

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Gatwick Airport](#)  
**Subject:** Why Gatwick must not expand  
**Date:** 09 June 2025 11:27:30

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Dear Secretary of State

I write as a long standing West Kent resident whose life, along with my fellow residents in Chiddingstone, has been ruined since 2009 (16 years of misery) by the relentless noise pollution of Gatwick arrivals (and to a lesser extent departures).

**Please read** some of the attached correspondence to the Gatwick CEO Stewart Wingate, from 2009 onwards, in relation to the constant aerial bombardment, and emails to our MP, Tom Tugendhat. This historic locality, within an AONB, has become almost uninhabitable over the last decade because of concentrated flight paths that destroy the peace and tranquillity of the open countryside in which we live. The toxic thunder of jet engines spreads for miles around the country skies. *It is also an outrage that Gatwick can wreck our sleep with systematic nightly overflights when Heathrow is not allowed the same privilege.*

I have on several occasions debated whether to sell up and move away...but why should the monstrous insensitivity of a commercial juggernaut force me out of my own home??

If Gatwick is allowed to expand, the areas overflowed and many others hitherto spared, will become places unbearable for civilised living. The right to peaceful enjoyment of one's own home will be trashed, mental health problems will multiply, as well as massive pollution on a scale previously unknown.

Please do not allow further expansion at a small regional airport that is already too big for comfort, and whose ambitions are of megalomaniac proportions.

Thank you

Steve Rudge

[REDACTED]



Dear Tom

As you know, for the sake of my health and sanity, I have decided to sell my Chiddingstone property : it's sad, it's tragic, but as soon as I have found a new home in deepest rural Suffolk (no motorway, no airport) I shall be gone from this 'once' unspoilt, idyllic Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. You will not hear from me again. I fear you will from other local fellow victims of the Gatwick scourge.

Tonight it started again at 6pm. I had just got into a warm relaxing bath when the onslaught began. One hideous aerial bombardment after another, every 2 minutes. It used to be every 3-4 minutes, now it's 2 minute intervals.

One airliner every 2 minutes from 6 o'clock  
One every 2 minutes  
One every 2 minutes  
One every 2 minutes until about 6.30...on and on and on...Then it starts again

Low-flying commercial aircraft, tearing apart the peaceful skies, discharging their foul monstrous thunder through my upstairs windows, desecrating my privacy in my own home, and breaching my human rights to boot. Why are we local constituents being persecuted and tormented by a greedy, immoral, callous, commercial juggernaut that destroys the quality of rural life? *The noise inferno is worse now in late September than at any time I remember in high peak season July or August.*

It's crazy!! It's bonkers!! We are being victimized by an inhuman lawless regime that MUST be brought to book. UKRAINE ring a bell??

I would like to know, for the sake of those stuck here in this formerly quiet, peaceful, tranquil, serenely endearing area, what you propose to do in your new office within government to wreak urgent, desperately needed change in use of air space.

Last night my sleep was destroyed. I woke at 11 am, wrecked : professional appointments had to be cancelled....tonight my attempts to enjoy a relaxing bath at home were destroyed.

My mental and psychological health is under attack...not to mention the integrity of the wide open countryside. This is so, so serious.

Will you please use your power and influence to help slay the monster in our midst before it destroys us, our homes, our locality.

Thanks for reading this.

Steve Rudge/Carolyn Hammond



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Mon, 30 May 2022 at 14:59

Dear Tom

Thank you for your response to my cry for help. I appreciate you must be incredibly busy both as a local MP and as a Parliamentarian.

I have to confess, I am disappointed by the reply you have sent me. As I sit here in my study with picture windows overlooking Grove Road and Finch Green, trying to work, I am compelled to hear jet airliner after jet airliner passing over and around my country home, tearing apart the peaceful skies with their ghastly bellowing engines...All day long there seems to be thunder over my character rural property. I have no desire to abandon my home of 20 years - absolutely not. The point is I am literally being forced out of my home by the inhuman practices of Gatwick airport. That cannot be right! Nor can it be right that I am unable to sleep at night because of noisy overflights at horrendous low altitudes.

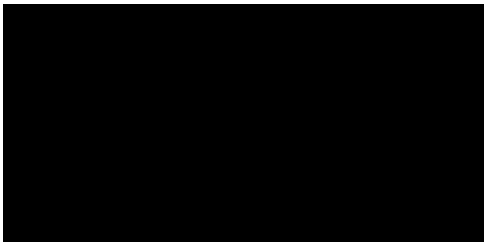
I look to you and fellow local MPs to introduce bills in parliament to curb these vile excesses and get night flights banned, just as they are banned at LHR. As I said recently to my father of 97, I cannot easily pick up my house and move it elsewhere...but Gatwick air control can very easily move its flight paths across a whole swathe of airspace at no real cost. Wingate and his cronies should be forced by law to instigate multiple flight paths for incoming aircraft, so that the misery is spread fairly across many different communities.

It is tragic that I cannot wait for Wednesday June 1st to arrive simply to get away from this hell-hole with my partner, as we travel to Dorset for a break. As I said previously, the area is becoming uninhabitable.

I hope you can do something to bring about radical change before it is too late.

Thanks for reading this.

Stephen Rudge





Sat, 21 May 2022 at 11:01

Dear Tom

It is with sadness that I have to announce some tragic news as one of your nearest local constituents. After much soul-searching I have decided to sell up and move away from the home and community I love. Chiddingstone has been my home since 2002. Over the last 2 years, my sensitive mind has become attuned once again to the natural peace and quiet of this glorious rural location. It has been a delight to reside here, a true joy (apart from weekend cyclists).

From early in 2022, and particularly since late March, Chiddingstone Hoath and surrounding neighbourhoods have fast reverted to being a war-zone. The relentless noise-blitz, day and night, has started to cause me and those around me deep disquiet and anguish, sleeplessness at night, fatigue. My work is suffering as a result. At times, you would think you were living right next to an airport - literally residing in Hounslow or West Drayton. That is grotesque and surreal, as you know - we live in an idyllic country setting, not in an urban airport hinterland. We also paid (me back in 2002) a premium for our homes in that same rural locality : not some terraced house in a crowded, noisy urban environment, but character homes with land in a fine, countryside location. I feel betrayed. I know for a fact, by empirical experience, that life here in 2002 was fundamentally different to what it is today. Changes to airspace have been made without proper process and consultation. Concentrated flightpaths have been instigated without legal approval and consent. We have looked to our appointed representatives to protect us : we still look to those same representatives to protect us! I know I am not the only one in this community to be in terminal despair.

Gatwick have declared war on our communities. Yes, there are quiet periods - but the ceasefire is short-lived. Aircraft come shrieking and whistling over my property with impunity, on a regular basis. I have spent several nights recently unable to sleep at 2am, 3am, 4am...because of persistent noisy overflights. Last night (19th) was the worst in living memory, with no less than 12 - yes, 12 counted - noisy aircraft passing over my property every 5 minutes between 4am and 5am. It is outrageous! It is nightmarish! A veritable modern dystopia. They get away with it because nobody stops them.

We have the right and the duty to fight back, but we have little power against the juggernaut. Does Ukraine ring a bell here?? Complaints to GAL are not even read, let alone acted upon. They are ignored with contempt. The airport operates in denial of the misery and suffering it causes. Government action is needed to bring GAL and NATS to the table and to impose some much-needed reform on the monstrous abuse of our rights and freedoms. Desperation is knocking at the door.

I know in the past you have wrung your hands and said you don't know what more you can do : but a united caucus of local MPs should have some power and influence over this callous inhuman regime.

I hope you can find new initiatives alongside GON, but I fear it will be too late for me by the time any improvements come about. I shan't be here - a major casualty of the brutality inflicted by GAL on those who live in the once peaceful unspoilt West Kent countryside.

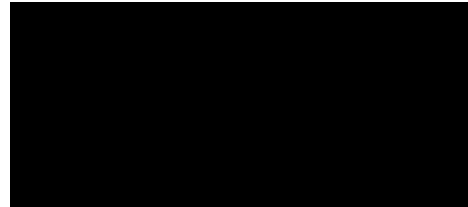
Thanks for reading this.

Stephen Rudge



**Private&Confidential- addressee only**

**Mr Stewart Wingate  
Managing Director  
Gatwick Airport Ltd  
London Gatwick  
West Sussex RH6 0NP**



July 25<sup>th</sup> 2016

Mr Wingate

**Abominable aircraft noise disturbance at**



The Summer deterioration in tranquility in this area, and the concomitant plague of aircraft noise, has suddenly, brutally, out of the blue, been visited upon the locality.

I wrote to you last year and the year before about the instances of what I considered to be criminal damage to the well being of your fellow citizens - planes flying over our homes at dead of night in a totally silent open countryside, devastating sleep and rest, destroying one's ability to perform a responsible professional job the day after through understandable excessive fatigue.

I still look forward to the day when you are brought to account for the horrendous disturbance which you still are prepared to allow to be perpetrated against innocent peace-loving dwellers in West Kent : as I said last time, it is nothing short of a 'moral' enormity. I note that two past invoices for costs relating to aircraft disturbance and reporting time are still unpaid.

During the last three days, (and I am told, nights) the assault on our (I include long suffering neighbours) countryside tranquility has reached a pitch that is among the worst I can recall in living memory. Today (Sunday 24<sup>th</sup>) it started early at 5.30am with a barrage of low-flying aircraft which woke me up and prevented me from further rest, so enraged was I at this aerial abuse. One after another for a good 30 minutes planes came over this neighbourhood, shattering our rest and peace of mind. Last night the same – from 11pm to midnight, a ceaseless torrent of abominable noise rent the air while we tried to sleep.

On Friday 22<sup>nd</sup>, not only were we disturbed pm at **18.57, 18.59, 19.02, 19.04, 19.05, 19.08, 19.10, 19.15, 19.52**, but the evening closed with a diabolical flourish after eleven o'clock with disturbance at **23.00, 23.12, 23.13, 23.17, 23.18, 23.30, 23.3, 23.3, 23.40** – virtually non-stop mental oppression. One after the other, this ongoing barrage of overflights inflicted psychological torture on a sensitive self-aware being trying hopelessly to sleep, and being slowly stifled by sleep deprivation. I was at the time powerless to do anything – but, I vow that there will be a time when I will be in a position to act and compel some change in this inhuman commercial practice.

I would like to obtain your home address, Mr Wingate, and install a simulated jet engine outside your family bedroom windows... reproducing the decibel level of your Gatwick overflights at TN8 on a not too infrequent basis. Evenings especially, when you are at home indoors or out. What about night times too?

I wonder how you would react to a booming deafening noise level loud enough to make you incapable of sleep, and by extension your work, your relaxation, your social interaction, your leisure? Perhaps you are an insensitive man with no hearing. Perhaps the noise would not bother you – I very much suspect you are in permanent denial, working as you do at an airport. But your partner, children and neighbours – I wonder how they would react to such an intolerable destruction of their health, harmony and right to peace and privacy? For a significant swathe of the regional population, as you know, this disturbance is intolerable, insufferable and unbearable.

It is high time that night flying at low altitudes is made illegal. Indeed, at dead of night it is not simply the altitude which is the problem, it is also the locality *constantly* overflown.

I would be pleased to know which airlines are responsible for conniving in these monstrous acts against people's night-time sleep and rest. It would be appreciated if you could give me full details of the aircraft that over flew my bedroom on July 24th between 5am and 9am.

I have registered the on going Summer sleep disturbance with my medical practitioner at [REDACTED] Medical Centre, and intend to call a doctor as an expert witness in any future court action. All of us afflicted by your overseeing of this peacetime aerial bombardment hope this will be in the European Court of Human Rights. I am copying in the local MPs who I know are working hard to end the brutal, callous actions of an uncaring commercially-driven monster which is LGA.

In the meantime I shall continue to do all in my power to bring about a desperately needed change of policy in the routing of in coming Gatwick planes, by writing to protest and to appeal to the consciences of all who will listen and support what is morally right and humane in a just crusade against your callous behaviour.

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Yours faithfully

**Stephen Rudge**

[REDACTED]

*cc    Tom Tugendhat MP  
      Greg Clark MP  
      Michael Fallon MP*

**Private & Confidential- Addressee only**

**Mr Stewart Wingate  
Managing Director  
Gatwick Airport Ltd  
London Gatwick Airport  
West Sussex RH6 0NP**

August 24th 2012

Mr Wingate

**Excessive and damaging aircraft noise at** [REDACTED]

I have written twice in the last two years to attempt to reason with a sentient, civilized human being who, I had hoped, would listen with a sense of concern and fitting responsibility to the atrocious sufferings of those who are being daily made angry, frustrated and - even ill - by the inhuman noise disturbance inflicted on them by the organization which he leads.

Twice since July 2010 I have urged you to at best alleviate or, ideally, remove, the blight caused by the aircraft you manage on the peace and quiet enjoyment of life to which local people like myself are entitled as land and property owners : I have asked politely and in frustration – but with growing incredulity that any decent corporate director can willfully ignore his responsibilities to the wider community and in particular to the misery he allows to go on unchecked, in spite of heartfelt pleas for compassion and remedial action.

On Thursday August 9<sup>th</sup> 2012, I was disturbed from my comfortable slumber by a Monarch Airbus passing over my bedroom at 00.38am at a terrifying low height of 2,799 feet. The indescribable disturbance (attested in writing by your FPT) stopped me from sleeping and ruined the rest which I needed for my work next day. That incident is shocking and an outrage on my right to peaceful sleep in my own home – I shall not forget it or forgive your Airport for it. And that is one of many such criminally insensitive disturbances for which *you* are responsible.

After two years of Summer misery, I am appalled to have to conclude that you, as Director of London Gatwick, show a callous and frighteningly insensitive attitude towards those whose sufferings you instigate. I have come to the end of my patience now, and have regrettably reached the conclusion that you are totally deaf to reason and civilized appeal, to courteous pleading and respectful demand for change.

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I write therefore to advise you that I am about to send you my invoice for the professional damages your airport has caused my company through the constant unremitting damage to my work and corporate profitability, occasioned by my constant obligatory recourse to your complaints line and letters of protest – not to mention loss of sleep at night.

I will not countenance moving home as a remedy to the unacceptable outrageous destruction of my freedom to live in peace in the rural tranquil setting of my choice.

I have no idea whether you will take this letter seriously, or whether you will accord me the courtesy of an interview. I would rather resolve my unhappiness in a spirit of goodwill and intelligent co-operation rather than a court action – however, the man I see sitting at the top of London Gatwick appears not to be interested in dialogue, in sensitive regard for those he causes to suffer, or any constructive process whereby noise disturbance is recognized for the horrendous blight it is, and alleviated.

You will receive my invoice, as indicated, as soon as I have alerted the press, parliament, and my lawyers. I shall do everything in my legal power to stop the monster that your business has become from preying unscrupulously on the communities who are at the mercy of your callous indifference and disregard.

Yours faithfully

**Stephen Rudge**



*cc Sir John Stanley MP  
David Cameron MP PM  
Peter Lake KCC  
Gatwick Airport Consultative Committee  
Cripps Harries Hall Solicitors  
Warders Medical Centre*



**Private&Confidential- Addressee only**

**Mr Stewart Wingate  
Managing Director  
Gatwick Airport Ltd  
London Gatwick Airport  
West Sussex RH6 0NP**

July 25th 2009

Dear Sir

**Excessive and disturbing aircraft noise at** [REDACTED]

I write to bring to your attention yet again the gravity of the disturbance being endured by myself and other local residents of Chiddingstone from Gatwick aircraft routed directly over our homes and businesses.

Over the last two weeks there has been a constant unremitting deluge of noise disturbance, much of it during daytime working hours, some during the night time. The impact of thundering ear-splitting planes over this house and business is detrimental not only to personal health, but equally important, destroys professional focus and concentration, leading to severe business impairment.

On Sunday July 17<sup>th</sup> 2009 – for the first time ever on record - I was compelled to get out of the bath to witness the plane going overhead and check the exact time (18.01), such was the severity of the noise disturbance. This, I think you will agree, is a disgrace and an outrage on my right to peaceful enjoyment of my own home - let alone my psychological well-being

As I commented last year, the number of complaints I am being forced to make on purely humanitarian grounds to register distress, protest, and at times sheer incredulity at what is inhuman invasion of my privacy, and my right to work undisturbed, damages the fabric of my business and employment – to say nothing of my mental health.

I had begun to believe that some alleviation of the noise disturbance was in evidence over the Winter months : however, the last few weeks have caused me to realise this is not the case, as the locality has been subjected to some of the most grotesque instances of disturbance on record.

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As last Summer, my professional work is being disrupted and damaged, not only psychologically from the continuing emotional distress inflicted on me, but by the constant recourse I have to the telephone and to your complaints line.

Every time I go to the phone I lose three to four minutes working time which can never be recovered, as I have a tight daily schedule of office business commitments.

I came to the conclusion last year that I would have to hold Gatwick Airport responsible for the losses to my professional business time and activity, as Gatwick were fundamentally responsible for the routing of aircraft and the provision of the Noise Line for essential complaints.

I would like to inform you that as things currently stand, I have cumulative losses totaling £1,450 from last June 2008 onwards for which I intend to invoice Gatwick when I have accumulated a critical amount of damages. The writing of this letter alone has cost me £200 (one hour) of my time.

Failure to settle a future invoice will result in court action with widespread local and national newspaper coverage. Should this happen, I intend to involve not only Sir John Stanley but David Cameron himself in the case.

Please take action now to reduce the constant, intolerable destruction of our collective peace of mind and well-being caused by the thoughtless, insensitive routing of incoming flights to Gatwick over our tranquil rural community.

It is high time the senior management of Gatwick Airport Ltd responded responsibly and compassionately to the sufferings of those innocent country dwellers whose peaceful existence is being trashed by unreasonable and unremitting aircraft noise, itself caused by callous, inept aircraft routing.

Please take this letter seriously.

Yours faithfully

**Stephen Rudge**

**SR IA Ltd**

*cc Sir John Stanley MP  
David Cameron MP PM  
Peter Lake KCC  
Gatwick Airport Consultative Committee*