



Kingston Air Quality Action Plan

- Draft



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Introduction

Air quality is one of the biggest issues we face and tackling poor air quality is a priority for Kingston Council. Poor air quality has life long impacts on our health - air pollution kills c9000 Londoners every year¹. It contributes to dementia and alzheimers² and children in the highest polluted areas of one London Borough lose two eggs worth of lung capacity by the time they are 9 years old³ and this damage is irreversible. Tackling the impacts of poor air quality costs the NHS, social care and society.

We know that 4000 Kingston residents live in areas with illegal levels of nitrogen dioxide and every single resident is exposed to levels of PM2.5 (ultra-fine particle pollution) that exceed the WHO exposure limit⁴, and we need to take action to tackle it.

But we also know that we, the council, can't solve this on our own. We have committed to improving air quality across the borough by working together with residents, communities, businesses and partners to find solutions and ideas that will improve all our lives.

In November and December 2019, the Council brought together 38 randomly selected residents from across the borough to consider evidence from experts, debate options, and consider options on how to collectively improve Kingston's air quality.

The Citizens Assembly made a number of recommendations and these form the basis of many of the actions in the new, draft Air Quality Action Plan. The plan sets out the actions that the Council will take with partners and communities over the next five years to improve air quality in the borough and mitigate the impact of the greatest environmental threat to health in the UK.

As well as recommendations from the Citizens' Assembly there are also a number of actions from the [Greater London Authority Air Quality Action Matrix](#) incorporated in the draft plan.

Each action in the plan will be implemented over time. Some will be quicker than others which may take years to come to fruition but, each action contributes to the overall improvement in air quality across the borough for everyone.

¹ Data from the Environmental Research Group at Imperial College London, 2020, Accessible from: <https://www.londonair.org.uk/LondonAir/General/research.aspx>

² Calderón-Garcidueñas, L. et al., 2015. Mexico City normal weight children exposed to high concentrations of ambient PM2.5 show high blood leptin and endothelin-1, vitamin D deficiency, and food reward hormone dysregulation versus low pollution controls. Relevance for obesity and Alzheimer disease. *Environmental Research*, 140, pp.579-592.

³ This impact was presented by Dr. Ian Mudway following research conducted in Tower Hamlets and Hackney.

⁴ Greater London Authority, 2019. London Atmospheric Emissions Inventory. Accessible from: <https://data.london.gov.uk/air-quality/>

Actions

The following sections outline the actions that form Kingston’s Draft Air Quality Plan.

Action 1: Remove pollutants within school boundaries

This was supported by 97% of assembly members, with half strongly supporting it. Only one assembly member was strongly opposed.

Specific Actions

	Citizens’ Assembly Recommended Action	Council Action	Ease of Delivery	Magnitude of Air Quality Benefits
1.1	Stricter building regulations around schools	New Local Plan to adopt BREEAM targets to help ensure energy efficiency targets would be met from major developments, where appropriate.	Medium	Low
1.2	Council to lobby government to assess schools on air quality and environmental credentials of schools	Carry out air quality audits on the three schools in Kingston where nitrogen dioxide concentrations are the highest in accordance with the GLA audit toolkit.	Most Difficult	Medium
1.3	Effective plant placement for green screens around schools	Develop a toolkit for schools about barrier planting to protect playgrounds and support with crowdfunding	Most Difficult	Low
1.4	Disseminate the “Love Your Lungs” campaign (see recommendation 4) via schools, possibly including a Childrens’ Assembly on Air Quality	Design and deliver a clean air communications campaign to raise awareness of the harm caused by poor air quality and how individuals can take action to reduce their emissions.	Medium	Medium
1.5	Temporary road closures and restrictions for parking and idling at relevant	Assess the feasibility of school streets at a number of schools per year. Implement where they are deemed appropriate.	Medium	Medium



	times			
1.6	Create a fleet of electric school buses and use electric vehicles for all external school activities.	Carry out a feasibility study for the creation of a fleet of electric school vehicles.	Straightforward	Medium

Action 2: Prioritise changes to planning rules and enforcement to place indoor and outdoor air quality as the highest priority

This was supported by 94% of assembly members, with two-thirds strongly supporting it.

Specific actions

	Citizens' Assembly Recommended Action	Council Action	Ease of Delivery	Magnitude of Air Quality Benefits
2.1	Target raising awareness and education of the community, backed up by effective enforcement	Develop a communications strategy which raises awareness of the harm caused by solid fuel burning. Material to be published early every winter for maximum impact.	Straightforward	Medium
2.2	Improve and enforce site construction regulations to exceed current air quality standards for equipment and working practices to reduce construction airborne pollutants by 50% over 2 years	Ensure that conditions requiring compliance with the GLA SPG Control of Emission during Construction and Demolition are applied to every appropriate major development.	Straightforward	Medium
2.3	Encourage clean vehicle use by implementing an Ultra Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ)	Liaise with South West London boroughs not covered by the central London ULEZ regarding the potential for a south London ULEZ.	Most Difficult	High



2.4	Enable wider electric vehicle adoption and use within the borough through preferential access to bus lanes and certain restricted access zones	Implement Kingston's first zero emission zone.	Most Difficult	High
2.5	Create planning regulations that ensure new developments deliver clean air for communities	Ensure that planning conditions are applied where appropriate to ensure that developments are adequately protecting their neighbours from pollution, as well as their future users.	Straightforward	Low

Action 3: Plan to urgently invest in greener and accessible transport and infrastructure for all

This was supported by all assembly members, with three-quarters strongly supporting it.

Specific Actions

	Citizens' Assembly Recommended Action	Council Action	Ease of Delivery	Magnitude of Air Quality Benefits
3.1	Replace diesel buses with electric buses as soon as possible, including school buses	Lobby TfL and other service providers to increase the rate at which ultra-low emission buses are introduced in Kingston.	Straightforward	Medium
3.2	Increase the number of bus routes and the frequency of services	Carry out a public consultation process to maximise quality of the bus service by optimising routes and frequencies.	Medium	Low
3.3	Lobby Transport for London and South Western Railways for changes to the zones system for the Kingston area resulting	Lobby Transport for London and South Western Railways for changes to the zones system for the Kingston area resulting in cheaper fares.	Straightforward	Low



	in cheaper fares			
3.4	Promote and expand public e-bikes and provide charging points across the borough	Implement a public e-bike hire scheme in the borough.	Medium	Low
3.5	Making footpaths and cycle lanes safe, accessible and attractive through design, maintenance and greening	Ensure that streets are designed in line with Healthy Streets Guidance with a specific focus on promoting sustainable transport by making highways safer, more accessible and attractive through design, maintenance and greening.	Medium	Medium

Action 4: Increase residents' awareness of air pollution and encourage positive behaviour change

This was supported by 92% of assembly members, with two-thirds strongly supporting it. No assembly members opposed.

Specific Actions

	Citizens' Assembly Recommended Action	Council Action	Ease of Delivery	Magnitude of Air Quality Benefits
4.1	Design and deliver a "Love Your Lungs" communications campaign to target all groups and demographics	Redesign Kingston's air quality website to make information more readily available and accessible as well as targeted at varying levels of expertise.	Medium	Low
4.2	Increase number of monitoring stations and develop communications tools	Implement a schools outreach programme designed to raise awareness of the impacts of air pollution and help them to create clean air route plans.	Medium	Medium
4.3	Design a rewards / incentives campaign to encourage individual behaviour change	Carry out an Active Travel Challenge over one month with rewards on offer for entrants.	Straightforward	Low

4.4	Incentivise public and private employers to utilize existing Employee Benefit Schemes (e.g. Cycle to Work) and initiate new practices (e.g. lift sharing and flexible working)	In conjunction with recommendation 4.3, run a rewards programme for Active Travel Employers, offering rewards to employers with the greatest commitment to active travel (e.g. showers at work, secure cycle parking, Cycle Scheme uptake, etc.).	Medium	Low
4.5	Introduce an accreditation system for business to strive to achieve resulting in a "Reward and Recognition" certification	The Kingston Strategic Partnership, with support from Healthy and Safe team and Sustainable Transport to encourage businesses to sign up to the accreditation system, and plan for a Green Workplaces event in 2021.	Medium	Low

Action 5: Accelerate the transition to sustainable vehicles

This was supported by 86% of assembly members, with over half strongly supporting it. Two assembly members were opposed.

Specific Actions

	Citizens' Assembly Recommended Action	Council Action	Ease of Delivery	Magnitude of Air Quality Benefits
5.1	Enhance and simplify the charging infrastructure for electric vehicles	Contactless payment possible on all newly installed charge points in the borough.	Medium	Low
5.2	Incentivise switching to electric vehicles for both private and organisational users	The Council will assess the viability of subsidising electric vehicle charging within the borough.	Medium	Low
5.3	Kingston Council should lead by example and ensure its entire fleet is sustainable (e.g.	Kingston to sign the Clean Van Commitment from Global Action Plan and commit to swapping fleet vehicles for zero emission versions, where they exist and are suitable, by 2028. Kingston	Straightforward	Low



	electric, hydrogen, etc.)	to lobby vehicle providers to sign the commitment too.		
5.4	Increase restrictions for polluting vehicles through Ultra Low Emissions Zone in the centre for example and Low Emissions Zone in the rest of the Borough	<i>We believe that this action has already been accounted for by action 2.3, therefore no new action is required here.</i>	NA	NA
5.5	Reintroduce Park & Ride using electric buses	<i>This recommended action has been deemed not viable. The Council is not aware of an appropriate location for such a facility.</i>	NA	NA

Actions to deliver our commitment to the Greater London Authority

As well as recommendations from the Citizens' Assembly there are also a number of actions from the [Greater London Authority Air Quality Action Matrix](#) incorporated in the draft plan.

Council Action	Ease of Delivery	Magnitude of Air Quality Benefits
Join the Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) for the borough's own fleet and obtain Gold accreditation	Medium	Medium
Increasing the number of hydrogen, electric, hybrid, bio-methane and petrol vehicles in the Borough's fleet. Replacement of existing internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles with zero tailpipe emission vehicles must be prioritised over replacing them with more efficient ICEs.	Medium	High
Accelerate uptake of new Euro VI vehicles in Borough fleet	Medium	High
Smarter Driver Training for drivers of vehicles in Borough Own Fleet i.e. through training of fuel efficient driving and providing regular re-training of staff.	Straightforward	High
Discouraging unnecessary idling by taxis and other vehicles (e.g. through anti-idling campaigns or on-the-spot fines)	Straightforward	Medium
Speed Control measures	Medium	Medium



Increasing the proportion of electric and hydrogen vehicles and low emission vehicles in Car Clubs	Straightforward	Medium
Very Important Pedestrian Days (e.g. no vehicles on certain roads on a Sunday) and similar initiatives	Straightforward	Medium
Free or nominal parking charges at existing parking meters for zero emission cars	Straightforward	Medium
Free or low cost residential parking permits for zero emission cars	Straightforward	High
Surcharge on diesel vehicles below Euro 6 standards for Resident's and Controlled Parking Zone permits	Straightforward	High
Installation of resident charge points close to homes on targeted residential streets	Medium	Low
Installation of rapid chargers to help enable the take up of electric taxis, cabs and commercial vehicles (in partnership with TfL and/or OLEV)	Straightforward	Medium
Reallocation of road space; reducing parking in accessible destinations and or restricting parking on congested high streets and busy roads to improve bus journey times, cycling experience, and reduce emissions caused by congested traffic.	Medium	Medium
Provision of infrastructure to support walking and cycling	Medium	High
Update of local authority Procurement policies to include a requirement for suppliers with large fleets to have attained silver Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) accreditation	Straightforward	High
Update of Procurement policies to ensure sustainable logistical	Straightforward	High



measures are implemented (and include requirements for preferentially scoring bidders based on their sustainable criteria)		
Re-organisation of freight to support consolidation (or micro-consolidation) of deliveries, by setting up or participating in new logistics facilities, and/or requiring that council suppliers participate in these.	Medium	High
Virtual Loading Bays and priority loading for ultra-low emission delivery vehicles.	Medium	Low
Ensuring emissions from construction are minimised	Straightforward	N/A - Benefits potentially great but not quantifiable
Ensuring enforcement of Non Road Mobile Machinery (NRMM) air quality policies	Straightforward	N/A - Benefits potentially great but not quantifiable
Enforcing combined heat and power plant (CHP) and biomass air quality policies	Straightforward	N/A - Benefits potentially great but not quantifiable
Enforcing Air Quality Neutral policies	Straightforward	N/A - Benefits potentially great but not quantifiable
Ensuring adequate, appropriate, and well located green space and infrastructure is included in new developments. Ongoing maintenance of green infrastructure to be secured via planning condition.	Straightforward	N/A - Benefits potentially great but not quantifiable
Ensuring that Smoke Control Zones are fully promoted and enforced	Straightforward	Medium
Promoting and delivering energy efficiency retrofitting projects in workplaces and homes using the Greater London Authority RE:NEW and RE:FIT programmes to replace old boilers /top-up loft insulation in combination with other energy conservation measures.	Medium	Low
Green Infrastructure	Straightforward	Medium
Low Emission Neighbourhoods (LENs) as proposed by TfL's Transport Emission Road Map	Medium	Low
Ensure that Director of Public Health (DPHs) have been fully briefed on the scale of the problem in your local authority area; what is	Straightforward	N/A - Benefits potentially



being done, and what is needed. A briefing should be provided.		great but not quantifiable
Public Health should be supporting engagement with local stakeholders (businesses, schools, community groups and healthcare providers). They should be asked for their support via the DPH when projects are being developed.	Straightforward	N/A - Benefits potentially great but not quantifiable
Director of Public Health to have responsibility for ensuring their Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) has up to date information on air quality impacts on the population	Straightforward	N/A - Benefits potentially great but not quantifiable
Strengthening coordination with Public Health by ensuring that at least one Consultant grade public health specialist within the borough has air quality responsibilities outlined in their job profile (as part of a wider role, not a dedicated air quality post).	Straightforward	N/A - Benefits potentially great but not quantifiable
Director of Public Health to sign off Statutory Annual Status Reports and all new Air Quality Action Plans	Straightforward	N/A - Benefits potentially great but not quantifiable
Ensure that the Head of Transport has been fully briefed on the Public Health duties and the fact that all directors (not just Director of Public Health) are responsible for delivering them, as well as on air quality opportunities and risks related to transport in the borough. Provide a briefing which can be disseminated amongst the Transport team.	Straightforward	N/A - Benefits potentially great but not quantifiable
Promotion of availability of airTEXT	Medium	High
Encourage schools to join the TfL STARS accredited travel planning programme by providing information on the benefits to schools and supporting the implementation of such a programme	Straightforward	Medium
Air quality in schools	Straightforward	High

Appendix A - Developing the Kingston Air Quality Action Plan

Kingston Council is committed to putting residents at the heart of decision making. When thinking about how to develop the new Air Quality Action Plan for the borough, the Council considered a variety of ways to work with our residents to develop the plan. Citizens' Assemblies are known to be a good way of exploring how to tackle complex issues, particularly where the support of residents is essential in order to make a real impact.

The Assembly brought together 38 randomly selected residents for two weekends during November and December 2019 to develop the recommendations in this report.

To read more about the Citizens' Assembly, you can find the full, independent report [here](#).





With thanks to the Kingston Council Citizens' Assembly:

Angela, from South of the Borough	Jixing, from Kingston Town
Angela, from Surbiton	John, from Kingston Town
Angelo, from Kingston Town	John, from Maldens and Coombe
Anthony, from Maldens and Coombe	Lisa, from Kingston Town
Barbara, from Maldens and Coombe	Luanne, from South of the Borough
Caroline, from Surbiton	Mary, from Kingston Town
Cristina, from Surbiton	Masoumeh, from Surbiton
Christopher, from Kingston Town	Mehrdad, from Kingston Town
Demetra, from Surbiton	Nikola, from Maldens and Coombe
Dennis, from Maldens and Coombe	Philip G., from Maldens and Coombe
Dharbi, from Kingston Town	Philip W., from Maldens and Coombe
Elle, from South of the Borough	Philippa, from Kingston Town
Emma, from Surbiton	Sarah, from Surbiton
Farhan, from Maldens and Coombe	Sarfraz, from Maldens and Coombe
Ian, from Maldens and Coombe	Sharada, from Surbiton
Jade, from Surbiton	Thiago, from Kingston Town
James, from Maldens and Coombe	Tom, from South of the Borough
Jean, from South of the Borough	Tony, from South of the Borough
Jeffrey, from Kingston Town	Violet, from Kingston Town