

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 already have comprehensive smokefree laws, with Ireland having the highest proportion of their populations “totally in favour” (71%)