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Sussex Monthly Air Quality Alert Service Report

Sussex Air Quality Partnership / East Sussex County Council

December 2024





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Contact Details		
Company Name	Bureau Veritas UK Limited	East Sussex County Council
Contact Name	Nigel Jenkins	Andy Arnold
Position	Principal Consultant	
Address	5th Floor, 100 Lower Thames, St Mary at Hill, London, EC3R 6DL	East Sussex County Council County Hall St Anne's Crescent, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1UE
E-Mail	Nigel.jenkins@bureauveritas.com	Andy.arnold@eastsussex.gov.uk

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Prepared By	J Cai	Graduate Air Quality Consultant	
Approved By	Nigel Jenkins	Principal Environmental Consultant	

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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 – December 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
September	1	2	0
October	4	0	0
November	0	1	0
December	1	1	0
Total Subscribers to date	455	366	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 (455 users) and text/SMS (366 users) services, these account for 55.1% and 44.3% 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 December 2024 by all Communication Methods	826
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3 Air Quality Forecasts and Alerts – December 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 December) 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 December 2024 at selected sites. It can be found that on average, there is no day where Moderate, High or Very High pollution forecasted across the selected sites.

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

Alert location	Low (1-3)	Moderate (4-6)	High (7-9)	Very High (10)
Brighton	31	0	0	0
Chichester	31	0	0	0
Eastbourne	31	0	0	0
East Grinstead	31	0	0	0
Hastings	31	0	0	0
Haywards Heath	31	0	0	0
Horsham	31	0	0	0
Lewes	31	0	0	0
Rye	31	0	0	0
Worthing	31	0	0	0
Average	31	0	0	0
Percentage of period	100%	0%	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 December 2024 accounting for on average 336 out of 366 days (91.7%). There were, on average, 30 days across the region that were forecasted as ‘moderate’ air pollution days, which accounted for 8.3% 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 December 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
September	252	198	4
October	0	0	0
November	0	0	0
December	0	0	0
Totals to date (2024)	2,866	2,216	35

During December 2024 there was no email alerts, no text/SMS alerts and no 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	333	33	0	0
Battle	331	35	0	0
Bexhill	337	29	0	0
Billingshurst	337	29	0	0
Bognor Regis	325	41	0	0
Burgess Hill	337	29	0	0
Brighton	336	30	0	0
Chichester	332	34	0	0
Crowborough	340	26	0	0
Eastbourne	338	28	0	0
East Grinstead	343	23	0	0
Goodwood	332	34	0	0
Hailsham	336	30	0	0
Hastings	334	32	0	0
Haywards Heath	341	25	0	0
Heathfield	338	28	0	0
Horsham	338	28	0	0
Hove	338	28	0	0
Lewes	334	32	0	0
Littlehampton	332	34	0	0
Newhaven	336	30	0	0
Petworth	337	29	0	0
Portslade by Sea	338	28	0	0
Rye	339	27	0	0
Seaford	337	29	0	0
Selsey	329	37	0	0
Shoreham	335	31	0	0
Steyning	335	31	0	0
Storrington	335	31	0	0
Uckfield	339	27	0	0
Worthing	332	34	0	0
Average	336	30	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	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	2024	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Email (totals)		1	4	2	0		2	2	3	0	9	1	63	20	1	4	0	1
Arundel																		
Battle											1		1	1				
Billingshurst																		1
Brighton Centre							1											
Brighton East																		
Brighton_and_Hove																		
Chichester			1	1										1		1		
Crawley																		
Crowborough													3	1				
East Grinstead																		
East Sussex							1		1		2	1	13	3				
Eastbourne				1							1		15	2				
Hailsham													3	1				
Hastings Bexhill											4		10	4				
Haywards Heath Burgess Hill															1			
Heathfield													1					
Horsham											1							
Hove																		
Lewes									1		1		3			1		
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													2					
West Sussex																1		
Worthing														2				

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

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

