

Swindon is a fast growing town of >220,000 inhabitants in the S/SW of England. There is much new residential development recently completed or in train; such as the North Eastern Villages, Tadpole Garden Village, and Wichelstowe. The local road network is growing to meet the expansion around these growth areas, but this expansion also increases journeys into the centre, which is constrained.

It is also a Council priority to increase footfall in the centre to ensure the sustainability of the shopping and cultural offer there, but there is limited scope to expand the road network around the centre. One place where this has had direct effect is on Kingshill Road, whose air quality has suffered as a result of high traffic flows (17,000 per day) and topographical factors, and so Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) levels have risen above national limits.

An Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) has been in place since 2018. NO₂ levels have fallen substantially as a result of both the Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) measures already put in place, and the general greening of vehicles, but more needs to be done to meet legal limits and offset our growth. We also need to reduce local PM_{2.5} emissions.

This is a DEFRA funded project combining the installation of Variable Message Signage (VMS) to deliver nudge and informational messaging at principal entries to the Kingshill AQMA, and a program of outreach to schools, groups, and the wider public on reducing both emissions of, and harm from, air pollution; specifically NO₂ and PM_{2.5} in Swindon.

The role holder will work very closely with the Travel Plan Officer and the Head of Environmental Health; together forming the core project team tasked with delivering the above and contributing to other actions within the AQAP.

Outreach activities will be initially centred on the Kingshill AQMA to support and promote the installation and commissioning of 2x VMS, before widening out to engage with our whole community around the generation of NO₂ and PM_{2.5} in Swindon; with a focus on reducing car journeys, promoting active travel and public transport, reducing emissions from domestic burning and bonfires, reducing exposure and harms from both NO₂ and PM_{2.5} pollution.

The project team will seek to contribute to and capitalise on the increasing awareness within Swindon as a result of the AQMA and the Council's 'Be The Change' campaign around the connected topic of climate change and Carbon reduction.#

Our priorities are to:

- Support and collaborate with local bus companies to minimise emissions and maximise usability of the bus network in Swindon, including their vehicle fleet renewal plans.
- Raise awareness of Air Quality Issues with local residents, schools and businesses to encourage behaviour change.
- Engage and work with employers to promote greener fleets and staff transport arrangements.

Another key AQAP measure; that of a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to prohibit most heavy vehicles from the road will be put in place during the project term.

Swindon's JSNA may be found here: <https://www.swindonjsna.co.uk/>

Our Air Quality web pages may be found here:

https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20024/health_and_wellbeing/916/air_quality_in_swindon

Details of the current DEFRA grant round may be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/107-million-in-funding-for-local-authorities-to-improve-air-quality>