

New Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) 2025-2030

Healthier Air for Leicester

Leicester's Air Quality Action Plan (2015-2026)

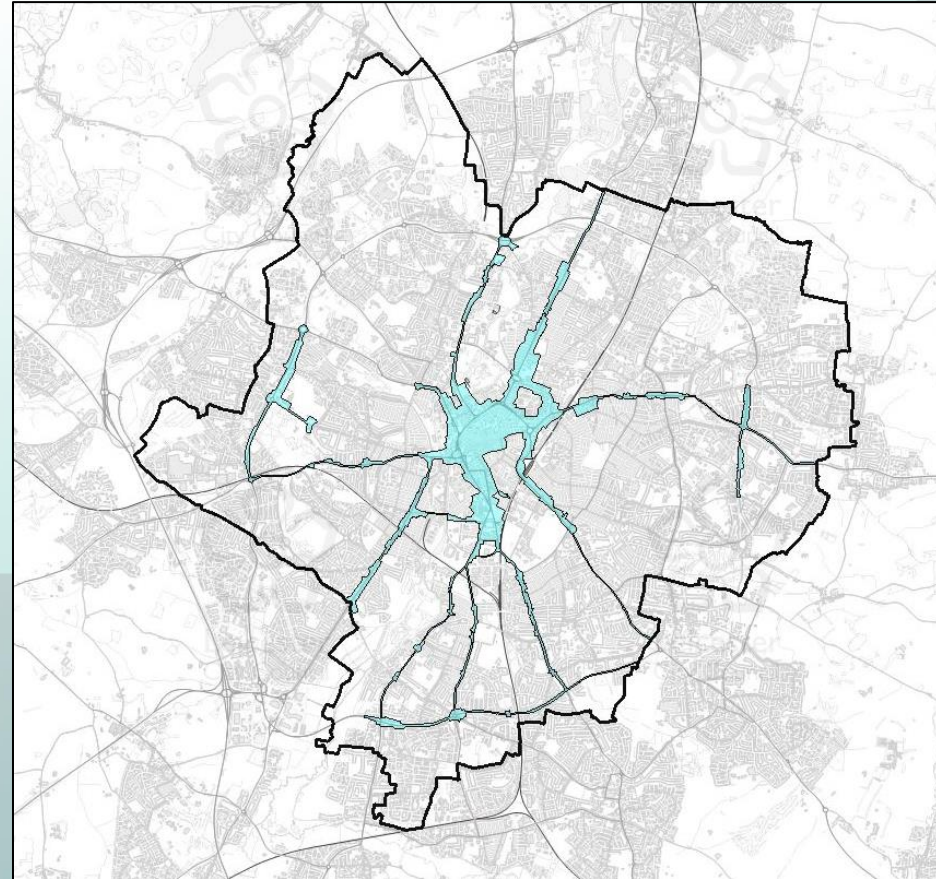


Rationale

Under the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) regime of the Environment Act, local authorities are required to produce an AQAP to address nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) exceedances within Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).

The measures within AQAPs must be continually reviewed, demonstrating progress to reduce NO₂ concentrations to levels below the Defra exceedance value (annual mean, 40 µg/m³).

Under the new Environment Act, local authorities are required to update their AQAPs regularly – the current LCC AQAP is 8 years old.



Current Leicester AQMA, covering the city centre, inner ring, and main radials, and sections of the outer ring.

Current NO₂ in Leicester

Station	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Abbey Lane	23.1	26	26.6	24.3	31.5
Glenhills Way	-	26	42.1	38.8	48.6
Glenhills Way East	21.2	24.2	-	-	-
Melton Road	30.4	33.4	31.4	28	38.5
St Matthews Way	29.7	33.7	34.9	31.4	40.6
Vaughan Way	36.3	38	36.8	35.2	45.7

- **Compliance has been achieved at all 5 stations in monitoring years 2023**
- Levels are like those reported in the pandemic, but traffic volumes are not – further investigation needed – but possible reasons include improved engine technology and vehicle renewal over time, electrification, and increased uptake of sustainable transport.
- Compliance with Defra’s NO₂ limit achieved since (at least) 2022 – Glenhills Way station relocated due to non-compliance with siting guidance.
- Good case to consider changes to boundaries of AQMA within the next few monitoring years, subject to Defra changing the legal limits:
 - Note - EU member states recently agreed to align the NO₂ limit value more closely with WHO recommendations, to be achieved by 2035.

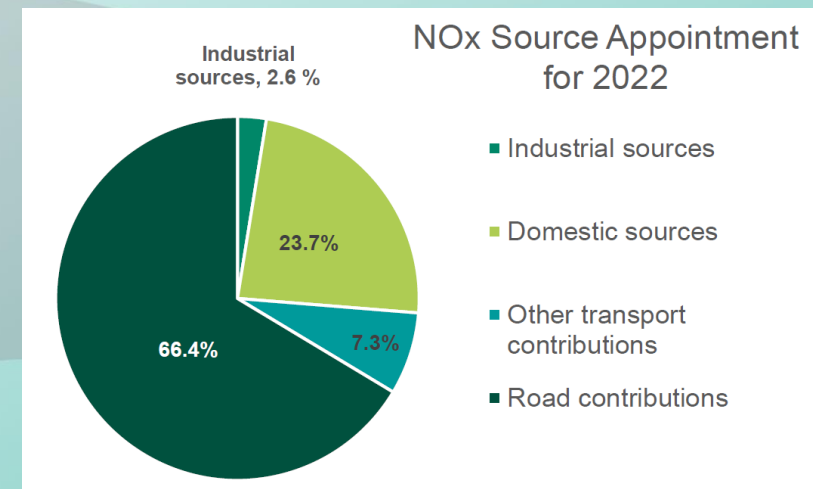
A closer look at NO₂

Identification of hotspots based on 2022 and 2023 data:

- Charles Street (outside former Wilko, opposite bus station)
- Infirmary Road (by hospital overpass bus stops, possible canyon effects?)
- Forest Road (at crossroads with Humberstone Road, uphill idling?)
- Others including Narborough Road, Blackbird Road, Melton Road

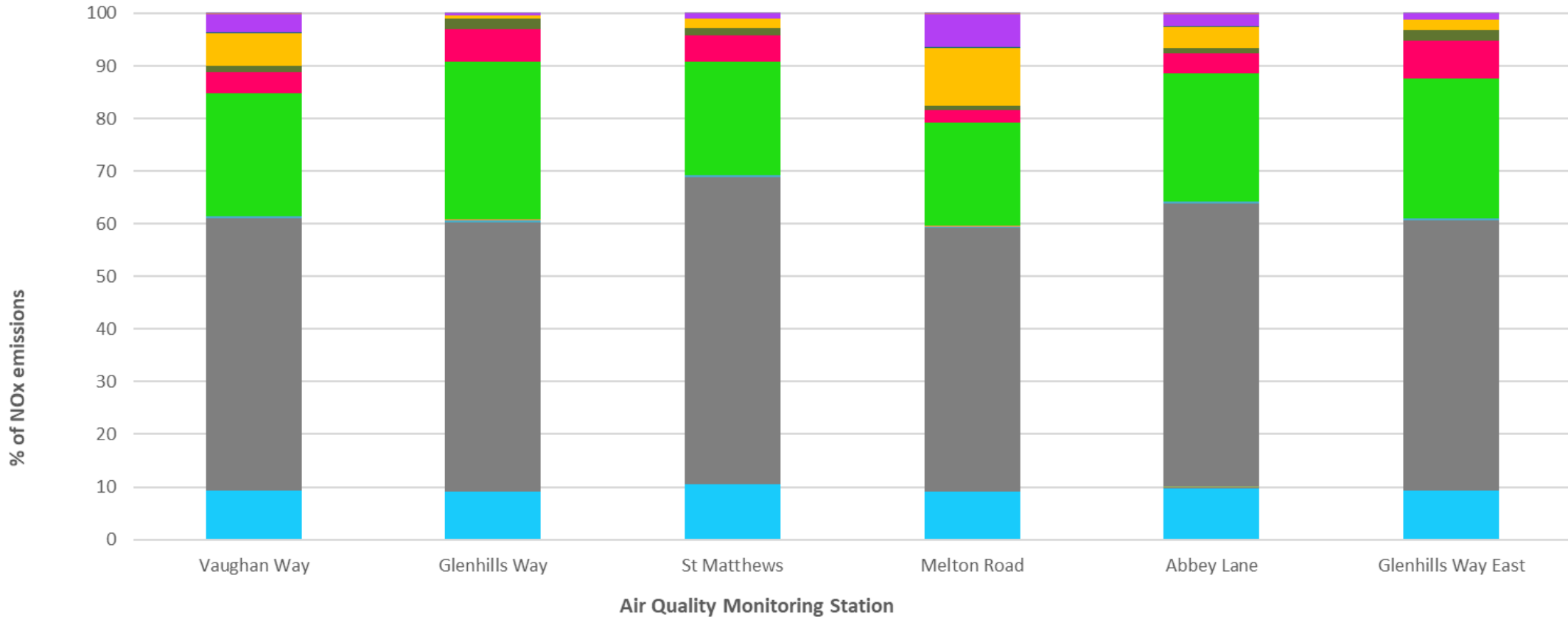
Defra source apportionment looking at NO_x contributions from vehicle classes at hotspots – diesel cars still majority contributor (~55%), diesel LGVs second (up to 20%), and buses important at Melton Road and Humberstone Road (around 10%).

