



TRUCKERS' TOILETS UK

Campaign to improve the health & wellbeing of lorry drivers

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NEWSLETTER 2-10

TTUK has been very busy this Easter!

Petition: www.tinyurl.com/drivewithpride The Department for Transport is legally obliged to 'maintain high standards of safety and security in transport' and our partners, *Blue Arrow*, have established a petition to prompt the Department of Transport to give lorry drivers clean, working toilet facilities that meet minimum standards as part of that obligation. *Truckers' Toilets UK* features in the description of the petition and we wholly endorse what *Blue Arrow / Drive with Pride* is doing to improve working conditions for lorry drivers. So before you read anything else in this newsletter please sign the petition if you've not already done so!



Why drivers are hanging up their keys: A letter in the Daily Telegraph [18 March] mentioned, amongst other issues, the lack of loos and washing facilities for drivers.



Our Ed couldn't resist the opportunity to respond and her reply [Daily Telegraph 24 March] highlighted the work of *Truckers Toilets UK* and the need for statutory toilet provision for lorry drivers. The methods to which drivers are forced to resort because of the lack of facilities and how needing the loo can compromise the safety of other road users were also remarked upon.

Radio Kent: As a consequence of her letter [see above] our Ed was interviewed by Lembit Opik on Radio Kent. The interview was short but hopefully the point was made about poor access to toilet and handwashing facilities. The suggestion by Mr Opik that lorry drivers should pay to use a toilet was hotly contested by our Ed!



FTA Driver Crisis Summit: This event took place on 12 March at the Ricoh Centre in Coventry. TTUK was supported by our Unite the Union representative who mentioned our campaign and reported that the lack of toilet and handwashing facilities was contributing to the driver shortage. This is one area related to the Driver Crisis that can and should be addressed without delay. Finding suitable hygienic ways to cope with a basic human need is not rocket science!



Roadside waste: There is no parking on a section of the A4 in Slough because of complaints from local residents about the mess [*Commercial Motor 3 April*]. The RHA recently stated that inadequate facilities at official areas meant that layby parking was 'a preferable option' for lorry drivers. A Council spokesman admitted not knowing of any official truckstops in the area but said that some laybys did have bins. Needless to say our Ed was on the case and wrote to Slough Council who said there was a café 'less than a quarter of a mile away' and the situation was such that the mess could no longer be tolerated. On the Internet the café's opening hours are described as 0900 to 2100 so there is quite a length of time without facilities. The Ed was informed that the café is open 'all the time' but there is a charge for overnight parking which might be part of the problem. The tone of the contact was very pleasant and informative and apparently our Ed's email has been passed to other departments. Hopefully our Ed



was considered equally polite and understanding of the effect on local residents. But we have an impasse. If anyone knows of the current situation please speak up via TTUK.

Cleaning up: If you are caught urinating in public in Eastleigh, Hampshire there is a new initiative whereby you will have the choice of either cleaning up the mess or being faced with a fine [Daily Telegraph 30 March]. You will also have the opportunity to meet a representative of the Business Improvement District who will explain the problems of public urination. An email from Gill to the Council asking for more details has received no reply to date. It seems that fulfilling a basic human need can very easily become a criminal offence if there are insufficient or no facilities available!!!



'Drivers need toilet areas': This is the heading of a letter in Cambridge News [1 April] – and it was not an April Fool! The writer has no connections with lorry drivers but certainly understands how the lack of toilet facilities affects their daily lives. He is also very aware of the importance of the contribution lorry drivers make to the smooth running of our society. Our Ed replied to this contributor who is going to try to highlight the issues further in the *Cambridge News* – watch this space!



Company support: It is not all bad news. We are beginning to get support from Company managers. Hopefully discussions will lead to solutions. More information in due course.



Standards: Sadly however photographs of poorly maintained toilet and hand washing facilities continue to be sent in. It beggars belief that drivers are expected to use such facilities. It is not just 'one-off' dirt that is illustrated but ingrained filth; toilets and basins that have not seen any hint of cleaning substances for a very long time. Such facilities would constitute a health hazard in other working environments. An HSE presentation [Welfare facilities & Construction Work (CDM 2007)] stresses the importance of welfare, including toilet provision and deems dirty toilets as unacceptable – but apparently not for lorry drivers. Why should any sector of the working population be treated differently when it comes to fulfilling a need which affects 100% of the population? The ghastly photographs displayed on the Powerpoint were from HSE inspectors – perhaps toilet inspections should form part of Health and Safety inspections generally or at least undertaken if reports of such poorly maintained facilities are received. Comments anyone?



Legal advice: TTUK is still trying to find a lawyer willing to discuss the position of drivers and the lack of access to toilet and handwashing facilities. There has been a willingness to help but then nothing more is heard. Follow up requests to know one way or another only produces additional silence. Is this topic really that scary? Is it too complex a subject? Silence would seem to indicate there is a case to be answered. TTUK will continue the search.



Election time! In case anyone hasn't noticed the General Election is fast approaching. In the 'debate' on 26 March David Cameron mentioned 'Dignity and security of work'. Ed Milliband apparently 'cares about British People'. However neither seems concerned with the lack of toilet and hand washing facilities endured by those who supply them and their communities



with goods. If anyone comes knocking at your door it is a great opportunity to ask them how they would improve welfare conditions for lorry drivers – and do let *TTUK* know the responses.

Anxiety UK: *TTUK* welcomes the support of Anxiety UK. Toilet phobia is very common and can be caused by a variety of factors including anxiety, fear, specific experience or trauma and learnt behaviour from someone close.

Causes of Toilet Phobia can often be a combination of the following factors: Agoraphobia, Social Phobia, Panic, OCD, Paruresis and Parcopresis.

If you or someone close to you suffers from Toilet Phobia or in fact any kind of anxiety condition, there is help available! Do get in touch with *Anxiety UK* on 08444 775 774 or email the support service: support@anxietyuk.org.uk There are also many resources available on the Anxiety UK website: www.anxietyuk.org.uk

NEWS FLASH!!!!!!!

The Independent [19 April]: ‘Driving while dehydrated can be just as dangerous as drink driving, study suggests’

More next month on this issue

Thanks to Kaz and Lee for bringing it to our attention

Drive with Pride

TTUK and *Drive with Pride* are not just stopping at the petition.

We are also planning additional ways in which to spread the word.

So do keep up to date via *TTUK* and *Drive with Pride* on Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/drivewithpridecampaign?sk=timeline>

TRUCKERS’ TOILETS UK

www.facebook.com/TTUKcampaign



Next issue of the **Truckers’ Toilets UK** newsletter will be May 2015

Gillian Kemp

The British Toilet Association < www.britloos.co.uk >