

Children, Young People and Vaping

An update on the evidence base

Smoking kills

“People smoke for the nicotine but they die from the tar.”
- Dr Michael Russell

Tobacco and its smoke: lethal consumer product; thousands of chemicals, 250 toxins, 69 are known to cause cancer; **up to 2/3 of smokers will die early**; huge contributor to health inequalities.

15.4% of people in County Durham smoke this equates to around 65,000 people. However, there are higher rates among key groups – health inequalities issue:

- Routine and manual workers – 22.0%;
- Rates will be much higher in some groups e.g. serious mental illness, those living in social housing etc.

Most smokers want to quit:

- Many lack confidence, have low awareness, underestimate the risks;
- They need as many options and routes as possible.

1/3 of North East households could be lifted out of poverty if smoking reduced.

Impact of vaping on health

[The OHID review: Nicotine vaping in England 2022 evidence update](#) (8th in series)

- In the short and medium term, vaping poses a small fraction of the risks of smoking, but that vaping is not risk-free, particularly for people who have never smoked.
- There is significantly lower exposure to harmful substances from vaping compared with smoking, as shown by biomarkers associated with the risk of cancer, respiratory and cardiovascular conditions. However, there is similar or higher exposure to harmful substances from vaping compared with not using any nicotine products.
- There is no significant increase of toxicant biomarkers after short-term secondhand exposure to vaping among people who do not smoke or vape.

[The Cochrane living systematic review on e-cigarettes for smoking cessation](#)

“Strongest evidence yet that e-cigarettes help people to quit smoking better than traditional nicotine replacement therapies,”

Prevalence and challenges

2023 adult e-cigarette prevalence – national data from ASH

- 9.1% adult prevalence – highest rate ever;
- 39% of smokers think vaping is as harmful or more harmful than smoking which is a misconception – **real concern and heading in the wrong direction.**

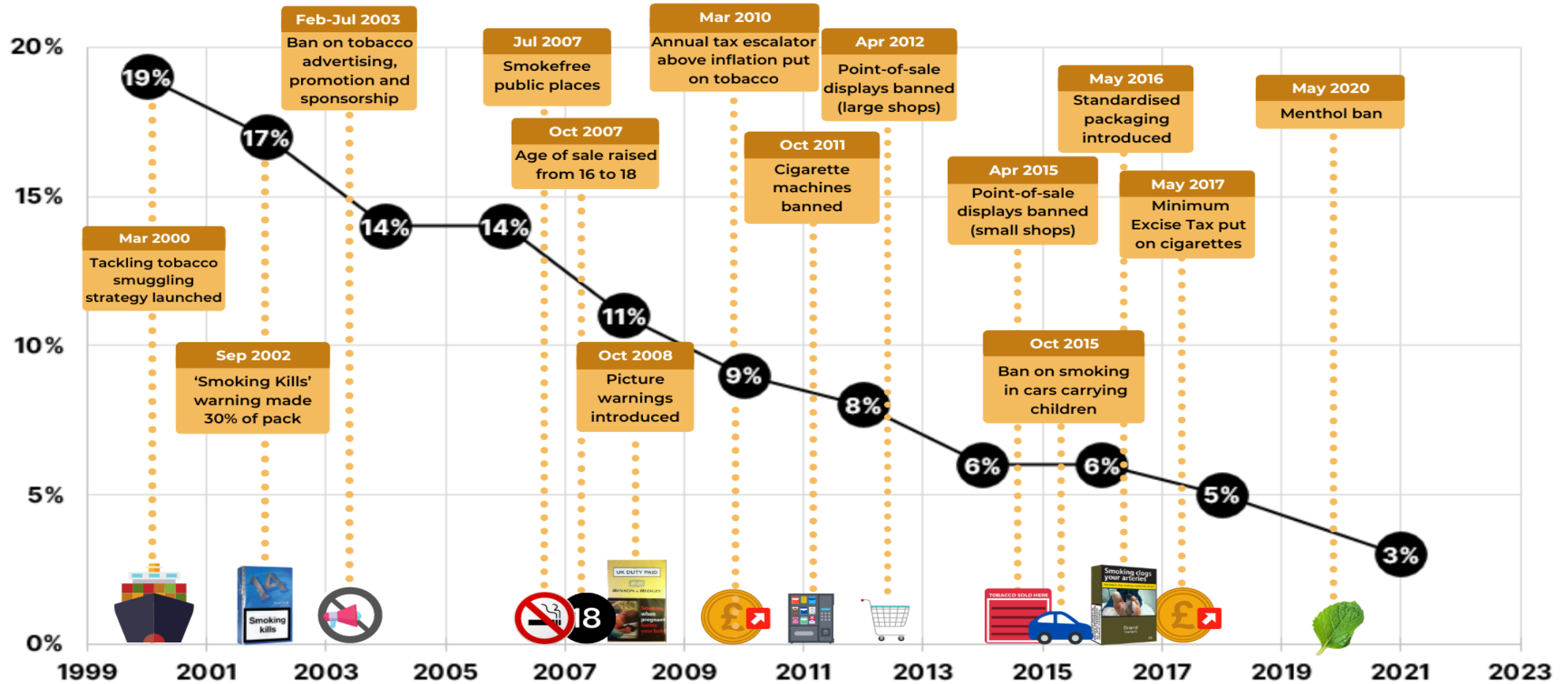
2023 youth e-cigarette prevalence (11-17 years) – national data from ASH

- Vast majority of 11-17 year olds have never vaped or smoked;
- 7.6% currently vape (NE schools data largely reflects this – 10% or less);
- 11.6% have experimented with vapes (tried them once or twice).

Issue with youth access and non-compliant products:

- 44% NE failure rate for age of sale – local test purchasing activity is underway
- Tighter regulations needed.

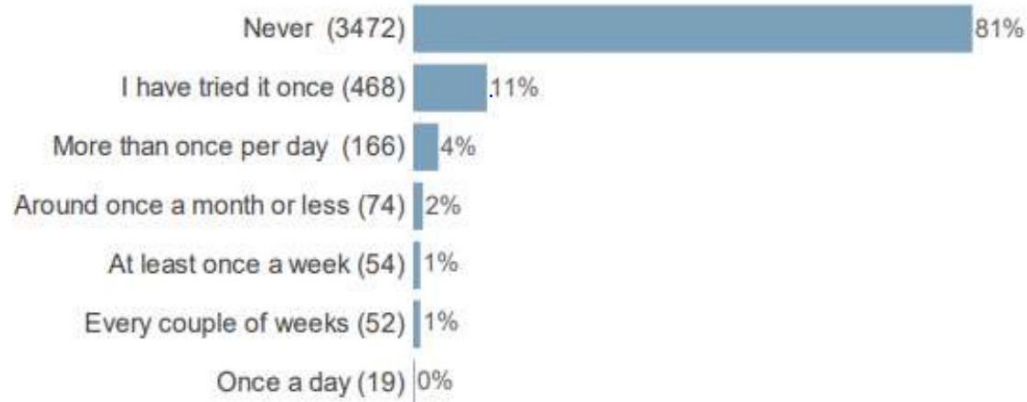
Tobacco legislation – changing the adult world and the impact on youth smoking



Prevalence locally

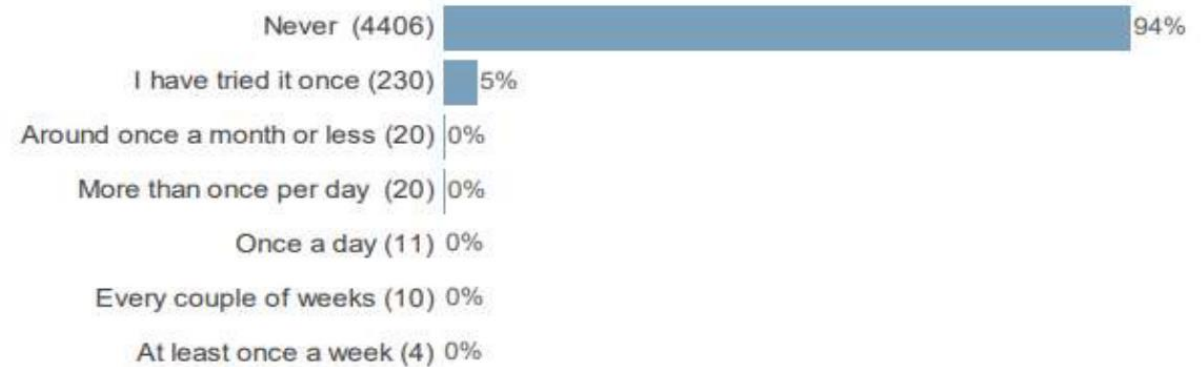
Secondary schools – vaping

Do you vape?



Primary schools – vaping

Do you vape?



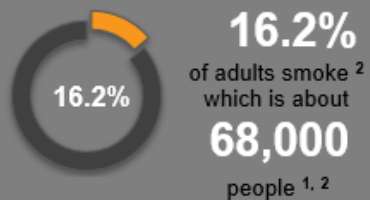
Cost locally

Each year we estimate that smoking costs County Durham:

£188.9M

These costs are accrued in these areas

In County Durham:



An estimated **£167.5M** is spent on tobacco annually (legal and illicit)¹⁶ based on an average annual spend of **£2,451** on tobacco per person

Revenue from cigarette and hand-rolled tobacco taxation only brings in about¹⁶ **£108.8M**

PRODUCTIVITY LOSS^{5 to 9}



£150.4M

HEALTHCARE^{3, 4}



£22.2M

SOCIAL CARE^{10, 11}



£14.0M

FIRES^{12 to 15}



£2.2M

IMPACT OF SMOKING ON PRODUCTIVITY^{5 to 9}

Smoking negatively affects earnings and employment prospects. The cumulative impact of these effects amounts to productivity losses of:

£150.4M



HEALTHCARE COSTS DUE TO SMOKING^{3, 4}

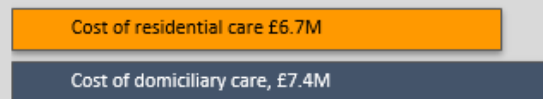
These costs are a result of smoking-related hospital admissions and the cost of treating smoking-related illness via primary care services.

£22.2M

SOCIAL CARE COSTS DUE TO SMOKING^{10, 11}

Many current / former smokers require care in later life as a result of smoking-related illnesses. The estimated costs to the local authority/ies is:

£14.0M



Smoking-related ill-health means social care is being provided informally by friends and family for: **13,000 people**

Smoking-related ill-health causes unmet care need for a further: **5,200 people**

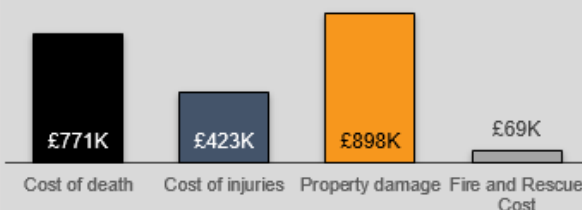
If these were both replaced with formal paid care, it would cost the social care system an additional: **£163.3M**

FIRE COSTS DUE TO SMOKING^{12 to 15}

Smoking materials are a major contributor to accidental fires, smoking related fires result in annual losses of:

£2.2M

About **18** smoking related fires are attended by Fire and Rescue Services each year.



ADPHNE position

- [ADPHNE factsheet on youth vaping](#)

Key message

- Vaping is not for children;
- Whilst it can help adults to quit smoking, it isn't risk-free;
- Those who don't smoke should not vape.

[ADPHNE](#) position statement – the role of vaping in tobacco control and the need to protect young people from vaping or smoking.

Evidence based tools and resources

National

[8th OHID evidence update on nicotine vaping in England](#)

[ASH briefing for local authorities](#)

[ASH guidance for schools and colleges](#)

[ASH addressing common myths about vaping](#)

[ASH, CTSI and Material Focus policy options for disposable vapes](#)

Regional

[ADPHNE position statement on nicotine vaping](#)

[Smokefree NHS position statement on vaping](#)

ADPHNE and Fresh communications guide on vaping

[ADPHNE factsheet on youth vaping](#)

Vaping hub on Fresh [KHub](#) group – includes resources for schools.

Fresh supporting various forums and alliances with key focus on vaping.

ASH: Addressing common myths about vaping

- ✘ “Vaping nicotine is more harmful than smoking tobacco” (*paras 21-30*)
- ✘ “Vaping is more addictive than smoking” (*paras 31-35*)
- ✘ “Disposable vapes deliver as much nicotine as 50 cigarettes” (*paras 36-42*)
- ✘ “Vaping is a proven gateway into smoking” (*paras 43-49*)
- ✘ “Nicotine damages brain development in young people” (*paras 50-53*)
- ✘ “The main reason children vape is because they like the flavours” (*paras 54-56*)



Resources for schools

- Two posters for display in schools.
- Electronic leaflet designed for parents and carers with info on smoking and vaping.
- Short, animated film which can be used in PSHE lessons, form times and assemblies, to start discussions.
- PowerPoint slides ready for use by teachers in the classroom alongside the animated film to guide discussions.
- More detailed slideset for teachers, providing additional information to support educators, answering questions and signposting to additional support.
- (Originally developed in Sheffield with ASH).
- Further resources for KS3 have been produced nationally by Office for Health Improvement & Disparities: [Vaping – KS3 form time activities | PHE School Zone](#).



Balancing the risks and benefits

“With the focus on youths creating an environment in which smokers believe that vaping is as dangerous as or more dangerous than smoking, many smokers struggling to quit may be unwilling to try vaping as an alternative. This likely translates into less smoking cessation than if smokers correctly understood the relative risks of vaping and smoking.”

[Balancing Consideration of the Risks and Benefits of E-Cigarettes | AJPH | Vol. 111 Issue 9 \(aphapublications.org\)](https://aphapublications.org) - co-authored by 15 past presidents of the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco for the American Journal of Public Health

Regulations on vapes

It's illegal to sell e-cigarettes and vaping products containing nicotine, or tobacco, to under 18s, or for an adult to buy them on behalf of someone under 18.

[Stopping the start: our new plan to create a smokefree generation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/stopping-the-start-our-new-plan-to-create-a-smokefree-generation)

Following the Government announcement, a national consultation was launched and closed on 6th December, this included:

- restricting vape flavours;
- regulating vape packaging and product presentation;
- regulating point of sale displays;
- restricting the sale of disposable vapes;
- introducing an age restriction for non-nicotine vapes;
- exploring further restrictions for other nicotine consumer products such as nicotine pouches;
- preventing industry giving out free samples of vapes to children.

Stopping the Start

On the 6th December at County Council a motion was passed to:

1. To respond to the Govt consultation with our support for the age of sale proposal
2. To respond to questions on vaping ensuring that evidence-based measures to tighten the promotion, packaging, branding, pricing of vapes to reduce appeal to children and young people are taking whilst ensuring we continue to encourage smokers to try to quit including by an option of switching over totally to vaping

Any questions?