

Press release 26 November 2019

Air pollution public information platform launched as research shows fewer than one in five people know where to get advice

- *94% think that reducing air pollution should be a priority for the UK, but only 16% knew where to go to for information*
- *Easily accessible air pollution guidance found in one place for the first time – cleanairhub.org.uk*
- *Air pollution information more important than smoking and dietary advice, says the public*

The [Clean Air Hub](https://cleanairhub.org.uk), which sees its public launch today (26 November), is designed as a comprehensive “one-stop shop” to address gaps in public understanding of air pollution.

The Hub is an initiative from environment charity Global Action Plan. It provides:

- Easy guidance on the sources of air pollution and simple ways to reduce it in the home and outdoors.
- Information on how air pollution affects people’s health and what they can do to protect themselves.

Research, commissioned for Global Action Plan’s Clean Air Public Insights Tracker, reveals that 94% of the public think that reducing air pollution should be a priority for the UK, but only 16% knew where to go to for advice on air pollution.

Meanwhile 76% of people surveyed said that they would find more public information campaigns on air pollution helpful, a higher number than for healthy eating (70%), smoking (57%), physical activity (68%) or sexual health (59%).

Air pollution is the largest environmental health risk we face today, according to the World Health Organisation, and in the UK is responsible for up to 36,000 deaths. Outdoor sources of air pollution include road transport, energy generation, industry, domestic fires and agriculture. Indoor sources include heating and cooking, and fumes from DIY, cleaning and personal care products.

Says Professor Stephen Holgate, Medical Research Council Clinical Professor at the University of Southampton, Special Advisor to the Royal College of Physicians on Air Quality and co-Chair of the recently formed RCPCH/RCP Working Party on Indoor Air Pollution and Children's Health:

"The Clean Air Hub could not have come sooner – the need for something like this has been glaringly obvious to all of us working on air pollution.

"The risks to our health from air pollution cannot be understated, so making people aware of this and the simple things they can do to protect themselves, is an important part of solving this public health crisis."

Says Larissa Lockwood, Head of Health and Air Quality at Global Action Plan:

"We need to get the public onside in tackling air pollution. The more they know about it, the more supportive they will be of clean air policies.

"The more the public understands about the massive risks to health and the crisis we are experiencing, the more likely they will be to act."

All the information on the Hub has been reviewed by academics and public health bodies, and is regularly updated.

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Notes to Editors

Further information and media interviews

Please contact Dominic Murphy, Global Action Plan, dominic.murphy@globalactionplan.org.uk
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About the Clean Air Hub - cleanairhub.org.uk

The Clean Air Hub is a free online resource aimed at the general public and those working to reduce the impact of air pollution on public health. All technical information on the site is approved by Public Health England and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

The Hub is regularly updated and contains:

- Accessible information aimed at the general public on the sources of air pollution, and simple ways to reduce it indoors and outdoors.
- Ways that the public can protect themselves from air pollution.

About the Clean Air Public Insights Tracker (CAPIT)

CAPIT is a regular UK-wide survey of public attitudes, knowledge and action related to air quality. Based on 2,000 adult respondents and conducted by Global Action Plan partner Opinium, CAPIT poses a regular set of questions, repeated each quarter, to track changes over time. Each quarter, the data and summary report is made available for free on the Global Action Plan website.

Recent CAPIT surveys found:

- **People feel that air pollution has an impact on their health.** The majority of people

surveyed (83%) felt that their health is impacted by outdoor air pollution (CAPIT, March 2019).

- **There is a high level of public desire for action on air pollution.** 94% of respondents think that reducing air pollution should be a priority for the UK, with 83% saying it should be a major (55%) or moderate (28%) priority (CAPIT, March 2019).
- **But the public feel unsupported.** Only 16% of people know who they would go to for advice on air pollution, leaving 84% unsure where they would find guidance (CAPIT, December 2018). When given options, 36% of people said they would expect environment groups to give advice (36%), closely followed by their local council (34%) and a government body (32%) (CAPIT, December 2018).
- **And people like a public information campaign on air pollution.** 76% of people surveyed said that they would find more public information campaigns on air pollution helpful, a higher number than for healthy eating (70%), smoking (57%), physical activity (68%) or sexual health (59%) (CAPIT, March 2019).