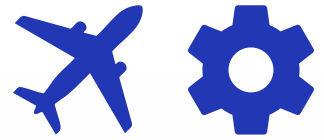


# Flying High

## The Impact of Aviation in the West of England



### AVIATION'S IMPACT IN NUMBERS



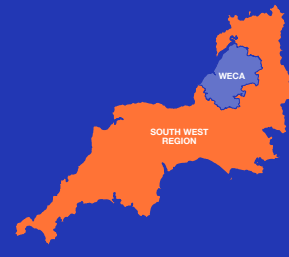
**13,977 jobs**

The West of England Combined Authority area has 13,977 jobs directly generated by aviation.



**3,156 jobs**

Of these, Filton and Bradley Stoke constituency has the largest number, with 3,156 jobs.



**48,000 jobs**

The wider South West region has 48,000 jobs directly generated by aviation.



**£9.5 billion**

Air freight supports 5.5% of the economy and contributes £9.5bn to the region's GVA.



**10 million**

More than 10 million passengers travel through Bristol Airport every year.

### INTRODUCTION TO AVIATION IN BRISTOL AND THE WEST OF ENGLAND

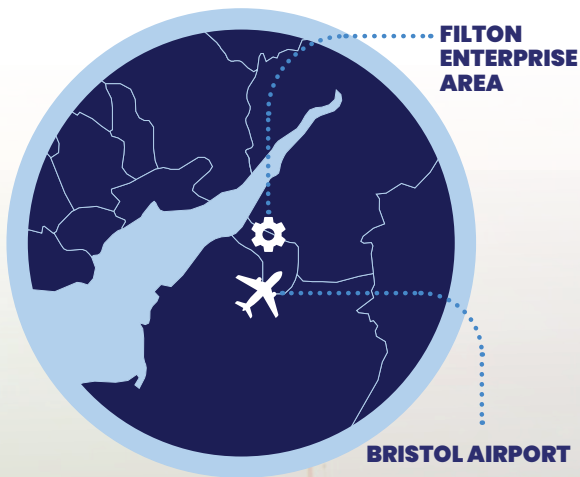
Aviation is a fast-growing sector in the UK. It supports key industries like advanced manufacturing, tech, life sciences, and tourism – many of which the Government's Industrial Strategy identifies as growth-driving sectors.

The aviation industry plays a particularly important role in the South West region and the West of England Combined Authority. There is a world-

leading aerospace cluster based in Filton, with household names such as Rolls-Royce, GKN and Airbus undertaking cutting-edge research and innovation, supporting advanced manufacturing and providing skilled jobs and training.

Bristol Airport is the largest airport in the South West, connected to more than 120 destinations and enabling businesses and people across the region to access global markets. Supporting the continued development of international tourism is integral to economic growth. At present, 20% of visits to Bristol and Bath are from international passengers – and they account for about 50% of the spend by tourists. Increasing the number of international visitors will help boost the economy in the West of England.

**“The West of England has ‘world-class strengths in aerospace and advanced engineering’ with over 40,000 people employed in these sectors.”**



## SUSTAINABLE AVIATION IN BRISTOL

The aviation industry has a clear and credible plan for decarbonisation. This includes more efficient planes, flying more efficient routes, ramping up the use of sustainable aviation fuels (SAF) and using new zero-emission technologies such as hydrogen. Research from Sustainable Aviation shows a homegrown SAF industry could boost the UK economy by £1.8 billion by the end of the decade and create 10,300 green jobs. The industry could grow to employ more than 60,000 people and support over £10 billion in GVA in the next 25 years.

Action has already been taken in the West of England to promote the use of SAF – Jet2 purchased SAF for flights from Bristol Airport in 2024, before the UK SAF mandate came into effect. Other decarbonisation work is ongoing through Project Acorn, in which Bristol Airport works with partners to address key issues in the use of hydrogen at airports, particularly in storage and refuelling. Project Acorn, led by easyJet, Bristol Airport and industry partners such as DHL, was the world's first airside hydrogen refuelling trial of its kind.

## A WORLD-LEADING AEROSPACE CLUSTER

### Filton Enterprise Area

Filton Enterprise Area in Bristol is the home of aerospace and aviation technology and specialises in advanced engineering, technology and manufacturing. Home to major companies who are critical to the high-value UK aerospace ecosystem, such as GKN, Rolls-Royce and Airbus, as well as their supply chains and university and innovation partners, the high concentration of strategic capabilities in Filton develops skills, creates jobs and drives both innovation and economic growth.

- **GKN's** partnership with Weston College has developed a bespoke apprenticeship programme to train the engineers of tomorrow.
- **Airbus** spent over £598 million in 2023 across the South West region with approximately 250 suppliers.
- At a time of increasing geopolitical instability, the **Rolls-Royce** manufacturing facility in Filton continues to power the UK and its allies with combat air engines, investing in ground-breaking technologies to deliver next generation air defence.

### Bristol Airport

Businesses and industry in the West of England are supported by the activity of Bristol Airport. The connectivity offered by the airport is often cited as a central reason for companies, such as US healthcare corporation Epic Systems, locating new UK headquarters in Bristol. The airport plays a critical role connecting businesses – in particular the aerospace cluster at Filton – to global markets, and in providing a baseload demand for manufacturing and supply chains.

## HOW AVIATION IS SUPPORTING THE WEST OF ENGLAND'S ECONOMIC AMBITIONS



The West of England Combined Authority recognises the importance of aviation, pointing to a diverse economy with strengths across aerospace, advanced engineering and advanced manufacturing. The presence of world-leading industry, with the airport as the gateway to the South West region, presents huge opportunities for the area.

There is an opportunity to do even more. This could include a focus on aviation in the upcoming Local Growth Plan, and providing explicit support for

Bristol Airport, airlines and associated industries. In addition, given the role of airports and airlines in developing routes for leisure and business travel, the Combined Authority could ensure strategic alignment by working with Bristol Airport to develop an internationalisation and inward investment strategy. Doing this would capitalise on the fantastic opportunity in the West of England and Bristol and ensure that aviation continues to deliver for the region.