

Café Scientifique Headingley

Tuesday 15 June 2021 at 7:30pm
Towards a Smog Free City
by Gary Fuller



Outline: We can live for around three weeks without food, three days without water but only three minutes without air.

The vast majority of us in the UK live in urban areas. The persistent haze over many of our cities is a reminder of the polluted air that we breathe. Over 80% of the world's urban population is breathing air that fails to meet World Health Organisation guidelines, and an estimated 4.5 million people died prematurely from outdoor air pollution in 2015. Globally, urban populations are expected to double in the next 40 years. An extra 2 billion people will need new places to live, services and ways to move around their cities. More important, the decisions that we make now about the design of our cities will determine the everyday lives and health of the next generations. So, what would the components of a smog-free – or at least low-pollution – city be?

Gary Fuller is an air pollution scientist at Imperial College London. His research interests focus on urban air pollution sources, how these are changing in response to policies, and how they affect our health. Gary is a regular contributor to the Guardian newspaper where he writes the Pollution Watch column and has taken part in the Guardian Ideal Cities series and Science Weekly Podcasts. He has a keen interest in air pollution history and how the lessons from the past can help future air pollution management. He explored these themes in his book "The Invisible Killer – the rising global threat of air pollution and how we can fight back".



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