

National Air Quality Conference 2024

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100

**CANZ we fix it?**  
**Clean Air Net**  
**Zero in the year**  
**of CHANGE**

Christopher Hammond, Chief Executive of UK100

# Who are UK100?



- **UK100 is the UK's only network of cross-party local leaders committed to ambitious clean air and climate action**
- **Our 115 members represent almost 40 million people and over 60% of the UK population**
- **We focus on advocacy, knowledge sharing and collaboration**
- **Local action to reduce carbon and air pollutant emissions can bring immediate air quality improvements and health benefits**

# The air quality crisis



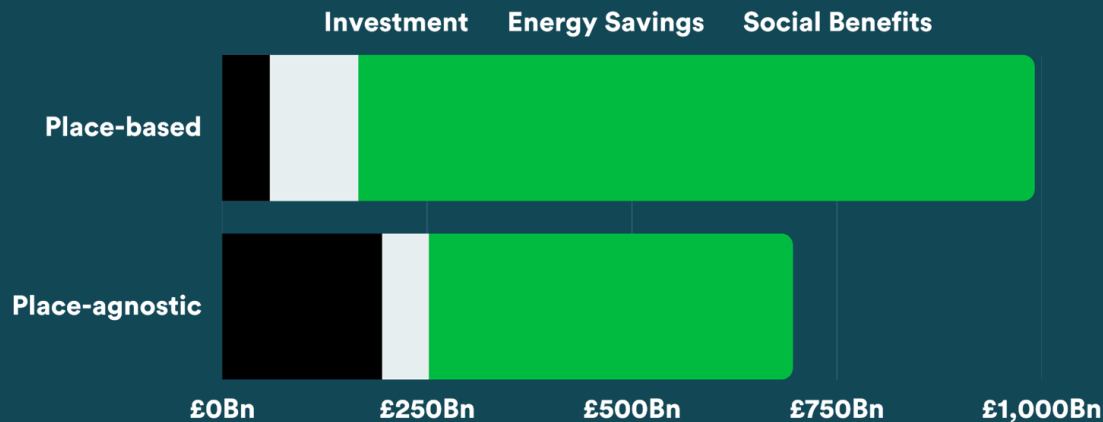
**HEALTH:** More than  
30,000 deaths annually in  
UK linked to air pollution

**FINANCIAL:** £2.3 billion  
funding gap for local  
authorities in 2025/26



# Local authority-led action is crucial

- Local authorities (LAs) have been required to monitor and manage air pollution since 1995
- PwC's latest report demonstrates the overwhelming benefits of local-led action as opposed to top-down one-size-fits-all



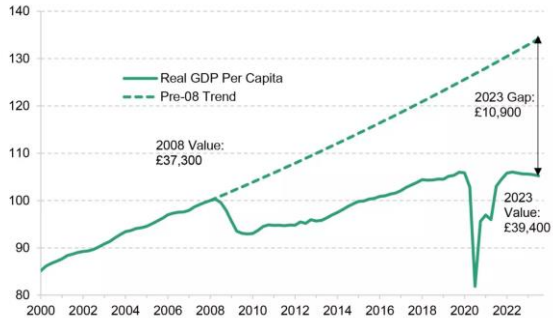
# Local authority context

- **18 councils relying on Exceptional Financial Support**
- **65.6% of service budgets allocated to social care**
- **77.4% increase in homelessness service costs since 2019/20**
- **9 in 10 councils struggling to fill essential roles**

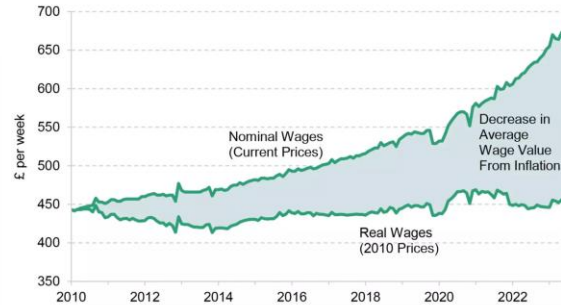


# The lost decade

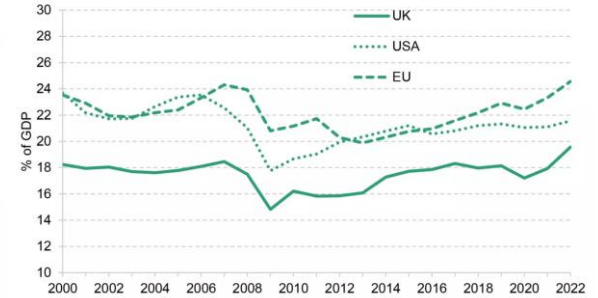
GDP per capita



Nominal and real wages



Investment levels compared to the EU and USA



Source: IFS, *The Conservatives and the Economy*, June 2024



- In the 19th and 20th century, sometimes we added 3% to the housing stock each year.
- Worst housing shortage in the developed world.
- The world's best transport system, local government and private companies in charge of building.
- Shifted to central government funding since 1990s, limited control over budget.
- Decommissioned coal; drove the initial decarbonisation.
- But policy changes and uncertainty have slowed growth in the renewables sector.

## FUNDING & FINANCE

- Public investment levels fell sharply in 2010 as capital spending was cut due to the record deficit.
- In 2022, France spent 26% of its GDP (on physical capital investment), Germany 25% and UK just 19%.
- Taxes are now close to their highest level as a proportion of national income in more than 70 years.
- Inconsistent tax policy.

# Autumn Budget

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**WHAT OUR  
MEMBERS  
WANT TO SEE  
IN THE  
AUTUMN  
BUDGET**

October 2024

- The Chancellor has announced a commitment to shift how the government works with local authorities
- The £1.3 billion uplift for local governments is welcomed, but will not completely plug the £2 billion gap.
- But the fuel duty freeze remains in place while the bus fare cap rises by 50%.
- UK100 will be closely monitoring the upcoming English Devolution White Paper.

# Rise of misinformation

- At least **50 UK100 members** have been hit by misinformation campaigns targeting climate and clean air action
- Misinformation surged post-pandemic and in response to **transport measures in Oxford** — they surged again and were embraced by some mainstream politicians following in the run-up to and following the **Uxbridge by-election**
- The number has grown over the last three months since the **Together Declaration** formalised the campaign against local action in a report “**Clean Air, Dirty Money, Filthy Politics**”
- The report was picked up by the **Daily Telegraph** and the website **Conservative Woman**
- Among the main “charges” against transport interventions are “**anti-democratic,**” a “**war on motorists,**” tantamount to “**open air prisons**” and funded by “**green billionaires**”



# Roadside emissions

## **NO<sub>2</sub>**

To date, the local approach to air quality has focused on roadside emissions and nitrogen dioxide.

## **PM<sub>2.5/10</sub>**

But as policies to phase out dirty vehicles take effect and research continues, Particulate Matter, from varied sources including wood fired burners, is an increasingly major concern alongside other pollutants.

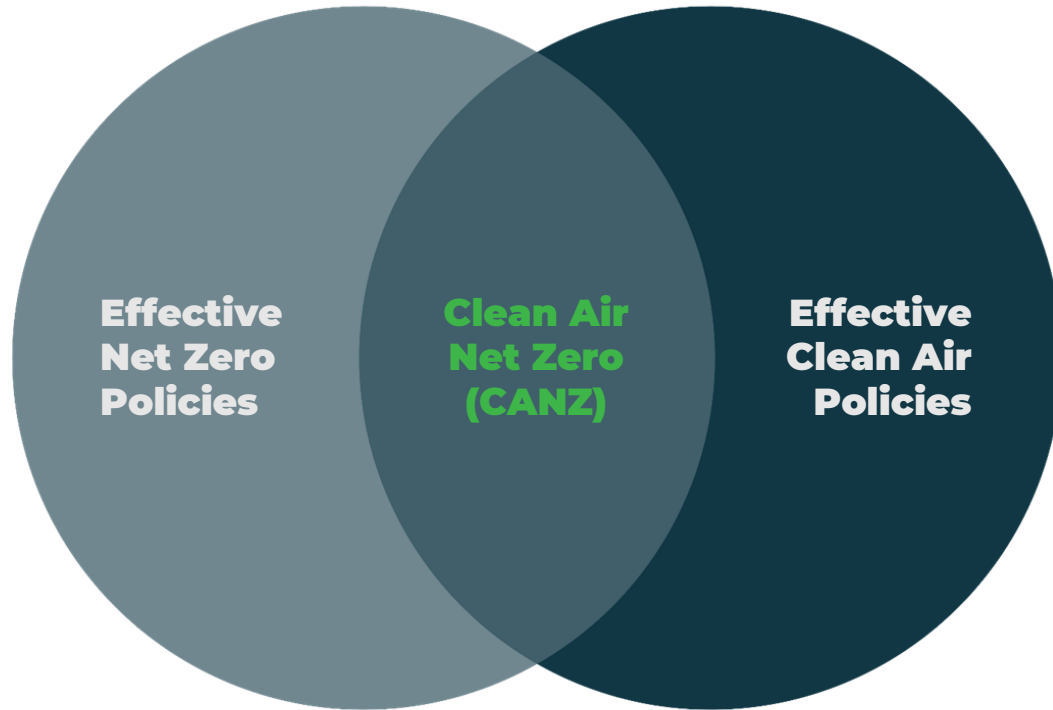
**It's time to reframe the discussion**

# Elephants in the room



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# What is Clean Air Net Zero (CANZ)?



# Clean Air Net Zero: what CANZ be done?

- Report from UK100
- Looks at key opportunities for LAs associated with aligning clean air policies and Net Zero
- CANZ has the potential to **slash the cost of reaching Net Zero by 16%**
- Report highlights four key win-wins of a joined-up approach

A photograph of a city street with a tram and pedestrians, overlaid with a blue tint. The tram is in the center, moving towards the viewer. Pedestrians are walking on the sidewalks. Buildings line the street, and there are trees on the right. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

# Changing how we move

(transport modal shift)

**Win-win 1**

| [INFO@UK100.ORG](mailto:INFO@UK100.ORG) |

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# Case-study: Birmingham



- Transport Plan CANZ improvements delivered in **four headline** areas:
  - reallocating road space, transforming the city centre
  - prioritising active travel in local neighbourhoods
  - managing demand through parking measures
  - Investing Clean Air Zone (CAZ) revenue in the public transport network



A large field of solar panels under a clear blue sky. The panels are arranged in rows and are tilted towards the sun. The text is overlaid on the image.

# Using less and cleaner energy to heat homes and businesses

**(Heat demand reduction and decarbonisation with renewable energy)**

**Win-win 2**

# Case-study: London Councils



- London Councils adopted Net Zero standards for all new housing in 2016, going beyond national commitments, **moving away from fossil fuel heating:**
  - By 2050, 25 more tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e reduced compared to just national standards
  - The Retrofit London Housing Action Plan will also retrofit 390,000 council homes and facilitate retrofit of London's 3.8 million homes
  - Reducing air pollution emissions from fossil fuel boilers





# Reducing greenhouse gas and air pollution emissions in farming

(Better management of nitrogen in agricultural systems)

Win-win 3

# Case-study: Gloucestershire



- Gloucestershire County Council and Gloucestershire Farming and Wildlife Advisory Service are working with local stakeholders to **accelerate the transition to more sustainable and regenerative farming practices:**
  - The GREAT (Gloucestershire's Regenerative Environment and Agriculture Transition) project provides financial support and advice to farmers to ease the transition to more sustainable practices.



# Transparency

(Empowering local communities with air quality data)

Win-win 4

# Case-study: Sheffield



- Sheffield City Council collaborated with the Better with Data Society to deliver the **AirQuality+** programme
- A series of co-designed activities to engage local people with data and use it better understand and tackle the of air quality in the city:
  - Including providing an easily accessible platform for air quality data
  - Working with local artists and coders to visualise data
  - Running an Air Aware information campaign



# Summary: cross-cutting benefits for local authorities

- 1. Health and wellbeing:** clean air, public transport, active travel, decent homes and improved public spaces
- 2. Economic:** healthcare cost savings, boosted workplace productivity and employment opportunities
- 3. 'Levelling-up':** reducing health inequalities and widely distributed green job opportunities
- 4. Outreach:** engaging communities on locally meaningful health and economic benefits, a potential route to engagement on wider
- 5. Future proof:** ensuring CANZ investments and innovations maximise positive impacts and avoid unintended negative consequences

# Challenges

- **Burning 'low carbon' fuels such as hydrogen and biofuels**
- **Road vehicle choices**
- **Poorly designed tree-planting**
- **Indoor air quality vs energy efficiency**

# Recommendations for action

- **Better access to data**
- **Identifying key moments and partnerships**
- **Better energy grid access for renewables and electric vehicle charging**
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# Key CANZ takeaways for local authorities

1. Identify when joined-up action is crucial and use place-shaping powers to bring the two agendas together at key stages
2. Use the communication opportunities presented by a CANZ approach to engage communities and get more stakeholders on board
3. Work with other LAs and key partners to build buy-in for CANZ policies
4. Use CANZ as a way to transition from a view of air pollution that is solely roadside/NO<sub>2</sub> focused



**Thank you  
Questions?**

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