



TRUCKERS' TOILETS UK

Campaign to improve the health & wellbeing of lorry drivers

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Interest in our TTUK campaign is growing and not just in the UK!

Canada: This month Gill gave a Skype interview to a journalist in Canada who is writing a book on toilets and had heard about the problems encountered by UK lorry drivers and was keen to learn more.



Western Australia: We now have a link to *Pilbara Heavy Haulage Girls* in WA who also face difficulties in finding a loo; not because of refusals but because there are very few facilities along their routes away from cities. They can go over 100 miles before finding a toilet and convenient bushes are non-existent! TTUK is learning how they cope in these circumstances and what actions are being taken. It does seem that their Government is taking more interest than ours. A female MP took the opportunity to go along on a trip and saw the problems for herself. Perhaps UK drivers could invite one of their local MPs to do something similar? TTUK is keeping in touch with the CEO to exchange ideas and comments.



UK: Earlier this month Gill gave an interview to a journalist who is writing an article for the *New Statesman* on the welfare of lorry drivers. This weekly magazine is concerned with current affairs and politics and has a wide readership so it will be a coup to be included in this renowned publication!



Unite the Union: The welfare of lorry drivers was raised in Unite's presentation at the recent *FTA Driver Crisis Summit*. The need for drivers to be able to access toilets and handwashing facilities was highlighted to a wide ranging audience. Now another group of people is aware of the situation. Although Gill was unable to attend she commented on Twitter and as some of the tweets were retweeted there is no doubt that word is spreading. TTUK believes that the lack of recognition of drivers' welfare is one of the reasons for this crisis situation



Drive with Pride www.wegetgoodpeople.com/drive-with-pride-update/ Our campaign partners, Blue Arrow, have established this site to raise awareness of the need for clean, well maintained facilities for drivers. They are also on Facebook www.facebook.com/drivewithpridecampaign Our TTUK partnership is highlighted and our TTUK newsletters are included. We also had a very good meeting this month. We covered a wide range of issues, prioritised them and made a plan. It's not just about the problems; we're looking to create solutions. The *Drive with Pride* team really understand the issues faced by lorry drivers and together we have every chance of success.



Healthy Lives, Healthy People: This is a Government White Paper [November 2010] outlining the strategy for Public Health England. In the Foreword the Secretary of State for Health [Ed: can't decipher the signature!] says that the promotion of healthy living will be supported by industry and other partners. The White Paper also states that the Department of Health will publish documents addressing 'many of the wider determinants of health'. The White Paper also states that 'being in work leads to better physical and mental health, and we could



save the UK up to £100 billion a year by reducing working-age ill health'. Apparently the Government will be 'strengthening self-esteem, confidence and personal responsibility; positively promoting healthy behaviours and lifestyles; and adapting the environment to make healthy choices easier'. They will also 'use a 'ladder' of interventions to determine the least intrusive approach necessary to achieve the desired effect and aim to make voluntary approaches work before resorting to regulation'. And so it goes on..... By the time our Ed had finished reading the document, proverbial steam was coming out of her ears accompanied by a rise in blood pressure [a health matter?]; the words were there but actions in the real world were and remain sadly lacking. This has made TTUK even keener to do battle and we hope that YOU will all continue to give this campaign your support.

An immediate contribution: If you are offered use of a toilet, please leave it as you would wish to find it. Simple! We know it's the minority who don't, but judging by the state of some of the toilets in photographs TTUK receives there are a number of people out there who don't give two hoots shall we say. If you find a loo that is in a poor state please report it [OK nothing may be done but *you've* done something about it] – every time you visit if necessary – and tell TTUK about your experience. We also know that some companies don't provide soap and towels; politely ask for them and let TTUK know the outcome. The actions of a few drivers are being used as an excuse to refuse facilities. This isn't fair but unfortunately if you think about it, it is understandable that companies get fed up with the way some of their facilities are left and give up.



A company viewpoint: In New Zealand a restaurant owner got so fed up with cleaning up after bus drivers that he sent a cleaning bill to the local Mayor. [Stuff.co.nz 22 Feb] He and his staff had tried to maintain good standards and make visits to the loo pleasant for customers but they were being left in such a bad state that he couldn't ask his staff to clean them so did it himself. He was very sympathetic about the lack of available toilets for drivers and since the presentation of his invoice there have been discussions about possible solutions – but, the article concludes, he still wants his cleaning bill paid! Perhaps this is a way we can get a dialogue between companies and driving personnel?



Handwashing, germs & restrooms [Cleansing 26 Feb]: Apparently a survey carried out by Bradley Corporation has found that only 66% of Americans who responded wash their hands after visiting the restroom even though 97% agree it is important. In the survey the majority of respondents believed that an unpleasant washroom in a business indicated poor management! [TTUK has evidence that a toilet available to drivers in a UK food warehouse does not have soap or drying facilities]



Scandal of sewage dumping: Back in February this year railway workers leafleted passengers at 2 Glasgow stations about the continued dumping of sewage on the track which they had to clear up. Apparently Union reps had been told that there was only a *limited* health risk to staff although the last analysis took place 10 years ago, The article [RMT news release 2 Feb 15] reported that workers would not be offered jabs against such diseases as hepatitis. The RMT is determined to end this practice of dumping which continues with little regard for the health, safety and wellbeing of railway workers. It's surely wrong that in 2015 the health, safety and wellbeing of railway workers - and lorry drivers - is not considered important in spite of all the health and safety regulations that are produced!



Coach drivers: Our Ed recently had a telephone discussion with a local community councillor, Colin McGrath about the toilet situation in Kelso – a tourist area. There was once a toilet block in the car park but this was closed and turned into an art gallery, aptly named The Wee Gallery – relating to its size as well as its former use! New toilets have been built in the town [which is cobbled] but coach drivers in particular are finding it difficult to visit the facilities. Budget cuts and incidents of vandalism are the cause of the problem yet car parks are an ideal location for public toilets because they provide natural surveillance and allow a wider range of people to use them such as coach drivers, taxi drivers, delivery personnel, and other mobile workers. As Mr McGrath pointed out tourist areas in other countries such as Turkey are recognising the need for well maintained toilets to attract visitors and the UK, once in the fore front, is being left behind. If an area wants tourists it must provide conveniently located toilets – and also consider the needs of drivers who bring in the visitors and the goods they buy!



And don't forget the **Election** is looming.....
This is an opportunity to say **your** piece about toilet provision to any
canvassers

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Next issue of the **Truckers' Toilets UK** newsletter will be April 2015

Gillian Kemp

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