



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

AIR QUALITY UPDATE

Thursday 30 January 2014

Air quality objectives

Each substance restricted to a level set out in the Regs.

Achievement or likely achievement of that level determined at locations

(a) which are situated outside of buildings or other natural or man-made structures above or below ground; and

(b) where members of the public are regularly present.

Requirement

- **Review and assess air quality**
- **Determine whether or not the air quality objectives are likely to be achieved**
- **Where exceedences are considered likely:
declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)
prepare an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP)**
- **Annual reports fulfil the requirements of the Local Air Quality Management process**

..... in practice:

- EA1995 doesn't prescribe any time scale for preparing an Action plan
- Requirement is to work towards Air Quality objectives
- Duty to keep Action plans up to date – must consult if revised
- Annual reports required (PR - annually / USA – every 3rd year)
- Both AQMAs declared in 2005
- Chipping Norton Action Plan 2008
- OCC LTP3 (rev Oct 2012) covers the key Action Plan measures

.... and (to put it in context):

UK compliance is based on monitoring and modelling via the Automatic Urban and Rural network (AURN)

Nationally, 40 out of 43 AQ Zones had not achieved full compliance with annual NO₂ limit value in 2010

thereafter, the exceedence period was to be kept as short as possible the deadline was then extended to 2015

**Responsible body in England is S of S EFRA (and Defra coordinates assessments for the UK as a whole)
of 400 LAs, around half have local AQ plans**

LAs assess pollution, designate AQMAs, produce Action Plans, review annually

Objectives

Declared in areas where reviews of ambient air quality indicate national objectives are unlikely to be met.

Nitrogen Dioxide

40 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ when expressed as annual mean, to be achieved by 31st December 2005.

200 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ when expressed as a 1 hour average, not to be exceeded more than 18 times per year. To be achieved by 31st December 2005.

[Time lines were extended to 2010 and now to 2015]

Traffic Emissions

Underperformance of vehicle abatement technologies

Compounded by fraction of NO_x directly emitted as NO₂ from diesel vehicles and their DPFs

Increase in diesel vehicle purchases:

14% in 2000
46% in 2010

Chipping Norton

Horsefair

Within the Chipping Norton AQMA levels averaged $35\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (max 62) and confirming this, the automatic monitor (outside the Crown and Cushion) averaged $37\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.

(Relevant Exposure ?)





OCC Position

Re-classification of the A44 needs the agreement of Warwickshire and Gloucestershire.

Warwickshire were happy with this change but the situation has been more complicated with Gloucestershire. Essentially they are worried that if sufficient lorries are transferred away from Chipping Norton to impact on the AQMA, then this may be sufficient to force them to have to declare an AQMA in Stow Market Place, which was marginal in their air quality surveys.

The A44, as a Primary Route, cannot have a permanent weight limit passed on it under EU Directive 89/460/EC.

The removal of the Primary Route Status is therefore a necessary precursor measure for lorry restriction. At the moment removal of the PRN status is a Department for Transport matter and they will only proceed if all the local highway authorities affected agree.

Action plan

- **HGV Routing - Reduce unit emissions in the AQMA in conjunction with County LTP**
- **Funding bid for regional prioritisation**
- **Continuously monitor emissions within AQMA - Identify and confirm reducing emissions trend**
- **Steering group**
- **Development of Climate Change Policy**
- **Lobby Government - Lobbying and support of Government to create policy to increase the use of cleaner vehicles and fuels**

- **Engage with local public transport operators - Reduce unit emissions in the AQMA**
- **Engage with freight transport operators - Engage with freight transport operators to:**
 - a) **promote the procurement of vehicles with cleaner engine technologies and**
 - b) **to promote the use of cleaner fuels.**
- **‘Leave your car at home’ initiative - WODC and OCC to promote use of public transport - awareness levels raised in all periodic Council publicity media**
- **Promote use of cycles - Promotion of the use of the cycle. Awareness levels raised in all periodic Council publicity media - Promote cycling and walking in Chipping Norton**

- **School Travel Plans / Green Travel Plan - Development of School Travel Plans and promotion of WODC Green Travel Plan**
- **County Bus Strategy**
- **Local Transport Plans - County wide improvements to route infrastructure and traffic management**
- **Switch off idling engines - Acquisition of powers to require drivers to switch off their engines if they are left idling.**
- **Manage parking to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality**

Witney

Bridge Street

In the Witney AQMA levels averaged $45\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (max 49) and the automatic monitor returned an average of $28\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ but note that this is located not in a restricted area but at the three-way junction by the bridge.



This location was chosen, in part, in order to monitor AQ levels before and after any traffic flow control / redirection as may be proposed

A future Action Plan awaits OCC Highways / Planning decisions



Diffusion Tubes

The main conclusions of West Oxon District Council Diffusion Tube Survey for 2012 are as follows. Of the 37 locations monitored:

Three diffusion tube monitoring sites within the District exceeded the annual mean NO₂ objective of 40 µg/m³;

The highest annual mean concentration, after bias adjustment was recorded at Horsefair, Chipping Norton (61.6 µg/m³).

Other sites that exceeded the annual mean NO₂ objective were:

Bridge Street, Witney (49.3 µg/m³);

Mill Street, Witney (41.5 µg/m³).

Local air quality management review

Summary of responses and Government reply

December 2013

Part IV of the Environment Act (1995)

Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland 2007

Air Quality (England) Regulations 2000

Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010

In 2013 the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) proposed 4 options to improve local air quality management in the UK and increase focus on measures to improve air quality.

The Government subsequently ran a consultation to ensure it understood the implications of the proposed options for change.

Key conclusions and next steps

Aim 1 – Local Action focused on what is necessary to support air quality improvements to benefit public health and to work towards EU air quality standards

Defra will review the range of air quality objectives that apply to local authorities, taking into account the relevance of these objectives for health protection, and the levels assessed in recent years.

Aim 2 – Local government and other stakeholders are clear on their roles and responsibilities and work together to improve air quality

Defra will review the need for additional guidance on these duties as part of its review of guidance to local authorities in fulfilling their duties under the Act.

Aim 3 – Local authorities have simple reporting requirements with less bureaucracy and more time to concentrate on actions to improve air quality and public health

Defra will make proposals to introduce regular annual reporting on air quality for local authorities, taking into account comments made and following further discussions with stakeholders on the content of such reports.

Defra will take account of the support for retaining AQMAs and will also review guidance on declaration/revocation procedures in order to reduce administrative burdens, taking into account matters of health impacts through exposure to air pollution and scope for measures.

Aim 4 – Local authorities have access to information about evidence based measures to improve air quality, including on transport and communications

Defra will continue to explore (with delivery partners and stakeholders) way of improving and disseminating evidence-based measures, including supporting innovative schemes. We will revise official guidance to coincide with the implementation of changes to the LAQM system, likely in mid-late 2015.

Options – conclusions:

There were no clear favourites among the 4 options, with many calling for an amalgamation of the best elements of each option, particularly #2 & 3 or putting forward alternatives.

Defra will explore all alternatives with key delivery partners in the early part of 2014, the outcome of which will inform a second consultation (in mid-late 2014) on regulatory changes and guidance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-air-quality-management-in-england-review>

..... the future ?

- **Oxfordshire Air web pages - £29,000 Defra grant to SODC**
- **Freight Distribution networks**
- **Chipping Norton AQMA – political and financial decisions ?**
- **Witney AQMA – OCC LTP3 contains intentions for:**
 - Cogges Link Road (CLR) – deceased**
 - West End Link 2 (WEL2)**
 - Downs Road / A40 junction**