

The 2020 Annual Status Report highlights that air quality has improved across Barnet.

- In 2020, Barnet operated two automatic air quality monitoring sites, with both sites monitoring NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub>. At both sites, compliance with the annual mean Air Quality Objective (AQO) of 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> for NO<sub>2</sub> was achieved and showing a decrease of 6 µg/m<sup>3</sup> in annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> at both ABN1 and ABN2. The 1-hour mean objective for NO<sub>2</sub> has not been exceeded at either site, with both sites recording zero hourly means >200 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. This is unchanged from 2019.
- Both sites measuring PM<sub>10</sub> meet both the annual and daily mean objectives. Concentrations have generally stabilised at urban background site ABN2 since 2017, whilst ABN1 (kerbside) has shown a slight decreasing trend, with a further reduction of 1 µg/m<sup>3</sup> between 2019 and 2020. The report notes historic exceedances of the annual mean objective for PM<sub>10</sub> at ABN1, however concentrations have been well below the objective for more than 7 years.
- Non-automatic (passive) monitoring of NO<sub>2</sub> was undertaken at 15 sites in 2020; however, only 12 sites provided sufficient data coverage (3 sites had COVID related issues) There were significant decreases in NO<sub>2</sub> levels at all monitoring locations. Our worst affected locations were Station Road, Edgware (35.5 µg/m<sup>3</sup>) and Cricklewood Lane (31 µg/m<sup>3</sup>) though the annual mean concentrations were below 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> at relevant exposure. There was one exceedance of the annual mean objective at PBN6 (347 Hendon Way = 40.2 µg/m<sup>3</sup>). However, after distance correction the annual mean concentration was below 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> at relevant exposure.

Levels of the pollutant nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) were reduced significantly during COVID-19 related lockdowns. A comparison between the annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations in 12 non-continuous monitoring locations (with sufficient data coverage) in 2019 and 2020 showed a 24.23% decrease in NO<sub>2</sub> levels across the whole of the borough (the decreases ranged across the diffusion tube network from 11 % to 32 %), mainly due to reduced traffic volumes and reduced congestion due to COVID-19 related lockdowns.

- There has been a general improvement in air quality across the borough in the past 7 years, and concentrations at all diffusion tube sites were significantly better in 2020 compared to 2019 and 2018. (The underlying trend of improving air quality was increased due to lockdown). In 2019, two sites exceeded the annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> objective: Station Road, Edgware (41.6 µg/m<sup>3</sup>) and Dyson Court-Tilling Road (41.6 µg/m<sup>3</sup>). In 2018 5 sites exceeded the annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> objective: High Street locations of Golders Green (43.5 µg/m<sup>3</sup>), Station Road, Edgware (50.4 µg/m<sup>3</sup>), High Street, Barnet (44 µg/m<sup>3</sup>), Dyson Court-Tilling Road (47.2 µg/m<sup>3</sup>) and Cricklewood Lane (43.1 µg/m<sup>3</sup>). The declining trend has been acknowledged within the report to be attributable in part to national

lockdowns during 2020. In addition to reduced traffic volumes and congestion due to lockdown, as well as weather conditions during 2020 (strong wind, and heavy rainfall will result in a low NO<sub>2</sub> concentration).

- The longer term improvement in air quality can probably be explained by increasing numbers of cleaner engines and the planning system ensuring that new residential developments on busy roads have more sustainable transport and energy options.

COVID-19 only slightly affected the ability to perform monitoring duties and a few action plan measures were put on hold such as sustainable travel events. However, COVID-19 brought new opportunities for sustainable travel. The 2020 Annual Status Report also outlines changes to town centres to aid social distancing, and sustainable travel and the experimental A1000 cycle lane connecting North Finchley Town Centre to East Finchley. Notable progress made from 2019 to end of 2020 includes:

- In 2019, 72 electric vehicle lamp column charge points were installed. A further 22 leisure centre charge points were installed at New Barnet and Cophall Leisure Centres, and 4 freestanding town centre charge points. In the financial year 2020-2021, we installed 2 community charging hubs, each of 6 dual charge point hubs (7kWh) at Watling Avenue and Lodge Lane Car Parks. We're in the process of installing a further 93 lamp column charge points, but they are not fully operational, yet.
- As part of work programmes focused on introducing 20mph areas around schools or where there is significant pedestrian activity, in 2020 Barnet provided 20mph areas on an additional 7.5km of road. At end of December 2020, there were approximately 51.2km of 20mph roads in Barnet (43.7km in December 2019).
- A commitment to plant 4,500 trees in Barnet to boost air quality, reduce the risk of flooding, provide protection from the sun and the replacement of ageing trees to improve parks. 737 trees were planted in 2020 in areas where there is poor air quality. This is part of a five-year scheme believed to be the largest of its kind in London.
- The continuation of a project to audit construction sites to ensure heavy site machinery complies with emissions limits supporting the reduction in air pollution emanating from construction sites (12% of air pollution in London comes from construction sites). North London Non-Road Mobile Machinery Project, led by Barnet, was replaced 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 by a Pan London project managed by London Borough of Merton (Construction for London project, Mayor's Air Quality Fund). In 2020, Cleaner Construction for London undertook 20 audits in Barnet. By the end of 2020, five sites had higher emissions than standards but had registered all machinery correctly prior to the audit five sites were non-compliant before auditing but met required emission standards by enacting all recommendations made by officers, nine sites upon arrival were compliant, and one site had no NRMM machinery within scope presently deployed. 15% of sites audited were unregistered and subsequently engaged.
- Clean Air Day 2020 did not take place due to COVID-19 related lockdown. Clean Air Day 2021 took place on 17 June 2021, led by Global Action Plan. It was not possible to organise events due to COVID-19 restrictions, but we had a social media presence for this event on our council channels with some social media posts to spread awareness.

Schools shared their clean air day activities. London Borough of Barnet was featured on Global Action Plan's supporters list.

- The council are in the process of developing a Sustainability strategy which will include actions that will support the improvement of air quality across the borough.