

Tobacco Control Strategy for Bury

Annual Report 2014

Message from Councillor Simpson & the Director of Public Health

This annual report reflects the progress made since the first refresh of the Bury Tobacco Control Strategy, and the future plans for tobacco control work in Bury.

During the past few years, we have faced problems associated with economic downturn, including the Council's own budgetary constraints, and also the additional stresses that our residents experience due to increased household expenses and the threat of job losses.

In April 2013, local authorities became responsible for reducing smoking prevalence, as well as a number of other public health outcomes. Bury Council has continued to invest in stop smoking services, recognising that reducing levels of smoking is the surest way to reduce health inequalities.

Whilst we have made good progress against the outcomes associated with tobacco, there still remains a distinctive gap between Bury and the rest of England. It is not acceptable that people in Bury should expect to live shorter lives and experience greater levels of ill health than other people in England, and therefore we will continue to look for ways to stop people from taking up smoking, and to help people who smoke to quit.

Smoking has become less acceptable and the work that we do and campaigns that we support aim to 'de-normalise' smoking. Changes in the law, such as the legal age of sale of tobacco products being increased to 18, have made it more difficult for young people to have access to tobacco. Future legislation of smoking in private vehicles with children present will go one step further to protect our children and young people from the harms of tobacco smoke.

We will continue to offer our residents the support they need to protect themselves, their children and families from these harms.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lesley Jones'.

Lesley Jones
Director of
Public Health



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Simpson'.

Andrea Simpson
Councillor

The logo for Bury Council, featuring the word 'Bury' in a large, bold, yellow font with a black outline, and the word 'COUNCIL' in a smaller, black, sans-serif font below it.

Where we are now

Smoking is still the biggest preventable cause of ill health and premature death. Over the past year we have made progress against our commitment to reduce smoking prevalence and the harms caused by tobacco.

The rate of smoking in Bury for adults over 18 years of age is **18.2%**. This is a reduction of more than 1 ½ percentage points on the previous year. This is a great achievement and a result of collaborative working of members of the Tobacco Alliance.

Whilst a reduction in overall prevalence is good news for Bury residents, we still have a higher rate of smoking amongst those who work in routine and manual jobs. The prevalence amongst this population group in Bury is **31.9%**, an increase of 2 ½ percentage points on the previous year.

Whilst this is described as *'not significantly different to England average'*, it is not acceptable that some of our residents, including children and families, experience poorer health and other related harms such as deprivation and poverty, because the rate of smoking is higher.

Our rate of smoking for pregnant mums, as recorded at the time of delivery is **13.6%** compared to 12% for England. Smoking in pregnancy not only harms the mum and the baby, but also potentially other children in the household, particularly toddlers, and it means that money spent on cigarettes may be stretching household budgets even more. Pregnant women often need extra specialist support to quit during pregnancy because of their increased metabolism and the way that nicotine is processed by their bodies.

Whilst overall the rate of smoking has reduced, the number of smokers coming to stop smoking services for support with quitting has also reduced. In 2013/14 there were **1,433** quitters for every 100,000 people compared to 3,524 in England. This clearly demonstrates an underuse of our support services and in this next year, we need to investigate why people do not come into services for support, and what we can do to make our services more appealing to smokers.

Overview of the strategy and Tobacco Alliance

The Bury Tobacco Alliance has faced difficulties this year in maintaining its membership, as have other non-statutory groups. Despite budget cuts and reduced levels of staffing across many departments and organisations, members have continued to contribute in whatever way they can to reducing smoking prevalence and tobacco use.

Whilst some meetings in the past year have been poorly attended or cancelled due to numbers of apologies, tobacco control work has continued to be a priority for member organisations, and it is no doubt due to this commitment that we are able to demonstrate a reduction in smoking prevalence on the previous year.

Our stop smoking services continue to provide expert advice and support, as well as medicines for people wishing to quit smoking. The Council's Trading Standards and Environmental Health teams have produced excellent results with the enforcement work that they do around illicit and illegal tobacco sales and smoke free public places enforcement. Other partners such as Bury College, Six Town Housing and Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service continue to promote key messages about the harms of smoking and tobacco use to our target groups.

The 3 key objectives of the Bury Tobacco Control Strategy that the Bury Tobacco Alliance promotes and supports are:

- Enabling smokers in Bury who want to quit, to be able to quit with the right support.
- Tackling the accessibility of tobacco products for young people, particularly in relation to illegal and illicit tobacco, underage sales and niche products.
- Protecting children, families and communities from the effects of second hand smoke.

We move into 2015 with these in mind and continue to use local knowledge and intelligence to inform our activities and service provision, and also to use regional and national campaigns to support our work locally.

Challenges

Some of the challenges we face have been identified already such as the higher rates of smoking in routine and manual work groups, our numbers of pregnant smokers and the reduced footfall of people wanting to quit into our stop smoking services.

We need to identify better with the target audiences in order to deliver services that appeal to them as well as being effective in supporting smokers to quit.

Reduced footfall through services means that our target audience has different needs to those that were identified when stop smoking services first came into being more than 10 years ago. We have different challenges such as those posed by electronic cigarettes.

Some smokers are choosing to use these devices to help them quit, although our available intelligence about their effectiveness is still emerging. For some, 'e cigs' have provided solace for their addiction, but for others there are concerns about safety, and also about the normalisation of products that essentially aim to mimic smoking.

We have come so far since 2007 in de-normalising cigarette smoking. When the smoke free legislation was introduced, it took a while to accept that people would not be allowed to smoke in public places. Now, seven years later, it is normal and it would be shocking to see somebody lighting up a cigarette in a public place. And yet we see e cigs being marketed towards children and young people.

De-normalising cigarette smoking is only part of the battle that we face in reducing the uptake of smoking by new, young smokers. Making accessibility of tobacco products more difficult for young is another element. Our trading standards team has seized large numbers of illegal and illicit tobacco products in the past year, and Trading Standards North West has produced another bi-annual report of the schools survey it conducts with pupils in the region. This contributes to our intelligence base, and yet we really do not know the full scale of the illicit and illegal tobacco product market in Bury. We are challenged with recruiting partners to contribute 'soft' intelligence that can direct the invaluable work of the Trading Standards team.

Bury's Stop Smoking Services

Bury has a specialist stop smoking service that is commissioned by Bury Council and provided by Pennine Care Foundation Trust. It has responsibility for providing more specialist support for clients who need it, as well as for training a range of other providers to deliver stop smoking support. Other providers include pharmacies, GP practices and maternity services. It is really important that front line staff who work on a daily basis with clients, customers and patients have the skills to be able to talk to smokers about their addiction, and if necessary are able to direct them to somewhere that can offer help with quitting.

Our specialist stop smoking service has networked and developed partnership arrangements with such organisations as the fire service in order that they can train staff and reciprocate by receiving training from other organisations. Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service continues to develop its working relationship with Bury Stop Smoking Service in order to identify early those who are at increased risk and to further develop mutual referral pathways.

Not only do we rely on these partnership arrangements to facilitate training and sharing of knowledge and good practice, but we are also in the fortunate position of receiving support from commercial organisations that provide some of the products we use to help smokers to quit.

As such, this year we have been able to deliver two half day training sessions for stop smoking practitioners using external expert speakers with a wealth of knowledge about stop smoking services and delivery. Topics covered included *Smokers with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)*, *Engagement and retention of smokers in services*, and *Smoking in Pregnancy*.

Our specialist service has targeted staff groups such as midwifery and workplaces with brief intervention training in order to equip them with the skills and knowledge to talk about smoking with smokers, and to refer into services.

All of our stop smoking services have managed the additional demand on services that often arises from regional and national media campaigns such as Stoptober. The staff in these services have also demonstrated commitment to helping people to quit by taking time out of busy and often clinical schedules to attend training.

Illegal and Illicit Tobacco

Bury Trading Standards has continued to make accessibility and supply of illegal and illicit tobacco products. These products are often linked to organised crime gangs both in the UK and abroad. They often have warnings written on them in a different language and may contain substances that are additional to the harmful products that are in regulated products.

Since changes in legislation, it is now illegal to sell cigarettes or tobacco products to anyone who is under 18 years of age. Trading standards has an essential and invaluable role in enforcing the legislation and therefore preventing the uptake of smoking by children and young people. The North West Trading Standards survey provides us with useful information about where children and young people source their tobacco products, and also about how many of them smoke tobacco.

