



### **43% RISE IN CIGARETTE LITTER: ASHCAN HAS THE ANSWER**

According to research released today, on 14 September, 2007 by Keep Britain Tidy, England has seen a massive 43% rise in smoking-related rubbish since the July 1, 2007 'Smoke Free' legislation came into force. At the same time, sales of Ashcan (<http://www.ashcan.co.uk>) - the first portable ashtray to retail nationally - are steadily rising, with over 250,000 distributed in the first three months of production. \_

\_Ashcan is featured in Keep Britain Tidy's 2007 advertising campaign on smoking litter, and Tesco is supporting the initiative by stocking Ashcans in over 750 stores across the UK. This month sees Keep Britain Tidy launching phase two of its drive to increase public awareness and reduce cigarette littering following the ban. \_\_

In a recent survey of councils, 83% have reported an increase in cigarette-related litter in their towns and cities since the ban\*. Grievances from members of the public have also risen; over a third of councils received more complaints about cigarette butts littering the streets. Under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act, smokers can be fined up to £80 on the spot for dropping a cigarette end in a public space.

\_\_Retailing at just £1.20, Ashcan is unlike any other personal ashtray currently on the market. Its ingenious design means that it fits neatly into a cigarette packet and the aluminium casing and flame retardant plastic caps means users needn't extinguish their cigarette first – they simply remove the air-tight lid and insert the lit butt into the tube. Ashcan is fully reusable and recyclable and stores up to three butts, after which they can be safely and easily disposed of - no smell, no mess. \_\_

Managing director, Lucy McNeill, says: *"These new statistics make worrying reading and we need to act now*



*before the situation worsens. Cigarette litter is not confined to England alone and, as smoking bans are rolled out globally, it is set to increase internationally. We must educate the public and protect our environment.”* \_\_

Ten local councils in England will be participating in the Keep Britain Tidy campaign and advertising will appear on billboards, buses, washrooms and other sites throughout these participating towns and cities in an effort to encourage smokers to dispose of their cigarette litter responsibly. Visitors to Tesco stores in these areas will be able to claim a free Ashcan during sampling days throughout September and October\*\*.

\_\_McNeill continues: *“Smokers are getting the rap for other people’s rubbish and we would urge everyone to make an effort for the sake of the environment. Carrying an Ashcan in in your cigarette packet is an incredibly easy way of enjoying your habit as well as protecting the local environment. We aim to see an Ashcan in every smoker’s cigarette packet - the planet needs it and the market is ready to act responsibly”*. \_

- Ends -

#### **Notes for editors** \_

Ashcan was designed and developed by husband and wife team Lucy and Alastair McNeill. Alastair, an award-winning furniture and product designer, died from an inoperable brain tumour in January 2007 at the age of 35, leaving Lucy and their two young sons. After her husband’s untimely death, Lucy – a former group events director at the London Business Design Centre, made the decision to focus solely on the rapidly growing Ashcan. Lucy McNeill is now available for interview.

\_\_\* According to Keep Britain Tidy \_\_

\*\* For a full list of participating stores within the 10 local councils and sampling dates, please contact [info@ashcan.co.uk](mailto:info@ashcan.co.uk)