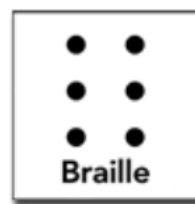
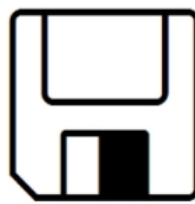
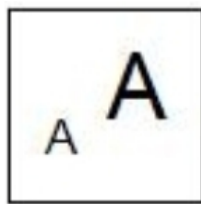


# AIR QUALITY POLICY



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# AIR QUALITY POLICY

## 1. Policy Intent

The production of air pollution can adversely affect the health and wellbeing of people in Rossendale. It also contributes to the overall level of air pollution in the North of England outside the Borough boundaries. The intention of this Policy is to ensure the protection of people from existing sources and to take action to reduce the likelihood of exceedance of permitted levels of air pollution.

## 2. What is air pollution?

Air pollution can be described as an unreasonable and significant emission that causes significant and unreasonable interference with the use and enjoyment of premises. This policy does not include pollution caused by noise or vibration but covers pollution caused by smoke, light, odour, vehicle emissions, dust, emissions from industry and commerce etc

## 3. Effects of air pollution

Air pollution can have a serious effect on people's health. Exposure to air pollution can have a long-term effect on health, associated in particular with premature mortality due to cardiopulmonary (heart and lung) effects. In the short-term, high pollution episodes can trigger increased admissions to hospital and contribute to the premature death of those people that are more vulnerable to daily changes in levels of air pollutants. Air pollution has also negative impacts on our environment, both in terms of direct effects of pollutants on vegetation, and indirectly through effects on the acid and nutrient status of soils and waters (Air Quality Strategy for England etc. Volume 1. Defra 2007).

Road traffic emissions are released at ground level and often disproportionately affect the more disadvantaged in society. Improvements in air quality will facilitate outdoor activity with its consequent health benefits. The provision of air quality information and involving local stakeholders in air quality issues will encourage community involvement and environmental education. Tackling emission of greenhouse gases will contribute towards the mitigation of the effects of climate change and all its consequent effects on health and the environment.

## 4. Policy Context

Policy in relation to air pollution comprises four main streams of legislation:-

a) The Environment Act 1995 introduced a system of local air quality management (LAQM). This requires local authorities to periodically review and assess the current, and likely future, air quality in their areas against national air quality objectives for seven air pollutants included in regulations for that purpose. Where any objective is unlikely to be met by the relevant deadline, local authorities must designate those areas as air quality management areas (AQMA) and take action, along with others, to work towards meeting the objectives.

b) The Environment Protection Act 1990 sets out a duty on every local authority to inspect its area for time to time to detect any statutory nuisance. This includes the following situations which may be prejudicial to health or a nuisance:-

- i) smoke emitted from premises,
- ii) fumes and gases emitted from premises,
- iii) any dust, steam, smell or other effluvia arising on industrial, trade or business premises

c) The Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations 2000 regulates pollution from industrial installations and requires operators of certain industrial and other installations to obtain a permit to operate. The permit when issued will include conditions aimed at reducing and preventing pollution to acceptable levels, which are set by the Government.

d) The Clean Air Act 1993 prohibits emissions of dark smoke from chimneys and dark smoke from industrial and trade premises, prohibition of domestic emissions of smoke in smoke control areas and deals with unauthorised fuels and exempt appliances.

In addition, the Council has the following duty and has made the following commitments:-

e) The Council has a duty under Section 3(2) of the Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act 2006, to have regard to the current Energy Measures Report in relation to any of its functions. By controlling emissions to air, LAs can contribute to climate change mitigation through encouraging businesses to comply with the emissions conditions of permits, plans to reduce carbon emissions and working to reduce other pollution from road traffic.

f) The Council has signed up to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change. This commits the Authority to publicly declare, within appropriate plans and strategies, the commitment to achieve a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

g) The Council's Environmental Strategy includes an objective to maintain and improve air quality in the valley. This Policy demonstrates the measures that will be taken by Environmental Health to achieve that objective.

