



Reading Schools Collaborate for Clean Air Day 2024



The CALM:ER (Clean Air Living Matters: Exploring Reading) programme celebrated [Clean Air Day](#), on the 20th of June 2024, by organising a workshop that over 60 students attended, from four secondary schools across the wider Reading area: [Blessed Hugh Farringdon](#), [Little Heath School](#), [The Abbey](#), and [St Joseph's College](#).



The workshop was also part of the [Reading Climate Festival 2024](#).

CALM is a collaboration between [Design Nature](#), [University of Reading](#), [Stantec](#), and [Reading Borough Council](#) and through funding awarded from [Defra](#).



[Watch the overview video here.](#)

Outline of the day

Led by [Mark Mason](#), from Design Nature, and [Marta O'Brien](#), from the University of Reading, the 4-hour session was delivered to encourage curiosity, creativity, teamwork and collaboration. Working in groups, the students had the opportunity to explore air quality in different ways and follow the effective Design Nature approach of Cultivate | Collaborate | Innovate.

Cultivate

Inspirational Green Careers 'Lightning Talk' from recent university graduates (and [STEM Ambassadors](#)), in-house air quality experts, [William Storey](#) and [Jonny Dodkins](#), sharing their valuable insights and real world experiences at Stantec.

Learning in the Lab, with Reading University air quality researcher and scientist [Marta O'Brien](#), with interactive experiments exemplifying some of the everyday things that can impact our indoor air quality.



Stantec air quality consultants William and Jonny, share their career journey.



Indoor air quality experiments with University of Reading Air Quality Researcher and scientist Marta O'Brien, Supported by Mark Mason of Design Nature.

Measuring and mapping outdoor air quality around the University using Atmotube monitors. Collecting data that could then be used to build wider understanding about the causes of air pollution.



Measuring outdoor air quality in groups across different locations. Students collect data, guided by [Emma Rigler](#), Senior Air Quality Consultant at Stantec.

Collaborate

Working in smaller school groups, the students were tasked to come up with ideas and explore different ways to improve air quality and achieve cleaner air at their school. They were encouraged to think creatively and outside the box; while also considering the air they breathe every day. After generating ideas as a team, the students worked together to create an 'ideas cloud' of all their concepts and potential innovative solutions.



Student teams get busy exploring the topic of indoor and outdoor Air Quality



Ideas Cloud: Coming up with ideas in teams for improving air quality

Innovate

Each group selected an idea, from the many that they created, and developed an ‘Action Plan’ outlining their approach to achieving the outcomes of the idea.

All these ideas and actions were documented and shared back with the schools as an outcome of the day, while also contributing to Reading Borough Councils air quality strategy.



The worksheet is titled 'Activity: Action Planning' and includes fields for 'SCHOOL' and 'DATE'. It is divided into four main sections: 1. THE IDEA (with a cloud shape for drawing), 2. WHEN / HOW LONG?, 3. WHO TO INVOLVE, and 4. RESOURCES. Below these are three numbered boxes for '3. STEPS TO TAKE...'. The footer contains logos for Reading Borough Council, Design Nature, Stantec, University of Reading, and defra.



Breakout groups completed the Activity planning worksheet.

All 11 of the ideas clouds at the end of the session.

Teachers feedback...

“Just wanted to say a massive thank you for the CALM workshop today. The students were buzzing as we walked back to school and loved the hands-on nature of the morning and the thought-provoking session in the afternoon on improving urban air quality.”

“Talking to the students on the day when we walked back to school it was clear they had really enjoyed the day. One of the Deputy Heads made a point to me, on our return to school, to say that the students were really buzzing about the day and how excited they were about the CALM workshop.”

“Well done for yesterday, it was a lovely day! I’m pleased the students represented us well and I was thrilled with their ideas! Some great thinking and the CALM team really helped to draw more out of them, so thank you.”



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In the numbers!

4

Schools from
across Reading

60

Students
exploring
air quality

11

Groups of
students

Workshop impact

14% increase in air pollutant awareness

86% agreed that taking part in the workshops improved their knowledge of air pollution issues

96% found using the hand held air quality sensors helped understand air quality

Students feedback (Key Stage 3)

“I will take air quality more seriously now, after everything I have learned.”

“Air quality learning could be supported more in regular lessons at school, making everyone more aware.”

“I am definitely interested in learning more about air quality and I will do some research and try to educate others around me on air quality.”

