

## SASIG Aviation Bulletin: December 2025

SASIG's Aviation news and policy bulletin aims to provide its members and associate members, with a comprehensive overview of what has been happening in Parliament and Whitehall as well as in the sector itself in the preceding month.

### Monthly Highlights

- **8 December** - [High Court challenge over decision to expand Luton Airport](#) is dismissed.
- **9 December** - [UK Government needs to do more to reduce costs and burden on airports](#) said Baroness Ruby McGregor-Smith in her speech opening AirportsUK Annual Conference.
- **10 December** - [Electric flying taxis may become available to London airport passengers from 2028](#). Vertical Aerospace hopes its Valo aircraft - capacity up to 6 passengers - can get regulatory approval in three years.
- **15 December** - [London Stansted's planning application to increase passenger numbers up to 51 million a year](#) over next two decades has been [backed by a number of leading airlines](#).
- **17 December** - [Plans to increase passenger limit given the green light by Uttlesford District Council](#). It will increase its annual passenger limit up to 51 million.
- **19 December** - [Work will begin on a new multi-storey car park and upgraded check-in area in Heathrow's Terminal 4](#), which is expected to be completed in 2031.
- **29 December** - Air travellers are being urged to prepare for soaring ticket prices as [regional airports throughout the UK brace for "unprecedented" property tax increases next year](#).
- **30 December** - [Newcastle Airport has secured a new £364million five-year financing facility](#) to refinance its bank debt and support its long-term growth ambitions.

### Potential Actions for LAs

- The Government has launched a call for evidence on airport business rates and this is something SASIG will respond to - we urge members to also do so (see PQ1). The current proposals will generate significant revenue to line the Treasury's pockets but will offer few benefits to LAs. Indeed, there is a danger that it might suppress the economic benefits which airport growth might otherwise have generated.

### SASIG Activities

- **18 December** – SASIG response to CAA's CAP1616 consultation submitted.
- Discussions initiated with HSPG and TfL re: a LA London Airport capacity round table.
- Note also plans for a prospective Noise focused webinar in March 2026.

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For local authorities in England and Wales who are not members of SASIG but would like access to the Bulletin, please contact us at the address below to inquire about Membership and being added to the circulation list.

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## **Editorial**

In the run up to the end of the year, this month (8<sup>th</sup>) saw a challenge by campaign group LADACAN, over the decision to expand Luton Airport, dismissed in the High Court. This was despite the fact that the Transport Secretary's decision to allow expansion went against a Planning Inspectorate recommendation that it should be turned down. Meanwhile on 17 December, London Stansted's planning application to increase passenger numbers up to 51 million a year over next two decade and which was backed by a number of leading airlines including Emirates, Ryanair, Jet2.com and Turkish Airlines, was approved by Uttlesford District Council.

Further North, Newcastle Airport secured a new £364million five-year financing facility to refinance its bank debt and support its long-term growth ambitions. The deal includes a £20 million Green Loan to fund Net Zero Carbon initiatives by 2035 and was backed by major banks including Barclays, Lloyds, and HSBC.

The thorny issue of airport business rates has become even more thornier. These rates are set to more than double at a time when global competition for connectivity, investment and trade has never been so fierce, according to Baroness Ruby McGregor-Smith's message in her speech opening the AirportsUK Annual Conference in early December. She said the UK Government needs to do more to reduce the costs and burden on airports otherwise, actions will not match ministers' rhetoric about the role they see airports, and wider aviation, playing in driving UK economic growth.

Her message reflects the one given to air travellers towards the end of the month, urging them to prepare for soaring ticket prices as regional airports throughout the UK brace for "unprecedented" property tax increases next year. An examination of official Government figures for the Press Association has shown that regional airports are among those confronting the sharpest business rates rises of any industry in the UK during a comprehensive overhaul of property assessments that determine the levy.

A notable technology news highlight was that electric flying taxis may become available to London airport passengers from 2028. Vertical Aerospace hopes its Valo aircraft, which has a capacity for up to six passengers, can get regulatory approval in three years - with the first planned commercial routes to include airport-to-city centre connections.

This month, Heathrow Airport announced plans for a £1.3 billion investment in infrastructure in 2026 with an upgrade of Terminal 4 a core focus. Work will begin on a new multi-storey car park and upgraded check-in area in T4 which is expected to be completed in 2031.

Finally, the Secretariat would like to wish all its members a great start to the New Year and thank for your staunch support throughout the old one.

Chris Cain  
Policy Director  
SASIG

## **Events, Meetings and Conferences**

### **SASIG Meetings**

(To note: resulting from the impact of the pandemic, SASIG meetings are still mostly being held virtually. It is therefore advised to always check with the Secretariat first before making any travel arrangements).

#### **2025/26**

##### **Chairman's Advisory Group meeting (CAG):**

Tuesday: 20 January 2026 (Online-for CAG members only)

##### **SASIG Members' meeting:**

Wednesday: 25 February 2026 (online).

#### **External Conferences: (please note: some date changes may always be possible).**

**17-18 March 2026:** [Sustainable Skies World Summit](#), Farnborough Conference Centre

**17-19 March 2026:** [Passenger Terminal Expo](#), Excel, London

**17-20 May 2026:** [Routes Europe](#), Rimini, Italy

**27-29 May 2026:** [EBACE](#), Geneva, Switzerland

**6-7 June 2026:** [Manston International Air Show](#), Manston Airport, Ramsgate

**20-24 July 2026:** [Farnborough Air Show](#), Farnborough

**31 August – 4 September 2026:** [ACI Airport Experience Summit](#), Istanbul

#### **Consultations Update: Recent and current:**

##### **Recent:**

##### **[CAP1616: UK airspace Change Process consultation](#)**

On 25 September, the CAA launched their UK Airspace change process consultation. This document (CAP1616) was a formal consultation setting out the CAA's proposals to modify the airspace change process. The consultation ran until 18 December 2025.

##### **[UK ETS: Regional Aviation Connectivity](#)**

On 28 October 2025, the UK ETS Authority launched a [consultation](#) to assess the impacts on regional air connectivity following the removal of UK ETS free allocation (FA) from the aviation sector. This could have material impacts on many regional and smaller airports.

The consultation sought views on whether intervention is needed to protect regional air connectivity specifically in light of the end of FA for aircraft operators, and if so, what form this should take. Details on this consultation and how to respond could be seen [here](#) and the full consultation document can also be seen [here](#). The deadline for responses was 19 December 2025.

**Ongoing:**

**CAA consultation: Policy framework for new types of Vertical-Take Off and Landing aircraft (6 Nov 2025 – 29 Jan 2026)**

On 6 November 2025, the CAA launched [a consultation](#) seeking views from the public and VTOL industry stakeholders on their proposed legislative changes. The CAA is aiming to implement the regulatory framework and operational systems needed for commercial passenger flights by new types of vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) aircraft by the end of 2028. As such, it is in the process of identifying the regulatory changes needed to accommodate the safe use of these new types of VTOL aircraft in the UK, whilst supporting sector growth, innovation, decarbonisation and international alignment.

This consultation closes **29 Jan 2026**.

**UK Airspace Design and Coordination Services (CAP3158 and CAP3159) – 17 November 2025 – 12 January 2026.**

On 17 November 2025 the CAA published:

- [Consultation on draft guidance for the UK Airspace Design and Coordination Services \(CAP 3158\); and](#)
- [Consultation on the requirements for the UK Airspace Coordination Service and associated guidance \(CAP 3159\).](#)

These services are central to the Government's approach to modernising UK airspace and will be provided by NATS (En Route) plc (NERL).

The CAA have updated their background document [Modernising the way we do airspace design \(CAP 3156\)](#), which supports these consultations, and they welcome responses by **12 January 2026**.

**Proposed changes to the Air Navigation Directions and Air Navigation Guidance (25 November – 20 January 2026)**

On 25 November 2025, the DfT published a [consultation](#) on proposed changes to the Air Navigation Directions and Air Navigation Guidance. These two documents provide the framework and environmental guidance for the CAA on how to carry out its air navigation functions in line with Government policy.

These documents require updating to reflect the latest Government policies, priorities and climate obligations, and their revision is critical to the delivery of Airspace Modernisation. The proposed changes are intended to help futureproof UK skies in a sustainable manner, whilst supporting economic growth, including airport expansion.

The consultation and supporting documents may be seen [here](#) and the consultation will run until **20 January 2026**.

## Parliamentary and Government News

### **4 December: [Unmanned Aircraft \(Offences and Consequential Amendments\) Regulations 2025](#) (House of Lords)**

Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill asked that the Grand Committee do consider the Unmanned Aircraft (Offences and Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2025.

### **8 December: [Unmanned Aircraft \(Offences and Consequential Amendments\) Regulations 2025](#) (House of Lords)**

Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill moved that the draft Regulations laid before the House on 21 October be approved.

*Relevant document: 40th Report from the Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee. Considered in Grand Committee on 4 December.*

Motion agreed.

### **8 December: [Sustainable Aviation Fuel Bill](#) (House of Lords)**

Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill moved that the order of commitment of Thursday 20 November committing the bill to a Grand Committee be discharged and that the bill be committed to a Committee of the Whole House; and that if the bill's Committee stage is not concluded by the rise of the House on Wednesday 10 December, the bill be reported from the Committee of the Whole House in respect of proceedings up to that date; and that, for the remainder of the bill, the bill be committed to a Grand Committee.

Motion agreed.

### **10 December: [Sustainable Aviation Fuel Bill](#) (House of Lords)**

The Bill was debated: *Scottish and Welsh legislative consent sought, Northern Ireland legislative content granted.*

## Transport Questions: House of Commons:

The House rose on 18 December for the Christmas Recess and will return on 5 January 2026.

There were no Transport Questions in the House of Commons this month.

## Transport Questions: House of Lords

The House rose on 18 December for the Christmas Recess and will return on 5 January 2026.

There were no Transport Questions in the House of Lords this month.

## **Parliamentary Questions:**

**Q.1. Question (95970) asked by Richard Holden (Basildon & Billericay) on 1 December 2025: "To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment she has made of the potential impact of future increases in business rates on the financial sustainability of regional airports and the level of regional air connectivity they are able to provide."**

A. Dan Tomlinson on 4 December 2025: "The government is committed to enabling investment so that airports can play their full role in the growth mission. Properties seeing large bill increases as a result of the business rates revaluation - including airports - will benefit from a redesigned transitional relief scheme worth £3.2 billion over the next 3 years. Compared to the 2023 transitional relief scheme, the redesigned scheme will provide more generous support for large properties. The Government has also published a Call for Evidence exploring concerns that airports and a small number of other ratepayers have raised around the 'Receipts & Expenditure' valuation methodology and its impacts on long-term, high value investments. Through this call for evidence, we will seek to address issues raised ahead of the 2029 revaluation".

**Q.2. Question (95835) asked by Ben Obese-Jecty (Huntingdon) on 1 December 2025: "To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment she has made of the impact of (a) ownership and (b) investment in Heathrow Airport by Chinese companies".**

A. Keir Mather on 9 December 2025: "The Government takes its responsibility for national security extremely seriously and balances this with its continued commitment to welcome inward investment in a way that provides investors with the certainty and transparency they need to do business in the UK. We work across government to conduct due diligence and other assessments and ensure that any potential national security risk to the UK is handled appropriately. For any new qualifying investments in sensitive sectors, which include transport, we will use the powers in the National Security and Investment Act 2021 to scrutinise transactions and intervene if necessary to protect national security".

**Q.3. Question (95934) asked by Munira Wilson (Twickenham) on 1 December 2025: "To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many sustainable aviation fuel plants are currently operational".**

A. Keir Mather on 5 December 2025: "I refer the hon Member to the answer I gave to the Rt Hon Member for Basildon and Billericay on 7 November 2025, to Question UIN 86750".

**Q.4. Question (95936) asked by Munira Wilson (Twickenham) on 1 December 2025: "To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many sustainable aviation fuel plants she expects to be under construction in (a) 2026, (b) 2027, (c) 2028, (d) 2029 and (e) 2030".**

A. Keir Mather on 5 December 2025: "I refer the hon Member to the answer I gave to the Rt Hon Member for Basildon and Billericay on 7 November 2025, to Question UIN 86750".

**Q.5. Question (97061) asked by Joe Robertson (Isle of Wight East) on 3 December 2025: "To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent representations she has received from airport operators regarding the potential impact of business rates changes announced in the Budget on the competitiveness of UK airports".**

A. Dan Tomlinson on 11 December 2025: "The government is committed to enabling investment so that airports can play their full role in the growth mission.

HM Treasury received budget submissions from several airports and AirportsUK. Both Ministers and officials have met with the sector and corresponded throughout the year on the impact of changes to rateable values as a result of the 2026 revaluation. Properties seeing large bill increases as a result of the business rates revaluation - including airports - will benefit from a redesigned transitional relief scheme worth £3.2 billion over the next 3 years. At Budget 2025, the government also published a Call for Evidence on Business Rates and Investment. It will explore the concerns that airports and a small number of other ratepayers have raised around the 'Receipts & Expenditure' valuation methodology and its impacts on long-term, high value investments. The government is seeking to address issues raised ahead of the 2029 revaluation, aiming to conclude this work in sufficient time before pre-list discussion commences.

**Q.6. Question (96849) asked by Ben Obese-Jecty (Huntingdon) on 3 December 2025: "To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the deadline is for the submission of a development consent application for a third runway at Heathrow Airport".**

A. Keir Mather on 15 December 2025: "It will be for scheme promoters to decide when to submit a development consent order application for a third runway scheme".

**Q.7. Question (96848) asked by Ben Obese-Jecty (Huntingdon) on 3 December 2025: "To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment she has made of the feasibility of new terminals for the proposed third runway at Heathrow Airport being built and operated in competition with those run by the airport".**

A. Keir Mather on 12 December 2025: "Information about terminals and other airport infrastructure would be provided as part of a development consent order application".

**Q.8. Question (96847) asked by Ben Obese-Jecty (Huntingdon) on 3 December 2025: "To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, by what date she plans to complete the review into airport funding".**

A. Keir Mather on 15 December 2025: "There is no current review into airport funding".

**Q.9. Question (96481) asked by Ben Obese-Jecty (Huntingdon) on 2 December 2025: "To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment has she made of the potential impact on airline ticket prices from Heathrow Airport of the need to fund the public consultation process for the proposed third runway".**

A. Keir Mather on 10 December 2025: "The Government is committed to delivering a third runway at Heathrow in a cost-effective way. The Civil Aviation Authority have launched a consultation on their working paper of regulatory options in their role as the independent economic regulator for the aviation industry. They propose several criteria for assessing future regulatory models, including how effective these options are in keeping costs for the travelling public low. Aviation operates predominantly in the private sector, with ticket prices determined by many factors including competition between airlines".

**Q.10. Question (96785) asked by Richard Holden (Basildon & Billericay) on 3 December 2025: "To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment she has made of the potential impact of business rates increases at airports on i.) passenger ticket prices and**

ii.) airline route planning”.

A. Dan Tomlinson on 11 December 2025: “The government is committed to enabling investment so that airports can play their full role in the growth mission. Properties seeing large bill increases as a result of the business rates revaluation - including airports - will benefit from a redesigned transitional relief scheme worth £3.2 billion over the next 3 years. At Budget 2025, the government also published a Call for Evidence on Business Rates and Investment. It will explore the concerns that airports and a small number of other ratepayers have raised around the ‘Receipts & Expenditure’ valuation methodology and its impacts on long-term, high value investments. The government is seeking to address issues raised ahead of the 2029 revaluation, aiming to conclude this work in sufficient time before pre-list discussion commences”.

**Q.11. Question (96482) asked by Ben Obese-Jecty (Huntingdon) on 2 December 2025: “To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what is the projected total cost of a third runway at Heathrow, including the consultation process; and who will be responsible for funding the planning and construction”.**

A. Keir Mather on 10 December 2025: “The Government has been clear that any expansion at Heathrow must be affordable and firmly in the interests of passengers. The costs of the scheme, should be kept to a minimum and met through private funding, including any associated surface-transport requirements.

Whilst we have set out our ambition to move at pace, decisions on construction and operational costs are ultimately a matter for the scheme promoter. Scheme promoters are responsible for any consultation in relation to their DCO application in accordance with Planning Act 2008 requirements”.

**Q.12. Question (97212) asked by Jim McMahon (Oldham West, Chadderton & Roydon) on 4 December 2025: “To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment she has made of the potential impact of Heathrow expansion on regional airports such as Manchester”.**

A. Keir Mather on 9 December 2025: “Expanding Heathrow has the potential to support connections between the regions and London, and, in turn, between the UK’s regions and the global economy - giving the entire UK more access to Heathrow’s world-leading connectivity. Domestic connectivity is a key part of the Airports National Policy Statement that we are currently reviewing, and we will consult on any revisions by summer 2026”.

**Q.13. Question (96341) asked by Richard Holden (Basildon & Billericay) on 2 December 2025: “To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment she has made of the potential impact of trends in the level of regional airlines and air links in the last five years on regional communities; and what steps she is taking to support the retention of regional air services”.**

A. Keir Mather on 10 December 2025: “The UK aviation market operates predominantly in the private sector, and it is for airports to invest in their infrastructure to attract passengers and airlines, while airlines deliver services by responding to demand for different routes. The Aviation Council was established earlier this year as a strategic platform for Government and industry to work collaboratively on the long-term challenges and opportunities facing the UK aviation sector. The Council is co-chaired by myself, the Minister for Aviation, and Ken O’Toole, the CEO of Manchester Airport Group (MAG).

The Council has formed five working groups to look at priority areas, including a Regional Connectivity working group to understand the factors that have influenced UK regional aviation connectivity, so recommendations can be made that would encourage growth. The Government continues to provide support for existing domestic air routes which are in danger of being lost through the use of the Public Service Obligation (PSO) regulations. The Department for Transport currently joint-funds three PSO air routes into London from Newquay, Dundee and Derry/Londonderry".

**Q.14. Question (98411) asked by Jim Shannon (Strangford) on 9 December 2025: "To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps she is taking to improve regional air travel".**

A. Keir Mather on 11 December 2025: "Regional airports serve our local communities and act as a gateway to international opportunities, alongside maintaining social and family ties and strengthening the bonds between the four nations. The UK aviation market operates predominantly in the private sector. It is for airports to invest in their infrastructure to attract passengers and airlines, while airlines are well placed to deliver services to their customers by responding to demand for different routes. The public service obligation (PSO) regulations enable the protection of existing domestic routes that are in danger of being lost. The government currently joint-funds three PSO routes into London from Derry/Londonderry, Newquay and Dundee".

## **National and Regional News**

**1<sup>st</sup> December** – [Unilode Aviation Solutions has officially opened new MRO facility close to East Midlands Airport](#) enhancing its ability to serve major airline operators in the region.

**1<sup>st</sup> December** - [Amazon cuts frequency of planned drone delivery flights from 21 to 10 per hour at its first trial site in Darlington](#) after Darlington BC granted only temporary planning permission for its drone facilities.

**1<sup>st</sup> December** - [AGS Airports - Aberdeen International, Glasgow and Southampton – given Sword of Honour by British Safety Council](#) for excellence in health and safety management.

**2<sup>nd</sup> December** - [Menzies Aviation to cut emissions from ground operations](#) by expanding use of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil across equipment fleets at Heathrow and Gatwick.

**2<sup>nd</sup> December** - [Cornwall Airport to upgrade radar system for more efficient airspace management](#). The upgrade is part of the Cornwall Airport Newquay Development Strategy.

**2<sup>nd</sup> December** – [CAA predicts millions of passengers will fly this month](#). The announcement follows airports and airlines nationwide reporting their busiest summer on record.

**3<sup>rd</sup> December** - [Heathrow Airport to raise terminal drop-off charge to £7 in 2026](#) and introduce a maximum stay of 10 minutes across all forecourt drop-off areas.

**3<sup>rd</sup> December** - [London Gatwick has invested £17m to improve resilience during the winter season](#) in order to keep flights going through bad weather conditions.

**3<sup>rd</sup> December** - Jet2 announces the launch of flights and holidays to Egypt from East Midlands Airport – more details are [here](#).

**4<sup>th</sup> December** – [Leeds Bradford Airport boss calls for 'true collaboration'](#) to tackle headwinds facing infrastructure projects.

**4<sup>th</sup> December** - [Bristol Airport is set to begin a significant redevelopment of its departure lounge](#) as part of the next phase of its ongoing £400 million transformation programme.

**4<sup>th</sup> December** - [London Gatwick announces new twice-daily Air France service to Paris](#) for summer 2026.

**4<sup>th</sup> December** - [Luton Airport have hosted almost 40 local businesses at networking event](#) providing information about tendering opportunities/procedures for working with airport.

**5<sup>th</sup> December** - Gatwick has become the first airport in the world to secure PAS 2080:2023 certification for carbon management in buildings and infrastructure – details are [here](#).

**5<sup>th</sup> December** - [Birmingham Airport reveal a series of assisted travel services upgrades](#) in preparation for its busiest year in terms of passengers requiring additional support.

**5<sup>th</sup> December** – [Heathrow's planned rise in terminal drop off fees draws criticism from chauffeur sector](#). The change is part of airport's effort to manage congestion around terminals.

**5<sup>th</sup> December** - [The UK transport infrastructure is critically vulnerable to hostile drones warns expert](#) as figures revealed a surge in unauthorised drone flights over UK airports.

**7<sup>th</sup> December** - Police run targeted checks on private hire vehicles and general motorists during Liverpool Airport security operation – read about it [here](#).

**7<sup>th</sup> December** - [Pepper spray incident at Heathrow prompts police response and arrests](#). Armed response officers were deployed and a man was arrested on suspicion of assault.

**8<sup>th</sup> December** - [Major improvements to critical parts of East Midlands Airport's infrastructure are being carried out](#) during a series of runway closures over the winter.

**8<sup>th</sup> December** - [A 6-week public consultation for phase one of Mix Manchester launched](#) giving residents/businesses/stakeholders the opportunity to shape plans for a science, innovation and manufacturing campus by Manchester Airport.

**8<sup>th</sup> December** - [High Court challenge over decision to expand Luton Airport](#) is dismissed.

**8<sup>th</sup> December** - [Aviation expert questions Heathrow's third runway case](#). Chris Tarry of the CILT (UK) questions whether the project reflects today's industry realities.

**9<sup>th</sup> December** - Three people have so far been arrested following a robbery attempt at Heathrow Airport's Terminal 3 car park on Sunday morning. Details [here](#).

**9<sup>th</sup> December** - [London Biggin Hill gets a runway makeover](#). The runway now boasts a new grooved surface, in addition to advanced LED and centreline lighting.

**9<sup>th</sup> December** - Exeter Airport sees 28% summer surge in passengers – [see here](#).

**9<sup>th</sup> December** - [UK Government needs to do more to reduce costs and burden on airports](#) said Baroness Ruby McGregor-Smith in her speech opening AirportsUK Annual Conference.

**10<sup>th</sup> December** - [Electric flying taxis may become available to London airport passengers from 2028](#). Vertical Aerospace hopes its Valo aircraft - capacity up to six passengers - can get regulatory approval in three years.

**10<sup>th</sup> December** - [Almost ¾ of passengers flying from East Midlands reported high levels of satisfaction during summer season](#) following wide range of improvements at the airport.

**10<sup>th</sup> December** - [Farnborough Airport's proposed expansion](#): warning it may cause harm to hundreds of thousands of residents while serving only a small group of private jet users.

**11<sup>th</sup> December** - [AGS Airports' \(Aberdeen, Glasgow and Southampton airports\), net zero journey](#) recognised by global carbon accreditation scheme.

**11<sup>th</sup> December** - [Gatwick has announced Mathieu Boutitie, as new Chief Technical Officer, effective 1 January 2026](#). He'll succeed Cedric Laurier who will rejoin VINCI Airports in Paris.

**11<sup>th</sup> December** - [Heathrow said it's hired Philip Jansen to be next chair of Heathrow Airport Holdings Ltd.](#) The former CE of BT Group PLC will be taking over from the start of January.

**12<sup>th</sup> December** - [Gatwick Airport is increasing price of its drop-off zones by £3, bringing the minimum charge to £10](#). The fee to allow drivers to stop outside the terminal for 10 minutes is set to increase on 6 January.

**12<sup>th</sup> December** – [East Midlands Airport: Great festive getaway to take place between 19 December and 4 January](#) with almost 24,000 passengers aiming to be away for the big day.

**13<sup>th</sup> December** - [AAIB has completed investigation into ground incident at Stansted Airport last year](#) when a Ryanair aircraft was pushed back onto a blast fence by a tug operator.

**14<sup>th</sup> December** - Air France to open a new lounge in Terminal 4 at Heathrow Airport in Spring 2026 but only for certain travellers – [details here](#).

**15<sup>th</sup> December** - [Over 1.5 million passengers expected to travel through Manchester airport between 19 December and 4 January](#). This comes right after record-breaking November.

**15<sup>th</sup> December** - [Flights delayed at Manchester Airport](#) after unexpected surface issue forced closure of a runway, compounding disruption caused by poor weather conditions.

**15<sup>th</sup> December** - [London Stansted's planning application to increase passenger numbers up to 51 million a year](#) over next two decades has been [backed by a number of leading airlines](#).

**16<sup>th</sup> December** – [Gatwick Airport has responded to growing passenger demand for flights to central Asia](#) with a new service to Tashkent, Uzbekistan, operated by airline Qanot Shard.

**16<sup>th</sup> December** - Birmingham Airport's £76 million annual investment in AI and seamless journeys – see the [video here](#).

**16<sup>th</sup> December** – [This article](#) purports to reveal the cheapest airport lounges in the UK.

**17<sup>th</sup> December** - DHL check-in and baggage staff at Luton Airport plan six days of strikes over pay, risking delays and cancellations during the busiest festive travel period. Details [here](#).

**17<sup>th</sup> December** - [The High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire visits East Midlands Airport to see its cargo operation](#). It's the largest of its kind in the country and has welcomed seven new cargo operators since launching its long-term cargo growth plans in the spring.

**17<sup>th</sup> December** - [Plans to increase passenger limit at Stansted, given the green light by Uttlesford District Council](#). It will increase its annual passenger limit up to 51 million.

**18<sup>th</sup> December** - [InfraBridge to sell 51% of its stake in Leeds Bradford and Newcastle Airports to Aena](#). It will still have 49% shareholding in holding company after completion.

**18<sup>th</sup> December** - [Newcastle Airport has opened a new off-site Waiting Zone for taxis, private vehicles and the public](#) in advance of passenger numbers reaching six million in 2026.

**18<sup>th</sup> December** - [Open Skies Network and Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust have signed agreement](#) for adoption of NHS medical drone delivery service in Cornwall/Isles of Scilly.

**18<sup>th</sup> December** - [Chris Tarry Shares CILT\(UK\)'s perspective on Heathrow's 3rd runway](#).

**19<sup>th</sup> December** - [Work will begin on a new multi-storey car park and upgraded check-in area in Heathrow's Terminal 4](#), which is expected to be completed in 2031.

**19<sup>th</sup> December** - [Guernsey Ports, operator of Guernsey airport reaches agreement with owners of 2 ATR72s](#) formerly operated by Blue Islands to settle most of the debt and release the turboprops.

**20<sup>th</sup> December** - [The top non-UK airlines at London Heathrow Airport this month](#).

**21<sup>st</sup> December** – This article is titled: '[What Heathrow Airport's third runway means for London, the environment and rival European hubs](#)'.

**22<sup>nd</sup> December** - [Demand for travel through Heathrow is "already outpacing" the limits of current infrastructure](#) with record numbers forecast this year.

**23<sup>rd</sup> December** - [Worldwide Flight Services strengthens long-term commitment to Heathrow Airport](#) after securing 20-year lease for a new, purpose-built on-airport air cargo warehouse.

**23<sup>rd</sup> December** - [Heathrow's famous green firefighter training rig](#), modelled on a Boeing 747 and DC-10 and nicknamed the 'Jolly Green Giant' to be replaced by new A380 simulator.

**23<sup>rd</sup> December** - [Wizz Air has pounced on slots released by TUI at London Luton Airport](#) and has announced six new routes as a result.

**24<sup>th</sup> December** - [Steve Griffiths, Managing Director, East Midlands Airport](#) talks about the airport's anniversary year marked by events, improvements and ambitious plans for growth.

**24<sup>th</sup> December** - Emirates' winter 2026/2027, shows it'll have three daily Airbus A380 flights again to Gatwick Airport – see [here](#).

**24<sup>th</sup> December** - [The number of passengers passing through UK airports will be the most ever seen on any Christmas Eve](#) since records began in 1972, says CAA.

**25<sup>th</sup> December** - This article is titled: '[Why Didn't Boeing Build a Next-Generation 757?](#)'

**26<sup>th</sup> December** - [British Airways' 2026 schedule revealed](#): 9 new routes that can be booked now.

**26<sup>th</sup> December** - East Midlands Airport's cargo boom set to create 20,000 jobs with £4 billion economic boost – [see here](#) for more details.

**27<sup>th</sup> December** - Wizz Air expands at London Luton with slots from TUI, 15th based aircraft and six new routes – details [here](#).

**28<sup>th</sup> December** - [IndiGo expands UK network with New Delhi–London Heathrow](#) route from February 2026.

**28<sup>th</sup> December** - A [Ryanair flight bound for Tenerife declared an emergency](#) and returned to Birmingham after an in-flight turbulence encounter.

**29<sup>th</sup> December** - Air travellers are being urged to prepare for soaring ticket prices as [regional airports throughout the UK brace for "unprecedented" property tax increases next year](#).

**29<sup>th</sup> December** - [Stansted Airport getting a huge new £600m upgrade](#) for its 27m passengers. The project will begin in January 2026.

**29<sup>th</sup> December** - [London City Airport will introduce a drop-off charge for the first time from January 2026](#). It will cost £8 for drop-offs lasting up to five minutes.

**30<sup>th</sup> December** - [Newcastle Airport has secured a new £364million five-year financing facility](#) to refinance its bank debt and support its long-term growth ambitions.

**30<sup>th</sup> December** - [More here](#) about how UK regional airports' rising taxes is sparking fears of higher fares for passengers in 2026.

