

## Year 12 Geography – Urban Heat Island



In October 2017, 52 Year 12 geography students boarded the train at Earley, westbound for Tilehurst. Their challenge was to detect an urban heat island as they followed a transect on foot towards Broad Street. This phenomenon usually is evident in the summer mornings when the town's urban surfaces and materials have stored the day's heat for longer than the surrounding rural areas. Consequently, it is possible to find city centres to be up to 8C warmer than the countryside.

The sixth formers used anemometers and thermometers to measure wind speeds and temperatures every 200m into town. After a short lunch break in the CBD, they trudged off to complete the second half of their transect, back to Maiden Erlegh.

The weather held and was dry all day, much to the students' delight. Some excellent field techniques were displayed by students, even if they were unable to see much of the elusive urban heat island.

Hopefully many have been inspired enough to choose 'urban microclimates' as their independent fieldwork investigation in Year 13.

**Mr Sutton**