



Air Quality in Liverpool

Liverpool, like other cities, suffers from high levels of air pollution. Much of this comes from road traffic.

The pollutant of most concern is Nitrogen Dioxide, which can irritate the lungs and affect the health of elderly people.

Liverpool City Council has identified areas where the public are exposed to levels of pollution that are above recommended limits and declared them as Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).

Can we reduce the pollution levels in these AQMAs?

In short, yes! Action plans have been developed to reduce pollution in these areas and will form part of the Local Transport Plan for the next 5 years.

The CATCH project is helping by already delivering projects that are contributing to the reduction of traffic pollution in Liverpool and helping to plan for further reductions in the future.





City Centre Movement Strategy

The principles are to:

- Improve accessibility to the City Centre to aid economic regeneration and to provide access for all
- Create a people friendly City Centre that is safe, clean and attractive for work, shopping, business, tourism and leisure
- Make best use of the City Centre's key transport assets – the Merseyrail stations, bus facilities, ferries and major car parks
- Support the improvement of the City Centre's architecture and townscape

A key part of the strategy is the need to reduce public access city centre parking and restrict private parking.

The CATCH project has focussed on improving facilities for pedestrians by the provision of better signage and high quality public transport. Improving air quality is also a key aim.

Liverpool has a high level of cycle ownership, but a low proportion of cycle usage. Liverpool City Council has been working to reduce reliance on travel by car and encourage cycling by promoting training and improving cycling infrastructure.





Mobility Management

CATCH has shown that the health benefits of sustainable travel are the drivers for effecting a change in behaviour for a significant proportion of people, when combined with a convenient and reliable transport service.

Mobility Management Plans have been created by:

- Initiating partnerships with property developers
- Undertaking surveys with residents
- Developing a package of sustainable travel measures

In some key Liverpool city centre developments residents have been offered a package of measures including travel information, calorie maps, cycle route maps, travel discounts, personalised travel advice and improved storage facilities.

Direct contact with individuals is known to be the most effective way to influence the way they travel.

Through CATCH a Healthy Travel Promotion project was initiated in the Aigburth district of Liverpool. The project works with the community to produce customised travel information and incentives.





Transferring Knowledge

As with all projects at the European level co-operation and transfer of ideas play a large part.

Although CATCH is focused on Liverpool (UK), our partners in Suceava (Romania) and Potenza (Italy) play a valuable role in sharing and discussing ideas that may be applicable in other partner cities.

Suceava is using information and awareness raising as the means of preventing the development of a car culture. This includes providing and promoting quality walking, cycling and public transport facilities.

Cars are still essential in some cases. In Suceava the work is focussed on promoting less polluting fuels such as LPG plus the use of particulate filters. This is building on the experience in Liverpool.

There is an ambitious plan for a city centre low emission zone which will provide a pedestrian retreat in the main shopping area and a venue for the city's communal celebrations.

Work in Potenza is concentrated on providing a limited traffic zone in the city centre, with vehicle access being restricted to clean public transport vehicles, such as the hybrid bus now being demonstrated in Liverpool.

This is a big step for the local politicians and it will be interesting to see the end result.





Reducing the Environmental Impact of the Bus Fleet

Merseytravel has introduced a brand new, super-clean shuttle bus into Liverpool city centre. The frequent service links transport interchanges with areas of employment and housing, and provides a quick way to get across town.

The buses are the first fleet of diesel-electric hybrids to operate in the UK.

Capable of operating in zero emission mode for a considerable distance, they are part of the solution to make Liverpool a cleaner, healthier city.

CATCH has not just introduced new vehicles. There are buses that have many years of service left in them. Arriva North West & Wales has been trialling new pollution reduction technologies on their buses.

Arriva installed 88 diesel particulate filters to five bus types based in Speke. The filters cut particulate emissions (smoke), carbon monoxide and hydrocarbon emissions by up to 95%. Initial tests show the devices to be extremely effective.

Arriva installed particulate filters on a further 16 buses based at Bootle. These particulate filters were backed up by an exhaust gas recirculation system which aims to reduce emissions of NO_x by 30%. NO_x or oxides of nitrogen are the major threat to good air quality in the centre of Liverpool.





Has CATCH made a difference?

In Liverpool, the impact of CATCH is being felt in terms of direct changes to the transport system and to travel behaviour.

There are other impacts too, such as improved information, giving better choice to residents, workers and visitors alike, resultant improvements in air quality and new systems to encourage sustained change.

A comprehensive monitoring programme was implemented that covers both the direct and indirect impacts, using a combination of:

- Public awareness surveys
- Qualitative data

Uniquely, the evaluation includes a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) to provide an evaluation of the potential health effects of the various initiatives¹.

CATCH is potentially contributing to improving health in Liverpool by:

- Reductions in traffic generated air pollutants
- Increases in physical activity

In addition it will also potentially have a small but positive impact on:

- Mobility and social support
- Personal safety and access

¹The HIA is a theoretical comparison, because actual health impacts could only ever be estimated given the wide range of factors that influence public health. Significant changes in the health of a population only become evident when monitored over a long period of time.

