

Air Quality Policy Update

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Scottish Government

Scottish Air Quality Annual Seminar 2025

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Cleaner Air for Scotland 2

- Cleaner Air for Scotland 2 – current Scottish air quality strategy published in July 2021.
- c. 80 actions to deliver further air quality improvements - including high profile policies such as introduction of Low Emission Zones in Scotland's four biggest cities - vast majority of these already completed.
- The 2024/25 CAFS 2 annual progress report will be published in June.
- Now starting to think about what comes after CAFS 2.
- Public engagement will be a key part of this.

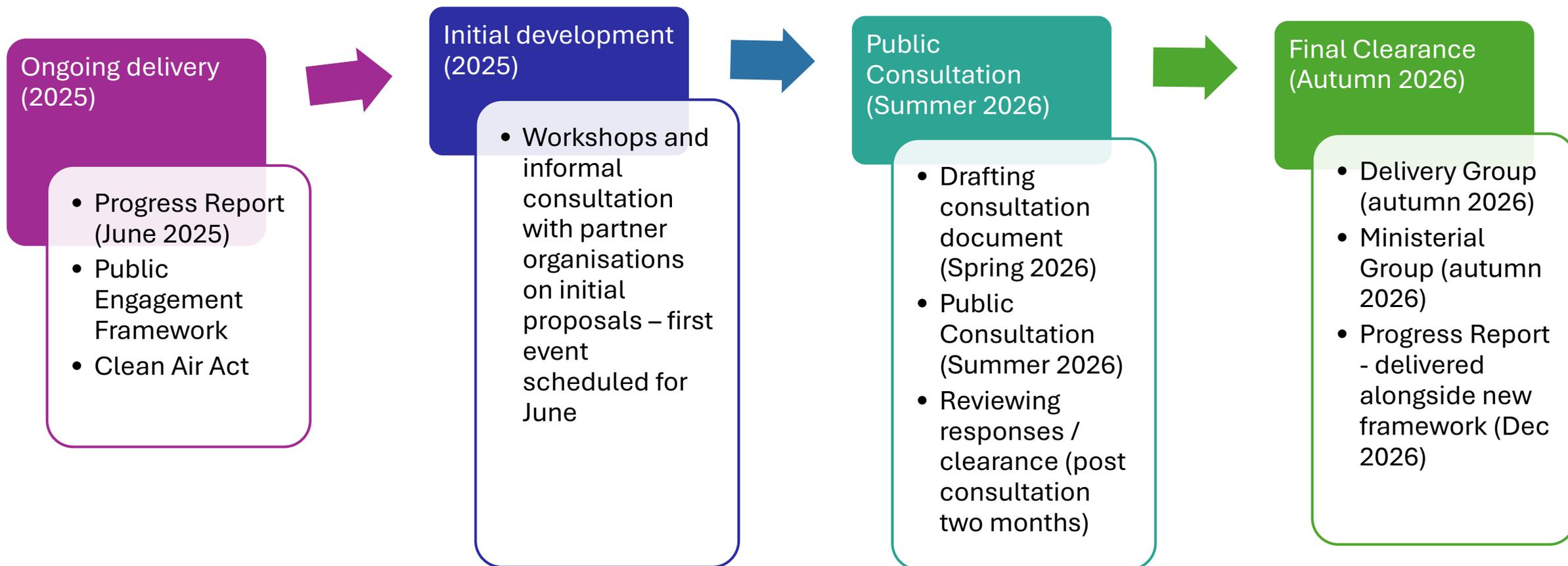


Air Quality Delivery Framework for Scotland 2045

Supporting our ambition to have the best air quality in Europe



Next steps on Air Quality



Next Steps on Air Quality - what are we aiming for...

✗ Repeating all evidence on issues for air quality.

✗ Extensive list of actions for all aspects of air quality

✗ A theoretical strategy with no new actions

- ✓ High level narrative on the drivers of air pollution, and policies to deliver the change
- ✓ Evidence on actions that will lead to measurable improvement in air quality
- ✓ A Framework, that:
 - ✓ Sets out our national aims and objectives, priorities and approach
 - ✓ Builds on and links to related strategic plans, identifies gaps and where there is added value in collective action
 - ✓ Has flexibility to update future action in response to new challenges



Key Drivers 1

- **Cleaner Air for Scotland 2 (CAFS2)** expires in 2026. A replacement and potentially new approach is needed for the medium and longer term.
- Updated **World Health Organisation** air quality guidelines were published in September 2021. For nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) the new guideline represents a 75% reduction compared to the current Scottish objective and for fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) a 50% reduction.
- A **new EU ambient air quality Directive** was formally adopted in October 2024, including tighter standards for the key air quality pollutants.
- **Environmental Standards Scotland's** Improvement Report on NO₂ and analytical report on PM set out a series of recommendations.
- **National Emission Ceilings** to be met by 2030.



Key Drivers 2

- Scotland's Climate Change Plan to achieve net zero by 2045. Effective policy coordination can deliver co-benefits for both air pollutant and greenhouse gas reduction.
- The EU's longer term Zero Pollution Action Plan, which sets out a vision for 2050 where air pollution is reduced to levels no longer considered harmful to human health and natural ecosystems.
- The three core focuses of health reform in Scotland of improving population health, reducing health inequalities and care system sustainability. This links to Scotland's population health challenges including an ageing population, the projected increase in the future burden of disease and, in our most disadvantaged communities, falling life expectancy and healthy life expectancy.
- Other Scottish Government plans and policies, for example the Early Years Framework which aims to give all children in Scotland the best start in life. Air pollution can impact on the health and development of children before birth and have long-lasting effects on health and wellbeing.



Air quality – emissions and concentrations

Emissions

- Regulated primarily on a joint UK wide basis under the Emission Ceilings Directive which forms part of retained EU law.
- Current emission ceilings to be met by 2020 and each year subsequently, with new tougher limits for 2030.

Concentrations

- Regulated under two sets of legislation:
 - Ambient Air Quality Directive – also part of retained EU law and responsibility of central government.
 - Local Air Quality Management under the Environment Act 1995 and associated regulations – responsibility of local authorities.
- Regulation of air pollutant emissions and concentrations is through separate but related legislative regimes.
- Plans and strategies to reduce emissions and concentrations have also tended to be separate, even though in practice the policies themselves tend to be the same.
- Aim to establish a more coordinated and overarching approach to tackling emissions and concentrations.



PM and NO₂ objectives

Annual average concentrations

Pollutants	SG current objective	WHO 2005 guidelines	WHO 2021 guidelines	EU new directive 2030	Defra's current objective 2030
PM10	18	20	15	20	40
PM2.5	10	10	5	10	10 (2040)
NO ₂	40	40	10	20	40



Air Quality Public Engagement and Behaviours Framework

Supporting our ambition to have the best air quality in Europe



Our Framework for Engagement: vision

Our vision for Scotland:

Scotland has the best air quality in Europe – a quality of air that aims to protect and enhance health, wellbeing and the environment

Our engagement vision:

Everyone in Scotland is **aware of the impact air pollution** has on our health and environment and **understands and contributes** to Scotland's response to improving air quality and reducing exposure



Cleaner Air for Scotland 2: Actions

Outcome: the Scottish **public are aware of air pollution issues** and **empowered to make behaviour changes** that contribute towards improving air quality and reducing exposure

short term action (to 2022)

- The Scottish Government will commission a baseline survey of current awareness amongst the Scottish public of air pollution health effects and source contributors.

long term action (to 2026)

- Scottish Government will continue to support Clean Air Day and other activities promoting raising awareness of air pollution.

medium term action (to 2024)

- Scottish Government will actively link with other agencies and organisations that are not air quality specific, but which deliver programmes having co-benefits for air quality improvements and behavioural change, such as Cycling Scotland, Sustrans and Living Streets.
- The Scottish Government will develop a public engagement strategy on air quality in Scotland, taking into account the recommendations from the evidence review.



Our Framework for Engagement: strategic objectives

Three pillars underpinning the framework:

To deliver our vision we have framed this under three strategic objectives:

Understand

Communicate Air
Quality

People are aware of the action that everyone can take to improve air pollution and understand how it relates to their lives

Participate

Enabling Participation
in Policy Design

People actively participate in shaping inclusive policies that support air quality

Act

Encouraging Action

Taking action on air quality is normalised and encouraged in households, communities and places across Scotland



Guiding Principles for Engagement: Air Quality

To support the framework we want to develop a set of guiding principles for public engagement:

- Our approach will be **inclusive** and accessible to all
- Our approach will **put people first** and place people at the heart of what we do
- We will listen to and engage with experts to ensure an **evidence-based** approach
- We will encourage a **participative** society with two-way dialogue on air quality
- We will take a **positive** approach that outlines a clear vision for Scotland that promotes the health and environmental benefits
- We will be **open and transparent** to make sure people can see and understand the benefits of our actions



In summary

We will:

- Continue to implement the remaining CAFS2 actions during 2025 and 2026, with a particular focus on our public engagement strategy.
- Publish the next CAFS2 annual progress report in June 2025.
- Take forward our post CAFS2 proposals and start to engage with partner organisations during 2025, with a workshop planned for June – further details to follow.



Thank you for listening and any questions?

