**SUGGESTED LETTER TO BE SENT TO THE CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY**

Mr M Swan

Director Airspace Policy

Civil Aviation Authority

CAA House

45-49 Kingsway

London WC2B 6TE

Dear Sir

**Gatwick Airport Departure Route to the North-West**

A new route has been introduced for aircraft taking off to the west and then turning north and then east, passing over Beare Green and Holmwood. This route lies outside the present Noise Preferential Routes (NPR), you (Mr Swan) gave permission for this new route in November 2013, on the proviso Gatwick Airport carried out a consultation on moving the NPR. You will be carrying out a review of your decision this November.

The review is required to ‘assess the environmental impact of the changes’. There have been no environmental benefits but considerable dis-benefits as listed below:

* Being disturbed from sleep around 6 am by aircraft noise which penetrates throughout the area.
* Low, aircraft flying overhead every 2-3 minutes throughout the day. Often to beyond midnight.
* Inability to open doors and windows at any point during the day.
* Aircraft noise pollution affecting normal conversation inside the property, even with closed windows.
* Socialising at home becoming impossible. The very low level of flying and the fact that these planes are banking and rising sharply over the South Holmwood area is creating unbearable levels of noise.
* Aircraft noise pollution is destroying our community spirit as it is no longer possible to sit and relax in the garden and communal areas. It is impossible to hold a conversation, as the noise is so loud.
* Devaluation of property prices in the area.
* Unquantifiable impact on the local countryside including plants and animals.
* Potential adverse impact on local economy due to reduced footfall of visitors to the area.

Despite concern expressed by the representative of environmental groups, the provisional approval was granted after consultation only with the Gatwick Airport Consultative Committee. Because a very large number of people were seriously affected by this decision, I believe a full public consultation should have been undertaken.

I request that you cancel the preliminary permission and require the new PBN route to keep within the existing NPR.The result of requiring aircraft to make a tighter turn would be to bring the rest of the route further south, thus substantially reducing the number of people newly overflown. That decision would be in line with the Government Guidance to the CAA, paragraph 4.19 which states, in relation to the replication of existing NPRs by new PBN routes: *‘the requirement is to preserve the existing route alignments as far as possible in the vicinity of airports.’*

It is claimed that modern aircraft cannot efficiently turn as tightly as older aircraft because their speed is higher and they need to take a wider turn. This is a case where the significant environmental benefit should take precedence over the need to operate aircraft in the most efficient way. The desire to cut airline costs should not be a reason to bring misery to thousands.

Yours faithfully