How to complain about helicopter noise

The official routes in London, in order, with what each can and cannot do, an evidence checklist and a letter you can copy.

Before you complain: three quick checks

- **Is it the heliport's traffic?** Heliport flights run 07:00–23:00. A helicopter circling for a long time is more likely police or air ambulance. Flights before 07:00 or after 23:00 are not the heliport's.
- **Can you read a registration?** A UK registration starts with G-. It tells you who to write to.
- **Do you have the facts?** Note the date, time, place and how long it lasted. Page 2 has a checklist.

The routes, in the order we would use them

#	Who	What to do	Good for
1	**London Heliport**	Use the online form on the Noise Complaints page at londonheliport.co.uk/noise-complaints (name, address, phone, email, date, time, location, duration). Tel +44 (0)20 7228 0181; email info@londonheliport.co.uk.	Aircraft using the heliport; helicopters on the Thames generally. The heliport owns no helicopters, so a named aircraft may be passed to its operator.
2	**The aircraft's operator**	Look up the registration in the CAA's G-INFO register to find the owner, then write to the operator.	An aircraft you can identify that is not breaking the Rules of the Air.
3	**CAA noise complaint**	Form FCS 1521 on the CAA website (search "CAA aircraft noise complaints and enquiries"). The CAA logs it and, where suitable, refers it to the airport, air traffic provider or Secretary of State.	General aircraft noise, low flying and other airspace concerns.
4	**CAA breach report**	Online form "Report a potential breach of aviation law". It can be anonymous. If you give contact details, the CAA says it will contact you within 20 working days.	Suspected low flying or a rule breach. The CAA assesses every report but cannot investigate them all.
5	**Military helicopters**	Low flying: SWK-lowflying@mod.gov.uk or 01780 417 558. The CAA has no authority over military aircraft.	Military aircraft only.

POLICE AND AIR AMBULANCE

There is no separate complaint portal for police and air ambulance helicopters. They can operate across London at any hour and are not heliport operations; they are exempt from some rules because of their emergency role.

What to expect

- The CAA says it cannot restrict an aircraft that is not breaking the Rules of the Air, and has no power to stop flights over a place or at a time for environmental reasons.
- Local councils have no legal power over aircraft noise itself. They matter only for planning conditions. The heliport's limits (80 movements a day, 12,000 a year, opening hours) come from its planning permission, which Wandsworth Council monitors.
- Complaints still count. They are logged, and they are how patterns get noticed.

Noise guide: evidence and a letter

What to record

Note down	Why it helps
Date and time	Start and end, to the minute. It lets the heliport check its movement log.
Where you were	Your address or a street corner, and which way you were facing.
What you saw	Colour, size, number of rotors, any markings. Write down the registration (G-xxxx) if you can read it.
How long, how often	One pass, a circuit for ten minutes, or the same flight every day.
How it affected you	Sleep, calls, children, work. Keep it short and factual.
A photo or video	Include a fixed point such as a building or bridge to show height. The CAA says flight-tracking apps are not accurate evidence of position or height.

A letter you can copy

To: [The London Heliport, Bridges Court Road, London SW11 3BE / the aircraft operator / the CAA]
Subject: Helicopter noise complaint, [date]

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing about a helicopter that flew near [your address] on [date] between [start time] and [end time]. It was [low / circling / flying repeatedly], heading [direction] and I could see [colour, markings and registration, if known].

The noise [woke me / interrupted work / disturbed my family] and lasted about [number] minutes. I have [photos or video] taken from [place], showing [fixed reference point].

Please tell me which aircraft this was, whether it was operating within the rules, and what can be done to reduce the disturbance. Please reply to the address below.

Yours faithfully,
[Name, address, telephone, email]

Where to find the forms

Heliport form	londonheliport.co.uk/noise-complaints
CAA noise (FCS 1521)	caa.co.uk, “Aircraft noise complaints and enquiries”
CAA breach report	caa.co.uk, “Report a potential breach of aviation law”
Find the owner	caa.co.uk, G-INFO aircraft register
More detail	londonhelicopterguide.co.uk/noise-and-law/how-to-complain-about-helicopter-noise/

General information, not legal advice. Contact details and forms change: check the official page before you send. Drone complaints are a different route (local police, 101). Sources: CAA, London Heliport, Ministry of Defence guidance, as listed at londonhelicopterguide.co.uk/noise-and-law/.