

Please find below the latest news release issued by Bristol City Council, today Friday 13 January 2005.

SMOKE FREE BRISTOL CHARTER CELEBRATES 1ST ANNIVERSARY

On Tuesday 17 January 2006, it will be exactly one year ago that the members of the Bristol Partnership signed a smoke-free charter, committing them to working towards a smoke free city.

The charter aims to: protect non-smokers from the damaging effects of secondhand smoke; reduce smoking prevalence in our area; educate and inform local people about the dangers of smoking and secondhand smoke; encourage and support smokers who want to give up, and to promote local support to stop services and support the enforcement of the law on advertising and the sale of tobacco products to minors.

One year into the five-year plan, the smoke free Bristol initiative has achieved much. This includes:

- Increase in the number of smoke free bars, pubs and restaurants - out of 414 pubs and bars in the city: 5 bars and pubs have gone completely smoke free (up from 0 in 2004); 78 have separate no-smoking rooms (up from 16 in 2004) and 27 have no smoking areas (up from 58 in 2004). Of the 770 cafes and restaurants in the city, 203 are now smoke free.

- More smoke free workplaces - the following went smoke free in 2005: Bristol South and West PCT (April 05) United Bristol Healthcare Trust - central Bristol hospitals (Oct 05) Bristol City Council (Oct 05) and the Government Office of the South West (Jan 06). The following committed to go smoke free in 2006: North Bristol NHS Trust (March 06) and Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership (June 06).

- Work with organisations who already have smoking policies to improve support for staff to give up smoking - smoke free Bristol worked with Somerfield HQ to improve support to their staff. As a result two support groups were set up and 12 staff quit smoking.

- Work with local businesses - All businesses on industrial and trading estates were visited and those without policies have been left toolkits on how to set up a policy. As a result all businesses in Easton Business Park went smoke free in 2005.

- A new website dedicated to smoke free Bristol www.smokefreebristol.org - this provides information about what's happening in Bristol. The site also has a search facility so visitors can find bars, pubs and restaurants that are smoke free or have designated no smoking areas.

Councillor Barbara Janke, Chair of Bristol Partnership and Leader of Bristol City Council said: "Good progress has been made over the last year through joint working and the support of organisations across the city. However, there is still much to be done to protect people from the effects of secondhand smoke, reduce smoking and improve health and quality of life across the city. It is good to know there are high levels of public support to take the campaign forward."

Angela Raffle, consultant in public health said: "The response to the smoke free Bristol campaign has been amazing. The vast majority of people, smokers and non-smokers alike, agree that smoky public places are no longer acceptable. No-one should have to suffer the harmful effects of second-hand smoke, and more and more places are switching to smoke-free. This is good for health and good for business."

Looking forward to 2006

What is happening nationally?

- Government debate on smoke free legislation - expected early February

What is Bristol doing?

- Councillors from Bristol City Council agreed at a full council meeting on Tuesday 10 January to write to Bristol's four MPs to ask them to support comprehensive smoke free legislation at the forthcoming debate, to protect all workers from the effects of second hand smoke
- Building compliance by continuing to educate businesses and the public about the effects of second hand smoke
- Expanding smoke free Bristol's reach into doing more on reducing exposure to secondhand smoke in the home

ENDS

Notes to editor

Background to smoke-free Bristol, the Bristol Partnership & the charter

The smoke free Bristol initiative is a 5-year local action plan to protect people living and working in the city from the harmful effects of second hand smoke.

Smoke-free Bristol is an initiative of the Bristol Partnership.

The Bristol Partnership is a collaboration between many different local agencies and includes Bristol City Council, the Bristol North and Bristol South and West Primary Care Trusts, Avon and Somerset Police Constabulary and local employers who have joined together as the Bristol Partnership.

In January 2005 the Bristol Partnership signed a smoke-free charter committing them to working towards a smoke free city.

The charter says:

"We recognise that smoking is the number one cause of preventable death in Bristol and across the United Kingdom. We recognise that most smokers become smokers before they become adults, and that many begin before their thirteenth birthdays. The future health of our children depends on ensuring that they do not become smokers.

We also recognise that progress to tackle health inequalities and increase the life expectancy of poorer and more vulnerable people in our community depends on action to cut the number of smokers and reduce the harm that smoking causes to them and to others.

We cannot tolerate the terrible toll of death, illness and misery that smoking causes to the people of Bristol. We promise to do all we can to bring it to an end.

We, The Bristol Partnership, are therefore determined:

- To reduce smoking prevalence in our area
- To educate and inform local people about the dangers of smoking and secondhand smoke
- To encourage and support smokers who want to give up, and to promote local support to stop services
- To protect non-smokers from the damaging effects of secondhand smoke
- To support the enforcement of the law on advertising and the sale of tobacco products to minors

We believe that protecting and improving the health and safety of local people is a top priority for the Partnership. We must work together taking determined action to protect the public from the damage caused by smoking.

We commit ourselves to working towards becoming a smokefree city."

For more information about smoke-free Bristol, the Bristol Partnership or the smoke free charter visit www.smokefreebristol.org

Groups that are vulnerable to secondhand smoke:

- Children exposed to secondhand smoke are at a higher risk of pneumonia, bronchitis, asthma and middle ear disease (WHO International Consultation on Second Hand Smoke and Child Health)
- Non-smokers who are exposed to cigarette smoke at work have double the risk of developing adult asthma when compared to those who work in smoke free environments (Jaakkola et al American Journal of Public Health 2003)
- Asthma UK estimated in 2004 that there were 5.2 million people suffering from asthma in the UK, 1.1 million were children (Asthma UK)
- 80 per cent of people who suffer from asthma say that cigarette smoke triggers or worsens their attacks (Asthma UK survey)
- The British Heart Foundation combined data from different studies to show that there are 1.84 million people (just under 2 million) people suffering from angina in the UK (Source BHF)
- The British Heart Foundation estimates that 1.273 million people living in Britain have had a heart attack (source-BHF)
- An estimated 360 000 people living in the UK have had a stroke previously (extrapolated from ONS stats)
- There were an estimated 750 000 pregnant women in England and Wales in 2000 and the number is unlikely to have changed greatly (ONS)

See the ASH site for details of the effects on health of secondhand smoke: www.ash.org.uk