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2 February 2024

Dear Supporter.

May I firstly wish all our supporters a happy New Year and thank you all for your continued support throughout 2023. Enclosed with this newsletter is a campaign update which highlights the surprisingly strong, post-pandemic, recovery in passenger numbers at Stansted Airport last year. That may not come as good news to everyone! – but let me now deal with other news.

Following the approval, at the Special General Meeting last November, of the proposal to convert Stansted Airport Watch into a Foundation, we have been working with Birketts LLP – the largest independent law firm in the East of England – to take matters forward. Birketts have considerable expertise in this field and, in the light of their advice, we have slightly switched tack, and now intend to convert SAW into a Community Interest Company ('CIC') rather than a Discretionary Trust.

A CIC is a relatively new concept. It is a social enterprise which exists to benefit the community rather than private shareholders. The activities of CICs are overseen by the CIC Regulator to whom CICs must submit an annual report and accounts, which are published, to ensure transparency.

On the reverse side of this page you will find the Notice of our AGM, to be held on 7 March, and you will see that the agenda includes a resolution seeking authorisation to establish the CIC. You will see that the resolution makes clear that the CIC will have the same or very similar objectives to the current objectives of Stansted Airport Watch.

You will also see that the agenda includes the (re-)election of our officers and committee for the period to 30 September 2024. This reflects our current expectation that it will take several months to complete the transition from Stansted Airport Watch to Stansted Airport Watch CIC.

In the meantime it will be largely business as usual. To the best of our ability we will continue to represent the interests of the local community on airport matters. In this regard we have recently met with Department for Transport officials regarding excessive use of night flight dispensations at Stansted – see <https://stanstedairportwatch.com/press-releases/night-flights-smoke-and-mirrors/> and on the wider issue of night flights; we continue to represent local community interests through our membership of the Stansted Airport Consultative Committee; and we have also recently made representations to Uttlesford District Council, in the context of the new Local Plan, seeking safeguards with regard to future airport development.

I hope you will find the attached Campaign Update of interest and I hope also that you might be able to find time to attend our AGM on 7 March.

With many thanks for your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely

Brian Ross  
Chairman



## **NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Stansted Airport Watch will take place at the Old School House Community Centre, Brewers End, Takeley CM22 6SB, on Thursday 7 March 2024 starting at 8pm. If you are planning to attend the AGM, please let us know by 1 March via email to [info@stanstedairportwatch.com](mailto:info@stanstedairportwatch.com) or by telephone (01279 870558) to ensure that we can provide sufficient seating. Please note that parking is limited.

### **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 14 June 2023.
3. Minutes of Special General Meeting of 29 November 2023.
4. Matters arising from the minutes of both meetings not on the Agenda.
5. Chairman's Report.
6. Treasurer's Report.
7. Approval of Accounts for year ended 30 September 2023.
8. Election of Chairman for the period to 30 September 2024.
9. Election of Deputy Chairman for the period to 30 September 2024.
10. Election of Treasurer for the period to 30 September 2024.
11. Election of Secretary for the period to 30 September 2024.
12. Election of Executive Committee for the period to 30 September 2024.
13. Special Resolution.

*"The members here present hereby authorise the Stansted Airport Watch ('SAW') Executive Committee to proceed with the dissolution of SAW as provided for in Clause 27 of the SAW constitution; to realise any assets held by or on behalf of SAW and, after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities, to transfer the remaining net assets to a Community Interest Company ('CIC') to be named either the Stansted Airport Watch Foundation CIC or Stansted Airport Watch CIC, which in either case will have the same or similar objectives to the objectives of SAW."*

14. Any other business.
15. Conclusion of the meeting.

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### **STANSTED AIRPORT WATCH**

