

URBAN EMISSIONS

Direct NO₂ emissions fear

The Air Quality Expert Group (Aqeg) has issued a draft report on direct emissions of nitrogen dioxide.

The seemingly narrow, technical subject has wide implications for local authorities trying to predict NO₂ concentrations in the future. With many areas just over or just under objective requirements – direct NO₂ has the potential to prompt declaration or revocation of air quality management areas across the country.

Vehicles, especially diesel vehicles, emit NO_x which has traditionally been considered to include up to 5% NO₂, with the rest being NO. Most NO_x oxidises to form NO₂. Health effects, and statutory objectives are couched in terms of NO₂ and recent findings that NO₂ is inexplicably rising in urban areas is being blamed on increasing amounts of direct NO₂ emissions from modern ‘cleaner’ vehicles.

Much of Aqeg’s ‘quickie’ report has been prepared by ERG’s David Carslaw who first revealed his findings earlier this year (*AQB May p1*). The report states that assumptions that tailpipe NO_x contains 5% direct NO₂ are wildly wrong and in reality it can contain up to 70%.

These large concentrations easily overwhelm any benefits in the gradually reducing amounts of total NO_x from cleaner engines and clean up

technologies. The implications are that predicted long term falls in roadside NO₂ cannot be assumed to take place – and the effect may be behind the large number of authorities that are having to declare AQMAs in relatively lightly trafficked ‘canyon’ type town centre streets.

Aqeg says: “The effects of increasing primary NO₂ emissions have not been accounted for within the scenarios carried out for the review of the air quality strategy. Clearly, this may have implications for achievement of the air quality objectives and limit values, particularly at roadside sites.”

While Aqeg is confident there is a problem, it is less confident about the solution. It points out that NO₂ and NO_x concentrations vary widely across the UK, and even within cities with some roads showing the effect, and others not showing it. Uncertainties such as this lead Aqeg into listing fundamental questions yet to be answered:

- Whether the fitting of catalytically regenerating particle traps to diesel vehicles has been a common factor in explaining increased NO₂/NO_x ratios elsewhere in the UK outside of the London conurbation;
- Why the NO₂/NO_x ratios are changing at some UK roadside sites, but not others;
- The degree to which the

fitting of catalytically regenerating particle traps has led to an improvement in PM_{2.5} concentrations and whether the associated change in exhaust gas emissions has led to increased secondary nitrate particle formation;

- The extent to which EURO-III diesel vehicles with their oxidation catalysts may have caused the increases in NO₂/NO_x ratios across the United Kingdom;
- The part played by direct emissions of HONO;
- A separate emission inventory for NO₂ within the NAEI needs to be updated regularly in the light of new data, which would then allow more reliable future predictions of NO₂ concentrations;
- The extent to which the behaviour seen in the United Kingdom has been experienced elsewhere in Europe and the light this sheds on cause and effect relationships.

All these uncertainties come at a time that Defra is recasting its air quality strategy (*AQB May p7*).

- *Trends in primary nitrogen dioxide in the UK* draft Air Quality Expert Group report has a deadline for comments on 7 November 2006. The final report is expected to be published in spring 2007. The report can be viewed on Defra’s website link www.defra.gov.uk/environment/airquality/aqeg/index.htm

IN BRIEF

Bristol maps air and noise effects of LEZ

Bristol City Council has embarked on a project to map environmental noise which will examine how the noise climate in the city might be affected by the introduction of a low emissions zone (LEZ) for air quality.

The work is part of the SILENCE project which aims to reduce transport noise in European urban areas. Bristol’s contribution will be to produce a baseline noise map of the city and then to change the road noise sources in line with preferred options for a potential low emission zone and re-run the noise modelling software under the new scenario.

Consultant TTR has just completed the low emission strategy study for Bristol and recommendations from this report will be used in the noise mapping work. The low emission zone is part of Bristol’s air quality action plan.

The City Council’s Steve Crawshaw, who is leading the mapping work, says “Going from air quality to noise and learning to use the new software is quite a challenge, but it’s an interesting piece of work and could contribute to a common approach in managing both air quality and environmental noise”.

- SILENCE project www.silence-ip.org

VEHICLE EMISSIONS

Three year probe on traffic pollution sensor network

A three-year research project jointly funded by the Department for Transport and EPSRC is to create a network of traffic and pollution sensors that will allow traffic pollution to be reduced by managing vehicle movements in real time.

The Pervasive Mobile Environmental Sensor Grids

(PMESG) study is a £3.5m project involving a collaboration between the universities of Leeds, Cambridge, Newcastle, Southampton and Imperial College, London.

Four demonstration projects will be set up in London, Cambridge, Gateshead and Leicester. Partners include IBM

UK Labs, SERCO, Boeing, Thales, Hampshire County Council, the Highways Agency and Transport for London.

The aim of the project is to get highly detailed street by street information incorporating details such as building design, vehicle braking and acceleration and local weather impacts – to

see pollution in real time.

Traditionally modelling pollutants at this detail can take weeks – the project hopes it can be done instantaneously so that traffic signals can be used to divert traffic or hold traffic in areas where pollution has minimal impact.

- website www.pmesg.org.uk

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IN BRIEF

Air targets missed

The Environment Agency has released its annual report including an analysis of regulated air emissions.

On air quality targets it set itself a target of 640kt, actual emissions were 487kt, so the target was comfortably met. Other targets were not met. The NO_x target of 370kt was not met (actual emissions were 438kt) and the same for PM₁₀ (target 13.2kt, actual 15.5kt).

It explains: "There has been a 20% decrease in releases of sulphur dioxide from industry regulated by us compared to 2004. This is largely due to the installation of flue gas desulphurisation abatement equipment at West Burton power station.

"Releases of NO_x were above those in 2004 and were more than we anticipated due to increased generation at a number of coal-fired power stations due to the high price of gas.

"Particle releases were approximately 7% greater than in 2004. This was in part due to increased generation and the use of low sulphur coal (which affects abatement equipment performance) at some coal fired power stations. Changes in reporting methodology also led to increased releases being reported at two mineral sites."

Included as a target is the Agency's work on developing 'environmental assessment levels' for use in assessing emissions from industrial processes (a consultation is due later this year).

During 2005 the Agency said it worked with the electricity industry to make sure that PPC applications included enough information to assess the habitat impacts. The refinery sector will follow later this year.

POP consultation

Consultation has started on the shape of the European plan to cut Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs).

The consultation will help develop a plan to meet the Stockholm Convention which required a POP plan.

● http://ec.europa.eu/environment/pops/consult_en.htm

FUNDING

Grants: £2 a day for Harrow

Sheffield has won a whopping £116,000 – and Harrow a measly £600 in Defra's air quality grants.

The awards, recently released by Defra, are no longer SCA (Supplementary Credit Approvals – essentially an ability to borrow) but are now

direct grants, benefiting authorities that operate on a debt free basis.

Defra says just over half the £2.3m provision for 2006/07 was awarded to support expenditure on air quality monitoring equipment, around 10% on emission inventory

work/dispersion modelling, and nearly 40% on projects under local authority action plans.

"We aim to write to all local authorities later this year inviting applications from the 2007/08 air quality grant programme which is at a similar level to this year."

2006/2007 AIR QUALITY GRANT WINNERS

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------|---------------------------------------|---------|
| Sheffield City Council | £116,000 | Sefton MBC | £20,000 |
| London Borough of Ealing | £109,000 | Teignbridge District Council | £20,000 |
| Liverpool City Council | £100,000 | London Borough of Camden | £20,000 |
| London Borough of Greenwich | £71,000 | Nuneaton & Bedworth DC | £19,500 |
| Suffolk Coastal District Council | £65,000 | Slough Borough Council | £19,000 |
| Kingston-upon-Hull City Council | £60,795 | Leicester City Council | £18,750 |
| Reading Borough Council | £60,000 | Chichester District Council | £17,337 |
| London Borough of Tower Hamlets | £58,000 | Crewe & Nantwich Borough Council | £17,000 |
| Calderdale MBC | £56,572 | Elmbridge Borough Council | £17,000 |
| York City Council | £55,000 | South Buckinghamshire DC | £16,280 |
| Barnsley MBC | £50,000 | London Borough of Croydon | £15,994 |
| Bradford MBC | £50,000 | North East Lincolnshire Council | £15,000 |
| Nottingham City Council | £46,000 | South Tyneside MBC | £15,000 |
| Doncaster MBC | £43,500 | St Albans City & District Council | £15,000 |
| Manchester City Council | £43,500 | Wycombe District Council | £15,000 |
| London Borough of Hillingdon | £40,000 | Congleton Borough Council | £14,500 |
| Derby City Council | £39,000 | Fareham Borough Council | £14,000 |
| London Borough of Brent | £38,000 | Colchester Borough Council | £13,500 |
| London Borough of Sutton | £38,000 | Newcastle City Council | £13,500 |
| Oxford City Council | £35,550 | London Borough of Bexley | £13,500 |
| Wakefield MDC | £35,000 | South Northamptonshire Council | £13,000 |
| London Borough of Hounslow | £34,500 | London Borough of Bromley | £13,000 |
| Bristol City Council | £33,500 | Tewkesbury District Council | £12,500 |
| London Borough of Wandsworth | £32,000 | Blackburn with Darwen BC | £12,000 |
| Mid Devon District Council | £31,250 | Trafford MBC | £12,000 |
| Tunbridge Wells Borough Council | £30,000 | Boston Borough Council | £11,678 |
| Bedford Borough Council | £28,000 | Eastleigh Borough Council | £11,489 |
| London Borough of Redbridge | £28,000 | Leeds City Council | £11,000 |
| Coventry City Council | £27,000 | Broxbourne Borough Council | £10,000 |
| Adur District Council | £25,000 | Dudley MBC | £10,000 |
| Blaby District Council | £25,000 | Mid Bedfordshire District Council | £10,000 |
| Kirklees MBC | £25,000 | North West Leicestershire DC | £10,000 |
| Plymouth City Council | £25,000 | Cannock Chase Council | £8,550 |
| Portsmouth City Council | £25,000 | Lewes District Council | £7,430 |
| Rugby Borough Council | £25,000 | North Cornwall District Council | £6,000 |
| Warrington Borough Council | £25,000 | Lincoln City Council | £5,395 |
| Barking & Dagenham LB | £25,000 | Brighton & Hove City Council | £5,000 |
| Richmond-upon-Thames LB | £25,000 | Fenland District Council | £3,390 |
| London Borough of Southwark | £25,000 | Reigate & Banstead Borough Council | £3,000 |
| Suffolk County Council | £24,000 | London Borough of Merton | £3,000 |
| Dover District Council | £23,666 | South Shropshire District Council | £2,500 |
| Salford City Council | £23,295 | Surrey Heath Borough Council | £2,500 |
| Erewash Borough Council | £22,220 | Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea | £2,500 |
| Rotherham MBC | £22,000 | Taunton Deane Borough Council | £1,700 |
| Bath & NE Somerset | £20,000 | South Lakeland Council | £1,059 |
| Halton Borough Council | £20,000 | London Borough of Harrow | £600 |

HEALTH EFFECTS

Comeap close to an opinion on ozone effects

The Committee on the Effects of Air Pollution (Comeap) has published its report on the health effects of ozone.

The overdue report, published this year, but not yet available, concludes that there is insufficient evidence to establish an association between exposure to ozone and mortality. It also states that there is no link to cancer.

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While Comeap is set to publish its findings on the health effects of ozone, the World Health Organization (WHO) has reported that exposure to air pollution is a leading cause of mortality (death). It has also reported that exposure to air pollution is a leading cause of morbidity (illness). For more information, contact our advisory bodies. www.ukcomeap.org

MONITORING

Gloves off in Teom v Bam war

Two leading monitor suppliers are scrambling to pick up business following Defra's recent reanalysis of particle monitoring equipment (*AQB July p1*).

Defra released an intercomparison report based on an exhaustive two year study of different monitor types. While Defra is adamant it will not recommend or endorse any particular type of monitor, the results of the study are being used by some to suggest equipment is 'approved' in a bid to increase sales of their equipment.

The firms believe there is a surge of potential orders given that the basic Teom has been labelled as non-compliant (but officials advise that such Teoms do not necessarily need to be replaced).

Enviro Technology is selling its BAMs aggressively, having been found to conform to the gravimetric standard without an additional factor. Its website has a splash saying: "Replace your non-approved Teom with a Bam today!" It is backing this up with a part exchange "old for new" deal, which allows an

upgrade to a brand new Defra-approved (sic) BAM-1020 Dust Analyser at a "substantially lower price than a costly Teom FDMS upgrade".

Says Mike Webley, Enviro Technology's technical director: "Following the report findings and due to the popularity of the Teom analyser in the UK, many environmental managers will potentially face the costly job of adding an FDMS upgrade to their older Teom analysers in order to achieve compliance.

"This will not only prove expensive but, by adding this upgrade, managers will find that larger roadside enclosures also need to be bought in order to house the analyser.

Arch rival Air Monitors, which focuses on Teoms, has on its website the prominent message: "Teom-FDMS, right for the right reasons" and a spreadsheet with the 'facts'.

Jim Mills says: "We believe it's wiser to use a system that actually measures the true PM mass without factors, eliminate the effect of humidity and give information about both volatile and core particulate mass fractions, all of which have been

the main reasons for the controversy surrounding particle measurement over the last few years.

"The Teom/FDMS may not be the lowest cost option "up front" but we believe it to be the best investment over time as it is based on solid scientific measurement principles which we believe will continue to stand up against future 'reference' methodology and standards.

"Recent orders from central, and local government both in the UK, Europe and the USA would suggest that most environmental professionals measuring particles appreciate these issues and many networks previously using beta technology have recently converted to Teom/FDMS (despite the additional cost) in order to obtain better data quality and to keep pace with the best scientific practice."

● Air Monitors has produced a Teom v Bam factsheet available for download on www.airmonitors.co.uk/fdms
 ● Enviro Technology: Mike Webley on 01453 733200 or email mike.webley@et.co.uk

IN BRIEF

Methane stats redone

UK methane emission statistics have been recast to reflect latest thinking.

Defra warns that the apparent rise in methane emissions result from better understanding, rather than there been a real increase in emissions. Estimated methane emissions have been revised from 12.5m tonnes (carbon equivalent) in 2004 to 14.1m tonnes, an increase of 12.7%. Equivalent revisions have been made for all years back to 1990. This is as a result of revised factors being used to estimate emissions from landfill sites.

The estimated reduction in methane emissions between 1990 and 2004 remains unchanged at 50%.

● www.defra.gov.uk/environment

US to study emissions

The California Air Resources Board (ARB) has approved over \$5 million in funding for researching air pollution, including shipping emissions.

The funding supports 21 projects for research on health and welfare effects, exposure assessment, global air pollution, and technology advancement and pollution prevention. Projects include:

- Defining the relationship between air pollution and premature death due to particulate matter;
 - Determining the nature and magnitude of emissions from offshore shipping emissions;
 - Quantifying engine lube oil's contribution to mobile source particulate matter emissions.
- www.arb.ca.gov

EU looks at costing

An EU study has found that business tends to over-estimate the costs of environmental measures, such as has been seen in UK studies.

The report says that lobby groups tend to overestimate costs of legislation – while equipment suppliers tend to downplay costs, and that real costs tend to be somewhere in between.

● *Ex-post estimates of costs to business of EU environmental legislation*
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/enveco/ex_post/costs.pdf

MONITORING

New ERG site as TfL bolsters monitor network

The Environmental Research Group (ERG) has taken delivery of a new air quality monitoring station.

The site is funded by Transport for London (TfL) and is located on the north approach to the Blackwall Tunnel. It is designed look for changes in transport emissions as a consequence of changes in London's vehicle fleet arising from the proposed low emission zone.

Equipment was installed in the cabin by the manufacturer and the complete installation was delivered on the back of a lorry. ERG's Jon Alexander, who managed the installation, confessed to having had a stressful moment as over £90,000 worth of cabin and monitoring equipment was hoisted into the air: "With the site location surrounded by railings, signs and other



Pic: Jon Alexander, KCL

obstacles, I wasn't sure it would go in easily. As it turned out my concerns were misplaced; the crane operator whisked the cabin high into the air and lowered it very precisely into position."

In addition to measuring

statutory pollutants the monitoring site will make measurements that are especially sensitive to changes in vehicle emissions. These include particle counts and black smoke readings. The site will take measurements to allow the quantification of primary emissions of NO₂.

The new monitoring site is part of a wider TfL funded programme which includes new equipment at existing monitoring sites alongside the North Circular, the Woolwich Flyover and other parts of London's trunk road network.

ERG is also leading US Health Effects Institute-funded projects to study the changes in the toxicity of airborne particles and health effects that may arise from the low emission zone.

● More details on ERG's website www.londonair.org.uk

IN BRIEF

Clearer Future rerun

South Yorks Care4Air grouping is holding its second annual *Clearer Future* conference on Thursday 21st September.

Presentations include those from Defra, the City of London, Camden, the potential for a low emissions zone in Sheffield, and the launch of a city car club.

● www.care4air.org

Two new R&A FAQs

Two new frequently asked questions have been added to the review & assessment helpdesk website:

● I have heard that the DMRB model is underpredicting concentrations. Is this the case and what should I do?
 ● What influence does location have on diffusion tube bias? In particular, can roadside co-location studies be used to adjust background diffusion tubes and vice versa?

● R&A website FAQs:
www.uwe.ac.uk/aqm/review

Spondon declaration

Derby City Council is extending its air quality management areas to include more of its ring road and an area in Spondon.

It says the high NO₂ areas came to light following increased monitoring.

● www.derby.gov.uk/Environment/Pollution/AirPollution

CO₂ effects outlined

Defra has released a key report used to inform the recent Aqeg probe into pollution and global warming impacts.

The Cerc report looked at air quality concentrations in London and Glasgow. For London the results averaged over a number of sites show a fall in NO_x of 6.1 ppb and a rise in ozone of 4.0 ppb with only small changes in NO₂ and PM₁₀. For Glasgow, the changes in all four chemical species are small.

Bigger changes are seen at individual sites, eg a fall of 11.5 ppb in NO_x at Marylebone Road and an increase of 5.1 ppb in ozone at Brent.

● The report can be viewed on www.airquality.co.uk/archive/reports/list.php

VEHICLE EMISSIONS

High speed vans pollute more than thought: predictions recast

Vans being driven at higher speeds pollute more than previously thought, a Netcen study for the DfT suggests.

The study was aimed at deriving emission factors for vans. Such emission factors are used in the National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (NAEI) and in models to predict current and future pollution levels to decide whether or not areas will meet air quality objectives.

20 Euro II and Euro III vans were tested over nine drive cycles leading to a number of conclusions including:

● For NO_x, the Euro II and Euro III factors for diesel vans are higher than currently used in

the NAEI, particularly at high speeds. The report proposes an increase in the current emission factors used for both Euro II and III vans. For Euro IV vans there are reduced emission factors at low and medium speeds, but higher emission factors at high speeds than had previously been estimated.

The changes would lead to an overall increase of about 2.5% in the estimates of UK NO_x emissions from road transport in 2010, with smaller overall increases in 2015 and 2020.

● For particles, the Euro II and Euro III factors for diesel vans are very similar to those currently used in the NAEI at urban speeds, but are lower at

high speeds. The report's recommendations for Euro IV vans also lead to similar emission factors at low and medium speeds, but lower emission factors at high speeds than had previously been estimated.

The changes would lead to an overall decrease of about 7% in the estimates of UK particle emissions from road transport in 2020, with smaller overall reductions in earlier years compared with estimates based on the current emission factors used in the NAEI.

● For CO, the Euro II factors for diesel vans are higher than current NAEI factors at low speeds, but lower than current NAEI factors at high speeds.

The new factors for Euro III vehicles are considerably below current NAEI factors at all speeds. The report recommends factors for Euro IV vans that are the same as the new lower factors for Euro III, meaning that the new factors for Euro IV are below current NAEI factors that had previously been estimated.

The changes would lead to an overall decrease of about 6% in the estimates of UK CO emissions from road transport in 2020, with smaller overall reductions in earlier years compared with estimates based on the current emission factors used in the NAEI.

● *Emissions factors for Euro II and III diesel vans* posted at website www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_control/documents/contentservertemplate/dft_index.hcst?n=16982&l=4

BOOK REVIEW

Discount offered on 'bible'

A discount is being offered on a book that many will see as a 'bible' on air quality pollutants.

The Environment Agency has



published a new *UK Air Pollutants digest* containing key data on over 140 pollutants. For each pollutant, monitored ambient concentrations from 2000-2003 are presented alongside other key data such as chemical formulae and structure. For over 50 pollutants, additional data are given, including summaries of environmental standards, source trends and concentration statistics.

Until the end of October it will cost £10, reduced from £30. A limited number of hard copies are available.

● Copies are available from <http://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk/epages/capublications.storefront>

EU DIRECTIVES

Defra submits progress report to Commission

Defra and the devolved regions are consulting on their statutory report to the European Commission on the state of air quality in the UK in 2004.

The annual reports set out where EU objectives are not being met – and what is being done to remedy the situation. It also notes total funding allocated

● €3.44m and €5.86m provided

in 2003/2004 to support English local authorities with their revenue and capital costs associated with LAQM duties.

● €0.37m over the 3 years 2004-07 provided by the National Assembly for Wales for running and maintaining the Welsh air quality database.

● €0.44m capital consents in Scotland which can be used for capital expenditure in Northern

Ireland, funding of €1.4m p.a. 2001-2004

● Consultation on the UK's plans and programmes to meet limit values set in the First Air Quality Daughter Directive (1999/30/EC) of the European Parliament and Council (2006 reporting year) website link www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/air1daughter2006/index.htm

Local authorities hit the web

Councils are increasingly using the web to post air quality information. Some are dull – and some are very good. We look at non-local authority sites on p10

We've visited nearly 500 local authority websites in our trawl for the best and worst. This is what we found.

In our thorough review of local authority websites and their air quality offerings, a few councils stand out above the crowd.

Surprisingly, the best websites aren't necessarily those that have huge air quality problems (and consequently large budgets). More likely it is the enthusiasm of individuals that has prompted them to go the extra mile.

We set out to find the best website – and this has proved rather difficult because there are several websites that are exceptionally good – including **Chiltern, Doncaster and Ellesmere Port**. And very close behind with particularly good websites are **Bristol, Brighton, East Riding of Yorkshire, Oxford, Sefton and Warrington**. How to choose between them? That was very difficult – but we went for **Chiltern** by a whisker, with **Doncaster** our runner up.

Chiltern's website is by Ben Coakley who has a track record in producing excellent air quality websites for this authority and others he's been associated with. It is bright and colourful and offers both serious and 'childish' content.

The serious content is all there under consistent CLAIR (Chiltern's Local Air and Environment) branding – air pollution levels, reviews and assessments, strategies, health effects, chemistry and downloads. The site is also moving towards covering of global warming issues – new for 2006 is the Chiltern Smart House project, more details on the website.

But for kids (and teachers!) it's brilliant. The 'Noxious Nine' characters (eg Bloated Butadiene, Smokey Steve, Beefy Benzene etc) take you through the effects of all the pollutants. There are tips for kids, fun air quality experiments, an air quality quiz and air puzzles. Brilliant –

Take this to the IT department and leave it on their desk

Dear Webmaster

Our council air quality site is really rather good. Please could you use a logo and/or better signposting from the home page so our residents can actually find the site from the home page!

Yours sincerely,

The environmental health team

and there's a council home page logo linking to the Claire pages as well.

Coakley told *AQB*: "The CLAIR website has been redesigned following the new E-Government Accessibility Standards. It is a shame as I really liked the old site but we would get marked down and less funding by Government if it is not 100% accessible.

"Perhaps the most important update is the Chiltern's SMART Project championing sustainable building techniques. It has been backed by a media campaign and you can listen to the radio adverts off the Claire site. We recently opened the exhibition with Marianne Suhr of the BBC show *Restoration* laying the final flint."

Doncaster's pages are a delight and have a 'today's air quality' link on the homepage, something that sits very nicely alongside 'today's weather' – it is our runner up. Information about current air quality in Doncaster is there – and a link to the *Fresh Air* branded pages on air quality. These are well designed and easy on the eye with plenty to inform and amuse everyone – What can you do about air pollution, air quality games and puzzles, and a 'focus on' section (currently on biofuels).

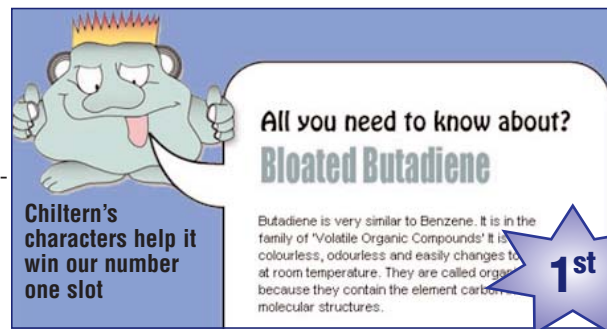
Try out the games section – wordsearches, word pairs, air pollution hangman, air pollution catch, a Doncaster air quality quiz – you get the picture.

The health effects area is the best I've seen (Malcolm Beale – you should licence this out to others!). Instead of the dry old text that is regularly recycled from Defra's websites about health effects, see a cut out picture of a human body fill with red according to the particular damage done by a pollutant. Good stuff.

All the more interesting because Doncaster is part of South Yorkshire – which has its own very good **Care4Air** initiative and website. So Doncaster residents are doubly well served in terms of air quality website offerings.

We also spoke to Doncaster's Malcolm Beale: "*Fresh Air* is a solely **Doncaster** initiative. It is the brainchild of our air pollution officer Lisa Crofts and it is going to continue to expand, especially as part of an air quality and general pollution package aimed at schools.

"We used a commercial firm who



did the implementation of Croft's ideas. The games were put on first to test young people's reaction and in the future the rest of the site will have finished its redesign and should also contain more 'meat' for use in school curriculum's by older children.

"We also plan a web page addition that will enable us to present real time and historical air quality data and enable anyone who logs on, member of the public or officer, to extract and print off tables and graphs of data from each monitoring station of up to a years worth of data in a number of combinations. That should be up and running in a couple of months time."



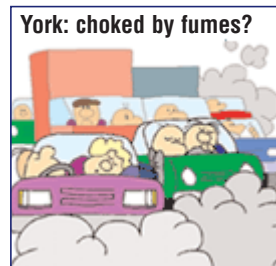
A good button from Sefton

Hit Ellesmere Port and Neston's front page and a big fat stinking chimney labelled 'live pollution info' drives you towards their excellent air quality web pages which include the dedicated *Airwatch* site. On here you can see how the air quality information is used – there is a picture here of roadside variable message signs warning of poor air quality and urging drivers to leave their cars at home.

Other five-rated sites include **Bristol** which has updated its site to include comprehensive information well illustrated with photos, **Greenwich** with its dedicated pages, **Brighton** has its *City Airwatch* with good illustrations, **East Riding's Air pollution** – lets put a lid on it site is a pleasant surprise and has nice welcoming graphics and is neatly laid out.

Oxford's Airwatch site is hard to find even if you're looking for it, shame because it's a nice site sitting comfortably within the city council web frames. The barometer device is good, and the map colourful.

Sefton is similar to Oxford, you drill down into the air quality pages and even if you know there is the



● continued on p6 overleaf

● continued from p5

Breathing Space site, its hard to find the small link to it. But once there, the site is nicely designed and couldn't be easier to navigate with its nicely designed buttons. And the same goes for **Warrington**, look hard for its *Air about us* branded pages because they are worth visiting because of their good design, navigation and use of graphics. **Barnsley** had a good, easy to find site when we first looked but on a subsequent check it had disappeared altogether for maintenance.

Those are our best five-rated sites for quality – there's more of those than 'five-rated' for ease of finding. To get a five rating here, you'd need a prominent front page link, **Chiltern, Ellesmere Port and Doncaster** have these, as mentioned, **York** also has one (and a four rated site). Other easy ways in are found at **East Herts, New Forest, North Lanarkshire, Cheshfield and West Oxfordshire**. The latter two are easy to get to, but basic once you get there. **Armagh** has a big link to very little.

Our four star sites are too many to mention – well done to all of them, all are worth visiting. At the other end of the scale, there are now very few local authorities that barely mention air quality, and fewer than ever before make do with the bare minimum – most now post reports and have something to say for themselves.

As we worked through the near-500 local authority offerings, we had a number of observations. If you're part of a grouping (eg a county) that has a good web presence, then provide a bold link to it, as for instance **Arun, Brent and South Bucks** do. Look at **Dacorum** which has settled with a simple link to the Herts and Beds site, and why not. **Rotherham** and **Sheffield** could make more of 'their' Care4Air site.

Culprits here also include **Bolton** with no link to the MAPAC site, **Cornwall County Council, Essex and West Sussex**. Mind you don't cooperate for the sake of it, some Dorset authorities (eg **Christchurch, East & West Dorset**) cooperate under the *Dorset for You* banner, this seems to offer them



Popular clipart: Rochford and Tendring use this to brighten their pages

absolutely nothing – and probably hinders them from doing anything better.

Perhaps more surprising is when sites have their own air quality site, and don't link to it as well as they could (**Ealing and Hammersmith & Fulham**), **Islington** does a good bulletin on air quality and should make more of it.

Some commercial providers, eg **AQdata.co.uk**, offer the opportunity to standardise presentation of monitoring information, otherwise you get the problem where councils such as **Dudley** make an effort but the data is presented inconsistently to elsewhere.

