



## Members Questions to Environment Committee.

### Questions from Councillor Beki Aldam

1. With car use increasing, and wood-burning stoves likely to become used even more in the face of astonishingly high fuel price rises, I would like to submit a question on behalf of several of the residents in my ward. What more can we, SDC, do to protect our residents from the ill-effects of air pollution? I would like to ask the committee to consider more widespread air-quality monitoring, particularly in places such as the A419 in Thrupp and Brimscombe.

### Reply

In 2022, based on quantitative evidence gathered over a number of years, nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) levels are being measured by SDC across the District at 30 locations. Additionally, Stroud Town Council funds and operates a further 10 such sites at traffic “hotspot” locations in Stroud itself and makes those results available to ourselves.

The results for similar monitoring undertaken in 2021 await ratification pending the publication of a statistical correction factor by DEFRA, which usually occurs in April. However, the uncorrected results fall below the Air Quality Objective (AQO) for NO<sub>2</sub> of 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. As the correction factor has never previously exceeded 1, we can be confident that none of the sites exceeded the AQO in 2021. These figures relate to the annual average NO<sub>2</sub> level at each location; formal guidance states that if annual average levels do not exceed 60 µg/m<sup>3</sup> then shorter-term limits are very unlikely to be exceeded.

None of the 30 sites are currently sited in Brimscombe/Thrupp and we would be happy to identify specific locations in that area for diffusion tubes to be deployed for the calendar year 2023.

Previous air quality monitoring results and interpretation can be viewed in our previously published Annual Status reports [here](#)

It is accepted that road traffic is not the sole source of air quality concern and the Environmental Protection team is currently undertaking a review of the range of particulate monitoring equipment available. The results of that review will form the basis for future decisions on pollutant monitoring across the District. It is also accepted that extending air quality monitoring does not in itself instigate behaviour change or environmental improvements, and that collective action is required to improve local and national air quality. Some of the initiatives in the Council Plan should address the points raised in this question, for example:

- most of the actions in EC4 especially expanding public transport, walking & cycling links – and specifically EC4.3: ‘Working with partners, expand the network of Electric Vehicle charging points and increase support for low carbon transport, and a reduction in private car use and explore measures to reduce air pollution such as no-idling zones’;
- EC1.5 additional projects for carbon reduction;
- EC3.3 help private home owners and businesses to meet the retrofit challenge and improve energy efficiency, which in turn helps with affordable warmth;

- CW5.3 action to reduce health inequalities in partnership with public health.

In addition, the environmental health team are members of the countywide air quality monitoring and behaviour change working group, which is a part of the Air Quality and Health partnership chaired by Public Health. The group was paused during the pandemic as resource was diverted to covid response, and will hopefully resume soon so that the [strategy](#) can be delivered

There is a national [Clean Air Strategy](#) which was released just before the pandemic, and contains a section on domestic burning (page 58) - some of these actions require a change in legislation, which is awaited.

The local Warm & Well Partnership aims to promote access to affordable warmth by funding home improvements and giving energy efficiency advice.