

Birmingham Airport Vortex Protection Scheme

Birmingham Airport runs a Vortex Protection Scheme to protect homes around the Airport from aircraft wake vortex damage.

Facts about Aircraft Wake Vortices

At Birmingham less than 0.005% of flights cause vortex damage. The majority of strikes are concentrated in small areas near the runway ends. Only properties with pitched roofs are affected.

Eligibility Criteria

Every house which has been damaged by a Birmingham vortex strike, or is damaged in the future, is eligible for vortex protection. The only criteria is that damage has to be verified at the time by the Airport Company Assessor. The damage is very specific in nature and the assessor can quickly identify whether it has been caused by an aircraft operation.

What are Vortices?

Vortices are circulating currents of air created by the passage of aircraft through the sky. All aircraft shed vortices, but in most cases they are broken up before they reach ground level. In certain weather conditions, vortices can reach ground level.

What is Aircraft Wake Vortex Damage?

During the later stages of landing, it is possible for aircraft vortices to make contact with the roofs of properties close to the airport. They can, occasionally, cause the movement and slippage of roof tiles. This is known as aircraft wake vortex damage.

Who is Legally Responsible for Aircraft Wake Vortex Damage?

Under Section 76(2) of the Civil Aviation Act 1982 legal responsibility for damage caused by aircraft rests with the operator of the aircraft concerned. Birmingham Airport is not liable for vortex damage. In recognition of the fact that identification of the airlines is not always possible, the Airport Company has introduced a Vortex Protection Scheme as part of our commitment to be a good neighbour.

How do I know if my property has been subject to Aircraft Wake Vortex Damage?

The pattern and location of roof damage from aircraft trailing vortices is generally distinctive and easily distinguished from more common gale damage, or general wear and tear. The Airport Company Assessor is an expert in identifying the cause of any reported damage.

What does the Vortex Protection Scheme provide?

Under the terms of the scheme, any property that is the subject of a confirmed aircraft wake vortex strike will be provided with a vortex-proof roof at the Airport Company's expense. Roofs are strengthened by fixing down new modern tiles with special metal clips. This was shown to be the best way to protect homes following extensive independent scientific research. The work is completed by a contractor appointed by the Airport Company and is offered at no financial cost to the homeowner.

What are the rules of the Vortex Protection Scheme?

The rules of the Vortex Protection Scheme are:

- Only properties where the Airport Company Assessor has verified damage to be as a result of a wake vortex strike will be eligible.
- Properties sharing the same roof will be offered a new roof.
- If householders do not accept the offer of a new roof, the Airport Company will no longer conduct repairs in the event of future vortex damage.
- The Airport-appointed contractor will carry out all works.
- Properties provided with a new roof will no longer be eligible for further repairs under the scheme.
- The Airport Company will continue to provide immediate remedial repairs to properties damaged as a result of a confirmed aircraft wake vortex strike.
- Those properties will then be added to the scheme for permanent vortex protection. Work will start as soon as possible although waiting times may vary, as the scheme is run as a phased programme.

How do I know if I will benefit from the scheme?

Only properties that are subject of a confirmed aircraft wake vortex strike, will be included in the scheme. Files are kept of all confirmed vortex strikes. The Airport Company will keep your details on file, and you will be notified in writing when your property will be included in the scheme.

What should I do if I believe my property has suffered Aircraft Wake Vortex Damage?

**Suspected vortex strikes should be reported immediately to Birmingham Airport by calling:
0121 767 8585**

Please have the following information available:

- **The exact date and time of the occurrence if known**
- **The extent and nature of the damage**
- **Your name, address and telephone number**
- **Name, address and telephone number of the house owner (if different)**
- **Details of the aircraft / airline concerned, if you are able to identify it**

The Airport Company Assessor will inspect the damage and if a confirmed aircraft wake vortex strike has occurred, free remedial repairs will be arranged immediately. The property will then be added to the Vortex Protection Scheme for permanent vortex protection works in the future.

HOUSEHOLDERS SHOULD NOT REPAIR ANY DAMAGE PRIOR TO AN INSPECTION BY THE AIRPORT COMPANY ASSESSOR. PROPERTIES CAN ONLY BE INCLUDED IN THE SCHEME ONCE THE DAMAGE HAS BEEN VERIFIED AS AIRCRAFT RELATED.

For further information contact:

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