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Annual report

It is hard to review an entire year's work programme in a few lines, but several issues stand out. As we begin 2018, the Civil Aviation Authority's new airspace change process has taken effect, the culmination of two years of consultation. One of AEF's objectives has been to help provide a platform for community views, and we were pleased that both the CAA and Department for Transport (DfT) staff came to listen to our members' views on engagement and noise policy at a workshop organised by AEF. The new process aims to be more transparent and accessible for impacted communities, but still lacks noise limits, a topic we will continue to work on in 2018.

We meanwhile accepted invitations to participate in the Government's newly created Airspace and Noise Engagement Group (ANEG), the CAA's Community Discussion Forum, and the interview panel for the Head Commissioner of the Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise, due to be set up by April this year. It's too early to judge the effectiveness of these bodies, but at a minimum they provide a mechanism that allows environmental concerns to be aired.

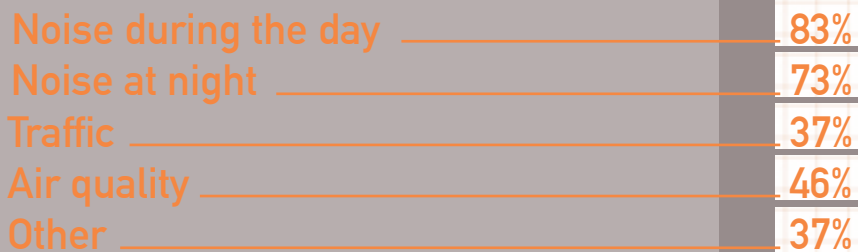
The draft National Policy Statement (NPS), if approved, would give the green light to a third Heathrow runway in a way that will be difficult to amend or reverse. In 2017, we called on MPs to hold the Government to account over whether the NPS is compatible with the Climate Change Act, air quality legislation, and effective protection from noise. We voiced our concerns about these issues to the Transport Select Committee when we were invited to give oral evidence in December.

Finally, we continued to work alongside international NGO colleagues to argue that the UN decision in 2016 to set up an offsetting scheme for aviation carbon emissions from 2020 requires transparency, and rules to ensure accurate accounting for alternative fuels, to deliver its goal effectively.

AEF's member survey in November 2016 allowed us to better understand the most important issues for our members, and to consider how we could best support them and reinforce their messages.

With a response rate of just below 60%, we gained an excellent sample of community views. While the concerns raised were complex and interrelated, the biggest issue that emerged was aircraft noise, as the table below shows.

We asked respondents who said they had an existing issue with or concern about aviation, or had experienced issues or had concerns in the past, "What is/ was the issue?":



We built the survey findings into our 2017 work programme in a number of ways. Most notably, AEF:

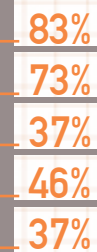
- launched a comprehensive online guide aimed at those impacted by aircraft noise;
- brought together noise-impacted community groups, the DfT and CAA at our Spring workshop and again in December at our 2017 AGM;
- referred (anonymously) to findings from the survey in our detailed responses to DfT and CAA consultations, in order to demonstrate the physical and mental impacts of noise on communities;
- gave presentations on the findings of the survey to the DfT, the CAA, the Airports Operators Association and the Institute of Acoustics, arguing that communities want fairness and accountability – and less aircraft noise.

In summary, members' responses to the survey have been invaluable and will continue to shape the work that we do.



The impact on our community has become intolerable

My sons have problems with their studies and their sleep patterns are disturbed at night



It affects my concentration... it's like having a smog invade my head

Cycle paths in the sky are being transformed into motorways overnight...no other industry would be allowed to do this



MEMBER SURVEY: 2017 IMPACT

LOOK AHEAD.



2018 is likely to be the year when parliament decides whether to approve expansion at Heathrow, with a vote expected before summer recess (to be followed by judicial reviews if the vote is in favour). AEF will continue to urge MPs to vote against the NPS.

We will also be keeping a watching brief on the various new processes for aircraft noise and airspace change that will be taking effect this year. Better community engagement through the airspace change process, ICCAN and airports' Noise Action Plans (due to be consulted on later this year), whilst welcome, do not guarantee noise reductions for communities, unless they all contribute to a meaningful noise objective, defined by Government. AEF will be calling for noise targets that reflect the World Health Organisation's updated noise recommendations due to be published this year.

The aviation strategy, which Government has committed to developing this year to replace the 2013 Aviation Policy Framework, is one opportunity to pursue an effective noise policy. However, environmental aspects of the policy will be consulted on last, to avoid getting in the way of the parliamentary vote on Heathrow expansion. AEF has criticised the fact that environment already looks like an afterthought in the strategy. The DfT has offered, by way of compromise, to put on a series of workshops allowing environmental stakeholders some input at an earlier stage in the process. We are planning, in parallel, to publish a set of discussion papers on how the aviation strategy should approach noise, air pollution and climate change, and to test our thinking on these issues through our own expert focus groups.

Our international work will, this year, focus on ensuring good monitoring and enforcement procedures for the carbon offsetting scheme being created for aviation, while calling for additional measures to reflect the ambition of the Paris Agreement and to tackle aviation's non-CO2 impacts.

With membership fees kept low to ensure AEF's services remain accessible and affordable to communities, we are, as always, grateful to our funders and donors for supporting our national and international work programmes.

While work on transport and environment remains hard to fund, AEF is currently in good financial health.

TEAM



1. Tim Johnson, director 2. Cait Hewitt, deputy director 3. Deborah Lovatt, community outreach and membership officer 4. Lizzie Harrocks, communications officer 5. Tim Thomas, treasurer 6. Nic Ferriday, researcher

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

After more than 30 years, we decided to make a few tweaks to update and clarify our founding aims and objectives. The newly revised aims and objectives, adopted unanimously at our AGM last November, are as follows:

AEF's aim:

- to protect the environment, public health and quality of life through securing policies and measures that ensure effective limits on noise, emissions and other environmental impacts from the aviation sector.

AEF's objectives:

- to seek effective legislation, policies and other measures by working with local, national and international policy-making and legislative bodies;
- to promote practical solutions through consultation and co-operation with AEF members, regulatory and public bodies, the aviation industry, and others;
- to support our members and affected communities in liaising with decision-makers and other stakeholders;
- to provide advice, analysis and information;
- to publicise and promote the role and responsibilities of the Federation.