



TRUCKERS' TOILETS UK

Campaign to improve the health & wellbeing of lorry drivers

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NEWSLETTER 2-3

Layby issue: *Flint councillors slam truckers for using layby as toilet.* [*The Daily Post 4 September*]. Apparently a number of complaints have been received about laybys being used as toilets. TTUK agrees with Councillors that it's unpleasant for residents and a potential health risk but what TTUK does *not* agree with is the proposal to ban drivers using the area to sleep without offering alternatives. The Ed has written to the Mayor about this issue. The owner of JD Owen Transport says that drivers have no option because no facilities are available and he has himself made 2 applications to Flintshire Council to create a truckstop - both of which have been refused. So what choice do lorry drivers have?



Commercial Motor: Chris Tindall has reported a similar story in Huntingdon [2 September] where apparently the local MP Jonathan Djanogly has condemned the drivers' actions. So here are 2 instances in a month where drivers have found nowhere to go. When will politicians recognise going to the toilet is a basic need? When will politicians recognise that drivers do NOT like being forced to be unhygienic and environmentally unfriendly? When will politicians instead stand up and SUPPORT the 300,000+ drivers and other mobile workers who supply the UK's shops and services? What can YOU do to help?



Reporting Toilet Standards: TTUK asked drivers via the Forums what they do when they come across poor standards in a toilet – [*some facilities are absolutely disgraceful – Ed*]. Many do report it at the time but it seems activity to put it right is lacking. One driver at least has been threatened with a site ban! A driver's boss has admitted he is powerless to do anything about it. This is not good enough. It is not allowed in other employment positions and it should not be allowed for visiting drivers and other mobile workers. It demonstrates a complete lack of respect



Trucker & Driver: It will come as no surprise, bearing in mind the above, that there has been an increase in human waste [*August issue*] dumped in lorry parks and at the side of the road because of the lack of facilities. Dover and Maidstone is an example. In the same issue a Pall-Ex survey showed that 86% of 135 drivers said that '*local authorities needed to do more to combat littering, by providing more bins at laybys and service stations*'. However when it comes to human waste, the best and most hygienic means of disposal is a proper toilet!



Unite the Union: Drivers can now rate the toilets they've visited at the *Better Loos 4 U* Campaigning section of the Union website. Thanks to our contact, Tony, at Unite it's straightforward and anonymous, so come on drivers take a moment to let us know the score! www.unitetheunion.org/campaigning .



Toilets in Coaches: It is not just bad news for lorry drivers. Coaches are now being built without toilets! This will surely limit the opportunities to go out and about for many potential passengers. [*I missed this on the news, did you? – Ed*]



Cleaning personnel: Lorry drivers are not the only sector suffering a lack of respect. Cleanzine [28 August] reports that an examination by the *Equality and Human Rights Commission* has found that many cleaners '*feel their employer, client firms and the public do not treat them with the dignity and respect everyone should expect*'. Many cleaners spoke of being '*invisible*' – *the lowest of the low*, being spoken to



rudely and treated badly compared to other employees'. TTUK will be following up the issue of respect with regard to lorry drivers.

Research: The Ed was sent a research paper on *The Effect of Acute Increase in Urge to Void on Cognitive Function in Healthy Adults* [*Neurourology & Urodynamics* 30-183-187 (2011)].

In a nutshell it suggests that wanting to wee urgently affects concentration and a reference to drivers was included! The paper states that this urge in itself doesn't mean that eg a road accident is likely, but it can have 'a deleterious effect on aspects of cognitive function'. [*Anything that affects concentration whilst driving definitely needs addressing and for lorry drivers – and other vehicle users – this means having access to a toilet!- Ed*]



HCCI: The Herts Chamber of Commerce & Industry is hoping to set up a Transport & Policy Group. The aim will be to identify, observe and explore current and future transport and planning issues. Gill on behalf of TTUK has expressed an interest in joining the group and will keep drivers updated



Hand hygiene: Chris Packham www.enviroderm.co.uk has responded to last month's piece with a suggestion that drivers should keep a bottle of alcohol sanitising rub/foam in their cab.



If applied to skin that is not soiled with organic matter, it helps to prevent infection as it deactivates any bacteria and many viruses. Also if properly formulated it does not defat the skin and can actually act as a skin conditioner.

World Toilet Organisation: The Guardian [22 August] carried an article about the Base of the Pyramid [BoP] Hub founded by Jack Sim who also founded the WTO



www.bopworldconvention.org. Although the subject of the article is about improving sanitation in developing countries some ideas from this article could be adapted for the UK eg: raising the social status of toilets and making toilets trendy! In fact Jack Sim suggests 'turning poop culture into pop culture'. Thinking caps on!

HSE: Whilst awaiting the outcome of the Consultation document due shortly re: the Code of Practice for the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations update, Gill analysed a variety of HSE documents relevant to drivers' welfare. The results suggest a degree of confusion and contradictions. It is hoped the results of the Consultation document will clearly identify the welfare position for drivers. In the meantime TTUK is continuing its aim to get drivers decent toilet and hand washing provision



Blue Arrow: With its large network of drivers, Blue Arrow has offered to work with TTUK to improve driver access to toilets and handwashing. At an enthusiastic meeting attended by Gill and representatives from relevant Blue Arrow departments it was agreed to hold a workshop for a range of companies early in the New Year. This is a fantastic opportunity to discuss issues with companies on neutral ground. In the meantime staff will start asking about access to toilets when companies request a driver!



Ladies in Waiting: Designer Tom Karen suggests that Ladies who find themselves in a queue for the loo might like to stick a little 'running lady' [like the fire escape sign] to the loo door. He suggests these stickers which can be printed on a clear self-adhesive sheet could also be sent to planners to remind them of women's requirements! Not a bad idea, eh?



Ageing Population: A new Age UK publication '*Making our Communities Ready for Ageing – a call to action*' reports how communities need to adapt to an ageing policy with the emphasis on enjoyment of life. Most importantly toilets feature as a way of encouraging older people to get out and about. Let's hope notice will be taken by those involved with designing our futures!



Exciting new project: a project photographically documenting the state of the Cornish British Toilet has begun. Two friends discovered a dire lack of public conveniences around their part of the Cornish county with many either closed or beyond use! Initially a few eyebrows were raised when the cameras came out but once the project was explained the public proved supportive and what started as a personal venture now has other exciting possibilities – a book and an exhibition perhaps! The ladies can be contacted at cornishtoilets@gmail.com

The Monkey Closet: More historical facts have been added! If you have any items on sanitation and hygiene you would like to share, contact the team via the website www.themonkeycloset.com

The Urgent Run: Sunday 16 November. The UK's contribution to World Toilet Day. Contact details Rachel Erickson rachel.ida.erickson@gmail.com

Don't forget to join in our Truckers Toilets UK campaign on Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Truckers-Toilets-UK/520313554691335>



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

Gillian Kemp

The British Toilet Association www.britloos.co.uk