

Appendix 2

Covid-19

At the time of writing, the Country is still is on the process of coming out of the restrictions initiated as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic.

When the first lockdown was implemented this had initially resulted in reduced emissions and consequently lower measured concentrations, particularly for NO₂ of around 30%. The situation for PM_{2.5}, with a reduction of around 20%, and for ozone is less clear, and was potentially influenced by the exceptional high amounts of solar energy in the spring, and longer than normal periods of easterly winds bringing emissions from continental Europe over the UK.

Figure 1 below illustrates the trend for the 7-day rolling average (in black) for NO₂ between January and December 2020 in comparison to the average of the previous 5-year 7 day rolling average (in dotted blue) and the figures for 2021 so far in solid blue.

Figure 2 showing PM_{2.5}.uses the same key as NO₂ above, and it can be seen that the trends displayed differ from those in Figure 1 for the reasons mentioned in the second paragraph above. All values are taken from the Hull Freetown Way Automatic Urban and Rural Network (AURN) air quality monitoring station. https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/networks/site-info?uka_id=UKA00450

The graphs show that during 2020 monitored levels were below the 5-year rolling average, however, the amount of that reduction decreased after the initial lockdown ended.

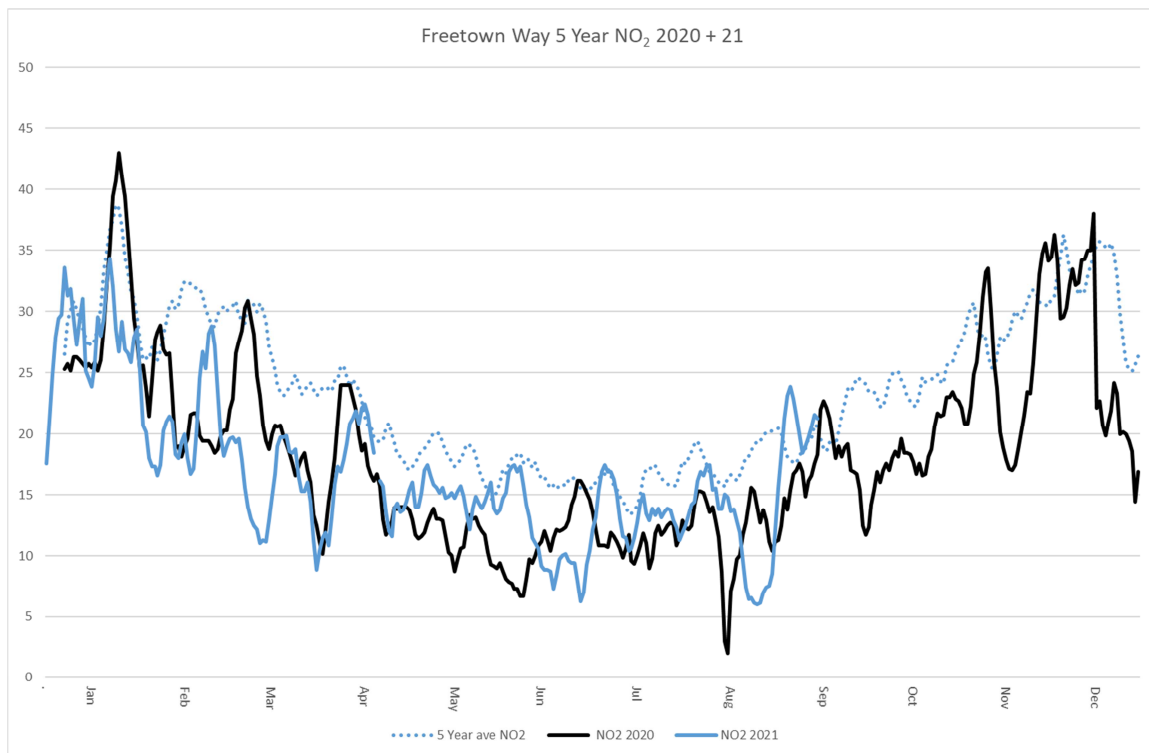
The Authority and local people are keen to ensure that the improvements in air quality are maintained once life returns to some form of normality and a number of separate groups of Officers and members are looking at a variety of options to try and achieve this generally related to supporting working from home, staggered working and a shift in transport modes and measures associated with the school run.

A number of the measures detailed in the Action Plan summary have been brought forward, and include adaptations made possible by the current situation. One example of this are moves to extend the cycling facilities, which includes a widening of cycle facilities on key arterial routes, and even closing some roads to private cars.

It is very early in what is a very fluid situation, and future ASR's will provide more detail of the impact on air quality of the pandemic and schemes such as the introduction of pop-up cycle lanes.

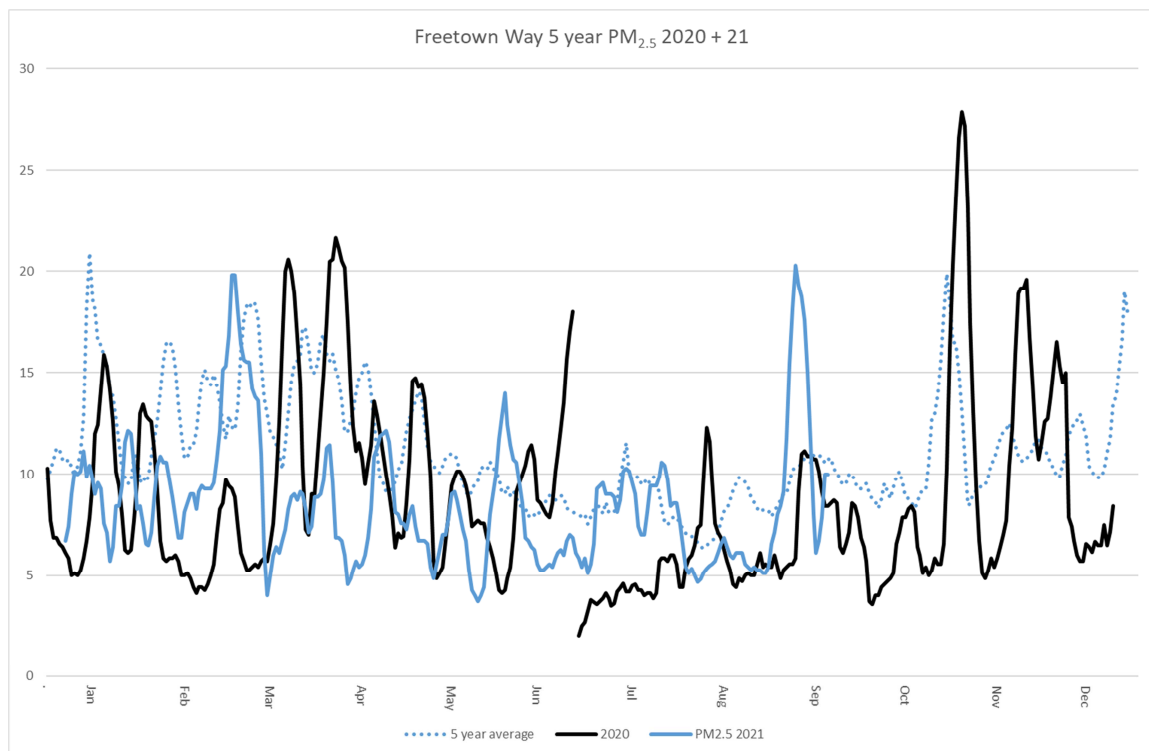
Prior to lockdown, Hull was at the bottom of the national table for the percentage of the population working from home. During lock-down, many people found ways of working remotely, which reduced the need to travel, which reduces congestion and has positive impacts for local air quality. There is the potential for the Council to encourage and support continued working from home, by for example creating opportunities with the smart city platform.

Figure 1: The current rolling 7-day average in comparison to the average of the previous 5-year 7 day rolling average for NO₂ as at 20/09/2021



Source: <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/data/>

Figure 2: The current rolling 7-day average in comparison to the average of the previous 5 year 7 day rolling average for PM_{2.5} as at 20/09/2020



Source: <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/data/>