

Local Authority: **Exeter City Council**
Reference: **ASR22-1257**
Date of issue **July 2022**

Annual Status Report Appraisal Report

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

Exeter City Council had two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) declared one for exceedances of the annual mean NO₂ [nitrogen dioxide] objective and the other for the exceedance of the NO₂ hourly objective. NO₂ concentrations in the vicinity of the AQMAs has seen a marginal downward trend over recent years.

During 2021 Exeter City Council conducted automatic monitoring of NO₂ at one location that was within the AQMA (CM1) [at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum RAMM]. There is also a second automatic monitor that only measures PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} [fine particulate matter] which is not located within the AQMA. Automatic monitoring site CM1 [on Alphington Street] also monitored PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}. Both sites had greater than 75% data capture for their monitored pollutants. There were no exceedances of any of the air quality objectives for any of the pollutants at any of the sites in 2021.

The Council undertook non-automatic (passive) monitoring of NO₂ at 83 locations, 50 of which are in AQMAs. There were no changes to the monitoring network in 2021. The highest annual mean NO₂ concentration for 2021 was 42.2 µg/m³ at tube 57 [East Wonford Hill] which exceeded the air quality objective [the objective level is 40 µg/m³]. Nitrogen dioxide levels in Exeter in 2021 were slightly above those measured in 2020 but still show a noticeable reduction on pre-pandemic levels. No areas in the city are thought to exceed the objectives for particulate air pollution. Measured PM_{2.5} concentrations were well below the relevant objective level [25 µg/m³] and PM₁₀ concentrations have shown a steady decline since 2006.

The Council has robust QA/QC procedures, which were applied appropriately and accurately to the 2021 monitoring data. The national bias adjustment figure (0.84) has been used this year as a result of low data capture at the co-located diffusion tube site. Data capture was generally good at all automatic monitoring sites during 2021 with data capture of more than 75%. Data capture from the diffusion tube at Northernhay Gardens (DT74) was below 75% (67%) so this has been annualised. The calculations were clearly outlined and justified. Distance correction was not required at any location.

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The current AQAP [Air Quality Action Plan] covers the period 2019-2024. The Council shall continue to improve air quality will continue to be focussed on those areas within the AQMA where exceedances have been measured. The priorities and challenges for 2022 are to implement the Physical Activity Strategy and Transport Strategy, to deliver the Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan and to deliver robust planning policy; all in the face of challenging and uncertain conditions.

On the basis of the evidence provided by the local authority the conclusions reached are acceptable for all sources and pollutants. The next step for Exeter City Council is to submit the next Annual Status Report, which is due to be submitted in 2023.

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Commentary

The report is well structured and provides all of the information specified in the Guidance. The report is accepted, and the following comments are to assist with future reporting.

1. The report has been completed to a high standard, with the accuracy of data presented and the discussion included with the report welcomed.
2. Robust and accurate QA/QC [quality assurance and quality control] procedures were applied. Calculations for bias adjustment and annualisation factors were outlined in detail.
3. The Council has included discussion and review of its AQMAs and monitoring strategy, informed due to the monitoring network and also the AQAP measures. This demonstrates the Councils proactive approach to ensuring good air quality across the district.
4. Council have provided very clear and detailed maps of the diffusion tube monitoring network, this is welcomed. Trends are presented and discussed, and a robust comparison to air quality objectives is provided.
5. Overall, the report is detailed, concise and satisfies the criteria of relevant standards. The Council should continue their good and thorough work.

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

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Appraisal Response Comment Form

Contact Name:

Contact Telephone number:

Contact email address: **UKLAQMAppraisals@aecom.com**

Comments on appraisal/Further information: