

**Air Quality Strategy for Wiltshire: Summary**  
**Environment Act 1995 Part IV.**

**Legal Requirements to monitor Air Quality**

1. District Councils and Unitary Authorities have a duty to monitor air quality within their areas having regard to national air quality objectives and standards. There are seven pollutants which we are required to consider are:

Pollutant	UK Objectives		Date to be achieved by
	Concentration	Measured as	
Benzene	16.25 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	Running annual mean	31.12.2003
	5.00 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	Running annual mean	31.12.2010
1,3-Butadiene	2.25 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	Running annual mean	31.12.2003
Carbon monoxide	10.0 $\text{mg}/\text{m}^3$	Running 8-hour mean	31.12.2003
Lead	0.5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	Annual mean	31.12.2004
	0.25 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	Annual mean	31.12.2008
Nitrogen dioxide	200 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ not to be exceeded more than 18 times a year	1-hour mean	31.12.2005
	40 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	Annual mean	31.12.2005
Particles (PM <sub>10</sub> ) (gravimetric)	50 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ , not to be exceeded more than 35 times a year	24-hour mean	31.12.2004
	40 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	Annual mean	31.12.2004
Sulphur dioxide	350 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ , not to be exceeded more than 24 times a year	1-hour mean	31.12.2004
	125 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ , not to be exceeded more than 3 times a year	24-hour mean	31.12.2004
	266 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ , not to be exceeded more than 35 times a year	15-minute mean	31.12.2005

2. Air quality in Wiltshire meets these standards with the exception of the annual averages for nitrogen dioxide and fine particulates (PM10). Both these parameters have proved problematic across the county in historic cities and towns with narrow highly trafficked streets, as well as metropolitan locations. Other pollutants, such as ozone, are monitored at a national level.
3. Derogations and extensions to these time periods are being negotiated with the EU in respect of the standards for nitrogen dioxide (2015) and fine particulates (PM<sub>10</sub>) (2012).

### Why Monitor Air Quality?

4. The objectives are health related and have been derived by the government's 'Expert Panel on Air Quality' and based on the epidemiological studies available on the toxicity and effect that each pollutant has on human health.
5. Air pollution can have a considerable effect on health of the young, elderly and vulnerable. In the 1950's the focus was on smog, which affected London, and other major cities. The smog had significant impact on people's day to day lives. The Clean Air Acts brought in controls to smoke.
6. Today air pollution is not visible in the way it was in the 1950's however it still has the potential to have an impact significantly on health.
7. Parliament's Environmental Audit Committee published a report in March of this year stating that poor air quality reduces average life expectancy in the UK by an average of seven to eight months and it could lead to up to 50,000 premature deaths every year. The MPs said that the UK should be 'ashamed' of its air quality and called for dramatic changes to be made to the UK's transport policy in order to improve the situation.
8. The report states that failing to act would result in EU fines, which could total as much as £300 million pounds.

### Is Air Quality a problem in Wiltshire?

9. We enjoy a high quality environment in Wiltshire however there are some locations which fail to meet the national objectives. These are:

Nitrogen dioxide & Fine Particulates:

- Masons Lane Bradford on Avon

Nitrogen dioxide:

- Warminster Road Westbury

- Shane's Castle Bath Road Devizes
- Salisbury City Centre
- Part of Wilton Road Salisbury (A36)
- Part of London Road Salisbury (A30)

### **The Mechanics of Review & Assessment.**

10. The review and assessment process is iterative and has currently reached the third round.
11. Each year Public Protection Services produces an annual report on air quality in Wiltshire, the detail of which varies depending on what stage we are in a 'round' and what levels of pollutants have been identified.
12. The link below goes to our reports page on the web:  
  
<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/environmentandplanning/publicprotection/pollutionandnoise/airandwaterpollution/airquality.htm>
13. And the attached diagrams give an over view of the mechanics of the process and current reports.
14. The pollutant that is of most concern in Wiltshire is nitrogen dioxide which is contained in exhaust fumes from vehicles. We monitor nitrogen dioxide using a network of small diffusion tubes which are attached to buildings and lamp posts in locations where people are exposed to higher concentrations of exhaust fumes. We also have 4 locations where we use more sophisticated monitoring equipment to measure nitrogen dioxide and fine particulates

### **Air Quality Strategy for Wiltshire**

15. The Air quality Strategy for Wiltshire is a general core document that sets out in broad terms our commitment to reduce levels of air pollution across the county. It will help shape policy across the council encouraging a consistent approach to this subject and has been produced in association with transport planning colleagues. It provides a framework which supports more specific work in areas where problems have been found to exist.

### **Objectives.**

16. These include:
  - To promote consistency across a range of policy areas and to ensure air quality is addressed in a multi-disciplinary way.
  - To provide a framework for developing consistent approach to addressing local air quality in special planning, the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Local Transport Plan3.

- To provide a link to wider initiatives across the authority (eg Local Area Agreement (LAA), Climate Change programmes and energy efficiency programmes.)
- Raise the profile of air quality
- Highlight and educate about the link between air quality and the risks to human health
- Promote involvement at all levels through the community boards and other community based initiatives
- Encourage co-operation and collaboration between neighbouring local authorities and Wiltshire council
- Encourage partnership with and between local businesses
- Provide a first point of contact and source of information relating to local air quality issues.

### Strategy commitments

17. Commitments are defined in the areas of
- Spatial planning,
  - Transport planning,
  - Climate change and energy efficiency
  - Health Education
  - Industrial and domestic sources

### Monitoring the strategy

18. We will monitor the success of the strategy indirectly through the existing mechanisms and performance indicators for example:
- Air Quality monitoring data collected from the council's network of diffusion tubes and real time monitors.
  - National Indicator 194 requires nitrogen oxides and primary PM10 emissions of each local authorities estate to be monitored. This also appears as an indicator in the LAW.
  - National indicator 186 Per capita Carbon dioxide emissions in a Local Authorities area which also forms part of the LAW.
  - Area wide vehicle mileage, cycling trips and travel to school which are reported as a mandatory LTP indicators
19. These Indicators are likely to be subject to change by the new government; however they will be retained as proxy indicators and reviewed as required.

### Conclusion

20. The strategy provides an overall framework for air quality policy and future work. It recognises that this is a challenge that can only be achieved through a multi-disciplinary/ agency co-operation and the support of local communities.



