

Government targets particulate matter and microplastic pollution from cars

Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey and Transport Minister Michael Ellis are leading a push to tackle the impact of particulate and plastic pollution from brakes, tyres and road wear.

While air quality has improved significantly over recent decades, a new report published today (11 July) by the [Air Quality Expert Group \(AQEG\)](#) calls for urgent action to address the problem of tyres and brakes which is predicted to account for 10 per cent of national emissions of PM 2.5 by 2030.

As outlined in its landmark [Clean Air Strategy](#), the UK Government is now calling for industry to support the development of standardised methods for measuring emissions from these sources, leading to a new international standard for tyre and brake wear.

It comes as the government also publishes the summary of responses to its call for evidence on these emission sources, which indicate that the problem is still poorly understood.

Calling on the automotive industry to consider action to address the problem, Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

The documents published today make clear that it is not just fumes from car exhaust pipes that have a detrimental impact on human health but also the tiny particles that are released from their brakes and tyres.

That is why an ambition of our Clean Air Strategy is to address all sources of particulate matter, including those from transport. Today's research goes a long way in helping us better understand the problem.

Emissions from car exhausts have been decreasing through development of cleaner technologies and there is now a need for the car industry to find innovative ways to address the challenges of air pollution from other sources".

Transport Minister Michael Ellis said:

We are committed to reducing all transport emissions and cleaning up our air. With record levels of ultra-low emission vehicles on the UK's roads, things are clearly moving in the right direction.

To continue this progress, we are looking for ways to reduce emissions from other sources such as brakes and tyres. We are engaging at an international level to identify how to measure these emissions as well as aiming to develop standards to control them.

Each time a car is driven, tiny pieces of particulate matter such as dust are released into the air from the brake wear, tyre wear and road surface wear.

These particles enter the airstream having a detrimental impact on human health for drivers, passengers and bystanders. Plastic particles from tyres are also deposited into our sewers and lead to harmful consequences to our marine wildlife and aquatic food chains.

Mike Hawes, Chief Executive of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, said:

The automotive industry is committed to improving air quality and has already all but eliminated particulate matter from tailpipe emissions. Brake, tyre and road wear is a recognised challenge as emissions from these sources are not easy to measure.

A United Nations global group, including industry experts and government, is working to better understand, and agree how to measure, these emissions. Maintenance of the road surface, as well as further investment in new vehicle technologies, is essential to reducing these emissions, without compromising safety and we welcome further research in this area.

While focus has previously been on tackling exhaust emissions, this report offers the most globally comprehensive analysis to date of the impact of brake and tyre wear.

The government is also due to shortly publish the results of a new £200,000 research project with the University of Plymouth, assessing the impact of microplastics from tyres and clothing on the marine environment.

Industry innovation is one way to tackle the challenge and the government is also advising drivers to consider how their driving style can reduce emissions, with gentle braking, driving at a consistent speed and using hybrid and electric vehicles with regenerative braking some of the ways to play a part.

Additional information:

- The Air Quality Expert Group (AQEG) is an Expert Committee to Defra that provides independent scientific advice on air quality.
- Air quality has improved in recent years, with nitrogen oxide emissions

falling by 29% since 2010, and sulphur dioxide emissions down 62%.

- The estimated increase in national emissions of PM 2.5 by 2030 projected improvements in other sources of air pollution meaning tyre and break wear will account for a higher proportion of total emissions as a result.

Rare butterflies and orchids on abandoned wildlife site boosted by Natural England funding

Rare species including the marsh fritillary butterfly, lesser butterfly orchids and Cladonia lichen communities have been given a boost as their home in Common Moor Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Devon, is improved through funding from Natural England.

Following more than a decade of decline – which saw scrub encroach on the rare delicate grassland – a partnership between Natural England, Putford Parish Council, and Devon Wildlife Trust (DWT) has today brought the site back into ‘unfavourable recovering’ condition through Countryside Stewardship (CS) funding. This condition means that the necessary management is now in place for the site to reach favourable condition.

Common Moor SSSI, spanning 55 hectares or more than 60 football pitches, is centrally situated within an arc of six other SSSIs in the North Devonshire countryside, and holds a vital role in connecting green corridors of habitat that allow threatened species to move between locations.

