

HERTSMERE BOROUGH COUNCIL AIR QUALITY ACTION PROGRESS REPORT

Introduction

In the 2003 Action Plan the section “Timescales” was not included in the report. This report has added this missing section combined with the Comments section. Since 2003 Action Plan progress reporting has changed due to new technology and ideas to help with Air Quality, this progress report on the Action Plan hopes to bring Hertsmer Borough Council Air Quality actions up to date. To help with this some of the old actions have been combined and wording changed. These are as follows:

No 1-action plan has had the wording changed from “health information” to “exposure of sensitive groups”. Information still hard to obtain as PCT cannot divulge patient information. Information (stats) could be drawn from census data?

Action 6 has been combined with Action 3.

Action 10 has been combined with Action 9.

Action 16 has been combined with Action 17.

Action 20 is a new action.

The National Air Quality Strategy (NAQS), which was introduced in 1997 revised in 2000 and revised again in 2007, not only set air quality standards and objectives for local authorities to work towards, it also gave us responsibility for periodically reviewing local air quality. Following a report in 2002 Hertsmer Borough Council declared 14 areas as Air Quality Management Area’s (AQMA) areas that would not meet the standards set in the Air Quality Strategy for nitrogen dioxide. In a further review and assessment the Council revoked 10 of the 14 AQMA’s. All these areas being motorway pollutant related.

In 2003, the Council produced its Air Quality Action Plan. This identified a number of specific actions, which when implemented, should help to improve air quality within the Borough and therefore help us work towards achieving the air quality objectives set out in the NAQS.

In 2004 two further, non-motorway, AQMA's were declared. Actions for these two AQMA's have been included in Hertfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan. It is now time to reproduce a progress report that gives us an indication of how far we have got with the 19 actions set out in the original Plan.

Progress with the plans has been slow with a majority of the plans. Slow progress is due to four out of six of our AQMA's being beside the motorway. Some of the actions have been combined as they were very similar and newer actions and ideas are around that can be implemented easily. Environmental Health works closely with other bodies to implement the plan these include Hertfordshire County Council, Highways Agency, Hertfordshire Highways, Planning Department. Some actions are not the sole responsibility of Environmental Health or Hertsmeare Borough Council.

Hertsmere Borough Council Air Quality Action Plan Progress

No	Action Plan	Progress with measure	Outcome to date	Comments Timescale	Responsibility
1	Look into the availability of health information i.e. exposure of sensitive groups with the aim of mapping this into the GIS system making comparisons between information and AQMA'S to consider any links	Possibility of obtaining health information was investigated. More likely to look at human exposure obtained from census and according to DEFRA guidance	No information obtained	New partnerships are being formed with the Primary Care Trusts and the Health Agency. New enquiries will be made into the possibility of obtaining information needed for mapping 2010	Environmental Health
2	Where ever pollution and or traffic issues have been identified the Council intends to investigate how these can be tackled through local plans/strategies in partnership with local communities, leading to local action plans	Local action plans written for Elstree Crossroads and Potters Bar High Street, two AQMA's declared in 2004, included in Local Transport Plan 2	Road layouts and traffic light sequencing checked 2007 and 2008 in both AQMA's to try and prevent queuing traffic. Some improvement	Diffusion tube monitoring extended in both areas. Traffic study to be carried out at Elstree Crossroads by Hertfordshire Highways	Other services in the Council and Environmental Health Hertfordshire Highways
3	Hertsmere will work, support and discuss with neighbouring authorities and the Highways Agency to consider traffic schemes that affect AQMA's on local roads and motorways M25, M1 and A1	Attendance at all M25 widening meetings with Highways Agency. Attendance at Officer Steering Group Meetings with Hertfordshire Highways. Still discussing.	Concerns over the M25 widening works affecting local roads and air quality have been pointed out at meetings attended. Work on the widening to start April 2009 J 16-23	Monitoring will continue to take place in all areas concerned and meetings attended	Environmental Health

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4	Will actively support the larger National and South East schemes that result from the multi modal study that may improve air quality along the motorway network and promote a modal shift to other forms of transport	Survey done with Council Staff to look at modes of transport and car sharing into work Part of Council's Green Transport Plan	Staff transport survey undertaken and proposals on car sharing incentives considered	Further work needed to look into car sharing	Environmental Health and Planning
5	Identify major fleet operators in the Borough to encourage accelerated use of cleaner vehicle technology and cleaner fuels and promote improved maintenance and considerate and economical driving.	The Council in their own fleet through the Green Transport Plan has investigated the use of cleaner fuels.	Green Transport Plan on hold at present	Further work to be carried out. Suggestion through Green Transport Plan to encourage car sharing	Planning and Environmental Health
6.	Hertsmere supports the Highways Agency in any means it identifies that will result in a reduction in pollution levels from traffic both M1 and M25 motorways and that it continues discussing the matter with Highways.	Action combined with no 3 action	See action 3	This action to be discontinued	
7	Support Hertfordshire County Council with its aim to encourage alternative modes of transport through various initiatives and through 2003 in particular Travel Wise events	Supported Travel Wise events in 2003. Cranborne Primary School walking bus just started	Travel Plans to schools need to be encouraged and old plans updated.	To be arranged with County Council 2009 and 2010	Hertfordshire County Council Environmental Health Services

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8	Hertsmere continue to support the projects Watling Chase Community Forest, Natural England formally known as the Countryside Agency and a Community Steering Group	Greenways officer encouraging non motorised routes	Cycle pedestrian and horse routes opened and publicised	Work and investigation needs to be carried out to find out if we can do any thing to support these projects.	Environmental Health Services Planning
9	Air Quality to be taken into account when considering all planning applications and particularly when these are within or closely adjoining any Air Quality Management Area. Air quality be taken into greater consideration in future local planning guidance by the adoption of additional specific guidance	First half of the action is dealt with for attention in the Core Strategy Development Plan Document which is to be presented to Secretary of State Feb 2009	On-going action with planning services	For part two of the action planning guidance regarding air quality needs to be included in planning specific guidance 2009/2010	Environmental Health and Planning
10	Environmental Health will continue to work with Planning Officers with regard to new developments and ensure that air quality is taken into account when located in or close to an Air Quality Management Area.	This will be integrated into action no 9	See action 9	To be discontinued	

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11	The Council will look for evidence that developers have taken appropriate steps to minimise any increases in air pollution, which will include an assessment of air quality implications where applicable	Environmental Health enforce the Control of Pollution Act on construction sites regarding odour, smoke and dust	Planning produce supplementary planning guides which contain odour smoke and dust Controls through demolition notices	On going	Planning and Environmental Health Building Control
12	The Council will promote the uptake initially of LPG or compressed natural gas by offering a reduction of £50 in Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicle license fees. The Council will consider other alternative fuels to qualify for a reduction in the license fees as technology improves with other alternative fuels	Promoted at Operators Forum	Have had an increase from 1 vehicle to 6 vehicles	Promoted by the licensing team. 2009/2010 on-going	Licensing Team
13	The Environmental Health Unit will begin an on-going campaign to discourage the excessive idling of vehicle engines	Environmental Health works closely with Bus Garage in Potters Bar to prevent buses idling. Regular visits made to check on idling buses	Started with Bus garage as it is situated in AQMA.	Work needs to be carried out to promote and discourage idling engines Borough wide. To approach schools and look at street signage 2010/2011	Environmental Health

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14	Testing Taxis and private hire vehicles to continue and for Vehicle Inspectorate to be contacted for arrangements to be made for roadside testing of vehicles for compliance with MOT emission standards	No progress	In the next year work will be done to work with licensing and VOSA	Work needs to be carried out contacting VOSA.. Environmental Health intends to buy hand held instruments to do some testing of their own.2010	Environmental Health
15	The Environmental Health Unit continues to provide comprehensive control over Part B processes and industry where powers exist.	Hertsmere has no Part A2 processes and 49 Part B processes	All inspections have been carried out with a satisfactory outcome	On-going	Environmental Health
16	Environmental Health Officers will continue to investigate complaints and take action where necessary	This is to be integrated into no 17	See action 17	To be discontinued	
17	Improved information and advise to residents and companies in the area about problems caused by bonfires and enforcement action for persistent offenders. We will also encourage residents to compost waste rather than burning it on bonfires	Hertsmere at present supply two thirds off all sizes of composters and introduced green waste collection for residents in 2005	In the last year Hertsmere has dealt with 140 complaints relating to bonfire smoke dust and odour	On going	Waste management and Environmental Health

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18	The Council continue to monitor air quality to the existing quality standard and with the change of use of the Furzehill site request Herts County Council for a position within the site where monitoring may continue. The diffusion tube network should be continually reviewed for its usefulness and that site be added or deleted as perceived necessary according to changing conditions and needs	The AQMS has now been moved to another site at Hartswood School. The diffusion tube and sites are reviewed and changed yearly.	Results can be seen on Herts and Beds web site also information from AQMS. As a result of reviews and reports a seventh AQMA is due to be declared.	On-going work. Investigation into further AQMS in the Potters Bar area. Apply for grant 2010. Consultant carrying out further modelling for area.	Environmental Health
19	We will seek to improve the availability of cleaner fuels by encouraging local service stations to stock alternative fuels	Further national moves since 2003	Review needs to be carried out and intergrated into Green Travel Plan	2010/2011	Environmental Health
20	Hertsmere are part of the Herts and Beds Air Alert scheme launched in Nov 08. We will continue to promote the service	At present time there sre only 3 people signed from Hertsmere	Further promotional work needed.	2009/2010 Promotion proposed through Primary Care Trusts, pharmacy and local hospital	Environmental Health