



**Craig Whittaker MP**

**CALDER VALLEY**

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## **The Tobacco Control Plan**

Thank you for contacting me about the Tobacco Control Plan and the related funding issues.

In July 2017 the Government published a new Tobacco Control Plan. The last plan ran from 2011 to 2015; it exceeded the Government's ambitions, reducing adult smoking rates from 20.2 per cent to 15.5 per cent. The Government strongly believes that there is still more progress to be made.

This new, still more ambitious plan will bring together local authorities and the Department of Health in efforts to reduce the total rate of smoking, drastically cut smoking in teenagers, provide stop-smoking services and support for those with mental health issues, and eliminate the damaging inequalities long associated with smoking.

The Government is offering £16 billion of funding to local councils, to 2021, to provide vital services, such as smoking cessation programmes, to ensure the success of this plan.

As things stand, there are over 200 smoking-related deaths per day. While smoking rates have fallen overall, 10 per cent of pregnant women smoke, as do 8 per cent of fifteen year olds.

Those earning less than £10,000 a year are almost twice as likely to smoke as those earning £40,000 or more. I agree with the Prime Minister when she spoke about the intolerable fact that the poorest die nine years earlier, on average, than the richest. Smoking accounts for around half of this variation in life expectancy, and the Government believes it is vital that it builds on the success of earlier plans and that the latest Tobacco Control Plan will help to eradicate one of the most serious inequalities in public health.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP