

# refresh\*

The newsletter of Fresh - Smoke Free North East



**Protecting the  
unborn child  
from smoke - pg 2**

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# Welcome to the refresh, the newsletter from Fresh.

The Autumn edition includes an update on a major project on smoking during pregnancy, proposals in England and across Europe to make smoking less attractive to children, smokefree playgrounds and an update on Stoptober.

# refresh\*



## A MAJOR initiative to reduce the harm caused by smoking to women and unborn babies is being rolled out across the North East ahead of a PR campaign in December.

The Babyclear project - led by Fresh and the Tobacco Control Collaborating Centre, working with all eight foundation trusts and six NHS Stop Smoking Services - is a UK regional first to ensure women smoking in pregnancy receive clear, consistent messages in a way that encourages take up of support to quit.

Although the North East has seen large reductions in smoking in England over the last decade, Smoking at the Time of Delivery (SATOD) statistics show nearly one in five (19%) women are smoking compared to around one in eight (12%) nationally.

Babyclear is now delivering systematic carbon monoxide (CO) monitoring in every maternity department in every Trust, so that every woman is tested at first booking appointment, with all high readings referred to NHS Stop Smoking Services within 48 hours.

For those women who haven't yet engaged, a more detailed "Risk Perception" intervention is offered at the dating ultrasound scan, to help to relay the important information about the potential harm being done. This has been implemented in County Durham and Darlington FT with work ongoing to support rollout across the region.

Around 400 midwives in hospitals and over 100 Stop Smoking Service advisers have received skills training. Local Stop Smoking Service admin teams have also been given extra training to be first point of contact with clients.

Systems for monitoring and evaluation include referrals to NHS Stop Smoking Services and an in-depth evaluation led by Newcastle University, tracking 30,000 pregnancies in the North East.



### **A report was published in June 2013 by the national Smoking in Pregnancy Challenge Group**

A coalition of baby charities, campaigners, leading academics and health experts including the Royal College of Midwives, Royal College of Nursing, ASH and Fresh.

It called for improvements over the training of healthcare workers and midwives to offer support to mothers who smoke, meaning that smokers do not always know the risks and that professionals are not always equipped to provide the necessary motivation required.

Over 1,400 women quit smoking during pregnancy with the help of NHS Stop Smoking Services in the North East between 2011-13.





# New hope for standardised packs

**Earlier this year Fresh voiced disappointment at the Government’s decision not to introduce standardised tobacco packaging to help stop 9,000 North East children and 207,000 UK children taking up smoking each year.**

However, there is still a chance this life saving proposal could become law. Two separate amendments in support of standardised packaging and banning smoking in cars carrying children have been tabled to the draft Children and Families Bill going through the House of Lords this Autumn.

Fresh has written to all Peers with links to the North East - as well as every MP - urging them to back these measures and protect our children from tobacco marketing.

Last year 13,500 people and every local authority in the North East backed standardised packaging.

Teenager Liam Pape, 15, a pupil at Darlington School of Maths and Technology, and Newcastle shopkeeper John McClurey, both attended a briefing session for Peers in Parliament on October 15.

Liam said: “The goal of this type of packaging should be to make smoking look more poisonous and less glamorous -

so the box shows exactly what it does to the inside of your lungs and other parts of the body.”

Alex Cunningham, MP for Stockton North: added:

“The vast majority of people start smoking when they are children so there can be no better piece of legislation to bring forward measures to introduce plain packaging for tobacco products and to ban smoking in cars with children present.”



## Two studies by leading UK charities have revealed the power of cigarette brands

A **survey by the British Heart Foundation** found barely a third (36%) of North East teenagers are put off smoking by current cigarette packs, compared to 48% of teenagers in Australia.

81% of North East teenagers think the UK should introduce standardised cigarette packs, with 59% saying the packs make people their age less likely to smoke.

Worryingly, over one in ten North East teenagers wrongly think some cigarette brands are healthier than others – more than double the number (5%) of Australian teens.

A separate study by Cancer Research UK found youngsters preferred novelty packaging to plain packs. It found the children who liked these packs were the same children who said they were more tempted to smoke.

## European action to cut smoking

Fresh has welcomed some of the new measures to make smoking history for more children across Europe in the EU Tobacco Products Directive - but warned they don’t go far enough to drastically cut the 700,000 deaths across Europe each year from smoking.

We urged our MEPs to back measures around pack warnings, tobacco flavourings and stronger restrictions on electronic cigarettes before the vote on October 8.

### The final proposals approved included:

- large pictorial health warnings covering 65% of the front and back of all tobacco products (rather than 75%)
- a ban on ‘slim’ packaging aimed at young women while still allowing the actual slim product inside to remain
- a ban on “characterising flavours” such as menthol by 2022 but other flavours sooner
- further regulation of e-cigarettes but not as medicines - which some healthcare professionals argued could have offered tighter controls on quality and restricting advertising to young people
- a ban on packs of 10 which are more affordable for children
- stronger, independent controls against counterfeiting and the illicit trade

The vote now means negotiations will now take place on the final directive.

