



POLLUTED CITIES



HAMPSHIRE

Like many towns and cities across the South East, urban areas in Hampshire are also blighted by Britain's toxic air crisis. Whilst Southampton's issues are well documented, other areas in Hampshire tend to be overlooked. This leaflet on Portsmouth and Winchester aims to redress the balance. It examines the latest available air pollution monitoring data and offers some insight into potential solutions.

AIR QUALITY LIMITS

Local authorities that experience poor air quality must designate air quality management areas (AQMA) and are mandated to collect and report on pollution levels.¹ Legal limits of exposure have been set by the EU (informed by the World Health Organization (WHO)). For Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) – which inflames the lining of the lungs and makes them more susceptible to illnesses such as bronchitis, and in the UK, is linked to the premature deaths of more than 20,000 people every year² – there are both hourly average targets and annual average targets. Within any given year, a local authority has exceeded the hourly average limit if levels of pollutants go above 200µg/m³ more than 18 times for an hour or longer over the course of the year. And if the annual average is higher than 40µg/m³ at any monitoring station, it has broken the safe, legal limit.

PORTSMOUTH

Portsmouth is a port city on the South coast, home to 205,400 people. As the UK's second busiest port, it handles three million passengers a year.

Portsmouth City Council (PCC) declared 13 AQMAs in 2005, eight of these were revoked in 2010 and just five remain.³ Two AQMAs cover wards in the UK's 10% most deprived areas.⁴

The city's main air quality issue is road traffic. Some sites breach NO₂ safe annual levels and Portsmouth also exceeds EU legal limits on NO₂ pollution.⁵ Almost 100 premature deaths of Portsmouth's over 25s a year are attributed to PM_{2.5} pollution, with over 1000 associated life years lost.⁶ PCC has plans to start measuring PM_{2.5}.

PCC's latest available data reports that NO₂ was monitored at 39 sites in 2016. Six sites (or 15%) exceed the annual legal limits of 40µg/m³. Pollution at five sites has increased on previous levels. An additional seven sites saw 'borderline exceedances' of over 36µg/m. Two of the sites over the annual limit are not in an AQMA. Reliability of PM₁₀ monitoring is an issue, with some sites having data capture of just 60%.⁷ There is a danger that the problems are more severe than reported.

THE AREAS OF PORTSMOUTH EXPERIENCING THE WORST AIR POLLUTION

Site	Annual mean (NO ₂ µg/m ³)	Over safe/legal limit	Highest monthly recording (NO ₂ µg/m ³)	Over safe/legal limit
The Tap, London Road	49.2	123%	61.9*	155%
Kingston Road	43.7	109%	48.8	122%
Lord Montgomery Way	43.5	109%	48.8	122%

*This was the highest monthly level recorded at any site in Portsmouth.

Portsmouth's 2017 Air Quality Strategy is similar to the national plan, which has been ruled as unlawful by the High Court. Portsmouth residents still await consultation on a draft action plan, which was due at the end of 2017.

#LetPompeyBreathe is a new joint initiative involving Portsmouth Green Party, Portsmouth Friends of The Earth, Milton Neighbourhood Forum and other groups concerned with Portsmouth's dangerous air quality. The campaign calls for a joined-up approach to tackle the city's air pollution and, in accordance with the High Court ruling, is pushing for a feasibility study of a Clean Air Zone in Portsmouth.