Bury Trading Standards team does receive intelligence from many sources on the availability of illicit tobacco products. So far during the year they have seized products from commercial and residential properties. Total seizures amount to 9.65 kg of hand rolling tobacco, 37,759 cigarettes and 256 blunts/ cyclones. The estimated street value is in the region of £20,751

As new developments occur, many organisations are beginning to recognise e cigarettes in a similar way to tobacco products when developing their policies and practices. During January 2015, the Government is consulting on proposals to restrict the age at which nicotine inhalers (including e cigarettes) can be purchased. This will bring them in line with tobacco products, but this will also create additional pressures for Trading Standards teams, who are to be tasked with enforcing the new regulations.

Children and Young People

Bury Public Health Purchased 4 licences for an internet-based educational programme called *Operation Smokestorm* for use in the school year 2013/14. The feedback was positive and the programme was offered more widely to all secondary schools in Bury. 6 schools will be making use of the programme this year. It teaches not only about the health harms of tobacco, but also about the ethical issues such as child labour associated with illicit tobacco, and the way products are marketed by tobacco companies. The programme is interactive and has a secret agent theme running through.

Alongside this programme, the Children's Trust led on a peer support/ education programme which trained year 10 pupils up to deliver tobacco educational messages to year7s, and also become mentors who were able to support children to say no. The training was delivered by Bury College and Bury Stop Smoking Service and culminated in a weekend residential that was led by Bury Youth Services. The feedback from pupils indicated that they had learned a lot and had developed their confidence in speaking to peers and their families about tobacco issues.

The latest CHETS (Childhood Exposure to Environmental Tobacco Smoke) survey 2014 for Wales, indicates that less children are being exposed to smoking in vehicles than stated in the previous survey in 2008.

66% of schools and 86% of pupils took part in the survey and alarmingly, 6% of these pupils said they had tried E cigarettes. This rose to 12% amongst those who had two smoking parents. 15% of those who had used an e cigarette reported that they might or will take up smoking in the next two years.

It is essential that we continue to work collaboratively to reduce both demand for and supply of tobacco products to children and young people if we are to reduce longer term smoking prevalence.

Campaigns

New Year Health Harms

Public Health England launched a new Smokefree Health Harms campaign on 29 Dec 2013. The campaign focused on the immediate harms that smoking does to the body, and encouraged people who smoke to go online to get free support.

A range of resources was made available to smokers to help them quit, some of which were distributed via the Bury Tobacco Alliance. These included a Smokefree app, Quit Kit, daily email programme or text messages, along with details of local services to get face-to-face support from a specially trained adviser. This campaign will run again in January 2015 and will be supported by Bury Council.

No Smoking Day

The theme for the 2014 No Smoking Day was 'V for Victory'. This coincided with the 100th anniversary of the 1st World War and also events that were organised by the Lancashire Fusiliers. Public Health worked with the Fusiliers in Bury as well as Bury Market and other colleagues from Pennine Care Foundation Trust to promote No Smoking Day.

The theme for 2015 is Proud to be a Quitter.

Stoptober

We supported this campaign locally again and this year we had an estimated 730 sign ups from the Bury area compared to 726. The increase is small but significant. Smoking prevalence has reduced since last year, and the figure this year have only captured local sign up and not electronic. This would suggest an incredibly successful local Stoptober campaign.

Locally, public health tweeted encouragement and re-tweeted Public Health England and Tobacco Free Futures messages. The Bury Stop Smoking Service was able to utilise the giant Stoptober Button, on loan from Public Health England, at two of their high profile events during October.

What next?

There are plans for 3 national Public Health tobacco control campaigns for 2015. They are:

Health Harms (January)
No Smoking Day (March)
Stoptober (October)

We will promote these locally in order to raise awareness of the harms of tobacco use and the services available, and to continue to reduce smoking prevalence and tobacco use in Bury.

We will continue to monitor new and developing trends, such as e cigarettes, and develop services that are responsive to the needs of the population of Bury in order to further decrease the levels of smoking.

We will look for other ways to gather intelligence that will inform local enforcement activity, to stop the uptake of smoking at a young age, but also to protect our most vulnerable residents from the harms of illicit and illegal tobacco use.

We will support organisations that work with children, young people and families to provide information and education about the harms of second hand smoke, including harms to unborn babies.

We will look at the population groups that are most affected by health inequalities caused by tobacco use in Bury, and we will target services and campaigns particularly towards these groups. We have a duty to reduce smoking prevalence amongst routine and manual work groups and will aim to have a great impact on this group within the coming year.

We will look to working more closely with our colleagues in the Bury Clinical Commissioning Group to ensure that commissioned services address needs of the population served by the CCG and Bury Council.

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