

# Idling Action Campaign – Phases 1, 2, 3 (2016-19) Final Project Report



Idling Action Partnership, April 2019

A report by the Idling Action Partnership – CWC Environmental, eco action games  
and Green Gumption



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## 1. Introduction

The City of London Corporation pioneered Idling Action Days in 2015. In July/August 2016, funded by the Mayor of London's Air Quality Fund (MAQF), the Idling Action campaign was launched, which included City of London Corporation and 11 other local authorities.

Phase 2 of the campaign (also funded by MAQF) began in June 2017, initially with 15 local authorities, with London Borough of Richmond joining in December 2017.

In Phase 3, the final year of the current funding, there were total of 18 local authorities taking part:

- Brent Council
- London Borough of Camden
- City of London Corporation
- London Borough of Croydon
- London Borough of Enfield
- Royal Borough of Greenwich
- London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham
- London Borough of Hounslow
- London Borough of Islington
- Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea
- London Borough of Lambeth
- London Borough of Lewisham
- Merton Council
- London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames
- London Borough of Southwark
- London Borough of Tower Hamlets
- London Borough of Waltham Forest
- London Borough of Wandsworth

Final reports for phases 1 and 2 were completed at the end of each phase. This report summarises Phase 3, and also pulls together some headline achievements for all three phases.

The Idling Action Partnership, a team of environmental professionals from the three constituent organisations (CWC Environmental, Green Gumption and eco action games) was chosen through a tender process to manage all three phases of the campaign and to assist the councils in their idling action activities over the project period. The partnership delivered Phase 1 of the campaign with the assistance of environmental social network Project Dirt.

### **The aims of the Campaign are to:**

- Reduce unnecessary engine idling and raise the profile of air quality and idling engines as a source of air pollution;

- Get the support of local communities, businesses and organisations to help with campaign days and train volunteers;
- Speak to drivers to educate and encourage behaviour change; and
- Gain maximum publicity for the campaign across London.

### **The main tasks of Phase 3 of the Campaign were to:**

- Organise, deliver and evaluate 3 training action events for each borough;
- Provide additional events for local authorities at an agreed price, if required;
- Manage the volunteer database;
- Review, maintain and actively manage the campaign twitter account and the website;
- Coordinate and distribute the best practice toolkits;
- Respond to queries through the website and keep a log of responses; and
- Evaluate the impact and produce reports mid-way through and at the end of each phase.

### ***Why an idling campaign?***

Air pollution is a major environmental risk to health<sup>1</sup>. Research by King's College London estimated it contributed to around 9,500 early deaths in 2010 in London<sup>2</sup>, and it has been proven to cause illnesses ranging in severity from eczema and itchy eyes, through to cancer and lung disease.

Leaving engines running while stationary for longer than a minute is known as 'idling'. Idling is nearly always unnecessary and it's a source of pollution.

Encouraging people to switch off by educating them about the health impacts of air pollution, and explaining why it is good to switch your engine off, are simple ways to instantly reduce vehicle emissions in London. Combating idling is particularly important in areas where there are high numbers of vehicle engines idling in locations where vulnerable sections of society are walking past, such as outside a school at pick-up and drop-off, at a bus stop where children and the elderly are likely to be waiting near the roadside, and outside hospitals where many people who already have health issues are walking past.

### ***The traffic regulations***

The law says it is an offence to idle your engine unnecessarily when stationary. The Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) (Fixed Penalty) (England) Regulations 2002<sup>3</sup> give local authorities the power to issue fixed penalty notices to vehicle owners who do not switch off their engines when asked to do so. Some (but not all) of the local authorities involved in this project enforce the regulations.

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<sup>1</sup> WHO 2014 <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs313/en/>

<sup>2</sup> King's College London 2015. Understanding the health impacts of Air Pollution. Available from: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/lsm/research/divisions/aes/research/ERG/research-projects/HIAinLondonKingsReport14072015final.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Find out more at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2002/1808/contents/made>

## 2. Campaign Planning

### Volunteer Recruitment, training and management

Volunteer recruitment in all three phases revolved around the following approaches:

1. Sourcing volunteers via the organisations which we partner with for events (schools, companies, hospitals, Business Improvement Districts etc).
2. Local authorities promoting the volunteering opportunity via emails / newsletters.
3. Volunteers contacting us via an online form on the Idling Action website, who are then added to our database.
4. Communication and social media methods such as Twitter.

