

NEWSLETTER

NEW PRESIDENT ELECT

At our virtual AGM on Wednesday 24th February Professor Jim Longhurst was elected unanimously to be our new President. He has a long affiliation with EPUK going back to the time he discovered our *Clean Air* publication in a dusty corner of a University library back in the 1970s. With Jim elected as President and our long serving Lord Whitty happy to stay on as a Vice President, we will continue to enjoy considerable influence in the future.

HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE

Annual General Meeting

Our Chair of Trustees, Christopher Fry reports on the AGM which took place online on 24th February. Read on.

EFCA

The European Federation for Clean Air and Environmental Protection Associations announce plans for a Conference on The Future of Europe which could lead to fundamental reforms towards Climate Protection. See their press release below.

Air Quality Committee Meets

Air Quality Committee met on Thursday 4th March by Zoom to discuss its priorities for 2021. A short list is to be drawn up and a further meeting scheduled in two months time.

EPUK Merchandise

Our exclusive, high-quality products are available to order online. Choose your product, size and colour and it will be delivered directly to your home. Order your environmentally friendly clothing with a donation to EPUK.

<https://ohmcharities.org.uk/shop/environmental-protection-uk/>

A Report on our AGM

As a consequence of Covid-19 the AGM was the first virtual event in the history of the Society where I had to 'manage' 28 people on zoom! This was a good attendance and there were 9 apologies. Lord Whitty was at last relieved of his 'caretaker President role' of two years during which he served the Society in addition to his term as President 2016-2018. We are privileged to have Professor Jim Longhurst (right) as our new President.



The AGM started with a paper by Professor Sir Stephen Holgate (one of our distinguished Vice-Presidents) focussing on the re-opened inquest into the tragic case of the death in 2013 of Ella Adoo Kissa-Debrah, a 9-year-old girl who lived close to the south circular road in Lewisham. This will prove to be the first death attributed to traffic air pollution where she developed severe asthma and later seizures. This reinforces the need for the Society to continue its important work to press the Government and local authorities to urgently reduce traffic-related air pollution.

On EPUK business, the AGM was advised of two important plans, the 2021-2026 Financial Development Plan to grow income to make the Society more sustainable having to rely on membership subscriptions which had been affected by Covid-19. A summary of this was given by Ulya Vasan, one of the new Trustees who is also an accountant and financial strategist. The second was the Communications Strategy & Outline Delivery Plan 2021-2022 intended to increase the profile and reach of the Society involving the important aspect of marketing. This plan had been produced by the Communications & Marketing Group which is Chaired by Ruth Calderwood (Trustee). Catherine Fildes, another new Trustee made a major contribution to the plan.

Finally, the AGM was advised that the Society was now having to make applications for grant aid from charitable foundations to enable important work & projects to continue in the face of falling subscriptions. I urge existing Members to renew their subscriptions to enable EPUK to continue well past the 123 years since its establishment as the Coal Smoke Abatement Society in 1898.

Christopher Fry



EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF CLEAN AIR AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ASSOCIATIONS

This month, the presidents of the political groups in the European Parliament have confirmed the roadmap for the Conference on the Future of Europe. This clears the way for a process that should lead to the most comprehensive reform of the European Union in more than a decade. Elected citizens' assemblies will be an essential part of the Conference. The Conference is scheduled to begin this year, probably on 9th May, and will, by spring 2022, develop concrete proposals to bring the European Union closer to its citizens, make it more democratic and more effective.

Daniel Freund, representative of the Greens/EFA Group for the Conference, comments:

"Euro crisis, migration crisis and Corona pandemic have clearly shown: The EU needs to be fundamentally reformed. This conference can and must initiate the right process to do this. We need more democratic participation in Europe and less slamming on the brakes by the member states."

"The EU faces enormous challenges when it comes to climate protection, digitization, fundamental values and Europe's role in the world. We must engage in a dialogue with our citizens now. The concept of randomly drawn citizens' assemblies is innovative. It worked very well in Ireland and at the French Climate Convention."

"There has been a long, perhaps too long, debate about details and personalities. The important thing is: the Conference will finally start. I am convinced that together with our citizens we can develop a momentum that will lead to Europe moving closer together and to more competencies for the European Union."

To read the full document, follow the link to The "joint declaration" of the European Parliament, Council and EU Commission:

<https://danielfreund.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/st06567.en21-1.pdf>

Other News in Brief

Air Quality Committee

The LQC met by Zoom on 4th February and they are planning a virtual seminar in early spring. Discussions on planning for our 2021 Conference, Regional Seminars, Cop26 (as a potential focus for our work) and Clean Air Day were conducted. AQC will meet again in two months' time maintain the momentum of its work.

Noise Committee

The Noise Committee met virtually last week and produced a proposal for grant-aid which has been submitted to a UK Charity for a 2021 Noise Action Week Campaign. More details to follow when a decision is received in early April.

Call for Articles

Those of you with grey hair might just remember our much-missed publication *Clean Air*. It contained articles by Local Authorities, Academics and Consultants on their air quality projects and initiatives. Whilst there are no plans at present to revive it, *Newsletter* would be interested in receiving items colleagues feel would be of interest to our EPUK membership in any of our Air, Noise and Land remits.

Please submit such articles for consideration to Vanessa Tanner at secretariat@environmental-protection-uk.org

Correspondence From our Mailbox

If you can offer Luke a volunteering opportunity, please let me know at secretariat@environmental-protection.org.uk

My name is Luke, I am writing to you today regarding any voluntary environmental or wildlife projects that may be running in the south of England through summer?

I have recently decided that I want to start making a bigger impact and difference in our society, and becoming a part of the goal of helping our planet and our environment is something that I am very keen to do.

I am an amateur photographer as well as an English Language School social programme manager. I have an A Level in environmental science, and my interests are in travel, exploring, science and wildlife.

I am currently based in Brighton, East Sussex and was wondering if there are any schemes or projects that are running throughout Summer that I can get involved with to begin working with and helping our environment in the southern area of the UK?

I understand that now is a difficult time and there may not be many opportunities, but it would be great to know if there is any way I can help and become a part of the goal at some point in the year.

Thank you very much for your time and I look forward to your response. Many Thanks, Luke

AND FINALLY, FROM THE PRESS

The Guardian

The Guardian reports this month that thousands of acres of forest will be created in and around Birmingham under plans to make the 2022 Commonwealth Games a carbon neutral City. In an announcement to mark 500 days to the start of the Games, organisers have pledged carbon-offsetting initiatives including the creation of 2,022 acres of forest and 72 mini-forests. Each of these, the size of a tennis court, are to be created in urban areas across the West Midlands. Each mini-forest will be linked to one of the nations and territories competing at the Games. These are to be held between 28 July and 8 August next year. It will be the first time the Commonwealth Games are set to be carbon neutral.

MEMBERSHIP

- *Recommend EPUK and its expert policy analysis and information on air quality, land quality, waste and noise.*
- *Promote EPUK's vision of a cleaner, healthier and more tranquil environment for all in the UK.*
- *Follow the link below for more information regarding types of membership and associated cost.*

<https://www.environmental-protection.org.uk/membership/>

- *Ask us for a Membership Booklet by emailing info@environmental-protection.org.uk*

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