
NEWS RELEASE



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Hertfordshire County Council supports Stoptober

Stoptober, the 28-day stop smoking challenge from Public Health England, is back from 1st October and Hertfordshire County Council is encouraging smokers from across Hertfordshire to get involved.

Stoptober is the biggest mass quit attempt in the country and thousands of people take part every year. It offers a range of free support including an app, daily emails, Facebook Messenger and encouragement from the Stoptober online community on Facebook.

Hertfordshire resident Martin Murphy had been a smoker for over 35 years when he finally decided to kick the habit once and for all. He said: "I'd tried stopping on a couple of occasions but always lapsed.

"When two years ago my wife and I were expecting our second baby, it was the final push I needed - I wanted to stop for good.

"I went to the Stop Smoking service and my nurse started me on 24-hour patches, which were the medication that best suited my lifestyle. She was very supportive and it was very motivating watching the carbon monoxide readings come down.

"What really made a difference was that I could get the medication on prescription rather than paying for it over the counter - this saved me a lot of money.

"I do feel better - I have more energy and it has made a real positive improvement to my life.

"Everyone's experiences of giving up smoking are different, and it's worth seeing what treatment works best for you. It's not as difficult as you might think and you'll get full support to help you.

“There are real financial incentives too; you could save around £300 a month so it is really worth giving it a go.”

Smoking is still the leading cause of death and disability in Hertfordshire, with around 1,500 smoking-related deaths each year and estimated costs to the local economy of £288 million.

Cabinet Member for Public Health, Richard Roberts, said: “We are very encouraged that people are stopping smoking in Hertfordshire; Hertfordshire now has lower than average rates of smoking at 13.5 per cent and the lowest on record.

“However we know that of those still smoking, two thirds want to quit.

“If you’re not quite ready to give up nicotine, e-cigarettes are 95 per cent safer than smoking tobacco, cheaper than conventional cigarettes and twice as effective at helping you stop smoking as over the counter nicotine replacements.

“Stopping smoking is the best thing you can do for your health and the health of those around you. Everyone’s experience of quitting is different, but with Stoptober, you’re not on your own.”

Hertfordshire resident Sue Fleming made up her mind on her 50th birthday to give up smoking by using e-cigarettes, after her mother passed away from a smoking-related illness.

She said: “At first I was worried about making the switch because I wasn’t sure if e-cigarettes were safe, but Hertfordshire’s Stop Smoking Service helped me understand that e-cigarettes were far less harmful to my health than continuing to smoke.

“The Stop Smoking Service was fantastic, really giving me the confidence to go for it and keeping me on track.

“I’m so pleased I gave up smoking, it’s made such an amazing difference to my health. Things taste much better, I go to the gym and do yoga now and I don’t get out of breath like I used to.”

With help from a Stop Smoking Service, you are four times more likely to kick the habit and if you can stop smoking for 28-days, you are five times more likely to stay quit for good.

For help to quit, including advice about e-cigarettes, text SMOKEFREE to 80818, call 0800 389 3 998 or visit www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/stopsmoking

Join the thousands quitting smoking with Stoptober and get all the support you need to help you on your quit journey. Just search 'Stoptober' to find out more.

Ends

Notes to editors

For further comment or interview please contact Cllr Richard Roberts via the HCC press office on 01992 588593.

Photos of both case studies available

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