



Hertfordshire Tobacco Control Newsletter

July 2025

New smokefree policy at East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust

[East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust has rolled out updated guidelines](#) to reduce staff exposure to second-hand smoke. Patients receiving home visits are asked to refrain from smoking in the room for an hour before the visit. If this isn't possible, alternative arrangements may be made. The Trust also stresses that staff must not smoke while in uniform or on duty. Smoking is banned across the grounds of four hospitals, but vaping is allowed in designated areas to support smoking cessation. These changes are part of the Trust's broader effort to promote health and protect staff wellbeing.

Smokefree signage in Hertfordshire

Smokefree Hertfordshire is our local programme within the larger government vision of creating the first smokefree generation. The smokefree generation initiative aims to prevent children born after a certain year from ever being legally sold tobacco products, effectively phasing out smoking in future generations. The goal is to reduce smoking rates to 5% or less by 2030, significantly decreasing smoking-related health issues and economic burdens. This plan includes measures to support current smokers in quitting and to regulate vaping, especially among youth.

In March 2023, local stop smoking services were provided with the necessary resources to continue supporting smokers who wish to quit. As a result, over the past few months, the Public Health team at Hertfordshire County Council has been working to replace smoking signs displayed at Hertfordshire County Council buildings, both internally and externally. The new signs include a QR code that directs to our website, providing information on the range of free Stop Smoking Services we offer. These signage changes support the [HCC smokefree policy](#), which prohibits smoking on all site grounds and in buildings. The policy also designates specific vaping areas, allowing staff, visitors, and residents to vape.

Supporting smokers in Hertfordshire: expanding our quit support services

Our smoking cessation initiatives have made a significant impact across Hertfordshire. Since April 2025, the Allen Carr Easyway programme has already supported **126 smokers** on their journey to quit, while the **Smokefree App** is currently helping **365 residents**.

Hertfordshire County Council is also excited to announce two upcoming developments:

- **A new self-serve Swap to Stop pathway**, enabling residents to request a **free vape starter kit** to support their quit attempt or transition to a less harmful alternative.
- **A refreshed, user-friendly website** to make accessing support even easier.

These services are part of our continued commitment to reducing smoking prevalence and improving health outcomes across the county.

Nicotine pouches spark calls for stricter regulations amid youth usage

The surge in nicotine pouch use among young people in the UK has led to regulatory concerns. These products, which are often flavoured and attractively packaged, currently fall outside tobacco legislation, making them easily accessible.

To address this, the Tobacco and Vapes Bill proposes age restrictions, marketing controls, and limits on nicotine content. Hazel Cheeseman, CEO of ASH, points out that while nicotine pouches are less harmful than smoking and likely less harmful than vaping, their broad and indiscriminate marketing is troubling. She notes that these products are often marketed with a lifestyle appeal rather than a focus on smoking cessation.

ASH polling on public support for a smokefree future

A recent YouGov survey for ASH reveals strong public backing for decisive government measures to combat smoking. The poll, which included over 11,000 adults in England, indicates widespread support across political lines, age groups, and regions for initiatives aimed at safeguarding future generations from tobacco-related harm.

Key findings show that 68% of respondents endorse the 'Smokefree Generation' policy, which would prohibit the sale of tobacco to individuals born after 2009. Additionally, 75% favour imposing a levy on tobacco manufacturers to fund efforts to mitigate smoking-related harm, such as NHS treatments, local stop smoking services, and public health education. There is also significant support for stricter vaping regulations to prevent youth uptake, including limitations on flavours, packaging, and retail displays.

Support for further tobacco control measures also remains strong with substantial majorities backing the creation of new smokefree areas in school grounds (91%), hospital grounds (79%), public transport waiting areas (77%), beaches (60%), pubs, cafés, and restaurants (59%), and in parks (56%). These findings underscore the public's readiness for ambitious tobacco regulation and a desire to hold the tobacco industry accountable.

The findings can also be viewed broken down by region in the new [ASH Regional Public support tool 2025](#).

Trading Standards: Tobacco Update

Trading Standards continue to receive complaints about the sale of illegal tobacco products. And we continue to see a lot of these retailers selling American sweets and drinks that are very popular with young people.

Operation CeCe is the HMRC funded operation that we continue to be involved with that enable us to use detection dogs to assist with our visits. Traders continue to invest in intricate and expensive methods to try and avoid detection, which indicates just how profitable they see the illegal tobacco trade. The detection dogs greatly help us uncover these hides.

In the first quarter of 2025 -26 we seized approximately 92,000 cigarettes, 16kg of hand rolling tobacco and 30kg of shisha tobacco. This equates to over £80,000 worth of retail sales of cigarettes and £14,000 worth of retail sales of hand rolling tobacco.



(A false wall that was disguised as shelving that revealed a hidden cupboard that contained illegal tobacco & cigarettes).

Trading Standards: Vaping Products Update

June saw the introduction of a ban on disposable vaping products, in favour of those products that can be recharged, refilled, and have their coil replaced. Unfortunately, despite over six months' notice and the amount of publicity, several retailers continued to stock and sell illegal products, quite often citing customer demand as the reason why they were breaking the law.

The DHSC's Operation Joseph continues to monitor the legal compliance level of vapes for sale in England along with the accessibility to vaping products by young people. We have seized approximately 10,000 illegal vaping products in the first quarter of 2025-26, with a retail value of more than £75,000.



(A hidden room built into the back of a specialist vape shop that was used for storing illegal vaping products).

Trading Standards: A focus on Royston

A convenience store and vape shop in Royston has been closed having come to the attention of North Herts District Council and Hertfordshire Trading Standards because of the repeated sale of illegal tobacco products and illegal vaping products, as well as complaints about underage sales. The premises were inspected several times with consistent seizures – in just under a year approximately 25,000 illegal cigarettes, over 6kg of hand rolling tobacco and approximately 2,500 illegal vapes were seized, as well as class B drugs being found on two occasions.

As a result of these repeated breaches, North Herts District Council, supported by the evidence of illegal activity obtained by Trading Standards, applied to the magistrates' court for a closure order under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act. The overwhelming weight of evidence ensured that the order was granted, and the shop has now been closed for a period of three months.



(The front window of Royston Shop & Vape).

Stoptober: what to expect?

Stoptober is a national campaign that encourages people across England to quit smoking for 28 days during October, based on evidence that those who succeed are five times more likely to quit for good.

A dedicated Stoptober newsletter will be shared in early September to keep partners informed of resources, campaign materials and events available.

We are here to support local activity across Hertfordshire, so please let us know if you're planning anything we can help amplify.

10 things to know about the [10 Year Health Plan for England](#)

1. Three key shifts

- **Hospital to community:** easier GP appointments, extended neighbourhood health centres, better dental care, quicker specialist referrals, convenient prescriptions, and 24/7 mental health support.
- **Analogue to digital:** modern tech for staff and patients
- **Sickness to prevention:** prevention and early intervention by making the healthy choice the easy choice

2. Public consultation shaped the plan

Over 250,000 responses from the public, workforce, system leaders and organisations and 600+ community events helped shape the strategy.

3. A new [Neighbourhood Health Service](#)

Bringing together different healthcare professionals under one roof, including GPs, nurses, physiotherapists, tests, scans, or minor injury treatment. This will make healthcare more accessible, reducing hospital visits.

4. Transformed GP access

End to the “8am scramble” for GP appointments by offering same-day digital and telephone consultations and more trained GPs.

5. [NHS App as the front door](#)

Will allow patients to book and rearrange appointments, get AI advice, book appointments in urgent care and self-refer to specialists, where appropriate.

6. Single Patient Record

Secure, unified health data for better, more personalised care which means they won’t have to repeat their medical history to different healthcare professionals.

7. From a sickness service to a prevention service

Boosted vaccination, screening, early diagnosis, and future genomics-based predictive care

8. Mental health support

Support in schools, 24/7 virtual therapists, dedicated emergency departments for patients in crisis, and community-based services.

9. An NHS workforce fit for the future

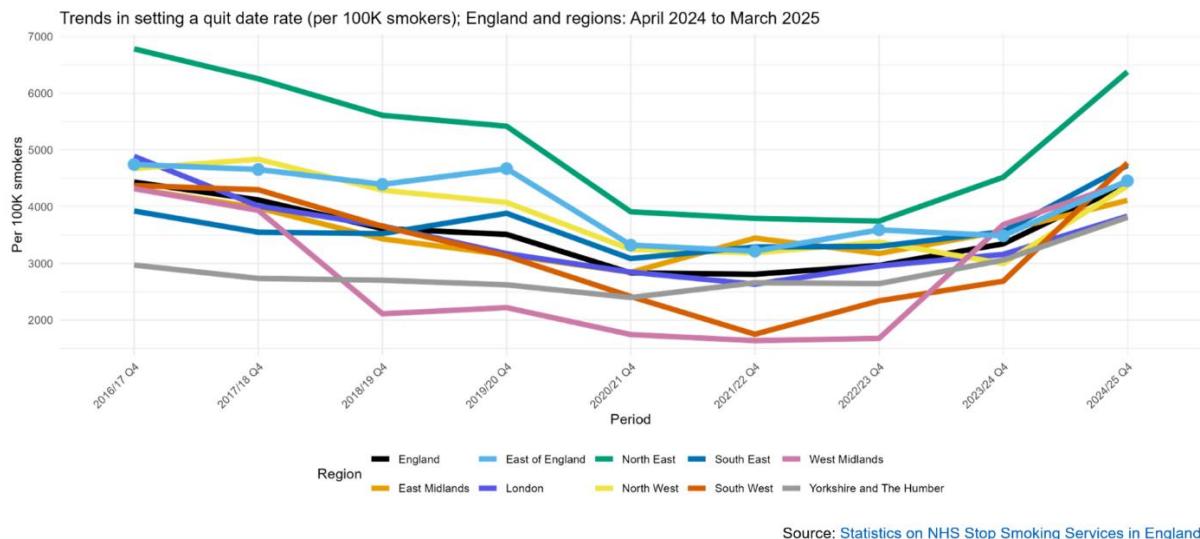
New employment standards by April 2026, tech to reduce admin, staff treatment hubs providing wellbeing and occupational health services from 2027, and flexible career paths and development opportunities.

10. Innovation and technology focus

AI tools to improve productivity and patient care, genomics and predictive analytics to personalise care, remote monitoring through wearable technology and robotics to support precision medicine.

New national data on local stop smoking services shows biggest successful quits since 2019

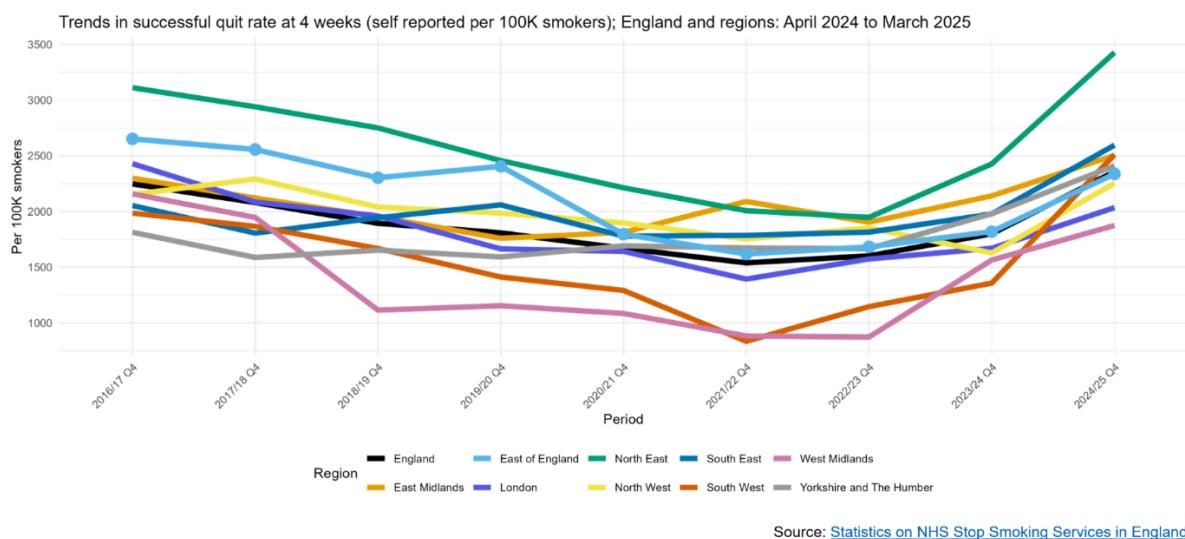
Setting a quit date per 100,000 smokers, England and regions



Office for Health Improvement and Disparities

BETA

Successful quitters per 100,000 smokers, England and regions



Office for Health Improvement and Disparities

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November Newsletter

The next newsletter will be published on Thursday, 27th November. Please send your updates through to Smokefree.Hertfordshire@hertfordshire.gov.uk by Monday, 24th November.