

An aerial view from a cockpit looking down at the Gatwick Airport runway. The runway is a long, straight strip of asphalt with white markings, including dashed lines and arrows. Several aircraft are visible on the runway: a white jet in the foreground, a smaller white jet further ahead, and a red and white jet further back. The surrounding area includes green fields, taxiways, and airport buildings. The sky is blue with some light clouds. The wing of the aircraft from which the photo was taken is visible in the upper left corner.

The Gatwick Transit

How to Transit the Gatwick CTR VFR

A Practical Guide by Steve Pells

24 June 2018

Introduction:

Flying the Gatwick transit VFR is an immensely rewarding experience, which many people are afraid to do. This guide is designed to show you exactly what to do and say.

When you make your initial RT calls, the controller will assess your competence and decide if he wants to grant you access or not. So, it is important to speak clearly and confidently.

To make life easier for you, you can use the NATS Class D Online Transit tool at <https://aup.nats.aero/>.

NATS Airspace User Portal

Welcome to the Airspace User Portal

Thank you for visiting the new NATS Airspace User Portal. Later in 2018 this site will become the home for General Aviation pilots, Balloon operators, Drone pilots and other airspace users to submit all non-standard flight planning applications.

For now this site offers General Aviation pilots wishing to transit through Class D controlled airspace within the London area the ability to pre-notify their intention to do so via a simple, online tool.

To submit an application to transit Class D airspace please see below.

Class D Pre-notifications

To help our Controllers to manage increasing volumes of traffic in the busy airspace above London, we have introduced a new pre-notification tool which enables GA pilots wishing to transit through Class D controlled airspace within the London area to notify us in advance of their flight.

Help us to safely manage the increasingly busy skies above us by telling us of your planned flight.

[Submit a Class D Pre-notification](#)



About

Welcome to the new NATS Airspace Users Portal. This portal will become the new hub for all non-standard flight planning applications (NSF) later in 2018. It currently offers GA pilots the ability to pre-notify NATS of their intention to transit Class D controlled airspace over London.

To submit a pre-notification please use the form provided.

Disclaimer

Electronic submission of the information does not constitute any approval of clearance to cross or enter any controlled Airspace. The aircraft must remain outside any CAS until such time as ATC have provided a clearance and it has been acknowledged and read back by the pilot.

Class D Transit

Step 1: Transit details

Please fill in the details below:

Transit details	
Callsign *	<input type="text" value="Enter callsign without a hyphen (-)"/>
Aircraft type *	<input type="text" value="Enter aircraft type"/>
Transit type *	<input checked="" type="radio"/> VFR <input type="radio"/> IFR
Place of departure *	<input type="text" value="Enter place of departure or ICAO designation if known"/>
Destination *	<input type="text" value="Enter flight destination or ICAO designation if known"/>

Pilot details	
First name *	<input type="text" value="Enter first name"/>
Last name *	<input type="text" value="Enter last name"/>

Class D Transit

Step 1: Transit details

Step 2: Transit areas

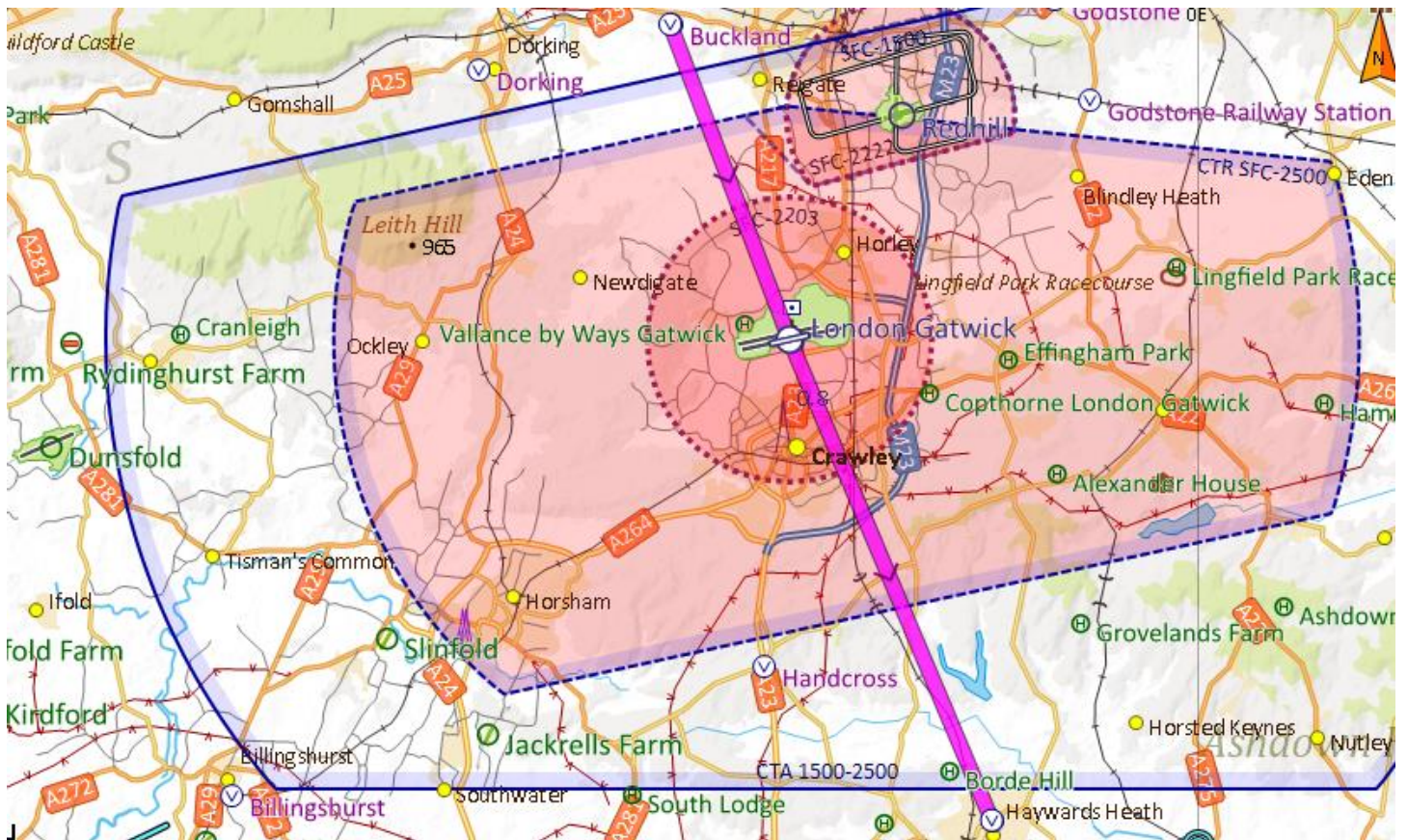
Please fill in the details below:

Add transit area	
Transit area *	<input type="text" value="Gatwick"/>
Date of transit	<input type="text" value="2018-06-23 (today only)"/>
Estimated time of transit *	<input type="text" value="14:02 UTC"/>

Just fill in all the details of aircraft, pilot and airspace transit needed and submit. You will receive an e-mail to confirm. This does not guarantee a transit will be approved, but it means they already have many of the details.

Transit North to South

The easiest routing is from Buckland VRP via the Gatwick overhead to the Haywards Heath VRP. However, a similar route can be started from Dorking VRP, and the transit can be terminated at Handcross.



Arrange your flight towards Buckland (or Dorking) and calculate an ETA (either from Sky Demon or the old-fashioned way. Arrange to be around 1500' on the Gatwick QNH at these points. Have copied the Gatwick ATIS already (136.525) and listen out on Gatwick Director 126.825. This frequency can be extremely busy, so you may have to wait for a while for a gap.

A/C: Gatwick Approach, G-ABCD for zone transit.

The standard response will probably be:

ATC: Aircraft calling for zone transit, Gatwick Approach, standby, I will call you.

When workload permits, expect:

ATC: Aircraft calling for zone transit, pass your message.

A/C: G-ABCD is a PA28 from Blackbushe to Lydd VFR, estimating Buckland time 34, information K, request zone transit.

ATC: G-CD, Squawk 1234, remain clear of controlled airspace, Gatwick QNH 1016, standby.

A/C: Squawk 1234, remain clear of controlled airspace. G-CD

Later:

ATC: Gatwick clears G-ABCD to transit controlled airspace routing Buckland to Haywards Heath via the Gatwick overhead, not above altitude 1500' QNH 1016. Basic Service.

A/C: G-ABCD is cleared to transit controlled airspace routing Buckland to haywards Heath via the Gatwick overhead, not above altitude 1500' QNH 1016. Basic Service. G-CD.

You should now navigate towards Buckland (a round lake W of Redhill), and descend to say 1200', once clear of the ridge line.

ATC: G-CD, your clearance limit is the North Terminal, report Gatwick in Sight.

A/C: Clearance limit is the North Terminal. Wilco. G-CD

Approaching Buckland:

A/C: Gatwick in sight, G-CD.

ATC: G-CD, Roger.

After passing Buckland:

ATC: G-CD, entering controlled airspace. Radar control.

A/C: Roger, Radar control, G-CD.

Shortly after:

ATC: G-CD, contact Gatwick Tower, frequency 124.225.

A/C: Tower, 124.225, G-CD.

This frequency can also be extremely busy so again wait for a gap.

A/C: Gatwick Tower, G-ABCD., routing to the N Terminal.

ATC: G-CD, Understood. Hold at the N Terminal

A/C: Hold at the N Terminal. G-CD.

You can now route towards the large square hotel at the North terminal. Do not cross the runway until instructed. If you get to the N Terminal before onward clearance is given, orbit to the left clear of the runway, over the Terminal. When traffic permits, usually before you get to the N Terminal:

ATC: G-CD, Report visual with the Airbus A320 on 4-mile final Runway 26L.

A/C: Wilco, G-CD.

Look on the approach and as soon as you can identify the traffic:

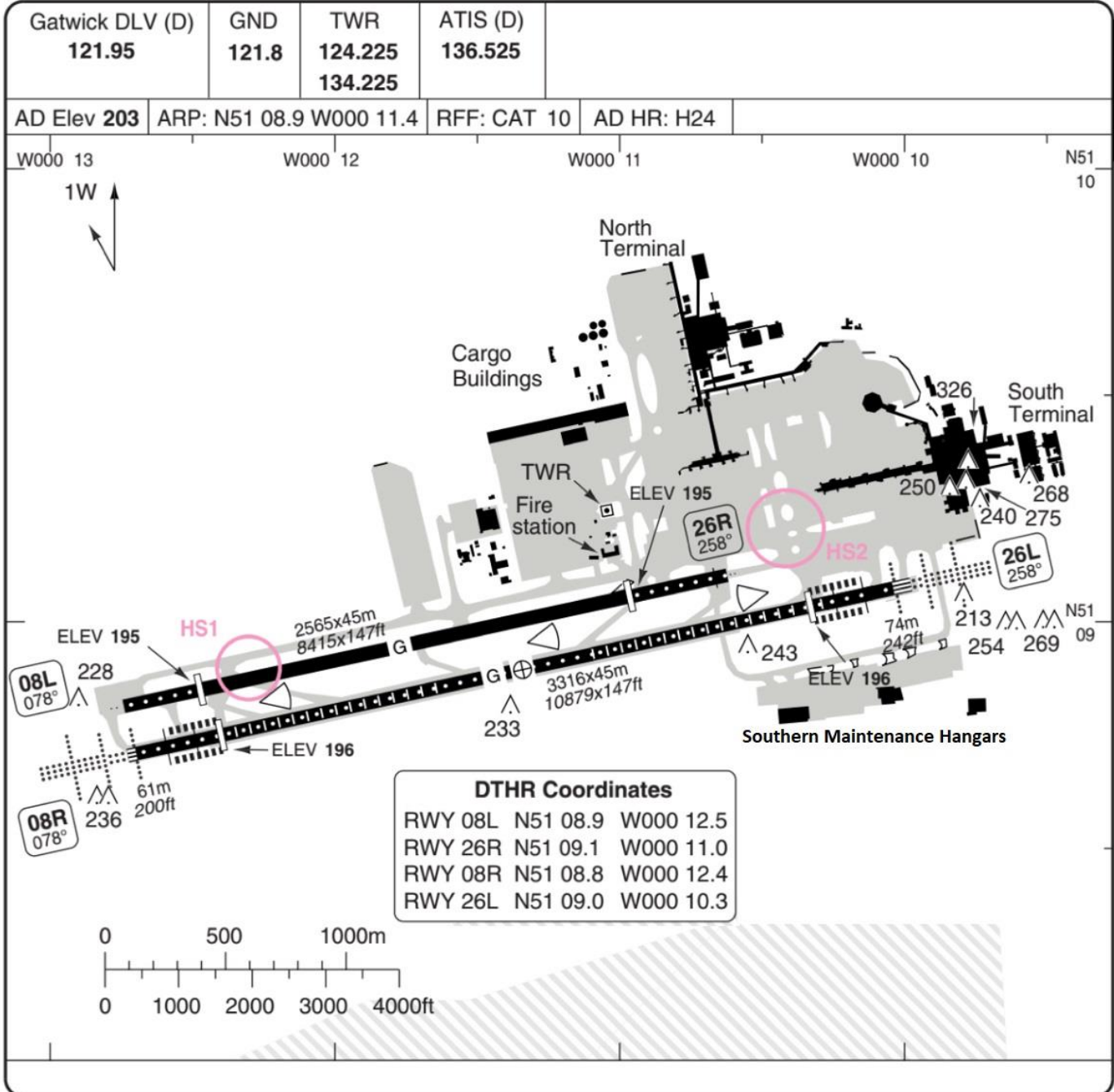
A/C: G-CD, visual with the A320 on 4 mile Final.

ATC: G-CD, with that traffic in sight, pass above and behind the landing traffic over the 26L threshold.

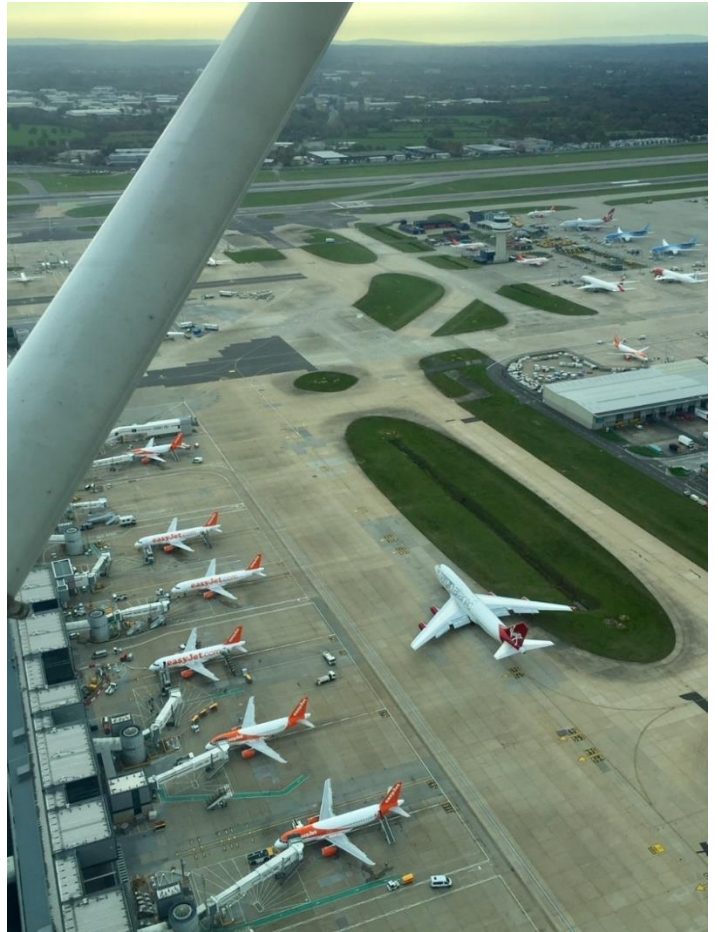
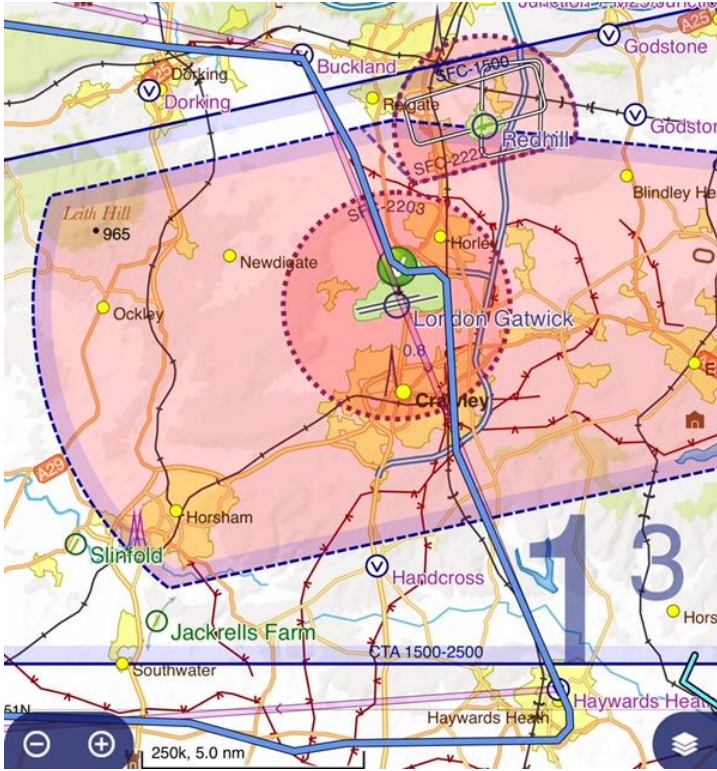
A/C: With that traffic in sight, pass above and behind, over the 26L threshold, G-CD.

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10 - 1



Keep the traffic in sight, and judge your track so as to follow the instructions. Slight track adjustments may be needed to achieve this. See below for an actual transit:





Remain below 1500' (or as cleared) and fly over the runway threshold. After crossing, you can initially follow the railway tracks south towards Haywards Heath. Once you have crossed the centerline, the Tower controller will be very keen to get rid of you and will hand you either back to Approach on 126.825 or on to Director 118.95.

ATC: G-CD, Continue to route South, contact Gatwick Approach 126.825.

A/C: Continue South, Approach 126.825. G-CD.

A/C: Approach, Hello again, G-ABCD.

ATC: G-CD, Leave the zone to the South VFR, not above Altitude 2500'.

A/C: Leave the zone to the South VFR, not above Altitude 2500'. G-CD.

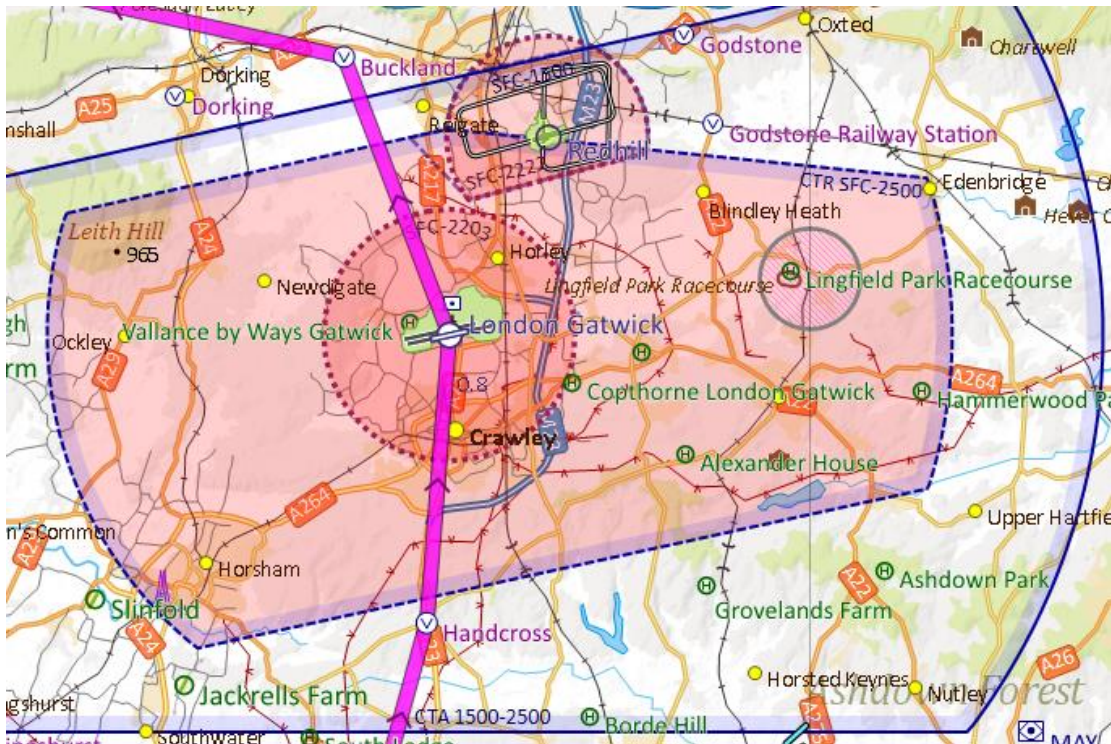
As you leave the zone, you will be told so, and returned to a basic service. When you change onwards to, say, Farnborough Radar, do not forget to thank Gatwick for the transit, as it is extra workload for them, and would be so much easier for them just to say no.

