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Air Quality Policy 2014

Roger Herbert
Department for Natural Resources
Welsh Government

Overview

- Air Quality in Wales
- 2014 Update
 - Changes at a national level
 - EC review of AQ policy
 - NO₂ compliance
 - Grant Schemes



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Air Quality in Wales

- AQ in Wales is a high priority for Welsh Government.
- We are committed to tackling the sources of pollution and ensuring people's right to clean air.
- Our driver is not only European legislation, but our commitment to protect human health and the environment.



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Air Quality Challenges

- Currently 39 AQMAs within Wales - 11 LAs
- Particulate issues in Port Talbot
- Nickel in Pontardawe above target value
- Modelled B[a]P exceedences in South Wales and Swansea zones
- Ecosystems: deposition on sensitive habitats sites



Changes at a national level

- New Minister with responsibility for air quality:

Carl Sargeant AM,
Minister for Natural Resources



- LAQM
 - Further Assessment: the Deregulation Bill
 - Reviewing the process



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Changes at a national level

- Review of Air Quality Incident Response in Wales
 - Following Fforestfach incident, Wales Resilience Forum concerned that there were potential gaps in the response mechanisms
 - capabilities across Welsh Local Authorities were better in some places than in others
 - Wales Resilience Partnership Team (WRPT) tasked WG with leading a task and finish group to review response provisions (includes PHW, PHE CRCE, NRW and LAs)
 - Findings and recommendations accepted by WRPT, including Local Resilience Fora
 - Aim to provide clear expectations and maximise resources nationally
 - Consistent with complementary reviews



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EC Air Quality Policy Review

- Air Quality Legislation in the UK that derives from the EU consists of:
 - The Ambient Air Quality Directive
 - The National Emissions Ceilings Directive
 - Source control legislation
- Review conclusions published in December 2013



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EC Air Quality Policy Review

1. A Clean Air Programme for Europe provides the framework for AQ policy until 2030
2. Proposal to repeal and replace 2001 NECD
 - New stricter ceilings for SO₂, NO_x, NH₃, NMVOC for 2020 and 2030
 - Proposal also covers PM_{2.5} from 2020 and CH₄ from 2030
3. Proposal for a Medium Combustion Plant Directive
 - Regulate emissions from plants between 1 – 50 MWth input
4. Recommendation to ratify the amended Gothenburg protocol agreed in 2012

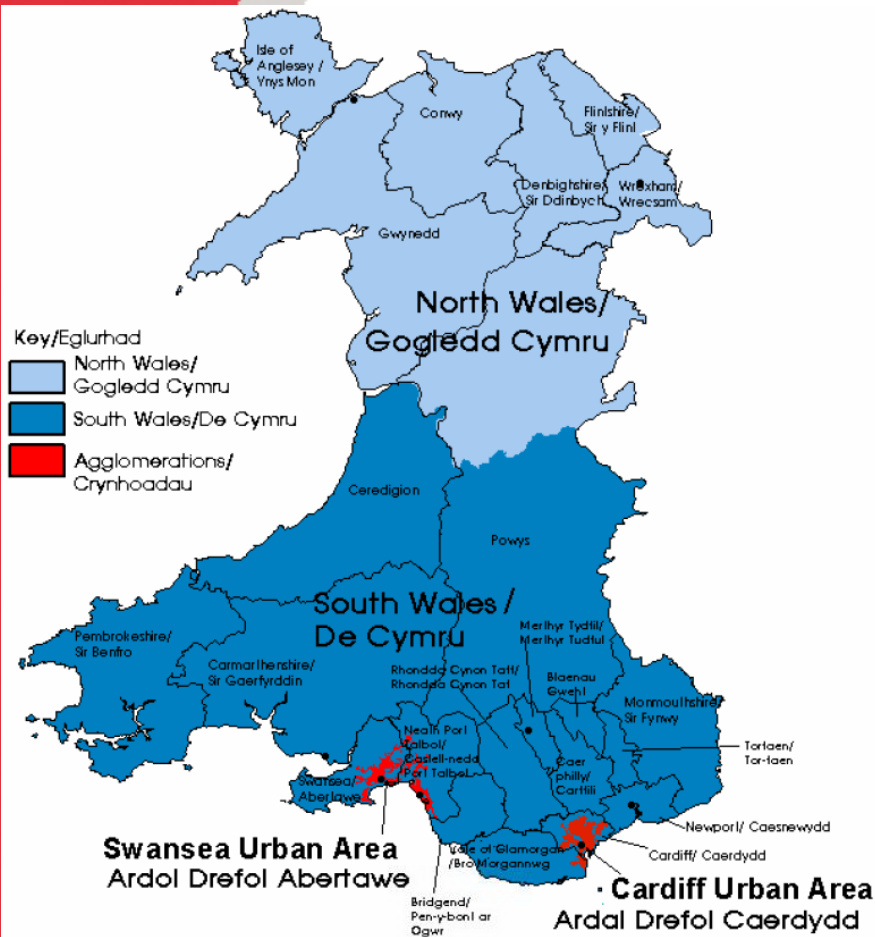


NO₂ Compliance

- Wales has 4 zones for assessment under AQD
- In recognition of the significant challenge of reducing NO₂ levels, the AQD allowed MS to apply for a time extension until 2015
- 3 / 4 zones granted a time extension: North Wales zone, Cardiff urban area and Swansea urban area
- Solutions require both national and local measures



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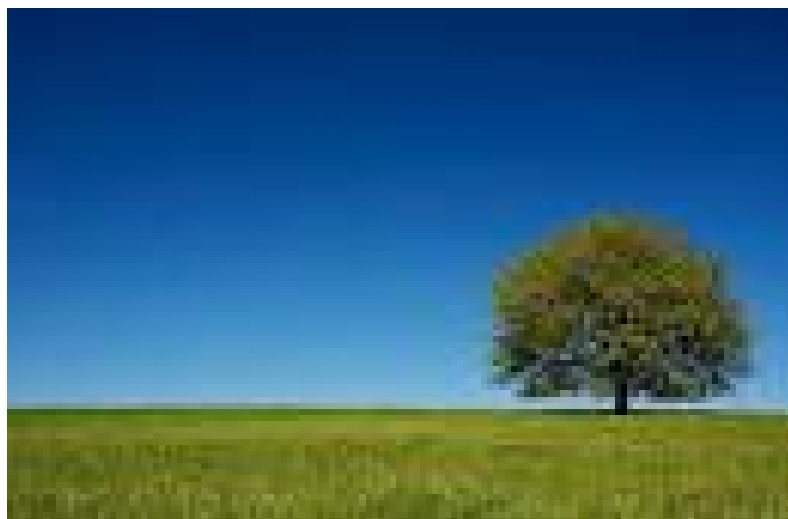


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TRANQUIL, GREENER AND CLEANER PLACES GRANTS:

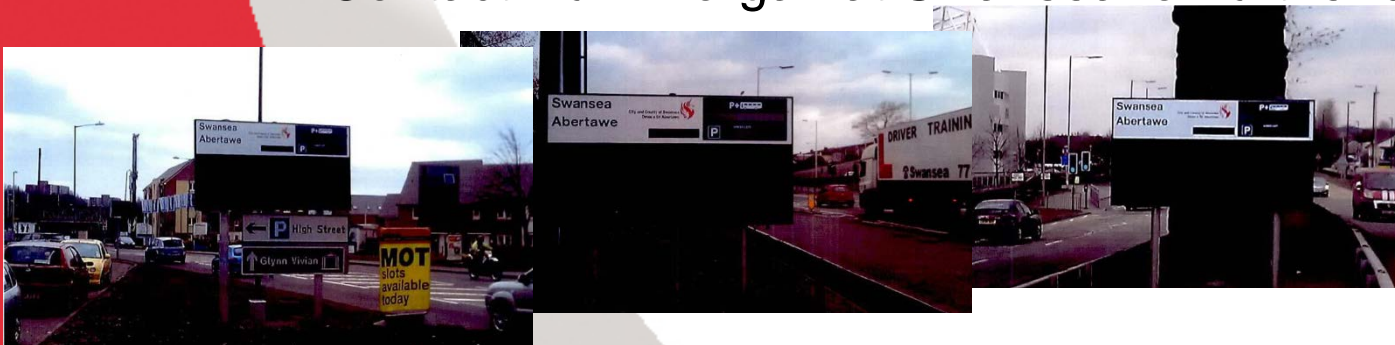
2012/13 and 2013/14



SWANSEA NOWCASTER PROJECT

Variable traffic signs with messages linked to real-time air quality prediction system

- Three variable road signs installed in 2012/13, focusing on the deprived Hafod AQMA
- Effectiveness of the system has yet to be evaluated – Welsh Government unlikely to provide further funding until method is proven effective in averting potential air quality objective exceedences in pilot area
- Contact Huw Morgan at Swansea for further details



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PORT TALBOT URBAN TREES PROJECT

Planting trees known to be effective at absorbing air pollutants in a tree-poor area

- Contact Victoria Seller at NPT CBC for further details



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TWYNYRODYN ROAD, MERTHYR TYDFIL

Small-scale traffic project to address NO₂ exceedences at specific residential properties

- Contact Llewellyn-Morgan Patrick at Merthyr Tydfil CBC for further details



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RHYL CUT WILDLIFE CORRIDOR

Creating a traffic-free route for walkers and cyclists away from busy roads



Photograph by G2G Communities CIC ©

- Contact Garry Davies at Denbighshire County Council for further details



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RHONDDA CYNON TAF CBC TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PROJECT

Optimising traffic signals to reduce congestion and improve air quality in deprived communities

- Contact Neil Pilliner at RCT CBC for further details



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NEATH CANAL TOWPATH FROM BRITON FERRY TO NEATH TOWN CENTRE

Restoring a traffic-free route for walkers and cyclists away from busy roads

- Contact Geoff Marquis at NPT CBC for further details



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SNATCHWOOD ROAD GREENWAY

Creating a traffic-free route for walkers and cyclists away from busy roads

- Contact Andrew Nevill at Torfaen CBC for further details



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NAVIGATION COLLIERY SITE REGENERATION

Scoping possible solutions to hydrogen sulphide emissions from old mine workings at historic site (outside scope of LAQM)

- Contact Glenn Cooper at Caerphilly CBC for further details



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TIDY TOWNS

(incorporating Tranquil, Greener and Cleaner Places):

2014/15

Tidy Towns

- Merged with TGCP to encourage integrated projects with multiple benefits tailored to an area's needs
- Improving local environment quality (LEQ) should be the primary purpose of any project
- LEQ issues include (but are not limited to): litter, graffiti, chewing gum, antisocial behaviour, **air pollution**, environmental noise and inadequate provision of high quality accessible green space
- Projects must help to improve the quality of life of those suffering from deprivation
- or regenerate the environment in deprived communities



2014/2015 OVER 50 PROJECTS FUNDED INCLUDING OFF-ROAD ACTIVE TRAVEL ROUTES IN...

- Anglesey – coastal path
- Blaenau Gwent – pedestrian routes to local nature reserves
- Denbighshire – green infrastructure improvements for Rhyl
- NPT – canal towpath from Neath town centre to Tonna
- **BUT**
- No air quality specific grant applications received this year!
- Next bidding round expected in early 2015...



Summary

- New Minister with responsibility for air quality: Carl Sargeant AM, Minister for Natural Resources
- We are looking at the available options to improve the effectiveness of LAQM
- NO₂ compliance relies on effective and timely measures implemented at national and local levels
- Welsh Government grant schemes are being reviewed – we will keep you informed of developments





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Thank you!

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