



TRUCKERS' TOILETS UK

Campaign to improve the health & wellbeing of lorry drivers

OCTOBER 2015
NEWSLETTER 3-4

National Lorry Week: Launched by the Road Haulage Association, National Lorry week is running from 26-31 October. The aim is to raise awareness of the contribution that freight makes to the quality of life in the UK. Drivers will be encouraged to display a 'Love the Lorry' sticker and be offered the chance of winning a prize worth £1000. The Chief Executive of the RHA has been quoted as saying 'We have a huge impact on the lives of everyone in Britain but sometimes that positive contribution is overlooked' [Prospect Commercial 11/9]. The RHA has arranged an event at Westminster to which MPs and Ministers will be invited and Gill has also accepted an invitation to attend on behalf of TTUK. Hopefully this will provide us with the chance to raise welfare issues which are also overlooked!



Have you signed the Petition?: <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/106393> This petition has the title: *Provide Better, Safer rest areas for Goods Vehicles on UK Motorways/Trunkroads*. You don't have to be a lorry driver to sign it! If you support the need for decent welfare facilities for drivers then this petition is an opportunity to respond. It doesn't take long to make a difference!



Moving forward: TTUK was recently contacted by Ray Bulpit, a specialist with experience in the provision of Trunk Road Service Areas in the Southern Counties. He is keen to see wide-ranging support for TTUK's initiative. Ray has suggested that we should try to arrange an initial meeting to explore the means by which practical solutions to those problems already identified might be implemented. We will also be assembling relevant information about affordable opportunities to respond to the particular needs of lorry drivers – and road users generally. Representatives of relevant organisations will be invited (RHA., FTA., Department for Transport, Highways England, Association of County Councils, Police, HSE., etc. If you have ideas for other invitees to this meeting (date and location TBA) who can contribute to improving welfare facilities for drivers do contact TTUK/ Gill at the email address at the end of the newsletter. Another positive step!!!!



Services: In the meantime TTUK was recently informed of shower problems at the Oxford Welcome Break services which had had no hot water for some time. TTUK contacted the WB and received a very prompt response via Facebook which provided the person who'd experienced the difficulty to discuss the issue directly with the WB representative. Hopefully the matter has now been resolved. A good way to solve problems?



Laybys, Loos & Lorry Drivers: As mentioned in the October TTUK newsletter Gill who leads our TTUK campaign has written a document which not only sets out some of the problems experienced by lorry drivers when it comes to finding suitable toilet facilities but also offers the pros and cons of possible solutions. Several supporters have asked for a copy and TTUK is very happy to email a copy to anyone interested in the subject – so please ask. However, there could soon be an easier way of accessing it – see the end of this newsletter!



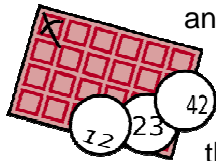
Damned if you do & Damned if you don't: Going to the toilet is part of being human – just like eating. When will this be recognised? Toilets with safe parking are few and far between yet lorry drivers are vilified if they use a quiet spot as a toilet and if they 'hold on' or reduce their fluid intake they put their life – and that of others – at risk! This scenario pops up too often in local press. It's understandable that communities don't like it. Drivers don't like it either. It's undignified and unhealthy but it's no good jumping up and down. Drivers need **ACTION!**. And this is what is starting to happen – at last! There is now a move to start thinking about **DRIVERS**.



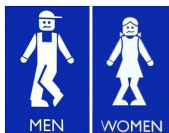
Public Health England: In August PHE published a document *The impact of physical environments on employee wellbeing, topic overview*. Whilst the report focuses on the office environment there is mention of employee control over the work environment and the extent to which this is associated with areas such as improved performance and job satisfaction. One of the recommendations is to 'engage staff in workplace design.....' which leads TTUK to ask the question to what extent are lorry drivers invited to contribute to the design of truckstops, services etc? Another recommendation is that employers should be considering the health and wellbeing of their workforce so that they give of their best. One sentence that resonated with TTUK was 'there exists an ethical argument for employees to have a work environment that is fit for purpose, enables performance and is not a source of unnecessary pressure'. Whilst the document is directed at office based staff TTUK believes that many of the concerns outlined in this document can also relate to lorry drivers. In TTUK's opinion we should not ignore this study or use it as an excuse to do nothing. We need to think laterally and consider how the arguments in this document affect drivers and how we can improve *their* wellbeing.



Toilet lottery: TTUK had a mention in *Private Hire & Courier Magazine* [Sept 2015]. The article 'Bog standard' highlights the lack of basic facilities for logistics drivers and whether those that are 'discovered' are fit for purpose. The serious affects on health and the inability to even wash hands properly are also included. Mark Manaton CEO of Blue Arrow agrees that whilst lorry drivers are the 'backbone of the UK's infrastructure' they are not getting 'the basic right of access to clean, working toilets'. He also acknowledges that 'we know first hand that drivers are suffering'. He concludes his statement by saying 'How can we attract young people to an industry that can't even offer them a clean loo?'. Mr Manaton feels that the Drive with Pride petition is the first step towards improvement working conditions but TTUK believes additional action is required – and quickly. The situation has been allowed to drift on for too long.



How Long Can You Hold It? 6 Facts Truckers Need to Know About Waiting To Go [CDLLife Oct6] emphasises what TTUK and our supporters know but noone in authority is taking notice. They include: 'holding on' stretches the walls of the bladder; the bladder enlarges in those who have few chances to relieve themselves; if you wait too long to 'go' there is a danger of bladder or kidney infection; if you really can go all day without going to the toilet you're probably dehydrated – and being dehydrated whilst driving is akin to driving whilst drunk!



For the want of a loo! The problem at Stafford Business Park was mentioned in September's newsletter and this month it featured in *The Cleanzine* [1 October] and included a mention of TTUK [thanks Jan]. This latest article picks up on the high cleaning costs because of the lack of toilet facilities



and this lack has apparently been ongoing for some time. Additional bins have been installed and regularly emptied and although Councillor Sutherland reported to *TTUK* that '*toilets facilities are a basic requirement*' no updates on the issue have been received. [Editor musing: if cleaning up costs one business park £7000 a year what is the national cost? All because of a lack of toilets]. Do you remember the rhyme: For the want of a nail.....? ?

Have you used this? Blue Arrow has been adding to their truckstop map on a weekly basis: <http://www.bluearrow.co.uk/pages/truck-stops.aspx> They are looking to build it as a resource where drivers can locate their nearest truckstops which are in a good working condition. Do let *TTUK* know if you've found it helpful.



Toilet closures affect cab drivers: A former taxi driver – now a private taxi company owner - in Bath [Bath Chronicle 24 Sept] has admitted to relieving himself 'in public' because of the lack of toilets. Unsurprisingly if taxi drivers have to go loo hunting they miss out on jobs. This particular driver confessed that he reduced his fluid intake to avoid needing the loo! Here is another profession that many of us use at some point being forced to put their health on the line to earn a living. The smell of urine is off putting to visitors and of course there is a hike in cleaning costs! Has a sense of decency and care for others disappeared along with the toilets?



We need a **Toilet Champion!** Someone in the public eye who understands the importance of toilets and is willing to say their piece on the subject. Please let *TTUK* have your suggestions

It's on its way! Yes by popular request *TTUK* will soon have its own **website**. Watch out for more details on our Facebook page

THE URGENT RUN for **World Toilet Day** in November. Visit www.urgentrun.com to find out more

TRUCKERS' TOILETS UK
www.facebook.com/TTUKcampaign



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