Royal Borough of Kingston Air Quality Action Plan Summary

2027 - 2032

THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KINGSTON UPON THAMES

Welcome

This Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) has been produced as part of our duty to London Local Air Quality Management. It outlines the actions we will take to improve air quality in the Royal Borough of Kingston between 2027-2032. This action plan replaces the previous version which ran from 2021 to 2026. Highlights of successful projects delivered through the past action plan include:

- The delivery of over 100 Play Streets and Street Parties across the borough
- Successful implementation and expansion of a public e-bike (Forest) hire scheme
- Implementation and continued proliferation of School Streets across the borough
- 98% of roads in the Royal Borough of Kingston are now 20 mph

The council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019, and remains steadfast in its commitment to creating a greener, healthier borough for current and future generations.

The local air we breathe directly shapes the health, wellbeing, and daily quality of life of our residents. Our Air Quality Action Plan sits fully aligned with our Climate Action Strategy, ensuring a unified approach to decarbonise our borough while actively cleaning our air. By aligning sustainable transport, green infrastructure, improving buildings, and public health initiatives, we maximise our ability to tackle the dual challenges of climate change and local air pollution together.

Air pollution is associated with a number of negative health impacts, it is recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer. Additionally, air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society: children and older people, and those with chronic illnesses, such as heart and lung conditions.

In 2024, in Greater London, up to 5,100 premature deaths and £5.1 billion in economic costs were estimated as attributable consequences of exposure to air pollution[1]. Air pollution has been shown to have an impact on health even at low concentrations, and because of this, it is now widely accepted that there is no safe level of exposure to air pollution.

Poor air quality widens inequality gaps; those who are most exposed to air pollution, are more likely to live in areas dealing with higher levels of social and economic deprivation, and are more likely to be members of minority groups (e.g., disability, chronically ill, or ethnic)[2]. These groups may be disproportionately impacted by the consequences of air pollution economically and in terms of overall health outcomes.

Kingston council is committed to improving the lives of people living and working in the borough, and those affected by air pollution generated within Kingston while existing beyond the boundary of the borough. This AQAP forms part of the council's legal obligation and represents the council's commitment to this process.

Within this AQAP, actions have been developed aligning with the themes in the Council Plan, to create a fairer, safer and greener borough, together. These actions can be further categorised under seven broad topics; each topic has priority actions.

[1] London health burden of recent air pollution, 2026.

[2] Air quality exposure and inequalities study (Part 1 - London analysis), June 2023.

Monitoring and core statutory duties

1. Maintain air quality monitoring equipment
2. Publish pollution data

Emissions from developments and buildings

3. Minimise Dust & Smoke from Construction Sites
4. Enforce Construction Machinery Rules
5. Reduce Emissions from Heating Systems
6. Enforce "Air Quality Neutral" Rules
7. Add Green Space to Developments
8. Educate residents on the rules surrounding solid fuel and wood-burning stoves.
9. Investigate any complaints of smoke within Smoke Control Zones
10. Design Healthy & Clean Neighbourhoods
11. Make Homes & Public Buildings Energy Efficient

Public health and awareness raising

12. Promote AirText and increase usage throughout Kingston borough
13. Promote Safe School Travel Plans
14. School Engagement
15. Public Awareness Campaigns
16. Community Education Workshops
17. Coordinate Public Health and Air Quality Work
18. Link Air Quality with Public Health Policy
19. Internal Council Communications

Cleaner Transport

20. Integrate Transport and Air Quality Work
21. Discourage Engine Idling
22. Temporary Car-Free Days
23. Use Parking Rules to Reduce Car Use
24. Install Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Points
25. Build Better Walking & Cycling Paths
26. Lobbying Transport Partners
27. Reallocating Road Space for safer walking and cycling
28. Maintain and expand Kingston's public e-bike hire scheme (Forest)

Borough Fleet

29. Switch Council Vehicles to Electric

Delivery, Servicing & Freight

30. Help Local Businesses to Reduce Emissions
31. Green Delivery & Contractor Requirements
32. Require Delivery & Servicing Plans for Large Developments

Localised solutions

33. Continue to trial and implement school streets across Kingston.
34. School Air Quality Audits
35. Studying Zero Emission Zones (ZEZ)
36. Clean Air Town Centre Regeneration

Green Infrastructure and Urban Greening

37. Improve and expand existing green spaces
38. Plant strategically to Block Air Pollution

Read the full draft Air Quality Action Plan by visiting our Kingston Let's Talk website or scanning the QR code: www.kingstonletstalk.co.uk/environment/airqualityactionplan

If you have difficulty reading this document or would like it in a different format, please call our helpline on 020 8547 5000 or ask someone to call on your behalf.

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