If Runway 08 is in use, the clearance will be similar, but you will be instructed to Passover the 08R landing threshold.



Transit South to North

The easiest routing is Haywards Heath VRP or Handcross VRP, routing via the Gatwick overhead to the Buckland VRP. However, a similar route can be terminated at the Dorking VRP.



Arrange your flight towards Handcross or Haywards Heath and calculate an ETA (either from Sky Demon or the old-fashioned way. Arrange to be around 1500' on the Gatwick QNH at these points. Have copied the Gatwick ATIS already (136.525) and listen out on Gatwick Director 126.825. This frequency can be extremely busy, so you may have to wait for a while for a gap.

A/C: Gatwick Approach, G-ABCD for zone transit.

The standard response will probably be:

ATC: Aircraft calling for zone transit, Gatwick Approach, standby, I will call you.

When workload permits, expect:

ATC: Aircraft calling for zone transit, pass your message.

A/C: G-ABCD is a PA28 from Shoreham to Blackbushe VFR, estimating Handcross time 12, information W, request zone transit.

ATC: G-CD, Squawk 1234, remain clear of controlled airspace, Gatwick QNH 1016, standby.

A/C: Squawk 1234, remain clear of controlled airspace. G-CD. Later:

ATC: Gatwick clears G-ABCD to transit controlled airspace routing Handcross to Buckland via the Gatwick overhead, not above altitude 1500' QNH 1016. Basic Service.

A/C: G-ABCD is cleared to transit controlled airspace routing Handcross to Buckland via the Gatwick overhead, not above altitude 1500' QNH 1016. Basic Service. G-CD.

You should now navigate towards Handcross (a small village), and descend to say 1200'.

ATC: G-CD, your clearance limit is the Southern Maintenance Hangars, report Gatwick in Sight.

A/C: Clearance limit is the Southern Maintenance Hangars. Wilco. G-CD

Approaching Handcross:

A/C: Gatwick in sight, G-CD.

ATC: G-CD, Roger.

After passing Handcross:

ATC: G-CD, entering controlled airspace. Radar control.

A/C: Roger, Radar control, G-CD.

Shortly after:

ATC: G-CD, contact Gatwick Tower, frequency 124.225.

A/C: Tower, 124.225, G-CD.

This frequency can also be extremely busy so again wait for a gap.

A/C: Gatwick Tower, G-ABCD, routing to the Southern Maintenance Hangars.

ATC: G-CD, Understood. Hold at the Southern Maintenance Hangars.

A/C: Hold at the Southern Maintenance Hangars. G-CD.



You can now route towards the large hangars on the south side of the runway. Do not cross the runway until instructed. If you get to the hangars before onward clearance is given, orbit to the left clear of the runway, over Crawley town. When traffic permits, usually before you get to the hangars:

ATC: G-CD, Report visual with the 787 on 4-mile final Runway 26L. A/C: Wilco, G-CD.

Look on the approach and as soon as you can identify the traffic:

A/C: G-CD, visual with the 787 on 4 mile Final.

ATC: G-CD, with that traffic in sight, pass above and behind the landing traffic over the 26L threshold.

A/C: With that traffic in sight, pass above and behind, over the 26L threshold, G-CD.



Remain below 1500' (or as cleared) and fly over the runway threshold. Once you have crossed the centerline, the Tower controller will be very keen to get rid of you and will hand you either back to Approach on 126.825 or on to Director 118.95.

ATC: G-CD, Continue to the North, contact Gatwick Approach 126.825.

A/C: Continue South, Approach 126.825. G-CD.

A/C: Approach, Hello again, G-ABCD.

ATC: G-CD, Leave the zone to the North VFR, not above Altitude 2000'.

A/C: Leave the zone to the North VFR, not above Altitude 2000'. G-CD.

As you leave the zone, you will be told so, and returned to a basic service. When you change onwards to, say, Farnborough Radar, do not forget to thank Gatwick for the transit, as it is extra workload for them, and would be so much easier for them just to say no.

If Runway 08 is in use, the clearance will be similar, but you will be instructed to pass over the 08R landing threshold.



Sometimes you may be asked to enter a right downwind for runway 08R, and be told when to cross. Such a routing might look like this:



