

Updated Air Quality Action Plan report Annex 2

All comments received through the consultation questionnaire and via email are detailed in the table below. Any consultation responses that were not constructive towards the development of the AQAP have been removed.

Consultee	Response
Members of the Public	Recent speed limit reduction is widely not being adhered to and measures to improve this would help. Giving pedestrians more priority crossings around schools would make walking easier
	Electric buses on local routes would be fantastic.
	Council seem to be paying lip service to zero emission. All council car parks and all car parks in kings hill should have EV charging. All new houses (of which there are plenty in kings hill) should be built with solar and ground source heat pumps. All council vehicles and buses should be EV. There should be incentives for using public transport and EV and disincentives for polluting vehicles. Idling should be banned everywhere (when people idle in front of my house esp on cold mornings my bedroom fills up with fumes even with all windows and vents closed).
	There is no traffic flow, too many lights and pinch points causing jams. There are no usable cycle routes, the traffic is very heavy and aggressive. At least in kings hill you can ride on the pathways
	Limit the amount of traffic going through the towns, it's not complicated. Pedestrianise Tonbridge High Street. Mostly focus on HGVs, as well as cars using the borough as a thoroughfare, rather than using the dual carriageways and motorways.
	We badly need a M25 J5 slip road. This council should be pushing to expedite this development. I can't understand why it's not happening.
	Please consider supporting the J5 slip road on M25 at Sevenoaks. This would greatly reduce the HGV traffic through our villages and make a huge difference to both air quality and safety.
	There are far too many Lorries coming through Borough Green. They seem to use it as a cut through to the motorways.
	Too many lorries and large vehicles on the A228 Platt. It's extremely dangerous to pedestrians, I take my child to school 25 miles away due to the pollution and how dangerous it is walking 10 mins to the local school. He is asthmatic and I do not want him breathing in more fumes than he needs to. Time again I have nearly been clipped by door mirrors walking along the footpaths, my dog actually has panic attacks walking there so we have to stick to the back roads.
	For cleaner air, get rid of diesel. Have diesel trucks unload at the edge of towns in mini depot areas and last part of journey can be done by electric vehicles like the old milk floats we used to know, or by petrol vans.
	Slip roads off M25 near junction of M5 would vastly improve air quality of all villages along that section of the A25.
	The missing J5 Slips in vicinity of M25 J5 Sevenoaks.
	First of all lower the speed limit borough wide, change traffic situation near Ightham school. Every 2 months a car is totalled. Also kids can't walk along the A25 towards the walking bridge safely. Once a car drove into the hedge on the sidewalk just before school ended. Make Ightham centre a one way road.circle around the A25 and roundabout. Kids are not able to walk from St Peters church to school because the road is too narrow near the pub. Make it one way and you can have a full walking path.
	J5 Slips to M25 M26
	Ensure large trucks stick to main A roads
Need west facing slips onto the m25 at Sevenoaks	
Stop building houses in green belt land.	

	Please consider J5 slip roads to reduce the high levels of heavy goods traffic that passes through Borough Green causing air pollution as well as noise and damage.
	Building 3000 houses as the Borough Green Garden City will increase the air pollution drastically in this area. Please reduce the number of properties proposed to avoid long term issues with air pollution and traffic congestion.
	You need to dramatically reduce the sheer volume of traffic, especially lorries, through Borough Green, Platt etc
	Take current areas where air quality is poor and areas where future development is likely and prioritise these for aggressive traffic reduction, green wall, sustainable transport measures. Consider how these areas will be affected by additional development and take advance action to mitigate these effects.
	Building a mass housing estate in the green belt is not the action of a council concerned about air quality. Leave the green spaces alone, get a decent local plan in place, and stop lorries thundering through our villages.
	The air quality around Borough green and Ightham and so the potential build of 3,000 new houses being built should be looked at as this will only increase the bad pollution
	Stop allowing or building new houses. The population is large enough and roads busy enough without adding more. Rewilding and planting or more trees should be a priority.
	Stop development along A20 corridor
	Borough Green badly need the proposed new relief road to improve AQA in the rest of the town. The new development is needed to achieve this.
	J5 Slips would be the single most action that could be taken to dramatically improve the air quality in this area. I live just off A25 which is permanently busy with cars & non-stop lorries coming off the motorway to drive & deliver to Sevenoaks. Our child is asthmatic too & the pollution will not be helping their health.
	More greenery everywhere, more cycle routes, make buses electric and increase no of buses - create a spoke system, more frequent and shorter routes with good interchanges and information.
	The introduction of J5 Slips on the M25 would drastically reduce traffic and air pollution through the villages along the A25. Preserve greenbelt to help CO ₂ emissions i.e do not build mass housing estate in Borough Green.
	Install an exit on the motorway at Sevenoaks. Have a comprehensive public transport system that is reasonably priced, always turns up on time and gets passengers to destinations on time
	Reduce traffic through Borough Green by opening J5 slip roads
	The 20mph scheme increases all forms of pollution. Get this removed to make an immediate improvement.
	This is a matter of urgency. Please work together as a council and community groups, putting politics aside. Less talking, time for action.
	You need to improve the local Bus service. You are never going to get more people on buses unless there is a more regular service.
	Junction 5 slip roads would drastically improve the air quality to the borough green area and beyond. Improved bus services to smaller villages to stations would reduce traffic.
	Junction 5 slips that would remove HGV and LGV TRAFFIC from areas like Borough Green, Platt, Seal & Wrotham Heath. They don't need to be here.
	Heavily discounted public transport for school children. The number of cars driving down our road dropping their secondary school aged children off at Toggs, Weald etc is ridiculous. Secondary school children should get to school under their own steam. I would cycle to work more often if there was a safe route between Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells
	Subsidised public transport that is cheaper than owning or using a car
	If London and other metropolitan areas can introduce congestion charging and insist of low pollution vehicles, why can't TMBC?

	<p>Please can you look at domestic wood burning stoves - the smoke from these is very polluting and impacts on whole neighbourhoods</p>
	<p>The Tonbridge High Street zone should be expanded up to the Pembury Road junction to capture data on the appalling traffic by the station and the excessively large taxi rank. There should be a comprehensive review of the traffic flow through the town. This should not be carried out by Kent Highways as they clearly do not have the expertise to develop such schemes.</p>
	<p>Like to see reduction of Speed to 30 in all major routes for example Hadlow Road / Cornwallis Avenue</p>
	<p>Stop trying to remove Green Belt Land , TMBC should object to the Tunbridge Wells Borough Draft Plan as over 50% of TWBC's housing allocation is on the border of TMBC, there will be significant air quality issues within Capel with over 4,000 new homes proposed with 1,000's of acres of Green Belt lost. Tonbridge will see a substantial deterioration in air quality due to these proposed developments as well as increased costs as people will continue to use cars from Tudeley Village to access Tonbridge, people will not use electric bikes or walk 4 km they will drive. The infrastructure burden from these proposals will be immense on TMBC, why should TMBC pay for all of TWBC costs and have further air quality issues.</p>
	<p>Integrated, cycle, train and bus. Travel passes for young people that include ALL forms of public transport and do not just serve to shore up bus companies. Work with rail companies to improve branch line timetables. Build link roads to main routes to divert through traffic away from villages. Consider impact of development on traffic. Build proper cycle routes, not white lines that disappear at junctions. Reduce speed and improve flow.</p>
	<p>Community Tree Planting</p>
	<p>Enter into a dialogue with Kent County Council about making Tonbridge High Street one way. Ask all schools and youth organisations in the borough to introduce or develop the Bikeability cycle training programme to encourage children and young people to ride safely and to help them develop a lifelong enjoyment and use of cycling as a means of transport. To clearly separate the areas within TMBC control and those outside it, such as KCC-controlled matters, and to focus on those it controls. To use their PLANNING powers to impose on developers the highest standards of non-fossil fuel heating - I saw no space elsewhere for this comment but this has a HUGE impact on Air Quality.</p>
	<p>Out of date data. With 20mph in Tonbridge air pollution has increased and more areas should be tested e.g. A227 by Sainsburys and York Parade. Well documented scientific evidence that 20mph increases air pollution. ALL MAIN "A" ROADS SHOULD BE NO LOWER THAN 30MPH. Also the connecting roads between A26 and A227 i.e. The Ridgeway and Yardley Park also 30mph. Keep housing estates off main roads at 20mph during peak school travel times, commuter times only. This will work better if monitored. At moment just frustration with drivers, worse driving, increased pollution and no police monitoring so no obeyed anyway.</p>
	<p>Decrease in air quality due to more vehicles on the road due to increase housing! Seriously look at your housing plan to stop estates being built on top of each other which would reduce traffic jams & areas getting clogged with traffic!!</p>
	<p>The points don't go far enough to be effective - Further action needs to be taken, look at pedestrianisation of public spaces, use of Low traffic neighbourhoods, one way streets, segregated cycle routes, reducing through traffic through the centre of town that could be applied borough wide. For example as a new resident to Tonbridge, I am shocked at the cut through traffic that uses Cannons Wharf as a rush hour rat run between the industrial estate and Tonbridge High Street, there is no way this should be a through route as there is not enough space for cars going in two directions in places, let alone at speed. This issue is worsened by the lack of parking controls, with cars parking all over the pavements reducing available road space further. This also leads to making the pavements hard to use and forcing pedestrians onto the road as there is no space for them. It seems an accident waiting to happen, when it seems no traffic should be really using this route to cut through and should be blocked off to by the gas work to separate the spaces and stop it from happening. It is unsafe, damaging the road surfaces and ultimately is feeding the pollution of the High Street and surrounding streets.</p>