The site is home to an array of rare wildlife – including the charismatic and colourful marsh fritillary butterfly – once widespread in Britain but now threatened across the UK and Europe.

Wesley Smyth, Natural England’s Area Manager for South West, said:

Common Moor is a fantastic example of the difference that Countryside Stewardship can make to help secure the future of rare plants and animals.

Strong partnership working between Natural England, the Devon Wildlife Trust and the Parish Council has brought the SSSI back into a recovering position, with more investment and support to come.

This is a celebration of our partners' commitment to nature conservation, and a springboard to future successes for the area.

Robert Dixon, Natural England's Lead Adviser for North Devon Land Team, said:

Having worked on Common Moor for several years, I am delighted to see the vast transformation that is occurring on this ownerless site.

I am especially impressed at the three-way partnership which has enabled this to take place. Without any one of these partners, the project would not have commenced. However, it is the Parish Council that must take the highest credit for these achievements as entering into such an agreement is not commonplace for such a small council.

The team effort of all partners involved has improved the quality of this rare Culm grassland, resulting in improved biodiversity and a better place for locals to enjoy.

Heath spotted orchid flowering at Common Moor. Credit: Tom Parsons

Careful management of Common Moor has resulted in huge improvements to this rare grassland. Current management tools include creating a network of firebreaks over the site and swaling (a method of controlled rotational burning). The management has allowed the growth of fresh vegetation by clearing the ground of overly dominant species and dead material which can swamp more fragile species which rare wildlife rely upon.

Lisa Schneidau, Northern Devon Nature Improvement Area Manager for Devon Wildlife Trust, said:

Devon Wildlife Trust has always seen Common Moor as a very important site.

We are delighted that Putford's local community have taken on responsibility for this ownerless common land. The new CS agreement means that funding will now be available for the Parish Council to carry out essential management work to maintain the valuable Culm grassland as a haven for wildlife.

The support provided by Natural England throughout has been invaluable, and we look forward to continuing to work alongside both Natural England and the Parish Council on this beautiful site.

This effective three-way partnership will continue in the coming years, with the Parish Council expected to take on management of the site later this year.

Councillor Myles Thomas from Putford Parish Council said:

The Parish Council has wanted to protect Common Moor for many years but have not had the resources to do so.

We are very grateful to Devon Wildlife Trust and Natural England for their help and support in setting up this Countryside Stewardship agreement to stop further deterioration and improve the status of the moor.

This will bring wider benefits to the parish and we are very much looking forward to seeing the changes in wildlife over the coming years.

The 10-year Countryside Stewardship agreement will see further funding and management, securing the long-term future of the site.

Today's announcement secures an important contribution to the government's target as set out in the [English Biodiversity 2020 Strategy](#) to maintain 95% of SSSIs at favourable or recovering condition.

2019 marks the UK Government's Year of Green Action, a year-long drive to help people to connect with, protect and enhance nature. The Year was a commitment in Defra's [25 Year Environment Plan](#) to put people at the heart of nature by working closely with others and developing shared objectives at a landscape-scale.

Additional information

- Common Moor was designated a SSSI in 1988 for being one of a few remnant sites for a type of wet heathland restricted to North Devon and Pembrokeshire. The site also supports a diverse invertebrate fauna.
- The marsh fritillary butterfly is listed on the IUCN Red List as a vulnerable species with a high conservation priority. Marsh fritillary populations are highly volatile and the species requires extensive habitat networks for its long term survival. More information can be found [here](#).
- The lesser butterfly orchid is classified as 'vulnerable' and is included as a species "of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity" under Sections 41 (England) and 42 (Wales) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. More information can be found [here](#).
- 'Culm grassland' is the name given to a distinctive suite of semi-natural, predominantly wet, vegetation communities that occur on the poorly drained acid soils of the Culm measures (Carboniferous shales and sandstones) of North-East Cornwall and North-West Devon. It is in fact a slight misnomer since the main vegetation communities include wet heath, purple moor-grass and rush pasture, fen meadow, mire and scrub, which often occur together in intimate mosaics. The Culm grassland has resulted from the combination of an oceanic climate, poorly draining,

acid soils and a long history of management as pasture. It supports an outstanding assemblage of plants and animals, including a number of rare species, such as the marsh fritillary butterfly *Euphydryas aurinia*.

