



## Wales Office | Swyddfa Cymru

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*From the Parliamentary Under-Secretary  
Oddi wrth yr Is-Ysgrifennydd Seneddol*

**Nick Ainger MP**

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*Dear Mrs. Arnett*

Thank you for your letter dated 13<sup>th</sup> September regarding smoking in public places. I am replying in my capacity as a member of the Cabinet Sub-committee on Public Health.

I concur that as a matter of urgency we need to find the best way for England and Wales to reduce the number of smoking related deaths. This Government is committed to ensuring that there is a major step forward in providing smoke free environments for people to live and work. However, we do need to ensure that whatever legislation is proposed, it should both recognise the views and needs of the people in England and Wales, and must provide the most practical vehicle for its implementation.

You may be pleased to hear that we have shifted significantly in favour of smoke-free environments. Subject to Parliamentary timetables, we propose to regulate, with legislation where necessary, in order to ensure that all work places and enclosed public spaces will be smoke-free. We intend to introduce smoke free places through a staged approach so we can successfully implement detailed legislation, including; exclusions from the areas which are intended to be smoke-free, penalties and enforcement.

A public consultation on smoking in public places for England and Wales ended on 5 September 2005. The responses are now being analysed and considered by, Department of Health and Welsh Assembly Government officials.

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Ministers and officials will give careful consideration to all stakeholder views and comments, before finalising the smoke-free elements of the Health Improvement and Protection Bill, which will be introduced in this Parliamentary session.

I hope this is of some help to you.

*Yours sincerely*

*Nick Ainger*

**Nick Ainger MP**

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