

Local Authority:	West Berkshire Council
Reference:	AR25-2816
Date of Issue:	August 2025

Annual Status Report Appraisal Report

The Annual Status Report sets out new information on air quality obtained by West Berkshire Council (WBC) as part of the Review & Assessment process required under the Environment Act 1995 (as amended by the Environment Act 2021) and subsequent Regulations.

The original report was rejected in July 2025. Following resubmission, the issues have been sufficiently rectified.

West Berkshire Council currently have no designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs), having revoked all of their AQMAs within their jurisdiction in 2024 due to 5 years of continuous compliance with the Air Quality Objectives. The Council are currently drafting a new Air Quality Strategy such that good air quality is maintained within the area.

The objective of a local Air Quality Strategy is to encourage prevention and reduction of polluting activities in preference to only taking steps to reduce air pollution once exceedances have been identified.

Local Air Quality Strategies will not have a set format and authorities will be able to draw on content within their ASRs and local transport plans to produce them. As long as the strategy addresses air quality assessments and policy responsibilities under the LAQM regime, it can be combined with the authority's other relevant plans and strategies if it is logical to do so.

The Council did not undertake any automatic monitoring in 2024. The Council undertook passive diffusion tube monitoring of NO₂ at 23 monitoring locations in 2024. No exceedances of the annual mean objective were recorded at any of these sites during 2024, the highest NO₂ concentration was 21.6 µg/m³ at A339 (64) Greenham Road.

A National bias adjustment factor of 0.84 was applied to the 2024 monitoring data. Annualisation was required at two sites 2024, sites Abbeydale Monks Lane Newbury and The Cross Key Inn Pangbourne which reported data captures of 67.9% and 52.8% respectively. Distance correction was not required at any location.

In the report, the Council has detailed extensive measures and plans to continue to address air quality within its jurisdiction. Key completed measures in 2024 include successfully trialling a through-pavement system for charging electric vehicles (EV), allowing residents to charge EVs from their homes easier, and continuation of improvements to the transport network through reduction of HGVs in residential areas and uptick of electric trains and bio gas buses in the area.

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Priorities for the upcoming year include drafting the Air Quality Strategy now that both AQMAs have been revoked and continuing to work within the unitary authority with Transport Policy and Highways Teams as there are some localised areas of congestion at peak times which require managing and investment.

WBC have highlighted three key measures in yellow in Table 2.2. These measures will be fed into UK-AIR to raise awareness amongst local communities of local authority action to improve air quality. These key measures are:

1. Electric charging points and infrastructure (Council & Private)
2. Health Education & Behaviour change
3. School Streets & Behaviour change

On the basis of the evidence provided by the local authority the conclusions reached in the report are **accepted** for all sources and pollutants. Following the completion of this report, West Berkshire Council should submit an Annual Status Report in 2026.

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Commentary

The report provides some of information specified in the Guidance. The following comments have been addressed, and therefore the report can now be accepted:

- The National Bias adjustment factor has been calculated incorrectly, a version of the calculator from 2024 has been used which produces a factor of 0.83, the latest version of the calculator (version 06/25) produces a factor of 0.84. The latest factor should be applied to 2024 monitoring data.** *This comment has been sufficiently rectified such that the correct bias adjustment factor has been provided.*

The below comments are designed to help inform future reports:

- It would be helpful if the Council provided a screenshot of the National Bias Adjustment Factor Calculation Sheet to show clear proof of calculations.
- The Council have not provided any mention of automatic monitor CM1 Newbury, it would help provide clarity if the council stated why this data could not be reported in this year's ASR.
- The Table of Contents includes mention of multiple tables that are not included within the report. *This comment has been sufficiently addressed; there are no longer references to tables that have been removed from the report*
- It is evident that the Council is dedicated to maintaining good air quality within the area through continuous reviewal of their monitoring network removing monitoring sites from areas where poor air quality is no longer expected to be an issue.
- WBC have listed clear actions to improve air quality within their jurisdiction clearly stating how they are progressing and if there are any barriers to implementation.
- The Council have provided detailed options for the local public to help contribute to good air quality within the area.
- The Council have provided clear summaries of measures and monitored concentrations specific regions within the area which is commended.
- The Council have shown good practice by clearly stating their adherence to the Defra monitoring calendar.

This commentary is not designed to deal with every aspect of the report. It highlights a number of issues that should help the local authority either in completing the Annual Status Report adequately (if required) or in carrying out future Review & Assessment work.

Issues specifically related to this appraisal can be followed up by returning the attached comment form to Defra, Welsh Government, Scottish Government or DOE.

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For any other queries please contact the Local Air Quality Management Helpdesk:

Telephone: 0800 0327 953

Email: LAQMHelpdesk@bureauveritas.com

The [Air Quality Hub](#) is now run by Defra, it is a free online information and knowledge sharing resource for local authority air quality professionals. Please consider onboarding on the Air Quality Hub to access a multitude of air quality resources and be kept up to date with local authority air quality activity and air quality news.

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Appraisal Response Comment Form

Contact Name:	
Contact Telephone number:	
Contact email address:	UKLAQMAppraisals@aeom.com

Comments on appraisal/Further information: