

Clean Air Barnet Insight Report

Air Quality in Barnet – 10 years of improvement

Air Quality in London, including in Barnet, has improved over the last 10 years, but our air quality does not yet meet WHO guidelines and for NO₂ we are “middle of the pack” compared to the rest of London.

Data Sources

This briefing is based on analysis of information from GLA, Air Quality England, Barnet Council and Breathe London. Barnet Council has monitoring stations at Chalgrove School Finchley N3 (an “urban background” location with a school street) and at Tally Ho Corner North Finchley N12 (a kerbside monitor), which have been measuring NO₂ and PM₁₀ for over 10 years. During 2022 and 2023 there were four Breathe London monitors collecting NO₂ and PM_{2.5} data at Cat Hill Allotments East Barnet EN5 (background measurement) and three primary schools – Martin Primary East Finchley N2, The Orion Primary Mill Hill NW7 and Wessex Gardens Primary Golders Green N11.

Air Quality - NO₂

Council monitoring 2014-2023

Barnet annual mean NO₂ has fallen over the last decade. The Tally Ho Corner mean reduced by 54% from 57 to 26 µg/m³ (31 µg/m³ lower) and Chalgrove School reduced by 41% from 27 to 16 µg/m³ (11 µg/m³ lower). The reductions in Barnet are in line with those at seen at outer London roadside and urban background locations in other boroughs.

Breathe London monitoring 2022-23

The 2023 NO₂ annual mean ranged from 23.5 to 27.9 µg/m³ and was between 7.5% and 8.6% lower than 2022. Comparing Breathe Barnet annual means for 2023 with the rest of London shows Barnet to be “in the middle of the pack” for NO₂ levels; ranging from 85 to 165 out of 268 locations.. The WHO guideline that the NO₂ daily mean should not exceed 25 µg/m³ on more than 3 - 4 days per year was breached in Barnet between 128 and 183 days. While latest concentrations in Barnet meet the UK standard of 40 µg/m³ they do not yet meet the World Health Organisation (WHO) guideline of 10 µg/m³ with many locations being above 20 µg/m³.

Air Quality Particulate Matter (PM)

Council monitoring PM₁₀ 2014-2023

Between 2014 and 2023, PM₁₀ annual mean at Tally Ho reduced by 17% from 23 to 19 µg/m³ and Chalgrove School mean reduced by 11% from 18 to 16 µg/m³. Tally Ho was higher than Chalgrove School every year. Both locations currently meet the UK target (40 µg/m³) but neither meet the WHO guideline (15 µg/m³).

Breathe London PM_{2.5} 2022-23

In 2023 the four Breathe London monitors PM_{2.5} annual mean ranged from 7.8 to 9.0 µg/m³ – 8% to 19% lower than in 2022. Cat Hill saw the largest fall and Martin Primary the smallest. The Orion Primary was 11.1%, and Wessex Gardens Primary 13% lower. The WHO guideline that PM_{2.5} daily mean should not exceed 15 µg/m³ on more than 3 - 4 days per year was breached at the four Barnet Breathe London locations between 31 and 43 days.

Clean Air Barnet

Clean Air Barnet is a community collaboration between Friends of the Earth Barnet, Middlesex University and Mothers CAN that aims to promote and enable evidence based conversations, decisions and actions that lead to improved air quality.

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