

Statement on Consultation on Smoke-free Guidelines

17 July 2006

Smoke-free Bristol today welcomed the consultation on guidelines. Dr Julia Verne, director of Public Health for the Bristol primary care trusts said;
"Smoking is the single most important cause of early deaths",

"We welcome this latest move towards legislation. We have been working hard for this in Bristol and have been at the vanguard of aiming for smoke-free public places. We believe this is going to have a great impact on improving health and preventing unnecessary deaths."

Councillor Barbara Janke, Chair of the Bristol Partnership said: "Making public places smoke -free protects people from the effects of second hand smoke, reduces the number of people starting smoking and improves health and quality of life. From an early stage in the debate, Bristol has worked hard to bring about a smoke -free city. We are already working with pubs and clubs to support them in the build up to the change in the law and hope the government's consultation will lead to greater clarity on the new regulations."

Ends

Further information from Julie Hendry tel 0117 900 2549

Notes to editors

Background to smoke-free Bristol & The Bristol Partnership

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. This states: "We recognise that smoking is the number-one cause of preventable death in Bristol and across the United Kingdom.

"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."

The partnership is determined to:

- Educate and inform local people about the dangers of smoking and secondhand smoke
- To encourage more businesses to go smoke free
- Reduce smoking prevalence in our area
- Support the enforcement of the law on advertising tobacco products
- Reduce under age sales of tobacco products to children
- Encourage and support smokers who want to give up and to promote local support to stop services

For more information about smoke-free Bristol and the Bristol Partnership 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

Key Facts about Bristol

- Surveys in Bristol show that over 80% of respondents are bothered by secondhand smoke and would prefer it if indoor public places were smoke free
- In 2005 in Bristol there were over 10,000 workers exposed to secondhand smoke in their workplace
- The percentage of Bristol households that are smoky is well over 30%, which significantly damages the health of children living in smoky rooms
- The percentage of Bristol adults who smoke is higher than the average for England. Lung cancer death rates in the south and west of Bristol are 35% higher than the average for the former Avon county