



# Tonbridge and Malling Green Party

## Tonbridge & Malling Green Party

### Briefing 1: Aviation and airports

July 2015

#### Possible lines to use

Long-distance air travel is one of the most energy-intensive and polluting forms of transport.

Aviation is the fastest growing source of greenhouse gas emissions.

International business flights are in decline but leisure flying is rising.

Passenger survey data shows that 15% of the UK population are taking 70% of all our flights, while half of us don't fly at all in any given year.

If aviation paid its environmental costs then there would be no pressing need for a new runway.

Air and noise pollution affects local communities, including those some way from airports eg Penshurst

The Green Party does not seek to ban flying – we just believe it should pay for the pollution it causes on the same “polluter pays” principle that is applied elsewhere rather than receiving special treatment and subsidies.

#### Green Party policy [see also full air transport policy section at end]

“Long-distance travel by air is one of the most energy-intensive and polluting forms of transport and causes health-damaging local pollution near airports. Aviation fuel goes untaxed and there is no VAT on tickets, amounting to a £16bn a year subsidy in the UK. We need a shift in priority, removing subsidies from air travel to invest in public transport that supports the common good.

The major challenge for our transport system is to decarbonise it and end its reliance on fossil fuels.

We would: Stop airport expansion, in particular no new runways at either Heathrow or Gatwick and ban night flying.”

*From 2015 manifesto*

TR064 The Green Party supports the introduction of fuel tax on aviation fuel and emission charges and increased landing charges on aircraft.

TR532 The additional environmental damage associated with travel to and from airports on the ground can be reduced by encouraging appropriate modes of transport. The Green Party supports the provision of public transport links by rail and road to existing airports, and opposes additional provision for the use of private cars.

TR533 The load and damage at airports is increased by excessive numbers of 'transit' passengers, who generate revenue for airport operators through landing fees and the use of retail facilities before flying on to another destination. Transit passengers should be reduced to a minimum,



## Tonbridge and Malling Green Party

especially at airports which put a particularly large load on the environment and local communities, such as Heathrow.

TR540 The Green Party supports emission charges and increased landing charges on aircraft, including Air Traffic congestion charges, to reflect the full cost of the damage their use does to the environment. We consider that local authorities should be empowered to levy such on aircraft landing at airports in their area because of the localised damage and that done by related ground travel.

TR541 The Green Party supports the removal of the various direct and indirect subsidies for air travel, and the adoption instead of fuel taxation and/or charges or levies.

*Policy section on website*

"This proposal from Howard Davies is deeply disappointing. His proposal would see a local community further blighted by noise and air pollution and would undermine our efforts to tackle climate change.

"The real choice our Government needs to make in response to the Davies Commission is whether it wants to invest now for a sustainable UK or continue to expand aviation. The only reason why the Airports Commission has discounted climate change as central to this decision is because it has followed the Government's current approach, which is to ignore all the climate impacts of international aviation before the planes land.

As well as recognising the true scale of local environmental impacts of expansion at either Heathrow or Gatwick Airports, our Government must now finally show its leadership on climate change by choosing a different course for the UK's economy – one where environmental and economic sustainability walk together, rather than talking about the former while investing in the latter."

*South East Green Party statement*

"Ahead of the Airports Commission announcing its final recommendations for the future of airport expansion in the UK, we want to put on record that we question the need for any new runways to be built at either Heathrow or Gatwick.

This is a consideration which has been missing from the last two years of debate on airport expansion but it does remain a sensible position if we are still serious about meeting our climate change targets and to avoid massive increases in noise and air pollution levels.

The economic arguments for expansion also don't add up. The extensive lobbying and advertising campaigns carried out by the aviation industry has simply served to muddy the waters alongside talk of a capacity crisis.

In fact, the UK already flies more than any other nation per head and if aviation paid its environmental costs then there would be no pressing need for a new runway.

It is widely expected that Sir Howard Davies will back a new runway at either Heathrow or Gatwick. We're not convinced that building a major new runway at either airport is a good idea".

*Letter to Evening Standard from Green Party and others 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015*



# **Tonbridge and Malling Green Party**



## Tonbridge and Malling Green Party

### **Frequent Flyer Tax proposal** [not sure what GP's position is on this]

Plans for a “frequent flyer” tax to curb demand for leisure flights and make a new runway in south-east England unnecessary have been unveiled by an influential group of transport campaigners, environmentalists and tax experts.

Ministers, and candidates seeking to be the next mayor of London, including Tory hopeful and green campaigner Zac Goldsmith, are being urged to back the proposals, which supporters argue in a letter to the Observer would relieve ministers at a stroke from having to make the invidious choice between expanding Heathrow or Gatwick airports.

Sir Howard Davies, former leader of the CBI and head of the Airports Commission, will report within a fortnight on how he thinks capacity can best be expanded in the south-east. He is expected to make a recommendation to develop either Heathrow or Gatwick, but may insist on tough environmental conditions being met by the “winner”. These could allow ministers room to judge which option they believe would achieve the best balance between the economic benefits and environmental impact.

The decision is one of the most controversial and politically difficult facing the new Tory government. Expansion of Heathrow is being resisted by several Tory cabinet ministers – including international development secretary Justine Greening and foreign secretary Philip Hammond – whose constituencies would be affected, as well as by London mayor Boris Johnson. A group of Tory MPs is also campaigning against an expansion of Gatwick.

With debate intensifying, green campaigners, transport groups, economists and tax experts have joined to propose the radical plan, which they say would reduce costs for once-a-year holiday travellers, while hitting those who choose to fly regularly. They say it would also ensure the UK could comply with its obligations under the Climate Change Act.

**Under the plan, backed by the Campaign for Better Transport, the New Economics Foundation, the Tax Justice Network, Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth among others, air passenger duty would be scrapped and replaced by a new frequent flyers levy. Everyone would be able to take one flight a year without paying any levy, but for subsequent journeys the levy would rise each time.**

Using accepted methods to calculate the effect of price on demand, experts say the number of flights taken by the better-off for leisure purposes – which account for much of recent growth – would be cut to a level that would make extra airport capacity unnecessary.

In their letter they say: “Britain’s skies are already some of the busiest in the world, and Howard Davies knows that these expansion plans cannot be made to fit with the UK’s long-term commitments under the Climate Change Act. Contrary to aviation lobby rhetoric, a new runway is not needed to allow more international business flights, which have been declining steadily since the turn of the century.

“The hub airport argument is a smokescreen. In reality, growing demand for air travel is concentrated in the short-haul leisure sector and among a small, wealthy minority of the population. It is more of these flights that a new runway will in practice service.



## Tonbridge and Malling Green Party

“This growth in flights is driven by air fares that are kept artificially low through generous tax subsidies; aviation is exempt from fuel duty by international treaty and zero rated for VAT, alongside wheelchairs and baby clothes. Yet these tax breaks almost exclusively benefit the richest section of British society. Our analysis of passenger survey data shows that 15% of the UK population are taking 70% of all our flights, while half of us don’t fly at all in any given year.”

**They argue the new levy would shift the burden “away from families flying to their annual holiday and on to the frequent fliers who are driving expansion. Our research shows that this would let the UK meet our climate targets without making flying the preserve of the rich – and without needing to build any new runways.”**

Stephen Joseph, director of the Campaign for Better Transport, said: “Replacing air passenger duty with a frequent flyers levy could, on the evidence so far, make it unnecessary to build any new runways. As the politics of airport expansion get more difficult, we think the government should look seriously at the levy proposal, to ensure that the richest who take the most flights pay the most tax.”

John Stewart, chair of Heathrow Association for the Control of Aircraft Noise, which campaigns against expansion of Heathrow, added: “The beauty of this proposal is that it ticks both the equity and green boxes. It is a way of controlling the growth of aviation but still allowing ordinary families a holiday in the sun.”

With business leaders impatient for a decision, the government has said it will not comment on airport expansion until Davies has reported. Sources have indicated that a decision on which option to back is unlikely until the end of the year. Some government insiders believe it will then be difficult to back expansion of Heathrow in the runup to the mayoral elections next May.

*Guardian 20<sup>th</sup> June 2015*



# Tonbridge and Malling Green Party

---

## Air transport

### **Background**

TR500 Heavier-than-air craft are one of the most energy intensive and polluting forms of transport. The worst are supersonic aircraft. Aircraft burn more fossil fuel per passenger or ton-mile than other modes of transport. This profligacy is heavily subsidised by the international agreement to impose zero taxes on aviation fuel.

TR501 Aircraft emit carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides and water vapour into the upper atmosphere, which is much more sensitive to pollution than the air at ground level. The greenhouse warming effect of one unit of aviation fuel is generally held to be several times that of fuel burnt by terrestrial modes of transport. Also aviation is the fastest growing source of greenhouse gas emissions. A large part of this extra warming is caused by the creation of water vapour (as well as carbon dioxide) from the combustion of aviation fuel, which is a mixture of compounds of carbon and hydrogen. Though the water is harmless at or near ground level it has a big effect in the upper atmosphere. This means that there is almost no possibility of reducing aircraft-induced global warming by replacing conventional fuels by hydrogen.

