
Draft AQAP 2026-2030 Public Consultation Results and Analysis

Public Feedback and Council's response to Oxford's
draft Air Quality Action Plan 2026-2030

Consultation Period:

24th October -30th November

Environmental Sustainability Team

Oxford City Council – December 2025

Background

As part of its statutory responsibilities, Oxford City Council is preparing to publish a new Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) for the city. The plan sets out a series of proposed measures aimed at tackling the persistent challenge of poor air quality and reducing its impact on the health of residents and visitors, which are expected to be delivered during the period 2026–2030.

Under the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) regime, all local authorities in England have a statutory duty to carry out a formal public consultation on their proposed AQAPs. This process also requires engagement with the following key statutory consultees:

- ✓ Environment Agency;
- ✓ Oxfordshire County Council (Highways Authority);
- ✓ All neighbouring District Councils (South Oxfordshire, Vale of the White Horse, West Oxfordshire and Cherwell);
- ✓ National Highways;
- ✓ DEFRA;
- ✓ Other local organisations as appropriate.

Oxford City Council held an online public consultation over a five-week period, from 24th October to 30th November 2025, inviting everyone who lives, works and visits Oxford to share their views on the proposed Air Quality Action Plan for 2026–2030.

Stakeholder engagement activities undertaken to promote participation in the consultation survey included:

- ✓ Publishing an online consultation link and local press release;
- ✓ Releasing multiple social media adverts and posts to raise awareness;
- ✓ Sending direct emails to all key statutory consultees and relevant stakeholders in the city;
- ✓ Circulating internal newsletters and member briefings to all Oxford City Councillors, reminding them of the open consultation and explicitly requesting that they share the information with residents in their constituencies;
- ✓ Circulating internal emails to various internal teams at City and County asking for wider dissemination through the officers individual networks;
- ✓ Displaying information on Oxford City Council's digital noticeboard (intranet homepage) and sharing it via corporate communications with all employees;
- ✓ Publishing articles at the Your Oxford Newsletter (reaching approximately 9,000 recipients), and at the Oxford City Centre Businesses newsletter;
- ✓ Sharing the consultation with Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Partnership members;
- ✓ Sharing the consultation with Oxford's Community Action Group Network.

A total of 125 responses were received.

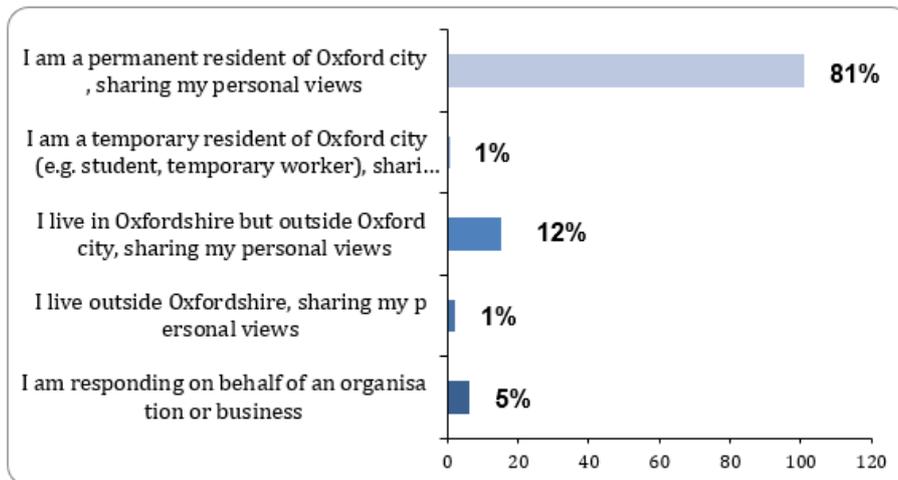
This report summarises the consultation results and outlines Oxford City Council's response to the feedback received. It highlights the changes that will be incorporated into the final version of the AQAP and explains the rationale for suggestions not adopted, in accordance with the requirements set out in Annexes A and B of DEFRA's AQAP template.

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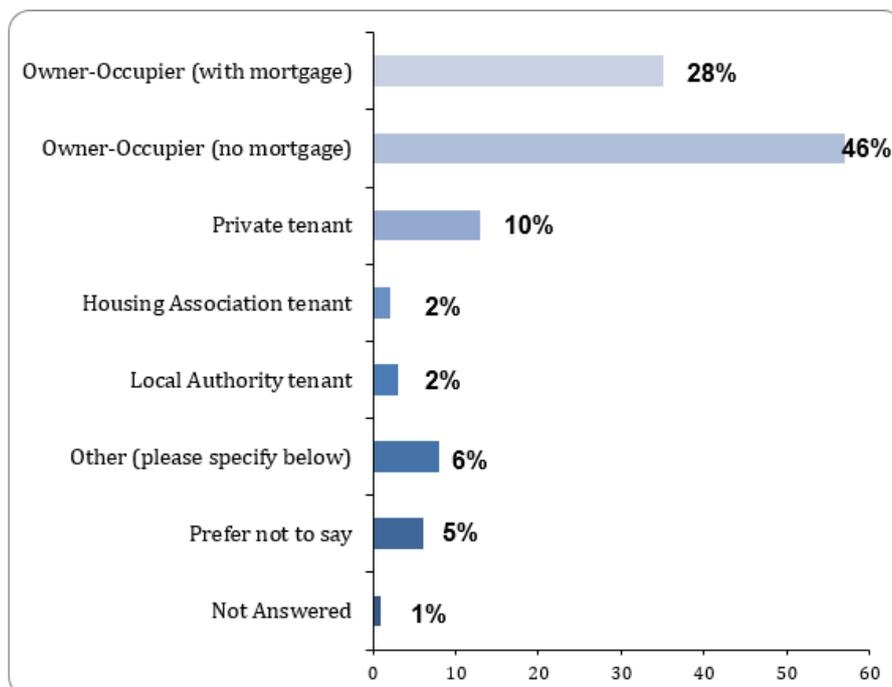
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Consultation Results

1. To help us understand who we have consulted, please indicate which of the following best describes your viewpoint in relation to this consultation

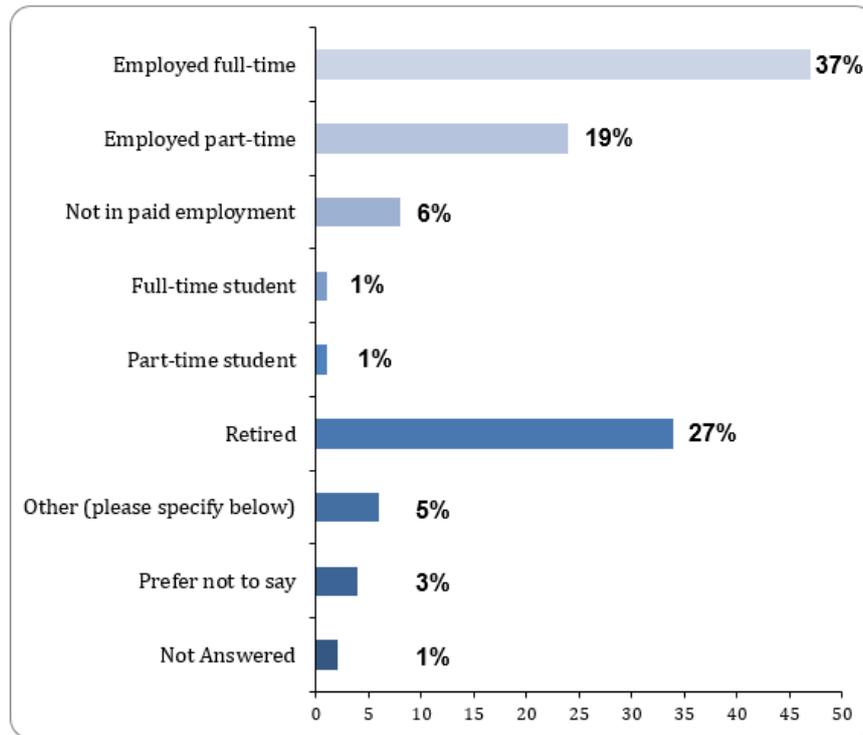


2. Which of the following best describes your housing situation?

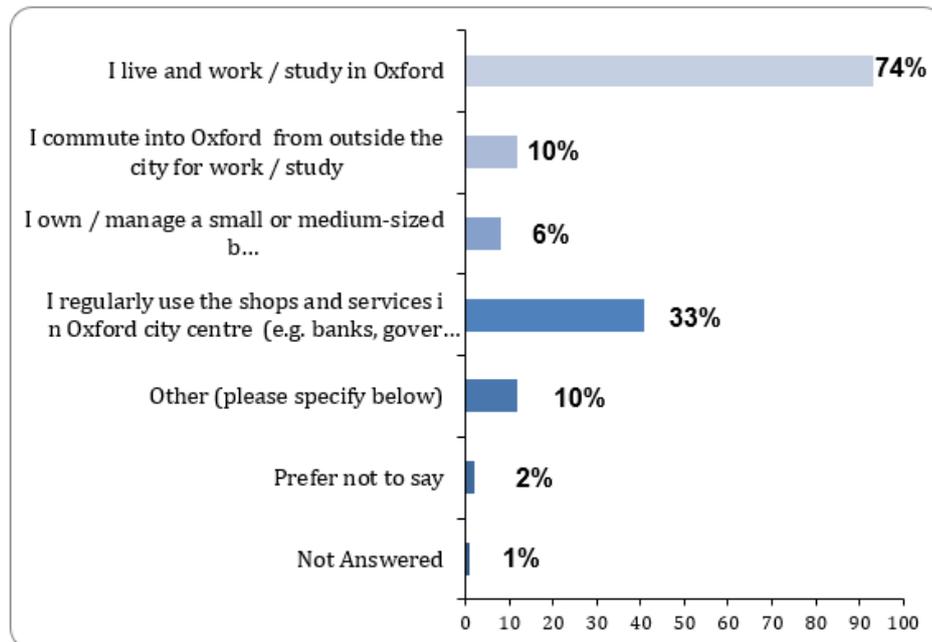


Note: The percentage of people who replied “Other” and whose responses do not fit any of the categories above mentioned that they are living with parents or family.

3. Employment status



4. Why do you come into Oxford? (Tick all that apply)



Note: The total percentage exceeds 100% because respondents were allowed to select multiple options. Each percentage shown for an individual option represents the proportion of respondents who selected that option.

Note 2: The percentage of people who replied "Other" and whose responses do not fit any of the categories above mentioned that they do not live in the city but visit occasionally to see family or friends and/or to enjoy its cultural offerings.

5. How would you rate the following aspects of Oxford City Centre?

Option	Air Quality	Traffic Congestion	Public Transport Provision	Space for Walking	Space for cycling
Excellent	9%	3%	8%	10%	7%
Good	25%	9%	32%	34%	22%
Average	43%	23%	30%	25%	27%
Poor	11%	25%	19%	22%	21%
Very Poor	8%	37%	6%	8%	12%
Don't Know	2%	1%	2%	0%	7%
Not Answered	2%	2%	3%	1%	4%

6. How have the following changed in Oxford City Centre Over the past 5 years?

Option	Air Quality	Traffic Congestion	Public Transport Provision	Space for Walking	Space for cycling
Much Improved	18%	2%	9%	3%	9%
Slightly Improved	34%	19%	25%	19%	29%
No Change	18%	24%	30%	52%	32%
Slightly Worse	9%	20%	14%	7%	9%
Much Worse	10%	28%	10%	11%	8%
Don't Know	10%	5%	11%	6%	12%
Not Answered	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%

Note : Legend of sentiment-aware conditional shading applied to questions 5 and 6:

Green = Higher percentages for positive options (Excellent/Good or Much Improved/Slightly Improved).

Red = Higher percentages for negative options (Poor/Very Poor or Slightly Worse/Much Worse).

Grey = Neutral rows (Don't Know, Not Answered).

White midpoint = Balanced or low influence.

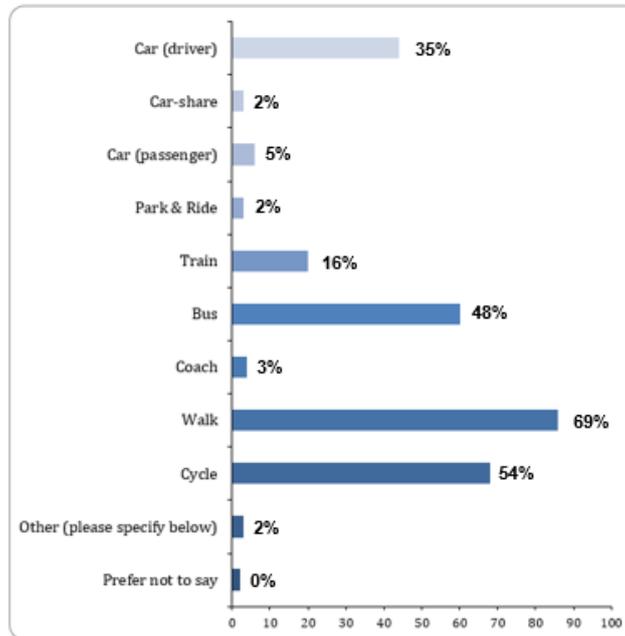
6a. Please share any additional thoughts or observations about Oxford City Centre's environment

Note: A summary table presenting the key observations shared by residents (organised by area of concern) is provided below

AQAP 2026-2030

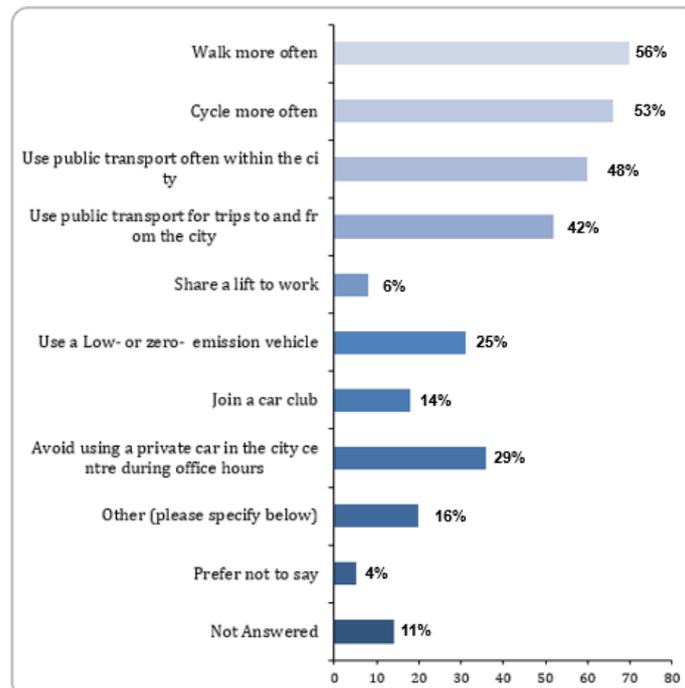
Area of Concern	Short Summary	Number of times mentioned
Cycling safety & infrastructure	Lack of safe, continuous and protected cycle lanes; concerns over junction conflicts, lack of segregation, and poor road surfaces	44
Pedestrian safety/space & pavements	Crowded/narrow pavements; shared spaces causing conflict; uneven surfaces, cambers, and accessibility barriers for wheelchair and mobility users	36
Public Transport - cost, reliability & routing	Mixed views on bus reliability, crowding, and routing; affordability concerns; suggestions for better cross city connections	36
Traffic congestion and routing	Perceived increases in congestion and journey times; bottlenecks (e.g., The Plain, Cowley Rd); circuitous routing imposed by filters/closures	31
Congestion charge/ZEZ impacts	Divided opinions: several report improved bus times/air quality; others cite accessibility and affordability concerns and displaced congestion	18
Air Quality- wood/coal smoke & diesel	Wood/coal burning and diesel emissions highlighted as persistent pollution sources (especially evenings and cold nights)	16
E-scooters/e-bikes behaviour and conflicts	Concerns about fast/heavy e-bikes and scooters mixing with pedestrians, illegal riding, and safety in pedestrianised areas.	13
Tourism & Westgate - crowding and character	Tourist pressure and Westgate related traffic; perceived change in city centre character and crowding on pavements.	12
LTNs, ANPR & traffic filters	Strongly mixed impacts: reduced traffic on some streets vs. displacement and longer/more stressful routes elsewhere; requests for resident exemptions	10
Parking (car & cycle) availability/cost	High car-parking costs and limited availability; insufficient/queuing for secure bike parking (e.g., near station or in centre)	9
Greening & pedestrianisation opportunities	Support for more pedestrianised streets (e.g., Broad St, St Giles), wider pavements, and more trees/placemaking	7
Enforcement & road behaviour (idling, illegal riding/speeding)	Requests for enforcement against idling tourist buses/taxis, illegal cycling/scooting (e.g., one-way violations), and speeding	7
Botley road/Frideswide Square impacts	Closure/redevelopment and designs perceived to disrupt trips and create confusing/unsafe cycling and walking layouts	6
Road and pavement condition	Potholes, broken/"wonky" paving and bumpy shared-use paths affecting safety and comfort, especially for cyclists	6
Side-road impacts & fairness (Jericho/Walton)	Equity concerns where closures protect some streets while displacing traffic onto others; requests to keep traffic to main roads	3
Disabled access & mobility	Inconsistent dropped kerbs; reliance on car access for some disabled/older residents; concerns over impacts of emissions policies	2
Canal area pollution	Specific localised concerns about pollution near the Oxford canal	1
Smoking in public spaces	Second hand smoke nuisance, particularly at bus stops and on university grounds; desire for visible antismoking messaging	1

7. Main mode(s) of transport for weekday travel?



Note: The total percentage exceeds 100% because respondents were allowed to select multiple options. Each percentage shown for an individual option represents the proportion of respondents who selected that option.

8. What of the following would you be willing to do to help improve air quality and public health in Oxford?



Note: The total percentage exceeds 100% because respondents were allowed to select multiple options. Each percentage shown for an individual option represents the proportion of respondents who selected that option.

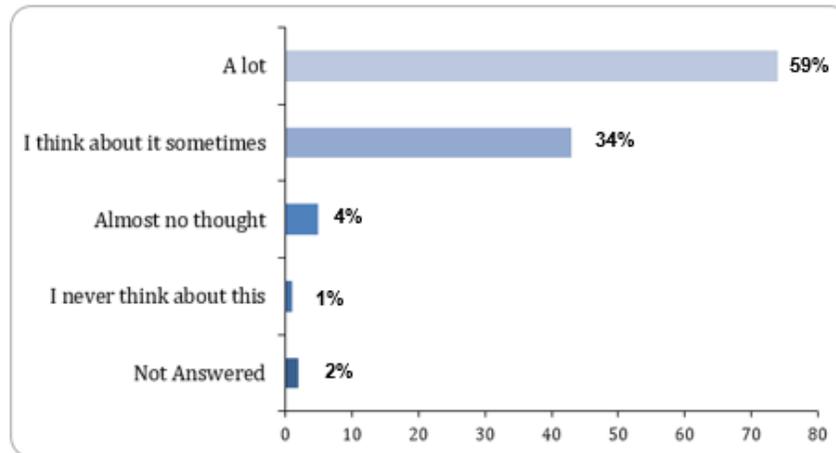
Note 2: The percentage of people who replied “Other” mostly provided a combination of the options listed above, while others have offered suggestions which were incorporated under question 27.

9. If you currently use a private vehicle for travel into and within Oxford, would any of the following encourage you to reduce your use?

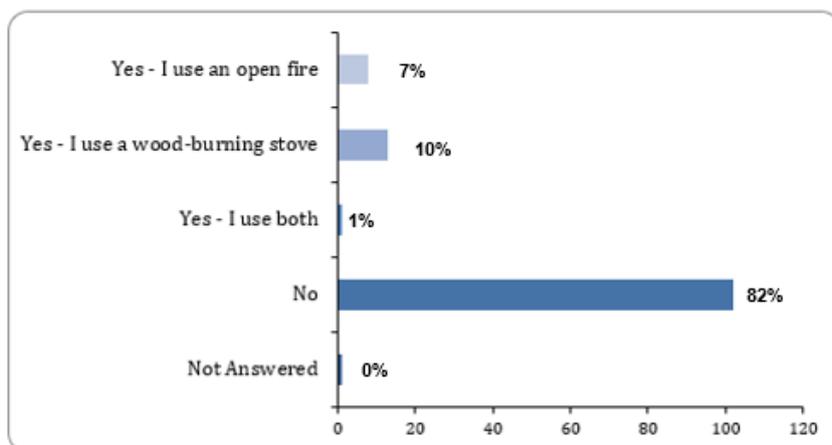
Option	More electric vehicle charging points	More cycle lanes	Better Public transport services	Financial Incentives or penalties	More secure cycle parking	Better information on travel alternatives	Availability of cycle hire	Availability of car clubs	Changing Facilities for Cyclists	Promotion of safe walking routes
Yes	15%	31%	40%	13%	27%	13%	9%	10%	8%	31%
Maybe	8%	14%	13%	14%	14%	18%	11%	14%	13%	13%
No	33%	21%	12%	34%	23%	26%	42%	34%	39%	22%
I don't know	5%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	4%	3%	1%
Not Answered	39%	33%	34%	38%	34%	41%	37%	38%	37%	33%

Green = Higher percentages for Yes (positive sentiment); Red = Higher percentages for No (negative sentiment); Grey = I don't know, Not answered

10. How much thought do you give to saving energy in your home?



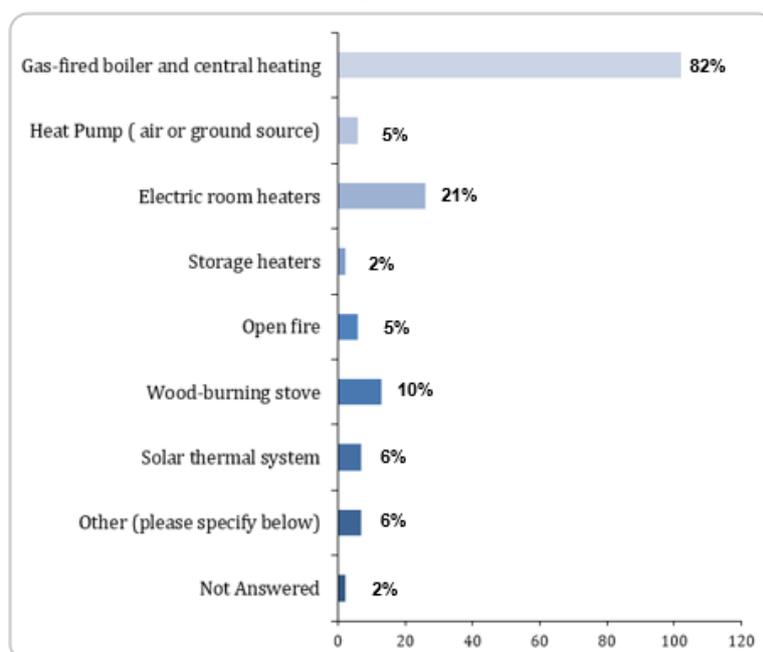
11. Do you use an open fire and/or a wood burning stove?



12. If yes, how well informed are you about the proper use of open fires and wood-burning stoves, and the most appropriate fuels to use?

Option	Percentage
Well Informed	28%
Moderately informed	8%
Not informed at all	5%
Not answered	59%

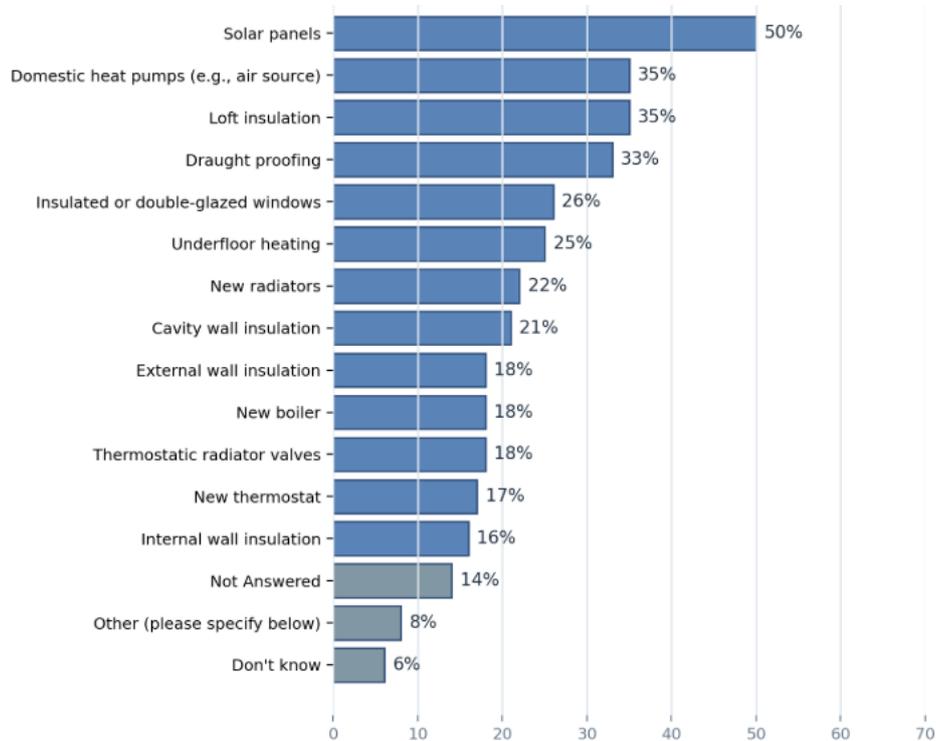
13. What types of heating do you have in your home?



Note: The total percentage exceeds 100% because respondents were allowed to select multiple options. Each percentage shown for an individual option represents the proportion of respondents who selected that option.

Note 2: The percentage of people who replied “Other” mostly provided a combination of the options listed above.

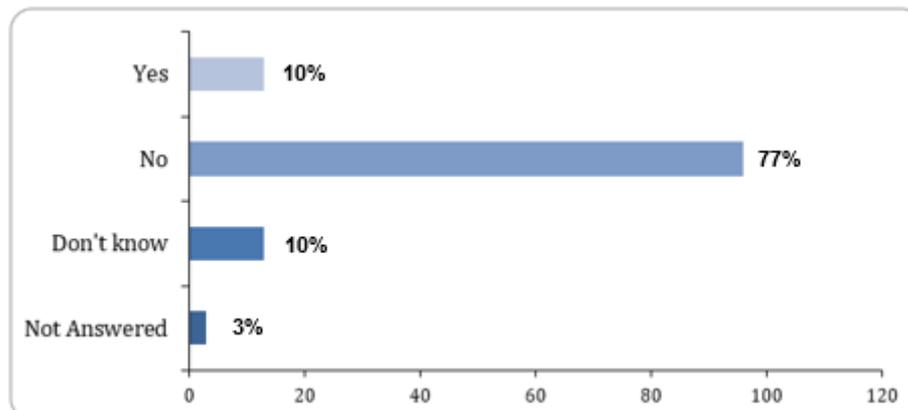
14. Which energy efficiency improvements would you consider making to help keep your home warmer, healthier and cheaper to run?



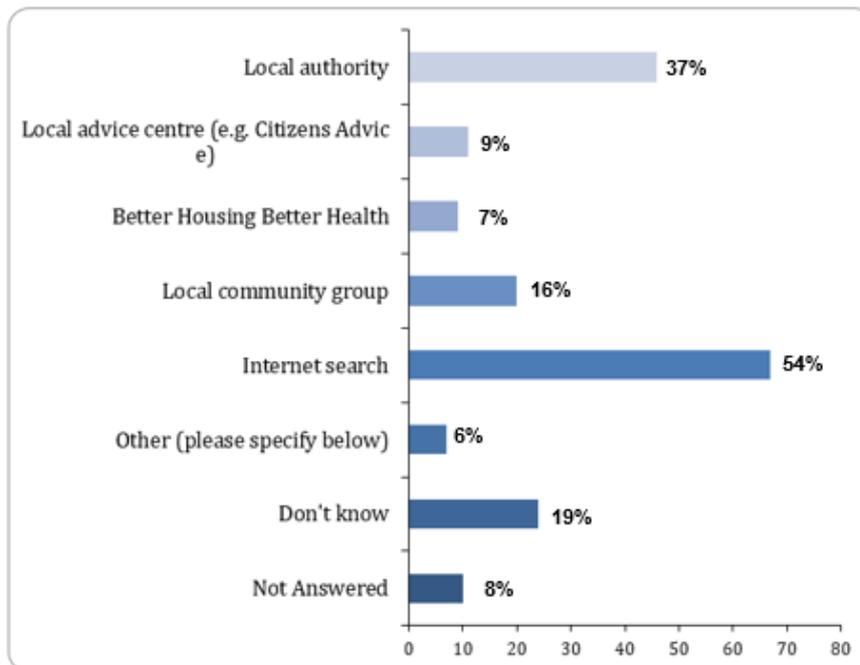
Note: The total percentage exceeds 100% because respondents were allowed to select multiple options. Each percentage shown for an individual option represents the proportion of respondents who selected that option.

Note 2: The percentage of people who replied “Other” mostly state that none of the above applies as they have already done all that's possible and their house is already quite well or over insulated.

15. Have you or someone you know received a grant to help improve the energy efficiency of your/their home?



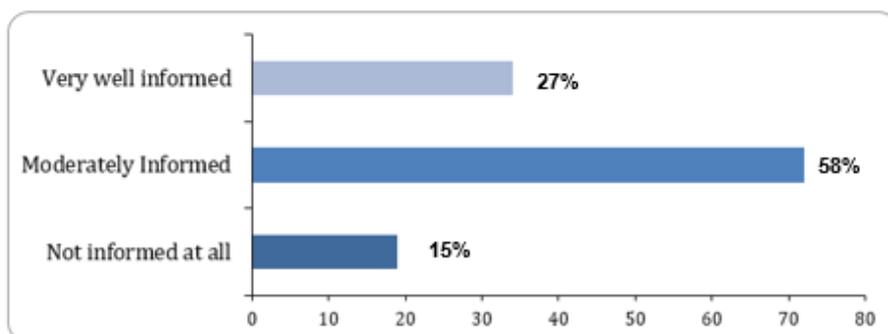
16. Where would you go to find information or advice about improving your home's energy efficiency or applying for grants?



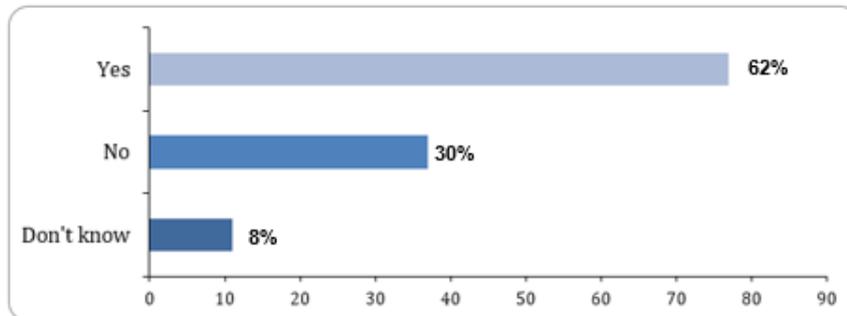
Note: The total percentage exceeds 100% because respondents were allowed to select multiple options. Each percentage shown for an individual option represents the proportion of respondents who selected that option.

Note 2: The percentage of people who replied "Other" mostly mention energy provider, boiler reseller and utility companies as other viable options.

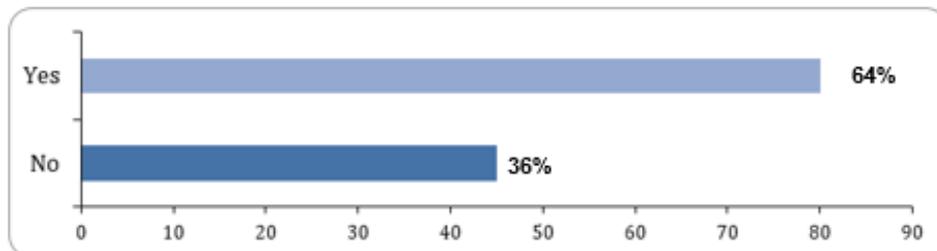
17. Overall, how well informed are you about air quality issues in Oxford?



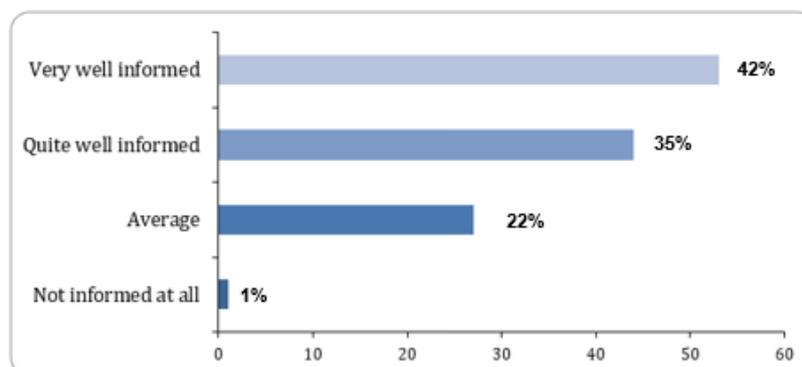
18. Would you like to feel more informed about air quality issues in Oxford?



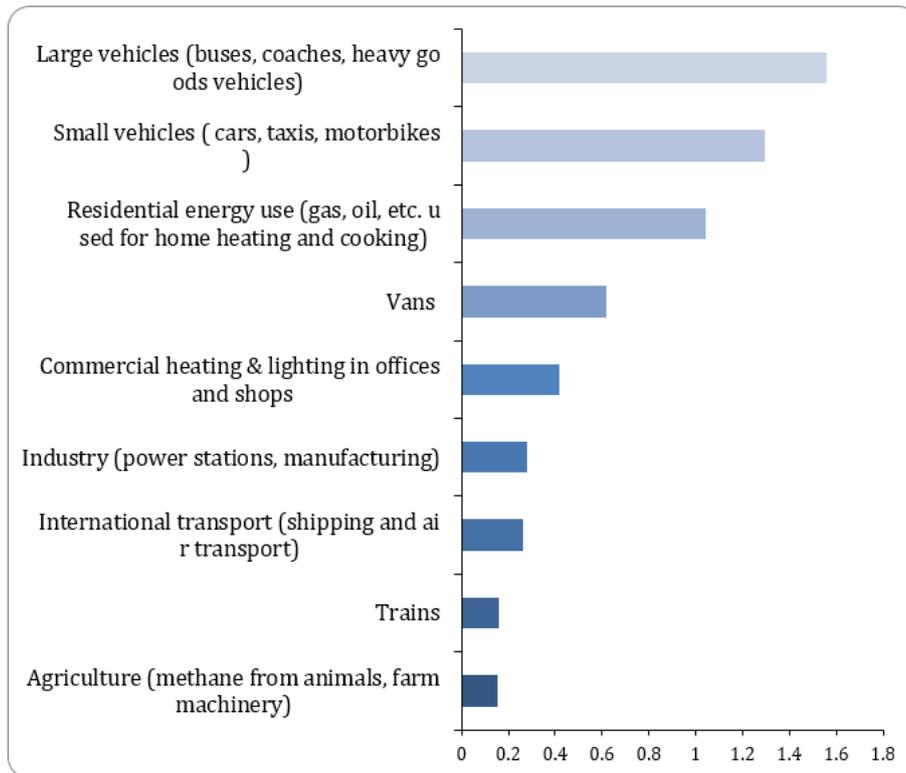
19. Are you aware of any local programmes introduced to improve air quality in Oxford?



20. How well informed are you about the negative impacts of air pollution on human health?

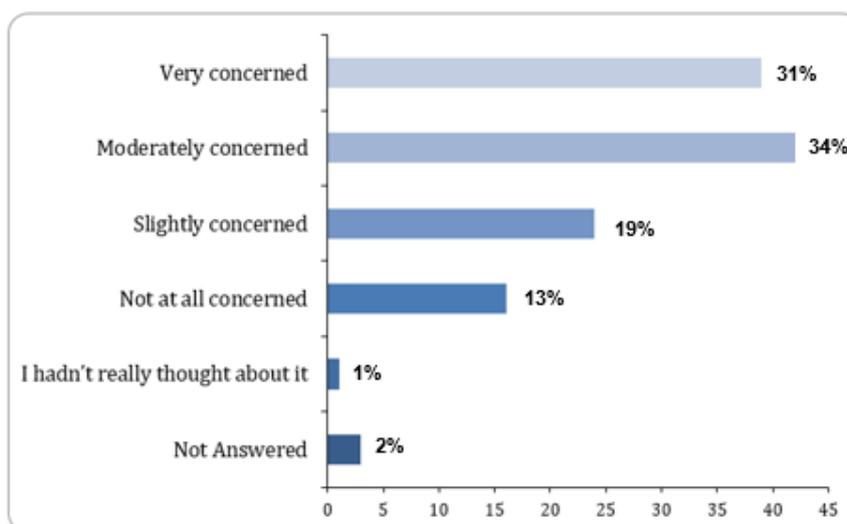


21. In your opinion, what are the 3 biggest contributors to poor air quality in Oxford?

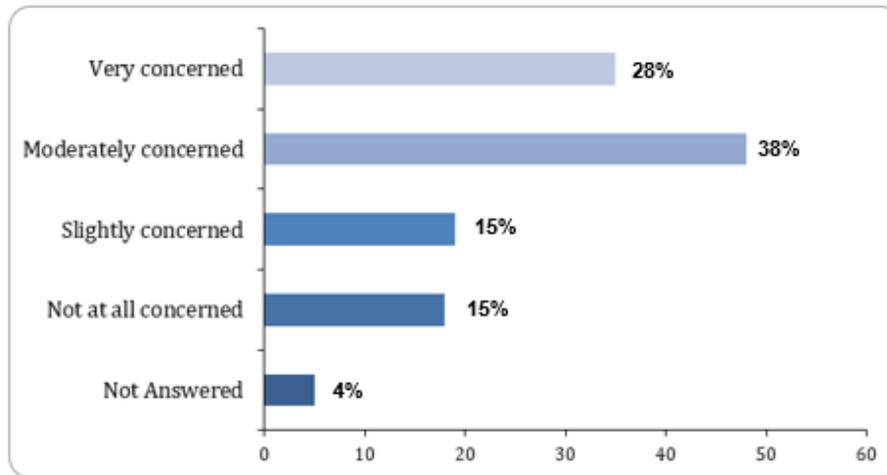


Note: The metric on the X-axis represents the average ranking of the top three contributors

22. Before reading the draft Air Quality Action Plan, how concerned were you about air quality in Oxford?



23. After reading the draft Air Quality Action Plan, how concerned are you now about air quality in Oxford?



24. The draft Air Quality Action Plan proposes the adoption of a local, more ambitious NO₂ annual mean target of 20 µg/m³ to be pursued city-wide by 2030. To what extent do you agree with the city’s ambition to adopt this new target?

Option	Percentage
Strongly Agree	52%
Agree	19%
Neutral	7%
Disagree	12%
Strongly disagree	9%
Not Answered	1%

25. The draft Air Quality Action Plan has identified 4 distinct areas of focus to reduce air pollution in Oxford (2026-2030). To what extent do you agree with these four areas?

Option	Percentage
Strongly Agree	43%
Agree	26%
Neutral	14%
Disagree	8%
Strongly disagree	7%
Not Answered	2%

26. Are there any other key priority areas that you think should be included in this Air Quality Action Plan?

Key areas of intervention suggested	Oxford City Council comments
Indoor Air Quality	Not addressed - Indoor air quality is not currently covered by the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) regime, which sets all the statutory air quality duties that local authorities must comply with at the local level. The LAQM framework, established under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995, requires local authorities to review and assess air quality in <u>outdoor</u> public spaces against national objectives. Its scope is limited to ambient (outdoor) air. Because indoor environments fall outside this statutory definition, this is inevitably beyond the scope of this Action Plan.
Green Infrastructure and Urban Greening	Not addressed – The key intervention areas in a local authority AQAP are designed to target statutory pollutants and their sources. The Council already addresses this through its adopted Green Spaces Strategy and Urban Forest Strategy. Therefore, measures to increase green areas in the city will be delivered under those strategies, not within the scope of this Action Plan.

Note: The remaining suggestions are already reflected within the current AQAP key priority areas or represent alternative wording for existing concepts. In many cases, these suggestions relate to specific air quality measures or actions rather than introducing new strategic intervention areas. Where suggestions constitute actionable measures, they have been reviewed and included in the dedicated section on proposed measures later in this document.

27. Is/Are there any specific air quality measure(s) that you feel the city should be included but are currently missing from the draft air quality action plan?

Note: The table below presents the aggregated air quality measures suggested by all consultees during this public consultation, along with their respective categories, the frequency of mentions, and Oxford City Council's responses.

Recommended Air Quality Measure	Category	Number of times mentioned	Oxford City Council's response
Ban/restrict wood burning and stoves	Domestic Heating	18	Partially Addressed - Local authorities cannot impose a blanket ban on wood burning or stoves, as these activities are not illegal in the UK. In December 2024 Oxford City Council designated the entire city as a Smoke Control Area. Within this area, it is illegal to emit smoke from a chimney, only DEFRA authorised "smokeless" fuels are permitted for use in open fires and older stoves. Wood can only be burned in appliances listed as exempt by DEFRA.
Improve public transport (cheaper, better, electrify buses)	Transport	15	Addressed – This Action Plan already addresses this under Key Priority A through the measures: "Delivery of the Bus service Improvement Plan." and "Enhancement of urban rail infrastructure", and also under Key Priority B through the measures: "Deliver Bus emission requirements under the Bus Enhanced Partnership and Scheme"
Expand cycling infrastructure & safety	Transport	10	Addressed – This Action Plan already addresses this under Key Priority A through the measure: "Expand and Improve Oxford's Footways and Cycleways."

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Enforce Idling Laws	Enforcement	9	Partially Addressed - Idling is challenging to address due to enforcement limitations under current legislation, which restrict local authorities' ability to take effective action. For this reason, idling is primarily tackled through awareness campaigns and school-focused initiatives (approaches that Oxford City Council has successfully delivered in recent years). This AQAP is expected to continue these efforts under the updated measure: <i>"Support school-wide initiatives that emphasize the importance of clean air, such as anti-idling initiatives near school gates"</i>
Plant more trees/Increase amount of green spaces	Green Infrastructure	8	Addressed – Elsewhere. The Council tackles this through its adopted Green Spaces Strategy and Urban Forest Strategy, which both include measures to increase green areas in the city. The Air Quality Action Plan measures are specifically designed to target statutory pollutants and their sources, and as such, this falls outside the scope of the AQAP.
Electrify Trains/reduce diesel trains	Transport	6	Partially Addressed – Implementing measures such as train electrification relies on strategic decisions at the national level and cannot be achieved solely through local action. However, this Action Plan includes a specific measure under Key Priority A: <i>"Delivery of Oxfordshire Railway Strategy and Supporting Measures."</i> Among other objectives, this measure aims to develop a robust business case and lobby central government for train electrification in Oxford.
Ban or regulate delivery vans & food couriers	Transport	5	Addressed - While delivery vans and food couriers cannot be completely banned, they will be partially regulated through the AQAP measure <i>"Delivery of Zero Emission Zone Expansion."</i> This will also be supported by other existing measures, including <i>"Investigate strategic options for implementing freight consolidation hubs"</i> and <i>"Promote the integration of sustainable logistics into Oxford's business ecosystem."</i>
Awareness campaigns (health impacts, wood burners, driving)	Awareness	5	Addressed – Oxford City Council has delivered numerous air quality awareness campaigns over the years, particularly on issues such as vehicle idling and wood burning , and we intend to continue this work. Key Area of Intervention D in this plan focuses specifically on enhancing public awareness across multiple aspects of air quality. Eight measures are scheduled under this area, demonstrating the Council's strong commitment in this critical domain - an approach we consider essential to support and amplify the effectiveness of technical and regulatory interventions.
Improve EV charging Infrastructure	Transport	4	Addressed - This Action Plan already addresses this under Key Priority B through the measure: <i>"Increase the amount of EV infrastructure in the city."</i>
Reduce speed limits	Transport	3	Not addressed – A substantial proportion of Oxford's residential and local streets already have 20 mph speed limits. Decisions on extending stricter limits to remaining areas, sit with the Highways Authority, who have deferred this until all AQAP transport schemes are fully implemented. This allows the impact of each measure to be accurately and independently assessed.
Monitor emissions from Trains	Monitoring	3	Addressed - This Action Plan includes a specific measure under Key Priority A: <i>"Delivery of Oxfordshire Railway Strategy and Supporting Measures"</i> which will, among other objectives, deliver an air quality study at Oxford railway station to assess exposure levels for nearby residents and railway users

Subsidies for solar panels and Insulation	Domestic Heating	3	Not Addressed - Actions to address funding for energy efficiency improvements such as solar panels and improved insulation are already being covered by other strategies and plans. Key initiatives include ZCOP's retrofit programme, the Warm Homes grant for vulnerable households, the Oxfordshire Local Area Energy Plan to support heat decarbonisation, and Local Plan policy requiring all new homes to be fossil fuel-free.
Ban Bonfires	Domestic Heating	3	Not addressed – Local authorities cannot impose a blanket ban on bonfires, as these activities are not illegal in the UK. However, smoke nuisance is unlawful and is already actively investigated by Oxford City Council's Environmental Health team whenever complaints arise
Expand Zero Emission Zone	Transport	2	Addressed - This Action Plan already addresses this under Key Priority B through the measure: <i>"Delivery of Zero Emission Zone expansion"</i> .
Address Industrial Emissions	Industry	2	Addressed - This Action Plan already tries to address this under Key Priority C through the measure: <i>"Facilitate electrification of industrial processes within the ZCOP Industrial cluster"</i> .

28. Do you have any further comments or suggestions for improving air quality in Oxford?

Note: A total of 47 written comments were received for this question, most of which reiterated concerns already raised in Questions 6a, 26, and 27 of this report. Consequently, the summary table below focuses only on additional comments, concerns, or suggestions (22) that are new and were not captured in any of the previous questions. All these will be passed on to Oxfordshire County Council colleagues.

Theme	Brief Explanation of concerns raised	Most important suggestions mentioned	Number of consultees raising this theme
Road Pricing/ZEZ/Traffic filters	Strong interest but mixed views -support from expanding ZEZ and congestion charging and worries about fairness, access and traffic displacement to nearby residential streets. Calls to let recent schemes "settle" and to merge restrictions coherently	Phase changes and publish before/after impacts, add displacement mitigation, consider area wide consistency (i.e whole area ZEZ rather than partial), allow time for congestion charge impacts to stabilise.	10
HGVs and coaches	Complaints about coach idling (St Giles and St Aldates) and fear that changes will force HGVs through residential streets (Jericho/Walton Manor)	Move coaching loading/layover to rail-station area, set clear HGV routing/permit rules, monitor and mitigate diversion effects	5
Parking	Badly parked cars causing standstill and idling	Enforce parking; make congestion/parking charges weight-based	4
Schools and school traffic	Concern about school-run pollution and children exposure	Free discounted bus passes, school streets/traffic free perimeters, teacher car share encouragement	3

Key Statutory Consultees

Note: The table below summarises all the comments received from the key statutory consultees identified earlier in this report, along with Oxford City Council's responses.

Recommendation	Related to	Oxford City Council's response
It is noted 2024 is the first year OCC have achieved all monitoring sites reporting below 10% under the objective (i.e. 36 µg/m ³). The AQAP could be improved by reporting relevant monitoring data and specific sites in a table to demonstrate this clearly	Monitoring data/Evidence	Addressed – A new table has been added in Section 2.2.4 of the AQAP, highlighting the four Oxford sites with the highest NO ₂ levels recorded in 2019 and showing the progress achieved between 2019 and 2024.
Oxford City Council should use the AQAP to ensure concentrations remain below 36µg/m ³ for 3 consecutive years, to enable the AQMA to be revoked. The AQAP should set out when they expect this can be achieved	AQAP Objectives	Addressed - An additional objective has been incorporated into the proposed Plan – <i>Achieve Compliance for AQMA Revocation</i> at sections: "Executive Summary", and "Oxford's Commitment to Clean Air".
Table 7 of the AQAP does not cover all the columns in Table 5.1 of DEFRA's AQAP template, for example funding source and potential barriers to implementation.	DEFRA's AQAP Template	Addressed - An additional column has been included on Table 7 to provide details on the funding source and funding status. The other columns have not been incorporated for the following reasons: <u>Measure Status and Progress to Date</u> All AQ measures are still in the planning phase and have not yet been implemented, as they were only introduced in the new AQAP. These columns will be added to the AQ ASR as delivery of the AQAP progresses. <u>Defra AQ Grant Funding</u> This funding stream was closed by central government in April 2024, with no assurance that it will ever be reinstated. <u>Barriers to Implementation</u> These are already addressed in the supporting text preceding Table 7 and apply to all measures within the Plan.
Table 4.1 of the template, which confirms consultation undertaken. It is acknowledged this is a draft AQAP, and this may not have occurred yet. This must be included in the final AQAP for this to be accepted	DEFRA's AQAP Template	Addressed – Chapter 6.2 of the AQAP now includes a dedicated section on the Public Consultation. This section provides a concise summary of the consultation results and includes a direct link to the full Public Consultation report, which will be published following the formal approval of the AQAP.
Similarly, Appendix A of DEFRA's AQAP template must be included in the final AQAP for this to be accepted. It is recommended the final AQAP includes clear links to how consultation responses have been considered within the AQAP	DEFRA's AQAP Template	Addressed - Chapter 6.2 of the AQAP now includes a dedicated section on the Public Consultation, with a direct link to the full consultation report. This report will be presented to Cabinet as part of the supporting documents for formal approval of the AQAP in February 2026. To avoid adding unnecessary length to an already extensive document, we have chosen not to include the specific information required in Annexes A and B of DEFRA's AQAP template within the AQAP itself. Instead, we provide a link to the full Public Consultation report, which will be published upon formal approval of the

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		plan. This report contains detailed responses from Oxford City Council to all suggestions received, as well as explanations for why certain proposed Action Plan measures will/will not be pursued
Appendix B of DEFRA's template should be included in the final AQAP which sets out any measures which were not pursued and the reasons for this	DEFRA's AQAP Template	Addressed – The same rationale provided for the previous recommendation applies here
Details on the steering group which will oversee the development and implementation of the AQAP has been outlined, as well as information on frequency of meetings already held. This could be improved by setting out how the steering group will oversee implementation of the AQAP	AQAP Governance	Addressed – Paragraph added on chapter 6.1
Table 7 outlines the estimated cost along with the estimated air pollution reduction. However, these have not been assessed in conjunction as a cost-benefit analysis. Whilst not a requirement, a cost benefit analysis considering reduction in air pollution, cost and feasibility, would be helpful to ascertain which measures may be a priority.	AQAP Cost-Benefit analysis	Not Addressed - A full cost-benefit analysis was not undertaken for this AQAP because many of the most impactful measures included in the plan stem from ongoing work by various teams at both the City and County Councils, as part of a long-term strategy for addressing air quality issues that have been identified in Oxford.
The further roll out of ultra-low and zero emission buses, under the auspices of the Oxfordshire Enhanced Bus Partnership should be given a mention in the plan	Buses	Addressed - The AQAP already clearly mentions this on as part of the list of measures under Priority B, and then again on the subchapter section "Policy Integration", and on Table 7. To make this clearer, we have now added a direct hyperlink to the Enhanced Bus Partnership document.
The references to the "Bus Enhancement Partnership Plan and Scheme" should be amended to the "Bus Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme"	Buses	Addressed – This has been actioned
Information should be added on the AQAP on the total amount of estimated early deaths that will be prevented in the Oxford City population as a result of the achievement of Oxford's proposed new local annual mean target of 20 ug/m ³	Local Annual Mean Target for NO ₂	Addressed – A footnote has been added on the Executive Summary and again within the subchapter outlining the rationale for Oxford's new local NO ₂ target.
Additional actions are required to address PM pollution from rail, agricultural emissions and transboundary influences	Additional AQ measures proposed	Not addressed – Oxford is an urban centre, not rural in nature. According to the city's latest source apportionment study, agriculture contributes only 0.7% of total PM ₁₀ emissions and 0.2% of PM _{2.5} emissions, making its impact negligible. Regarding transboundary pollution, this AQAP has developed a set of areas and actions that intend to respond to air quality problems in the city of Oxford, which is the limit of jurisdiction of the City Council – The City Council cannot therefore include and develop measures to reduce air quality that originate from other parts of the County and Country, both outside the council's jurisdiction. As for rail emissions, this AQAP already includes the measure: "Delivery of Oxfordshire Railway Strategy and Supporting Measures," which will deliver (amongst other things) an air quality study at Oxford railway station and

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		seek to lobby for railway electrification. However, implementing measures such as electrification depends on strategic decisions made at the national level and therefore cannot be delivered solely through local action.
The City Council is encouraged to review and make reference to other parties who have also played a part on assessments and achievements which underpin and will assist delivering this Plan. I.e. the County Council should be referred to regarding delivery of electric buses and ZEZ.	Add text references	Addressed – References to Oxfordshire County Council’s involvement in delivering bus electrification and the ZEZ Pilot have been added to Figure 4 and on the text that precedes it.
Reference in the AQAP to the County’s core schemes (traffic filters, workplace parking levy and zero emission zone) is welcomed and supported. However, it is noted there is no mention within the document on the temporary congestion charge.	Add text references	Not Addressed - The congestion charge was introduced in October 2025, which falls entirely outside the scope of this AQAP (2026 –2030). It will therefore be reported under the current AQAP, which expires in December 2025. In addition, the congestion charge is a transitional measure, intended to bridge the period until traffic filters are introduced in August 2026, at which point they will replace the charge.
It is noted that the following strategies are missing from Table 6: Draft Rail Strategy (OxRail2040); Oxfordshire CC’s Climate Action Framework 2020 (Updated version to be published in draft in February 2026); Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan (Oxfordshire Leaders Joint 1 Committee) and Oxfordshire Climate Vulnerability Assessment and Extreme Value Analysis.	Policy Integration	Addressed - All these strategies have now been incorporated on Table 6 of the city’s AQAP.
Oxford City Council is encouraged to consider how biodiversity aspects can be utilised to help deliver the objectives and aims of the action plan. Oxford City Council should also consider how the Air Quality Action Plan can be aligned with their biodiversity duty	Policy Integration	Addressed - AQAPs are designed to target statutory pollutants and their sources. Biodiversity is therefore not the primary focus of the AQAP. That said, in an urban setting, opportunities to integrate biodiversity enhancements are assessed on a case-by-case basis, as there are circumstances where urban greenery can contribute positively to air quality improvements but others where it can contribute to trap pollutants. Importantly, the current proposed AQAP already includes a measure titled: <i>“Collaborate with communities and businesses to explore green infrastructure solutions that reduce exposure to air pollution and support climate adaptation.”</i>
Climate Action Oxfordshire website as a vehicle for public engagement and raising awareness could be updated to include more air quality content and signpost to OXONAIR, alongside the other actions listed. The City Council is encouraged to continue this line of communication.	Communication & Engagement	Addressed – This is a valuable suggestion and can be implemented as part of the existing measure: <i>“Enhance the content, usability, and visibility of the OXONAIR website to better inform and engage residents on local air quality issues.”</i>
There is no reference in the plan to other potential sources of air pollution such as smoking. The County, as the body responsible for Public Health, would encourage inclusion of this source as well as measures to reduce exposure to secondary smoke, in particular closer to schools.	Additional AQ measures proposed	Not addressed - Smoking is already regulated under public health legislation, such as the Health Act 2006 (which bans smoking in enclosed public spaces), rather than environmental legislation. The LAQM regime is designed for environmental sources that local authorities can control

