



**MERTHYR TYDFIL**  
County Borough Council

Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol  
**MERTHYR TUDFUL**

# Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Air Quality Action Plan

In fulfilment of Part IV of the  
Environment Act 1995  
Local Air Quality Management

2018

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## Executive Summary

This Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) has been produced as part of our statutory duties required by the Local Air Quality Management framework. It outlines the action we will take to improve air quality in Merthyr Tydfil between 2018 and **2020**.

Air pollution is associated with a number of adverse health impacts. It is recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer. Additionally, air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society: children and older people, and those with heart and lung conditions. There is also often a strong correlation with equalities issues, because areas with poor air quality are also often the less affluent areas<sup>1,2</sup>.

The annual health cost to society of the impacts of particulate matter alone in the UK is estimated to be around £16 billion<sup>3</sup>. Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council is committed to reducing the exposure of people in Merthyr Tydfil to poor air quality in order to improve health.

The potential actions considered may be grouped under the following eight broad topics. Those which have resulted in the development of proposed actions, additional to the Council's normal operating activities, are marked in bold:

- Alternatives to private vehicle use
- Freight and delivery management
- Policy guidance and development control
- Promoting low emission transport
- **Promoting travel alternatives**
- **Transport planning and infrastructure**
- **Traffic management**
- Vehicle fleet efficiency

Whilst our main aim has been to reduce traffic movement in the Twynrodyn Road AQMA we have sought to achieve this primarily by modifying the town centre transport infrastructure to provide more direct traffic routes and lower traffic congestion. Doing so reduces journey times and distances overall; producing a wider reduction in vehicle emissions, and public exposure to them, rather than just in the AQMA. Other, more localised, methods of reducing exposure to traffic pollution in the

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<sup>1</sup> Environmental equity, air quality, socioeconomic status and respiratory health, 2010

<sup>2</sup> Air quality and social deprivation in the UK: an environmental inequalities analysis, 2006

<sup>3</sup> Defra. Abatement cost guidance for valuing changes in air quality, May 2013

AQMA have also been considered and, where considered viable, offered for public consultation. Our key priorities, detailed in Section 3.5 below, were firstly local road traffic emissions and, secondly, general town centre traffic emissions.

In this AQAP we outline how we plan to effectively tackle air quality issues within our control. However, we recognise that there are a large number of air quality policy areas that are outside of our influence (such as vehicle emissions standards agreed in Europe), but for which we may have useful evidence, and so we will continue to work with regional and central government on policies and issues beyond Merthyr Tydfil's direct influence.

## **Responsibilities and Commitment**

This AQAP was prepared by the Environmental Health Department of Merthyr Tydfil Council with the support and agreement of officers of the following departments:

Highways Engineering

Planning and Development

Countryside Planning

Fleet Management

Town Centre Regeneration

The consultation options of the draft AQAP were approved for issue by:

Cabinet on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018 and Full Council on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2018. The finalised AQAP is being presented to Full Council on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2018 for approval for submission to WG and DEFRA.

This AQAP is a component of the Council's Environmental Wellbeing Objective and will be subject to regular review by the Council's scrutiny process. Progress each year will also be reported in the Annual Status Reports (ASRs) produced by Merthyr Tydfil, as part of our statutory Local Air Quality Management duties.

If you have any comments on this AQAP please send them to Llewellyn Patrick at:

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