

## 1,200 households seeking compensation from Southend Airport

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A map showing the location of claimants

MORE than 1,200 households are claiming compensation from [Southend Airport](#), which could result in a multi-million pound bill.

Residents are seeking compensation for noise nuisance and pollution they claim has reduced the value of their homes.

Confidential talks have started between airport representatives and surveyors acting for homeowners seeking payouts if the expansion of the airport has devalued their properties.

Jonathan Carrington, owner of Cardiff-based surveyor Carrick and Co, which is representing about 370 claimants, said: "I think they are going to resist the claims, but it's difficult to say at this stage. We're just trying to prove our case.

"We didn't expect them to bow down and pay up straight away.

"Hopefully, when we come up with the evidence, they will pay up."

Mr Carrington and Michael Marriott, a [Westcliff](#)-based chartered surveyor representing 800 claimants, have begun discussing the merits of claims with surveyors acting on behalf of airport owner the [Stobart Group](#).

Chartered surveyor Chris Hunt, of Hunt Scott, Dorking, has submitted at least another 60 claims.

A series of summits are expected as the experts try to agree if the claimants can prove an increase in noise, vibration, dust, smell, light pollution, discharge or fumes as a result of the airport's expansion has devalued their homes, under a law called the Land Compensation Act.

The surveyors would then have to agree the amount of any payouts due.

The process could take years, but if no agreement is reached after six years, cases will be referred to a tribunal.

Any individual payout, based solely on the devaluation, would likely reach tens of thousands of pounds.

Mr Hunt has claimed some homeowners who sold properties within a year of the extended runway opening, had to drop their asking price by as much as 15 per cent to sell.

Mr Marriott said: "We are discussing the merits of any claims.

How long it will take depends on the expertise and experience of those involved."

David Lister, operations director of the airport, said: "People who believe they are impacted by the development of Southend Airport were entitled to make a claim one year from when the development was finished.

"These claims are followed by a detailed and thorough assessment over a period of time that will evaluate a number of factors.

"If there are any claims that are proved, then we would certainly meet our responsibilities."