

# **How to Stop a Mega-Project**

**John Stewart**

# Heathrow 3<sup>rd</sup> Runway



# Learning lessons from past failures

- ~~Terminal 4~~ – failed

- ~~Terminal 5~~ – failed

# Four Lessons – the basis of our strategy

- Form coalitions
- Challenge the economic arguments
- Put forward alternative solutions, such as rail
- Run a visible, high-profile, pro-active campaign

# 1. We formed a Heathrow Coalition

- Residents Groups
- Local Authorities
- Sympathetic politicians
- National Environment and Development Organisations
- Environmental activists, including direct action activists
- **Linked to a national coalition, AirportWatch**

# Strength in diversity



# The benefits of the coalition

- It gave us more **power** to challenge the aviation industry and the Government
- It enabled us to fight the government on a **diverse range of issues**: noise; community destruction; climate change; pollution

# Business support

- Letter to The Times (5/5/09):
- Ian Cheshire, Chief Executive, Kingfisher; Russell Chambers, Adviser, Credit Suisse ;Jon Moulton, Founder, Alchemy Partners; Charles Dunstone, Chief Executive, Carphone Warehouse; David Levin, Chief Executive, United Business Media; Dominic Murphy, Partner, KKR ;Justin King, Chief Executive, J Sainsbury, Sir Roy Gardner, Chairman, Compass Group; Jeremy Darroch, Chief Executive, BSkyB ;James Murdoch, Chairman and Chief Executive, News Corporation; Howard Leigh, Managing Director Cavendish Corporate Finance; Lord Young of Graffham, former President of the Institute of Directors



# The Coalition

- “The coalition assembled outside Parliament is extraordinarily wide. It runs from radical ecowarriors to middle-class mothers in west London, hedge fund managers in Richmond, to pensioners and parents in Brentford” **Iain Martin, Daily Telegraph, 14/1/09**

## 2. We challenged the economics



# Respected commentators

- **Steven Norris**, “the Government is pushing ahead with plans for a third runway without really understanding what that means for the economy” (speech 14/2/08)
- **Anatole Kalesky**, then economics editor of the Times: “expanding Heathrow would be environmental, economic and political madness.” (The Times 28/2/08)
- **Simon Jenkins**, “The claim that Heathrow expansion is ‘vital’ for British business is palpable rubbish.” (Sunday Times 2/3/08).

### 3. We promoted alternatives



## 4. We ran a “pro-active” campaign

- Wait for Public Consultation? **NO**
- Wait for Public Inquiry? **NO**
- Ran our own events? **YES**

# Numbers (esp. voters) count



# Visibility matters



# Direct Action influences





# Direct action plus residents matter even more



# Flashmobs!



# Victory!



# That resonated around Europe



# But will it last?



- The question is: have we done enough to make a 3<sup>rd</sup> runway politically impossible?