

SHEFFIELD GREEN PARTY AIR QUALITY PETITION – BRIEFING

Petition <https://www.change.org/p/sheffield-city-council-sheffield-needs-a-new-air-pollution-action-plan>

The Cabinet agreed a headline plan signed July 2012: “An ambitious set of local measures have been outlined in the AQAP, which when fully implemented should lead to a significant reduction in levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), and fine particles (PM₁₀) in the air.” The 7 key actions were:

- Action 1: Assess feasibility for a Low Emission Zone
- Action 2: Develop infrastructure for refuelling low emission vehicles
- Action 3: Promote smarter travel choices
- Action 4: Improve engine performance of commercial diesel vehicles
- Action 5: Mitigate the impact of the M1 motorway (particularly in the Tinsley Area)
- Action 6: Develop policies to support better air quality
- Action 7: Control industrial emissions

Dirty Air in Sheffield - facts:

- According to the former Director of Public Health, poor air quality contributes to over 500 premature deaths per year in Sheffield - and over 29,000 annually across the UK.
- In 2014, the council acknowledged that the single biggest contributor to poor air quality in the city was motor vehicle traffic. One of the most effective ways to clean up our air is to encourage people to walk, cycle, or use public transport wherever possible. The choices we all make every day about travel can make a real difference.
- Diesel vehicles are particularly polluting - moving to electric buses and taxis would be a big step towards cleaning up the air in Sheffield. An almost-empty diesel bus is usually less polluting than if all of its passengers drove their own cars for the same journey.
- Among the most polluted areas of the city are Broomhill, Ecclesall Road, the Abbeydale Road corridor, and neighbourhoods nearest the M1 like Tinsley. The health impacts of dirty air are felt by people of all communities and all social classes.
- Sheffield City Council adopted its first ‘Air Quality Action Plan’ in 2003, with the aim of reducing levels of air pollution including nitrogen oxides to below EU legal limits. But 13 years later nitrogen oxide levels continue to exceed legal limits in many areas of the city.
- In 2014, Green councillors called on the Council to make tackling dirty air a priority - but the motion was watered down by the Labour administration.
- There is no ‘safe’ level of air pollution, but reducing the levels of particulates and nitrogen oxides to the legal maximums citywide could prevent hundreds of serious health conditions and deaths in Sheffield every year.