

Smokefree England factsheet

SMOKEFREE IS WORKABLE

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 provide healthier environments for employees and customers, protecting people from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke, and will therefore have a **positive effect on business**.

Currently only **51%** of people report their workplace as being completely smokefree. The figure is lowest for people in routine and manual groups, with **44%** reporting that their workplace is completely smokefree.

Good for business

There is considerable **international evidence** from countries that have introduced legislation for smokefree public places and workplaces that the impact on the hospitality industry is not detrimental. Analysis and international experience shows that going smokefree can actually be beneficial to the hospitality industry, in particular because **three out of four** people in England already choose not to smoke and **three-quarters** of those who do smoke want to give up.

New York City

New York's Smokefree Air Act came into effect in March 2003. After the first year of being smokefree, a report on the impact of the legislation found that:

- business tax receipts in restaurants and bars were up by **8.7%**
- employment in restaurants and bars increased by **10,600 jobs**
- New Yorkers overwhelmingly **support the law**
- tests showed that the air quality in bars and restaurants **improved dramatically**

The 2004 Zagat New York City Restaurant Survey of nearly 30,000 New York restaurant-goers found that **almost a quarter (23%)** of respondents were eating out more often since the introduction of smokefree legislation.

Ireland and Scotland

There is also comparable evidence of the benefits of smokefree legislation for the hospitality industries in **Ireland**, which went smokefree in 2004, and similar evidence is emerging in **Scotland** since their smokefree legislation was implemented in March 2006.

The **Irish Office of Tobacco Control** reported in December 2004 that **compliance levels** with the new law were high – **94%** in hotels, **99%** in restaurants and **91%** in licensed premises. Similarly high levels of compliance are reported in Scotland.

England

Many pubs and restaurants in England that have already introduced a voluntary smokefree policies report an **increase in trade and profits**. A recent survey for **The Times**, published in October 2006, found that amongst English pubs that have already banned smoking:

- **profits** have risen by an average of **50%**
- **food sales** have risen by **80%** on average
- 9 out of ten landlords reported that they were **selling more food**
- Nearly half of landlords said that **drinks profits had increased** by 37% on average, while a third said they had stayed the same

In their latest survey of members, **The Federation of Small Businesses** found that 25 per cent of business owners thought that a ban on smoking in public places would not adversely affect their business, compared with just 4 per cent who did foresee a negative impact. This survey collected information from close to 19,000 Federation of Small Businesses across the United Kingdom, and was conducted in September 2005.

A survey of 501 business decision makers in England conducted by Continental Research in August 2006 found that:

- **89%** of all businesses, and **three-quarters** (74%) of hospitality businesses predict that smokefree legislation will be **easy to implement**
- **36%** of hospitality businesses believe that creating a smokefree workplace will have a **positive impact** on the company, **45%** believe it will **not change anything**, whilst only **17%** believe it will have a negative impact

Case study evidence

Mitchells & Butlers (M&B), the pub group that owns the All Bar One and O'Neill's chains, reported in September 2006 that food sales, which make up 28% of their sales mix, were **up by 11%**, as a result of the introduction of smokefree legislation in Scottish pubs.

In the betting industry, many worried that the ban would deter punters from visiting bookies, however **Ladbrokes'** chief executive Christopher Bell said the evidence from Scotland had been the reverse. Mr Bell said he relished the introduction of the legislation in England, saying it would be "the removal of the last stigma attached to high street betting shops." The pub chain **Wetherspoons** has reported that overall sales in August, September and October 2006 were up 9.2% on last year, but rose 11.8% in their 101 non-smoking outlets.

Punch Taverns started to introduce non-smoking outlets nearly three years ago and now has over 70 smokefree pubs. Francis Patton, customer services director said: "Too many people are looking at the smoking ban as a threat, but we know this is a huge opportunity. The smoking ban is a great opportunity to get new customers (who want to eat) into pubs and also keep people there who go regularly."

Importantly, it is widely acknowledged that smokefree legislation will **improve the health** of hospitality workers and patrons. The **British Institute of Innkeeping's** magazine said earlier this year that: "We are talking about banning the use of a carcinogenic substance which is enclosed spaces kills or damages the health of passive smokers – that means licensees and bar staff and customers. This is a scientific fact, and we should bear this in mind along with the economic arguments."