



PRESS RELEASE

The government's dirty air dereliction of duty

For Immediate Release

UK100 is the only network of local leaders across the UK committed to ambitious action on Net Zero and clean air.

Responding to dangerously high levels of air pollution today [Thursday 24 March] in [Yorkshire and Humberside, the East, South East, East Midlands, North East and London](#), **UK100's Assistant Chief Executive Jason Torrance** says:

"Today's dangerous spike in air pollution is a reminder that the Government's plan to meet World Health Organisation (WHO) limits on the deadliest pollutants [by 2040](#) is not just lacking in ambition, it is a dereliction of duty. Air pollution is linked to around 30,000 premature deaths every year."

"It can't be right that with air pollution levels [at more than 11 times what is deemed safe by the WHO](#), local authorities can only offer their residents advice on staying indoors, keeping their windows closed, and avoiding exercise."

UK100 has worked with cities in its network like Birmingham to develop ambitious Clean Air Zones, and Jason adds:

"The Government needs to urgently bring forward its ambition to meet WHO guidelines while matching the ambition of local authorities and giving local leaders the powers to implement regional air quality plans that mean residents can breathe easily."

"Action on clean air comes with added benefits. Many of the measures that will help the UK progress on cleaning up our air will also accelerate action on Net Zero, enhance our economy and improve everyone's quality of life."

In a [response to the Spring Statement](#) yesterday, UK100 bemoaned the lack of support for public transport. Jason adds:

"We recognise the fuel duty cut was a step taken as an attempt to address the



cost of living crisis, but there is no escaping the fact it is a backwards step for Net Zero and action on cleaning up our air."

"Meanwhile, we saw no attempt to offset the cut with support for local authorities to bolster more sustainable transport measures. To clean up our air and achieve Net Zero, we need to see the Government supporting local leaders to promote active travel and expand, rather than cull, bus services, particularly in rural areas."

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About UK100

UK100 is a network of the most ambitious local leaders working towards Net Zero as soon as possible but no later than 2045. We help them collaborate to take decisive action in their communities.

Our members represent more than 37 million people in towns, cities and counties across the UK.

We facilitate knowledge-sharing between members, partnership-building and leadership mentoring. And support them to harness their collective power to affect vital national change.

Warm homes, affordable energy, clean air, and healthy landscapes make thriving communities.

And UK100 members have pledged to deliver a Net Zero future that delivers for people and planet.

[UK100.org](https://uk100.org)