## **5. Sources of Air Pollution and Policy for action we can take**

The principle means for controlling and improving air quality, in order to deliver the aims and objectives of the Environmental Strategy, are as follows:-

a) Proportionate enforcement of existing powers and duties in relation to domestic, commercial and industrial activities in accordance with the Council's Enforcement Policy. Appendix 1 shows the measures that exist to deal with each type of air pollution complaint we receive. More detailed procedures on the action we can take can be found on the Council's website [www.rossendale.gov.uk](http://www.rossendale.gov.uk)

b) Tackling pollution caused by road transport in conjunction with Highways authorities. Such issues, described by the Department of Transport as "Smarter

Choices” in their 2004 report, include workplace and school travel plans, personalised travel planning, public transport information and marketing, travel awareness campaigns, car sharing, car clubs, teleworking and teleconferencing, cycling and walking. These measures can complement rather than substitute for other policies such as encouragement of low or non-carbon emitting forms of transport.

c) Developing innovative ways of engaging local stakeholders, including residents and community groups as well as local businesses. If people feel personally involved in air quality issues they are more likely to change or modify their behaviour and support proposed measures to improve air quality locally. Involvement of schools is especially important.

d) Providing advice and information in the form of press releases and attendance at various fairs and festivals within Rossendale. We can give advice on minimising pollution issues and the ways people, communities and businesses can contribute and help themselves and also promote the services we provide.

e) In accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations, to organise environmental information that is relevant to air pollution with a view to its active and systematic dissemination to the public.

f) Adopting a proactive approach to the reduction of greenhouse gases as a means of mitigating the effects of climate change by promoting and co-ordinating the Council’s role as community leader, estate manager and service provider in accordance with the Environmental Strategy.

g) Promoting consideration of air quality issues as a part of the Development Control process in order to mitigate the effects of demolition, site clearance, construction and operation of new developments thereby linking the existing issues of air pollution with those of climate change.

## **6. Service Standards**

We promise you that you will:

- Always receive respectful, courteous and fair treatment
- Be told the name of the person dealing with your enquiry or problem
- Be given clear and correct advice
- Be kept informed at key stages throughout your enquiry
- Receive the best help that we can give to help resolve your problem
- Receive a response to your enquiry within 3 working days either verbally or in writing, or as soon as practicable if the pollution is happening during normal working hours

## **7. Performance Monitoring and Reporting**

Monthly output reports are produced detailing the number of complaints dealt with on a monthly basis. Customer satisfaction forms are sent out following the closure of a complaint and comments received back on the forms are acted upon, if applicable, to continue to improve the service.

The annual number of complaints dealt with is detailed in the Council's Annual Environmental Health Report and figures of the number of inspection of permitted processes are sent to DEFRA on an annual basis.

BVPI 217 reports on the achievement of compliance by businesses with the percentage of pollution control improvements to existing installations that are completed on time. The new performance indicator, NI 194, will require reports on the level of air quality reduction in NO<sub>x</sub> and primary PM<sub>10</sub> emissions through Rossendale's estate and operations.

Achievements of efforts to reduce greenhouse gases are reported to the Council's Programme and Project Management Board through the Acorn Environmental Management System.

## **8. Contact details**

If a member of the public is affected by or concerned about air pollution, contact with the Council's Environmental Health Service can be made by any of the following:

- By telephoning 01706 252556 or 01706 217777
- In person by visiting the One Stop Shop, located in the Town Centre Offices, Rawtenstall
- In writing to the Environmental Health Service, Stubblelee Hall, Stubblelee Lane, Bacup, Lancashire OL13 0DE
- By fax to 01706 870447
- By the internet by completing a request for service form on the Council's web site [www.rossendale.gov.uk](http://www.rossendale.gov.uk)
- Via the local ward Councillor

The complainant must provide their own name, address and a telephone number as well as details of the complaint and the address of the premises or location of the pollution. A description of the pollution, when and for how long it occurs, the way in which it affects them and anything they have done to try to resolve the problem must also be given.

Details of the complainant are kept in confidence unless otherwise agreed. Only during legal proceedings would these details be released, and the complainant's agreement to this position is normally secured at a relatively early stage during the investigation.

## **9. Partners in Service delivery**

Partnerships are an invaluable tool when tackling pollution and a multi agency approach allows issues to be addressed effectively and succinctly.

- SMILE mediation: Officers can make referrals to a free mediation service where there is no other route available or it is felt that mediation between both parties could lead to an effective resolution.
- Development Control: Officers are consulted on planning applications which could have an impact on air pollution and are able to recommend conditions to

be attached to planning permission to minimise the impact of the development.

- Highways: the predominant source of low level air pollution is now from road traffic. Lancashire County Council staff work with us to monitor and analyse traffic pollution and develop solutions to pollution problem areas.
- DEFRA: provide guidance in the preparation of air quality management programmes and initiatives. The Government's Air Quality Strategy sets the agenda in the short and long term and sets out a framework to achieve clean air and a good quality of life.
- Environment Agency: regulates the release of pollutants into the atmosphere from large and complex industrial processes. They also regulate emissions from some large-scale food processing factories and some pig and poultry rearing activities. They also provide expert advice and support and regulatory assistance in certain circumstances.

Signed:

Leader

Chief Executive

Date:

## Appendix 1

Source of pollution	Action we can take	Action we do take	Approximate number of complaints/ visits per year
Permitted processes	Informal and formal action under the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations 2000	Risk based inspections of permitted processes minimum one inspection per year. We respond to complaints about emissions from permitted processes	30
Bonfires/ open burning including complaints of dark smoke	Informal and formal action under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and informal and formal action under the Clean Air Act 1993	Send letters and diary sheet to occupiers of residential property in relation to garden bonfires advising people to recycle garden waste. Visit is made to complainants about commercial/trade burning as burning waste is inappropriate disposal. Visit is made following complaint about dark smoke as it is an offence to cause an emission of dark smoke from industrial or trade premises.	82
Smoky chimneys	Informal and formal action under the Clean Air Act 1993	The whole of Rossendale is a smoke control area which means that residents with solid fuel fires must only burn smokeless fuel or use an approved appliance. Letters are sent following a complaint to inform the perpetrator of the legislation	7
Road traffic	Monitoring of air quality under The Environment Act 1995	There are 13 locations across the borough where nitrogen oxides (NOx) is monitored on a monthly basis to ensure that the levels are within government limits	0
Sandblasting and other dust complaints, odour and light nuisance complaints etc	Informal and formal action under the Environmental Protection Act 1990	Contact the person responsible to make them aware of the complaint and discuss ways to minimise the pollution. Send letter and diary sheet to the complainant if necessary.	40

## Document Management

Version	Date	By Who
Version 1.0	29 November 2007	Lorna Rouke Principal Environmental Health Officer

**If you would like a summary of this information in large print, on audio cassette or language other than English, please let us know and we will be happy to arrange it.**

**Please telephone 01706 217777 or Contact Communications Section, PO BOX 74,Bacup,OL13 OWU**

اگر آپ کو ان معلومات کا خلاصہ بڑے حروف میں، آڈیو کیسٹ پر، یا انگریزی کے علاوہ کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہے تو براے مہربانی ہمیں بتائیں، ہم بخوشی آپ کے لیے اس کا انتظام کریں گے۔  
برائے مہربانی 01706217777 پر ٹیلیفون کریں یا پھر کمیونٹی کیشن سیکشن سے اس پتہ پر رابطہ قائم کریں:

Communications Section, PO Box 74, Bacup, OL13 0WU

آپنی جیسی اس بات کے سارے سنگھپ بڑے حروف میں، آڈیو کیسٹ پر، یا انگریزی کے علاوہ کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہے تو براے مہربانی ہمیں بتائیں، ہم بخوشی آپ کے لیے اس کا انتظام کریں گے۔  
تاریخ: 29 نومبر 2007

انگریزی کے علاوہ کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہے تو براے مہربانی ہمیں بتائیں، ہم بخوشی آپ کے لیے اس کا انتظام کریں گے۔  
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