

# Northamptonshire implements a 'No Smoking' rule for Country Parks play areas

Country Parks across North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire Councils have committed to play areas becoming smoke free zones.

Signage is now up in Country Park play areas in both unitary authorities banning smoking in a bid to stop youngsters from picking up the habit after a concerned member of the public flagged the issue after witnessing smoking around her children.

This proposal for this signage was put forward by Public Health Northamptonshire and backed by both North and West Northamptonshire Country Parks. It takes action in a practical way to reduce the exposure to, and visibility of, smoking.

Sadly smoking remains the leading cause of death and ill health in the United Kingdom, and every day more than 200 people die from a smoking related condition in England alone. Smoking places an enormous strain on our health service, social care system, and economy. Every day in England 280 children start smoking, and two thirds of these children will go on to become daily smokers.

There are approximately 96,000 smokers in our county. Every year in Northamptonshire smoking is responsible for more than 7,000 hospital admissions, 300,000 GP appointments, 30 house fires, and over 1,000 deaths.

Councillor Helen Harrison, Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing for North Northamptonshire Council says: "Our Country Parks play an important role in helping our residents explore the great outdoors with friends and family, and thousands flock to enjoy these areas every year, myself included. Despite our Country Parks being the epitome of a healthy and active lifestyle, exposure to second-hand smoke whilst enjoying these areas is sadly not uncommon, even in children's play areas."

Councillor Matt Golby, Portfolio Holder for Adult Care, Wellbeing and Health Integration for West Northamptonshire Council concludes: "It is really important to make smoking less visible to our younger residents. Implementing

a no-smoking rule in all of our Country Parks children's play areas ensures that these environments remain a safe and fun place for adults and children alike."

Those who are looking to quit smoking can self-refer to Northamptonshire's Stop Smoking services which offer:

12 weeks of specialist support to help you stop smoking

Bi-weekly telephone consultation with a Stop Smoking Advisor

Tips and advice on how to quit

A free course of nicotine replacement therapy

A free e-cigarette starter kit and ample supply of e-liquid

Products sent directly to your door at no cost

For more information visit [www.northnorthants.gov.uk/stopsmoking](http://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/stopsmoking) or call 0300 126 5700

Or follow @smokefreeNN1 on Twitter and Facebook:

#### Notes to editors:

The following parks are implementing the 'No Smoking' rule:

#### **West**

Daventry

Watermeadow (Towcester)

Brixworth

#### **North**

Barnwell

Sywell

Fermyn Woods

Irchester