

# Government provides more funds for local authority air quality action

The government has announced the latest round of funding to help local authorities improve air quality across England.

Since it was established, the [Air Quality Grant](#) scheme has awarded more than £61 million to a variety of projects, benefitting schools, businesses and residents, reducing the impact on people's health and creating cleaner and healthier environments.

Local authorities are encouraged to bid for a portion of at least £2 million of central government support for a wide range of projects to improve the air we breathe.

Applicants in previous years have been awarded funding to install electric vehicle charging points, improve cycling infrastructure and develop local online air quality resources.

These projects have contributed to the significant improvement in air quality in the UK in recent decades. Between 2010 and 2017, we have achieved reductions in primary emissions of harmful fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and nitrogen oxides by 10% and 29% respectively, and levels of nitrogen dioxide at the roadside are now at their lowest levels since records began.

Environment Minister Rebecca Pow said:

We know the impact air pollution has on public health, which is why we are continuing to provide funding to local authorities to help them to take action to improve air quality for the benefit of schools, businesses and residents. This is part of the much wider strategy to tackle air quality.

Local authorities are in the best position to address the issues they face around their roads, and we are looking forward to receiving ideas for innovative schemes to reduce emissions and encourage cleaner, more active transport.

Minister for the Future of Transport George Freeman said:

We know we need to step up the pace and clean up our air for everyone – from children on their way to school, to commuters travelling to work, and communities around the country.

This vital funding will help councils to take forward exciting new technologies, improving air quality and making our communities cleaner, more vibrant places to live.

Applications for the grant for 2019-20 are open from 4 October to 7 November 2019.

The Air Quality Grant forms part of the wider UK Plan for Tackling Roadside Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations, which includes a £3.5 billion investment into air quality and cleaner transport. The plan is supporting the uptake of low emissions vehicles, getting more people to cycle and walk, and encouraging cleaner public transport.

As a result of this plan, and alongside the Air Quality Grant, the government is working with 61 local authorities – and providing £495 million in funding – to reduce nitrogen dioxide concentrations through local plans that are effective, fair, good value, and will deliver required improvements in the shortest time possible.

In addition to this plan, last year we also launched the Clean Air Strategy, the most ambitious air quality strategy in a generation which aims to halve the harm to human health from air pollution by 2030, and has been praised by the World Health Organisation as “an example for the rest of the world to follow”.