

# Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan Overview

January 2019

## The problem

Poor air quality is the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK. It:

- Contributes to the equivalent of 1,200\* deaths a year in Greater Manchester.
- Plays a part in breathing illnesses, heart disease, stroke, and even some cancers.
- Particularly affects the vulnerable including the elderly, sick, poor and children.
- Reduces everyone's life expectancy by an average of six months.

In Greater Manchester, air quality is improving. But:

- We exceed legal annual limits for harmful nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) levels in many areas.
- Road transport is responsible for 80% of NO<sub>2</sub> pollution at the roadside, where it is most damaging to health.
- Diesel vehicles are the largest source, particularly HGVs and buses.

## What has government done?

It has:

- Set up a Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU) to deliver national plans to improve air quality.
- Placed legal responsibility for complying with air pollution limits with local authorities.
- Set out a process for more than 60 local authorities to produce and implement Clean Air Plans to bring NO<sub>2</sub> levels within legal limits in "the shortest possible time", informed by national air pollution modelling.\*\*
- Identified Clean Air Zones (where those driving the most polluting vehicles would pay a penalty to enter a designated area) as the benchmark measure that will bring levels of roadside NO<sub>2</sub> within legal limits most quickly, thereby requiring local authorities to bring forward such schemes unless they can prove compliance through alternative routes to the same timescale.

## Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan

The 10 Greater Manchester local authorities are working with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) to produce a single Clean Air Plan, liaising with JAQU. This approach aims to:

- Avoid displacing NO<sub>2</sub> pollution to other areas.
- Make sure the plan works alongside existing Greater Manchester-wide strategies.
- Reduce emissions in the most effective way across the whole of the city-region.

\* The Public Health Outcome Framework (PHOF) indicator 3.01, 2016.

\*\* Government has not directed Highways England (which has responsibility for motorways and trunk roads) to act to reduce NO<sub>2</sub> with the same timescale and process.

## In developing a Clean Air Plan, so far we have:

- Completed detailed local modelling which has identified 250 points of exceedance on 152 stretches of road (across all 10 local authority areas) predicted to have concentrations of harmful NO<sub>2</sub> beyond 2020 if no action is taken.
- Considered a wide range of 96 potential measures to tackle NO<sub>2</sub> levels and narrowed these down to the shortlist below.
- Run detailed modelling to help develop a range of options that combine the measures in different ways. This will help us understand the type and scale of action needed to bring NO<sub>2</sub> levels within legal limits and identify a 'preferred option'.

## Shortlisted potential measures

Retrofit/upgrade public transport fleet	Retrofit or upgrade vehicles to a higher Euro engine standard.
Retrofit/upgrade local authority fleets	Retrofit or upgrade to a higher Euro engine standard.
Increase public transport capacity	Identify specific routes where most impact will be made.
Switch Bus/HGV/LGV/GM fleet to GtL	Using cleaner alternative fuels, e.g. Gas-to-Liquid (GtL).
Electric vehicle (EV) incentives	Increase EV uptake through expanding the charging network or financial incentives.
Differentiated parking charges	Different charges for parking depending on the time of day, vehicle type, car-sharers and could include a workplace parking levy.
Congestion Deal – increase capacity	Review existing junction improvement plans – assess impact and identify opportunities to accelerate.
Congestion Deal – encouraging alternatives	Encouraging alternative travel choices through road space reallocation.
Congestion Deal – network management	Changing traffic signal timing to optimise flows, reducing congestion.
Private hire and taxi alternative fuels	Incentivise change to EV/Ultra-Low-Emission vehicles, increase EV infrastructure for taxis, retrofitting and increasing LPG refuelling infrastructure for taxis.
Communications campaigns	Increase awareness of health and cost benefits for public and of different modes of transport, or around particular communities/schools.
Sustainable travel engagement	Work with employers and individuals to encourage sustainable travel choices.
Active travel programme – infrastructure	Expand and improve cycling and walking infrastructure.
Clean Air Zones – Class B, C or D	Different classifications/time restriction and geographical areas to be modelled for their impact on NO <sub>2</sub> and timescale of any impact.

