

Clean Air Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2032:

Easy Read

***“Better Air Quality,
Across Northern Ireland”***



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

An Roinn

**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Depairtment o'

**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

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PLEASE NOTE: This is an ‘Easy Read’ short version of the consultation which contains less detail than the full consultation document and impact assessments. If you would like more detail, you may find the full version better suited to your needs. This can be accessed at:

<http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations>

To get a copy of this document in another format, or tell us what you think, you can telephone: 028 9052 4245 and talk to one of the Consultation Team.

If you have a hearing difficulty you can contact the Department via Text Relay. Dial 18001 028 9052 4245 or email: casni@daera-ni.gov.uk

For more air quality information visit: <https://www.airqualityni.co.uk>

Or: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/air-pollution-northern-ireland>

Or: [20.21.066 Draft Clean Air Strategy for NI - Public Discussion Doc abridged version V4.PDF](#)

About us

We are the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs. Here are some of the things we do:

- We look after environment and rural development and the development of farming, forests and fishing in Northern Ireland.
- We provide a service to look after the health and welfare of animals, fish and plants.
- We provide research, expert advice and education.

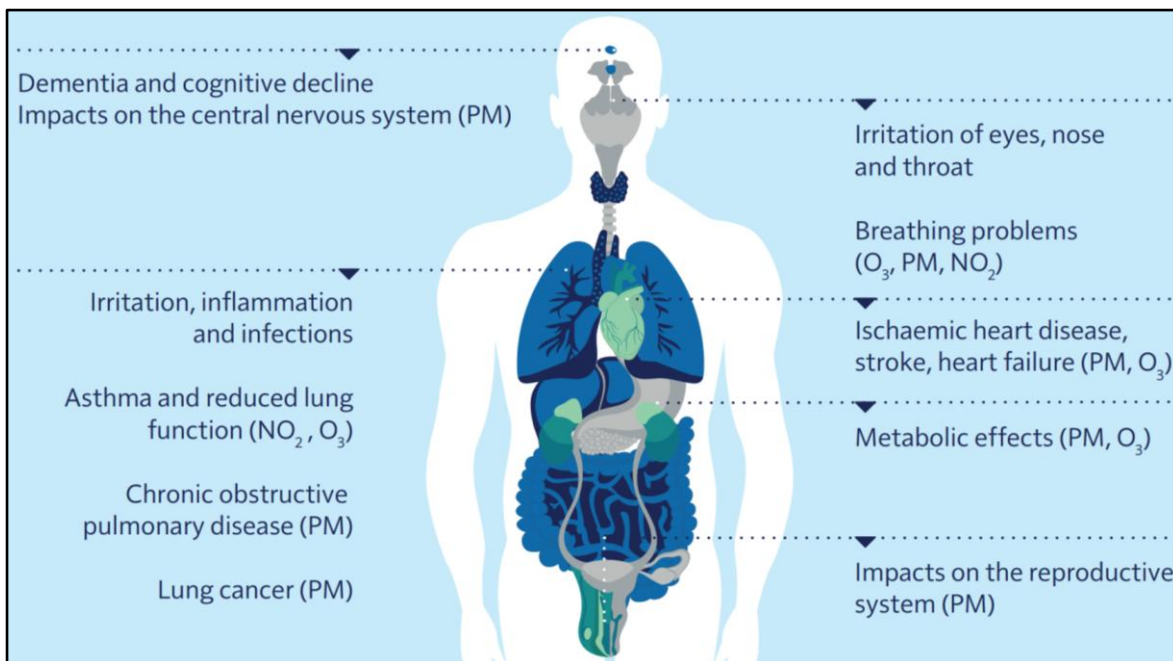
Consultation on the draft Clean Air Strategy for Northern Ireland

- Clean air is a key human health and environmental challenge for Northern Ireland.
- Air pollution comes from sources including transport, home heating, industry and some farming practices. Air pollution has a negative impact on our health and our environment.
- We need to act now to improve public health and our environment.
- This draft strategy aims to set out a pathway which delivers solutions to improve air quality.
- This consultation provides an opportunity for you to share your views on the draft Clean Air Strategy for Northern Ireland.

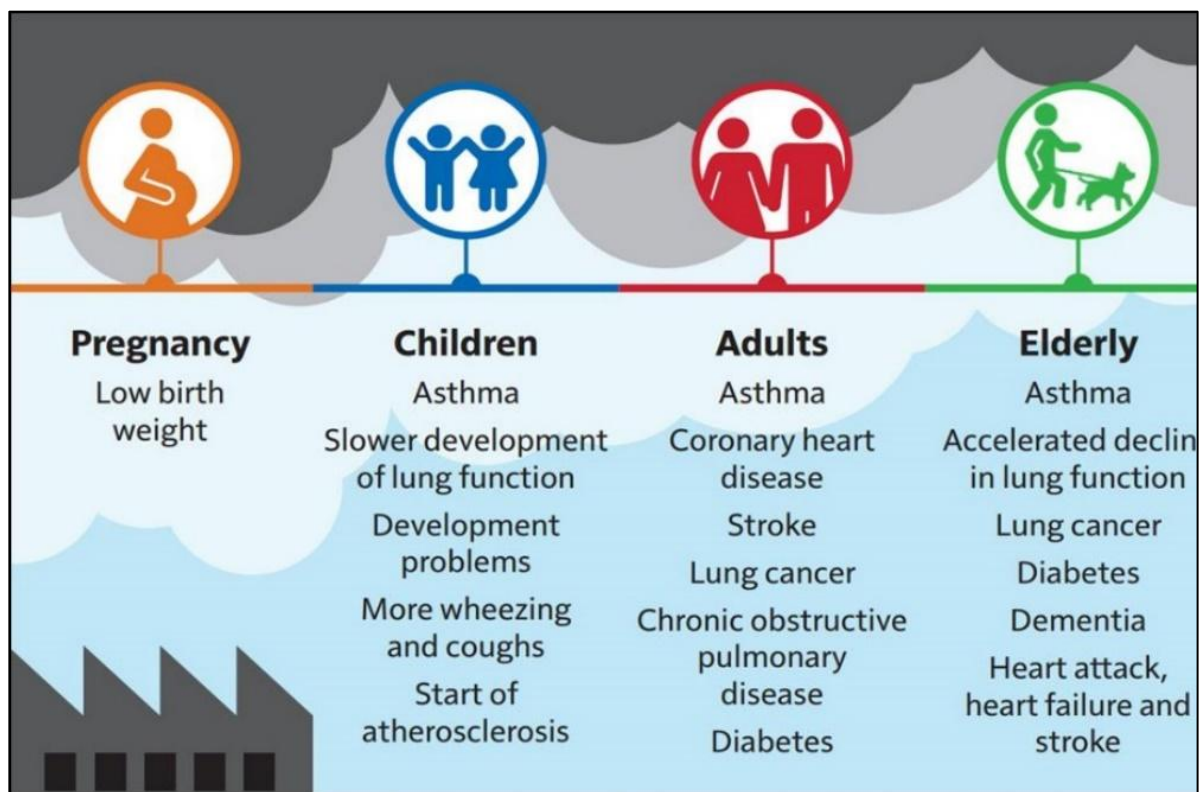
Why clean air is important?

Reducing air pollution will prevent early deaths, improve quality of life, and reduce healthcare costs, making clean air a critical public health priority.

Picture showing an overview of some of the health effects of different air pollutants



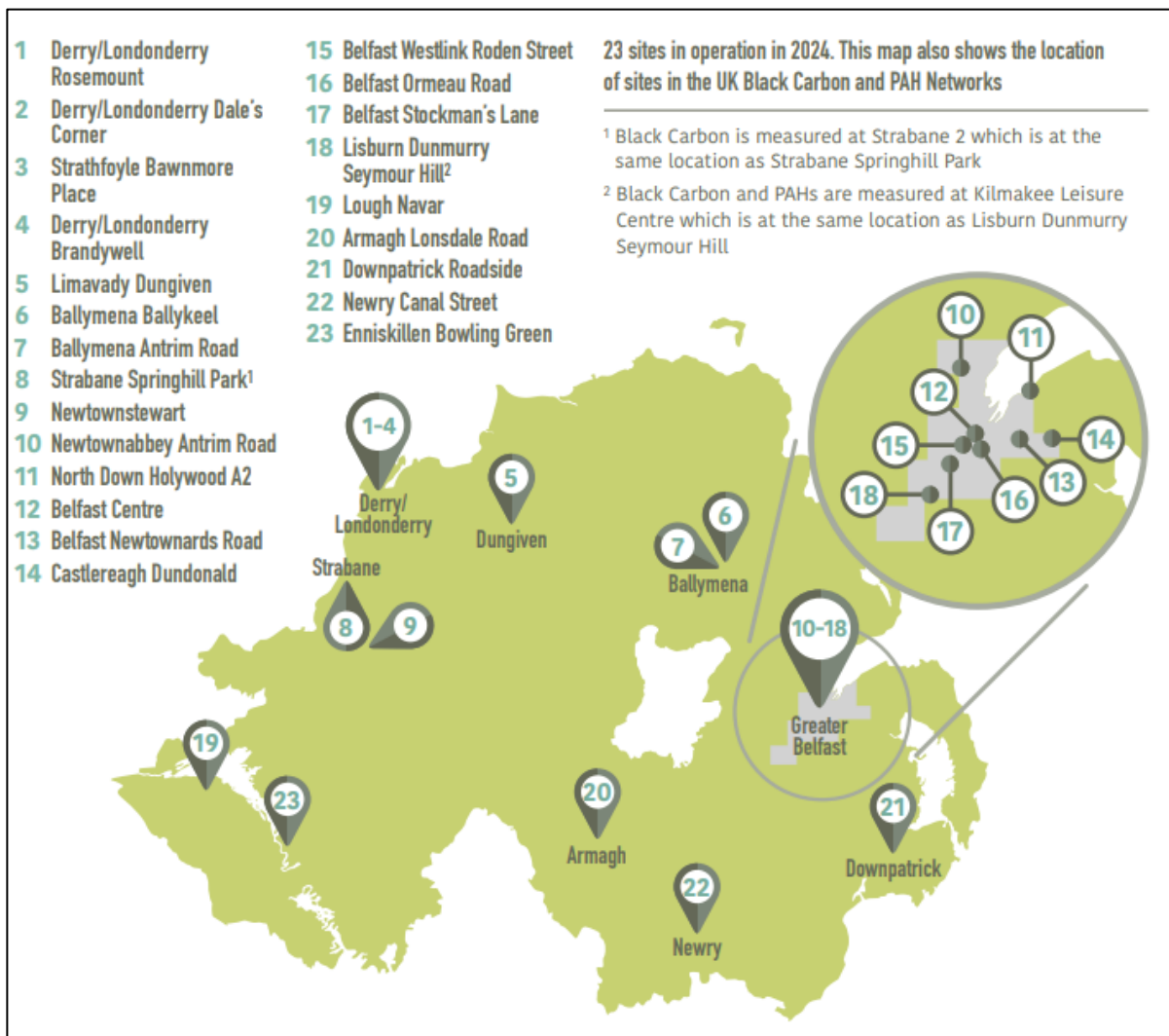
Picture showing the health effects of air pollution through life



Are there other impacts of air pollution?

Improving human health and quality of life is the primary driver for this draft strategy, but poor air quality is not only bad for nature and ecosystems, but it is also bad for jobs and money too. There are so many good reasons to want to improve air quality!

Map showing Northern Ireland's Air Quality Monitoring Stations

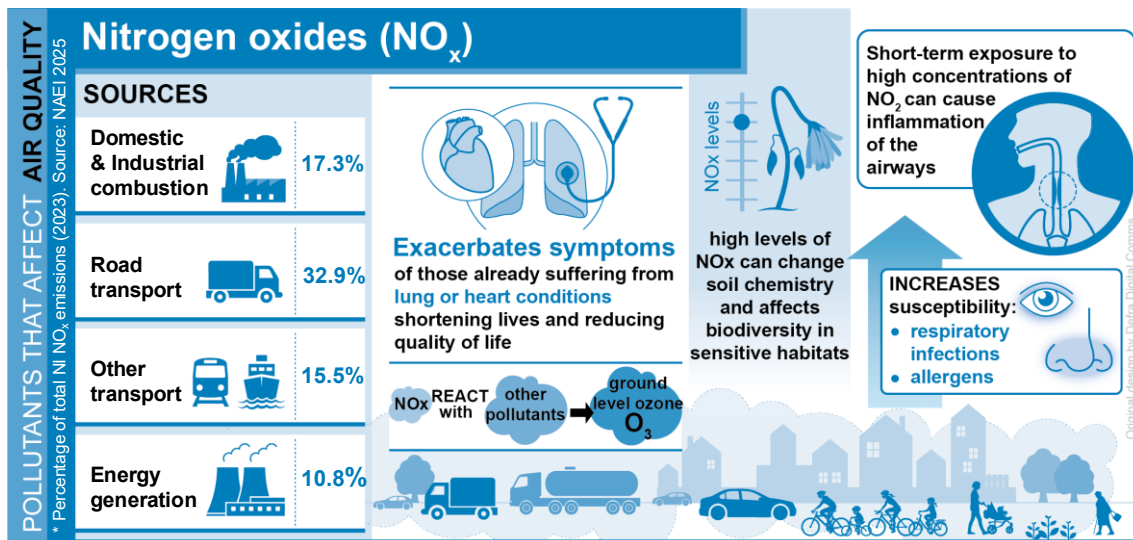


Pollutant Fact Files – meet the pollutants!

Here are some of the main pollutants in Northern Ireland's air:

Nitrogen oxides (NO_x)

Nitrogen dioxide is a gas, which can be formed when any kind of fuel is burned. There is not usually enough nitrogen dioxide in the air to be able to see or smell it. It's also harmful to humans, especially anyone who has a medical problem with their breathing or their heart. Nitrogen dioxide pollution can make these people more unwell.



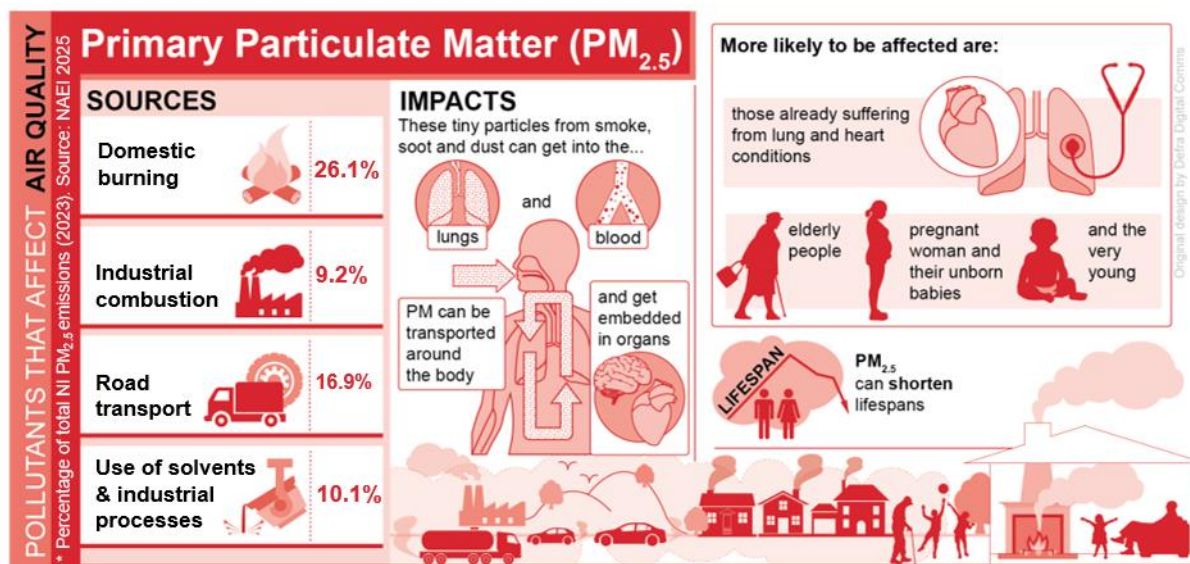
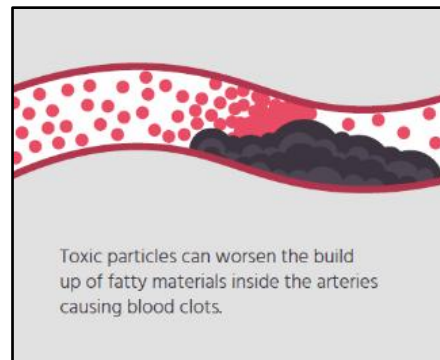
Particulate matter (PM)



Particulate matter (often called PM) is lots of tiny particles floating in the air. This is a problem because we can breathe them in.

The particles are different sizes. Some get trapped naturally in our noses or throats, before they get into our lungs, while smaller particles can get into our lungs

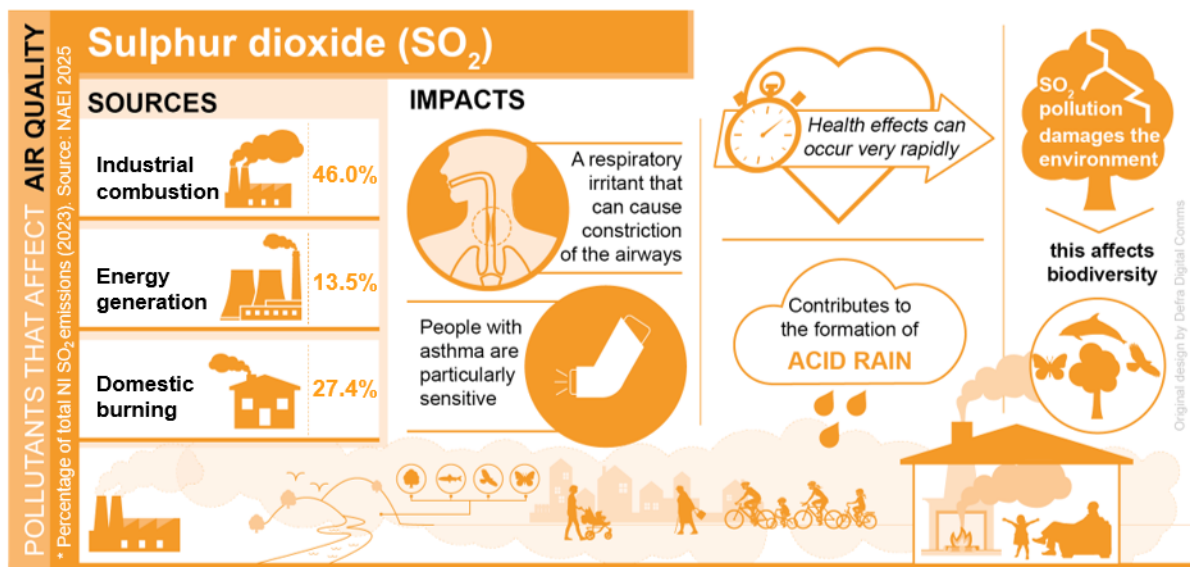
PM_{0.1}	Ultrafine particulate matter Around a thousandth of the width of a human hair.
PM_{2.5}	Fine particulate matter Anything with a diameter of less than 2.5 micrometres – that’s around a 30th of the width of a human hair.
PM₁₀	Coarse particulate matter Coarse particulate matter.



Sulphur dioxide (SO₂)



Sulphur Dioxide is an invisible gas which you can smell. When a match is lit, that is sulphur dioxide you can smell. If there is enough of it in the air, it can make your eyes sting and make your airways (the tubes between your mouth and nose and lungs) tickly or sore.



Strategy Aim

The aim of the strategy is: ***To improve air quality across Northern Ireland by 2032 for the benefit of human health and the environment.***

The strategy has three goals and five objectives. Here are the objectives:



What Action will be taken to improve air quality

Actions have been designed to help deliver the five objectives. These are listed below:

Strategic Objective 1

- **Develop our evidence base** by building on our existing high quality air quality network. This will inform future decisions and allow us to measure success.

Strategic Objective 1 Actions	
1.1	Undertake knowledge surveys
1.2	Review the Northern Ireland air quality monitoring network
1.3	Expand and upgrade the NI air quality monitoring network
1.4	Assess the feasibility of establishing ultra-fine particulate matter monitoring in Northern Ireland
1.5	Develop an Air Quality Model Application

Strategic Objective 2

- **Improve legislation** (our laws) by updating existing legislation to protect Northern Ireland's air quality and human health. New ambitious PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ limits, or targets will be introduced.

Strategic Objective 2 Actions	
2.1	Consult on new PM _{2.5} and PM ₁₀ limit values and make relevant legislative changes

2.2	Review and simplify air quality policy monitoring terms for the public
2.3	DAERA will work with the UK Government to analyse the consultation responses to the 2026 UK wide solid fuels and stoves consultation

Strategic Objective 3

- **Raise Awareness and change behaviour** by providing people with clear information to allow people to make better informed decisions and change behaviour.

Strategic Objective 3 Action	
3.1	Launch Air Quality Awareness and Behaviour Change Campaigns

Strategic Objective 4

- **Work towards zero pollution** by preventing air pollution at source. If prevention is not possible, air pollution should be reduced; and, if air pollution has occurred, it should be cleaned up.

Strategic Objective 4 Actions	
4.1	Achieve a fair and just transition to phasing out of coal, manufactured solid fuels and unseasoned wood for home heating
4.2	Produce Local Draft Transport Plans
4.3	Conduct diesel particulate filter tests

Strategic Objective 5

- **Deliver change through partners** by working together to manage and improve Northern Ireland's air quality.

Strategic Objective 5 Actions	
5.1	Establish a Northern Ireland Clean Air Forum
5.2	Increase investment in Active Travel
5.3	Deliver a transboundary air pollution collaborative project (PEACEPLUS)
5.4	Establish an Air Quality Common Framework
5.5	Improve policy integration between air quality, noise and net zero
5.6	Review the LAQM process and associated guidance
5.7	Review the LAQM Grant

Indicators

To help us know if air quality is getting better, we will use ‘indicators’ to show if the strategy is making air quality better. The indicators for particulate matter use the World Health Organisation advice. The indicators are:

Downward (improving) trend in:

- **PM_{2.5} to 10µg/m³ as an annual average, in line with WHO Interim Target 4 (from 25µg/m³ at present); and**
- **PM₁₀ to 20µg/m³ as an annual average, in line with WHO Interim Target 4 (from 40µg/m³)**

Other important indicators include improved feedback when DAERA run and then repeat an air quality awareness survey.

The indicator is:

- **10% increase in average score across all respondents for key questions to the awareness survey;**

Vehicle emissions will also be measured using nitrogen dioxide as an indicator. The indicator is:

- **A downward (improving) trend in the Wellbeing Framework NO₂ indicator, down to 10µg/m³.**

What is the Clean Air Strategy timeline?

The timeline for the Northern Ireland Clean Air Strategy is expected to be six years. DAERA will keep the strategy under review, both during and after this six years.



Picture of DAERA’s Air Aware poster



Air Aware

Suffer from a chronic illness that affects your breathing?

Receive alerts **FREE** to your mobile letting you know when air pollution levels are high.

Just text **Air** to
079 8440 5722
or download the
Northern Ireland Air App

Text messages to the service will be charged at your normal standard rate. Alerts are received free of charge. To opt out, text STOPAIR to 079 8440 5722.

For more information visit: **www.airqualityni.co.uk**

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An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe

Department of Fairmin, Environment an' Kintra Matthers

Department of Health
An Roinn Sáiríe
Máinistire O' Poustle

Further information on air quality in Northern Ireland is available in the Northern Ireland Air Website: <https://www.airqualityni.co.uk/>

Making it happen

Delivery of this strategy will need DAERA, and other government departments to work together including Department for Economy, Department for Infrastructure, and the Department of Health. Northern Ireland District Councils will also help and many more important groups and organisations too.

Have your say

In this section we would like to ask you what you think about our plan to make air quality better. The plans we have put forward have worked well in other places similar to Northern Ireland. We have also carefully looked at air quality science to help us make decisions.

We would love to hear what you think about these plans. You can respond to this consultation online by completing the questions on Citizen Space:

<https://consultations2.nidirect.gov.uk/daera/clean-air-strategy-public-consultation-2026>

QR Code



Questions include:

Do you agree with the aim of the draft Clean Air Strategy?

Do you agree with the three goals in the draft Clean Air Strategy?

Do you agree with the five strategic objectives in the draft Clean Air Strategy?

For further information:

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