In phase 3, a one-hour training session was held immediately before each action event.

The powerpoint presentation was updated to reflect feedback from phase 2 volunteer surveys which said that the most useful part of the training was the 'how to talk to drivers' section. This was expanded to include more information on where idlers are likely to be found, and how to be effective at getting them to switch off.

During this phase, we promoted the campaign to parents through the Clean Air Parents Network, which was set up by Client Earth and the British Lung Foundation. The group has over 1,000 members across the UK on its facebook page. The events were regularly advertised on the facebook page. There was a lot of interest, in particular from parents in Haringey where the campaign has not yet started. Parents from Haringey attended the training at several events so that they could take some ideas back to their schools.

#### **Total number of volunteers trained in phase 3: 250**

All volunteers who attended the events were:

- Provided with a volunteer pack;
- Required to sign a health & safety form before going out to volunteer; and
- Logged on the database, noting if they were trained, attended an event and if they'd signed a form

## 3. Campaign Delivery

### Training and Action Events

A variety of events were held in the boroughs, in conjunction with schools, hospitals, local businesses and BIDs, resident groups and even a bus garage. The case studies below illustrate the different types of events and how they were run.

## Event case studies

### School event - Rathfern Primary School

A very successful school event took place at Rathfern Primary in Lewisham. The school was very well coordinated and had assigned a dedicated teacher to run the event for them. The children had been well primed beforehand and were very knowledgeable of the topic. The school had send out lots of targeted communications in the weeks running up to the event, and hence there was a good number of parent volunteers who joined for the training and the event. A Councillor also attended, and is featured in the video. The school arranged for a professional video maker to shadow the event and produced an inspiring video diary of the event, which can be accessed through this link:

<https://vimeo.com/299264893>

We even had our, probably, youngest volunteer attend (with mum of course):



### Business partnership event - The Shard

To celebrate Clean Air Day 2018, Southwark council ran an event in conjunction with two BIDs - Better Bankside and Team London Bridge and the business partner for the event The Shard.

The Shard's building management team are very committed to this cause, and the champion for the event from their side is a manager in charge of the delivery/drop off depot at the base of the Shard. The training vent was very well attended with approximately 12 staff members. The event then took place concentrating on the delivery/drop off facilities as well as farther afield in the area surrounding London Bridge station. The giant game was displayed on the Shard's concourse, and played by a visiting councillor. The event was such a success that The Shard vowed to continue to run them, around the loading bay area, on a regular basis in future.



## School event - Woodcote Primary school, Croydon

This was a fantastic event with a primary school in Croydon. The project team delivered classes for year 6 pupils in the afternoon of the event about pollution and idling. Smaller sessions were then held with groups of 6 children on the snakes and ladders game in the playground. At the end of the sessions, children had a clear idea about what creates pollution, why it's especially important for children not to breathe in too much pollution, and why they should make sure their parents don't idle their engines.

Several parents joined us for a volunteer training session, and we then went out to the street where parents park and idle at school pick-up time. It was a residential street where lots of parents were parking and idling. Our parent volunteers, who were nervous to start with, then put their learning from the training to good use when they spoke to drivers. The volunteers had a 100% success rate, with all parents switching off when asked. This really gave the parent volunteers confidence to continue doing this in the future, and

they took a couple of high vis vests so they continue the idling action in the future.



## Hospital event – Great Ormond St Hospital, NHS Sustainability Day



An event was organised in conjunction with Great Ormond St Hospital (GOSH) for NHS Sustainability Day. It was very well-attended by local residents, and there was a lively discussion about idling and pollution in London during the training. It was great to see all the ambulance drivers were waiting in their vehicles with engines off, having been trained several times about the need to switch off when stationary to improve air quality. Several drivers we spoke to commented that they now speak to drivers from other hospitals who bring patients to GOSH and sometimes idle. While Great Ormond St seemed to be quiet with very few idlers (ambulance drivers have already been trained, and no idling signage is up on the street from a previous campaign there), high levels of idling were observed on Guilford St to the north of the hospital, and that has been earmarked for further action.

## PR and Social Media

The statistics regarding Twitter coverage for the campaign so far are shown below:

- Followers: 1,486
- Following: 1,237



- Tweets: 2,709
- Impressions: 810,275
- Profile visits: 19,366
- Mentions: 1,741

In the third phase the Campaign has been well represented in the press at local, borough level. Appendix 1 gives links to a representative sample of the type and nature of the press received.

## 4. Best practice toolkits

Toolkits have been produced and were made available to download on our website in phases 2 and 3. There are toolkits for different groups (schools, businesses, hospitals, local authorities) and they include best practice guidance for running events, volunteer packs, event host packs and campaign materials. We have also made it possible for members of the public to download the artwork for the campaign posters and leaflets if that's all they want.

These are available on our website: <https://idlingaction.london/toolkits/>

We have installed a plugin on the website which allows us to track how many downloads of each toolkit have been requested. To date we have had the following number of downloads:

Toolkits	Phase 2	Phase 3
Posters & Leaflet	128	322
Business Toolkit	29	38
Schools Toolkit	78	74
Local Authority Toolkit	40	64
Hospitals Toolkit	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>501</b>
<b>Total for phases 2 and 3</b>	<b>779</b>	

## 5. Impact Evaluation

### Headline Numbers and Analysis

The headline results for the campaign so far are as follows.

<b>Metric</b>	<b>Phase 1</b>	<b>Phase 2</b>	<b>Phase 3</b>	<b>Total</b>
Number of action days that have taken place	58	48	55	161
Number of people trained	200	230	250	680
Number of people taking part in events	500	420	460	1,380
Number of drivers that switched off during Idling Action events	840	740	530	2,110
Twitter tweet impressions	348,000	259,000	203,000	810,000
Number of interactions at events	2,690	1,660	1,630	5,980
Number of people (drivers and pedestrians) reached at events	3,170	2,020	2,030	7,220
Number of Primary School Events	11	25	36	72

Estimated number of pupils who attended an Idling Action assembly		6,000	9,000	15,000
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The total number of organisations supporting the campaign over all 3 phases are shown in the table below. See Appendix 2 for a full list of the organisations who have supported the campaign so far.

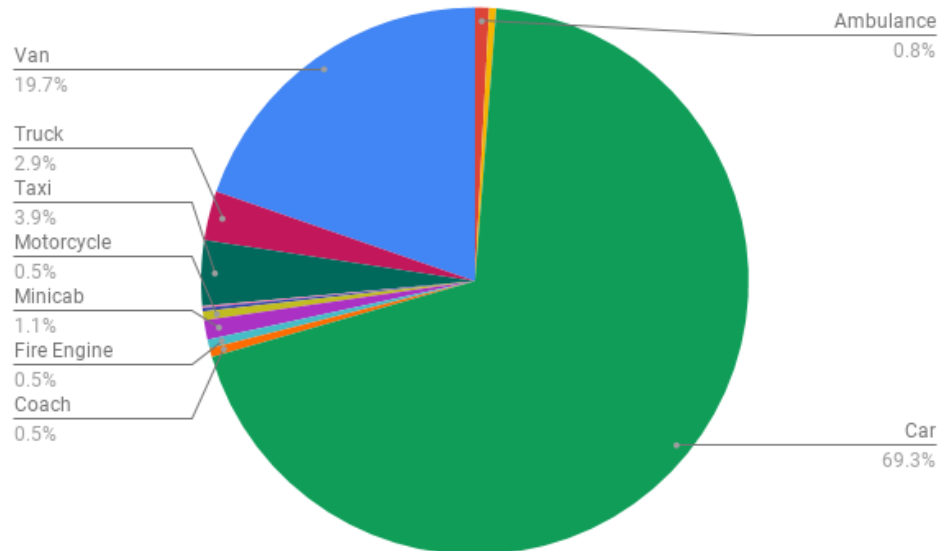
Business Improvement Districts	17
Corporate Organisations	15
Environmental groups / Community networks / Similar campaigns	14
Hospitals	9
Universities / Colleges	15
Schools	72
Bus Garages	1
Total	143

## Idling interactions analysis

The following tables and charts give an overview of activity at the Phase 3 Idling Action events.

### Vehicles interacted with in Phase 3

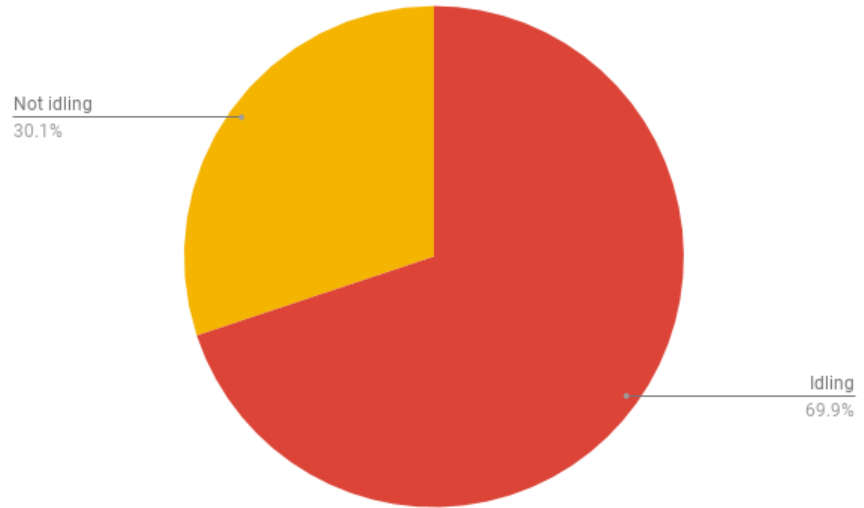
Ambulance	8
Bus	4
Car	665
Coach	5
Fire Engine	5
Minicab	11
Motorcycle	5
Other	2
Police Car	1
Taxi	37
Truck	28
Van	189



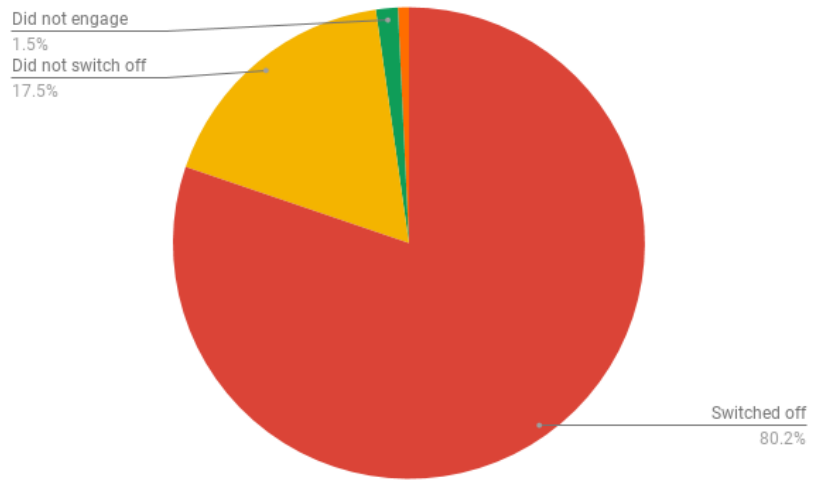
### % drivers idling and % not idling

At Idling Action events we encourage volunteers to engage with idling and non-idling drivers alike. In the case of the latter, we thank the driver for not idling and give them a leaflet. In Phase 3 the engagements broke down as follows:

Idling	671
Not idling	289



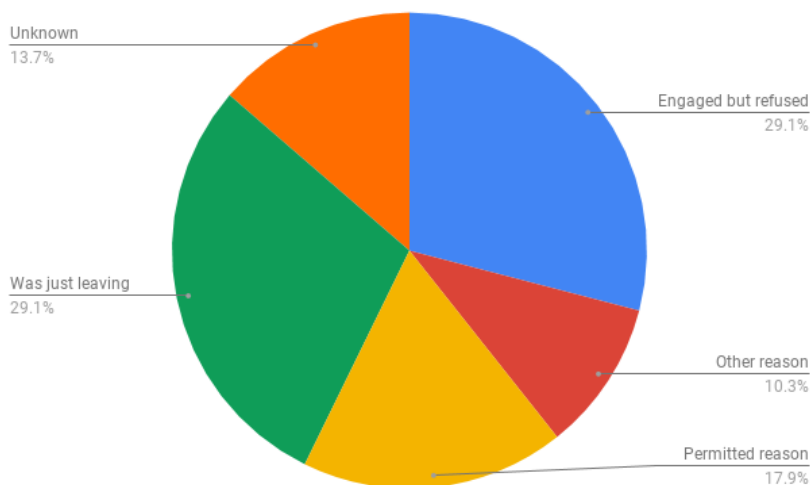
Of the idling drivers the response to the engagement was:



Switched off	536
Did not switch off	117
Did not engage	10
Drove off before engagement	5

Of the drivers who did not switch off the reasons given for not switching off were as follows:

Engaged but refused	34
Other reason	12
Permitted reason	21
Was just leaving	34
Unknown	16



Permitted reasons include refrigerated vehicles, emergency service vehicles etc. Other reasons include excuses such as using their heating or air conditioning, charging their phone etc.

The number of drivers who either refused to switch off or gave a non-permitted reason for not switching off was 46, which represents 7% of the total number of idling vehicles.

## 6. Conclusion

### Lessons Learned

- In all phases of this campaign, the most successful events had a good mix of project team, council employees from different teams, resident / organisation volunteers and TfL officers.
- School events in residential areas often have higher success rates in terms of percentage of drivers who switch off. At the Woodcote primary in Croydon, for example, the team had a 100% success rate because all drivers idling were parents waiting to pick up (none could claim to be 'just leaving').
- School events have very high engagement numbers, and could therefore be seen to offer good value for money.
- As with previous phases, we found that individuals are interested in getting trained so they can talk to drivers in their particular area. They may not necessarily come back to idling events in different parts of the borough.
- Volunteers (particularly first time volunteers) enjoy the opportunity to come back for a de-brief and chat about their experiences over a cup of tea. This should be encouraged where possible.

### What worked well?

- Toolkits had very high rates for downloads.

- Reaching out to people through the Clean Air Parents Network. Idling is one of the most popular topics of conversation on the group.
- Getting the Head Teacher engaged makes for a more successful event. We had a very successful event at a school in Camden, where the Head, members of school staff and parents went to the training and the Head Teacher even went out to talk to drivers. She emailed all parents the week before the event, and several parents said that the email had opened their eyes to the problem.
- Ensuring the event is planned far enough in advance so that assemblies / lessons can be scheduled at the school to coincide with the event.

## What could be improved in the future

- With all phases of this campaign, around half of the total events happened in the last three months. If the plan is to have more boroughs and more events in the future, stricter rules about when the first half of the events need to happen by should probably be applied, in order to pre-empt that problem.

## Appendix 1 - Representative sample of press in phase 3

[https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/news/article/619/have\\_your\\_say\\_on\\_vehicle\\_idling\\_in\\_hounslow](https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/news/article/619/have_your_say_on_vehicle_idling_in_hounslow)

<https://www.ageas.co.uk/solved/your-car/turn-your-car-engine-off-idling-could-be-banned-on-the-school-run/>

<https://www.lbhf.gov.uk/articles/news/2018/10/hf-tackles-air-pollution-new-powers-fine-idling-motorists>

<https://www.londonnewsonline.co.uk/plumcroft-primary-school-engine-idling/>

[http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/news/article/14933/air\\_pollution\\_falls\\_again](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/news/article/14933/air_pollution_falls_again)

<https://www.rte.ie/lifestyle/motors/2018/0803/982962-uk-councils-introduce-fines-for-drivers-who-leave-engines-idling/>

<https://love.lambeth.gov.uk/cllr-holland-caw2018/>

<https://love.lambeth.gov.uk/act-tough-improve-air-quality/>

<http://www.putneysw15.com/default.asp?section=info&page=issuepollution060.htm>

<http://islingtonlife.london/discover-islington/blog/clean-air-day-21-june/>

<http://blog.sadlerswells.com/2018/10/>

<https://wembleymatters.blogspot.com/2018/06/brent-council-calls-for-properly-funded.html>



## Appendix 2 - Organisations supporting the campaign through Phases 1, 2 and 3

The table below shows which organisations were approached to join &/or support the campaign.

Organisation Type	Example
Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Angel London</li> <li>Baker Street Quarter Partnership</li> <li>Better Bankside</li> <li>Brixton</li> <li>Camden Town Unlimited</li> <li>Cheapside Business Alliance</li> <li>Fitzrovia Partnership</li> <li>Hammersmith BID</li> <li>Old St Partnership</li> <li>Paddington Now</li> <li>South Bank</li> <li>Streatham</li> <li>Team London Bridge</li> <li>Victoria BID</li> <li>We are Waterloo</li> <li>Westway Trust</li> <li>The Welcome People (working on behalf of the Cheapside Business Alliance and Victoria BID until 2020)</li> </ul>
Corporate organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arup</li> <li>Virgin Money</li> <li>Westway Community Transport</li> <li>TfL</li> <li>Network Rail</li> <li>Brompton bicycles</li> <li>Vespro</li> <li>Addison Lee</li> <li>Salesforce</li> <li>Wellcome Trust</li> <li>Skanska</li> <li>Nomura Bank</li> <li>Sadlers' Wells Theatre</li> <li>Peter Jones</li> <li>The Shard</li> </ul>
Environmental groups / Community networks / Similar campaigns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Friends of the Earth</li> <li>Green Party</li> <li>I Like Clean Air</li> <li>Camden Air</li> </ul>

	<p>London Cycling Campaign          Sustrans          Living Streets          Just Add Spice (Time Credits)          Lions Clubs          Transition Towns          Sunday Assembly          Islington Sustainable Energy Partnership          University of the 3rd Age (U3A) Green Issues Group Islington          Primrose Hill community group</p>
Hospitals	<p>NHS England          Great Ormond St          Royal London          St Bartholomew's          The Whittington          Croydon University Hospital          St Thomas's Hospital          St George's Hospital          Croydon University Hospital</p>
Universities / Colleges	<p>Birkbeck          Central Saint Martins          School of Oriental and African Studies          University College London          City and Islington College          City University London          London Metropolitan University          Imperial College London          London South Bank University          Queen Mary University of London          South Thames College          London School of Economics          Kings College London          University of Westminster          LSE</p>
Schools	<p>Ridgeway Primary School, Croydon          Ambler Primary, Islington          Laycock Primary School, Islington          Fitzjohn School, Camden          Argyle Primary, Camden          St Anthony's Junior, Camden          Holbeach Primary, Lewisham          Dalmain Primary, Lewisham</p>

	<p>St James Hatcham Primary, Lewisham          Corpus Christi Primary, Lambeth          Sudbourne Primary, Lambeth          Brookfield primary, Camden          Holy Trinity primary, Richmond          George Spicer Primary, Enfield          St Paul's CE Primary School, Hammersmith &amp; Fulham          Chepstow House School, Kensington &amp; Chelsea          Holbeach Primary School, Lewisham          East Sheen Primary School, Richmond          Edinburgh Primary School, Waltham Forest          Smallwood Primary School, Wandsworth          Bowes Primary, Enfield          Notting Hill Primary, Kensington &amp; Chelsea          Dalmain primary school, Lewisham          Bonner Primary School, Tower Hamlets          Walthamstow School For Girls, Waltham Forest          Sacred Heart Primary School, Wandsworth          Eglinton Primary School, Greenwich          Godolphine &amp; Latymer School, Hammersmith &amp; Fulham          St James Hatcham Primary, Lewisham          Hampton High, Richmond          English Martyrs Primary School, Tower Hamlets          Handsworth School, Waltham Forest          Brandlehow Primary School, Wandsworth          Swaffield Primary, Wandsworth          Alexander McLeod Primary, Greenwich          Woodcote Primary, Croydon          Highfield Primary, Enfield          Plumcroft Primary, Greenwich          St Mary's Primary and William Hogarth primary, Hounslow          Hugh Myddleton Primary, Islington          Rathfern Primary, Lewisham          St Mary's, Merton          Darell School, Richmond          St Luke's CE Primary, Tower Hamlets          Sarum Hall School, Camden          George Spicer Primary School, Enfield          Wyborne Primary School, Greenwich          Hammersmith Grove, Hammersmith &amp; Fulham          Strand-on-the-Green Primary, Hounslow          St Francis Drake, Lewisham          Morden Primary, Merton          Thomson House school, Richmond</p>
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	<p>Harris, Southwark  Globe, Tower Hamlets  Handsworth Primary, Waltham Forest  Chesterton, Wandsworth  John Keble, Brent  Walker Primary, Enfield  Linton Mead, Greenwich  Cavendish Primary, Hounslow  Sunnyhill School, Lambeth  St Jude's school, Islington  Sandhurst, Lewisham  Sacred Heart, Merton  Deer Park School, Richmond  Mayflower, Tower Hamlets  Henry Maynard, Waltham Forest  Earlsfield Primary, Wandsworth  Kilburn Grange School, Brent  Kingsgate School, Camden  IQRA primary, Lambeth  Hillyfield Primary School, Waltham Forest</p>
<p>Bus Garage</p>	<p>Thornton Heath, Croydon</p>