



# SANDWELL'S FAITH COMMUNITIES FOR CLEAN AIR

## AIR POLLUTION TOOLKIT

Provided by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough  
Council in partnership with DEFRA

### Abstract

A resource of different routes to improving air quality in Sandwell designed for faith groups, in partnership with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

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# Introduction

## Developing this toolkit

1. This toolkit has been developed by Elizabeth Stephens and Sophie Morris on behalf of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) as a way to provide a variety of different and varied options to help reduce localised air pollution. Sandwell has one of the highest levels of Particulate Matter (PM), a dangerous air pollutant, outside of London<sup>1</sup>. Sandwell also has the highest morbidity burden in the West Midlands associated with PM air pollution<sup>2</sup>. As a result, it is a priority of Sandwell MBC to engage with those living and working in the borough to promote the necessary behaviour change to improve air pollution.
2. Sandwell was declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in 2005, and subsequently the monitoring of air pollutant levels (e.g. nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter, ground level ozone) was undertaken. Each year a report on the situation of air quality in the borough is reported to DEFRA and published in an “Air Quality Annual Status Report” that is publicly available to view on the Air Quality page of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council’s website.
3. This toolkit compiles a variety of different options those living and working in Sandwell can use to improve local air pollution, and as a result, the health of residents. This toolkit considers a broad range of factors, including:
  - 3.1. Providing an understanding of what air pollution is and the sources
  - 3.2. Information regarding Smoke Control Areas and the increasing risks of wood burning stoves
  - 3.3. Alternatives to travelling by car
  - 3.4. Community engagement ideas for increasing awareness of air quality
  - 3.5. How to communicate air pollution to children
  - 3.6. Funding and grant opportunities
4. Although this toolkit is up to date at the time of circulation, the links to external sites or sources are not maintained or the responsibility of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, therefore some links may not work, or information become out of date. This

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.lgcplus.com/services/health-and-care/revealed-more-than-70-areas-have-dangerous-levels-of-pm2-5-air-pollution-06-12-2019/>

<sup>2</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/332854/PHE\\_CRCE\\_010.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/332854/PHE_CRCE_010.pdf)

toolkit is not intended as medical advice, please consult your health care professional if you have concerns about your health.

### Who is the toolkit for?

1. The toolkit can be used by any interested groups or communities within the borough, although it is specifically designed for faith centres, as a part of the “Working with Faith Groups in Sandwell to Improve Air Quality via Behavioural Change” project, funded by a DEFRA grant. Sandwell is a superdiverse, multi-cultural and multi-faith borough where a significant proportion of residents regularly attend religious centres. Our main faith groups are Christians, Sikhs, Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists. Sandwell has some of the largest and well-attended faith centres in the country, and we want to support our faith-based organisations in leading the way towards community-driven, community-designed improvements in air quality.
2. Furthermore, research has identified links between Covid-19 deaths and air pollution. This is an important issue as ethnicity is strongly correlated to air pollution exposure as we know ethnic minorities are more likely to live in polluted areas. As there is a significant representation of people who are black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) within Sandwell’s faith communities, working to reduce their exposure to air pollution is a priority.

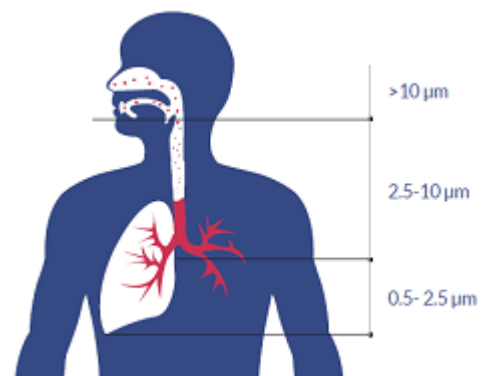
# What is air pollution?

## An introduction to air pollution

1. Air pollution is anything in the air that has a negative impact on people's health or the environment. There are many different types of air pollutants. The main ones are:
  - 1.1. Particulate matter (PMs;  $PM_1$ ,  $PM_{2.5}$ ,  $PM_{10}$ )
  - 1.2. Nitrogen dioxide ( $NO_2$ ) and nitrous oxides ( $NO_x$ )
  - 1.3. Ozone ( $O_3$ )
  - 1.4. Ammonia ( $NH_4$ )
  - 1.5. Sulphur dioxide ( $SO_2$ )
2. The amount of air pollution can change because of the weather and season. When the weather is still and sunny in the summer or foggy in the winter, air pollution becomes trapped in one location, and causes a higher concentration of pollutants.
3. There are two important air quality scenarios: indoor air pollution and outdoor air pollution. Research has found that long-term exposure to outdoor air pollution contributes to lung cancer and development of asthma.
4. Some people are more at risk to air pollution than others. People who are living with a lung condition, the elderly and children and babies are most at risk. Healthy people who work or exercise outside might also be at a higher risk if they are outside in high levels of pollution.
  - 4.1. If children are exposed to air pollution for a long period of time, it can affect their lung development. Children who grow up in areas that have high pollution are more likely to develop asthma.

## Sources of outdoor air pollution<sup>3</sup>

1. Particulate matter (PM) is a mix of different types of liquid or solid particles that are suspended in the air. The different numbers put after the PM (e.g.  $PM_1$  or  $PM_{2.5}$  or  $PM_{10}$ ) refer to the size of the particles. PM is one of the biggest causes of health problems caused by air pollution.
  - 1.1.  $PM_{10}$  is particles which diameter is smaller than 10 microns, and  $PM_{2.5}$  is particles with a diameter smaller than 2.5 microns.  $PM_{2.5}$  is also known as fine particles. The smaller the diameter of the particulate matter, the further into the lungs they can go.



<sup>3</sup> Information adapted from the British Lung Foundation.

- 1.2. The different types of PM can cause different health problems dependent on their size. Some PMs contain toxic carcinogens- chemicals linked to cancers.  $PM_{10}$  can irritate your nose and throat and can worsen asthma symptoms. It also results in more hospital admission, through lung conditions (e.g. Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease [COPD], asthma, bronchitis, lung cancer) and heart conditions (e.g. strokes, heart attacks). These can cause early death.
- 1.3. PM comes from both natural and man-made sources. The natural sources include pollen, volcanic eruptions, sea spray and soil. The man-made sources include building works, dust from roads, industry, domestic burning and diesel and petrol engines. Diesel engines produce much more PM than petrol. Domestic burning, such as wood or coal burning stoves, account for over half of the PM produced in the UK.
2. Nitrogen dioxide ( $NO_2$ ) is a type of nitrous oxide ( $NO_x$ ) and one of the most common air pollutants and is a gas.  $NO_2$  levels in Sandwell have been monitored for many years and having been steadily declining in the UK.
  - 2.1. There are many man-made sources of nitrogen dioxide. The combustion of fossil fuels is the biggest source. It comes from diesel and petrol vehicles, power stations, heating like gas boilers, and it is also a by-product of making fertilisers. The highest levels can be found along busy roads with lots of traffic. Road transport is thought to be responsible for half of the total emissions of nitrogen oxides in the UK.
  - 2.2.  $NO_2$  can also react with other chemicals in the atmosphere to become other forms of air pollution, such as ozone, particulate matter and acid rain.
  - 2.3. Children and the elderly are most at risk of being affected by air pollution. Long term exposure can also increase likelihood of developing a respiratory infection and more severe reactions to allergens. High levels can cause the lining of your airways to become inflamed and irritated, which can create coughing and difficulty breathing. This can also cause worsening of asthma, COPD and other lung conditions.
3. Ozone ( $O_3$ ) is a gas made up of three molecules of oxygen. Ground-level ozone is considered an air pollutant caused by the reaction of sunlight with nitrogen oxides.
  - 3.1. Ground-level ozone levels are the highest in spring and summer and decrease in the autumn and winter. They are also higher in the afternoon and are often higher in the countryside than towns or cities. Ground-level ozone is a big contributor to why air pollution effects are much worse in the summer. When ozone levels are

high, there is an increase in hospital admissions for asthma and COPD symptoms, in addition to a higher risk of lung conditions like pneumonia and bronchitis.

3.2. Ozone affects the airways of people with lung conditions, and also those who are healthy. High levels of ozone can cause the capacity of your lungs to decrease, which can cause discomfort and also trigger asthmatic episodes. Those who have lung conditions may experience coughing, wheezing and shortness of breath. Adults and children with asthma may have to use their inhaler more often.

4. Sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) is another gas, that is colourless, and has a strong associated smell. It has a wide range of impacts on human health and the environment. It also contributes to the formation of ozone.

4.1. SO<sub>2</sub> is formed when fossil fuels that contain sulphur, like coal and oil, are burned. Sources include petrol and diesel vehicles, power generation and heating. It can also come from petrol refineries, cement manufacturing and electric industries that burn fossil fuels.

4.2. Sulphur dioxide causes irritation of the lining of your nose, throat and lungs, and causes coughing, chest tightness and a narrowing of airways which will reduce the flow of air to your lungs. The irritation of airways causes inflammation, which causes more coughing and mucus production, worsening asthma and COPD, and also make people more prone to chest infections.

4.3. Adults, children and the elderly who already have asthma are much more sensitive to SO<sub>2</sub> than those who have no lung conditions.

### Sources of indoor air pollution

1. We spend about 90% of our time indoors, and even more during the Covid-19 pandemic. Poor indoor air quality has been linked to lung diseases such as asthma, COPD and lung cancer. Children are particularly vulnerable to indoor air pollution, as their lungs are still developing. Also, allergies can develop due to poor indoor air pollution, in addition to heart issues such as stroke or heart disease.

1.1. The most common forms of indoor air pollution are particulate matter and gases like carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides and sulphur dioxide. Many sources of indoor air pollution contain volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Some VOCs are hazardous to human health.

1.2. Sources of indoor air pollution include:

- 1.2.1. How you heat your home
- 1.2.2. Tobacco or cannabis smoke
- 1.2.3. Cooking methods
- 1.2.4. Poor ventilation





- 1.2.5. Damp or mould
- 1.2.6. Chemicals in cleaning products like bleach
- 1.3. Specific products contain VOCs that can severely irritate airways if not used correctly with adequate ventilation:
  - 1.3.1. Detergents
  - 1.3.2. Furniture polish and varnishes
  - 1.3.3. Air fresheners
  - 1.3.4. Carpet cleaners
  - 1.3.5. Oven cleaners
  - 1.3.6. Pesticides and fungicides
  - 1.3.7. Paints and paint strippers
  - 1.3.8. Glues



- 2. Inhaling any form of smoke is harmful. The burning of wood alone contributes to up to 31% of particulate matter in Birmingham<sup>4</sup>. The recent rise in popularity of wood burning stoves in homes is a serious risk to people's health. Research shows that homes with wood burning stoves also fill their neighbours' properties with higher levels of particulate matter. The next section of this toolkit provides more information about wood burning stoves.
- 3. The British Lung Foundation recommends three simple things for improving indoor air pollution. As always, make sure you have a working carbon monoxide monitor in your home.
  - 3.1. Keep your home well-aired. Opening windows or skylights for just 5-10 minutes a couple times a day, especially if you are cooking or showering, can really help. When having building works done, ask how your home will be ventilated, and if there will be dust or a chemical smell. Air filtration systems can reduce background levels of particulate matter- but have only been found to work well in small rooms.
  - 3.2. Look out for condensation. Damp leads to condensation, which is common in Britain. This encourages mould and other fungi to grow. This can be caused by things like cooking or washing and drying clothes. It is more likely to occur in cold places in your home, like windows or rooms with external walls. Irritated nose and throat, feeling short of breath and worsening asthma symptoms are common from

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<sup>4</sup> [https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/assets/documents/reports/cat05/1801301017\\_KCL\\_WoodBurningReport\\_2017\\_FIN\\_AL.pdf](https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/assets/documents/reports/cat05/1801301017_KCL_WoodBurningReport_2017_FIN_AL.pdf)

damp. If you find bad damp, mould or fungi, and are renting, you should tell your landlord, so they can fix the problem. The best ways to prevent condensation are:

- 3.2.1. Preventing leaks in your roof and water damage
  - 3.2.2. Keeping your home well-aired
  - 3.2.3. Using an extractor fan when cooking or showering, and keeping the door shut to prevent damp air spreading
  - 3.2.4. Dry your washing outside as much as possible. One study found that 30% of moisture in homes in Scotland are from drying clothes indoors.
  - 3.2.5. Wipe down windowsills often to keep condensation down
  - 3.2.6. If you find mould, remove it straight away
- 3.3. Keep your home at a comfortable temperature. As much as air pollution can affect your breathing, so can too low or high temperatures. For example, high humidity can make it easier for mould to grow. Keeping the rooms you spend lots of time in, like the bedroom or home office if working from home, at a comfortable temperature can help. The recommended temperature is 16°C (64°F), but also remember to air your home as well. In winter, close your bedroom window at night, as breathing in cold air all night long can increase the risk of chest infections.

### UK's National Daily Air Quality Index

1. The [Daily Air Quality Index](#) (DAQI) tells you about the levels of air pollution and suggests actions and advice. It splits levels into Low, Moderate and High. Using this Index can help you decide what activities to do that day, and if you need to consider poor air quality.

### Tips to protect yourself from poor air quality

1. Use online real-time air quality maps and apps
  - 1.1. Real-time air quality apps for your smartphone or maps can tell you what the levels of air quality are like in your area or travel route. If certain roads are showing high levels, you can decide to avoid them.
2. Avoid exercising outside during rush hour
  - 2.1. Walking, running and cycling along main roads can be really easy for exercise, however try to avoid doing this during rush hour or busy periods. Lots of traffic means it is likely that there are higher levels of air pollutants like nitrogen dioxide around the roads, that can be harmful for your health.

3. Use walking routes away from main roads
  - 3.1. If you are walking for exercise or to travel to work, the shops or your faith centre, try to avoid main roads during busy times.
  - 3.2. Even when it isn't busy, try walking routes that use quieter streets or pathways, with less road traffic.
4. Drive less, walk more
  - 4.1. Many people think that being inside a car means that they aren't breathing in any air pollution, but this is not the case. Pollution levels are four to five times higher in your car than outside. By using your car less, you are experiencing lower levels of air pollution, and also contributing to air pollution less as well.
  - 4.2. Did you know that 8.2% of car journeys in the UK are for less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile? That means that 330,000 car trips a day are for less than half a mile, and 238,000 of those are for trips between  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a mile. These types of journeys can be easily walked or cycled, which can reduce air pollution and traffic levels.
5. Open your windows
  - 5.1. Having your windows open for only 15 minutes a day reduces pollution levels inside your home. It is also a good idea to open windows in the faith centres when possible. Keeping buildings well ventilated can help indoor air pollution levels.
6. Use natural cleaning products in your home
  - 6.1. Cleaning products and other things like air fresheners can cause air pollution levels to increase indoors.
7. Avoid wood burning stoves
  - 7.1. The best, cleanest and most modern single wood burning stove, burning the best wood in laboratory conditions, produces the same amount of  $PM_{2.5}$  air pollution every hour as 18 new diesel cars or six new diesel lorries.
  - 7.2. The next section of this toolkit goes into greater detail about wood burning stoves.

# Smoke Control Areas and Wood Burning Stoves

## What are Smoke Control Areas?

1. A Smoke Control Area is a legally defined area where only approved solid fuels or exempted appliances can be used within buildings. Fines of up to £1,000 can be applied.
  - 1.1. DEFRA Exempted Stoves is a list of rigorously tested appliances that emit lower smoke emissions, with the recommended fuel.
  - 1.2. DEFRA also provide a list of approved solid fuels, available on their website<sup>5</sup>.
    - 1.2.1. Wood can only be burned in exempted appliances when it is fully dry, seasoned and untreated.
2. All of Birmingham has been a Smoke Control Area since 1995. Sandwell is currently only a Smoke Control Area in certain parts, but this is changing. We are considering making the whole of Sandwell a Smoke Control Area. Check the Air Quality pages on Sandwell Council's website for more information regarding the switch to a Smoke Control Area in Sandwell.

## Garden bonfires

1. You are allowed to have a garden bonfire in Smoke Control Areas, but there are rules surrounding this:
  - 1.1. You cannot burn domestic waste. Domestic waste is defined as waste from the household e.g. plastics, rubbish, furniture or rubber items. Compost, recycle it, or make use of the local recycling centres if the waste is too large for roadside recycling.
    - 1.1.1. You could be fined if you light a fire and allow the smoke to drift across a road and become a danger to traffic.
    - 1.1.2. Burning plastics, rubber, painted materials and other general waste create lots of smoke, an unpleasant smell and a range of poisonous compounds, so therefore cannot be burned.
  - 1.2. Burning garden waste, in particular damp or smouldering waste, produces large amounts of particulate matter and carbon monoxide. Piles of garden waste also are often used by hibernating wildlife, like hedgehogs.
2. Garden bonfires can be a safety risk.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://smokecontrol.defra.gov.uk/fuels.php>

- 2.1. Rubbish may contain bottles or aerosols that explode when burnt.
- 2.2. If the Fire Brigade are called out and they believe life or property is at risk due to your garden bonfire, you may be charged a fee.
3. Smoke which causes a persistent interference with the enjoyment of a neighbour's property could be classed as a statutory nuisance. This can result in formal action may being taken under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.
  - 3.1. Where there is evidence that smoke is prejudicial to health or a nuisance the Council is obliged to serve a notice on the person responsible for it, requiring them to abate the nuisance and prevent its recurrence.
  - 3.2. Where an abatement notice has been served, any further incidents causing a nuisance would be an offence, punishable on conviction in the Magistrates' Court by a fine of up to £5,000 per offence and/or up to six months imprisonment.
4. You can make a bonfire complaint with the Council [here](#), or search for "Sandwell bonfire complaint" online. Please only use this service for **persistent** bonfires that impact the enjoyment of your property.

### Wood burning stoves

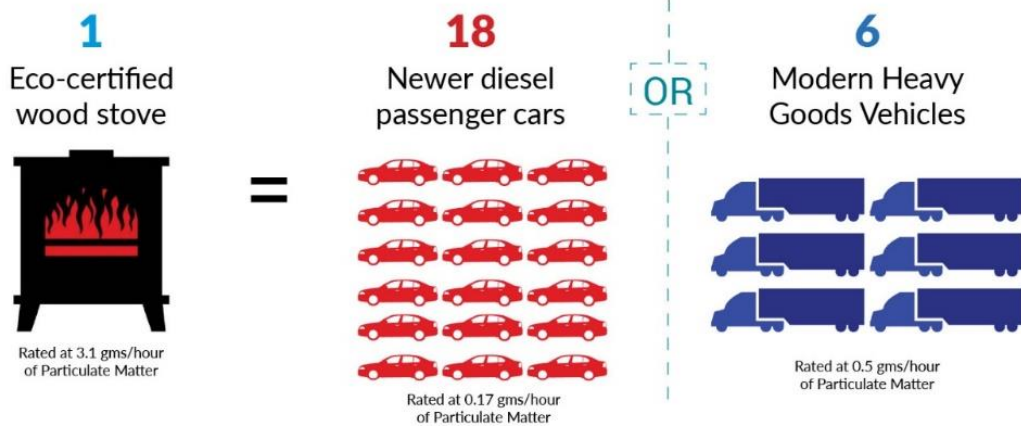
1. Wood burning stoves are becoming more popular as people perceive them as an "eco-friendly" way of heating their homes. Unfortunately, there are a wide range of health risks associated with wood burning stoves. Even EPA certified, or DEFRA approved stoves emit particulate matter.
  - 1.1. The installation of wood burning or multi fuel stoves is controlled under the Building Regulations and may require the re-lining or installation of flues and chimneys.
  - 1.2. Wet wood makes for a much less efficient fire and if you can get it to light at all, the logs that are not dry provide a fire that smoulders and creates a lot of tar and smoke. These tars can be corrosive and potentially damaging to the lining of the flue and increasing the danger of a chimney fire.
  - 1.3. Wood burning stoves and open fireplaces are serious sources of indoor air pollution.
2. The Air Quality Expert Group (a DEFRA Committee) has shown that the best, cleanest and most modern single stove, burning the best wood in laboratory conditions, produces the same amount of PM<sub>2.5</sub> every hour as 18 new diesel cars or six new diesel lorries.
3. If you do have a wood burning stove or fireplace:
  - 3.1. When buying wood look out for the 'ready to burn logo' and make sure you store it in a dry place.



- 3.2. When choosing a manufactured solid fuel, such as briquettes or fire logs, choose a brand that indicates its 'suitable for use in smoke-controlled areas' these give off less smoke.
- 3.3. Composting food and garden waste instead of burning it can reduce air pollution. Sandwell offers a [discount on compost bins](#) to help reduce methane and smoke emissions. More than a third of household rubbish is food or garden waste and most of this ends up in landfill. When green and food waste breaks down in landfill, it can give off methane, a gas that has a big effect on climate change. When green waste is properly composted at home, it doesn't give off methane. This means that composting can help reduce climate change as well as provide free food for your soil.

## All Wood Stoves Pollute

Even a perfectly-run, certified wood stove emits far more harmful fine particulates *per hour* than many diesel vehicles



Data from: "Potential Air Quality Impacts from Biomass Combustion", Air Quality Expert Group (UK), 2017

A wood stove would never pass vehicle emission standards (and in real world use they are known to emit far more than their rating). Yet we allow them to run for hours on end, right where we live, play and go to school.



# Relative PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions in your home from domestic heating methods



Smoke plumes are not to scale. Emission factors show emissions in the home – emissions during production of fuel or electricity are not included here. Emission factors taken from EMEP 2016 Guidebook (1A4 - small combustion tables). The following definitions were used: *Solid fuel open fire*: wood burned in an open fire; *Non-Defra approved stove*: wood in a conventional stove; *Defra-approved / Ecodesign stove*: wood in an advanced / ecolabelled stove; *Pellet fired boiler*: wood in pellet stoves and boilers; *Oil fired boiler*: fuel oil in a medium (>50KWth <1MWth) boiler; *Gas fired boiler*: natural gas in a small (<50 KWth) boiler.

## Alternatives to Travelling by Car

1. Travelling by petrol or diesel car is the largest source of nitrogen dioxide air pollution. Just cutting down on the number of journeys you do in a car can have a huge impact. There are many alternatives to driving, that can be more fun and better for your health.
  - 1.1. [TravelWise in Sandwell](#) offers information on how to plan a carshare, public transport journey, cycle journey, or walking journey.
2. The UK government has introduced a ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030. New hybrid cars can remain on sale until 2035. This ban does not affect used cars. However, we need fewer cars on the road, not just cleaner cars.
  - 2.1. Transport is the UK's biggest emitting sector, with road vehicles attributing for 19% of the UK's total emissions.
  - 2.2. This ban will cut carbon emissions and help air pollution.
3. Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council offers [Independent Travel Training](#), which teaches someone to learn how to travel a specific route on their own in a safe and responsible way.
  - 3.1. This training offers:
    - 3.1.1. A unique learning programme specifically designed for the individual's needs.
    - 3.1.2. One-to-one flexible bespoke training by a qualified travel trainer.
    - 3.1.3. Support gradually phased out until the individual feels confident and competent enough to do their journey alone.
    - 3.1.4. The option to achieve an Entry Level 3 qualification, nationally accredited by Open Awards in Skills for Independent Travel, for free.
  - 3.2. The training is open to anyone who would like to improve their skills and confidence when making journeys in their local area and by using public transport. They work with young people from the age of eleven, all the way up to adults in their eighties - there is something in a travel training programme for everyone, and you are never too young (or old!) to improve your independence skills, confidence, and abilities when making journeys using public transport.


## Walking

1. Walking to your faith centre from home, if you are able, is an excellent way to reduce the impact on local air pollution. It also improves physical fitness as well as help with traffic congestion at busy times, and parking issues.



- 1.1. [Sandwell Stride](#) is a scheme organised by the Public Health department by the Council.
  - 1.1.1. Walks take place every week throughout the year and make the most of the green spaces, parks, canals and neighbourhoods all across Sandwell.
- 1.2. [Sandwell Walking Strategy](#) 2015 to increase walking uptake, target resources and deliver improvement and enhancements to the walking environment over a 5-year period.
- 1.3. [Healthy Sandwell](#) offers support for your health and wellbeing. They can provide information about walking, increasing activity and more.
- 1.4. The [walk and cycle Sandwell Facebook page](#) is for pedestrians and cyclists that are interested in discussing their experiences both good and bad when travelling around the borough.
  - 1.4.1. This page is where you can air your views about walking and cycling infrastructure and let the council know where you are experiencing problems on your journey.

## Cycling

1. Cycling is a good way to get around Sandwell without contributing to local air pollution or traffic, and simultaneously improving your physical fitness and health. Sandwell is a part of the West Midlands Bikeshare scheme that is coming soon, which will receive about 300 bikes for hire across 30 locations in the borough. The National Cycling Routes 5 and 81 go through Sandwell.
 
  - 1.1. It is now possible to cycle traffic free from Wolverhampton to Birmingham via Tipton, Oldbury and Smethwick on Birmingham Newline Canal and from Tamebridge to Birmingham via Hamstead on the Tame Valley Canal.
  - 1.2. Cycling on canal towpaths is an easy, traffic free way to travel around Sandwell, that offers beautiful scenery. You can [check your route](#) ahead of time with the Canal and River Trust.
  - 1.3. Sandwell Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan ([SCWIP](#)) was adopted in January 2020 to prioritise a programme of infrastructure improvements for future investment.
  - 1.4. To find the quietest, quickest or most recreational route to your destination plan your cycle route using a [journey planner](#).
  - 1.5. It is also possible to [report a pothole](#) in Sandwell, if it affects your cycling.
2. THINK! is a government scheme designed to raise cycle awareness amongst drivers and cyclists, to improve road safety.

- 2.1. They offer specific resources, including films, lesson plans, games and documents, for road safety for children. They offer content designed for ages 3 to 6, 7 to 12 and 13 to 16. The content is available here: <https://www.think.gov.uk/education-resources/>.
- 2.2. They also offer downloadable [campaign material](#) for a variety of other road safety issues, including:
  - 2.2.1. Mobile phone usage
  - 2.2.2. Drinking and driving
  - 2.2.3. Motorcyclists
  - 2.2.4. Cycle safety tips
  - 2.2.5. Country roads and night driving
  - 2.2.6. Seat belts
  - 2.2.7. Speeding
  - 2.2.8. Distractions whilst driving
3. [Bikeability](#) is a cycling proficiency scheme that offers training sessions for different groups, including adults and children.
  - 3.1. The [Smethwick BTS Community Cycling Club](#) offers cycle training for women who have never cycled before, and enables them to build confidence to take part in led rides around Sandwell.
  - 3.2. The Bikeability Trust also organise, in partnership with Sustrans, a “Bike to School Week” which encourages children and adult to cycle for the school run for a week every year.
4. The UK police have approved a scheme that allows you to register and mark your bicycle to protect it from theft for free called the [Bike Register](#).
  - 4.1. You can add your bike details to the Bike Register database, which is approved by the National Police. This allows you to be reunited with your bike in the event that it is stolen.
  - 4.2. They also offer kits in which you can mark and protect your bike with a security marking kit, for a small fee. This also comes with warning label stickers that warn thieves that you use the Bike Register, which could be a deterrent to criminals.



## Cargo E-bikes

1. Cargo electric bikes are a great alternative to vans for trips about Sandwell. The cargo e-bikes have capabilities for delivery services, carrying children or food- and have been successfully used by local businesses in Cambridgeshire and many other communities over the UK. They are also tax deductible. They allow you to save on

journey times, congestion, parking problems and improve fitness, all whilst reducing the impact on air pollution and dropping your carbon footprint.

## Public transport

1. Sandwell is lucky enough to be well connected by tram, bus and rail. Using public transport instead of personal vehicles for some journeys can improve air quality.
2. You can travel from Birmingham to Wolverhampton, that includes stops in West Bromwich and Wednesbury, by the West Midlands Metro tram. There are spaces for mobility scooters on trams. Currently, on Monday to Saturday, there are trams:
  - 2.1.1. Every 15 minutes between 4:45am and 7am
  - 2.1.2. Every 6 to 8 minutes during the day
  - 2.1.3. Every 15 minutes between 7pm and 0:45am
  - 2.1.4. On Sundays, there are trams every 15 minutes between 7:30am and 11:45pm
- 2.2. There are also facilities to park and ride for using the tram service in The Hawthorns, Wednesbury Parkway, Black Lake, Priestfield and Bradley Lane.
3. Bus routes cover the vast majority of areas in Sandwell. Many operate all day Sunday and late into the evenings. Some buses have free Wifi and USB charging points.
  - 3.1. A bus route map for all of Sandwell and Dudley can be found [here](#). Please note- the pdf of the bus area maps provided are correct as of 1<sup>st</sup> November 2020.
  - 3.2. You can request a bus stop or bus shelter be put in a new location on the Council website. There is a form located [here](#).
4. The train network in the West Midlands is the biggest outside of London. You can easily travel within the West Midlands, but also to Manchester, Scotland, London and Wales. You can also store your bikes for free at most train stations in the West Midlands.
  - 4.1. You can view local train routes [here](#).

## Car Clubs

1. Pay per trip car clubs, sometimes known as car sharing allows individuals and businesses to have access to a personal vehicle without being tied to ownership. By offering low carbon, flexible use vehicles, car clubs are a key component for future sustainable transport solutions.
  - 1.1. Sandwell MBC have a partnership with Lift Share, called [Carshare Sandwell](#).
  - 1.2. A commuter will typically save over £1,000 a year by finding someone to share their journey with. It also helps alleviate road and parking congestion.
  - 1.3. Enterprise also offer [a car sharing club](#).

## Switching to an Electric Vehicle

1. Following the news of the Government ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars in 2030, electric vehicles (EVs) are becoming more popular. Technology has advanced in recent years, allowing electric cars to travel further between charges, and offering good alternatives for business cars and vans.
  - 1.1. Vehicle emissions are split into two sections: life cycle and direct emissions.

Direct emissions refer to pollutants coming directly from the tailpipe of a vehicle, such as nitrogen oxides, particulate matter and greenhouse gases. Life cycle emissions refers to all emissions from fuel, vehicle production, processing, distribution, use, recycling etc.
  - 1.2. Electric vehicles have no direct emissions. This in particular specifically helps to lower urban air pollution levels. Plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs), which have a gasoline engine and electric motor, have fewer direct emissions than normal petrol or diesel vehicles.
  - 1.3. All vehicles produce life cycle emissions. However, electric vehicles have lower life cycle emissions than conventional vehicles, as emissions of electricity production are lower than gasoline/diesel production. The least emission comes from electric vehicles that are powered with electricity produced from renewable sources, like solar or wind energy.
2. Although electric vehicles are better for air pollution than petrol or diesel cars, they still cause traffic and congestion in busy places like Sandwell. The best option is to walk, cycle or use public transport as much as possible, and only use your electric car for trips you cannot make without a car.
3. Using and purchasing electric cars helps reduce air pollution in and around Sandwell. The [Black Country Ultra Low Emission Vehicle Strategy](#) commits to deliver a network of electric vehicle charging points and ULEV public service vehicles.
  - 3.1. Residents can [recommend a location](#) for a residential on-street electric vehicle charging point in Sandwell.

## Funding opportunities for switching to an electric vehicle

1. Following the Government Budget announcement in March 2021:
  - 1.1. The government will provide £403 million for the plug-in car grant (PICG), extending it to 2022-23.
  - 1.2. Recognising that the market for other ultra-low emission vehicles is still at an early stage of development, the



government will also provide £129.5 million to extend the plug-in grants for vans, taxis and motorcycles to 2022-23.

## 2. Plug-in Grant

- 2.1. To be eligible for the grant, cars must cost less than £35,000. This is the recommended retail price (RRP) and includes VAT and delivery fees.
- 2.2. The grant will pay for 35% of the purchase price for these vehicles, up to a maximum of £2,500.
- 2.3. It is applicable on cars, motorcycles, mopeds, smaller and larger vans, taxis and trucks that are on the government approved list.
- 2.4. You do not have to do anything to get this grant. The dealer will include the value of the grant in the vehicle's price. Only vehicles that are approved by the government are eligible for this grant. For more information, visit:  
<https://www.gov.uk/plug-in-car-van-grants>.

## 3. Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme (EVHS) Grant

- 3.1. If you have a home with off-street parking suitable for an electric car charger, and an eligible electric vehicle, you could get £350 off the cost of buying and installing an electric charger.
- 3.2. All vehicles that have been approved as ultra-low emission vehicles by the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles are eligible for the Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme. See the full list of the [vehicles that are eligible for the plug-in car grant](#).
- 3.3. For more information about the EVHS grant, visit:  
<https://www.edfenergy.com/electric-cars/government-grants> and  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/customer-guidance-electric-vehicle-homecharge-scheme>.

## 4. Workplace Charging Scheme

- 4.1. The Workplace Charging Scheme (WCS) is a voucher-based scheme that provides support towards the up-front costs of the purchase and installation of electric vehicle charge-points, for eligible businesses, charities and public sector organisations.
- 4.2. Workplaces can apply for vouchers using the Workplace Charging Scheme application form below.
- 4.3. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/workplace-charging-scheme-application-form>

## 5. Plug-in Taxi Grant

5.1. The PiTG has been introduced as an incentive scheme designed to support the uptake of purpose built ULEV taxis by offering up to a maximum of £7,500 for eligible taxis.

## Community Engagement Ideas for Raising Awareness of Air Pollution

1. The more people are aware of the risks of air pollution, the more mindful they are about the choices they make. Even if it is small decisions like walking to the local shop instead of driving, or bigger changes like purchasing an electric vehicle or getting solar panels, all choices that consider air pollution are a step in the right direction.
2. As the leader, member or supporter of your faith centre, you will know what types of community events and campaigns that would work best for your faith centre. However, below are some ideas to get the ball rolling. The ideas can be adapted to fit your individual centre's needs and attendees.

### Anti-idling campaigns

1. Idling is the act of leaving your engine running whilst being stationary. This may be whilst you're in a car park, waiting outside someone's house or school to drop off or pick up passengers, loading or unloading materials from the vehicle, or even on your own drive. Idling increases the amount of engine exhaust fumes in the air, which can cause higher levels of pollutants like carbon dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and carbon monoxide.
  - 1.1. It is possible to be issued a fixed penalty notice in the form of a fine for emission offences and stationary idling under The Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) (Fixed Penalty) (England) Regulations 2002, if you do not switch off your idling engine when asked to do so by an authorised person.
2. A large diesel engine wastes up to a gallon, or just over 4.5 litres, of fuel for every hour it idles. In 2021, that costs approximately £4.88. It can also reduce the life of the engine, increase maintenance costs and require maintenance of the vehicle more regularly. This is because idling covers engine parts in a layer of fine soot known as "black carbon", which causes the vehicle to require more frequent oil changes and even engine re-building.
  - 2.1. Most modern vehicles do not require the "warm-up or cool-down" periods that involve idling.
3. Putting up signs in car parks, posters, leaflets and sending out emails to members can be the first steps in creating an anti-idling campaign and improving local air quality. You could create a sign-up sheet or pledge system for volunteers to spread information about idling at their workplace, school or local community.
  - 3.1. Idling doesn't just affect those in the car that is idling. Pollution levels inside a car that is behind an idling vehicle can be ten times worse than the air outside.

- 3.2. An idling vehicle emits 20 times more pollution than one traveling at 32mph.
- 3.3. There are many images available online that you could use in campaign posters etc. It is also popular for children and young people to create anti-idling drawings and posters. You could even hold a competition for the best children's posters that get to be put up in the centre. Some example posters are below:

**SWITCH IT OFF SO WE DON'T COUGH!**

Leaving an engine running whilst idle results in up to **10 times more contaminates inside the vehicle** than outside the vehicle.

**NO IDLING** Switch on to switching off  
**CLEAN AIR NETWORK**  
**RED FUNNEL**

**A small switch can help reduce lung cancer**

Turn off your engine while you're parked

**It's Not Fair**

SCHOOL

**NO IDLING**

**To Pollute Our Air**

Be The Solution to the Pollution  
 #DontBeIdle

Wigan Council

**No Idling!**

**Don't be Mean Stay Green**

**Don't idle your Cars!**





# I pledge to be a Sandwell Air Pollution Champion!

Actions I will take:

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Eco bus workshop

1. Sandwell's [Eco Bus](#) is a project in partnership with Serco, designed to educate children and adults about their local environment, air pollution, climate change and recycling.

It is a free service available to all Sandwell schools and community groups.

- 1.1. The bus itself is a recycled double decker. The interior has been restored to its former glory and includes recycled work tops made from coke bottles. Local children have heavily influenced all the content and following a competition



with over 2500 entries a handful of the designs have been turned into reality on the actual bus itself.

