

Welcome to the first edition of the UKIEG News. This newsletter is brought to you by the UKIEG committee as we aim to improve communication between our growing number of members. We hope to make this a regular feature and would appreciate your input and news items for future editions.

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Dear Member

Welcome to the first UKIEG members' newsletter. The Committee thought that this would be an ideal way of providing you with information. As you will see, there is a substantial amount going on. In part, what might appear as behind the scenes work has been the main reason for our rather ad hoc emails over the past year, so I hope that this first edition of the newsletter will not only bring you up to speed with all that is going on, but also encourage you to spread the word about the UKIEG, encourage membership amongst colleagues and, of course, take part in our Annual Conference.

The UKIEG Annual Conference will take place on the 24th February 2011, which is mighty soon! I know that Committee members had problems securing dates and a venue and we thank them for their efforts. However, this does mean that we all need to get moving. Details on submitting abstracts of posters and presentations of work you would like to share can be found in this newsletter and on the UKIEG website. Do please remember that your work need not be completed in order to present. One of the things the UKIEG prides itself in is its members' ability to help progress work and provide guidance on work in progress. In recognition of the importance of the work we do, the Department of Health has once again been kind to us. So, DH

HQ in London is the venue. We look forward to seeing you!

We have an encouraging update on the MRC research work we have been involved with so far! The work on WELLINE (Wellbeing in the indoor environment) has neared completion and we are storming ahead with a slightly broader group of expertise with the ALICE (Healthy Ageing: Adaptive Living in a Changing Environment) work. This has now been submitted to MRC for consideration having got through the preliminary stage.

Our contribution to the Marmot Review was recognised and we hope that the UKIEG will continue to have such a voice in the future.

Finally, please don't overlook the section 'Member to Member' nor the email for feedback on any items or contributions you as members would like to make towards the next edition of the newsletter. Between editions, we are happy to circulate items to the group via email.

I hope that you find this an attractive and useful means of receiving information and updates as a member of the UKIEG, that you enjoy this first edition and look forward to the next edition in the New Year.

Jon Ayres

UKIEG ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN FEBRUARY 2011

Calling all abstracts! The next UKIEG Annual Conference will take place on the 24th February 2011 at Skipton House, Department of Health, London, SE1. This conference is open for members to present any work which they are involved with regarding the indoor environment. We have not set a 'theme' as in this conference we wish to reflect the diversity of work our members are involved with. This should also make this conference a most enlightening experience for all involved and no doubt generate much discussion. It will be a full day meeting with refreshments and lunch provided. There will be an attendance fee and although not as yet confirmed, this will be in line with past meetings, thus keeping costs for attendees to a minimum.

Please send abstracts of no more than 300 words, indicating whether you wish to present an oral paper or show a poster, to Isabella.Myers@hpa.org.uk by the 4th January, bearing in mind that presentations on this occasion will be accepted on **a first come first served basis** due to time constraints (although the quality of the work the abstract details will also be taken into account).

MRC RESEARCH UPDATE

WELLINE – Wellbeing and the Indoor Environment

This is the network project some members of the UKIEG were involved with last year and completed earlier this year. It was funded by the Life Long Health and Wellbeing Cross-Council Programme. New members to the UKIEG might not be aware of this work, so here is an extract from our final report:

"The principal activities undertaken by the WELLINE network were the hosting of three workshops and the establishment of a website to disseminate the outputs from the project.....

....The first two workshops looked in detail at respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses and musculoskeletal and neurological disease in relation to the domestic indoor environment, with a focus on what makes these conditions better or worse and what initiates them. The workshops included talks about the conditions from both medical practitioners and sufferers, to give delegates an insight into their causes, worsening factors and impacts. The method used at the workshops to identify linkages between the indoor environment and health effects was based on

an approach known as DPSEEA - Drivers, Pressures, State, Exposure, Effects and Actions. The chains of relationships that were developed facilitated the identification of specific actions to improve outcomes or reduce adverse effects, and also helped determine possible knowledge gaps. The aim of the third workshop was to share the findings from Workshops 1 and 2 with a broader audience and gain consensus on the principal conclusions and research recommendations.”

The final workshop was open to members of the UK Indoor Environments Group, to aid both intersectoral working and the dissemination of findings. Further information on the work of WELLINE, workshop presentations and reports can be found on the WELLINE website (www.welline.org.uk). In addition, a research proposal based on the outcomes from the project was developed –this has resulted in another submission to Phase 3 of the Life Long Health and Wellbeing research call. See below for information on ALICE.

ALICE – Healthy Ageing: Adaptive Living in a Changing Environment (ALICE)

To date we have submitted a research proposal for this 3rd phase of the Life Long Health and Wellbeing Cross-Council Programme. This research aims to establish how behavioural patterns in, and housing conditions of, older people with chronic conditions (cardiovascular disease [CVD] and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease [COPD]) might help to explain ill health and impaired quality of life due to temperature extremes as well as from other indoor environmental factors, including indoor pollution. The study will address different age groups, divided into those who have overt CVD or COPD or who at simple screening have neither condition. We will be looking at environmental exposures, behaviour, housing characteristics, the probability of hospitalization and GP visits, and how these are affected by climate change.

The research has made it through the first round – watch this space for further news! For further information on the LLHW programme see: www.mrc.ac.uk/LLHW

QUANGO CUTS

Does anyone know what is in store for our areas of interest based on the cutting of QUANGOS? For some of us things will continue – business as usual, especially in the air pollution field through COMEAP. But what of cuts for those in the field of sustainability? The loss of the Sustainability Commission is seen by many to be major retrograde step as it is being abolished completely rather than simply changed to a departmental expert committee. This cuts across the whole issue of independent scientific advice to Government for which the Government’s Chief Scientist (Sir John Beddington) has worked well to clarify the situation with the new coalition. We shall see how this pans out once the QUANGO shuffle has settled down! We’d be interested to hear your opinions and experiences about how the spending review and changes at both local and national government may impact on work relating to the indoor environment.

MARMOT REVIEW

You may recall that the UKIEG Committee, on behalf of the UKIEG membership, commented on the Marmot Review into local inequalities and health. In February 2010, the Marmot Review Team published Fair Society, Healthy Lives. The review proposes the most effective evidence-based strategies for reducing health inequalities in England from 2010. Since publication we have seen, and worked to support, many developments based on the approach advocated by the review. For further information see: <http://www.marmotreview.org/>

EU SEEKING HARMONISED FRAMEWORK ON IAQ

The Belgian Presidency recently held a 'high level' event on product policy and indoor air quality. It took the form of a two day conference in Brussels on 23 and 24 September involving invited policy makers, experts and other stakeholders. The focus was on developing environmental product policy to enhance the quality of the indoor air. The products of particular concern were construction products, furniture, paints, varnishes, glue, adhesives, detergents and other household products.

Some insight to the event is given by the press statement by the Belgian Environment Minister (published by the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union on 24/9/10; <http://www.eutrio.be>) from which the following extract is taken;

'In order to ensure that indoor air quality receives the same attention as outdoor air or water, it is essential that a European institutional framework be set up. This framework must, above all else, enable us to define the main policy and technical guidelines for the years to come as well as to establish interrelations between policies in matters of health, environment, research and industry. The framework should also define a clear strategy for achieving the environmental health objectives set for 2020. "The drafting of a Green Paper is the first essential step towards a European institutional framework. One of its objectives is to give a clear picture of the current situation among Member States," Paul Magnette pointed out.'

AMENDMENT OF APPROVED DOCUMENT J OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS- COMBUSTION APPLIANCES AND FUEL STORAGE SYSTEMS

The Approved Documents provide technical guidance on ways of complying with the Building Regulations. A new requirement has been introduced for the provision of Carbon Monoxide alarms when installing all solid fuel appliances. The changes also remove technical disincentives to the wider use of Biomass heating systems.

This Approved Document J (2010) came into force in October 2010 in support of the Building Regulations 2000.

NEW BOOK- ENVIRONMENTAL MEDICINE EDITED BY AYRES, HARRISON, NICHOLS AND MAYNARD

This is certainly no formal review of this 'must read' (according to our UKIEG Chairman!) – note carefully first editor's name! However, it has been described as an:

... 'international and definitive guide to the investigation and treatment of environmentally – acquired disorders, covering 'hot topics' including climate change, air pollution,.... antibiotic-resistant infections, written by leading experts.'

To find out more and order your copy, go to www.hodderarnold.com

MEMBER TO MEMBER

This is the area in the newsletter where we will publish information from members directed at other members – we will circulate these messages as emails should a newsletter not be pending.

Research positions on Indoor Air Contamination with Flame Retardant Chemicals -

INFLAME Marie Curie Initial Training Network - 12 PhD and 2 Postdoctoral positions available immediately!

The INFLAME project is a supradisciplinary project covering aspects of environmental and analytical chemistry and toxicology. It aims to further understanding of how and to what extent flame retardant chemicals used in every-day consumer goods and construction materials enter humans and the risk to health that such exposure presents. Our vision is that this enhanced understanding will inform assessment of risk associated with recent and current-use flame retardant chemicals and of those under development and ultimately lead to more sustainable approaches to meeting fire safety regulations.

Those interested in applying for a position should see the project website:

www.gees.bham.ac.uk/inflame/projects.shtml

Potential applicants are recommended to consider carefully whether they meet the eligibility criteria:

www.gees.bham.ac.uk/inflame/eligibility.shtml

The positions are extremely well remunerated (PhD students annual living allowance – adjusted per country - €36,700; postdocs €56,400). Generous mobility and travel allowances also provided.

POST NOTE 366 ON UK IAQ

The Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology has published a POST note on UK Indoor Air Quality. The introduction to POST note 366 states “It is well established that outdoor air pollution is harmful to human health. However, less attention has been paid to the potential health effects of indoor air pollution. This POSTnote describes sources of indoor air pollution, the evidence for adverse effects on human health and outlines possible policy responses.”

http://www.parliament.uk/documents/post/postpn366_indoor_air_quality.pdf

UKIEG MEMBERSHIP

There are now some 160 members of the UKIEG. We are a broad church of academics, policy makers and practitioners involved in work that relates to the effects of indoor environments on human health. We are always keen to have new members with new ideas so if you know of anyone who would be interested in becoming a member of the UKIEG, please do direct them to the UKIEG website: www.ukieg.org where potential members can find out more about the group's aims, past meetings and current work.