

**Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group (SASIG)  
Annual Report to LGA Leadership Board**

<b>SIG Name:</b>	Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group (SASIG)
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**advancing sustainable aviation policy on behalf of local communities.**

**Membership: 01/04/2020 – 31/03/2021**

Broadland District Council	Rushmoor Borough Council
Cornwall Council	Slough Borough Council
Crawley Borough Council	Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council	Spelthorne Borough Council
East Hertfordshire District Council	Uttlesford District Council
Essex County Council	West Midlands Airport Shareholders Committee
Hampshire County Council	comprising of:
Hertfordshire County Council	- Birmingham City Council
Isles of Scilly Council	- Coventry City Council
London Borough of Hillingdon	- Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
London Borough of Hounslow	- Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
London Borough of Richmond upon Thames	- Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Luton Borough Council	- Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Plymouth City Council	- Wolverhampton City Council
Reigate & Banstead Borough Council	Wokingham Borough Council
Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead	

SASIG represents 12 million people which equates to 20% of the LGA area. Airports covered by Member Authorities handled 75% of air passengers in England in 2019 and 65% in the UK overall.

**SASIG's objectives are:**

- to promote the need for long-term, sustainable aviation policies that lead to a reduction in the environmental impact of aviation whilst securing appropriate social and economic benefits;
- to increase understanding of the local and global impacts of aviation on the environment and communities;
- to identify and promote the changes needed to move towards sustainable aviation practices within the industry and Government; and
- to work with other organisations and the Government on the formulation of policy advice.

### **SASIG Policy Principles**

- i. To give the people of the UK the social and business opportunities to travel from their nearest airport where feasible.
- ii. To capture, not stifle, the social and economic benefits of aviation using robust and objective evidence.
- iii. To direct aviation growth to locations where it will assist sustainable economic regeneration.
- iv. To minimise adverse impacts – social, economic and environmental – by protecting people and non-transferable habitats.
- v. To ensure that the air transport sector rather than local communities pays the full costs of the impact of all air journeys.
- vi. To offer the aviation industry tough but realistic parameters based upon associated impacts around which to secure growth.
- vii. To ensure that good quality surface access links are provided to airports, particularly public transport links that create integrated transport hubs.
- viii. To promote better point to point air services from regional airports, with sensitive control over all impacts.
- ix. To work with Government and other bodies to ensure that noise impacts as a result of airport growth, airspace changes and flight path changes on local communities are minimised and mitigated.
- x. To support the coordination and integration of the full spectrum of national policies on issues relating to aviation. This must accord with international and regional policy-making and implementation.
- xi. To promote investigation of the impacts of the air freight industry, supporting the development of air freight infrastructure where it is the most appropriate mode.
- xii. To encourage Governments and the aviation industry to make greater efforts to reduce aviation's impacts on climate change.
- xiii. To instigate and design, in collaboration with external partners, innovative policies and methodologies for identifying, measuring and addressing effectively the noise, health, social infrastructure and wider strategic planning impacts of airport development.

### **SASIG strongly supports the Government's work towards a new national aviation policy that:**

- Is based on the need to control the impacts rather than the aviation activity.
- Has considered in detail all options for providing capacity to meet forecast demand, and for providing for other, lower levels of demand.
- Embraces the concept of integrated transport provision.
- Audits the parameters that should be used in any forecasts of future demand.
- Adopts an assessment process for aviation developments that explicitly includes all associated costs.
- Sets effective environmental limits for the aviation industry to meet, taking the appropriate form – regulation, charges, taxes, etc.
- Considers and mitigates against the impact of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Develops the economic analysis of aviation, and in particular improves valuation of the net impact – benefits and disbenefits.
- Coordinates with other transport policies and with other associated national policies, such as climate change, and energy policies.

### **Key Activities / Outcomes of work undertaken**

**National Representation:** The ways in which SASIG is represented publicly emphasises the national nature of the membership and thus the sphere of interest. This has included:

#### **Department for Transport, CAA, ICCAN and Aviation Minister**

- SASIG continues to be recognised as a 'strategic stakeholder' by DfT and its views are actively sought during consultations of which there have been many over the past year.
- Evidence of this is shown by the SASIG Chairman representing local authorities on the board of the DfT's Airspace Strategy Board chaired by the Aviation Minister. Due to the pandemic the only meeting in this period was held in March of this year which our Chairman attended. The date of the next meeting is still to be confirmed.
- SASIG is a regular attendee at the DfT's Airspace & Noise Engagement Group (ANEG). The previous meetings in this period were held in July and December 2020 and the next one is scheduled for April 2021. SASIG will, once again, attend.
- The Policy Director sits on the Future of Flight Government Liaison Group.
- SASIG has also been holding regular liaison meetings (approx. bi-monthly) with the DfT since May 2020 to discuss the development of the Department's Aviation Recovery Plan and how SASIG can feed into its development.
- The CAA continues to seek SASIG's views on its programme of work including how decisions on airspace change should be made and also looking at the development of aviation forecasts.
- SASIG is also working alongside the CAA as a member of the Combined Aerodrome Safeguarding Team (CAST) formed in January 2021 to co-ordinate future work and good practice. Their focus groups include ones for Regulation & Legislation, Technical and also Safeguarding Training.
- SASIG has regular liaison with the Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise (ICCAN) set up in 2018. ICCAN has presented at and also attended SASIG members' meetings.
- SASIG regularly meets with the Aviation Minister to highlight its work and promote future mutual co-operation with Government officials. SASIG met the current Minister Robert Courts in January 2021.

#### **Engagement with Other Stakeholders**

SASIG's Secretariat continues to liaise with other prominent stakeholder groups including the AOA, RABA, LEP Network, COSLA, BEIS, Key Cities, Sustainable Aviation, Aviation Environment Federation, National Planning Inspectorate, HSPG and the Gatwick Airport Conservation Campaign.

In December 2020, SASIG Chairman and SASIG Policy Director met with Cllr David Renard in his capacity as Chair of the LGA's Economy, Environment, Housing and Transport Board.

From June 2020, SASIG has been having regular engagement with the UKRI Innovate UK, Future Flight Programme including attending their initial steering group meetings. Their representative has, in turn, attended and presented at SASIG meetings over this period.

From October 2020, SASIG has also been liaising with Connected Places Catapult regarding future collaborative work. Since December 2020, SASIG has been working alongside Regional & Business Airports Group (RABA) and the Independent Transport Commission (ITC) on a study looking at future policy challenges likely to be associated with emergent aviation technologies over the next 30 years.

#### **Conferences and Public Fora**

Since March of 2020, the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns have significantly affected the number of conferences and seminars usually available to the industry and SASIG has therefore concentrated more on internal meetings and workshops. SASIG looks forward to the industry opening up to more opportunities over the next 12 months.

#### **SASIG Newsletter**

This is a core service emailed monthly by the SASIG Secretariat to members. It contains: editorial; an events diary; 'Monthly Highlights' section; Parliamentary Q & A's on aviation matters; news articles from the month covering Parliamentary News, Government News, Regional News, National and Other Industry News and European News and updates to the SASIG website (publications/ industry documents, etc). It provides a valuable resource, allowing Local Authorities to remain well-informed and take an active role in the aviation debate.