



High Impact Changes **New guide gets regional launch**

A step-by-step guide to best practice in tobacco control at a local level has received its regional launch at an event at St James' Park in Newcastle.

Titled 'Excellence in Tobacco Control: 10 High Impact Changes to achieve tobacco control', the document was launched by Andy Graham from the Tobacco Control National Support Team to a mixed audience including local tobacco control leads, stop smoking service officers and trading standards officers from across the North East. The easy-to-use document is aimed at local Tobacco Control Alliances, partner organisations and anyone else with a role in driving down tobacco prevalence.

It is a 'how to' manual designed ultimately to lead to public health gains across communities by strengthening the ability and capacity of local tobacco control advocates to make change happen.

- Topics covered in the document are:
- Building and sustaining capacity
 - Tackling cheap and illicit tobacco
 - Influencing change through advocacy
 - Helping young people to be tobacco free
 - Maintaining and promoting smokefree environments
- Working in partnership
 - Gathering and using data
 - Tackling health inequalities
 - Delivering successful communications campaigns
 - An integrated stop smoking approach



No Smoking Day **No Smoking Day launch**

This year's North East launch of the theme for No Smoking Day 2009 will take place at Durham University on 13 November. No Smoking Day itself is 11 March 2009.

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Cheap and Illicit **North leads way with smuggling plan**

The North of England is leading the way in attempts to tackle the problems caused by cheap and illicit tobacco.

High prices are the most effective way of reducing smoking levels, according to evidence from around the world. Yet the benefits of a policy of high taxation are being undermined when it is possible to buy illegal tobacco products at knockdown prices in some of our most deprived communities. Following on from the event held in Newcastle last December on Cheap and Illicit tobacco, Fresh has got together with colleagues from Yorkshire and Humber and the



Speakers at the second themed consultation event.

North West to develop a draft North of England Cheap and Illicit Tobacco Health Action Plan. The plan was developed in collaboration with HM Revenue and Customs, the Department of Health, local authorities, the Association of Chief Police Officers, the Serious and Organised Crime Agency and the newly formed UK Borders Agency.

The plan, which is open for consultation, looks at six areas where regional and local agencies in the

North of England can work together to both tackle the demand for and supply of cheap and illicit tobacco. The six areas are:

- Developing partnerships
- Engaging health and community workers
- Generating and sharing intelligence
- Identifying informal markets and preventive action
- Marketing and communications
- Working with business

If you would like to comment on the plan, go to www.freshne.com

Fresh published smokefree diary

Fresh has printed a diary of events covering the lead up to and implementation of the smokefree law. The review, titled 'Smokefree Journey: a diary of events April 2006 – March 2008' covers a historic period for tobacco control and also looks forward to the challenges ahead.

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For more information on any of these stories, to register for events or to receive regular updates contact us on 0191 387 2139 or email info@freshne.com

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SPECIAL ISSUE

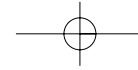
See pages 2 & 3

- 522,000 North Easterners still smoke
- 5,500 of them die from smoking-related illnesses every year
- 14,500 of 11-15 year olds smoke
- half of those young people who don't quit will be killed early by their addiction



Let's make smoking history for our children

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National Consultation

Fresh launches campaign to protect region's children

The people of the North East are being given a once in a lifetime opportunity to help make smoking history for the children of the region – thanks to a Government consultation on a new national tobacco strategy.

Smoking remains the region's biggest killer, with 5,500 people dying from smoking-related illnesses every year – that's more than alcohol, HIV, drugs, suicides and accidents put together. And half of the 11-15 year olds who currently smoke in the North East will die prematurely from smoking-related diseases if they are unable to quit.

With the highest smoking rate in England – and over half a million people in the region still smoking – the North East has the most to gain from a long-term, well-funded and evidence-based tobacco strategy.

As part of the consultation – which runs until 8 September – the Government is looking at what measures can be taken to help protect children and young people from the effects of smoking.

Key measures under consideration include:

- Putting cigarettes out of sight in shops and supermarkets
- Banning vending machines, where 17 per cent of 11-15 year olds currently buy their cigarettes
- Only allowing tobacco products to be sold in plain packaging
- Banning packs of 10, which are known to be bought by the majority of 11-15 year old smokers

The Government is looking at other ways in which they can reduce the smoking rate to the kind of levels found in places like Australia and California.

The most effective way to reduce smoking levels is by increasing taxes. Unfortunately, the policy is undermined by cheap and illicit tobacco which can sometimes sell at half the price of legal products. The Government wants to hear how people think it can best tackle the problem.

The North East has the most effective local NHS Stop Smoking Services in the country. The Government wants views on how it can make them even more effective.

Finally, it is recognised that many heavy smokers find it difficult to quit. The consultation is seeking views on making more effective clean,

medicinal nicotine products more widely available. Many of the measures are already attracting public support, according to a recent national survey conducted by YouGov on behalf of ASH, which revealed that of those surveyed:

- 65 per cent would support banning the sale of cigarettes from vending machines
- 58 per cent would support banning the display of tobacco products where they are sold
- 75 per cent would like to see a crackdown on smuggling
- and 82 per cent would make quitting medications such as patches and gums easier for smokers to get hold of.

You can individually respond through a simple e-postcard at www.freshne.com

More detailed responses are welcome from key organisations

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Single digit smoking levels possible say experts

Tobacco control experts from around the world have been visiting the North East to help encourage the region to demand from the Government a new National Tobacco Strategy which is comprehensive, evidence-based and well funded.

Speaking at a series of events held by Fresh to mark the consultation on a new strategy, over 250 local delegates have been hearing how, by supporting the right policies, it would be possible to reduce smoking prevalence to single digits in our lifetime.

Here are just a few of the key statements made by those speakers:

Professor Gerard Hastings, Professor of Social Marketing at Stirling University

"UK tobacco control is entering its final phase: we are gradually waking up to the fact that smoking can become a historical quirk, as outmoded as medicinal leeches and child chimney sweeps. We can make the UK tobacco free in a generation: we just need a steady hand, a clear vision and a clear strategic plan"

Ron Borland, the Nigel Gray Distinguished Fellow in Cancer Prevention, The Cancer Council, Victoria, Australia

"Cigarette packing designs and brand names are two potent means of adding value to cigarettes. So important is branding, that companies have taken to having a range of varieties available

for most common brands. Smokers are loyal to their brand even though the actual differences between brands are often greater than between variants within a brand family. Our research has shown that strong health warnings reduce some of the positive appeal of pack design, but only some. It seems likely that brand name and design can largely substitute for each other, and that both need to be removed to have maximal impact, at least in the short term.

Ann McNeill, Professor of Health Policy and Promotion, University of Nottingham

"Recent surveys have found that children still find it very easy to purchase cigarettes. Given all we know about the harmfulness and addictiveness of cigarettes, it's ridiculous that in the 21st century, they are still available through vending machines, as easy to get hold of as sweets. Vending machine sales of tobacco should be prohibited as soon as possible.

Martin Dockrell, Policy and Campaigns Manager, Action on Smoking & Health

"Every year the tobacco industry has to recruit 200,000 new young smokers to replace the 100,000 who quit and the 100,000 who die. That's why it is so important that ordinary people be heard and not just the companies that profit from the manufacture and sale of cigarettes to teenagers. 6 out of 10 adults support a ban on point of sale tobacco display and three quarters want an end to the cigarette vending machine"

Dr David Spencer, Consultant in Respiratory Paediatrics, Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

"Every day of my working life I see children who are ill and suffering because they have been exposed to tobacco products. Often parents or family and friends do not realise the harm that second hand smoke can cause to health, especially their children's health or the impact a parent who smokes in view of children has on the child's likelihood to start smoking themselves.

Eamonn Rossi, Chief Executive of the Office for Tobacco Control, Ireland

"The retail setting has remained the last bastion of brand and product placement for the tobacco industry. The imminent commencement of this legislation will remove this type of promotion and advertising from prominent display behind the counter of convenience stores, supermarkets, newsagents and petrol stations across Ireland. This measure will also bring to an end the practice of placing tobacco brands next to a range of familiar items, including chocolate, crisps and other confectionary."



Speakers at the Consultation launch event

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Smokefree Anniversary

Law delivers on its promises

One year on and the region has been celebrating the introduction of a smokefree law which has delivered healthier workplaces and more quitters.



Councillor Mick Henry, Chair of ANEC and Ailsa Rutter on 1st July 2007

In its report 'Smokefree England: One Year On' released on 1 July the Government said there had been more quit attempts than ever, the air in pubs and bars is cleaner and compliance rates are high across the country.

The report confirms the regional picture. Before and after the introduction of the legislation Fresh conducted tests in local hospitality venues which showed that levels of PM2.5 (one of the cancer causing chemicals in secondhand smoke) had fallen by an average of 95 per cent. Further tests taken at the same time revealed that the amount of cigarette smoke that had entered the bodies of non-smoking workers had dropped by an average of 75 per cent.

Throughout the year the North East has also recorded the highest levels of compliance with the new law, and its introduction has encouraged

record numbers of smokers to quit. The latest national figures suggest that support for the law is increasing, with 76 per cent of people, and 55 per cent of smokers, in favour.

It seems the impact of the law is also likely to have a significant impact on the number of lives saved. According to Prof Robert West, Cancer Research UK's director of tobacco studies based at University College London, the law will help prevent an



Event held at the Centurian bar, 1st July 2007

estimated 40,000 deaths over the next 10 years. "The law has proved to be a resounding success, not least in the North East where partners from across the region helped ensure the introduction of the law was a success," says Ailsa Rutter, Director of Fresh. "But we still have 522,000 smokers in the North East. Of those who don't quit, half will die from the effects of their addiction. That's why we must push for the introduction of a comprehensive and evidence-based National Tobacco Strategy."

Smokers warned kids like what you like

The NHS Smokefree campaign has been running advertisements designed to illustrate that, by smoking, parents treble the chances of their child becoming a smoker.



Smoking Don't keep it in the family. SMOKEFREE

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