

Review of Local Air Quality Management

Robert Vaughan
Resource, Atmosphere & Sustainability
(RAS)



Experience of Local Air Quality Management

LAQM has provided a strong foundation of professional expertise and understanding about local air quality

It has been effective in improving detailed understanding especially of local air quality hotspots

Over 180 authorities have Action Plans and many have been successful in implementing a wide range of measures especially where they have direct control

Local air quality objectives

Pollutant	Air Quality Objective	Measured as	Deadline
Benzene	16.25 µg/m ³	Running annual mean	31/12/2003
	5.00 µg/m ³	Annual mean	31/12/2010
1,3 – Butadiene	2.25 µg/m ³	Running annual mean	31/12/2003
Carbon Monoxide	10.0 µg/m ³	Maximum daily running 8-hour mean	31/12/2003
Lead	0.5 µg/m ³	Annual mean	31/12/2004
	0.25 µg/m ³	Annual mean	31/12/2008
Nitrogen Dioxide	200 µg/m ³ (not to be exceeded more than 35 times a year)	1 hour mean	31/12/2005
	40 µg/m ³	Annual mean	31/12/2005
PM10	50 µg/m ³ not to be exceeded more than 35 times a year	24 hour mean	31/12/2004
	40 µg/m ³	Annual mean	31/12/2004
Sulphur Dioxide	350 µg/m ³ not to be exceeded more than 24 times a year	1 hour mean	31/12/2004
	125 µg/m ³ not to be exceeded more than 3 times a year	24 hour mean	31/12/2004
	266 µg/m ³ not to be exceeded more than 35 times a year	15 minute mean	31/12/2005

Experience of Local Air Quality Management

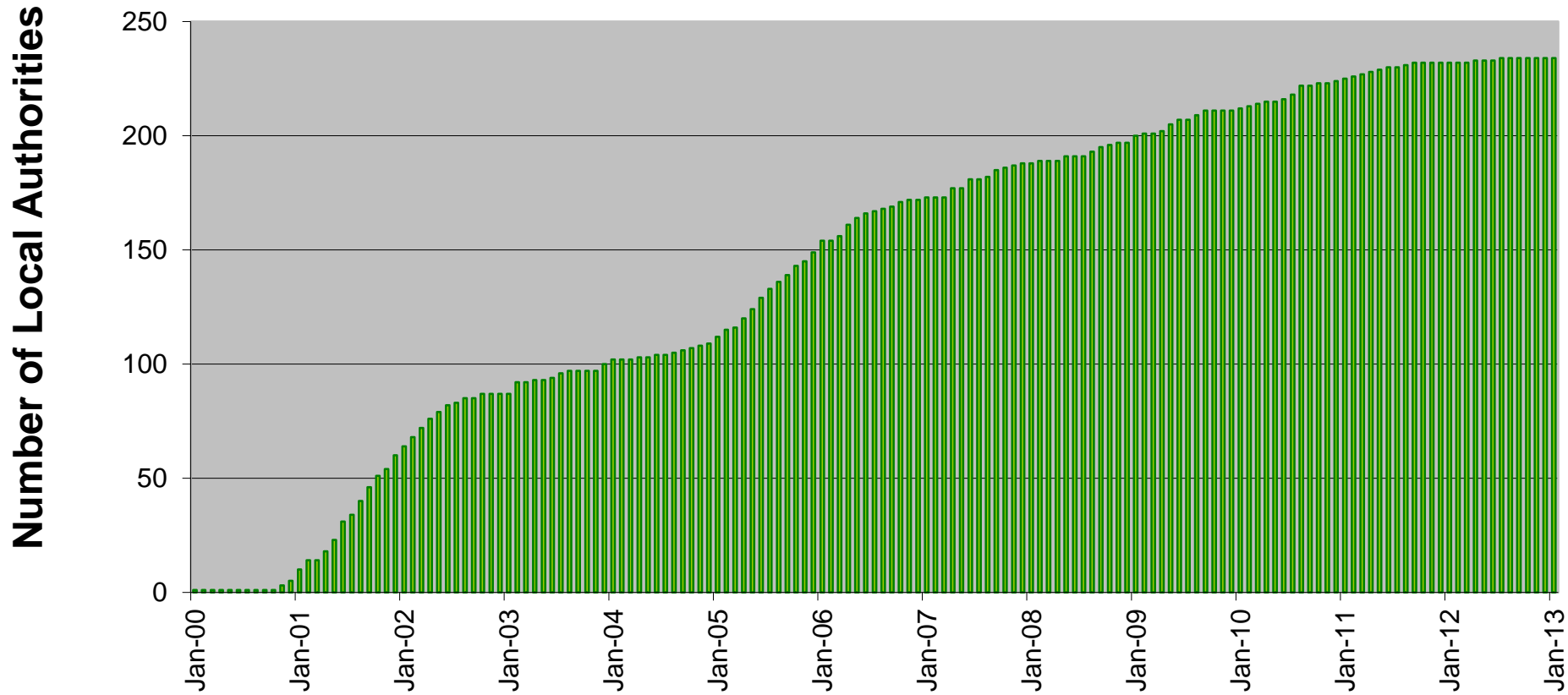
We still face significant challenges in meeting Air Quality limits for Nitrogen Dioxide but also to reduce PM especially PM2.5

Having EU limits and national objectives can cause confusion as to which has priority and what the role of local authorities is in meeting EU obligations

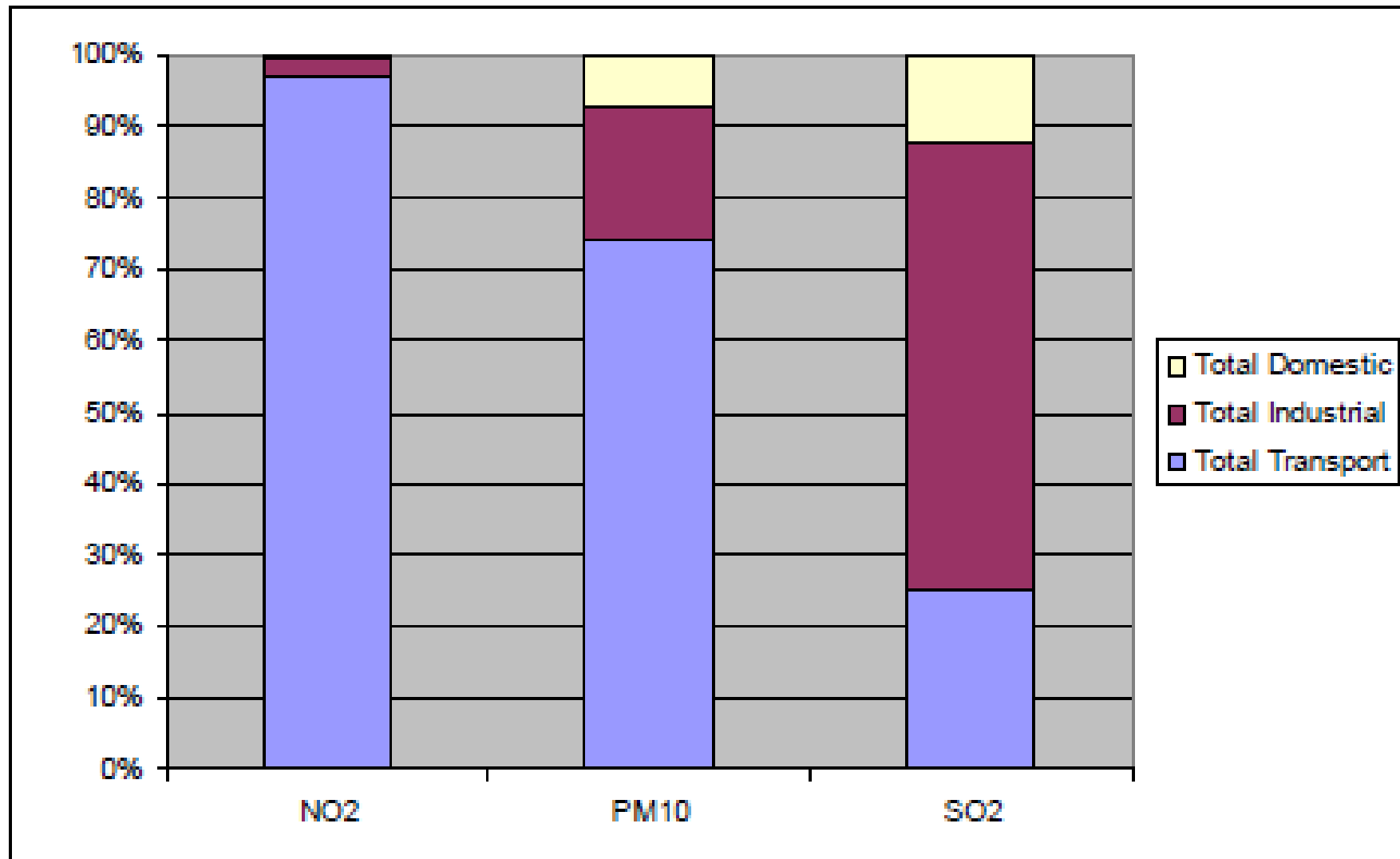
Reporting is focused more on diagnosis and assessment rather than action planning and delivering measures

Experience of local air quality management: around 240

Local authorities in England have declared an air quality management area



Most AQMAs have been declared for transport reasons



Review of Local Air Quality Management

The relationship between local air quality and EU air quality standards is not clear and the contribution local authorities make is not transparent.

