

Peter Boswell

Up to every 2 minutes of every day, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. That's how often aircraft noise from Luton Airport (LLA) affects me in my home in Harpenden.

To date I have made more than 15,000 complaints to Luton airport and today I will share with you the shocking, harrowing, and deceitful ways that Luton airport have attempted to silence me in order to aggressively expand their operations at the expense of those who they harm.

I moved to Harpenden in 2008 and the flight path of Luton Airport did not cross my home. Life was good and life was peaceful.

In 2017/2018 the LLA flight path was moved which meant aircraft did cross my home, I was not consulted or informed that this was going to happen. It came without warning and instantly made life a misery.

I am a 40 year old business professional who has no interest or desire to be writing this statement or to be complaining to LLA about noise, however when an operation such as LLA act with such disdain, disrespect and malice I have no other place to turn in order to ensure LLA are brought to account for their actions.

Today my story will shock you.

Aircraft departing from an Easterly and Westerly direction from LLA are directed over my home in Harpenden up to every 2 minutes. Also, aircraft coming into land are often sent from a South to North direction also over my home. The loud, excessive and concentration shattering noise immediately causes me to be woken up at night, inability to get to sleep of an evening, concentration on work impossible during the day, and any thought of sitting in peace and reading in my home at any time is impossible.

The mental and physical health effects of this have left me diagnosed with Depression, Anxiety and physical Stomach Pain.

In 2018 I went to a public surgery and spoke to Neil Thomson, Operations Director for LLA and asked him what remedial action LLA would take based on the noise issues I was experiencing.

His answer was "Nothing". "You are not eligible to be affected by the noise from Luton Airport"

I asked what that meant and Neil advised that because I lived outside of a certain zone, I was not eligible to be affected by noise. I was astonished at this response and asked what on earth that meant. Neil refused to answer any more questions and told me my time with him was over.

Following the LLA complaints procedure, I began to make complaints about aircraft noise back in 2018. The responses from LLA were initially dismissive, impersonalized and uninterested.

As soon as more than 1 complaint a day is sent for 30 consecutive days, Luton airport classify you as a “Serial Complainer” which means they will no longer respond to you.

This means that if more than one aircraft a day disturbs you and you complain, you will effectively be branded as a nuisance by LLA.

For context, it is normal for more than 100 aircraft to disturb me every single day.

In short, if you don’t complain much they don’t take your complaints seriously or offer any action and if you complain often then you are ignored and vilified. You cannot get a meaningful response no matter what you do.

LLA’s own complaint procedures state that:

Unless otherwise specified in this policy, every complaint received by LLA will be recorded, however where complaints are made about noise incidents caused by multiple aircraft within one email or online form, this will be categorised as a general disturbance and only one complaint will be registered. Where complainants wish to report noise, incidents caused by multiple aircraft and would prefer these to be registered as separate complaints, each noise incident should be reported using a separate online complaint form or email, each containing the required information in the body of the email or form.

In short, if you have 100 aircraft noise complaints in one day and you list all of those complaints in one email, only one complaint will be logged and it will not be logged as a noise complaint by LLA!

Therefore, in order to have each aircraft noise complaint logged, LLA insists that one email per noise complaint is sent.

Today this is what I am forced to do, following LLA’s own procedures.

To that extent I have been forced to log every single aircraft that disturbs me, which runs into thousands every month.

I have escalated my complaints from the Complaints Team, to the Operations Director, to the CEO Alberto Martin, to Graham Olver.

To date I have received no response from LLA for a single remedial action they will take to help the extreme noise and stress, anxiety and depression their actions have caused.

Further, neither Alberto or Graham have responded to a single piece of correspondence from me.

What might you expect an airport operations team to do when a person is affected more than 100 times per day from noise by their operations?

I offered numerous options to the LLA team including respite and noise proofing windows, but not a single option was taken and not a single option was offered.

LLA did advise me that I should complain less as more complaints meant they would not look into the case as seriously.

However when I did that, the Quarterly Noise Reports released by LLA simply highlighted that their noise complaints had gone down, presumably to convince themselves and the government that they were doing a good job.

What LLA did to me in November 2021 is truly horrendous.

On 6th November 2021 the Police turned up to my home and arrested me after being falsely told that I was “Harassing” Luton Airport.

I want you to take a moment to consider how you would feel if the police came to your home and arrested you for simply making noise complaints.

This alleged harassment was as a result of the thousands of complaint emails I had sent, following LLA’s own complaints procedures that I highlighted earlier.

I am a business professional with a long standing positive relationship with authorities.

On the 6th November 2021 the police took my Phone, Laptop and Tablet.

It took 9 months to get my items back and to be advised that there was no evidence found to justify the complaints made by LLA. No further action was taken as no evidence was found.

This action by LLA is a clear example of the shocking, harrowing, and deceitful actions I stated at the start of this statement.

You will not be surprised that this event has left me traumatised and has exacerbated an already impossible situation at the hands of LLA and their senior team Neil Thompson, Alberto Martin and Graham Olver.

During this time I was not able to contact the airport which prevented me from making any complaints. This has made their quarterly complaints report incorrectly show a reduced number of complaints. LLA will tell you that this reduction shows they are having a positive impact on the community, whereas the reality is they are falsely and potentially criminally attempting to silence people like me who dare to regularly complain.

LLA have tried to have me criminalised for complaining about the noise of their operations rather than taking a single piece of remedial action to stop the noise affecting me.

The police confirmed that my complaint emails were not inappropriate and did not warrant any police action.

LLA tell me that the number of complaints I have sent are “excessive”, despite their own guidelines forcing complaints to be sent individually.

I want you to understand today that if LLA think thousands of complaint emails are excessive then imagine how excessive it is to have the noise from thousands of aircraft destroy your life in your home every single day!

All I am doing is simply reporting the noise LLA are making and begging for action to be taken, yet LLA are trying to portray me as the problem. The easy way for them to stop my complaints is to stop the noise....it is only LLA that can make that happen, not me!

In August 2022 I booked a slot at the Noise Surgery meeting in Harpenden. LLA confirmed they had received my booking and also offered a 121 slot with their operations team.

I replied accepting this offer with a proposed agenda and at this point all replies were stopped from LLA.

On the 25th August I arrived at the public surgery at my timeslot, where 2 large security officers blocked me from entering and refused to let me talk with the team.

After this event, I emailed LLA to ask why this happened and they replied advising that the offer to meet on a 121 was also being revoked.

This is a clear attempt to block every action I make to try and amicably resolve the impossible situation that is destroying my life. LLA pays no interest and is only trying to silence me and other residents who complain in order to expand their operation and make more profit.

Sacrificing human life is just not a concern for LLA.

To close, LLA have been making my life a misery for more than 4 years, and continue to do so.

- I have followed LLA complaints policy and no remedial action has been taken.
- I have escalated my complaints upwards through the senior team and they have done nothing
- The only actions LLA have taken is to try and silence me through the false and disgraceful actions I have explained above.

And so today I reiterate that up to every 2 minutes of every day, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

That's how often an aircraft affects me in my home from Luton Airport.

Any attempt to expand Luton Airport must be rejected, they currently do not take any interest in the existing problems they are causing and therefore cannot be trusted to deal with any of the new problems that inevitably comes with expansion.

I would urge you to force LLA to fix all existing problems, including mine, before any expansion is even considered.

Further growth will make the issues I have highlighted today even worse, this is costing human life and must be taken seriously.

Luton Airport have had every chance to engage with people like me in order to do something, anything, to resolve the situation and they have done nothing.

This is a clear and demonstrable statement of intent that LLA's senior team are neither competent nor capable of addressing serious problems and that they will act with complete disregard to a human life in order to further their cause.

My statement today is only a summary of the long lasting and extremely serious, life changing effects that LLA have had on my life.

Thank You

Peter

Please find below a table showing the number of aircraft movements per complaint. (Note that Q4 2021 – Q2 2022 was when I was unable to send any complaints)

YEAR	QUARTER	# OF FLIGHTS	# OF COMPLAINTS	# OF FLIGHTS PER COMPLAINT
2014	1	20,881	104	200.8
2014	2	28,547	391	73.0
2014	3	29,859	495	60.3

2014	4	24,651	155	159.0
2015	1	22,824	107	213.3
2015	2	31,353	236	132.9
2015	3	33,966	396	85.8
2015	4	28,269	224	126.2
2016	1	26,907	191	140.9
2016	2	35,301	609	58.0
2016	3	37,673	1866	20.2
2016	4	31,554	1136	27.8
2017	1	29,887	1849	16.2
2017	2	36,664	5304	6.9
2017	3	38,291	5785	6.6
2017	4	30,676	2446	12.5
2018	1	29,368	1310	22.4
2018	2	36,461	2335	15.6
2018	3	37,811	3175	11.9
2018	4	32,630	1455	22.4
2019	1	30,422	2793	10.9
2019	2	38,129	2748	13.9
2019	3	39,608	4593	8.6
2019	4	33,322	2601	12.8
2020	1	26,285	1368	19.2
2020	2	3,898	525	7.4
2020	3	22,624	1858	12.2
2020	4	10,786	739	14.6
2021	1	6,047	1075	5.6
2021	2	9,945	2213	4.5
2021	3	21,725	8036	2.7
2021	4	23,844	1108	21.5
2022	1	21,054	839	25.1
2022	2	33,398	1293	25.8