Tonbridge and
Malling Green
Party

While we broadly support the thrust of the Plan we fear that it is not ambitious enough and rather than seeking to reduce the effects of air pollution to the legal limit we should be aiming to improve air quality at every location in the Borough and taking a more holistic approach in terms of transport policy, highways infrastructure and new development. The response received was very detailed and a number of the points welcomed. A number of the key points of the consultation response were as follows:

- We do not believe that the Action Plan as it stands will be enough to stimulate the necessary kind of modal shift away from the most polluting modes of transport or insists on more sustainable housing by demanding higher energy standards through an effective Local Plan. The highways infrastructure measures identified to tackle the increase in traffic generated by new developments will not limit the damage many developments will inflict on neighbouring communities.
- There is no mention of the developmental effects of poor air on children. The Tonbridge AQMA is in an area where many schoolchildren pass through on their way to and from school it is not just the effect on mortality rates, we should be concerned about but the lifelong effects that poor air quality has on our children and grandchildren. We have no particulate monitoring in Tonbridge and this pollution will endure irrespective of the phasing out of petrol and diesel engines.
- The SW Tonbridge Site will only make the situation in the AQMA in Tonbridge worse. The Plan was submitted before the impact of the redesign of the road system had been factored in. The Brook Street Roundabout is far too constrained to allow it to mitigate the effect of over 500 potential houses either side of Lower Haysden Lane.
- The need to draw up a Local Cycling, Walking Infrastructure Plan cannot be understated, cycling provision has stalled in Tonbridge and we require a comprehensive network of routes, preferably physically separated from roads to allow novice and young cyclists to make two wheels the preferred mode of transport and remove as many vehicles from the roads as possible.
- The regeneration of Tonbridge Town Centre was done while completely ignoring the impact on the AQMA or active travel other than pedestrian access. The High Street is now a far more hostile place for cyclists and many now avoid the road and take other routes or cycle on the pavements. The cycleway at River Walk is completely invisible since it was resurfaced and we have a bizarre policy from this Council where it is fighting to prevent the registration of a bridgeway at River Lawn which forms part of the cycle route from Big bridge to Avebury Avenue.
- We need to see more use of our rail network to deliver freight which would have been possible at the Panattoni/Aylesford Newsprint site but the sidings are being developed. We need to reduce the number of HGVs in our AQMAs either by better signposting of alternative routes or restricting their access between certain hours.
- Greater regulation of the bus network by a passenger transport executive to oversee the timetable and franchises could also compel the assignment of the cleanest vehicles to the most polluted routes. Restricting HGV movements through the AQMA has to be considered either by insisting on certain loading times outside of the most congested periods in Tonbridge High Street.
- The massive rises in the cost of school bus travel will lead to even more pupils being driven to school and more cars being on the roads, the direct opposite of the intention of the Freedom Pass when it was introduced. Young people are not encouraged to cycle between Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells because of a completely inadequate cycle infrastructure especially the section between Bidborough and Brook Street and the section of Shipbourne Road between Yardley Park road and Portman Park. There is no obvious safe cycling route between most of North and South Tonbridge and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan needs to consider proposals for cycle routes along Hadlow Road.
- We advocate the removal of more HGVs from Tonbridge High Street and making the High Street effectively one-way other than for buses and cyclists. Prioritising buses through this stretch will improve their efficiency and cyclists will also benefit. The removal of a lane of traffic during the refurbishment work was not as detrimental as first thought and mitigation measures at the Medway Wharf Road/Sovereign Way and Angel Lane/Vale Road junctions will further improve the flow of traffic. The suggestion is to carry out a three month trial to evaluate alternatives to the current layout.

