Smokers in Cambridgeshire are being urged to take the first step in stubbing out cigarettes for good on No Smoking Day.

Smoking is the biggest cause of premature death in England and each year it accounts for over 80,000 deaths across the country with just over 800 deaths per year in Cambridgeshire.

While studies show that two-thirds of smokers want to quit, nearly one in five UK adults continue to smoke. It is estimated that in Cambridgeshire 15.2% of adults smoke which is just below the national figure of 15.5%. However there are differences within Cambridgeshire with the estimated proportion of people smoking in Fenland being around 21%.

This year’s No Smoking Day, which takes place on Wednesday 14 March, has the theme of ‘Proud to be a Quitter. In life we’re told never to give up, to keep going – but when it comes to smoking, being a ‘Quitter’ is a good thing.

Val Thomas, Consultant in Public Health at Cambridgeshire County Council, said: “Smoking increases your risk of a range of cancers, heart disease and stroke; giving up smoking is the single best thing you can do for your health.

“We understand that the majority of smokers want to stop smoking, but many find the task too daunting. No Smoking Day is the perfect opportunity to inspire smokers in Cambridgeshire to quit for good. We’re encouraging smokers to mark Wednesday 14th March in their calendars and take the first step towards a smoke-free life.”

The County Council’s local Stop Smoking Service CAMQUIT is part of a network of organisations across the UK that provide local activities for the annual campaign and encourage hundreds of thousands of smokers to make a quit attempt on No Smoking Day.

Running for over 30 years, there is evidence the campaign does actively prompt people to make a quit attempt which is in a great part, the result of the support that it receives from health professionals and different organisations.

This week Camquit will be at:

Nuffield Health Cambridge Hospital - Monday, March 12 2pm-4.30pm
Abcam on the Science Park - Wednesday, March 14 12pm-2pm

MedImmune – Wednesday, March 14 12pm-2pm

Call CAMQUIT on 0800 018 4304 or to find out more visit www.camquit.nhs.uk (http://www.camquit.nhs.uk/)

To receive information and support on stopping smoking visit bewellcambridgeshire.gov.uk & healthypeterborough.org.uk

First steps towards giving up smoking:

Step 1: Think how great you would feel if you stopped smoking for good and what it would be like to wake up every day feeling completely fresh and addiction-free, with more energy, more money and more life.

Step 2: Prepare for a better future! Have a plan. Understand why you smoke and what you will do to take your mind off smoking. Get advice about the medication choices and what would be the best option for you and which people are going to support you. Set a date to quit smoking.

Step 3: Quit with the support that’s right for you. If you stop smoking with the support of a trained advisor and also use licensed smoking cessation medication your chances of success increase by four times.

In Cambridgeshire this help is available through every GP practice, more than 50 pharmacies, community-based clinics offered by CAMQUIT and also via CAMQUIT’s telephone support line.

Step 4: Stop for good and stay positive. It can take a few attempts to stop smoking. There are lots of ways to stop smoking and success comes from finding the way that’s right for you.