

British pub finds smoking ban loophole: report

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The landlady of a British pub has exploited a loophole in the country's smoking ban by opening a "smoking research centre" where drinkers can light up legally, reports said Wednesday.

Locals at the Cutting Edge pub in Barnsley, northern England, must fill in a questionnaire on their smoking habits to satisfy legal requirements before sitting down for a drink and a cigarette in the centre.

England and Wales introduced a ban on smoking in enclosed public places in 2007, contributing to tumbling beer sales which have forced over 2,000 pubs to close in the last year, according to the British Beer And Pub Association.

The Cutting Edge's landlady Kerry Fenton opened the centre, which is a separate room in her pub, five days ago.

"It's given business a shot in the arm and it's all in the name of research, legal and above board," she told the Sun newspaper. "I'm a non-smoker but I believe in the freedom of the individual."

The loophole in the law was discovered by pub regular James Martin, a 40-year-old printer. The local council told the paper it intended to enforce the [smoking ban](#) at the pub.

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