KEITH TAYLOR, GREEN PARTY MEP FOR THE SOUTH EAST

- 1 Local authorities are required to report annually on the levels of pollution and can remove an AQMA if the average annual levels fall back within the legal limit
- 2 Defra (2015) Valuing impacts on air quality: Updates in valuing changes in emissions of Oxides of Nitrogen (NO_x) and concentrations of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂). https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/460401/air-quality-econanalysis-nitrogen-interim-guidance.pdf
- 3 Details on the locations and extent of Portsmouth's current AQMAs can be found here: https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/aqma/local-authorities?la_id=198
- 4 Portsmouth City Council, Air Quality Strategy 2017-2027. <https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/env-air-quality-strategy-proof-9a.pdf>
- 5 World Health Organization, (2016) WHO Global Urban Ambient Air Pollution Database (update 2016). http://www.who.int/phe/health_topics/outdoorair/databases/cities/en/
- 6 Public Health England, Estimating local mortality burdens associated with particulate air pollution, 10 April 2014. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/332854/PHE_CRCE_010.pdf
- 7 Portsmouth City Council, 2016 Air Quality Annual Status Report, September 2017. <https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/env-air-quality-2016-annual-status-report.pdf>
- 8 Winchester City Council, 2017 Air Quality Annual Status Report, July 2017. http://www.winchester.gov.uk/assets/attach/11953/Winchester_ASR_2017_final.pdf
- 9 Public Health England, Estimating local mortality burdens associated with particulate air pollution, 10 April 2014. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/332854/PHE_CRCE_010.pdf
- 10 Winchester City Council, 2017 Air Quality Annual Status Report, July 2017. http://www.winchester.gov.uk/assets/attach/11953/Winchester_ASR_2017_final.pdf
- 11 Winchester City Council, 2017 Air Quality Annual Status Report, July 2017, http://www.winchester.gov.uk/assets/attach/11953/Winchester_ASR_2017_final.pdf
- 12 Winchester City Council, Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015. <http://www.winchester.gov.uk/data/index-of-multiple-deprivation-2010>
- 13 Winchester Green Party, Improving air quality in Winchester. <https://winchester.greenparty.org.uk/home/campaign-improving-air-quality-in-winchester.html>



WINCHESTER

At the edge of the South Downs, Winchester is Hampshire's county town and 116,000 people live in the wider District. Its narrow medieval streets cannot cope with high traffic levels, so a one-way system is in place, but this ultimately results in more vehicle miles travelled.

Winchester's main pollutant of concern is NO₂, which breaches annual mean air quality limits in parts of the city. The main source of pollution is road traffic.

Winchester City Council (WCC) declared an AQMA in 2003 around the one-way system and feeder roads. Both NO₂ and PM₁₀ are measured.⁸ However, since 2013, hourly PM₁₀ monitoring has ceased, a move heavily criticised by Winchester Greens. Whilst PM_{2.5} is not monitored, over 50 deaths of the over 25s a year in the District are attributed to PM_{2.5} pollution, with 520 associated life years lost in Winchester.⁹ For the c.4000 people living in the AQMA, the local Green Party estimates premature loss of six lives and 63 years of life annually from PM pollution.

The latest available WCC data reports that NO₂ was monitored at 26 city sites and another eight in the District in 2016. Four city sites (or 15%) exceed the annual legal limits of 40µg/m³. An additional 10 sites registered 'borderline exceedances' of over 36µg/m³. Whilst none of the District sites exceeded legal limits, seven registered higher levels than in previous years, suggesting the problem is worsening in the wider District.¹⁰

But considering annual mean alone is insufficient. Of the areas that, on average, didn't breach annual legal limits in 2016, residents in 17 (or 77%) experienced at least one month of illegally toxic air. For example, Upper Brook St – technically within legal limits – was over the limit for seven months, in excess of 45µg/m³ for two of these.¹¹

THE AREAS OF WINCHESTER EXPERIENCING THE WORST AIR POLLUTION

Site	Annual mean (NO ₂ µg/m ³)	Over safe/legal limit	Highest monthly recording (NO ₂ µg/m ³)	Over safe/legal limit
Romsey Road	56.6	142%	65.5*	164%
St. Georges St. Bed	49.8	124%	60.4	151%
St. Georges St. Lad	48.9	122%	56.7	142%

*This was the highest monthly level recorded at any site in Winchester.

Both St. Georges St. sites were missing one month of data. St. Georges St. Bed saw two months over 60µg/m³, and five months over 50µg/m³. St. Georges St. Lad saw eight months over 50µg/m³, so actual exposure here is likely to be higher. This area is in the 50% least deprived areas in the UK, but on the living environment index it is in the top 30%.¹²

Winchester Green Party has a longstanding air quality campaign. In 2012, I delivered a formal complaint from them and Winchester Friends of the Earth to the European Commission, over WCC's failure to improve air quality.¹³ In the face of continued inaction, Winchester Greens are calling for:

- **A reduction in road traffic across the city**
- **A town centre free from cars**
- **Improved public transport**
- **Promotion of walking and cycling**

KEITH TAYLOR, GREEN PARTY MEP FOR THE SOUTH EAST

www.keithtaylormep.org.uk @GreenKeithMEP keithtaylor@greenmeps.org.uk 0207 250 8418