- 1.2. To book a visit to your school or centre, or for further information, please email Litter Watch at [tiptonlitter@aol.com](mailto:tiptonlitter@aol.com) or visit the [Tipton Litter Watch](#) website.

## Adopt-a-street

1. Residents in Sandwell can volunteer to adopt their street to help keep it clean and benefit the environment. This could be the street the faith centre is on and the streets that members live on. Offered by Litter Watch, in return for your commitment they provide you with:



- 1.1. Litter picking equipment and bags (limited to 10 sets for community groups/schools)

- 1.2. Hi-vis vests, gloves and a Litter Watch T-shirt (subject to availability)

- 1.3. Guidance on health and safety

2. You can use your grey bin at home for disposing of any litter you collect but if you collect a large amount of litter please contact the Litter Watch team. They also offer to list your street on their Litter Watch Google map and give you encouragement by sharing your pledge on social media, with your permission.
3. For business owners, there is the option to become part of the Litter Watch Business Environmental Charter. It is an entirely voluntary agreement between your business and Litter Watch, which provides a framework for businesses to

identify how, when and where litter problems are arising, and to work in partnership with the Litter Watch to resolve these issues.

- 3.1. The Environmental Charter is for any business in the following towns Smethwick, Tipton, Rowley, Wednesbury, Oldbury and West Bromwich, large or small, which through its operations or staff may produce smoking related litter. By signing up to the Charter, your business is demonstrating a commitment to reducing the level of smoking related litter on our streets and keeping the environment a clean and safe place to work, live and visit.
- 3.2. Cigarette ends and other items discarded as litter degrade the perception of a business and will reduce trade.
- 3.3. The Charter offer free advice and assistance with tackling litter
  - 3.3.1. Discuss with you any issues raised by the checklist and help you in finding solutions to litter around your premises
  - 3.3.2. Ensure that all streets are part of a cleaning schedule. Any recommendations made as a result of the Business Environmental Charter are suggestions only. This is a voluntary agreement, and as a business you would only ever be asked to do what is reasonable and achievable.

### Subsidised eco-driving training for businesses

1. Did you know the way that you drive has an impact on the local air pollution? Eco-driving is a driving style that reduces fuel bills, cuts carbon emissions and lowers accident rates. Subsidised training is available for all business drivers. An effective way to see immediate results, eco-driving training delivers average fuel savings of 15% on the day of training and up to 6% in the long term for fleets. More than 85,000 drivers have been trained since 2008. Benefits of eco-driving include:
  - 1.1. Reduced fuel consumption and carbon emissions
  - 1.2. Increased mileage by up to 15%
  - 1.3. Reduced risk of vehicle accidents
  - 1.4. Lower risk of vehicle wear and tear
  - 1.5. Opportunities to demonstrate your business commitment to the environment
2. Subsidised training is available directly from approved training companies and independent trainers. All training is delivered by Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency

(DVSA) registered fleet trainers who have attended one of Energy Savings Trust eco-driving ‘train-the-trainer’ courses. Training for electric and plug-in vehicles is available to third and public sector, and not-for-profit organisations for free. [Find a training supplier here.](#)

### Switching your search engine

1. Instead of using a search engine like Google or Microsoft Bing, consider switching to Ecosia, for any computers at the faith centre or at home.



- 1.1. Ecosia is a free search engine just like Google, but Ecosia uses over 80% of the money generated from searches to plant trees, which help global air quality. This is a really simple and free step that anyone with a computer can take to help make a difference.
- 1.2. They also offer an app on iOS devices, Android and other major mobile phone providers.
- 1.3. They have already planted over 155 million trees at locations all over the world.

### Heating the faith centre and your homes

1. Improving the efficiency of your heating system is one of the most important steps you can take to reduce your fuel bills and your carbon dioxide emissions. In most households, half the money spent on fuel bills goes on heating and supplying hot water.



- 1.1. If you have a mains gas connection, a gas boiler is likely to be the cheapest heating option. Average fuel prices (as of March 2019) show gas to be the cheapest heating fuel per kWh, compared to oil, economy 7, LPG and house coal.
- 1.2. If you don't have a gas supply to your home, it might be worth considering a form of low carbon heating such as an air source [heat pump](#). With the [renewable heat incentive \(RHI\)](#), this may be cheaper overall.
2. Switching to an energy provider that has 100% renewable sources is a great way to reduce the impacts of running and heating the faith centre and also the homes of the members that attend. Many of the main providers offer this as a tariff, at no or minimal extra cost. Switching energy providers can be quick and simple, and there are many websites that compare prices and providers.
3. Solar panels are also a great way to reduce the impact of your home or centre on the environment. Faith centres have access to community funding and government grants, which can reduce the costs of solar panels, or generate income from different tariffs.

For more information surrounding help available from the government for renewable energy; <https://www.gov.uk/green-deal-energy-saving-measures>.

## No Driving Days

1. Many institutions have introduced a “Carless Friday” (or alternative day of the week), or a “No Driving Day”. They promote alternative forms of travel, such as walking, cycling or public transport, as a way to commute to their centre, on a designated day of the week.



- 1.1. Schemes such as these improve local air quality, can save money, improve fitness and encourage the community to come together in a different way. They also can reduce traffic flows at peak times and decrease the need for parking.
- 1.2. Holding a crafts/activities session for children to create hand-coloured signs that can be put up within the centre can be a really great way to incorporate teens, children and toddlers, in addition to teaching them about air pollution.

## Planting trees and greenery

1. Planting trees and greenery can improve local air pollution, as well as being an important source of carbon sequestration. You can support local garden initiatives as an organisation or plant trees within the faith centre grounds. There are also options to sponsor trees being planted elsewhere. Alternatively, you can grow your own produce in your garden or allotment.



- 1.1. Becoming a Tree Warden is a great way to become involved with the tree planting initiatives in your local area. A Tree Warden is someone who is actively supporting planting initiatives, planting trees and look after trees in their area. For more information about Tree Wardens, visit the Tree Council website. Some projects that Tree Wardens get involved with include:
  - 1.1.1. Arranging tree planting days locally
  - 1.1.2. Pruning, watering and giving vital aftercare for local trees after planting
  - 1.1.3. Working with local authorities like Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council to plant and care for our precious street trees
  - 1.1.4. Rejuvenating local woodlands in need of management
  - 1.1.5. Raising funds and identifying suitable land for local tree planting projects
  - 1.1.6. Going into schools to talk to young people about the value of trees

2. The Woodland Trust charity has thousands of trees available to apply for every planting season for free. The free tree packs vary from packs specific for urban trees, to ones designed to promote wildlife, to fruit and nut producing trees. You can also purchase these tree packs if you are not able to apply for the free ones. They also offer advice on planting and caring for trees, how to get the community involved, how to create a community wood and more.

3. Gardening and spending more time in nature has massive benefits for physical and mental health and wellbeing. When planting in your own garden or the faith centre grounds, consider planting wildflowers or trees that are beneficial for pollinators.

Pollinators are on the decline in the UK.

3.1. Plants for Pollinators is a logo that means the plants are good for vital pollinating insects.



3.2. Other ways to help encourage pollinators include:

3.2.1. Leaving your grass longer in between cuttings.

3.2.2. Providing water for pollinators.

3.2.3. Avoiding use of pesticides as much as possible, and never spraying open flowers.

3.2.4. Providing nest sites for wild bees.

4. Sandwell offers garden allotments. These can be especially helpful if you live in housing that doesn't have a garden, or your garden is not big enough for what you want to grow.

4.1. Allotments allow you to grow food, meet new people and gardening is a great form of exercise.

4.2. Some of the allotments in Sandwell are equipped with toilet facilities, or raised beds for less physically able gardeners. Some also have improved roads and paths for wheelchair access.

4.3. There are allotment plots available in:

4.3.1. **Oldbury**; Tividale Park, Dudley Road, Pound Road, Cemetery Road, Basons Lane on Warley Road, Newbury Lane, Barnford Park, Meadow Road, Brandhall, Ramsay Road and Lewis Estate.

4.3.2. **Rowley Regis**; Britannia Park, Perry Park, Cherry Orchard on Spring Meadow and Silverthorne

4.3.3. **Smethwick**; Stony Lane, Hall Road, Thimblemill, Bearwood Road, Londonderry on Manor Road, Hamilton Road and Salop Drive.

4.3.4. **Tipton**; Lee Howl on Stella Road, Central Library in Victoria Park and Whitehall Road.

- 4.3.5. **Wednesbury**; Dingley Road, Woodgreen on Barlow Road, Black Horse on Old Park Road, Brunswick Park, Mesty Croft on Crankhall Lane, Paul Street, Friar Park and Woden Road South.
- 4.3.6. **West Bromwich**; Moorlands on Hall Green Road, Newton Street, Caroline Street, Bromford Lane on Coyne Road and Kenrick Park on Constance Avenue.

### Tree planting guide from RHS

1. The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) has developed a beginner's guide for planting trees. Their top tip is that it is important to understand the eventual height and spread of whatever tree you are planting! The best time to plant is between October and April. Equipment you will need:
  - 1.1.1. Tree in a container
  - 1.1.2. Bucket
  - 1.1.3. Watering can
  - 1.1.4. Spade and fork
  - 1.1.5. Stake and tie
  - 1.1.6. Tree guard or spiral
  - 1.1.7. Mulch (organic matter like chipped bark)

## 10-Step tree planting guide



Royal Horticultural Society

Sharing the best in Gardening



### Step 1

Dig a hole three times as wide as the pot and the same depth. Loosen the soil around the hole with a fork.



### Step 2

Thoroughly soak the root ball in water before planting - standing it in a bucket is good for this.



### Step 3

Loosen the root ball to encourage roots to grow into the soil.



### Step 4

Place the root ball in the hole so that the point where the roots meet the trunk is level with the surface of the soil surface.



### Step 5

A piece of wood can be useful to check the level.



### Step 6

Refill the hole ensuring there are no air pockets around the roots. Firm the soil around the tree making sure the stem remains upright.



### Step 7

Use a tree guard or spiral if your garden has wildlife visitors who may want to nibble the bark.



### Step 8

Water well. Add a 5-8cm (2-3in) layer of mulch but leave a 10cm (4in) mulch-free collar around base of stem.



### Step 9

Top-heavy trees will probably need staking. Put the stake in firmly at a 45 degree angle - use a hammer to make sure it's secure.



### Step 10

Now attach a tie to your tree to support it in windy weather. Garden centres can show you how to do this when you buy it.



## The best plants to improve air quality

1. The RHS says that research shows that some types of plants are best at trapping pollutant particles, improving local air quality. This could be used in the green space around your faith centre, your home, or your allotment. Studies have found that leaves that are rough in texture, waxy, scaly or hairy are most effective at removing air pollutants. Also, plants that have bigger leaves with complex shapes are better too.
  - 1.1. RHS provides examples of each leaf type that is best at removing pollution. For hairy leaves, plant cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster franchetii* and *C. coriaceus*) and flowering currant (*Ribes*).
  - 1.2. For scaly leaves, plant red cedar (*Thuja plicata*) and lemon cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa* “Goldcrest”).
  - 1.3. For waxy leaves, plant yew (*Taxus baccata*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and laurustinus (*Viburnum tinus*).
  - 1.4. For rough leaves, plant hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) and Japanese rose (*Rosa rugosa*).

## Communicating Air Pollution to Children and Young People

1. Communicating air pollution to children and young people can seem like a daunting task. You want to make them aware of the situation without scaring them or causing them to overly worry. If your child becomes worried about pollution or climate change that they learn about either from school or other sources, there are three key ways of helping:
  - 1.1. Remind them they aren't alone. Feeling anxious or upset about these topics is normal, and many other adults and children feel the same way. It can be an intimidating topic to talk about, but necessary to do.
  - 1.2. Share their worries. If the children don't feel comfortable talking about their worries, encourage them to draw or write them down. If they are comfortable talking, encourage them to confide in an adult they trust.
  - 1.3. Be positive. Remind them that steps are being taken to fix the problem and share with them positive success stories from the news or other organisations. Talk to them about what you are doing at home or at the faith centre to help make a change.
2. Although children and young people will learn about air pollution at school, it can be helpful to talk to them about what you are doing at home and at their faith centre to help.
  - 2.1. Greenpeace have created a [teaching resource pack](#) designed to teach children at Key Stage 2 about the air pollution in terms of health. Although designed for teachers, the resource pack can be taught by an interested member of the faith centre in any learning environment.
  - 2.2. The Young People's Trust for the Environment have a [factsheet about air pollution](#), as well as factsheets about land pollution, water pollution and what can be done about pollution.
  - 2.3. The BBC also offer a guide on communicating things like pollution and climate change to children. They also have an air pollution section on [BBC Bitesize](#), a well-known learning resource for children and young people of all ages. These sections can link directly to the child's school curriculum or exam board if they are older (e.g. AQA, Edexcel, etc.). BBC Bitesize is split into ages:
    - 2.3.1. [Primary school](#) (3 to 11 years old)
    - 2.3.2. [Secondary school](#) (11 to 16 years old)
    - 2.3.3. Post-16 (16 years old and up)
  - 2.4. And also includes a separate section for [parents](#), or primary care givers, with tips and advice, and activity ideas.

3. Lots of different organisations and charities offer memberships that provide children-friendly environmental activities. Environmental charity Friends of the Earth offer a “[Planet Protectors](#)” pack designed for adults and children, with each donation, that contains:
  - 3.1. Bee-friendly wildflower seeds
  - 3.2. Activity handbook, 24 pages of fun activities with quizzes, nature games and more, aimed at ages 5 to 11 years
  - 3.3. Plastic-free stickers
  - 3.4. 10 Tips to Save the World poster
  - 3.5. Personalised membership card and wallet

