

<b>Authority:</b>	<b>North Hertfordshire District Council</b>
<b>Reference:</b>	<b>ASR20-0677</b>
<b>Date of Issue:</b>	<b>October 2020</b>

## **Annual Status 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.

There are two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) within North Hertfordshire District Council: Stevenage Road and Payne's Park. Both AQMAs were declared for exceedances of the annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> objective. The Payne's Park AQMA has one site remaining above objective levels (still within 10% of the objective after distance correction). The Stevenage Road AQMA show pollution levels fluctuating around the objective in recent years but remaining below 10% of the objective after distance correction has been applied. On this basis, the Council have decided to continue to retain and continue to monitor both AQMAs, with the intention of reviewing the status of Stevenage Road next year.

North Hertfordshire District Council undertook automatic monitoring at two locations throughout 2019, both within the Stevenage Road AQMA. One monitor measures NO<sub>2</sub>, whilst the other monitors PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. The automatic monitor NH1 recorded an exceedance of the annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> objective for 2019 (45.0 µg/m<sup>3</sup>), prior to distance correction, but achieving 31.5 µg/m<sup>3</sup> at relevant exposure. There were no exceedances of the 1-hour NO<sub>2</sub> objective. The annual and 24-hour mean PM<sub>10</sub> objectives, and the annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> objective were all met for 2019.

During 2019, North Hertfordshire District Council conducted non-automatic diffusion tube monitoring of NO<sub>2</sub> at 46 sites, one of which was a co-located triplicate location. Prior to distance correction, there are two diffusion tube locations which recorded exceedances of the NO<sub>2</sub> annual mean objective: NH93 within the Payne's Park AQMA and NH110-112 the co-located triplicate. After distance correction, both fall below the objective with only NH93 within 10% of the objective (37.7 µg/m<sup>3</sup>).

QA/QC procedures have been applied. A national bias adjustment factor was used. A local bias adjustment factor could be calculated, but the Council have decided not to use this as the Council deemed the positioning as not appropriate. The report states these have now been relocated, and a local bias adjustment factor can be considered in future reports. Distance correction calculated have been applied for sites not at relevant exposure, with calculations provided in the appendix. Data capture was 58% at NH122, but there was no evidence of annualisation calculations performed here.

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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, North Hertfordshire District Council should submit an Annual Status Report in 2021.

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## Commentary

Overall 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. The report contains an in-depth and comprehensive discussion of trends. The Council additionally included regression analysis of trends, extrapolation to estimate future concentrations, and interpretation of traffic counts on relevant roads. Whilst these steps are not required, it demonstrated the Council's commitment and enthusiasm for understanding air quality trends within the district. This is welcomed.
2. The Council's review of AQMA designations were clearly presented, and easy for a reader to follow. The Council have stated they will retain the Stevenage Road AQMA for one more year and reassess following 2020 monitoring results. Whilst this decision is supported, the Council is reminded to treat 2020 monitoring results with caution as there are uncertainties surrounding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. The report refers to the Public Health Outcomes Frameworks, which is encouraged. In future ASRs, the Council may consider including a reference to the indicator value for the district and a comparison to national/regional values.
4. The Council have diffusion tubes co-located with an automatic monitor, meaning a local bias adjustment can be calculated. A local factor is generally preferred over the national factor according to LAQM.TG16. The Council have decided not to use this as the Council deemed the positioning as not appropriate but have stated that these have been relocated. The use of a local bias adjustment factor is encouraged in future ASRs.
5. In Table A.3 of the report, recent concentrations have not been bolded when surpassing 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup>.
6. There was a small discrepancy between the report and the supporting Excel document; Table A.3 in the Excel does not have data capture reported.
7. Diffusion tub NH122 required annualisation due to a data capture of 58%. However, there is no evidence of this calculation being performed. However, as the annual mean concentration is very low, annualisation is unlikely to lead to an exceedance here. The Council should ensure annualisation is applied where appropriate in future ASRs, with calculations included in the appendix. Defra have released an Annualisation Tool (Version 1) designed to assist with annualisation calculations. This can be found at: <https://laqm.defra.gov.uk/tools-monitoring-data/annualisation.html>.

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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 Assembly Government, Scottish Government or DOE, as appropriate**

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

Telephone: 0800 0327 953

Email: [LAQMHelpdesk@uk.bureauveritas.com](mailto:LAQMHelpdesk@uk.bureauveritas.com)

## Appraisal Response Comment Form

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

**Comments on appraisal/Further information:**