

# Smokefree Sidelines Toolkit

# #smokefreesidelines

## **What is Smokefree Sidelines?**

'Smokefree Sidelines' is a collaborative campaign between Buckinghamshire Public Health and the Berks & Bucks Football Association (FA). The aim of this campaign is to introduce a culture of smokefree sidelines across Buckinghamshire and reduce the harm to those exposed to smoking. The campaign began in Norfolk in 2016 and has since been delivered successfully by local authorities and football associations across the country.

The Smokefree Sidelines campaign aims to protect young footballers from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke and the temptation to copy adults smoking and vaping. It encourages people not to smoke or vape at the sidelines of junior football matches and training sessions.

**Did you know that children and young people are more at risk of developing breathing problems, asthma and allergies if they are exposed to second-hand smoke? Children are most at risk of becoming smokers themselves if they grow up in communities where smoking is the norm.**

A survey of Buckinghamshire junior football clubs found that:

- 86% of members think smoking on the sidelines is not acceptable
- 85% feel smoking and vaping along sidelines negatively impacts their enjoyment of the game
- Two key reasons for not asking a fellow supporter not to smoke on the sideline is due to a lack of policy and signage.

## **Here is an interview with a recent joiner, Chairman Declan Breen of Flackwell Heath Minors Football Club:**

### **1. What prompted you to choose to join the Smokefree Sidelines campaign?**

I saw something on social media from the B&B (Berks and Bucks Football Authority), and it coincided with a Mum of one of our players mentioning to me that she saw one of our coaches vaping. The following week I was watching one of our Under 7's matches and an opposing team supporter was vaping on the side and massive puffs of smoke were going onto the playing field!!

### **2. How important do you think the campaign aim is?**

VERY....I'm not a smoker and never have been. I believe that smoking is in the minority now but it's still there, and of course vaping has taken off. It's not a great example to the kids

playing football, this is their play area so parents and supporters should respect that and set the right example.

### **3. What did the joining up process include?**

It was really straightforward - the forms didn't take long to complete and the team behind the campaign was great in providing advice and support.

### **4. How have you found the experience so far? Have you noticed a difference in people's behaviour at Flackwell Heath Minors FC matches and training sessions since joining? How?**

We have the Smokefree Sidelines a-frames and posters out every home match. I'm not seeing anyone smoking or vaping, and other club officials have said the same. Have we stopped it completely? That's difficult to say as we're not at every match – but the message is loud and clear to all our coaches.

We also send the Smokefree Sidelines message out on our club directions sheet, which goes to every club when they are due to visit us for a game. This is done by our coaches.

### **5. Would you recommend other clubs to join? Why?**

Absolutely...it's a complete no brainer and I'd be puzzled if football clubs were not supportive of the idea and campaign.

## **How can my Club join?**

Join the campaign and receive free items to display where your junior football team plays! To sign up, please complete the form below and send it to [Nicola.Coote@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:Nicola.Coote@buckinghamshire.gov.uk). (Please be aware that there may be a waiting list).

## **Your welcome pack**

As part of our welcome pack, you will receive free Smokefree Sidelines signage and promotional items to use and display at your junior matches and training sessions including:

- a5 flyers
- postcards
- barrier tape
- infographic posters
- a selfie frame
- an optional 2m x 1m vinyl banner

## **How do I use this toolkit?**

1. Use social media #Buckssmokefreesidelines and encourage others to share the messages. Here is an example you can use:

More and more clubs are adopting #SmokefreeSidelines in Buckinghamshire! Make '24/'25 your smokefree season. In partnership with @berksandbucksfa, we're helping local football clubs encourage spectators watching local youth football to either refrain from smoking during the match or to move away from the sidelines, and smoke where children and young adults are not present. A suite of FREE resources is available to help clubs show sideline smokers the metaphorical red card. Find out more and take a look at how your local football clubs can get involved at [www.berks-bucksfa.com/smokefreesidelines](http://www.berks-bucksfa.com/smokefreesidelines)

2. Take photographs (with appropriate permissions) using the free resources provided e.g., selfie frame:



3. Send letters/e-mails to Club members informing them of the scheme:



Smokefree Sidelines  
Draft Letter to Parents

4. Add the Smokefree Sidelines logo to your paperwork and any website:



5. Add our Smokefree Sidelines policy below to your Club membership forms! This is also being added to our Council pitches, parks and playing field booking forms:

**For the benefit of our future generations, please refrain from smoking and/or vaping at our Club training sessions and matches. Did you know that children and young people are more at risk of developing breathing problems, asthma and allergies if they are exposed to second-hand smoke? Children are most at risk of becoming smokers themselves if they grow up in communities where smoking is the norm. Our Club, in line with Buckinghamshire Council and the Berks & Bucks Football Authority, fully supports the Smokefree Sidelines campaign - let's unite to protect our young stars.**

6. Include an article in any newsletters you might have. Here is an example you can use:

**We copy what we see, let's make our sport smoke and vape free! More and more clubs in Buckinghamshire are adopting our #SmokefreeSidelines initiative, in partnership with Berks & Bucks Football Association. Young people are most at risk of becoming smokers themselves if they grow up in communities where smoking is the norm. Our campaign encourages smokers watching local youth football to either refrain from smoking or vaping during the match, or to smoke where young people are not present. To help show sideline smokers the metaphorical red card, we're providing clubs with free campaign materials to promote at youth matches. Find out more: [Berksbucksfa.com/smokefree-sideline](https://berksbucksfa.com/smokefree-sideline)**

## How do I get more information?

1. Refer to the slidepack below for background:



Smokefree Sidelines  
presentation for clubs

2. Read the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) document here:



Bucks Smokefree  
Sidelines\_FAQs\_2024.

3. Contact [Nicola.Coote@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:Nicola.Coote@buckinghamshire.gov.uk).

## How do I quit smoking?

Contact the free local stop smoking service Be Healthy Bucks ([Home | Healthy Lifestyle Service | Be Healthy Bucks \(maximusuk.co.uk\)](#)). You can call 03332 300177, email [behealthybucks@maximusuk.co.uk](mailto:behealthybucks@maximusuk.co.uk) or text SMOKE to 60777. A member of the team will be in touch within 48 hours to discuss supporting you with stopping smoking.