

# An evaluation of the Sheffield Air Quality Management Area scheme: Can it work and does Sheffield: City on the Move, really care?

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## **Abstract**

This Dissertation assesses and analyses the draft Air Quality Management Area policy that will be approved by Sheffield City Council during the summer of 2012. It looks at the key issues, the policies that are proposed to address them and the potential effectiveness of those policies. In addition to this, another key aspect is the understanding and knowledge of the importance of the issue by the general public. Their awareness of climate change issues is known to be waning in the shadow of the present worldwide financial crisis, which doesn't bode well for concerns related to air quality and traffic derived emissions.

Through the use of a range of research methodologies, it has been possible to establish that whilst there are global concerns for air quality issues of this type, the need for economic expansion and development invariably defeats those that propose meaningful action be taken. In Europe, the European Union has established emissions targets that are set above those suggested by the World Health Organisation and yet here too it is quite possible that the issue is slowly falling down the list of priorities.

Using Sheffield as a case study clearly demonstrates that whilst sincere efforts are being made by the local authority and community groups, they become almost futile without support from national government, both in terms of finance and policy formulation. Added to this is a less than satisfactory effort from commercial organisations that on a daily basis contribute to the problem. They appear to suggest that shareholders are more important than customers. Potentially, a real example of "killing the goose that laid the golden egg"? As a direct result of this, the vast majority of Sheffield's citizens are barely aware that these issues exist, unless of course they are amongst those unlucky enough to have their health and mortality directly affected by this serious and growing problem.