

# **THE NORTH WEST WANTS SMOKEFREE AIR**

## **RESULTS OF THE BIG SMOKE DEBATE NORTH WEST**

80% of North West residents support legislation to ban smoking in public places, with 85% stating they would prefer public places to be smokefree, according to the results of the Big Smoke Debate published today by the North West Public Health Group.

Thousands of North West residents aired their views in what has become one of the biggest consultation exercises on a public health issues ever seen in the UK. Out of the 14,222 people who took part in the Big Smoke Debate around 78% of people want cafés, restaurant and offices to be completely smoke free with less than 6% wanting smoking throughout pubs and bars.

The Big Smoke Debate results demonstrated there is a strong desire for change with 4 out of 5 people saying they are bothered by tobacco smoke with 78% wanting restaurants to be completely smokefree and 57% wanting bars and pubs to be free of smoke. Yet currently only a tiny percentage of the North West's pubs and restaurants are smokefree.

Commenting on the results of the Big Smoke Debate, Regional Tobacco Policy Manager Brenda Fullard said, 'The right to enjoy clean air, free of tobacco smoke pollution has been denied to the vast majority of people in this region. Now the Big Smoke Debate has shown the strength of support for smoke free work and public places in the North West. It also shows support for legislation to enforce it. All confirm the strength of opinion for a smoke free society'

The consultation represented views of smokers, ex smokers and those who have never smoked.