Concerns have also been raised about **tobacco multinationals spending millions of pounds in lobbying** aimed at delaying or derailing the directive.

**North East MEP Stephen Hughes said:** “The vote on all areas was very close, and I am sure that emails to MEPs did help to counteract the large amount of lobbying from industry. Emails can and do make a difference.

“Once an agreement is reached with national ministers, which will likely happen by the beginning of next year, MEPs will have to vote once more to accept the deal. I hope this will go smoothly, so the new law can be agreed as soon as possible.”



**This means a big step forward in the control of tobacco across the EU, and will particularly deter people from starting to smoke.**

Fiona Hall, North East MEP.



# New resources for further education colleges



Fresh is equipping a new generation of childcare workers to reduce the harm from tobacco in the lives of families across the North East with a new resources pack.

Further Education Colleges in the region will be able to take advantage of the “Making Smoking History” resource which recognises the valuable role trainee early years workers, nursery nurses and child-minders can play to promote healthier lifestyles to the families they will work with.

Every year in our region, 84,000 children are growing up in homes where their parents smoke around them, leading to 13,000 additional doctors’ appointments and hospital admissions for conditions like asthma, wheeze, coughs, colds and chest infections.

The resource helps develop skills and knowledge on protecting families from the risks of tobacco as part of training. It contains session plans and materials for activities, slide sets to support delivery of sessions, links to further reading and student workbooks.

Catherine Taylor, of Fresh, said: “Training is already being provided to people working in many of our communities – in children’s centres, schools, doctors’ surgeries and nurseries - on second-hand smoke.

“This resource is about equipping the staff of the future with the facts and the confidence to give people facts they may not have realised and help protect families from harm.”

## Support for smokefree playgrounds

A new suite of resources has been developed by Fresh to help councils roll out smoke free playgrounds.

Using insight from both smokers and non-smokers, Fresh has developed a briefing and signs that can be localised, marking playgrounds as smoke free zones and thanking parents for not smoking in that area as children copy what they see.

According to a poll by YouGov, 77% of adults in the North East think that smoking should not be allowed in children’s outdoor play areas, while a Fresh survey found 89% of parents would like smoking to become a thing of the past for children.

As well as offering extra protection from tobacco smoke, smokefree playgrounds will also help to protect the environment by reducing discarded cigarette butts - a problem sometimes encountered by parents in parks in the North East.

Ailsa Rutter, Director of Fresh, said: “This isn’t about a ban or finger wagging, it’s about politely asking

We copy what we see, thanks for keeping our park smoke free.

Insert LA logo here

fresh logo



parents to respect the fact that playgrounds are dedicated spaces for children and they deserve smoke free spaces. Most parents who smoke don’t light up in play areas.

“Parents we spoke to really disliked people smoking in playgrounds, while those who did admit to smoking in playgrounds were honest and admitted they felt guilty about it. Another real worry expressed was litter, with people’s children having picked up discarded cigarette butts.

“For any council considering smokefree play areas, the signs will hopefully tackle all these issues and discourage smoking in a polite way that thanks smokers for being respectful.”

The resources are in the Professionals section of the [Fresh website](#).

## Five questions on e-cigs before deciding your policy

The growth in the use of electronic cigarette has caught many local businesses and organisations by surprise - with confusion whether to permit or prohibit use of these devices.

To help local decision making and encourage sensible policies, ASH and the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health have produced a [5 key question’s](#) briefing document.

It encourages careful consideration of the aim of local policies - whether to enforce smoke free law, promote good role models to children and avoid the confusion of tobacco lookalikes.

The briefing also reminds decision makers that unlike tobacco, electronic cigarettes do not emit smoke and there is no current evidence of harm from vapours.



## More councils signing up to tackle tobacco

**Councils across the country are being encouraged to sign up for the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control originally developed by Newcastle City Council.**

The Declaration has been endorsed by Public Health England, the Faculty of Public Health, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, Trading Standards Institute, and Association of Directors of Public Health amongst others.

It recognises the harm caused by smoking and tobacco, with a commitment to tackling it, as well as protecting tobacco control work

from the commercial and vested interests of the tobacco industry by not accepting any partnerships.

Hartlepool Borough Council will be formally launching the declaration in December, with Gateshead Council having also signed up.

**Cllr Nick Forbes, leader of Newcastle City Council said:**

“I believe this is ‘our moment’ to show our public health credentials. In the 19th century local authorities saved thousands of lives by introducing basic sanitation in cities across the UK. In the 21st century, we can make that historic difference again by having a zero tolerance approach to smoking and the tobacco industry.”

**Gateshead’s Director of Public Health, Carole Wood, added**

“Gateshead Council has consistently worked hard with its partners to tackle all aspects of tobacco control for the last 10 years and fewer of our population are now smoking. The declaration acknowledges the challenge we still face and demonstrates our promise to continue to protect local communities from the harm caused by smoking.”

A national Parliamentary reception for Councils who have signed up to the Declaration is being held on December 11.



## Endgame thinking from our neighbours

**Fresh has welcomed recent announcements from the Scottish and Irish Governments around ‘end game’ thinking and setting long term aspirational targets to reduce death and illness from smoking and make it a thing of the past for future generations.**

Earlier this year the Scottish Government set a goal of just 5% of people smoking by 2034 when it published “[Creating a Tobacco Free Generation](#)” - a five year tobacco control plan.

Similarly the Republic of Ireland - the first to introduce a ban on smoking in workplaces back in 2004 - has published a plan to get down to just 5% prevalence by a more ambitious 2025.

These are bold ambitions with 22% of people in Ireland (aged 15 and

over) and 24% of people in Scotland smoking. Both countries plan to go it alone with standardised packaging, whether or not England follows.

As well as de-normalising tobacco, the Irish plan makes 60 recommendations to cut smoking deaths and illness, with tobacco still available but at an increased cost. It calls for greater restrictions and more regulation on the types of outlets selling tobacco.

Ailsa Rutter, Director of Fresh, said: Ireland and Scotland are showing leadership in prioritising tobacco control for reducing health inequalities. Both are countries with similar issues and smoking rates to the North of England - which is why we need to consider the changes that will make the most difference in reducing tobacco deaths, such as price rises on tobacco, making smoking less

desirable, supporting harm reduction and reducing the tobacco industry’s ability to recruit new customers. We would welcome discussions for similar thinking for England and will work with partners to raise the need for a new bold ambitious plan for the next decade. The new Making Smoking History in the North East Partnership at its inaugural meeting agreed such a plan was necessary and we will be exploring this more over the next few months.





## News and campaigns

# Stoptober Events

**Over 12,000 people in the North East signed up for Stoptober - the nation's biggest mass quit attempt - during September and October.**

Fresh worked with Public Health England and local authorities to co-ordinate regional and local coverage of Stoptober, ensuring the campaign was in the public eye right from the summer onwards.

In July the Northern TUC backed Stoptober through the Better Health at Work Awards to ensure that quitting messages reached hundreds of thousands of staff.

For the launch, every council joined in with a roving photo opportunity in every locality involving elected members, Directors of Public Health, Stop Smoking Services and quitters. At the time of writing, FRESH had gained 64 pieces of regional media with a PR value of £153,298.

### **Some of the Stoptober quitter success stories we also celebrated included:**

- Tony the Fridge Phoenix Morrison - who smoked for nearly 30 years before he quit and became a superfit charity fundraiser
- Guisborough gran Trish Benson who had smoked since she was 14 but who was quitting for the sake of her two grandsons
- 36-year-old Matthew Johnson from Hartlepool, who quit after he collapsed at a party with chest pains.
- Grandad Richard Hughes from Haltwhistle who quit after 50 years smoking
- Natalie Graham, a 23-year-old from Newcastle who lost two family members from smoking and is saving up the money for a holiday to the Maldives.



**Players from Hartlepool United backed Stoptober with a photocall featuring a special "Stoptober 28" shirt, while high profile roadshow events were held in Newcastle, Sunderland and Middlesbrough.**

## Illegal tobacco - not on the rise

**Official figures released in October show the size of the illicit tobacco market in the UK in 2012/13 was no higher than in 2010/11.**

HM Revenue & Customs figures show 9% of cigarettes smoked in the UK were illegal in 2012-13 - compared to 9% in 2010/11. Meanwhile, tobacco tax revenues have also continued to rise, discrediting claims by tobacco multinationals and front groups that the illicit trade is increasing.

Deborah Arnott, Chief Executive of ASH said: "Once again, official figures show that the illicit tobacco trade in the UK is not rising rapidly, as the tobacco industry and its front groups routinely claim. The industry's latest myth is that standardised packaging of cigarette products could increase illicit trade: this is as false as every other claim it makes on the issue."

The House of Commons Public Accounts Committee has reported that more needs to be done to stop tobacco companies oversupplying some European markets, with the tobacco finding its way to the UK as illegal product.

Chair of the committee, Margaret Hodge has urged HMRC to be more assertive with tobacco manufacturers.



**For more information on any of these stories, to register for events or to receive regular updates, contact us on 0191 333 7141 or email [info@freshne.com](mailto:info@freshne.com)**

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Making Smoking History