

Press release: £260 million of clean air funding launched by government

The UK Plan for Tackling Roadside Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations was produced by the government in July last year, and outlined that councils with the worst levels of air pollution at busy road junctions and hotspots must take robust action in the shortest time possible.

Fulfilling a commitment to support local authorities to deliver these plans, the government has today launched a £220m Clean Air Fund to minimise the impact of local plans on individuals and businesses. A range of options local authorities could consider to utilise this money such as new park and ride services, freight consolidation centres, concessionary travel schemes and improvements to bus fleets have been set out.

At the same time, more than £40 million from the £255 million Implementation Fund has been awarded to support local authorities take action as soon as possible to improve air quality.

This includes:

- £11.7 million to the 28 local authorities with the biggest air quality challenges to help carry out the work needed to develop air quality plans, including securing resource and expertise
- £24.5 million to the same 28 local areas to support a range of measures to take action locally. Examples include installing electric charge point hubs in car parks; junction improvements; bus priority measures; building cycle routes; incentivising ultra-low emission taxis through licensing schemes and leasing electric vehicles; and traffic management and monitoring systems
- £2.4 million from the 2017/18 Air Quality Grant for local community projects to tackle air quality at a grass roots level. This comes in addition to £3.7m already awarded in last year's Air Quality Grant, which included an award winning project taken forward by Westminster City Council to provide advice and toolkits for small and medium businesses to reduce transport emissions from deliveries associated with their operations
- £1.65 million to support the 33 local authorities that have been asked to conduct targeted feasibility studies to identify measures that could bring forward compliance dates within the shortest possible time

Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

We have been clear that local leaders are best placed to develop innovative plans that rapidly meet the needs of their communities. Today's funding demonstrates the government's commitment to support the local momentum needed and continue to improve our air now and for future generations.

Improving air quality is about more than just tackling emissions from transport, so later this year we will publish a comprehensive Clean Air Strategy. This will set out how we will address all forms of air pollution, delivering cleaner air for the whole country.

Today's announcement is part of a £3.5billion plan to improve air quality and reduce harmful emissions.