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People in Peterborough are being urged to take the first steps to give up smoking with the help of No Smoking Day initiatives.

With national No Smoking Day on Wednesday 8 March, residents are being encouraged to quit with the support of Peterborough City Council's specialist wellbeing advisors who will be at three smoke free roadshows.

Smoking increases your risk of developing more than 50 serious illnesses and is one of the biggest causes of death and illness in the UK. Every year 100,000 people in the UK die from smoking, with many more living with debilitating smoking related illnesses.

Statistics prove you are four times more likely to quit with specialist support and these smoke free roadshows take place outside:

- > Barclays Bank, Lincoln Road, Millfield - Wednesday 8 March and Thursday 9 March
- > Town Hall, Bridge Street - Saturday 11 March

In addition to these events, wellbeing advisors will be visiting workplaces and schools around Peterborough to promote No Smoking Day.

Councillor Diane Lamb, Peterborough City Council's cabinet member for public health, said: "Smoking is the biggest cause of preventable early death in England. Stopping smoking might be a challenge, but the benefits to your health, purse and those around you will be worth it. No Smoking Day is the perfect opportunity for people to take action to protect their health and join thousands who are starting their quitting journey."

Only about one in twenty unaided attempts to quit smoking result in smokers stopping for good. The best chance for quitting smoking in England is to use a local Stop Smoking Service, which offers behavioural support and medication which can improve a smoker's chances of kicking the habit.

On Saturday 11 March and Sunday 12 March, an advertising campaign involving 'look walkers' wearing illuminated billboard backpacks will take place in the city centre to engage with smokers and generate referrals into local services.

No Smoking Day is also budget day and tobacco taxes are expected to rise. A 10 a day smoker who decides to quit completely could save themselves about £23.50 a week, or more than £1,200 a year. This is an opportunity for smokers in England to use the day as their chance to quit.

If you are unable to visit a roadshow, you can talk to your GP or pharmacist who can refer you to a specialist stop smoking clinic.

There's also the free Stop Smoking Service on 0800 376 56 55 where you can speak direct to a trained advisor.