

A Clean Air Strategy for Southampton 2016-2025



Clean air is essential for good quality of life, yet every day people living in our urban centres can be exposed to potentially harmful levels of pollutants.



Southampton City Council is committed to improving the city's air quality. Reducing emissions and air pollution now will have lifelong, lasting benefits for the city's population, remove barriers to further economic development and make the city a more attractive place to work, live and visit. Improvements in air quality can deliver ongoing improvements in public health and wellbeing. To protect our residents' health we want to make the city's air as clean as we can.

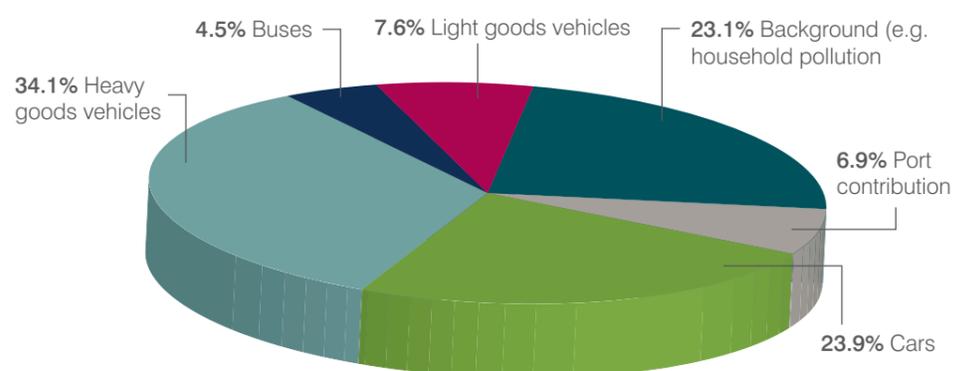


The Council cannot improve air quality on its own. This strategy details the key ways in which we will work together with our partners to make improvements to air quality across the city.

AIR QUALITY IN SOUTHAMPTON

- There are many different pollutants that can affect the quality of the air we breathe. Nitrogen dioxide and Particulate Matter are the main concern in the UK.
- The negative effects of exposure to air pollutants occur at every stage of life, from early stages of development through to old age. Those with existing cardiovascular and respiratory disease are most at risk, but a wide range of health effects have been linked to the wider population including stroke, heart disease, obesity, lung cancer and asthma. Reducing the health impacts of local air pollution is identified as a priority by Public Health England in its Strategic Plan (2016 to 2020).
- The Council has a statutory duty to assess and review air quality in its area and make reasonable efforts achieve statutory thresholds. DEFRA have set limits for key pollutants. Monitoring and modelling in Southampton suggests levels of nitrogen dioxide could exceed that level beyond 2020, unless additional efforts are made.
- In the UK, up to 50,000 early deaths each year can be attributed to Particulate Matter and Nitrogen Dioxide exposure. Costs to society, businesses and NHS services due to poor air quality exceed £30 billion a year.
- Exposure to Particulate Matter alone is estimated to contribute to 110 early deaths in Southampton each year.
- Road transport is the biggest contributor to pollution across the city followed by industry. Port operations are also significant in certain areas of the city.
- Diesel cars have been encouraged by national policy to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. However, they generate significantly higher emissions of Particulate Matter and Nitrogen Dioxide than petrol cars. In 2001, 18% of all new cars registered were diesel. By 2012, this increased to 50%.
- Air quality is a consideration for the Planning Authority and the Council is obliged to ensure that impacts on air quality are taken into account when approving developments.

Causes of pollution in Southampton



Source apportionment (% of modelled nitrogen dioxide) at M271 and A33 junction, Redbridge

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?

- The Council is committed to improving Southampton's air quality, reducing health impacts, and fulfilling our legal obligations. The national Air Quality Plan for Nitrogen Dioxide in UK (2015) sets out targeted local, regional and national measures to meet these goals.
- This includes implementing a new programme of Clean Air Zones in Southampton, Birmingham, Leeds, Nottingham and Derby. Under this Plan, by 2020 the most polluting vehicles - older buses, coaches, taxis and lorries - will be discouraged in Southampton through the levying of a penalty charge. Newer vehicles that meet the latest emission standards, and private cars will not be subject to the statutory penalty charges.
- The Council will develop a package of measures as part of the city's Air Quality Action Plan and Clean Air Zone implementation plan to encourage behaviours which support improvements in air quality.

We have identified four priorities for improving air quality in the city:

PRIORITY	WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT
Improve air quality in the city	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air pollution has an adverse effect on people's health. Reducing levels of pollutants below statutory levels and beyond is key to improving the health and wellbeing of Southampton's residents of all ages. • The threshold level for nitrogen dioxide (annual average) is exceeded in a number of key locations across the city and the Council has a statutory duty to make reasonable efforts to reduce levels below this. • If air quality does not improve it could become a significant barrier to further economic growth.
Supporting businesses and organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council cannot deliver improvements in air quality on its own - we will need to work with our local businesses and organisations to promote the benefits of change in term of both health and prosperity. • The Council will need to engage with residents, visitors, businesses and other organisations to encourage the use of low emission technologies, public transport and the take up of active travel such as cycling and walking.
Collaborating with communities and residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaner air in Southampton can only be achieved if individuals and organisations take responsibility and change their current behaviours. • These measures can provide direct benefits to the health and wellbeing of everyone in the city. If our residents and visitors embrace this positive message we can expect to see improvements sustained for future generations. • Our communities and residents will need support to ensure they are able to deliver the changes they want.
Promoting sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important that measures to improve air quality in Southampton are sustainable and do not create a negative impact elsewhere. This might happen if the most polluting vehicles are displaced from the city or alternative fuels are not from a sustainable source. • The Council will promote sustainable change – as well as making sure that, when providing advice and promoting change to others, it can demonstrate its own efforts and the positive differences it is making.

WHAT DO OUR RESIDENTS SAY ABOUT AIR QUALITY IN SOUTHAMPTON?



In 2014, a survey of residents' views on air quality was undertaken:

- Of the 291 responses, 36% felt that air quality in the city was a "significant issue". Only 7% felt it was not an issue.
- Cars and HGVs were felt to be the main contributors to pollution, with buses, industry, shipping and other port-based activities also selected.
- Residents suggested a wide range of measures that would be needed to help improve the city's air quality including promoting public transport, cycling and walking, traffic improvements, low emission vehicles, penalty charging and port improvements.

OUR CHALLENGES	OUR SUCCESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air pollution is linked to many major health problems facing cities like Southampton. Estimates suggest that 6.2% of early deaths in Southampton in 2010 were attributable to long term Particulate pollution alone. Those who live in deprived areas or have existing medical conditions are disproportionately affected by poor air quality. Between 2008/9 and 2012/13, Southampton has become relatively more deprived – of the 326 Local Authorities in England, Southampton is now ranked 54th (previously 72nd) most deprived. Southampton's port is the busiest cruise terminal and second largest container port in the UK. Its continued success is vital to the city's economy As a regional retail and economic centre, Southampton's economy is heavily reliant upon its transport links. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council introduced its first Air Quality Action Plan in 2007. At its last review, it identified 48 individual activities delivering improvements in local air quality. The city has a long established air monitoring network that provides robust data on current and historical pollution levels. Four continuous monitoring stations and 60+ passive sampling sites currently provide data on current levels and ongoing trends. Our air monitoring network has been able to demonstrate a steady statistical improvement in the city's air quality since 2007. Both the existing Local Transport Plan and Local Development Plan recognise the health impact of air quality and identify how improvements can be achieved. The Council was amongst the first authorities to offer an Air Alert service. This is free to anyone but is particularly valued by those with respiratory illnesses who can be more sensitive to air pollution. The My Journey campaign has achieved significant success in promoting public transport and active travel choices across the city. Over 100 events were delivered in 2015. More than 25% of the city's adult population have been engaged via one or more of the promotional activities. Over the programme period car journeys have reduced by 3% and cycling has almost doubled. The Council is working closely with key partners and has assisted and supported local bus operators, port operators and the University of Southampton in seeking and acquiring funding for activities to assess and improve air quality.

PRIORITY	OUTCOME	WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?
Improve air quality in the city	Adopt an effective programme of measures to reduce emissions of nitrogen dioxide, particulates and other pollutants in Southampton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the Southampton Clean Air Zone (CAZ) on a voluntary basis, with no charging, by 2017 and deliver an associated package of measures. Fulfil our statutory requirements and introduce penalty charges in 2019/20 for the most polluting commercial vehicles entering the CAZ. Ensure future revisions of our Local Transport Plan, Local Development Plan and all other Council and city plans and strategies provide suitable and adequate policies to reduce emissions and deliver cleaner air. Improve transport and freight delivery systems through efficient infrastructure, uptake of new and innovative technologies and increased uptake of public transport, cycling and walking. Encourage the uptake of low emission technologies and vehicles. Identify where alternative fuels and innovative solutions might deliver positive outcomes and support their assessment and introduction.
Supporting businesses and organisations	Work with businesses and organisations to promote the uptake of low emission technology and change travel behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Clean Air Partnership with key stakeholders in the city and region. Work with the Port of Southampton to identify and support initiatives that will reduce their emissions. Continue to promote sustainable travel through maintaining the "My Journey" campaign and explore options for further development. Empower businesses to take responsibility for their contributions to air pollution and implement improvements. Implement schemes to support taxi operators, other businesses and public services in reducing the emissions relating to their activities. Strengthen shared learning via networks including representatives from academia, community groups and expert groups.
Collaborating with communities and residents	Work with and support the education of communities and individuals to identify and support behaviours which improve air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a role for residents and community groups in our Clean Air Partnership. Support the education sector to raise awareness of air pollution and how to reduce emissions. Incentivise the use of public transport, cycling and walking. Empower communities and individuals to take responsibility for their contributions to air pollution. Provide good quality, timely information and data on local levels of pollution to enable residents to adopt behaviours to maintain their own health.
Promoting sustainability	Southampton City Council will be an exemplar of sustainable working practices in relation to reducing emissions and improving local air quality	<p>The Council will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead by example, ensuring our plans, policies and working practices support and promote an improvement in local air quality whilst delivering wider environmental and economic benefits locally, regionally and nationally. Introduce a programme of measures to reduce its emissions and act as a key partner, sharing best practice on reducing emissions and promoting sustainable working methods whenever it can. Use its influence on the local supply chain to ensure impacts on air quality are considered when making procurement decisions, including in the procurement and operation of its own fleet.

HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

We will:

- Achieve all statutory air quality standards by 2020.
- Deliver an ongoing reduction in Nitrogen Dioxide and Particulate Matter levels, to include those arising from Southampton City Council activities.
- Reduce the fraction of mortality attributable to particulate air pollution.
- Implement the Southampton Clean Air Zone by April 2017, and penalty charging for the most polluting commercial vehicles by 2019/20.
- Increase the proportion of journeys to work and school made by public transport or active methods.
- Increase the uptake and use of ultra-low and zero emission vehicles in the city.

This Clean Air Strategy will also contribute to wider improvements in the health of the Southampton population and we anticipate improvements in key indicators for public health in the city.

More detail about how we intend to achieve our targets or monitor progress is included in our Air Quality Action Plan which will be reviewed and updated annually for the duration of this strategy.

LINKS TO OTHER STRATEGIES AND PLANS

