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Sussex Monthly Air Quality Alert Service Report

Sussex Air Quality Partnership / East Sussex County Council

August 2024





Document Control Sheet

Identification	
Client	East Sussex County Council for Sussex Air Quality Partnership
Document Title	Sussex Monthly Air Quality Alert Service Report – August 2024
Bureau Veritas Ref No.	AIR13115761

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Configuration				
Version	Date	Author	Reason for Issue/Summary of Changes	Status
1.0	September 2024	J Cai	First Issue	First Issue

	Name	Job Title	Signature
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1 Sussex Air Quality Alert Service

The Sussex Air Quality Alert service was developed by the Sussex Air Quality Partnership (“Sussex-air”), which is made up from the Sussex local authorities and Public Health bodies. Bureau Veritas provides this service on behalf of the Sussex Air Quality Partnership.

The Sussex Air Quality Alert service was established over 15 years ago to provide a Sussex-wide air pollution forecasting and alert service to support vulnerable persons such as those with respiratory and heart conditions and the public.

- The service provides pollution alerts direct to subscribers for “FREE” via different delivery methods such as text/SMS, email, or telephone message to landlines.
- The Alerts are sent to subscribers 24 to 48 hours prior to an episode of elevated air pollution.
- Subscribers can select either the general area alerts for East or West Sussex or to specific areas more representative of where they live or work.
- Subscribers can cancel the service at any time.

Further details on the service and live pollution forecasts are shown on the homepage <https://sussex-air.net/>

1.1 How the Alert Service works

Air quality is measured for a variety of pollutants and can have a variety of effects on different people in society. The UK Air Quality Banding system is used to inform the public about the levels of pollution that they may be exposed to and are based on health advice approved by the Committee on Medical Effects of Air Pollution Episodes (COMEAP).

The system uses an index divided into four bands to provide more detail about air pollution levels in a simple way; these bandings range from Low, Moderate, High to Very High. The overall air pollution index is calculated from the highest index value of five pollutants: nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, ozone, carbon monoxide and particles < 10µm (PM₁₀). The bandings, pollutant concentrations and periods of exposure are provided in Appendix A.

Using the national UK Met Office air pollution service, we check and send out air pollution alerts only when pollution levels are likely to affect people’s health. Forecasts of air quality are generated daily and cover a 5-day period and are available 365 days of the year.

Alerts are only sent if:

- air quality is forecast to be “Moderate” or above on the day of the forecast; or
- on any of the other 4 days within the 5-day forecast period.

Alerts are sent;

- in the morning and sent by mid-day each day; and
- cover a 5-day period.

Subscribers will be sent the alert if:

- there is an alert for an area they are subscribed to which is “Moderate” or above; and
- an alert is forecast for the present day or one day over the following 4 days.

We will not resend alerts if:

- the air pollution levels stay the same or go back down to “Low”.

We will only send alerts if:

- the level changes to “High” or “Very High” in that period..

2 Service Users – August 2024

2.1 Service users in 2024

The service users reported here are those that have been subscribed since January 2024. Table 2-1 shows the subscribers and delivery method type for the service.

Table 2-1: New Subscribers 2024

Service type	Email	Text/SMS	Voice message
Pre 2024	357	280	5
January	2	2	0
February	2	0	0
March	3	1	0
April*	0	0	0
May	9	2	0
June	1	3	0
July	63	63	0
August	20	15	0
Total Subscribers to date	449	362	5

Note: The total number of subscribers can vary from month to month, with some leaving as well as new people subscribing. The total at the end of the period includes all those who stayed with the service plus new recruits and leavers, hence the difference in the totals.

*A problem was reported with the register form in April which has impacted the new subscribers' number to be 0 in April 2024.

The alert service is delivered mainly by email (449 users) and text/SMS (362 users) services, these account for 55.0% and 44.4% of the users respectively. The remaining (5) 0.6% of users still prefer to receive alerts via land-line telephone voice messages.

Table 2-2 Total Subscribers

Total Number of Subscribers as of end of August 2024 by all Communication Methods	816
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3 Air Quality Forecasts and Alerts – August 2024

Air quality forecasts are produced daily, as described in section 1, with alerts only being issued when above the “Moderate” Daily Air Quality Index (DAQI) level.

3.1 Forecasts

There are 31 area forecasts produced daily, which can vary slightly dependent on conditions, locations and other model forecast factors the Met Office determines. The full list of DAQI days for all 31 sites in 2024 (January to August) is provided in Appendix B and Table B-1 sets out the number of days that were categorised as ‘low’, ‘moderate’, ‘high’ and ‘very high’ at the alert area locations. These data demonstrate the variance in the numbers of DAQI days across different locations.

Table 3-1 shows the number of forecast DAQI days in August 2024 at selected sites. It can be found that on average, there are 2 days (8%) where Moderate pollution forecasted, and there is no day where High or Very High pollution forecasted across the selected sites.

Table 3-1: Number of forecast DAQI days in 2024 (August) at selected sites

Alert location	Low (1-3)	Moderate (4-6)	High (7-9)	Very High (10)
Brighton	29	2	0	0
Chichester	28	3	0	0
Eastbourne	30	1	0	0
East Grinstead	30	1	0	0
Hastings	29	2	0	0
Haywards Heath	31	0	0	0
Horsham	29	2	0	0
Lewes	27	4	0	0
Rye	29	2	0	0
Worthing	28	3	0	0
Average	29	2	0	0
Percentage of period	92%	8%	0%	0%

The data shown in the table is rounded to the integers.

The full set of 31 sites data identifies that most days were ‘low’ air pollution days between January to August 2024 accounting for on average 216 out of 244 days (88.5%). There were, on average, 28 days across the region that were forecasted as ‘moderate’ air pollution days, which accounted for 11.5% of days during this period. There were no days where ‘high’ pollution and ‘very high’ pollution was forecasted.

3.2 Alerts

shows the number of alerts sent via the three main service distribution routes. The number of alerts sent are relative the number of service users, the areas they have selected and the number of ‘moderate’ or above forecasts produced in a month.

Table 3-2: Alerts sent (January to August 2024)

Period	Service type		
	Email	Text/SMS	Voice message
2023 Total	3,319	2,481	44
January	1	1	0
February	1	1	0
March	69	70	0
April	239	186	0
May	794	596	10
June	877	689	11
July	330	249	4
August	303	226	6
Totals to date (2024)	2,614	2,018	31

During August 2024 there was 303 email alerts, 226 text/SMS alerts and 6 voice alerts sent to subscribers across Sussex.

Appendix A – Air Quality Bandings

Table A - 1 UK Air Quality Bandings

Band	Index	Ozone	Nitrogen Dioxide	Sulphur Dioxide	PM2.5 Particles	PM10 Particles
		Running 8 hourly mean	Hourly mean	15 minute mean	24 hour mean	24 hour mean
		µg m-3	µg m-3	µg m-3	µg m-3	µg m-3
Low						
	1	0-33	0-67	0-88	0-11	0-16
	2	34-66	68-134	89-177	12-23	17-33
	3	67-100	135-200	178-266	24-35	34-50
Moderate						
	4	101-120	201-267	267-354	36-41	51-58
	5	121-140	268-334	355-443	42-47	59-66
	6	141-160	335-400	444-532	48-53	67-75
High						
	7	161-187	401-467	533-710	54-58	76-83
	8	188-213	468-534	711-887	59-64	84-91
	9	214-240	535-600	888-1064	65-70	92-100
Very High						
	10	241 or more	601 or more	1065 or more	71 or more	101 or more

Appendix B – Number of Forecast DAQI days in 2024 (to date)

Table B - 1 Number of Forecast DAQI days in 2024 (to date)

