

**Tower Hamlets Air Quality Annual Status Summary Report for
2016**





Introduction

This report provides a brief overview of air quality in Tower Hamlets during 2015.

The EU sets limits for a number of known air pollutants, that member states must meet. Tower Hamlets is exceeding EU limits for the gas Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2) in parts of the borough. The main areas of concern are The City fringe, Commercial Street area, Aldgate, Whitechapel, Limehouse area, and areas along the A11, A12 & A13, however the whole borough is designated as an Air Quality Management Area for NO_2 . Tower Hamlets is required by the Government and the Mayor of London to monitor air pollution in the borough, and take action to reduce it. The Government and the Mayor of London also have a range of responsibilities for taking action to reduce pollution.

We are currently meeting the limits that are set by the EU for all other air pollutants, although we remain focused on Particulate Matter (PM_{10} and $\text{PM}_{2.5}$) because these pollutants have detrimental impacts on health at any level. The whole borough is declared an Air Quality Management Area for PM_{10} .

The main sources of pollution in the borough are road transport and gas boilers/CHPs.

NO_2

We monitor NO_2 across the borough through a combination of highly accurate continuous (or automatic) monitoring stations and indicative low-cost diffusion tubes. In 2015, overall, levels of NO_2 decreased at one monitoring station but showed no significant change at the others.

PM_{10}

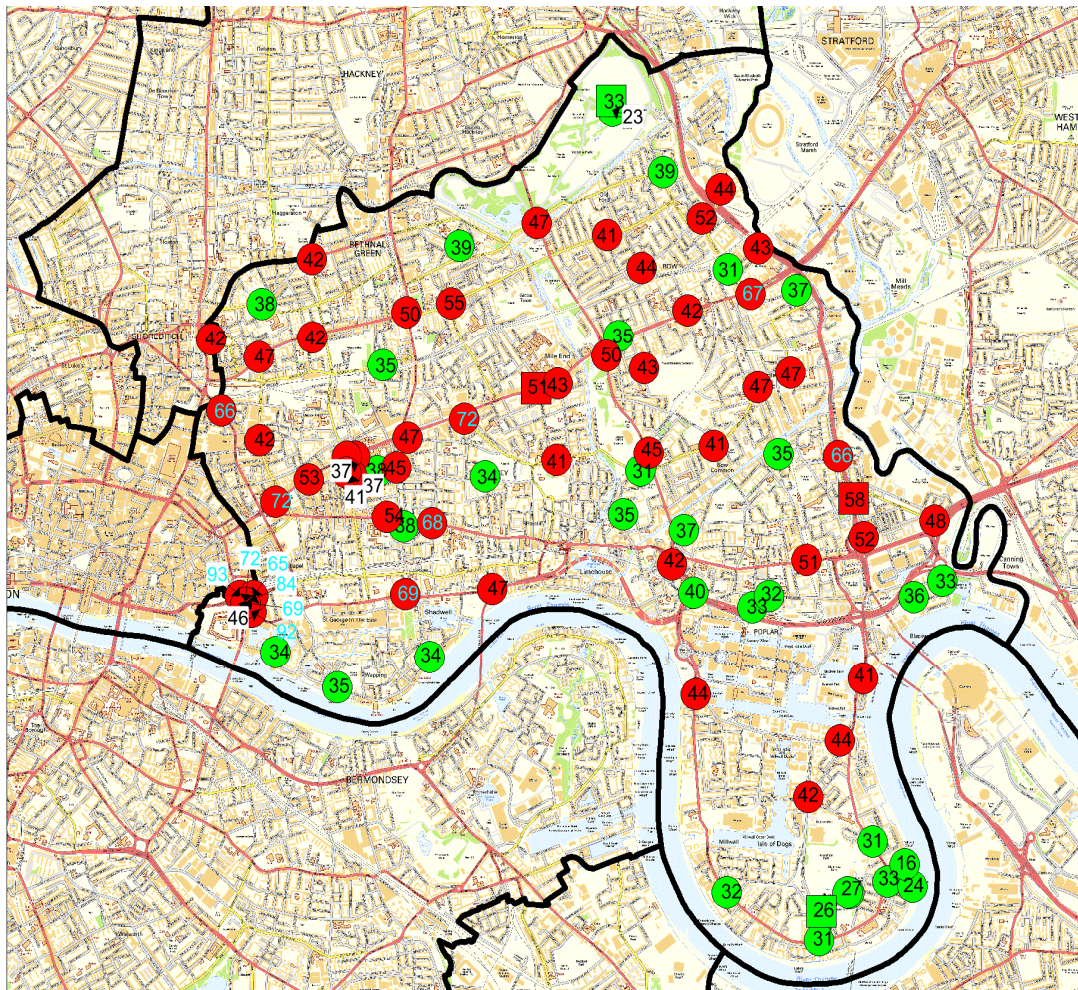
We monitor PM_{10} at three continuous (or automatic) monitoring stations. In 2015, overall, levels of PM_{10} decreased slightly from the previous year.

$\text{PM}_{2.5}$

We monitor PM_{10} at one continuous (or automatic) monitoring station. In 2015, overall, levels of $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ decreased slightly from the previous year





NO₂ Monitoring

Figure 1 Map of NO₂ monitoring sites in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, showing annual mean results from 2015



Legend

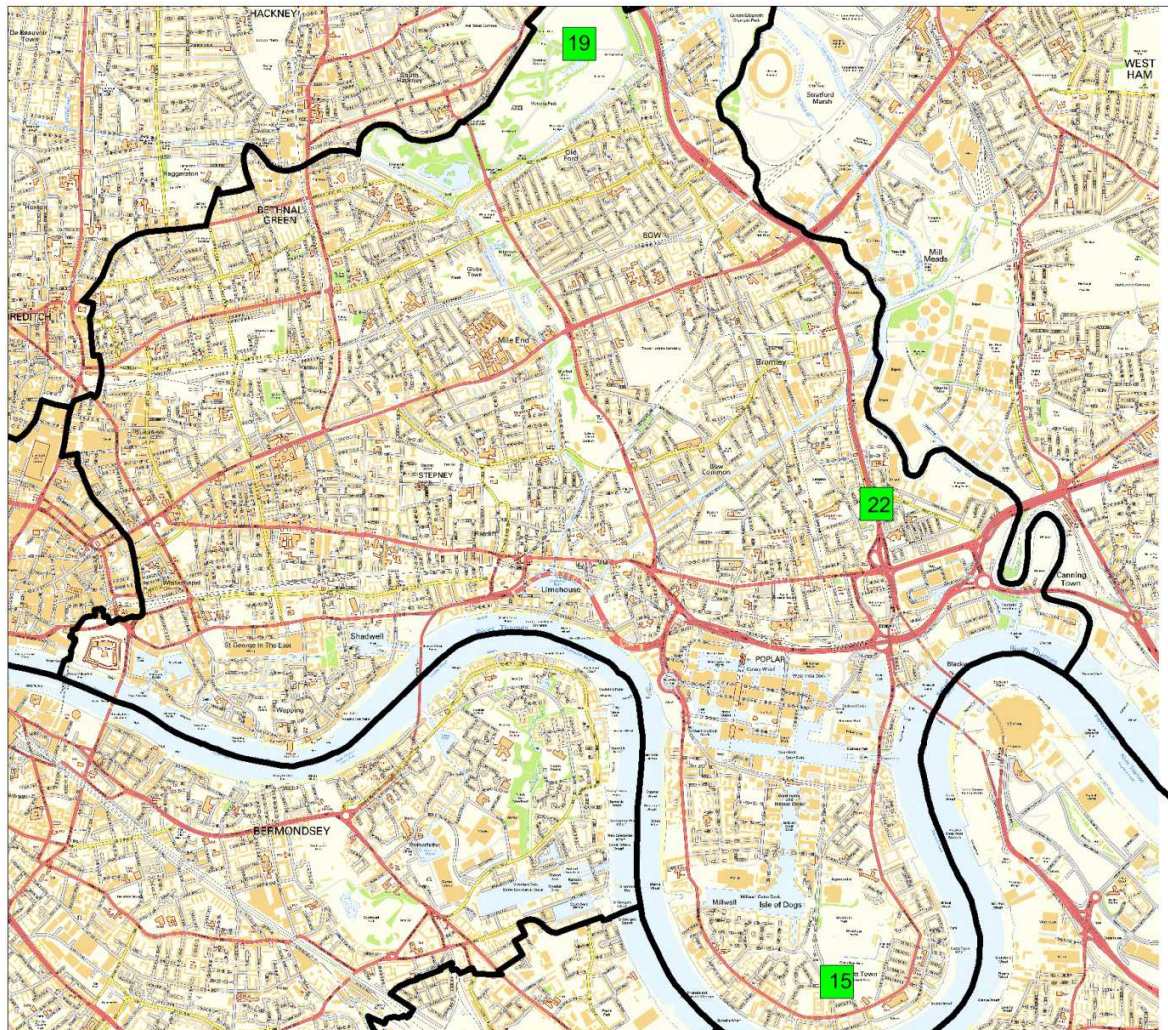
On this map, the circles represent NO₂ diffusion tubes, and the squares represent continuous NO₂ monitors. The EU limit value for annual mean NO₂ is 40µg m⁻³. All monitoring sites that recorded NO₂ concentrations above this level are coloured in red and all that are below this level are coloured in green. The numbers in each square or circle are the annual mean NO₂ concentration for 2015.

- Continuous Monitor (> 40 ug m³)
(White Text)

- Diffusion Tubes (< 40 ug m³)

- Diffusion Tubes (40 - 59 ug m³)

- Diffusion Tube (> 60 ug m³)
(Blue Text)


Over the past 3 years the NO₂ concentrations have held steady at both the Victoria Park Background site and the Blackwall Tunnel Roadside site, showing no increasing or decreasing trend. The Mile End Roadside monitoring site though has shown a decreasing trend in NO₂ concentrations with a large reduction from 2014 to 2015 (however at the time of reporting the 2015 data had not been fully ratified so is still subject to changes).

PM₁₀ Monitoring

Figure 2 Map of PM₁₀ monitoring sites in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, showing annual mean results from 2015



Legend

The green squares represent continuous PM₁₀ monitors. The EU limit value for annual mean PM₁₀ is 40µg m⁻³. All monitoring sites recorded levels beneath this threshold, and so are coloured in green. The numbers in each square are the recorded annual mean PM₁₀ concentrations for 2015.

Continuous Monitors (< 40 ug m/3)



Over the past 3 years PM10 concentrations have decreased slightly at the Victoria Park Background site and a larger decrease was observed at the Blackwall Tunnel Roadside Site.



Actions to Improve Air Quality

Tower Hamlets' two main air quality achievements in 2015 were:

- Our Zero Emissions Network Project won two awards bringing the total to three awards for the project. The awards were:
 - Fleet Heroes Awards 2015 – Air Quality Initiative Award
 - National CSR Awards – Special Judges Award for Community Innovation
- Securing funding from the Mayors Air Quality Fund for a second round of projects including the second phase of the ZEN Project, Anti Idling project and London Low Emissions Construction Partnership.

Tower Hamlets' main priorities to reduce exposure to poor air quality for the year ahead are:

- Efficiently using the planning system to reduce exposure to air pollution and to ensure that new development does not lead to a further deterioration in air quality due to the high levels of development the borough is currently experiencing.
- To roll out our anti idling project including anti-idling action days and promoting the anti-idling messages to reduce pollution.
- Review and update our Air Quality Action Plan by April 2017 with new measures to reduce pollution levels and exposure across the borough.

Further information

For more detailed information on air pollution in the borough see:

http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ignl/environment_and_planning/pollution/air_quality/reports.aspx

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