

Local Authority:	Bracknell Forest Council
Reference:	ASR25-2930
Date of Issue:	November 2025

Annual Status Report Appraisal Report

The Annual Status Report sets out new information on air quality obtained by Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) Council 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 2025 ASR was rejected in July 2025 due to issues with bias adjustment. The issues highlighted were then only partially addressed in September and the ASR could once again not be accepted. These issues have now been resolved.

BFC currently has one Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) which is 'AQMA Crowthorne'; this was first declared in February 2011 for exceedances of the NO₂ annual mean Air Quality Objective (AQO). BFC previously had a second AQMA (AQMA Bracknell) which was declared in May 2013 for exceedances of the NO₂ annual mean AQO, but this was revoked in March 2024. There have been no exceedances of the NO₂ annual mean AQO recorded inside the remaining 'AQMA Crowthorne' AQMA since 2020, with compliance (concentrations recorded as being 10% below the relevant AQO) having been achieved inside this AQMA in 2022, 2023, and 2024. Therefore, BFC has requested permission to revoke the 'AQMA Crowthorne' AQMA. Based on the evidence provided the revocation appears to be appropriate, however ideally more evidence would be presented to support this decision. This could be included as an appendix to an ASR.

BFC did not undertake any automatic monitoring in 2024 but did conduct non-automatic NO₂ diffusion tube monitoring at twenty-two sites in 2024. Four non-automatic NO₂ diffusion tube monitoring sites were decommissioned between 2023 and 2024 as they were continuously below the objective compliance level. In 2024, no exceedances of the NO₂ annual mean AQO were recorded. In 2024, the highest correctly bias adjusted NO₂ annual mean concentration was 31.8µg/m³, recorded at monitoring site 58xC-58yC-58zC located on Bracknell Road in Crowthorne inside the 'AQMA Crowthorne' AQMA (this is a triplicate monitoring site), a decrease of 1.4µg/m³ over the concentration of 33.2µg/m³ recorded at the same monitoring site in 2023.

The highest correctly bias adjusted NO₂ annual mean concentrations recorded outside of the AQMA was at monitoring site 86xB, 86yB, 86zB located on the A322 (Downshire Way) in Bracknell, which recorded a concentration of 27.3 µg/m³ in 2024, which is a decrease of 3.0 µg/m³ over the concentration of 30.3µg/m³ recorded at the same monitoring site in 2023. The general trend in NO₂ annual mean concentrations is mixed, with some monitoring sites recording an increase in concentrations between 2023 and 2024, and others recording a decrease in

Local Authority:	Bracknell Forest Council
Reference:	ASR25-2930
Date of Issue:	November 2025

concentrations over the same time scale. The average change in NO₂ annual mean concentrations between 2023 and 2024 is a decrease of 2.1 µg/m³. The largest decrease in NO₂ annual mean concentrations recorded between 2023 and 2024 was recorded at monitoring site 117 located at the Blue Smoke House, The Ring, Bracknell located outside of the 'AQMA Crowthorne' AQMA which recorded a concentration of 15.7 µg/m³ in 2024, which is a decrease of 3.7µg/m³ over the concentration of 19.4 µg/m³ recorded at the same monitoring site in 2023.

QA/QC procedures have been applied, however with no automatic monitoring in the area, a local bias adjustment factor could not be calculated. BFC uses Gradko International for the supply and analysis of the NO₂ diffusion tubes, which are prepared with 20% Triethanolamine / De-ionised water. No annualisation or distance correction was required at any monitoring site in 2024. The correct national bias adjustment factor of 0.84 has been used in this ASR.

In the absence of any PM₁₀ or PM_{2.5} monitoring, Defra background maps are the best tool for estimating PM_{2.5} concentrations in the area. The latest PM_{2.5} data available (2024) from DEFRA show that Bracknell Forest Council has a maximum level of 8.06 µg/m³ (co-ordinates x 487500 y167500), and the average level of 7.22µg/m³.

The ASR discusses what measures within the AQAP were completed within the reporting year of 2024, which includes the addition of 3 new rapid chargepoints at Great Hollands and Birch Hill. The ASR also discusses what measures BFC expect to be completed over the course of the next reporting year, which includes investigating the feasibility of EV chargepoints for staff to use at Time Square, and finger signs due to be installed to improve directional information for pedestrians and cyclists in and around Crowthorne.

The ASR also discusses BFC's involvement in the Air PT scheme, this is an example of good practice and the reporting of the results shows the reliability of the lab.

BFC have highlighted three key measures in yellow in Table 2.3 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. Education, Health Promotion, Behaviour Change Projects, and Environmental Action Days
2. Anti-Idling Education/ Enforcement
3. Increase in EV chargers

Local Authority:	Bracknell Forest Council
Reference:	ASR25-2930
Date of Issue:	November 2025

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, BFC should submit an Annual Status Report in 2026.

Local Authority:	Bracknell Forest Council
Reference:	ASR25-2930
Date of Issue:	November 2025

Commentary

The report is well structured, detailed, and provides the information specified in the Guidance. The following comments are designed to help inform future reports:

1. BFC has provided good quality discussion on the effects of PM_{2.5} within their administrative area and measures being implemented to reduce concentrations. This is good practice and is encouraged for future reports.
2. There is good quality discussion on the trends of the results recorded for all pollutants which includes good quality graphs showing the trends in results recorded over the last 5 years. This is encouraged for future reports.
3. BFC has highlighted that the 'AQMA Crowthorne' AQMA has achieved compliance with the relevant AQO's for the past three years, and they have proposed within the ASR revoking this AQMA in 2025 with Defra's consent. Based on the evidence provided, there appears to be justification for revoking the AQMA, however ideally more evidence would be provided.
4. BFC's involvement in and reporting of the AIR PT scheme is an example of good practice. This showcases the reliability of the lab being used.
5. One minor formatting issue is the table numbering in Appendix A. The first table is numbered as 2 and the next table is numbered as 4. Table number should begin from 1. Table numbering in Appendix C also begins at 2.

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.

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.

Local Authority:	Bracknell Forest Council
Reference:	ASR25-2930
Date of Issue:	November 2025

Appraisal Response Comment Form

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

Comments on appraisal/Further information: