Skybus announced as new operator of Cornwall–London Gatwick service

7 November 2025

Skybus, the airline of the Isles of Scilly Steamship Group, will operate the essential air service connecting Cornwall Airport Newquay with London Gatwick, strengthening Cornwall's connectivity with the UK and beyond.

Tickets go on sale from today, with the first flight scheduled to take off on Sunday 23 November 2025. Skybus was awarded the Public Service Obligation (PSO) contract to operate the essential route by Cornwall Council following the collapse of Eastern Airways.

A refreshed timetable of flights will operate daily from 23 November and will gear up to twice-daily services on weekdays from 14 February 2026.

Skybus will operate the route using a 70-seat ATR72 aircraft – the world's most popular regional turboprop aircraft – marking a significant step-up from the much-loved smaller aircraft Skybus flies on the Isles of Scilly's lifeline air routes.

The PSO route will provide vital links for business and leisure travellers alike; enabling faster, more convenient travel between Cornwall and London, as well as seamless access to Gatwick's extensive network of international destinations.

Jonathan Hinkles, Managing Director of Skybus, said: "We are thrilled to launch this new service between Cornwall and London Gatwick. It is not just about making travel easier for passengers; it's about creating opportunities – for businesses, for tourism, and for the local communities we serve.

"As a Cornish company with more than 40 years of aviation experience, we understand how critical dependable air links are for our region. We're proud to step up to operate this vital route. Our focus is on rebuilding confidence and offering reliability, and we look forward to providing passengers with the service they deserve.

"None of us underestimate the challenge ahead to build the Newquay-Gatwick route to be a thriving cornerstone of the local economy once more. We're wholly confident that we can achieve this through Skybus' record for reliability and service."

Amy Smith, Managing Director, Cornwall Airport Newquay, said: "We're delighted that Skybus, our longest-serving airline partner, will be taking over the vital London Gatwick service later this month. We know just how important a regular, reliable service between Newquay and London is for our passengers and we look forward to working with Skybus to deliver just that going forward."

Following last week's collapse of Eastern Airways, Skybus was selected by Cornwall Council via an expedited tender process to fly the route ahead of a new four-year tender from Cornwall Council to begin in mid-2026.

Skybus has committed to restoring reliability and punctuality to the PSO air service. The condensed launch timescale means that an aircraft will be sourced from Jersey-based Blue Islands to resume flights on 23 November.

A permanent Skybus-liveried ATR72 aircraft will then enter service in mid-2026; it will be operated by Skybus Newquay-based pilots, cabin crew and engineers under an arrangement with Aurigny Air Services of Guernsey.

Further benefits to the Cornish economy will stem from Skybus's introduction of new same-ticket fast connections between London and the Isles of Scilly. These will be delivered by aligning the new London Gatwick-Newquay flights with existing services from Newquay to the Isles of Scilly by February 2026.

Fares on the route will begin at £79.99 one-way, including a 15kg checked baggage allowance. Customers can purchase additional baggage or a Skybus FlyFlexi add-on, including extra baggage allowance, ticket flexibility and fast-track airport security (where available) for as little as £22.50 one-way.

Flights are available to book now at www.skybus.co.uk the new website launched today to handle bookings for the service. Flights for summer 2026 will be available to book by mid-November.