

Regional press releases – 16 January 2025

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New figures show cost of smoking in the North West is £5.75bn a year

Today, Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) has published new estimates showing that smoking costs the North West £5.75 billion a year. This includes:

- £3.50 billion in lost economic productivity
- £252 million to the NHS
- £1.96 billion in social care costs to local authorities
- £20.6 million in fire costs

Most of this consists of lost economic productivity from smokers being too sick to work and dying prematurely. Unchecked, this is a major barrier to the government's ambition to boost economic growth. However, with planned legislation and the commitment to create a roadmap to a smokefree country, the government could make real progress in reducing this impact during the current parliament.

The health and economic impacts of smoking are disproportionately concentrated in the most deprived parts of the country, meaning that these areas stand to benefit the most from investment in stop smoking support. In the North West:

- 10,030 people die each year due to smoking
- 208,000 households fall under the poverty line after smoking expenses are taken into account
- Around 378,000 children live in smoking households

Hazel Cheeseman, Chief Executive of ASH, said:

“These figures show conclusively that tobacco should play no part in our country's future. Tobacco companies make massive profits selling a lethal addiction which puts pressure on vital public services and the economy. A levy on the tobacco industry is

urgently needed to accelerate progress towards a smokefree future, ending the harms from smoking for good.”

Howard Reed of Landman Economics, who has undertaken much of the unpinning analysis for these costs, said:

“The ludicrous suggestion in some quarters is that reducing the tobacco market might damage public finances due to a decline in tax receipts. However, this is to see only a very fragmentary part of the picture. Smoking places additional burden on public finances and individual households that far outweighs any ‘benefit’ from tobacco taxes. The country will be better off without the sale of tobacco.”

Dr Rob Branston, University of Bath, added:

“Tobacco companies have spent decades profiting from addiction and leaving the state to pick up the substantial costs created. A levy on industry will go some way to redress that while providing the needed funding to make smoking history.”

The full dataset is available online: [ASH Data and Cost Calculators](#)

ENDS

New figures show cost of smoking in the East Midlands is £3.81 bn a year

Today, Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) has published new estimates showing that smoking costs the East Midlands £3.81 billion a year. This includes:

- £2.29 billion in lost economic productivity
- £168 million to the NHS
- £1.32 billion in social care costs to local authorities
- £31.0 million in fire-related costs

Most of this consists of lost economic productivity from smokers being too sick to work and dying prematurely. Unchecked, this is a major barrier to the government’s ambition to boost economic growth. However, with planned legislation and the commitment to create a roadmap to a smokefree country, the government could make real progress in reducing this impact during the current parliament.

The health and economic impacts of smoking are disproportionately concentrated in the most deprived parts of the country, meaning that these areas stand to benefit the most from investment in stop smoking support. In the East Midlands:

- 6,020 people die each year due to smoking

- 115,000 households fall under the poverty line after smoking expenses are taken into account
- Around 254,000 children live in smoking households

Hazel Cheeseman, Chief Executive of ASH, said:

“These figures show conclusively that tobacco should play no part in our country’s future. Tobacco companies make massive profits selling a lethal addiction which puts pressure on vital public services and the economy. A levy on the tobacco industry is urgently needed to accelerate progress towards a smokefree future, ending the harms from smoking for good.”

Howard Reed of Landman Economics, who has undertaken much of the unpinning analysis for these costs, said:

“The ludicrous suggestion in some quarters is that reducing the tobacco market might damage public finances due to a decline in tax receipts. However, this is to see only a very fragmentary part of the picture. Smoking places additional burden on public finances and individual households that far outweighs any ‘benefit’ from tobacco taxes. The country will be better off without the sale of tobacco.”

Dr Rob Branston, University of Bath, added:

“Tobacco companies have spent decades profiting from addiction and leaving the state to pick up the substantial costs created. A levy on industry will go some way to redress that while providing the needed funding to make smoking history.”

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Notes to the Editor

Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) is a health charity working to eliminate the harm caused by tobacco use. For more information, visit ash.org.uk. ASH receives funding for its programme of work from Cancer Research UK and the British Heart Foundation.

For interviews or more information, contact press@ash.org.uk

ENDS

New figures show cost of smoking in the West Midlands is £4.64 bn a year

Today, Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) has published new estimates showing that smoking costs the West Midlands £4.64 billion a year. This includes:

- £2.91 billion in lost economic productivity

- £193 million to the NHS
- £1.50 billion in social care costs to local authorities
- £35.7 million in fire costs

Most of this consists of lost economic productivity from smokers being too sick to work and dying prematurely. Unchecked, this is a major barrier to the government's ambition to boost economic growth. However, with planned legislation and the commitment to create a roadmap to a smokefree country, the government could make real progress in reducing this impact during the current parliament.

The health and economic impacts of smoking are disproportionately concentrated in the most deprived parts of the country, meaning that these areas stand to benefit the most from investment in stop smoking support. In the West Midlands:

- 6,860 people die each year due to smoking
- 146,000 households would fall under the poverty line after smoking expenses are taken into account
- Around 271,000 children live in smoking households

Hazel Cheeseman, Chief Executive of ASH, said:

“These figures show conclusively that tobacco should play no part in our country’s future. Tobacco companies make massive profits selling a lethal addiction which puts pressure on vital public services and the economy. A levy on the tobacco industry is urgently needed to accelerate progress towards a smokefree future, ending the harms from smoking for good.”

Howard Reed of Landman Economics, who has undertaken much of the unpinning analysis for these costs, said:

“The ludicrous suggestion in some quarters is that reducing the tobacco market might damage public finances due to a decline in tax receipts. However, this is to see only a very fragmentary part of the picture. Smoking places additional burden on public finances and individual households that far outweighs any ‘benefit’ from tobacco taxes. The country will be better off without the sale of tobacco.”

Dr Rob Branston, University of Bath, added:

“Tobacco companies have spent decades profiting from addiction and leaving the state to pick up the substantial costs created. A levy on industry will go some way to redress that while providing the needed funding to make smoking history.”

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ENDS

New figures show cost of smoking in the East of England is £4.83 bn a year

Today, Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) has published new estimates showing that smoking costs the East of England £4.83 billion a year. This includes:

- £2.29 billion in lost economic productivity
- £168 million to the NHS
- £1.32 billion in social care costs to local authorities
- £31.0 million in fire-related costs

Most of this consists of lost economic productivity from smokers being too sick to work and dying prematurely. Unchecked, this is a major barrier to the government's ambition to boost economic growth. However, with planned legislation and the commitment to create a roadmap to a smokefree country, the government could make real progress in reducing this impact during the current parliament.

The health and economic impacts of smoking are disproportionately concentrated in the most deprived parts of the country, meaning that these areas stand to benefit the most from investment in stop smoking support. In the East of England:

- 7,030 people die each year due to smoking
- 103,000 households fall under the poverty line after smoking expenses are taken into account
- Around 281,000 children live in smoking households

Hazel Cheeseman, Chief Executive of ASH, said:

“These figures show conclusively that tobacco should play no part in our country's future. Tobacco companies make massive profits selling a lethal addiction which puts pressure on vital public services and the economy. A levy on the tobacco industry is urgently needed to accelerate progress towards a smokefree future, ending the harms from smoking for good.”

Howard Reed of Landman Economics, who has undertaken much of the unpinning analysis for these costs, said:

“The ludicrous suggestion in some quarters is that reducing the tobacco market might damage public finances due to a decline in tax receipts. However, this is to see only a very fragmentary part of the picture. Smoking places additional burden on public finances and individual households that far outweighs any ‘benefit’ from tobacco taxes. The country will be better off without the sale of tobacco.”

Dr Rob Branston, University of Bath, added:

“Tobacco companies have spent decades profiting from addiction and leaving the state to pick up the substantial costs created. A levy on industry will go some way to redress that while providing the needed funding to make smoking history.”

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ENDS

New figures show cost of smoking in the South East is £6.56 bn a year

Today, Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) has published new estimates showing that smoking costs the South East £6.56 billion a year. This includes:

- £4.04 billion in lost economic productivity
- £284 million to the NHS
- £2.19 billion in social care costs to local authorities
- £49.8 million in fire-related costs

Most of this consists of lost economic productivity from smokers being too sick to work and dying prematurely. Unchecked, this is a major barrier to the government’s ambition to boost economic growth. However, with planned legislation and the commitment to create a roadmap to a smokefree country, the government could make real progress in reducing this impact during the current parliament.

The health and economic impacts of smoking are disproportionately concentrated in the most deprived parts of the country, meaning that these areas stand to benefit the most from investment in stop smoking support. In the South East:

- 9,500 people die each year due to smoking
- 133,000 households fall under the poverty line after smoking expenses are taken into account
- Around 360,000 children live in smoking households

Hazel Cheeseman, Chief Executive of ASH, said:

“These figures show conclusively that tobacco should play no part in our country’s future. Tobacco companies make massive profits selling a lethal addiction which puts pressure on vital public services and the economy. A levy on the tobacco industry is urgently needed to accelerate progress towards a smokefree future, ending the harms from smoking for good.”

Howard Reed of Landman Economics, who has undertaken much of the unpinning analysis for these costs, said:

“The ludicrous suggestion in some quarters is that reducing the tobacco market might damage public finances due to a decline in tax receipts. However, this is to see only a very fragmentary part of the picture. Smoking places additional burden on public finances and individual households that far outweighs any ‘benefit’ from tobacco taxes. The country will be better off without the sale of tobacco.”

Dr Rob Branston, University of Bath, added:

“Tobacco companies have spent decades profiting from addiction and leaving the state to pick up the substantial costs created. A levy on industry will go some way to redress that while providing the needed funding to make smoking history.”

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ENDS

New figures show cost of smoking in the South West is £4.36 bn a year

Today, Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) has published new estimates showing that smoking costs the South West £4.36 billion a year. This includes:

- £2.67 billion in lost economic productivity
- £181 million to the NHS
- £1.48 billion in social care costs to local authorities
- £33.2 million in fire-related costs

Most of this consists of lost economic productivity from smokers being too sick to work and dying prematurely. Unchecked, this is a major barrier to the government’s ambition to boost economic growth. However, with planned legislation and the commitment to create a roadmap to a smokefree country, the government could make real progress in reducing this impact during the current parliament.

The health and economic impacts of smoking are disproportionately concentrated in the most deprived parts of the country, meaning that these areas stand to benefit the most from investment in stop smoking support. In the South West:

- 6,590 people die each year due to smoking
- 110,000 households fall under the poverty line after smoking expenses are taken into account
- Around 254,000 children live in smoking households

Hazel Cheeseman, Chief Executive of ASH, said:

“These figures show conclusively that tobacco should play no part in our country’s future. Tobacco companies make massive profits selling a lethal addiction which puts pressure on vital public services and the economy. A levy on the tobacco industry is urgently needed to accelerate progress towards a smokefree future, ending the harms from smoking for good.”

Howard Reed of Landman Economics, who has undertaken much of the unpinning analysis for these costs, said:

“The ludicrous suggestion in some quarters is that reducing the tobacco market might damage public finances due to a decline in tax receipts. However, this is to see only a very fragmentary part of the picture. Smoking places additional burden on public finances and individual households that far outweighs any ‘benefit’ from tobacco taxes. The country will be better off without the sale of tobacco.”

Dr Rob Branston, University of Bath, added:

“Tobacco companies have spent decades profiting from addiction and leaving the state to pick up the substantial costs created. A levy on industry will go some way to redress that while providing the needed funding to make smoking history.”

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ENDS

New figures show cost of smoking in London is £7.22 bn a year

Today, Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) has published new estimates showing that smoking costs London £7.22 billion a year. This includes:

- £5.25 billion in lost economic productivity
- £253 million to the NHS
- £1.66 billion in social care costs to local authorities
- £51.8 million in fire costs

Most of this consists of lost economic productivity from smokers being too sick to work and dying prematurely. Unchecked, this is a major barrier to the government’s ambition to boost economic growth. However, with planned legislation and the commitment to create a roadmap to a smokefree country, the government could make real progress in reducing this impact during the current parliament.

The health and economic impacts of smoking are disproportionately concentrated in the most deprived parts of the country, meaning that these areas stand to benefit the most from investment in stop smoking support. In London:

- 5,940 people die each year due to smoking
- 82,000 households fall under the poverty line after smoking expenses are taken into account
- Around 343,000 children live in smoking households

Hazel Cheeseman, Chief Executive of ASH, said:

“These figures show conclusively that tobacco should play no part in our country’s future. Tobacco companies make massive profits selling a lethal addiction which puts pressure on vital public services and the economy. A levy on the tobacco industry is urgently needed to accelerate progress towards a smokefree future, ending the harms from smoking for good.”

Howard Reed of Landman Economics, who has undertaken much of the unpinning analysis for these costs, said:

“The ludicrous suggestion in some quarters is that reducing the tobacco market might damage public finances due to a decline in tax receipts. However, this is to see only a very fragmentary part of the picture. Smoking places additional burden on public finances and individual households that far outweighs any ‘benefit’ from tobacco taxes. The country will be better off without the sale of tobacco.”

Dr Rob Branston, University of Bath, added:

“Tobacco companies have spent decades profiting from addiction and leaving the state to pick up the substantial costs created. A levy on industry will go some way to redress that while providing the needed funding to make smoking history.”

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