

Clean Air Day West Midlands Workshop notes

17/April/2018 at Impact Hub Birmingham

Update 09 May 2018

Not much new information was returned by 27/Apr, but there are some new contacts and two changes of email address – please see list at the end of this document and discard the previous email distribution list.

Peter Edwards is organising some CAD events at Birmingham University.

Fareeda Akbar from Birmingham Council is working with several local communities on air pollution including some who will be affected by the HS2 route. This work is supported by London Sustainability Exchange (<http://www.lsx.org.uk/>)

Air sample tubes have been installed in several sites around the region, but the lab results may not be back in time for Clean Air Day. The results may feed into local follow up community engagement.

From now until beginning of July, Kevin Chapman will be “steward” of the mailing list – email kevin_chapman_brum@outlook.com

Purpose: to share information and ideas about Clean Air Day (CAD2018) activities in the West Mids region. The meeting itself was a spin-off from the Climate Action Network West Midlands (CANWM) transport workshop on 28/Feb, and a subsequent meeting between CANWM and Campaign for Better Transport West Midlands.

The meeting started with introductions around the room. Several planned CAD2018 activities were mentioned and we agreed to share information about these, plus other useful links and resources, via the canwestm@gmail.com email account **by 27/April**.

We also agreed to share email addresses. Addresses of people who sent apologies, plus attendees at the CANWM Transport workshop have been added to the email distribution list (see below). If anyone does not want to be copied into future messages, please email canwestm@gmail.com and ask to be removed from the list.

The workshop session began with a longer term, more general discussion about clean air campaign goals and approach. We then discussed CAD2018 in more detail.

There was general agreement that an ongoing clean air campaign network would be helpful, but no follow up meeting dates were agreed. The only actions were to:

1. write up and share these notes
2. share extra information by 27/April, which will then be collated and shared
3. review the level of interest in a follow up planning event for CAD2018 and an ongoing campaign network

Longer Term Issues and Priorities for Clean Air Campaigning

Air quality is a broader issue than transport emissions, but these have priority because of EU standards and public awareness. Other air quality issues which were mentioned included idling diesel trains at New St Station, Birmingham Airport, Industrial pollution, freight traffic (e.g. increasing % of home deliveries), domestic and commercial heating, incinerators. Also secondary emissions from cars such as brake pad dust, etc. would not be fixed by getting rid of diesel cars.

Similarly, emissions are not the only argument for modal shifts in transport – congestion, road safety and population health are also major issues. More intelligence regarding reasons why people chose particular transport modes could be useful. For example, surveys show some people don't use buses because “they don't feel safe”, but how much of an issue is this for how many people?

National legislation will be required in some areas – such as limits on exhaust emissions, enforcement of emissions standards and road safety violations. Also, funding is not fairly distributed between London and other conurbations.

Public awareness and education is still an issue. In a recent survey of 2000 people, 1600 said they didn't think air pollution was a problem.

It was agreed that comparing west mids conurbation to “benchmark cities” could be helpful in raising awareness of the benefits of cleaner air and measures to achieve this. Examples could include Copenhagen, Osaka, Rotterdam, Dusseldorf, Dresden. Also possibly UK cities which had cleaner air than Brum / west mids such as Nottingham, Leicester, Oxford, Bristol, Edinburgh. See <https://www.880cities.org/>

Is a clean air zone going to happen in brum and what about other parts of the city and WM region? General agreement that to some extent central gov was “passing the buck” to local / regional councils.

Cleaner buses are being planned over a 3-4 year timescale. Replacing diesel trains could be part of the renewal of the Cross Country rail franchise.

There was general agreement that WMCA and TfWM were “key players” because of their devolved responsibilities for transport, but Andy Street’s term ends in 2020.

Promoting the health benefits and explaining the health impacts on children and elderly people is an important way of shifting public opinion. Clean Air Day is mainly about raising awareness.

There was general agreement that emphasis and investment in “technical fixes” such as “self-driving electric Ubers” was misplaced or at least over-optimistic.

Local councils and officers are affected by a vocal car-driving lobby. One benefit of a clean air network would be to counter arguments about “attacks on motorists”. About 1/3 of households don’t have access to a car.

Arguments about health inequality and social justice are not given sufficient weight.

Promoting “mini-holland” schemes and modal filters to cut car traffic in local high streets has potential, but there is significant public misunderstanding of the impacts and benefits. (see e.g. <https://lcc.org.uk/pages/mini-hollands>)

Other potential measures with a large impact on exhaust pollution and casualties include on-street parking restrictions, 20mph zones, better enforcement and driver behaviour education. “Presumed Liability” for car drivers injuring pedestrians and cyclists is common in the rest of Europe.

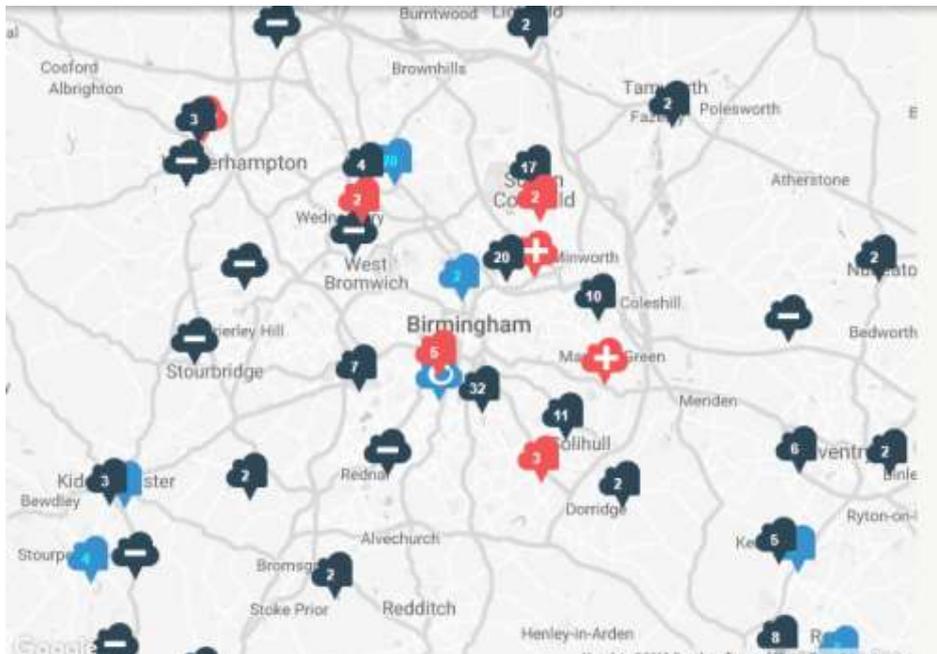
Road use charging may be inevitable in the longer term because of reductions in Treasury returns from VAT, fuel levies and road tax. Relatively cheap technology was available to enable per mile / per vehicle charging.

Clean Air Day 2018

Known activities are listed below – more details will be shared after the 27/April deadline

- Kings Heath – no detail yet – meeting scheduled for end-April
- University of Birmingham staff and students (Joe Green) – no detail yet
- FoE Clean Air Petition to Birmingham Council – still open, details to be shared
- FoE monitoring tubes and pollution map (national campaign) (Denis Murphy)
<https://friendsoftheearth.uk/clean-air> Maps at <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/clean-air/clean-air-campaign-air-monitoring-kit-results> - see screen shot below
- Birmingham Council support for “Clean Air Cops” teaching materials plus skills into 320 primary schools, starting 15/May (Ash Sharma)
- British Lung Foundation – establishing Parents Clean Air Network and “bootcamp” training for local campaign leaders (Sue Huyton) – www.cleanairparents.org.uk – more details to be shared
- Wolverhampton – meeting planned (Steve Young)

FoE Air Quality Monitoring Tube map extract.



The Clean Air Day campaign web site has some useful resources to download including pledge cards, toolkits for different domains such as schools, etc. <https://www.cleanairday.org.uk/Pages/Category/get-involved-in-national-clean-air-day>

Issues to consider:

- Media buy-in and how to present a more joined up and powerful campaign. Example – common #tags
- What are the key issues / asks which will gain maximum public awareness and buy-in? For example health aspects – “this affects everyone, and so we need to...”
- Engagement with other Local Authorities apart from Birmingham
- Campaign launch event(s)?

Short term and longer term lobbying of central and local government and WMCA were important. Need to check what was said in various manifestos (especially Andy Street) and hold politicians to account.

Other air quality related groups / resources mentioned:

Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) <https://www.bettertransport.org.uk/local-sustainable-transport-fund>
<http://www.acttravelwise.org/news/government/report-what-works-learning-from-the-local-sustainable-transport-fund-2011-2015/>

Active Travel - £850m – has all the budget been allocated? <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/active-travel-a-briefing-for-local-authorities> W Mids LEP consultation?

Young Active Travel scheme (Birmingham Council)
<https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/news/article/86/bids-to-young-active-travel-trust-invited>

Young Active Travel Trust
<https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20163/road-safety/367/young-active-travel-initiative/3>

Smarter Choices Programme (historic) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/smarter-choices-main-report-about-changing-the-way-we-travel>

Living Streets campaign <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/resources>

Healthy Air Coalition <https://www.healthyair.org.uk/>

Cycling UK <https://www.cyclinguk.org/campaigning/views-and-briefings/air-quality>

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