



LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL

Promoting City, Coast & Countryside

Lancaster City Council

Air Quality Action Planning Update - Galgate Air Quality
Management Area

October 2018

Air Quality Action Planning Update - Galgate AQMA

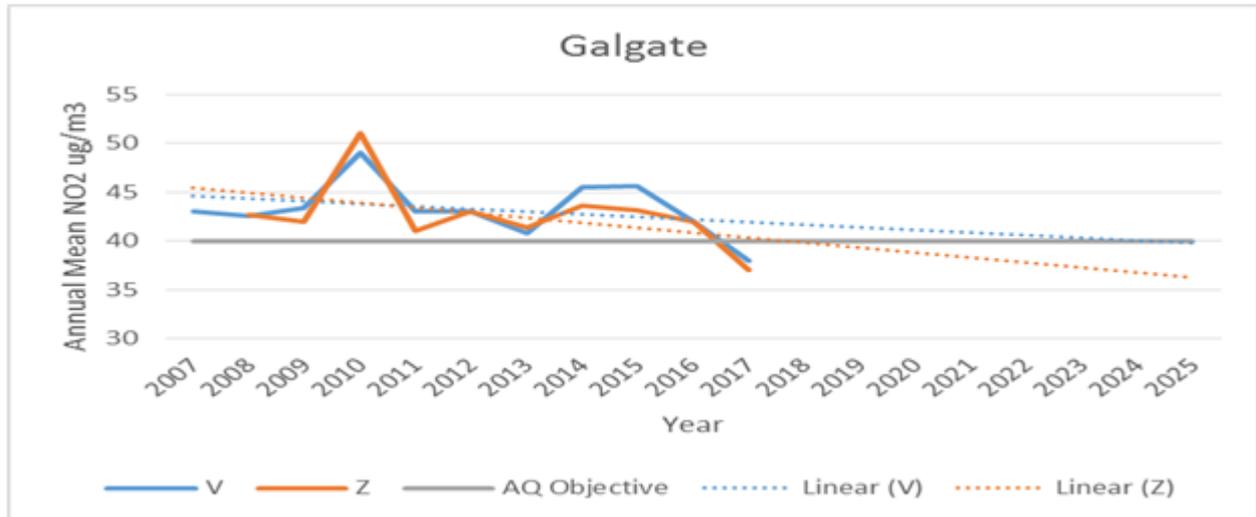
In 2013 Lancaster City Council produced and adopted a new Air Quality Strategy for Lancaster (available at: <https://www.lancaster.gov.uk/environmental-health/environmental-protection/air-quality/air-quality-reviews-and-assessments>). The Strategy was considered necessary as previous plans had proved insufficient to address the issues presented. More recently it has also become clear that a key failing has been that vehicle emissions regulated through Euro emission standards have not delivered expected pollution reductions. The Strategy sets the aims and objectives for local air quality and set a route and process to provide 'the best environment and structure to achieve an agreed successful outcome'. Interaction with key partners (particularly County Council Highways and planning sections of both councils) was a key concern of the Strategy adopted in 2013.

In response to the Strategy and to address the need for an action at Galgate, the County Council proposed that the air quality delivery be incorporated into the then arising Transport Masterplan for Lancaster (available at: <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/council/strategies-policies-plans/roads-parking-and-travel/highways-and-transport-masterplans/lancaster-district-highways-and-transport-masterplan/>). Through consultation on the detail of the plan, this approach was agreed and a schedule was put in place for the production of a new Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) for the Lancaster district based on the aims, objectives and process set out in the Air Quality Strategy for Lancaster. The Transport Masterplan was adopted in October 2016. The AQAP is scheduled to be evaluated in 2018/19 and adopted in 2019/20 (see p.52 of the Transport Masterplan). Progress has unfortunately been delayed due to the need to obtain representative baseline traffic count data following the opening of the Bay Gateway and the reopening of the Greyhound Bridge following required repair work.

Although air quality issues are changing e.g. there are arising concerns over the increased use of solid fuels, the issue giving rise to the designation of Galgate Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), are emissions from road traffic, specifically emissions of nitrogen oxides. In Galgate the AQMA is designated due to the likely exceedance of the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide. In 2014 the discussions took place with the County Council to consider possible substantive action to relieve the traffic related air quality issues at the crossroads at Galgate. Although travel planning, cycling and walking measures etc. could contribute to reducing pollution levels in the locality, a more substantive action was considered to be required to significantly improve air quality in this location. A proposal was raised by the City Council to the County Council, to consider the possibility of holding back queueing traffic along the A6 away from the built up areas at each side of the crossroads. Unfortunately this idea was rejected for safety reasons, particularly the potential impact on traffic exiting the M6. The transport masterplan process was proposed as the way forward to produce a required plan of actions at this time.

In 2017 air quality monitoring in Galgate indicated compliance with air quality objective levels for nitrogen dioxide for the first time since the location was designated as an Air Quality Management Area. General pollution levels giving rise to the AQMA are considered to be slow gradual decline, particularly evident over the last four years. Air quality monitoring in Galgate will therefore continue to track progress. At this time however, additional action is still considered to be required in Galgate for three reasons (i) to reassure likely compliance with the objective in each future year (monitoring in 2017 indicated levels in some locations were just below the objective, not well under), (ii) to meet the Lancaster Air Quality Strategy objectives (which directs a reduction approach) and (iii) to respond to new demands arising from new development (which can add additional road traffic/emissions).

Graph showing indicated declining roadside NO₂ pollution levels in Galgate AQMA (annual mean NO₂ ug/m³)



Some elements of the Masterplan/AQAP have however already been delivered e.g. delivery of the Bay Gateway link road, adoption of new planning guidance, and this will continue to take place as matters in hand progress. Actions being considered will comprise of a number of approaches, including a by-pass for Galgate, the development of a bus rapid transit route across the district, traffic route/management changes (particularly changes to the gyratory system in Lancaster), measures to facilitate the use of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles, measures to reduce emissions from buses and measures to facilitate and promote cycling and walking. A meeting was held in April 2018 to set out a process to assess measures that will form the basis of Air Quality Action Plan proposals. It is likely that that key measures in the arising air quality action plan will relate to those put forward in the transport masterplan, however, wider formal consultation on measures that may form part of the plan will commence in 2018 and continue to be open during the first half of 2019. After actions have been gather, assessment will then take place to consider the likely impact of the measures and provide a recommended plan of actions which will be subject to consultation and finally adoption in 2020. The assessment process will work using the outputs of work carried out or commissioned by both Lancaster City and Lancashire County Councils.

Given the traffic emissions are the key pollution source giving rise to the designation of the districts three AQMA's and the County Council's role as Highways authority (and for public health), it is considered that the close alignment of the Transport Masterplan and AQAP provides the best approach and opportunity to provide an effective, properly assessed, solution to air quality issues within the district.

Please be aware that a progress report (Annual Status Report) on air quality is provided to Defra on an annual basis and is available at: <https://www.lancaster.gov.uk/environmental-health/environmental-protection/air-quality/air-quality-reviews-and-assessments>

As part of the process to produce a new air quality action plan for the Lancaster district we are currently consulting on actions that could be included within the plan. If you would like suggest any action that could be used to improve air quality in Galgate or other areas of the district please send your suggestions to:

environmentalhealth@lancaster.gov.uk

(please present the email subject as ' Suggested Air Quality Action Plan measures for Lancaster District')

or send by post to:-

FAO Paul Cartmell,
Senior Environmental Health Officer,
Lancaster City Council,
Morecambe Town Hall,
Marine Road,
Morecambe
LA4 5AF

The consultation will remain open until the 30 June 2019.