

Proposal for a Consultation to Designate the Whole Borough of Sandwell as a Smoke Control Area

Sophie Morris, MSc, BSc (Hons), AMIEnvSc

Elizabeth Stephens, MSc, BSc (Hons), MCIEH



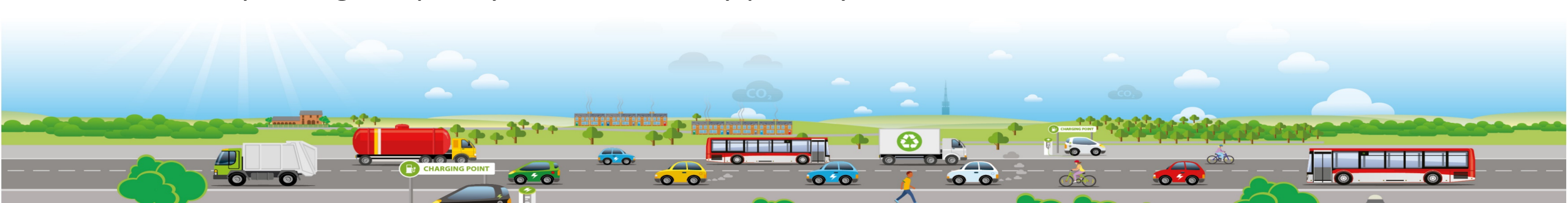
Agenda

- Air Pollution in Sandwell
- What is a Smoke Control Area?
- Why Solid Fuel Burning Stoves and Open Fireplaces are Harmful to Health
- Next Steps...



Sandwell has an air pollution problem

- The main air pollutants -nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5})- are **too high in many parts of the borough**.
 - Poor air quality has severe impacts on the health of our residents from the very young to the very old.
- PM_{2.5} enters the lungs and causes coughs, dizziness, inflamed airways and shortness of breath.
 - When it enters the blood stream it increases the risk of pneumonia, COPD, lung cancer, heart disease and stroke.
 - It can impact on pregnancy, the development of children's lungs as well as causing dementia and early eyesight loss.
- Sandwell's Climate Change and Air Quality Consultation (2020) found that **70% strongly agreed** that improving air quality should be a key priority for Sandwell MBC



Sources of Air Pollution

- Air pollution is generated by many different sources
 - e.g. traffic, industrial activities, power generation and domestic heating/burning
 - **12%** of PM2.5 comes from road traffic but **38%** comes from domestic burning
- Indoor air pollution
 - A single fireplace operating for an hour and burning 4.5kg of wood will generate **4,300 times more** carcinogenic polyaromatic hydrocarbons (**cancer causing chemicals**) than 30 cigarettes
- One measure that has not yet been fully utilised is to declare the whole Borough of Sandwell as a Smoke Control Area (SCA)
 - A Smoke Control Area is designed to minimise the release of harmful smoke from chimneys used by homes and businesses

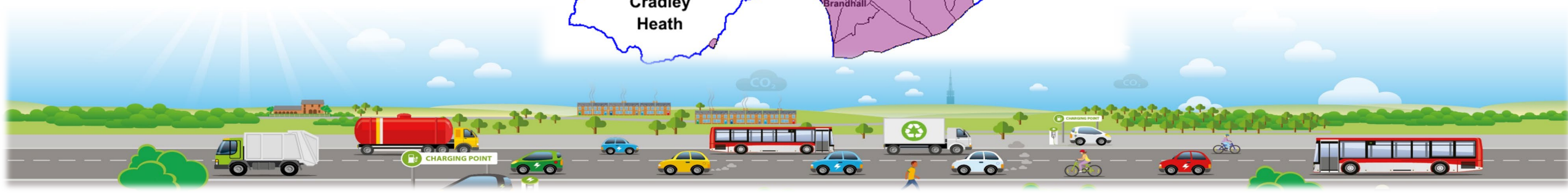


What is a Smoke Control Area?

- In a Smoke Control Area you cannot emit smoke **from a chimney through a building** unless you are burning authorised fuels or using an “exempt appliance”
- If people break these rules, they can be fined up to £1,000
- This is not a new or unusual idea – the whole of Dudley and Birmingham are SCAs



Areas of Sandwell currently designated as Smoke Control Areas



Air Quality: Government Policy

- Clean Air Strategy Jan 2019
 - Actions to reduce emissions from a range of sources including domestic solid fuel combustion
 - Some Local Authorities re-issued their Smoke Control Area to remind people of the rules due to the growth in solid fuel burning e.g. Leicester City Council
- Environment Bill 2020
 - Focussing controls on domestic burning emissions, due to health impacts from particulate matter in towns and cities
- The Air Quality (Domestic Solid Fuel Standard) (England) Regulations 2020
 - Controls the sale of solid fuels to ensure smokeless

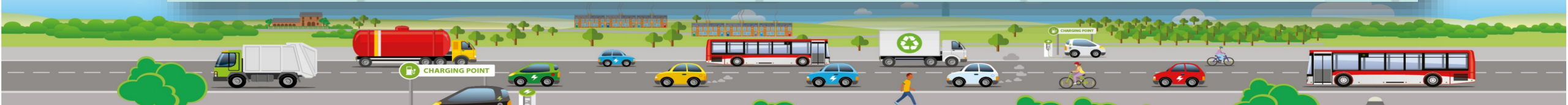
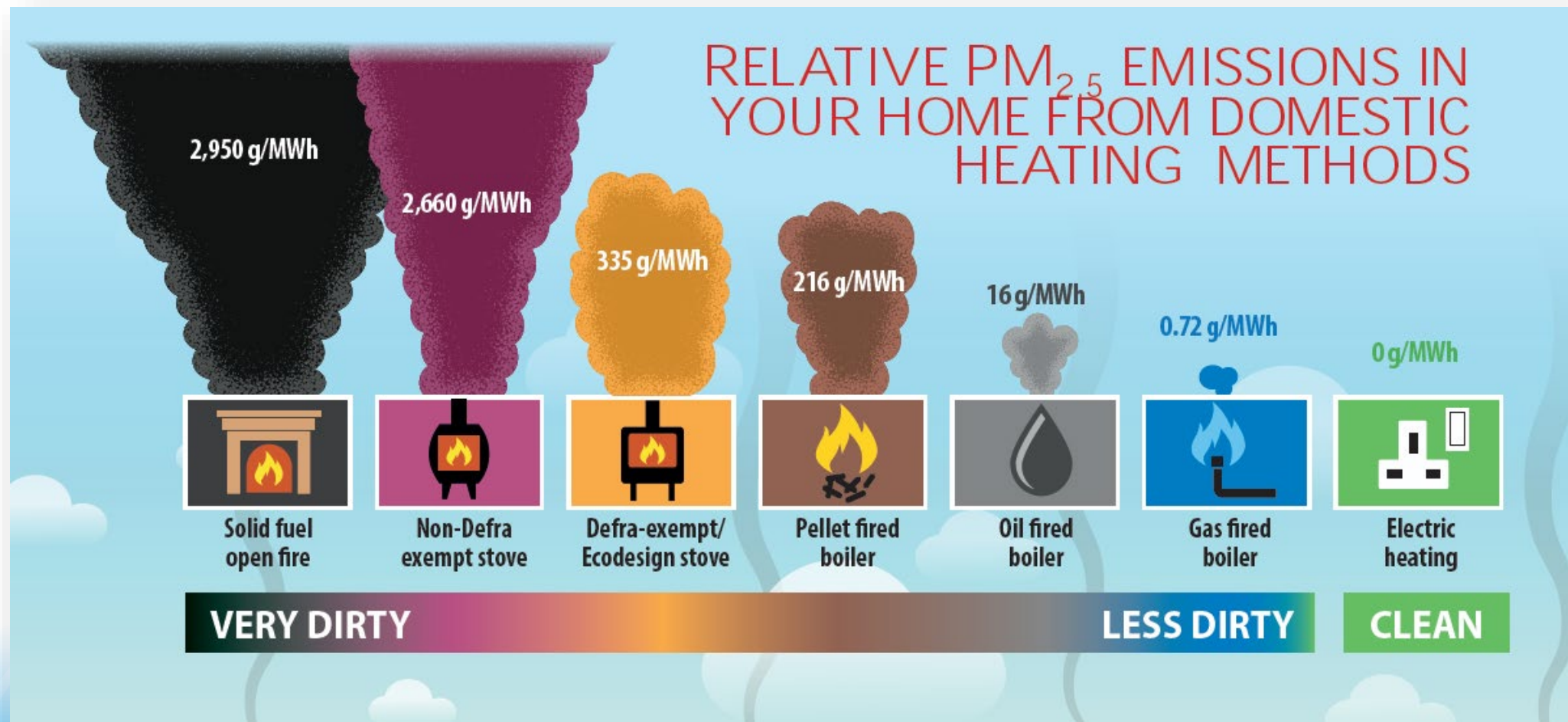