Alert location	Low (1-3)	Moderate (4-6)	High (7-9)	Very High (10)
Arundel	213	31	0	0
Battle	213	31	0	0
Bexhill	219	25	0	0
Billingshurst	216	28	0	0
Bognor Regis	205	39	0	0
Burgess Hill	218	26	0	0
Brighton	217	27	0	0
Chichester	211	33	0	0
Crowborough	221	23	0	0
Eastbourne	218	26	0	0
East Grinstead	223	21	0	0
Goodwood	211	33	0	0
Hailsham	217	27	0	0
Hastings	216	28	0	0
Haywards Heath	222	22	0	0
Heathfield	219	25	0	0
Horsham	217	27	0	0
Hove	218	26	0	0
Lewes	215	29	0	0
Littlehampton	212	32	0	0
Newhaven	217	27	0	0
Petworth	215	29	0	0
Portslade by Sea	218	26	0	0
Rye	221	23	0	0
Seaford	218	26	0	0
Selsey	209	35	0	0
Shoreham	215	29	0	0
Steyning	215	29	0	0
Storrington	215	29	0	0
Uckfield	221	23	0	0
Worthing	212	32	0	0
Average	216	28	0	0

Appendix C – Alert Service information from 2022 to 2024

The Sussex Alert service was operational from March of 2022; however, the service was updated in October 2022 with a new service and all users invited to re-register. The service was enhanced to provide more localised air quality forecasts instead of the general “West” and “East Sussex” and “Brighton only” forecasts and alerts. There are currently 32 different areas across Sussex that have specific forecasts.

Table C - 1 Historical subscriber numbers 2022 and 2023

Service type	Email	Text/SMS	Voice message
Pre-October existing subscribers	37	14	0
2022			
October	150	129	3
November	99	90	2
December	21	13	0
2023			
January	7	2	0
February	6	2	0
March	3	2	0
April	2	3	0
May	4	3	0
June	15	10	0
July	9	4	0
August	6	4	0
September	1	1	0
October	4	1	0
November	2	3	0
December	0	0	0
Total new subscribers	329	267	5
End of 2023 total subscribers	357	280	5

Note: The total number of subscribers can vary from month to month, with some leaving as well as new people subscribing. The total at the end of the period includes all those who stayed with the service plus new recruits and leavers, hence the difference in the totals.

Table C - 2 Email subscribers by location and month in 2023/24

	2023	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	2024	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Email (totals)	8	6	1	4	2	0			2	2	3	0	9	1	63	20
Arundel																
Battle													1		1	1
Billingshurst																
Brighton Centre									1							
Brighton East																
Brighton_and_Hove			1													
Chichester	1	1			1	1										1
Crawley	1															
Crowborough															3	1
East Grinstead																
East Sussex			1						1		1		2	1	13	3
Eastbourne	2	2				1							1		15	2
Hailsham			1												3	1
Hastings Bexhill	2												4		10	4
Haywards Heath Burgess Hill																
Heathfield															1	
Horsham													1			
Hove																
Lewes											1		1		3	
Littlehampton Bognor Regis			1		1											1
Newhaven Seaford					1						1		1		9	2
Portslade Shoreham				1												
Rottingdean Saltdean															2	

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Rye				1										1	
Selsey Whitterings															
Steyning									2			2			
Storrington															2
Uckfield	1													2	
West Sussex															
Worthing	1														2

Table C - 3 Mobile text subscribers by location and month in 2023/24

	2023	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	2024	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Mobile Text (totals)		4	4	1	1	3	0		2	0	1	0	2	3	63	15
Arundel																
Battle													1		1	
Billingshurst															1	
Brighton Centre																
Brighton East																
Brighton Falmer																
Brighton_and_Hove									1					1	1	
Chichester									1							
Crawley																
Crowborough						1								1	1	
East Grinstead																
East Sussex															14	3
Eastbourne			1												10	3
Hailsham															2	
Hastings Bexhill			2			1									14	4
Haywards Heath Burgess Hill																

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Heathfield																1	
Horsham			1														
Hove														1			
Lewes	1	1				1										2	1
Littlehampton Bognor Regis																1	
Newhaven Seaford					1						1					7	1
Petworth																	
Portslade Shoreham																	
Rottingdean Saltdean																	
Rye	1															3	1
Selsey Whitterings																	
Steyning																	
Storrington																	
Uckfield																4	
West Dean Goodwood																	
West Sussex	1													1		1	1
Worthing	1																1

Table C - 4 Voice text subscribers by location and month in 2023/24

	2023	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	2024	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Voice Text (totals)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brighton Falmer																
Brighton_and_Hove																
East Sussex																
West Sussex																