

Friday 30 August 2019 - For Immediate Release

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Photos / videos from the meeting will be uploaded here:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1wNk1s-yqzCOWIFtI8aGCU_7YCmCNTjAP

HEATHROW DRONE ACTIVISTS MEET AIRPORT AUTHORITIES

- Environmental activists will meet with police and airport authorities to discuss plans to fly toy drones in the Heathrow exclusion zone, commencing Friday 13 September
- The meeting will take place at Lambeth Police Station on Friday 30 August from 9 - 11am
- Immediately following the meeting, the four activists participating in the meeting will be available for photos and interviews outside the police station
- The full plan for the non-violent direct action is available at:
<https://heathrowpause.org/documents/>

On Friday 30th August, 9 - 11am, Lambeth Police Station: four people who have pledged to fly toy drones in Heathrow Airport's exclusion zone will meet with the Heathrow Airport Authority, Heathrow Business Resilience team and the Metropolitan Police.

The four people, representing the group of individuals planning to fly drones as part of the [Heathrow Pause](#) action are:

- Valerie Milner-Brown (64, writer)
- Jonathan Fishwick (61, window cleaner and Alexander Technique teacher)
- Sylvia Dell, (61, retired IT business analyst)
- James Brown (54, Charity Social Entrepreneur and Paralympian medalist)

To ensure maximum transparency, the group has asked the Heathrow Airport Authority and the Heathrow Business Resilience team to permit the meeting to be filmed and live-streamed. They are currently awaiting a response.

In a statement responding to the group's request for a meeting, Heathrow Business Resilience team said:

"We agree wholeheartedly with the need to act on climate change and that constructive engagement is necessary to do so. We believe this meeting can be an opportunity to have

informed conversations about the surrounding issues, our existing and future plans in this space, and ideas you may have for potential solutions as well as improvements.”

The group undertaking the Heathrow Pause action are doing so to highlight the incompatibility of Heathrow Airport's expansion with the Government's own legally binding commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. This was made in light of Parliament's declaration of an Environment and Climate Emergency.

Valerie Milner-Brown, one of the people risking prison by flying a toy drone, commented:

“We are in the middle of a Climate and Ecological Emergency. I am a law-abiding citizen - a mother and a grandmother too. I don't want to break the law, I don't want to go to prison, but right now we, as a species, are walking off the edge of a cliff. Life on Earth is dying. Fires are ravaging the Amazon. Our planet's lungs are quite literally on fire. Hundreds of species are going extinct every day. We are experiencing hottest day after hottest day, and the Arctic is melting faster than scientists' worst predictions.

“All of this means that we have to cut emissions right now, or face widespread catastrophe on an increasingly uninhabitable planet. Heathrow Airport emits 18 million tons of CO2 a year. That's more than most countries. A third runway will produce a further 7.3 million tons of CO2. For all Life - now and in the future - we have to take action. I'm terrified but if this is what it will take to make politicians, business leaders and the media wake up, then I'm prepared to take this action and to face the consequences.”

ENDS

Notes to editors

Valerie Milner-Brown, Linda Davidsen and the other 'peace pilots' are being interviewed with the interviews being posted here: <https://heathrowpause.org/pilots/>

Our Three Objectives:

UK Government must:

1. Tell the Truth about global heating; comply with Parliament's declaration of an Environment and Climate Emergency; work with other institutions and influencers to communicate the urgency for radical new policies to halt and even reverse climate change
2. Act Now to reverse biodiversity loss and reduce CO2 emissions to net zero by 2025.
3. Go Beyond Politics by creating and being led by the decisions of a competent, well informed and properly resourced Citizens' Assembly on Climate and Ecological Justice.

Safety Measures and Protocols:

To ensure no living being is harmed, the action will have strict safety measures and protocols:

1. Head height - Drones will be flown no higher than at head height. The relevant government legislation, (The Air Navigation Order 2016 SI 2016 No. 765), deems 400ft to be hazardous. A 6-foot (183cm) maximum height is not in breach of this and clearly no risk to aircraft.
2. Small toy drones - Drones will be small and lightweight. The relevant government legislation, (Air Navigation Order 2016 SI 2016 No. 765), deems 7kg (excluding fuel) to be hazardous. Our tiny toy drones are clearly no risk to aircraft.
3. Not within flight paths - If deployed as part of a planned action, drones may be flown at just above head height in the restricted 5km zone surrounding Heathrow but NOT within flight paths. As an example, advance notice could be given that a drone might be flown just above head height in a public park in West Drayton, presenting the airport authorities with the advance decision to safely close air space for the duration of this action.
4. 1 hour's advance notice - Heathrow Airport Authority will be given at least 1 hour's advance notice before each drone flight.
5. Early start - Drone use will start early (3am) before most night flights which run 4.30-6.00am, and scheduled flights, which run from 6am-11.30pm. The airport authority will therefore have the choice of not initiating flights when drones are in the air.
6. Call the police once completed - Drone pilots will telephone the police after their drone flight is completed for the day and wait peacefully to be arrested.
7. Regular intervals - Drones will fly at regular intervals throughout the day. Continual drone flights during the day will ensure that, to comply with Heathrow's own rules, no aircraft flights take place.
8. Emergencies - In the case of a genuine emergency all drone use will stop immediately. A direct communication hotline between the authorities and the action groups will be set up, to ensure fluent communication.
9. Advance notice - The authorities and public will have suitable advance notice of the start date and time. We hope this will also give members of the public sufficient time to make alternative travel arrangements if needed.

If a breach of these protocols should occur we can stop the action immediately, and advise the authorities accordingly through the 'hotline' set up for this purpose. Our protocols ensure this will be a nonviolent action. There is nothing violent about flying drones when there are no scheduled flights in the air. Initiating those scheduled flights is the sole responsibility of the airport authorities.

Likely Legal Consequences:

All participants flying drones know they risk arrest and imprisonment, and are prepared to be arrested peacefully.

Our readiness and courage are based on the conviction that:

1. Our actions are a humanitarian act intended to save millions of innocent lives that will be lost if carbon emissions are not drastically reduced.
2. This is an act of conscience. We cannot live in peace with ourselves knowing that inaction will cost us the future. Faced with the prospect of such disaster, no rational, mindful person can live with the thought of having done nothing to prevent it. Our moral code is rooted in the principle of doing unto others as we would have them do unto us. We seek to save the lives of strangers because we believe they would do the same for us. Our conscience dictates that we act, for the good of us all.
3. This action is proportionate with the threat we face. If anything, it is comically modest. The death of millions versus flying a drone at an altitude of six feet? Really? It is a citizen's right and duty to bypass a law if not doing so will result in greater harm to life and property. We act out of necessity to protect our children, our fellows, and all the other lives that travel with us on this Earth.

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