

Local Authority:	Welwyn Hatfield District Council
Reference:	ASR20-0745
Date of issue	December 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.

Welwyn and Hatfield District Council does not currently have any declared air quality management areas (AQMAs), as such there is no formal requirement for the Council to develop an air quality action plan (AQAP). Regardless of this the Council has detailed within the ASR the current measures that are currently being undertaken, with strong links identified with neighbouring authorities and through the Council's membership of the Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire Air Quality Group.

Automatic monitoring of PM_{2.5} continues to be undertaken at one site within the district; Great North Road / A1000. The annual mean PM_{2.5} concentration in 2019 has remained consistent with previous years, with an annual mean of 10µg/m³ reported in 2019. A second automatic monitor is currently in the process of being installed, this will monitor NO₂ at a roadside location. Installation has been delayed due to groundworks, electrical connections and COVID-19 restrictions. If the Council have any queries relating to the installation of the automatic monitor there are able to contact the LAQM helpdesk for advice.

Non-automatic (passive) monitoring of NO₂ was conducted at 33 sites during 2019. Prior to the application of distance correction two exceedances of the annual mean objective were measured. The maximum annual mean concentration reported in 2019 was 48µg/m³ at WH26 West View, when corrected to a point of relevant exposure the concentration fell to 32µg/m³. Data capture was greater than 75% at all monitoring locations during 2019 therefore annualisation was not required at any site. The valid data capture for the monitoring period has not been completed within Table A.3, this was also not completed within the 2019 ASR.

The comments provided within the appraisal of the 2019 ASR have been included and relevant responses incorporated into the completion of the 2020 ASR.

QA/QC procedures are provided for both automatic and passive monitoring techniques including bias adjustment (using a national factor). Distance correction has been applied correctly to all reported annual mean NO₂ concentrations above 36µg/m³ and not at a point of relevant exposure.

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Although there are no designated AQMAs the Council has provided thorough details on the measures currently being undertaken to improve air quality conditions across the district, and also details the links developed through the Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire Air Quality Group.

On the basis of the evidence provided by the local authority the conclusions reached are acceptable for all sources and pollutants. Following the completion of this report, Welwyn Hatfield District Council should submit an Annual Status Report in 2020.

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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 help inform future reports.

1. A national bias adjustment factor has correctly been applied to the 2019 NO₂ monitoring results but the incorrect revision of the national factor spreadsheet has been referenced, 03/20 and not 09/20. The factor utilised has not changed between the releases but the Council should use the correct release of the national factors at the time of the ASRs completion.
2. Following the installation of the roadside NO₂ automatic monitoring station it is recommended that the Council co-locate a set of triplicate diffusion tubes to enable the calculation of a local bias adjustment factor.
3. Distance correction has correctly been applied to the relevant monitoring locations.
4. All monitoring locations are detailed and labelled clearly in the maps presented within the ASR.
5. Although there is a short paragraph relating to monitoring trends within the executive summary there are no comparisons between the monitoring results and relevant objectives presented in Section 3, it would be beneficial to include a written summary of the results within this section.
6. Valid data capture for the monitoring period column within Table A.3 should be completed in subsequent ASRs. This highlights monitoring sites that have been ceased / established part way through the calendar year, such as in 2018.
7. The WASP intercomparison scheme is referred to within Appendix C. The WASP scheme has been superseded into the AIR-PT scheme therefore this reference should be updated within the 2021 ASR.
8. Generally the report is very good, provides a great deal of information and acts as a good first point of reference for members of the Public. The Council should continue their hard work in developing partnerships and improving local air quality.

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.

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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:	
Contact email address:	

Comments on appraisal/Further information: