ILC Friday three - 6 October 2023

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International Longevity Centre UK

Latest news

ILC Friday three

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Solution of the week - making smoking cessation work



Policymakers have been trying to stop people smoking for centuries. In 1604, King James I described smoking as a '*custome lothesome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain, dangerous to the lungs, and in the black and stinking fume thereof, nearest resembling the horrible stygian smoke of the pit that is bottomless*', imposing a 34% import tax on tobacco. The Catholic Church tried to discourage tobacco use by declaring it sinful and banning it from holy places.

But by the early 1660s, the habit was commonplace and starting to cause concern. In 1665, the Great Plague saw tobacco smoke recommended as a defence against 'bad air'. At the height of the plague, smoking a pipe at breakfast was made compulsory for Eton schoolboys. Tobacco imports from the US plantations continued and until the mid-1980s you could smoke everywhere including on planes and the London Underground.

Globally, smoking-related diseases cause between 5 and 6 million deaths annually. In the 21st century, many countries have seriously addressed the issue through a series of measures from a total smoking ban in Bhutan in 2004 to bans on indoor smoking in many countries across the world.

Last year New Zealand introduced a law to incrementally raise the smoking age every year as part of measures aimed the country smoke-free by 2025. And in his speech to the Conservative Party Conference, the UK Prime Minister proposed to raise the smoking age from 18 by one year, every year. So if this was introduced by 2027, someone aged 14 today would never legally be sold a cigarette. Given that there is a strong correlation between the geography of smoking-related deaths and deprivation, a move towards a smoke-free Britain should also go some way towards addressing health inequalities.

This is a welcome first step but will policymakers today have more success than those in the 1600s? New Zealand's initiative will also be accompanied by a series of other measures to make smoking less affordable and accessible, including forcing tobacco and nicotine products to be sold only through specialty shops, rather than corner shops and supermarkets. The UK should do the same.

We know we can do better than this. What is your sustainable solution for better retail across longer lives? We need your ideas for our Longevity White Paper, supported by Aviva, which will be launched at our Future of Ageing Conference on Thursday 7 December 2023. Let us know via the button below.

LET US KNOW

Car-free Sundays - back to the 1970s



"We are well aware that, for a different and more future-proof view of mobility in cities, we need to work smartly with likeminded pioneers. The long-term vision and approach of politics also plays a key role in this, good cooperation and shared strategy are necessary." Suzanne Berings, General Manager Netherlands at Swapfiets

For three months from November 1973, the Dutch government banned private motor vehicles from driving on Sundays. The measure aimed to reduce oil consumption during the OPEC energy crisis, and it allowed citizens to roller-skate, picnic and cycle

emergency, Dutch bike subscription service Swapfiets is urging authorities to reinstate Sunday bans.

Swapfiets has written to the city councils of the main Dutch cities, advocating for the reintroduction of car-free Sundays once a month. The bike rental company called on local politicians to adopt a long-term perspective and implement no-car days as a means to decrease pollution, reduce emissions and improve air quality. To help the politicians envisage this, the bicycle company used AI to recreate photos from 1973 and envision what car-free Sundays would look like today.

Ironically, in the week the UK Government announced a five-year delay to the ban on new petrol and diesel cars and politicians fretted about low traffic neighbourhoods (LTNs) other countries observed World Car-Free Day. However, in a Swapfiets poll to mark the day on 22nd September, the British public remained optimistic, and when asked "which city they thought would be the world's first to go car-less and when", they responded "London, by 2050".

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Events update - two webinars and an autumn reception



Here are three of ILC's upcoming events this Autumn. See our website for further details of all our events:

Monday 16 October 2023 1.00pm – 2.30pm (BST)
Join us for the *"If only I had"… LV= insights into retirement planning webinar* to learn the findings from LV='s survey on retirement, pensions and savings, hear from Sir Steve Webb, former Minister for Pensions, and ILC experts.

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European countries compare? webinar to help us highlight the key challenges and opportunities to politicians in Brussels and beyond.

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Wednesday 8 November 2023 5.00pm – 8.00pm (GMT)
Join us at the *ILC Autumn Reception 2023* to learn about our "An age of opportunity" plan for 2024 and beyond, meet our staff and trustees and, of course, enjoyably mingle and network.

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MORE EVENTS

To keep up-to-date with ILC events throughout the year, please continue to check our website on a regular basis.

Future of Ageing 2023 takes place on Thursday 7 December. If you haven't got your ticket yet, please register here.

Please follow us on social media via the links below for our latest news and event updates.

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