

The Health Bill 2009

In an important step towards a tobacco free future, MPs and Peers voted in favour of new measures to help prevent children and young people taking up smoking. As part of the Health Bill 2009, legislation to remove cigarettes and tobacco from display at the point of sale and ban cigarette vending machines has been given the green light in Parliament.

Commenting on the positive outcome, Dr. Janet Atherton, Chair of Smokefree North West, said: "It is a testament to the weight of public support the Bill has received in the region. Everyone who has written, spoken and campaigned in favour of the tobacco control measures in the Health Bill have helped close the loopholes in the Tobacco Advertising and Promotion Act 2002."

Last year, more than 60,000 people living in the North West responded to the Department of Health's consultation on the Future of Tobacco Control, showing support for new measures to protect the region's children and young people from the harmful effects of tobacco.

Janet added: "This vote is truly reflective of the views of people living in the North West. Smoking remains the single biggest preventable cause of premature death. If we want to cut the number of adults suffering from smoking-related illnesses we must reduce the number of young people taking up smoking. This will help to save more lives across the North West."

The Health Bill will now return to the House of Lords for further consideration before it can be made law.