



Fog causes disruptions to UK flights for second day Free 010125

Description



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Heavy fog has continued to cause delays and cancellations at some of the UK's busiest airports for the second day in a row, with the majority of flights at Gatwick and Stansted affected on Saturday afternoon and some delays predicted until Sunday.

A number of other delays were reported at Manchester Airport on Saturday afternoon, with dozens of flights delayed at Heathrow and Birmingham earlier in the day.

The UK's main air traffic control provider, Nats, said "temporary" air restrictions remained in place until Sunday for areas with low visibility.

Weather forecasters said fog would persist across much of England and Wales and was likely to linger, especially across southern areas.

Passengers have been advised to check their flight status, with drivers being warned to take extra care on roads.

Saturday's disruption follows delays and some cancellations on Friday, again caused by fog and poor visibility.

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A Gatwick spokesperson said: "Temporary air traffic restrictions have been put in place due to fog causing poor visibility."

The airport apologised for any inconvenience, adding that delays could last all day.

Many passengers found themselves unexpectedly extending their Christmas breaks due to the disruption.

In Gatwick's South Terminal, a lack of seating to accommodate passengers dealing with delays and cancellations meant many were sat on the floor or stairs.

James King and his wife Madison had planned to return from Stockholm, Sweden, to Gatwick on Friday but they have experienced significant delays in their journey.

Their flight took off from Stockholm on Friday evening but their aircraft could not reach Gatwick and they had to stop to refuel in Dublin.

However, while refuelling in Dublin, they were told that the plane would have to return to Stockholm "due to crew flight time restrictions".

"My wife and I hope to be back tonight as it's her birthday tomorrow and we have a lot planned for it,"

Nats said it was monitoring the situation as some UK airports continue to be affected by the "widespread fog".

Yvonne – who did not give her surname – is making her way back to London from Sharm El Sheikh,

Egypt. She said her flight was eventually cancelled after several delays.

“We’re all just sat here in limbo,” she said, adding that airport staff had told them the flight will now depart on Sunday.

Elif Arjin Celik was trying to leave Gatwick Airport and board her flight to Istanbul, which has been delayed. She told the BBC the departures area is “extremely packed” and she had to wait 20 minutes to use the toilet.

Ms Celik said there is not enough food available at the terminal, with “thousands of people waiting for their flight and nowhere to sit”.

Jonathan Risley and his wife, Janice, spent 25 December in Amsterdam and planned to travel back to the UK on Boxing Day. However, due to weather conditions, three flights home have all been cancelled.

Mr Risley told the BBC he and his wife were now booked on to a flight to Norwich on Sunday morning.

“It may be fourth time lucky, fingers crossed,” he added.

Their airline, KLM, provided them with accommodation for their three additional nights – at three different hotels – but their checked luggage has been held at Schiphol airport, meaning they have had to buy new clothes.

Which? travel expert Jo Rhodes advised passengers to keep in mind that if their flight is cancelled “you have the choice of being refunded or rerouted on the next available flight”.

She added: “Airlines can sometimes be reluctant to buy you a ticket with their competitors, so don’t be afraid to remind them of this rule if another flight could get you where you need to go quicker than they can.”

On Friday, data from flight tracking website Flightradar24 showed dozens of outbound flights were cancelled from airports across the UK, while hundreds more were delayed.

Disruption on Friday saw a Ryanair flight from Alicante, Spain, to Teesside International Airport diverted to Dublin, Ireland, because of the heavy fog.

Manchester, Glasgow and Cardiff were among the airports where flights were either delayed or cancelled.

National Highways, which runs the UK’s motorways and busiest A-roads, said the misty weather was not having a significant impact on its network.

It reminded drivers to use dipped headlights, wipers and demisters while driving in foggy conditions.

Fog is essentially a cloud that has formed near the ground and gives a damp feeling. It happens when the air contains a lot of moisture and often happens after rain.

Saturday’s widespread low cloud, mist and fog is expected to clear later.

Conditions are expected to look significantly clearer on Sunday, with sunny spells across much of

England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The Met Office said travellers should allow for extra time for their journeys and warned drivers to leave extra braking distance in areas with poor visibility.

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