TR502 Global warming produced by air transport is not covered by the international negotiations led by the IPCC to address climate change. The actions taken by the International Civil Aviation Organisation in response to the Kyoto Agreement on Climate Change on allocating emissions of greenhouse gases to countries and developing means of reducing aircraft emissions have been wholly inadequate.

TR503 Aircraft cause local pollution: noise which damages the health of those living near airports, volatile organic compounds which are carcinogenic, and water pollution from de-icing fluids. Airports also produce pollution from engine testing, paint spraying and the attendant pollution that goes with the large infrastructure and transport to and from the airport.

### **Aims and Objectives**

TR510 The Green Party seeks a reduction in the amount and impact of air transport.

TR511 It is essential that the demand for air transport is managed in a way compatible with wider social and environmental objectives. The Green Party advocates a drastic reduction in the number of journeys made by air for whatever purpose. We must first discourage the growth of air transport.

TR512 The Green Party seeks substitution of air travel wherever possible with less damaging modes of transport, such as ferries, trains and buses. This does not apply to the emergency air services such as mountain rescue or specialist medical services, nor necessarily to air links to remote islands.

### **Aircraft policies**

TR520 The Green Party would implement tougher regulation of aircraft emissions in all categories of chemical pollutants, including greenhouse gases, and of noise, and would introduce tougher emission and noise standards for new aircraft types. The worst kinds of aircraft, such as Concorde and any further supersonic transport aircraft, would be banned, as would night flights over populated areas.

TR521 A rolling programme is needed to phase out older and more damaging aircraft. Meanwhile, the use of such aircraft should be restricted.

TR522 As heavier aircraft have to use more power, burning more fuel and producing more emissions and noise, permitted loads would be reduced.

TR523 The Green Party would regulate more strictly the use of helicopters. These operate in more locations and at much lower heights than almost all other aircraft. Helicopters and heliports are extremely noisy to those nearby.

### **Infrastructure Policies**

TR530 Air transport provision is currently based on the 'predict and provide' scenario, much the same as building more roads has led to increases in road traffic and more congestion. The Green



## Tonbridge and Malling Green Party

Party believes that building more facilities for air transport must cease. This includes additional terminals and runways at airports, the conversion of disused MoD and smaller airfields into regional or satellite civil airports and the development of more local airports.

TR531 Alternative economic strategies would be developed for each airport including both the possibility of complete conversion to ecological and socially appropriate uses and the maintenance of the airport for restricted purposes consistent with the long-term objective of ecological sustainability, such as use for lighter-than-air craft.

TR532 The additional environmental damage associated with travel to and from airports on the ground can be reduced by encouraging appropriate modes of transport. The Green Party supports the provision of public transport links by rail and road to existing airports, and opposes additional provision for the use of private cars.

TR533 The load and damage at airports is increased by excessive numbers of 'transit' passengers, who generate revenue for airport operators through landing fees and the use of retail facilities before flying on to another destination. Transit passengers should be reduced to a minimum, especially at airports which put a particularly large load on the environment and local communities, such as Heathrow.

TR534 The Green Party is concerned about the development of airports as shopping centres. Such retail rents, etc. account for a very large part of current income for airport operators. The privatised British Airports Authority plc can be seen as primarily a property company. We oppose such development, especially where it is at the expense of existing shopping centres.

TR535 All major airports should be taken into public ownership.

### ***Financial measures***

TR540 The Green Party supports emission charges and increased landing charges on aircraft, including Air Traffic congestion charges, to reflect the full cost of the damage their use does to the environment. We consider that local authorities should be empowered to levy such on aircraft landing at airports in their area because of the localised damage and that done by related ground travel.

TR541 The Green Party supports the removal of the various direct and indirect subsidies for air travel, and the adoption instead of fuel taxation and/or charges or levies. We recognise that achieving enough international agreement to make this practicable is difficult, and would seek in the first instance to impose such taxes in the UK. Taxation, charges and/or levies will be easier to introduce and more effective if it is done at a European or even global level, so the Green Party would work with institutions at those levels, as well as the air transport industry bodies such as ICAO and IATA, to introduce them more widely.

TR542 The Green Party notes that air freight in particular exhibits both dramatic growth and by far the highest pollution per weight of goods transported compared with other modes. We would therefore introduce specific UK levies on air freight as well as working towards European and global agreements.

TR543 The Green Party opposes the lifting of public sector borrowing restrictions on local authority controlled airports as this would encourage inappropriate development. Where investment is necessary, notably in air traffic control services and developing public transport links to airports, the expenditure should be recouped through charges on those providing and using air transport, not from general taxation.

TR544 Air transport is an inefficient and capital intensive method of employment creation. Equivalent funds invested in other sectors will provide more jobs per pound spent and offer much more benefit to people and the environment.

### ***Demand management and promotion***

TR550 There is insufficient public awareness of the resources wasted and damage done by excessive use of air transport. The Green Party considers that governments should run public awareness campaigns about the impact of air travel on the global climate, the local environment and human health.

TR551 The Green Party will campaign for the UK Government, the European Union and the relevant international bodies, to create a global demand management strategy for air travel, taking into account the excessive use of air transport by 'developed' nations. The taxation of aviation should be set at a level that reflects not just the climate impact relative to other carbon taxes, but at a level high enough to reduce demand for flights.



## Tonbridge and Malling Green Party

TR552 Flying is a significant and growing contributor to climate change in the UK and world- wide. In view of the considerable dangers to the health of current and future generations from the promotion of a high-carbon lifestyle, the Green Party will seek to introduce legislative controls on the advertising of air travel.

TR553 Specifically, the Green Party will campaign for UK and/or EU legislation for mandatory warnings to be included on all advertisements for air travel. These warnings would include information about the effects of climate change and details of the carbon dioxide emissions of the flights advertised. The same information would also be included on flight tickets and would take up a significant and specified proportion of the area of each advert/ticket.

TR554 Carbon dioxide emissions would be reported as the average per-passenger emissions. This will be based on published average per-passenger carbon dioxide emissions of the airline on the particular route being travelled, reflecting average occupancy and aircraft payload. Reporting the data in this way would encourage airlines to use aircraft with lower emissions and not to run individual flights with low occupancy rates, in order to reduce their published carbon dioxide emissions for each route. Airlines will be obliged to provide all this information for public scrutiny. It would raise also awareness among consumers of their personal contribution to climate change due to their lifestyle choices.

### **Regulatory measures**

TR560 Prevention of accidents and increasing their survivability must be the priority in the construction, maintenance and operation of aircraft and airports. There is concern that commercial pressure and a lack of sufficient independent regulatory resources in the public sector have reduced safety. For example, 'Kapton' wiring should be banned from civil as well as military aircraft.

TR561 Unsafe operation should lead to sanctions against operators including suspension or removal of licence to operate. Examples include operating aircraft with insufficient fuel for stacking or diversion, and aircraft dropping objects such as 'brown ice', caused by poor maintenance.

TR562 All UK registered commercial aircraft with a take off weight above 5,700kg, using re-circulated air within the aircraft air conditioning system will be required to have high standard HEPA filters to filter the re-circulated air, which must be replaced annually.

TR564 All aircraft flying into UK airports from a region that has serious transmissible disease risk as outlined by the WHO, should have an approved portable air sampling system to monitor the air in-flight. Such a portable air sampling system should on arrival in the UK be able to be quickly taken for microbiological examination to determine whether there are any bacteria or viruses of concern present in the captured air samples. If they are found, the passengers and crew will be traced, advised and treated appropriately.

TR565 All UK registered commercial aircraft with a maximum take off weight in excess of 5,700kg, which use 'bleed air' from the engines or auxiliary power to supply the cockpit and passenger cabin air, must have an adequate 'bleed air' filtration system to remove possible contamination from hydraulic fluids and synthetic jet engine oils that are known to sometimes contaminate the bleed air supply.

TR566 To reduce the probability of disease and infections during air journeys, hygiene standards in airliners are to be raised, especially in airline toilets used not only by passengers but by crews before serving meals to the travelling public.

TR567 The Green Party is committed to the principle and extended practice of independent regulation and inspection by the public sector to ensure the highest standards of aircraft safety in aircraft construction, maintenance and operation. We strongly oppose any effort to privatise any of the regulatory bodies, and if any are privatised, would return them forthwith to public ownership.

TR568 Air traffic control services are a public responsibility and must be managed and provided by the public sector. We oppose any privatisation of air traffic control.

TR569 The Green Party is committed to proper precautions against air piracy and adequate public sector inspection of those on aircraft and at airports. Consideration should be given to refusing licences to operate from the UK to airlines that operate from airports overseas considered to have inadequate security.

TR570 The Green Party supports the banning of those found guilty of in-flight violence or aggression and any other acts that may endanger the flight from future flights, and would ensure that aircrew who took action against them were given the necessary protection. 'Air rage' is a hazard often associated with excess consumption of alcohol before and during the flight, the effects being exacerbated by the in-flight environment. The dispensing, sale and consumption of alcohol at airports and on aircraft should be subject to greater restriction.



# **Tonbridge and Malling Green Party**