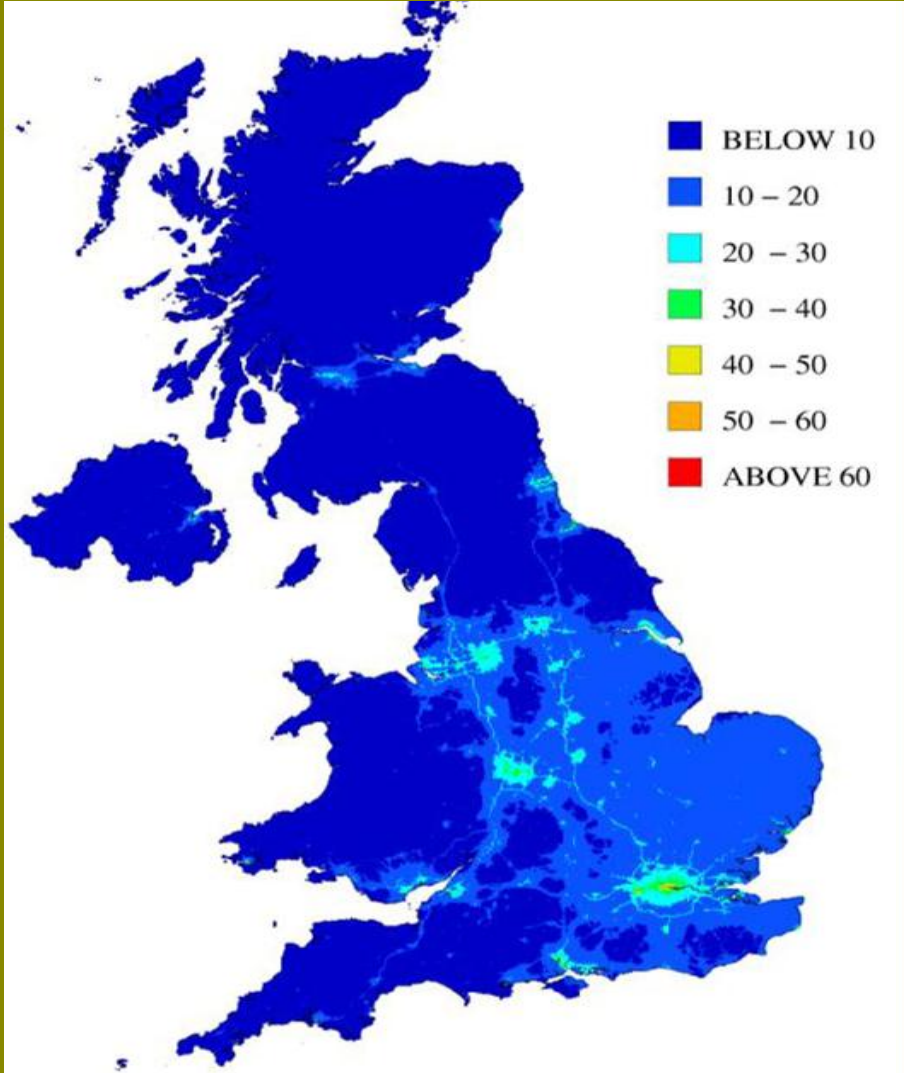
Need a clearer line of sight between local action and how this contributes to meeting EU air quality standards

There are sometimes competing priorities between District and County authorities and it is not always clear who leads on interventions.

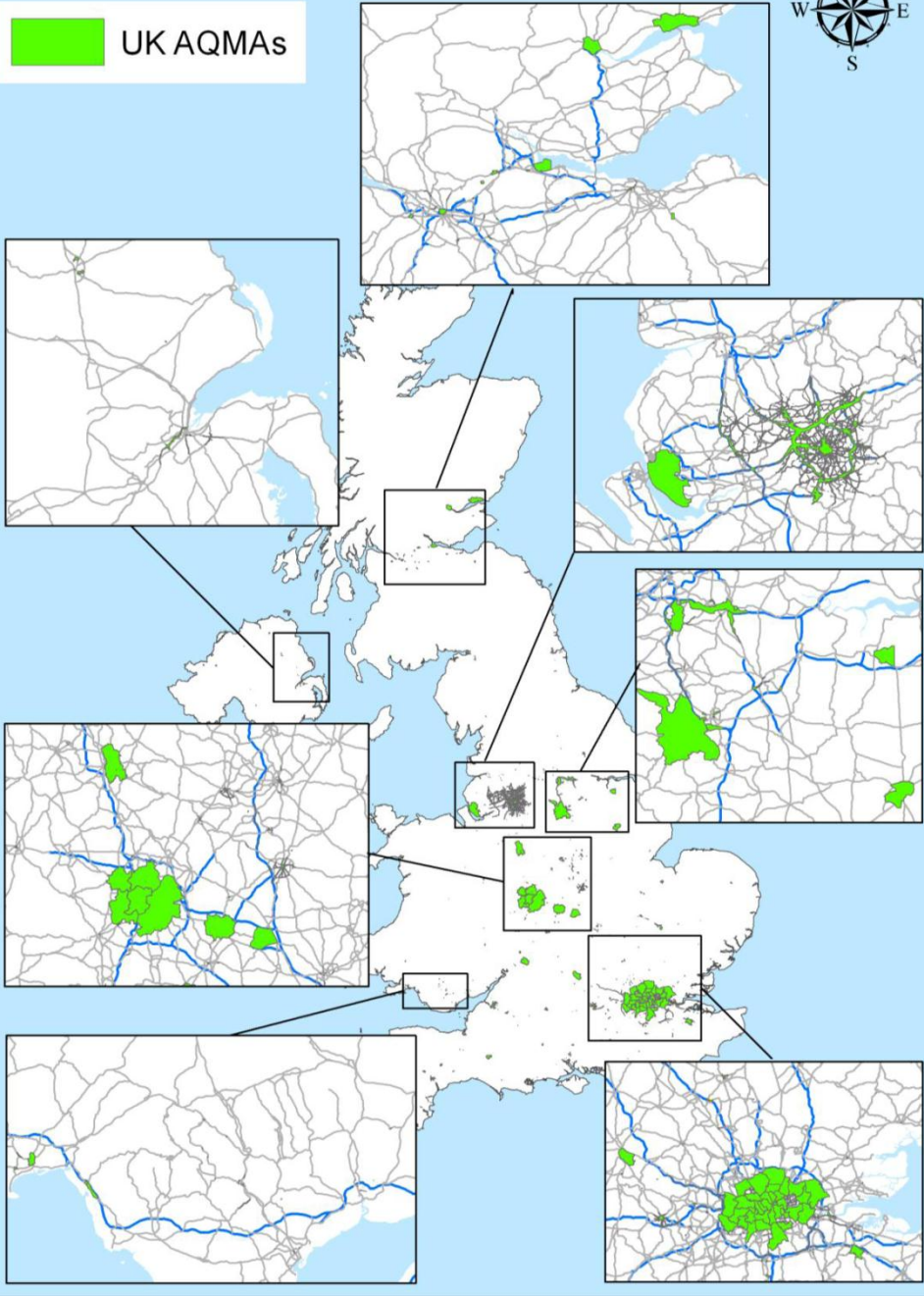
LAQM is very report and diagnosis driven – needs more focus on action to improve air quality and reduce emissions

Need to improve our evidence base for air quality measures and ensure good practice and innovation is shared more widely.

Distribution of NO₂ concentrations and AQMAs



© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved, Licence number 100022861 [2012]



There are many examples of innovation



But it is challenging to demonstrate effectiveness and there has been limited quantification of impacts

Our aims for review of local air quality management are to

- Ensure local authority action is focused on what is necessary to support air quality improvement and to meet EU air quality standards
- Ensure local government and other stakeholders know what they can do to improve air quality and work together
- Reduce reporting requirements for local authorities, to ensure more time to focus on action to improve air quality
- Provide better access to evidence-based measures to improve air quality, including on transport & public communications



Ensure local authority action is focused on what is necessary to support air quality improvement and to meet EU air quality standards

- Option 3 proposes
 - Consolidate national objectives with EU standards
 - reduce local reporting and more focus on measures
 - Local authorities use national assessment and supplement with local information as necessary
 - Local authorities report on progress but not required to assess and report on air quality outside this except to inform development of measures and effectiveness of measures.
- Option 2 Proposes
 - Retain National objectives but align with EU standards
 - Share national assessment but retain local reporting and assessment
 - Local authorities provide regular (annual) progress reports on local air quality.
- Questions
 - Views on consolidating EU standards and national objectives
 - Views on range of objectives – should PM2.5 be included, should number of objectives be reduced?
 - Views on using national assessment as compared to local assessment

Ensure local government and other stakeholders know what they can do to improve air quality and work together

- Options not significantly different in effect for this aim but option 3 is expected to provide stronger driver for coordination and cooperation between different tiers compared to others
- Seeking views on
 - How cooperation between tiers of local government can be improved
 - Evidence for where joint working is effective and what has helped to achieve this or less effective and why?
 - Views on need to review balance of responsibility between tiers of local government

Reduce reporting requirements for local authorities, to ensure more time to focus on action to improve air quality

- Option 2 proposes
 - Single annual progress report on air quality
 - Retain AQMAs
 - Retain Action plans
- Option 3 proposes
 - Reporting restricted to progress on delivery of action plan measures for areas with EU exceedences.
 - Do not retain AQMAs as currently.
- Seeking views on
 - Current arrangements and how they could be simplified
 - Need for public facing report on local air quality
 - Need for line of sight between local reporting of air quality and reporting to EU
 - Should current arrangements for AQMAs be retained/changed?

Provide better access to evidence-based measures to improve air quality, including on transport & public communications

- Has been difficult to evaluate benefits of measures introduced to improve air quality
- Local authorities need access to cost effective and evidence based measures to improve air quality
- Local authorities now play a key role in local public health and air pollution is a significant local indicator – need access to information on arguments to support business case for interventions to improve air quality and to unlock support for action
- Options 2 and 3 are not differentiated for this aim
- Seeking views on
 - Extent to which this is an issue and whether stronger evidence base would help.
 - Examples of good practice which can help to improve air quality and communications on this.
- Working with DfT on guidance for cost effective transport measures.

We explore 4 possible Options

Option #1 Business As Usual with limited changes

- Retain separate local air quality regulations .
- Maintain review and assessment reporting cycle, but remove the need to carry out Further Assessments.
- Review the need for continued assessment and reporting on objectives that have been met.

Option #2 Concentration on Action Planning and focused reporting

- All of option 1
- Change focus from review and assessment to action planning.
- Reduced and more focused reporting

Option #3 Alignment with EU requirements to meet air quality limit values

- All of Option 2 plus Local authorities no longer required to carry out detailed assessments or to make/amend AQMAs.
- Consolidate and amend Air Quality (England) and Air Quality Standards Regulations so that local authorities work towards compliance with EU air quality limit values and targets where there is scope for action at the local level.
- No reporting requirements on local hotspots outside of the national assessment of EU air quality standards but a stronger interest and reporting on local measures which help to improve air quality and bring us closer to compliance with EU air quality standards.
- Local authorities to focus on action planning and public health and report on measures taken to improve air quality and these are included in reports to EU on compliance where quantified.

Option #4 Separate local air quality management duties do not exist

- No separate LAQM duties but local authorities would still have to take account of air quality when appraising transport and development proposals and policies.
- Provisions for LAQM in the Environment Act would be repealed along with Air Quality England Regulations.
- Air Quality Standards Regulations amended as per Option 3.
- No specific duties on local authorities to assess or report on air quality locally – greater reliance on national assessment.



We are seeking views on

- Whether the aims we have set out for the review of LAQM are the right aims and which option might best deliver these
- Whether we should consolidate the EU limits and National Objectives or otherwise review the objectives local authorities have (e.g. PM_{2.5}, SO₂ etc) – increasing reliance on national assessment information.
- Whether the allocation of Air Quality duties between different tiers is appropriate
- Whether LA reporting requirements should be further simplified with more focus on action planning and less on review and assessment of local air quality – how far can this go
- The evidence base for cost effective measures and how we can develop this.
- The consultation was formerly published on 12th July 2013:

https://consult.defra.gov.uk/communications/https-consult-defra-gov-uk-laqm_review



Timeline – next steps

Provisional Timeline	
Milestone	Completion date
Consultation document published – 12 th July (6 week consultation)	30 Aug 2013
Analysis – Summary of Responses & Government Response	November 2013
Drafting of <u>regulatory</u> consultation document (preparation of Statutory Instrument) and impact assessment (timescale subject to option or variation chosen)	End March 2014
Clearance procedures for regulatory consultation document and impact assessment	April-May 2014
Cleared Final regulatory consultation document package, including Press Release	May 2014
Publication of regulatory consultation document & Impact Assessment (assume 6 week consultation)	June-July 2014
Analysis – Summary of Responses – Government Response (including revision of Statutory Instrument in line with comments on con doc)	Sep-Oct 2014
Statutory Instrument made (to come into force on the following day or later specified date)	April 2015