

## **UPDATE: Southend Airport returns to normal after air travel chaos delays**

9:57am Saturday 7th December 2013 in [News By Ian Weinfass](#)



British Airways plane at Southend Airport this afternoon. Picture by Echo reader Simon Wilson

A TECHNICAL hitch caused travel chaos at airports across the country.

The usually punctual [Southend Airport](#) reported several on Saturday.

Among those hit by the hitch are flights to and from Alicante, Barcelona, Jersey and Majorca. Passengers were advised to board planes despite the delays - which may continue on into tomorrow.

The problem was caused by computer issues at the air traffic control centre at Swanwick in Hampshire.

A statement from Southend Airport's operator said on Saturday morning: "Due to a technical issue at Swanick Air Traffic there will be delays across the whole of the UK.

"Swanick Air Traffic have informed us they are trying to resolve this issue as quickly as possible.

"Please check with your airline for further flight information. Please note bag drop, check in and gate will still close at scheduled times."

A statement from air traffic control provider NATS said: "In the early hours of this morning, a technical problem occurred at our Area Control centre at Swanwick.

"The problem is related to the internal telephone system used by our air traffic controllers.

"Safety has not been compromised at any time."

It added: "We now understand what the problem is and our engineers are working hard to rectify the issues as quickly as possible. Everyone in our operation is continuing to work closely with our customers to manage the traffic and clear the backlog."

"We apologise sincerely for any inconvenience being caused to passengers."

***Have you been affected by the delays? Call reporter Ian Weinfass on 01702 321 142 or email [ian.weinfass@nqe.com](mailto:ian.weinfass@nqe.com).***