

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment



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Do you want to know more about the current picture of Air Quality in the London Borough of Richmond, as well as the efforts to better understand and reduce it?

Welcome to the twenty-third issue of the JSNA Newsletter - a rolling publication produced by Public Health that describes the health, social care and wellbeing of local residents. In this issue we give an update on air quality in Richmond.

There is strong evidence demonstrating that current levels of air pollution in the UK are damaging the health of everyone, with the vulnerable and deprived carrying the greatest burden. Current levels of air pollution continue to exceed legal limits throughout the UK and poor air quality is an on-going issue of much concern in major cities including London. Action is needed to prevent the on-going ill-health and reduced life-expectancy caused by air pollution every year. Richmond is affected by poor air quality; in 2000 it was designated an Air Quality Management Area for exceedances in nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter, and remains so today. Road traffic is the leading source of air pollution in the borough, although other contributing sources include construction and wood burning stoves.

To have a meaningful impact on air pollution and health, people need to identify opportunities to reduce their own contribution and help resolve the problem of air quality, including the way homes are heated and insulated, the reliance on and impact of next day delivery systems and the way in which they use their vehicles and the need to be more active.

We need, as a society, to be less dependent on private vehicles and have equal access to high quality active transport systems and healthy and welcoming environments in which to live, play, work, grow and learn. Addressing the detrimental effects of air pollution poses a unique opportunity for public health as, in doing so, many other benefits, such as reducing obesity, physical inactivity, social isolation and inequality, can also be realised.

This newsletter reports on our latest strategic assessment of air pollution, which provides an analysis of air quality in the borough and updates on initiatives currently undertaken to improve air quality in the borough through the Air Quality Action Plan. This is with a view to identifying the strategic priorities and opportunities to act to address pollution, while maximising positive impacts on the health and wellbeing of people living and working in Richmond - for example, through reducing the need for car use and maximising opportunities to use active travel methods instead. It seeks to identify key messages to guide actions to tackle air pollution while maximising the health and environmental benefits that can be achieved.

If you would like to contribute to future editions of this JSNA newsletter please get in touch with us at jsna@richmond.gov.uk. We will gladly receive and consider your feedback, data, information and intelligence for future newsletter publications.

Houda Al-Sharifi

Director of Public Health

Serving Richmond and Wandsworth Councils

National Picture

Local authorities have a statutory responsibility under the Environment Act 1995 to undertake Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) which includes regular review and assessment of air quality within the borough. A review is performed every 3 years with a requirement for local authorities to produce annual progress reports. If a local authority identifies locations within its boundaries where thresholds for air quality are likely to be exceeded, it must designate that area as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Local authorities that have designated their Boroughs as AQMAs are required to produce an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP).

Local & Proposed Strategies

Air pollution and monitoring are overseen by the Pollution Team within the Council. The Council is required to produce an air quality action plan (as discussed above), the progress of which is reported annually to the Greater London Authority (GLA). The Council is currently in the process of completely refreshing its Air Quality Action Plan to ensure that it reflects the priority of Air Quality to the Borough and is fit for purpose over the coming years. It will open to public consultation later in 2017, and we welcome feedback comments and suggestions. The 2016 action plan, outlining the measures and actions taken within the borough to improve air quality can be accessed via the [Air Pollution](#) section of the Richmond Councils website. The action plan outlines the overarching measures for addressing air pollution in the borough, including:

- *London wide and regional measures e.g. The Mayor is promoting a new cycle strategy, cleaner buses, zero emission taxis, Low Emission Zone (LEZ) for commercial vehicles, the T (toxicity) charge for all vehicles in central London and the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) from 2019*
- *Richmond's Pollution Team are also leading on a London wide project to control emissions from the construction industry funded by the GLA*
- *Borough wide Measures e.g. The Council has made improvements to High Streets for pedestrians, is supporting cycle infrastructure, public transport and the installation of more electric vehicle (EV) charge points. It is promoting school travel plans and healthy travel for all staff.*
- *Local measures e.g. the Council is working on new procedures for all planning applications, policies such as no engine idling and a new Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP)*

Snapshots

What is air pollution?

- The term air pollution is used to refer to substances in the air that have harmful effects on human health, welfare, plant and animal life.
- Although there are many air pollutants that have been associated with significant excess morbidity and mortality, it is the effects of particulate matter (PM) smaller than $2.5\mu\text{m}$ that has the strongest epidemiological link with health outcomes.
- PM can be anthropogenic (manmade) or come from natural sources, however the latter contributes only a small proportion to the total concentration.
- Emissions of $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ from road vehicles are the source of most importance to health in UK urban settings. Roadside levels of $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ and human exposure are therefore generally much higher in comparison to those measured at background locations.

Local Air Quality and what we have achieved so far

- Richmond is affected by poor air quality and was designated an Air Quality Management Area in 2000 and remains so.
- The Council runs a robust monitoring scheme to measure changes in air pollution at 64 sites around the borough
- The Council has installed new attractive pavements to encourage walking
- The Council has run campaigns to promote no engine idling and burning the correct fuel to raise awareness of air pollution
- The Council is running a Clean Air 4 Schools programme with local primary schools to educate and inform children on healthy routes and modes of getting to and from school
- The Council continues to lobby the Mayor of London for cleaner, greener buses ASAP
- The Council continues to fight expansion of Heathrow airport and increased pollution

Health Impacts of Air pollution

- PM_{10} , shown to penetrate and lodge deep within the lungs, is associated with short term impacts and exacerbation of existing medical conditions.
- $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ is of greatest significance to human health, being a risk factor for cardiovascular disease and premature mortality.
- It is estimated that, across the whole population of Richmond, anthropogenic $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ is responsible for 1,238 lost years of life each year (equivalent to 84 deaths at typical ages).

Opportunities for everyone to help improve air quality and maximise the benefits to the people of Richmond

- Maximize the health benefits and reduction of health inequalities by establishing joint working across borough departments to prioritise action that addresses air pollution and promotes active travel.
- The average number of walking trips per person in London has fallen in recent years; 75% of Richmond households own a car (the fifth highest in London) and over a third of journeys could be walked in less than 25 minutes.
- There are ongoing initiatives in place to support the integration of walking, cycling and public transport use into daily activities.
- As air pollution is mostly caused by road traffic, if everyone uses their car as little as possible, using walking, cycling and public transport instead, they help reduce the levels of air pollution and at the same time reduce the effects of air pollution on their health. This also helps combat other health issues such as inadequate physical activity, obesity, diabetes, poor mental health, and isolation and loneliness.
- Identifying and addressing barriers and challenges to the uptake of walking, cycling and public transport and ensuring these modes of travel are accessible and attractive options for everyone will be key to adequately addressing air pollution while improving health and wellbeing.

What next?

Future needs assessments

Throughout the year short topic-based reports are published on the Local Authority's website, enabling key messages to be shared with local partners. Topics that are planned for future JSNA reports and newsletters include:

- *Learning Disabilities needs assessment*
- *Mental Health needs assessment*
- *Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment*

Look out for our newsletters and have a look at some of the resources we have highlighted below. All health needs assessments and quarterly newsletters are available via: www.richmond.gov.uk/jsna.

Further resources

- *Richmond Annual Status Report including Air Quality Action Plan*
https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/environment/pollution/air_pollution/air_quality_reports/progress_reports_and_air_quality_action_plans
- *Cycling in Richmond*
https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/roads_and_transport/cycling
- *Walking initiatives Richmond*
https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/roads_and_transport/transport_planning/school_travel_planning/walking_initiatives
- *The Annual Report of the Director of Public Health 2016*
www.richmond.gov.uk/annual_public_health_report
- *Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-21*
www.richmond.gov.uk/joint_health_and_wellbeing_strategy

Contact us

If you have any topics or issues you think the JSNA team could analyse, or if you would like to get involved in any of the work currently underway, please email us at: [**jsna@richmond.gov.uk**](mailto:jsna@richmond.gov.uk)