About Natural England

Natural England is the government's adviser for the natural environment in England, helping to protect England's nature and landscapes for people to enjoy and for the services they provide.

Within England, Natural England is responsible for:

- Promoting nature conservation and protecting biodiversity
- Conserving and enhancing the landscape
- Securing the provision and improvement of facilities for the study, understanding and enjoyment of the natural environment
- Promoting access to the countryside and open spaces and encouraging open-air recreation
- Contributing in other ways to social and economic well-being through management of the natural environment
- Follow us on Twitter @naturalengland and visit online at the [Natural England website](#)

[T Level providers to benefit from multi-million pound fund](#)

Eleven T Level providers are set to benefit from a share of an £8.65 million investment to help build new classrooms and refurbish buildings in readiness for the introduction of the new technical qualifications in September 2020, Apprenticeships and Skills Minister Anne Milton announced today (Thursday 11 July).

The funding has been awarded from the £38 million [T Level Capital Fund](#) which is designed to make sure young people taking the new technical courses have access to industry standard equipment and high-quality facilities so they gain the skills and knowledge employers demand. Today marks the first wave of providers to be awarded funding from the Capital Fund, with further funding expected to be awarded to more T Level providers later this year.

The 11 providers announced today include The Blackpool and Fylde College that will receive £400,000 to invest in state of the art facilities so students learn the skills they need to progress in the construction industry, and Barnsley College in South Yorkshire that will receive £2.2 million to build a new Digital Innovation Hub so young people gain the digital skills needed for the jobs of the future. Providers submitted proposals based on their specific needs and all received the funding they applied for in full.

Apprenticeships and Skills Minister, Anne Milton said:

T Levels will be the biggest change to technical education in a generation – helping young people fast-track their career and get a head start in the world of work.

I'm thrilled to announce the first batch of T Level providers who will benefit from the T Level Capital Fund, so young people will have access to high-quality facilities come September 2020 when the first T Level courses will be taught. I look forward to announcing further allocations of funding soon.

Bev Robinson OBE, Principal and Chief Executive of Blackpool and The Fylde College said:

Blackpool and The Fylde College has invested significantly in its technical and professional learning resources for many years to ensure that students greatly benefit from using industry standard equipment. We welcome the national development of T Levels and the investment which the government is choosing to make. The announcement of a financial contribution towards ongoing extensive capital investment will assist in maintaining B&FC's very high standards of technical and professional education and training aligned to the needs of the economy.

Nav Chohan, Principal, Shipley College said:

It's great news that we can further develop our facilities to support the new qualifications in September 2020.

The first three T Levels for Digital, Education and Construction will be taught from September 2020. A further seven will to be taught from 2021, including three in health and science, with a further 15 coming on stream from 2022 onwards in sectors such as legal, financial and accounting, engineering and manufacturing, and creative & design. To support the further education sector to deliver the new T Level courses, the Government will provide an additional half a billion pounds every year once they are all fully rolled out.

The T Level Capital Fund is being delivered in two parts. This first part, launched in January 2019, is for the 2020 providers to refurbish their existing buildings or to build new spaces to support the delivery of the first T Levels.

Following this, funding for specialist equipment such as digital and audio visual kit, will be allocated to all providers in spring 2020.

The Department for Education has also today named the [37 T Level providers](#) that will take part in the first round of phased implementation of the T Level Transition Programme. The programme will help young people get up to speed with the skills and confidence they need before starting their T Level. These providers work in partnership with the Association of Colleges to develop the programme content so it available from September 2020.

The government is also investing £20 million to help prepare the sector for the introduction of T Levels. This includes the [£5 million Taking Teaching Further programme](#), which aims to attract more industry experts to work in the sector, and the [£8 million T Level Professional Development offer](#) to help teachers and staff prepare for the roll-out of the new qualifications.

T Levels are a key part of the Government's drive to transform technical education in this country, so more people gain the skills they need to secure a rewarding career and employers can access the workforce they need to plug skills gaps in key sectors like engineering and digital.

The breakdown of the funding between the 11 providers is available below:

1. Shipley College of Further Education – £121,125
2. The College of Richard Collyer – £206,292
3. City of Stoke-on-Trent sixth Form College – £296,551
4. Barnsley College – £2,250,000
5. Fareham College – £446,625
6. Havant and South Downs College – £495,030
7. Farnborough College of Technology – £767,500
8. Cardinal Newman Sixth Form College – £868,382
9. Salesian School – £1,184,000
10. Blackpool and The Flyde – £400,000
11. Bridgwater and Taunton College – £646,988
12. Bridgwater and Taunton College – £999,089

[Report shows strong progress on diversity in transport apprenticeships](#)

- Strategic Transport Apprenticeship Taskforce releases third annual report on delivery of road and rail apprenticeships
- report shows diversity has increased, with the proportion of black, asian and minority ethnic (BAME) apprentices shooting up 56% over the last 2 years.

A report published today (11 July 2019) shows that strong progress is being made by an industry-led taskforce in boosting the proportion of under-represented groups in transport apprenticeships.

The [Strategic Transport Apprenticeship Taskforce's \(STAT\) 3 year progress report](#) marks the latest in a series of annual reports setting out progress against ambitions from the government's 2016 [Transport infrastructure skills strategy](#), as well as information on the diversity of those undertaking apprenticeships.

And statistics in today's report show that BAME representation now stands at over a fifth of apprentice intake, representing a 56% proportional increase over the last 2 years in the share of BAME apprentices in the sector.

The figure provides a positive result for [STAT](#), who have exceeded their commitment to improve BAME representation in apprenticeships.

And the picture for women's representation also shows positive improvement, with women now making up 15.4% of technical and engineering apprenticeship starts, up from 10% 2 years ago, representing a 54% proportional increase. The figures again show real progress towards the STAT's target of 20%. Female representation in all apprentice roles has increased to 23.6%, up from 20% 2 years ago.

Minister Nusrat Ghani said:

Drawing from the widest pool of talent is vital for any industry, particularly where there are skills shortages. 41,000 people are needed in roads by 2025, and rail needs 50,000 extra people by 2033 to deliver planned investment.

That's why it's fantastic to see how apprenticeships can be used to attract and train a more diverse workforce. STAT's work is vital in getting under-represented groups into transport apprenticeships and meeting skills needs. They are providing great opportunities for all, regardless of background.

Mike Brown MVO, Chair of the Strategic Apprenticeship Taskforce and London's Transport Commissioner, said:

It's fantastic to see the increase in diversity in those joining the transport industry as apprentices. In order to keep the sector at the forefront of innovation, it is vital that we continue to attract and inspire a variety of people into transport careers, reflecting the customers that we serve, and stimulating creativity of thought and approach.

By working together across the industry, we have managed to start challenging the perception that a career in transport is for a certain type of person. We need to ensure that we maintain and drive this momentum forward, so that, more and more, people realise the wide range of roles on offer and do not feel they face barriers to achieving their career aspirations.

[New report shows increased diversity in transport apprentices](#)

Today's report sets out growth in higher level apprenticeships in the sector. Crucially, female representation at this level is higher than the average for the sector, which will help to reduce the gender pay gap.

STAT has committed to driving forward existing programmes around diversity and [social mobility](#) in the sector. Key commitments for 2019 to 2020 include:

- piloting a pre-employment training programme, to support those facing significant barriers into training and work into the sector
- developing a shared apprenticeships programme in Data Analytics and Data Scientist, which will plug an important future skills need

[Strengthening UN peacekeeping through triangular cooperation](#)

Thank you Mr President.

May I start by welcoming your choice of debate today. I think, from the conversation we've had around the table and the contributions made, this is one which has provoked considerable interest and I think it's a really good choice. And I'd like to thank in that spirit our briefers as well for coming to us today and for setting out your views.

Mr President, the United Kingdom greatly values triangular cooperation that is of course between this Council, between the Secretariat – represented by Jean Pierre but of course Atul also is a key player – and the troop and the police contributing countries which are so vital for all of us in terms of achieving any mandate. And as the Ambassador of Kuwait kindly reminded us, we set out these issues in a joint non-paper with our friends and colleagues from Pakistan last year which we think is still highly relevant to these conversations. At that time, there was broad agreement that the purpose of triangular cooperation was to enable those troop and police contributing countries to provide reliable and relevant information on the realities of implementing and delivering peacekeeping missions' mandates to decision-makers here in New York.

Now, the United Kingdom, like many counterparts here on the Security Council, is of course a troop contributing country ourselves. So as a troop contributing country we recognise very much the importance and value of views from the ground which we happily pass on from our own troops. And as a Security Council member, without personnel presence in every mission, we know that we need to seek the perspectives of other troop and police contributing countries as we consider issues on this Council's agenda. And so we do. And an example: in advance of the AMISOM mandate renewal this year, we met each

of the Permanent Representatives of the troop contributing countries. We met them throughout the process and at every level in the mission. We hosted a meeting with other UN Security Council members and that helped directly to inform our approach towards that resolution and to inform, I think, the Council's decision making, particularly on how to deliver the commitment that we've made repeatedly on the transition from AMISOM to Somali-led security.

Now that's just one example, Mr President. And in that example, it wasn't necessary for us to create any new process; we could do that within the existing parameters. And I think we should consider that as well.

Now we must also recognise, of course, as troop contributing countries, we may draw a particular view or perspective from our own contingents' activities. But no single contributor has a monopoly of truth of what is happening on the ground. And as a Council, we need to make sure that we consider the views of our SRSGs and Special Envoys of the Secretary-General, of course Force Commanders and all other relevant analysis to make sure we have a complete and integrated picture.

Now I think there's been a really interesting conversation, as I've said before, about the best way of holding these discussions. As I said Mr President, we've carried out these sort of informal consultations one-on-one and then involving other members of the Council. I also, during the Presidency of the UK last August, chaired a TCC meeting. I would say it wasn't the most dynamic discussion I've ever participated in so I think it's really important that we do consider how we can make those meetings more informative and interactive. And I'm very up for this, we're very up for this conversation. And I notice the proposals made by Alexandra Novosseloff. But we don't want it just to add to our already very busy agenda. I think we if we were to come up with a new idea for how to do something, we would need to take something else away or amend the existing method otherwise we're simply creating more and more meetings. I also agree with all those who have talked about the value of missions and visits.

Mr President, the Secretary-General urged Member States to make a greater commitment to peacekeeping through A4P – Actions for Peacekeeping and 151 Member States endorsed that declaration. And that declaration specifically called upon us to implement existing inter-governmental commitments on triangular cooperation – namely to strengthen consultations between peacekeeping stakeholders on mandate supplementation, to strengthen UN and EU cooperation, and to expand the triangular partnership project which builds long-term capacity for TCCs and supports capacity building.

Now Mr President, when Alexandra Novosseloff talked to us about triangular cooperation, she also talked about doing so to avoid tension. And let me, in that spirit, note that other shared commitments under A4P include improvements to performance and conduct through the use of performance data to inform deployment decisions and an agreement to hold personnel and leadership to account for proper conduct, including in particular on sexual exploitation and abuse. And for the United Kingdom, it's therefore disappointing that some troop contributing countries have decided to obstruct improvements which would have helped to deliver better performance. The Fifth

Committee's cross-cutting peacekeeping resolution would have asked the Secretary-General to take further steps to improve peacekeeping performance and tackle sexual exploitation and abuse. And it was also deeply concerning that the same Member States frustrated the usual consensus on the independent Board of Auditors report which addresses actions within the Secretary-General's own remit by forcing a vote and resoundingly rejecting recommendations on improving performance. Such recommendations would have not only helped to protect civilians in conflict, they would have gone hand in hand in improving the safety and security of our peacekeepers.

Mr President, let me conclude by saying that in seeking to improve UN peacekeeping, the Secretary-General has sought commitment and consensus. It's now down to us to demonstrate our commitment to implementing reforms that we so often talk about and on which he found consensus just last year.

Thank you.