



TUCAN Newsletter

Autumn 2024: No. 6



Editorial

It's been a busy year for the Trade Union Clean Air Network (TUCAN). We have published a comprehensive set of resources for union reps and campaigners to use in their work with employers, local authorities and politicians.

Next year we have even more ambitious plans to bring together union activists, community campaigners, local and regional authorities in a series of events in different regions and countries in the UK. All this work is done unpaid by volunteers in the **Hazards** movement and **Greener Jobs Alliance**.

Action on occupational air pollution is vital if we are to improve standards both at work and in our communities. If you want to get more involved sign up for our online training programme next month.

Union Rep Training

Do you want to get involved in air quality campaigns in your workplace or community?

If so, then sign up for the TUCAN training on Tuesday 10 December from 18.00 - 19.00 hrs.

Please register for this free training by using this [HERE](#).

Planning for 2025

In the spring and summer of next year we will be hosting a series of regional and national conferences focused on indoor air pollution. Events are planned for Wales, Scotland, the North-West, Yorkshire and London.

Check the Winter 2025 newsletter for further details.

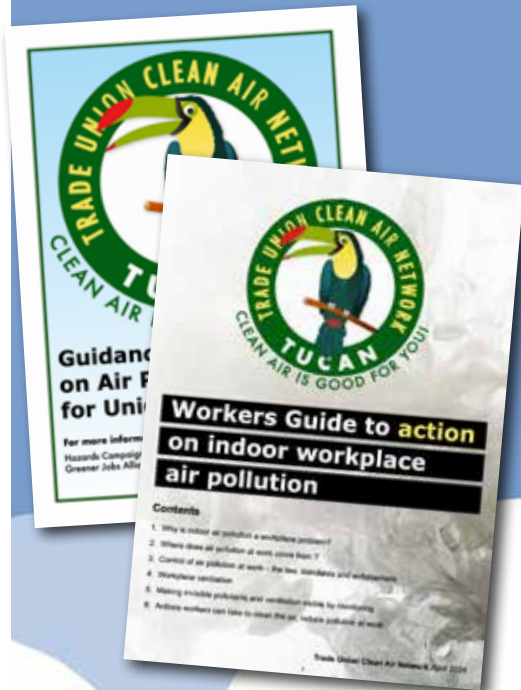
TUCAN resources and changing the law

Both the training and the conferences will be an opportunity to discuss the set of resources that TUCAN produced in the summer. These include the Workers Guide, the 10-minute film and the Briefing Paper. They can all be found here [TUCAN - Greener Jobs Alliance](#)



TUCAN attended a parliamentary reception organised by the Healthy Air Coalition. The reception was called to lobby the Government about the need for new clean air legislation.

Photo: Gary Fuller, Imperial College addressing the event





Health and Social Care - A new petition has been put on the parliament.gov web site calling on the government to introduce new air quality and PPE rules for health and social care settings to prevent and control airborne infections, new ventilation and filtration requirements, new PPE standards and staffing rules, and monitoring and inspection to ensure compliance.

Covid and other infectious diseases are spread by airborne aerosols. There are key ways to prevent them by improving air quality and using well-fitting respiratory masks. Some research has found that reinfection can increase the risk of long-term serious organ damage and care workers having amongst the highest prevalence of long Covid. There are many tools to protect people in health and social care, including improving ventilation/air filtration, reintroducing PPE masks and Covid testing, and supporting ill staff to stay home.

You can find this petition [HERE](#).

Consultation on a proposed air pollution benchmark - Guy's and St Thomas' Foundation have a launched a consultation on corporate air pollution action. The deadline is 17 December and TUCAN intends to comment.

Consultation on a proposed corporate air pollution benchmark

Update on TUCAN campaigns

We have been working closely with the London Borough of Wandsworth around the hazards of particulate matter in indoor markets. In the 2 markets in Tooting there has been a recognition that levels are dangerously high. This has featured as a case study in our [Air Pollution film](#).

Since the film was launched in the summer there has been an agreement to install monitoring and carry out a survey in one of the markets. The other market had not been responding to requests to address the hazards. Following further interventions, we have been notified that improvements are now being made. There is still a long way to go for both markets, but it does provide a useful example of where trade union campaigners working with local authorities can make a difference.

International campaigns - Links with Australian air pollution campaigns

Safer Air Project - We met up with Colin Kinner in Australia to discuss what we are doing in TUCAN and what he is involved with in Australia on clean air. We spoke about the work he is doing in the education sector on clean air and @SaferAirProject. He has been involved in developing a training package for teachers and parents with a concern about the continuing impact of Covid illness but also with a concern about all virus transmission and air pollution. He agrees that there is more that could be done to stop infections circulating indoors by improving ventilation / air filtration www.saferairproject.com/

Making places more accessible and inclusive. Their vision is to create a world where everyone can breathe safely indoors, ensuring healthy and inclusive environments for all. They are launching a new report on 20 November. '*Safer shared air A critical accessibility and inclusion issue*'.

Their resources and training can be accessed www.covidsafetyforschools.org/ which includes a 90 minute introductory course on key aspects of Covid safety in schools, a Comprehensive course covering all aspects of COVID safety in schools and live webinars. They are also looking to develop a series of short films. The course although referencing Australia is pretty universal in their information and useful simple guide to cleaning indoor air.

We also met with Dr Bronwyn King who has been working on a clean indoor air campaign. She has put together a report that covers not just Australia but other countries including the UK. The report, which echoes the TUCAN call for better legal standards can be found [HERE](#).



Invisible killers - Trades Council conference on cleaning the air

Barking, Dagenham and Havering Trades Council (BDHTC) recently held a conference gathering union reps from local authority unions together to discuss workplace air pollution, asbestos in workplace buildings and Covid.

TUCAN speaker Mick Holder gave an overview of the health issues arising from air pollution in workplaces and what union reps can do to tackle them as set out in the TUCAN Workers guide to action on indoor workplace air pollution.

Conference attendees also watched the TUCAN film, All in a day's work. Dr Jonathan Fluxman of Doctors In Unite spoke of the continuing Covid risk and the need to increase workplace protections. Hank Roberts, NEU and JUAC (Joint Union Asbestos Committee), Gill Reed of JUAC and author of recent NEU report on asbestos in schools, and Harminder Bains of law firm Leigh Day all spoke of the continuing risk of asbestos in schools and public buildings and the need for a campaign for asbestos's total removal.

TUCAN would like to congratulate BDHTC on this successful event and would encourage others to do similar, especially on the issue of workplace air pollution which we would happily consider participating in.

Image by Yerson Retamal from Pixabay

Sources of information

The following publications that have come out in the last few months may be of interest:

1. **Assessment of the health impacts and costs associated with indoor nitrogen dioxide exposure related to gas cooking in the European Union and the United Kingdom** Spanish research Oct 2024
2. **WHO Ambient Outdoor Air Pollution Factsheet Oct 2024**
3. **A mission for lung health (Asthma and Lung UK) Nov 2024**
4. **Integrating Action on Air Quality and Climate Change:** A Guide for Local Authorities published by the Institution of Environmental Sciences, Oct. 2024 Climate change and air pollution are some of the most pressing global challenges of our time. They are also closely related, and there are substantial benefits to tackling both together.
5. The European Union voted to formally adopt the revised Ambient Air Quality Directive¹, marking a pivotal step in the fight against pollution across Europe. The new directive introduces stricter limits on key air pollutants, aligning EU standards more closely with World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines **EU Council gives final approval for stricter air quality laws**

Funding

Thanks to Battersea and Wandsworth TUC for donating £500 towards the work of TUCAN. They have also launched an appeal to affiliated branches. We will need extra resources to run the work identified in this newsletter.

If you are able to support our work or would like to join our mailing list, please contact Janet Newsham on:

Email: janet@gmhazards.org.uk

