

Air Quality Review and Assessment

Under the Environment Act 1995, local authorities are required to review and assess air quality on a regular basis. This involves a consideration of the levels of pollutants in the air now and what these are likely be in the future. These detailed air quality modeling reports and assessments are often very technical, the following provides a summary of the findings from the last 10 years.

The first review and assessment round for Lewes District Council was completed in **July 2000** and concluded that the national air quality objectives were not likely to be exceeded at any locations in the District.

The second round of review and assessment was commenced in **2003**. The first stage of review and assessment - known as an Updating and Screening Assessment ("USA") - aimed to determine whether there have been any significant changes in air quality since the first round of review and assessment, and also to compare the current position with likely future air quality targets.

The USA concluded that we had to progress to a more detailed assessment of air quality within Lewes town centre. We undertook a Detailed Assessment in **2004**, focusing on two pollutants, nitrogen dioxide and fine particulates (PM10) at locations beside busy roads and in the centre of Lewes, where streets are narrow and traffic can be congested.

The Detailed Assessment (**September 2004**) concluded that pollution levels in Fisher Street (Lewes town centre) were likely to exceed the annual mean air quality objective for nitrogen dioxide and an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)- *link to map?* for nitrogen dioxide was declared in **June 2005** in the town centre.

A Progress Report (**August 2005**) confirmed that the AQMA in Lewes town centre should be maintained.

A "Further Assessment" was carried out a year later (**August 2006**) to provide a detailed understanding of the sources of emissions contributing to the nitrogen dioxide pollution in the Lewes town centre AQMA area and consider a series of scenarios that were based on changing conditions. This Identified that the annual mean air quality objective for nitrogen dioxide in Market Street, Lewes, a road already within the existing AQMA area could be exceeded. The nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective could also be exceeded at Southway in Newhaven.

A Detailed Assessment (DA) for Newhaven undertaken in **2007**, predicted that the annual mean of nitrogen dioxide would be exceeded at Southway, Newhaven. However the findings were not accepted by DEFRA. Further revised modeling was carried out and in **April 2010** DEFRA accepted our findings that a AQMA would not be required in the Newhaven area.

Fourth round of Review and Assessment was completed in June 2009. No additional areas were considered likely to exceed the national air quality objectives but it concluded the Lewes AQMA should be maintained for the annual mean nitrogen dioxide objective.

The Air Quality Action Plan for Lewes AQMA was adopted by cabinet in **June 2009**. Joint working with the County Council and other relevant bodies is necessary to implement viable measures to reduce levels of air pollution in the centre of Lewes through the air quality Action Plan. The aim of the Action Plan is also to encourage active participation in the achievement of the 28 action plan measures by consulting the local community and raising awareness of air pollution issues.