

## Simple steps can have a big impact

**Close external doors and windows** facing a busy street at times when traffic is heavy.

**Install a carbon monoxide alarm.**

**Keep a smoke free house.** If you smoke, quitting now will help to protect your whole household. Visit [NHS quit smoking](https://www.nhs.uk/quit-smoking)

**Take care in cars.** Surprisingly, the quality of air can be worse when you're in a car than if you're outside. Turning the engine off when waiting in traffic can help.

**Travel differently.** Where possible, try leaving the car at home, especially for short journeys, and walk, wheel or cycle to work, school or the shops. It's a great way to give your health and wellbeing a boost too. For longer journeys, if you can, why not take the bus or train instead.

**Go electric.** If you're thinking of replacing your car, consider an electric vehicle, which has zero tailpipe emissions.

**If you have asthma,** using your reliever inhaler more often, as necessary, can help.

**Got an open fire or log burner?** Try lighting them less often.

Whether you want to learn more about what air pollution is, how it affects your health, what you can do to protect yourself from it, and the action you can take to tackle it visit:

[www.cleanairhub.org.uk](http://www.cleanairhub.org.uk)

If you think air pollution is affecting your health or your baby's or child's, please discuss this with your GP practice.

Bath & North East  
Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives

# Care for your Air

## Protecting you and your growing family

Information for you, your  
unborn baby and children  
under the age of 5



[Learn more about clean air](#)



## What is air pollution?

Air pollution is chemicals or particles in the air which can harm us if they are inhaled or absorbed into our bodies.

### Causes of indoor air pollution include:

- heating and cooking
- damp and mould
- tobacco smoke
- cleaning products
- burning wood on fires.

For more details visit [indoor fires and wood burning](#)

### Outdoor air pollution in cities and the countryside

Traffic emissions are the main cause of outdoor air pollution. The spreading of manures and organic fertilisers on farms and fields is also a major source.

## Effects on your baby during pregnancy and young children

**It's important to remember you can have a healthy pregnancy even if you're exposed to low levels of air pollution every day. You can focus on a healthy lifestyle to reduce your exposure and risks.**

For more information visit [NHS pregnancy](#)

However, babies who are exposed to high levels of air pollution while in the womb, may have an increased risk of:

- being born [prematurely](#)
- being born with a [low birth weight](#)
- impacted lung development
- developing asthma

Children are particularly vulnerable to the effects of air pollution, as their bodies are still developing.



## Help to quit smoking

Smoke free leaflet



The [Health in Pregnancy Service](#) can support with quitting smoking during pregnancy, your midwife can put you in touch.

There's **free** support available to help you stop or reduce your smoking. For a smoke free environment, take a look at the [NHS smoke free homes leaflet](#).

The **Community Wellbeing Hub** offers a local, confidential stop smoking service, visit [communitywellbeinghub.co.uk](#) or call **0300 247 0050**. You can also contact the **National Smokefree Helpline** on **0300 123 1044**.

### Carbon monoxide

During pregnancy, your midwife will offer you a carbon monoxide (CO) screening test, which will give you a score to detect if you've been exposed to CO.

If you have a particularly high reading (above 4ppm), you may have been exposed to carbon monoxide through faulty heating or cooking appliances. If this is the case, we strongly recommend you **contact the appropriate helpline**.

**Gas:** Call 0800 300 363 or visit the [HSE website](#)

**Oil:** Call 01473 626298 or visit the [OFTEC website](#)

**Solid fuel:** Call 01773 835400 or visit the [Solid Fuel Association website](#)