Consultancy source apportionment looking at total Leicester NO_x from various sources – transport still dominant, but recognition for domestic (e.g. cooking, heating). Industry is minor.



2023 NOx Source Apportionment

Transport NOx emission contributions, 2023



- Petrol Cars
- Diesel Hybrid Cars
- Petrol Hybrid Cars
- Diesel Cars
- Petrol Plugin Hybrid Cars
- Diesel LGVs
- Petrol LGVs
- Diesel Cars
- Conventional Buses
- Hybrid Buses
- Hybrid Coaches
- Biogas Coaches
- Rigid HGVs
- Biogas Buses
- Conventional Coaches
- Motorcycles

Draft Measures

Draft Themes

- Theme 1: Air Quality Monitoring, Public Awareness & Engagement
- Theme 2: Promoting, Supporting and Encouraging Sustainable Transport
- Theme 3: Reducing Emissions from Transport
- Theme 4: Optimising Traffic Management
- Theme 5: Development Control and Regulatory Services

Draft Actions – Theme 1

Theme 1: Air Quality Monitoring and Partnership Working

- To continue monitoring NO₂ using regulatory grade equipment at locations across Leicester for the duration of the AQAP.
- To make use of hyperlocal air quality monitors (e.g. Zephyrs) for indicative monitoring, capturing variations in air quality at the neighbourhood scale, relocating monitors to identify potential pollution hotspots, enabling targeted interventions at critical locations such as schools and hospitals.
- Partnership working: Working with Schools (e.g. Clean Air Day), Communities and Businesses, Public Health
- Supporting domestic emission sources awareness campaigns

Draft Actions – Theme 2

Theme 2: Promoting, Support, and Encouraging Sustainable Transport

- Continued delivery of the Connecting Leicester programme
- To continue progression of goals under Leicester Enhanced Bus Partnership Plan, including full electrification, bus priority measures, and signalling improvements.
- To further increase the number of public transport trips through provision of real time information at bus stops, smart integrated ticketing (tap on/tap off), free buses (City Centre Hop), and fare caps.
- To deliver the actions within the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), Cycle City Action Plan, and Walk Leicester Action Plan (WLAP), and their actions, including Bikeability, Wheels to Work, BetterPoints, Beat the Streets, and guided walks.
- Providing service to employees to choose sustainable mode of transport when travelling to and from work (e.g. Choose How You Move).

Draft Actions – Theme 3

Theme 3: Reducing emissions from Transport

- To work with the following transport sectors to reduce their emissions through technology upgrades, fuel switching, and behavioural change campaigns:
 - Bus – electrification, improved park and ride services.
 - Freight – Freight Quality Partnership, Eco-Stars fleet recognition scheme.
 - Taxi – vehicle spot checks.
 - Rail – electrification, development of Leicester Railway Station.
- Increased uptake of ULEVs for residents, provision of charging infrastructure and grants to purchase vehicles. Progression of Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy with goals of installing a set number of chargers by 2030.
- Continued reduction in emissions from the Council's fleet, including replacement of diesel vans to ULEVs and employee salary sacrifice schemes (e.g. TUSKER).

Draft Actions – Theme 4

Theme 4: Optimising Traffic Management

- To continue delivery of 20mph zones in Leicester.
- To upgrade traffic management capabilities, allowing integration of air quality data (e.g. Zephyrs) into traffic management systems to improve traffic flows, reduce congestion, prioritise sustainable modes of travel, and reduce pedestrian/cyclist exposure to air pollution.
- To make use of highway signage, e.g. VMS and anti-idling, providing real time information on polluted corridors and educational messages to help motorists reduce their impact.

Draft Actions – Theme 5

Theme 5: Development Control and Regulatory Services

- To ensure planning applications are appropriately scrutinised for their impact on air quality, requiring developers to propose suitable mitigation and financial contributions, where necessary.
- To integrate multiple data sets (e.g. air quality, meteorology, traffic, and public health) into the Council's dispersion model for use in assessment of major transport developments (e.g. LRI, Connecting St Margaret's, HNRFI).
- To ensure that air quality considerations are embedded within Local Plans, Local Transport Plans, and other relevant Council documentation (e.g. Cycling and Walking Plans, Cycle City Action Plan, Climate Emergency Action Plan).
- To continue installation of solar and green bus shelter rooves in Leicester, providing a source of renewal energy and a means of natural air purification.
- To continue Environmental Permitting Regulations (EPR) inspections on selected A2 industrial processes in Leicester, reducing NO_x emissions from industry.

Public Consultation

- Public consultation commenced 31st July until 27th September
- Plan and details of consultation are available at....
- [Draft Air Quality Action Plan 2025 - 2030 - Leicester City Council - Citizen Space](#)