

**Farnborough Airport**  
**Airspace Change Post Implementation Review**  
**CAA Reference ACP-2013-07**  
**Annex D Stakeholder Feedback and Complaints**  
**Item 58**

Record of revisions

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## 1 About this document

### 1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This document is part of the Farnborough Airport airspace change post-implementation review (ACP PIR). It should be read in conjunction with the main PIR document which provides the structure, the majority of the evidence, and details the regulatory requirements for the PIR. It should also be read in conjunction with the separate document ‘Annex A Farnborough PIR Traffic Dispersion and Environmental Overflight Diagrams’.
- 1.1.2 This document summarises feedback and complaints from non-aviation stakeholders such as residents of local communities during the PIR period. Feedback was also received specifically on the PIR process itself.
- 1.1.3 This document covers items 58a and 58b of the CAA’s list of PIR items.
- 1.1.4 A specific CAA requirement refers to engagement with Lasham Gliding Society and Southdown Gliding Club. However, feedback from many local aviation operations on their experience of the airspace change is provided in the separate document ‘Annex B Operational Feedback Engagement’ covering items 37 and 55 from the CAA’s list of PIR requirements. Feedback from LGS and SGC was received and is placed in that document.

## 2 Complaints received by Farnborough Airport

### 2.1 Logging methodology and background

- 2.1.1 This document provides information on all environmental complaints received, together with feedback from a dedicated email address, during the defined PIR period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. To help understand this section the following information is provided.
- 2.1.2 As a non-scheduled airport the number of flights each day and the frequency of them is variable.
- 2.1.3 If an individual complains twice then the data will show this as 2 complaints and 1 complainant.
- 2.1.4 Feedback to the dedicated email address has been counted based on unique email addresses.
- 2.1.5 If an individual made contact using more than one email, they will be counted as 2 distinct entities.
- 2.1.6 Farnborough Airport has a public website called WebTrak ([link](#)). This allows anyone to see and follow (nearly 'live') Farnborough arrivals and departures, over a map background, with the altitude of the flight shown. It is also possible to look back over three months of historic data, and should a user believe that an aircraft was not in an appropriate place or at the wrong altitude, then they can submit a report to the airport team which will investigate the circumstances.
- 2.1.7 All complaints received during the PIR period were handled in the normal way with respect to investigation and normal routine reporting. Due to the increase in complaints and the impact of COVID-19 on the aviation industry (see Main PIR Document section 1.3 on page 5), the time it took to do the investigation and response was, during the first half of the data gathering period much longer than the ideal; this was later rectified.
- 2.1.8 All the noise complaint investigations established that the aircraft in question had been operating appropriately. However, some additional air quality monitoring was instigated during this period due to an environmental complaint.
- 2.1.9 During the data gathering period the Farnborough Air Show took place and the Instrument Landing System (ILS) to both runways was upgraded and then calibrated; therefore it was not available for use for periods of several weeks. Consequently, the data for the months of May, June, July, August and September is influenced by the essential engineering works.
- 2.1.10 Most complaints were received through WebTrak. Direct email was the second most common method. There was a WebTrak notification issue for c.14 days in March 2023 when WebTrak did not send the automatic message after a complaint was logged, however, this did not prevent the actual complaint being registered in the system. Any complaints submitted after 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 are not included in this analysis but will be assessed and included in our normal complaints procedures/reporting.
- 2.1.11 Comparison is made with the same period in 2018/2019. This was chosen as the nearest similar 12-month period to this PIR data gathering period that was not impacted by COVID-19 and it also contains a period in July for the Farnborough Air Show.
- 2.1.12 Runway usage during the PIR period was 74% westerly Runway 24 and 26% easterly Runway 06 which is due to the prevailing southwest wind. This reflects the historic 70/30 split at Farnborough, and the most complained about runway is Runway 24.

### 3 Results

#### 3.1 Summary

3.1.1 During the PIR period we recorded 3,239 environmental complaints, whereas the similar period in 2018/2019 saw only 149. This is an increase of 2,074%. However, the number of individuals complaining did not increase in the same way; this rose from just 48 to only 104 (a 117% increase, significantly lower than the increase in complaint numbers). The following is a breakdown of those complaints:

- The 3,239 complaints were from 104 complainants.
- Some complainants complained multiple times in multiple months.
- One of the 104 complainants was responsible for 873 complaints, which is 27% of the total.
- The top 10 complainants accounted for 88% of the total.
- The postcode region originating the most complaints was GU10 with 54% of complaints.
- Complaints peaked in August and were lowest in March.
- Complainants peaked in July and were lowest in December.
- 118 complaints, 3.6% of the total, were not about our operations.
- 30 complaints, fewer than 1%, specifically mentioned helicopters.
- Runway 24 usage generated more complaints and complainants than Runway 06.

#### 3.2 Themes of complaints

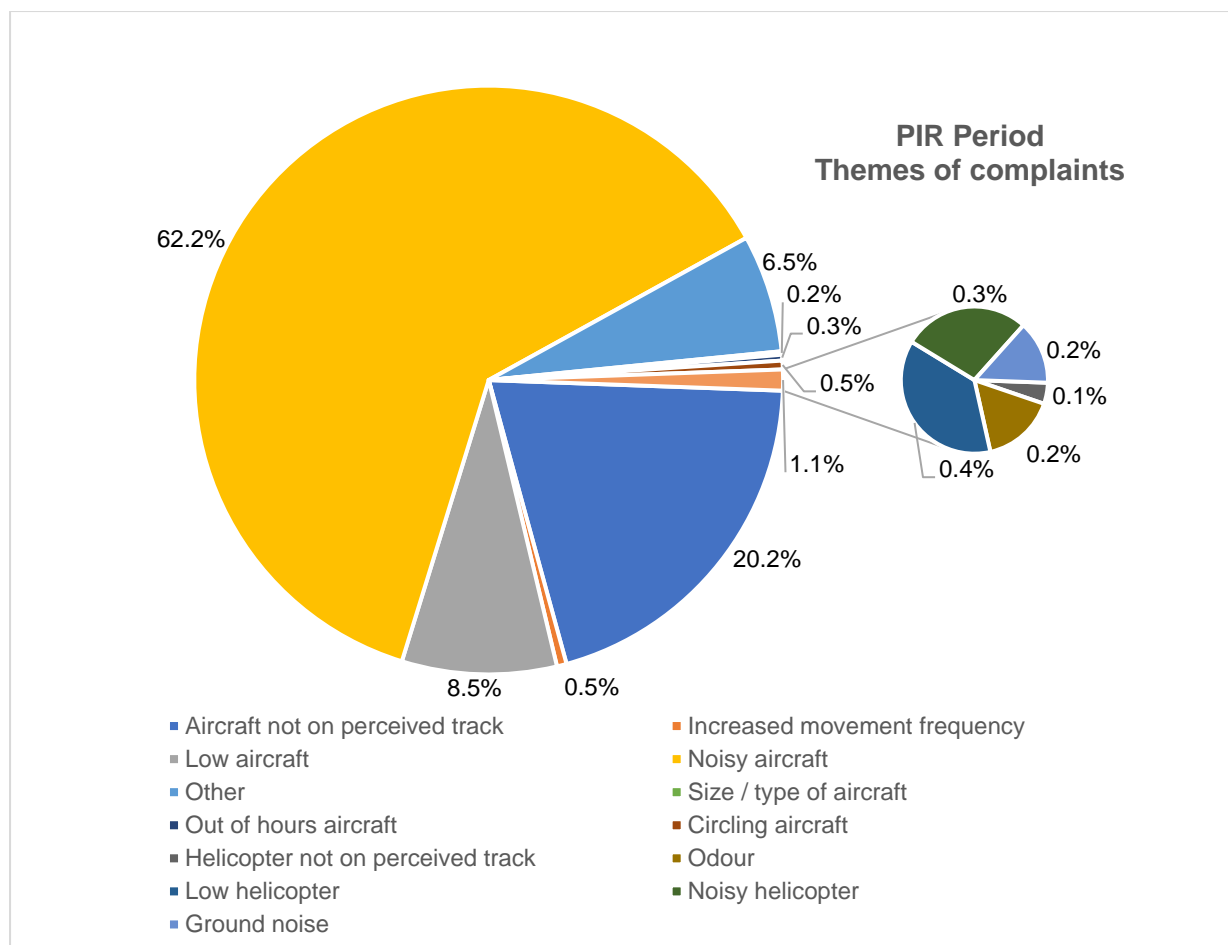


Figure 1 PIR period themes of complaints

- 3.2.1 The highest concern that complainants had was noisy aircraft<sup>1</sup> with 2,029 mentioning this issue, the second most mentioned concern with 755 complaints was that aircraft were perceived to be off track.
- 3.2.2 Other complaints included concerns over the size of aircraft, low aircraft, helicopters, and aircraft operating out of hours.
- 3.2.3 There were 7 odour complaints that could not be attributable to the ACP but are believed to be due to usage of Auxiliary Power Units (APU). Specifically, a local resident logged a phone complaint about an aviation fuel smell. Due to the nature of this issue Farnborough reacted by establishing extra quarterly air quality monitoring for the top 15 Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) in this location. While the scope of the PIR excludes air quality requirements, we have included this information section for completeness as they were received and actioned during the data gathering period.

### 3.3 Monthly breakdown: Complaints

- 3.3.1 The most complained about month was August with 521 complaints received, this is attributed to the elevated temperatures, leading to residents leaving doors and windows open and therefore being more aware of aircraft.
- 3.3.2 August was not the busiest month in terms of movements (this was June 2022, see Main PIR document section 7.1.2 on page 15).
- 3.3.3 March saw the lowest number of complaints with 124. March was not the quietest month in terms of movements (this was January, see Main PIR document section 7.1.2 on page 15).
- 3.3.4 March was the wettest in over 40 years ([link](#) to Met Office report). This is likely to be a contributory factor as fewer people would be outside, windows are more likely to be closed, and rain causes a significant blanket white noise effect. The focus of complaints also moved to the PIR email address which saw a spike in the same month.
- 3.3.5 The November to March period was more stable in terms of the levels of complaints, the monthly number between 223 to 239 and the number of complainants between 10 and 15. As mentioned previously, the ILS was unavailable for 3 specific periods, complaints during these periods may have been influenced by this.

The dates are:

- ILS Runway 06 unavailable 4<sup>th</sup> May – 15<sup>th</sup> June
- ILS to both runways unavailable 15<sup>th</sup> Jul – 26<sup>th</sup> Jul
- ILS to runway 24 unavailable 8<sup>th</sup> Aug – 30<sup>th</sup> Sept

- 3.3.6 By comparison during the baseline 2018/19 period June had the most complaints at 42, while August registered 12.

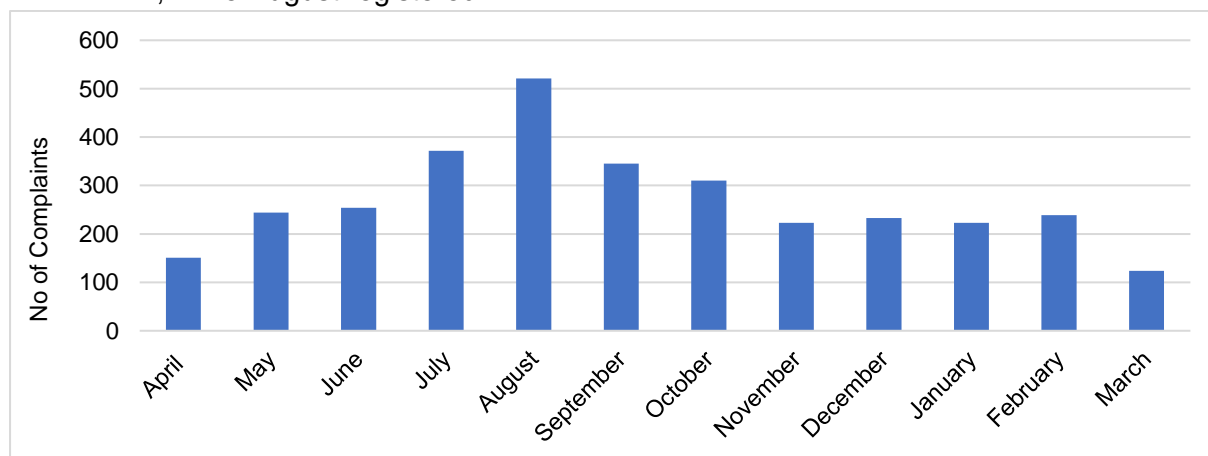


Figure 2 Number of complaints by month, PIR period April 2022-March 2023

<sup>1</sup> Farnborough operate strict compliance with aircraft that must comply with the standard known as ICAO Chapter 4.

### 3.4 Complainants

3.4.1 The total number of complainants was 104 in the PIR period, compared with 48 in the baseline 2018-19 period.

3.4.2 While it is impossible to know absolutely from the information provided by complainants, we believe that at least 11 complainants have been active in both the baseline and the PIR period.

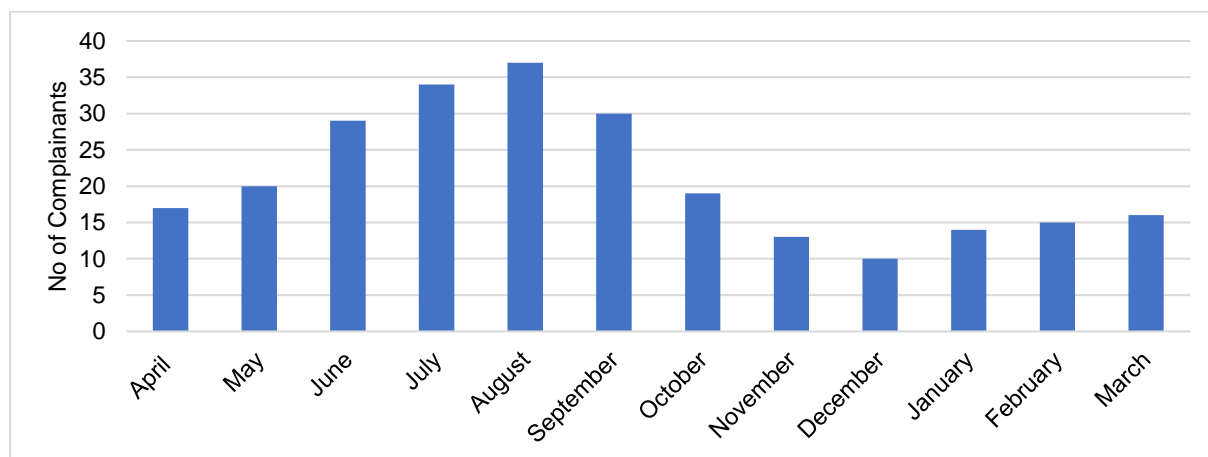


Figure 3 Number of complainants by month, PIR period April 2022-March 2023

3.4.3 The highest numbers of complainants were during the months of July and August which again is likely due to the hot weather ([link](#) to Met Office report on Summer 2022), the ILS outage and the operation of the Farnborough Air Show in July 2022.

3.4.4 During the baseline 2018-19 period the highest number of complainants was June (18) and July (13).

3.4.5 Of the 104 individual complainants, the number of times each complained varied and is detailed below:

- 3 complainants accounted for 1,928 complaints
- the top 4 complainants each complained over 340 times
- the top 10 complainants complained a total of 2,844 times.
- 86 out of the total 104 complainants complained between 1 to 5 times.

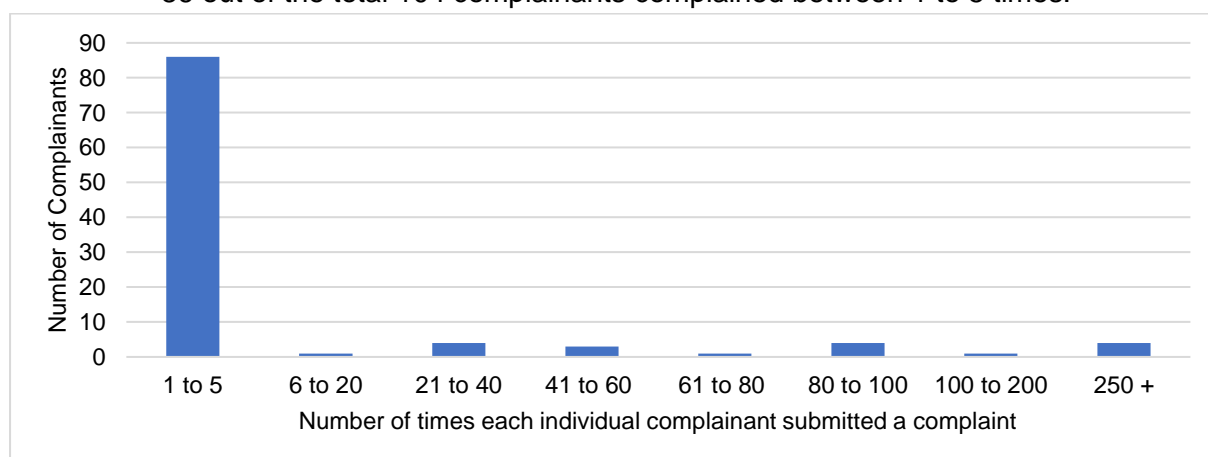


Figure 4 Number of times each individual complainant submitted a complaint, PIR period April 2022-March 2023

3.4.6 The airport team, as per our policy, reached out to the top complainants to better understand the issues and to invite them into the airport to hear their concerns.

3.4.7 This invitation is sometimes accepted and can prove useful to all concerned.

3.4.8 Complainants at the infrequent end of the spectrum (contacting us between 1 and 5 times) are often wanting to educate themselves about the operation and are in

contact to learn and digest the information provided and once this has happened, they generally do not contact us again.

3.4.9 The following graph highlights that 20 complainants account for over 96% of all complaints and 2 individuals account for nearly 50% of all complaints. To add some context, the complainant who is ranked at number 20 in the Top 20 has made 5 complaints.

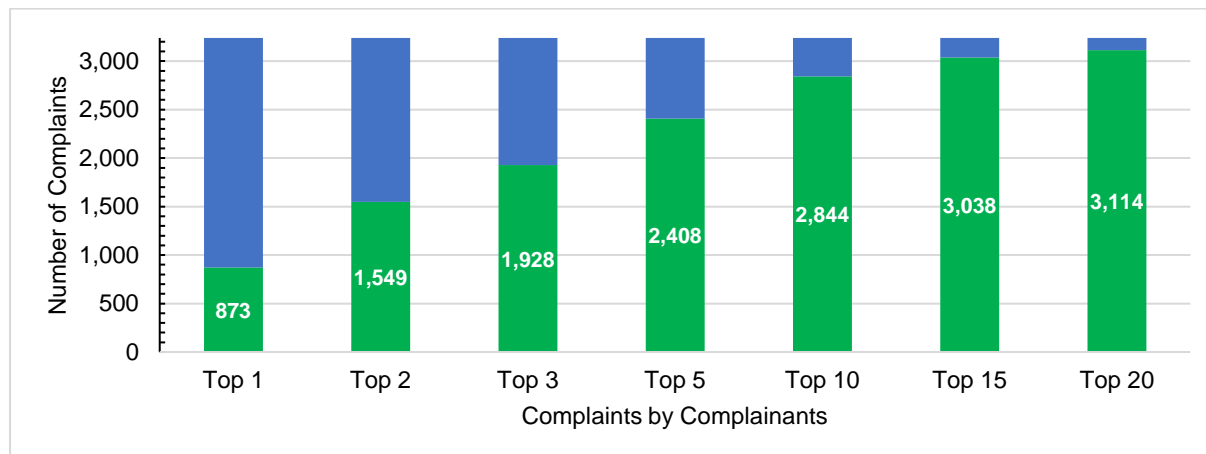


Figure 5 Proportions of 3,239 total complaints by number of complainants, PIR period April 2022-March 2023

### 3.5 Complaints by location

3.5.1 We compiled data on the most frequent locations of complaint originators.

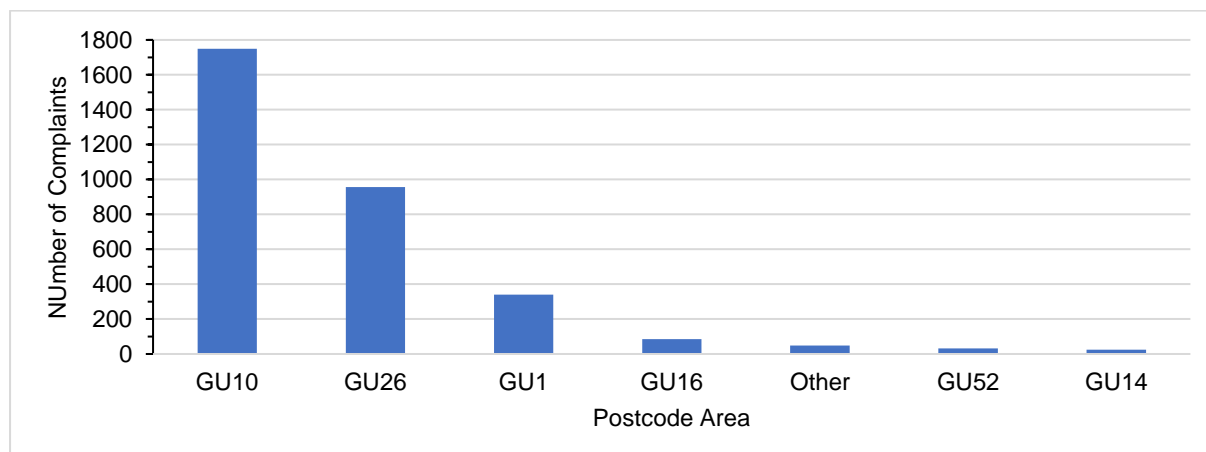


Figure 6 Complaints by postcode, PIR period April 2022-March 2023 ('Other' represents 16 postcodes including RG27, KT15, CT10)

3.5.2 The GU10 postcode area (south of the airport) accounts for both the highest number of complaints and the highest number of complainants.

3.5.3 A total of 1,749 complaints were received, which is more than all the other complaint postcodes areas combined and is 54% of the total.

3.5.4 In the corresponding 2018/2019 dataset, GU10 was the location of 7 complaints which was 4.7% of total complaints.

3.5.5 Within the large GU10 postcode, most complaint activity originated from the village of Churt, which is approximately 10 miles due south of the airport, a journey by car of about 30 minutes. The elevation of the village centre is approximately 328ft, rising to the southeast towards Hindhead, which is approximately 656ft.

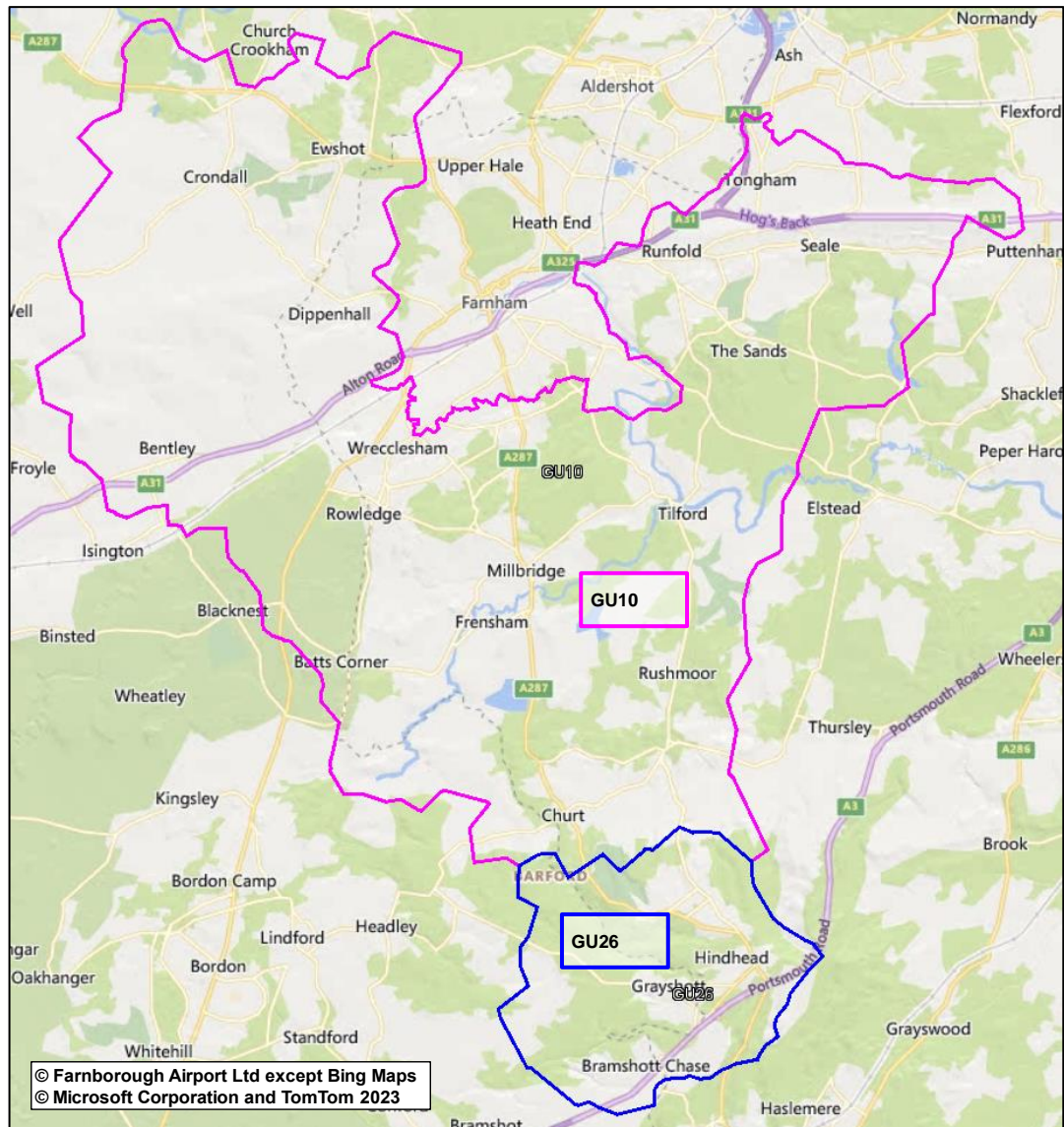


Figure 7 GU10 and GU26 postcode areas, the two originating most complaints

3.5.6 During the baseline period 2018-19 GU51 was the area originating most complaints, with over 52% of the total number of complaints being from one complainant in this postcode. GU52 was second. Both those postcodes are close to the airport.



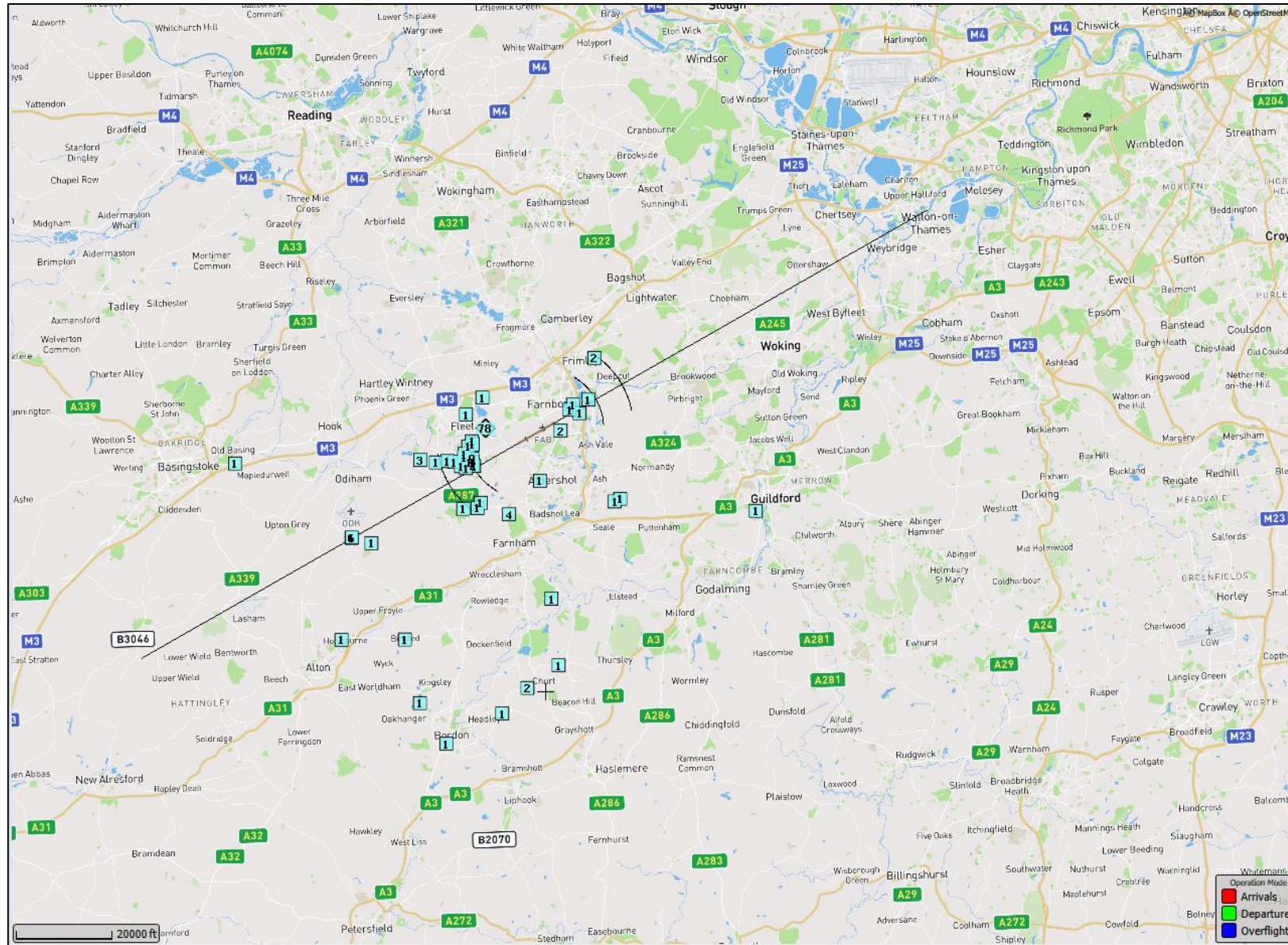


Figure 8 Originators of complaints mapped by postcode pre-ACP, with numbers of complaints per postcode. Data © Farnborough Airport Ltd, map data © OpenStreetMap

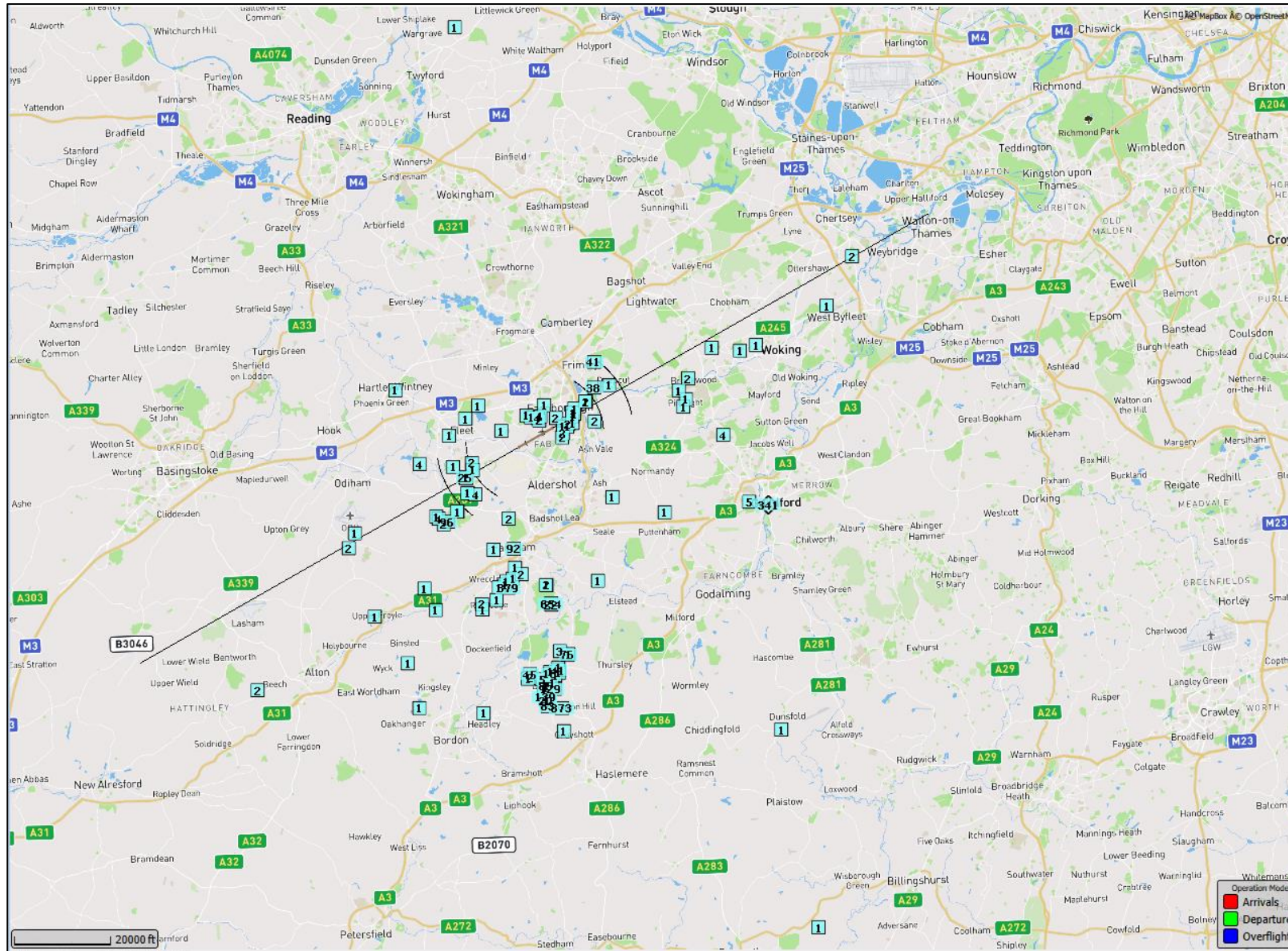


Figure 9: Originators of complaints mapped by postcode pre-ACP, with numbers of complaints per postcode. Data © Farnborough Airport Ltd, map data © OpenStreetMap

- 3.5.7 The region was consulted in 2014 (see Consultation Document Part A Figure A1 page A6 ([link](#)), Parts B and C most relevant), and a smaller sub-region was consulted again in 2016 (see Additional Consultation Document Figure 1 page 5 ([link](#))).
- 3.5.8 Feedback Report A Figure 140 page A131 ([link](#)) summarises the responses by location. Figure 10 below illustrates the consultation regions and original responses.

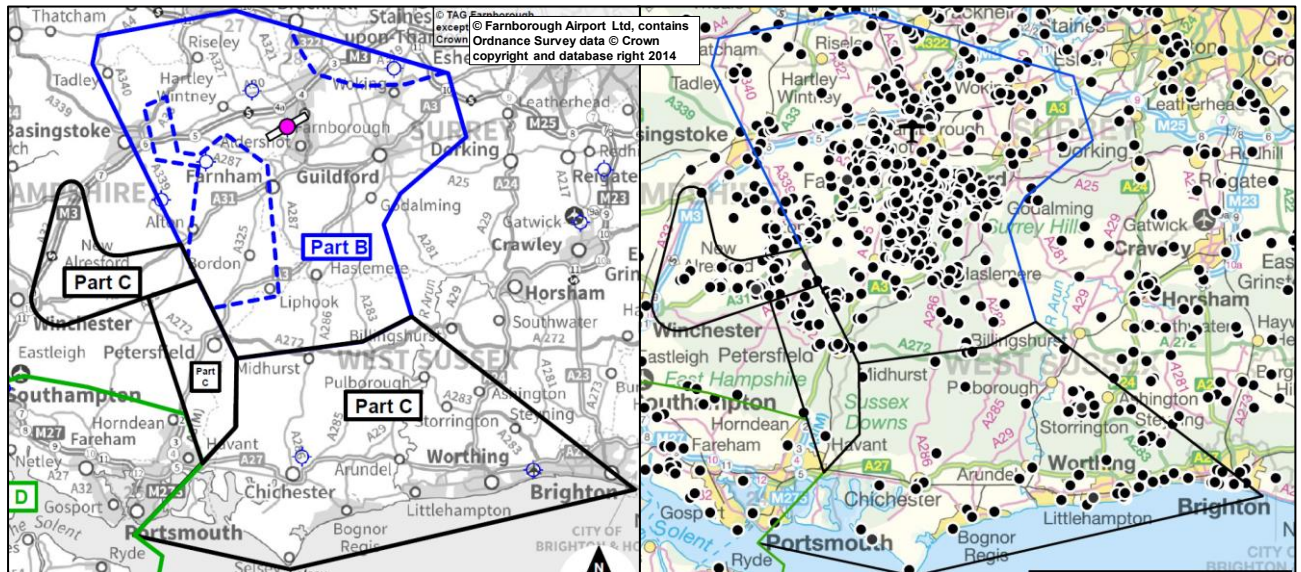


Figure 10 (L) Extract from 2014 consultation document illustrating consultation area, (R) extract from Feedback Report A with responses plotted

### GU10 and Churt

- 3.5.9 Within the original consultation documentation it was clear that Churt and the GU10 region would be in an area where aircraft overflight was most likely (i.e. in a narrower area than pre-ACP) and would be beneath 4,000ft for arrivals to both runways. The GU10 postcode area, and Churt, are specifically discussed in the separate document ‘Annex A Traffic Dispersion and Environmental Overflight Diagrams’, please see section 3.8 on page 27 of Annex A.
- 3.5.10 Consequently, although Churt has generated more complaints and feedback than any other area, these impacts were not unexpected and had been articulated in accordance with the CAA airspace change process requirements.
- 3.5.11 Churt has a population of approximately 2,000 according to the Churt heritage webpage. A local group known as ‘Farnborough Noise Group’ is active in the area and promoted use of both the complaint system and the PIR email address on a website ‘Net Zero for Churt’.
- 3.5.12 See the image below which explains how to complain about Farnborough flights. This website is likely a factor in the increased number of complaints from this area.

**Actions you can take**

There are 3 types of actions for you to take. You can choose some (or all) of.

1. Write to those conducting the PIR to ask that the issues above are considered.  
Farnborough Airport Ltd, Farnborough Airport, Farnborough, GU14 6XA  
email: [acp-pir@farnboroughairport.com](mailto:acp-pir@farnboroughairport.com)
2. Write to your MP to ask that they put pressure on the CAA for the above measures to be taken into account.  
Jeremy Hunt: [huntj@parliament.uk](mailto:huntj@parliament.uk)  
Damian Hinds: [damian.hinds.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:damian.hinds.mp@parliament.uk)
3. Complain about noisy flights:  
by email: [complaints@farnboroughairport.com](mailto:complaints@farnboroughairport.com)  
online: <https://webtrak.emsbk.com/fab>

Please copy in [farnboroughnoise@gmail.com](mailto:farnboroughnoise@gmail.com) so they can keep a separate record of complaints and coordinate.

It is particularly important that we complain about as many Farnborough Airport related flights as possible until at least April 2023. Without a regular stream of complaints from a wide variety of people, Farnborough Airport will claim that the public are content with the changes and the flightpaths will be set in stone which will be disastrous for the area as the airport ramps up its activities.

Template letters are available from [farnboroughnoise@gmail.com](mailto:farnboroughnoise@gmail.com)

Figure 11 Churt website extract

## GU26

3.5.13 The total number of complaints originating from this area was 957.

A single complainant originated 873 complaints, meaning one complainant was responsible for over 91%.

## GU1

3.5.14 This postcode area had a single complainant originating 341 complaints.

### Helicopters

3.5.15 During the baseline period 532 helicopters arrived at Farnborough and 533 departed, during the PIR period there were fewer helicopter movements with 470 arrivals and departures.

3.5.16 Of the 3,239 complaints, 30 mentioned helicopters. This covers Farnborough operations and also helicopters unrelated to Farnborough Airport.

3.5.17 Generally, there are no set routes for helicopter operations. Helicopters that operate in or out of Farnborough Airport do not follow the routes that were introduced in this ACP as they are not required to do so. If a helicopter is transiting through the airspace around Farnborough there are no set routes or requirements, instead the air traffic controllers will accommodate the request of the pilot or offer an alternative route subject to the air traffic scenario at the time.

## 4 Complaints unrelated to Farnborough Airport operations

4.1.1 We regularly receive complaints about aircraft that are not operating into or out of Farnborough Airport. There were 118 complaints (3.6%) of this kind during the PIR period.

4.1.2 During the baseline period there were proportionally more of this type of complaint with 11 (7.4%) actual complaints of this kind.

4.1.3 Most were regarding flights occurring outside of Farnborough's opening hours and are likely to be operations from Gatwick and Heathrow, or they are flights operating into adjacent airfields such as RAF Odiham and Blackbushe.

4.1.4 We are unable to assist complainants where the flight is unrelated to our operations, and suggest they contact the destination or departure aerodrome.

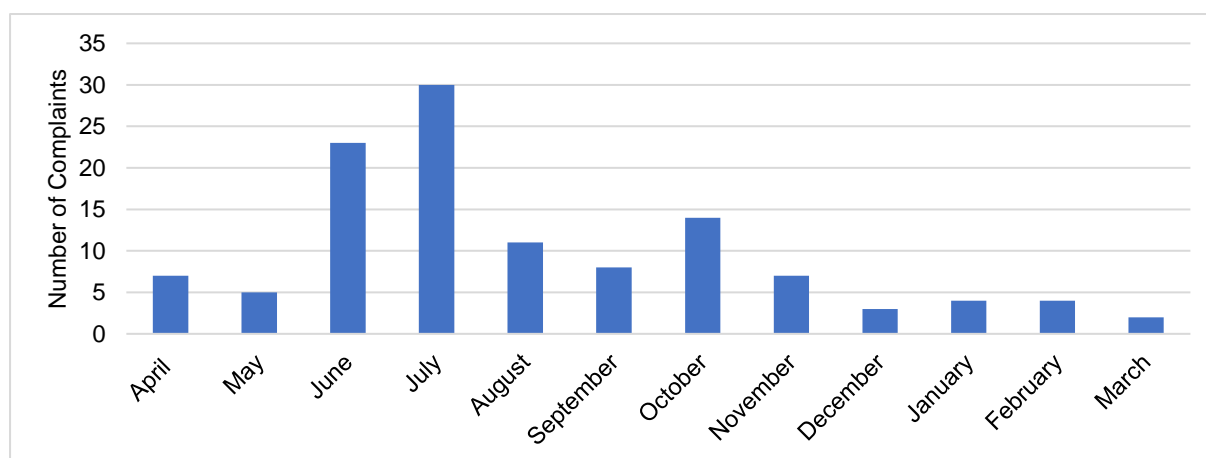


Figure 12 Complaints unrelated to Farnborough operations by month, PIR period April 2022-March 2023

## 5 Feedback on the PIR and in relation to the process

### 5.1 Email feedback

- 5.1.1 To enable stakeholders to have their opinions included within this report, we established a dedicated email address for the data gathering period.
- 5.1.2 We publicised this address to 187 registered ACP stakeholders<sup>2</sup> in April 2022, published details on the airport website, and included details at Farnborough Airport Consultative Committee (FACC) and Flight Operations Committee (FLOPSC) meetings throughout the PIR period.
- 5.1.3 A total of 71 emails were received, however, 4 were out of scope as they were not about this airspace change. The remaining 67 in-scope emails are discussed and summarised in the rest of this section. Redacted copies are published separately as 'Annex D Appendix of Redacted Emails'.
- 5.1.4 The following table shows the arrival rate of emails into the dedicated address. None were immediately received. It could be inferred that the warmer months drew more interest but there is no obvious pattern. There was a spike as the PIR period came to a close.

Month	Number	Month	Number
April 2022	0	October 2022	4
May 2022	0	November 2022	0
June 2022	1	December 2022	1
July 2022	4	January 2023	1
August 2022	5	February 2023	3
September 2022	4	March 2023	44

Table 1 Emails received re PIR, by month

- 5.1.5 Each inbound email was sent an acknowledgement, explaining that the contents would be included in this report.

### 5.2 Feedback Provision

- 5.2.1 Emails received were varied and often contained numerous themes, were often factually inaccurate in parts and in some cases the specific wording meant that the subject matter experts reading the responses needed to make assumptions. When this was necessary, the assumption was made in favour of the responder with the spirit of the response being taken into the analysis.
- 5.2.2 The following examples highlight these issues:
- *[sic] We have so much noise all day long, some flights are as early as 5 am and its very loud! We cant sleep in our house with open window . Often we are working from home and its impossible to work as some flights are so low that you could see all details of a plane ! I would understand if its one ore two planes on weekend BUT its every single day all day long! We feel vibration of windows even! Could you please take actions! PLEASE move your flights above woodland! Not PIR Update – January 2023 above residential area! I have busy days and I want to relax at home and not to listen every 10 minutes to propellers above my head! Please let me know whom directly to write in order that this issue will be investigated further and actions will be taken to protect residence form a noise pollution!*

The writer refers to 5am and Farnborough airport flights, however, this is inaccurate as Farnborough Airport's opening hours are 0700-2200 local time (weekdays) and 0800-2000 local time (weekends and Bank Holidays).

<sup>2</sup> Based on the information the original consultation for the ACP

- *In the CAA's 2014 consultation...*

The writer was referring to the 2014 consultation carried out by Farnborough Airport.

