

Annual Progress Report (APR)



2026 Air Quality Annual Progress Report (APR) for Aberdeenshire Council

In fulfilment of Part IV of the Environment Act 1995, as amended by the
Environment Act 2021

Local Air Quality Management

30 June 2026

Aberdeenshire Council

Information	Aberdeenshire Council Details
Local Authority Officer	Paul Couper
Department	Planning & Economy (Protective Services – Environmental Health)
Address	Environmental Health, Protective Services, Unit 7, Harlaw Way, Harlaw Industrial Estate, Inverurie, AB51 4SG
Telephone	01467 539039
E-mail	environmental@aberdeenshire.gov.uk
Report Reference Number	APR 2026
Date	30 June 2026

Executive Summary: Air Quality in Our Area

Aberdeenshire enjoys good air quality with no exceedances of the national air quality objectives. The nitrogen dioxide levels within Aberdeenshire are stable or decreasing apart from slight increases in Peterhead locations. Even with the slight increases, the maximum annual mean value of nitrogen dioxide recorded in Aberdeenshire of $17.9\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ is less than half of the national air quality objective of $40\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. There are no air quality management areas (AQMA) within Aberdeenshire.

Aberdeenshire is located on the north-east coast of Scotland and surrounds the Aberdeen City Council area. In terms of land area it is the fourth largest region in Scotland covering 6,313 square kilometres and is predominantly a rural area. It stretches from the Cairngorms in the west to the North Sea Coast in the east. Farming, Fishing, Forestry and Food as well as work in the Energy Sector are its main industries. The western part of the council area is dominated by the Grampian mountain range and includes large areas of forest and moorland. The northern, eastern and southern parts of the Council area are somewhat less mountainous with large expanses of agricultural land, coastal grassland and a greater density of small towns.

The population of Aberdeenshire continues to grow and ranks as the 6th highest populated council area in Scotland with approximately 264,320 people¹. As this increase in population continues more housing developments have been proposed through the planning process.

Although predominately rural there are six towns with a population of over 10,000 people - Peterhead, Inverurie, Fraserburgh, Westhill, Stonehaven and Ellon with Peterhead having the highest population, just short of 20,000 people. A large proportion of the Aberdeenshire population is involved in the Energy Sector. Traditional industries such as farming, forestry, food and fishing also figure highly in Aberdeenshire with approximately

¹ [Mid-2023 population estimates - National Records of Scotland \(NRS\)](#)

one third of Scotland's agricultural produce originating in the region and Peterhead having one of the busiest white fish and processing ports in Europe.

The industrial and commercial areas are primarily located in the east of the Council area around Aberdeen, Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Ellon, Inverurie and Stonehaven.

A large section of the central region of Aberdeenshire is a commuter region for Aberdeen City and other larger towns with a significant proportion of the local population commuting on a regular basis. As transport plays a key role in air pollution encouraging the use of active, sustainable and public transport is important. A train service connects Aberdeen to Inverness which goes through the towns of Kintore, Inverurie, Insch and Huntly. Aberdeen is also connected to the South with train stations at Portlethen, Stonehaven and Laurencekirk within Aberdeenshire. The Buchan Sustainable Transport Study by Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce and Campaign for North East Rail, assessing the feasibility of creating a new passenger and freight rail link between Aberdeen, Peterhead and Fraserburgh, was submitted to the Scottish Government in June 2024.

Travelling by road is the predominant mode of transport with Aberdeenshire Council maintaining 3,468 miles of roads. A review carried out in 2024 assessing the bus network across the North East of Scotland highlighted an increase in bus passengers of 13.7% in 2023 compared to 2022 with an estimated 10 million journeys being carried out by under 22's throughout 2022 and 2023 when free travel was introduced for this age group. Improvements have also been made to the bus fleet with electric and hydrogen buses being added to their fleet².

Aberdeenshire Council is part of NESTRANS – North East Scotland Transport Partnership. Their 2040 strategy follows six key priorities which set the tone and direction of the strategy. These are:

- Improved journey efficiencies to enhance connectivity
- Zero fatalities on the road network

² [Microsoft Word - State of the Network - November 2024 FINAL](#)

- Air quality that is cleaner than the World Health Organisation standards for emissions from transport
- Significantly reduced carbon emissions from transport to support net-zero by 2045
- Accessibility for all
- A step change in public transport and active travel enabling a 50:50 mode split between car driver and sustainable modes.

Aberdeenshire Council was one of the first councils to set a carbon budget and continues to work towards producing a 75 percent reduction over the 2010/2011 figures by 2030.

The route map to 2030 and beyond was developed to further facilitate this.

Air Quality in Aberdeenshire

Aberdeenshire Council continues to work with internal and external partners to deliver the objectives of Cleaner Air for Scotland 2 – Towards a Better Place for Everyone (CAFS2).

Aberdeenshire enjoys good air quality with no exceedances of the national air quality objectives and latest nitrogen dioxide data shows the levels have continued to reduce or stabilise apart from two Peterhead locations which increased slightly of 4.4% and 5.3%, respectively. The highest annual mean value obtained for nitrogen dioxide, 17.9µg/m³, is less than half of the national air quality objective of 40µg/m³. Consequently, there is no requirement for Aberdeenshire Council to declare any air quality management areas (AQMAs).

Actions to Improve Air Quality

Aberdeenshire enjoys good air quality with predominately reducing trends in nitrogen dioxide. The highest annual mean value of nitrogen dioxide was less than half the air quality objective. We have the following initiatives in place to improve air quality further:-

- Aberdeenshire Council, as part of the North East Transport Partnership and also the North East Bus Partnership is carrying out ongoing work to improve the impact of transport on air quality through a variety of projects. [Regional Transport Strategy | Nestrans](#).
- Aberdeenshire Council is committed to promoting sustainable transport sustainable travel and promoting public transport - [Public Transport - Aberdeenshire Council](#)

- Aberdeenshire Council is committed to promoting active transport [Walking and cycling - Aberdeenshire Council](#) with [Integrated Travel Towns - Aberdeenshire Council](#)
- Aberdeenshire Council has a variety of initiatives relating to [Climate change and sustainability - Aberdeenshire Council](#)
- Aberdeenshire Council is committed to improving the digital connectivity throughout the area to enable people to work from home [Digital Connectivity - Aberdeenshire Council](#)
- Aberdeenshire Council is committed to improving [Energy efficiency - Aberdeenshire Council](#) and have just completed the fourth year of the housing improvement programme. [Housing Improvement Programme - Aberdeenshire Council](#) which is phase one of meeting the Social Housing Net Zero Standard [Energy efficiency: council homes - Aberdeenshire Council](#). It is also committed to improving the local heat and energy efficiency throughout Aberdeenshire [Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy - Aberdeenshire Council](#)
- Aberdeenshire Council is committed to ensuring through its planning policies that air quality is protected. [Aberdeenshire Local development Plan - January 2023 - Introduction and Policies](#)
- Aberdeenshire Council is committed to providing information on air quality [Air quality in Aberdeenshire - Aberdeenshire Council](#)

Local Priorities and Challenges

Aberdeenshire Council continues to promote policies and actions which positively impacts air quality. Our planning policies consider air quality when assessing these developments.

There are a large number of energy infrastructure projects being proposed for Aberdeenshire which when operational will not significantly impact on air quality but could temporarily do so during the construction phase. Construction Environment Management Plans which are required to be submitted as part of the planning proposal should help reduce the impact through the identification and implementation of controls relating to vehicle movements and dust.

Aberdeenshire Council will continue to review and assess local air quality in accordance with the statutory monitoring and reporting requirements.

How to Get Involved

For further information on Air Quality in Aberdeenshire, including information on how to get involved, obtain previous annual LAQM reports and a link to the Air Quality in Scotland website please visit the air quality section of our website, or follow our social media feeds:

[Air quality in Aberdeenshire - Aberdeenshire Council](#)

Facebook: [Aberdeenshire Council | Aberdeen |](#)

[Facebookhttps://www.facebook.com/EHAberdeenshire/](https://www.facebook.com/EHAberdeenshire/)

Table of Contents

Executive Summary: Air Quality in Our Area	1
Air Quality in Aberdeenshire	3
Actions to Improve Air Quality	3
Local Priorities and Challenges	4
How to Get Involved	5
1 Local Air Quality Management	8
2 Actions to Improve Air Quality	9
2.1 Air Quality Management Areas	9
2.2 Measures to address air quality	9
2.3 Air Quality Complaints Relating to Activities and / or Smoke Emissions	15
3 Air Quality Monitoring Data and Comparison with Air Quality Objectives	16
3.1 Summary of Monitoring Undertaken	16
3.1.1 Automatic Monitoring Sites	16
3.1.2 Non-Automatic Monitoring Sites	16
3.1.3 Other Monitoring Activities	16
3.2 Individual Pollutants	16
3.2.1 Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	16
3.2.2 Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀)	17
3.2.3 Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5})	17

3.2.4 Sulphur Dioxide (SO ₂).....	17
3.2.5 Carbon Monoxide, Lead and 1,3-Butadiene.....	17
4 New Local Developments	18
4.1 Road Traffic Sources.....	18
4.2 Other Transport Sources	18
4.3 Industrial Sources.....	19
4.4 Commercial and Domestic Sources.....	20
4.5 New Developments with Fugitive or Uncontrolled Sources	20
5 Planning Applications	21
6 Conclusions and Proposed Actions	22
6.1 Conclusions from New Monitoring Data.....	22
6.2 Conclusions relating to New Local Developments	22
6.3 Proposed Actions	22
Appendix A: Monitoring Results	23
Appendix B: Full Monthly Diffusion Tube Results for 2025	27
Appendix C: Supporting Technical Information / Air Quality Monitoring Data QA/QC	29
New or Changed Sources Identified Within Aberdeenshire Council During 2025.....	29
Additional Air Quality Works Undertaken by Aberdeenshire Council During 2025	29
QA/QC of Diffusion Tube Monitoring	29
Diffusion Tube Annualisation.....	30
Diffusion Tube Bias Adjustment Factors	30
NO ₂ Fall-off with Distance from the Road	32
Glossary of Terms	34
References	35

List of Tables

Table 1.1 – Summary of Air Quality Objectives in Scotland.....	8
Table 2.1 – Declared Air Quality Management Areas	9

Table 2.2 – Progress on Measures to Improve Air Quality.....	11
Table A.1 - Annual Mean NO ₂ Monitoring Results: Non-Automatic Monitoring (µg/m ³)....	23
Table B.1 – NO ₂ 2025 Monthly Diffusion Tube Results (µg/m ³).....	27
Table C.1 – Bias Adjustment Factor	31

List of Figures

Figure 1.....	25
Figure 2.....	26
Figure 3.....	30

1 Local Air Quality Management

This report provides an overview of air quality in Aberdeenshire Council during 2025. It fulfils the requirements of Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) as set out in Part IV of the Environment Act (1995), as amended by the Environment Act (2021), and the relevant Policy and Technical Guidance documents.

The LAQM process places an obligation on all local authorities to regularly review and assess air quality in their areas, and to determine whether or not the air quality objectives are likely to be achieved. Where an exceedance is considered likely the local authority must declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and prepare an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) setting out the measures it intends to put in place in pursuit of the objectives. This Annual Progress Report (APR) summarises the work being undertaken by Aberdeenshire Council to improve air quality and any progress that has been made.

Table 1.1 – Summary of Air Quality Objectives in Scotland

Pollutant	Air Quality Objective Concentration	Air Quality Objective Measured as	Date to be Achieved by
Nitrogen dioxide (NO ₂)	200 µg/m ³ not to be exceeded more than 18 times a year	1-hour mean	31.12.2005
Nitrogen dioxide (NO ₂)	40 µg/m ³	Annual mean	31.12.2005
Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀)	50 µg/m ³ , not to be exceeded more than 7 times a year	24-hour mean	31.12.2010
Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀)	18 µg/m ³	Annual mean	31.12.2010
Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5})	10 µg/m ³	Annual mean	31.12.2021
Sulphur dioxide (SO ₂)	350 µg/m ³ , not to be exceeded more than 24 times a year	1-hour mean	31.12.2004
Sulphur dioxide (SO ₂)	125 µg/m ³ , not to be exceeded more than 3 times a year	24-hour mean	31.12.2004
Sulphur dioxide (SO ₂)	266 µg/m ³ , not to be exceeded more than 35 times a year	15-minute mean	31.12.2005
Benzene	3.25 µg/m ³	Running annual mean	31.12.2010
1,3 Butadiene	2.25 µg/m ³	Running annual mean	31.12.2003
Carbon Monoxide	10.0 mg/m ³	Running 8-Hour mean	31.12.2003

2 Actions to Improve Air Quality

2.1 Air Quality Management Areas

Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) are declared when there is an exceedance or likely exceedance of an air quality objective. After declaration, the authority must prepare publish and implement an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) within the shortest possible time and no later than 12 months of the date of AQMA Designation Order. The AQAP must set out measures the local authority intends to put in place in pursuit of the objectives within the shortest possible time Measures should be provided with milestones and a final date for completion. The action plan itself should have a timescale for completion and for revocation of the AQMA. Where measures to reduce air pollution may require a longer timescale an action plan shall be reviewed and republished within five years of initial publication and then five-yearly thereafter.

Aberdeenshire currently does not have any AQMAs and therefore no Air Quality Action Plan is required. It does however implement measures to reduce its impact on air quality.

2.2 Measures to address air quality

Aberdeenshire Council does not have an Air Quality Action Plan as it does not have any Air Quality Management Areas. The authority has however as a matter of good practice taken forward a number of measures during the current reporting year of 2025 which will positively impact on air quality.

Details of all measures completed, in progress or planned are set out in Table 2.1.

Key completed measures for this reporting year are:

1. Aberdeenshire Council undertook a review of passenger transport within Aberdeenshire by carrying out surveys, producing an action plan and Tickets and Fares analysis report. This led to the Draft Passenger Transport Strategy and Action Plan being published which was formally adopted by the Council in April 2025.
2. As part of the Carbon budget measures in 2024, such as a Heating policy being agreed and implemented, Changing Streetlights to LED's, LAN network and fleet improvements, an expected 1472.5 tons of carbon dioxide equivalents has been saved.

3. To encourage active travel within schools Aberdeenshire Council runs a variety of programmes such as Bikeability, I Bike, WoW travel tracker, Junior Road Safety Officers and roll out of a project to close roads adjacent to the school gate across a number of sites during peak morning and afternoon periods; the first scheme is now permanent and others now in delivery. Funding is also available for bicycle shelters within schools and the Council is also delivering improved walk and cycle routes including pedestrian crossings to support less vehicular travel to school.

As well as ongoing projects to improve air quality the following measures have been undertaken over the course of the reporting year:

- New Local Transport Strategy to be adopted.
- Begin a project working collaboratively with three other neighbouring council areas to expand EV charging infrastructure by 570 charging points throughout the North East of Scotland.
- Continue reducing carbon emissions as per the carbon budget for 2025 with actions such as providing covers for quarry sites and starting phase 2 on modifications to council housing to further improve energy efficiency.

Table 2.1 – Progress on Measures to Improve Air Quality

Measure No.	Measure	Category	Expected/ Actual Completion year	Organisations Involved	Measure Status	Funding Status	Key Milestones	Progress	Barriers to implementation
1	Review of passenger bus travel within Aberdeenshire leading to an updated Passenger Transport Strategy and Action Plan.	Alternatives to private vehicle use	2024/2025	Aberdeenshire Council	Completed	Aberdeenshire Council	Survey carried out 2024. Action Plan Draft report July 2024. Fares and Ticketing Strategy published. Passenger Transport Strategy submitted to Committee April 2025.	Draft Strategy published 2024. Adopted April 2025 ³	
2	Carbon Budget	Policy guidance and development control	Ongoing 75 percent reduction over the 2010/2011 figures by 2030	Aberdeenshire Council	In progress	Aberdeenshire Council	2025 projects include *Heating Policy savings *LAN improvements *Vehicle Fleet Improvement *LED streetlights	Ongoing work Total. Reduction currently anticipated for 2024/2025 is 1472.5 (tCO ₂ e) ⁴	
3	Promoting and enabling Active Travel in schools and route delivery	Promoting travel alternatives	Ongoing	Aberdeenshire Council, Transport Scotland and Nestrans	In progress	Transport Scotland Local Authority Direct Award, Nestrans	Promote active travel in schools:- *WOW travel tracker *Bikeability and I Bike	Ongoing work	

³ [Passenger Transport Strategy 2025](#)

⁴ [Appendix 1 CARBON BUDGET 2024-2025 FINAL UPDATE.pdf](#)

	including crossings.					People & Places, Aberdeenshire Council.	*Junior Road Safety Officers *Bike Shelter funding *Road closure trials at schools		
4	Promoting Active Travel and Behavioural Change	Promoting travel alternatives	Ongoing	Aberdeenshire Council	In progress	Aberdeenshire Council and Transport Scotland	Aberdeenshire Council has a wide variety of promotions for active travel *Walking routes *Cycling routes *Maps *Treasure Trails *Love to ride challenge *Bike Month *Pedometer Challenge *Winter Wheelers *E bike cycle scheme for staff and hire along Formartine Way	Ongoing work	
5	Publish new Local Transport Strategy 2025	Alternatives to private vehicle use	2025	Aberdeenshire Council	In progress	Aberdeenshire Council	Adopted in 2025	Completed	
6	REGIONAL TRAVEL Review and update the status of the bus network system within Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen.	Alternatives to private vehicle use	2024	North East Bus Alliance consisting of Nestrans, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Bains Coaches, First Aberdeen and	Complete	Scottish Government's Scottish Ultra-Low Emission Bus Scheme and Scottish Zero Emission Bus Challenge Fund (ScotZEB) to	Report shows *Increased bus usage in North East by 13.7% in 2023 compared to 2022 *Young Persons Under 22 Free Bus scheme resulted in an estimated 10 million journeys in North East in 2022 to end of 2023	Review published ⁵	

⁵ [Microsoft Word - State of the Network - November 2024 FINAL](#)

				Stagecoach Bluebird.		improve bus fleet	*Improvement in bus fleet in terms of hydrogen, electric and Euro VI compliance. Additional funding applied for electric vehicles traveling along Aberdeen to Inverness route.		
6a	Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART)	Alternatives to private vehicle use	Ongoing	North East Bus Alliance consisting of Nestrans, Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council.	In progress	Scottish Government Bus Partnership Fund – annual; 2024/25-2027/28 City Region Deal; Nestrans – annual/3-yearly)	Cross-city network of ART routes, linked to mobility hub and/or park and ride facilities, which connect people to the places they want to go with journey times competitive to the car and providing an attractive, accessible, and easy to use way of travel. Cross-city routes would operate to Blackdog, Craibstone Park and Ride, Portlethen and Westhill.	In Progress	
6b	Expansion of EV charging infrastructure to include 570 new EV charging points in North East Scotland	Promoting low emission transport	2028	North of Scotland Partnership - Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen City, Moray and Highland Councils with EasyGo	In progress	Transport Scotland, Scottish Government	Finalised Installation of EV Charging points	Agreement reached in 2025 and implementation of project started .	
7	Designing sustainable places - Place strategy	Policy guidance and development control	Ongoing	Aberdeenshire Council	In progress	Aberdeenshire Council	Publication of Local Development Plan 2029 Place strategy published for Academy towns	In progress	

Aberdeenshire Council

8	Integrated Travel Towns for Banff, McDuff Mintlaw, Turriff Stonehaven Westhill	Alternatives to private vehicle use Transport. Planning and infrastructure	Ongoing	Aberdeenshire Council	In progress	Aberdeenshire Council, Nestrans People & Places and Transport Scotland	Site audit, visit town, surveys and plan. Phase 1 complete - Huntly Inverurie Portlethen Fraserburgh Ellon	Phase 1 complete. Phase 2 due to commence 2026	
9	Increased awareness of air quality	Public information	2025	Aberdeenshire Council	In progress	Aberdeenshire Council	Website updated to improve awareness of idling vehicles, air quality and health. Also to promote a change in behaviour at events such as clean air day.	In progress	

2.3 Air Quality Complaints Relating to Activities and / or Smoke Emissions

Aberdeenshire Council has investigated a total of 69 air quality complaints related to burning activities and/or emissions of smoke during the reporting year. These complaints related primarily to smoke emissions from domestic or commercial chimneys and/or the burning of inappropriate materials. Of the complaints received, 100% have been fully resolved following investigation, with 0 cases remaining open and under further review.

Investigations were undertaken in accordance with the Clean Air Act 1993 or the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Where necessary, officers provided advice, carried out site visits, gathered evidence, and engaged directly with householders to support compliance.

No formal enforcement action was required.

3 Air Quality Monitoring Data and Comparison with Air Quality Objectives

3.1 Summary of Monitoring Undertaken

3.1.1 Automatic Monitoring Sites

Aberdeenshire Council does not undertake any automatic (continuous) monitoring within the authority's area.

3.1.2 Non-Automatic Monitoring Sites

Aberdeenshire Council undertook non-automatic (passive) monitoring of NO₂ at 11 sites during 2025. Table A.1 in Appendix A shows the details of the sites.

Maps showing the location of the monitoring sites are provided in Appendix D. Further details on Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) and bias adjustment for the diffusion tubes are included in Appendix C.

3.1.3 Other Monitoring Activities

Aberdeenshire Council did not carry out any other monitoring activities.

3.2 Individual Pollutants

The air quality monitoring results presented in this section are, where relevant, adjusted for annualisation and bias. Further details on adjustments are provided in Appendix C.

3.2.1 Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂)

Table A.1 and Figures 1 and 2 in Appendix A compares the ratified monitored NO₂ annual mean concentrations for the past five years with the air quality objective of 40 µg/m³ at monitoring sites.

The results show a continuing reduction in values except for the two Peterhead areas which marginally increased. The highest value was below half the national objective.

For diffusion tubes, the full 2025 dataset of monthly mean values is provided in Appendix B. The I/GH diffusion tube September data is not available due to the tube going missing. The December data for all diffusion tubes is not available as the diffusion tubes were left out for six weeks due to severe weather conditions.

3.2.2 Particulate Matter (PM₁₀)

Aberdeenshire Council does not carry out any monitoring in respect of PM₁₀ and has no plans to do so.

3.2.3 Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5})

Aberdeenshire Council does not carry out any monitoring in respect of PM_{2.5} and has no plans to do so.

3.2.4 Sulphur Dioxide (SO₂)

Aberdeenshire Council does not carry out any monitoring in respect of Sulphur Dioxide and has no plans to do so.

3.2.5 Carbon Monoxide, Lead and 1,3-Butadiene

Aberdeenshire Council does not carry out any monitoring in respect of Carbon Monoxide, Lead and 1,3-Butadiene and has no plans to do so.

4 New Local Developments

There are no newly identified developments in the area that would impact on the air quality and cause an exceedance.

4.1 Road Traffic Sources

There are no newly identified air pollutant sources attributable to the transport sources listed below:

- Narrow congested streets with residential properties close to the kerb.
- Busy streets where people may spend one hour or more close to traffic.
- Roads with a high flow of buses and/or HGVs.
- Junctions.
- New roads constructed or proposed
- Roads with significantly changed traffic flows.
- Roads with new/changed layout

4.2 Other Transport Sources

There are no new:

- Airports
- Locations where diesel or steam trains are regularly stationary for periods of 15 minutes or more, with potential for relevant exposure within 15m.
- Locations with a large number of movements of diesel locomotives, and potential long-term relevant exposure within 30m.
- Ports for shipping.

4.3 Industrial Sources

Planning permission was approved for nine new poultry farms in Aberdeenshire. The location and associated planning reference for these approved applications are as follows:

- Fraserburgh (APP/2024/1306 and APP/2025/1285)
- Portsoy (APP/2025/0125)
- Newmacher (APP/2025/0216)
- Fettercairn (APP/2025/0420)
- Laurencekirk (APP/2025/0773)
- New Pitsligo (APP/2025/1115)
- Inverurie (APP/2025/1124)
- Banchory (APP/2025/1303).

Air quality was considered in each and did not meet the criteria required for an air quality impact assessment.

There was a Planning Application for a petrol station at Turriff, however, due to its historical use as a petrol station air quality was not considered.

The list of industrial sites which SEPA have authorised in 2025 are listed below.

- WML/L/5009760 Bethelnie House, Barra Business Park, Oldmeldrum, AB51
0GX Sureclean Group Limited Granted 20/03/2025 Waste Management
Licence Waste - Other Waste Storage and Treatment Sites New Licence
- WML/E/0220219 Laurencekirk Household Recycling Centre, Market Road,
Laurencekirk, AB30 1DG Aberdeenshire Council Granted 26/02/2025
Waste Management Licence Waste - Other Waste Storage and Treatment
Sites Operator Technical (Substantial) Variation to existing Authorisation
- WML/L/1148211 Portlethen Household Recycling Centre, Badentoy Drive,
Portlethen, Aberdeenshire, AB12 4ZD Aberdeenshire Council Granted
25/02/2025 Waste Management Licence Waste - Other Waste Storage and
Treatment Sites Operator Technical (Substantial) Variation to existing
Authorisation
- PPC/B/5005701 MCP Glentauchers Distillery, Mulben, Keith, Banffshire, AB55
6YL Chivas Brothers Limited Granted 02/09/2025 PPC Part B PPC(B) -
Combustion of Fuels New Licence

- PPC/A/5007385 Nether Glasslaw Free Range Egg Farm, New Pitsligo, Aberdeenshire, AB43 6PU Aberdeen and Northern Eggs Limited Granted 16/01/2025 PPC Part A PPC(A) - Intensive Agriculture (Pig and Poultry) New Licence
- PPC/A/1016719 West Cockmuir Farm, Fraserburgh, AB43 6RQ Aberdeen & Northern Eggs Limited Granted 07/01/2025 PPC Part A PPC(A) - Intensive Agriculture (Pig and Poultry) Operator Technical (Substantial) Variation to existing Authorisation
- PPC/A/5010104 Home Farm Poultry Unit, Straloch, Newmachar, Aberdeenshire, AB21 0RU Brian Grant Jolly Granted 13/08/2025 PPC Part A PPC(A) - Intensive Agriculture (Pig and Poultry) New Licence

4.4 Commercial and Domestic Sources

Planning permission was approved for four commercial biomass boilers in Aberdeenshire. The location and associated planning reference for these approved applications are as follows:

- Turriff (APP/2024/2037)
- Westhill (APP/2025/0050 – AQIA),
- Inch (APP/2025/0743),
- Strichen (APP/2025/0893)

All applications were screened for air quality and an air quality impact assessment (AQIA) was required for the Westhill application. The outcome of the AQIA was that emissions would comply with air quality objectives and impacts would be negligible.

4.5 New Developments with Fugitive or Uncontrolled Sources

Planning permission was approved for a sand and gravel quarry at Huntly (APP/2024/1444). The need for an air quality impact was screened out during the planning process.

5 Planning Applications

Planning applications relating to new petrol station, poultry sheds, biomass, and quarrying or extraction operations are discussed in Chapter 4.

Planning applications for various sizes of residential, commercial mixed use developments were received in 2025. Although these developments, in isolation, are not considered to have significant detrimental impact on local air quality they are recorded here should any potential cumulative impacts require consideration in future.

Planning Applications for various energy projects were submitted in 2025. These range from Windfarms with onshore infrastructure to Battery Energy Storage Sites The increase in infrastructure within Aberdeenshire in itself will lead to a temporary increase in nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter being produced initially during the construction phase due to HGV movements and construction activities although Construction Environmental Management Plans should minimise this.

6 Conclusions and Proposed Actions

6.1 Conclusions from New Monitoring Data

Aberdeenshire Council carried out diffusion tube monitoring at 11 sites across the local authority area. The diffusion tube monitoring data presented in this report demonstrates that concentrations of nitrogen dioxide in Aberdeenshire continue to remain well below the national air quality objectives.

No AQMAs have been declared in the Aberdeenshire Council area and no requirement for detailed assessment has been identified.

6.2 Conclusions relating to New Local Developments

There are no significant changes in sources since the previous Annual Report in 2025.

There are no current or projected exceedances of relevant national air quality objectives.

6.3 Proposed Actions

The Gordon House (I/GH) nitrogen dioxide tube monitoring site is now at Market Green Inverurie following the previous sites demolition. This was moved to the new location for the full reporting year.

The I/MC nitrogen dioxide tube monitoring site has been moved 10-15 metres down the street to avoid airflow problems with existing signage on lampposts.

Aberdeenshire Council will continue to review and assess local air quality in accordance with the statutory monitoring and reporting requirements.

Appendix A: Monitoring Results

Table A.1 - Annual Mean NO₂ Monitoring Results: Non-Automatic Monitoring (µg/m³)

Diffusion Tube ID	X OS Grid Ref (Easting)	Y OS Grid Ref (Northing)	Site Type	Valid Data Capture for Monitoring Period (%) ⁽¹⁾	Valid Data Capture 2025 (%) ⁽²⁾	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
I/HS	377408	821583	Roadside	90.4	90.4	15.0	19.2	15.1	14.1	13.5
I/GH	376622	821476	Urban Background	82.7	82.7	4.0	5.4	5.2	5.3	5.4
I/MC	377624	821295	Roadside	90.4	90.4	17.0	15.2	14.9	12.7	11.9
I/BR	376382	821574	Roadside	90.4	90.4	12.0	11.9	11.5	10.8	9.0
I/TH	377512	821584	Roadside	90.4	90.4	13.0	13.6	12.1	10.0	10.0
W/AM	383526	806645	Roadside	90.4	90.4	14.0	13.7	12.7	11.5	10.8
W/SR	381837	806691	Roadside	90.4	90.4	11.0	9.3	9.0	8.1	7.0
E/SM	395750	830115	Kerbside	90.4	90.4	14.0	11.1	12.1	11.0	10.1
PH/BH	413379	845906	Roadside	90.4	90.4	17.0	16.6	16.5	17.0	17.9

Diffusion Tube ID	X OS Grid Ref (Easting)	Y OS Grid Ref (Northing)	Site Type	Valid Data Capture for Monitoring Period (%) ⁽¹⁾	Valid Data Capture 2025 (%) ⁽²⁾	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
PH/MS	413420	845918	Kerbside	90.4	90.4	15.0	15.0	14.8	15.7	16.4
FB/SS	399870	867168	Roadside	90.4	90.4	15.0	13.6	14.2	13.5	14.2

Notes:

Exceedances of the NO₂ annual mean objective of 40 µg/m³ are shown in bold.

NO₂ annual means exceeding 60 µg/m³, indicating a potential exceedance of the NO₂ 1-hour mean objective are shown in **bold and underlined**.

Figure 1

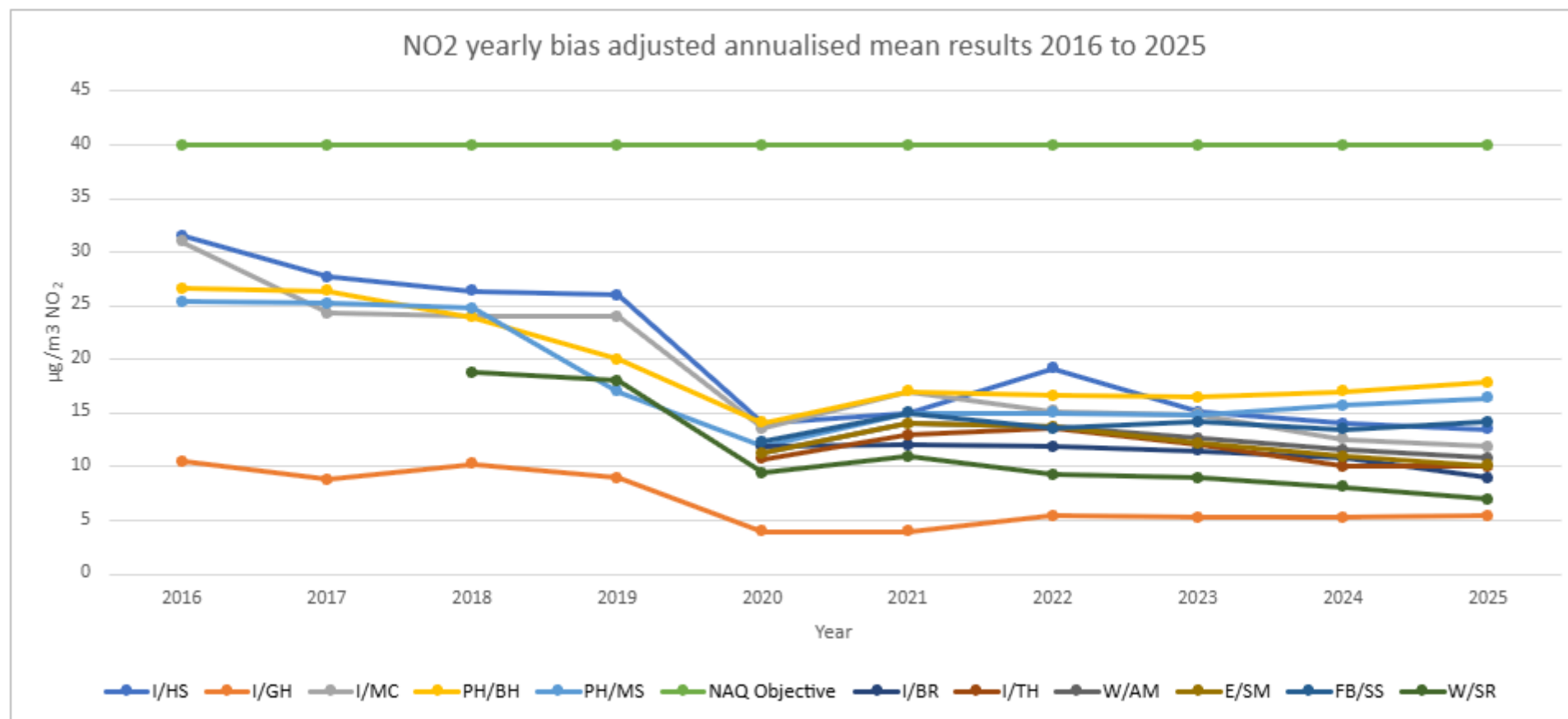
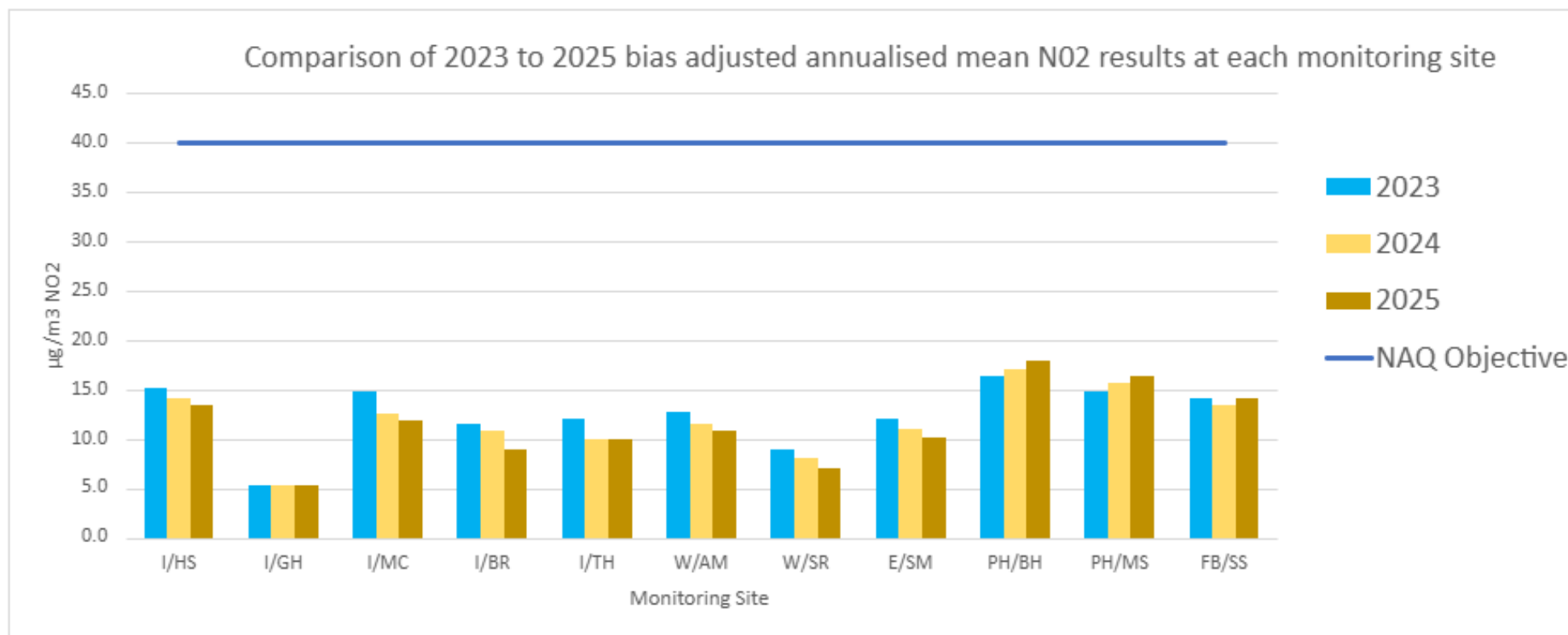


Figure 2



Appendix B: Full Monthly Diffusion Tube Results for 2025

Table B.1 – NO₂ 2025 Monthly Diffusion Tube Results (µg/m³)

DT ID	X OS Grid Ref (Easting)	Y OS Grid Ref (Northing)	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual Mean: Raw Data	Annual Mean: Annualised and Bias Adjusted <0.74>	Annual Mean: Distance Corrected to Nearest Exposure	Comment
I/HS	377408	821583	29.0	27.0	18.0	16.0	11.0	11.0	9.0	11.0	14.0	19.0	39.0	-	18.5	13.5	N/A	
I/GH	376622	821476	12.0	11.0	7.0	6.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	-	7.0	11.0	-	7.4	5.4	N/A	
I/MC	377624	821295	26.0	25.0	19.0	18.0	13.0	10.0	10.0	12.0	11.0	14.0	21.0	-	16.3	11.9	N/A	
I/BR	376382	821574	23.0	10.0	14.0	12.0	10.0	8.0	9.0	8.0	8.0	12.0	21.0	-	12.3	9.0	N/A	
I/TH	377512	821584	24.0	20.0	14.0	14.0	10.0	8.0	7.0	10.0	13.0	13.0	18.0	-	13.7	10.0	N/A	
W/AM	383526	806645	22.0	24.0	16.0	18.0	11.0	10.0	10.0	12.0	11.0	13.0	16.0	-	14.8	10.8	N/A	
W/SR	381837	806691	16.0	15.0	13.0	11.0	8.0	5.0	6.0	5.0	6.0	9.0	12.0	-	10.1	7.0	N/A	
E/SM	395750	830115	22.0	18.0	15.0	13.0	13.0	12.0	9.0	10.0	10.0	12.0	18.0	-	13.8	10.1	N/A	
PH/BH	413379	845906	39.0	26.0	28.0	23.0	14.0	18.0	20.0	32.0	26.0	22.0	23.0	-	24.6	17.9	N/A	
PH/MS	413420	845918	37.0	27.0	27.0	19.0	14.0	12.0	19.0	29.0	22.0	19.0	22.0	-	22.5	16.4	N/A	

DT ID	X OS Grid Ref (Easting)	Y OS Grid Ref (Northing)	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual Mean: Raw Data	Annual Mean: Annualised and Bias Adjusted <0.74>	Annual Mean: Distance Corrected to Nearest Exposure	Comment
FB/SS	399870	867168	23.0	19.0	19.0	26.0	15.0	19.0	16.0	21.0	18.0	15.0	23.0	-	19.5	14.2	N/A	

Notes:

Exceedances of the NO₂ annual mean objective of 40 µg/m³ are shown in **bold**.

NO₂ annual means exceeding 60 µg/m³, indicating a potential exceedance of the NO₂ 1-hour mean objective are shown in **bold and underlined**.

See Appendix C for details on bias adjustment and annualisation.

Appendix C: Supporting Technical Information / Air Quality Monitoring Data QA/QC

New or Changed Sources Identified Within Aberdeenshire Council During 2025

Aberdeenshire Council has not identified any new sources relating to air quality within the reporting year of 2025.

Additional Air Quality Works Undertaken by Aberdeenshire Council During 2025

Aberdeenshire Council has not completed any additional works within the reporting year of 2025.

QA/QC of Diffusion Tube Monitoring

Aberdeenshire Council diffusion tubes are analysed by Aberdeen Scientific Services within Aberdeen City Council. They use the 20% TEA in water preparation method.

Analysis of nitrogen dioxide tubes is part of the laboratories fixed scope of accreditation to ISO17025:2017 with UKAS.

The laboratory participates in the Laboratory of the Government Chemist (LGC) AIR PT scheme. During 2024 the Laboratory participated in all available rounds and all results submitted were satisfactory (z-score < ± 2).

The laboratory also participates in the nitrogen dioxide "inter comparison" exercise, managed by the National Physical Laboratory. During 2025, the Laboratory participated in all available rounds, with results classified as "Good" throughout 2025.

Diffusion Tube Annualisation

All diffusion tube monitoring locations within Aberdeenshire Council Area recorded data capture of 75% therefore it was not required to annualise any monitoring data. In addition, any sites with a data capture below 25% do not require annualisation.

Diffusion Tube Bias Adjustment Factors

Aberdeenshire Council have applied a national bias adjustment factor of 0.74 to the 2025 monitoring data. The national bias adjustment factor is used rather than a local bias adjustment factor as there are no co-located automatic nitrogen dioxide monitoring sites which would allow the local bias factor to be calculated. The National Bias Adjustment Factor has been used from Spreadsheet Version Number 03/26.

National Diffusion Tube Bias Adjustment Factor Spreadsheet						Spreadsheet Version Number: 03/26				
Follow the steps below in the correct order to show the results of relevant co-location studies Data only apply to tubes exposed monthly and are not suitable for correcting individual short-term monitoring periods Whenever presenting adjusted data, you should state the adjustment factor used and the version of the spreadsheet This spreadsheet will be updated every few months: the factors may therefore be subject to change. This should not discourage their immediate use. The LAQM Helpdesk is operated on behalf of Defra and the Devolved Administrations by Bureau Veritas, in conjunction with contract partners AECOM and the National Physical Laboratory. Spreadsheet maintained by the National Physical Laboratory. Original compiled by Air Quality Consultants Ltd.										
Step 1: Select the Laboratory that Analyses Your Tubes from the Drop-Down List If a laboratory is not shown, we have no data for this laboratory.			Step 2: Select a Preparation Method from the Drop-Down List If a preparation method is not shown, we have no data for this method at this laboratory.		Step 3: Select a Year from the Drop-Down List If a year is not shown, we have no data²		Step 4: Where there is only one study for a chosen combination, you should use the adjustment factor shown with caution. Where there is more than one study, use the overall factor³ shown in blue at the foot of the final column. If you have your own co-location study then see footnote⁴. If uncertain what to do then contact the Local Air Quality Management Helpdesk at LAQMHelpdesk@bureauveritas.com or 0800 0327953			
Analysed By	Method	Year	Site Type	Local Authority	Length of Study (months)	Diffusion Tube Mean Conc. (Dm) (µg/m³)	Automatic Monitor Mean Conc. (Cm) (µg/m³)	Bias (B)	Tube Precision	Bias Adjustment Factor (A) (Cm/Dm)
Aberdeen Scientific Services	20% TEA in water	2025	KS	Marylebone Road Intercomparison	12	46	31	47.2%	G	0.68
Aberdeen Scientific Services	20% TEA in water	2025	UB	Aberdeen City	12	20	15	33.5%	G	0.75
Aberdeen Scientific Services	20% TEA in water	2025	R	Aberdeen City	13	18	14	24.2%	G	0.80
Aberdeen Scientific Services	20% TEA in water	2025	R	Aberdeen City	13	28	20	39.6%	G	0.72
Aberdeen Scientific Services	20% TEA in water	2025	R	Aberdeen City	13	28	21	35.8%	G	0.74
Aberdeen Scientific Services	20% TEA in water	2025	R	Aberdeen City	11	29	23	28.4%	G	0.78
Aberdeen Scientific Services	20% TEA in water	2025		Overall Factor ³ (6 studies)				Use		0.74

Table C.1 – Bias Adjustment Factor

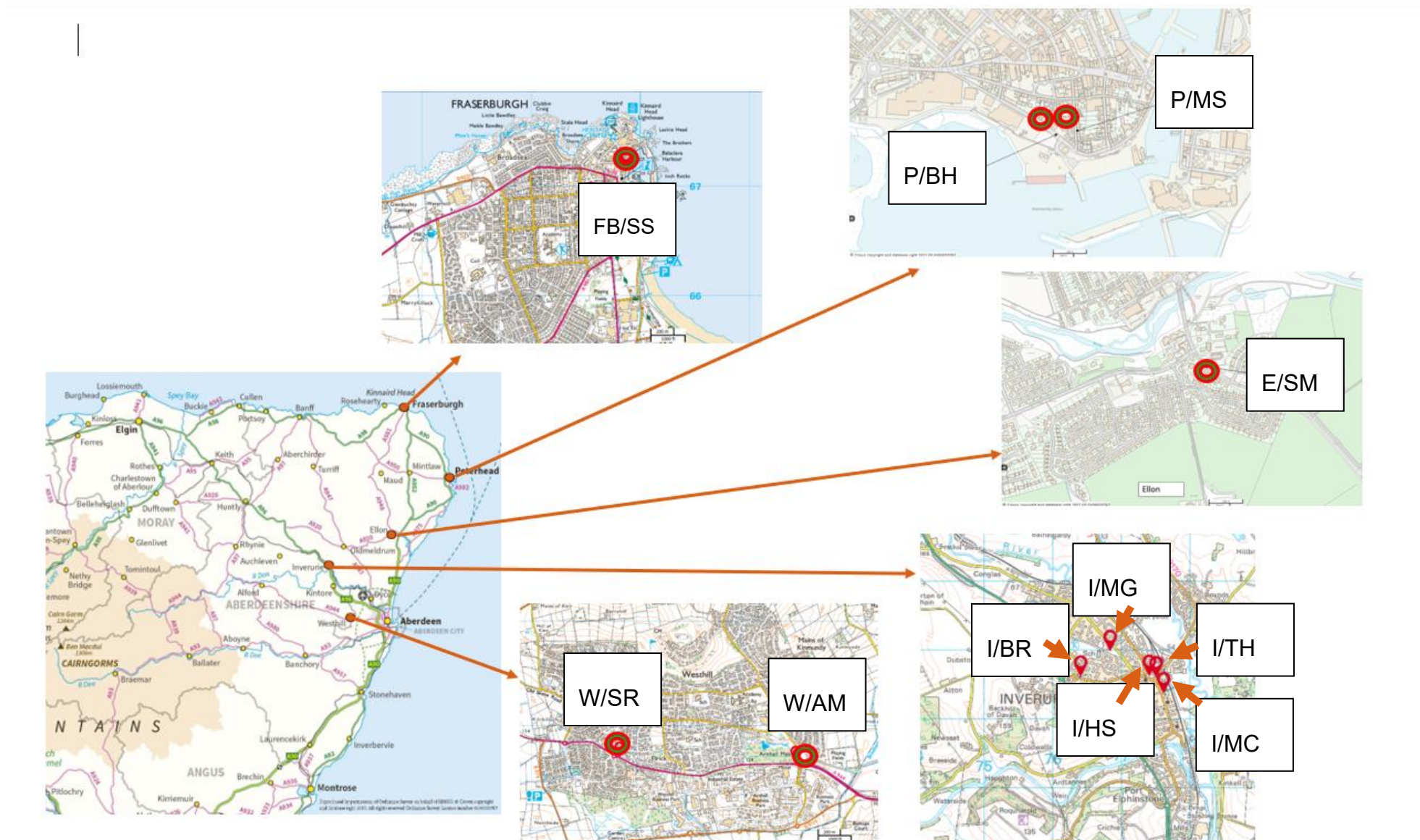
A summary of bias adjustment factors used by Aberdeenshire Council over the past five years is presented in Table C.1.

Year	Local or National	If National, Version of National Spreadsheet	Adjustment Factor
2025	National	03/26	0.74
2024	National	04/25	0.76
2023	National	03/24	0.73
2022	National	03/23	0.76
2021	National	06/22	0.77

NO₂ Fall-off with Distance from the Road

No diffusion tube NO₂ monitoring locations within Aberdeenshire required distance correction during 2025.

Appendix D: Diffusion Tube Monitoring Site



Glossary of Terms

Abbreviation	Description
AQAP	Air Quality Action Plan - A detailed description of measures, outcomes, achievement dates and implementation methods, showing how the LA intends to achieve air quality limit values'
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area – An area where air pollutant concentrations exceed / are likely to exceed the relevant air quality objectives. AQMAs are declared for specific pollutants and objectives
APR	Annual Progress Report
AURN	Automatic Urban and Rural Network (UK air quality monitoring network)
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DMRB	Design Manual for Roads and Bridges – Air quality screening tool produced by Highways England
DT	Diffusion Tube
FDMS	Filter Dynamics Measurement System
LAQM	Local Air Quality Management
NO ₂	Nitrogen Dioxide
NO _x	Nitrogen Oxides
PM ₁₀	Airborne particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10µm (micrometres or microns) or less
PM _{2.5}	Airborne particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5µm or less
QA/QC	Quality Assurance and Quality Control
SO ₂	Sulphur Dioxide

References

Aberdeenshire Council (2025) Passenger Transport Strategy 2025. Available at <https://engage.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/aberdeenshire-council-passenger-transport-strategy>

Aberdeenshire Council (2025) Carbon Budget 2024 – 2025 Final Update. Available at <https://aberdeenshire.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s28678/Appendix%201%20CARBON%20BUDGET%202024-2025%20FINAL%20UPDATE.pdf>

National Records of Scotland (2024) Mid 2023 population estimates. Available at <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/publications/mid-2023-population-estimates>

Nestrans (2024) Assessing the State of the Bus Network in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. Available at <https://www.nestrans.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/State-of-the-Network-November-2024.pdf>