

The Times air pollution campaign: our manifesto for clean air

1 A new Clean Air Act to confer a legal right to unpolluted air for everyone in the UK

The first Clean Air Act, introduced in 1956 in response to the Great London Smog, was a world first. Britain has since lost its mantle as the world leader in tackling air pollution. The new act should adopt tighter pollution limits based on World Health Organisation recommendations and give local authorities extra powers and resources to tackle all sources of pollution.

2 Ban sales of new diesel and petrol cars from 2030 and reverse cut to green car grants

The government's 2040 target for banning sales of new diesel and petrol cars is weaker than that of China, India and Ireland, all of whom aim for 2030. Britain should match this date. The Committee on Climate Change last week recommended that all new cars should be fully electric by 2035 "at the latest". Some analysts say that hybrid and fully electric vehicles will remain more expensive for at least another five years — others say it could be far longer. The government must reverse its £1,000 cut to green car grants, which were reduced to £3,500 in November.

3 Temporary traffic bans outside schools at drop-off and pick-up times

All vehicles except buses should be banned from roads beside schools for 45-60 minutes in the morning and again in the afternoon. The ban, which would not apply to main roads, can be enforced by automatic number plate recognition cameras. As well as improving air quality, more children will walk to school, reducing obesity, and there will be fewer road accidents.

4 The extension of pre-2016 diesel and pre-2006 petrol pay zones to other cities

Only London and Birmingham have imposed or promised charges on the most polluting cars. Dozens of other cities with illegal air quality, including Manchester, Bristol, Southampton, Newcastle, Bath and Derby, are failing to restrict these cars.

5 Pollution monitors in every postcode

When people are given precise and up-to-date information from live local monitors about the level of air pollution near their homes, they will be empowered to take action, seek changes to benefit their health and hold politicians to account for promises to clean up the air.



Air pollution can be a death sentence

We need to act now

- 1 66,000 people in the UK die prematurely because of air pollution**
- 2 Air pollution is associated with a wide range of fatal diseases, including lung cancer**
- 3 40 million people in the UK live where the WHO air pollution limits are exceeded**
- 4 Children are especially vulnerable to air pollution**
- 5 Air pollution related health problems cost the NHS £20 billion/year**

#Act4CleanAir