CALM Community of Practice - Developing Air Quality Resources for Teachers

Following the hugely successful creation and delivery of the CALM programme, Design Nature is developing a 'Community of Practice' for teachers to join us and get involved in **Air Quality Education**.

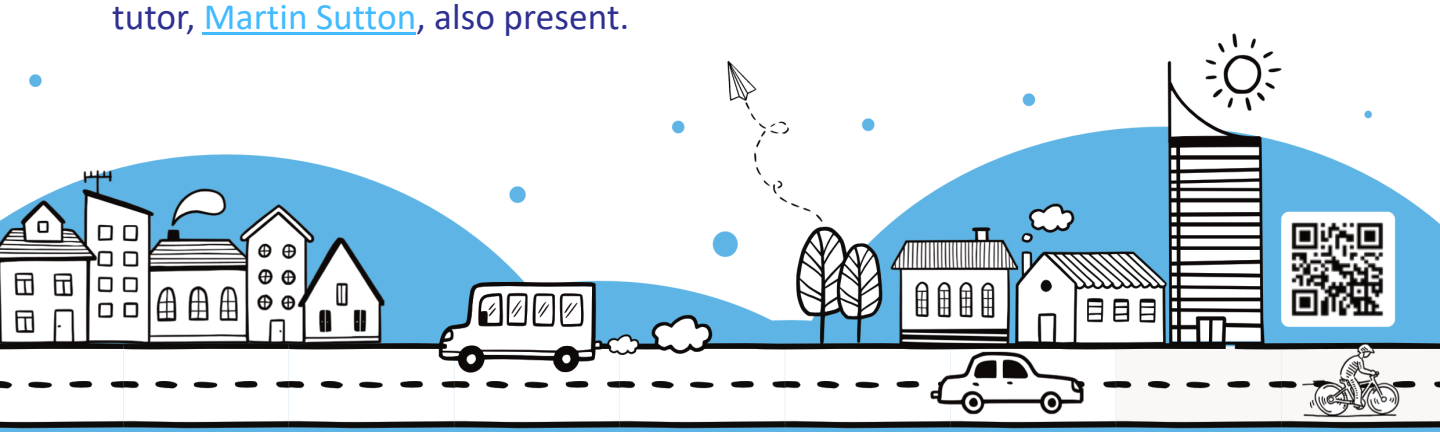
On Monday 23rd February, the Design Nature Team, Mark Mason, Marta O'Brien and Mia Haroon collaborated with Kirsty Shakespeare from University of Reading, to design and deliver the first 'train the trainer', session for teachers.

The 'pilot' session was held at the University on Reading, in collaboration with National Education Nature Park (National Education Nature Park is a free programme for all schools that empowers young people to brighten nature's future) and was an Inset day training session for Early Year Practitioners, Teaching Assistants, KS1 & KS2 teachers, and the SLT (12 staff) from Newbold School.



Marta & Mark leading the classroom session

Alongside Newbold School, the session was attended by 14 students from the University's own PGCE Geography course, educating current students to become KS3 Geography teachers, with their tutor, Martin Sutton, also present.



©CALM - Exploring Reading | 2026

Our Approach - Leading the Way

Kirsty led the initiative, through her work at the University with the Nature Park, having previously worked with Newbold School (see blog), inviting them to the session as the first step in exploring teacher training around air quality.

Our Approach - Train the Trainer

Through various interactive presentations, the teachers were invited to engage with the resources from the CALM – Clean Air Living Matters Programme and consider how they might use them in the classroom to deliver similar activities in a school setting.

The resources included a KS2 assembly (including a PowerPoint slide deck and scripted presenter notes), indoor and outdoor lesson plans and action planning documents.

This method of delivery supports the teachers in becoming air quality experts in the classroom and allows them to inspire children to care about air quality through interactive activities.

The teachers were also introduced to the air quality measuring equipment used by the CALM programme. These included indoor and outdoor air quality monitors that were supplied by ATMO and AirGradient.





©CALM- Exploring Reading | 2026

Our Approach - Experiential Learning

CALM
Clean Air Living Matters
Exploring Reading

Engaging pupils on air quality, raising awareness as to the causes of air pollution, and delivering activities in an engaging, fun, interactive, and experiential manner was the main aim of the CALM programme.

This approach was again used for the teacher training session and involved getting outside to measure air quality around the university campus, using handheld digital devices, alongside an analogue approach with paper and pencils.

Design Nature led the digital activity, which involved collecting data outside the classroom using hand-held ATMO devices and asked the teachers to consider what they could identify as a potential source of air pollution at 5 separate locations around the campus.

Having already spoken about bio-indicators in the classroom, Kirsty led the subsequent lichen – outdoor air pollution monitoring activity.

This activity involved teachers observing the quantity of lichens on a tree, identifying the lichen species, and determining whether the species was tolerant or intolerant of air pollutants.





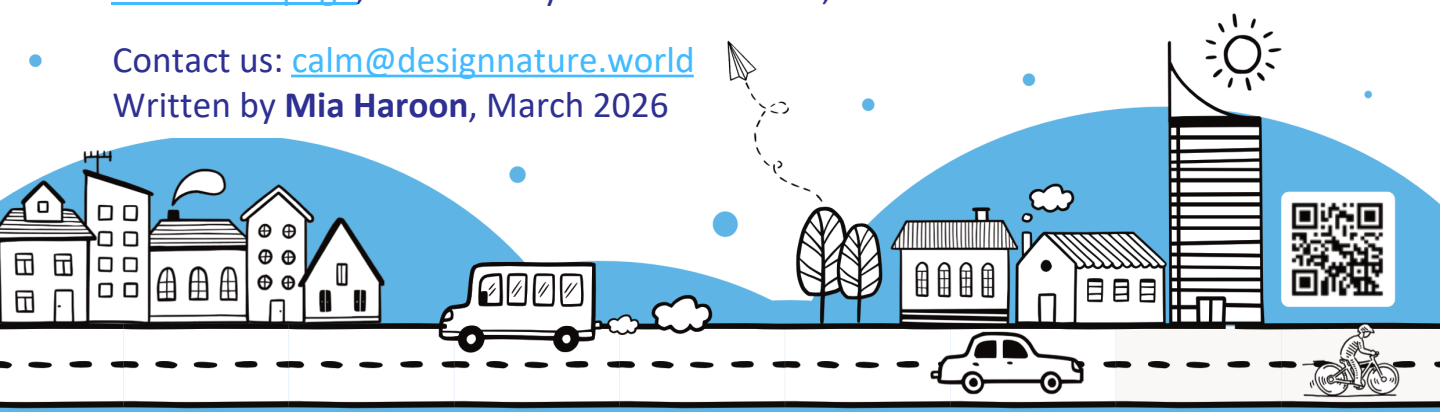
Outdoor activities and lichen measurement

Next Steps

We aim to evolve the programme and expand it to other schools in the Reading area, and potentially beyond, with additional funding.

Resources for teachers are available to download via the Design Nature website, CALM web page, 'Community of Practice Zone', with more materials to be added.

Contact us: calm@designnature.world
Written by **Mia Haroon**, March 2026



Reading Borough Council Working better with you
DESIGN NATURE
Stantec
University of Reading
defra Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs

©CALM - Exploring Reading | 2026