Smokefree England factsheet

SMOKEFREE IS WANTED

From **Sunday, 1 July 2007**, virtually all workplaces and substantially enclosed public areas in England will become smokefree by law.

Smokefree public places and workplaces will **protect** everyone from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke when they are working, socialising and relaxing, and will **help** those that want to quit smoking by creating **more supportive environments**:

- More than **three out of four** people in England already choose not to smoke (24% of adults in England are smokers)
- **Nearly three quarters** of those who do smoke say that they want to give up

The public want smokefree

An **Office for National Statistics** survey released 6 July 2006 (with fieldwork taking place in Oct/Nov 2005) found:

- **91%** of people favoured smoking restrictions in **restaurants**, **86% supported restrictions at work**, **65% supported restrictions in pubs**
- **22%** of pub goers said they **would go more often** if smoking restrictions were in place. Women were more likely to say this (26%) than men (17%). Only **4%** of pub goers would **go less often**
- Support for restrictions in indoor **shopping centres (87%)**, indoor **sports and leisure centres (93%)** and indoor areas at **railway and bus stations (83%)**

Independent opinion polls have also confirmed similar levels of public support:

- **YouGov** poll conducted in December 2005 which asked ‘**The government has announced plans to make most public places smoke-free. Would you support a proposal to make ALL workplaces, including all pubs and all restaurants smoke-free?**’ – **71%** said they’d support such a proposal
- **EU Barometer survey** across all 25 EU countries published in June 2006 showed **67%** of people in favour of “smoking bans” in bars or pubs, **84%** of “smoking bans” in restaurants, **86%** in offices and other workplaces, and **85%** in other indoor places
- **Guardian ICM poll** in October 2004 which asked: “Would you approve or disapprove of a ban on smoking in all enclosed public places, such as pubs, restaurants and offices?” – **66%** said they’d approve
- **BBC Healthy Britain poll** in August 2004: **67%** said they were in favour of a ban in all workplaces, including pubs and clubs
Smoking in public places reduces the choice available to people, particularly the eight million Britons with lung disease and the five million people with asthma:

- Asthma UK reports that secondhand smoke is the second most common asthma trigger in the workplace
- 82% of people with asthma say that other people’s smoke worsens their asthma and 1 in 5 feel excluded from parts of their workplace where people smoke
- 44% of people with severe asthma said their social life was restricted because they could not go to pubs or restaurants due to smoky atmospheres

The 2006 European Hotel Guest Satisfaction Index Study found that around 70% of hotel guests in Europe prefer a smokefree environment that exceeds the boundaries of their room. Guests who reside in the UK and Sweden were most likely demand a smokefree environment (76%) and Spanish guests least likely (57%).

**Employers want a Smokefree England**

A survey of 501 business decision makers in England conducted by Continental Research in August 2006 showed overwhelming support amongst employers for smokefree:

- 91% agreed that people at work have the right not to breathe in other workers’ smoke
- 79% said they would support a law which made all workplaces smokefree
- 83% agree that there should be no smoking in all enclosed workplaces and public places
- 58% felt creating a smokefree workplace would have a positive effect on staff health, rising to 73% amongst respondents from the hospitality industry

The top three benefits of smokefree legislation identified by businesses were:

1. Health benefits (26%)
2. Better working environment (14%)
3. Cleaner/hygiene (14%)

International evidence suggests that popular support will increase even further once smokefree legislation is implemented, for example:

- In Ireland, the smokefree law was voted the no.1 ‘high’ of 2004 by the RTE national New Year’s Poll. Those in favour of smokefree pubs and restaurants grew from 67% before the legislation was introduced to 82% after it was fully implemented and was almost universal by the one year anniversary of the legislation:
  - 93% thought the law was a good idea, including 80% of smokers
  - 96% of people felt the law was successful, including 89% of smokers
  - 98% believed that workplaces are now healthier because of the smoke-free law, including 94% of smokers.
• In Scotland, just one month after the country went smokefree, 69% of pub goers agreed with the legislation, up from 56% in May 2005 and 67% against the legislation at the end of 2004. A Cancer Research UK poll of 545 workers six months after Scotland went smokefree, revealed that three-quarters of bar staff thought the legislation would improve their health in the long term.

• In New Zealand, public approval of smokefree pubs and restaurants rose from 79% in 2003 to 91% in 2005.

• In New York, support grew from 60% just after the introduction of their smokefree legislation in 2003, to 80% in 2005.

• Across the 25 EU countries, support for smokefree pubs and bars is highest in those countries that are already have comprehensive smokefree laws, with Ireland having the highest proportion of their populations “totally in favour” (71%)