



What people think,
feel and do

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Global Action Plan

Public Attitudes to Air Pollution – wave 3



Key findings

13 September 2021

Project details

PROJECT NUMBER	OP17731
PROJECT NAME	Public Attitudes to Air Pollution – wave 3
CLIENT COMPANY NAME	Global Action Plan
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SAMPLE	2,000 nationally representative UK adults aged 18+
FIELDWORK DATES	7 th to 10 th September 2021

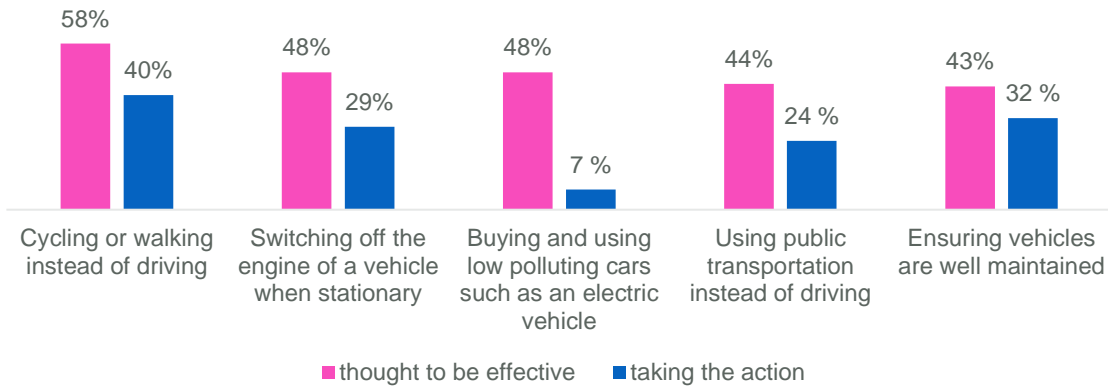
Air pollution and health

A fifth of UK adults see air pollution in their home as a problem

A fifth (19%) of UK adults say that air pollution in their home is a major or moderate problem, rising to about two fifths (38%) who see air pollution in their local area as a problem.

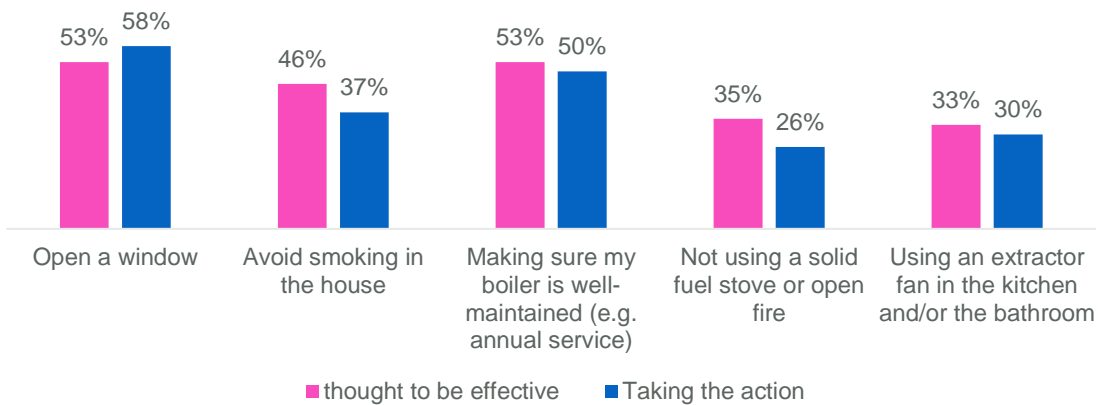
Of ways to reduce pollution in their local area, nearly three in five (58%) UK adults think that opting to walk or cycle instead of drive is an effective way to do this, although only two fifths (40%) actively do this. Similarly about half (48%) think that switching their engine off when their car is stationary can help reduce outdoor pollution levels, although only about three in ten (29%) do this.

Effective ways to reduce outdoor air pollution versus how many people are taking this action



When we look specifically at indoor air pollution, UK adults’ thoughts are more aligned with their actions: over half (53%) think opening a window helps reduce indoor air pollution and a similar amount (58%) do this. Similarly over half (53%) think ensuring their boiler is well-maintained will help with indoor air pollution, and half (50%) actually do this.

Effective ways to reduce indoor air pollution versus how many people are taking this action



Thinking about pollution and its relation to health, UK adults feel that the biggest health issues associated with indoor and outdoor air pollution are:

Biggest health issues from indoor air pollution	Biggest health issues from outdoor air pollution
Worsening of asthma (45%)	Worsening of asthma (51%)
Development of asthma (38%)	Development of asthma (47%)
Lung cancer (37%)	Lung cancer (46%)

On this note, about a tenth (11%) of UK adults have received personalised information about air pollution from a health professional.

Overall, about a quarter (24%) of UK adults feel that their personal actions can make a substantial or extremely positive difference to the quality of air that we breathe.

Supporting measures for climate change

Over half of UK adults support traffic reduction measures

Over half (54%) of UK adults support traffic reduction measures to reduce air pollution. Of these people, their reasons for supporting these measures are based around air pollution being bad for our health and being harmful to the environment. If put in place in their local neighbourhood, many do / would support them, with the highest levels of support being for wider pavements (59%) and for cycle lanes (58%).

Having said this, some UK adults don't / wouldn't support these measures if they were put in place in their local neighbourhood, including 51% that don't / wouldn't support reduced parking spaces and 43% temporary street closures.

Thinking about measures to tackle air pollution made by home deliveries, most UK adults would support these:

- About half (47%) support fewer delivery vehicles on the road – *rising to 49% of support for fewer delivery vehicles on the road even if it meant waiting slightly longer for your goods*
- Two thirds (66%) support electric delivery vehicles – *although this decreases to 52% for electrical delivery vehicles even if it meant paying slightly more for your goods*
- Nearly three fifths (59%) support zero emission vehicles, bicycles, cargo bikes etc. – *decreasing to 51% for zero emission vehicles, bicycles, cargo bikes etc. even if it meant paying slightly more for your goods.*

Support in a political sphere is also important: about two thirds (65%) of UK adults say that when it comes to deciding who to vote for, how tough a political party is on tackling climate change is important to them. About the same amount (59%) say the same for how tough a political party is on tackling air pollution.

UK adults are generally clued up on the issue as well, where over three fifths (61%) are aware of the upcoming COP26 climate change talks and even more (73%) on the government's pledge to reach Net Zero.

Climate change brings out emotions of frustration and uncertainty

When thinking about air pollution, frustration (22%), uncertainty (22%) and anxiety (21%) are top emotions felt. Emotions associated with climate change are similar, where 32% feel uncertainty, 25% frustration and 25% anxiety.

Many UK adults also feel more vulnerable to certain climate change factors, and say certain factors will have the most impact them personally:

CLIMATE CHANGE FACTORS	FACTORS THAT WILL HAVE THE MOST IMPACT	FACTORS THAT THEY FEEL MOST VULNERABLE TO
Extreme weather events	39%	31%
Extreme heat	37%	31%
Air pollution	32%	29%
Food security	29%	31%
Flooding	25%	17%



About Opinium

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