



Air Quality

Context

Burning fossil fuels not only results in GHG emissions, but also causes air pollution. Owing to its concentration of nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), poor air quality can have a detrimental impact on health. Exposure to air pollution affects lung function, exacerbates asthma, and increases the risk and severity of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, leading to reduced life expectancy.⁹ According to Imperial College London, 3,600 to 4,100 people die from air pollution in London each year¹⁰.

On the 4 March 2022, representatives from the CCG, the five trusts, the six local authorities and general practice came together in the first ever 'Sustainability Summit' in South East London and agreed that a key Area of Focus for health and social care in South East London to collaborate on should be Air Quality.

Since December 1997, each local authority in the UK has been carrying out a review and assessment of air quality in their area. If a local authority finds any places where the national air quality objectives are not likely to be achieved, it must declare it as an Air Quality Management Area¹¹. This is the case for all boroughs of London:

- All South East London boroughs have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of NO_x and all, apart from Bromley and Lewisham in respect of PM_{2.5}
- In Lambeth, the whole borough has been declared an AQMA
- In Lewisham, most of the borough has been declared an AQMA
- Southwark estimates that 200 deaths in its borough are caused by air pollution. Improving local air quality has been designated a priority of Southwark council, with 45% of Southwark's residents regularly exposed to high levels of NO₂



Achievements to date

- Most of the achievements to date and planned actions to address air quality fall under the Areas of Focus concerning travel and transport, energy use, and green/blue space, and will be discussed in the respective sections of the green plan. However, there are several successes and planned actions that are not covered in these sections.
- Air quality monitors for major Trust locations and one per borough have been secured for two years
- In 2020, Lambeth council implemented five trial Low Traffic Neighbourhoods to reduce vehicle traffic and improve air quality in neighbourhood streets, with plans to implement two more in the future
- Southwark council implemented a 'School Streets' campaign which encourages schools to close roads outside of the school during certain times of the day, e.g., morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up

Case-study 1



Clean Air Village Project

The Clean Air Village project is an engagement initiative run by the Cross River Partnership in 16 'villages' across 12 London boroughs identified as having high levels of air pollution. The programme involves businesses, hospitals, and the wider community in tackling air pollution and traffic congestion. King's College Hospital was the first hospital campus to join the project. Hospital staff co-designed an air quality monitoring project which identified air pollution 'hotspots' and clean-air spaces. The results were used by staff to develop interventions to help patients and staff avoid polluted areas and to reduce air pollution through anti-idling campaigns and the promotion of decreased car use.

Commitment

- **We will work collaboratively across ICS to improve air quality in South East London**



Actions for Year 1

1. ICS to identify appropriate locations for borough air quality monitoring and install monitors (nodes)
2. ICS to mobilise a joint programme, and agree priorities for ICS action to improve air quality
3. NHS Trusts to install air quality monitors at major sites
4. NHS Trusts to review data from air quality monitors and identify actions
5. NHS Trusts to promote anti-idling at major locations

Aim 1: Launch a joint programme across the ICS to take action on air quality

Aim 2: Improve the understanding of air quality at NHS estates and promote air quality improvements

Actions for ICS

- Mobilise a joint programme and agree priorities for ICS action to improve air quality by June 2022
- Identify appropriate locations for borough air quality monitoring and install monitors (nodes) by September 2022
- Evaluate actions completed and their impact, as well as overall air quality across SEL, by March 2025
- Provide training for primary care staff on the health impacts of air pollution by March 2025

Actions for NHS Trusts

- Install air quality monitors at major sites by May 2022
- Review data from air quality monitors and identify actions by March 2023
- Promote anti-idling at major locations by March 2023