

Local Authority:	West Berkshire Council
Reference:	ASR20-0542
Date of issue	August 2020

Annual Status Report Appraisal Report

The Report sets out the Annual Status Report, which forms part of the Review & Assessment process required under the Environment Act 1995 and subsequent Regulations.

West Berkshire Council have two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) declared within their administrative boundaries: Newbury AQMA for exceedances in annual mean and 1-hour mean NO₂ objectives; and Thatcham AQMA for exceedances in the annual mean NO₂ objective. There is currently only an Air Quality Action Plan published for the Newbury AQMA; as Thatcham AQMA has not seen exceedances in recent years, the Council have not yet produced an AQAP here. The Council have stated they will consider revocation of both AQMAs following the results of the 2021 ASR.

The Council have conducted automatic monitoring of NO₂ at one site during 2019: CM1 Newbury. The annual mean NO₂ concentration at this site was 35.9 µg/m³ during 2019, remaining below the air quality objective. There were two instances of concentrations surpassing the 1-hour mean objective threshold, with a 99.8th percentile of 145.63 µg/m³, indicating there is no exceedance of the 1-hour mean objective.

Non-automatic (passive) diffusion tube monitoring of NO₂ was undertaken at 36 sites across West Berkshire during 2019. There were no exceedances of the annual mean NO₂ objective in 2019. The highest annual mean concentration was 33.9 µg/m³, recorded at the triplicates co-located with the automatic monitor. There were no sites within 10% of the objective. Data capture was good (at least 75%) at all monitoring locations in 2019, thus annualisation was not required.

The Council have detailed QA/QC procedures applied to monitoring data. A national bias adjustment factor was selected as the automatic monitor had a data capture of less than 90%. Whilst some monitoring locations are not located at relevant exposure, no recorded concentrations were within 10% of the objective thus distance correction was not required. Data capture at all passive diffusion tubes were good, and annualisation was not required here. However, data capture for the automatic monitor CM1 WAS 70.3%, and annualisation was performed for this monitoring location.

The Council has outlined measures implements to tackle air quality in West Berkshire and commented on their progress in 2019. These measures include improvement works at Bear

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Lane, A339 to improve traffic flows, the installation of 31 electric vehicle charge points and the National Cycle Network 422 expansion. The Council have also identified key priorities and challenges for 2020.

On the basis of the evidence provided by the local authority, the conclusion reached are acceptable for all sources and pollutants. Following the completion of this report, West Berkshire Council should submit an Annual Status Report in 2021.

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Commentary

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

1. Trends are clearly presented and discussed and a robust comparison with air quality objectives is provided.
2. The diffusion tube and AQMA mapping is comprehensive and clearly demonstrates the monitoring network.
3. The Council have stated they will consider revocation of both the Newbury and Thatcham AQMAs following the results of the 2021 ASR. This decision is supported.
4. QA/QC procedures were largely applied appropriately, with detailed information provided regarding the decision between local and national bias adjustment factors.
5. The Council have included some mentions of the Public Health Outcomes Framework. In future ASRs, the Council is suggested to include a reference to indicator D01 - Fraction of mortality attributable to particulate air pollution, and how it compares regionally / nationally. This information can be found at: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/public-health-outcomes-framework>

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 Progress 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 Assembly Government, Scottish Government or DOE.

For any other queries please contact the Local Air Quality Management Helpdesk:
 Telephone: 0800 0327 953
 Email: LAQMHelpdesk@uk.bureauveritas.com

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Appraisal Response Comment Form

Contact Name:	
Contact Telephone number:	
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Comments on appraisal/Further information: