

The Planes Above Us by Rachael Welsh

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Rachael Webb gave us a very interesting and informative talk about the aircraft that pass over this area and of the work of the consultative committee.

This area is complex as the flight paths for Luton, Heathrow and Stansted all pass at differing heights over this area of Buckinghamshire. Aircraft landing at Heathrow are held in a stack over Buckinghamshire whilst their landing slot becomes available. Stansted flights pass over to line up for their slot. Add to this take offs and landings to Luton and you get a complex pattern of air tracks. The paths for Luton can be viewed on the copies of the take off and landings attached to this report.

These paths are under constant review by the consultative committee. They are able to view proposed changes to flight paths, angles of descent and ascent, lowering of undercarriage and the sound of engines so that residents are able to have the best possible living environment. One example given was that, on landing, aircraft are able to use less engine as there is an element of gliding as it comes in to land. Pitstone is now the point at which landing gear is lowered and so less engine is required to push the airliner to its landing point. Another interesting fact is that Dunstable Gliding school have right of way as they were there first so airliners have to fly round the area when gliders are operating. After leaving the Luton control area aircraft are handed on to the National Control Centre at Swanage.

Live flights can be viewed at www.flightradar24.com

Colin Tufnell, MBE