

Redbridge Air Quality Action Plan: Consultation Document

1. Introduction

The London Borough of Redbridge will be producing a new Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) as part of our duty to London Local Air Quality Management. It will outline the action we will take to improve air quality in the London Borough of Redbridge between 2019-2024.

Air quality is something that the Council cannot tackle alone. Everyone – from residents to businesses to other public bodies – will need to play their part if we are to make Redbridge’s air clean, safe and healthy again.

2. Air Quality in Redbridge

Air quality is a serious issue affecting the health and wellbeing of all who live in Redbridge, London and beyond. Short-term and long-term exposure can have adverse health impacts, leading to acute and chronic health issues, or the exacerbation of existing medical conditions. This can adversely affect the most vulnerable in our borough, particularly the young and elderly. It also lowers the effectiveness of the immune system, increases the risk of some cancers and can shorten lifespans.

A report by Kings College, GLA and TfL¹ estimated that the number of deaths from air pollution in Redbridge in 2010 was 396. The Public Health Outcomes Framework found that 6.4% of deaths in Redbridge in 2014 were attributable to long-term exposure to poor air quality.

There are two types of pollution which are most harmful to health. These are:

- Nitrogen dioxide, which is a toxic gas that is produced from vehicle exhausts and other combustion processes such as domestic boilers
- Particulate matter, which is a mixture of various microscopic solid and liquid particles suspended in the air, some of which are harmful. It is produced mainly from diesel engines and construction equipment, as well from tyre- and break-wear from road vehicles.

Data from local monitoring stations shows that we are still failing to meet national annual air quality limits in a number of locations across the borough. Nitrogen dioxide tends to be higher around the most densely built-up areas of the borough, and areas with heavy traffic. Particulate matter is highest in the south west of the borough, around the Wanstead area and along the borough’s main roads.

It is evident that much of the nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter in Redbridge are a result of vehicle emissions and a significant increase in construction activities over the past couple of years. Therefore, a reduction in the number of diesel and petrol vehicles on the road and a reduction in emissions from construction are two of our top priorities. However, a significant proportion of particulate matters comes from outside of London and even the UK, so Redbridge must work closely with regional and national partners to ensure that a big picture approach is taken to this challenge.

3. National and Local Context

This Air Quality Action Plan sits alongside a number of other regional and national strategies designed to reduce air pollution and improve air quality. These include:

- [London Environment Strategy 2018](#), which sets out the Mayor’s ambitions for air quality in London by 2050
- [London Transport Strategy 2018](#), which sets out the Mayor’s approach the encouraging more sustainable transport use

¹ [Understanding the Health Impacts of Air Pollution in London 2015](#)

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- [Draft London Plan](#), which sets out how the Mayor will work with partners to ensure that the spatial, climate change, transport and design policies support a reduction in emissions and public exposure to pollution

Improving air quality is also included as a four-year goal in the [Council's Strategic Delivery Plan, "A Great Place to Live"](#), as part of our commitment to regenerate the borough to benefits our residents. Improving air quality is also a key part of the Council's priority to keep the borough clean and safe. Other local plans which integrate with and support this Air Quality Action Plan include:

- [Local Development Framework & Redbridge Local Plan 2015-30](#), which sets out the Council's policies for a cleaner, greener borough
- [Redbridge Parking Strategy 2015-20](#), which sets out the Council's policies to reduce car journeys and encourage sustainable transport
- [Redbridge Local Implementation Plan 2011-31](#), which sets out how the Council will deliver its transport policies in line with the Mayor's Transport Strategy
- [Redbridge Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-21](#), which sets out a long-term vision for the health and wellbeing of Redbridge's communities

Nitrogen dioxide emissions are expected to decline from 2020 onwards due to a greater number of low emission vehicles in fleets and used by residents, along with national policies encouraging the use of more sustainable forms of transport. This includes the introduction of the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ), which will run through the middle of the borough.

4. Key Priorities

Our proposed priorities are to:

- Reduce pollution in and around schools
- Install Ultra-Low Emission Vehicle charging infrastructure
- Reduce emissions from the Council's own transport fleet
- Promote transport mode shifts to walking, cycling and public transport
- Improve walking and cycling infrastructure
- Promote and delivering energy efficiency retrofitting projects in workplaces and homes
- Promote and enforcing smoke control zones
- Support pollution alert services, including Airtext and the Mayor's air pollution forecasts
- Control construction emissions
- Reduce pollution through planning and transport policies
- Raise awareness amongst Redbridge residents and businesses about what they can do to reduce their own emissions and avoid exposing themselves to existing pollution
- Work with the Greater London Authority (GLA) and Transport for London (TfL) to continue to reduce pollution in the borough and across London

5. Actions

We have put forward a number of key actions that could form the basis of a new draft action plan. These actions are summarised under seven broad themes.

Monitoring air quality

Monitoring air quality locally is important to help us to evaluate long-term air quality trends, to understand the impact and effectiveness of air quality policies and projects, and to help us provide

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information to Redbridge's residents, workers and visitors when pollution levels are high. This is done through a network of 5 automatic and 26 diffusion tube monitors across the borough.

We propose to:

- continue to maintain the borough's 31 monitoring stations
- ensure that the public are made aware of this information through real-time updates via the London Air Quality Network website and an annual report and review of Redbridge's air quality data

Reducing emissions from developments and buildings

Redbridge must balance the conflict between the need for growth and the impact that this has on the environment, particularly in the construction phase of new developments. Additionally, Council wants to reduce emissions from domestic gas boilers by reducing gas consumption and improving energy efficiency in buildings.

The Council is leading the way in this through a number of projects, such as introducing a range of energy efficiency improvement measures at its headquarters at Lynton House, and installing solar panels in six of Redbridge's schools.

We propose to:

- Ensure emissions from construction are minimised by ensuring developers adhere to best practice guidance, including having a dust management plan and construction management plan
- Secure additional funding through s106 agreement to manage and enforce construction impacts
- Educate, raise awareness and enforce Non Road Mobile Machinery (NRMM) air quality policies
- Enforce Combined Heat and Power (CHP) and biomass air quality policies
- Enforce Air Quality Neutral and Air Quality Positive policies for new developments (including requiring air quality assessments where necessary)
- Continue to ensure appropriate green space and infrastructure is included in new developments
- Ensure the Borough Smoke Control Zone requirements are fully enforced
- Deliver energy efficiency retrofitting in Council-owned housing

Public health and awareness raising

Informing and educating the public about air pollution and its impact can help improve local air quality and protect the health and wellbeing of our most vulnerable residents. The first step of awareness-raising is for those contributing to air pollution to understand what they can do to reduce their impact. This is relevant for every one of us that drives a car, bus, van, truck or taxi.

We propose to:

- Strengthen co-ordination with our Public Health team to tackle air quality from all angles by:
 - Ensuring the Director of Public Health stays fully briefed issues and actions
 - Ensuring the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) has up-to-date information about air quality health impacts

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- Integrating air quality objectives into the new Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Ensuring that at least one Public Health consultant has air quality in their job profile
- Engage local stakeholders (e.g. businesses, schools, community groups, GP surgeries, pharmacies etc.) to raise awareness about the impact of air pollution, including information about how to help improve air quality and reduce exposure for patients and employees
- Promote airTEXT, a free air pollution forecasting service, and the Mayor's London Air service, which gives real-time pollution readings across London
- Encourage schools to promote sustainable travel and cleaner walking routes
- Introduce clean air zones around schools, including anti-idling and road closure measures at the start and end of the school day

Reducing emissions from delivery servicing and freight

Emissions from heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) are higher than from cars and other small vehicles, and in areas with large numbers of freight journeys they typically contribute a significant proportion of the total emissions.

We propose to:

- Update Redbridge procurement policies to ensure that Council suppliers have a Bronze Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) accreditation
- Update Redbridge procurement policies to give preferential scoring to bidders delivering good or service with zero or low-emission vehicles
- Reduce emissions from deliveries to local businesses and residents using the London Boroughs Consolidation Centre, which channels suppliers' deliveries into one central point

Reducing emissions from the Council's own transport fleet

The Council's fleet, which includes vehicles such as rubbish trucks and school buses, is currently 100% low emission zone (LEZ) compliant. All vehicles purchased since September 2009 are of Euro V standard, and Euro 1 and 2 vehicles have been completely phased out. Redbridge wants to go a step further and ensure that its whole fleet is compliant with the upcoming Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ).

We propose to:

- Obtain Gold Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) accreditation for the Council's own fleet
- Increase the number of electric, hybrid and low-emission vehicles in the borough fleet
- Accelerate uptake of new Euro VI vehicles in the borough fleet
- Provide training for borough fleet drivers to improve fuel efficiency

Implementing local solutions to improve the environment of our neighbourhoods

Redbridge is trialling a number of local solutions, which it is now keen to roll out to the rest of the borough. For example, green walls have been added at Winston Way Primary and Cleveland Junior Schools, and pine trees have been planted at William Torbitt School. This is in addition to a number of mass tree planting projects across the borough.

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Additionally, the Council has received funding from the Mayor of London to introduce a Low Emission Neighbourhood in the borough, which involves a package of measures to reduce vehicle emissions and promote sustainable living, including the implementation of a segregated two-way cycle route, lighting upgrades and enhanced green landscaping.

We propose to:

- Continue to plant and encourage the planting of green infrastructure, including introducing green walls as part of the Ilford Town Centre public realm scheme
- Implement a Low Emission Neighbourhood at the junction of the A406 North Circular Road and the A118 Romford Road

Incentivising cleaner transport

Despite a number of policies from the Greater London Authority, such as the congestion charge and Low Emission Zone (LEZ), road transport continues to be the largest source of emissions in the borough. Redbridge's increasing population and traffic is exacerbating this issue, particularly the persistence of older diesel and petrol engines. Redbridge must take steps to reduce reliance on road vehicles and develop alternative, cleaner transport options such as walking, cycling, car-sharing and low-emission vehicles.

For example, the Council has already introduced cycling parking provision at all main council buildings and shopping parades, and installed the Quietway cycling route between Wanstead Flats and Barkingside. The Council is also working with TfL and Crossrail to improve bus connectivity across the borough and into Essex.

We propose to:

- Enforce anti-idling measures
- Introduce Car Free Days and Road Closures
- Introduce free or discounted residential parking permits for electric vehicles
- Install additional residential electric charging points for electric vehicles
- Install rapid charging points for commercial vehicles
- Re-prioritise road space to discourage vehicle use, including reducing parking
- Improve infrastructure to support walking and cycling
- Introduce a parking surcharge for diesel vehicles below Euro 6 standards in residential and commercial parking zones
- Reallocate or restrict road space around schools through road closures or pedestrianisation, for example