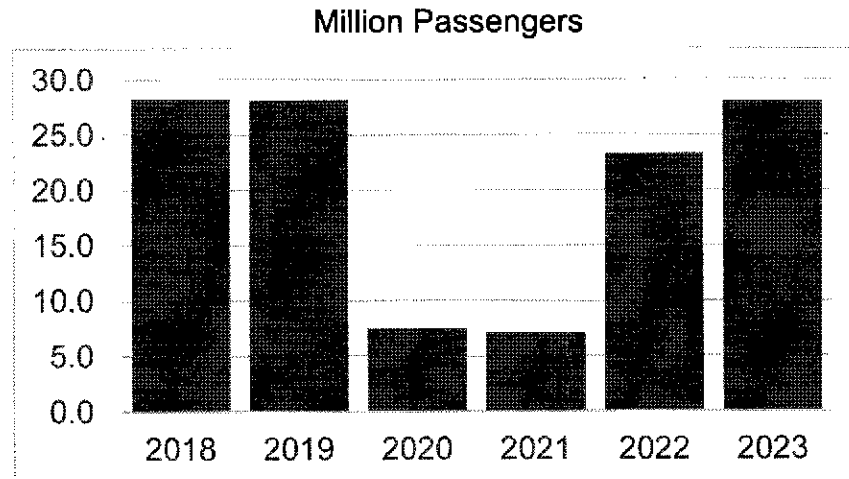
Chairman: Brian Ross • Deputy Chairman: Irene Jones  
Treasurer: Denise Williams • Secretary: Sarah Cousins  
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## CAMPAIGN UPDATE

### STANSTED RETURNS TO BUSINESS AS USUAL

Figures released in January show that Stansted Airport handled just under 28 million passengers last year, only slightly below the number of passengers handled in 2018 and 2019, i.e. before the Covid-19 pandemic caused such major disruption to air travel.



The severity of the impact of the pandemic upon air travel can be seen in the table above. Stansted passenger numbers slumped to 7.5 million in 2020 and just 7.1 million in 2021. The speed of the recovery – just two years to return to pre-pandemic levels of flying – has confounded most forecasters, especially since this coincides with a cost of living crisis.

And it's not just Stansted which has seen a fast recovery from the effects of the pandemic. Heathrow also is almost back to pre-pandemic passenger numbers and has just recorded its busiest ever December.

It's much the same picture worldwide. According to the International Air Transport Association (IATA), in November 2023, global demand for air travel reached 99% of 2019 (i.e. pre-pandemic) levels. It seems that neither economic challenges, nor concerns about global warming, are stopping people from flying.

Stansted Airport has however been taken by surprise by the speed of the recovery and now faces the prospect of severe overcrowding in the terminal over the next three years.

This is because the airport cancelled a planned increase in terminal capacity when the pandemic struck. Preliminary groundwork started for a new dedicated arrivals building in March 2019 but this was abandoned within a matter of weeks.

The airport has now decided to extend the existing terminal by adding three more bays to the rear of the terminal, rather than build a separate arrivals building. This is a major project and is expected to take until early 2027 to complete. It will also mean the removal of the airport transit trains system. This will be replaced by moving walkways.

If passenger numbers continue to increase, the existing Stansted terminal will struggle to cope, especially during the busy summer periods over the next three years.

From the standpoint of local residents adversely affected by aircraft noise, the key issue is not the number of passengers handled by the airport but the number of flights, which includes cargo flights as well as passenger flights. In this regard there is some good news.

Stansted handled 9,816 Cargo flights last year, considerably less than the pre-pandemic (2019) figure of 10,406. In fact, the number of cargo flights has been in slow decline for the past 20 years.

The vast majority of Stansted flights are, of course, passenger flights, and the vast majority of these (about 80%) are Ryanair flights. Stansted handled 168,715 passenger flights last year, more than 4,000 fewer than 2019, when passenger numbers were almost the same.

This obviously means more passengers per plane. On average, each flight carried 166 passengers at Stansted last year, the highest figure on record. The average number of passengers per flight has grown steadily, year on year, ever since the Wright brothers first took to the air in 1903! It will continue to increase steadily over the coming years.



Ryanair recently placed an order for 300 Boeing 737-MAX-10s at a staggering cost of US\$40 billion for delivery between 2027 and 2032. These aircraft are only slightly longer than the Boeing 737-800s currently operated by Ryanair but they have 21% more seats (228 seats compared to 189). The new aircraft are also claimed to be less noisy and to have lower carbon emissions than the 737-800s. We will need to wait until at least 2027 to find out for ourselves whether these claims are borne out.

Like it or not, Stansted has planning permission to handle up to 43 million passengers a year. If and when Stansted ever reaches that throughput, it would clearly be better, in terms of noise, air quality and carbon impacts, if this could be achieved with the fewest possible number of mid-size planes.

Quite how our local roads will manage to cope if and when Stansted Airport ever reaches a throughput of 43 million passengers a year is another matter!