

# Essex Air Quality Strategy - Consultation Report

Version: 01

Essex Air Quality Strategy  
9 May 2025



## Essex Air Quality Strategy - Consultation Report

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## Executive summary

Councils in Essex, Southend and Thurrock have been working together to develop a joint Essex Air Quality Strategy. It has been developed by the Essex Air Quality Consortium, which brings together all 15 borough, district, city, county and unitary councils across Essex to work in partnership on air quality issues. A number of the councils already have local air quality action plans or strategies. The new Essex Air Quality Strategy aims to complement these and provide an overarching strategy for the whole county, including Southend and Thurrock.

The strategy will help to strengthen the current partnership working in Essex further. It is felt that a joint strategy will also carry additional weight, have greater impact, and will help demonstrate a more co-ordinated and consistent approach to tackling air pollution across Essex.

While Essex County Council, Southend-on-Sea City Council and Thurrock Council are part of the government's Devolution Priority Programme and, together with the 12 district, borough and city councils in Essex, they are also working collaboratively on proposals for local government reorganisation, there remains significant support from the councils for a new Essex Air Quality Strategy. Irrespective of the potential future make-up of local government in Essex, it is felt there will still be a need for local authorities in Essex to work collaboratively on the subject of air quality to ensure maximum impact and make best use of the collective resources available.

Having developed the new draft strategy, residents, businesses and partner organisations were given an opportunity to share their feedback as part of a public consultation. The consultation, which ran from January to March 2025, was managed by Essex County Council on behalf of the Essex Air Quality Consortium and provided a valuable insight into people's views. The feedback received during the consultation has been reviewed and is summarised in this report. It will now also be used to help improve and finalise the strategy and determine initial priority actions to improve air quality in Essex.

The public consultation showed a very strong level of support for the need for action to improve air quality in Essex, with 82% of respondents saying that they felt that improving air quality was important (67% very important and 15% important). In addition, 75% said they were concerned about the impacts of poor air quality on the health of themselves, their family and friends (54% very concerned and 21% fairly concerned).

The draft Essex Air Quality Strategy itself was also well supported. A significant 83% of respondents were supportive of our draft vision (58% strongly support and 25% support) and each of our four draft aims were supported by over 80% of people who responded to the consultation survey.

All ten of our proposed overarching actions to improve air quality in Essex were also well supported, with air quality monitoring, limiting impacts of development and working with partners all receiving 84% support. Leading by example, raising awareness of air quality issues, utilising green infrastructure, identifying funding to reduce emissions and working on Essex-wide initiatives all had between 80% and 82% support. Encouraging public transport and active travel modes had 76% support and encouraging low emissions vehicles had 64% support.

When asked to what extent they agreed that, overall, our planned actions would help achieve our vision and improve air quality in Essex, 69% of respondents agreed (30% strongly agreed and 39% agreed). This perhaps suggests that while people were broadly supportive of the proposed

individual actions, some respondents felt additional actions were also needed to help improve air quality in the county.

As part of our consultation survey, respondents were also given an opportunity to provide open written feedback. Many people raised issues they felt were relevant to air quality either in their specific area of the county or more generally. These issues included major road infrastructure projects happening or planned in Essex, concerns about a waste management facility and the impacts of residential developments. People also raised issues such as perceived increases in idling vehicles and the use of wood burners.

Other feedback more specifically about our planned actions or other suggested actions included increasing air quality monitoring across Essex, investing in campaigning and education about air quality, ensuring there are more green spaces, switching to electric buses, and improvements to road infrastructure, footpaths, cycle paths and public transport to help reduce traffic and emissions.

Overall, the feedback on the draft Essex Air Quality Strategy during the public consultation was very positive and demonstrated broad agreement with the importance of the topic of air quality and strong support for the vision, aims and planned actions set out within the draft strategy. Potential changes to the strategy are now being considered in light of the feedback we have received before it is finalised and agreed by the councils. The comments will also help us in prioritising the initial actions to focus on to help improve air quality in Essex.

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction to air quality

Air pollution is the largest environmental risk to public health. It can intensify existing health conditions, affect people's quality of life and reduce life expectancy. In fact, in Essex, it is estimated that more than 1 in 20 deaths can be linked in some part to air pollution.

Poor air quality also affects vulnerable members of our society the most and is more likely to be found in areas of deprivation. By improving air quality, the health of residents and those who visit and work in Essex can also be improved.

Air pollution crosses boundaries, and therefore it is vital councils work together closely, and alongside other partners, to make best use of their collective resources and have maximum impact.

### 1.2 Introduction to the strategy

Councils across Essex, Southend and Thurrock have been working in partnership to develop an Essex Air Quality Strategy.

The new draft strategy sets out the current understanding of the air quality issues in Essex and outlines the actions local authorities plan to take together to improve air quality.

It has been developed by the Essex Air Quality Consortium, which brings together all 15 borough, district, city, county and unitary councils across Essex to work together on air quality issues.



The strategy will help strengthen the current partnership working in Essex further. It is felt that a joint strategy will also carry additional weight, have greater impact, and will help demonstrate a more co-ordinated and consistent approach to tackling air pollution across Essex.

A number of the councils already have local air quality action plans or strategies. The new Essex Air Quality Strategy aims to complement these and provide an overarching strategy for the whole county, including Southend and Thurrock.

Essex County Council, Southend-on-Sea City Council and Thurrock Council are part of the Devolution Priority Programme, with the government looking to create a Mayoral Combined County Authority for Greater Essex by May 2026. Together with the 12 district, borough and city councils in

Essex, they are also working collaboratively on proposals for local government reorganisation, including exploring potential new unitary council structures in Essex. Irrespective of the potential future make-up of local government in Essex, there remains significant support from the current councils for a new Essex Air Quality Strategy and it is felt there will still be a need for local authorities in Essex to work collaboratively on the subject of air quality to ensure maximum impact and make best use of the collective resources available.

Partner organisations in Essex have also been invited to formally support the new draft strategy and to work with the local authorities on improving air quality in the county. At the point of public consultation, the partners which had formally agreed to support the strategy were:

- The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust
- Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board
- Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust
- Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care Board
- Anglia Ruskin University
- University of Essex County Council Essex County Fire & Rescue Service
- Essex Police

Having developed the new Essex Air Quality Strategy, residents, businesses and partner organisations were encouraged to share their feedback on the draft strategy as part of a public consultation. The consultation, which ran from January to March 2025, was managed by Essex County Council on behalf of the Essex Air Quality Consortium.

This public consultation report summarises the key findings. The feedback received will also be used to help improve and finalise the strategy and determine initial priority actions to improve air quality. It is expected a final version of the strategy will then be approved later this year and all local authorities in Essex and interested partner organisations will be invited to formally adopt, endorse or support the strategy.

### 1.3 Vision and aims

The new draft Essex Air Quality Strategy sets out a shared vision and aims to improve air quality across Essex, including Southend and Thurrock. They are as follows:

#### **Vision**

*'By reducing exposure to poor air quality, the people of Essex enjoy improved health and fewer health inequalities.'*

#### **Aims**

1. Do what is within our power as local authorities to improve air quality in Essex
2. Limit the negative impacts of new developments on air quality in Essex and reduce exposure to air pollution
3. Work closely with a range of partners and stakeholders to improve air quality
4. Raise awareness about air quality in our communities and encourage behaviour change, including measures to improve indoor air quality



As detailed later in this report, the public were invited to provide feedback on the draft vision and aims as part of the consultation, and they were strongly supported.

## **1.4 Actions**

The draft strategy also sets out a series of overarching actions which the local authorities propose to take to help improve air quality in Essex and achieve the vision. These are as follows:

1. We will encourage, enable and support the use of public transport and active travel modes, particularly for shorter trip or where they form a part of a longer journey in Essex.
2. We will limit or reduce the adverse impacts of developments and transport infrastructure on air quality and seek to minimise new exposure to air pollution.
3. We will raise public awareness of air quality issues in Essex and the impacts of poor air quality on human health and, by doing so, seek to encourage behavioural change.
4. We will identify, seek funding for, and implement measures to reduce air pollutant emissions, particularly in areas of Essex with poor air quality.
5. We will lead by example by reducing the impact of our activities on air quality.
6. We will work with relevant partner organisations, e.g. schools, the NHS, commercial premises, developers, workplaces, and National Highways, as well as local communities to improve air quality.
7. We will seek to encourage, enable and support the uptake of low emission and electric vehicles in Essex.
8. We will work together to monitor and assess air quality and seek to improve air quality monitoring in Essex.
9. We will look to install multifunctional green infrastructure, such as trees, hedges, 'living walls' or 'green screens' in appropriate locations in Essex with the aim of improving air quality.
10. We will regularly engage with each other as local authorities and other partner organisations in Essex regarding air quality related issues, and will seek to develop and implement Essex-wide air quality initiatives.

Like the vision and aims, the feedback received through the public consultation also demonstrated a strong level of support for the proposed actions. This is detailed later in this consultation report.

## 2. Consultation

Having developed the new joint Essex Air Quality Strategy, residents, businesses and partner organisations were invited to share their feedback as part of a public consultation.

The consultation ran from Monday 20 January 2025 to Sunday 2 March 2025. The feedback will be used to help improve and finalise the strategy, as well as determine initial priority actions.

A main consultation landing page was created on the EssexAir website and included an introduction to the strategy and why it is needed, a summary of the main elements of the strategy, the animation video, details of the consultation and next steps. The page also included a link to the consultation survey and the full draft strategy documents, including the strategy, supporting information and action plan. The three documents are set out in more detail below.

The EssexAir webpage had almost 10,000 page views during the consultation period, demonstrating a significant number of people accessed information about the strategy.

Having reviewed and analysed all consultation responses, this consultation report summarises the key findings. We will now consider potential changes to the strategy in light of the feedback before the strategy is approved and formally considered for adoption, endorsement or support by each of the councils in Essex.

### 2.1 Consultation materials

Three main documents were created and shared as part of the consultation:

- The main draft strategy document gave a high-level summary of the reasons why action is needed, what is already being done to improve air quality in Essex and the actions which are proposed to further improve air quality. This document was intended for all audiences.
- A draft supporting information document provided more detailed information, describing the current air quality situation in Essex and how air quality is expected to change in the future. It also identified potential opportunities to improve air quality. This document was intended for those who wanted to know about air quality in Essex in greater detail.
- A draft action plan outlined the actions the local authorities in Essex proposed to take to improve air quality in more detail and set out how progress would be measured. The final action plan is expected to be a live document, which will be updated as needed.

The full draft Essex Air Quality Strategy, as well as the supporting information document and action plan, were made available to read and download on the [Essex Air webpage](#).

Printed copies of the strategy were available upon request, while they were also made available to pick up from the following libraries:

- Basildon Library
- Braintree Library
- Brentwood Library
- Canvey Island Library

- Chelmsford Library
- Clacton Library
- Dunmow Library
- Epping Library
- Grays Library
- Harlow Library
- Maldon Library
- Prettygate Library, Colchester
- Rayleigh Library
- Southend Library, The Forum

Reference copies were also available to read at all other Essex, Southend and Thurrock libraries, but could not be taken away.



## 2.2 Methods of responding

Responses to the public consultation were accepted via the following channels:

- Completing the online survey on Essex County Council's consultation platform at: <https://consultations.essex.gov.uk>
- Those who were unable to access the online survey could also send in paper copies of the survey or a written response for free (no stamp required) to the following address:  
FREEPOST ESSEX HIGHWAYS ENGAGEMENT TEAM
- Feedback and completed surveys could also be returned by email to: [strategy@essexair.org.uk](mailto:strategy@essexair.org.uk)

People were also directed to email [strategy@essexair.org.uk](mailto:strategy@essexair.org.uk) if they had any questions about the strategy or public consultation.

The consultation survey comprised eleven questions about air quality in Essex and the draft Essex Air Quality Strategy.

Ten questions were quantitative/closed questions with fixed answer options (i.e. boxes to be ticked with specific answers). One was a qualitative/open question with a large text box where respondents were able to answer and comment as they wished.

Optional personal information and equality and diversity data questions were also included to aid understanding of who had responded to the consultation, and to support Essex County Council in considering how its engagement and consultation approach could be improved in the future.

## **2.3 Data protection, confidentiality and anonymity**

### **Data protection**

The following statement was published on the consultation webpage prior to starting the survey and on the first page of the printed copies of the survey:

*"Essex County Council is managing this consultation on behalf of the Essex Air Quality Consortium. Essex County Council fully complies with information legislation. If you would like the full details of how we use personal data, and the rights you have about its use, please go to [www.essex.gov.uk/privacy-adults](http://www.essex.gov.uk/privacy-adults) or call 03457 430430."*

### **Confidentiality**

The following statement was also published on the webpage and on paper copies of the survey prior to the questions asking for personal information:

*"This section asks for information about you. Any personal information you provide is confidential and will be used solely for monitoring purposes."*

### **Anonymity**

In this report all responses will be kept anonymous. Any answers to the qualitative questions which indicated any personal information have not been used or have been redacted to ensure respondents are not individually identifiable.

## **2.4 Demographic questions**

The following statement was published prior to the About You section of the survey:

*"This section asks a series of questions about you. We will use the data collected for monitoring purposes and to help us assess whether the consultation has reached a representative section of the community. The information you provide is confidential and will not be collated with any information which makes you identifiable."*

*"These questions are entirely optional, and you are not obliged to answer any of the questions. If you choose not to answer the questions, it will not affect your participation."*

## 2.5 Engagement with young people

In February 2025, as part of the public consultation, members of the project team engaged with 23 young people in Basildon and Harlow through the Young Essex Assembly and Essex Youth Service.

This provided an opportunity to get valuable feedback from younger age groups on the issue of air quality and certain elements of the draft Essex Air Quality Strategy, as well as a chance to increase their knowledge and understanding of air quality issues.

The sessions included a short presentation about the sources and impacts of air pollution. The young people were also asked their views on air quality through an interactive poll, with 85% saying they thought it was important to improve air quality in Essex. 57% of the young people said they were concerned about the impact of poor air quality on their health, with a further 17% saying they were unsure.

When asked to identify the actions they felt were most important to help improve air quality, encouraging public transport/active travel, installing green infrastructure and raising awareness of the health impacts of air pollution were the top three. Working in small groups, the young people also came up with their own campaign ideas to help improve air quality in Essex.

Earlier in the development of the Essex Air Quality Strategy, the project team also engaged with young people about air quality and the emerging strategy at the Chelmsford Skills Festival in June 2023 and the Braintree Skills Festival in September 2023. The young people were encouraged to take part in a series of interactive activities to help them learn about the main sources of air pollution, the impacts it has on our health and the actions we can all take to help improve air quality.

A short anonymous survey was also used to help us understand the pupils' level of concern about air pollution, how much they felt they knew about the subject and what actions they felt would have the biggest impact in improving air quality. 90% of the pupils who completed the survey said they were concerned about air pollution, with just 6% unconcerned and 4% unsure. Just 6% of the pupils said they felt they had a good level of knowledge about air quality, compared with 63% who said they had some knowledge and 32% who felt they had little or very little knowledge.

At this earlier stage in considering potential actions to help improve air quality, 43% of pupils felt that encouraging people to use more sustainable transport, such as walking and cycling, would have the biggest impact. 21% said raising awareness of the impacts of air pollution and 20% said encouraging a switch to electric vehicles. 16% said focusing on measures to address specific problem areas.



Figure 1: Engagement with young people in Basildon

### **3. Promotion of consultation**

A variety of different communications channels and tactics were used to promote the consultation as widely as possible and encourage people to participate by completing the consultation survey. A summary of the channels used can be found below.

#### **3.1 Sharing with partners**

All partner local authorities were encouraged to help promote the consultation across their communications channels and via their networks. This included social media, webpages, newsletters and consultation platforms.

To support with this, the communications teams in each local authority were sent a communications toolkit which contained resources, key messages, images and suggested posts to ensure consistency and to make it as easy as possible for partners to promote the consultation.

The toolkit was also shared with other partners, such as parish and town councils, universities, MPs and NHS trusts.

Information about the consultation was circulated to schools via a weekly newsletter which is sent to all 550+ schools in Essex, as well as through the Healthy Schools team and headteacher associations.

The consultation was also promoted to businesses through Essex Chambers of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses. Examples of some of this promotion can again be seen in appendix A.

Some examples of the promotion of the consultation by partners can be seen in appendix A.

#### **3.2 Essex County Council newsletters**

The consultation was promoted in the February edition of Essex County Council's Your Essex email newsletter, which was sent to over 18,000 recipients. An article about the consultation was also included in the January edition of the Essex Climate Action newsletter.

The articles from the newsletters can be seen in appendix B.

#### **3.3 Press release**

A press release was issued about the consultation on the day of the launch.

#### **3.4 Emails to stakeholders**

Emails were sent to identified stakeholders notifying them of the consultation and encouraging them to share their feedback on the draft strategy.

A stakeholder mapping exercise was carried out to identify relevant stakeholders. These included councillors, MPs, parish and town councils, community groups, MPs, neighbouring councils, transport operators, active travel groups, business groups, disability and accessibility groups, environmental groups and bodies, local NHS trusts and health-related charities and groups.



### 3.5 Animation video

An [animation video](#) was created to help explain the background to the Essex Air Quality Strategy, highlight the health impacts of air pollution and encourage people to participate in the public consultation. The video used animated characters from the draft strategy document and was published on YouTube and embedded on the consultation landing page on the EssexAir webpage. The video was viewed more than 500 times on YouTube, as well as used and watched across other social media channels such as Facebook.

### 3.6 Print advertising

To help promote the consultation to people without internet access or who consume their news through more traditional channels, print adverts were booked through LocaliQ/Newsquest (Basildon/Southend Echo, Thurrock Gazette, Braintree & Witham Times, Clacton & Frinton Gazette, Colchester Gazette, Dunmow Broadcast, Epping Forest Guardian and Saffron Walden Reporter etc.). Adverts were also booked through Reach (Essex Chronicle and Brentwood Gazette). This helped ensure a good level of promotion across Essex. Examples of the adverts can be seen in appendix C.

### 3.7 Digital advertising

As part of the advertising packages, we also ran digital display advertising in January and February 2025 to help promote the consultation. The campaigns delivered over 350,000 impressions, while an advert of Reach's In Your Area platform was displayed a further 80,000 views.

### 3.8 Facebook advertising

A Facebook advertising campaign was run through the Essex County Council page to help promote the consultation. The advertising was targeted at all areas of Essex, including Southend and Thurrock, and delivered 435,000 impressions.

### 3.9 Other promotion

In the final few weeks of the consultation, flyers were distributed at Basildon and Benfleet railway stations to encourage passengers to complete the consultation survey. The locations were selected as we had received comparatively lower numbers of responses from people in those areas of Essex.



Figure 2: Flyer distribution at Basildon station



Figure 3: Flyer distribution outside Basildon station

## **4. Data analysis and interpretation of data**

### **4.1 Sample**

The respondents to this consultation were a self-selecting sample of people who live in the Greater Essex area. Beyond this targeted population, we also welcomed contributions from any other interested parties who may work or visit Essex. As such, the findings are not directly representative, nor are the answers or findings weighted in any way.

All responses are important for the project team to understand the suggestions, opinions and any concerns there may be, both on air quality in Essex in general, and on the draft Essex Air Quality Strategy presented. All comments have been recorded and analysed for consideration. Conclusions are communicated openly and the methods used to measure statistical significance is clear.

While the information collated in this report provides a valuable insight, it is important to be aware that the feedback is likely to highlight particular viewpoints and does not necessarily represent the views of the wider population. As such, the feedback is not considered to be a 'vote' on the strategy. Nonetheless, the feedback does provide a measure of public feeling.

### **4.2 Quantitative analysis**

Quantitative data analysis has been undertaken on all closed questions, allowing a numerical value and percentages to be applied to respondents' answers. In doing this, the data for each set of answers can be compared and an accurate measure of the range of opinion and preference of the consultation feedback can be produced.

### **4.3 Qualitative analysis**

Qualitative data analysis has been undertaken on the open question. This is data where no numerical value can be applied as each answer is different. In order to effectively assess responses, themed codes have been applied which pick out key re-occurring concerns or comments.

These codes are used to guide reporting and to give an understanding of the comparative regularity and frequency of themes and issues being raised. The codes are not intended to be, and would not be appropriate for, carrying out statistical comparisons.

The frequency of these themes does not necessarily relate to their importance but is an indication of a topic of interest. This report summarises these responses and, as such, not all comments are represented directly. All feedback has been read and taken on board in preparation of this report, and new suggestions and points raised have been passed on to relevant members of the project team for information and consideration, where appropriate.



## 5. Respondents and responses

### 5.1 Responses by area

In the personal information section of the consultation survey, respondents were asked a small number of questions to help us better understand the nature of their interest in the Essex Air Quality Strategy, as well as where in Essex they are specifically based.

#### Which of the following best describes you?

*There were 535 responses to this question.*

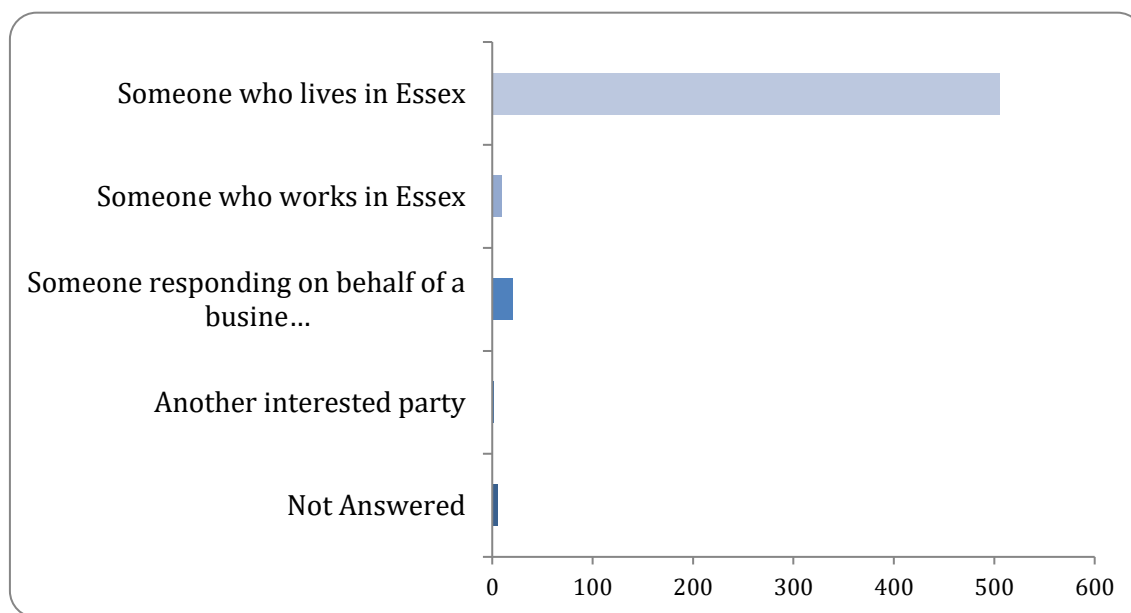


Table 1: Relationship of respondents to Essex

Option	Total	Percent
Someone who lives in Essex	505	94%
Someone who works in Essex	9	2%
Someone who visits Essex	0	0%
Someone responding on behalf of a business or organisation based in Essex	20	4%
Someone responding on behalf of a business or organisation based outside Essex but which travels or operates in the area	0	0%
Another interested party	1	<1%
Not Answered	5	1%

## Which of the following areas within Essex do you live in?

There were **535 responses** to this question.

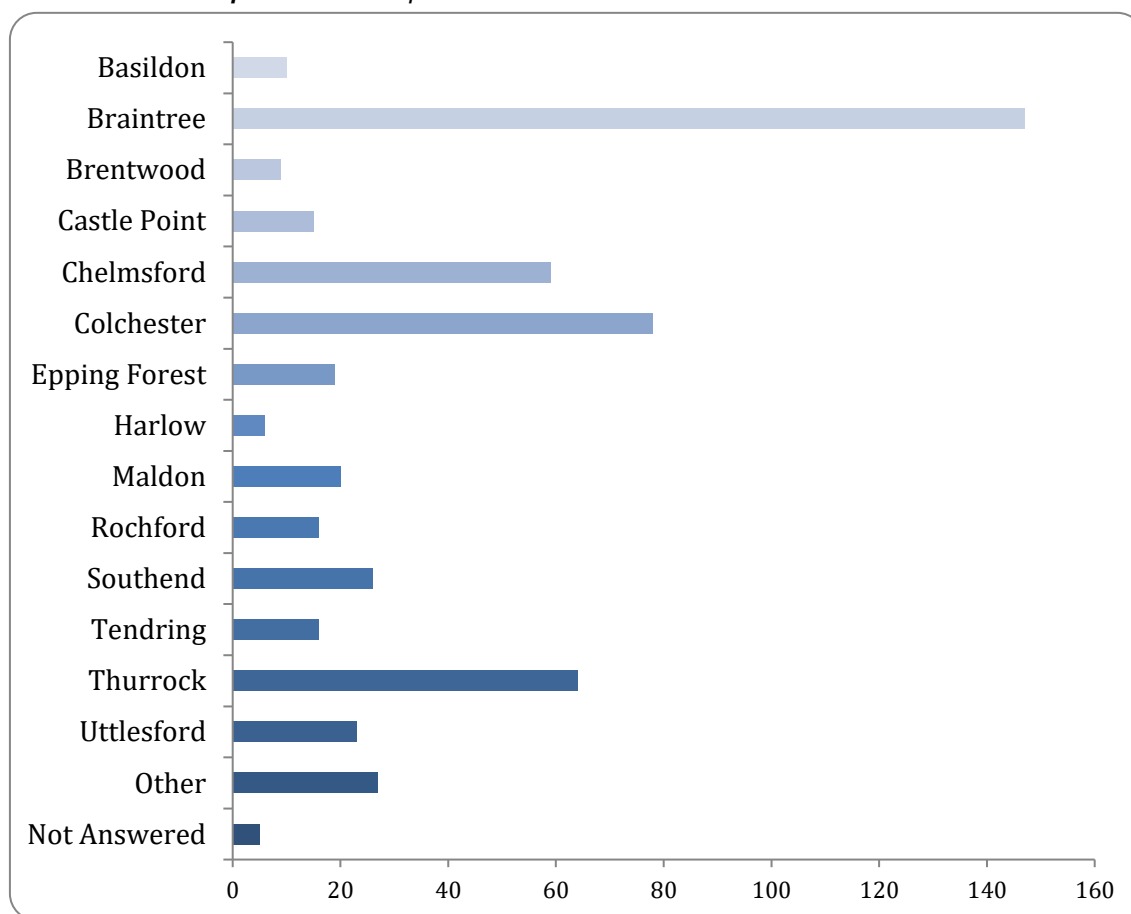


Table 2: Area of respondents

Option	Total	Percent
Basildon	10	2%
Braintree	147	27%
Brentwood	9	2%
Castle Point	15	3%
Chelmsford	59	11%
Colchester	78	14%
Epping Forest	19	4%
Harlow	6	1%
Maldon	20	4%
Rochford	16	3%
Southend	26	5%
Tendring	16	3%
Thurrock	64	12%
Uttlesford	23	4%
Other	27	5%

Not Answered	5	1%
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Of those who selected 'Other', the majority shared more specific towns or villages within the areas/districts listed, such as Witham, Grays, Billericay and Leigh-on-Sea.

## 5.2 Respondent heat map

Below is a heat map which shows the areas people who responded to the consultation survey were from, based on the first part of the postcodes they provided.

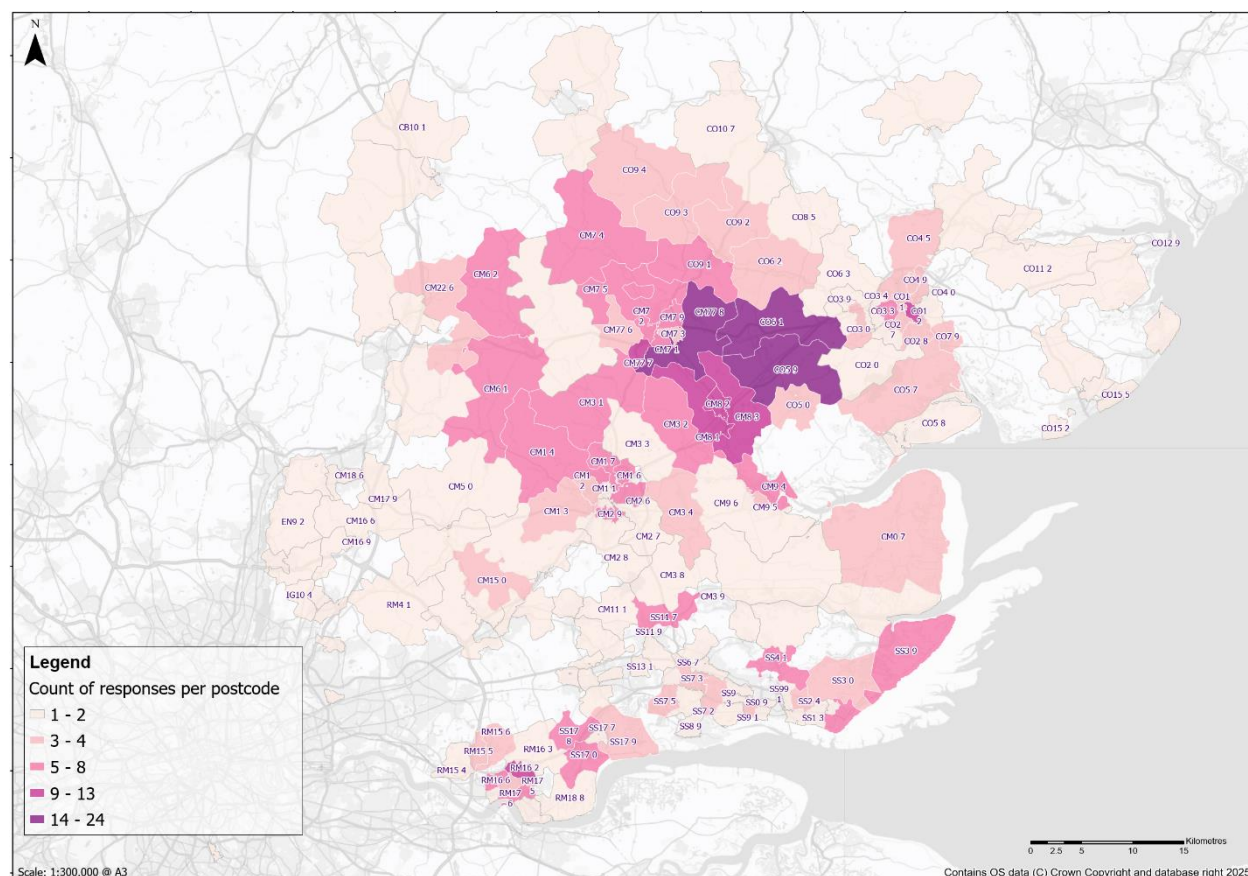


Figure 4: Heatmap of respondent location

## 5.3 Responses by channel

In total, 550 responses to the consultation were received via the following channels:

Email: 10

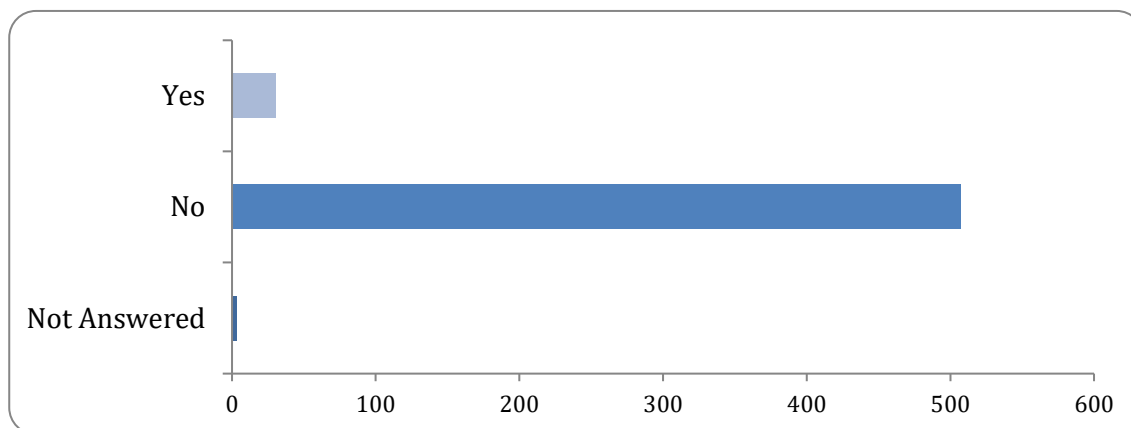
Online survey: 528

Freepost (printed surveys): 12

## 5.4 Representative stakeholders

**Are you responding on behalf of a business or organisation?**

*There were 537 responses to this question.*



**Table 3: Responses on behalf of an organisation**

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	30	6%
No	507	94%
Not Answered	3	1%

30 responses to the online survey were submitted on behalf of a specific business or organisation.

28 of these responses were from representative stakeholders.

7 further representative stakeholders submitted a consultation response via email.

The 35 representative organisations which responded to the consultation included parish councils, schools, cycle campaign groups, nature groups and residents' associations.

Feedback was also provided by some of the district council planning departments, including Chelmsford City Council , Harlow Council and Uttlesford District Council.

## 6. Responses to closed questions

The graphs and tables below summarise the responses to the closed questions in the consultation survey, as such responses by email or freepost that did not answer these questions are not represented in this chapter. The percentages in the tables have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number. As such, the percentages could add up to slightly more or less than 100% in some places.

An analysis of the following quantitative findings can be found in section 9.0 of this report.

The first main section of the survey was about the topic of air quality in Essex more generally. Respondents were given a choice whether they wanted to complete this section or move straight to the questions directly relating to the draft Essex Air Quality Strategy.

### Question One: Are you happy to answer questions about air quality in Essex?

If you are happy to answer questions about air quality in Essex, please select **Yes**.

If you would like to skip the questions on air quality in Essex and move straight to questions about the Essex Air Quality Strategy, please select **No**.

There were **540 responses** to this question.

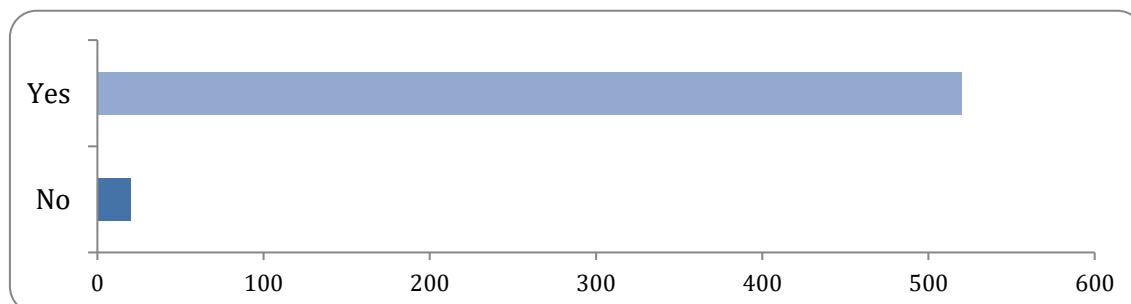


Table 4: Willingness to answer questions on Essex air quality

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	520	96%
No	20	4%
Not Answered	0	0 %

## 6.1 Section One: Air Quality in Essex

### Question One: How important do you feel it is to improve air quality in Essex?

There were **518 responses** to this question.

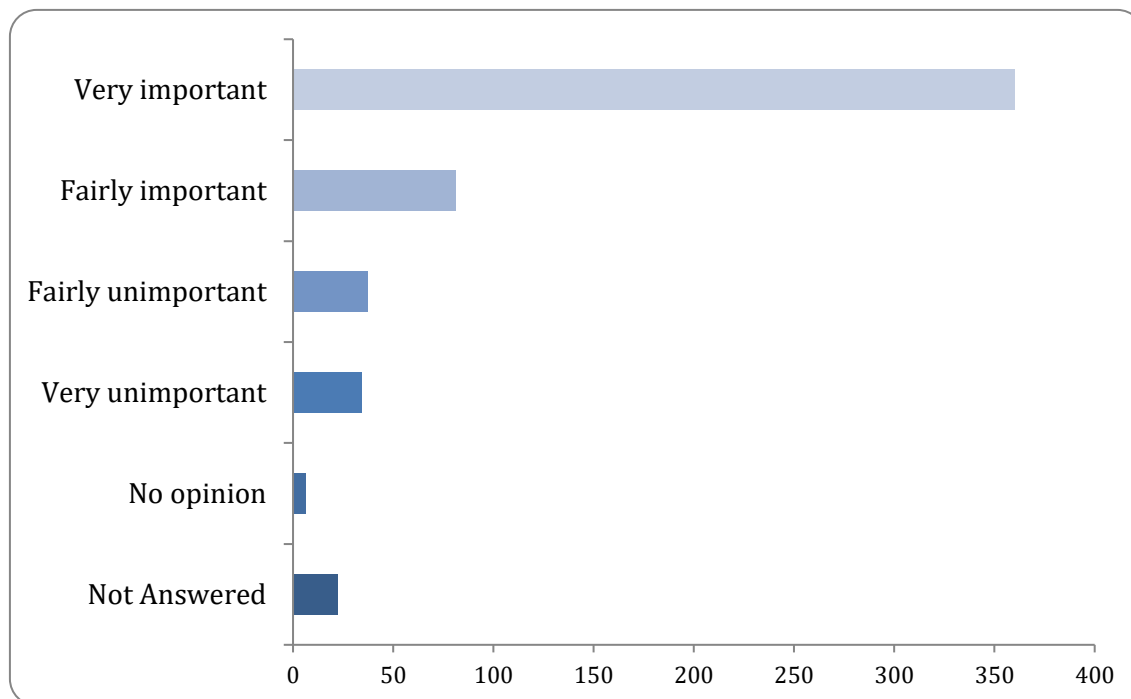


Table 5: Importance of improving air quality in Essex

Option	Total	Percent
Very important	360	67%
Fairly important	81	15%
Fairly unimportant	37	7%
Very unimportant	34	6%
No opinion	6	1%
Not Answered	22	4%

## Question Two: How concerned are you about the impacts of poor air quality on the health of you, your family and/or friends?

There were **519** responses to this question.

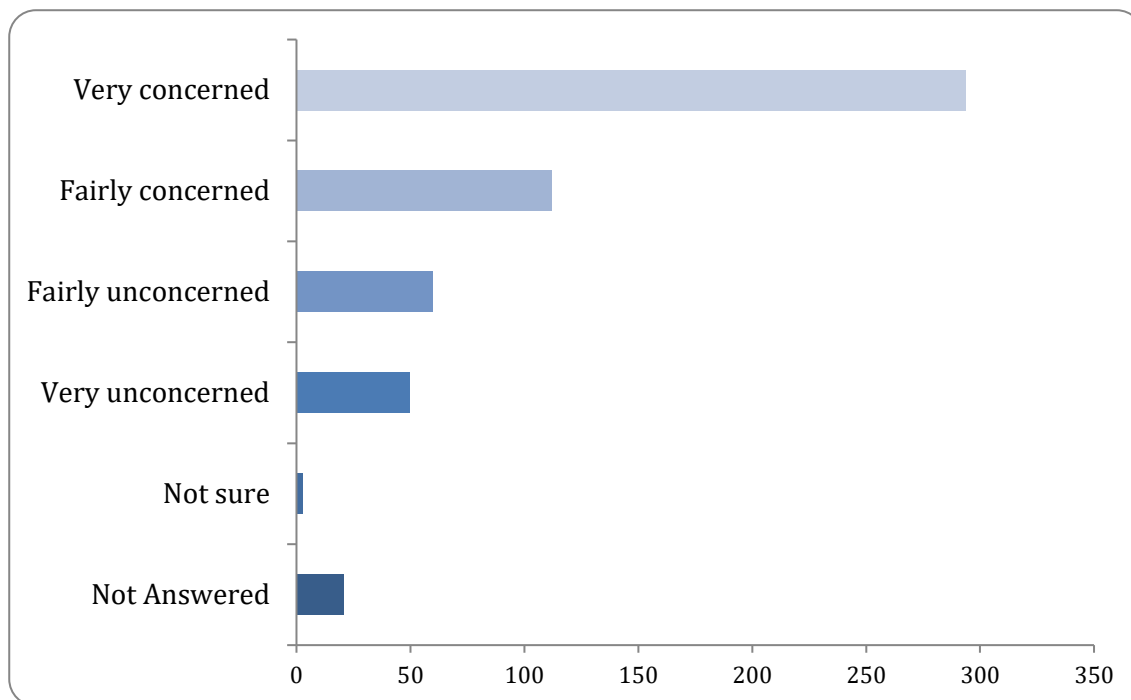


Table 6: Level of concern of the impact of poor air quality

Option	Total	Percent
Very concerned	294	54%
Fairly concerned	112	21%
Fairly unconcerned	60	11%
Very unconcerned	50	9%
Not sure	3	1%
Not Answered	21	4%

### Question Three: Which sources of air pollution concern you the most?

Please rank them in order from 1 (most concerned) to 6 (least concerned)

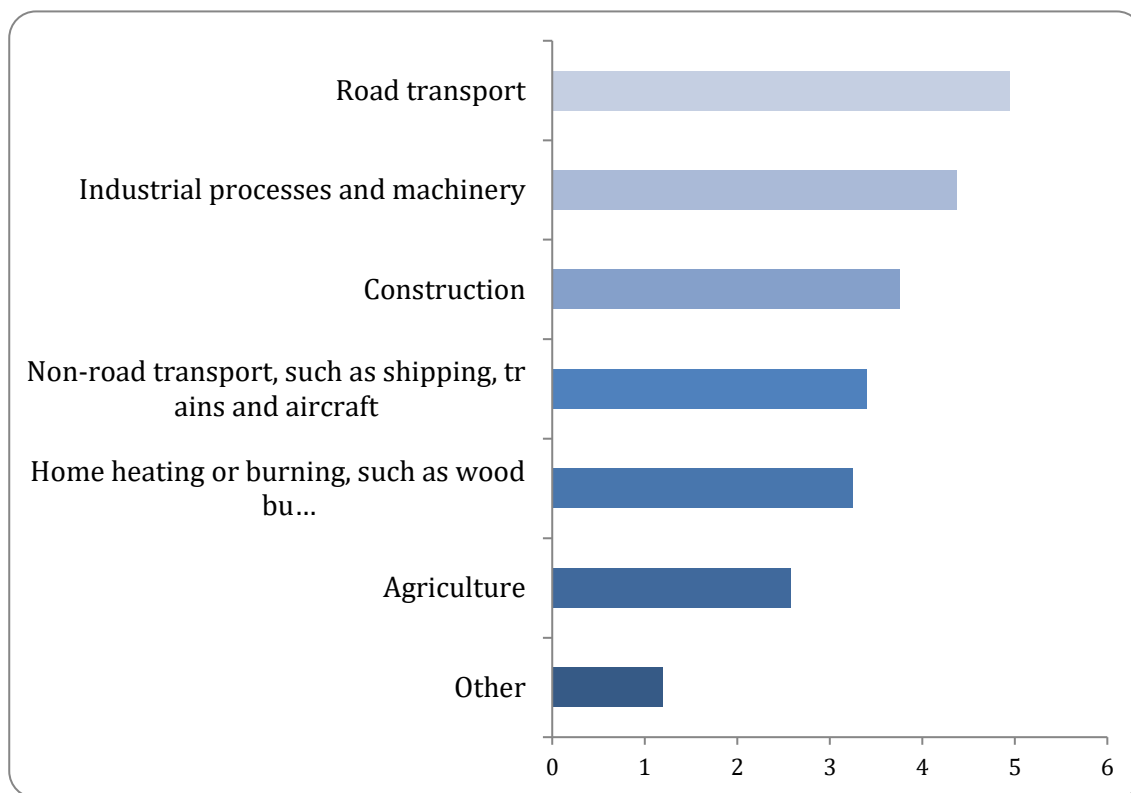


Table 7: Level of concern over different sources of air pollution

Item	Ranking
Road transport	4.94
Industrial processes and machinery	4.38
Construction	3.76
Non-road transport, such as shipping, trains and aircraft	3.40
Home heating or burning, such as wood burners	3.25
Agriculture	2.58
Other	1.19

The figures displayed in the graph and table above are based on a ranking system and give an overall average ranking for each source of pollution, with the highest value indicating the source respondents were most concerned about on average across all respondents and the lowest value indicating the source people were least concerned about.

Of those who selected other, a number referenced waste incineration. Other answers included airports/aircraft, indoor air pollution and bonfires. Some respondents said they were not concerned by any of the sources of pollution.



#### Question Four: How much do you think you currently know about the issue of air pollution and its impact on our health?

There were **520 responses** to this question.

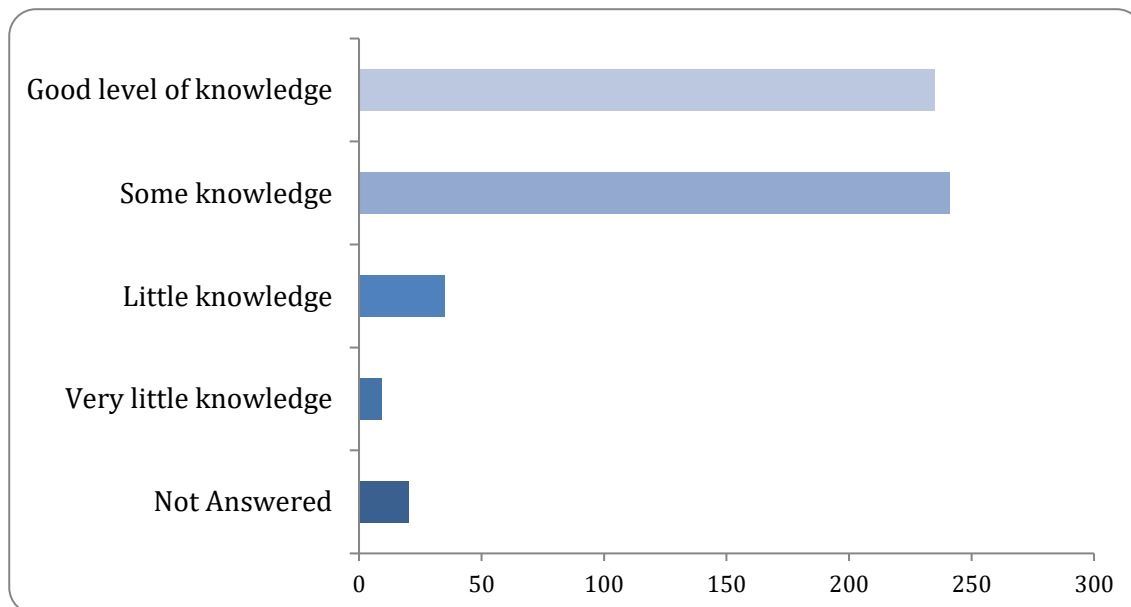
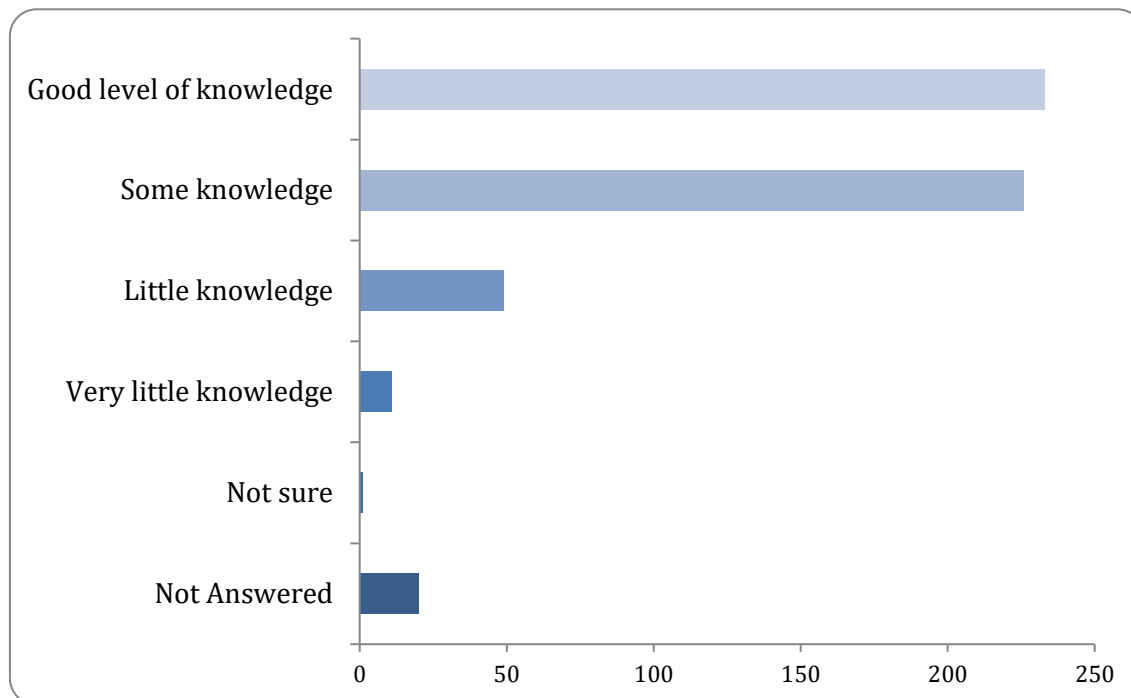


Table 8: Current level of knowledge on impacts of air pollution

Option	Total	Percent
Good level of knowledge	235	44%
Some knowledge	241	45%
Little knowledge	35	6%
Very little knowledge	9	2%
Not sure	0	0%
Not Answered	20	4%

**Question Five: How aware are you of sources of air pollution in the home and the actions which can be taken to improve indoor air quality?**

*There were 520 responses to this question.*



**Table 9: Knowledge of air pollution sources in the home**

Option	Total	Percent
Good level of knowledge	233	43 %
Some knowledge	226	42%
Little knowledge	49	9%
Very little knowledge	11	2%
Not sure	1	<1%
Not Answered	20	4%

## Question Six: Have you previously accessed information about air quality from any of the following sources?

### Essex Air website

There were **516 responses** to this question.

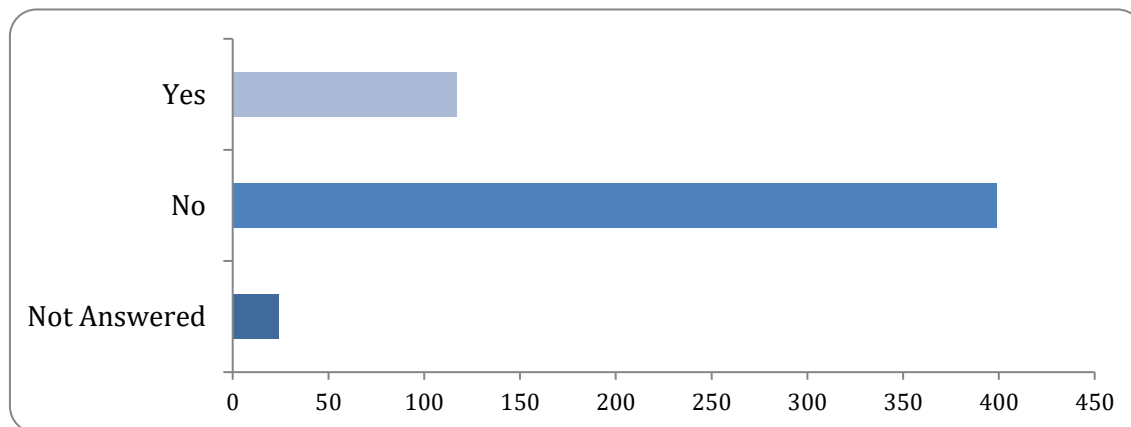


Table 10: Number of respondents who have accessed air quality information from the EssexAir website

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	117	22%
No	399	74%
Not Answered	24	4%

### Local council website

There were **508 responses** to this question.

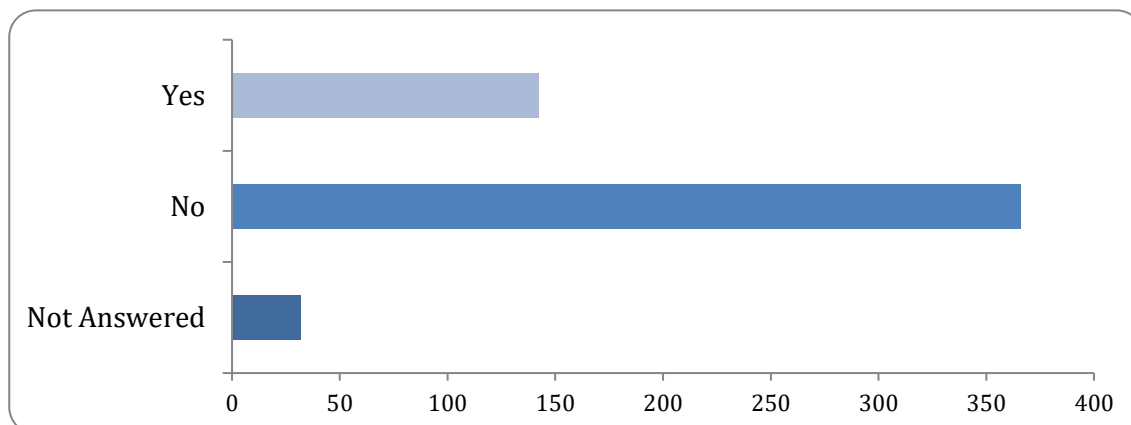
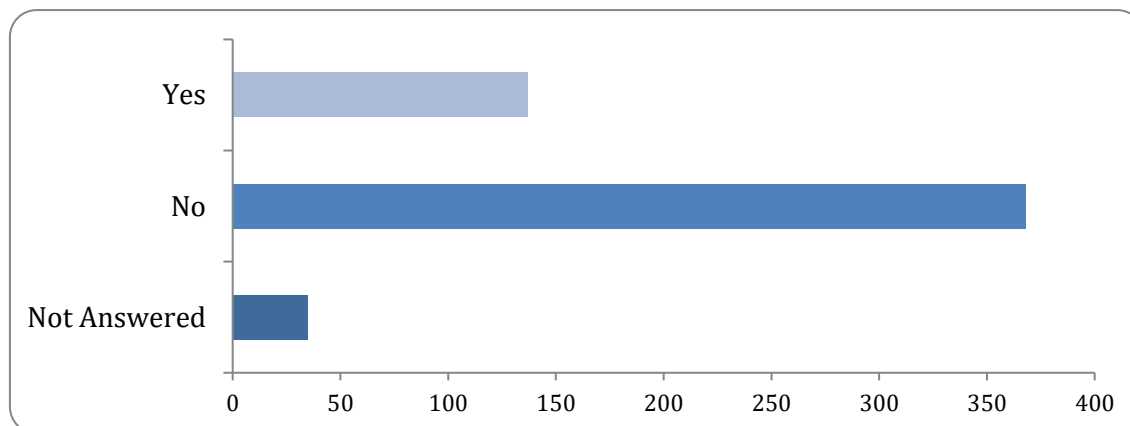


Table 11: Number of respondents who have accessed air quality information from local council websites

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	142	26%
No	366	68%

<b>Not Answered</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>6%</b>
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*DEFRA website*

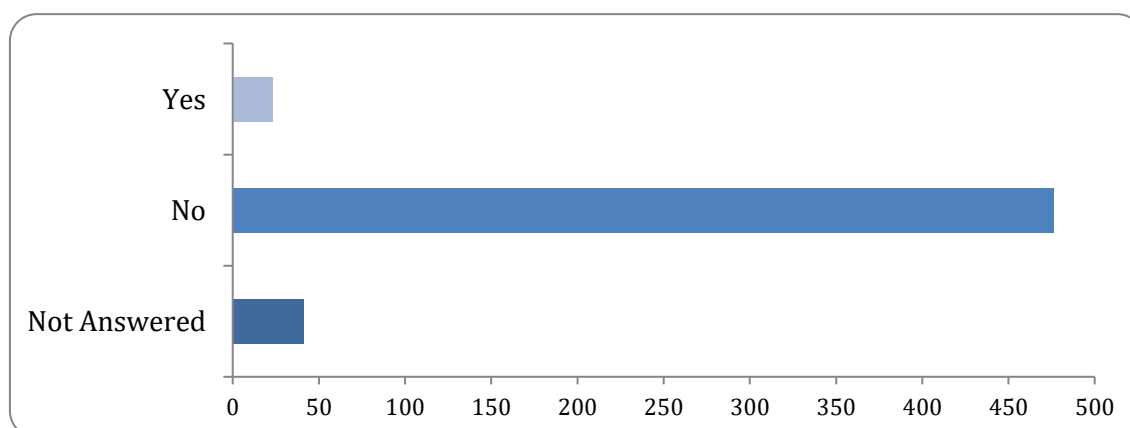


There were **505 responses** to this question.

**Table 12: Number of respondents who have accessed air quality information from Defra air quality website**

Option	Total	Percent
<b>Yes</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>68%</b>
<b>Not Answered</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>6%</b>

*AirText alert system*



There were **499 responses** to this question.

**Table 13: Number of respondents who have accessed air quality information from AirText website**

Option	Total	Percent
<b>Yes</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>88%</b>
<b>Not Answered</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>8%</b>

*Other*

There were **54 responses** to this question.

Of those who specified other, responses included the media, academic research and the internet.

## 6.2 Essex Air Quality Strategy

The second main section of the survey included a series of questions about specific elements of the new draft Essex Air Quality Strategy.

**Question Seven: Our overarching vision for improving air quality in Essex is 'By reducing exposure to poor air quality, the people of Essex enjoy improved health and fewer health inequalities.' To what extent do you support this vision?**

*There were 536 responses to this question.*

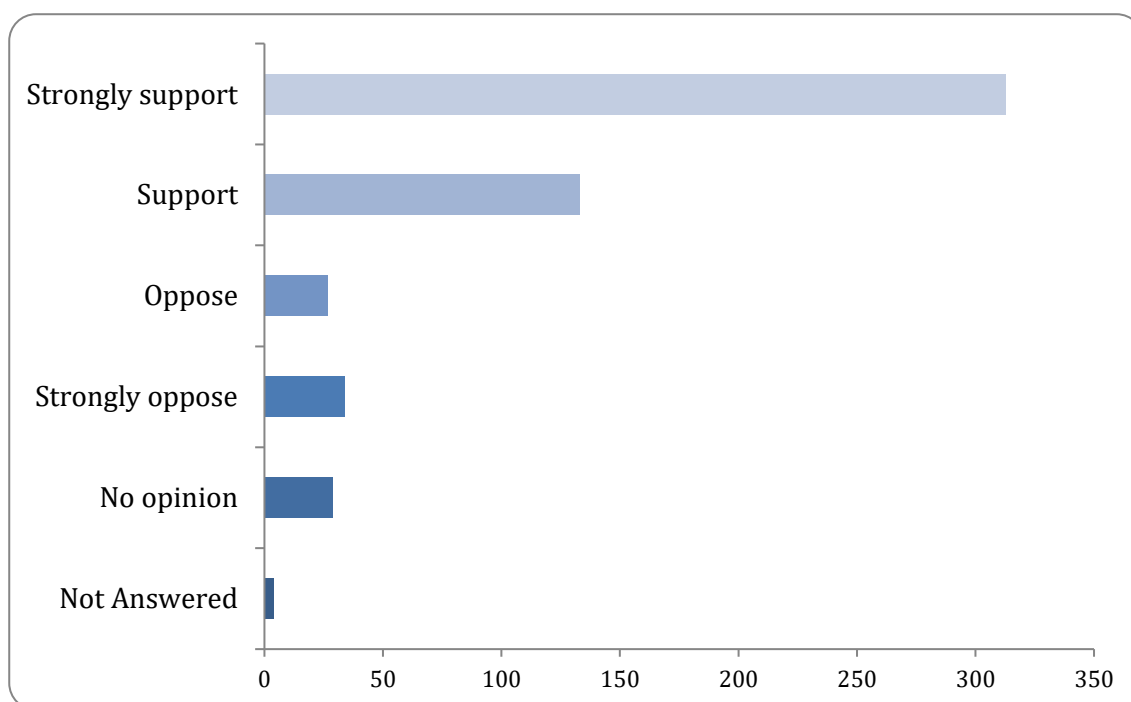


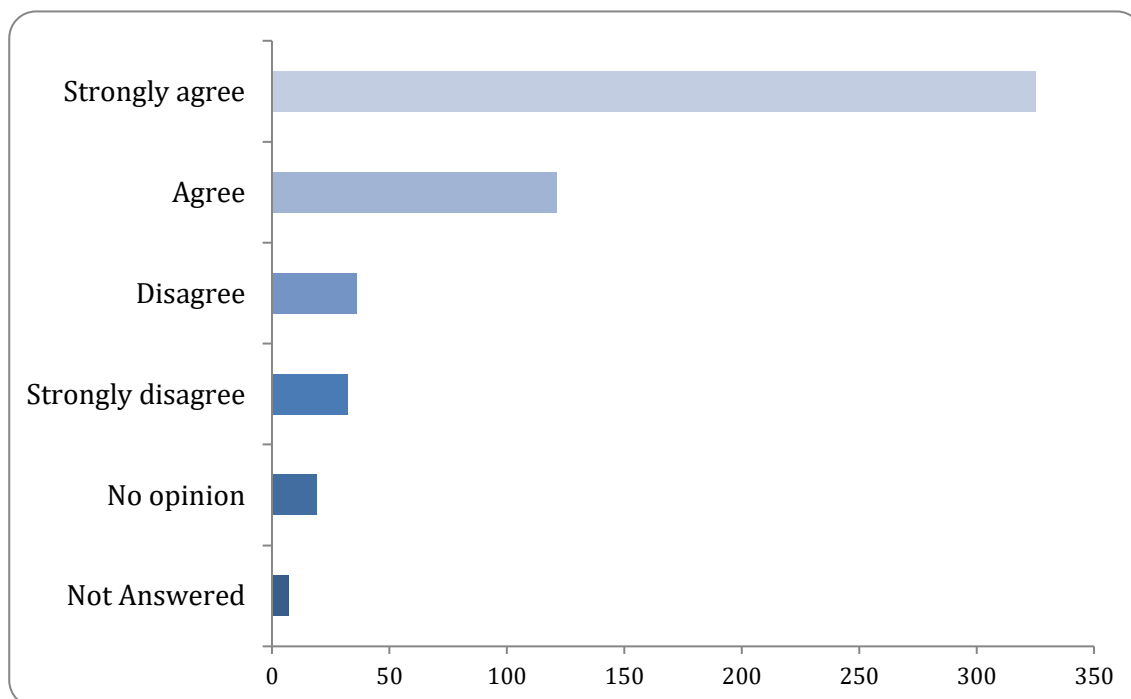
Table 14: Support for Essex Air Quality Strategy vision

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly support	313	58%
Support	133	25%
Oppose	27	5%
Strongly oppose	34	6%
No opinion	29	5%
Not Answered	4	1%

**Question Eight: As part of the draft Essex Air Quality Strategy, we have set four broad aims to help improve air quality in Essex. To what extent do you agree with these aims?**

***Aim: Do what is within our power as local authorities to improve air quality in Essex***

*There were 533 responses to this question.*



**Table 15: Level of agreement for aim 1 – doing what is within our power as local authorities**

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	325	60%
Agree	121	22%
Disagree	36	7%
Strongly disagree	32	6%
No opinion	19	4%
Not Answered	7	1%

**Aim: Limit the impact of new developments on air quality in Essex**

There were **535 responses** to this question.

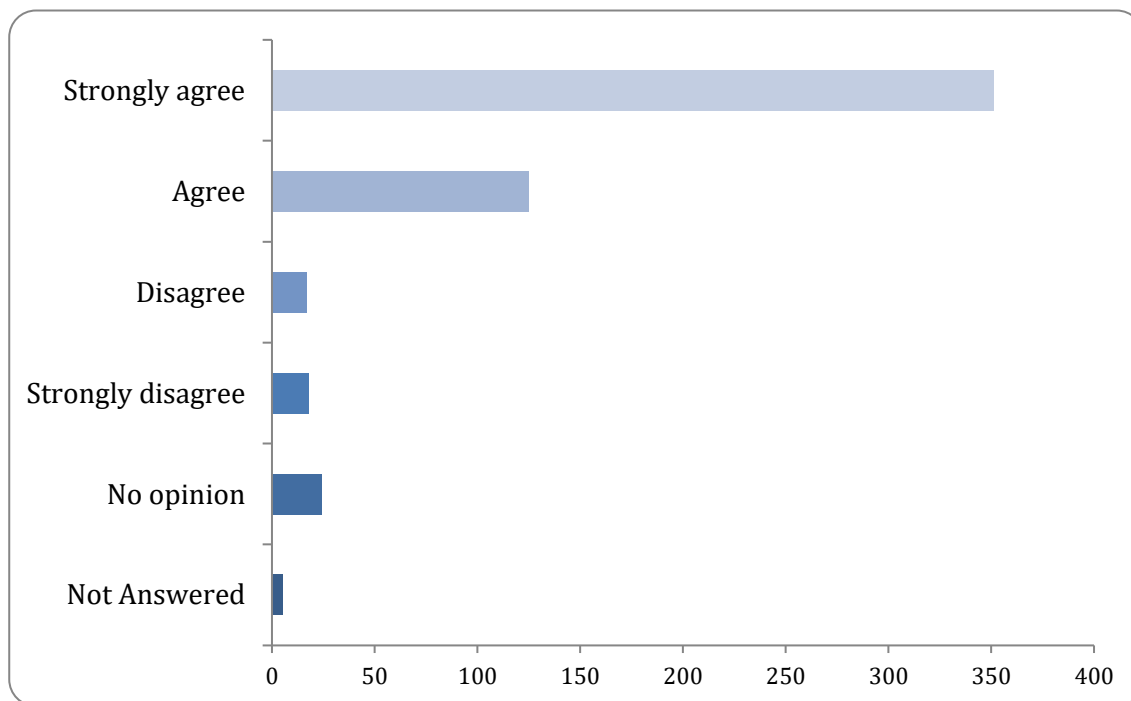
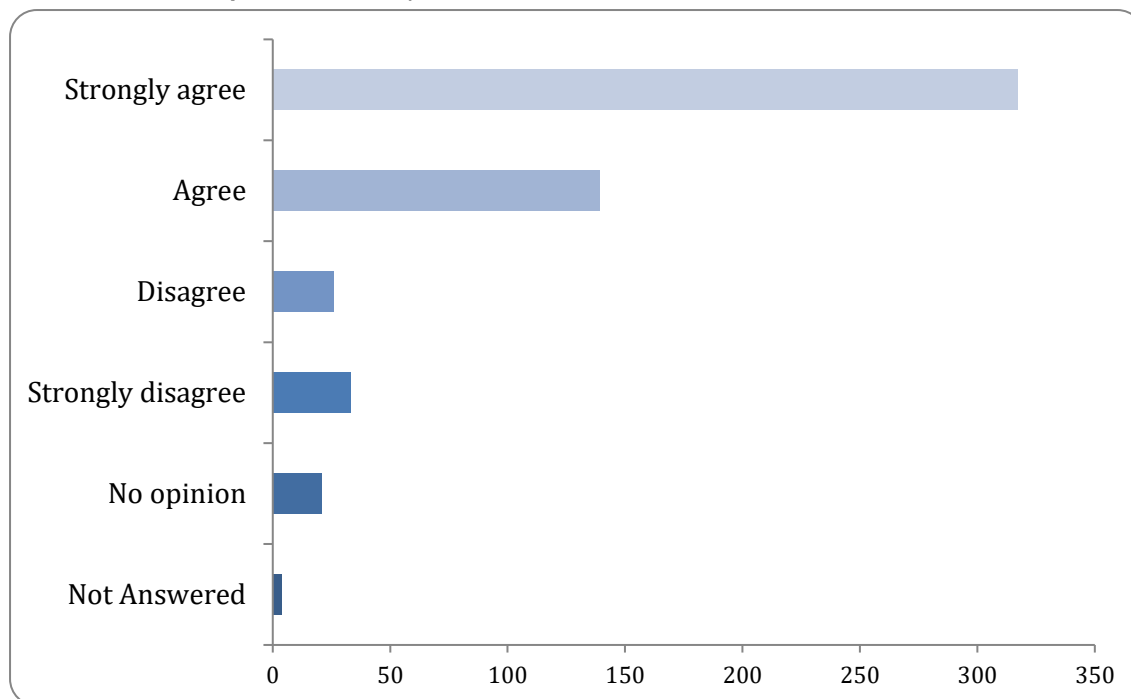


Table 16: Level of agreement for aim 2 - limiting the impact of developments

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	351	65%
Agree	125	23%
Disagree	17	3%
Strongly disagree	18	3%
No opinion	24	4%
Not Answered	5	1%

**Aim: Work closely with a range of partners and stakeholders to improve air quality**

There were **536 responses** to this question.



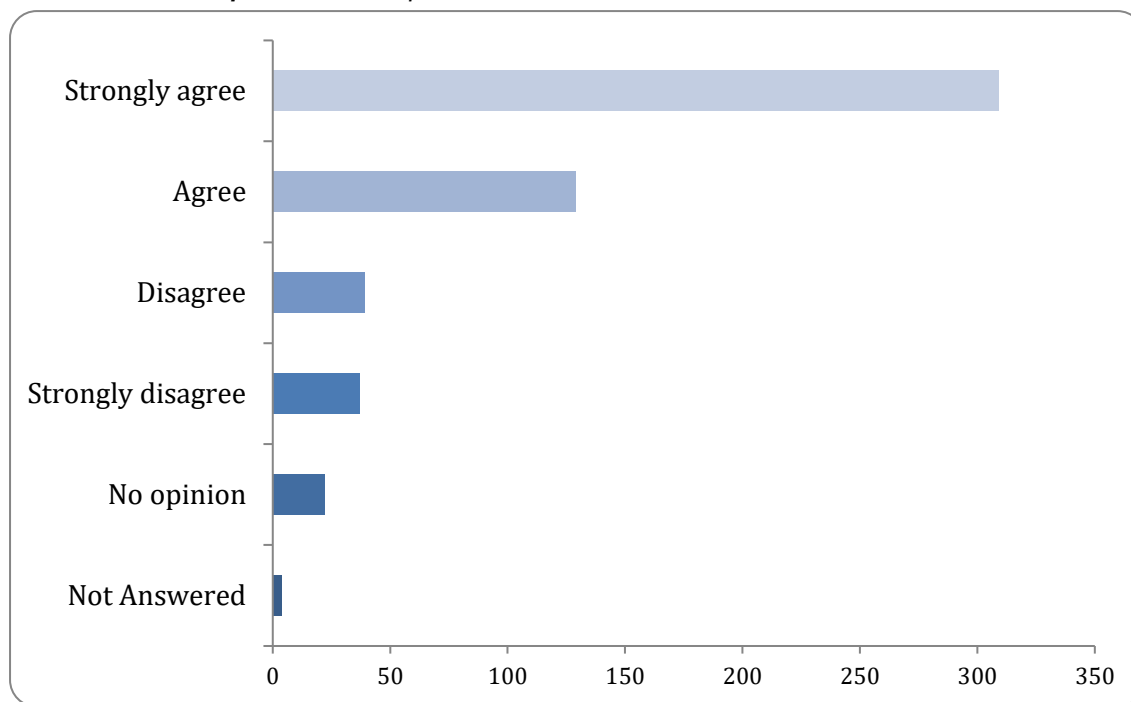
**Table 17: Level of agreement for aim 3 - working closely with a range of partners and stakeholders**

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	317	59%
Agree	139	26%
Disagree	26	5%
Strongly disagree	33	6%
No opinion	21	4%
Not Answered	4	1%



**Aim: Raise awareness about air quality in our communities and encourage behaviour change, including measures to improve indoor air quality**

There were **536 responses** to this question.

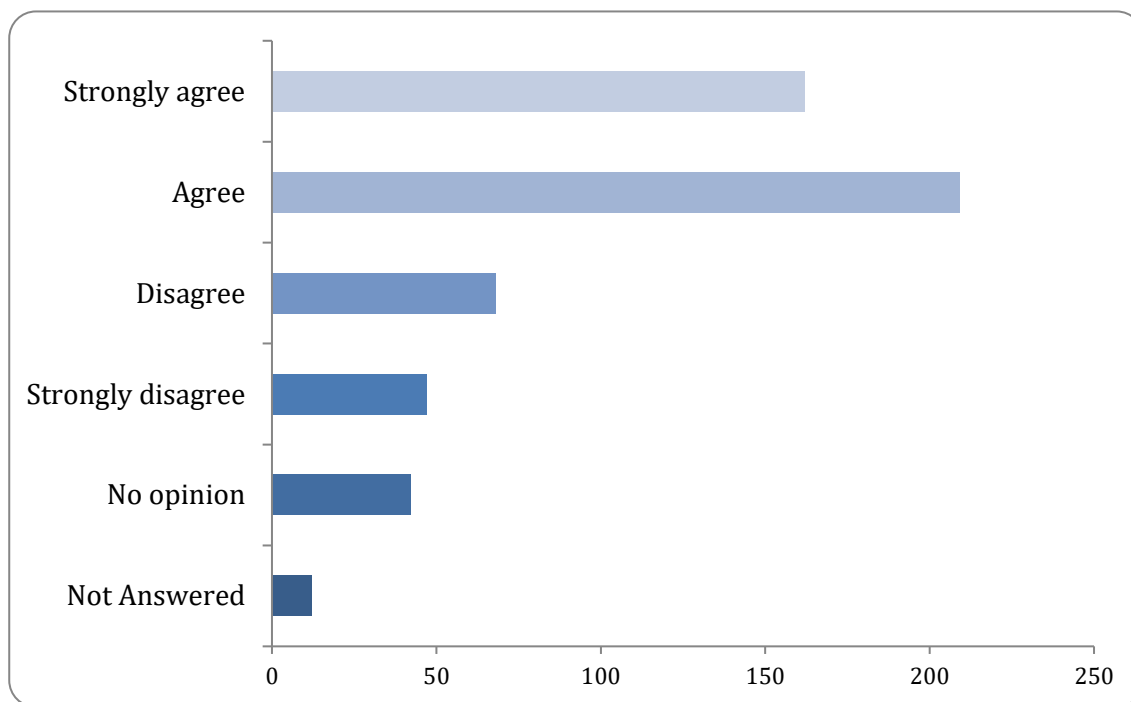


**Table 18: Level of agreement for aim 4 - raising awareness of air quality to encourage behaviour change**

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	309	57%
Agree	129	24%
Disagree	39	7%
Strongly disagree	37	7%
No opinion	22	4%
Not Answered	4	1%

**Question Nine: The Essex Air Quality Strategy sets out a series of ten overarching actions we plan to take to help improve air quality in Essex. Overall, to what extent do you agree the actions would help achieve our vision and improve air quality in Essex?**

*There were 528 responses to this question.*



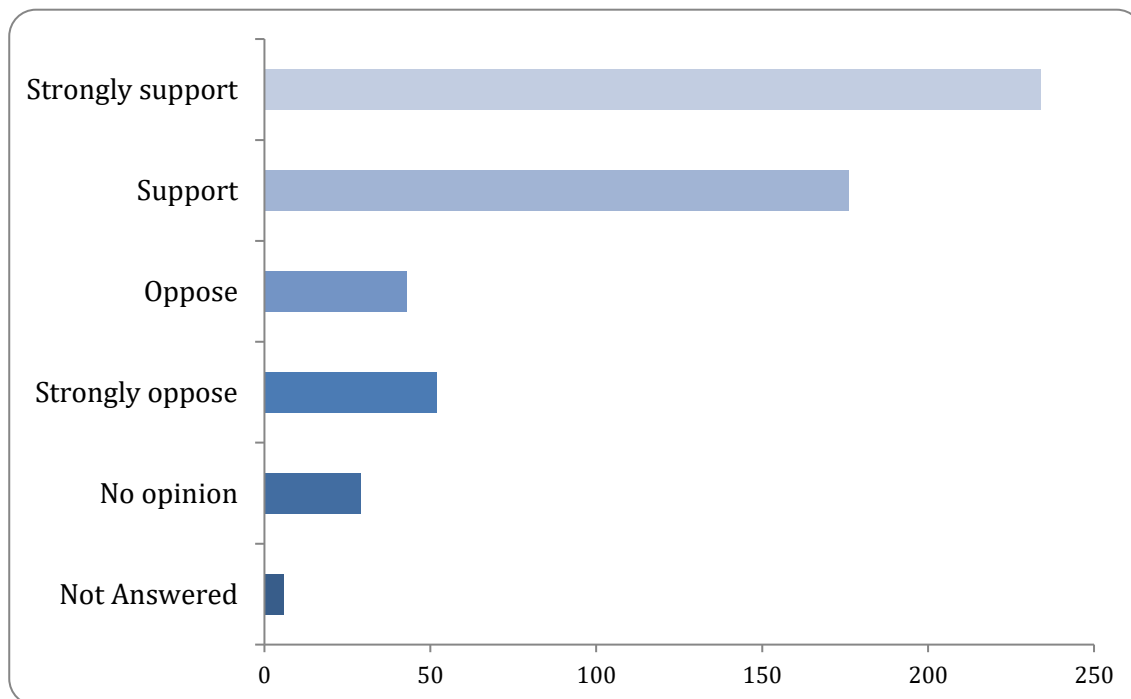
**Table 19: Level of agreement that overarching actions would help achieve vision and improve air quality in Essex**

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	162	30%
Agree	209	39%
Disagree	68	13%
Strongly disagree	47	9%
No opinion	42	8%
Not Answered	12	2%

**Question Ten: To what extent do you support the specific overarching actions we currently plan to take as part of the Essex Air Quality Strategy?**

*Action: We will encourage, enable and support the use of public transport and active travel modes, particularly for shorter trips or where they form a part of a longer journey*

There were **534 responses** to this question.



**Table 20: Support for encouraging, enabling and supporting the use of public transport and active travel**

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly support	234	43%
Support	176	33%
Oppose	43	8%
Strongly oppose	52	10%
No opinion	29	5%
Not Answered	6	1%

**Action: We will limit or reduce the adverse impacts of new developments and transport infrastructure on air quality and seek to minimise new exposure to air pollution**

There were **536 responses** to this question.

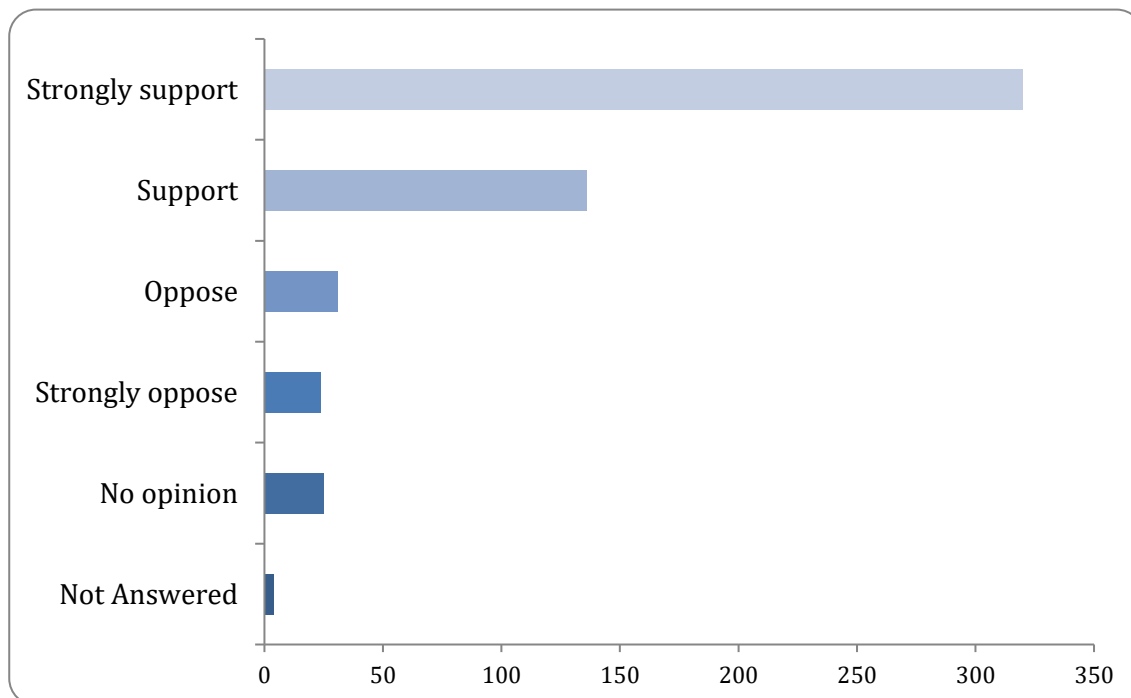
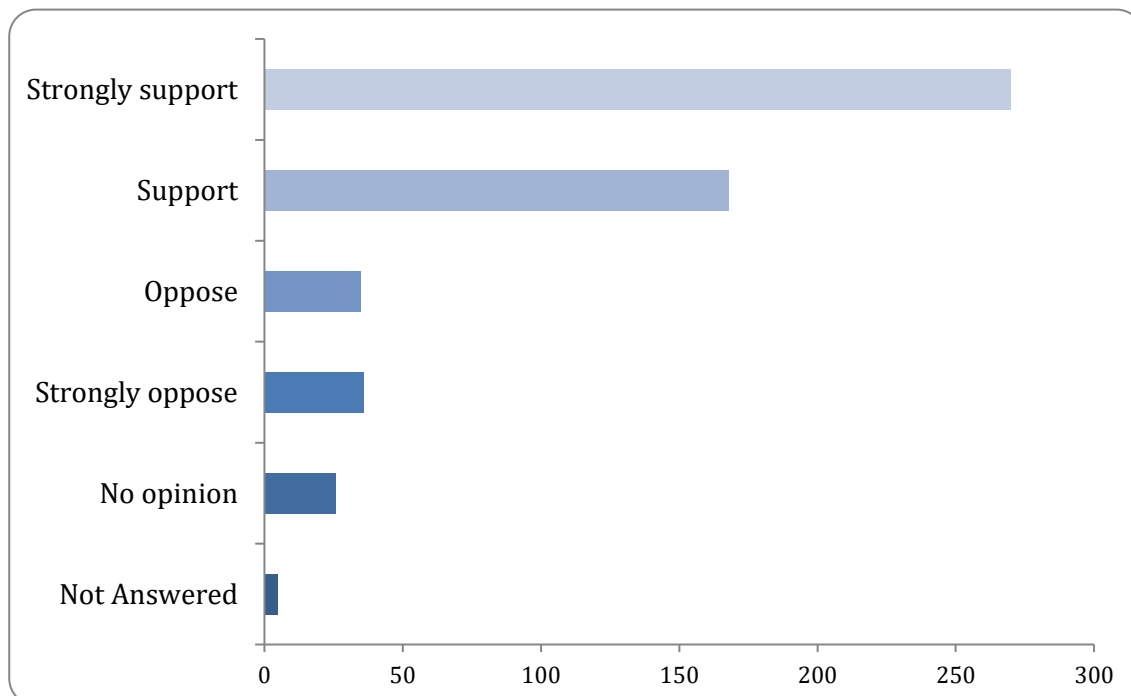


Table 21: Support for reducing the adverse impacts of new developments

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly support	320	59%
Support	136	25%
Oppose	31	6%
Strongly oppose	24	4%
No opinion	25	5%
Not Answered	4	1%

**Action: We will raise public awareness of air quality issues in Essex and the impacts of poor air quality on human health and, by doing so, seek to encourage behavioural change**

*There were 535 responses to this question.*



**Table 22: Support for raising public awareness of air quality issues to encourage behaviour change**

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly support	270	50%
Support	168	31%
Oppose	35	6%
Strongly oppose	36	7%
No opinion	26	5%
Not Answered	5	1%

**Action: We will identify, seek funding for, and implement measures to reduce air pollutant emissions, particularly in areas of Essex with poor air quality**

There were **534 responses** to this question.

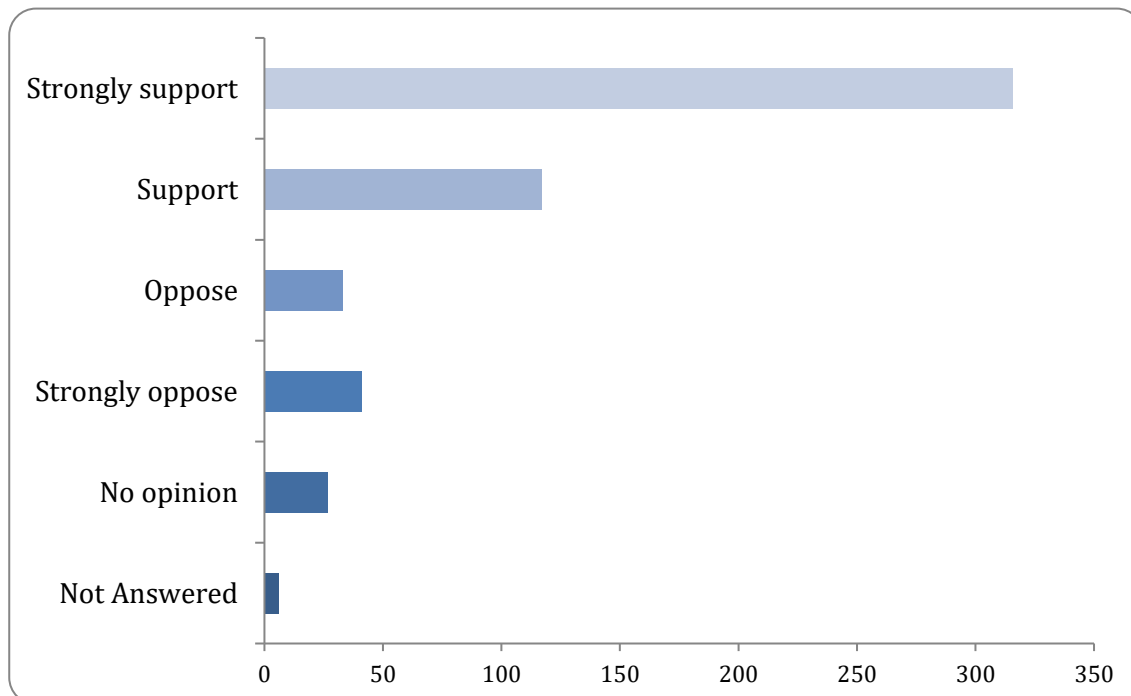
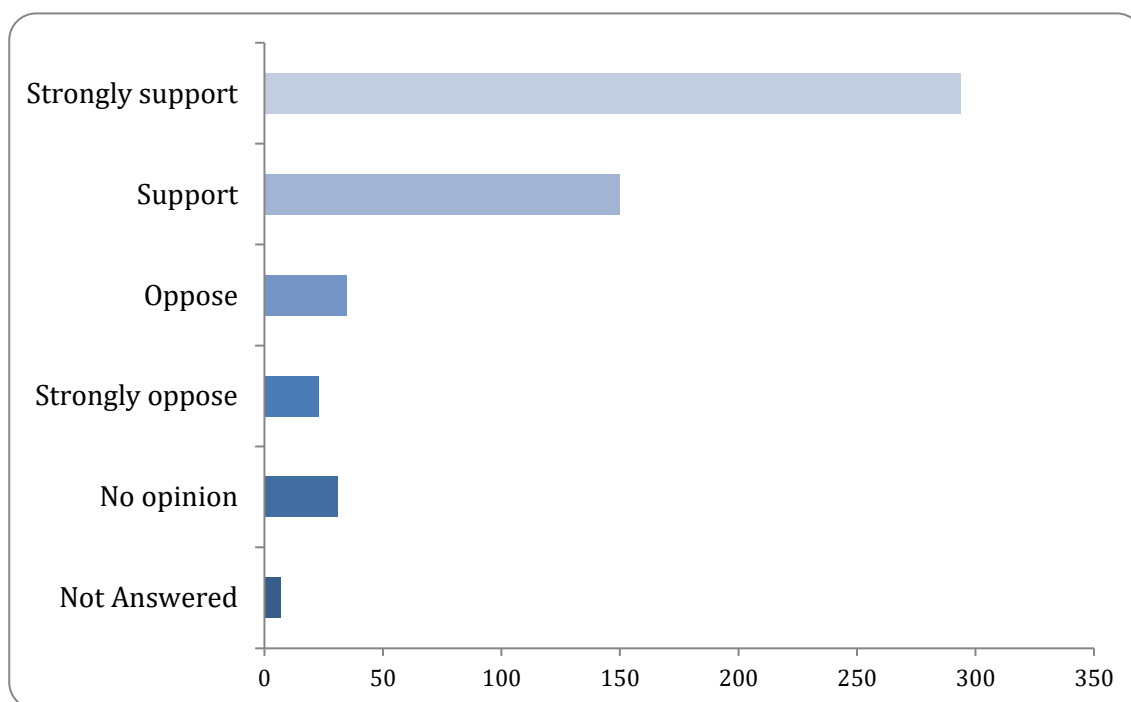


Table 23: Support for identifying and implementing measures to reduce air pollutant emissions

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly support	316	59%
Support	117	22%
Oppose	33	6%
Strongly oppose	41	8%
No opinion	27	5%
Not Answered	6	1%

**Action: We will lead by example by reducing the impact of our activities on air quality**

There were **533 responses** to this part of the question.

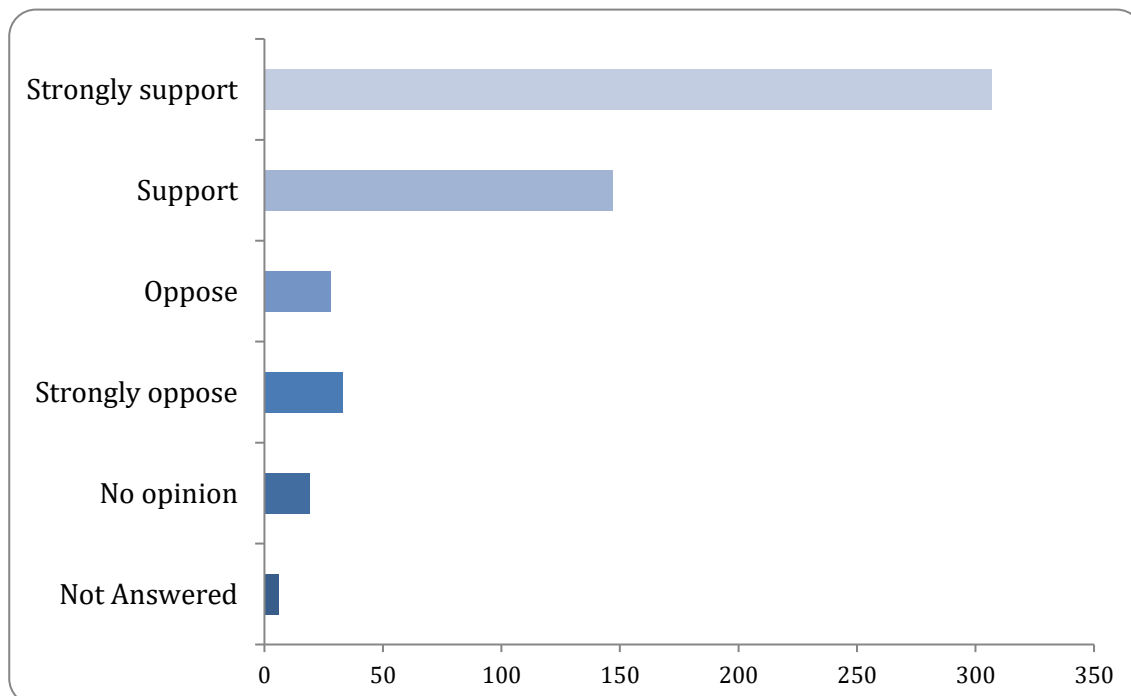


**Table 24: Support for leading by example by reducing the impact of our activities**

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly support	294	54%
Support	150	28%
Oppose	35	6%
Strongly oppose	23	4%
No opinion	31	6%
Not Answered	7	1%

**Action: We will work with relevant partner organisations, e.g. schools, the NHS, commercial premises, developers, workplaces, and National Highways, as well as local communities to improve air quality**

There were **534 responses** to this question.



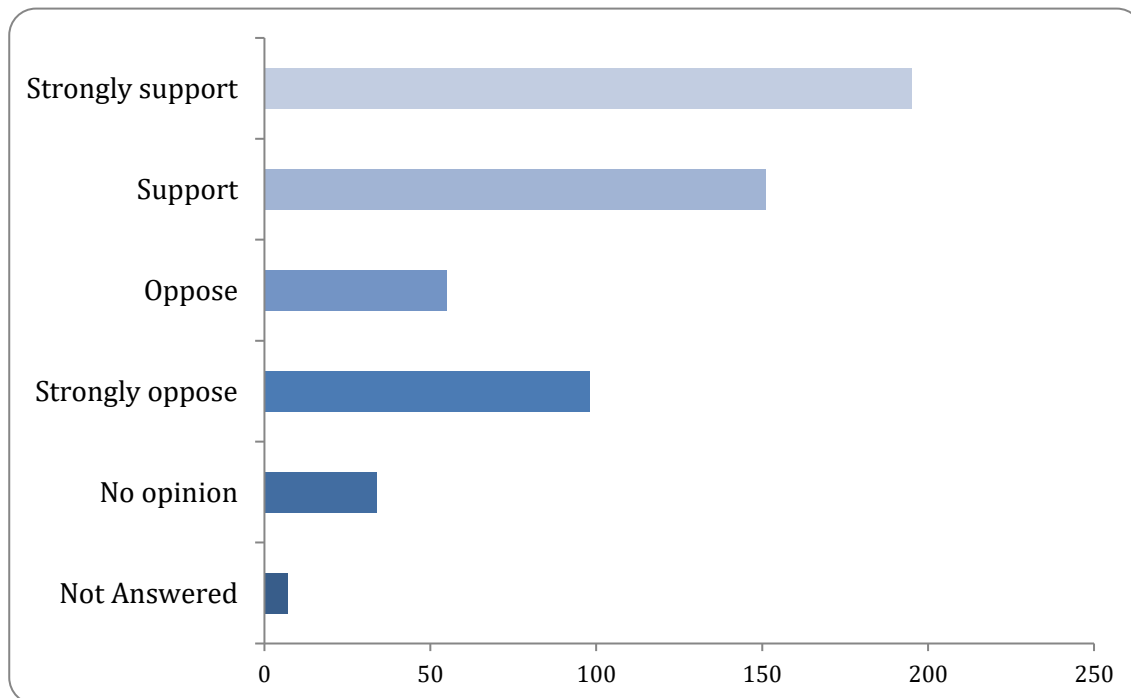
**Table 25: Support for working with relevant partner organisations developers, workplaces, National Highways and local communities**

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly support	307	57%
Support	147	27%
Oppose	28	5%
Strongly oppose	33	6%
No opinion	19	4%
Not Answered	6	1%



**Action: We will seek to encourage, enable and support the uptake of low emission and electric vehicles in Essex**

There were **533 responses** to this question.

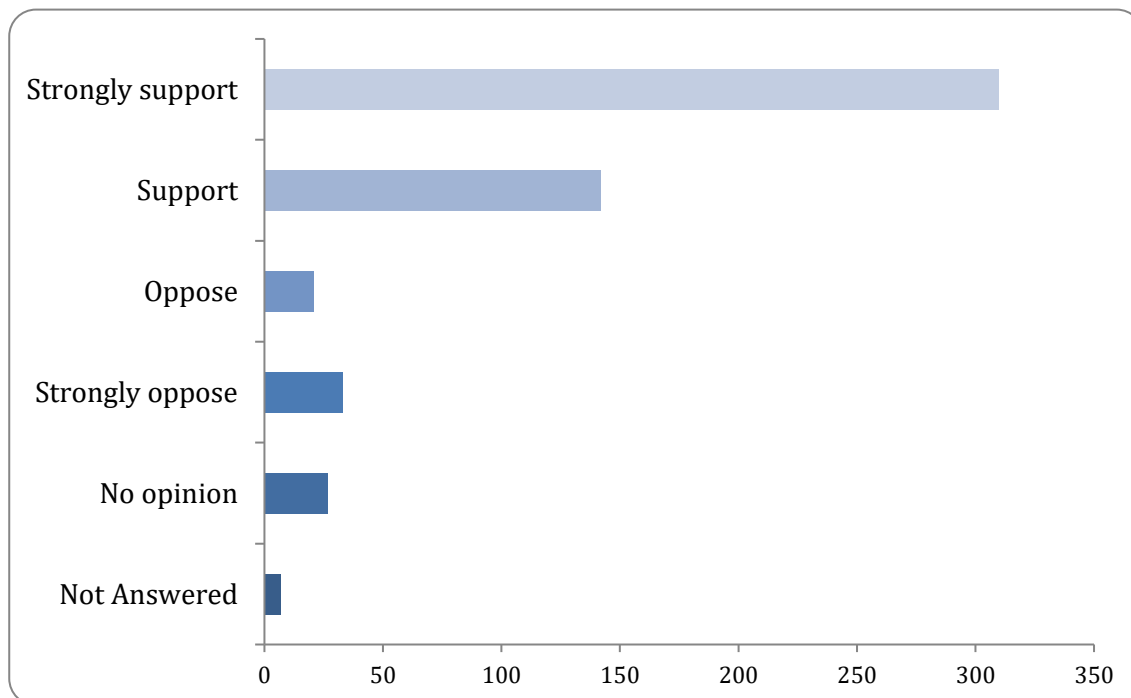


**Table 26: Support for seeking to encourage, enable and support the uptake of low emission and electric vehicles**

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly support	195	36%
Support	151	28%
Oppose	55	10%
Strongly oppose	98	18%
No opinion	34	6%
Not Answered	7	1%

**Action: We will work together to monitor and assess air quality and seek to improve air quality monitoring in Essex**

There were **533 responses** to this question.



**Table 27: Support for working together to monitor and assess air quality and seeking to improve air quality monitoring**

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly support	310	57%
Support	142	26%
Oppose	21	4%
Strongly oppose	33	6%
No opinion	27	5%
Not Answered	7	1%

**Action: We will look to install multi-functional green infrastructure in appropriate locations in Essex with the aim of improving air quality**

There were **532 responses** to this question.

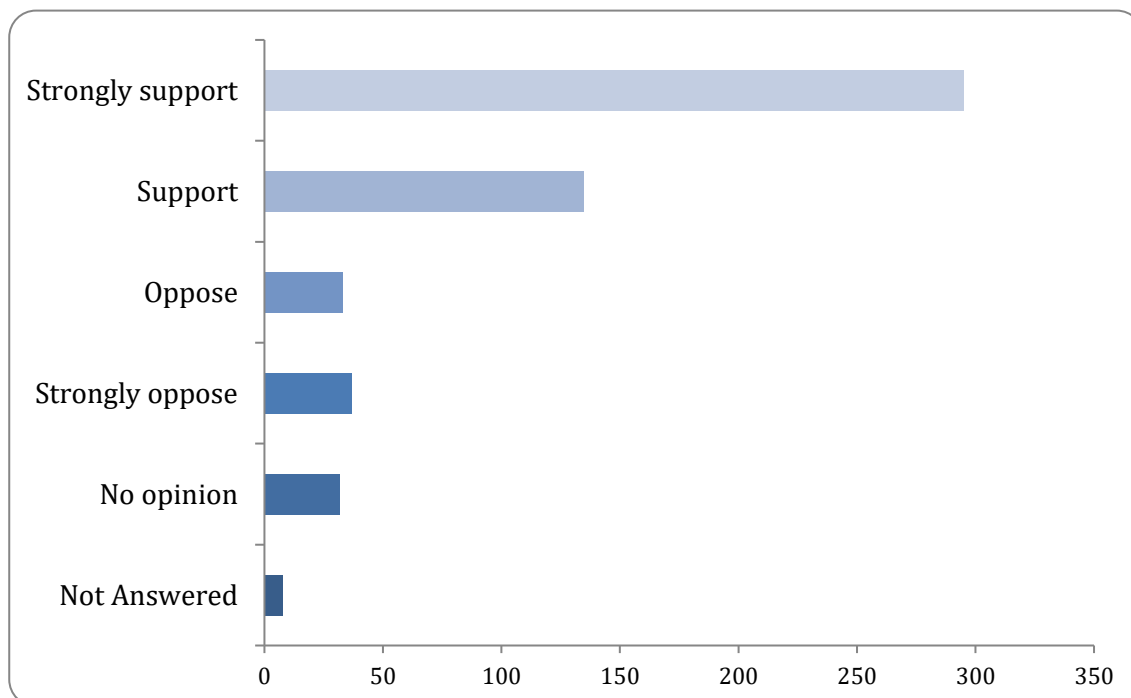
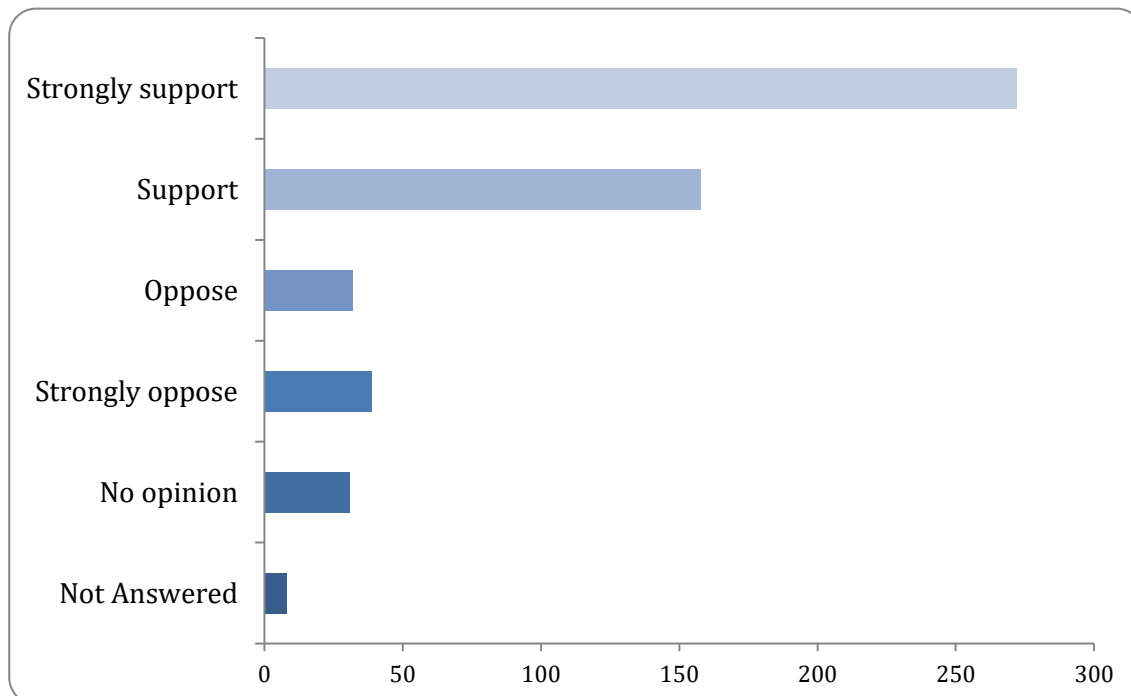


Table 28: Support for looking to install multi-functional green infrastructure in appropriate locations

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly support	295	55%
Support	135	25%
Oppose	33	6%
Strongly oppose	37	7%
No opinion	32	6%
Not Answered	8	1%

**Action:** *We will regularly engage with each other as local authorities and other partner organisations, in Essex regarding air quality related issues, and will seek to develop and implement Essex wide air quality initiatives*

There were **532 responses** to this question.



**Table 29: Support for regularly engaging with each other as local authorities and other partner organisation to develop and implement Essex wide initiatives**

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly support	272	50%
Support	158	29%
Oppose	32	6%
Strongly oppose	39	7%
No opinion	31	6%
Not Answered	8	1%

## 7. Responses to open question

**Question Eleven: Do you have any further comments about the draft Essex Air Quality Strategy or suggestions for other actions which could be taken to improve air quality in Essex?**

*There were 368 responses to this question.*

Question eleven gave respondents an opportunity to provide any further comments about the Essex Air Quality Strategy.

References made to specific projects, localised issues or matters outside the scope of the strategy have not been published in detail in this report. Any comments about individual locations, local authorities or projects have been passed on anonymously to the relevant teams and councils for their information and consideration.

Please note that some of the quotes included in the following sections may have included additional comments about other parts of the strategy, or separate issues or concerns which differ from the topic set out. For example, a comment may have talked about cycling, public transport and electric vehicles all in the same sentence. By splitting comments into themes, a comment may have been split up into different parts. We have tried to ensure such responses are still presented as the respondent intended. Please be assured all comments are taken onboard in full.

### Issues

A number of respondents made comments or expressed concerns about certain issues or topics, some of which were specifically air quality-related and some of which were broader. This short section of the report provides a very high-level summary of the issues raised.

A large number of people raised concerns about the air quality impacts of waste incineration, in particular the Rivenhall Integrated Waste Management Facility. The facility is owned and operated by Indaver Rivenhall Limited. All emissions to air, water and land are tightly regulated through the site's Environmental Permit which is issued, monitored, and controlled by the Environment Agency. Comments made about the facility have been shared anonymously with colleagues from Essex County Council.

Other issues commonly raised by respondents to the consultation included comments about perceived sources of air pollution in their local communities, such as farming, ports and airports (including concerns about proposed expansion of London Stansted Airport), idling vehicles (particularly around schools during drop-off and pick-up times), traffic congestion and wood burning.

### Actions

This section of the report summarises the comments people made more specifically about the actions we have set out in the draft Essex Air Quality Strategy or other actions they feel would help improve air quality in Essex.

#### Public transport

One of the main themes brought up by respondents when it came to actions was public transport.

A common comment was about the current level of services in Essex, which many respondents suggested discourages people from using public transport and needed improvement.

**[#4]** *"Commendable to encourage use of public transport, but need to improve service to acceptable level first."*

**[#26]** *"If you want to get more people using public transport there needs to be far better, affordable public transport."*

Some respondents specifically made reference to public transport in their own local areas and, in particular, the lack of services in rural parts of the county which meant they were forced to use their cars.

**[#34]** *"There is very little recognition that a large percentage of the population of Essex reside in rural communities with appalling public transport infrastructure. Residents are therefore forced to rely on private cars to access Schools, Health care, Shops etc."*

**[#42]** *"Many of us have no or very little reliable public transport. We rely on our cars to get about to live our lives."*

Some talked about the importance of ensuring bus routes and services are closely aligned to the places where people want to travel to and from.

**[#283]** *"Stop cutting bus routes and improve public transport to hospitals, clinics, schools and shopping centre."*

**[#354]** *"I am catching the bus to work now and would like to use it more, but the timetable needs more work to connect routes with other public transport and to be reliable."*

Another common comment was suggestions that local buses themselves were contributing to poor air quality. Many of the responses asked for buses to be upgraded to an electric fleet to help tackle this.

**[#71]** *"I would support use of public transport if the buses were electric - they are one of the main pollutants in my area."*

**[#115]** *"Public transport needs to be more environmentally friendly. Some of the local buses are very polluting."*

**[#265]** *"If you are serious about reducing traffic to tackle air pollution, one important agenda item is to invest in public transport (e.g. modern and punctual electric buses)..."*

## Residential developments

A number of responses to the consultation survey related to the topic of residential developments. A lot of these were in relation to concerns these developments bring more cars to the area and, therefore, more pollution.

*[#65] "More house building in the area is just going to make the traffic, and hence pollution, worse."*

*[#77] "More houses = more traffic= more pollution."*

However, some suggested that if there were more people then there would be a better case for public transport improvements.

*[#56] "More housing leads to higher population density, which leads to higher use of public transport systems (and ideally, better public transport systems)."*

In contrast, other respondents felt new housing developments often did not come with the required infrastructure which would help alleviate such issues. Some suggested there needed to be greater consideration given to whether the necessary infrastructure was in place before consent was given for new developments.

*[#110] "New houses get built but the infrastructure to support this is not put in place resulting in traffic jams..."*

*[#124] "We need to oppose developments along roads with no infrastructure improvements. Our roads are too busy and queuing traffic causes poor air quality... New developments should include road infrastructure away from current residential areas."*

Other respondents simply suggested that they did not believe that air quality was properly taken into account in considering proposed new developments.

*[#248] "We are inundated with new developments either no consideration to air quality."*

*[#315] "Be very strict in requiring assessments as part of planning applications. Survey all public buildings in the County AQ partnership and install measures to improve indoor air quality plus install monitors in schools, health centres, care homes etc."*

*[#26] "All new builds should be totally environmentally friendly. Stop allowing unlimited housing developments."*

## Road infrastructure

While not directly related to air quality, a number of respondents made comments about road infrastructure and how they felt improvements to roads could have a knock-on impact in improving air quality or simply that road improvements should be a bigger priority.

**[#121]** *"Out of date roads need to be updated to improve traffic flow."*

**[#278]** *"I feel there are more urgent infrastructure priorities... such as road conditions..."*

Others suggested slightly more specific improvements and how they felt they would help.

**[#184]** *"Improve road layouts to reduce traffic jams."*

**[#319]** *"My main criticism is the lack of ambition behind major infrastructure projects to reduce pollution, congestion and enable extra green spaces within our towns."*

**[#111]** *"Build bypasses for the villages for all your new developments."*

One topic raised was about lowering speed limits to reduce emissions and improve safety.

**[#352]** *"Please reduce speed limits on roads...from 60 to 50 mph. It can help reduce emissions, noise pollution and improve safety."*

Some respondents suggested this was particularly important near places such as schools and children's play areas, and in areas where people are more likely to walk or cycle.

**[#175]** *"I strongly support speed limits being reduced to a default of 20mph in all areas where people live, work, learn and play. Slower speed limits can encourage people into active travel as they feel less afraid of being hit by cars and this can improve air quality, as well as many other benefits."*

## **Electric vehicles (EVs)**

One way of helping to reduce air pollution is by using electric vehicles. However, there were some respondents who were critical of the potential impact of EVs, particularly because of wider environmental concerns.

**[#266]** *"Not in favour of electric cars as the batteries are more dangerous to the environment."*

**[#296]** *"I do not believe electric vehicles are anywhere close to being as environmentally friendly as they are portrayed to be."*

Many of the responses under this theme also highlighted the challenges and barriers they felt people were experiencing in switching to electric vehicles.

**[#48]** *"Electric cars are unaffordable to people on low wages."*



**[#72]** *"installing public chargers is important for when people are on the move, but charging solely from public chargers is more expensive."*

**[#113]** *"I live in a first floor flat so charging an electric car at home is impossible. And to park up and charge my car at a service station isn't realistic owing to charging times being hours at a time."*

Others suggested improvements to EV infrastructure and potential incentives which they felt would help make it easier or more appealing for people to switch to electric vehicles.

**[#28]** *"ensuring there are more EV chargers and homes can get charging for EVs across pavements quickly."*

**[#169]** *"sufficient charging points installed at every public car park and public spaces."*

**[#274]** *"Offering more incentives for residents to switch to electric vehicles, such as subsidies, tax rebates, or priority parking."*

### **Awareness raising campaigns**

Another key theme was suggestions about the need for more awareness raising campaigns about air pollution, its impacts and what actions can people take to help.

**[#3]** *"Create specific campaigns to educate the public and encourage them to do their best and be active participants in improving their local area air quality."*

**[#274]** *"Running targeted campaigns to educate the public on the health impacts of air pollution and how they can contribute to cleaner air."*

The suggested focus of these campaigns included a number of different issues which are included elsewhere in this report, including idling, air quality monitoring and wood burners.

Other people specifically suggested the need for more information on indoor air quality, which is a key issue highlighted in the strategy.

**[#141]** *"Would welcome information on how to improve air quality in the home."*

**[#338]** *"More publicity /education about what causes household air pollution."*

Although there were a number of people suggesting the need to raise awareness of air quality issues, some questioned the impact of awareness campaigns.

**[#155]** *"I know there are posters and advertising about idling engines but I don't see people changing this behaviour so any way of working on this would also be great."*

There were also suggestions to improve access to information about air quality. Some respondents specifically wanted to find out levels of pollution in their own areas and others felt there could be a case for displaying these levels at the roadside in priority areas, such as schools.

It should be noted that some live and historical air quality monitoring data is available from the air quality map on the [EssexAir website](#).

*[#323] "Higher prominence of pollution levels. Shown on digital display on approach roads into and centre of towns, within 200m of primary and secondary schools and ad hoc locations."*

*[#291] "More information on how we as locals can access information on air quality in our own local areas please."*

One frequent suggestion was that there should be a focus on schools, with a need to understand and monitor the air quality issues around young children.

*[#163] "We need to look at and improve air quality in schools, hospitals and other public buildings."*

Others felt schools could provide a good way to raise awareness of air quality issues.

*[#97] "In schools it would be so easy to run a county-wide competition with pupils being taught the problems of cars idling causing air pollution..."*

*[#172] "There should be a much stronger engagement on this topic with all schoolchildren - perhaps awards / recognition - to those who make a difference."*

Some respondents went into more detail about the positive impacts they felt engagement with schoolchildren could have in educating them on the issue and equipping them with the knowledge to make more informed choices as they move into adulthood.

*[#294] "Work closely with schools to educate students about air quality and the positive impact of mode change can have on reducing pollution from transport."*

*[#298] "Projects in schools to ensure children and young people understand the issues and aims and make environmentally aware decisions moving forwards."*

## **Air quality monitoring**

Another key theme raised in people's comments was a desire for more air quality monitoring in Essex. This included suggestions for more monitoring relating to major road projects in Essex, Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs), waste management proposals and places where vulnerable people spend time, such as schools and healthcare facilities.

*[#50] "I would strongly suggest that more air quality monitoring is undertaken with more AQMA's established."*

**[#239]** *"Air quality must be measured in more than three streets in the city centre and "selected schools". It should be measured around EVERY school and that will give you much more precise data for most streets."*

**[#315]** *"install measures to improve indoor air quality plus install monitors in schools, health centres, care homes etc."*

In addition to the need for more monitoring, some respondents suggested making air quality data more accessible, such as through the EssexAir website or Air Text.

**[#185]** *"More obvious monitoring that can be seen being done for the public and wider publication of the results."*

**[#63]** *"Air Text could be extended across all of Essex please."*

**[#335]** *"Increased public awareness is key. Air Quality alert system through the Essex Air website."*

Some respondents suggested using monitoring data to help prioritise areas of Essex where action is most needed.

**[#21]** *"Maybe have an aim on monitoring improvement of air quality as local authorities and direct attention to highly polluted priority areas to make change."*

### Active travel

One of the notable actions which was suggested as important to help improved air quality was encouraging and enabling walking and cycling, particularly in relation to travel to schools.

**[#8]** *"Encourage children to walk to school as traffic at these times is worse."*

**[#190]** *"More should be done to encourage walking to school, setting up of school streets to reduce air pollution around schools and encourage use of public transport and "walking buses".*

However, some other respondents had concerns about safety or a lack of active travel infrastructure, especially in more rural areas.

**[#44]** *"Many residents drive short journeys because it is so dangerous to cross the road."*

**[#360]** *"I can't cycle into villages... because there is no joined up cycling network."*

**[#47]** *"To encourage cycle use, then safe and adequate cycle lanes or cycle route need to be provided. It is not safe to cycle in rural Essex."*

Many people indicated they wanted to see improvements to footpaths, cycleways and other active travel infrastructure.

*[#72] "...to increase the uptake of walking, cycling and public transport. I would like to see specific commitments from all councils to increase safe cycling infrastructure, improve pavements and road crossing..."*

*[#94] "I would like to see improvements to roads... where there are no cycle routes or room on pavements for pedestrians to walk."*

*[#185] "More cycle paths and routes away, as far as possible from heavily used roads."*

*[#265] "improve the network of foot/cycle paths to attract more users."*

A number of these respondents talked about integrating green space with walking and cycling facilities.

*[#121] "More greenery next to roads and residential areas to soak up pollution. Improve footways, making them wider and greener."*

*[#138] "Pavements should be separated by greenery from roads to make it safer to walk/cycle with children, reduce pollution from the road next to you and make it a more pleasant experience."*

## Green spaces

There were also several responses which talked more specifically about the importance of green spaces, both from an air quality perspective as well as a wider environmental viewpoint.

*[#52] "More green spaces with trees would be good."*

*[#214] "Protecting existing green belt land and existing green spaces."*

Some respondents suggested green spaces and green infrastructure could be particularly useful in urban areas and would help in managing air pollution.

*[#274] "Increasing green spaces and urban forestry to help absorb pollutants and improve air quality."*

*[#320] "More trees in urban areas would improve air quality."*

*[#342] "We could benefit from a massive increase in green measures, such as green corridors, to help combat pollution, wetland areas that could absorb and capture carbon and wooded areas using, for example, plane trees."*

## Other notable themes

We also noted other comments that either were not raised as frequently or fell outside the scope of the strategy. These have been read, considered and, where appropriate, shared anonymously with the relevant teams or local authorities.

Some respondents commented that the number of ports and airports in Essex mean the county is an important hub for freight and haulage, which brings challenges with pollution and air quality. Others talked about major infrastructure projects in the Essex area and the possibility of these adding to congestion and exacerbating air quality issues.

In terms of ideas to help address air quality, some people suggested clubs, parking restrictions and pedestrianisation to help encourage behaviour change.

Others suggested that the Essex Air Consortium should lobby central government to invest in new research, technologies, alternative energy sources and a stronger mandate for making air quality and wider environmental issues primary considerations for every decision made by all levels of government.

A small number of respondents referenced the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) for London, with some suggesting that such schemes should be considered in other areas and some expressing concerns about ULEZ and making clear they would be opposed to expansion of the zone or any similar scheme in Essex.

Some respondents raised much wider concerns about the impacts of certain activities on wider environmental issues such as climate change, including the actions of other regions and even countries. Concerns were also raised about the wider global increase in air travel.

Although the draft Essex Air Quality Strategy does reference the health impacts of air quality, a small number of respondents suggested the connection between air pollution and specific conditions, such as dementia, should be highlighted. There was also a suggestion that there should be greater explanation about health inequalities and why poor air quality is more likely to be found in areas of deprivation.

## 7.1 Email responses

We also received ten responses via email into the scheme inbox. These all came as qualitative responses so do not change the data presented in Section 7 - Responses to closed questions.

These responses have been taken as an answer to the question eleven **'Do you have any further comments about the draft Essex Air Quality Strategy or suggestions for other actions which could be taken to improve air quality in Essex?'**

Notable topics of feedback from these emails included air quality monitoring, particularly in areas vulnerable to poor air quality, the impact of the strategy on Local Plans, national planning policy and developments in the future, road infrastructure, and the issues of domestic log burners and waste management facilities.

## 8. Conclusion

The public consultation has provided an excellent insight into the public's views about air quality in Essex and demonstrated a good level of support for the draft Essex Air Quality Strategy. The feedback will be used to help improve and finalise the strategy and determine initial priority actions to improve air quality in Essex.

From section 6 we can see that action to improve air quality in Essex has broad support. 82% of respondents felt that improving air quality was important (67% very important and 15% important), while 75% were concerned about the impacts of poor air quality on the health of themselves, their family and friends (54% very concerned and 21% fairly concerned).

Positively, we also saw strong support specifically for key elements of the draft Essex Air Quality Strategy itself. When asked about our draft vision, a significant 83% of respondents were supportive (58% strongly support and 25% support).

When asked about our individual aims:

- 88% agreed with our aim to limit the impact of new developments (65% strongly agreed and 23% agreed)
- 85% agreed with us working with other partners to improve air quality (59% strongly agreed and 26% agreed)
- 82% agreed with councils doing what is within their power to improve air quality (60% strongly agreed and 22% agreed)
- 81% agreed with raising awareness and encouraging behaviour change (57% strongly agreed and 24% agreed)

In addition, 69% of respondents agreed that, overall, our planned actions would help achieve our vision and improve air quality in Essex (30% strongly agreed and 39% agreed).

There was even more positive support for all of the actions individually, with all but one achieving a higher percentage of support than when asked about them collectively. Air quality monitoring, limiting impacts of development and working with partners all had 84% support. Leading by example, raising awareness of air quality issues, utilising green infrastructure, identifying funding to reduce emissions and working on Essex-wide initiatives all had between 80% and 82% support. Encouraging public transport and active travel modes had 76% support and encouraging low emissions vehicles had 64% support.

When given the opportunity to comment on the strategy and/or air quality as an open response, many people raised issues they felt were relevant to air quality either in their specific area of the county or more generally. These issues included major road infrastructure projects happening or planned in Essex, concerns about a waste management facility and the growth of residential developments. People also raised issues of other people's behaviour, such as a perceived increase in idling vehicles and individuals using wood burners.

Other feedback was made specifically about our planned actions or other suggested actions for the project team to consider. This included increasing air quality monitoring across Essex, investing in campaigning and education about air quality, ensuring there are more green spaces, switching to

electric buses, and improvements to road infrastructure, footpaths, cycle paths and public transport.

Overall, feedback on the draft Essex Air Quality Strategy was very positive. Many of the open-ended comments received during the consultation raised concerns about wider matters and potential sources of air pollution and these have been reviewed and, where the matters are more localised, the comments have been shared with the relevant local authorities. Feedback specifically in relation to the strategy is now being considered to support us in improving and finalising it. Other recommendations for future air quality initiatives and suggestions about the implementation of the strategy will also be taken on board.







## Appendix B. Newsletters

Your Essex newsletter article (February 2025):

### Have your say

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### Have your say on new Essex Air Quality Strategy

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A public consultation on a new [Essex Air Quality Strategy](#) is now live and we want your views. More than one in 20 deaths in Essex are estimated to be linked in some part to air pollution and it is the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK.

The new strategy has been jointly developed by councils across Essex, Southend and Thurrock through the Essex Air Quality Consortium. It sets out actions to improve air quality and help reduce the impacts of air pollution on people's health. [Have your say on the draft Essex Air Quality strategy](#) before Sunday 2 March 2025.

**Essex Climate Action newsletter article (January 2025):**

**Have your say on new Essex Air Quality Strategy**



A public consultation on a new [Essex Air Quality Strategy](#) is now live and Essex Councils want your views. More than one in 20 deaths in Essex are estimated to be linked in some part to air pollution and it is the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK. Air pollution reduces life expectancy by causing heart and lung diseases and is connected to other health impacts, such as dementia.

The new Essex Air Quality Strategy has been jointly developed by councils across Essex, Southend and Thurrock through the Essex Air Quality Consortium. It sets out actions to improve air quality and help reduce the impacts of air pollution on people's health.

Have your say on the draft strategy by completing the [public consultation survey](#).



## Appendix C. Advertising

### LocalIQ/Newsquest:

### Reach:

27 Jan 2025 - 23 Feb 2025

**JACOBS UK LTD**

**Public Invited To Shape New Strategy To Improve Air Quality In Essex**

Residents, businesses and organisations across Essex are encouraged to have their say on a new joint strategy to improve air quality. Share your feedback by 2 March 2025.

[Find Out More](#)