

Buckinghamshire Alliance for Action on Smoking
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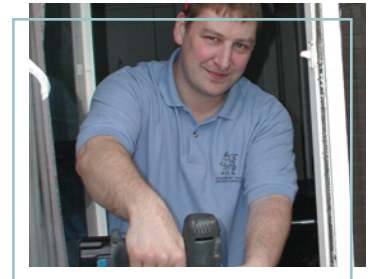
South Bucks
District Council



If you have trouble understanding
this leaflet, please contact your
local authority who will be
pleased to help you



SMOKE FREE workplaces



**A Guide for
Employers**

Why become smoke free?

Smoke free workplaces can bring many benefits

It costs the average business £2000-£3000 more to employ a smoker than a non smoker. In the South East alone, an estimated £370 million is lost to businesses due to sick days taken by smokers. A staggering £1.2 billion is lost from employees taking smoking breaks throughout the day. Research has also shown that 70% of smokers want to quit - becoming smoke free could help them do so.

(Government Office South East, 2005)

Tobacco smoke contains a cocktail of over 4000 chemicals, many of which are poisonous, causing cancer and heart disease. Non-smokers breathe in this smoke, either directly from the cigarette or exhaled from the lungs of a smoker.

By Summer 2007 almost all workplaces will have to be smoke free by law, so why not join other local businesses in leading the way and become smoke free today?

You could achieve the following benefits from a smoke free workplace:

- A more welcoming atmosphere with a cleaner, corporate image
- Reduced maintenance and cleaning costs
- A healthier workforce with less time off through smoke related sickness
- Increased productivity, as smokers tend to take more breaks than non smokers
- Compliance with the forthcoming legislation in Summer 2007
- Pay less insurance premiums as fire hazards are reduced
- Avoid future labour and legal problems from staff

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Simple steps to becoming a smoke free business in Buckinghamshire

1. Consulting and identifying the needs of your employees (both smokers and non smokers)

Remember becoming smoke free is not anti smoker, it's anti smoking

Identify the needs of your employees; you could use the following options. This will help them to feel included and support the changing process.

- Simply talk to your staff and find out about any issues they might have
- Question/answer session after a presentation or discussion on smoke

free benefits

- Confidential questionnaire to all staff. Contact your area representative who has samples. (Details on page 7)
- Set up a discussion group

2. Inform your employees

Your employees are more likely to support your smoke free policy if they are fully informed about the health problems associated with second hand smoke. Use the following options to support employees who smoke:

- Ask Bucks Stop Smoking Services to come for an informal chat with employees about the benefits of becoming a smoke free environment. See page 5 for more information and contact details

2. Inform your employees *continued*

- Perhaps give presentations on the advantages of becoming smoke free. This could be the same person who is in charge of Health and Safety in your place?
- Provide leaflets, put up posters around the building, use display boards. Leaflets, posters and display boards can be provided free by Health Promotion Resources (contact details on page 7)

3. Developing a smoke free workplace

You could use the following, to help formulate and implement your new smoke free workplace:

- Use the results of a staff questionnaire to draft smoke free guidelines that best suits the workforce
- Support people trying to quit, make staff aware of the help available, see page 5 for more information
- Incorporate the smoke free guidelines into staff handbooks, contracts, future staff training, job adverts and interviews

4. Implementing and evaluating your smoke free workplace

- Agree the date when you plan you workplace to become smoke free. Inform your staff and customers at least 3 months in advance of this date; make sure you advise them why it is being implemented

A Guide for Employers

- You may find it beneficial to introduce the policy in stages, for example limit the times that people can smoke, then allow smoking in designated areas only. 3 months is an ideal time scale
- Order and display no smoking signs. These can be provided from Health Promotion Resources, details on page 7
- Monitor and promote the benefits and successes of becoming smoke free, such as reduced sick leave and higher productivity

5. Supporting people who smoke

You need to allow employees who smoke time to adjust once the smoke free guidelines are in place. You could suggest confidential support to those who wish to quit.

The following services could help those employees who want to stop smoking:

NHS Quitline 0800 169 0169

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) is available on prescription from some pharmacies and your local GP, please ask.

Bucks NHS Stop Smoking Service (0845 2707 222) can provide:

- A Specialist Stop Smoking Adviser into your workplace to provide free group stop smoking sessions for employees
- Staff training in order to support fellow employees to quit
- NRT can be provided on prescription, or free in some cases, via the NHS Stop Smoking Service

6. Managing your smoke free workplace

Once you have agreed your smoke free guidelines, you will need to review and update them regularly, to reflect your employees' changing attitudes.

- Review the policy from time to time and update it where appropriate
- Consider any comments after you become smoke free
- Consult with your employees and customers to monitor the success of the policy and consider any possible alterations
- Think about an amnesty period before bringing in the changes, an over night change may cause upset

It is good for Business

Many countries have already taken the step to having smoke free workplaces and now have laws in place to protect staff from second hand smoke. These include Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Canada, The Netherlands and Scotland. England, Wales and Northern Ireland are all following soon.

Cities such as El Paso in Texas became smoke free in 2001, with no decline reported in restaurant and bar revenues. New York also became smoke free in 2003, after which employment in restaurants and bars increased. In 2004, the Republic of Ireland put new smoke free laws in place with no long term effects. In fact, there are some reports that say business has actually improved (GASP, 2005).

Further information

If you have been inspired by this leaflet and require more information before going smoke free, then please have a look at the following websites.

www.ash.org.uk - Information on becoming smoke free

www.gasp.org.uk - Provides smoke free resources

www.smokefreeaction.org.uk - Research, legislation & resources

www.givingupsmoking.co.uk - Advice, information & support

www.quit.org.uk - Helps smokers to quit

www.ash.org.uk/html/quit/givingup - NHS help-lines, including Asian support

www.cieh.org - Type "smokefree" in search option for a comprehensive toolkit

Health Promotion Resources

Aylesbury Area **01296 310136**

South Bucks Area **01494 462151**

If you would like more advice on how to become a smoke free workplace, please contact the District Council in your area:

Aylesbury Vale **01296 585605**

Chiltern **01494 729000**

South Bucks **01895 837200**

Wycombe **01494 461000**