Planners should require the highest possible standards of sustainable design and tools designed to improve air quality. These should include:

- A requirement to include alternative energy provision on all new developments. This could include a combination of solar power, deep and efficient ground source heat pumps and other renewable means of energy generation. Consideration should be given to stipulating that a proportion of the total energy input to new builds should come from renewable sources, to be determined at planning stage.
- A further requirement that all new builds are equipped with the highest possible grade insulation materials, limiting heat loss, improving home efficiency and reducing energy usage
- Electric car charging points wherever possible and as a requirement for new builds. In some instances, it will be possible to install exterior, standalone chargers and this should be encouraged. In other locations it will be necessary to consider other means, which could include simply having power connections provided to outdoor space.
- Recognition of the power of planting as a means of dramatically improving air quality. Small quantities of trees are simply not effective and developers should be encouraged to include low-growing planting and species which are particularly effective at carbon capture such as cotoneaster wherever possible.
- Consideration in larger developments of communal heating systems. These are often popular with residents and provide a cheap, effective and efficient way of heating homes. Lessons could be learnt here from ambitious proposals and developments overseas and in the UK, for example in the London Borough of Enfield.

When it comes to commercial development, all of the above should apply at scale, in a way which reflects the increased energy and resource consumption of commercial activities. In addition to requiring developers to go further on clean air and sustainable design, planners should also work with residents to encourage the inclusion of similar systems and materials in upgrades and extensions to existing buildings.

We are fully supportive of TMBC initiative of improving the quality of the air that we breathe. We would like to see an enhanced network of smaller electric buses. Delivery drivers could be incentivised to use electric HGV & LVC's through the premises they are delivering too. All taxi licences should cost less if the taxi is electric. Increased use of electric vehicles needs to run alongside a reduction in journeys. There are many health benefits of walking and cycling but it is essential that the lack of feeling safe is addressed. It would be advantageous to have an enhanced network of 'Quiet Streets' where walking, then cycling, takes precedence. Idling should be banned outside schools, taxi ranks, pick-up points and shops. A huge number of more electric charging points are needed but an understanding of how this would work for residents, with no off street parking, is essential. The speed of traffic needs to be reduced and implemented. The stopping of driveways being concreted over would reduce the rain water which is now lost as it runs off into the streets. While green walls have a place in reducing air pollutants we also need our whole residential network to feel safer and be more environmentally friendly. Planters full of wild flowers could also be used for traffic calming. Hedgerow, which will lock up more carbon, could be planted alongside miles of Kent's roads. More trees in towns would provide shade as our climate warms.