

THE HEATHROW HEALTH DISASTER

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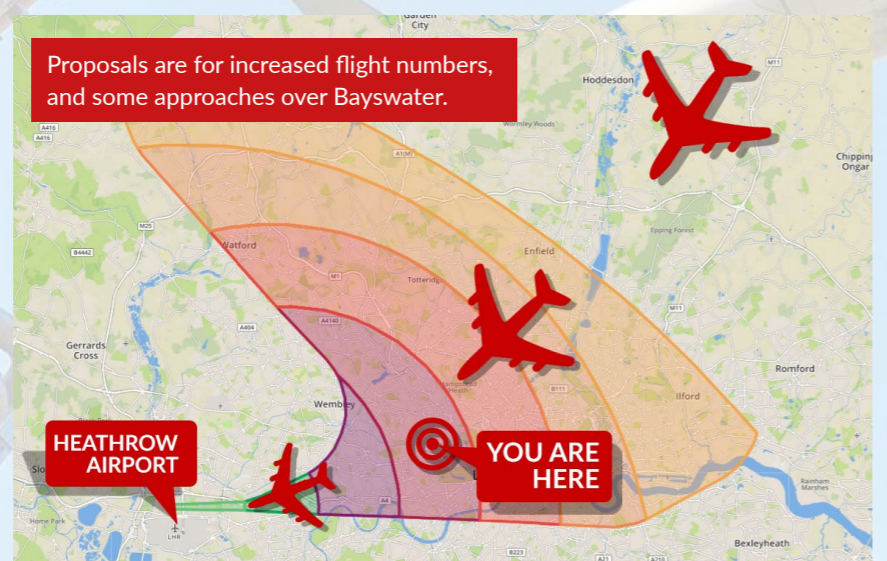
I write as a follow up to the excellent articles from the Heathrow Campaign Group and John Walton in the previous edition of SEBRA NEWS W2, both of which fully explained the reasons for blocking the Heathrow plans for increased flights over central London and the third runway.

Things have now moved on in a very alarming way about the potential health issues, reports of which have recently been published in the press. We, who live in London, although aware of the level of pollution which is sprayed all over us on a daily basis, now have to digest the news from several new health reports which are stating how considerably more dangerous this is proving to be than we, the public, have been led to believe.

According to the article in the Independent, it has been discovered that the airport emissions can travel far further into London than was originally thought. So that not only are we struggling against the pollution from gigantic delivery and construction vehicles, buses, taxis, cars, and motor bikes, all of which leave us breathing in ultra-fine particles, which according to the latest research, are less than 0.1 micrometres in size. Far smaller than those originally tested and reported. That research had been carried out on larger particles which were reported to be 2.5 micrometres.

I am not a scientist nor a researcher into pollution and consequently had not fully comprehended the dangers produced by these particles, but when I am told that a scientist and researcher have found "... that airport emissions even if located at the outskirts of the city (e.g. Heathrow) can travel far enough and reach populations in urban areas away from the airport", i.e. they are blowing in from Heathrow, then I start to really take notice.

Apparently – according to Dr Ioar Rivas, research fellow and author of the study as quoted by Shaun Lintern, the Health Correspondent of the Independent, in an article dated Friday January 3 2020 "the smaller the particle the deeper it can penetrate into the lungs, and



ultra-fine particles have been linked to brain cancer". This makes sense and is a horrific prospect for us all.

And now I start to worry about the next generation, and their children, my grandchildren. Not only do we all face the climate change challenge, as we watch parts of the world go up in flames and being starved of water through drought for their populations, but as I write this, poisonous and dangerous emissions are threatening their lives in a far more dangerous way than we have ever contemplated before.

Dr Gary Fuller, a senior lecturer in air pollution measurement has said "Cities around Europe have policies to reduce airborne particles from traffic that should also reduce people's exposure to ultra-fine particles, but aircraft emissions are not being addressed in the same way." He and his team now plan to study the effects of the different sources of ultra-fine particles on mortality and hospital admissions.

More vital health information appeared in The Daily Mail. We go to our local parks to get fresh air and some relief from the road pollution and for the good of our children's health – but no, apparently more than a quarter of London's parks and playgrounds exceed the safety limits for air quality. Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens and Regents Park are three of the most polluted places and exceed the annual limit imposed by WHO and the European Union. So far from giving people some

healthy lungfuls of fresh air as they run about, they are breathing in particles being dropped on them from the air and from the roads surrounding them.

To add to this disastrous state of the capital, as reported in the last issue of this magazine, we are now told that Heathrow is proposing to send 700 extra flights a day right across Central London and its flight paths will include areas which have not been overburdened with low flying aircraft before, including Bayswater. In other words, it is now SEBRALand's turn to suffer.

These flights will start very early in the morning and finish very late at night, with an increase of noise pollution and toxic air pollution which once started will never be removed and will cause irreversible damage to our health and mental well-being, and even more importantly, to the younger generations.

This, of course, will start before the Heathrow third runway extension battle is finalised, with all the cost and destruction that will come about. Assuming that the runway will get the go-ahead (despite Boris saying that he would lie in front of the first bulldozer in protest – I daresay he might have changed his mind about that now). imagine the cost to the taxpayer in financing such a scheme, followed by the increase of even more flights right over our heads. Plus, of course, the increase in damage to everyone's health which will impact further on the already stretched National Health Service.

Even if the third runway does not get permission, we will still be left with the 700 plus extra flights above us, because make no mistake, once Heathrow has its permission for these they will not stop at 700 per day, we all know they will be increased.

Does this not make the collective hearts sink even further? This is a gigantic problem. We need help from as many people as we can muster to pass this information on to your family, your friends, your neighbours so that those

who are as horrified by this future opening up in front of us as I am, can join forces to show that they are against its implementation.

The word needs to be spread and quickly – we have been so preoccupied by the Brexit debate that this enormity has been quietly slipping ahead of us. Now is the moment to call a halt to it and the more who call for it the more chance we have of crushing this plan.

And for those who say that electric planes will soon be in flight (not that

soon), or that plane fuel is becoming cleaner (that is a naïve hope), or that the health issue is just journalistic hype, look at your children and grandchildren and can you truly say to them, with total confidence, "You will be all right." and mean it?

Article quotes taken from:

The Independent
[bit.ly/sebra1009](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/stop-heathrow-polluting-us)

The Daily Mail
[bit.ly/sebra1010](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/stop-heathrow-polluting-us)

HEATHROW - PLANNED EXPANSION IS "A TICKING TIME BOMB"

From the "StopHeathrowPollutingUs" Campaign Group

Why we oppose Heathrow's plans to increase the number of flights over London.

The planned expansion is a ticking time bomb- with toxic air and noise pollution, which will affect the health and wellbeing of Londoners- starting as early as next year!

- Heathrow is proposing a 700+ increase in flights a day over London, and its suggested new flight paths will cover areas which have previously not had flights directly overhead, including Bayswater. It is taking its case to the Supreme Court after the recent High Court ruled that its proposal was incompatible with the UK Climate Change commitment. So it is imperative that we continue our campaign.
- We are concerned about the impact the plans will have on the physical and mental health and well-being of current and future generations living, working and visiting London.
- There is now a much greater understanding of the adverse impact of aviation pollution on people's mental

and physical health. Recent research has provided frightening proof that aviation noise and air pollution cause depression, anxiety, heart disease, increased blood pressure, asthma, respiratory complications and cognitive impairment.

- In 2017 the then UK Chief Medical Officer Sally Davies's annual report on the state on the public's health focused on the impact of Air Pollution on human health. Her key conclusion was that ALL air pollution must be treated as a preventative disease.
- The indicated noise levels as a result of the proposed Heathrow flight paths will create noise pollution that far exceeds WHO's guidance of 40-45dB, and this is over densely populated areas.
- Aviation also causes toxic air pollution (NOx, CO, SOx, PM10 and PM2.5) which causes irreversible damage to people's health. (According to the WHO Urban air pollution is among the top 10 risk factors for mortality in the UK).
- Scientists see aviation pollution as a ticking time bomb. A recent research project published by Kings College

found that airport emissions PM2.5 ultra-fine particles from Heathrow Airport are being blown more than 11 miles into Westminster. The smaller the particle, the deeper it penetrates the lungs and ultra-fine particles have also been linked to brain cancer. Please see the Daily Mail link above.

- Air quality is already very poor in London. A number of initiatives, including ULEZ, aim to improve this. The UK government and the London Mayor has also made firm commitments to address climate change and air quality.
- Increasing flights over the city would completely sabotage these endeavours, put lives at risk and significantly reduce the quality of life of people living, working, studying or visiting Westminster.
- We believe the Heathrow expansion makes no sense due to its proximity to densely populated central London, the massive cost to tax payers and decades of disruption to the M25 and rail infrastructure.
- There is a much better way... This includes introducing the new UK regional hub model in place of the outdated central hub model, reduce demand by increasing use of technology as an alternative to business travel, invest in and incentivise more sustainable rail travel.
- Commit to policies and tax payer funded investments that champion the health, well-being, safety and prosperity of Londoners and the rest of the United Kingdom.

www.stopheathrowpollutingus.org

