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Freedom to Choose

(Scotland)

25 JULY IS "ASH WEDNESDAY"

Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) are forever making statements like "public opinion supports the Smoking Ban", so let's **send them our opinion of their Anti-Smoking stance.**

On Wednesday 25 July **send a first class letter (or letters) to ASH with a short statement saying you disagree with their aims.**

THE IDEA IS TO GIVE ASH A MAIL DELIVERY ON THE FOLLOWING DAY THAT THEY WILL NEVER FORGET.

The addresses for ASH and ASH Scotland are shown below:

ASH, 102 CLIFTON STREET, LONDON, EC2A 4HW

ASH Scotland, 8 FREDERICK STREET, EDINBURGH, EH2 2HB

THE ROYAL MAIL CANNOT BE INTERCEPTED OR DIVERTED AND ASH WILL HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING THE CONTENTS UNTIL THE LETTERS ARE OPENED.

For those who really want to make a point, send the letter by "recorded delivery"; that means somebody will have to sign for the letter.

If you are adversely affected by the smoking ban, or if you are simply unhappy with its draconian and undemocratic nature, take part in our "ASH Wednesday" protest. Remember this is about more than smoking As we highlighted in our last Newsletter: when an unelected, unrepresentative group such as ASH is able to drive government policy, democracy itself is under threat.

(As a word of caution, please ensure that your letters to ASH are polite, factual and non-offensive and resist any temptation to send cigarette ends, etc. Freedom to Choose is pursuing legal action/appeals against the legislation on both sides of the border, and such activity would be counterproductive. We have the truth on our side.)

SPREAD THE WORD!

Freedom to Choose Scotland, c/o Mary Moriarty, Port o' Leith Bar,
58 Constitution Street, Leith, Edinburgh, EH6 6RS

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Scottish Petitions update

The Petitions Committee heard petitions 1037 and 1042 on 26 June and both petitions were referred to the Health Committee following the summer recess.

Day of Defiance, 1 July 2007

Nick Hogan, The Swan, Bolton; Tony Blows, The Dog Inn, Hereford; Hamish Howitt, The Happy Scot, Blackpool

On the day the English ban was enacted, these three licensees allowed customers to smoke, as they had promised weeks in advance, and at the time of writing the protest goes on. Members of Freedom2Choose Scotland travelled to Bolton for the big day, where we were joined by F2C members from all over the UK, and the day went with a swing. There was heavy security but no trouble, except when anti-smoker challenged one of our group, who defended himself with remarkable restraint by pointing out that the manager was allowing smoking in the pub. A security man had a quiet word with the troublemaker who left shortly afterwards. (As someone pointed out, he must have known what to expect by coming into the Swan that day, and could have exercised his choice to go elsewhere.)

The story of Tony Blows's defiance has appeared in the Chinese English language press, and further international support has come from various parts of Europe and as far away as Hawaii. Nick Hogan had several international phone calls on 1 July. A photograph from the *Hawaii Reporter*, of licensees with a banner supporting England's Day of Defiance, was also posted on the Internet.

In England itself, though the mainstream press seems not to oppose the ban, *The Times* carried an interesting editorial on the following day, which included this comment: "... furthermore, the Government's claim that 12,000 die each year as a result of passive smoking must be regarded as suspect, even spurious, as it is so self-serving for those who commissioned it."

Along with the three licensees mentioned we hear that many others (preferring a degree of anonymity) continue to open their doors to welcome smokers, and there is no doubt that this has helped to raise the profile of Freedom to Choose in the media and with the public.

It is customary for newspapers to make much of their growing circulation, and in that spirit we are glad to report that hits on the F2C website have rocketed to over 100,000 unique visits per day since 29 June.

Opposition to these bans, and to ASH, has grown daily. We will not go away. All we ask, nay demand, is **FREEDOM TO CHOOSE**.

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