		through planning, transport, and emissions policies - not personal behaviours
<p>Although Table 7 includes a list of measures to be implemented as part of the AQAP, there is no clear reference to the financial implications of these actions or which one of these are most at risk of not being delivered. A RAG coding based on potential delivery constraints would be welcomed as a tool that assists in the monitoring of the plan.</p>	Financial Implications	<p>Not Addressed - This AQAP is already heavily caveated due to the ongoing Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and the significant uncertainty surrounding which option will be approved by central government. In principle, all measures could be at risk of delivery, as they may need to be re-evaluated or re-approved under new governance structures. Additionally, the redistribution of responsibilities and budgets could affect the prioritisation of certain measures. For these reasons, introducing a RAG (Red-Amber-Green) rating at this stage would add little value.</p>
<p>Table 7 only mentions in passing the potential impacts of idling vehicles. The County would welcome reference to the need to reduce idling, in particular closer to schools, which can be delivered as a result of network management and traffic signals.</p>	Idling vehicles	<p>Addressed - Idling is challenging to address due to enforcement limitations under current legislation, which restrict local authorities' ability to take effective action. Its overall contribution to citywide air pollution is also relatively small compared to other measures. For these reasons, idling is primarily tackled through awareness campaigns and school-focused initiatives (approaches that Oxford City Council has successfully delivered in recent years). This AQAP is expected to continue these efforts under the updated measure: "<i>Support school-wide initiatives that emphasize the importance of clean air, such as anti-idling initiatives near school gates</i>"</p>
<p>The AQAP does not appear to take into account the potential for canyon effects resulting from new developments such as Oxford North, which could result in excess concentration of air pollution, therefore measures to minimise these effects are not accounted for in the plan.</p>	Planning & New Developments	<p>Addressed - The potential air quality impacts of new developments, including effects such as street canyon formation, are continuously assessed by Oxford City Council's Planning and Environmental Quality Teams. This process involves the review of air quality assessments (a mandatory requirement) for all major planning applications that are submitted. In addition, the Council is currently progressing work on a new Local Plan for Oxford, which will further strengthen the integration of air quality considerations into planning policy. This AQAP includes a specific measure to update Oxford City Council's Air Quality Planning Guidance. The purpose of this update is to ensure that all future air quality requirements placed on developers are fully aligned with the objectives of the AQAP and support its delivery, rather than working against it.</p>
<p>On the Executive Summary, "Air pollution contributes to health inequalities, disproportionately affecting vulnerable groups". Mention how/more detail - it affects minorities and those on lower incomes.</p>	Suggested text amendments	<p>Addressed – It is an Executive Summary, and as such you can't develop an idea in detail. This is explored in more detail in a subsequent section of the report, however, the sentence now reads: "<i>Air pollution contributes to health inequalities, disproportionately affecting vulnerable groups such as minorities and those on lower incomes</i>".</p>

<p>On the Executive Summary, <i>"Alignment with the World Health Organisation Air Quality Guidelines. These guidelines will serve as the city's reference standard and long-term target. This AQAP commits to pursuing WHO's Interim Target III for NO₂."</i> Interim target III is mentioned here but on page 10 paragraph 3 it is mentioned target II. Which is it?</p>	<p>Suggested text amendments</p>	<p>Addressed - This was a typo. It should be Interim Target III (20 ug/m3) in both sections. This has now been amended</p>
<p>On the Executive Summary, <i>"Pursue a Zero Carbon Oxford"</i> - Suggestion to change wording to <i>"work towards a zero-carbon Oxford"</i>, and <i>"Support Thriving Communities"</i> suggestion to change wording to remove thriving and put <i>"support communities"</i></p>	<p>Suggested text amendments</p>	<p>Not Addressed – This is the exact wording of Oxford City Council's corporate priorities and as such must remain unchanged</p>
<p>On the Executive Summary <i>"While DEFRA requires this AQAP to focus primarily on reducing NO₂ levels – so that the city's Air Quality Management Area can eventually be revoked - many of the proposed measures will also indirectly reduce PM2.5 emissions, which pose serious health risks."</i>, Suggestion to change wording: <i>'As Oxford's air quality management area has been declared due to high levels of NO₂, this AQAP primarily focuses on reducing NO₂ levels. However, most measures will also lead to reductions in pm2.5 emissions, another pollutant which is detrimental to health.'</i></p>	<p>Suggested text amendments</p>	<p>Addressed -Suggested text amendment accepted</p>
<p>On the section of the Description of the Pollutants, replace emitted by released, to make it less technical, and on page 14 suggest change wording of <i>"There is no safe level of exposure to air pollution"</i> to <i>"There are no safe levels of air pollution"</i> , Add <i>"cause harm to human health"</i> on section 1.2, paragraph 4</p>	<p>Suggested text amendments</p>	<p>Addressed -Suggested text amendment accepted</p>
<p>On section 1.3, Reference about black carbon is nearly 15 years old.</p>	<p>Suggested text amendments</p>	<p>Addressed -More up to date reference added</p>

Comparative Analysis of Public Consultation Outcomes (2020 vs 2025)

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	Public consultation 2020 (224 responses)	Public consultation 2025 (125 responses)	Change	Direction	Evaluation ¹
Rating Aspects of Oxford's Environment	Percentage of consultees rating the aspect as 'Excellent' or 'Good'		(%)		(Positive, Negligible, Negative)
<u>Air Quality</u>	13%	34%	+21%	↑	Positive
<u>Traffic Congestion</u>	13%	12%	-1%	↔	Negligible
<u>Public Transport Provision</u>	37%	40%	+3%	↔	Negligible
<u>Adequate space for walking</u>	22%	44%	+22%	↑	Positive
<u>Adequate space for cycling</u>	12%	29%	+17%	↑	Positive
Perception of change over last 5 years	Percentage of consultees rating as 'Significantly Improved' or 'Slightly Improved'		(%)		(Positive, Negligible, Negative)
<u>Air Quality</u>	25%	52%	+27%	↑	Positive
<u>Traffic Congestion</u>	11%	21%	+10%	↑	Positive
<u>Public Transport Provision</u>	15%	34%	+19%	↑	Positive
<u>Adequate space for walking</u>	13%	22%	+9%	↑	Positive
<u>Adequate space for cycling</u>	24%	38%	+14%	↑	Positive
How very well-informed consultees are about air quality issues in Oxford	19%	27%	+8%	↑	Positive
How well informed are you with regards to the negative impacts of air pollution on human health?	31%	42%	+11%	↑	Positive

1- Any change of less than 5% (increase or decrease) was classified as 'Negligible'

Conclusions

The main conclusions of the analysis on the results of this public consultation are the following:

- ✓ **Profile of respondents** – The vast majority of responses (81%) represent the views of permanent Oxford residents;
- ✓ **Key themes raised** – Residents highlighted issues such as cycling safety and infrastructure, pedestrian safety and pavement space, public transport quality, and traffic congestion. These observations will be shared with Oxfordshire County Council (the Transport Authority);
- ✓ **Support for stricter NO₂ targets** – 71% of consultees strongly agree or agree with Oxford City Council’s proposal to adopt a new local annual mean target of 20 µg/m³ for NO₂, aligned with the World Health Organization’s Interim Target III;
- ✓ **Agreement on priorities** – 69% of consultees strongly agree or agree with the four key intervention areas proposed in this Action Plan;
- ✓ **Feedback on the draft AQAP** – A significant number of recommendations and suggestions for improving the draft AQAP were submitted by consultees and key statutory stakeholders. These have been addressed throughout the document, with clear justifications provided for inclusion or non-inclusion of those in the final version of the AQAP document;
- ✓ **Improved perceptions** – Respondents generally express a more positive view of several aspects of Oxford’s environment, reflecting the progress achieved through the efforts of both Councils over the past five years. In particular, air quality emerges as one of the areas showing the most significant improvement;
- ✓ **Persistent challenges** – Although perceptions of traffic congestion and public transport provision appear to have improved slightly over the past five years, comparison with the 2020 survey shows that current-status ratings have barely changed. This indicates these areas remain significant challenges requiring continued attention;
- ✓ **Greater awareness and access to information** – Public understanding of air quality and its impacts has noticeably increased, likely reflecting the effectiveness of recent year measures such as the launch of the Oxfordshire’s air quality website [OXONAIR](#).