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NEWS RELEASE

Consultation – TDC’s breath of fresh air!

Air Quality Action Plan Consultation

Thanet District Council is looking for the views of residents on suggested ways to address air pollution hot-spots in the area.

In fact, because of its location, Thanet’s air quality is already very good, although there are two locations where concentrations of traffic currently cause the level of a pollutant called nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) to be higher than is desirable.

Michelle Fenner, Cabinet Member for Business, Corporate and Regulatory Services explained: “Using guidance from the Government, and by working with Kent County Council, TDC has produced an ‘Air Quality Action Plan’ which sets out how the council intends to work on tackling pollution issues and towards achieving its air quality objectives. Rather than being a piecemeal approach, which could just shift problems around, this plan looks at the whole of Thanet strategically as an ‘Air Quality Management Area’, rather than just at the problems sites individually. This is a really good opportunity to have your say on the ways in which we are looking at making the area even better for residents and tourists alike.”

The draft action plan consists both of new ideas and measures which are already in place and includes ways of:

- influencing freight strategy to redirect HGVs away from key hotspots
- altering junction configurations to improve traffic flow
- promoting sustainable methods of travel through development planning - thus reducing the total ‘miles travelled’ by encouraging a movement away from personal car use
- reducing the emissions from individual vehicles.

As a live working document the plan will be continually reviewed and updated. As an initial stage of this the council would like to hear your views and comments on the measures being proposed to improve local air quality over the coming years.

The Air Quality Action Plan is available to view at www.thanet.gov.uk/airquality

Please email your comments to consultation@thanet.gov.uk before 14th March 2013.

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For more information on this story please contact:

Tony Haynes

Communications Officer, Thanet District Council

Tel: 01843 577034
tony.haynes@thanet.gov.uk

Information for editors

Improving air quality is important because the air that we breathe can have an impact on our health. Thanet District Council has been monitoring the air quality and pollution levels from vehicle emissions since the 1997. Monitoring has shown that, like many urban areas in the UK, the levels of a pollutant called nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) are too high at some residential properties in The Square Birchington and High Street St Lawrence.