

No Smoking Day 2017

Background

Wednesday 8 March is No Smoking Day and to mark the event, Hertfordshire County Council is raising awareness of the benefits of e-cigarettes as an effective way to help people give up smoking tobacco.

There is considerable controversy surrounding e-cigarettes, with half of us still wrongly thinking they are equally or more harmful than smoking and not realising the potential benefits.

In fact, they are 95% safer than smoking tobacco and twice as effective at helping people stop smoking as over the counter nicotine replacements so we are actively encouraging people to consider using them as a route out of smoking.

E-cigarettes are also significantly cheaper than conventional cigarettes and with anticipated increases in the budget (also Wednesday 8 March) there is no better time to stop.

Hertfordshire County Council has also developed a nationally-acclaimed model policy on the use of e-cigarettes, to help local organisations understand the evidence and regulation issues around e-cigs when developing e-cig policies of their own for their staff and service users. It has already been well-received by organisations across the region.

What they can offer you

- **Interviews with case studies:**

- Sue Fleming

Sue is a Hertfordshire resident who decided to use e-cigarettes to help her give up smoking on her 50th birthday, having seen her mother die of COPD. With the support of Hertfordshire County Council's Stop Smoking Service, Sue has given up - she found e-cigarettes invaluable in her quitting journey and talks about her experiences very positively and candidly.

- Ruth Harrington

Ruth is a Hertfordshire resident who has seen the lives of her husband, mother and sister-in-law transformed by using e-cigarettes to help them quit smoking and she is very passionate about the benefits she has seen e-cigarettes bring to her family

- **Interviews with officers and/or politicians**

- Jim McManus

Hertfordshire County Council's Director of Public Health has worked closely with a number of high-profile national agencies around e-cigarettes and can

provide a very engaging and compelling argument to counter some of the controversy.

Jim can also provide more information about Hertfordshire's leading e-cigarette policy and explain why it is important to make sure that employers understand the facts around e-cigarettes, which carry a significantly lower risk than smoking tobacco. He has recently co-authored a [blog with Public Health England](#) on this issue

- Teresa Heritage

Hertfordshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Public Health can provide the political view on any of the above issues.

- **Visit one of the Stop Smoking Services**

Interview a Stop Smoking Service specialist and find out how they support residents to quit using e-cigarettes. Film a carbon monoxide test in action.

- **Testimonials from other authorities**

We can provide testimonials from professionals in other authorities who can endorse our e-cigarette policy and explain how it has/will help them develop sound policies of their own.

Interviews with all of the above can be arranged on request.

Facts and figures

- [To view Hertfordshire's policy see items 4 and 4a via this link.](https://cmis.hertfordshire.gov.uk/hertfordshire/Calendarofcouncilmeetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViawMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/583/Committee/50/Default.aspx)
(<https://cmis.hertfordshire.gov.uk/hertfordshire/Calendarofcouncilmeetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViawMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/583/Committee/50/Default.aspx>)
- Wednesday 8th March is No Smoking Day. It is also Budget day and tobacco taxes are anticipated to rise.
- A 10-a-day smoker who decides to quit completely could save approximately £23.50 a week or more than £1,200 a year.
- All e-cigarettes are now required to be licensed or regulated
- Approximately 2.8million people in the UK are using e-cigs, almost entirely comprising current smokers, smokers wanting to quit and ex-smokers. Very few 'never smokers' use e-cigarettes
- There is no evidence that regular use of e-cigarettes in young people is by anyone other than those who are already smoking, despite young people experimenting with them
- There are no increased toxins in the ambient air from people who use e-cigarettes. People who vape are therefore not subjecting people around them to harmful tobacco smoke
- Nicotine is relatively harmless for most people and may help people not ready to stop smoking to reduce the amount of tobacco they use

Further information

For more information or to arrange filming or interviews, please contact Jo Necchi on 01992 588593 or by email joanne.necchi@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Detailed copy for trade press available on request.

NEWS RELEASE



PR 21449

For Immediate Release

01 March 2017

Thinking about giving up smoking?

Wednesday 8 March is No Smoking Day and to mark the event, Hertfordshire County Council is raising awareness of the benefits of e-cigarettes as an effective way to give up smoking tobacco.

Many people are still confused about the safety of e-cigarettes, with half of us wrongly thinking they are equally or more harmful than smoking and not realising the potential benefits.

However e-cigarettes are 95 per cent safer than smoking tobacco, cheaper than conventional cigarettes and twice as effective at helping people stop smoking as over the counter nicotine replacements.

Hertfordshire resident Sue Fleming made up her mind on her 50th birthday to give up smoking by using e-cigarettes, after her mother passed away from a smoking-related illness.

She said: "At first I was worried about making the switch because I wasn't sure if e-cigarettes were safe, but Hertfordshire's Stop Smoking Service helped me understand that e-cigarettes were far more beneficial to my health than continuing to smoke.

"The Stop Smoking Service was fantastic, really giving me the confidence to go for it and keeping me on track.

"I'm so pleased I gave up smoking, it's made such an amazing difference to my health. Things taste much better, I go to the gym and do yoga now and I don't get out of breath like I used to."

Smoking is still the leading cause of death and disability in Hertfordshire, with around 1,500 smoking-related deaths in 2015 and estimated costs to the local economy of £288 million.

Hertfordshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Public Health, Localism and Libraries, Teresa Heritage, said: "We know that two thirds of smokers want to give up smoking but not all are ready to give up nicotine.

"Vaping isn't for everyone, but e-cigarettes are much safer than smoking and can help people quit tobacco effectively. There's no real risk to bystanders and while the vapour can be a nuisance for some, most vapers find ways of minimising that around others.

"With the help of our free Stop Smoking Services, you are four times more likely to kick the habit. Your health – and your bank balance – will thank you in the long run!"

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For information about how Hertfordshire's Stop Smoking Service can help you stop or reduce smoking, including advice about e-cigarettes, please text SMOKEFREE to 80818, call 0800 389 3 998 or visit www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/stopsmoking

You can also sign up to receive email updates about your health and wellbeing at: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/updateme

ENDS

Notes for editors

For further comment, please contact the Cabinet Member for Public Health, Localism and Libraries via the HCC press office on 01992 588593.

Talking head videos from the case study Sue Fleming are available online at the following links. Please do add these to your websites and media channels:

<http://bit.ly/2lYeLtw>

Embed code: `<iframe width="560" height="315" src="https://www.youtube.com/embed/rPNb7nCh8vQ" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen></iframe>`

<http://bit.ly/2InvlNw>

Embed code: `<iframe width="560" height="315" src="https://www.youtube.com/embed/Ab9Ordr0nKM" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen></iframe>`

Interviews with all case studies can be arranged on request.

More detailed copy for trade press available on request

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