

#### Action Plan 1: Influencing Union Policy

- Read the sample union motion on air quality below.
- Make a note of how would it need to be adapted for your union and industry?
- Prepare a draft for a future meeting where Annual Conference Motions is an agenda item.

*Air pollution in the UK is a public health emergency. The deaths of over 40,000 people per year are linked to the air that they breathe – more than obesity and alcohol combined. A significant cause is carbon pollution arising from work and travel to work. It is an occupational health issue that employers take little responsibility for.*

*In the FHE sector many workplaces are in high pollution areas. Recent research shows that 43% of colleges in London are in locations that breach legal standards. We call on UCU to:*

- *Campaign for a legal framework that addresses this health emergency*
- *Promotes a programme of awareness raising for staff and students in the sector*
- *Provide training and support for UCU Environment and Health and Safety Reps to tackle this issue in their workplace and communities*
- *Work with the Greener Jobs Alliance, the Hazards Campaign and other organisations promoting air quality action to deliver these objectives*

### Action Plan 2: Campaigning in your Workplace

Is your workplace in a pollution hotspot? If the answer is **Yes** or **maybe**, then apply the **Risk Assessment Checklist** below to understand the extent of the hazard. Before you start get the support of your union branch. Liaise with the union safety rep, if there is one. Before you start, outline who you plan to involve and further information needed to complete the checklist.

#### Risk Assessment Checklist for a Workplace

##### Step 1 – Identify the risks and people impacted

- There are plenty of reports that highlight the general extent of the hazard. Ref back to Modules 1 and 2 for information. These may be enough in themselves to move to the next stage of the process
- There is research that identify hazards in sectors and locations. For example, 43% of Colleges in London are in high-risk areas according to recent reports.
- Survey staff to find out whether they think their health is affected by air pollution.
- Identify any staff who indicate they may have health problems that have been brought on or aggravated by air pollution

##### Step 2 – Identify key information

- Legal standards – Environment Regulations specify exposure levels. See Module 2. Showing that workers and others could be exposed to pollution above legal standards is a powerful way to get support and get improvements.
- Use workplace H+S standards. See above for legislation that places a duty on employers to protect the occupational health of workers
- Local Authority obligations – Check if your LA has an Air Quality Action Plan. This may contain useful information indicating whether there are high-risk areas.
- Check where air monitoring stations are and get the results. The LA website should provide a link to any permanent sites near your workplace
- Does your employer have a policy?
- Has it been raised at any meetings?
- Have any local groups carried out any monitoring?
- Has there been a survey of staff views?

##### Step 3 – Existing control measures and any additional measures needed

- Review current employer policy to find out if it covers any of the following:
  - Transport of people and goods
  - Travel policy
  - Procurement policy
  - Pollution alerts
  - Staff at special risk – job or health issues
  - Awareness raising
  - Carbon management
- Identify any gaps in the above and decide what additional measures are needed

### Step 4 – Implementation

- Based on Steps 1-3 decide if there is a need for a general risk assessment?
- Based on Steps 1-3 is there a need for person/job specific assessments?
- Raise the issue with management. Get a commitment that the union will be consulted on implementation measures
- If you work in the education sector, identify if there is an opportunity for curriculum links with students

### Step 5 – Review and Monitoring

- Agree a procedure for regular monitoring of exposure levels
- Agree a procedure for liaising with the local authority and other employers to exchange information and identify good practice
- Ensure the policy is subject to regular review through the HSE committee

### Action Plan 3: Campaigning in your Community

Identify the organisations active on air quality in your community. Make a note of any campaigns or actions that have been organised. Check the [Friends of the Earth \(FoE\)](#) and [London Sustainability Exchange \(Lsx\)](#) websites for potential follow-up activities.

## Air Pollution - a Public Health Emergency

### Module 3 – Campaigning in your Union

#### Action Plan 4: Campaigning in your Local Authority

Find out what they've been doing about air quality in your area. Go on to their website and search for Air Quality. Check whether the policies cover the 17 bullet points below.

1	Funding and the cost of improvement measures.	
2	Engagement with employers and businesses	
3	Clean air zones	
4	Current air monitoring provision	
5	The council's procurement policy in relation to vehicles and other equipment	
6	Regulation of construction and other activities with a high level of emissions	
7	Promoting walking and cycling initiatives	
8	Town centre design and goods delivery operations	
9	Clean public transport	
10	Links to education / public awareness	
11	Implementation of diesel scrappage schemes	
12	Links to housing/fuel poverty issues	
13	Links to inequalities	
14	Air Quality Action Zones	
15	Public health	
16	Consultation and communication	
17	Supporting campaigns for improving and implementing national policy	

#### Action Plan 5: Campaigning Nationally

Check the websites of the organisations like [Friends of the Earth](#), [British Lung Foundation](#), [SERA](#), and [Greener Jobs Alliance](#) to find out the latest information on the Campaign for a Clean Air Act.

Arrange a speaker from one of organisations supporting the campaign to a meeting in your workplace or local community to discuss the latest developments and why change is needed.

#### Notes