Illustrations can be easily sourced and can give a bright look to pages. Basic sites which make the most of illustrations include **Craven, Leeds, Rochford, Shrewsbury & Atcham, Tendring, Waverley and West Wilts**.

Newham looks good with its use of an air quality barometer (like **Oxford**), **North West Leicestershire** uses nice old paintings of industrial pollution. There's no need to provide wads of text without illustrations (**South Beds**).



Chiltern: interactive and good use of buttons

Some sites run on, and on, and on down the page, requiring loads of scrolling (**Preston**). By contrast some sites are so disaggregated onto different pages that you can only read a few lines at a time before having to switch pages (**Congleton**). Progress through **Bury's** pages was tortuous (page, after page, after page)

Nice to see sites with good links (eg **Thurrock**), although they are a chore to keep up (we haven't penalised anyone who links to 'other' air quality newsletters whose websites no longer work!).

We know that local authority officers are busy and websites have to fit in to their 'day job' (which may well include disciplines other than air quality). So we don't always expect elaborate five rated offerings, but a modest, well thought out effort can still do the job well, for example **Babergh, Aylesbury Vale, Huntingdonshire and Mid Beds**.

Accessibility is a growing issue and one that perhaps we should consider more as authorities are increasingly required to make sure sites are comfortable to all. But sometimes that accessibility can spoil a site – for instance **Monmouthshire and Wyre Borough Council**. **Castlereagh's** site was rather basic, clunkiness let down **Bath and North East**



Logo says it all – marvellous

Somerset and East Hants. By contrast **Stoke on Trent's** site is nice and bright, **Birmingham's** information was disjointed and a shame. We tried not to mark down sites such as **Liverpool** for being too purple!

Some sites we felt were unexpectedly poor given the size of the authority and its air quality problem. **Barnet** springs to mind, and we know **Croydon** is doing good work with *Airtext*, anti idling and other air quality initiatives – why not talk it up a bit and make it more prominent?

And there are authorities that have had good sites in the past that appear to have disappeared. **Belfast's** previously excellent site has gone, We gave up looking for **Edinburgh's**, also disappointing compared to previous year's is **Camden and Westminster** – how the mighty have fallen. What happened to **Wycombe** – how can the webmaster there sleep at night having replaced a very good site with one that is so basic?

Some sites were unexpectedly good – for instance counties that don't have a statutory role in air quality – **Cambridgeshire, Cheshire, and Devon**. Or areas that are not renowned for poor air quality but have nice sites – **Castle Morpeth** (and let's face it, **Chiltern!**).

We commend use of good maps, for instance **Carrickfergus, Charnwood, and Sevenoaks**. **Tameside** even has an interactive map with layers – you can overlay air quality management areas along with other matters that might come up in property searches, this is quite innovative.

In the virtually impossible to find category include **Jersey's** nice site (try health/hospitals/Le Bas !!!). The **Corporation of London and Kennet** are hard too.

Norfolk doesn't want to talk about air quality, but it does want to sell you a report on the benefits of LPG vehicles for £35. Try to avoid use of jargon (eg **Reading** over-uses 'AUN' which may trip punters up).

Air quality websites can be a useful tool for dealing with particular local air quality concerns, **Walsall** does this well with its Chuckery problem, **Rugby** and **Kennet** authorities try to appease locals upset about cement works.

● Sites were visited in August and rated on an entirely subjective and non-scientific basis against 'ease of finding' and 'quality of site' criteria. Some sites were unavailable, it is possible some air quality websites were missed, and probable that many will disagree with our rankings. We will scoop up corrections and comments in a future issue.

Doncaster – our runner up – has a fantastic interactive 'body' which shows the differing effects of various pollutants. Much better than pages and pages of text

How it affects your body:
 Sore throat
 Sore eyes
 Lung damage
 Hard to breathe

2nd

| Authority | Quality | Findability |
|---|---------|-------------|
| Chiltern District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Ellesmere Port & Neston Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Bristol City Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Brighton and Hove Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| East Riding of Yorkshire Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Oxford City Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Sefton MBC | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Warrington Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Greenwich London Borough | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| City of York Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Cambridge City Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Cambridgeshire County Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Shrewsbury & Atcham Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Tunbridge Wells Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Waverley Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Adur District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Arun District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Cheltenham Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Ealing, London Borough of | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Glasgow City Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Hammersmith & Fulham, London Boro' of | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Hillingdon, London Borough of | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Leeds City Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Leicester City Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Liverpool City Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Middlesbrough Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Newham, London Borough of | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Selby DC | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Sevenoaks DC | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| South Bucks District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| South Cambridgeshire District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Swansea City Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| West Wiltshire District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Corporation of the City of London | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺ |
| Jersey (Channel Isles) | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺ |
| Kennet District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺ |
| East Hertfordshire District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| New Forest District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| North Lanarkshire | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Aberdeen City Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Ashfield District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Aylesbury Vale District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Basildon District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Camden, London Borough of | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Derby City Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Hambleton District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Harborough District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Hart District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Hastings Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Huntingdonshire District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Lancaster City Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Mansfield District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Reading Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Reigate and Banstead Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Rushcliffe Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Rushmoor Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| South Norfolk District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| South Staffordshire | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| South Tyneside MBC | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Teignbridge District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Tendring District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Tower Hamlets, London Borough of | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| Wakefield Metropolitan District Council | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |

LOCAL AUTHORITY WEBSITES RANKED

Key: The more smileys the better. A five smiley 'quality' site will have good graphics and be jam packed full of information and visitors will want to come back. A five smiley 'findability' website will have a link on the front page – a one rating site will be hard to find even if looking for it

| Authority | Quality | Findability |
|--|---------|-------------|
| Warwick District Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| West Sussex CC | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Babergh District Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Bath & North East Somerset Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Bexley Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Birmingham City Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Bracknell Forest Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Brent, London Borough of | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Brentwood Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Broxtowe Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Charnwood Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Chelmsford Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Chichester District Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Colchester Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Conwy DC | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Craven District Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Crawley Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Croydon, London Borough of | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Dacorum Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Darlington Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Dartford Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Devon CC | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| East Hampshire District Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Eastbourne Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Elmbridge Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Exeter City Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Gloucester City Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Gravesham Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Hackney, London Borough of | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Herefordshire Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Hertfordshire CC | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Hinckley and Bosworth | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Horsham District Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Islington, London Borough of | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| King's Lynn and West Norfolk | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Kirklees Metropolitan Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Lewes District Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Maidstone Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Manchester City Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Mid Bedfordshire District Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Neath Port Talbot | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Newcastle-upon-Tyne, City of | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| North Devon District Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| North Norfolk District Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| North Warwickshire Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Nottingham City Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Plymouth City Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Preston Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Redditch Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Restormel Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Richmond, London Borough of | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Rochford District Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Rugby Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| St Albans District Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Salisbury District Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Sheffield City Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Shetland Isles | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| Slough Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| South Gloucestershire District Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| South Hams District Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |

AIR QUALITY ON THE WEB

| Authority | Quality | Findability |
|--|---------|-------------|
| South Lakeland District Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Spelthorne Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Stoke-on-Trent City Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Stratford on Avon District Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Telford & Wrekin Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Thurrock District Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Waltham Forest, London Borough of | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Westminster, London Borough of | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Woking Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Worthing Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Wrexham County Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| Canterbury City Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺ |
| Cardiff City Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺ |
| Carrickfergus DC | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺ |
| Castle Morpeth Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺ |
| Congleton Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺ |
| East Sussex CC | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺ |
| Gosport Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺ |
| Hounslow, London Borough of | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺ |
| Kettering Borough Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺ |
| Lambeth, London Borough of | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺ |
| North West Leicestershire District Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺ |
| Portsmouth City Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺ |
| Aberdeenshire Council | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺ |

| Authority | Quality | Findability |
|---------------------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Chesterfield Borough Council | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| West Oxfordshire District Council | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Barking and Dagenham, London Boro' of | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Copeland Borough Council | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Cotswold District Council | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Craigavon DC | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Derbyshire Dales DC | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| East Lothian | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Epsom & Ewell Borough Council | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Fenland District Council | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Forest of Dean District Council | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Havant Borough Council | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Luton Borough Council | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Mid Sussex District Council | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| North Kesteven District Council | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| North Lincolnshire Council | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Oadby & Wigston District Council | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Poole Borough Council | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Redbridge, London Borough of | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Uttlesford District Council | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Wealden District Council | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| West Dumbartonshire Council | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| West Lindsey | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| West Lothian | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| Winchester City Council | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |

....other 'two-rated' sites:

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Amber Valley BC | Durham County Council |
| Anglesey | Easington DC |
| Ashford BC | East Dunbartonshire DC |
| Berwick Upon Tweed DC | East Lindsey DC |
| Blaby District Council | East Northamptonshire |
| Blyth Valley DC | East Renfrewshire DC |
| Bolsover District Council | Erewash BC |
| Bournemouth BC | Falkirk BC |
| City of Bradford | Fareham BC |
| Braintree District Council | Fermanagh DC |
| Breckland DC | Fife CC |
| Broadland DC | Flintshire DC |
| Burnley Borough Council | Forest Heath DC |
| Bury Metropolitan BC | Fylde Borough Council |
| Carlisle City Council | Gloucestershire CC |
| Cherwell District Council | Guildford BCI |
| Cheshire CC | Halton Borough Council |
| Christchurch Borough Council | Harlow District Council |
| Cookstown DC | Harrogate BC |
| Coventry City Council | Harrow, London Boro' |
| Crewe and Nantwich BC | Hartlepool BC |
| Daventry District Council | Hertsmere BC |
| Denbighshire CC | Kent CC |
| Dorset County Council | Kerrier District Council |
| Dover District Council | Lewisham, London Boro' |
| Dumfries and Galloway | Lincoln City Council |
| Dundee City Council | Macclesfield BC |
| Durham City Council | Maldon District Council |
| | Malvern Hills DC |

| |
|--------------------------|
| Medway Council |
| Melton Borough Council |
| Merthyr DC |
| Mid Devon DC |
| Monmouthshire Council |
| Newark & Sherwood DC |
| Newcastle-under-Lyme |
| Newtonabbey DC |
| Northampton BC |
| North Cornwall DC |
| North Down |
| North East Derbyshire |
| North Shropshire DC |
| North Tyneside Council |
| North Wiltshire DC |
| Oldham MBC |
| Oswestry |
| Penwith DC |
| Peterborough Council |
| Powys CC |
| Purbeck DC |
| Redcar & Cleveland |
| Renfrewshire DC |
| Rhondda Cynon Taff |
| Ribble Valley BC |
| Rossendale MBC |
| Rutland County Council |
| Ryedale District Council |
| St Edmundsbury BC |

| |
|--------------------------|
| Solihull MBC |
| Somerset CC |
| South Ayrshire DC |
| South Bedfordshire |
| South Derbyshire DC |
| South Northants DC |
| South Shrops DC |
| South Somerset DC |
| Southampton Council |
| Southwark, LB |
| Stafford BC |
| Staffordshire Moorlands |
| Stevenage BC |
| Stockport MBC |
| Strabane DC |
| Stroud DC |
| Suffolk Coastal DC |
| Suffolk CC |
| Tandridge DC |
| Test Valley BC |
| Tewkesbury BC |
| Thanet District Council |
| Torbay Borough Council |
| Tonbridge and Malling |
| Torrige District Council |
| Trafford MBC |
| Vale of White Horse DC |
| Vale Royal BC |
| Wandsworth, LB |



A useful graphic from four-ranked Waverley shows what a diffusion tube looks like

| |
|--------------------------|
| Wansbeck DC |
| Watford BC |
| Waveney District Council |
| Wear Valley DC |
| Wellingborough BC |
| Welwyn Hatfield DC |
| West Berkshire |
| West Lancashire DC |
| West Somerset DC |
| City of Worcester |
| Wychavon DC |
| Wycombe DC |
| Wyre Borough Council |
| Wyre Forest DC |

Air sites we couldn't find (either missing or hidden)

| |
|--------------------------------|
| Belfast City Council |
| Blaenau Gwent DC |
| Bolton MBC |
| Bromsgrove District Council |
| Buckinghamshire CC |
| Caerphilly DC |
| Calderdale MBC |
| Cannock Chase District Council |
| Canterbury City Council |
| Carmarthenshire DC |
| Carrick DC |
| Castlereagh DC |
| Ceredigion DC |

| |
|--------------------------------|
| Clackmannanshire |
| Coleraine Borough Council |
| Cumbria CC |
| Derbyshire County Council |
| Derry City Council |
| Down DC |
| Dungannon DC |
| East Cambridgeshire DC |
| Edinburgh City Council |
| Epping Forest District Council |
| Essex CC |
| Gwynedd CC |
| Highland Council |

| |
|-------------------------------|
| Inverclyde DC |
| Lancashire CC |
| Leicestershire County Council |
| Limavady DC |
| Midlothian Council |
| Mid Suffolk DC |
| Moray DC |
| Newport |
| North Yorkshire CC |
| Nottinghamshire CC |
| Oxfordshire CC |
| Pembrokeshire CC |
| Perth and Kinross |

| |
|-------------------------------|
| Sedgefield Borough Council |
| Shropshire CC |
| South Oxfordshire DC |
| South Ribble Borough Council |
| Southend Borough Council |
| Stirling BC |
| Surrey Heath Borough Council |
| Swale Borough Council |
| Tamworth Borough Council |
| Teesdale District Council |
| Warwickshire CC |
| Windsor & Maidenhead, RB |
| Worcestershire County Council |

How did the 'others' do on the web?

We continue our website survey – now of 'non local authority' sites ranging from large governmental offerings to small consultants. Big is not always best

While local authorities dwarf the 'non local authority' sector by a factor of about four to one in number, councils arguable have far less time and money to spend on their websites.

But if this review draws any conclusions, it's that an organisation's size or wealth appears to have little correlation on whether they have a good website. Some small pressure groups have excellent websites, while some huge organisations should be ashamed of their offerings.

Our review of 'other' websites include groupings of local authorities. We judged sites on many criteria (see table) and of course a large dollop of unscientific first impressions and dubious personal prejudice

as to what looks and feels good.

We settled on a handful that we felt looked great and had lots of content. Who said the public sector was staid and unimaginative? We found ourselves left having to choose between two very good offerings – South Yorks **Care4Air** website and the **BucksAirNet**. Despite the latter being better looking, in the end it was South Yorks **Care4Air** that emerged as our winner based on the sheer scale of what was on the site.

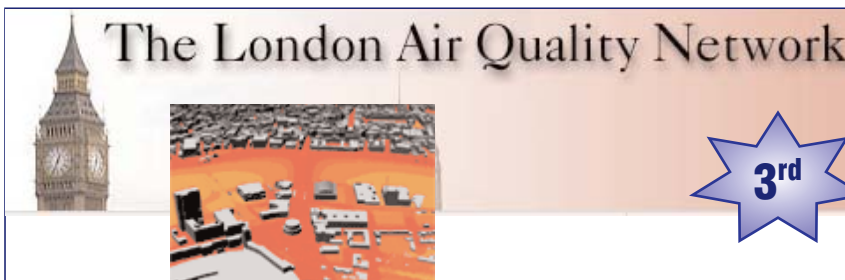
Congratulations also to other excellent sites including the former **Aric Encyclopaedia**, **Londonair**, and **Kentair**.

Next year we expect the private sector to do better!

Our winner...



Our winner is Care4Air which has updated its website with video clips, news, games, kids puzzles, and locally tailored hints and tips for its local readership.



The **Londonair** site in its old form proved itself useful during the Buncfield incident – it's been improved even more (Netcen's airquality.co.uk take note!) Visitors to the new website can view:

- 'Real time' air pollution measurements by postcode;
- Maps showing progress towards the attainment of UK air quality objectives;
- Animations of pollution incidents showing hour-by-hour pollution changes;
- Daily maps of pollution measurements across London for the last 10 years;
- 3D maps of current and future air pollution in central London;
- Analysis of air pollution concentration by wind direction to show the sources of air pollution at each monitoring site;
- *A Guide to Air Pollution* to understand what it all means.



The rankings: non local authority

| Rank | Organisation | Web address | Good looking | Content | Helpful | Links |
|------|---|--|--------------|---------|---------|-------|
| 1st | South Yorks Care4Air Excellent site in all respects apart from links. Something for everyone including videos and plenty of nagging to go green | www.care4air.org | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊 |
| 2nd | Bucks Air Net The best looking site in town – another Ben Coakley special (he runs Chiltern, our local authority winner) | www.bucksairquality.net | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊😊😊😊 |
| 3rd | Londonair ERG's recently relaunched London site – lots of new features including 3-D 'fly over London' map of air quality | www.londonair.org.uk | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊 |
| 4th | (Ex Aric) Encyclopedia No information about who runs this now and information is a bit hidden away – <i>Clean Air Kids</i> very good | www.air-quality.org.uk | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊😊😊😊 |
| 5th | Kent Air Quality Partnership Nice Kentish looking front end for ERG-run site doing the job nicely for Kent authorities | www.kentair.org.uk/kent | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊😊😊😊 |
| 6th | Airshare US site with lessons for the UK for air quality professionals in tying together air quality initiatives | http://airshare.info | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊😊😊😊 |
| 7th | NSCA Nice and bright, and packed full of information, regularly updated and still delivers the goods | www.nasca.org.uk | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊😊😊😊 | 😊😊😊😊😊 |

● continued on page 10

AIR QUALITY ON THE WEB

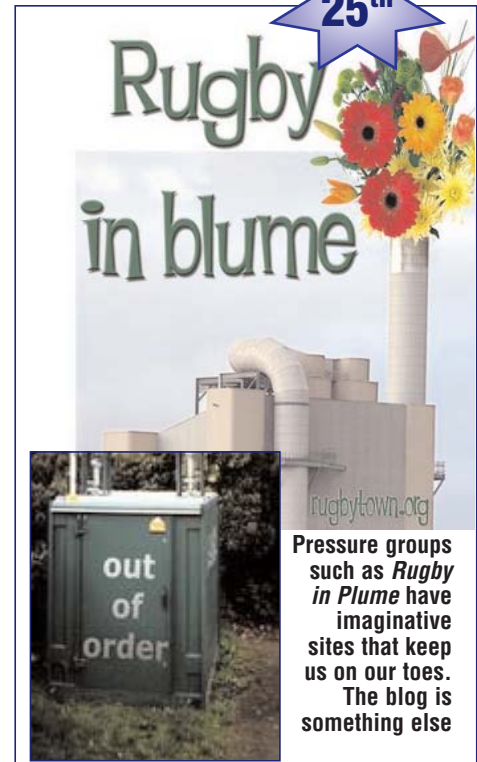
2nd



Our number two site. Apart from being good looking, the BucksAirQuality.net site includes all the best things you'd expect for a council groupng website and more.

It has even teamed up with NASA and provides a click through link to TOMS which shows a satellite plot of ozone over Europe

25th



Pressure groups such as Rugby in Plume have imaginative sites that keep us on our toes. The blog is something else

Web rankings (continued from page 9)

| Rank | Organisation | Web address | Good looking | Content | Helpful | Links |
|------|--|--|--------------|---------|---------|-------|
| 8 | Airparif The French make even air quality look stylish | www.airparif.asso.fr | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| 9 | Local authority support desk Combined site is clean and crisp, brings together much information of use to air professionals | www.laqmsupport.org.uk | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| 10 | Sussex Air Net Good looking site for Sussex local authorities with locally focussed news stories | www.sussex-air.net | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| 11 | www.airquality.co.uk The huge Netcen site is due for yet another revamp. Defra, can't you bung them to do it? | www.airquality.co.uk | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| 12 | US EPA / Airnow The US leviathan of all aq websites: shows the English Environment Agency how to organise lots of information | www.epa.gov/airlinks & http://airnow.gov | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| 13 | Enviro Technology Services Jam packed full of stuff, trumpeting the virtues of Bams! | www.et.co.uk | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| 14 | UWE AQM centre UWE university side, excellent links and a nice photo to see who everyone is | www.uwe.ac.uk/aqm | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| 15 | Welsh Air Quality Forum Nice site for Wales – loads of great links (another one produced by Netcen) | www.welshairquality.co.uk | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| 16 | Northern Ireland Air Like the Welsh site but for Northern Ireland, also produced by Netcen, and looking good | www.airqualityni.co.uk | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| 17 | Review and Assessment site Looking a bit jaded now the other support desks have been spruced up | www.uwe.ac.uk/aqm/review | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| 18 | Casella Measurement Crisp, easy to navigate site – easy to see what they do now the Stanger mob has left them | www.casellameasurement.com | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| 19 | Air Quality Consultants Good looking small consultant's site (well not so small these days) | www.aqconsultants.co.uk | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| 20 | Coalition for clean air US campaigning site that's bright, cheerful and informative | www.coalitionforcleanair.org | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ |
| 21 | Ozoneweb Sophisticated interactive map on where the ozone is | www.eea.europa.eu/maps/ozone/map | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺ |
| 22 | SEPA SEPA certainly does it better than that lot south of the border | www.sepa.org.uk | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| 23 | ERG Kings College ERG own research and consultancy site does the job and is no longer overpowered by Kings' frames | www.erg.kcl.ac.uk/erg | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| 24 | Heathrow Airwatch Another reliable site produced by Netcen for the Heathrow area | www.heathrowairwatch.org.uk | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| 25 | Rugby in Plume Rugby in Plume blog: bet you're pleased you're not the Rugby Council EHO with this lot breathing down your neck! | www.rugbytown.blogspot.com | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| 26 | Sadler Consultants Here's how to do a modest, job useful, sole trader website | www.airqualitypolicy.co.uk | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| 27 | Herts and Beds Does the job, but not quite as pretty as the rest of the ERG offerings (but still pretty good – compare it with MAPAC!) | www.hertsbedsair.org.uk | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| 28 | Raymond Agius's website All sorts of academic resources here, lots to find out | www.agius.com/hew/resource/airqual.htm | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |

● continued on page 10

Web rankings (continued from page 10)

| Rank | Organisation | Web address | Good looking | Content | Helpful | Links |
|------|---|--|--------------|---------|---------|-------|
| 29 | APIS Air pollution info. system Find out what's being emitted in your backyard | www.apis.ac.uk | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺ |
| 30 | Air Monitors Good website displays evidence of some jostling among monitor suppliers and setting out the benefits of FDMS | www.airmonitors.co.uk | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| 31 | Action Plan Appraisal Helpdesk Improved but not much action going on? Badging FAQ's dated in June 2005 as 'new' needs watching | www.casellastanger.com | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| 32 | Lakes Environmental Colourful sites from dispersion modelling software vendor | www.lakes-environmental.com/ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| 33 | Nat. Atmosph'c Emis. Inventory Less dry than it might seem at first glance | www.naei.org.uk | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| 34 | AEAT EMAQ/IAPSC site Does it need to look pretty if it does the job? Not in this case | http://emaq.aeat.com | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| 35 | Air Quality Bulletin site Site to support the fledgling but fast growing publication. At least it works, unlike some others we shouldn't really mention! | www.air-quality-bulletin.co.uk | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ |
| 36 | ADM Very smart, you don't have to be big to have a good website, and a good website doesn't have to be big | www.aboutair.com | ☺☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺ | ☺ |
| 37 | Breeze Surprisingly bright and cheerful site from Aermod supplier | www.breeze-software.com | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 38 | Cornwall AQ Forum Scooping up air quality for Cornwall, plenty of academic nuggets here | www.cornwall-airquality.org.uk | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺ |
| 39 | CERC Nitty gritty site from Cerc that has some surprises, not least in the links to the forecasting sites it runs | www.cerc.co.uk | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| 40 | Sniffer Nice looking job useful site for Scottish and NI research | www.sniffer.org.uk | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺ | ☺ |
| 41 | Air-Quality.Net Nice idea from Casella ETI with increasing amount of site data. Great home page pic – you can **feel** the fresh air | www.air-quality.net | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺ | ☺ |
| 42 | British Airways Air Quality Great little site putting BA's case on air quality | www.britishairways.com/travel/crlocairqual | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺ |
| 43 | Tyne and Wear Site covering the north east of England | www.tyneandwearair.sunderland.ac.uk | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺ |
| 44 | Inst of AQ Management Discussion forum never really took off – is there really nothing to chat about? | www.iaqm.co.uk | ☺☺ | ☺☺ | ☺☺ | ☺ |
| 45 | Scottish Executive AQ pages Air quality information looking very out of date, shame, because they're far more ambitious than Defra | www.scotland.gov.uk | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| 46 | Epacs Does the job and no more | www.defra.gov.uk/environment/airquality | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| 47 | MAPAC (Manchester) Disappointing site for such a huge conurbation. Better than the West Midlands site (there isn't one!) | www.mapac.org.uk | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| 48 | European Commission air pages Colourful and slightly more useful than the usual Eurobabble twaddle | http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺ | ☺ |
| 49 | Defra Air Quality pages Could be better – or at least have bolder links to helpdesks and other providers that do make an effort | www.defra.gov.uk/environment/airquality | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺ | ☺☺ |
| 50 | Env Agency AQ pages Hideous site. Can't find stuff even if you know its there | www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/apc | ☺ | ☺☺☺☺ | ☺☺ | ☺ |
| 51 | Met Office air quality forecasts Met Office does work on air quality, it does like to keep it secret though | www.met-office.gov.uk/environment | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺ | ☺☺ | ☺ |
| 52 | Bartlett (UCL) site Academic site from UCL pollution specialist | www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/web/ben/ | ☺ | ☺☺ | ☺☺ | ☺☺☺ |
| 52 | Comeap Comeap's home pages, but new stuff is tucked away and difficult to pick out | www.doh.gov.uk/comeap | ☺☺ | ☺☺ | ☺☺ | ☺ |

8th

The French Airparif site (which is even translated into English) has an excellent user-friendly panel showing pollution past, present and future. The site is very well designed

12th

The US Airnow site uses a weather map style to show residents where the bad air is

Political posturing

So the Tories are pledging to increase environmental taxes on short haul domestic air travel and cars.

Well, we've heard it all before, the great advantage of being in opposition is that you can say what you like and change your mind if you get in power. Just like Labour did – remember the fuel tax escalator pledge? That was a promise to increase fuel duty over the rate of inflation on a long term basis to deter continued increases in traffic.

Once in power, the escalator policy (very easy to implement unlike road pricing) was quickly junked on the basis that it was (surprise, surprise) unpopular. Perhaps the Tories have been out of power so long they have forgotten that the dangerously powerful aviation and motoring lobbies are off limits (unless your name is Ken Livingstone).

Only in France

It could only happen in France.

It appears a few municipalities have byelaws that prevent certain activities once ozone reaches a certain level – exceeded during recent heatwaves.

Districts such as Bouches-du-Rhone have banned activities such as household painting and petrol powered garden equipment.

But the restrictions lapse at 9pm – interesting timing that might have your noise abatement colleagues rather busy.

...and only in America

Personal monitoring usually refers to humans – but Californians are mounting personal monitors to homing pigeons in order to get a fuller picture.

The 'Pigeonblog' project equips urban homing pigeons with GPS-enabled electronic air pollution sensing devices capable of sending real-time location based air pollution and image data to an online mapping/blogging environment.

Lest the technical description overwhelm – the organisers have ready some meaningless twaddle to 'explain' it: "Pigeonblog is a social public experiment between human and non-human animals." Ehhhh? Social public experiment between man and bird?

Socially progressive perhaps: "Facilities emitting hazardous air pollutants are frequently sited in, or routed through, low-

income and "minority" dominated neighbourhoods, thereby putting the burden of related health and work problems on already disadvantaged sectors of the population who have the least means and legal recourse to defend themselves."

And if the neighbourhoods are particularly grim, at least the monitors are safe from vandals.

• More details on website www.pigeonblog.mapyourcity.net/index.php

Don't hold your breath

Given the almost complete abandonment of roadside emission tests (in England at least, Scotland soldiers on), it is curious to note that Defra's report to the EU suggests roadside tests will be used to help improve air quality.

It says that vehicles "are liable to be checked during the year at the roadside", which is partially true – the report to Europe talks about 2004 when test funding was still available.

So we will watch closely to see whether the 2005 report includes this pledge. Since DfT funding was withdrawn, you're more likely to win the lottery than be pulled over to have your emissions checked.

AIR QUALITY EVENTS 2006

September 6th

The integration of air quality management with climate change

EMAP conference to be held at The Friends House, London, Sue Powditch on 0870 190 6551 or sue.powditch@aeat.co.uk

September 6-8th

Air pollution and environmental health

From science to action: the challenge of particle matter, IUAPPA regional conference to be held in Lille, www.IUAPPA-lille2006.org

September 12th-14th

4th CIWEM annual conference

Emerging environmental issues and future challenges, including session on odour, to be held in Newcastle on Tyne, contact CIWEM 01924 257891

September 13th

The integration of air quality management with climate change

EMAP conference to be held at Cosla, Edinburgh, Sue Powditch on 0870 190 6551 or sue.powditch@aeat.co.uk

September 21st

The Integration of air quality management with climate change

EMAP conference to be held at Oakroyd Hall, Bradford, Sue Powditch on 0870 190 6551 or sue.powditch@aeat.co.uk

September 21st

A cleaner future

Good practice in air quality national conference 2006, Care4Air conference to be held in Sheffield, website www.care4air.org

October 3rd

Dispersion Modellers User Group (DMUG)

to be held in London, Contact Sally May, NSCA, 01273 878770

October 4th

ADMS Urban and ADMS Roads user group meeting

to be held in Birmingham, website [Cerc www.cerc.co.uk](http://www.cerc.co.uk)

October 26th

Environmental and public health training day

Advanced update to include IPPC, Sherman Education Centre, Guy's Hospital, London Karen Hogan, 0207 771 5384

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AIR QUALITY

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