## Greater Manchester's direction of travel

- No decision has yet been taken on which of these measures will be included in the final Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan.
- This is because we need to consider their impact on wider social and economic outcomes in Greater Manchester.
- Government says that local authorities must consider implementing a Clean Air Zone unless they can identify alternative measures which are as effective in reducing NO<sub>2</sub> air pollution at least as quickly.
- The work undertaken in Greater Manchester so far indicates that a package of measures that includes some form of Clean Air Zone is highly likely to be necessary to comply with government guidance and legal rulings to reduce NO<sub>2</sub> in the “shortest possible time”.

## What is a Clean Air Zone?

**Categories:** Government has specified four categories of Clean Air Zones where drivers of non-compliant vehicles would pay a penalty to travel within a designated area.

**CLASS A –** 

**CLASS B –** 

**CLASS C –** 

**CLASS D –** 

**Age of compliant vehicles:**

**Car/Taxi**

Diesel Euro 6 (2015)

Petrol Euro 4 (2005)

**Van**

Euro 6 (2016)

**Bus/HGV**

Euro 6 (2013)

**Motorcycle/Moped**

Euro 3 (2007)

Ultra-low emission vehicles with a significant zero-emission range are exempt.

## Clean Air Zones are not the same as Congestion Charging Zones

The GMCA has ruled out congestion charging. Clean Air Zones have very different objectives and timespans:

Congestion Charging Zones	Clean Air Zones
Charges apply to all vehicles (with some discounts and exemptions applied).	Penalty only applies to non-compliant vehicles, compliant vehicles are unaffected.
Goal is that some people switch to other modes of transport, but most stay and pay – so drivers pay the cost they impose on others.	Goal is for a reduced number of the most polluting vehicles entering the designated area.
Schemes are highly profitable, providing resources to invest in public transport, active travel and other measures.	Schemes typically make a loss, especially in later years.

## Asking for support from central government

To support any future Clean Air Plan, the Mayor of Greater Manchester has written to the Secretary of State for the Environment on behalf of Greater Manchester local authorities, highlighting specific actions needed to support the city-region. These include:

- Clear arrangements and funding to develop workable, local vehicle scrappage/upgrade measures.
- Short-term effective actions in vehicle and technology manufacturing, led by national government, to ensure a ready supply of compliant vehicles.
- Early funding for the replacement and/or retrofit of non-compliant buses to safeguard future public transport provision.
- A clear instruction to Highways England to work closely with Greater Manchester to implement measures which deliver compliance with legal limits for NO<sub>2</sub> on the Strategic Road Network (motorways and major trunk roads), for which they are responsible.

## Next steps

The next steps for the development of the Clean Air Plan Outline Business Case are:

- Ongoing work to assess these different options in terms of their air quality impact (and timeframe of this impact), technical feasibility, cost-benefit and socio-economic impact.
- Further work to understand the impacts any measures may have on growth and inclusion.
- Work to better understand Highways England activity to reduce NO<sub>2</sub> and to encourage greater cooperation in contributing to the Clean Air Plan.

It is anticipated that a report on the Clean Air Plan Outline Business Case will be made to the GMCA and the 10 local councils in spring 2019.

- The 10 local authorities will be asked to approve the Outline Business Case before a final version is submitted to government.
- There will be an opportunity for the public to give feedback, which local authorities and TfGM would consider while continuing to develop the Full Business Case.
- A formal public consultation may be required to help establish the final design of the measures which will be included in the Clean Air Plan.
- Greater Manchester is in discussions with JAQU over the deadline for submission of the final Clean Air Plan.
- Any measures in the Clean Air Plan would need to be introduced by 2021.

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For further information on the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan visit **CleanAirGM.com** or email **info@cleanairgm.com**

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