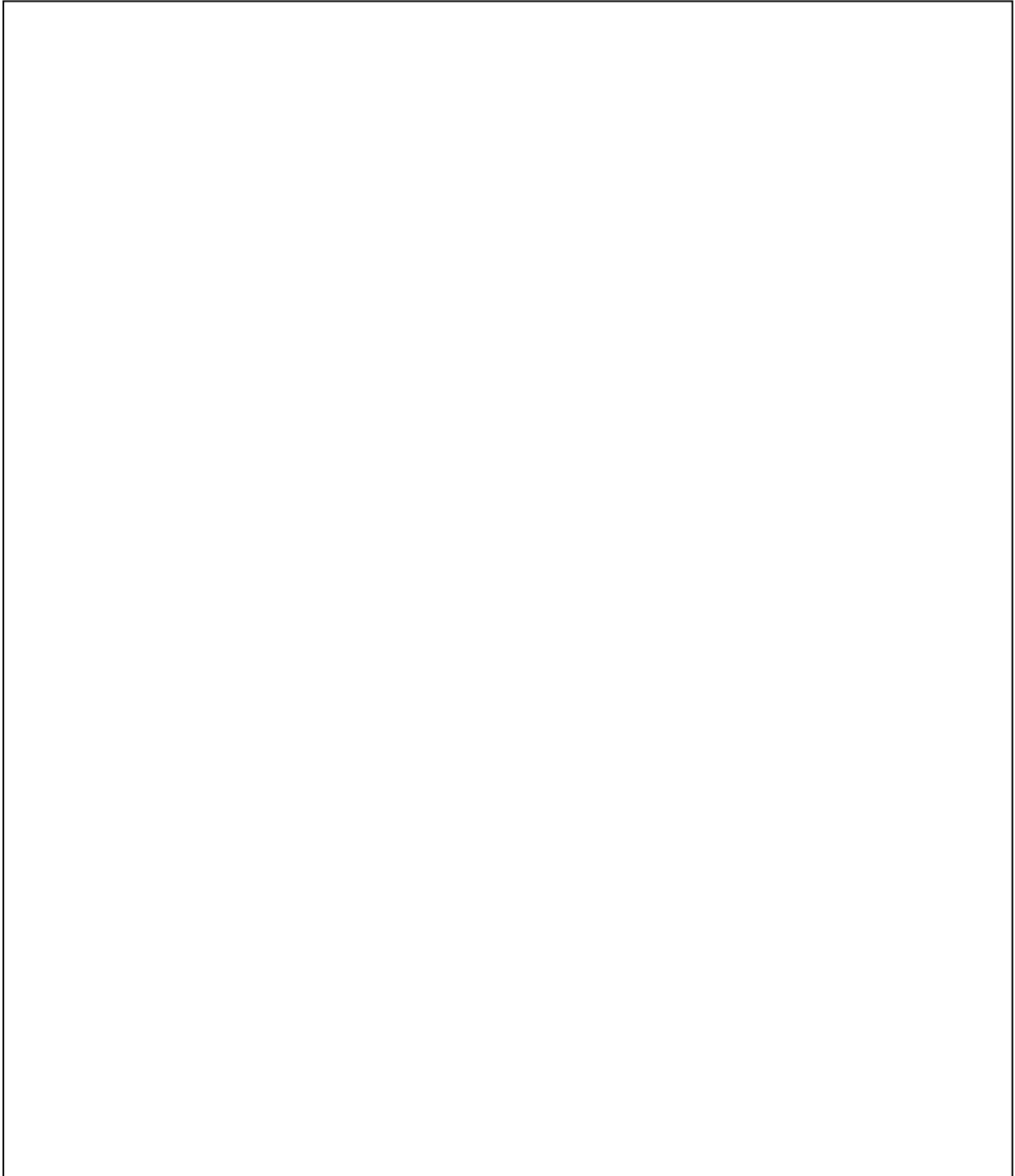
### Working with schools

1. Many faith centres or groups have a school that they work with or support regularly, or that is located nearby. Working with a nearby school to improve local air quality is a great way to get increased engagement and raise awareness.
  - 1.1. If your centre works with a school, and you would like to arrange a visit from a Council staff member to talk about air quality and schools, please contact [pollution\\_control@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:pollution_control@sandwell.gov.uk).
  - 1.2. Working with schools to run a joint anti-idling campaign or other campaign ideas is a great way to widen community engagement and help raise awareness in young people. You can also arrange a visit from the [Eco Bus](#) jointly for both the school and faith centre. Here are some other ideas for working with schools:
    - 1.2.1. Promoting “[Park and Stride](#)” initiatives
    - 1.2.2. Promoting car sharing
    - 1.2.3. Walking route maps and leaflets
    - 1.2.4. Awareness raising sessions amongst school and faith centre staff
    - 1.2.5. Cycling training
    - 1.2.6. Promoting active travel e.g. walking or cycling
    - 1.2.7. [Walking buses](#) initiatives
    - 1.2.8. CPD support for teachers on air quality
    - 1.2.9. Supporting and promoting “[Walk to School](#)” week

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Draw a picture of where air pollution can come from:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a student to draw a picture of where air pollution can come from.

## Advice for Business Owners

1. If you are a business owner in the West Midlands, and you wish to become more sustainable, there is a variety of information and funding available to you from the Sustainable Business Support Hub, supported by the West Midlands Combined Authority.
  - 1.1. The [West Midlands Net Zero Business Pledge](#) is a commitment your business can take to reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality, whilst receiving practical support and guidance on achieving your targets.
  - 1.2. You can join your [local green business network](#), which fosters sharing ideas, good practice, tips and resources. There is a list available of organisation and members of the network providing the support across the West Midlands Combined Authority area on the Sustainability West Midlands website [here](#).
2. Sandwell is a part of the [Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership](#) (LEP), along with Dudley, Walsall and Wolverhampton.
  - 2.1. The [Black Country Growth Hub](#) coordinates support for businesses based in the Black Country to grow and develop. They offer support on:
    - 2.1.1. Funding
    - 2.1.2. Training
    - 2.1.3. Efficiency
    - 2.1.4. Innovation
    - 2.1.5. Supply
    - 2.1.6. Export
    - 2.1.7. Property
3. [Energy Systems Catapult](#) helps business transformations, to allow both businesses and consumers to benefit from the opportunities of clean growth. It is an independent, not-for-profit centre of excellence, that is designed to bridge the gap between industry, academia, government and research.
  - 3.1. They create a network of clean growth providers and offer advice and tools to businesses.

### Funding opportunities for businesses in the Black Country

1. The following links have been taken from the Sustainability West Midlands webpage. <sup>i</sup>
  - 1.1. [BECCI - Built Environment Climate Change Innovations](#): support is available to Small or Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) to develop new or improved energy efficient products, engage with housing providers in the region to support the use

of more green products and give them access to the latest information and knowledge on low carbon technologies.

- 1.2. EBRI - Energy & Bioproducts Research Institute (EBRI): EBRI leads and delivers a range of research projects and collaborations with partners in the West Midlands, UK, Europe and beyond. Projects focus on the adoption of bioenergy technologies in both urban and rural settings and the provision of support to businesses to enable them to make informed bioenergy decisions. Support is available to SMEs wanting to develop low carbon goods and services.
- 1.3. EnTRESS - Environmental Technologies & Resource Efficiency Support Service: Working across a variety of sectors EnTRESS seeks to improve resource efficiency for SMEs. Their aim is to increase business competitiveness, improve productivity and identify new market opportunities for SMEs through the adoption of environmental technologies and the reduction of waste.
- 1.4. Low Carbon SME's: The Low Carbon SMEs project uses university academics to provide short- and long-term support to SMEs. Projects leading to a reduction in energy consumption, carbon emissions and process inefficiencies within high energy using organisations are eligible for support including a free diagnostic evaluating your sites' energy use and process efficiencies, a grant of up to £12,250, one to one advice and innovation support, and sector specific workshops.
- 1.5. Smarter Choices has been government funded to bring together and test the latest financing and monitoring technologies into a single online platform to provide straightforward building energy-saving solutions. To develop this new service, SMEs with energy bills above £20,000 per year can now access a limited number of free energy assessments and free measurement & verification equipment for pilot projects which proceed to installation.

### Carbon calculator tool for SMEs

1. A new tool has been developed by Small99 that allows SMEs to calculate their Carbon Impact through a tool that asks only 30 simple questions. Once the questions are filled in, the tool provides a list highlighting where the most improvements can be made, to get the business closer to being net-zero carbon emissions.

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<sup>i</sup> For full information regarding these funding opportunities, please visit the Sustainability West Midlands website: <https://www.sustainabilitywestmidlands.org.uk/sustainable-business-support/black-country-lep/>.