



**PRESS RELEASE**  
**20<sup>th</sup> December 2009**

**TIRED OF GOLD CUP CROWDS? WE'LL FLY YOU AWAY FOR WEEK.**  
**GLOUCESTERSHIRE AIRPORT OFFERS GOLD CUP GETAWAY**

Sick of the crowds at Cheltenham during the Gold Cup? Now you can escape at the drop of a Guinness hat to the Emerald Isle. During the busiest week in the town Gloucestershire Airport is running flights for people to escape the hoards on a trip to Ireland. It comes as thousands of fans come from across the water to sample the festival each year.

The Staverton-based airport is tempting residents from the "madness and hype" of the four-day festival with low-cost flights to the Irish capital. Chief executive of the world-famous Prestbury Park venue, Edward Gillespie, said he welcomes the campaign launched to entice people to Dublin. He said: "I don't mind as it will happen on the back of bringing people in from Dublin. I don't think for a minute that a few people going away for a short break is going to affect us.

"The few dozens who might be tempted are not the same people who'll want to visit the Gold Cup anyway." From Tuesday, March 16 to Friday 19, 220,000 people are expected to descend on the town, spending at least £50 million on accommodation, restaurants, bars and shopping. The highlight of the UK's jump race season, the event will see some of the world's best thoroughbred's compete in 25 races. Mr Gillespie said the number of people travelling out of the area will be far outweighed by the number of Irish race fans flying in. Mr Gillespie added: "We must do everything we can to get people back in from Ireland, as we were 30 per cent down on Irish punters last year. "Anything that helps bring those people back is only a good thing. It will be hugely beneficial."

The airport's advertising blurb states: "While racing fans can now fly directly into Gloucestershire in fewer furlongs with Aer Arann's dedicated day return flights to Gloucestershire Airport, locals in the county can now hit Ireland just in time to celebrate St Patrick's Day." The flights are available for March 16 to 19 from £120 return, including taxes.

Business development manager at the airport, Verline Leo, said: "Allowing local people to travel to Ireland from Gloucestershire means they can now choose to miss the madness and hype and come back to normality at the end of it all."

To make a booking visit [www.AerArann.com](http://www.AerArann.com), [www.gloucestershireairport.co.uk](http://www.gloucestershireairport.co.uk) or call 01452 857700 for further information.