**31<sup>st</sup> December** - '[A Year in Review: 12 Months That Shaped UK Aviation and Aerospace](#)'.

**31<sup>st</sup> December** - [An Emirates Airbus A380 departing for Dubai made a precautionary return to London](#) after encountering landing gear door issue after take-off.

## Other Aviation Industry News

**1<sup>st</sup> December** - [Leading planning and environmental expert says proposed legislation to lift Dublin airport cap](#) - which is due to come before the Cabinet for approval this week - is not "worth the paper it is written on" and legal challenges will block it from being implemented.

**1<sup>st</sup> December** - [Ambitious plans for new terminals, imminent openings and longer term airport projects](#) ensure it has been a busy end to the year for infrastructure development.

**1<sup>st</sup> December** - [Shannon Airport first in Ireland to generate power from a solar farm built inside its boundary](#). Expected to provide up to fifth of airport's annual electricity demand.

**2<sup>nd</sup> December** - How some of the world's busiest airports show that better navigation and communication improves passenger satisfaction and supports more efficient operations and measurable financial return. [See here](#) to read all about it.

**2<sup>nd</sup> December** – [In first half of 2026, 61 airports in 35 countries will have scheduled Airbus A380 flights](#) but Heathrow will be one of only 6 airports with 4 or more Airbus A380 airlines.

**3<sup>rd</sup> December** - [Smiths to sell airport scanning business in £2bn deal](#) in the latest move to offload parts of the business following investor pressure.

**3<sup>rd</sup> December** - Glasgow Airport opened its state-of-the-art new Valet Hub following a significant investment – details [here](#).

**4<sup>th</sup> December** – [This article](#) is about former CEO of Leeds & Bradford Airport, Ed Anderson, on airports, advice for graduates and his honorary degree.

**4<sup>th</sup> December** - [Ryanair's Kerry Airport passenger numbers hit 7 million](#). Their operations to and from the airport began in 1989.

**4<sup>th</sup> December** - [Cork Airport passenger numbers up 7% in November](#). Some 214,790 travellers used the airport while Dublin numbers increased 11% to over 2.6m.

**5<sup>th</sup> December** - [Air cargo volumes through UK airports climbed to 687,000 tonnes in Q3 2025](#), a modest year-on-year increase from 679,000 in the same quarter last year.

**5<sup>th</sup> December** - [Edinburgh Airport suspended all flight operations after IT failure hit its air traffic control systems](#). Timing of the disruption, just before Christmas, amplified impact.

**5<sup>th</sup> December** - [E-commerce is seen as driving force at Glasgow Prestwick Airport](#) as it strives to grow its air cargo volumes and move up the UK airport ranks.

**5<sup>th</sup> December** - British Airways expands network with brand-new twice-weekly route from Glasgow Airport to San Sebastián – see [here](#).

**6<sup>th</sup> December** – Read about [5 largest Airbus A320neo fleets in 2025](#). Easyjet come in 5<sup>th</sup>.

**8<sup>th</sup> December** - [Scottish airport reveals plans for new flights to key market](#). Prestwick Airport is in a position to line up routes to India as its freight cargo operation grows.

**8<sup>th</sup> December** - [Scottish airspace modernisation consultation reaches halfway point](#).

**9<sup>th</sup> December** – Read interesting article titled: '[Why Local Airports Matter More Than Ever](#)'.

**9<sup>th</sup> December** – [This article](#) considers how airports can seek to safeguard their operations from litigation.

**9<sup>th</sup> December** - [Eve and SkyGrid publish AAM white paper](#) intended to provide a roadmap for airspace integration and automation, setting the stage for the future of digital aviation.

**10<sup>th</sup> December** - [Proposed near-€1 million severance deal for airport operator DAA chief executive Kenny Jacobs is off the table](#) after Minister for Transport blocked the payment.

**10<sup>th</sup> December** – [This article](#) addresses how airports can protect themselves from cybercriminals.

**10<sup>th</sup> December** - [Shaping Glasgow Airport's passenger experience](#) with £3.7 million upgrade.

**11<sup>th</sup> December** - [International Air Transport Association \(IATA\)](#) has released latest edition of the [World Air Transport Statistics \(WATS\)](#) with comprehensive statistical data for 2024.

**11<sup>th</sup> December** - [Ryanair announces record schedule at Glasgow Airport for Summer 2026](#) including two new routes (Stansted and Warsaw), 600k seats and 50% growth.

**12<sup>th</sup> December** - [Glasgow Prestwick Airport named Air Freight Business of the Year](#) at Logistics UK Awards.

**12<sup>th</sup> December** – This article is titled: '[Why flight planning and trip support are essential to business aviation](#)'.

**12<sup>th</sup> December** - New study investigates tyre particle emissions from aircraft – details [here](#).

**13<sup>th</sup> December** - [Paris Charles De Gaulle airport's terminals will be renamed](#) in March 2027.

**14<sup>th</sup> December** – [Here's a list of Europe's oldest airports still in operation](#) but did you know Brighton City Airport is generally considered the oldest airport in Europe with the first recorded flight taking place in 1910?

**15<sup>th</sup> December** – [Change is coming](#): Airline digitalisation will transform the airport departure hall and how other processing facilities are used in the future according to this article.

**16<sup>th</sup> December** - [Jersey Airport exits special regulatory oversight](#) following operational leadership changes and improved performance.

**16<sup>th</sup> December** – [Daa, operator of Dublin and Cork Airports has appointed new deputy chief executive](#) amid ongoing tensions between the company's board and current chief executive.

**16<sup>th</sup> December** - [Sixth consecutive year of profit for Glasgow Prestwick Airport](#). It's already achieved its annual operating target in the first six months to September 2025.

**17<sup>th</sup> December** – [‘How Motional Digital Twins improve flow, efficiency and non-aero performance in airports’](#). (One for the technically minded!)

**17<sup>th</sup> December** - [EUROCONTROL releases Trajectory 2030 strategy](#). The document outlines where the Agency wants to be by 2030, and how it intends to meet its goals.

**17<sup>th</sup> December** - [KLM have revealed it will begin flying to Jersey in 2026](#). It's a resumption, as it last flew there nearly 30 years ago.

**18<sup>th</sup> December** - [IATA urging regulators to ensure fairer airport slot access for air cargo](#). It says despite its growing role in global commerce, freight flights are increasingly pushed to back of the queue.

**18<sup>th</sup> December** – Read article: [‘From compliance to competitive advantage: how airports can leverage advanced hold baggage screening to drive operational efficiency’](#).

**18<sup>th</sup> December** - [European airports are calling for the planned expansion of the EU’s new Entry-Exit System to be halted](#) after its initial rollout sparked widespread delays, technical failures and waiting times of up to three hours.

**18<sup>th</sup> December** - [Ryanair has accused Dublin Airport manager DAA of hiking passenger charges by 10% from next year](#) to pay for spending on unnecessary “gold-plated” projects.

**19<sup>th</sup> December** - [Dublin Airport operator, daa, said today was the busiest day for the airport ahead of Christmas](#) with 114,000 people expected to travel through arrivals and departures.

**19<sup>th</sup> December** - Joby Aviation and Metropolis Technologies will develop 25 vertiports across the United States – details [here](#).

**19<sup>th</sup> December** - [A £26 billion European mega airport is set to open in Poland](#) and could rival large hubs such as Heathrow.

**20<sup>th</sup> December** - Questions raised after easyJet passenger confirmed dead following boarding in Malaga – details [here](#).

**21<sup>st</sup> December** - [Aer Lingus A321XLR faces a multimillion-dollar repair bill](#) following a very hard landing at Dublin Airport last week.

**22<sup>nd</sup> December** - [British/American hydrogen-electric aircraft developer ZeroAvia has completed further round of financing](#). It will continue to fully industrialise its hydrogen power and propulsion technology for the aviation and defence markets.

**23<sup>rd</sup> December** - ACI Europe condemns French regulator ART's decision rejecting Paris airports 2026 user charges proposal. Details are [here](#).

**23<sup>rd</sup> December** - [Review of Schengen Entry-Exit System urgently needed](#) to avoid systemic disruptions impacting passengers says ACI Europe.

**24<sup>th</sup> December** - Four future ready airports – including Dublin and Cork - embracing technology, sustainability and passenger experience. Details about this are [here](#).

**24<sup>th</sup> December** - [DAA chief executive Kenny Jacobs suspended on full pay](#), setting in motion a new investigation into his conduct after months of turmoil in the State airports group.

**25<sup>th</sup> December** - Poland's newly renamed Port Polska mega-airport aims to open in 2032 as a 40-million-passenger global hub linking Europe, Asia, and beyond. Details are [here](#).

**26<sup>th</sup> December** – [Top 10 busiest airports in the world in 2025](#): Dubai takes top spot – Heathrow lands in 5<sup>th</sup> place.

**27<sup>th</sup> December** – This article is about Ryanair and how it is: ‘[The World’s Largest Boeing 737-800 Operator](#)’.

**27<sup>th</sup> December** - 2026 could see new legislation and a possible EU court ruling once and for all deal with the [32 million-a-year limit at Dublin Airport](#) that dates back to 2007.

**28<sup>th</sup> December** - Vienna Airport hits historic high with 32 million passengers ahead of year-end – details [here](#).

**29<sup>th</sup> December** – [This is a snapshot](#) of the latest news stories and features from some of the companies that support the growth and development of the world’s airports.

**29<sup>th</sup> December** - [Edinburgh Airport ready for busy New Year](#). Over 60,000 people will fly into Edinburgh over the next few days and 64,000 people will head away to celebrate New Year.

**30<sup>th</sup> December** – [This article](#) gives 7 predictions about how Europe’s aviation map is being rewritten in 2026.

**31<sup>st</sup> December** - [The Boeing 767’s Unique Design That Helped Make ETOPS \(“extended-range twin-engine operational performance standards” Possible](#): It’s the standard that twin-jet airliners have to achieve to fly on routes over long stretches with few or no airports available for emergency landings, such as when flying over oceans.

**31<sup>st</sup> December** - [daa releases statistics at end of record year for passenger numbers at Dublin Airport](#) with total expected to exceed 35 million in 2025.

## **SASIG Library Additions**

There were no Library additions this month.