

Notice of Meeting

Joint Public Protection Committee

A shared service provided by Bracknell Forest Council
and West Berkshire Council

Monday 11 March 2024 at 7.00pm

Venue: Council Chamber Council Offices Market Street
Newbury

Note: This meeting will be streamed live here:

<https://www.westberks.gov.uk/jointpublicprotectioncommitteeelive>

To: Councillors Lee Dillon (Chairman) (West Berkshire Council), Iskandar Jefferies (Vice-Chairman) (Bracknell Forest Council), Nick Allen (Bracknell Forest Council), Phil Barnett (West Berkshire Council), Guy Gillbe (Bracknell Forest Council) and Howard Woollaston (West Berkshire Council)

Part I

		Page No.
1	Apologies To receive any apologies for absence.	1 - 2
2	Minutes To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 11 December 2023.	3 - 8
3	Outstanding actions from previous meetings To consider any outstanding matters from previous meetings.	9 - 10
4	Declarations of Interest Any Member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in a matter should withdraw from the meeting when the matter is under consideration, and should notify the Democratic Services Officer in attendance that they are withdrawing as they have such an interest. If the Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is not entered on the register of Members' Interests, the Monitoring Officer must be notified of the interest within 28 days.	11 - 12

Public Protection Partnership Agenda - Monday, 11 March 2024 *(continued)*

- 5 **Notice of Public Speaking and Questions** 13 - 14
To note those agenda items which have received an application for public speaking.
A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice.
The Partnership welcomes questions from members of the public about their work.
Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Partnership or an item which is on the agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact Democratic Services.
- 6 **Forward Plan** 15 - 18
To detail future items that the Committee will be considering.
- 7 **Water Safety Partnership Annual Report 2023/24 (JPPC4335)** 19 - 34
As agreed by West Berkshire Council's Executive on 15 July 2021, an annual report is presented to the JPPC detailing the activities of the Bracknell and West Berkshire Water Safety Partnership.
- 8 **Public Protection Partnership Service Update and Q3 Report for 2023/24 (JPPC4333)** 35 - 68
To inform the Committee of the performance of the Public Protection Partnership in line with the operating model and business plan, and provide an update setting out performance during the third quarter of 2023/24.
- 9 **Crowthorne Air Quality Action Plan and Air Quality Management Area Revocations Update (JPPC4485)** 69 - 184
To seek approval from the Joint Public Protection Committee (JPPC) for the revised Crowthorne Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) following the statutory consultation.
To seek approval from the JPPC for the revocation of the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Bracknell (A322 Downshire Way), Newbury (A339) and Thatcham (A4) having considered of the consultation process instigated by the Committee on the 11th December 2023.

Item for information

- 10 **Young People and Vaping (JPPC4483)** 185 - 192
To provide an update to the Committee about the work being undertaken by the Public Protection Partnership to reduce the consumption of vaping products by young people across the partnership areas.

Contact Officer:

Stephen Chard, Legal and Democratic Services, West Berkshire Council, Council Offices, Market Street, Newbury RG14 5LD

Email: stephen.chard@westberks.gov.uk **Tel:** 01635 519462

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JPPC – 11 March 2024

Item 1 – Apologies for absence

Verbal Item

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JOINT PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on

MONDAY 11 DECEMBER 2023

**BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL, TIME SQUARE, MARKET STREET, BRACKNELL,
RG12 1JD**

Present: Lee Dillon (Chairman), Iskandar Jefferies (Vice-Chairman), Nick Allen, Phil Barnett, Guy Gillbe and Howard Woollaston

Also Present: Rosalynd Gater (Team Manager - Commercial), Sean Murphy (Public Protection Manager), Eric Owens (Service Director - Development & Regulation), Clare Lawrence (Executive Director - Place), Suzanne McLaughlin (Senior Environmental Health Officer), Moira Fraser (Public Protection Partnership), Kevin Gibbs (Bracknell Forest Council), Damian James (Bracknell Forest Council) and Stephen Chard (Democratic Services Manager)

PART I

21 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

22 Outstanding actions from previous meetings

Updates were provided on the following action points:

Item 1 - Water Safety Cabinets and Defibrillators – Member bids were anticipated to fund defibrillators at the location of the three water safety cabinets.

Item 3 – PPP Priorities – priorities would be discussed at the March 2024 meeting.

Items 4 and 5 were completed.

Item 6 – Proposed Fees and Charges Schedule – a letter was to be sent on behalf of the Licensing Chairs to central government regarding the potential to increase statutory fees. Councillor Lee Dillon would also raise this at the next Berkshire Leaders meeting.

23 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Lee Dillon declared a personal interest during discussion of Agenda Item 8 (PPP Service Update) by virtue of the fact that he was an employee of Sovereign Network Group with responsibility for housing management. As his interest was personal and not prejudicial or a disclosable pecuniary interest, he determined to remain to take part in the debate.

24 Notice of Public Speaking and Questions

No public questions were received.

25 Forward Plan

Members agreed to add an item 'Young People and Vaping' to the Forward Plan.

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

26 Air Quality Status Reports 2023 (JPPC4278)

The Committee considered the report (Agenda Item 7) which informed Members of the submission and results of the annual air quality reports for Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) and West Berkshire Council (WBC). These reports were for the monitoring data and action plan progress for the calendar year 2022.

The report also informed the Committee that the annual air quality report for Wokingham Borough Council had been submitted. The results had been received and passed to Wokingham Borough in accordance with the shared service arrangements effective from 1 April 2022.

Suzanne McLaughlin explained that work and monitoring took place on an ongoing basis. This showed improvements across the three local authority areas.

Councillor Guy Gillbe queried progress with the action plan for Crowthorne and the challenges being faced in trying to improve air quality in that area.

Suzanne McLaughlin clarified that the action plan covered all Bracknell Forest. The progress being made was captured within the status report. The data showed traffic levels as the primary cause of air pollution. Actions were being progressed with colleagues in both local authorities as part of Local Transport Plans. These included active travel, transport planning and work with Public Health.

Councillor Phil Barnett welcomed the improvements being made. He queried if certain vehicles exacerbated the situation. Suzanne McLaughlin advised that the vehicle mix was a consideration, i.e. HGVs or LGVs. Data was not collected on whether a vehicle was diesel, petrol or electric. Councillor Barnett felt this could be a point for officers to consider in future.

RESOLVED that:

- The contents of the Air Quality Annual Status Reports for BFC and WBC be noted.
- The feedback on the reports from the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) be noted.
- Consultation would take place for the potential revocation of the BFC Bracknell Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and WBC Newbury and Thatcham AQMAs in accordance with the recommendations from DEFRA.
- Progress made on the measures to improve air quality set out in each report be noted.
- The ongoing and planned future measures to improve air quality set out in each report be approved.
- It be noted that the Air Quality Status Report produced by the Public Protection Partnership on behalf of Wokingham Borough Council had been submitted to DEFRA, feedback had been received, and both had been passed to the authority for processing under their governance arrangements.

27 Public Protection Partnership Service Update and Q2 Report for 2023/24 (JPPC4275)

The Committee considered the report (Agenda Item 8) which informed Members of the performance of the Public Protection Partnership, in line with the operating model and

JOINT PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE - 11 DECEMBER 2023 - MINUTES

business plan, during the second quarter of 2023/24. The Committee worked through the different sections of the report.

Finances and Resources – Sean Murphy explained that while there was an underlying underspend of approximately £200k this was being deployed to help offset in-year pressures faced by both Councils.

As at the 30 November 2023, the Service was reporting a zero outturn which included the management of an estimated £80k shortfall in income. Mitigation measures included the management of vacancies and reduced spend on agency staff.

Customer Satisfaction Rates – the majority of respondents to customer satisfaction surveys gave positive feedback. This was in line with previous reports. Efforts were ongoing to increase the number of responses.

Officers were busy responding to Freedom of Information requests with 89 requests received during Q2.

Only a small number of complaints (three) had been received. They had all been responded to. Moira Fraser explained that lessons had been learned and actions taken as a result. Councillor Lee Dillon asked that this information be shared.

Officers agreed that customer satisfaction data would be provided at a local authority level.

Human Resources – recruitment difficulties continued, this was the case across many local authorities and created some competition for staff. However, 1.5 FTE Licensing Officers had been appointed. Further recruitment was planned.

It was also the case that some officers had left the authority, in one case to a another Berkshire Council.

The approach of investing in apprentices continued. Four level 4 apprentices were expected to qualify in the near future.

ICT – Members asked to receive a detailed paper on progress with implementing the single system database including information on costs and whether the business case should be reviewed. This would be provided.

Property and Assets – a relatively minor capital receipt had been received from the disposal of one animal warden van.

Operational delivery – Measures of Volume – this data was set out in Appendix A.

Communication, Consultation and Engagement – the Lead Communication Officer had left the service. While communications activity had fallen behind as a result, officers had worked hard to bring this back on track with press releases, articles etc being published.

The report also noted that officers had attended water safety partnership events.

Community and Trading Standards – a high volume of investigative work had been undertaken. This included investigations into non-compliant vape products resulting in seizures being made, scams, noise nuisance complaints, as well as working with Thames Valley Police on a child sexual exploitation operation.

Commercial (Food Safety and Health & Safety) – a number of service requests had been received for both areas. This was alongside officers working to catch up on low risk inspections that had fallen behind since Covid. Rosalynd Gater explained that cost of living pressures were impacting on businesses and this was resulting in more action needing to be taken following some, generally low risk, inspections.

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Licensing (including applications and Licensing Governance) – several matters in relation to taxis had been resolved as explained in the report. Fees and charges were going through consultation.

Licensing hearings were taking place in West Berkshire and one was due to be held in Bracknell Forest.

Environmental Health Housing – residents were seeking help with resolving issues with their landlords. Particular issues needing to be resolved in the winter months were damp and mould.

Work was ongoing in relation to Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs). Officers had secured evidence against the operation of an HMO.

The annual caravan site inspection programme had started. There had been a growth in enforcement work in this area to ensure that repairs were taking place. Cost of living pressures were in some cases impacting on work being done.

Councillor Lee Dillon declared a personal interest at this point by virtue of the fact that he worked for Sovereign National Group.

He then asked for a breakdown of the information relating to instances of damp and mould, including the landlords concerned. Sean Murphy explained that officers were working closely with social landlords in order to make progress on this matter.

Environmental Quality – noise monitoring activity had taken place. Officers had attended two West Berkshire planning committees to provide specific noise and contaminated land advice.

Officers had served two Private Water Supply Notices due to the presence of E Coli. These were generally provided with a Boil Water Notice. Notices would also be provided to the Drinking Water Inspectorate.

Councillor Iskandar Jefferies queried the process followed post the issuing of a water supply notice. Suzanne McLaughlin advised that the manager of the water supply would be required to resolve the issue. It was often the case that water cleaning was not maintained.

Emerging issues – dog kennelling provision – kennelling for larger dogs was an issue within many areas including Berkshire. Local authorities had a duty to take ownership of stray dogs for up to seven days whilst looking to reunite them with their owners or potentially looking to rehome dogs. Solutions to this issue were being worked on.

Regular kennel providers had ceased to take in aggressive dogs, larger dogs, or dogs of a certain breed, i.e. XL bullies. Registration requirements for XL bullies were expected to be confirmed shortly and this would be the subject of a press release.

Councillor Dillon queried if local authorities were required to kennel banned dogs for a period of seven days. Sean Murphy agreed to provide a fuller response, but advised that efforts would still be made to trace the owner in the first instance.

Councillor Woollaston queried whether charities, i.e. RSPCA, could assist. Sean Murphy explained that the service did work with charities for rehoming.

Councillor Jefferies queried if there was a cross Berkshire kennelling arrangement and Sean advised that each unitary authority had its own individual arrangement but a shared model was being explored.

Governance – discussions were ongoing with Wokingham about ways to involve Wokingham Members more in aspects of the services shared with Bracknell Forest and West Berkshire. Councillor Ian Shenton and Narinder Brar were in attendance at this meeting from Wokingham and were welcomed by the Committee.

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Investigations and Case Management – the Case Management Unit continued to be busy working on cases and providing advice across the PPP and also to partner organisations. The Investigations Team had 15 ongoing investigations involving a significant number of suspects. Cases were due to go to trial in 2024.

Recent case examples were provided in the report, in some cases these resulted in custodial sentences for the offenders.

Committee Members thanked officers for all their hard work and for the provision of this comprehensive report.

RESOLVED to note:

- The 2023/24 Q2 performance for the Public Protection Service.
- The Service Update since the last meeting.

28 Budget 2024/25

The Committee considered the report (Agenda Item 9) which updated Members on the proposals to deliver a balanced budget for 2024/25 with respect to the shared Public Protection Service.

Sean Murphy advised of two significant pressures – a salary pressure of £291k and an income pressure of £98k.

The salary pressure was as a result of Wokingham's decision to leave the PPP in March 2022. It was proposed that £271k of this pressure would be met by deleting vacant posts. The remaining £20k would be delivered by managing vacancies in year.

The income deficit had reduced slightly and conversations were ongoing across the PPP on meeting the funding gap. This could result in a cut to operational capacity and the implications of this would be carefully considered. The focus would remain on the provision of the highest priority areas. The Committee would be kept up to date on progress.

Councillor Nick Allen queried the reasons behind the income deficit and asked whether statutory fees could be increased. Sean Murphy explained that there had been a loss of licence holders during Covid and they had not returned.

Discussions had been held on fees and charges at Licensing Committees and it had been agreed that the Government would be lobbied on a potential increase in fees that had not seen an increase for many years.

Councillor Lee Dillon felt it would be appropriate for an increase in fees and pointed out that planning fees had seen an increase.

RESOLVED that:

- The budget position of each partner Council be noted.
- The proposals set out in this report to deliver a balanced budget, including impacts and associated risks, be noted.
- Any further budget representations to the partner Councils had been considered.

29 Briefing on Martyn's Law (Protect Duty)

The Committee considered the report (Agenda Item 10) which provided Members with an update on the progress being made with the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill as was requested at the October Committee meeting.

JOINT PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE - 11 DECEMBER 2023 - MINUTES

One of the recommendations of the Inquiry into the Manchester Arena bombing in 2017 was the introduction of a 'Protect Duty' on those responsible for publicly accessible venues and events to take steps to reduce the risk to the public from terrorist attack.

Rosalynd Gater explained that enforcement responsibility was yet to be confirmed, but this could fall to the Environmental Health Team.

Councillor Phil Barnett noted that action was already being taken in some areas. However, he voiced concern at the resource implications this could have on local authorities and therefore cost.

Councillor Howard Woollaston queried the size of the issue, the number of venues/events to which this could apply etc. Rosalynd Gater explained that this was unconfirmed but had the potential to be very broad. The draft Bill indicated that this would apply to premises with a capacity in excess of 100 people.

Councillor Iskandar Jefferies highlighted the need for a robust risk assessment process on which to identify which events met the criteria for the Bill.

Moira Fraser explained that a Safety Liaison Group had been formed with Emergency Planning colleagues. This included work on risk assessments/templates to be used by event organisers.

Members would be kept informed on this matter.

(The meeting commenced at 7.00pm and closed at 8.25pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature

Joint Public Protection Committee Actions Arising from Previous Meetings

Ref	Meeting Item	Action	Officer	Update
1.	13 March 2023 Public Protection Partnership Priorities 2021 to 2023 – Refresh	Sean Murphy to consider the implications, if any, for the PPP resulting from the enactment of the Hunting Trophies (Import Prohibition) Bill and update the Committee.	SM	The impact of the enactment of the legislation to be covered off in the priorities setting process for the Service.
2.	02 October 2023 Revenue Budget 2024/25 Including Proposed Fees and Charges Schedule	Clare Lawrence would speak with the Berkshire Group of Officers to lobby government to uplift the statutory fees. Councillor Lee Dillon would do the same at Berkshire Leaders, Officers would draft a letter to be sent on behalf of the Licensing Chairs to central government about increasing the statutory fees	CL LD JOB/ SM	
3.	11 December 2023 Public Protection Partnership Service Update and Q2 Report for 2023/24	Members requested that a social media campaign around timescales for implementation of new XL Bully rules be undertaken. George Lawrence to provide an update on liaison with the Dogs Trust for kennelling provision.	MF GL	Press release issued on the 18 th December 2023 which was supported by a series of social media posts in December, January and February. We work closely with the Dogs' Trust in our attempts to rehome stray dogs where owners cannot be traced or have not come forward. The Dog's Trust is however not a kennelling facility we can use for the purpose of housing stray dogs for the statutory period of 7 clear days.

Ref	Meeting Item	Action	Officer	Update
		More information about RSLs to be included in future iterations of the report.	RG	Table now included in the Q3 report.

JPPC – 11 March 2024

Item 4 – Declarations of Interest

Verbal Item

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JPPC – 11 March 2024

Item 5 – Public Speaking and Questions

Verbal Item

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JPPC Forward Plan June 2024 to June 2025

No.	Ref No	Item	Purpose	Lead Officer	Comments
JPPC 10 June 2024 – BFC					
1.	JPPC4369	Election of the Chairman and Appointment of the Vice-Chairman for the 2024/25 Municipal Year.	To elect a Chairman from Bracknell Forest Council and a Vice-Chairman from West Berkshire Council for the 2024/25 Municipal Year, if necessary	Verbal Item	
2.	JPPC4370	JPPC Terms of Reference	To note the terms of reference of the Committee.	Moira Fraser	
3.	JPPC4371	Public Protection Partnership Q4 2023/24 Performance Report	To consider the Quarter 4 Update and Performance Report.	Sean Murphy/ Moira Fraser	
4.	JPPC4372	PPP Strategic Assessment 2024 – 2027	To review and where appropriate update the existing document.	George Lawrence	
5.	JPPC4368	Service Plan 2024/25 and Public Protection Partnership Priorities 2024/25 to 2026/27.	To identify the relevant details of the Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) and set out how the PPP intends to operate through the delivery of the Service Plan including reviewing the priorities for the Service.	Sean Murphy & Strategic Mgrs	
6.	JPPC4451	Nuisance Policy	To adopt a policy.	Suzanne McLaughlin	
JPPC 07 October 2024 – WBC					
7.	Form submitted	Public Protection Partnership Q1 2024/25 Performance Report	To consider the Quarter 1 Update and Performance Report.	Moira Fraser	
8.	Form submitted	Revenue Budget 2025/26 Including Proposed Fees and Charges Schedule	To set out the draft revenue budget for 2024/25 including fees and charges and to seek approval for the draft budget and draft fees and charges schedule prior to submission to Bracknell and West Berkshire Councils in accordance with the Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA).	Sean Murphy	

No.	Ref No	Item	Purpose	Lead Officer	Comments
9.		Tackling Fraud and Unfair Trading	To provide the Committee with an update on the work of the Public Protection Service in tackling fraud and financial abuse.	Alison Beynon/ Theresa Bashford	
10.	JPPC4482	Martyn's Law	To provide a further update on the resource implications for the Service following the enactment of the Bill.	Rosalynd Gater	If legislation enacted.
11.	JPPC4277	PPP Delivery Plan Update 2023-2025	To set out progress has been made against the PPPs agreed priorities as set out in the 2021 to 2023 Delivery Plan.	Sean Murphy & SMs	
JPPC 16 December 2024 – BFC					
12.		Public Protection Partnership Q2 2024/25 Performance Report	To consider the Quarter 2 Update and Performance Report.	Sean Murphy/Moira Fraser	
13.		Air Quality Status Reports	To set out the response received from DEFRA	Suzanne McLaughlin	
JPPC 10 March 2025 – WBC					
14.		Public Protection Partnership Q3 2024/25 Performance Report	To consider the Quarter 3 Update and Performance Report.	Sean Murphy/ Moira Fraser	
15.		Water Safety Partnership	To provide an annual update of the work of the Partnership.	Jon Winstanley	
16.		Service Plan 2025/26	To identify the relevant details of the Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) and sets out how the PPP intends to operate through the delivery of the Service Plan	Sean Murphy & Strategic Mgrs	

No.	Ref No	Item	Purpose	Lead Officer	Comments
JPPC June 2025 – BFC					
17.		Election of the Chairman and Appointment of the Vice-Chairman for the 2025/26 Municipal Year.	To elect a Chairman from West Berkshire Council and a Vice-Chairman from Bracknell Forest Council for the 2025/26 Municipal Year, if necessary	Verbal Item	
18.		JPPC Terms of Reference	To note the terms of reference of the Committee.	Moira Fraser	
19.		Public Protection Partnership Q4 2024/25 Performance Report	To consider the Quarter 4 Update and Performance Report.	Sean Murphy/ Moira Fraser	
20.		Service Plan 2025/26.	To identify the relevant details of the Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) and set out how the PPP intends to operate through the delivery of the Service Plan.	Sean Murphy & Strategic Mgrs	
21.		Communication and Engagement Strategy 2025-2027	To update the existing Strategy and adopt any modifications made to it.	Moira Fraser	
22.		WBC RIPA Powers 2025-2028	To provide Members with an oversight of the measures in place and actions being taken by the Councils including policy and guidance and social media policy	Sean Murphy	

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Water Safety Partnership Annual Report 2023/24

Committee considering report:	Joint Public Protection Committee
Date of Committee:	11 March 2024
Chair of Committee:	Councillor Lee Dillon
Date JMB agreed report:	26 February 2024
Report Author:	Jon Winstanley
Forward Plan Ref:	JPPC4335

1. Purpose of the Briefing

- 1.1 As agreed by West Berkshire Council's Executive on 15th July 2021, an annual report would be presented to the JPPC detailing the activities of the Bracknell and West Berkshire Water Safety Partnership.

2. Background

- 2.1 Following a tragic incident in March 2021, involving the loss of life of a young child in the Kennet and Avon Canal adjacent to Victoria Park in Newbury, West Berkshire Council Officers and representatives from the Canal and River Trust and emergency services came together to look at measures that could be implemented to prevent future loss of life from accidental drowning. A proposal from this group was the establishment of a Water Safety Partnership for West Berkshire. Following the initial annual report to the Joint Public Protection Committee in 2022 it was agreed that the Water Safety Partnership would cover both West Berkshire and Bracknell to align with the Public Protection Partnership.
- 2.2 On average, around 250 people lose their lives in accidental drownings in the UK every year, with hundreds more having near drowning experiences, sometimes suffering life-changing injuries. Children can be particularly at risk.
- 2.3 One of the striking characteristics of the data on accidental drownings is that a large proportion of victims did not leave home on the day they died intending to go into water of significant depth. Roughly 40% of deaths happen whilst people were out walking or running, in comparison to approx. 20% who lose their life whilst swimming. It shows the importance of everyone being aware of the risks posed by water. West Berkshire is home to a number of significant water courses and bodies, some of which extend through our urban areas, which can significantly increase the risk of accidental drowning.
- 2.4 The incident in March 2021 has emphasised the devastating impact water related tragedies can have on our communities. Through the Partnership key stakeholders have an opportunity to play a leading role in helping prevent future incidents of accidental drowning
- 2.5 The objectives of the partnership being to:

- Promote and develop water-safety education and initiatives within West Berkshire with particular emphasis on the most at-risk groups identified through incident data and local knowledge.
- Proactively promote public awareness of water-related risks and ensure a consistent message through campaigns and communications.
- Share best practice and resources across the district (and beyond) highlighting a multi-agency approach to water safety.
- To be the focus group in responding to water related incidents in West Berkshire.
- Work with partner organisations to gather and improve data involving water incidents in West Berkshire in order to inform a targeted approach to water safety.

2.6 Partnership member organisations include:

- WBC Service Director Environment (Chair).
- WBC Officers (Public Protection, Environment and Communities & Wellbeing).
- Bracknell Forest Council Officers.
- Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service.
- Canal and River Trust.
- Thames Valley Police.
- South Central Ambulance Service.
- National Health Service.
- Environment Agency.

2.7 The meeting has also been attended by representatives from Laura Farris' (MP) office and there are plans to invite representatives from other local unitary authorities as part of a knowledge sharing exercise.

3. Implications and Impact

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	None
Human Resource:	None
Legal:	None
Risk Management:	An objective of the partnership is to reduce the risk of accidental deaths from water related incidents.
Property:	None
Policy:	None
Consultation and Engagement	None

4. Current Status

- 4.1 There has been one reported water related fatality in West Berkshire over the last 12-month period and none in Bracknell Forest. The incident in West Berkshire involved a male returning home from the Town Centre at night and falling into the canal in the Mill Lane area of Newbury. Representatives from the Water Safety Partnership visited the site of the incident and did not find any physical measures that could reasonably be introduced that would have prevented the incident. Contact has been made with the Street Pastors in Newbury for their assistance in spreading the word about the dangers of water when walking home from a night out. RBFRS are looking at other promotional activity around the night time trade in Newbury.
- 4.2 In addition to the above, two vulnerable users of the salvation army building in Newbury town centre fell into the river Kennet opposite the building. Both had to be rescued by RBFRS and it was classed as a 'near miss'. The incident occurred on private land with the two men falling over a low barrier. Discussion is ongoing with the landowner to make this area more secure and to prevent access to the water at this point.
- 4.3 The Water Safety Partnership also keeps abreast of incidents county-wide to ensure we are aware of current issues and take any learning from those incidents. One such unfortunate incident has involved the death of a 10-year-old boy in the River Kennet in the Elgar Rd area of Reading. Representatives of the Water Safety Partnership have been liaising with Reading Borough Council about the establishment of a Reading Water Safety Partnership.
- 4.4 4 meetings of the Water Safety Partnership took place in 2023 and the following actions have been completed during that period:
- Terms of reference for the partnership have been updated.
 - Further safety review of the River and Canal through Newbury initial and significant work completed to remove trees and tree roots that could impact of water safety.
 - RBFRS hosted a Water Safety Day in Newbury on the 15th of April at 10.00 in Victoria Park with throw line demonstration and training.
 - Open water swim coaching – Bracknell Forest have an open space Horseshoe Lake where they have a water sports operator who do open water swimming lessons if a venue is needed.
 - Water Safety Messaging has been incorporated into Emergency Planning's Heatwave Health Alerts as this tends to represent a peak in water activity.
 - Further development of the PPP website as a resource for sharing information etc. [Water Safety Messages - Key Resources - PPP \(publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk\)](https://www.publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk)
 - Analysis of water incidents have resulted in a Water Safety cabinet being installed in Northcroft Park, Newbury in addition to those previously installed in Victoria Park, Newbury and at Pangbourne Meadows.



Northcroft Newbury

- Cabinet features rescue buoy with rope, solar powered beacon, and keypad entry to prevent vandalism.
- Joint promotional activities around water safety week in May, drowning prevention week in June, summer water activities and promotional material around cold-water shock along with winter preparedness late Autumn.

4.5 The Water Safety Partnership is also working with Pangbourne Parish Council to look at ways to discourage jumping (tombstoning) from Whitchurch Bridge. A Water Safety Partnership roadshow was held during the summer in Pangbourne Meadows adjacent to the Bridge and we are soon to trial the placing of signs with QR codes that will link to educational and safety messaging around the dangers of this activity.

5. Next Steps

5.1 Currently planned activities for 2024 include the following:

- [Toddler Safety Week](#) being organised by the Canal and River Trust, date TBC.

Further engagement with youth groups to promote water safety especially during the summer months. Groups such as <https://togetherasone.org.uk/> [Don't die of cold water shock! Mellesa explains what you should do if ... | TikTok](#)

- Continuous monitoring and assessment of water related incidents.
- Comms/Events plan for the year currently being developed a draft of which can be seen in Appendix B.
- Continued schools training programme.

- Liaison with suicide prevention group to look at Samaritans signs on appropriate bridges.
- Wild/Open Water Swimming coaching and instruction event for adults and children targeting popular areas.
- Monitoring the use of QR codes at key locations linking to water safety educational and safety messaging.

6. Supporting Information (if required)

6.1 N/A

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 Although instigated as a result of a tragic event, there is a clear need for a multi-agency group to focus on water safety and reducing the risk of accidental drowning.
- 7.2 This group was effective in the initial response to the incident in March 2021, but also provides the longer-term opportunity for individual members to present ideas, initiatives, research and updates on their individual work on water safety.

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A – Water Safety Partnership Terms of Reference.
- 8.2 Appendix B – Draft 2023 Comms Plan

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Appendix A

West Berkshire & Bracknell Water Safety Partnership

Terms of Reference

Document History

Document Revision	Date	Reason for Change
V3	02/05/2021	Simplified

Terms of Reference

Name of Group: West Berkshire Water Safety Partnership (known as “WBWSP”)

Background: The group initially met in April 2021 in response to an incident on the Kennet and Avon Canal in Newbury that involved the death of a small child. The purpose of the group was to look at preventative measures for that particular incident, however it soon became clear that appetite exists for a wider Water Safety Partnership across the District.

WBWSP

Purpose: The purpose of the WBWSP is to work towards prevention of accidental drowning deaths in West Berkshire by working in partnership to ensure consistent guidance for the safe enjoyment and management of activities in, on and around water.

Aim: The aim of the WBWSP is to work to improve the safety of persons from water risks in West Berkshire with the intention to reduce accidental drowning deaths of people who live, work and visit the District.

Objectives	
1.	Improve fatality and incident data in West Berkshire by advocating Water Incident Database (“WAID”) and sharing WAID reports with partner organisations and local authorities.
2.	Promote and develop water-safety education and initiatives within West Berkshire & Bracknell Forest with particular emphasis on the most at risk groups identified through incident data and local knowledge.
3.	Proactively promote public awareness of water-related risks and ensure a consistent message through campaigns and communications.
4.	Sharing best practice and resources across the District highlighting a multi-agency approach to water safety.

5.	To be the focus group in responding to water related incidents in West Berkshire & Bracknell.
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Structure

All organisations (“members”) of the WBWSP sit on the **Main Group**. This group provides the opportunity for individual members to present ideas, initiatives, research and updates on their individual work. The main group includes a Chair, Vice Chair and administrative support. In addition to this main group, **subgroups** may be established to develop and deliver specific objectives. These subgroups will usually consist of members of the main group but may also include additional members as required.

The Chair and Vice Chair will rotate amongst the Partnership Members and are elected by the main group every 24 months at the April meeting.

The admin support for the group is provided by the current Chair’s organisation or another as agreed.

Membership

Each member shall be represented by a nominated representatives (or such replacement as notified to the Chair) who shall have responsibility to contribute to the WBWSP.

All invitations for new members to the WBWSP should go through the Chair.

All potential members for any WBWSP will be approved by the main group.

In order to retain full membership, each organisation is expected to attend at least two meetings in a 12 month period.

An organisation must be a full member of the WBWSP to lead a subgroup.

If it is not possible to attend the WBWSP meetings, updates can be sent to the Chair to be included in the main meeting.

Members of the WBWSP can also invite guests to a WBWSP meeting by letting the Chair know.

Role of members (through nominated representative)

The role of the members of the WBWSP includes:

- The attendance of meetings
- Providing updates of their own organisations (where appropriate)
- To be an advocate for the WBWSP and drowning prevention
- To contribute to the outputs of the WBWSP

Role of The Chair

The role of the Chair of the WBWSP includes:

- To provide leadership
- Lead, organise and conduct the WBWSP meeting, including holding a casting vote
- To ensure the WBWSP functions properly.
- To ensure the WBWSP is managed effectively.
- To represent the WBWSP as its figurehead
- Ensure the terms of reference are followed
- Ensure an annual report is submitted to the Leader’s Office West Berkshire Council for onward submission to the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board, and (if applicable) represent the WBWSP at any West Berkshire Council committee.

Accountability/Governance

The WBWSP will report to the Joint Public Protection Committee as part of the Public Protection Partnership.

Media Protocols

All members of the WBWSP are encouraged to have a comms representative named and have a responsibility in the promotion of the work of the WBWSP.

All WBWSP members are asked to promote the use of the WBWSP brand where appropriate and use the WBWSP logo.

The members agree they shall not be permitted to use the other members Intellectual Property (including logo's) unless prior written consent of the member is provided. Such consent shall grant a non-exclusive, non-transferable, terminable licence to use the other members Intellectual Property for the purposes agreed in this WBWSP or meetings.

All press releases and press statements will be agreed by all members of the WBWSP with the Chair (or if unavailable, the Vice Chair) of the WBWSP responsible for final approval.

Review

This document and the WBWSP will be reviewed annually for continuous improvement. Any changes which would warrant an early review should go through the Chair where the issue will be raised at the next WBWSP meeting. If deemed appropriate, a review will take place.

Working Methods

The WBWSP main group meets quarterly. Subgroups may be created to manage and prioritise individual objectives or specific areas to support the purpose of the WBWSP. These subgroups must be approved by the main group before creation.

Meetings

The WBWSP will meet formally every quarter (in person or via video conferencing); additional meetings being called as required.

All WBWSP meeting minutes will be produced following the meeting and shared with the partnership. At the following meeting the minutes will be agreed before being made available on the WBC website.

Any items that members wish to be placed on the agenda should be sent to the Chair 14 days in advance of the meeting.

The notice of a meeting with agenda and any accompanying papers shall be circulated at least 7 days in advance.

Agendas for meetings will be formed via:

- Incident information
- Items submitted by member organisations through the Chair
- Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meetings
- Correspondence received

All agendas should follow a consistent framework including:

- Welcome
- Minutes from previous meetings, accuracy and matters arising
- Review of Outstanding WBWSP Actions
- Review of Incidents since previous meeting.
- Agenda items
- AoB
- Date and Time of next meeting

In the absence of the Chair at a meeting, the Vice Chair will take responsibility for the group. If both the Chair and Vice Chair are unavailable, the meeting will be postponed until an appropriate time.

Sharing of information

All minutes, and information regarding the group will be publicly accessible through the webpage which is located at [Water Safety Partnership - PPP \(publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk\)](http://WaterSafetyPartnership-PPP(publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk)) Hosted by PPP.

Correspondence

The WBWSP webpage will be maintained and updated by WBC. Members are encouraged to provide resources and information for the website.

Data Access

The WBWSP agrees to only use WAID data provided by The Royal Society for the Protection of Accidents (“RoSPA”) and WBWSP members.

Finances

Funding for the WBWSP will be provided through agreement at the WBWSP meetings with payment for campaigns, media and running costs being direct from partners. No WBWSP bank account will be established and as such financial responsibility will not be a requirement of the WBWSP but for individual partners.

Contingency Measures

Events when contingency arrangements come into force:

- Chair and/or Vice Chair incapacitated, unable to perform normal duties or resign

Contingency arrangements: Chair and/or Vice Chair unable to honour duties or resign:

- The Chair/Vice Chair will undertake both roles until the Chair/Vice Chair is able to resume duties or, if an absence of more than 6 months is expected a new Chair/Vice Chair is elected at the next WBWSP meeting.

Contingency arrangements Chair and Vice Chair unable to honour duties or resign:

The remaining members of the WBWSP will call a meeting at the earliest opportunity and elect a new Chair and Vice Chair

General Provisions

This WBWSP does not constitute or infer any contract or binding agreement on or between the members.

Nothing in this WBWSP is intended to, or shall be deemed to, establish any partnership or joint venture between the members, constitute either member as the agent of another member, nor authorise any of the members to make or enter into any commitments for or on behalf of the other members.

This WBWSP shall remain in effect until terminated by all members voting by agreement.

The members intend that any intellectual property rights created in the course of this WBWSP shall vest in the member whose employee created them.

Except as otherwise provided, the members shall each bear their own costs and expenses (along with any liabilities) incurred in complying with their obligations under this WBWSP.

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Event Calendar 2024

Date	Title	Weblink
TBC	<p>Toddler Safety Week</p> <p>Free activities and resources suitable for the under 5s, aimed at helping children stay safe near water. You can use these at home or in nursery.</p>	<p>Toddler water safety Canal & River Trust (canalrivertrust.org.uk)</p>
TBC	<p>Greenham Lock Open Day</p>	<p>Greenham Lock open day Canal & River Trust (canalrivertrust.org.uk)</p>
22 nd – 28th April 2024	<p>Be Water Aware</p> <p>The aim of Be Water Aware is to encourage people to spend time in and around water safely. The campaign week runs in April, but messaging can be used throughout the year.</p>	<p>Be Water Aware - NFCC</p>

	<p>The messaging supports the aims and objectives of the Strategy National Water Safety Forum and that of other member organisations of the National Water Safety Forum. By aligning our messaging and supporting a calendar of campaigns, we aim to reduce the number of accidental drownings in the UK.</p>	
<p>13th - 19th May 2024</p>	<p>International Learn to Swim Week</p> <p>With more than 150 Swim Star Swim Schools, 20 Swim Academies and 150,000+ STA swimming teachers world-wide, we can make a huge impact together during International Learn to Swim Week in 2024.</p> <p>Together we can help encourage people of all ages and abilities to learn a life-long skill, have fun and get water-ready for the summer holidays.</p> <p>Help STA preserve human life through the teaching of swimming, lifesaving, and survival techniques, and let's make this our biggest #LoveWaterSafely campaign yet.</p>	<p>International Learn to Swim Week 2024 – STA.co.uk</p>
<p>18th - 24th May 2024</p>	<p>National Safe Boating Week</p> <p>National Safe Boating Week will be held from May 18-24, 2024, reminding all boaters to brush up on boating safety skills and prepare for the boating season</p>	<p>National Safe Boating Week Press Release - Safe Boating Campaign</p>
	<p>Summer Water Safety</p> <p>To enjoy the water safely and make the right call.</p>	<p>Summer Water Safety Royal Life Saving Society UK (RLSS UK)</p>
<p>15th - 22nd June 2024</p>	<p>Drowning Prevention Week (DPW)</p> <p>Drowning Prevention Week (DPW) aims to equip everybody across the UK and Ireland with the skills and knowledge, to make the right decisions about water safety.</p>	<p>Royal Life Saving Society UK's Drowning Prevention Week (rlss.org.uk)</p>

	Open Water Swimming Instruction event: for adults and children Sessions	Home of Open Water Swimming Swim England
TBC	Don't Drink and Drown Freshers. Don't Drink and Drown is the Royal Life Saving Society UK's national campaign that encourages smart decision making whilst intoxicated around water.	Don't Drink and Drown Royal Life Saving Society UK (RLSS UK)
16 th – 22 nd Sept and 12 th – 20 th Dec 2024	Don't Drink and Drown Winter Don't Drink and Drown is the Royal Life Saving Society UK's national campaign that encourages smart decision making whilst intoxicated around water.	RLSS UK's Don't Drink and Drown campaign
	Ice Safety Message	Winter Water Safety Royal Life Saving Society UK (RLSS UK)

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Public Protection Partnership Service Update and Q3 Report for 2023/24

Committee considering report:	Joint Public Protection Committee
Date of Committee:	11 March 2024
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Lee Dillon
Report Author:	Sean Murphy
Forward Plan Ref:	JPPC4333

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To inform the Committee of the performance of the Public Protection Partnership in line with the operating model and business plan and provide an update setting out performance during the third quarter of 2023/24.

2 Recommendations

The Committee:

- 2.1 **NOTES** the 2023/24 Q3 performance for the Public Protection Service.
- 2.2 **NOTES** the Service Updates since the last meeting.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	<p>The service is currently predicting an end of year budget outturn of zero. Although there is an underlying managed underspend (arising from vacancies and last year's carry forward) this is being deployed to offset in-year pressures faced by both Councils.</p> <p>The service is predicting an income shortfall of £95k in 2023/24. This is in the most part due to a fall in income in licensing (Street Trading, Premises Licences and Private Hire Operators). This is also being mitigated by vacancies in licensing and other areas of the service combined with reduced spend on agency staff.</p> <p>West Berkshire as host currently has strict financial controls in place where expenditure over £2K is considered by a panel.</p>

	<p>Work is underway to understand how this process applies to PPP expenditure where a significant part of spend relates to other authority and grant contributions.</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>The combination of vacancies and restrictions on the use of agency staff has the risk of increasing pressure on existing staff and there is no doubt in some areas the staff and the service are under significant pressure. We are constantly reviewing the service to ensure that resource is targeted in high priority areas and areas where there is greater risk of detriment to residents. There is some very limited engagement of agency staff, but this is linked primarily to grant funded areas where there is not the resource to conduct the work e.g., level 3 investigation work and private sector housing work.</p> <p>A great deal of effort has gone into re-balancing the service through the delivery of a workforce strategy focussed on a ‘grow our own’ ethos by investing in apprenticeships, post graduate professional qualifications and post-entry training for both new and existing officers. This workforce strategy is underpinned by the Training and Development Plan.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. The Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) charges the Joint Public Protection Committee with the responsibility to oversee service delivery and performance including financial performance. This report discharges this responsibility. The governance arrangements with Wokingham are managed through Joint Management Board. Options are being considered around Wokingham’s alignment with JPPC.</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>We will continue to manage risk in line with the prevailing situation and corporate policies. The service maintains both a strategic and operational risk register.</p> <p>The strategic risk register is regularly scrutinised by the Joint Management Board (JMB) which meets fortnightly. The JMB considers the red risk action plans at these meetings.</p> <p>The operational risk register is routinely monitored by the Principal Policy Officer Group with concerns being escalated to the Joint Management Team.</p> <p>The first critical risk currently facing the service is the failure to retain or recruit business critical staff which would result in the Service being unable to fulfil our statutory obligations. This risk is being managed through the carefully executed workforce strategy.</p>

	The second critical issue is a significant reduction in budget following Wokingham’s departure from PPP in respect of the loss of income.			
Property:	There are no direct property implications arising from this report although it is to be noted that the ‘Transformation Programme’ at West Berkshire is looking at rationalising the use of the estate. This may have an impact on the PPP use of Theale Gateway with some sharing of the building proposed on a trial basis.			
Policy:	<p>There are no direct policy implications arising from this paper. It should be noted that the Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) places a responsibility on the Joint Public Protection Committee (JPPC) to determine service policies and priorities and to maintain oversight of performance. This report addresses that requirement.</p> <p>The revised service priorities were agreed at the March 2023 JPPC meeting. The Delivery Plan and Strategic Assessment will be discussed at June 2024 meeting which will assist with setting new priorities and monitoring progress against them whilst providing context about how the priorities are being delivered on a day-to-day basis.</p>			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		✓		No implications
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		✓		No implications

<p>Environmental Impact:</p>	<p>✓</p>			<p>It is anticipated that the revised ways of working will continue to deliver reductions in travel for the team.</p> <p>In addition, one of the aims of the Partnership is to deliver better outcomes for the environment and for residents of Bracknell Forest and West Berkshire.</p>
<p>Health Impact:</p>	<p>✓</p>			<p>The proposals create no direct health impacts on staff. They do however set out progress against community-based health protection and improvement measures and initiatives.</p>
<p>ICT Impact:</p>	<p>✓</p>			<p>The use of ICT on service delivery has been transformational. MS Teams continue to be employed in the day today running of the service.</p> <p>The JPPC will continue to meet in accordance with the decisions made by West Berkshire Council, as the host authority, about meeting arrangements. The Licensing Committees will be conducted under the meeting arrangements of their individual authorities.</p> <p>The Service will continue to make use of the website, and social media platforms to improve the customer journey and keep residents and businesses informed.</p>
<p>Digital Services Impact:</p>	<p>✓</p>			<p>None – any updates to the PPP website are undertaken within existing resources.</p>

PPP Priorities:	✓			<p>This information sets out how the Service has maximised the use of resources to deliver against all the JPPC priorities as set out below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alcohol and Tobacco Harm Reduction 2. Animal Welfare 3. Cost of Living 4. Environmental Protection 5. Food Safety and Standards 6. Health and Safety Enforcement 7. Housing Standards in the Private Rental Sector 8. Impact of Nuisance on Residents and Communities 9. Improved Air Quality 10. Licensing 11. Nutrition and Childhood Obesity 12. Service Improvement 13. Tackling Fraud 14. Unsafe Consumer Goods
Core Business:	✓			<p>A lot of the activity within the Service constitutes Business as Usual Activity and performance is monitored through the set of indicators previously agreed by this Committee.</p>
Data Impact:		✓		<p>All activity in undertaken having regard to the PPP's Privacy Statement.</p>
Consultation and Engagement:	<p>There is regular engagement with staff as well as senior officer and Member briefings in each of the authorities that form the PPP.</p>			

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 The Committee is mandated by the Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) to keep under review the performance and activity of the Public Protection Service including the financial performance and outputs of the service. Throughout the year the Committee receives updates on aspects of performance and any emerging issues, achievements, and priorities. This report also sets out progress and risks in key strategic areas of the business i.e., Finance, HR, ICT, Property and Legal.
- 4.2 The summarised Quarter 3 (October to December) performance data is set out in **Appendix A** to the report.

- 4.3 The narrative in this report sets out the steps and interventions that the service performs across all partner authority areas to protect both residents and businesses.

5 Finances and Resources

- 5.1 As at the 29th February 2024 the Service is reporting a zero outturn which includes management of an estimated £95K shortfall in income which has arisen primarily in the licensing service.
- 5.2 The Service continues to seek access to grant funding. In the year to date the service has made successful grant funding applications exceeding £250K for level 2 and 3 investigations. These grants are used to fund costs for expert witnesses, staff costs, agency costs and legal costs.
- 5.3 The Service also accesses a range of public health funding relating to housing standards and links to health, tobacco and alcohol control including the development of Community Alcohol Partnerships. Other grant funding sources relate to supporting scam (fraud) victims with interventions to reduce the risk of harm and detriment. Some examples of this work can be found elsewhere in this report.
- 5.4 The Service has also recently been awarded a grant by DEFRA to undertake work on air quality in Bracknell Forest, West Berkshire and Wokingham. More information will be provided once the embargo has been lifted.

6 Customer Satisfaction Rates, FOI's etc.

- 6.1 The Service continues to explore ways to improve data capture on customer satisfaction for businesses and residents interacting with the service. All documentation issued by the service now has a QR code that links to a short on-line survey.
- 6.2 During Q3 52% (11/21) of respondents to these surveys confirmed that they were fairly, very or exceptionally satisfied with the service that they had received. This represents a significant drop when compared to the percentages for Q1 (87%) and Q2 (81%). In the year to date the satisfaction levels stand at 72% the target being 75%.
- 6.3 Officers are seeking to amend the way this data is captured to enable us to be able to undertake some cross correlation and also to be able to better understand why respondents have answered in the way they have in order to improve service delivery. Due to the nature of the Service, which often involves neighbour disputes etc, it is to be expected that not all service users will be satisfied with the service they have received. Changing the way the information is recorded will assist with interrogating the data to be able to allow for these situations.
- 6.4 While the Service is not complacent about customer satisfaction levels it should be noted that the ten respondents that indicated that they were not satisfied with the service amounted to less than 0.004% of the service requests dealt with this quarter. This information should also be viewed in the context of the compliments set out in Appendix B and the number of service complaints received.
- 6.5 During Q3 the team dealt with a total of 87 Freedom of Information requests which took around 53.5 hours to process. The number of requests increased by around 19% when

compared to the same period in 2022/23 where 73 Fols were processed. The number of FOIs processed in Q3 is slightly lower than the 89 processed in Q2. The team also processed 30 enquiries from Councillors and the local MPs. This represented a significant increase when compared to the 22 (32% increase) that were dealt with in Quarter 3 of the previous year.

6.6 The Information is broken down by authority below:

	BFC						PPP
	Q3 22/23	Q3 23/24	Q3 22/23	Q3 23/24	Q3 22/23	Q3 23/24	YTD 29/2/24
FOIs	32	51	39	34	2	2	331
MP/Cllr Queries	7	5	15	25	0	0	121
Complaints	0	0	5	1	0	0	17

6.7 One service complaint was processed in Q3. This figure is lower than the five received in the corresponding period in 2022/23. The response to the complaint, which related to concerns around reminders being issued for taxi licences, explained that it was not a requirement for the service to issue these reminders albeit that this was something that had previously been done. It was anticipated that once the public portal element of the new IT system was up and running these reminders would be generated automatically. Officers have now been able to resume issuing reminders manually in the interim.

6.8 Quarter 3 Data for Past 4 years (Wokingham Data Removed for Comparator Purposes). Data broken down by authority in the appendix.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Fols	106* (41 hrs)	71	78 (43.3hrs)	87 (66)
MP/Cllr Enquiries	20	16	22	37
Complaints	8	10	2	3

* there was a surge in Covid related Fols at this time.

Partner authority data is broken down in Appendix A

7 Human Resources

7.1 We currently have two vacancies in the PPP Housing team. The recruitment process to fill the vacant posts is underway. An officer from the Communities Team has been deployed into this Team to provide interim cover and is receiving the necessary training to ensure that the required competencies are in place. Additionally, one of the Apprentices has been moved into the team to provide additional resilience. A contractor has also been brought in to assist with providing temporary cover in this area.

7.2 As has been previously reported we continue to have vacancies in the Licensing Team. We are currently recruiting to the Lead Licensing Officer role as well as two Licensing Enforcement Officer roles. In addition, a vacancy in the Applications Team is also being recruited to. One of the apprentices has been moved into the Team to provide additional resilience and a different apprentice will be assisting with the animal licensing activity in the team. Apprentices are also assisting with some inspection work.

- 7.3 Unplanned sickness absence in the Commercial Team has meant that we are unlikely to complete the programmed food inspections on time. Internal arrangements are being put in place to provide some cover including the fourth apprentice being moved into this team to increase capacity for trained officers to undertake some of these inspections.
- 7.4 The Service's Lead Communication Officers left the Service in quarter 3 and a decision was made not to replace this role as part of the savings programme for 2024/25. The activity is now being undertaken in part by the Policy and Governance Manager with support from the Apprentices and the Community and Health Lead Officer.
- 7.5 Our apprentices have attended some peer sessions for apprentices arranged by Trading Standards South-East. Officers from CTS (and Licensing) have recently undertaken refresher training regarding hoarders and firework and pyrotechnics safety.
- 7.6 Two officers are going through their final assessments for Criminal Disclosure while others are still at earlier stages in completing this qualification.
- 7.7 In terms of wider training and development we have two officers studying the Level 6 Trading Standards qualification and one studying the Level 6 Environmental Health (EH) qualification. We also have one graduate EH trainee and two officers undertaking MSC's in EH. All four of our current Level 4 Apprentices are looking to qualify in the next six months. One of the apprentices is also undertaking a Level 3 Apprenticeship in Animal Welfare and one of them will be starting the Higher National Certificate in Food Safety in the autumn.

8 ICT

- 8.1 The new single system is largely fully operational with all data transferred. Work is underway to embed this with customers once the portal is fully operational. Damain James and the PPP Service Lead meet with the contractor monthly.

9 Property and Assets

- 9.1 The key property highlights are as follows:
- West Berkshire's ongoing transformation programme is looking at property. Theale Gateway is the home to many staff including all central teams such as licensing and customer delivery. It is proposed by West Berkshire that this becomes a shared facility on a limited basis with up to six desks allocated for non PPP staff. Should this transpire then any space used will be recharged corporately.

10 Operational Delivery – Measures of Volume

- 10.1 The key measures of volume data are set out in **Appendix A** to this report and the key highlights in terms of team activity is set out below.

11 Communication, Consultation and Engagement

- 11.1 During Q3:

- Officers have dealt with five press enquiries and the PPP has been mentioned in a significant volume of online articles.
- Officers have published 18 news articles.
- The service is currently working with a television production company to capture aspects of our work for future broadcast.
- As the Lead Communications Officer left the Service during Q3 there was an initial drop off in output while adjustments were made, and new skills were developed.

Target	2022/2023 Outturn	Q3	Q2	Q1
Facebook – No of New Followers *	265	-6	57	47
Facebook – No of Posts	358	100	118	101
Twitter – No of New Followers	29	12	7	0
Twitter – No of Tweets	311	15	84	58
Website – No of Visits	88,872	19,017	24,150	22,307
Website – No of Articles	110	18	28	15

- During Q3 Officers undertook consultations on statutory licensing fees in both partner authorities and a report was produced on the consultation undertaken in respect of the ‘Knowledge Test’ in Bracknell Forest.
- The Policy and Governance Manager continues to work closely with West Berkshire and Bracknell Forest communication teams and liaises with them on a regular basis regarding our campaigns. We also share our press releases for their distribution, as well as both continuing to share relevant posts on each other’s social media platforms.
- During Q3, 12 presentations took place in schools across West Berkshire. All presentations delivered were regarding vaping education. Presentations in respect of alcohol harm reduction have been booked in by schools for the new year. The delivery of presentations to schools continues to be a highly sought after area of the work we do. In addition, two responsible retailer training sessions have been offered. This work is funded by Public Health.

11.2 Since launching the Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP) as a West Berkshire wide initiative, the following activities have been undertaken during Q3:

- Work with Berkshire Youth CEO to discuss CAP and how we can work together on CAP funded projects.

- Distribution of CAP parent's guide leaflet through all secondary schools across West Berkshire along with the Youth Offending Team to provide to parents of pupils and service users.
- Provision of a list of all breweries across West Berkshire to enable CAP CiC to approach them to request additional funding for the West Berkshire CAP.
- Working with Newbury College regarding establishing a 'college CAP', this will include five projects across the remainder of the academic year and the development of 'Young Health Champions' within the college.
- Contact with all schools within West Berkshire advising of the alcohol presentations that can be undertaken to students by the team. We have schools booked in for presentations in the new year.
- Partnership working with colleagues in respect of setting up a Challenge 25 test purchasing operation.

11.3 The service also manages the Community Alcohol Partnership commissioned by Wokingham Borough Public Health Team.

11.4 Smokefree sidelines work which aims to abolish smoking and vaping at grass roots football is ongoing. Consideration is being given to opening up the initiative to other grass roots sports.

11.5 Communication in regard to the Smokefree Homes project, including the dangers of smoking, second hand smoke and where and how to get help to quit smoking regularly went out via the PPP social media platforms during Q3.

11.6 The Tobacco Control Alliance have started drafting the Tobacco Control Plan for 2024-2026.

11.7 During Q3 the PPP fitted eight call blockers, delivered eight training sessions or presentations on scams, directly supported 12 victims and retrieved over £38,000 for victims of fraud.

11.8 Thatcham Community Larder has continued to operate on a weekly basis throughout Q3, member numbers remain steady (circa 75). It continues to be a well utilised resource by residents within Thatcham, not just for the food provided but also the social interaction and advice and guidance that can be sought in respect of matters such as housing, debt management, scams, rogue traders and nutrition.

11.9 The electric blanket and portable heater safety campaign, funded by the Office of Product Safety Standards (OPSS), has continued during Q3 with leaflet drops across the partnership, communication on social media and presentations. The PPP have been successful in Q3 in securing funding for two further campaigns. The first funded by Electrical Safety First and working in conjunction with Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service seeks to raise awareness of the dangers of electric bikes and electric scooters, and the second funded by OPSS seeks to educate and raise awareness of the dangers of button batteries. The delivery of these projects will take place during Q4.

12 Community and Trading Standards (including Customer Services)

12.1 The Trading Standards Service is delivered across Bracknell Forest, Wokingham and West Berkshire. The following is a summary of some of the work undertaken by the Community and Trading Standards Team:

- Over the last quarter officers have undertaken food standards inspections, and where any issues were identified, for example foreign labelling, sold beyond use-by dates, or poor allergen control, officers have advised the food business accordingly.
- A comprehensive food sampling programme is taking place this year. During November, officers visited 23 food premises to assess the (foreign) labelling of food e.g. American sweets, non-English ingredients, non-English product names etc.– this amounted to around 3000 products in those stores being inspected. There was overwhelming compliance for the majority, and for the minority of non-complaint premises/products, advice on labelling was given and products were removed from sale. During the rest of the quarter, officers sampled take away meals (for artificial colours), fish and chips (for species and acrylamide) as well as following up any failures accordingly. Results are still pending for all of Quarter 3 sampling.
- Trading Standards Officers continued to conduct a number of interviews under caution in relation to several non-compliant vapes seized during Operation Tanoak. Officers are now submitting case files for review for eleven premises. Of those eleven, four formal warning letters were sent to the relevant premises, which included business advice. The remaining seven are being reviewed by the Case Management Unit.
- Officers have also been test purchasing disposable vapes as part of a national project looking at market surveillance as part of Operation Joseph. Results have been provided by colleagues at Kent County Council Scientific Services. Of note are the number and reasons of failures including quantity of nicotine and total volume being different to that declared and well as labelling. A number of matters have been referred to the Medicine and Healthcare Regulatory Authority. This work has been funded nationally and we have been notified that we are to receive further grant funding for follow up work in this area.
- In response to a cluster of product safety notifications for children's toys, several samples were purchased and sent to an independent test house to check that the products met recognised standards. Results are still pending.
- In addition, officers have received unusual service requests as part of business as usual – building works and second-hand car related complaints continue to remain the most complained about business sectors. Officers are utilising provisions within the Enterprise Act 2002 as an alternative tool to protect consumer rights by obtaining undertakings by the trader not to trade in a detrimental manner towards consumers. Breach of this agreement can then be dealt with through the court system.
- Officers continue to work with partners to tackle fraud and scams, partners include, Thames Valley Police, HMRC, neighbouring Trading Standards departments by exchanging intelligence and information that can lead to victims receiving lost money

back via banking protocols, and jointly working to remove and prevent illegal traders from operating throughout the area.

- As part of general inspections over 40 explosives visits were undertaken on all premises registered to keep explosives (mainly fireworks) across the PPP area. Officers identified some minor issues relating to the conditions set by the licence around safe storage and quantity. Advice was provided about correct safe storage conditions, and licences varied to bring premises into compliance. This is an improvement on last year where two premises were found to have major breaches and were subsequently investigated for health and safety breaches.
- Visits concerning animal health and welfare, and animal feeding are ongoing.
- Nuisance complaints remain a significant element of service requests received by the team, and there are several ongoing investigations concerning noise from sources such as cockerels, domestic appliances, water pumps and human behaviour in addition to the usual nuisance of music. Quarter 3 produced around the same level of complaints; most of which are dealt with through officer dialogue.
- The service continues managing stray dog collection, and we are now prepared for the changes in legislation relating to XL Bully type dogs as well as the restricted availability of kennelling provision. The service has secured kennelling provisions for larger dogs, and the impact of the new legislation surrounding XL bullies has been minimal. The service has only needed to arrange collection of one suspected XL bully type dog since its introduction, which was rehomed via Battersea dog's home before then ban took effect. The work around XL Bullies was supported by a communications plan advising of the various deadlines as was requested at the last meeting.
- In addition, officers have completed 19 petroleum site inspections across the PPP.
- Underage sales exercises throughout quarter 3 included seven attempts to purchase fireworks by children with no sales, eleven attempts to purchase vapes with one sale and six attempts to purchase lottery scratch cards, with no sales.
- Finally, amongst the business-as-usual service requests, trading standards have had some interesting enquiries. For example, the service received a complaint about microbeads in cosmetics which officers are looking into as businesses are no longer able to sell rinse-off cosmetics and personal care products that contain microbeads.
- Also, an online seller on social media not delivery on clothes and jewellery. It is believed this might be a scam aimed at young girls. There are also a number of sellers of counterfeit goods identified in our area that are being investigated. In more traditional selling forums, complaints were received concerning out of date and mouldy food, as well as other allegations of the sale of takeaway food in polystyrene pots alleging contravention of the single used plastic ban.
- Businesses are also proactive in contacting the service. For example, a trader called to obtain advice over concerns that there were heavy metals present in jewellery

that was being sold and wanted advice on how to recall the products and a local food bank requested advice on the distribution of Calpol.

13 Commercial (Food Safety and Health and Safety)

- 13.1 The Commercial Team are still working through the food hygiene inspections that are due (and overdue as a result of Covid). In this quarter they carried out 120 Full Inspection/Audits of food premises.
- 13.2 Officers are prioritising higher risk premises although it is evident that some premises' standards have dropped as Officers are taking more formal action this year than in previous years. This is due to ongoing complications that the premises are facing post Covid and subsequent shutdowns and as a result of high running costs. Officers continue to work with businesses to ensure compliance. The PPP will ensure that the highest risk premises are inspected in this inspection year and will also prioritise unrated premises that are higher risk.
- 13.3 The team also dealt with 115 Food hygiene service requests from businesses and the public and 130 infectious disease notifications.
- 13.4 In terms of enforcement three premises voluntarily closed to carry out improvements. Further follow up visits were undertaken to ensure that the business operators had delivered the improvements required and there will further monitoring checks.
- 13.5 Officers also enforce the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. In this quarter we looked at 57 health and safety at work service requests, and in addition investigated 38 workplace accidents which were reported to the Service.
- 13.6 During routine food hygiene inspections officers also look for any matter of evident concern in relation to Health and Safety compliance. At a takeaway premises officers noted that the guarding was missing from a potato chipper machine and prohibited its use until it could be used safely. An accident using a machine such as this with no guard could result in a serious injury.
- 13.7 Formal action was also taken at a retail premises where a Health and Safety Improvement Notice was served due to overstocking and obstruction of aisles on the shop floor. The notice was issued as the store had failed to comply with the informal action proposed. Overstocking and obstruction of aisles can have a detrimental effect should the premises need to be evacuated, it also presented manual handling and items falling from height risks, in addition to making it difficult and unsafe for people navigating the shop.
- 13.8 The Commercial Team are also involved with event safety and the Safety Advisory Group. There was a review of event safety management plans and liaison with event organisers for 29 events in Bracknell Forest and 69 events in West Berkshire during Q3. In addition, a number of events were subject to officer validation/advisory visits.
- 13.9 Notable events during this quarter included; Lapland UK, Bracknell Forest (11/11/2023 to 24/12/2023), Lions Fireworks Newbury, Firework Extravaganza at Newbury Showground, Remembrance parades/events, Ladbroke's Winter Carnival and racing, Newbury Racecourse, Christmas lights switch on and Christmas fairs.

14 Licensing (Including Applications and Licensing Governance)

14.1 Ongoing recruitment issues for the team have been referenced elsewhere in the report.

14.2 During Quarter three Licensing Committee meetings took place in both authorities. Fees and Charges for 2024 were presented to both authorities and the outcome of the associated consultations were reported back to the meetings early in quarter 4. Finalised fees were prepared for consultation by both authorities at their annual budget meetings.

14.3 Bracknell Forest Council also adopted an updated Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy during quarter 3. West Berkshire Council adopted its updated Statement of Licensing Policy.

14.4 The following licensing panel/subcommittee meetings have taken place in Q3:

Type of Application	Applicant	Outcome
Bracknell Forest		
None		
West Berkshire		
New Premise Licence	Boxford Restaurant Ltd The Boxford, Roodhill, Boxford RG20 8DD	Approved with Conditions
New Premise Licence	Eng Retails Ltd Newbury Premier, 3 Monument Close, Essex Street, Newbury RG14 6QW	Approved with Conditions
New Premises Licence	Nigel Hopes Awberry Barn, Awberry Farm Beenham	Approved with Conditions
New Premise Licence	Let's Eat Trading Ltd Coriander Club, 98 Royal Avenue, Calcot, Reading, Berkshire, RG31 4UT	Approved with Conditions

14.5 During Q4 to date one premise licence application and one personal licence application have been heard in Bracknell Forest. In West Berkshire two Sub-Committees have been set up to deal with applications for new premise licences.

Type of Application	Applicant	Outcome
Bracknell Forest		
New Premise Licence	Bracknell Local Store	Approved with Conditions
Personal Licence	Part II	Outcome Awaited
West Berkshire		
New Premise Licence	Reloaded Nightclub 7-9 Wharf Road Newbury	Approved with Conditions

New Premise Licence	Hungerford	Hearing yet to be held in Q1 of 2024/25

Licensing Hearings Data for last three years.			
Authority	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Bracknell Forest	0	2	2 to date
West Berkshire	6	0 (2 cancelled after agenda publication)	9 to date (with a further 6 cancelled or adjourned after agenda publication)

15 Environmental Health Housing

15.1 Table 1

	Total request for service housing	Of these number of complaints regarding house condition	Of these number that were Registered Social Landlords
WB July to September 2023	66	44	18 (41%)
WB October to December 2023	82	60	34 (57%)
BF July to September 2023	68	37	15 (41%)
BF October to December 2023	92	62	31 (50%)

15.2 As can be seen issues raised by tenants of Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) constitute a significant percentage of the complaints. The team are working closely with the RSLs to keep the resource implications for PPP as low as possible and to attempt to resolve matters as quickly as possible for the tenants.

15.3 Service requests from EH Housing tenants remained high with the majority regarding damp and mould. This quarter would normally be the time that damp and mould cases rise, but, although we have seen a rise this quarter we have noted that the high level of damp and mould cases have not really receded since last year. It is an area that we continue to work with tenants and landlords on resolving. Advice to the public was promoted through a social media campaign in January.

- 15.4 In this quarter (and continuing in the next quarter) officers are carrying out the annual inspections of caravan park sites, this is to ensure the site is safe and that the conditions of the licence are being adhered to.
- 15.5 Officers are continuing their project looking at Commercial to Residential property conversions. This involves a proactive inspection of those properties (on a risk assessed basis). The project has identified a number of issues including, but not limited to, compartmentation, excess heat and water ingress into residential flats due to faulty/poorly maintained roofing. A report will be produced for the Committee on findings once the project is completed. The five buildings inspected to date equates to approximately 350 families.
- 15.6 As before, the team have experienced an increase in the need to progress cases to enforcement. Landlords are sharing cases of hardship due to the cost of living and rise in mortgage rates. The trend in disrepair being higher cost repair works such as roofing, central heating and building maintenance. One service request resulted in seven notices being served on a property to ensure that the works were carried out.

16 Environmental Quality

- 16.1 The team have continued to undertake work to protect the health and wellbeing of our residents through focused projects, planned inspections and responding to complaints particularly from noise from pubs this quarter.
- 16.2 Some key activity undertaken in Q3 has included:
- Review of Air Quality monitoring programmes.
 - DEFRA Air quality grant anti idling project extension to work to include more detailed studies in two locations in the three areas; and schools Nitrogen Dioxide project finished in January.
 - Further successful DEFRA air quality grant application submitted for PM2.5 and domestic burning behavioural change.
 - Consultation on revocation of Air Quality Management Areas AQMAs in Newbury Thatcham and Bracknell as agreed at JPPC and consultation exercise undertaken. The outcome is included in a separate report on this agenda.
 - Air Quality Action Plan AQAP development for Crowthorne – stakeholder meeting held, statutory consultation undertaken. Outcome included in a separate report on this agenda.
 - New Private Water Supplies (PWS) inspected and annual Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) Return prepared for PWS work.
 - Complaint work has included a number of complex commercial nuisance matters including noise from pubs/event venues / golf club / construction sites, industrial premise BS4142 assessment carried out and an abatement notice served.

- Inspections are continuing for Pollution Prevention Control with two thirds of the inspections completed that require inspection this financial year.

17 Investigations and Case Management

17.1 The Case Management Unit continues to be busy working on cases and providing advice across the PPP and to partner organisations. Currently the team have oversight of some 40 PPP criminal investigations (excluding a significant volume of road traffic matters). A number of these are at file stage or in the court system. New investigations are commencing all the time.

17.2 The National Crime Agency Accredited Financial Investigators are currently working on 12 investigations relating to money laundering and confiscation under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

17.3 The Investigations Team have approximately 10 ongoing complex investigations involving a significant number of suspects and large losses to the victims in some cases.

17.4 In terms of the Case Management Unit cases are continuing to be heard in both the Magistrates Court and the Crown Court however significant delays are still being encountered with trial listings in the Crown Court.

17.5 Some recent case examples are below –

- **Shopkeeper sentenced for unsafe storage of fireworks** - During the fireworks season, Trading Standards officers visited a premises store to carry out a routine check of the storage of fireworks. Officers found fireworks that were being stored dangerously with live electricity and highly flammable items. They also found rockets and other explosive fireworks which were not allowed to be stored as the explosive content was more than double that which was allowed under the licence.
- Trading Standards Officers had previously provided advice on numerous occasions which had not been acted on by the owner. The defendant was sentenced to pay total fines and costs amounting to £29,313.
- **Roofer convicted of fraud and consumer protection offences** - The Defendant offered roofing and guttering services. The case involved three consumers. The first paid a substantial deposit payment but the defendant failed to complete any work. The second and third complainants made payments in full, but the work completed by Mr Bell was significantly below the standard expected of a reasonably competent and diligent roofer.
- Following a two day trial at Reading Magistrates Court, the bench found the defendant guilty of two fraud offences and one of professional diligence under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008. Sentencing has been adjourned until April 2024.

17.6 The CMU team are also currently reviewing a number of cases that have come out of the work carried out by PPP in relation to vapes. Both cases involving vapes that are not compliant with the regulations and underage sales of vapes are being considered in order to determine the most appropriate course of action in each case.

18 Appendices

Appendix A –2023/24 Performance Framework

Appendix B - Service Compliments

Background Papers:

None

Subject to Call-In: Yes: No:

- The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval
- Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council
- Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position
- Considered or reviewed by Scrutiny Commission or associated Committees, Task Groups within preceding six months
- Item is Urgent Key Decision
- Report is to note only

Wards affected: All

Officer details:

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Service Requests Data

Table 1: Environmental Health and Licensing for PPP

	2023/24			2023/24	2023/24	Comments
	Bracknell	West Berkshire	PPP	PPP	PPP	
	Q3	Q3	Q3	Q2	Q1	
Envirocrime	232	0	232	227	252	
Flytipping	61	0	61	22	19	
Food Hygiene Related	44	72	116	144	131	
Health and Safety (including accidents reported)	18	26	44	48	26	
Housing	101	78	179	136	153	
Licensing	62	57	119	93	91	
Other (e.g. other nuisances, cont. Land, private water supplies, burials, enclosed smoking)	24	50	74	39	45	
Planning	39	63	102	140	112	
Ukraine Accommodation Check	0	7	7	7	1	
Anti-Social Behaviour	56	115	171	242	232	Includes Accumulation, Rubbish at premises, Drainage, dog fouling, dangerous dogs, Pest Control etc
Dog Warden (stray dog collection only)	5	6	11	18	8	
Noise - Non-commercial	46	68	114	206	199	
Noise - Commercial	22	26	48	118	105	
All Bonfire/Smoke	10	18	28	59	49	
Grand Total	720	586	1306	1499	1416	

Public Protection Partnership | Bracknell Forest West Berkshire

Table 2: Trading Standards Service Requests (includes) commissioned services.

 Bracknell Forest West Berkshire Wokingham	2023/24				2023/24	2023/24	Comments
	Bracknell	West Berkshire	Wokingham	PPP	PPP	PPP	
	Q3	Q3	Q3	Q3	Q2	Q1	
Animal Health	0	8	3	11	10	8	
Door Step/Scam/No cold calling zones	16	16	23	55	37	47	
Food Standards	18	11	24	53	17	23	
Misleading Description	4	12	2	18	17	18	
Other (e.g. counterfeit goods, under age sales)	26	29	16	71	75	39	
Unsafe goods	3	7	4	14	18	38	
What are my rights? (Business)	2	2	3	7	7	5	
What are my rights? (Consumer)	41	97	96	234	236	282	
Trading Standards Notifications	125	258	197	580	607	575	
Weight Restrictions	4	84	17	105	84	93	
Grand Total	239	524	385	1148	1118	1128	

Measures of Volume – No targets as they are cumulative measures of volume

Measure	2022/23 Outturn		Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		2023/24 Outturn To date	
	BFC	WBC	BFC	WBC	BFC	WBC	BFC	WBC	BFC	WBC	BFC	WBC
Number of Fols Processed*	145	172	43	43	43	44	51	34			137	121
Time Taken to Process Fols to nearest hour	112	113	31	27	37	28	29	24			97	79
Number of Service Complaints *	9	13	2	5	3	0	0	1			5	6
Number of Councillor and MP Enquiries*	30	50	14	24	7	28	5	25			26	77
Number of operations conducted based on intelligence relating to age restricted products*	4		3		3 (1 per authority)		2	0			8	
Number of PPP articles and press releases published on the PPP website	110		21		36		18				75	
Number of page views on PPP Website	88,872		22307		24150		19017				65 474	
Number of PPP Facebook posts	358		101		118		100				329	
Number of PPP Twitter Tweets	311		58		84		15				147	
Number of new PPP Twitter followers	29		0		7		12				19	
Number of Facebook New Followers	265		47		57		-6				98	
Number of caravan site visits (programmed and reactive) *	39 (5 reactive)		1	1	2	3	5	5			8	9
Number of food inspections carried out (includes those by alternative enforcement strategy) *	Data N/a		36	43	59	37	48	56			143	136
Number of new food businesses registered*	Data N/a		23	58	30	56	26	42			79	156
Number of HMO licenses issued*	Data N/a		2	0	9	6	3	1			14	7
Number of housing visits carried out (excl Ukraine)*	Data N/a		38	18	19	24	13	18			70	60
Percentage of Food Premises that have scored 0 (Urgent Improvement Necessary) in accordance with FHRS * (shown as denominator and numerator)	Data N/a		Data N/a	Data N/a	0/674 (0%)	0/1116 (0%)	0/668 (0%)	2/1102 (0.18%)			0%	0.18%
Percentage of Food Premises that have scored 1 (Major Improvements Necessary) in accordance with FHRS * (shown as denominator and numerator)	Data N/a		Data N/a	Data N/a	5/674 (0.7%)	7/1116 (0.6%)	1/668 (0.15%)	7/1102 (0.6%)			0.15 %	0.6%

Measure	2022/23 Outturn		Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		2023/24 Outturn To date	
	BFC	WBC	BFC	WBC	BFC	WBC	BFC	WBC	BFC	WBC	BFC	WBC
Percentage of Food Premises that have scored 5 (Very Good) in accordance with FHRS * (shown as denominator and numerator)	Data N/a		Data N/a	Data N/a	549/674 82%	960/1116 86%	551/668 (82.4%)	942/1102 (85.5%)			82.5%	85.5%
Number of Licensing Applications under the Licensing Act 2003 that proceed to a hearing*	0/ Data N/a	0/ Data N/a	0	1	0	2	0	4	2**	1	2	8
SAG Events Processes	New measure in Q4 = 151 at year end		64		33	49	29	69			244	

* will be reported by authority

** to date

Trading Standards Data

	22/23 Outturn	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4			23/24 Outturn
Product	PPP	Wok	BFC	WBC	Wok	BFC	WBC	Wok	BFC	WBC	Wok	BFC	WBC	PPP
	Passes/ Visits	Pass/ Visit	Pass/ Visit	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visit	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits
Alcohol	12/13	11/11	3/4	0/0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Tobacco	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Spray Paint	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Knives	8/8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Fireworks	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7/7	0				
Solvents	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
E-Cigs	10/12	0	0	0	6/7	9/9	7/8	4/5	5/5	0				
	22/23 Outturn		Quarter 1			Quarter 2			Quarter 3		Quarter 4		23/24 Outturn	
Food Samples Passed/Failed	BFC 42 samples tested. 14 unsatisfactory for composition		10 (alcohol) samples submitted - awaiting results			15 (glazed meats) - 6 unsatisfactory.			9 samples (chicken tikka masala take-away) – Awaiting results					

	22/23 Outturn	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4			23/24 Outturn
Product	PPP	Wok	BFC	WBC	Wok	BFC	WBC	Wok	BFC	WBC	Wok	BFC	WBC	PPP
	Passes/ Visits	Pass/ Visit	Pass/ Visit	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visit	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits
	and/or labelling. WB 50 samples tested. 13 unsatisfactory for composition and/or labelling.					8 (chocolate desserts) – all satisfactory. 8 (frozen Chicken) – 2 unsatisfactory (labelling claims)		23 inspections undertaken for foreign labelling. 10 premises with non-compliant food items due to foreign labelling. All followed up with advice.						
No of Counterfeit and Unsafe Good Seized	7 cars (unsafe goods) 1104 vapes units – unsafe goods) 171 phone chargers and cases (counterfeit) unsafe garage door (investigating not seized) 118 items of clothes seized by east midlands		We've received 3 complaints re counterfeits, food, cigarettes and gas safety valves but none seized 4 complaints of unsafe goods. (1 from OPSS about unsafe strollers/buggies - ongoing 1 about unsafe teats on a baby feeding bottle which we are investigating 1 re Leicestershire TS have stopped a		Counterfeit Goods WBC – 0 seizures but 10 complaints dealt with Bracknell 0 seizures or complaints WOK – 10 test purchases made (clothing/footwear - not seized) 7 items confirmed counterfeit Investigations ongoing. 6 complaints dealt with		Unsafe Goods We've received 8 complaints about unsafe consumer goods. (Including 1 – x OPSS referral dangerous levels of cadmium and Nickel in bracelets sold by local trader on Amazon) Counterfeit Goods 8 complaints about counterfeiting							

	22/23 Outturn	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4			23/24 Outturn
Product	PPP	Wok	BFC	WBC	Wok	BFC	WBC	Wok	BFC	WBC	Wok	BFC	WBC	PPP
	Passes/ Visits	Pass/ Visit	Pass/ Visit	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visit	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits	Pass/ Visits
	<p>airport under investigation by PPP (counterfeit).</p> <p>A number of 'marvel children's tattoos' seized by east midlands airport under PPP investigation (counterfeit)</p> <p>A number of watches seized by TVP under investigation by PPP. (counterfeit)</p>		<p>consignment of 500 USB Chargers, unbranded Apple Wireless Phone & Watch Chargers at East Midlands Airport, Leics TS is having them tested and will come back to us</p> <p>1 re Unsafe vapes- but complaint not justified)</p> <p>Request for advice: 1 re baby grows</p>		<p>Unsafe Goods</p> <p>WBC 1074 disposable vapes seized and 4 safety complaints dealt with</p> <p>Bracknell 88 disposable vapes seized and 2 safety complaints dealt with</p> <p>WOK = 406 disposable vapes seized and 6 safety complaints dealt with</p>		<p>No seizures</p>							
Amount of Money Recovered for Victims	Circa £450k		Will be reported in Q4		Will be reported in Q4		Will be reported in Q4							

Key Performance Indicators Public

Type	Measure	2022/23 Outturn		Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		2023/24 Outturn	
		BFC	WBC	BFC	WBC	BFC	WBC	BFC	WBC	BFC	WBC	BFC	WBC
IAA	% of service users satisfied with the Public Protection Partnership	75% good or excellent		13/15 = 87%		17/21 = 81%		11/21 = 52%					
Local	% of Trading Standards requests for advice from business responded to within 3 working days	Data unavailable due to challenges in migrating CAB connector to IC – Duty officer in place to ensure timely response.		Data unavailable due to challenges in migrating CAB connector to IC – Duty officer in place to ensure timely response		Data unavailable due to challenges in migrating CAB connector to IC – Duty officer in place to ensure timely response		Data unavailable from IDOX reporting – Duty officer in place to ensure timely response					
IAA	Management of income to within 5% of budget	£98k shortfall		£140k shortfall		£80k shortfall		£90k shortfall					
Statutory	% of valid TEN's and Late TENS processed for consultation within 3 working days	Data N/a						Will be reported in Q4	Will be reported in Q4				
Local	% of Premise licensing applications (New and Variations)	Data N/a						Will be reported in Q4	Will be reported in Q4				

Type	Measure	2022/23 Outturn		Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		2023/24 Outturn	
		BFC	WBC	BFC	WBC	BFC	WBC	BFC	WBC	BFC	WBC	BFC	WBC
	processed within 28 days or 56 days if they proceed to a hearing												
Local	% of valid Taxi licensing applications and renewals processed within five days	Data N/a						Will be reported in Q4	Will be reported in Q4				
Local	% of valid general licensing applications and renewals processed within five days	Data N/a						Will be reported in Q4	Will be reported in Q4				
Statutory	% of local authority pollution prevention and control (LAPPC) inspections, that are due, carried out	14/14 completed		0/5 completed	2/21 completed	1/5 completed	7/21 completed	4/5 completed	14/21 completed				
Local	% of inspected food businesses that score at least 3 on the food hygiene rating scale during reporting period	Data N/a		Data N/a	Data N/a	663/674 98%	1092/1116 97.8%	664/668 (99%)	1078/1102 (97.8%)				

* This would not include caravans or HMOs

Annual Key Performance Indicators Public

	Measure	2022/23 Outturn	2023/24 Outturn	
IAA	Management of budget to within 1% of baseline	£148k underspend	Will be reported in Q4	
Statutory	Submit Annual Air Quality Reports to DEFRA by 30 June	All 3 submitted to DeFRA on the 27 June 2022	All 3 submitted to DeFRA on the 15 June 2023	Green
Statutory	Submit to JMB the Annual Food Safety, Food Standards and Feed Service Plan in accordance with the Food Standard Agency Code of Practice	Annual Food Standards and Feed Service Plan have been submitted to JMB by August 2022	Taken to the 09 September JMB	Green
Local	Four During Performance Inspections carried out on high profile events per annum	6	Q1 = 3 Q2 = 11 Q3 = 0	In Q3 no events took place that needed noise monitoring
Local	% of caravan sites due an inspection inspected within the reporting period	BF 100% WB 100 %	Will be reported in Q4	
Local	% of food hygiene inspections completed, that are due, as per FSA recovery plan	FSA RECOVERY PLAN 22 23 All A, B, C and non Broadly Compliant D to be done All unrated to be prioritised and high Priority inspected. A premises – 100% (3 premises) B premises – 100% (24 Premises) C premises – 100% (155 premises)	Will be reported in Q4	

	Measure	2022/23 Outturn	2023/24 Outturn	
		<p>In addition, over and above the FSA targets D 131 visits done</p> <p>Unrated – all prioritised and 226 visits done (8 high risk to be carried out)</p>		
Local	% of food standards inspections completed, that are due, as per FSA recovery plan	<p>BF</p> <p>High risk - 100% Med risk – 75% Low – Response only/AES *Unrated – 78 premises assessed, prioritised & Inspected as necessary (2 new high risk programmed for inspection carried over)</p> <p>WB</p> <p>High Risk – 100% Med Risk – 74% Low – Response only/AES *Unrated – 348 premises assessed, prioritised & inspected as necessary (3 new high risk programmed for inspection carried over)</p>	Will be reported in Q4	
Local	% of food premises rated as 0 or 1 on the FHRS at the start of the year that are broadly compliant (3 score or above) by their next full inspection visit (subject to pending enforcement action) for premises with inspections due in reporting period	<p>WB 7 premises in scope 3 of these ceased trading 4 of these improved One remained a 1 score Therefore 50% reached score 3 or more</p> <p>BF 6 premises in scope 1 of these ceased trading 4 improved to BC One remained a 1</p>	Will be reported in Q4	

	Measure	2022/23 Outturn	2023/24 Outturn	
		Therefore 80% reached score 3 or more		

Local Indicators for Bracknell Forest Council

Measure of Volume	2022/23 Outturn	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2023/24 Outturn To Date
Fly Tipping / Waste Duty of Care Incidents						
Number of fly tipping / waste 'duty of care' incidents referred to PPP	101	18	22	61		103
Number investigated	101	18	22	47		87
Number of warnings issued	14	3	0	2		5
Number of formal cautions issued	2	0	0	0		0
Number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued	16	13	0	8		21
Number of Prosecutions	6	0*	0	1		1
Waste Carriers						
Number of vehicles checked for waste carriers licence	112	0	0	40		40
Number of compliant waste carriers	105	0	0	15		15
Number of non-compliant waste carriers	7	0	0	2		2
Abandoned Vehicles						
Number of abandoned vehicles reported and actioned	491	247	220	212		679
Number of abandoned vehicles traced	30	28	20	36		84
Number of abandoned vehicles removed from highway	4	3	3	12		18

* files are with legal for processing

Local Indicators for West Berkshire Council

Measure of Volume	2022/23 Outturn	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2023/24 Outturn	Comments
Weight Restrictions							
Number of observations made	197	67	48	79		194 to date	57 WB, 17 BFC, 5 Wok
Number of breaches of restrictions observed	169	71	50	65		186 to date	54 WB, 7 BFC, 4 Wok
Number of warnings issued	11	Reported Q4	Reported Q4	Reported Q4			
Number of Prosecutions concluded	25	Reported Q4	Reported Q4	Reported Q4			

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Quarter 3 Selection of Service Compliments

From a resident after one of our Environment Health Officers had been assisting them with a nuisance complaint about a local public house.

“in recent weeks which they sent a flyer round with dates + times of in advance, which was good, and there was a line included about how to flag noise concerns, which was good and hopefully shows that your representations have been taken on board.”

“Thanks for all your assistance on that front - much appreciated.”

Received from a resident after our Fraud Victim Support Officer sent them an update on submissions he had made to a banking institute on their behalf.

Dear Malcolm

I sincerely appreciate your recent update on the progress regarding the victims' case against {redacted}. On behalf of all those affected by this distressing scam, I want to express my profound gratitude for your commitment to championing our cause. Your dedication to addressing our grievances and your potential pursuit of rectifying {redacted}'s dismissive stance are truly commendable.

While your email may not have brought the overwhelmingly positive news we had hoped for, it has undoubtedly illuminated a glimmer of hope in what has felt like a persistently dark and challenging journey for us.

Thank you for tirelessly advocating for us. Your efforts do not go unnoticed, and we are genuinely grateful for the energy and time you invest in seeking justice. As we navigate through these trying times, your support serves as a beacon of reassurance.”

Sent to one of our Enforcement Officers just before Christmas

“Dear Mark, as I reflect on this year, I would like to send thanks to all those that have helped & supported me and my family & you are certainly one of those kind people so thank you from the bottom of my heart. May I take this opportunity to wish you and your family a magical Christmas very best wishes for a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year. Look forward to seeing you in '24.”

Sent to Policy and Governance Officer at Christmas time:

“From all of us Bracknell Taxi Drivers we wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy Prosperous New Year for 2024. Thank you very much for your good service/positive and supportive feedback in previous two years to move forward. We hope we'll continue to work together and balance the opinions of both sides, continuing the same relationship with the Bracknell taxi trade in the near future. “

From a resident after an Environment Health Officer put up some additional anti-idling signs in a residential area near a school:

“Thank you Charlie. Yes I’ve recently spotted some notices locally, let’s hope the parents collecting their children take suitable action.”

From a resident who is being supported by an Environment Health Officer to establish the cause of noise nuisance in their property:

“I appreciate your efforts and I feel like you are being very honest with us.”

Feedback after one of our Environment Health officers dealt with a commercial noise complaint:

“Hi Charlie

Fantastic news today!

Your hard work has paid off. My quality of life, within my home, will change immensely from today. I honestly can't thank you enough.

From a Councillor after an officer had responded to a number of queries made on behalf of residents:

“Dear Rosalynd,

Thank you for all you do and for being there for us,”



A shared service provided by
Bracknell Forest Council and
West Berkshire Council



Crowthorne Air Quality Action Plan and Air Quality Management Area Revocations Update

Committee considering report:	Joint Public Protection Committee
Date of Committee:	11 March 2024
Chair of Committee:	Councillor Lee Dillon
Date JMB agreed report:	26 February 2024
Report Author:	Suzanne McLaughlin
Forward Plan Ref:	JPPC4485

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To seek approval from the Joint Public Protection Committee (JPPC) for the revised Crowthorne Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) following the statutory consultation.
- 1.2 To seek approval from the JPPC for the revocation of the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Bracknell (A322 Downshire Way), Newbury (A339) and Thatcham (A4) having considered of the consultation process instigated by the Committee on the 11th December 2023.

2. Recommendations

The Committee:

- 2.1 **APPROVES** the Crowthorne AQAP, as set out in Appendix A.
- 2.2 **RESOLVES** that the Air Quality Management areas for Bracknell (A322 Downshire Way), Newbury (A339) and Thatcham (A4) be revoked.

3. Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	<p>Work relating to Air Quality monitoring and reporting is funded from the general revenue budget allocated to the Public Protection Service. Several proposals in the action plans continue to require additional funding to implement whilst others are relatively low cost and are covered from within the PPP revenue budget.</p> <p>Grant funding from DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) has been available and the PPP have applied annually. In addition, West Berkshire Council (on behalf of the Partnership) was awarded £259,406 in March 2021 by DEFRA to fund a project focused on behavioural change for the residents who drive in the three boroughs by launching an anti-idling campaign as well as PM2.5 monitoring in / near the Air Quality Management Areas.</p>

<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>Staff who undertake this work are a shared resource with Wokingham Borough Council under the new Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) with Wokingham.</p> <p>One benefit of the shared service is the ability to have staff that specialise in areas such as this and the service is fortunate to have several officers with significant expertise on environmental matters generally and air quality specifically.</p> <p>The 2021/22 Grant from DEFRA has meant that the authority was able to appoint an Air Quality Officer on a fixed term contract until September 2023 to support the anti-idling campaign. The post holder left WBC in April 2023 and since then the work has been undertaken in PPP and recharged to the grant.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>Under the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) system local authorities are legally required to assess air quality in their area and designate Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) if improvements are necessary.</p> <p>Where an AQMA is designated, of which there are two in Bracknell Forest (Crowthorne and Downshire Way, Bracknell) and two in West Berkshire (Newbury A339 and Thatcham A4), local authorities are required to produce an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) describing the pollution reduction measures it will put in place.</p> <p>Where the pollutant levels no longer exceed the Objectives then the AQMAs should be revoked by Order. Where a Local Authority no longer has any AQMAs then an Air Quality Strategy is to be produced. Where a Local Authority still has an AQMA these are to be regularly reviewed and must be revised no later than every five years.</p> <p>PPP Officers have worked with the WBC and BFC Legal Services Teams to progress the Order.</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>This is a legal requirement under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. Failure to comply with our statutory obligations could present the risk of challenge to the PPP partner authorities.</p>
<p>Property:</p>	<p>There are no direct property implications arising from this report.</p>
<p>Policy:</p>	<p>The Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) identified Environmental Protection as one of the six Overarching Themes for the Joint Public Protection Committee.</p> <p>Under this heading the Committee in turn identified Improving Air Quality as a priority for 2023/24. West Berkshire has declared a climate emergency. They have embedded Air Quality</p>

	improvements into their Environment Strategy and Climate Emergency Action Plans.		
	Bracknell Forest Council's Climate Change Strategy was completed and published in January 2021 and have a target of net carbon zero by 2050.		
	Positive	Neutral	Negative
	Commentary		
Equalities Impact:			
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		x	Consideration of the impact on inequality is set out in the report and reflected on in the National Clean Air Strategy. Any inequalities raised as part of the consultation have been addressed in the AQAPs and AQMAs.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x	Poor air quality can be particularly harmful to the young, elderly, pregnant and those suffering ill health. Consideration to all these matters is given in this report and / or the National Clean Air Strategy.
Environmental Impact:	x		Under the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) system local authorities are legally required to assess air quality in their area and designate Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) if improvements are necessary. Where an AQMA is designated, local authorities are required to produce an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) describing the pollution reduction measures it will put in place. These reports are therefore designed to have a positive impact on the environment.
Health Impact:	x		The Air Quality Objectives have been put in place to protect people's health and the environment.

			<p>Although there has been a reduction in air pollution since the 1970s, poor air quality is still the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK. It shortens lives and reduces quality of life, particularly amongst the most vulnerable, the young and old, and those living with health conditions.</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring and where appropriate the creation of action plans or strategies is designed to improve the quality of lives of our residents.</p>
ICT or Digital Services Impact:		x	<p>None</p> <p>All Reports and Plans are published on the PPP website.</p>
PPP Priorities :			<p>The report will impact on the following PPP Priorities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Environmental Protection 2. Improved Air Quality
Data Impact:		x	None
Consultation and Engagement:	Consultation with all statutory consultees and other interested parties has taken place for the Crowthorne AQAP update and AQMA revocations.		
Other Options Considered:	None – The update of the AQAP is a requirement by DEFRA and revocations are required when Air Quality Objective levels are no longer exceeded over the three-year period.		

4. Executive Summary

- 4.1 Following the [report to the last Committee](#) in December 2023 the statutory consultation has taken place for the Crowthorne AQAP. The responses received have been reviewed and an updated Plan finalised, as set out in Appendix A.
- 4.2 The revocation of the Bracknell, Newbury and Thatcham AQMAs are progressing following consultation, as shown in Appendices B and C.

5. Bracknell Forest

- 5.1 Following submission of the Annual Status Report 2023 (for monitoring data 2022) to DEFRA their corresponding appraisal recommended that the Bracknell AQMA (the A322 Bagshot Road and Downshire Way from Berkshire Way to the junction with the B3430) be revoked.
- 5.2 It also stated that the Crowthorne AQMA (Bracknell Road B3348 and High Street) should remain in place due to there not being three years of Nitrogen Dioxide monitored data below 10% of the Objective level recorded. DEFRA also commented that the AQAP for Crowthorne required updating.

- 5.3 Officers subsequently updated the Crowthorne AQAP and the draft document was then subjected to a statutory consultation. The consultation ran from the 20 December 2023 to the 31 January 2024. In accordance with the legislative framework DEFRA, the Environment Agency, National Highways, all local authorities neighbouring BFC, other public authorities as appropriate, and bodies representing local business interests and other organisations as appropriate, such as internal public health, planning policy and transport colleagues, and town / Parish councils were consulted.
- 5.4 The statutory consultation received six responses:
- 5.5 National Highways – welcomed the proposal to improve Dukes Ride / Bracknell Road junction and initiatives to shift from car use.
- 5.6 Crowthorne Parish Council – welcomed measure to reduce queuing such as a freight quality partnership for deliveries and a left filter into the High Street.
- 5.7 Crowthorne Village Action Group (CVAG) – stated that the impact on air quality by planned housing growth in Crowthorne in the Local Plan needed to be acknowledged; and sought to encourage increases in public transport provision.
- 5.8 BFC Development and Planning and Climate Change and Sustainable Living Teams – requested some specific updates to some BFC documents and plans.
- 5.9 BFC Corporate Management Team – requested an additional measure regarding a feasibility study into High Street closures.
- 5.10 In addition DEFRA acknowledged receipt of the draft and any comments are awaited.
- 5.11 Once adopted the final Plan will be reported to DEFRA and published on BFC and PPP websites.
- 5.12 The Bracknell AQMA draft revocation report for consultation was agreed by the Joint Public Protection Committee at the meeting on the 11 December 2023. The revocation consultation process was carried out between the 13 December 2023 and the 19 January 2024. Again DEFRA, the Environment Agency, National Highways, all local authorities neighbouring BFC, other public authorities as appropriate, and bodies representing local business interests and other organisations as appropriate, such as internal public health, planning policy and transport colleagues, and town / Parish councils were consulted.
- 5.13 One consultation response was received. This was from the Highways and Transport Team which provided some additional justification regarding highway improvements on the AQMA A322 corridor.

6. West Berkshire

- 6.1 Following submission of the Annual Status Report 2023 (for monitoring data 2022) the corresponding appraisal from DEFRA recommended that the two AQMAs declared (Thatcham (on the A4) and Newbury (A339, St John's Roundabout) both be revoked.
- 6.2 The Newbury and Thatcham AQMAs draft revocation report for consultation was agreed by the Joint Public Protection Committee at the meeting held on the 11 December 2023. The revocation consultation process was carried between the 13 December 2023 and the 19 January 2024.

- 6.3 Officers consulted with DEFRA, the Environment Agency, National Highways, all local authorities neighbouring WBC, other public authorities as appropriate, and bodies representing local business interests and other organisations as appropriate, such as internal public health, planning policy and transport colleagues, and town / parish councils.
- 6.4 One consultation response was received. Thatcham Town Council felt the revocation was premature. The response has been acknowledged and responded to as follows:
- The number of years of data used to recommend revocation with the impact of the two Covid-19 (2020 and 2021) years was considered in the revocation process.
 - Officers clarified that an Air Quality Strategy was not required as an Air Quality Action Plan was in place.
 - Officers took into consideration the cumulative impact of traffic due to planning applications for industrial developments in Thatcham and Theale as well as the Draft Local Plan's consideration of the impact on air quality by future developments in proposing revocation.
- 6.5 In addition, Defra were also of the view the Order should be revoked.

7. Next Steps

- 7.1 Officers will now publish the AQAP for Crowthorne, as set out in Appendix A, on the PPP and BFC websites. It will also be uploaded on the DEFRA air quality portal. The Bracknell Forest Council Officer Working Group meets regularly to progress actions, and progress will be reported to DEFRA via the Annual Status Reports.
- 7.2 For the Bracknell, Newbury, and Thatcham AQMAs the final Revocation Order for approval of intention must be sealed and sent to DEFRA and as is required will be published on the each of the Councils and the PPP websites.
- 7.3 The West Berkshire Air Quality Strategy must now be development and a publication will be produced in consultation with the Director of Public Health. The Strategy must set out and progress the steps the local authority will take to improve air quality in their area.

8. Concluding Observations

- 8.1 The improvements to Air Quality, and hence the requirement to revoke the AQMAs, across the three local authority areas are to be welcomed. There are many factors that have contributed to this and it is clear that the range of interventions made by each Council has contributed to this improvement.
- 8.2 Air Quality continues to be a high-profile area of work and the links with the sources of pollutants and health impacts have become more apparent during and after the Covid pandemic. We are not complacent and the authorities will continue to monitor the levels of pollutants and ensure that we continue to progress actions set out within the action plans.

- 8.3 The duty on local authorities to both assess and improve air quality is not just a legal requirement but a public demand. The effects on health of poor air quality are indisputable and councils have been given a range of tools to tackle the causes.
- 8.4 In simple terms the causes are known but the solutions are wide ranging. The proposals set out in the plans seek to address several approaches ranging from raising awareness, changing human behaviour and improving infrastructure.

9. Appendices

Appendix A – Crowthorne Air Quality Action Plan

Appendix B - Bracknell Town Revocation Report, as updated

Appendix C - Newbury and Thatcham Revocation Report, as updated

10. Background Papers:

11 December 2023 JPPC report item 7 [West Berkshire Council - Agenda for Joint Public Protection Committee on Monday, 11th December, 2023, 7.00 pm](#)

Bracknell Forest Council's LTP3 and supporting documents which can be accessed via the Council's website, at: <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning/planningpolicy/transport-policy>

West Berkshire Council's LTP3 and supporting documents which can be accessed via the Council's website, at: <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/ltp>

Defra: National Clean Air Strategy 2019 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-air-strategy-2019>

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

- The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval
- Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council
- Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position
- Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months
- Item is Urgent Key Decision
- Report is to note only

Wards affected: All Wards or State Specific Wards

Officer details:

Name: Suzanne McLaughlin
Job Title: Principal Officer
Tel No: 01635 519851
E-mail: Suzanne.mclaughlin@westberks.gov.uk



Bracknell Forest Council

Air Quality Action Plan

2024 to 2029

In fulfilment of Part IV of the Environment Act 1995

Local Air Quality Management

Information	Bracknell Forest Council
Local Authority Officer	Charlie Fielder
Department	Environmental Quality
Address	Public Protection Partnership Theale Library Church Street Theale Berkshire RG7 5BZ
Telephone	01635 503242
E-mail	EQteam@westberks.gov.uk
Report Reference Number	BFBC AQAP 2024
Date	March 2024 Report prepared by PPP on behalf of Bracknell Forest Council

1. Executive Summary

This Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) has been produced as part of our statutory duties required by the Local Air Quality Management framework. It outlines the action we will take to improve air quality in Bracknell Forest between 2024 and 2029.

This action plan replaces the previous action plan which ran from 2014 to 2023.

The projects listed below were completed and delivered because of the 2014 to 2023 Action Plan:

- **Improvements and signalisation at the Horse & Groom Roundabout**

These measures form part of the wider improvements of the A322/A329 corridor and monitoring undertaken before further capacity improvements on Downshire Way, showed an overall improvement in peak hour journey times along the entire route between Coppid Beech Roundabout and the Swinley Gyratory. For work completed in 2018, the monitoring showed improved movement through the junction with shorter queuing times and a reduction in NO₂ concentrations, to below the objective set in the AQMA 1 (Bracknell).

- **Improvements and signalisation at the Sports Centre Roundabout**

Created an improvement in traffic movement which led to more reliable journey times and a reduction in queues, alongside a reduction in NO₂ concentrations, to below the objective in the AQMA 1 (Bracknell).

- **Capacity and safety improvements including full signalisation at the Twin Bridges Roundabout.**

This improved traffic movement along Bagshot Road and Downshire Way during peak hours and achieved a reduction in NO₂ concentrations to below the objective in the AQMA 1 (Bracknell).

- **Widening of Downshire Way from the Horse & Groom Roundabout to Twin Bridges**

Improved movement along Bagshot Road and Downshire Way for peak hour traffic and achieved a reduction in NO₂ concentrations to below the objective in the AQMA 1 (Bracknell).

- **Capacity and safety improvements at the junction with B3348 Dukes Ride and A321 Wokingham Road**

This improved traffic movement through junction in peak hours and created a reduction in NO₂ concentrations to below the objective in the AQMA 1 (Bracknell).

- **Crowthorne High Street replacing flat top humps with speed cushions**

This has helped reduce the stop/start of the traffic and help maintain an even speed through the High Street, reducing NO₂ levels in this area to below the objective levels.

- **Reduction in bus waiting times at stops, which aids traffic flow and reduces queuing**

All local buses in Bracknell now accept payment by contactless bank card which speeds up boarding times. Improvements have been made to bus fleet, 85% of which meet Euro VI and 65% meet Euro V standard. Only one bus (used only in emergencies) falls below Euro IV standard. Further, there is a notable reduction in the use of buses due to the knock-on effects of COVID. All the above have helped reduce the background NO₂ concentrations across the borough.

- **Signage improvements along key routes including the Bagshot Road within the AQMA (Cycle Routes)**

Data drawn from annual walking and cycling surveys indicate that levels of cycling and walking across the wider Borough have increased by 13% from 2021 to 2022. Again, this has helped reduce the background NO₂ concentrations across the Borough.

- **Provision of real time information at key bus stops**

This encourages people to use the bus and reduces the number of vehicles on the road, which in turn reduces background NO₂ concentrations across the Borough.

- **Updating the Council's website to include real time rail and bus information**

BFBC has launched the MyJourney microsite which provides information on all public transport within Bracknell Forest. This has helped towards reducing the background NO₂ concentrations across the borough.

- **With Government funding, further work into Smart Ticketing was commissioned**

All Thames Valley Buses accept payment by contactless payment, to speed up the “on and off” speed at the bus stops. This has help towards reducing the background NO₂ concentrations across the borough.

- **Undertaking targeted marketing to households and businesses within 150m of the key routes, to encourage cycling and walking**

Original survey conducted through Local Sustainable Transport Fund (STF) has helped towards reducing the background NO₂ concentrations across the borough.

- **Development of School Travel Plans within the Borough**

Council actively works with schools across the Borough to use and update their Travel Plans to encourage cycling and walking. All but one of the non-independent schools, have produced a School Travel Plan. Bikeability classes are run each year and we promote an annual Walk to School Week. This has helped reduce the background NO₂ concentrations across the Borough.

- **Development of two programmes for personal travel planning; to encourage more sustainable travel.** One programme will be set in residential areas and the other at large employer sites.

Business travel plans produced and distributed to all businesses in 2016 are available on the Council website and all new major residential developments in Bracknell are now required to develop travel plans. The guidance and advice have been well received by businesses and the developer of Jennets Park subsequently agreed to run a bus service into the town centre, for several years.

CALA/Vistry (Bovis and Linden Homes) (Legal & General) are funding alterations to a bus service which will allow access to Crowthorne railway station, and several large employers (such as Dell) now run minibuses for staff travelling from the railway station to the office. This has helped towards reducing the background NO₂ concentrations across the Borough.

Several of the proposed actions are still in the implementation stage and will be added to the new Action Plan, so this work will continue.

Actions for the 2024 to 2029 AQAP include:

- **Measure 1:** Improvements to Dukes Ride/Bracknell Road junction
Scheme aims to improve the flow of traffic through the junction by adding a left-turn lane into High Street and moving the bus stop on Bracknell Road.
- **Measure 2:** Enforcement of the Parking regulation in Crowthorne High Street
Parking Enforcement Team to look at the feasibility of enforcing the signs.
- **Measure 3:** Feasibility Study for a Cycle path in the Crowthorne Golden Triangle
Transport Planning to look more in-depth to whether a dedicated cycle route is feasible.
- **Measure 4:** Education Health Promotion, Behaviour Change Projects, and Environmental Action Days
Promote cleaner air during the national/local action weeks.
- **Measure 5:** Anti-Idling Education/ Enforcement
Working with Parking Enforcement, alongside educating those who idle on the health impacts and why we are carrying out enforcement.
- **Measure 6:** Environmental Permitting Regulations
Inspections and checking monitoring data for emissions to air, will be carried out as required by Environmental Health.
- **Measure 7:** Feasibility Study into High Street Closures
To close the High Street at different times throughout the year to help reduce the NO₂ emissions.
- **Measure 8:** Feasibility delivery plan and provision of rear service yard access to reduce number of delivery vehicles unloading in Crowthorne High Street
To look further into depth on the feasibility of this long-term action that is dependent on gaining permission from shops. Complications arise, given individual ownership issues at the back of the shops and properties. Responsibility for the High Street delivery issues really relies with the Council's enforcement team and as an interim/compromise solution, a Freight Quality Partnership with the Parish, traders, and freight providers.

- **Measure 9:** Feasibility Study for bike parking with in Crowthorne
Investigation to find out if and where extra bike parking could be installed.
- **Measure 10:** Feasibility Study for 20 mph zone in the AQMA along Bracknell Road
Study to be conducted by Traffic Safety.
- **Measure 11:** Finger Signs for cycling and walking routes in Crowthorne
More signage to be used in Crowthorne to help those who are walking or traveling by bike, know the approximate time it will take them to reach their destination.
- **Measure 12:** Bus User Discounts
Bus ticket holders to be offered discount in participating venues.
- **Measure 13:** Grants for help with projects within the AQMA and Borough
This will include the DEFRA Air Quality grant, along with others, that will be of benefit to the air quality in the Borough.
- **Measure 14:** Air Quality Planning Conditions
- Planning to continue to work with Environmental Health and to the apply conditions that improve the air quality in the Borough and to consider the impact of a new development on existing air quality levels.
- **Measure 15:** Continue introducing electric cars as pool cars
Increase the number of electric pool cars owned by the Council.
- **Measure 16:** Increase in EV chargers
Increase the amount in the Borough and Crowthorne.
- **Measure 17:** Feasibility Study into the Lane Rental Scheme under NRSWA s74A.
Companies who work on the roads, charged in relation to the legislation.
- **Measure 18:** Parking Car sticker Advertising
Car parking tickets to advertise the health effects of idling and traffic emissions.

- **Measure 19:** Helping Business reduce emissions

ECO Stars - an accreditation scheme to help companies achieve emission reduction in their fleet.

Air pollution is associated with several adverse health impacts. It is recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancers and affects the most vulnerable in our society particularly children, older people and those with existing heart and lung conditions. There is also a strong correlation with equalities issues because areas with poor air quality are often the less affluent areas^{1,2}. The annual health cost to society, of the impacts of particulate matter alone in the UK, is estimated to be around £16 billion³. Bracknell Forest Council is committed to reducing exposure to poor air quality for all its residents to improve health.

Bracknell Forest Council has developed several actions for consideration under 10 broad topics:

- Alternatives to use of private vehicles
- Environmental permits
- Freight and delivery management
- Policy guidance and development control
- Promoting low emission transport
- Promoting travel alternatives
- Public information

¹ Environmental equity, air quality, socioeconomic status, and respiratory health, 2010

² Air quality and social deprivation in the UK: an environmental inequalities analysis, 2006

³ Defra. Abatement cost guidance for valuing changes in air quality, May 2013

- Transport planning and infrastructure
- Traffic management
- Vehicle fleet efficiency

Our priorities are to reduce the idling traffic in Crowthorne by keeping the traffic flowing and changing people's behaviour, so they turn off their engines when stationary and safe to do so. In this Action Plan we outline our plan to effectively tackle air quality issues that are within our control. We recognise that there are many air quality policy areas that we cannot influence (such as vehicle emissions standards agreed in Europe) but for which we may provide useful evidence, therefore, we will continue to work with Regional and Central Government on these policies, for the wider good.

The Action Plan entails a joint working approach with other teams within the Council, such as Climate Change, Transport and Highways, Planning and Public Health, along with local environmental groups and schools. This joint approach will ensure that the measures detailed within this Action Plan continue to provide a holistic and structured approach towards improving the air quality in the Borough.

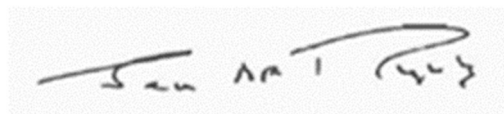
1.1 Responsibilities and Commitment

This Action Plan was prepared by the Public Protection Partnership for Bracknell Forest Council with the support and agreement of the following departments:

- Highways Department,
- Planning Department,
- Climate Action Change,
- Waste and Recycling,
- Landscaping,
- Environmental Health and
- Public Health.

This AQAP has been approved by: Sean Murphy

This AQAP has been signed off by the manager of Public Protection Partnership.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sean Murphy', is shown on a light-colored background.

Sean Murphy

Service Lead – Public Protection Partnership

This AQAP will be subject to a tri-annual stakeholder working group, an annual review, appraisal of progress and reported to the Joint Management Board. Progress each year will be reported in the Annual Status Reports (ASRs) produced by Bracknell Forest Council as part of our statutory Local Air Quality Management duties.

If you have any comments on this AQAP, please send them to Charlie Fielder at:

Public Protection Partnership

Theale Library

Church Street

Theale

Berkshire RG7 5BZ

EQTeam@westberk.gov.uk

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2. Introduction

This report outlines the actions that Bracknell Forest Council will deliver from 2024 to 2029 to reduce concentrations of air pollutants and exposure to air pollution; thereby positively impacting on the health and quality of life for residents and visitors to Bracknell Forest, and in particular Crowthorne.

It has been developed in recognition of the legal requirement on the local authority to work towards Air Quality Strategy (AQS) objectives under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 and relevant regulations made under that part and to meet the requirements of the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) statutory process.

This Plan will be reviewed every five years at least and progress on measures set out within this Plan, will be reported annually within Bracknell Forest Council's Air Quality Report (ASR) submitted to DEFRA.

The Council declared the Crowthorne AQMA in 2011, for the exceedance of the annual mean NO₂ objective at a level of 41.7 µg/m³.

The purpose of the Action Plan is to:

- Provide context to the national requirements for assessing and managing air quality in declared AQMA.
- Outline the measures delivered and/or proposed by the Council in its aim to improve local air quality and meet the air quality standards and objectives, within the AQMA area.

As the Action Plan is predominantly transport based, through highways network and travel choices, most of the delivery of this plan will be integrated with the delivery of the existing Local Transport Plan (LTP) 3, and the current draft LTP4 which is due to be published later in 2024. It is also important to recognise the link between air quality and climate change, so the Action Plan will seek to provide an integrated approach to local air quality and the impacts of climate change.

The new plan focuses primarily on the one AQMA in Crowthorne, see Appendix D.

The local air quality plan has a vital role not only in protecting public health and the environment but also by enhancing quality of life for our society. There is evidence to demonstrate that exposure to air pollution can be associated with several adverse health impacts and can reduce life expectancy by an average of 7 – 8 months. Poor

air quality particularly affects the most vulnerable in society, the very young and older people and those with pre-existing heart and lung conditions.

The strategic framework for air quality management in the UK is contained within the Air Quality Strategy (AQS) which DEFRA updated in April 2023. This strategy contains the national air quality standards and objectives established by the Government to protect human health. See Table 2.1.

The AQS objectives consider EU Directives that set limit values which member states are legally required to achieve, by target dates. The objectives for ten pollutants (benzene, 1,3-butadiene, carbon monoxide, lead, nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, particulates - PM10 and PM2.5, and ozone) have been prescribed within the Air Quality Strategy based on the Air Quality Standards (England) Regulations 2010.

The Strategy acknowledges there are links between air quality and climate change and in 2010 DEFRA published a further document entitled “Air Pollution: Action in a Changing Climate” which acknowledged that air pollution often originates from the same activities that contribute to climate change e.g., road transport. Therefore, it makes sense to link air quality action plans with climate change and transport policies, by including objectives in these policies, within this plan.

All local authorities in the UK have statutory duties for managing local air quality under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995. Local authorities are required to carry out regular reviews and assessments of air quality in their area against standards and objectives prescribed in the Air Quality (England) Regulations 2010 and the Air Quality (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2002 (SI 3043). The objectives for the pollutants for the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) are set by the Regulations as shown in Table 2.1.

Bracknell Forest Council is one of the 130 Local Authorities which has declared AQMAs based on the failure to meet the air quality objective for annual mean NO₂.

Table 2.1- Air Quality Objectives included in the Air Quality Standard regulations 2010 for the purpose of LAQM in England.

Pollutant	Air Quality Objective		Date to be achieved by
	Concentration	Measured as	
Benzene	16.25 µg/m ³	Running annual mean	31.12.2003
	5.00 µg/m ³	Running annual mean	31.12.2010
1,3-Butadiene	2.25 µg/m ³	Running annual mean	31.12.2003
Carbon monoxide	10.0 mg/m ³	Running 8-hour mean	31.12.2003
Lead	0.5 µg/m ³	Annual mean	31.12.2004
	0.25 µg/m ³	Annual mean	31.12.2008
Nitrogen dioxide	200 µg/m ³ not to be exceeded more than 18 times a year	1-hour mean	31.12.2010
	40 µg/m ³	Annual mean	31.12.2010
Particles (PM2.5) (gravimetric)	20 µg/m ³	Annual mean	01.01.2020
	Target reduction of 20% in concentrations at urban background	Annual mean	Between 2010 and 2020
Particles (PM10) (gravimetric)	50 µg/m ³ , not to be exceeded more than 35 times a year	24-hour mean	31.12.2004
	40 µg/m ³	Annual mean	31.12.2004
Sulphur dioxide	350 µg/m ³ , not to be exceeded more than 24 times a year	1-hour mean	31.12.2004
	125 µg/m ³ , not to be exceeded more than 3 times a year	24-hour mean	31.12.2004
	266 µg/m ³ , not to be exceeded more than 35 times a year	15-minute mean	31.12.2005

2.2 Summary of Current Air Quality in Bracknell Forest

Air pollution is associated with several adverse health impacts. It is recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancers. Additionally, air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society such as children, the elderly and those with existing heart and lung conditions. There is also a strong correlation with equalities issues because areas with poor air quality are also often the less affluent areas^{4,5}.

The mortality burden of air pollution within the UK is equivalent to 29,000 to 43,000 deaths at typical ages⁶, with a total estimated healthcare cost to the NHS and social care of £157 million in 2017⁷.

2.3 General Air Quality Trends in Bracknell Forest.

The major source of air quality pollutants in Bracknell Forest is emissions from road transport. The main pollutant of concern is nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and to a lesser extent the increased levels of particulate matter. Two AQMAs were declared in 2011 due to exceedances of the Annual Mean Objective for NO₂; the Bracknell AQMA (Bagshot Road and Downshire Way) and the Crowthorne AQMA. There are no exceedances of PM10. Details can be found at: <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/aqma/list?view=W> and maps for Crowthorne are in Appendix D.

Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) is the main pollutant of concern. The levels in 2022 have shown a decreasing trend since 2018 (36.6µg/m³). The annualised continuous monitored NO₂ Annual Mean in 2022 was 31.1µg/m³ at Downshire Way and did not

⁴ Public Health England. Air Quality: A Briefing for Directors of Public Health, 2017

⁵ Defra. Air quality and social deprivation in the UK: an environmental inequalities analysis, 2006

⁶ Defra. Air quality appraisal: damage cost guidance, January 2023

⁷ Public Health England. Estimation of costs to the NHS and social care due to the health impacts of air pollution: summary report, May 2018

exceed the Air Quality Objective level of $40\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, further, there were no exceedances of the 1-hour objective at Downshire Way. There have been no exceedances of the Objectives since before 2018.

There were no exceedances of the ratified, bias corrected, annualised and distance corrected diffusion tubes (NO_2) within the entire Borough, including the Bracknell and Crowthorne AQMA's. Also, there were no locations reading greater than $60\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, which further indicates that there are unlikely to be any exceedances of the 1-hour Objective. All the 2022 sites showed decreased levels compared with the data from 2018. Although all locations within the borough showed an increase from the 2021 data, apart from Site 58, Firmount, Bracknell Road Crowthorne which dropped from $31.1\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ to $30.6\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. We expected an increase in 2022 as there were no lockdowns and traffic levels increased post pandemic.

From the data presented in the 2023 ASR, DEFRA has requested that Bracknell Forest Council revoke the Bracknell AQMA. However, as Crowthorne AQMA is yet to register NO_2 levels $36\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ or below, for five consecutive years, a new AQAP must be produced and the AQMA remains in place.

Please refer to the latest ASR from Bracknell Forest for full details on our 2022 data and actions. publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk/media/2877/bfbc_asr_2023_ph-eh.pdf

2.4 Sources of NO_2 in AQMA

The Detailed Assessment (2012) report apportioned the source of the NO_x in the AQMAs. Government guidance in LAQM (TG) 22 states that the sources must be separated into the following components:

- Regional background (which the LA is unable to influence)
- Local background (which the LA should have some influence over) and
- Local Sources (which will add to the background to give rise to the hotspot area of exceedances. These are the principal sources for the local authority to control with the Action Plan.)

The Crowthorne AQMA Further Assessment report highlighted the local source to be moving traffic. The traffic was split into the component types of light and heavy vehicles. The main local source identified in this area derives from Light Delivery Vehicles (LDVs). As neither the nature of the high street or shop layouts have changed and using the data, we collected during COVID, the evidence shows that traffic is still the main source in the High Street and Bracknell Road.

The results show that the predominant source of NO_x in the AQMA comes from the background. As already stated, the background is made up of both local and regional background levels of NO_x and there is little that the Council can do to influence the regional background although the local background, is often influenced by local sources. The local sources identified, queuing traffic and the movement of light vehicles within the Crowthorne AQMA, contribute to the emissions.

The current legislation governing air quality, outlines that air quality action plans need to demonstrate progress towards achieving the national air quality objectives and standards. This will be evidenced by the continued monitoring within the AQMAs and through annual progress reports. Data and evidence may also be obtained from other parties to establish whether the objectives in the Action Plan are being achieved.

2.5 AQMA and a review of the Monitoring network

Bracknell Forest undertook non-automatic (i.e., passive) monitoring at 26 sites in 2022. The diffusion tubes are set at a position to replicate a human exposure (receptor locations). Several tubes are placed at the roadside and a number are placed along the kerbside, slightly away from the roadside. This data is used to model the NO₂ levels at the nearest human receptor. The results from these tubes are analysed every month and ratified annually. Some sites have a single tube whilst others have triplicate tubes, to ensure greater accuracy in the monitoring.

Air Quality data has been collected within the Borough for many years as part of the Local Air Quality Management regime. As part of the on-going monitoring and assessment of air quality, the extent and location of the monitoring sites are reviewed on an annual basis.

2.6 Crowthorne AQMA

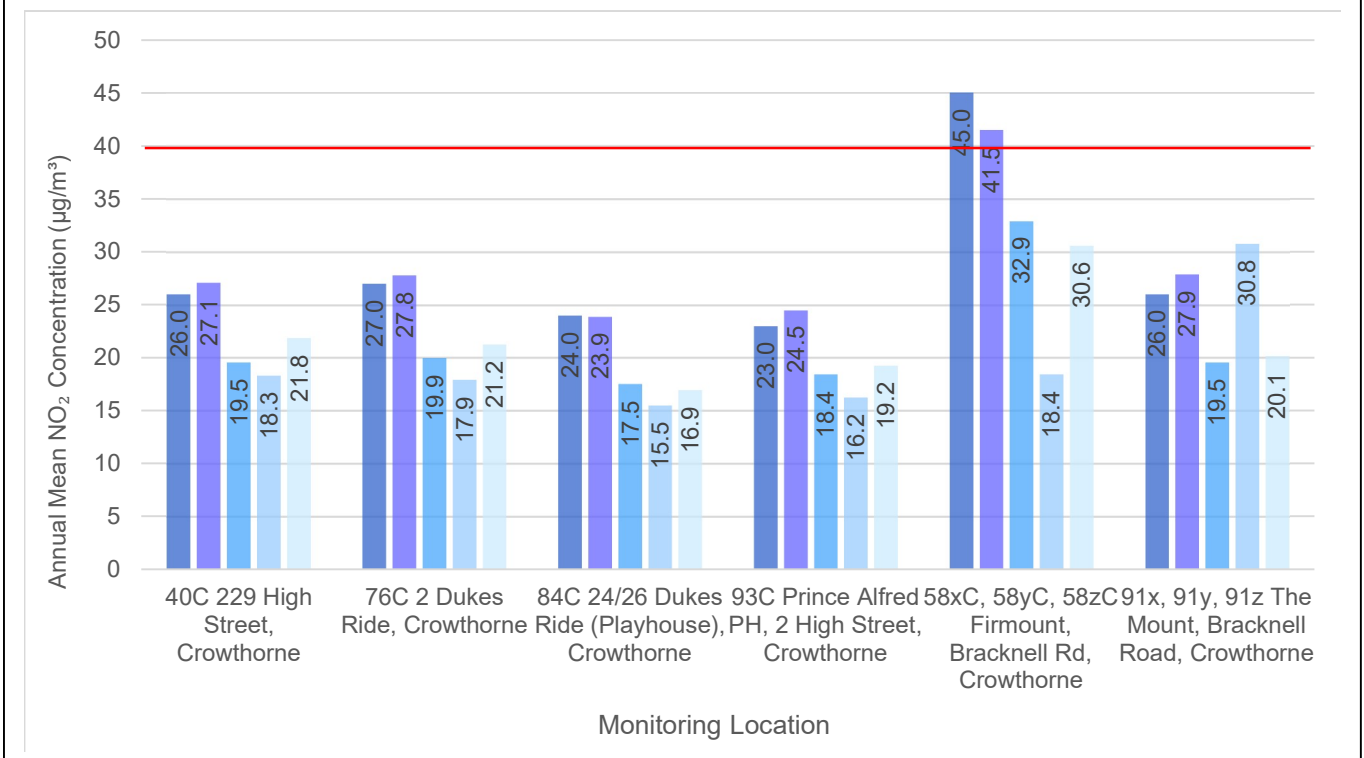
Within the Crowthorne there are 10 diffusion tube sites, 6 of which are located within the AQMA. 5 are located at road and kerb side and 1 at a receptor location. (As shown in the maps in Appendix D).

- 229 High Street Crowthorne (Kerbside)
- Dukes Ride, Crowthorne (Kerbside)
- 24/26 Dukes Ride, Playhouse, Crowthorne (Kerbside)
- Prince Alfred (Public House), High Street, Crowthorne (Receptor)
- Firmount, Bracknell Road, Crowthorne (Kerbside)
- The Mount, Bracknell Road, Crowthorne (Receptor)

2.7 Trends in Air Quality within the Crowthorne AQMA

For all 6 sites within the AQMA boundary there have been no exceedances of the NO₂ annual objective (40.0 µg/m³) since 2020 and the NO₂ has continued to show an overall reduction. In 2022, five out of six sites have seen increases in NO₂ compared to 2021 which has shown the impact from COVID. See Figure 2.1 for the NO₂ levels for years 2018 – 2022.

Figure 2.1 - NO₂ results in the Crowthorne AQMA from 2018 to 2022



2.8 When can Crowthorne Revoke its AQMA?

An AQMA can be revoked according to the LAQM. TG (22):

Para 3.57 - “The revocation of an AQMA should be considered following three consecutive years of compliance with the relevant objective, as evidenced through monitoring. Where NO₂ monitoring is completed using diffusion tubes, to account for the inherent uncertainty associated with the monitoring method, it is recommended that revocation of an AQMA should be considered following three consecutive years of annual mean NO₂ concentrations being lower than 36 µg/m³ (i.e., within 10% of the annual mean NO₂ objective). There should not be any declared AQMAs for which compliance with the relevant objective has been achieved for a consecutive five-year period.”

DEFRA has clarified what constitutes ‘a COVID-19 year’ with respect to air pollution and it is considered, that because of COVID-19 on traffic levels in turn, local pollutant concentrations, monitoring data from 2020 and 2021 should be excluded when a local authority is considering compliant years for AQMA revocation. Crowthorne as

has been compliant in 2022 ($36\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ or below), and if it remains compliant in 2023 and 2024, we can then request to revoke the AQMA.

2.9 Stakeholder Working Groups

Due to the nature of Air Quality and how it fits within multiple groups, the Air Quality Officer attends groups such as Public Health, Parking Enforcement, Active Travel, Climate Change, Planning & Policy, as well as chairing a bi-annual AQAP meeting, to ensure that all the actions on the AQAP are being met, or to devise new actions for the new plans. As the actions of many groups can impact on improving the air quality in the borough, it is imperative that the Officer attends several groups to ensure that their actions do not create additional adverse impacts.

Stakeholders in the AQAP meetings have so far included representatives from Parking Enforcement, Public Health, Climate Change, Active Travel, Transport Planning, Planning, Traffic Enforcement, Environmental Enforcement, Parish Council, Local Councillors, Borough Councils, and local environmental groups such as Crowthorne Reduce Our Waste (CROW) and Crowthorne Village Action Group (CVAG), the local schools were also invited to attend.

3. Bracknell Forest Council's Air Quality Priorities

3.1 Public Health Context

All combustion processes in air produce oxides of nitrogen. NO₂ and nitric oxide (NO) are both oxides of nitrogen and together are referred to as NO_x. However, it is NO₂ which may be associated with adverse effects upon human health. Road transport accounts for about 33.6% of the total UK emissions of NO_x (Figure 3.1), with further contributions from non-road transport (16.8%). [Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs](#) (DEFRA) estimates that 80% of NO_x emissions in areas where the UK is exceeding NO₂ limits are due to transport, with the largest source being emissions from diesel light duty vehicles (cars and vans). Other sources include power generation, industrial processes, and domestic heating.

The Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants (COMEAP) has [established](#) that short-term exposure to NO₂, particularly at high concentrations, is a respiratory irritant that can cause inflammation of the airways leading to - for example - cough, production of mucus and shortness of breath. Studies have shown associations between NO₂ in outdoor air with reduced lung development, respiratory infections in early childhood and effects on lung function in adulthood.

[Epidemiological studies](#) have also shown associations of outdoor NO₂ with adverse effects on health, including reduced life expectancy. It is unclear whether these effects are caused by NO₂ itself, or by other pollutants emitted at the same time by sources such as road traffic. ([Health matters: air pollution - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)). However, emissions are likely to decline further over the coming years as new technology and emission standards continue to be introduced, along with local low emission zones.

There is evidence to show that long-term exposure to NO₂ may affect lung function and at relatively high concentrations, NO₂ causes inflammation of the airways. Exposure to NO₂ also increases the response to allergens, in sensitised individuals (DEFRA 2004) (Figure 3.2).

This Action Plan will outline the reduction measures in relation to NO_x, as the other pollutants in the air quality objectives have been monitored in recent years and the levels do not currently pose a health threat to those living within the AQMAs.

Figure 3.1 - Sources of air pollution

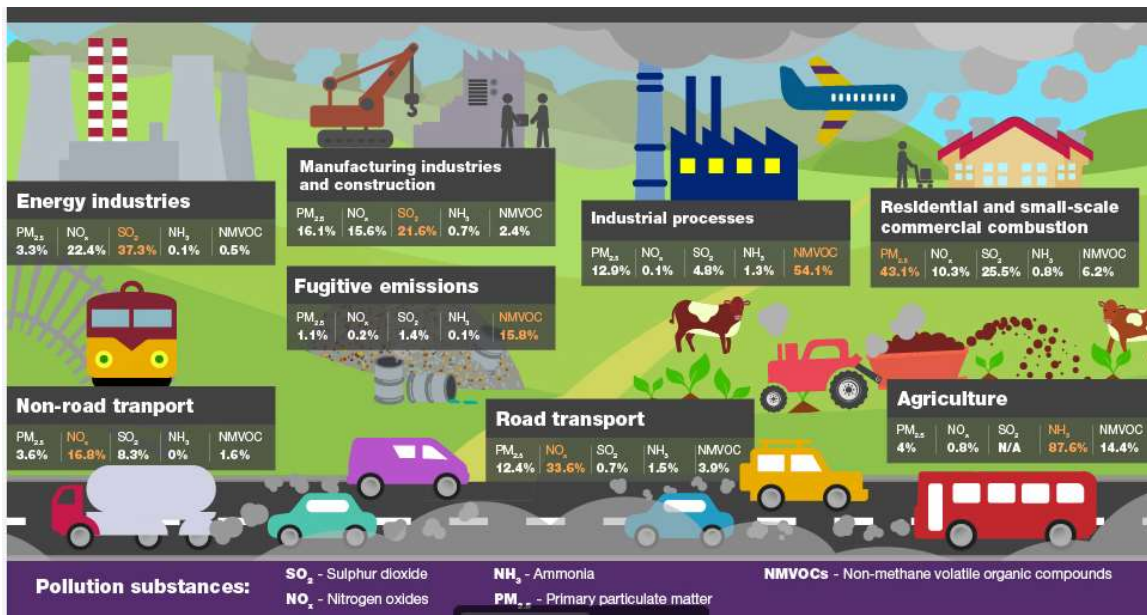
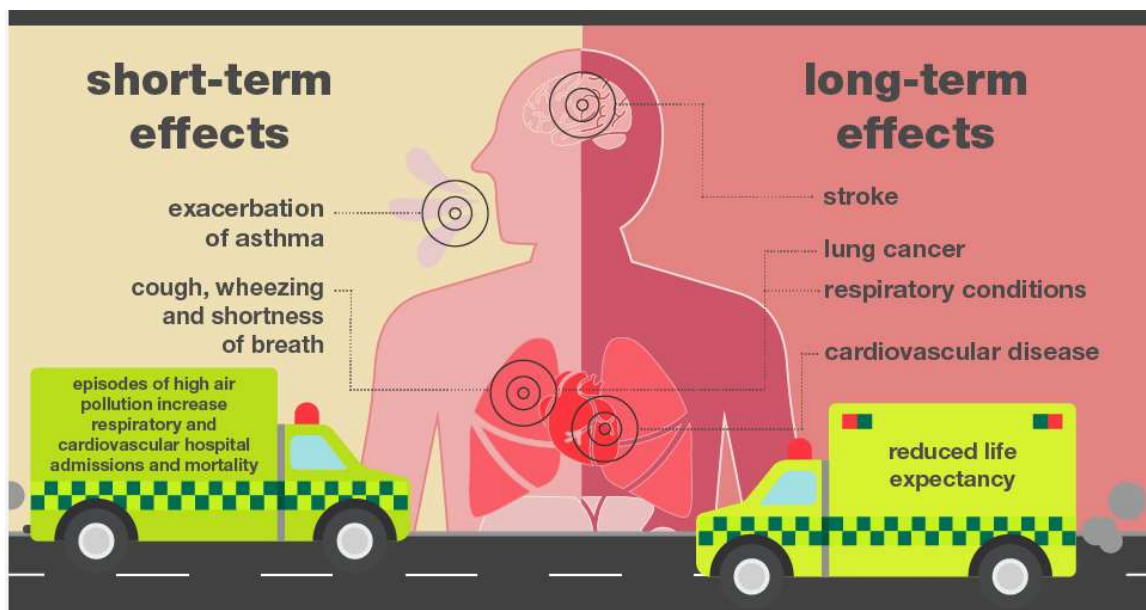


Figure 3.2 - Health effects of air pollution



The Fraction of Mortality Attributable to Particulate Air Pollution Indicator Value, for Bracknell Forest and other Local Authorities within Berkshire, can be seen in Table 3.1.

In 2020, the first person in the UK had air pollution listed as their cause of death, having been exposed to annual average exceedances of NO₂. The Prevention of Future Deaths report that followed Ella Adoo-Kissi-Debra's death, highlighted the public's low level of

awareness about the national and location pollution levels and their health impacts. The report sought better communication from Local Authorities and other health professionals about what the resolutions are. BFBC have already been working in partnership with the local Public Health Team to identify more vulnerable areas and will continue this work in the AQAP. Using the 2020/21 DEFRA air quality grant, we created an education tool kit about anti-idling, which is available to all schools, as well as leaflets to be attached to the weekly newsletters for parents.

Table 3.1 - Showing the Fraction of Mortality Attributable to Particulate Air Pollution Indicator Value within Berkshire.

National England Average	Southeast Region	West Berkshire	Reading	Wokingham	Bracknell Forest	Windsor & Maidenhead	Slough
5.5%	5.4%	5.4%	5.9%	5.9%	5.9%	5.9%	6.3%

3.2 Planning and Policy Context

3.2.1 The Bracknell Forest Council Local Plan (2020 – 2037)

The Bracknell Forest Local Plan provides the strategy for the growth of the borough up to 2037. Once adopted, it will replace the saved policies in the [Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan](#) (2002) and the [Core Strategy](#) (2008). It will, therefore, be wide ranging in terms of the issues it will cover. Air quality and human health is summarised within the Sustainability Appraisal (Incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (page 213) [Latest updates on the local plan | Bracknell Forest Council \(bracknell-forest.gov.uk\)](#)).

The Plan includes a vision, objectives and strategy for the level and distribution of development in the borough up to 2037 and is divided into two parts.

- **Part 1** deals with strategic matters and contains policies that set out the overall strategy for the pattern, scale, and quality of development, together with provision to meet specified needs.

- **Part 2** covers non-strategic matters which are essentially development management policies. These set out the criteria against which all planning applications will be considered.

The issues covered are summarised below.

Part 1:

Following the main modifications, the structure of the draft Bracknell Forest Local Plan Part 1 has changed as follows:

- Vision and objectives
- Strategy for sustainable growth
- Housing
- Economic development
- Infrastructure
- Climate change and built and natural environment

Part 2:

- housing
- economic development
- local infrastructure and community use
- development affecting the countryside and Green Belt
- character and design
- historic environment
- natural environment
- climate change and environmental sustainability
- transport

3.2.2 National Planning Policy Framework (updated December 2023)

This is National planning guidance that applies to all local authorities. It sets out the Government planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It outlines the purpose of the planning system and how it contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. The relevant section regarding air quality is:

- **Ground Conditions and Pollution (section 192)**

The following chapter states:

Planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, considering the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement. So, far as possible, these opportunities should be considered at the plan-making stage, to ensure a strategic approach and limit the need for issues to be reconsidered when determining individual applications. Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones is consistent with the local air quality action plan”.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

3.2.3 Bracknell Forest Local Transport Plan 3 (2011 – 2026)

Focusing on air quality matters, Local Transport Plan 3 is consistent with the government’s transport objectives for improving local air quality, by developing a set of local objectives, including the objective to protect and enhance the quantity and quality of natural resources including water, air quality and the natural environment. These have led to a set of transport policies that set a statement of intent and direction of travel, in terms of achieving better air quality in the borough and within the AQMAs. Together, over time, these policies will ensure improved air quality.

The following provide examples of how the policies are intended to deal with air quality issues across the Borough:

- **Accessibility (Policy TP1)** – states the Council is committed to improving accessibility through developing a series of corridor route strategies that ensure a co-ordinated and forward-thinking approach to network improvements. This is critical to improving the flow of traffic within and through, the Borough. For example, the A322/329 corridor which will keep traffic moving and reduce the stop/start impact of congestion, which contributes towards poorer air quality.
- **Buses (Policy TP3)** – encourages the use of alternative fuels and greener buses, which will minimise air pollution from this mode of transport in the AQMA areas.

- **Rail (Policy TP4)** – encourages improvements to capacity as an alternative to car use.
- **Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles (Policy TP5)** – encourages alternative fuels and low emission vehicles, which will benefit the AQMAs in the longer term.
- **Smarter Choices (Policy TP7)** - states that the Council will improve and promote walking and cycling options especially for short local trips. This could help ensure that unnecessary car trips through the AQMA areas are minimised.
- **Walking and Cycling (Policy TP8)** – aims to improve walking and cycling infrastructure, which could improve provision through the Crowthorne Area 2 AQMA.
- **Smarter Vehicle Use (Policy TP11)** – encourages up-to-date journey information which could influence traffic using the A322/329 corridor especially during congested periods.
- **Traffic Management (Policy TP12)** – seeks to regulate traffic by facilitating its movement. This will *minimise* traffic congestion and reduce its impact on air quality.
- **Congestion Management (Policy TP13)** – states that the Council, through works and measures, will improve the capacity and functionality of junctions and route corridors. The proposed junction improvements along the A322/A329 corridor planned in association with the Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan, are an example of the intended improvements to be made to implement this policy, which will have a positive impact on air quality issues in this area.
- **Intelligent Transport System (Policy TP14)** – states the Council will use Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) technology to manage traffic flow through transport corridors. This will help to keep traffic moving and help people to make informed decisions about their intended journey.
- **Movement of Freight (Policy TP15)** –. promotes preferred routes for freight movement, low emission vehicles and the provision of infrastructure, to facilitate the use of low emission vehicles.
- **Parking (Policy TP16)** – promotes electric charging points in parking bays.
- **Network Management (Policy TP18)** - states the Council will co-ordinate the response to congestion issues which will contribute to minimising the impacts of congestion on AQMAs.

The next LTP 4 to cover the period 2024 to 2037 consultation ended on 31/01/2024. The vision for 2037 is to develop a sustainable and resilient transport network that reduces carbon and provides choice and access for all, in a safe and healthy environment, making Bracknell Forest a desirable place to live, work and grow. [Updating the Local Transport Plan | Bracknell Forest Council \(bracknell-forest.gov.uk\)](https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

3.2.4 Cycling and Walking Guidance Statement (2018 - 2022)

This Statement addresses the need to continue to encourage visitors and residents to walk and cycle, for work and leisure through a range of measures set out within Policy TP8 of the Local Transport Plan 3. These include information, promotion, education, infrastructure provision, maintenance, lighting, and trip-end facilities.

The Bracknell Forest vision derives from the Local Transport Plan, which forms the backbone of all our strategies; 'To develop a transport system that supports the local economy, provides choice and improves quality of life in a safe and healthy environment'. Through a focus on walking and cycling, we aim to help drive forward benefits for strategic and local access, sustainable transport, the environment, community health, economic growth, education, enjoyment, tourism, carbon reduction and more.

<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-06/walking-and-cycling-strategy.pdf>

3.2.5 Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Action Plan (2020-2024)

Bracknell Forest Council has committed itself to becoming carbon neutral by 2030 or as near possible. Delivering on this challenging target will require Members and Officers to work together to achieve this important objective. Air Quality and the actions we take as part of the Air Quality Action Plan plus local monitoring, are combined in the Climate Change Action Plan to help make a positive impact. BFC declared a climate and biodiversity emergency on 13/09/2023.

<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/strategies-plans-and-policies/climate-change/climate-change-strategy>

3.2.6 Crowthorne Neighbourhood Plan 2018 to 2036

The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to set out a series of planning policies that will be used to determine planning applications in the area in the period to 2036. The Plan

forms part of the development plan for the Bracknell Forest Borough, alongside other Neighbourhood Plans and development plan documents produced by Bracknell Forest Council such as the Core Strategy, which covers the period up to 2036. The Core Strategy is one of the documents that will eventually be replaced by the Bracknell Forest Local Plan, which will cover the period up to 2037.

Policy CR9: -. demonstrate how air quality improvements will be achieved, where possible.

3.2.7 Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (March 2016)

An effective strategy for dealing with parking issues is vital to deliver sustainable growth in the borough. A balanced approach to delivering parking standards can help stimulate growth and meet the needs of our residents. The SPD therefore aims to deliver effective parking solutions while taking account of other planning considerations. It is not intended to suppress the use of the car, or to promote the car over other forms of transport such as walking, cycling or public transport.

Section IV (and Annex E) Adapting parking provisions for future technology and climate change, which includes the following standards.

1. For residential schemes: on sites larger than 10 dwellings, require 20% (1 in 5) of all spaces to be designed and constructed to be readily adaptable to provide charging points.
2. For employment schemes: on sites with over 500 sq. m net internal area, require 20% (1 in 5) of new spaces to be designed and constructed to be readily adaptable to provide charging points.
3. For retail schemes: on sites over 1000 sq. m net internal area, require 20% (one in five) of new spaces to be designed and constructed, to be readily adaptable to provide charging points.

3.2.8 Environmental Permitting Regulations

There are 3 Part B permits regulated by the Council within the AQMA, 2 dry cleaners and a petrol station, all of which are designated as low risk and are inspected regularly in accordance with the Pollution, Prevention and Control 1999 legislation to control emissions to air.

4. Source Apportionment

The AQAP measures presented in this report are intended to be targeted towards the predominant sources of emissions within Bracknell Forest Council's area.

4.1 Source apportionment for NO₂

A source apportionment exercise, using the DEFRA guidance (TG:22 Box 7-5), was carried out for Bracknell Forest. There was limited traffic data therefore the local sources are not broken down into vehicle type. This identified that within the AQMA, the source apportionment contributions were as follows:

- **Regional background, NO₂ 5.53 µg/m³ which equates to 18%**

The authority is unable to influence.

- **Local background, NO₂ 5.73 µg/m³ which equates to 19 %**

The authority should have some influence).

- **Local sources road traffic 19.34 µg/m³ which equates to 63%**

The local sources are areas which add to the background NO₂ to give rise to the hotspot area of exceedances. These are the principal sources for the local authority to control within the Action Plan.

4.2 The proportion of road NO_x emissions

The proportion of NO₂ from road traffic Using the NO_x to NO₂ Calculator provided by DEFRA, the Road Increment NO_x values could be obtained and the Total Percentage of NO₂ caused by vehicles using the roads (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 The proportion of NO_x from Road Traffic

Monitoring Location	2022 Average NO ₂ Value (µg/m ³)	Road Increment NO _x (µg/m ³)	Total NO ₂ (µg/m ³)	Road NO ₂ (µg/m ³)	Total Percentage of Road NO ₂ (%)
229 High Street	21.80	20.58	21.80	10.54	48
2 Dukes Ride	21.20	19.35	21.20	9.94	47
24/26 Dukes Ride (Playhouse)	16.90	10.76	16.90	5.64	33
Prince Alfred PH, 2 High Street	19.20	15.31	19.20	7.94	41
Firmount, Bracknell Road (Worse Case Receptor)	30.60	39.53	30.60	19.34	63
The Mount, Bracknell Road	20.11	17.15	20.11	8.86	44

*Background 11.26(µg/m³) used for the NO_x to NO₂ conversion spread sheet (Calculator v8.1, August 2021).

The results showed (Table 4.1) that the road vehicles are one of the largest proportions of local sources and contributors to NO₂ in the Crowthorne AQMA. The main polluters are vehicles that stop/start and idle, and those queuing at the mini roundabouts at each end of the High Street and along Bracknell Road (worse case receptor) and Dukes Ride. The idling / stationary vehicles are also causing congestion, due to a single carriage way, thus increasing the NO₂ when they are making deliveries to the shops along the High Street.

AQAP will focus on proposals to reduce emissions from these local traffic sources. It will also be important to separate these sources into:

Stationary sources (if relevant) potentially dealing with each source separately.

Vehicle emissions split between moving and stationary traffic if congestion is a significant issue.

It has also been concluded from Bracknell Forest COVID traffic data (Figures 4.1 to 4.3), that vehicles are the main producer of NO₂, as the NO₂ reduce as the traffic declined in 2020 and 2021 (Figure 2.1).

Figure 4.1 - A 329 London Row traffic flow comparison between 2019 - 2021

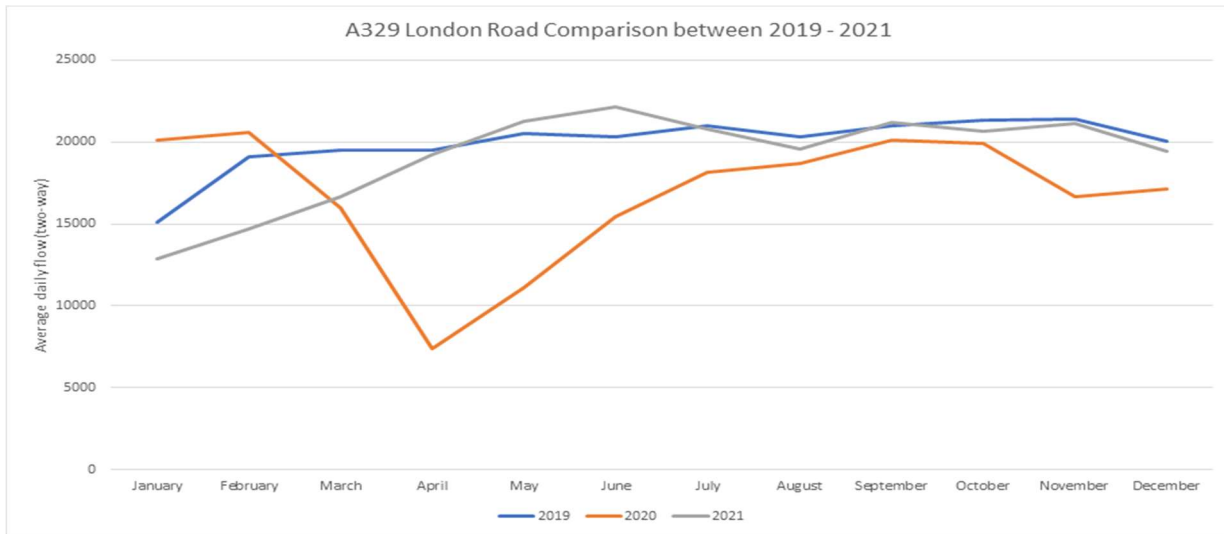


Figure 4.2 - A321 High Street Sandhurst flow comparison between 2019 - 2021

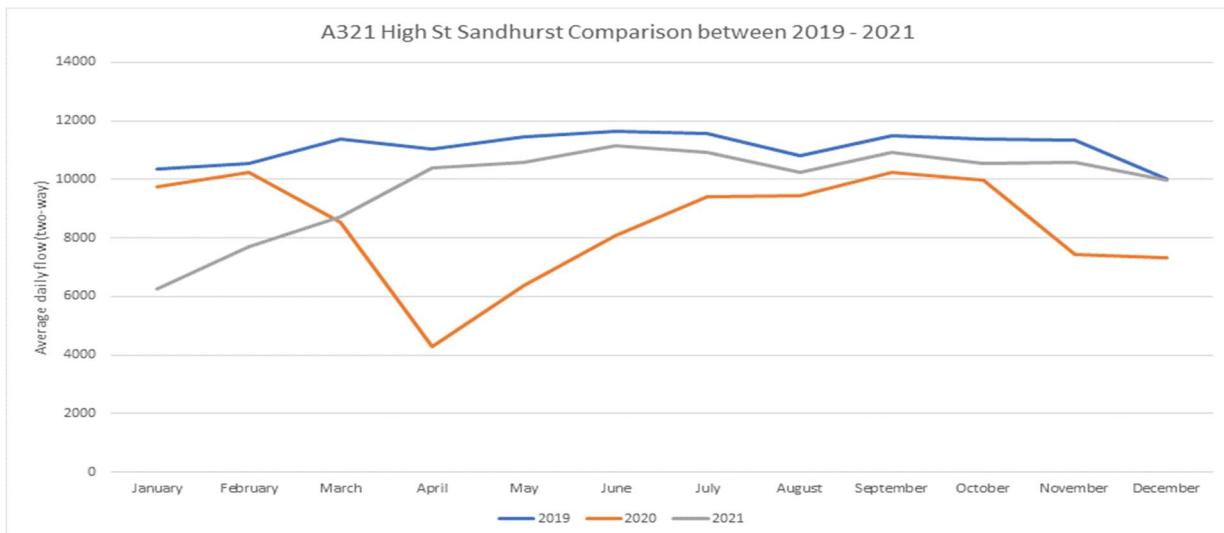
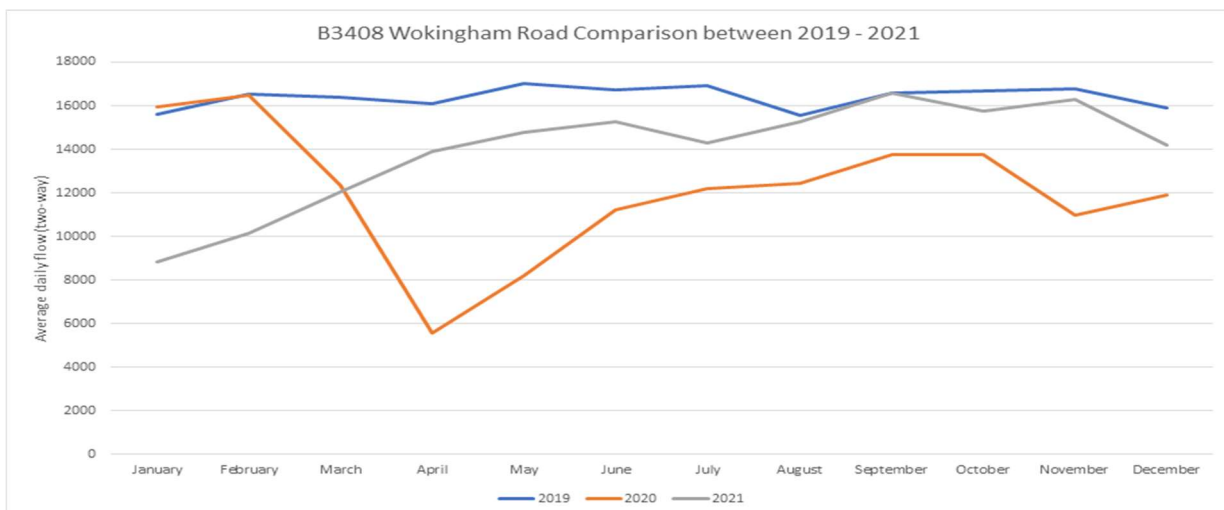


Figure 4.3 - B3408 Wokingham Road flow comparison between 2019 - 2021



4.3 Reduction in Road NO_x Emissions and Air Quality Improvement Required from this Action Plan

Figure 2.1 shows that 5 of the 6 sites within the AQMA have been compliant with the Air Quality Objective and below 36µg/m³ for the past 5 years, and one site has only been below 36µg/m³ for the past 3 years, The most recent and only location of exceedance has been at Firmount, Bracknell Road in 2018 and 2019.

Therefore, when calculating the source apportionment reduction, as required in LAQM TG.22, it can be seen that we have already achieved the target (Table 4.2), and we are now looking at measures in this plan to maintain this value, and keep the final site to below 36µg/m³ so the AQMA can be revoked (see section 2.8).

Table 4.2 - Showing the % NO₂ reduction required from this Action Plan.

Monitoring Location	2022 Average NO ₂ Value (µg/m ³)	Required Value NO ₂ (µg/m ³)	NO ₂ Reduction Required to be below 36.0 µg/m ³ (µg/m ³)	% NO ₂ Reduction required
229 High Street	21.80	36.00	-14.20	-65.14
2 Dukes Ride	21.20	36.00	-14.80	-69.81
24/26 Dukes Ride (Playhouse)	16.90	36.00	-19.10	-113.02
Prince Alfred PH, 2 High Street	19.20	36.00	-16.80	-87.50
Firmount, Bracknell Road (Worse Case Receptor)	30.60	36.00	-5.40	-17.63
The Mount, Bracknell Road	20.11	36.00	-15.89	-78.98

4.4 Key Priorities

Key priority themes, identified from the evidence above, have been integrated into the actionable measure to deliver compliance with the AQO for the AQMA. This will improve the air quality within the whole borough, whilst some measures will specifically target the AQMA. The themes are not numbered relative to their importance.

- **Theme 1 – Public Health, Education and Behaviour Change.**

Bracknell Forest would like to help protect those most vulnerable to the air quality impacts and improving air quality, is largely driven by a change in behaviour of those who use vehicles. As a Council, we have an important role in encouraging and facilitating this change. We aim to continue to inform our residents about the health impacts associated with poor air quality and provide information and guidance on how they can and travel by alternative methods or drive in a greener way, to be part of the solution. This can include Health Action days such as Clean Air Day and social media campaigns.

- **Theme 2 – Active Travel, Public Transport and Low Emission Vehicles**

Bracknell Forest would like to help its residents use alternative means of travel in the borough and especially in the AQMA, by making the use of bicycles more attractive, alongside walking. It supports sustainable travel, car clubs, travel plans, electric vehicles and would like to improve EV charging options and other options.

- **Theme 3 – Transport Planning and Traffic Management**

The Council always considers the air quality when making alterations and improvements to the local network, regarding options to enhance junctions enabling traffic to flow and prevent queuing as much as possible.

5. Development and Implementation of Bracknell Forest Council AQAP

5.1 The AQAP Development

Bracknell Forest Council currently has two active AQMA's, however due to Area 1 being advised by DEFRA for Revocation in 2024, Bracknell Forest have been advised to concentrate on measures to reduce the NO₂ in Crowthorne, whilst including actions which will benefit the Borough as a whole.

A Strategic AQAP will provide Bracknell Forest Council with an Action Plan that includes:

- Strategic Borough wide measures
- Incorporating locally focused measures
- Strategic Partnership working through a wider strategic AQAP Steering Groups.

5.2 Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

In developing/updating this AQAP, we have worked with other local authorities, agencies, businesses, and the local community, to improve local air quality. Schedule 11 of the Environment Act 1995 requires local authorities to consult the bodies as listed in listed in Table 5.1. In addition to consultation with statutory consultees, stakeholders and internal officers, bodies representing local business interests and other organisations were included.

We have conducted two workshops with Stakeholders. One for internal colleagues and included officers from the following areas: Highway Engineers, Active Travel, Public Health, Waste & Recycling, Parks and Countryside, Asset Management and Climate Change. The second meeting was for those who represent the village and attendance included: the Parish Clerk, a Parish Councillor, a Borough Councillor, chairperson from Crowthorne Reduce Our Waste (CROW) and Crowthorne Village Action Group (CVAG). The local schools were also invited to attend.

The Consultation was also advertised on the Public Protection Partnership website.

The response to our consultation stakeholder engagement is given in Appendix A: Response to Consultation, and suggested actions are given listed in Appendix C.

Table 5.1 – Consultation Undertaken

Consultee	Consultation Undertaken
The Secretary of State (DEFRA)	Yes
The Environment Agency	Yes
The Highways Authority	Yes
All neighbouring local authorities (Windsor and Maidenhead, Hampshire CC, Surrey CC, South Oxfordshire, Reading, Wokingham and Basingstoke and Deane)	Yes
Other public authorities as appropriate, such as Public Health officials. (E.g., Crowthorne Parish Council, Crowthorne Village Action Group, Crowthorne Reduce Our Waste	Yes
Bodies representing local business interests and other organisations as appropriate	Yes

5.3 Steering Group

The Steering Group has been in place since 2012 when the original AQAP was adopted, and actions required. The Steering Group is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the delivery of the AQAP to ensure measures are kept on track and the actions updated in the ASR.

The group is led by the Air Quality Officer and meets bi-annually to update on the action's progression. Members are from a diverse background and include (but not limited to)

- Public Health
- Active Travel/ Transport Planners
- Highways
- Waste Enforcement
- Traffic Enforcement
- Planners
- Environmental Health
- Climate Change
- Environmental groups (external).

The Air Quality Officer attends both internal and external meetings (cross Borough) to ensure that all remain up to date with what is happening within the Borough and adjacent authorities. Individual stakeholder meetings are also set up when project planning and implementing specific items on the AQAP.

6. AQAP Measures

Error! Reference source not found. 6.1 shows the Bracknell Forest Council AQAP measures. It contains:

a list of the actions that form part of the plan.

- the responsible individual and departments/organisations who will deliver this action.
- estimated cost of implementing each action (overall cost and cost to the local authority)
- expected benefit in terms of pollutant emission and/or concentration reduction.
- the timescale for implementation
- how progress will be monitored
- listed in priority order following a cost benefit and air quality impact analysis (see Appendix E) (e.g., showing the cheapest measures with the greatest reduction in pollutant concentrations are the higher priorities).

NB: Please see future ASRs for regular annual updates on implementation of these measures.

6.1 Strategic and localised measures

The proposed measures set out in the AQAP are a mixture of educational, enforcement, strategic, alternative transports plans and traffic management options, which are specific to the Crowthorne AQMA.

6.2 2024-2029 Measures

Each measure for the action plan has been explained below to give more detail. Annual updates will be provided in the ASR.

- **Measure 1:** Improvements to Dukes Ride/Bracknell Road junction

Scheme aims to improve the flow of traffic through the junction by adding a left-turn lane into High Street and moving the bus stop on Bracknell Road.

- **Measure 2:** Enforcement of the Parking regulation in Crowthorne High Street
Parking Enforcement Team to look at the feasibility of enforcing the signs.
- **Measure 3:** Feasibility Study for a Cycle path in the Crowthorne Golden Triangle
Transport Planning to look more in-depth to whether a dedicated cycle route is feasible.
- **Measure 4:** Education Health Promotion, Behaviour Change Projects, and Environmental Action Days, Promote cleaner air during the national/local action weeks.
- **Measure 5:** Anti-Idling Education/ Enforcement
Working with Parking Enforcement, alongside educating those who idle on the health impacts and why we are carrying out enforcement.
- **Measure 6:** Environmental Permitting Regulations
Inspections and checking monitoring data for emissions to air, will be carried out as required by Environmental Health.
- **Measure 7:** Feasibility Study into High Street Closures
To close the high street at different times throughout the year to help reduce the NO2 emissions.
- **Measure 8:** Feasibility delivery plan and provision of rear service yard access to reduce number of delivery vehicles unloading in Crowthorne High Street.
To look further into depth on the feasibility of this long-term action that is dependent on gaining permission from shops. Complications arise, given individual ownership issues at the back of the shops and properties. Responsibility for the High Street delivery issues really relies with the Council's enforcement team and as an interim/compromise solution, a Freight Quality Partnership with the Parish, traders, and freight providers.
- **Measure 9:** Feasibility Study for bike parking with in Crowthorne

Investigation to find out if and where extra bike parking could be installed.

- **Measure 10:** Feasibility Study for 20 mph zone in the AQMA along Bracknell Road

Study to be conducted by Traffic Safety.

- **Measure 11:** Finger Signs for cycling and walking routes in Crowthorne

More signage to be used in Crowthorne to help those who are walking or traveling by bike, know the approximate time it will take them to reach their destination.

- **Measure 12:** Bus User Discounts

Bus ticket holders to be offered discount in participating venues.

- **Measure 13:** Grants for help with projects within the AQMA and Borough

This will include the DEFRA Air Quality grant, along with others, that will be of benefit to the air quality in the Borough.

- **Measure 14:** Air Quality Planning Conditions

Planning to continue to work with Environmental Health and to the apply conditions that improve the air quality in the Borough and to consider the impact of a new development on existing air quality levels.

- **Measure 15:** Continue introducing electric cars as pool cars

Increase the number of electric pool cars owned by the Council.

- **Measure 16:** Increase in EV chargers

Increase the amount in the Borough and Crowthorne.

- **Measure 17:** Feasibility Study into the Lane Rental Scheme under NRSWA s74A.

Companies who work on the roads, charged in relation to the legislation.

- **Measure 18:** Parking Car sticker Advertising

Car parking tickets to advertise the health effects of idling and traffic emissions.

- **Measure 19:** Helping Business reduce emissions

ECO Stars - an accreditation scheme to help companies achieve emission reduction in their fleet.

Table 6.1 – Air Quality Action Plan Measures

Measure No.	Priority Score (Cost Benefit Analysis)	Measure	Category	Classification	Estimated Year Measure to be Introduced	Estimated / Actual Completion Year	Organisations Involved	Funding Source	Defra AQ Grant Funding	Funding Status	Estimated Cost of Measure	Measure Status	Target Reduction in Pollutant / Emission from Measure	Key Performance Indicator (Quantitative Assessment)	Progress to Date	Comments / Potential Barriers to Implementation
1	1	Improvements to Dukes Ride/Bracknell Road junction	Traffic Management	Strategic highway improvements, Re-prioritising Road space away from cars, including Access management, Selective vehicle priority, bus priority, high vehicle occupancy lane	2017	2029	BFBC	BFBC	NO	Funded	£100k - £500k	Planning	Reduction in NO ₂ concentrations to below the objective in AQMA	Reduce queues and journey time. Measurable reduction in NO ₂	Concept designed and consultation ongoing	Scheme aims to improve the flow of traffic through the junction by adding a left-turn lane into High St and moving the bus stop on Bracknell Road.
2	2	Enforcement of the Parking Regulation in Crowthorne High Street	Traffic Management	Workplace Parking Levy, Parking Enforcement on highway	2023	2040	BFBC Parking Enforcement	BFBC/Parking Enforcement	NO	Funded	£10k - £50k	Planning	A reduction in NO ₂ concentrations to below the objective levels in the Crowthorne AQMA	Free flowing traffic. Measurable reduction in NO ₂	Signs are already erected along the High Street with “No delivery times” displayed to be enforced.	Signs already in place. Lack of resources/priority to enforce on a regular basis to act as a deterrent.
3	2	Feasibility Study for a Cycle path in the Crowthorne “Golden Triangle”	Transport Planning and Infrastructure	Cycle network	2023	2029	BFBC Highway Authority	BFBC Highway Authority	NO	Not Funded	£10k - £50k	Planning	A reduction in NO ₂ concentrations to below the objective levels in the Crowthorne AQMA	Increase of bike users in the village. Measurable reduction in NO ₂	None	Feasibility study to be undertaken to establish suitability. The Golden Triangle is located along Dukes Ride, High Street and Church Street/Waterloo Road.
4	3	Education, Health Promotion, Behaviour Change Projects, and Environmental Action Days	Public Information	Other	2023	2029	BFBC/Public Health	BFBC/PH	NO	Not Funded	£10k - 50k	Implementation	Reduction in NO ₂ concentrations to below the objective in the whole borough	Reduce emissions and having people actively changing their habits. Measurable reduction in NO ₂	Anti-idling education pack for the schools on the PPP website, and My Journey website. Free 5buses to Bracknell town centre Saturdays during December	The main barrier is the lack of engagement from the schools, and people’s lack of willingness to change, and realising that everyone’s small action, creates a large change. There are many days out there to help with promotion, such as Clean Air Day, Bus for £2 schemes and free bus days, Dr Bike sessions, Bikeability cycle training, walk /

Measure No.	Priority Score (Cost Benefit Analysis)	Measure	Category	Classification	Estimated Year Measure to be Introduced	Estimated / Actual Completion Year	Organisations Involved	Funding Source	Defra AQ Grant Funding	Funding Status	Estimated Cost of Measure	Measure Status	Target Reduction in Pollutant / Emission from Measure	Key Performance Indicator (Quantitative Assessment)	Progress to Date	Comments / Potential Barriers to Implementation
															2023. Eco Rewards and Love to Ride initiatives running 2021 to date	cycle to school days. There are also campaigns / initiatives such as Love to Ride and Eco Rewards that aim to make active travel fun and engaging with an element of competition
5	3	Anti-Idling Education/ Enforcement	Traffic Management	Anti-idling enforcement	2022	2029	BFBC	BFBC	NO	Partially Funded (DEFRA AQ Grant)	£100k - £500k	Implementation	Reduction in NO ₂ concentrations to below the objective in the whole borough, especially outside schools	Reduce emissions and having people actively changing their habits Measurable reduction in NO ₂	Anti-idling education pack for the schools on the PPP website, and My Journey website.	BFBC Parking Services already carry out anti-idling education and parking enforcement in known hotspot areas, including near schools.
6	3	Environmental Permitting Regulations	Environmental Permits	Measures to reduce pollution through IPPC Permits going beyond BAT	2023	2040	BFBC Env Health	EH BFBC	NO	Partially Funded	< £10k	Implementation	A reduction in emissions to comply with the Permit.	Permitted premises are compliant with the permit.	Dry Cleaning the Petrol Vapour Recovery Permits within Crowthorne	Ensure inspections continue as required by the risk rating system.
7	3	Feasibility Study into High Street Closures	Traffic Management	UTC, Congestion management, traffic reduction	2024	2029	BFBC Highway Authority	BFBC Highway Authority	NO	Not Funded	< £10k	Planning	A reduction in NO ₂ concentrations to below the objective levels in the whole borough	Measurable reduction in NO ₂	Feasibility study	Whether it is implemented by the borough
8	4	Feasibility of the delivery plan and provision of rear service yard to reduce number of delivery vehicles unloading in Crowthorne High Street	Freight and Delivery Management	Freight Partnerships for city centre deliveries	2015	2035	BFBC	BFBC	NO	Not Funded	£100k - £500k	Planning	Reduction in background NO ₂ , concentrations across the borough	Reduce unloading and loading along section of High Street and smooth traffic flow Measurable reduction in NO ₂	In progress. Council is working with shop owners to gain planning permission to use rear access.	To look further into depth on the feasibility of this long-term action that is depending on gaining permission from shops. Complications arise, given individual ownership issues at the back of the shops and properties. Responsibility for the High Street delivery issues really relies with the Council's enforcement team, and as an interim/compromise

Measure No.	Priority Score (Cost Benefit Analysis)	Measure	Category	Classification	Estimated Year Measure to be Introduced	Estimated / Actual Completion Year	Organisations Involved	Funding Source	Defra AQ Grant Funding	Funding Status	Estimated Cost of Measure	Measure Status	Target Reduction in Pollutant / Emission from Measure	Key Performance Indicator (Quantitative Assessment)	Progress to Date	Comments / Potential Barriers to Implementation
																solution, a Freight Quality Partnership with the Parish, traders, and freight providers.
9	4	Feasibility Study for bike parking with in Crowthorne	Promoting Travel Alternatives	Promotion of cycling	2023	2040	BFBC Highway Authority	BFBC Highway Authority	NO	Not Funded	£10k - £50k	Planning	A reduction in NO ₂ concentrations to below the objective levels in the Crowthorne AQMA	Completion of the study. Measurable reduction in NO ₂	None	Lack of funding and/or space to build the bike lock ups.
10	4	Feasibility Study for 20 mph zone in the AQMA along Bracknell Road	Traffic Management	Reduction of speed limits, 20mph zones	2023	2029	BFBC Highway Authority	BFBC Highway Authority	NO	Not Funded	£10k - £50k	Planning	A reduction in NO ₂ concentrations to below the objective levels on the Bracknell Road, Crowthorne	Completion of the study. Measurable reduction in NO ₂	None	Feasibility study to be undertaken to establish suitability.
11	4	Finger Signs indicating cycling and walking routes in Crowthorne	Transport Planning and Infrastructure	Cycle network	2023	2029	BFBC Highway Authority	BFBC Highway Authority	NO	Not Funded	£50k - £100k	Planning	A reduction in NO ₂ concentrations to below the objective levels in the Crowthorne AQMA	Increase and encourage active travel users in the village Measurable reduction in NO ₂	None	Feasibility study to be undertaken to establish suitability.
12	4	Bus User Incentives	Promoting Travel Alternatives	Personalised Travel Planning	2023	2029	BFBC/Thames Valley Buses/Active Travel	BFBC/Thames Valley Buses/Active Travel	NO	Not Funded	£10k - 50k	Implementation	A reduction in NO ₂ concentrations to below the objective in the whole borough	Increase in bus use uptake for journeys into shopping areas in the Borough.	Bus companies already run discount days.	The local of business will to accept the bus tickets and support the venture, also lack of advertising to help promote the venture.
13	4	Grants for help with projects within the AQMA and Borough	Other	Other	2023	2029	BFBC	BFBC	NO	Not Funded	< £10k	Planning	A reduction in NO ₂ concentrations to below the objective levels in the whole borough	Increase in projects enabled	None	Cost for applying for a grant, not winning the grants, and having to apply for more grants to achieve the actions on the AQMP.
14	5	Air Quality Planning Conditions	Policy Guidance and Development Control	Air Quality Planning and Policy Guidance	2023	2029	BFBC Planning	Planning	NO	Not Funded	< £10	Implementation	Reduction in NO ₂ concentrations to below the objective in	Decrease in NO ₂	Conditions are applied to Planning permissions	Planning to continue to work with Environmental Health and apply conditions to improve

Measure No.	Priority Score (Cost Benefit Analysis)	Measure	Category	Classification	Estimated Year Measure to be Introduced	Estimated / Actual Completion Year	Organisations Involved	Funding Source	Defra AQ Grant Funding	Funding Status	Estimated Cost of Measure	Measure Status	Target Reduction in Pollutant / Emission from Measure	Key Performance Indicator (Quantitative Assessment)	Progress to Date	Comments / Potential Barriers to Implementation
													the whole borough			the AQ in the Borough.
15	5	Continue introducing electric cars as pool vehicles	Promoting Low Emission Transport	Public Vehicle Procurement - Prioritising uptake of low emission vehicles	2015	2029	BFC	BFC	NO	Not Funded	£100k - £500k	Implementation	Reduction in background NO ₂ concentrations across the borough	Reduce vehicle NO _x emissions	Pool cars and van now on fleet. 18 fast EV charge points being installed in new depot 2024.	There are charge points at Time Square and the new depot, which will facilitate more electric fleet vehicles, reducing the overall carbon footprint of the council. The fleet team are looking to move to electric vehicles once their lease on the petrol cars expires. 2 electric pool cars and van now on fleet.
16	5	Increase in EV chargers	Promoting Low Emission Transport	Procuring alternative Refuelling infrastructure to promote Low Emission Vehicles, EV recharging, Gas fuel 176recharging	2020	2029	BFC, constituent councils, Chargepoint operators (CPOs). Silva Homes	Govt (OZEV) and private sector (CPOs)	NO	Some funded, further funds likely	~£500k - £2 million	Some delivered, some planned	A reduction in NO ₂ concentrations to below the objective levels in the whole borough	More EV vehicles charging the in borough	36 charge points installed across 12 council community car parks using ORCS fund. 12 charge points in town centre multi-storeys. LEVI bid in progress, and possible new ORCS bid 2024	There are numerous considerations and variables depending on type of charge points, location, and feasibilities. Procurement will be needed to spend Govt LEVI and ORCS funds, along with securing a supplier for a concession contract to install EVCPs in some of our commercial car park sites. This is a fairly major and long-term action. 5 locations for fast / rapid chargers identified in Crowthorne at present.
17	6	Feasibility Study into the Lane Rental Scheme under NRSWA s74A	Traffic Management	18UTC, Con19gestion management, traffic reduction	2023	2029	BFBC Highway Authority	BFBC Highway Authority	NO	Not Funded	< £10k	Planning	A reduction in NO ₂ concentrations to below the objective levels in the whole borough	Quicker completion of road works in the AQMA	Feasibility study	Whether it is adopted by the borough
18	6	Parking Car sticker Advertising	Public Information	Via other mechanisms	2023	2029	BFBC/Parking Enforcement	BFBC/Parking Enforcement	NO	Not Funded	< £10k	Planning	A reduction in NO ₂ concentrations to below the objective levels 1in the whole borough	Reduction in idling in the local car parks and the rest of the Borough.	Ticket machines located for advertising.	Advertising on the back of parking stickers, the advantages of anti-idling. If funding is available may be able to increase to petrol filling stations and buses.

Measure No.	Priority Score (Cost Benefit Analysis)	Measure	Category	Classification	Estimated Year Measure to be Introduced	Estimated / Actual Completion Year	Organisations Involved	Funding Source	Defra AQ Grant Funding	Funding Status	Estimated Cost of Measure	Measure Status	Target Reduction in Pollutant / Emission from Measure	Key Performance Indicator (Quantitative Assessment)	Progress to Date	Comments / Potential Barriers to Implementation
19	6	Helping Business reduce emissions	Promoting Travel Alternatives	Personalised Travel Planning	2023	2029	BFBC	BFBC/Business	NO	Not Funded	<£10k	Planning	A reduction in NO ₂ concentrations to below the objective levels in the whole borough	Direct relationship with the amount of business who sign up and achieve the rewards.	Planning	Tools to help would be ECO Stars - Fleet Recognition Scheme (ecostars-uk.com)

7. Appendix A: Response to Consultation

Table 7.1- Summary of Responses to Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement on the AQAP

Consultee	Category	Response
Planning Policy	Internal BFC team	Regarding access for deliveries along the rear of the shops and properties - There is no objective or policy, for deliveries along the rear of shops in the emerging Bracknell Forest Local Plan.
Planning Policy	Internal BFC team	Advice to update policy dates and policy content.
National Highways Programme Development Team (Strategy)	National Highways	Pleased to see that road systems which encourage continual traffic flow rather than stopping and starting is recognised, as this may help to mitigate the impact of diesel and heavy goods vehicles. We therefore welcome the improvements to Dukes Ride/Bracknell Road junction. We would also welcome local initiatives that will encourage a shift away from car use. Incentives should also be provided to encourage workers to cycle or use public transport. Also, if policies are in place to encourage workplaces to start at different times, this may reduce congestion at peak times and thus aid in the improvement of air quality.
Climate Change and Sustainable Living	Internal BFC team	Advice to update policy dates and policy content.
Crowthorne Parish	Local Government	It must be noted that there is currently no plan or funding, to provide a bus service and the lack of local

Consultee	Category	Response
Council		integrated transport is being considered between BFC, CPC and the developers.
Crowthorne Parish Council	Local Government	<p>The report acknowledges vehicles that stop/start and idle at the mini roundabouts at each end of the High Street, and the light good vehicles when they are making deliveries to the shops along the High Street. If these vehicles are stopping in a manner that is blocking the carriageway, then cause traffic jams along the High Street.</p> <p>Looking at the areas of maximum emissions they occur at the beginning of Bracknell Road before the BP garage. It is suggested that this is due to queues caused by: a) traffic turning right into Lower Broadmoor Road, b) traffic held up at the bus stop, c) traffic turning right into the BP garage and d) traffic queuing to turn south into the High Street.</p>
Crowthorne Parish Council	Local Government	<p>Measure 1 suggests a left filter into the High Street and moving the bus stop on Bracknell Road - both to be commended. However, banning a right turn into the petrol station would eliminate one of the above. Vehicles requiring access could turn at the Old Wokingham Road roundabout. Suggesting a 20mph limit along Bracknell Road (Measure 5) seems counter-productive given the above unless it is intended to stop sharp acceleration.</p>
Crowthorne Parish Council	Local Government	<p>The proposal for a Freight Quality Partnership is to be welcomed as the major source of pollution in the High Street is light delivery vehicles and queuing traffic caused by deliveries particularly at peak time. With the addition of roadworks, this is often the cause of traffic back-up at the High St / Bracknell Road junction and together contribute to this traffic buildup, therefore causing idling and pollution.</p>

Consultee	Category	Response
Crowthorne Parish Council	Local Government	Feasibility Study into the Lane Rental Scheme under NRSWA s74A. If this reduces the queuing due to road works, it is to be welcomed. Certainly, there needs to be more co-ordination of roadworks. That includes the wider Crowthorne of Wokingham Without, which requires managing with Wokingham BC.
Crowthorne Parish Council	Local Government	Increased provision of EV charging points however there is little useable space for such an initiative. Lidl has given over 2 spaces for EV charging. The Napier Road toilets were pulled down and Crowthorne was promised by BFC a car parking area dedicated to EV charging. Sadly, the promise has not materialised to date.
Crowthorne Parish Council	Local Government	Query raised regarding the no.124 bus service from Wokingham, the suitability for use of vehicle and the route.
Crowthorne Village Action Group	Non - profit organisation and non- political residents' association	<p>Concern that air quality monitoring is not being carried out at many locations where new residential development is planned in the vicinity of Crowthorne.</p> <p>No monitoring has been undertaken by the roundabout at the junction of Old Wokingham Road and Nine Mile Ride. Unofficial monitoring has shown that this location is already close to the legal limit of 40microgm/cc. There will be increased traffic from 1000 homes at Buckler's Park, potentially 226 homes at Beaufort Park and the proposed 800 new homes along Old Wokingham Road. It is suggested that PPP should institute its own monitoring at this location, to identify the current levels.</p> <p>(Comment noted, and Diffusion Tube 127 measures the NO₂ from traffic from the Old Wokingham Road</p>

Consultee	Category	Response
		and Nine Mile Ride approach to the AQMA).
Crowthorne Village Action Group	Non - profit organisation and non- political residents' association	Request to acknowledge the Local Plan and the demand of major development in Crowthorne.
Crowthorne Village Action Group	Non - profit organisation and non- political residents' association	<p>Regarding measure 2 - This is a great concept with potential to reduce congestion due to vehicles queuing behind delivery vehicles.</p> <p>The provision of a Service Yard to reduce delivery vehicles parking in the High Street was first proposed over 20 years ago and has been included as an action item in the air quality action plan since 2013.</p> <p>However, as far as we can identify, no one at Crowthorne Parish Council or the Planning department of Bracknell Forest Borough Council is actively working on this plan. Hence there has been no progress over the past 10 years.</p> <p>We suggest more information on the proposal be included in this action plan, including an indicative map of possible location and identification of department of BFC which will be responsible for pursuing it. The map could be used to inform decisions on planning applications which may impinge on the proposed location.</p> <p>Alternatively, if it is not going to be pursued by anyone, the mention of a service road should be removed from the action plan. Suggesting it as a possible mitigation but not following up could be misleading for DEFRA.</p>
Crowthorne Village Action Group	Non - profit organisation and non- political residents' association	Regarding Measure 12 - Roadworks are a frequent cause of traffic congestion in the High Street. Reducing the time span has a direct and proportionate effect on reducing the impact on congestion. It is

Consultee	Category	Response
		<p>not clear why this is not estimated for completion until 2029. Can anything be done to speed up the preparation and implementation of this measure?</p>
<p>Crowthorne Village Action Group</p>	<p>Non - profit organisation and non- political residents' association</p>	<p>Regarding Measure 18 - In view of the already planned significant growth, BFC should adopt a new planning policy, until it has been demonstrated that the growth already in the plan can be accommodated without breach of the statutory levels of NO₂</p> <p>, there be a presumption against additional developments which will add pressure on Crowthorne High Street.</p> <p>Individual decisions on planning applications are purely based on conforming with planning policy and until there is a clear policy, air quality will continue to be a low priority in determining planning applications.</p>
<p>Bracknell Forest Corporate Management Team</p>	<p>Local Government</p>	<p>Requested the addition measure (number 7) to be added, regarding a feasibility study into the High Street closure.</p>
<p>DEFRA</p>	<p>Central Government</p>	<p>Comments (ref: AQAP23-2026) regarding, Source Apportionment and Cost Benefit analysis</p>

8. Appendix B: Reasons for Not Pursuing Action Plan Measures after the Consultation

Table 8.1 - Action Plan Measures Not Pursued and the Reasons for that Decision.

Action category	Action description	Reason action is not being pursued (including Stakeholder views)
n/a	n/a	n/a

9. Appendix C: Ideas from the Stakeholders meetings

Table 9.1 - Brainstorm Ideas from the Action Plan Stakeholder meetings

Idea description	Incorporated in Action Plan
Visual, real time air quality monitoring (Air Sensors), such as traffic lights or faces.	N
Encouraging more walking and cycling – finger post signs to give times, e.g., 5 mins walk to the station.	Y
Cycle lanes in the Golden Triangle (Dukes Ride, High Street, Waterloo Road).	Y
More bike racks in the shopping centre of High Street (non in Lidl and Co-Op car parks).	Y
Parklets - wooden seats with planters e.g., outside library.	N
Blue green urban study.	N
Sustainable routes to school provision of crossing points, link this to Eco awards, Golden Triangle, signposting etc.	Y
Bucklers Park, as no school on the estate, no provision of safe routes to school from this site.	N
Service road deliveries – private land. Can anything more be done via the planning process?	Y
No Waiting restrictions exist for the High Street, no deliveries between 6.30-8.30am and 4.30-6pm, on the High Street? Who is enforcing? Applies to deliveries as well as shoppers – need comms. What about outside these times as the traffic continues along the road.	Y

Liaison with local businesses – with BFBC economic officer and CPC to discuss what they need to help with deliveries.	Y
Roadworks to be carried out more quickly – requesting High Street to be a road in BFC where this will apply – link with Highways.	Y
No turning right into BP station? Queuing due to cars blocking road as petrol station full. However, would this make the traffic queue further in the hot spot area. Perhaps no right turn out?	N
Improving traffic flow along High Street as well as the junctions/roundabouts.	Y
Speed limit reduced to 20mph, exactly where, can it be extended?	Y
Cycle path on High Street – feasible? Space?	N
Effect of rerouting traffic to Broadmoor site (since Aug 2023), what is the traffic impact.	N
Encouraging use of other forms of transport - Buses – connecting other parts of the village, working with BFBC and Wok BC, east to west to include train station, link Bucklers Park to station, issue funding.	Y
Bike Park in Crowthorne	Y
Cycling – bike park, E-Bike Park, safe storage, routes into village centre and links to leisure routes (west of High St)	Y

Consider other options such as Crowthorne Minibus or Good Neighbours, to provide service into village on e.g., market day.	N
EV charging – none in Co-op car park.	Y
What grants are there for EV charging point installation?	Y
Education – e.g., good car maintenance, no idling, fuelling at night in summer, correct tyre pressure, reducing trips etc.	Y
CROW document – wildlife margins, buzz stops, planters.	N
Deliveries – vehicle tyres, restricting times, e-cargo bikes.	Y
Reducing idling.	Y
Vehicle share with Wokingham Without PC	N
NPPF street trees for new schemes.	N
Education with businesses and residents through local channels e.g., Crowthorne Eye publication	Y
Health Walks and Health Promotion.	Y
Car Parking ticket – advertise on the rear health benefits of anti-idling or other AQ facts.	Y

<p>Bus Tickets get discount in local shops/coffee etc.</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>Bus stop alternations for prevent queuing.</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>E-Cargo Bikes for local business.</p>	<p>N</p>

10. Appendix D: Crowthorne AQMA Maps

Figure 10.1 - Map of Crowthorne AQMA and the Monitoring locations (North)

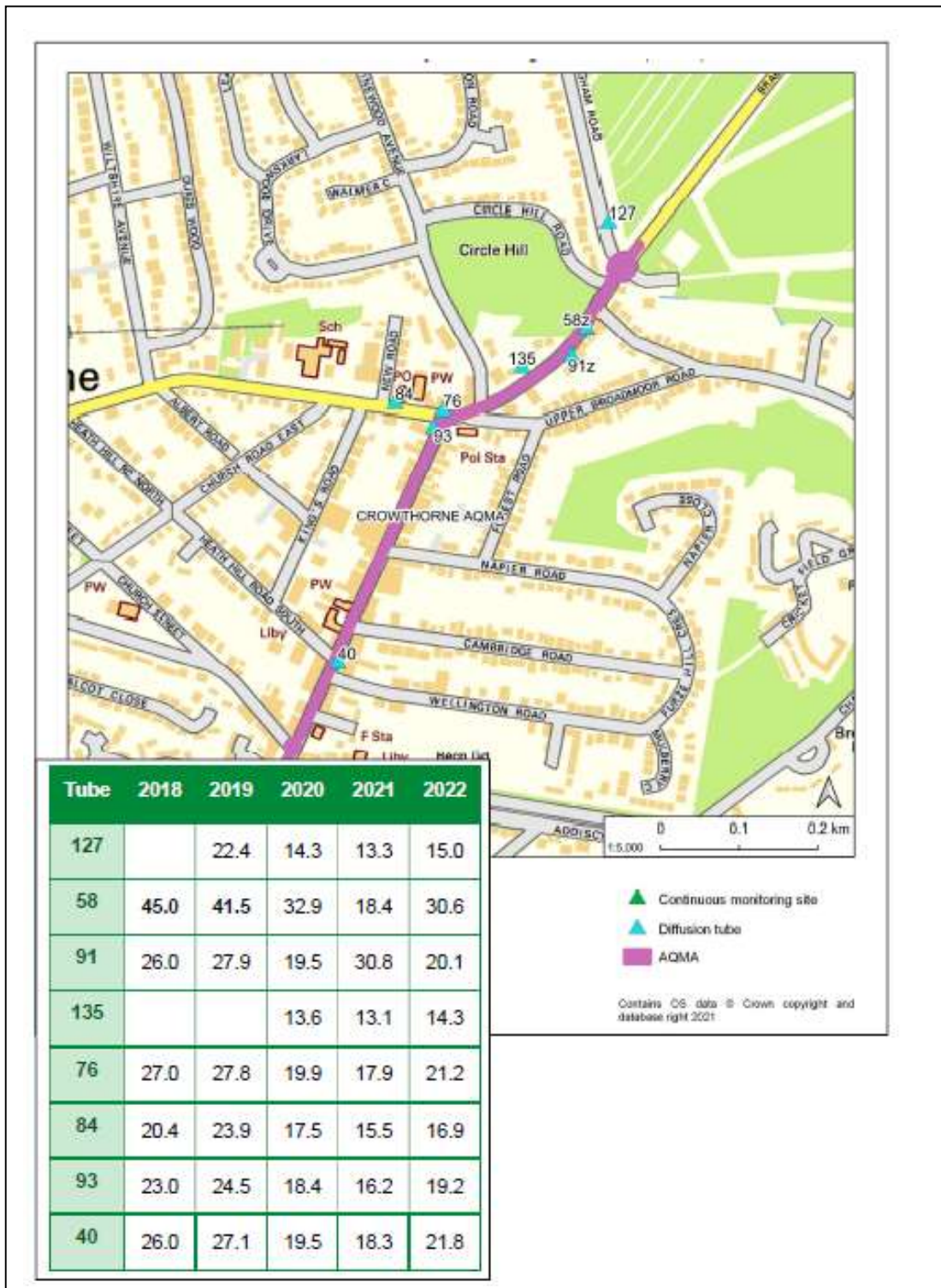
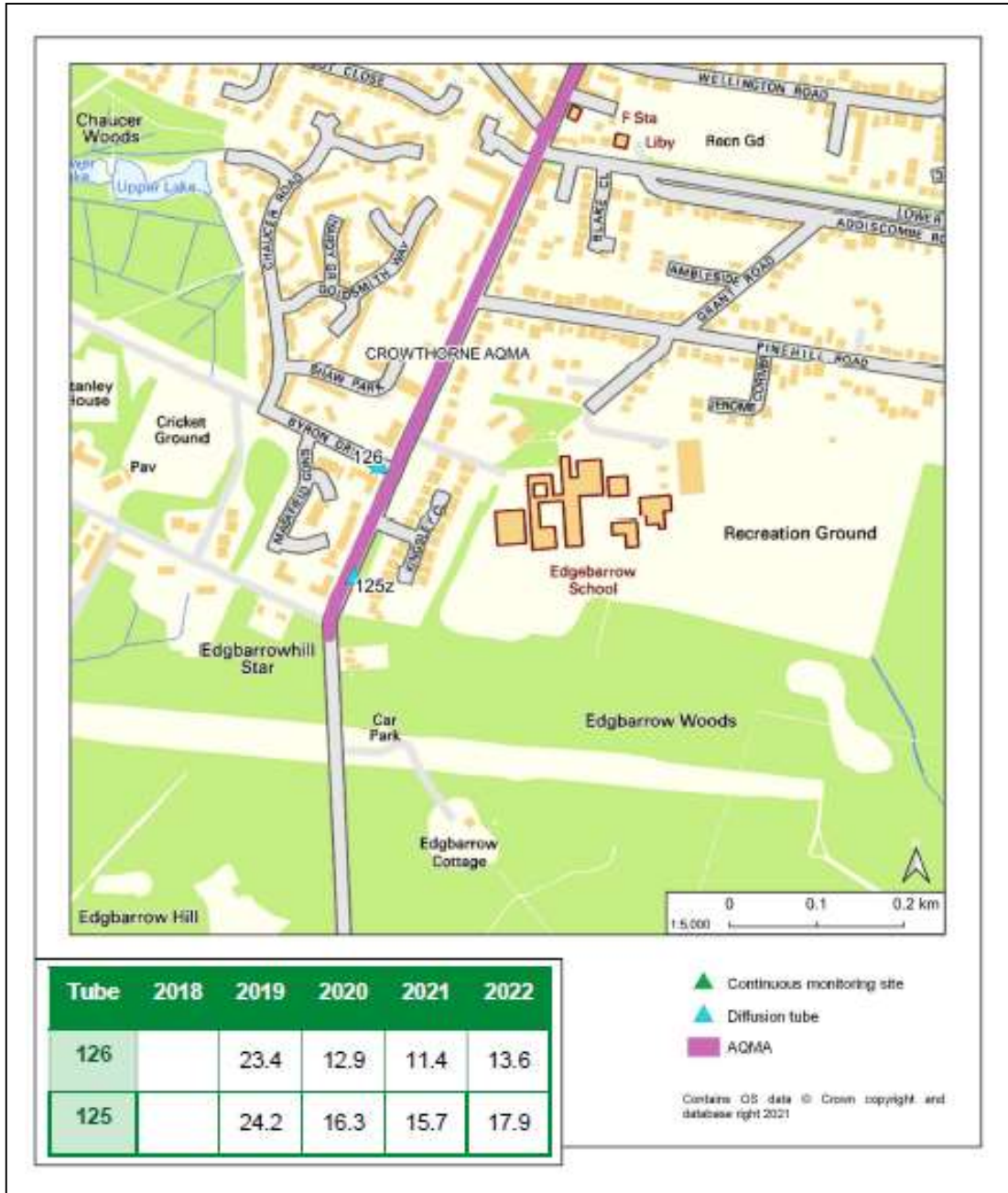


Figure 10.2 - Map of Crowthorne AQMA and the Monitoring locations (South)



11. Appendix E: Cost Benefit Analysis

Measure Number	Measure	AQ Benefit	Costs	Measure Status	Funding	AQMA Impact	Overall Rating	Priority
1	Improvements to Dukes Ride/Bracknell Road junction	20	5	5	20	15	65	1
2	Enforcement of the Parking Regulation in Crowthorne High Street	20	10	5	10	15	60	2
3	Feasibility Study for a Cycle path in the Crowthorne "Golden Triangle"	10	10	5	20	15	60	2
4	Education, Health Promotion, Behaviour Change Projects, and Environmental Action Days	10	15	15	10	0	50	3

Measure Number	Measure	AQ Benefit	Costs	Measure Status	Funding	AQMA Impact	Overall Rating	Priority
5	Anti-Idling Education/ Enforcement	10	15	15	10	0	50	3
6	Environmental Permitting Regulations	10	15	15	10	0	50	3
7	Feasibility Study into High Street Closures	10	15	5	5	15	50	3
8	Feasibility of the delivery plan and provision of rear service yard to reduce number of delivery vehicles unloading in Crowthorne High Street	10	10	5	5	15	45	4
9	Feasibility Study for bike parking with in Crowthorne	10	10	5	5	15	45	4

Measure Number	Measure	AQ Benefit	Costs	Measure Status	Funding	AQMA Impact	Overall Rating	Priority
10	Feasibility Study for 20 mph zone in the AQMA along Bracknell Road	10	10	5	5	15	45	4
11	FS Finger Signs indicating cycling and walking routes in Crowthorne	10	10	5	5	15	45	4
12	Bus User Incentives	10	15	15	5	0	45	4
13	Grants for help with projects within the AQMA and Borough	20	15	5	5	0	45	4
14	Air Quality Planning Conditions	10	15	15	5	0	45	4
15	Continue introducing electric cars as pool vehicles	10	5	15	10	0	40	5
16	Increase in EV chargers	10	5	15	10	0	40	5

Measure Number	Measure	AQ Benefit	Costs	Measure Status	Funding	AQMA Impact	Overall Rating	Priority
17	Feasibility Study into the Lane Rental Scheme under NRSWA s74A	10	15	5	5	0	35	6
18	Parking Car sticker Advertising	10	15	5	5	0	35	6
19	Helping Business reduce emissions	10	15	5	5	0	35	6

Scoring Key

<p>Potential air quality benefits</p> <p>Low (0) – Study where no immediate action all be taken.</p> <p>Medium (10) – a small measurable change in NO₂.</p> <p>High (20) – a larger measurable change in NO₂;</p>	<p>Cost</p> <p>Low (15) <£10k.</p> <p>Medium (10) £10K-£100K.</p> <p>High (5) >£100K</p>	<p>Measure Status</p> <p>High (15) Implementation</p> <p>Medium (5) Planning</p>
<p>Funding</p> <p>High (20) – Funded;</p> <p>Medium (10) -Partial Funded</p> <p>Low (5) – no funding or feasibility study</p>	<p>AQMA Impact</p> <p>High (15) – in Crowthorne</p> <p>Medium (0) – for the whole borough</p>	<p>Priority</p> <p>Higher 1 & 2</p> <p>Medium 3 & 4</p> <p>Lower 5 & 6</p>

12. Appendix F. Glossary of Terms

Abbreviation	Description
AQAP	Air Quality Action Plan - A detailed description of measures, outcomes, achievement dates and implementation methods, showing how the local authority intends to achieve air quality limit values'
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area – An area where air pollutant concentrations exceed / are likely to exceed the relevant air quality objectives. AQMAs are declared for specific pollutants and objectives
AQS	Air Quality Strategy
ASR	Air quality Annual Status Report
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EU	European Union
LAQM	Local Air Quality Management
NO ₂	Nitrogen Dioxide
NO _x	Nitrogen Oxides
PM ₁₀	Airborne particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10µm (micrometres or microns) or less
PM _{2.5}	Airborne particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5µm or less

13. Appendix G. References

Regulation 28: report to prevent future deaths (1), **20th April 2021**,

[REGULATION 30: ACTION TO PREVENT FUTURE DEATHS \(judiciary.uk\)](https://www.judiciary.uk/regulation-30-action-to-prevent-future-deaths/)

Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance LAQM.TG22. **August 2022**.

Published by Defra in partnership with the Scottish Government, Welsh Assembly Government and Department of the Environment Northern Ireland.

Bracknell Forest Borough Council Annual Status Report (2023), **30th June 2023**,

Public Protection Partnership.

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**Bracknell Air Quality Management Area
Proposal for Revocation Report
In fulfilment of Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 Local
Air Quality Management**

Date: February 2024

Information	Bracknell Forest Council Details
Local Authority Officer	Charlie Fielder
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Date	February 2024 Report prepared by PPP on behalf of Bracknell Forest Council

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1 Introduction

This report was produced on behalf of Bracknell Forest Council constitutes the required information under which the Council is to apply for the revocation of the Area Quality Management (AQMA) area known as the Bracknell (Area 1).

The AQMA revocation report has been developed in recognition of the legal requirement on the local authority to work towards the Air Quality Strategy (AQS) objectives under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 and the relevant Regulations made under that part and to meet the requirements of the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) statutory process.

This report will provide the Council with robust evidence as required under the LAQM guidance, LAQM.TG (22) to enable it to revoke the AQMA.

2 Local Air Quality Management

2.1 Review and Assessment of Air Quality

Under the Environment Act 1995 local authorities are required to review and assess local air quality annually against national air quality objectives. This process sits under the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) programme which requires local authorities to report annually to the department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

The air quality objectives applicable to LAQM in England are set out in the Air Quality Standard Regulations 2010. The pollutant of concern for this AQMA is for the annual mean objective Nitrogen Dioxide only and the limits are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1: The National NO₂ Air Quality Objectives

Pollutant	Air Quality Objective: Concentration	Air Quality Objective: Measured as
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	200µg/m ³ not to be exceeded more than 18 times a year	1-hour mean
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	Annual mean 40µg/m ³	Annual mean

2.2 Health Impacts

Air pollution is associated with several adverse health impacts. It is recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer. Air Pollution can be harmful to everyone, it mainly affects particularly affects the most vulnerable in society: children, the elderly, and those with existing heart and lung conditions. There is also often a strong correlation with equalities issues because areas with poor air quality are also often less affluent areas^{1,2}.

Poor Air Quality is also a contributory role in mortality. The mortality burden of air pollution within the UK is equivalent to 29,000 to 43,000 deaths at typical ages³, with a total estimated healthcare cost to the NHS and social care of £157 million in 2017⁴.

The major source of air quality pollutants in Bracknell Forest is road transport, and the main pollutant of concern is nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). Two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) have been declared for exceedances of the Annual Mean NO₂ Objective (Table 1). The Crowthorne AQMA (area 2) is located in Crowthorne, and includes Part B3348, High Street & part of Sandhurst Road and Bracknell AQMA (Area 1) was designated along the A322 Bagshot Road and Downshire Way from Berkshire Way to junction with B3430. (See Appendix A for the maps).

2.3 Current Air Quality Management Area Status

In the comments from the June 2023 Annual Status Report (ASR) for Bracknell Forest BC DEFRA has approved the recommendation made for the revocation of the Bracknell (Area 1) AQMA as it has recorded annual levels at or below 36.0 µg/m³ for 3 continuous years.

2.4 Requirements for revoking an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)

The process for the revoking an AQMA is set out in the DEFRA Local Air Quality Management Policy and Technical Guidance (22). It states that:

¹ Public Health England. Air Quality: A Briefing for Directors of Public Health, 2017

² Defra. Air quality and social deprivation in the UK: an environmental inequalities analysis, 2006

³ Defra. Air quality appraisal: damage cost guidance, January 2023

⁴ Public Health England. Estimation of costs to the NHS and social care due to the health impacts of air pollution: summary report, May 2018

“3.57 The revocation of an AQMA should be considered following three consecutive years of compliance with the relevant objective as evidenced through monitoring. Where NO₂ monitoring is completed using diffusion tubes, to account for the inherent uncertainty associated with the monitoring method, it is recommended that revocation of an AQMA should be considered following three consecutive years of annual mean NO₂ concentrations being lower than 36µg/m³ (i.e. within 10% of the annual mean NO₂ objective). There should not be any declared AQMAs for which compliance with the relevant objective has been achieved for a consecutive five-year period.”

Therefore as Bracknell Forest Council has robust monitoring data for the Bracknell AQMA, that has recorded annual levels at or below 36.0 µg/m³ for 3 continuous years it can be revoked.

3 AQMA Bracknell

3.1 The AQMA

The original Bracknell AQMA was declared for the NO₂ annual mean in 2011 but was reduced in 2013, following further assessment, and was designated along the A322 Bagshot Road and Downshire Way from Berkshire Way to the junction with B3430 (Map 1).

3.2 The Nitrogen Dioxide Levels

The nitrogen dioxide levels for the Bracknell AQMA, have been monitored using diffusion tubes at 5 sites, 1 of which is triplicate, and a reference continuous monitor (see Appendix A Map 2). The diffusion tubes sites are located as follows:

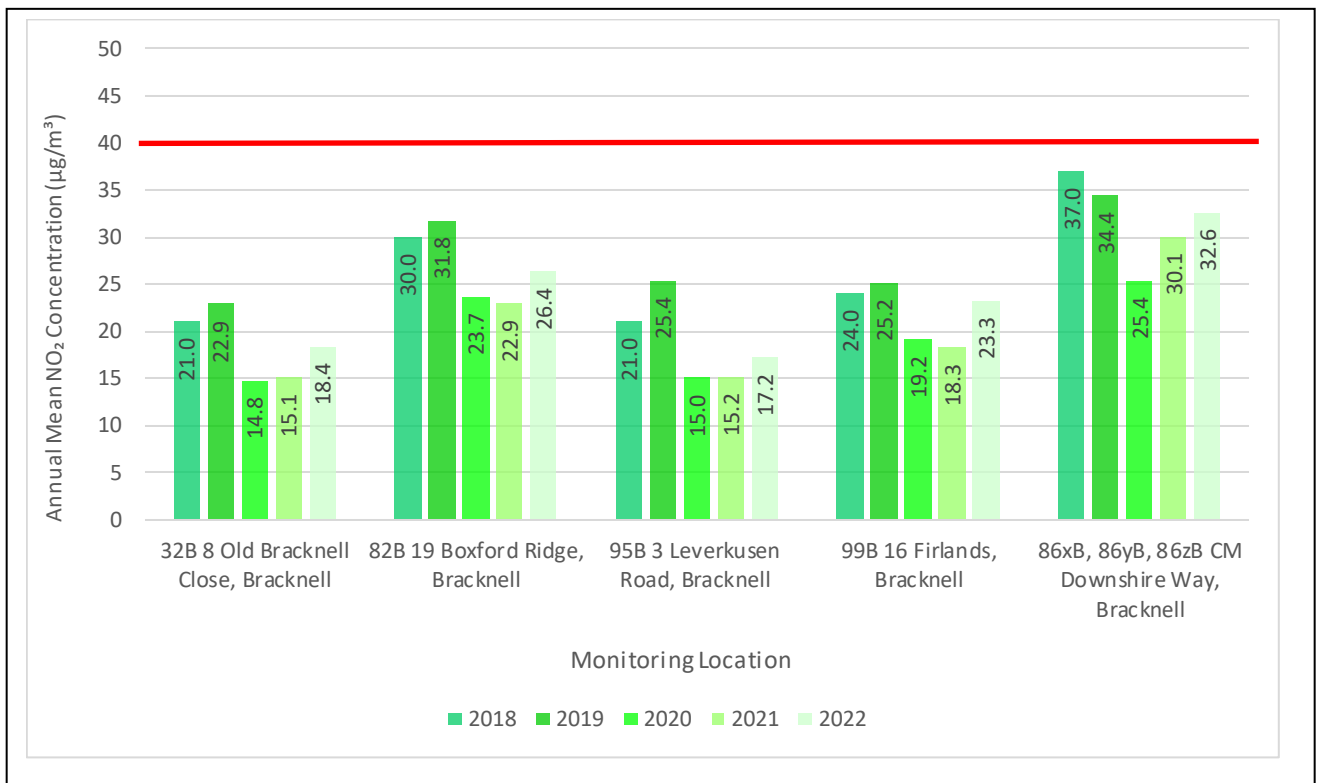
- 32b – 8 Old Bracknell Close, Bracknell
- 82b – 19 Boxford Ridge, Bracknell
- 95b – 3 Leverkusen Road, Bracknell
- 99b – 16 Firlands, Bracknell
- 86xb, 86yb,86zb – Continuous monitor Downshire Way, Bracknell.

The results have been 36.0µg/m³ or below for the past 5 years, in 4 of the diffusion tube locations (Map 3) and continuous monitor (Map 2). One of the diffusion tube locations (86xb, 86yb, 86zb), co-located with the Continuous monitor has been 36.0µg/m³ or below since 2019. Whilst the NO₂ has started to rise slightly since 2020 they remain below the 2019 levels (as shown in Figures 1 & 2 below).

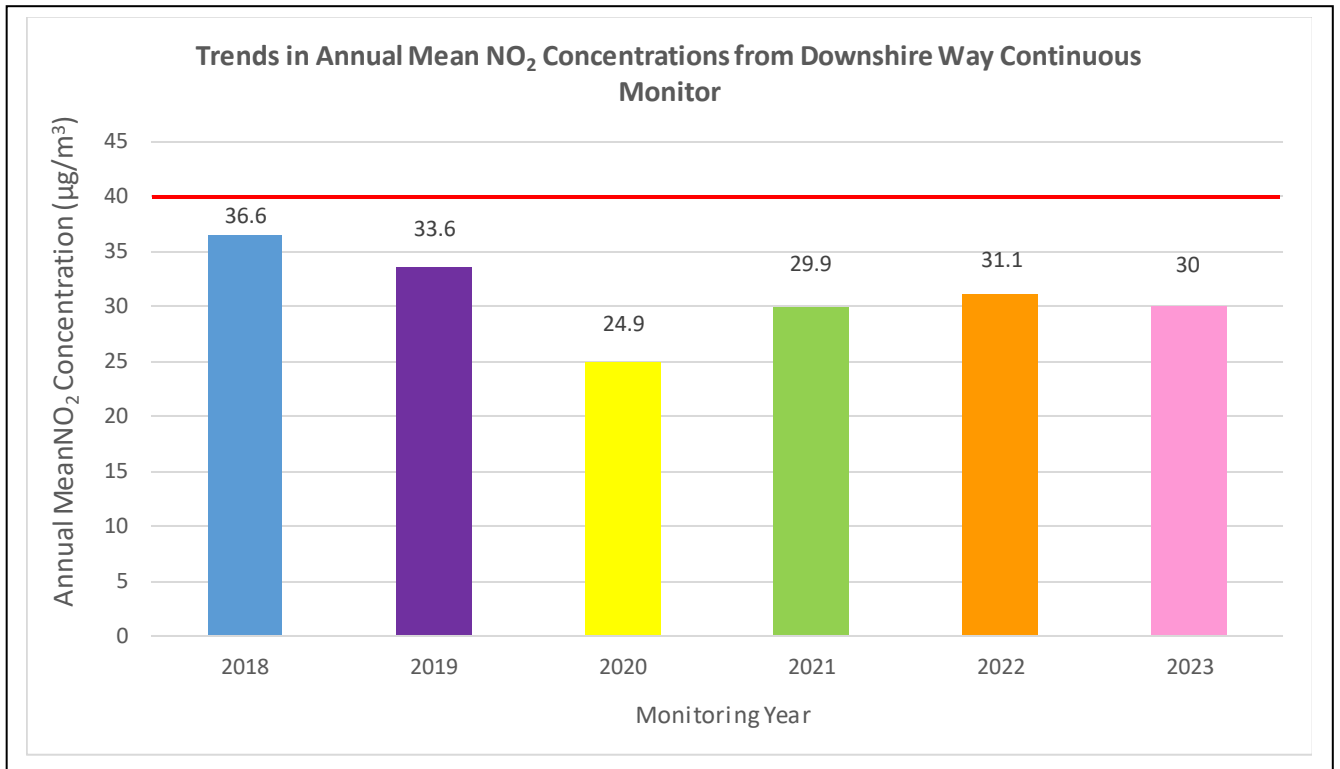
A number of factors may attribute to this reduction in NO₂, including significant capacity improvement works carried out to Downshire Way (A322) between the Twin

Bridges and Horse and Groom junctions which have improved traffic flow and movement on what was previously a bottleneck with significant congestion. This has been complemented by wider traffic management improvements at all junctions along the AQMA A322 corridor, with new traffic signals and junction layout changes further improving traffic flow and reducing congestion. There has also been a change in traffic trends during the day, for example peak traffic is typically slightly lower than pre-pandemic, but traffic during the inter-peak hours is higher, consequently there is less congestion and queuing within the AQMA. There has also been an increase in LGVs, making up for a decrease in car traffic. This is likely partly attributable to increased homeworking, but also increased home deliveries.

3.2.1 Figure 1: Diffusion Tube NO₂ Levels in the Bracknell AQMA from 2018 to 2022



3.2.2 Figure 2: Continuous monitor NO₂ Levels in the Bracknell AQMA from 2018 to 2023



3.3 Monitoring

Monitoring will continue for NO₂ at the sites using diffusion tubes as advised in LAQM.TG (22) to ensure that the levels remain at 36.0µg/m³ or below, for the next 3 years.

3.4 2023 Monitoring

Throughout 2023 the 5 diffusion tubes site within the AQMA have remained in place along with the continuous monitor. The 2023 data from the continuous monitor has shown a reduction in and annual average NO₂ to 30µg/m³ from 2022 (31.1 µg/m³) and therefore remains below 36.0µg/m³ (as shown in Figures 2 and 3), The results from the diffusion tubes will not be known until they have been bias corrected at the end of the full monitoring year. However, they are predicted to be below 36µg/m³ from analysis and comparison with 2022 data and the current data from the continuous monitor.

3.4.1 Figure 3: A table showing the 2023 Continuous monitoring data for the Downshire Road.

Month	Average NO concentration (µg/m³)		Monthly comparison (%)	Quarterly Annual Average		Quarterly comparison (%)
	2022	2023		2022	2023	
January	45.1	53.6	+17	32.4	38.0	+16
February	25.2	35.8	+35			
March	27.6	25.3	-9			
April	23.9	27.1	+12	24.6	24.4	-0.8
May	22.7	25.7	+12			
June	27.5	20.3	-35			
July	34.8	18.8	-85	33.2	23	-36
August	30.4	21.8	-39			
September	34.5	28.6	-21			
October	31.0	30.2	-3	33.8	34.6	+2
November	28.5	39.7	28			
December	41.8	33.9	-23			
Annual Average	31.1	30.0	- 3			

3.5 QA/QC of Monitoring Data

All the monitoring data is presented with a robust quality assurance and quality control refer to Appendix B for full details.

4 Ongoing measure to improve the local Air Quality

In addition to working to reduce and maintain NO₂ concentrations below the annual objective in all areas of the Borough, we will continue to assess planning applications to ensure that future developments and changes to the road networks across the Borough do not lead to an increase in the NO₂ concentration above the annual mean objective of 40µg/m³. We will also continue to regulate PPC installations to ensure that emission limits are not exceeded and the regulation of smoke control and waste burning to reduce impacts on local air quality. We will continue to provide our Anti-Idling Schools Kit to the local Primary's as well as running Clean Air Day, and other campaigns which help improve our air quality, ([air-quality-school-toolkit-final-version-1-003.pdf](https://publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk/air-quality-school-toolkit-final-version-1-003.pdf) (publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk)).

4.1 Current Borough Wide Monitoring

In the 2023 Annual Status Report Bracknell Forest confirmed it has 26 diffusion tube sites monitoring NO₂ levels in borough and that they have shown a decreasing trend since the 2018.

No diffusion tube sites located within Bracknell Forest exceeded the Annual Mean Objective. No diffusion tube results were recorded above $60\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, indicating no exceedances of the 1-hour NO_2 objective.

The continuous monitoring unit in Downshire Way, within the Bracknell AQMA, recorded an Annual Mean NO_2 level of $31.1\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in 2022, which meets the Annual Mean NO_2 Objective ($40\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) was not exceeded. The continuous monitoring also met the 1-hour NO_2 objective.

Bracknell Forest Council will be continuing to monitor the Air Quality across the borough (using diffusion tubes), it may move the locations and add new areas to the monitoring schedule as the local environment changes, such as new housing developments, changes to our road networks and the reduction of NO_2 across the borough. Bracknell is committed to continuing our work to reduce levels of pollution throughout the borough.

The Council will continue to monitor the Crowthorne AQMA along with many other areas of the borough working toward reducing the concentration of all air pollutants to achieve the Air Quality Objectives as stated in the Environmental Act 2021.

5 Bracknell Forest Council Consultation

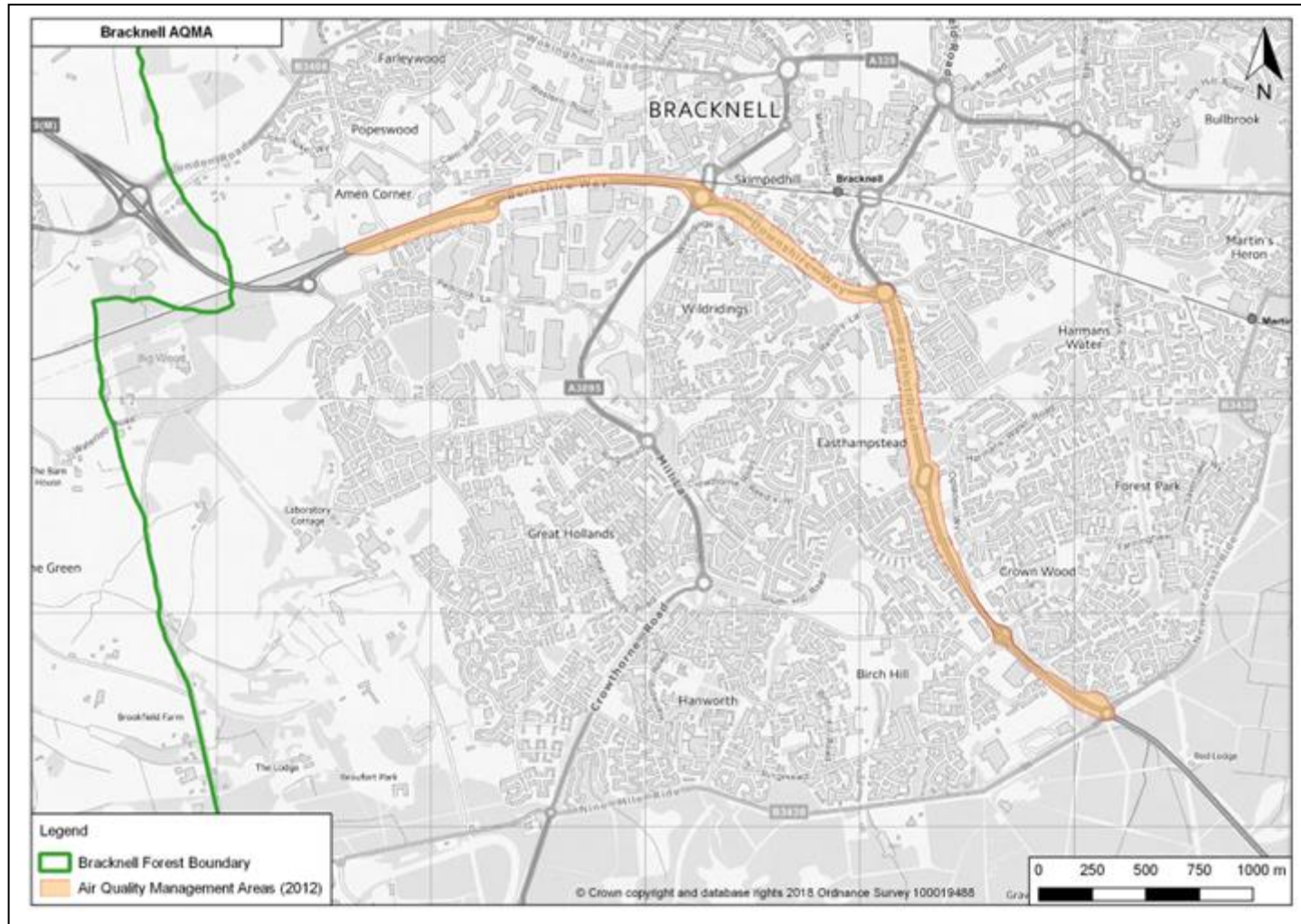
Bracknell Forest Council will consult with statutory consultees as well as interested parties of the intention to revoke the AQMA. It invited The Highways Agency, Environment Agency, neighbouring authorities Planning, Highways and Climate Change for feedback by emailing EQteam@westberks.gov.uk.

6 References and Papers

- **Bracknell Forest Council Annual Status Report** (*June 2023*), by Charlie Fielder.
[Air Quality Monitoring - PPP \(publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk\)](https://www.publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk)
- **Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA)** (*DEFRA October 2023*)
[AQMA Details - Defra, UK](#)
- **Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance LAQM.TG (22)** (*August 2022*).
Published by Defra in partnership with the Scottish Government, Welsh Assembly Government and Department of the Environment Northern Ireland.
[LAQM-TG22-August-22-v1.0.pdf \(defra.gov.uk\)](#)

7 Appendix A

Map 1: The Bracknell AQMA



7.1 Map 2: The Bracknell AQMA (North) diffusion tube and continuous monitoring locations



7.2 Map 3: The Bracknell AQMA (South) diffusion tube and continuous monitoring locations



Appendix B:

QA/QC for the Diffusion Tubes and Continuous Monitor

QA/QC Diffusion Tubes

Bracknell Forest Council uses GRADKO as the supplier used for diffusion tubes and the method of preparation, e.g. 20% TEA in water. The monitoring that has been completed for the past 5 years+ is in adherence with the 2022 DEFRA Diffusion Tube Monitoring Calendar ([NO₂ Diffusion Tube Monitoring Calendar | LAQM \(defra.gov.uk\)](#)).

The Workplace Analysis Scheme for Proficiency (WASP) is an independent analytical performance testing scheme, operated by the Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL). WASP formed a key part of the former UK NO₂ Network's QA/QC and remains an important QA/QC exercise for laboratories supplying diffusion tubes to Local Authorities for use in the context of Local Air Quality Management. The laboratory participants analyse four spiked tubes and report the results to HSL. HSL assign a performance score to each laboratory's result, based on their deviation from the known mass of nitrite in the analyte. The Performance criteria are due to be changed, at present the criteria are based on the z-score method, and equates to the following:

GOOD: Results obtained by the participating laboratory are on average within 13% of the assigned value. This equates to a Rolling Performance Index (RPI) of 169 or less.

ACCEPTABLE: Results obtained by the participating laboratory are on average within 13-26% of the assigned value. This equates to an RPI of 169 - 676.

WARNING: Results obtained by the participating laboratory are on average within 26 – 39% of the assigned value. This equates to an RPI of 676 - 1521.

FAILURE: Results obtained by the participating laboratory differ by more than 39% of the assigned value. This equates to an RPI of greater than 1521.

However, from April 2009, the criteria has been based upon the Rolling Performance Index (RPI) statistic and will be tightened to the following:

GOOD: Results obtained by the participating laboratory are on average within 7.5% of the assigned value. This equates to an RPI of 56.25 or less.

ACCEPTABLE: Results obtained by the participating laboratory are on average within 15% of the assigned value. This equates to an RPI of 225 or less.

UNACCEPTABLE: Results obtained by the participating laboratory differ by more than 15% of the assigned value. This equates to an RPI of greater than 225.

Bracknell Forest Council use Gradko International for the supply and analysis of the nitrogen dioxide diffusion tubes for their non-automatic monitoring programme. Gradko’s performance for AIR PT please see Table C.2. Nitrogen Dioxide AIR PT 2019.

Diffusion Tube Bias Adjustment Factors

The diffusion tube data presented have been corrected for bias using an adjustment factor. Bias represents the overall tendency of the diffusion tubes to under or over-read relative to the reference chemiluminescence analyser. LAQM.TG22 provides guidance with regard to the application of a bias adjustment factor to correct diffusion tube monitoring. Triplicate co-location studies can be used to determine a local bias factor based on the comparison of diffusion tube results with data taken from NO_x/NO₂ continuous analysers. Alternatively, the national database of diffusion tube co-location surveys provides bias factors for the relevant laboratory and preparation method.

A summary of bias adjustment factors used by Bracknell Forest Council over the past five years is presented in Table B.. The site which was used was Downshire Way (Bracknell AQMA). Gradko International Ltd of St Martin’s House 77 Wales Street Winchester Hampshire is the supplier and analyst of the nitrogen dioxide diffusion tubes. The tubes are analysed by U.V. spectrophotometry. The limit of detection is 20% TEA/Water.

Table B.1 – Bias Adjustment Factor

Monitoring Year	Local or National	If National, Version of National Spreadsheet	Adjustment Factor
2022	Local	-	0.82
2021	National	03/21	0.81
2020	National	09/20	0.84
2019	Local	-	0.82
2018	National	03/21	0.81

QA/QC of Automatic Monitoring

TRL carry out the QA/QC on behalf of Bracknell Forest Council, below is their QA/QC procedure.

Site operation

Routine instrument calibrations are conducted approximately once a month, which involve zero and span checks, a written record of the gas analyser diagnostics and a general visual inspection of all equipment is undertaken. There is a written operating procedure, and a calibration record sheet is completed at every site visit.

Data retrieval and daily data checking

Data from the monitoring station is retrieved and processed on a Campbell CR10x data logger as 15-minute mean data. The logger was interrogated via a Siemens TC35i GSM modem at 8-hourly intervals by the ENVIEW 2000 software hosted at TRL. This was used to retrieve, check and archive data. TRL's internal QA/QC procedures require all data to be backed up on a secure server and all documentation associated with each site to be uniquely identified and securely stored to provide an audit trail. Daily data inspections are undertaken during office hours using the facilities of the Data Management System. Initial observations of the Management System indicate whether the site has been contacted during its nominated 'poll time' overnight. If this has not been successful a manual poll of the site may be required. If this is not successful further investigation of the communications integrity will be required to establish contact with the site modem and data logger. Three-day plots of recorded data are viewed for the requested site, and these are inspected and assessed for continuity, validity, minimum and maximum values, date and time, power failures and general integrity. All anomalies are recorded on the Daily Check sheet, as required. Any anomalies or queries arising from daily inspection of data, or system operation, are brought to the attention of the Project Manager who will evaluate the situation and initialise any necessary action. In the event that the PM is not available, contact will be made with the next available senior person within the monitoring team. Any issues identified with equipment operation will be referred to the client for attention within 24 hours (excluding weekends). On a weekly basis, data is examined using summary statistics and outlier analysis to establish data validity. If unusual data episodes are recorded, these would be routinely examined over longer data periods to establish their impact on trends but would also be cross referenced with data peaks and troughs recorded at other national monitoring stations. In addition, integrity and validity of data logger clock times are checked, and any significant errors recorded in the Data Management System logbook. All site data recorded through the Data Management System is archived on TRL's Network. The data is backed up daily, and the TRL IT Department maintains these data within their long-term and secure archives. This secures all data in the event of any system failure.

Data calibration and ratification

Data is ratified as per AURN recommended procedures. The calibration and ratification process for automatic gas analysers corrects the raw dataset for any drift in the zero baseline and the upper range of the instrument. This is done using Evista software-based calibration and ratification process which incorporates the zero and span check information from the calibration visits. The zero reading recorded during the calibration visits is used to adjust any offset of the baseline of the data. The difference between the span value obtained between one calibration visit and the next visit is used to calculate a factor. This change is assumed to occur at the same rate over the period between calibrations and as such the factor is used as a linear data scaler. This effectively results in the start of the period having no factor applied and the end of the period being scaled with the full factor with a sliding scale of the factor in-between. After applying the calibration factors, it is essential to screen the data, by visual examination, to see if they contain any unusual measurements or outliers. Errors in the data may occur as a result of equipment failure, human error, power failures, interference or other disturbances. Data validation and ratification is an important step in the monitoring process. Ratification involves considerable knowledge of pollutant behaviour and dispersion, instrumentation characteristics, field experience and judgement. On completion of this data correction procedure, the data set is converted to hourly means and a summary of the data is provided to Bracknell Forest Council at quarterly intervals and a calendar year annual report is prepared.

Independent Site Audits

In addition to these checks an independent site audit is carried out every 12 months to ensure the monitoring equipment is operating correctly. The audits that are carried out utilise procedures that are applied within DEFRA's National Automatic Air Monitoring Networks Quality Control Programme. The efficiency of the analyser's convertor is checked, and the analyser is also flow and leak tested. The gas bottle used for calibrations on site is also checked against the auditor's gas bottle to ensure the stability of the gas concentration.



**The Newbury and Thatcham Air Quality Management Areas
Proposal for Revocation Report
In fulfilment of Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 Local
Air Quality Management**

Date: February 2024

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Report Reference Number	Newbury and Thatcham AQMA Revocation Report
Date	February 2024

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1 Introduction

This report was produced on behalf of West Berkshire Council and constitutes the required information under which the Council is to apply for the revocation of two Area Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) known as Newbury AQMA and Thatcham AQMA.

The AQMA revocation report has been developed in recognition of the legal requirement on the local authority to work towards the Air Quality Strategy (AQS) objectives under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 and the relevant Regulations made under that part and to meet the requirements of the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) statutory process.

This report will provide the Council with robust evidence as required under the LAQM guidance, LAQM.TG (22), to enable it to revoke the two AQMAs subject to consultation.

2 Local Air Quality Management

2.1 Review and Assessment of Air Quality

Under the Environment Act 1995 local authorities are required to review and assess local air quality annually against national air quality objectives. This process sits under the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) programme which requires local authorities to report annually to the department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

The air quality objectives applicable to LAQM in England are set out in the Air Quality Standard Regulations 2010. The pollutant of concern for these 2 AQMAs is Nitrogen Dioxide only and the limits are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1: The National Nitrogen Dioxide Air Quality Objectives

Pollutant	Air Quality Objective: Concentration	Air Quality Objective: Measured as
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	200µg/m ³ not to be exceeded more than 18 times a year	1-hour mean
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	Annual mean 40µg/m ³	Annual mean

2.2 Health Impacts

Air pollution is associated with several adverse health impacts. It is recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer. Air Pollution can be harmful to

everyone, it mainly affects particularly affects the most vulnerable in society: children, the elderly, and those with existing heart and lung conditions. There is also often a strong correlation with equalities issues because areas with poor air quality are also often less affluent areas^{1,2}.

Poor Air Quality is also a contributory role in mortality. The mortality burden of air pollution within the UK is equivalent to 29,000 to 43,000 deaths at typical ages³, with a total estimated healthcare cost to the NHS and social care of £157 million in 2017⁴.

The major source of air quality pollutants in West Berkshire is road transport, and the main pollutant of concern is nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). The Newbury AQAM was declared for the exceedances of the Annual Mean and 1-hour NO₂ Objectives, and the Thatcham AQAM declared for the exceedance of the Annual Mean NO₂ Objective. (See Appendix A for the maps).

Table 1: The National NO₂ Air Quality Objectives

Pollutant	Air Quality Objective: Concentration	Air Quality Objective: Measured as
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	200µg/m ³ not to be exceeded more than 18 times a year	1-hour mean
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	Annual mean 40µg/m ³	Annual mean

2.3 Current Air Quality Management Area Status

In the comments from the June 2023 Annual Status Report for West Berkshire Council DEFRA has approved the recommendations made for the revocation of both of its AQMA's, as they have both recorded annual levels at or below 36.0 µg/m³ for 3 continuous years.

¹ Public Health England. Air Quality: A Briefing for Directors of Public Health, 2017

² Defra. Air quality and social deprivation in the UK: an environmental inequalities analysis, 2006

³ Defra. Air quality appraisal: damage cost guidance, January 2023

⁴ Public Health England. Estimation of costs to the NHS and social care due to the health impacts of air pollution: summary report, May 2018

2.4 Requirements for the revoking an Air Quality Management Area

The process for the revoking an AQMA is set out in the DEFRA Local Air Quality Management Policy and Technical Guidance (22). It states that:

“3.57 The revocation of an AQMA should be considered following three consecutive years of compliance with the relevant objective as evidenced through monitoring. Where NO₂ monitoring is completed using diffusion tubes, to account for the inherent uncertainty associated with the monitoring method, it is recommended that revocation of an AQMA should be considered following three consecutive years of annual mean NO₂ concentrations being lower than 36µg/m³ (i.e. within 10% of the annual mean NO₂ objective). There should not be any declared AQMAs for which compliance with the relevant objective has been achieved for a consecutive five-year period.”

Therefore as West Berkshire Council has robust monitoring data for both the Newbury and the Thatcham AQMAs, that has recorded levels at or below 36.0 µg/m³ for 3 continuous years they can both be revoked subject to consultation.

3 Thatcham AQMA

3.1 The AQMA

The Thatcham AQMA was declared for the NO₂ annual mean in 2011, which includes part of the A4 in Thatcham from the Harts Hill Road junction to the junction with the Broadway (See Appendix A for Map 2).

3.2 The Nitrogen Dioxide Levels

The nitrogen dioxide levels for the Thatcham AQMA, have been monitored using diffusion tubes since 2001 at 5 locations (see Map 5). These are located within or near the AQMA:

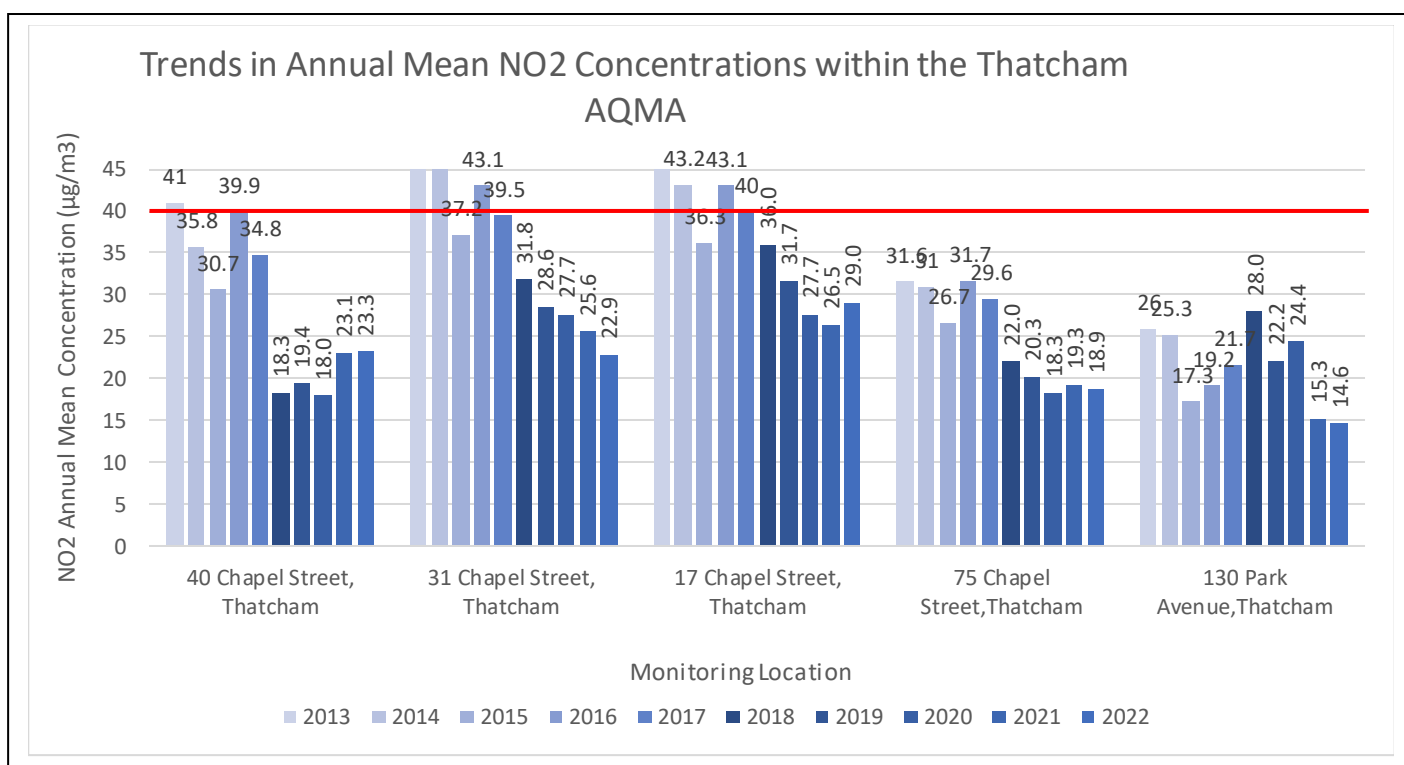
- 40 Chapel Street
- 31 Chapel Street
- 17 Chapel Street
- 75 Chapel Street
- 130 Park Avenue

The results have been 36.0 µg/m³ or below for the past 5 years at 4 locations and 36.0 µg/m³ or below for 4 years at site 17 Chapel Street, within the highest level reaching 36.0 µg/m³ in 2018. Whilst the levels have started to rise slightly since 2020-2021 in two locations, 40 Chapel

Street and 17 Chapel Street, they are still below 30.0 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (See Figure 1). From Figure 1 it can be seen that 75 Chapel Street and 130 Park Avenue’s NO₂ levels have been below 36 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ since 2013. 40 Chapel Street has been below since 2017, and 31 Chapel Street, and 17 Chapel Street since 2018. Therefore, the NO₂ started to reduce before the impact from the COVID lock downs (2020 and 2021) and changing traffic volumes and working patterns.

Several factors may attribute to these reduced levels including an increased use of electric vehicles, more people working from home “hybrid working”, increase in public transport use and reduction in vehicle idling.

Figure 1: Diffusion tube Nitrogen Dioxide Levels in the Thatcham from 2018 to 2022



3.3 Future Monitoring

Monitoring will continue at the 5 sites using diffusion tubes as advised in LAQM.TG (22) to ensure that the levels remain at 36.0 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ or below, unless direct otherwise from DEFRA.

3.4 Air Quality considerations in the Local Plan (2022 to 2023)

The *Human and Public Health Modelling Results and Interpretation* section (8) of the Local

Plan looks at the future impact on the air quality on our residents, and it concluded that the NO₂ will not exceed any of the current objectives in 2037. [Air Quality Assessment.pdf \(westberks.gov.uk\)](#)

The *Sub-Section on Human Health and Local Air Quality Management*, Page 101 (8.1.14) states that the;

“The AQS objective for annual mean NO₂ concentrations (40µg/m³) is predicted to be met at all modelled receptors, both without and with the 2037 Pre-Submission Local Plan. Concentrations are reduced from the 2017 baseline scenario due to improvement in vehicle emissions and background concentrations forecast in the years up to 2037, which more than offsets the forecast traffic growth.”

For *the 1-hour Mean NO₂ Concentrations* (section 8.1.18) page 101 states that;

“As all predicted annual mean NO₂ concentrations are all well below 60µg/m³, it is very likely that there is compliance with the 1-hour mean AQS objective. Therefore, all impacts on 1-hour mean NO₂ concentrations can be described as negligible.”

Future Occupants of the Pre-Submission Site Allocations, page 118 states that the;

“Annual Mean NO₂ Concentrations In 2037, with the Pre-Submission Local Plan, Table 8-13 shows that annual mean NO₂ concentrations within all of the proposed site allocations are predicted to be below 20.0µg/m³. The maximum annual mean NO₂ concentration across all site allocations is predicted to be 19.0µg/m³ and is predicted within,” Land at Siege Cross Farm, Thatcham’. Therefore, when compared to current air quality standard objectives, none of the sites are predicted to exceed any current objective”.

The impact on annual mean NO₂ concentrations experienced at all receptors can be described as negligible. At all receptors the predicted concentrations are reduced from the 2017 baseline due to future improvements in vehicle emissions which more than offset the forecast growth between 2017 and 2037 (the end of the assessed Pre-Submission Local Plan period).

The *Public Health Change in Exposure and Relative Risk Across the District* section (page 103, section 8.2.1) states that;

“The locations within the district that are affected by annual mean NO₂ concentrations in the high (28.5 to 40 µg/m³) and very high (>40 µg/m³) exposure bands are expected to be substantially smaller in 2037, with no locations within the high and very high band in 2037. These improvements are due to the changes to zero/ultra-low emissions technologies in transport, industrial, commercial and residential sectors that are forecast by Defra.”

4 Newbury AQMA

4.1 The AQMA

The Newbury AQMA was declared for the NO₂ in 2009. An area encompassing the roundabout junction of the A339, A343 and Greenham Road in Newbury (See Appendix A Map 2).

4.2 The Nitrogen Dioxide Levels

The nitrogen dioxide levels for the Newbury AQMA, have been monitored using diffusion tubes (7 sites, 1 of which is triplicate) and a reference continuous monitor (see Map 3). The tubes are located at:

- 64 Greenham Road
- 1 Winchester Court
- Newbury Gardens Day Nursery
- 3 Howard Road
- 63 St Johns Road
- 1 St Johns Road
- Newbury Continuous Monitor

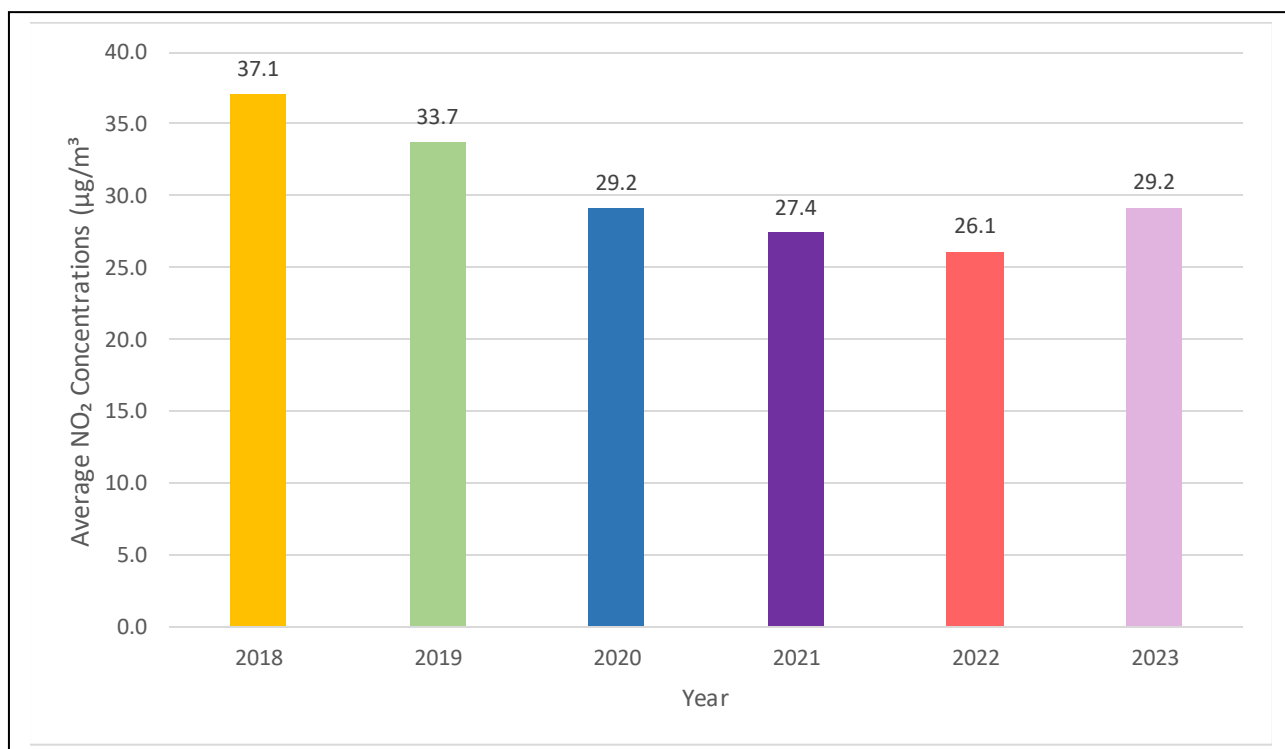
The Annual Mean results for NO₂ have been 36.0 µg/m³ or below for the past 5 years, at all the diffusion tube locations (Figure 2). The continuous monitor has remained below 36.0 µg/m³ since 2019, and the NO₂ has continued to decrease (Figure 3). There have not been any exceedances of the 1-hour objective in the last 5 years, where 18 are permitted. See Figure 4.

Several factors may attribute to these reduced levels including an increased use of electric vehicles, more people working from home “hybrid working”, increase in public transport use and reduction in vehicle idling.

Figure 2: Diffusion tube Annual NO₂ concentrations at Newbury AQMA from 2018 to 2022



Figure 3: Continuous Monitor Annual NO₂ concentrations at Newbury AQMA from 2018 to 2022



4.3 Monitoring

Monitoring will continue at the 7 diffusion tubes sites in Newbury as advised in LAQM.TG (22) to ensure that the levels remain at 36.0 µg/m³ or below, unless direct otherwise from DEFRA.

4.4 Future Monitoring

Throughout 2023 the 7 diffusion tubes site within the AQMA have remained in place along with the Continuous monitor. The continuous monitoring has shown that the 2023 annual NO₂ results of 29.2µg/m³ still remains well below 36.0µg/m³ in 2023, see Table 2. There has only been a slight rise from the 2022 data (26.2µg/m³). The 2023 data shows the same NO₂ annual average results as the COVID year of 2020. The results from the diffusion tubes will not be known until the raw data has been bias corrected, however they are predicted to be below 36µg/m³ from analysing the previous year’s data and the current data from the continuous monitoring.

Table 2: A table showing the 2023 Continuous monitoring data for the Newbury.

Month	Average NO ₂ concentration (µg/m ³)		Monthly comparison (%)	Quarterly Annual Average NO ₂		Quarterly comparison (%)
	2022	2023		2022	2023	
January	38.8	32.9	-15	32.3	31.8	-1.6
February	23.9	35.5	48			
March	33.3	27.4	-18			
April	22.3	25.3	12	20.2	29	+36
May	17.0	43.4	61			
June	21.7	18.1	-20			
July	24.7	35.5	+30	25.1	27	+7
August	25.7	20.3	-25.7			
September	Offline	24.8	n/a			
October	23.4	32.2	+32	26.6	29.1	+9
November	26.9	33.2	+21			
December	29.4	21.8	-30			
Annual Average NO₂ (µg/m³)	26.2	29.2	+11			

5 Ongoing measure to improve the local Air Quality

In addition to working to reduce and maintain NO₂ concentrations below the annual objective in all areas of the Borough, we will continue to assess planning applications to ensure that future developments and changes to the road networks across the Borough do not lead to an increase in the NO₂ concentration above the annual air quality objective of 40µg/m³. We will also continue to regulate installations to ensure that emission limits are not exceeded and continue the regulation of smoke control and waste burning to reduce impacts on local air quality. We will continue to provide our Anti-Idling Schools Toolkit to the local Primary's as well as running Clean Air Day, and other campaigns which help improve our air quality. ([air-quality-school-toolkit-final-version-1-003.pdf](https://publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk/air-quality-school-toolkit-final-version-1-003.pdf) (publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk)).

5.1 Air Quality Strategy

Up until now West Berkshire Council has not been required to have an Air Quality Strategy, as it has two declared AQMA's and had published a working Air Quality Action Plan. Once the AQMA's have been revoked, an Air Quality Strategy will then be developed in consultation with the Director of Public Health, in order to set out and progress the steps the local authority will take to continue to improve air quality in their area. This will include the continuation of air quality monitoring. Whilst the strategy is being prepared the air quality will continue to be monitored, and the Annual Status Reports submitted as it is a statutory duty which is required under the Environment Act 1995.

5.2 Current District Wide Monitoring

In the 2023 Annual Status Report West Berkshire Council confirmed it has 36 diffusion tube sites monitoring NO₂ levels in district and that they have shown a decreasing trend since the 2018. No diffusion tube sites located within West Berkshire exceeded the Annual Mean Objective. No diffusion tube results were recorded above 60µg/m³, indicating no exceedances of the 1-hour NO₂ objective.

The continuous monitoring unit in Newbury, within the Newbury AQMA, recorded an Annual Mean NO₂ level of 26.1µg/m³, which meets the Annual Mean NO₂ Objective (40µg/m³) was not exceeded. The continuous monitoring also met the 1-hour NO₂ objective and recorded no exceedances.

Furthermore, there were no exceedances of the Annual Mean NO₂ Objective from the monitoring sites within both the Newbury and Thatcham AQMAs.

West Berkshire Council will be continuing to monitor the Air Quality across the borough (using diffusion tubes and continuous monitors), it may move the locations and add new areas to monitoring schedule as the local environment changes, such as new housing developments, changes to our road networks and the reduction of NO₂ across the district. West Berkshire is committed to continuing our work to reduce levels of pollution throughout the borough.

The Council will continue working toward reducing the concentration of all air pollutants to achieve the Air Quality Objectives as stated in the Environmental Act 2021.

6 Report Consultation

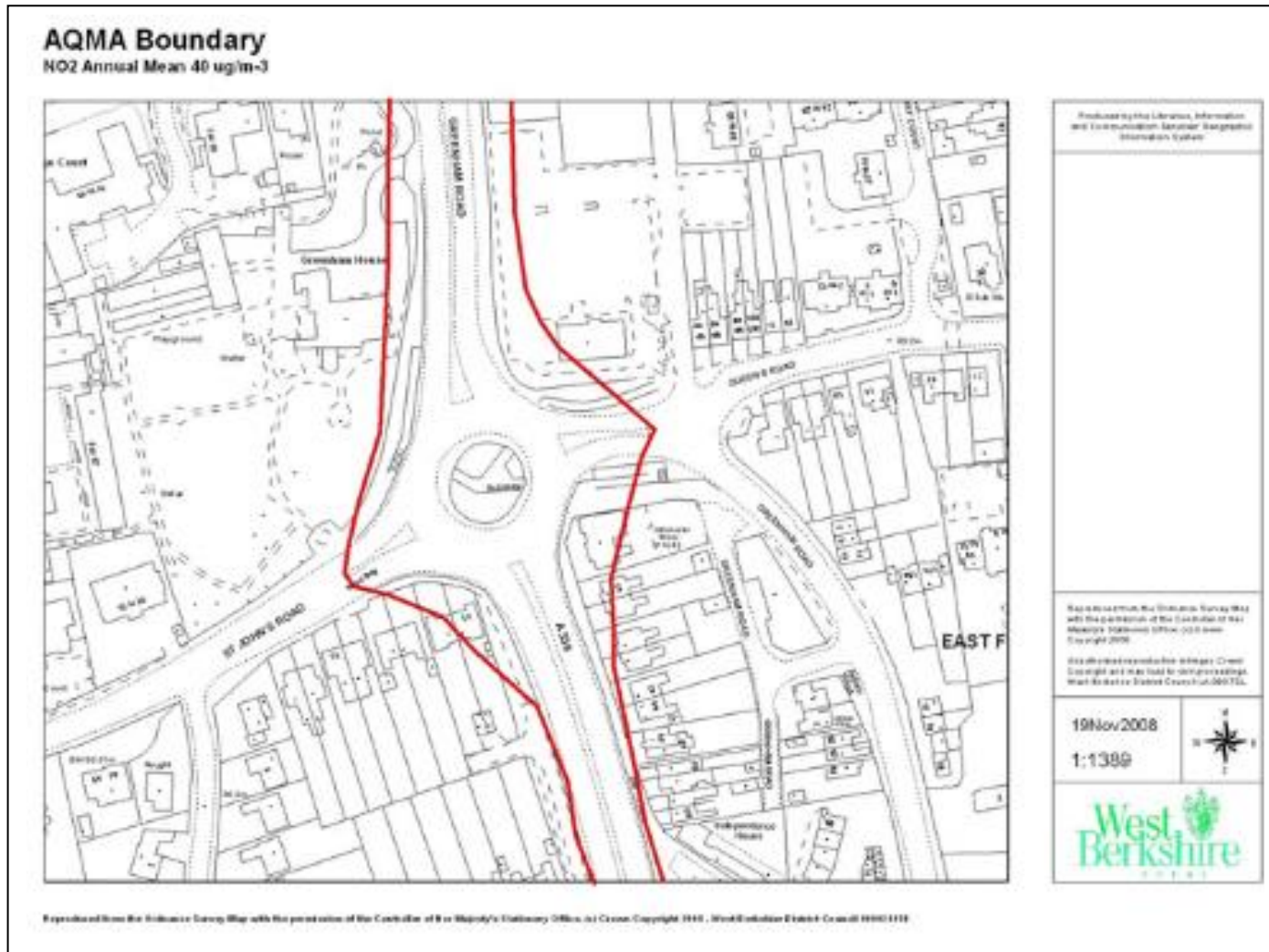
West Berkshire Council has consulted with statutory consultees as well as interested parties of the intention to revoke the two AQMAs. The comments were noted, and further additions have been made to the report, for clarification.

7 References and Papers

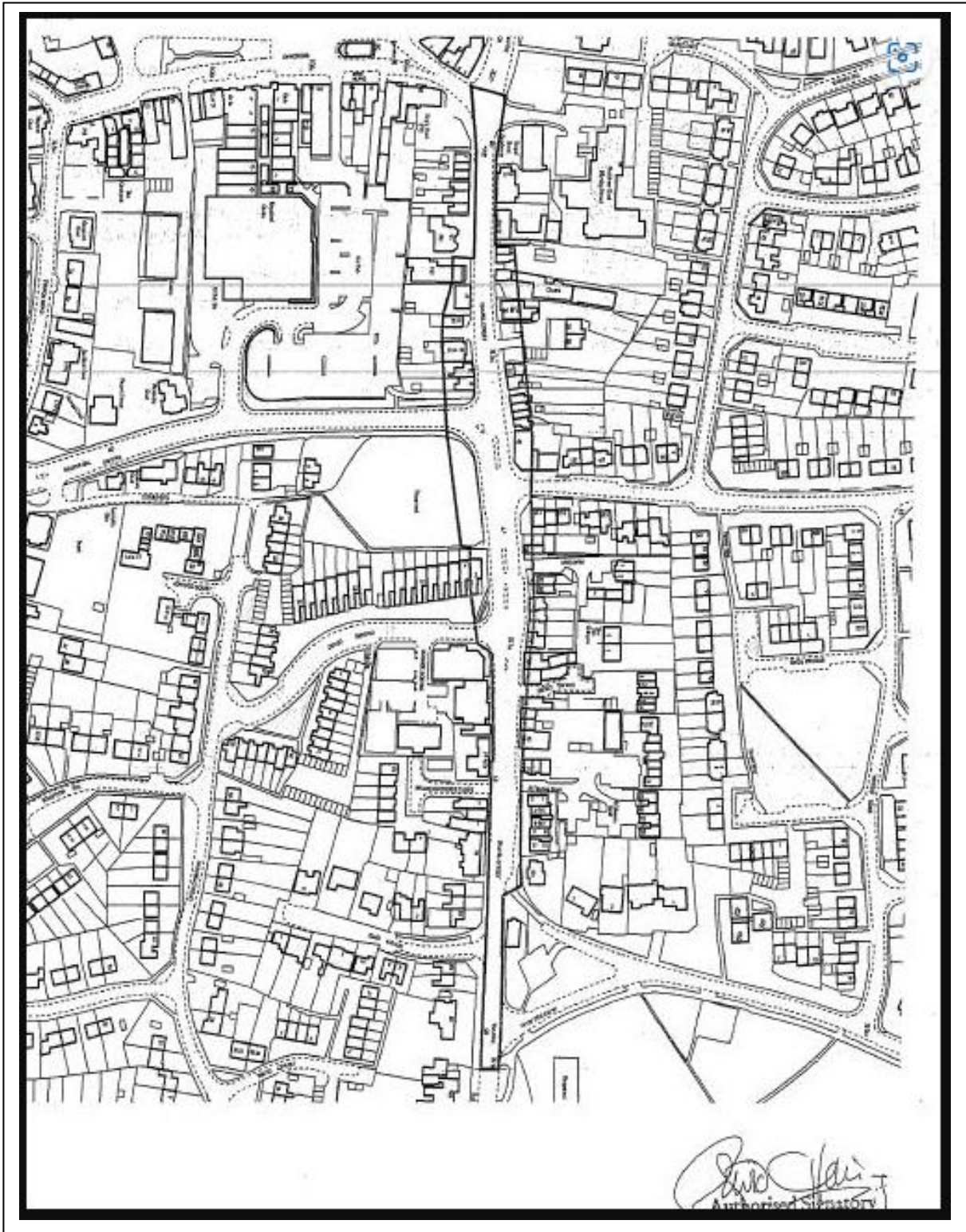
- **West Berkshire Council Annual Status Report** (*June 2023*), by Charlie Fielder.
[Air Quality Monitoring - PPP \(publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk\)](https://publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk)
- **Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs)** (*DEFRA October 2023*)
[Local Authority Details - Defra, UK](#)
- **Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance LAQM.TG (22)** (*August 2022*).
Published by Defra in partnership with the Scottish Government, Welsh Assembly Government and Department of the Environment Northern Ireland.
[LAQM-TG22-August-22-v1.0.pdf \(defra.gov.uk\)](#)
- **West Berkshire Pre-Submission Local Plan – Air Quality Assessment**, *West Berkshire Council*, (January 2023). [Air Quality Assessment.pdf \(westberks.gov.uk\)](#)

Appendix A

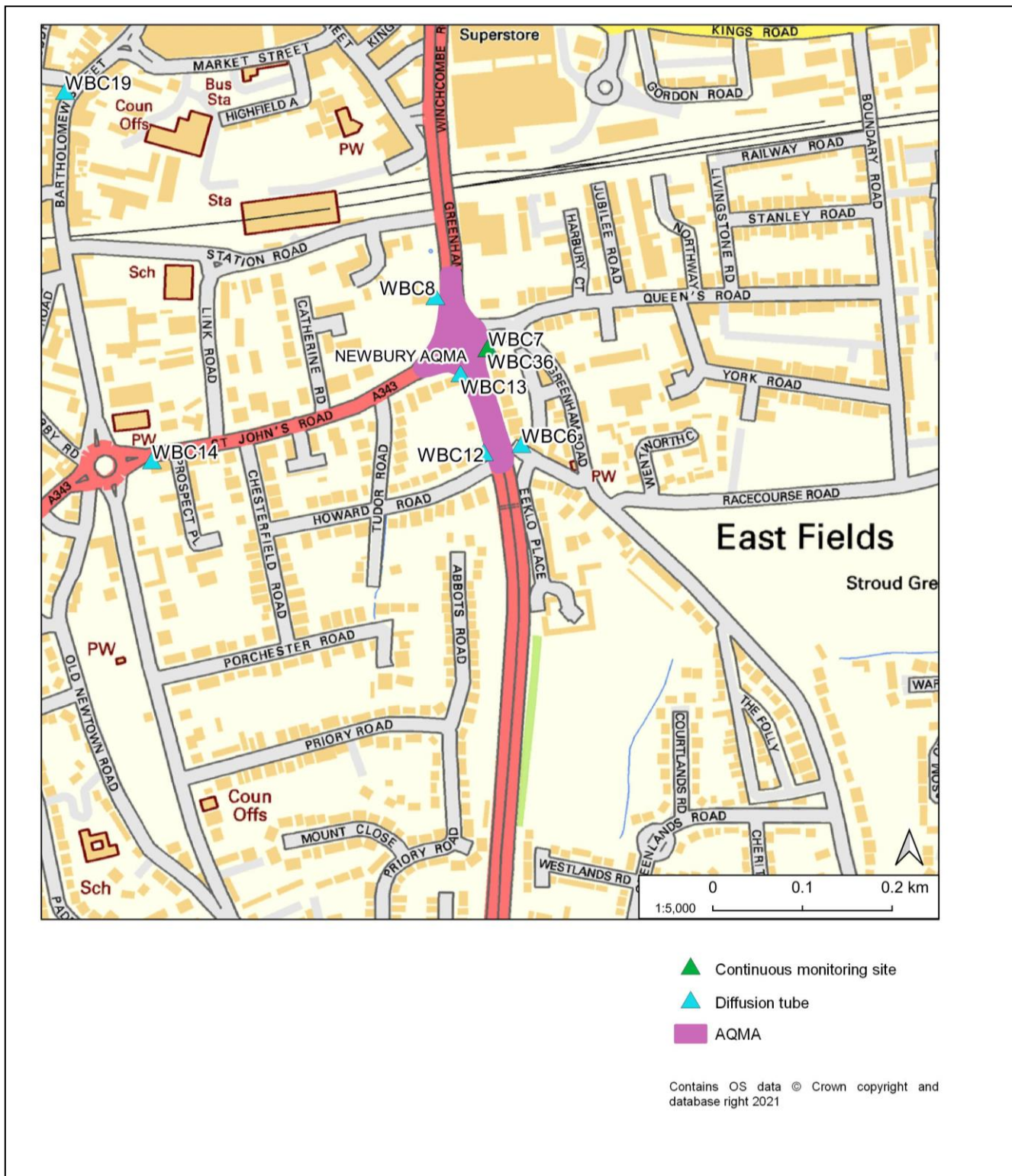
Map 1: The Newbury AQMA



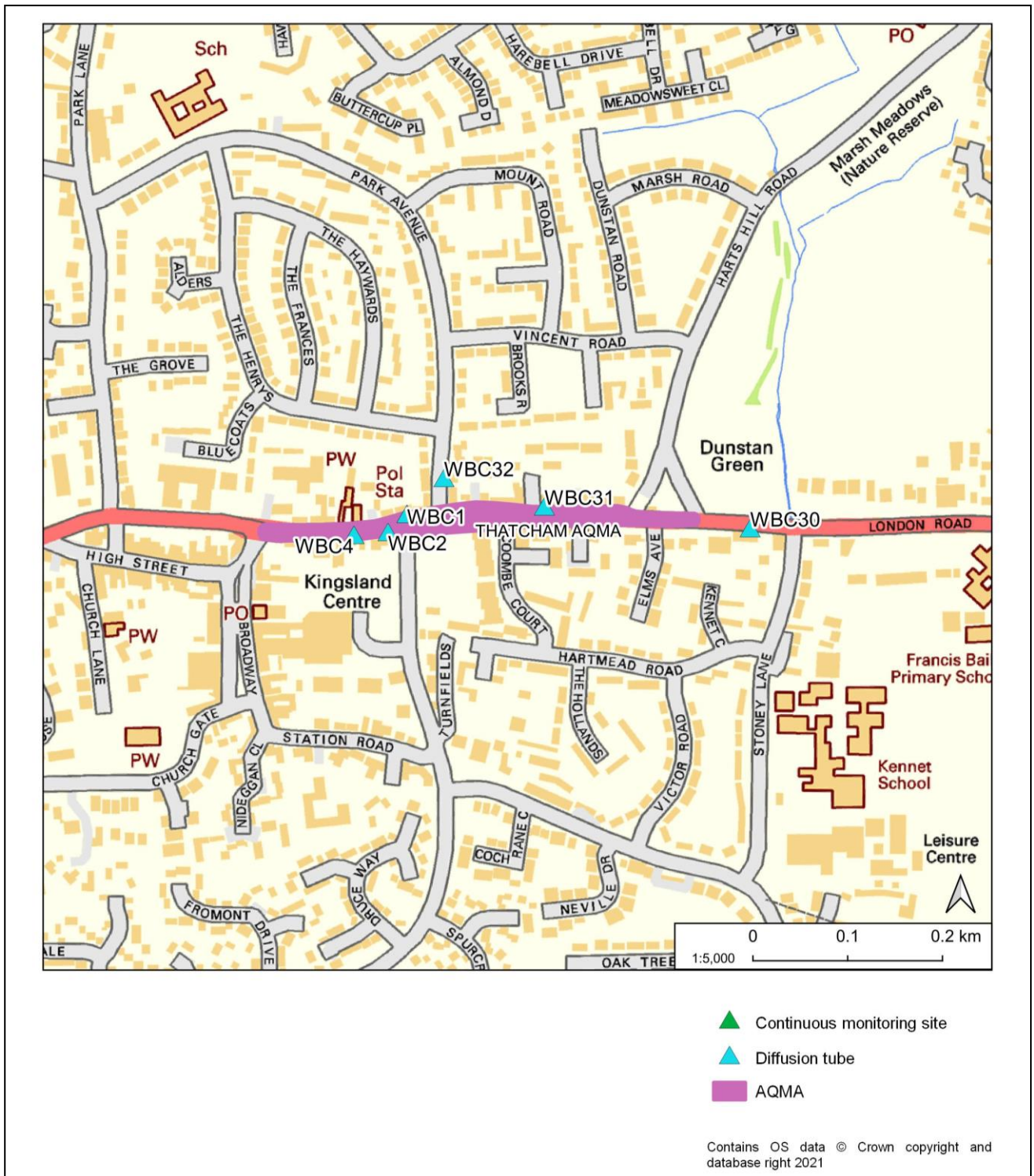
Map 2: The Thatcham AQMA



Map 3: The Newbury AQMA diffusion tube and continuous monitoring locations



Map 5: The Thatcham AQMA diffusion tube monitoring locations



Appendix B:

QA/QC for the Diffusion Tubes and Continuous Monitor

QA/QC Diffusion Tubes

West Berkshire Council uses GRADKO as the supplier used for diffusion tubes and the method of preparation, e.g. 20% TEA in water. The monitoring that has been completed for the past 5 years+ is in adherence with the 2022 DEFRA Diffusion Tube Monitoring Calendar ([NO2 Diffusion Tube Monitoring Calendar | LAQM \(defra.gov.uk\)](#)).

The Workplace Analysis Scheme for Proficiency (WASP) is an independent analytical performance testing scheme, operated by the Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL). WASP formed a key part of the former UK NO₂ Network's QA/QC and remains an important QA/QC exercise for laboratories supplying diffusion tubes to Local Authorities for use in the context of Local Air Quality Management. The laboratory participants analyse four spiked tubes and report the results to HSL. HSL assign a performance score to each laboratory's result, based on their deviation from the known mass of nitrite in the analyte. The Performance criteria are due to be changed, at present the criteria are based on the z-score method, and equates to the following:

GOOD: Results obtained by the participating laboratory are on average within 13% of the assigned value. This equates to a Rolling Performance Index (RPI) of 169 or less.

ACCEPTABLE: Results obtained by the participating laboratory are on average within 13-26% of the assigned value. This equates to an RPI of 169 - 676.

WARNING: Results obtained by the participating laboratory are on average within 26 – 39% of the assigned value. This equates to an RPI of 676 - 1521.

FAILURE: Results obtained by the participating laboratory differ by more than 39% of the assigned value. This equates to an RPI of greater than 1521.

However, from April 2009, the criteria has been based upon the Rolling Performance Index (RPI) statistic and will be tightened to the following:

GOOD: Results obtained by the participating laboratory are on average within 7.5% of the assigned value. This equates to an RPI of 56.25 or less.

ACCEPTABLE: Results obtained by the participating laboratory are on average within 15% of the assigned value. This equates to an RPI of 225 or less.

UNACCEPTABLE: Results obtained by the participating laboratory differ by more than 15% of the assigned value. This equates to an RPI of greater than 225.

West Berkshire Council use Gradko International for the supply and analysis of the nitrogen dioxide diffusion tubes for their non-automatic monitoring programme. Gradko’s performance for AIR PT please see Table C.2. Nitrogen Dioxide AIR PT 2019.

Diffusion Tube Bias Adjustment Factors

The diffusion tube data presented have been corrected for bias using an adjustment factor. Bias represents the overall tendency of the diffusion tubes to under or over-read relative to the reference chemiluminescence analyser. LAQM.TG22 provides guidance with regard to the application of a bias adjustment factor to correct diffusion tube monitoring. Triplicate co-location studies can be used to determine a local bias factor based on the comparison of diffusion tube results with data taken from NO_x/NO₂ continuous analysers. Alternatively, the national database of diffusion tube co-location surveys provides bias factors for the relevant laboratory and preparation method.

A summary of bias adjustment factors used by West Berkshire Council over the past five years is presented in Table . The site which was used was Newbury in the AQMA. Gradko International Ltd of St Martin’s House 77 Wales Street Winchester Hampshire is the supplier and analyst of the nitrogen dioxide diffusion tubes. The tubes are analysed by U.V. spectrophotometry. The limit of detection is 20% TEA/Water.

Table 3 – Bias Adjustment Factor

Monitoring Year	Local or National	If National, Version of National Spreadsheet	Adjustment Factor
2022	National		0.82
2021	Local	-	0.84
2020	Local	-	0.99
2019	Local	09/20	0.91
2018	Local	-	1.0

QA/QC of Automatic Monitoring

TRL carry out the QA/QC on behalf of West Berkshire Council below is their QA/QC procedure.

Site operation

Routine instrument calibrations are conducted approximately once a month, which involve zero and span checks, a written record of the gas analyser diagnostics and a general visual inspection of all equipment is undertaken. There is a written operating procedure, and a calibration record sheet is completed at every site visit.

Data retrieval and daily data checking

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Data is ratified as per AURN recommended procedures. The calibration and ratification process for automatic gas analysers corrects the raw dataset for any drift in the zero baseline and the upper range of the instrument. This is done using Evista software-based calibration and ratification process which incorporates the zero and span check information from the calibration visits. The zero reading recorded during the calibration visits is used to adjust any offset of the baseline of the data. The difference between the span value obtained between one calibration visit and the next visit is used to calculate a factor. This change is assumed to occur at the same rate over the period between calibrations and as such the factor is used as a linear data scaler. This effectively results in the start of the period having no factor applied and the end of the period being scaled with the full factor with a sliding scale of the factor in-between. After applying the calibration factors, it is essential to screen the data, by visual examination, to see if they contain any unusual measurements or outliers. Errors in the data may occur as a result of equipment failure, human error, power failures, interference or other disturbances. Data validation and ratification is an important step in the monitoring process. Ratification involves considerable knowledge of pollutant behaviour and dispersion, instrumentation characteristics, field experience and judgement. On completion of this data correction procedure, the data set is converted to hourly means and a summary of the data is provided to West Berkshire Council at quarterly intervals and a calendar year annual report is prepared.

Independent Site Audits

In addition to these checks an independent site audit is carried out every 12 months to ensure the monitoring equipment is operating correctly. The audits that are carried out utilise procedures that are applied within DEFRA's National Automatic Air Monitoring Networks Quality Control Programme. The efficiency of the analyser's convertor is checked, and the analyser is also flow and leak tested. The gas bottle used for calibrations on site is also checked against the auditor's gas bottle to ensure the stability of the gas concentration.

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Young People and Vaping

Committee considering report:	Joint Public Protection Committee
Date of Committee:	11 March 2024
Chair of Committee:	Councillor Lee Dillon
Date JMB agreed report:	26 February 2024
Report Author:	George Lawrence
Forward Plan Ref:	JPPC4483

1. Purpose of the Briefing

- 1.1 To provide an update to the Committee about the work being undertaken by the Public Protection Partnership to reduce the consumption of vaping products by young people across the partnership areas.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 Research shows that there is a concerning uptake of vaping amongst young people albeit that it is illegal to sell vapes to anyone under the age of 18. This report sets out some of the intelligence gathered by the Public Protection Partnership, the preventative measures, including educational activity and communication campaigns and enforcement action being undertaken by the Service to address this matter.
- 2.2 The education work undertaken by the Public Protection Partnership in West Berkshire is funded by Public Health. Education activity across the other two authorities is not undertaken by the PPP and therefore not covered in this report.

3. Supporting Information

- 3.1 Research points to a concerning trend in the uptake of vaping amongst young adults and teenagers, and a significant increase in the use of disposable vapes. [Youth vaping: call for evidence - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/youth-vaping-call-for-evidence). This trend has also attracted the attention of health professionals and Government. As a result, the Trading Standards Team in the PPP, at a local level, are working on co-ordinated projects to tackle this issue. An example of this is Operation Joseph (see below).
- 3.2 From a legal perspective, it is illegal to sell vapes to anyone under the age of eighteen. Delegated powers to enforce this age restriction sits with the Trading Standards service. Trading Standards Officers are also responsible for the enforcement of safety standards such as nicotine content and warning labels on these products.
- 3.3 The Service is also involved in the regulation of 'single use vape' disposal under the [Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations 2013](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/waste-electrical-and-electronic-equipment-regulations-2013) (WEEE). Irresponsible disposal is both hazardous in terms of the fire risks and a blight to the community in terms of litter. The regulation of 'single use vapes' disposal under the WEEE Regulations rests with the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS). However, there is an expectation that messaging from OPSS will be increased to make it clearer to retailers where their responsibilities lie, and the PPP is involved in raising awareness about this matter.

- 3.4 As a community-based service with a longstanding working relationship with Berkshire West's Tobacco Control Alliance (which includes Reading Borough Council, West Berkshire Council and Wokingham Borough Council) and the partner authorities' Public Health Teams, the Public Protection Partnership (PPP) is experienced in the work it carries out with respect to reducing the harmful effects of tobacco and alcohol by reducing consumption by young people. Up until 2023, this work was supported by regular gathering of trend data at a local level via the respective public health teams. Activity across the authorities has since been tailored to the priorities of the individual authorities and subsequently the funding that is provided to the Service has been largely removed.
- 3.5 The Public Protection Service's delivery model is based on the 'National Intelligence Model'. Through this model the PPP seeks to tackle all areas of its work with a combination of preventative actions, intelligence gathering and analysis and enforcement.

Prevention

- What action can the PPP take that would stop a problem from occurring?

Intelligence

- What information can the PPP gather to help make better decisions?

Enforcement

- What action can the PPP take to ensure those breaking the law are taken to task

- 3.6 To this end, the Service has a Strategic Assessment and Control Strategy supported by a tactical tasking process which is of itself delivered through a number of specialist teams; trading standards, environment health, licensing, investigations including financial investigators and the case management and intelligence functions.
- 3.7 The PPP's [Strategic Assessment](#) identifies Protecting and Improving Health as one of its six overarching themes and Protecting and Improving Health was identified as a key strategic priority in March 2023. The Partnership plays a key role in supporting residents to live as well as possible for as long as possible and promoting the health and wellbeing of our residents through proactive projects and reactive work. As part of these initiatives, the Service works to support the wider tobacco, vaping and alcohol harm reduction agenda across key stages in children's educational development in West Berkshire.
- 3.8 The Strategic Assessment takes into consideration the relevant authorities' own Health and Wellbeing Strategies.

Young People Local Vaping Data

- 3.9 The last annual Secondary School's Survey undertaken by the Public Protection Partnership (PPP) on behalf of Berkshire West's Tobacco Control Alliance identified that in 2023 13.8% of pupils (326 out of 2365 secondary school pupils surveyed)

answered 'yes' to the question 'Have you ever used a vape?' This is below the national average of 20.5% published by Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) in June 2023.

- 3.10 However, when you consider the figures against 2022's Secondary School Survey data (8.4%) and 2020's data (3.7%) it is evident that the number of children vaping in the Berkshire West area has significantly increased year on year. Seventeen year olds are most likely to have tried vaping (35.8%) and of the 326 pupils who answered that they had ever tried a vape, 29.1% answered that they use them 'every day/ almost every day.'
- 3.11 The most frequent responses to the question in the Berkshire West survey 'where do you usually get your vape from?' (284 respondents who currently use a vape) was 'given to them by friends/ family' (39.4%) and 'buy them myself' (31.1%). This is similar to the national picture.
- 3.12 Whilst no similar local data was captured within Bracknell Forest by the PPP research, it is expected that the picture is the same locally, regionally and nationally.

School and Community Engagement

- 3.13 The Public Protection Partnership delivers regular presentations to schools in West Berkshire to talk about vaping. Twenty-two visits were undertaken within the last academic year (September 2022 to July 2023). It is anticipated that, given the increasing prevalence of vaping amongst school children, additional visits can be undertaken this academic year but in order to do so more resource will be needed. The Team have also delivered vaping presentations to schools in Wokingham when sponsored to do so by the public health team.
- 3.14 To undertake this work and to reduce the impact of vaping amongst young people those involved in delivering this type of work need to ensure they are up to date with the latest information in respect of vapes from a health, environmental, legal and government perspective and would adapt their presentations and material accordingly.
- 3.15 Communications are posted on various social media platforms to educate and inform parents and pupils. Vaping presentations and workshops are offered in West Berkshire, highly sought after and routinely delivered to secondary school pupils across the area and on occasions their parents. A podcast has been completed and is available to all secondary schools to access and utilise. [PSHE4you Episode 14 - Vaping \(youtube.com\)](#)
- 3.16 The school's harm reduction educative drama production 'Risking it All', which took place at numerous secondary schools across West Berkshire during the first week of February 2024 included scenes relating to the dangers of vaping amongst young people.
- 3.17 The Service has also attended information stands at Newbury College and has undertaken presentations with the students there. Officers will also be attending the Young Health Champion Conference in March 2024. Young Health Champions is a Public Health initiative which teaches secondary school children about managing and promoting health and wellbeing within their schools. The yearly conference held by West Berkshire's Public Health Team provides the opportunity for the Young Health Champions across the secondary schools in West Berkshire to come together and

learn about health harms that may be impacting on pupils within their schools and how to help and support themselves and others to make healthy lifestyle choices.

Campaigns

3.18 In addition to the above, there are a number of campaigns currently in place which are aimed at smoking reduction which could act as templates in approaches to convey similar positive messaging around reducing vaping in children. The service is working to lock into locally agreed campaigns targeted towards reducing vaping amongst young people on a more formal footing.

3.19 The Public Protection Partnership publicises current campaign activity and materials are available on its website here: [Vaping Education Campaign - PPP \(publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk\)](http://publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk)

Enforcement

3.20 A proportion of vaping products sold in UK shops do not meet the requirements of [the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016](#). Consequently, Operation Tanoak was set up to tackle the supply chain. During this operation, and based on intelligence sources, officers inspected:

- (a) 39 West Berkshire premises and found illegal products in four of those premises.
- (b) 10 Bracknell premises and found illegal products in two of those premises.
- (c) 21 Wokingham premises and found illegal products in five of those premises.

3.21 In total, the number of seized vape products were listed as below.

Area	Number
Bracknell Forest	88
West Berkshire	1074
Wokingham	406

3.22 The main areas of non-compliance related to the size of the tank (disposable vapes should not contain quantities of more than 2ml which equates to around 600 puffs). In addition, disposable vapes must not contain nicotine in excess of 20mg/ml and must be labelled with a UK or EU address. This project is ongoing with both follow up work being scheduled by the Team and where appropriate formal files are being processed in readiness for court proceedings.

3.23 The service has also contributed to national intelligence and research in order to inform market compliance. Operation Joseph is a national operation linked to Market Surveillance of “Notified” Vapes (i.e. it is a legal requirement that all vapes must be notified to the Medicines & Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)).

3.24 The PPP is one of only three national leads working in this area. The project was to overtly sample and test ‘approved’ vapes for legal compliance, specifically to test whether the products have the correct nicotine strength and correct amount of nicotine containing liquid and that they did not contain heavy metals. Test results are being collated nationally and will inform national strategy.

- 3.25 Officers collected 13 samples in West Berkshire, 13 in Wokingham and 14 samples in Bracknell. The samples were tested for size of tanks and nicotine concentration, with some testing for other substances. The results have now been received and the results and the non-compliance rate is in the order of a 70% failure rate, and this is mirrored in those samples taken by the other pilot area. As a consequence, further testing is planned, and will be funded by regional support.
- 3.26 As part of our business-as-usual activity officers have conducted eight underage sales test purchases over the past twelve months in West Berkshire. Compliance was generally good and only one sale was successful.
- 3.27 During the corresponding period 14 test purchases were conducted in Bracknell Forest with a zero % failure rate. Twelve underage sales test purchases were conducted in Wokingham and there were two successful sales. Warning letters were sent to the premises that sold products to individuals aged under eighteen. Resources and competing priorities permitting, further testing will take place during 2024.

4. Looking Ahead

- 4.1 The UK government are committed to bring about the first 'smokefree generation' by 2030, having pledged to introduce legislation to make it illegal for any person born on or after 1st January 2009 to purchase tobacco products. To help ensure its success, new government funding will be provided to Trading Standards to implement measures to reduce opportunities for associated criminality.
- 4.2 On 29th January 2024, the Government announced that disposable vapes will be banned in the UK as part of plans to address the rise in youth vaping. The measure comes as part of the response to the government's smoking and vaping consultation which took place between October to December 2023.
- 4.3 It has been reported that the ban will introduce new powers restricting flavours, packaging the displaying of vapes in retail premises. The objective being to reduce their appeal to children. Moreover, vaping alternatives such as nicotine pouches will also be outlawed for children to purchase.
- 4.4 In a bid to reduce underage sales the government will also bring in new fines for shops in England and Wales which sell vapes illegally to children. Trading Standards officers will be empowered to act 'on the spot', building on the £2,500 maximum fine that can already be imposed by LA's. [Disposable vapes banned to protect children's health - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/disposable-vapes-banned-to-protect-childrens-health)
- 4.5 There has been no date set by the government for the introduction of these measures and in the meantime, there is no indication that the current youth consumption of vaping products is showing any sign of abating. Areas such as increased levels of compliance visits, test purchases and targeted education interventions will be considered as part of resource allocation, but these will be resource dependent. The service is looking at all grant funding options and this will include a programme proposal to the public health teams for all three (Bracknell Forest, West Berkshire and Wokingham) PPP trading standards authorities.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 While nicotine vaping is substantially less harmful than smoking, it is not risk free. For adults it can and does provide an alternative to tobacco consumption. However, the effects on young people, whose developing lungs and brains are more sensitive to its effects, are not yet known. Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine which is highly addictive and can harm adolescent brain development. They may also contain other harmful substances.
- 5.2 National data shows that by April 2023 the proportion of children experimenting with vaping had grown by 50% year on year with 20.5% stating that they had tried it even though it is illegal to sell them to under eighteens.
- 5.3 The current marketing of vaping, including easy access to vapes, appealing flavours, bright and inviting displays and the risk of nicotine addiction are the recognised factors driving the increased use of vapes by young people.
- 5.4 Young people have always faced public health challenges. Our data shows that tobacco consumption has declined significantly over the period we have been working with young people to raise awareness. Much work has also been carried out to raise awareness of public health and personal safety risks associated with alcohol. However, we have not seen a public health challenge that has developed so quickly and has the potential to impact so many as we have with vaping.
- 5.5 We know from many years of delivering young people's harm reduction strategies that a holistic approach is needed. Working with retailers and wider enforcement initiatives need be delivered alongside targeted public health education interventions to allow for informed decision making. The messaging around vaping is more complex than that relating to tobacco due to the fact that it is often associated with providing a 'safer alternative' to smoking but the health effects on young people are still being studied.
- 5.6 We also know that the government are planning further controls that will come to Councils and their public protection services to implement. Delivery will prove challenging with additional targeted resource as all areas of trading standards are under significant pressure.

6. Implications and Impact

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	<p>The current activity around preventative and enforcement work is being undertaken within existing budgets and resources. The Service is looking at all grant funding options and this will include a programme proposal to the public health teams for all three (Bracknell Forest, West Berkshire and Wokingham) PPP trading standards authorities.</p> <p>Successful implementation of the Government's Plans around vaping will depend on the tools and resources made available to Trading Standards to ensure successful enforcement and clarity on how the £30m of national funding will be allocated is still awaited.</p>

Human Resource:	None
Legal:	<p>Clear and practical legislation and guidance will be needed in order to take forward the Government's proposals.</p> <p>Current enforcement activity is undertaken in accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014, as amended by The Nicotine Inhaling Products (Age of Sale and Proxy Purchasing) Regulations 2015.</p>
Risk Management:	The risk to the health and wellbeing of young people are set out in the report.
Property:	None
Policy:	The PPP will continue to feed into the Health and Wellbeing Strategies for partner authorities.
Consultation and Engagement	As this is a report for information only, no consultation has taken place.

7. Appendices

7.1 None

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