

Camden Clean Air Action Plan

2027–2030

A quick overview



What is air pollution

'**Air pollution**' is gases, particles, and chemicals in the air that can directly harm our health. Air pollution is often invisible, and sometimes we cannot smell it, but it has a **very serious effect on our health** – both as individual people, and as a society.

'**Air quality**' is the term that is used to describe whether the air in a particular location at a particular time is polluted or not. In short, if it is generally **safe and healthy to breathe**.

The UK has legal limits for air pollution which are higher than the levels recommended by health experts. For this reason, Camden Council became the first council to adopt the stricter **World Health Organization (WHO) air quality guideline limits** to better protect public health.

There are various activities outdoors that create pollution, including:

- **Using fossil fuels** in vehicles and construction machinery, for building heating and power, for cooking, and industrial processes (factories and workshops)
- **Cooking food**
- **Burning garden and household waste**
- **Construction sites**
- **Using chemicals, solvents, and synthetic products**



Some air pollution can be transported large distances in the air. This means the emissions of pollution in one place can affect the health of people or the environment far away. In Camden we also have to think about air pollution coming from sources outside of our borough.



Poor air quality can also be found indoors – in homes, workplaces, schools, hospitals, health centres, and care homes.

Recent evidence shows that indoor air quality can sometimes be worse than outdoor air quality. Everyday activities such as **cooking and using cleaning and personal care products** can create indoor air pollution. We typically spend up to 90% of our time indoors, so improving the air we breathe inside buildings is very important for protecting health.



Why is it important

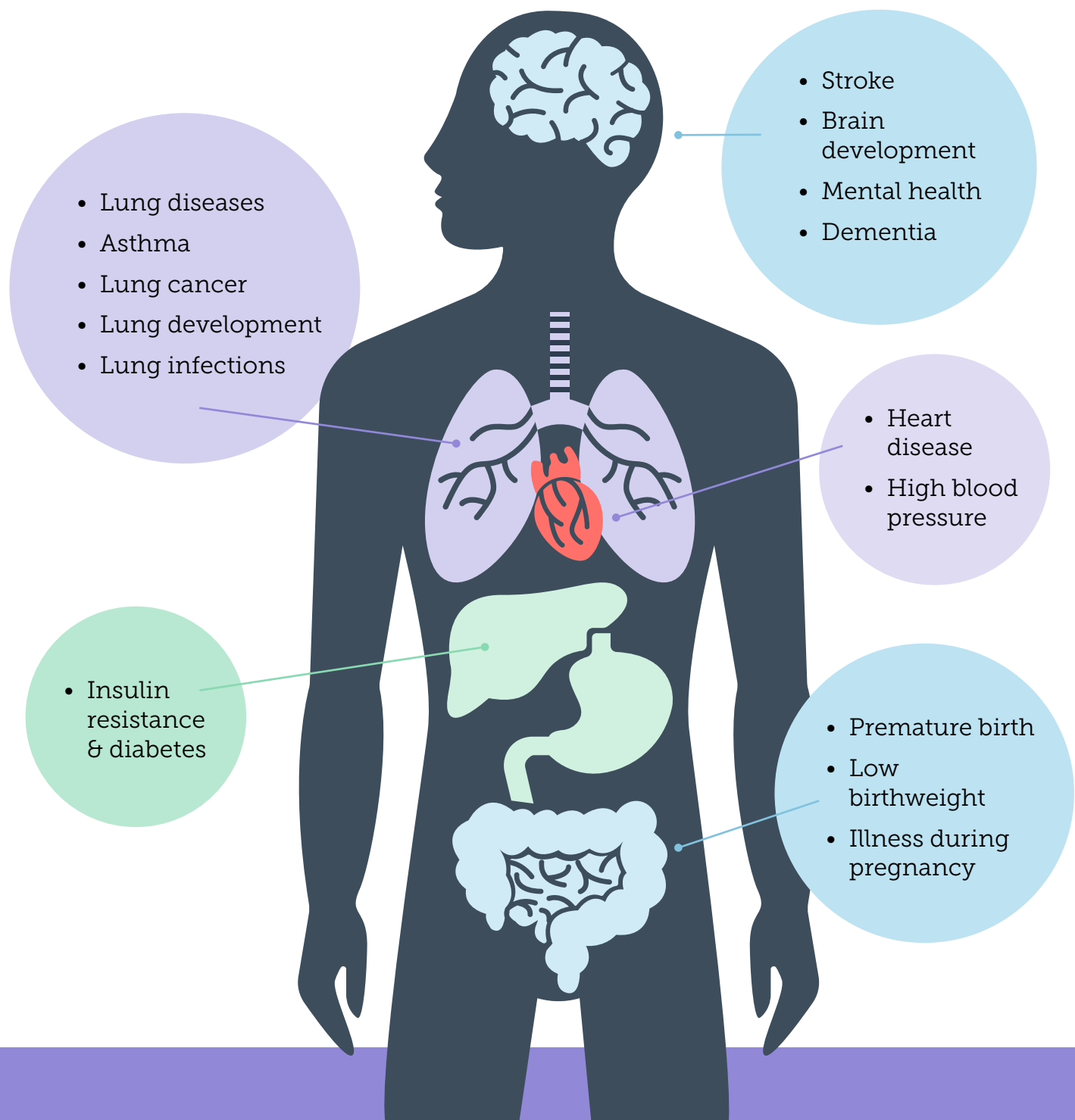
When we breathe air pollution, harmful gases and particles enter our lungs and can damage our bodies.

Air pollution causes hundreds of thousands of people in the UK to become ill and causes tens of thousands of deaths every year from these illnesses.

In Camden, air pollution causes more than 100 early deaths every year.

It worsens existing health conditions affecting our heart, lungs, and brain, and makes people more likely to develop other illnesses. It also places significant pressure on the NHS, social care services, and the economy, with estimated **costs of £27–50 billion per year.**

Air pollution affects us all



What we are doing, and how it is going

Our goal is to achieve clean air in Camden. **We want to be a borough where nobody gets ill because of the air they breathe.** We have strong air quality targets, and since 2019 we have completed many projects to improve air quality outdoors and indoors to better protect people's health from air pollution. We have:

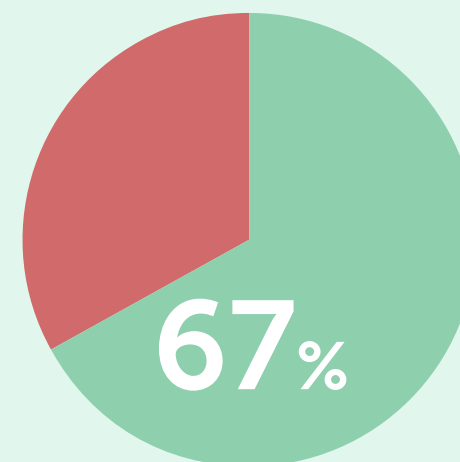
- supported the use of cleaner road vehicles by installing 550 electric vehicle chargers and improving Camden Council's own vehicle fleet which is now 25% electric
- built 25 kilometres of new and improved cycle lanes and 430 bike storage hangars, and created 30 Healthy School Streets
- installed electricity supplies for canal boats and ice cream vans
- supported more than 250 healthcare workers to speak to patients about air quality and health

- improved public awareness and knowledge, and empowered local action, by running clean air campaigns like the London Wood Burning Project, Idling Action London, and the Year of Clean Air for Camden Schools
- launching and then expanding an indoor air quality monitor loan project so that anyone living in Camden can request to borrow a monitor to learn about air quality at home

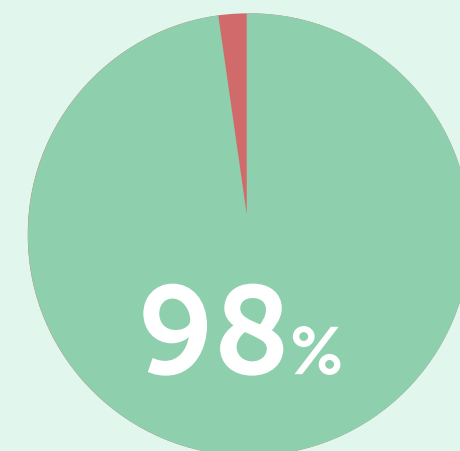
Air quality has improved in Camden since 2019. In 2019, 67% of roadside air quality monitors met the legal limit for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). By 2025, 98% of these sites met the limit.

NO₂ and particulate matter (PM) air pollution have reduced throughout Camden, but the rate of improvement has slowed down. We still have a long way to go before we meet our World Health Organization air quality targets everywhere in the borough. This will be challenging, but it is important for our health and the environment.

In 2019, 67% of roadside air quality monitors met the legal limit for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂).



By 2025, 98% of these sites met the limit.



Our Clean Air Action Plan for 2027-2030

Our new plan includes actions to improve both outdoor and indoor air quality, tackling environmental health inequalities, and making us more resilient to air pollution incidents and events linked to climate change.

The list below is a short summary. You can read the full list of actions on the consultation page.

1. Reduce emissions from buildings

- From homes and businesses, including Camden's housing and corporate buildings, and by providing grant funding support via the Camden Climate Fund, and by promoting the benefits for both climate and air quality, and by reducing wood and solid fuel burning



- From restaurant kitchens by creating guidance and working with businesses

2. Reduce emissions from transport

- From personal and private vehicle use and from deliveries and freight, by delivering the Camden Transport Strategy
- From Camden's own vehicles, by continuing the improvement of our fleet



3. Reduce emissions from construction and development

- From machinery and generators and from demolition and construction dust
- From road works and small-scale construction



4. Reduce other outdoor sources of air pollution

- From street food trading and ice cream vans, and from filming and events
- From BBQs, bonfires, and grounds maintenance



5. Build awareness and empower local action for cleaner air

- Create an awareness campaign for the public as well as Camden staff and councillors, and improve how we share and communicate air quality information and data, especially when there are pollution alerts or incidents
- Work with schools, the NHS, and partners to build knowledge and empower action



6. Improve indoor air quality

- In homes, by raising awareness and further expanding our monitor loan project
- In schools, workplaces, and other buildings by engaging and working with partners



7. Lead, advocate and influence change for cleaner air

- Maintain and strengthen Camden's reputation as a leading borough for clean air action
- Advocate for action to reduce air pollution and protect public health from all sources of pollution, including pollution sources outside of our borough



What we are consulting you about

We have made good progress but there is a lot more work to do before there is clean air everywhere in Camden.

We have created a new Clean Air Action Plan which says what we will do over the next four years (2027-2030) to keep improving air quality in Camden.

We want to know what you think about our new Plan, whether you support our ideas and objectives, if you think we have missed anything important, and how you think we should communicate about air quality and share air quality data.

How you can respond to the consultation

Fill out the consultation survey on We Are Camden:

➡ <https://consultations.wearecamden.org/>.

Alternatively, you can email ✉ **AirQuality@camden.gov.uk**, or write to 'FAO Air Quality Team, Sustainability, Air Quality and Energy, 5th floor, 5 Pancras Square, London, N1C 4AG'.