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Best & Worst Air Quality in the UK: Towns and Cities

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What are the most and least polluted towns and cities in the UK?

The World Health Organisation routinely publishes their [Ambient Air Quality Database](#).

This lists any areas in the world where fine-particle air pollution levels above 10 micrograms per cubic metre.

Breathing polluted air can make certain health conditions worse, and in serious cases can lead to stroke, heart disease, lung cancer, and respiratory infections.

According to the latest WHO report, 99% of the world's population live in areas where air pollution exceeds the guideline limit of 10 micrograms per cubic metre. So what are the current best and worst towns for air quality in the UK?

Towns & Cities with the Worst Air Quality in the UK

According to the latest WHO figures, the five worst towns and cities in the UK for air pollution are:

- Warrington
- Bristol
- Stanford-Le-Hope
- Storrington
- Swansea

It's important to remember that air pollution levels are never constant. They can change on a daily basis. So the most polluted towns in the UK at the time of the WHO report might not be the most polluted towns by the time you read this.

Though in total, there are 42 cities across the UK where air pollution is at dangerous levels. In fact, around 97% of homes in the UK exceed the WHO guideline limits.

Towns & Cities with Best Air Quality in the UK

Not one of the 42 at-risk towns and cities in the UK is in Scotland. Cities like Edinburgh and Glasgow still experience air pollution, of course. But the concentrations of harmful pollutants in the air fall below the WHO limits.

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Other areas with good air quality include:

- Devon
- Peak District
- Mid Wales
- Cornwall
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What Affects Air Quality?

Many things can influence the air quality in an area, including:

- Heavy traffic
- Agriculture
- Industrial activity
- Burning fuel
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Though most air pollution is caused by human activity, pollen and sea spray are also classed as potentially-harmful pollutants.

Wind direction is another major factor, and it's partially due to the wind that air quality can change in an area on a daily basis.

You can read our full guide to [harmful air pollutants, and the activity that creates them](#).

How to Check the Air Quality in Your Area

Use the [IQ Air tool](#) to get a real time map of air quality levels across the UK.

You can also use the [Address Pollution tool](#), which lets you “demand action” if your home exceeds WHO air quality guidelines.

How to Improve the Air Quality in Your Home or Organisation

Local authorities and business owners are actively working to improve the air quality in their towns, cities, and organisations.

One key strategy is to introduce a speed limit for air quality. Head here to read our full guide to the [link between vehicle speed and harmful emissions](#).

Other strategies include working with air quality consultants, and using air purifiers to improve the interior air quality in buildings like schools, universities, offices, hospitals, and private homes.

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Want to improve the air quality in your organisation?

We offer [bespoke air quality monitoring systems](#) for all kinds of workplaces. We can assess the air quality of your premises and advise on a solution to help your staff and service users breathe cleaner, healthier air. We also stock a range of [powerful air purifiers](#) suitable for a range of environments, from open plan offices to operating theatres.

Get in touch to [talk to one of our air purification experts today](#).

Courtesy of Cairn Technology

<https://cairntechnology.com/best-worst-air-quality-in-the-uk-towns-and-cities/>

<https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/themes/topics/topic-details/GHO/ambient-air-pollution>