A Growing Problem

- Popularity in solid fuel stove use grows year on year. **1 in 12 homes** in the UK now has a wood burning or solid fuel burning stove



Comparison of PM_{2.5} Emissions From Domestic Heating Sources



Why are stoves and open fireplaces harmful?

- Health impacts
 - Wood burning stoves, open fireplaces and coal fires emit high levels of fine particulate matter
 - There is **no “safe level”** of particulate matter (PM)
 - The health risks of PMs are wide and varied
 - Health risks are particularly pronounced in **children** – impaired lung function and growth in children, brain development and mental health impacts etc
- Environmental impacts
 - PM reduces visibility, and can be deposited on plants, soil and water which affects water quality, and can affect plant growth



The journey so far: what do the public think?

- Three initial Surveys have already been conducted – residents, business and young people
- Environmental Health Facebook page – 700+ views
 - People were not against but want **more** action
- Sandwell Council Facebook page
- Press Release – Express and Star 7th August 2021
- Think Sandwell
- Schools Distribution



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Should Sandwell be a Smoke Control Area? H... survey closing e...

Posted on 21/07/2021 by **Kate Christie**

Have Your Say

Smoke Control Area Survey

Sandwell
Metropolitan Borough Council

Sandwell Council Environmental Health
Published by Deborah Bailey · August 9 ·

Do you think all of Sandwell should become a Smoke Control Area? Air pollution affects us all but it can have very serious health impacts for children and older people.

Sandwell currently has PM2.5 levels that exceed the World Health Organisation guidelines. So what can we do to help reduce air pollution in Sandwell? One idea is to make the whole of Sandwell a Smoke Control Area. Currently some parts of Sandwell are already designated as Smoke Control Areas but many part... [See More](#)

Sandwell
@sandwellcouncil · Government Organization

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Sandwell
August 24 at 12:57 PM ·

Would you like to see a Smoke Control Area in Sandwell?

We are looking at proposals to make the whole of Sandwell a 'Smoke Control Area' in order to improve air quality.

Air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable including children and older people.

Harmful air pollutants called particulate matter are emitted from wood and coal burning stoves. In a Smoke Control Area you cannot emit smoke from a chimney unless you're burning an authorised fuel or using 'exempt appliances', for example certain burners or stoves.

Please have you say using our surveys. There is one for adults, one for young people and another for local businesses. Links in comments below.

Please complete your survey by Monday 30 August 2021

Express & Star

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Plans launched to make Sandwell a Smoke Control Area

By [Jamie Brassington](#) | [Sandwell](#) | [Environment](#) | Published: Jun 17, 2021

A Black Country council has launched plans to ban people from burning wood through chimneys unless through authorised stoves.

Initial survey results

- **Overwhelming support for** improving air quality as a key priority for Sandwell
- Only **one person** said they used their wood burning stove as their only source of heating
- Significant majority of respondents said they think **ALL** of Sandwell should be a Smoke Control Area
 - Majority of comments said we need to be doing more



Next steps:

1. Cabinet approval for consultation for notice of intention to declare a Smoke Control Area (October 2021)
2. Consultation occurs minimum 6 weeks- any concerns addressed (Nov/Dec 2021)
3. Cabinet approval for designation and legal declaration by Director Public Health (Early 2022)
4. 6 month adjustment period- any further objections can be raised to the Secretary of State
5. Official confirmation of order by Secretary of State after adjustment period (Late 2022)
6. Staged enforcement by authorised officers (Late 2022)

If you would like to learn more please email pollution_control@Sandwell.gov.uk

Useful links:

<https://www.gov.uk/smoke-control-area-rules>

https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200274/pollution/485/air_quality/4