5.2.3 The following is a breakdown of the responses:

- 2 responses were received from local council.
- 1 response was from a local noise action group.
- 64 responses appear to be from individual community stakeholders, some appear to come from the same household.
- 1 response was received stating support for the change.
- 6 email addresses provided more than one response, in total these 6 addresses provided 18 responses, which is more than 25% of the total.
- 55 distinct email respondees are identified in the response.
- 26 email respondees, approximately 40% of the total also submitted a complaint in this period.
- 41 responses, approximately 61% of the total, stated they were from GU10.
- 34 responses (50.7%), based on the information provided, appear to come from the area of Churt, which aligns with the complaint data.

5.2.4 The statistics above align with the complaint data showing that those most interested in this process are from GU10 and specifically Churt. With a population of approximately 2,000 in Churt, this indicates a response rate of about 1.7% of the population.

### 5.3 Feedback content analysis

5.3.1 Most emails contained multiple points; the chart shows a breakdown of subjects raised, with the top 5 subjects all registering between 13% and 9% of the total.

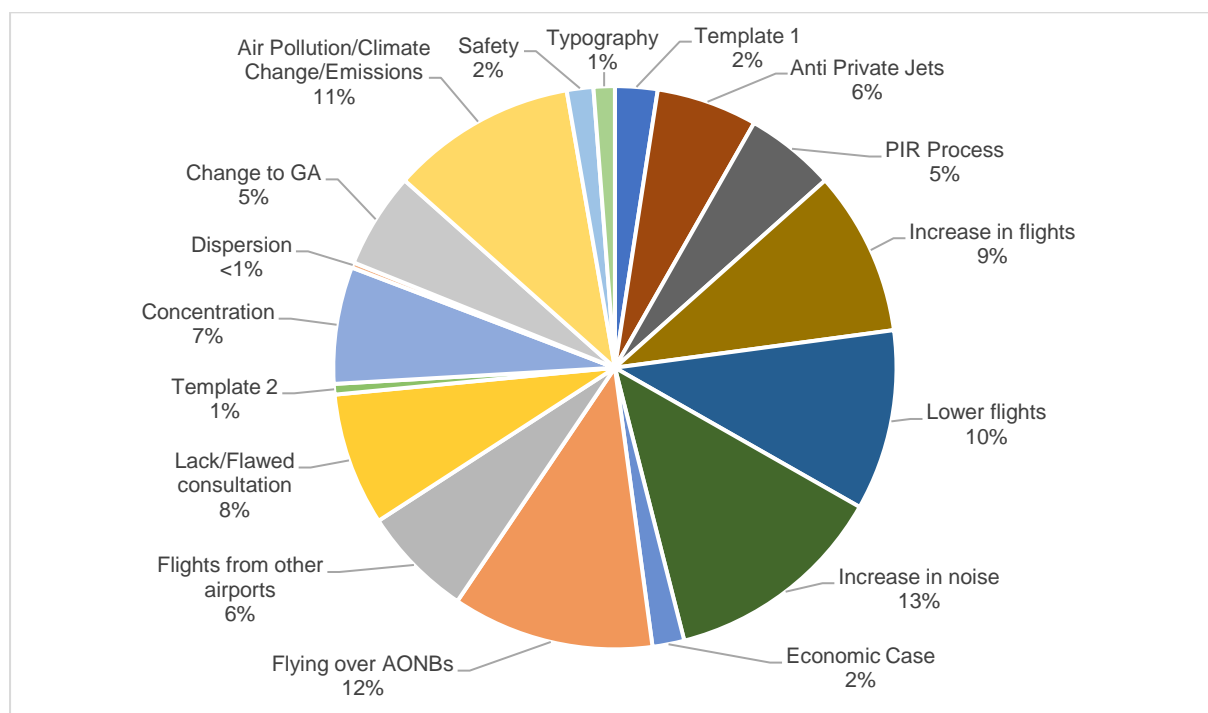


Figure 13 Feedback Response Topics

5.3.2 Examples:

Received 5th August 2022

*The PIR should be transparent and fair, with active engagement of those affected. This has happened without local knowledge or notification but the impact is huge. How can something that has such great impact happen without any local and open consultation? This has happened suddenly without any publicised consultation to this area which has been so severely affected. This seems to be to the convenience of wealthy corporations and individuals with a unhealthy impact on the general public under the flightpath; benefiting a few and negatively impacting the many.*

Received 23rd September 2022:

*We .....have noticed a large increase in frequency of flights directly over us, as well as the planes flying much lower. This is creating much more noise and pollution due to the height, and as we have rare species of animal in our AONB / SSSI such as sand lizards, we would like to complain that this should be reduced or diverted for the countryside's sake.*

Received 11th February 2023:

*My objection concerns current levels of flights which causes unacceptable levels of noise and air quality pollution. When these aircraft come over, climbing steeply, you have to stop talking and you can literally taste the air pollution. That even this unacceptable level, in this beautiful area, is to be increased is beyond comprehension and is totally unacceptable.*

Received 17th March 2023:

*The private jets navigational systems are so accurate they follow the same course in a very narrow-concentrated flight path band. This results in significantly more overflying and noise in an area that was not previously overflowed. By FA jets flying so low, by flying in a narrow-concentrated band and by flying in AONB with no background noise, the noise pollution has a massive impact at ground level.*

- 5.3.3 Two emails made specific reference to the ACP documentation. The separate document 'Annex A Traffic Dispersion and Environmental Overflight Diagrams' explains how flights behaved in the period pre and post ACP, and also provides a comparison with the predictions made in the original consultation and feedback material.

## 6 Conclusion

- 6.1.1 Complaints during the data gathering period show an increase over the historic pre-ACP numbers and are reflective of a change taking place.
- 6.1.2 It has not been possible to infer if this increase was influenced by the impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on the abrupt stopping, and subsequent resumption, of air traffic overflight. It is possible that perception of noise and awareness was heightened because of a cessation of air traffic for a significant period in 2020.
- 6.1.3 It is evident that there are now more people in the local area that are aware of the noise generated by flights into and out of the airport, or that those who were already aware are undertaking additional complaint submission.
- 6.1.4 The ability for stakeholders to present feedback (separate from the complaint process) on this ACP was widely publicised and encouraged by FAL and a small number of stakeholders made use of this facility.
- 6.1.5 No information in any of the emails provided evidence of an impact that had not been foreseen and articulated in the previous documentation/consultations during the CAP725 process.
- 6.1.6 In the consultations we illustrated where we predicted areas of flightpath narrowing were most likely to occur, we received consultation feedback, we amended the airspace design, we provided appropriate charts and diagrams of our subsequent predictions and we have now compared those predictions with actual flight data in the separate document 'Annex A Farnborough PIR Traffic Dispersion and Environmental Overflight Diagrams'.
- 6.1.7 The number of complaints has increased from before the implementation of this ACP. The feedback and complaints received during the data gathering period reflect the impacts on those overflown.
- 6.1.8 There is no positive feedback from places where previous regular overflight was reduced or removed.

End of document