

South East Airport Expansion Meeting

Notes from John Stewart

- 1. AirportWatch** came together in 2000 to overcome NIMBYISM amongst airport community campaign groups. Later, national environmental organizations joined. One golden rule: fight our own corner but not suggest expansion goes elsewhere. It enabled us to engage in the wider political debate around aviation. And it brought success: runways at Heathrow, Stansted and Gatwick were all dropped. We fought together and we won together!
2. A similar coalition, but including local authorities, came together to successfully fight the third runway at **Heathrow**.
- 3. Banding together we as campaign groups, local authorities and environmental organisations, can once again set the terms of the debate.** Transport Secretary has dismissed the efforts of the aviation industry as 'a pub-style debate'. The industry is simply repeating its old arguments and, with each airport fighting its own corner, shows little chance of developing a coherent aviation strategy.
- 4. We have the chance to lead the debate** by producing the sort of evidence-based research that the Transport Secretary is looking for. WWF, RSPB and HACAN are looking to commission research into capacity and connectivity. We will take comments on the brief beforehand.
- 5.** There is one other key point which much of the industry doesn't seem to have grasped. Both Thames Estuary and a third runway at Heathrow are almost certainly in the **"too difficult" box** as far as politicians are concerned. Strong campaigning will be the best way of keeping them there.