

HEALTH: EMISSIONS OVER LIMIT

Fears over air pollution level

BY CHRIS BURN
chris.burn@thestar.co.uk
@chrisburn_star

Air pollution in Sheffield is set to remain in breach of European limits until at least 2025 – a decade later than hoped.

Revised Government figures have extended the expected time it will take the city to get below the European Union's nitrogen dioxide pollution limit.

A report in September 2011 said Sheffield should be complying with the target by 2015.

However, updated projections from the Department for Environment,

Food and Rural Affairs said nitrogen dioxide emissions are now projected to be in breach of EU guidelines until 2025.

A Defra spokesman said the projections have been updated to 'reflect more accurate assumptions' about how cars contribute to pollution. He said the assumptions are 'more pessimistic' than previous projections.

The spokesman said: "This is largely due to the failure of the European vehicle emission standards for diesel cars to deliver expected emission reductions."

Neil Parry, from the East End Quality of Life Initiative which is campaigning for improved air quality in the east end of Sheffield, said

the city would be further set back by the decision to build the new Ikea store in Carbook and the Government throwing out plans for a 60mph limit on the M1 through the city.

He said: "We need to reaffirm what we are doing as a city to move forward and get people on short journey to use things other than cars."

"We have got to do something about this – it is a public health crisis. Unless we do something, we are talking about a lot of people in Sheffield who are going to suffer ill-health."

A Sheffield Council report last year said poor air quality is causing an estimated 500 premature deaths a year in the city.