

# MEDIA PACK

## ZANE'S LAW SUMMIT ON CONTAMINATED LAND AND WATER

Wednesday 11 JUNE 2025 from 2 – 4pm,  
HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT



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### INTRODUCTION

On 28th July 2022, the United Nations General Assembly declared that everyone on planet Earth has the right to a *"clean, healthy and sustainable environment"*. They called on states to step up action to ensure their people are protected, saying that *"climate change and environmental degradation are some of the most pressing threats to humanity's future"*. One of those *'most pressing threats'* is the ticking time bomb of contaminated land and water.

Currently, hundreds of historic landfill sites lie untested across the UK; landfill sites created before regulations came into being containing who knows what? More and more stories are emerging, in both local and national press, of communities sounding the alarm about landfill leachate, bad smells, contaminated water, unexplained illnesses and deaths. And with major flooding events on the increase, due to climate change, the situation will only get worse – and worse – unless we do something about it.

**Zane's Law** [www.zaneslaw.co.uk](http://www.zaneslaw.co.uk), launched at Cop 26 by Zane's parents, Kye and Nicole Gbangbola and Baroness Natalie Bennett, calls for

- ***The human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment to be enshrined precisely and explicitly in UK and Welsh Law***
- ***Rigour and best practice in the identification and remediation of contaminated land and water, with full transparency and with due regard to the protection of the public and the environment, following the polluter pays principle.***

## BACKGROUND

### The Truth About Zane

[www.truthaboutzane.com](http://www.truthaboutzane.com)

'Zane's Law' is named after seven-year-old Zane Gbangbola, who tragically died on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2014 during terrible flooding of the River Thames at Chertsey, Surrey - the first floods in the UK to be attributed to climate change.

Floodwater passed through a historic, unregulated landfill site adjacent to Zane's home, where Surrey Fire and Rescue HAZMAT detected Hydrogen Cyanide during three separate sweeps of the house on the night of the tragedy. The area was evacuated, a decontamination centre was set up at the local hospital, the incident was classified as *major*, Porton Down was called in, and Silver and Gold Command meetings were immediately held, followed by an emergency COBRA meeting. However, at Zane's Inquest, in September 2016, the coroner judged that the probable cause of Zane's death was Carbon Monoxide (CO) poisoning.

The Fire Brigade's '*Incident Investigation Details*' logged in the *National Incidents Recording System* clearly states that no CO was detected at the time of the incident, and Zane's father, Kye, found in cardiac arrest only feet away from his son, was later diagnosed by the Consultant Clinical Neurophysiologist at St Peter's Hospital with paraplegia '*due to hydrogen cyanide*'. But the coroner chose not to take account of this evidence at Zane's Inquest. Having disregarded the call for an Article 2 Inquest, which would have required a jury, the coroner was empowered to hear only the evidence he deemed relevant.

In the wake of the Inquest judgement, the Truth About Zane (TAZ) Campaign was launched by Kye and Nicole with a petition calling for an Independent Panel Inquiry (IPI) into the cause of Zane's death <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/call-for-a-public-debate-into-the-death-of-7-year-old-zane>. The petition, with over 118,000 signatories, was ignored by successive Conservative governments, but from the outset the Fire Brigades Union has been in full support. Now, the TUC, Unison, Unite, the National Education Union, NASUWT *the Teachers' Union* and CWU *the Communications Union* have all joined the call, together with many elected parliamentarians, including Andy Burnham, Mayor of Manchester, and an Early Day Motion was tabled by Jess Phillips MP, in June 2019 <https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/53103/independent-panel-inquiry-for-zane-gbangbola>.

Nicole and Kye are still waiting for the truth and for justice for their son.

### Zane's Law

[www.zaneslaw.co.uk](http://www.zaneslaw.co.uk)

*Zane's Law* was launched at Cop 26 by Kye and Nicole, together with Baroness Natalie Bennett, at a Peace and Justice event hosted by Jeremy Corbyn; the logical and inevitable continuation of their heroic struggle for justice for Zane, which gives substance to their ardent wish that no other child or person should suffer death or harm from contaminated

land or water. *Zane's Law* carries with it the full support of all the unions and supporters demanding an IPI for Zane, and is now, also, Green Party policy. The Zane's Law petition to Make Toxic Landfills Safe is here: <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/make-toxic-landfills-safe-support-zane-s-law>

*Zane's Law* has been unanimously supported by several local authorities, including the London Assembly, also by many elected politicians and parliamentarians, including Andy Burnham, Mayor of Manchester and Steve Reed MP (Secretary of State for the Environment).

The *Zane's Law Summit on Contaminated Land and Water* marks an important milestone in the growing movement calling for legislative reform.

### **Local Authority Support for Zane's Law**

The first local authority to pass a motion of support for *Zane's Law* was **Lewes District Council**, on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024. The motion was moved by Councillor Imogen Makepeace and support was unanimous.

The full text of the motion is here:

<https://democracy.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/documents/s31058/Motion%20-%20Support%20for%20Zanes%20Law.pdf>

Other councils that have passed similar motions are:

**Brighton & Hove City Council** - Cllr Kerry Pickett, 2.04.2024 – unanimous

**Adur District Council** - Cllr Gabe Crisp, 28.03.2024 - unanimous

**Stroud District Council** - Cllr Beki Aldham, 25.04.2024 - unanimous

**Rother District Council** - Cllr Polly Gray, 20.05.2024

**Cheshire & Chester West Council** - Cllr Chris Copeland, 13.12.2024 - unanimous

**The London Assembly** – Zac Polanski, 6.11.2024 - unanimous

### **UK Landfills Campaign**

Stories of communities frightened, injured or killed by toxins, in relation to landfill and contaminated water, are becoming rife. Since its inception less than a year ago, the UK Landfills Campaign has attracted 20 campaigns from across the UK; individuals and communities fighting for justice and protection from contaminated land and water in their areas, some of whom have also tragically lost loved ones poisoned by toxins.

The UK Landfills Campaign provides a much-needed space for people to come together, share knowledge, get support, expert advice, and help to publicise their campaigns. All are united behind the drive to get *Zane's Law* enshrined into law and giving voice to these brave campaigners will be the central focus of the *Zane's Law Summit on Contaminated Land and Water*.

## **OUTLINE OF EVENT AND LIST OF SPEAKERS**

The summit will take place at the Houses of Parliament from 14.00 – 15.50

### **Welcome**

Baroness Natalie Bennett of Moulescoomb – Chair

### **Address from the Secretary of State for the Environment**

Rt Hon Steve Reed MP

### **Introduction to Zane's Law**

Kye Gbangbola (Zane's Daddy)

### **Campaigners**

Nicole Gbangbola (Zane's Mummy)

John Watts (Northwich Wade Works))

Alison Gaffney (Corby Childhood Cancer)

Ruth Kettle-Frisby (Mums for Lungs & Clear Air In Havering)

Cllr Steve Skivens (Caerphilly County Borough Council)

Cllr Kerry Pickett (Brighton & Hove City Council)

Denise Ashurst \* (Dirty Water Campaign)

Sarah Green (Hillingdon Leaking Landfill)

Marie Sansford \* (AGHAST - Action on Gasworks Housing Affordability  
Safety & Transparency)

Angela Fonso \* (Gas Communities United)

*\* Liz Mansfield (Coordinator Zane's Law Campaign) will read these speeches*

### **Experts**

Luke Douglas-Home CEnv (A Future Without Rubbish /  
Initial Site Risk & Responsibility Audit)

Rev Paul Cawthorne (PCB Contaminated Land Research Team Leader)

Keiron Finney (ExEA Associates Ltd)

### **Unions**

Steve Wright (General Secretary - Fire Brigades Union)

\*Other Unions represented will include the CWU, Unison, Unite, NEU, NASUWT and the TUC.

### **Legal**

Des Collins (Collins Law - *Toxic Town*)

### **Final Words**

The Rt Hon Steve Reed & Baroness Natalie Bennett.

**Meeting adjourns at 15.50. Photocall / interviews at College Green 16.00 – 16.15**

**LINKS**

Truth About Zane Campaign: [www.truthaboutzane.com](http://www.truthaboutzane.com)

Zane's Law: [www.zaneslaw.co.uk](http://www.zaneslaw.co.uk)

Independent Panel Inquiry for Zane Gbangbola petition:

[https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/call-for-a-public-debate-into-the-death-of-7-year-old-zane?source=rawlink&utm\\_medium=socialshare&utm\\_source=rawlink&share=1b641f5c-3411-4f28-b7f8-a218396d2aba](https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/call-for-a-public-debate-into-the-death-of-7-year-old-zane?source=rawlink&utm_medium=socialshare&utm_source=rawlink&share=1b641f5c-3411-4f28-b7f8-a218396d2aba)

Make Toxic Landfills Safe petition: <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/make-toxic-landfills-safe-support-zane-s-law>

Early Day Motion - Jess Phillips MP: <https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/53103/independent-panel-inquiry-for-zane-gbangbola>.

Full text of Lewes District Council motion in support of Zane's Law:

<https://democracy.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/documents/s31058/Motion%20-%20Support%20for%20Zanes%20Law.pdf>

## **CONTACTS**

Natalie Bennett - Baroness of Moulsecoomb: [bennettn@parliament.uk](mailto:bennettn@parliament.uk) or 07967 417859

Kye and Nicole Gbangbola - please contact Alice Dann [press@fbu.org.uk](mailto:press@fbu.org.uk) or 07801047610

Truth About Zane Campaign [www.truthaboutzane.com](http://www.truthaboutzane.com)

Zane's Law Campaign [zaneslaw1@gmail.com](mailto:zaneslaw1@gmail.com)

-ENDS-