

Air Quality

Annual Status Report 2018 Summary

Environmental Issues Scrutiny Commission

Date 23 July 2018



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Introduction

1. Each year Southwark produce a mandatory report, required by the London Local Authorities Air Quality Management Framework called the Annual Status Review (ASR) which includes the air quality monitoring data from our monitoring stations and details progress against the borough's AQAP commitments.
2. The ASR report is submitted to the GLA and Defra to provide information that is put towards regional and national assessments of air quality.
3. This document summarises Southwark's 2018 Annual Status Report (ASR).
4. Southwark's AQAP was devised to be a 'living document', updated each year by the outcomes of the annual ASRs to ensure that the AQAP remains relevant and up to date over its 5 year lifespan by ensuring:
 - All actions of significance are captured, including actions undertaken that were not originally in the action plan
 - As actions become achieved or out-dated their targets can be revised
 - If Southwark becomes aware of new ideas, knowledge or initiatives, they can be incorporated by being considered for inclusion
5. Southwark's Air Quality Strategy & Action Plan links to the Council's objectives of making Southwark cleaner and greener and improving the health of the borough.
6. The Council has also made local air quality a local public health priority and published a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment on Air Quality (JSNA-AQ), it's recommendations were included in the AQAP via the ASR recommendations last year.

Policy Implications

Air Quality Monitoring

7. The levels of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) are gradually falling across the borough as shown in the results for the automatic monitoring stations and at the diffusion tube locations. This trend is mirrored by a slow downwards trend in measurements from across London. Exceedance of the national air quality objective for NO₂ is still commonly found at roadside on busy roads in Southwark.
8. The levels of Particulate (PM₁₀) are gradually falling across the borough as shown in the results for the automatic monitoring stations. This trend is mirrored by a slow downwards trend in measurements from across London. In Southwark levels of PM₁₀ are well below the national air quality objective.
9. Southwark does not currently monitor PM_{2.5}, a small fraction of particle known to impact on health or Sulphur Dioxide (SO₂) but modelling and measured levels from elsewhere in the capital indicate that levels of these pollutants in Southwark are well below their national air quality objectives.

Progress against the Air Quality Action Plan

10. The majority of actions in the AQAP due for delivery in the year 2018 were delivered on target. Key actions met in 2018 include:
- A reduction in emissions from Southwark Councils fleet vehicles, with 196 vehicles replaced, and procurement commenced for 11 full electric vehicles. Where diesel vehicles still have to be used, procurement is limited to Euro 6 emission standards vehicles
 - Southwark took part in vehicle anti idling awareness raising activities and has introduced vehicle idling enforcement. The Highways street works standard contract has been amended to provide for anti-idling signage at temporary traffic signals. Ice cream van pitches in Southwark parks are now available for vans with electric hook up only
 - Southwark has introduced variable parking charges for lower emission vehicles for resident and staff parking permits and is working toward a similar regime for on-street parking
 - Southwark worked with the GLA and schools to facilitate air quality audits at 2 primary school and 3 nursery schools and has match funded the GLA grants for improvement measures. 3 school streets have been implemented and work was done with schools to promote school travel plans, considerably increasing the number of TfL Stars Gold accredited school travel plans
 - Southwark continues to lobby and respond to local, regional and national consultations with a view of reducing emissions to air
 - Air quality technical guidance for developers was updated and all planning applications with a potential air quality impact scrutinised against the highest standards that can be defended.
 - Grant bids submitted in 2018 have been largely successful meaning that more air quality improvement projects can commence delivery in 2019/20
11. Outside of Regulatory Services, there has been good liaison with other service areas with the responsibility for delivery of AQAP actions, the increased involvement of Public Health, Parking, Highways and Transport Planning is notable.
12. Some actions were not achieved. They include:
- The target to include Southwark's Air Quality Technical Guidance in Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) was not met due to a delay in the adoption of the New Southwark Plan, the intention to deliver planning policy changes remains and they will be addressed once the New Southwark plan is approved
 - The number of schools with a Silver STARs accreditation for their school travel plan has fallen as many now have Gold accreditation. The number of schools engaging with the STARs programme overall has increased
 - Smarter Driver training has not yet been included for the induction of all Southwark Fleet drivers
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- The target for air quality neutral developments approved was not met but performance in this regard should improve once appropriate SPDs are in place
 - The planned media campaign to raise public awareness regarding air quality issues was not executed in 2018 but has since been delivered in 2019
13. New actions are suggested. These will need internal consultation to clarify targets and timescales, with a view they could be added to the AQAP. They include:
- A proposal to develop a cross-departmental air quality 'steering group' or similar. This is in order to better manage the delivery of the AQAP commitments, the school air quality audits and other ongoing air quality improvement projects. The group will also be able to ensure effectively prioritisation of work streams, improved co-ordination of action, strengthened cross services links and improved capture of all relevant air quality improvement actions from across the council
 - Air quality improvement around schools, reducing private vehicle use, addressing significant point sources (Rotherhithe Tunnel) and assessing the feasibility of area heat and power schemes

Community impact statement

14. All the community are affected by local air quality. A report by the Environment Agency found that areas of poor air quality correlated well with areas of deprivation. There are a number of deprived areas in Southwark that are within the Government definition of areas of deprivation. (Source - Official National Statistics).
15. Mortality linked to particulate air pollution is higher in Southwark than in London or England, accounting for 6.7% of all deaths in 2017¹.
16. 13,600 patients in Southwark have an asthma diagnosis and 4,400 patients have a diagnosis of chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder². People with long term health conditions are vulnerable to air pollution as there is evidence their conditions are exacerbated by exposure to pollutants.
17. The rate of decrease for both acidification and eutrophication has slowed in the short term (since 2009) with acid deposition exceeding critical load in 44% sensitive habitats in 2014 and nitrogen deposition exceeding critical loads in 63% of sensitive habitats in 2014.

Conclusions

18. The UK met the limit value for hourly mean Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) in all but two zones. Six zones were compliant with the limit value for annual mean NO₂. The remaining 37, including London exceeded this limit value. London will currently be the last region to meet the current air quality objectives. All the

¹ Public Health England website:

<https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/search/air#page/4/gid/1/pat/6/par/E12000007/ati/102/are/E09000028/iid/30101/age/230/sex/4>

² NHS Quality and Outcomes Framework 2015-16

actions in the AQAP, and more, will need to be achieved as we work towards meeting the national air quality objectives in Southwark.

19. The air quality objectives for Particulates, Carbon Monoxide, Sulphur Dioxide, 1,3-Butadiene, Benzene and Lead continue to be met in Southwark, but, there are still many roadside locations where NO₂ levels exceed the annual mean objective limit.
20. Overall there has been a measurable improvement in air quality in Southwark and across London over 2018.
21. Progress on delivery of the AQAP is good. Many actions are being delivered on target, with only a few complex actions regarding planning policy and district heating seeing some delay. The intention to deliver these difficult items remains.

Consultation

Southwark's Air Quality Strategy and Action Plan 2017-22 was consulted extensively before being approved for adoption by the Council in July 2017.

The 2018 Annual Summary Report was compiled with information from the departments and service areas responsible for delivery of the actions and with extra monitoring data from the London Air Quality Network.