



RoSPA National Occupational Safety and Health Committee

Air Quality

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Scoping the air quality challenge

- UK is a serial non-complier with EU AQ limits
- External air quality heavily influences internal air quality
- Traffic growing and major infrastructure projects
- Biggest current issue is particulate emissions – diesel vehicles
- Anthropogenic particulate emissions are responsible for around 29,000 deaths per annum in the UK
- Total number of deaths due to poor air quality ranging from 5,000 to 60,000 with a reliable figure being approximately 40,000 (PHE, 2017)
- AQ causes more deaths per annum than obesity, alcohol, substance abuse and excess winter deaths combined (Rob Howard, Consultant in PH at Leicestershire County Council; 2017)



Scoping the air quality challenge 2

- Still waiting for a new AQ strategy from DEFRA
- DEFRA state that 'AQ in Britain is improving' – wildly optimistic!!!!
- NICE guidance is weak BUT recognises the disconnect between planning and EH
- Many Local Authority EH teams do little other than monitor and some don't do that!
- Weak enforcement of older measures to ensure air quality (Smoke control)
- AQMA's have failed and CAZ are not the answer





So, for CIEH and environmental health

- Our policies are important and member-led!
- They set out what our core beliefs are on key subjects
- They indicate what we want to achieve and how we intend to get there
- They guide our campaigning activities





So what has CIEH got to say on air quality?

- CIEH believes that the following need to be achieved:
 - Improving air quality to become a priority for UK
 - Recognition that air quality and climate change are inextricably linked AND external AQ heavily influences internal AQ
 - Poor indoor air quality needs to also be addressed
 - A new Clean Air Act
 - A proper air quality strategy from DEFRA!
 - Effective strategies to address the health and wider societal effects of poor air quality





So what have we got to say on air quality? (2)

- Public health, environmental health and occ. health teams should be working together to provide advice and guidance
- Tackling poor air quality should be a priority for local authorities
- New guidance for the Planning Inspectorate is urgently needed
- A national transport strategy and infrastructure that seeks to reduce air pollution
- A modal shift towards zero emission vehicles
- Provision of ultra-low NOx emission boilers in all new developments
- National campaigns and advertising to encourage sustainable and active transport



Our ongoing commitment

- *Inter alia* CIEH will:
 - recognise the contribution to air quality made by all environmental health professionals and will support their work
 - continue to research and advise the public and professionals on matters concerning air quality
 - provide information and support to members to help them work better with other parts of the public health workforce
 - collaborate with partners to further our objectives.
 - lobby for ring-fenced funding for local authorities to tackle air quality and to ensure that at least equivalent standards to EU limit values are embodied in UK legislation post Brexit
 - campaign to address outdated legislation and guidance



...and on the Government's strategy for NO₂

- We took a very robust line and said the plans are:
 - “Woefully inadequate”!!
 - “Unfairly shifts the burden to solve the problem to local authorities, while abdicating themselves of responsibility”





We also said:

- “We are on the cliff-edge of a national public health emergency and these plans are devoid of substantive proposals, timescales for addressing the key challenges, clarity around targets or even availability of resources to support necessary actions”
- “Government’s cost/benefit analysis fails to consider the burden on the NHS and the health implications on people and local communities, concentrating solely on business impacts”
- “Overlook particulate matter as the single biggest contributor to premature deaths and ill-health”



We achieved.....

- Unusually high levels of national media coverage
- National press
- BBC news - we were the top story
- Radio coverage and live interviews across the world!





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