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| Local Authority: | South Kesteven District Council |
| Reference: | ASR25-2667 |
| Date of Issue: | July 2025 |

Annual Status Report Appraisal Report

The Annual Status Report sets out new information on air quality obtained by South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) as part of the Review & Assessment process required under the Environment Act 1995 (as amended by the Environment Act 2021) and subsequent Regulations.

SKDC currently have one declared Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), which encompasses Manthorpe Road, Wharf Road, High Street and London Road within Grantham. The AQMA was declared for exceedances of the annual mean NO₂ and 1-hour mean NO₂ objectives. Measures to improve air quality within the AQMA are provided within the Council's Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) which was most recently updated in 2024. Concentrations within the AQMA have been below the annual mean NO₂ Air Quality Objective (AQO) (40 µg/m³) for more than five years, however they have only recently reduced to below 10% of the AQO (36 µg/m³). The AQMA has now been compliant with the 1-hour mean NO₂ objective for 12 consecutive years, as such the Council plans to revoke the AQMA for the 1-hour mean NO₂.

SKDC did not undertake any automatic (continuous) monitoring during 2024. SKDC undertook non-automatic (i.e. passive) monitoring of NO₂ at 35 sites during 2024 with 58 individual diffusion tubes. No changes to the monitoring network were made in 2024. There were no exceedances of the annual mean NO₂ AQO recorded at any of the passive monitoring sites. The maximum reported annual mean concentration in 2024 was 33.1 µg/m³ at diffusion tube duplicate monitoring location SK33/SK34, located on A607 Manthorpe Road in Grantham in the AQMA, which is lower than the annual mean concentration reported in 2023 at this site (36.1 µg/m³). The largest annual mean concentration observed outside the AQMA was 22.4 µg/m³, and was recorded at SK7, Stamford School. The annual mean NO₂ concentration did not exceed 60 µg/m³ at any non-automatic monitoring site, and therefore exceedances of the 1-hour mean objective are unlikely at all monitoring locations. Trends within the recent monitoring years show that concentrations are generally decreasing across the district.

QA/QC of monitoring data has been discussed, and the national bias adjustment factor of 0.78 was applied to the 2024 monitoring data, with details of the methodology (i.e. bias adjustment spreadsheet) provided. No monitoring locations required annualisation or distance correction during 2024.

During 2024, SKDC completed several key measures relating to air quality including: continuing to develop and enhance an app for encouraging cycling in South Kesteven, alongside

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Lincolnshire County Council (LCC), encouraging active travel using established Core Walking Zones (CWZs) across the district and ongoing development of a Green Fleet Strategy with the central goal of operating a carbon neutral vehicle fleet by 2035.

On the basis of the evidence provided by the local authority the conclusions reached in the report are **accepted** for all sources and pollutants. Following the completion of this report, South Kesteven District Council should progress with plans to revoke the AQMA of the 1-hour NO₂ objective and submit an Annual Status Report in 2026.

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Commentary

The report is well structured, detailed, and provides the information specified in the Guidance.

The following comments are designed to help inform future reports:

1. The Council have stated their plans to revoke their AQMA for the 1-hour NO₂ objective, which is encouraged due to 12 years of continuous compliance with this objective. Progress on the status of this is expected in next year's ASR.
2. The Council have stated that they have updated their AQAP. This is commended and clearly shows the councils dedication to achieving / maintaining good air quality within the borough.
3. The Council have detailed extensive measure through which they continue to improve air quality within the district as well as providing clear priorities for the coming year. This is commended and should be continued in future ASRs.
4. The Council have provided detailed trends of NO₂ concentrations within the borough over recent monitoring years which has been split into regions within the borough for focused discussion of pollution levels and their effects. This is commended and this level of detail should be carried forward into future ASRs.
5. The Council have included reference to the Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF) indicator for fractions of mortality attributable to PM_{2.5} emissions to provide additional context as to PM levels in the district. Similarly, they have also referenced the Defra background maps for additional context regarding base PM levels in the district. This is encouraged
6. Detailed responses to comments from last year's ASR appraisal have been provided and clear evidence of implementation can be seen in this year's ASR.
7. The Council have provided detailed ways for the local population to engage in air quality improvement, offering a variety of methods through which they can contribute and providing links for further information on how to get involved.
8. The Council have used version 04/25 of the National Bias Adjustment Factor Calculations Spreadsheet as opposed to the latest version 06/25. Both versions provide the same adjustment factor (0.78), as such, there is no impact on the data reported but it is good practice to use the latest version when available.

This commentary is not designed to deal with every aspect of the report. It highlights a number of issues that should help the local authority either in completing the Annual Status Report adequately (if required) or in carrying out future Review & Assessment work.

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Issues specifically related to this appraisal can be followed up by returning the attached comment form to Defra, Welsh Government, Scottish Government or DOE.

For any other queries please contact the Local Air Quality Management Helpdesk:

Telephone: 0800 0327 953

Email: LAQMHelpdesk@bureauveritas.com

The [Air Quality Hub](#) is now run by Defra, it is a free online information and knowledge sharing resource for local authority air quality professionals. Please consider onboarding on the Air Quality Hub to access a multitude of air quality resources and be kept up to date with local authority air quality activity and air quality news.

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Appraisal Response Comment Form

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| Contact Name: | |
| Contact Telephone number: | |
| Contact email address: | UKLAQMAppraisals@aeom.com |

Comments on appraisal/Further information: