

Slough Pubgoers Enjoy LAST CIGARETTE

With the smoking ban about to take effect on 1st July, how are Slough's pubgoers coping with the impending anti-smoking laws?

In many parts of the country, and notably in Ireland, pubs have already begun enforcing a non-smoking policy ahead of the actual ban. Not so in Slough it seems – apparently only one pub in the borough is currently asking its smoking customers not to light up.

The popular theory amongst publicans is that by introducing a 'voluntary' non-smoking rule before the ban, smokers will have the chance to acclimatize to pub life without smoke. When the ban itself kicks in, they will already be mentally prepared for the change. It's a policy that's already been adopted by thousands of pubs up and down the country.

However, the borough of Slough has bucked the trend. Of the 50 public houses within the borough, only one – The Herschel Arms in Park Street – has already banned smoking in advance of the nationwide ban. Apparently publicans are fearful that an early ban may scare off their smoking clientele, driving them to competitors that will still allow them to light up – at least for now.

Meanwhile Slough Borough Council has been working with the Berkshire East Primary Care Trust to encourage more businesses to become smoke-free zone prior to 1st July. A spokesperson for the council commented: "There is a misconception that they will lose trade but I think it's an unfounded fear. In Ireland, where the ban has been in place

for a while now, pubs have found that more families come visit and eat at the pub so their profits have actually gone up."

From 1st July all business premises will need to display non-smoking signs warning about the ban on smoking in public places. If you need further advice, visit www.smokefreeengland.co.uk to get a free sign and for more information.



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