



# Roadmap to a *Smokefree 2030*

We can make smoking history by 2030  
.....for a smokefree childhood and smokefree lives



## The challenge in delivering the Government's ambition for England to be smokefree by 2030

The UK Government has announced that its ambition is for England to be smokefree by 2030.<sup>1</sup>

The Government admits this will be “*extremely challenging*”, particularly in areas of deprivation and among people living with mental health conditions, and will require “*bold action to both discourage people from starting in the first place, and to support smokers to quit.*”

In recognition of the difficulties the ambition was backed up by commitments to:

- **consider options for revenue raising, including the “polluter pays” approach**, which could be achieved using mechanisms set out in health legislation; and
- **set out further proposals** for moving towards a Smokefree 2030 at a later date.

**The UK is a world leader in successfully reducing smoking prevalence**, going further and faster than any other country in Europe over the last decade.<sup>2</sup>

However, the lessons from the past are that sustained declines in smoking prevalence can only be achieved if government action is systematic, co-ordinated and properly resourced.<sup>3</sup>



## The clock is ticking

The UK Government should have published next steps for delivering on its ambition on 6th January 2020, 12 weeks after the consultation on the Green Paper closed.<sup>4</sup>

**In those 12 weeks over 23,000 children in England started to smoke, and around 280 more join them every day.**<sup>5</sup> Two thirds of those who experiment with smoking go on to become daily smokers.<sup>6</sup>



**There are only ten years to go and no time to be lost.** This roadmap, which has been endorsed by health organisations, individual clinicians, health professionals, academics and members of the public sets out what the UK Government must do to deliver on its Smokefree 2030 ambition.<sup>7</sup>



## Roadmap to a Smokefree 2030



To achieve the Smokefree 2030 vision, and take a giant step towards eradicating health inequalities, the UK Government must commit without delay to:

1. **Legislate to require tobacco manufacturers to finance a Smokefree 2030 Fund.** This would provide sustainable funding for tobacco control for UK nations, regions and localities, targeted to help reduce inequalities through:
  - 1.1. **Multi-channel public education campaigns at national and regional level** which are highly cost-effective at motivating quitting, helping sustain quit attempts and discouraging youth uptake.
  - 1.2. **Regional and local tobacco control programmes** to help smokers to quit and enforce tobacco laws.
  - 1.3. **Universal access to support for smokers to quit**, in healthcare but also through community services, using effective evidence-based methods.
2. **Consult on the policy proposals** submitted in response to the Green Paper for **stricter regulation of tobacco, its sale, marketing and use.** For example, requiring retailers to have a licence to sell tobacco; publishing comprehensive data on sales and marketing;

introducing pack inserts and dissuasive cigarettes; extending smokefree laws; and increasing the age of sale from 18 to 21.

3. **Ensure the NHS Long Term Plan commitments** to provide smoking cessation in the NHS in England are delivered.<sup>8</sup>
4. **Review and revise e-cigarette regulation** to ensure it is fit for purpose in helping smokers quit while managing and minimising any risk of uptake by never smokers.
5. **Implement greater reductions in affordability** through increased taxation.
6. **Update the Tobacco Control Plan for England<sup>9</sup>** in line with the Smokefree 2030 ambition.
7. **Renew and refresh the Government's strategy** to control the illicit trade in tobacco.
8. **Sustain Government commitment** to support FCTC implementation abroad as well as at home.

While some of these measures are nation-specific, such as the Tobacco Control Plan, delivery of help to smokers to quit, or age of sale policies, others are UK-wide, such as tobacco tax policies. Some the devolved nations can potentially opt in to, for example the Smokefree 2030 Fund; while others are a combination. For example, HMRC is responsible for UK-wide anti-illicit trade policies, but the devolved nations also have a role to play in tackling the illicit trade at local level.



## Big Tobacco must be made to pick up the tab

**Funding cuts threaten key elements of our strategy:** universal access to help to quit for smokers no longer exists in England; enforcement of tobacco laws is threatened; and funding for public education campaigns has nearly vanished. Government action to end smoking is needed, wanted and workable, but requires funding which is why we strongly support the **Smokefree 2030 Fund**.



**Big Tobacco makes excessive profits** from selling a highly addictive and lethal product, so it should be forced to **pay the price to end the smoking epidemic:**

- Making Big Tobacco pay to end smoking, is a wholly justified extension of the “polluter pays” principle.
- **The big four tobacco transnationals are responsible for over 95% of UK tobacco sales and make around £1.5 billion a year in profits in the UK.**<sup>10</sup> Globally, they make more money than Coca Cola, Disney, Google, McDonalds and FedEx put together.<sup>11</sup> Profit margins on tobacco are much higher than for other comparable industries.<sup>11</sup> Big Tobacco can afford to pay.
- Big Tobacco still makes the vast majority of its profits from selling cigarettes, and **the UK government has a legal obligation not to allow it to influence tobacco control policy development and implementation.**<sup>12</sup>



## The public support Government action

The majority of the public support government action to limit smoking, and support for government to go further has grown over the last decade.<sup>13</sup>

Over three quarters of adults in Great Britain (77%) support activities to limit smoking or think the government could do more. Only 7% think that Government is doing too much.<sup>14</sup> Specifically, there is majority support from adults in Britain for the following policy measures:

- **81% support requiring businesses to have a licence to sell tobacco** which they can lose if they sell to underage smokers (4% oppose).
- **72% support making tobacco manufacturers pay a levy or licence fee to Government** for measures to help smokers quit and prevent young people from taking up smoking (7% oppose).
- **64% support prohibiting smoking in all cars** (16% oppose).
- **58% support increasing the age of sale from 18 to 21** (17% oppose).



Support grows after measures are implemented, particularly among smokers. For example, in 2007, when smokefree laws were implemented in England, 78% were in favour. Ten years later, it had risen to 83%, with support from smokers rising from 40% to 55%, while support among non-smokers was stable.<sup>15</sup>



## Tobacco Retailers support Government action

The majority of small tobacco retailers support existing retail regulation of tobacco and new measures such as increasing the age of sale to 21:<sup>13</sup>

- **71% strongly agreed on having a tobacco licence which could be removed if retailers break the law** (net agree 84%, net disagree 9%, neither agree/disagree or don't know 7%).
- **61% support prohibition of tobacco displays** (26% oppose, 13% neither support/oppose or don't know).
- **51% support standardised "plain" packaging of tobacco packs** (36% oppose, 12% neither support/oppose or don't know).
- **52% support increasing the age of sale for cigarettes to 21** (39% oppose, 9% neither support/oppose or don't know).



## What does Smokefree 2030 mean?

To be smokefree is to reach a tipping point when smoking is no longer normalised in society, and the end of smoking is in sight.

**The UK<sup>9</sup> and other Governments<sup>16</sup> have defined this to be when smoking rates are 5% or less.** (Scotland's ambition is to achieve this by 2034<sup>17</sup>).



We're going in the right direction. **In 2018, 14.4% of the adult population in England were smokers, down from 19.3% five years ago.**<sup>18</sup> That's a decline of nearly a quarter and brings the number of smokers in England down to around 6 million.

However, to bring smoking rates down to the smokefree target, of 5% or below, requires a decline of a further two thirds, equivalent to 4 million fewer smokers. As the government acknowledges, to achieve smokefree status by 2030 will be "*extremely challenging*".



To eradicate inequalities and achieve smokefree status across society will be even more challenging. **More than one in four routine and manual workers smoke, compared to only one in ten managerial and professional workers.**<sup>19</sup> More than a third of those with a mental health condition smoke.<sup>20</sup>



## Why a Smokefree 2030 is needed



### **Smoking is the greatest cause of premature death and disability, responsible for half the difference in life expectancy between the richest and poorest in society.**

- Over 77,000 people die in England from smoking a year, more than obesity, alcohol, and illegal drugs put together.
- For every person who dies from smoking, 30 times as many live with a serious smoking-related illness.<sup>21</sup>
- Health starts failing at 47 for men living in poorer parts of Blackpool, while in Belgravia men live in good health until 79, with smoking the single biggest cause of this stark difference in healthy life expectancy.<sup>22</sup>



### **Making smoking history by 2030 will make us healthier, wealthier and happier.**

- Ending smoking will make the single most significant contribution to increasing healthy years of life, while narrowing the gap between the richest and the poorest.
- Exposure to smoking harms the health of our children and makes it far more likely they will become smokers themselves.<sup>23</sup>
- All smokers can reduce their risks of disease and premature death and improve their quality of life by quitting.<sup>24</sup>
- Smoking drives more than a million people into poverty in the UK.<sup>25</sup>

- Smoking costs society an estimated £12.5 billion a year.<sup>26</sup> Ending smoking will increase our productivity and economic prosperity.
- Smokers who quit are more positive about life, with reductions in depression and anxiety and stress.<sup>27</sup>



### **Smokers want and need support to quit.**

- Two thirds of smokers started smoking as children, before realising how hard it is to quit.<sup>9</sup>
- Children growing up in smoking households are 90% more likely to become smokers themselves, so helping adult smokers to quit will also reduce youth initiation.<sup>28</sup>
- Seven out of ten adult smokers want to stop smoking, and three quarters regret ever having started.<sup>13</sup>
- On average smokers try 30 times or more before quitting successfully.<sup>29</sup>
- Smokers provided with help to quit can increase their likelihood of doing so by up to three times.<sup>30</sup>
- Ending smoking is not “anti-smoker”, but “anti-smoking” and making smoking history does not mean making it illegal to smoke.
- Even when we achieve the smokefree ambition, once rates of smoking are 5% or less, there will be around 2 million smokers still needing help and support to quit.

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ISBN 978-1-913448-03-5

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