

**Leicester**  
City Council

**SMOKING AND  
VAPING IN  
LEICESTER**

# CURRENT LANDSCAPE

- Smoking continues to be a leading cause of preventable ill health and premature death
- Whilst Leicester has seen a decline in smoking prevalence, it is still estimated that 14.6% of residents smoke, compared to 11.6% nationally
- The difference in life expectancy between smokers and non-smokers (irrespective of wealth) is approximately 10 years
- Smoking is increasingly confined to the poorest communities, thus widening health inequalities
- There are several different forms of tobacco consumption, each with their own distinct health risks. Smoking cigarettes is the most common type but also Shisha and chewing tobacco popular in Leicester.
- Action to reduce smoking rates has been taken over many years both nationally and locally, recent renewed emphasis nationally



# TARGET GROUPS

There are a number of groups who either experience high smoking rates or are at higher risk of harm:

- Those living in some of the most **disadvantaged areas** of the city (higher rates amongst **white/ white other groups & routine and manual workers**)
- **Children and young people**
  - Over 80% of smokers start before the age of 20. People who start under the age of 18 have higher levels of nicotine dependence
  - 3.5% of young people in Leicester regularly smoke - much higher amongst children in care
- **Those with mental health illnesses**
  - Smoking rates are higher in those with mental health illness & also tend to smoke much more heavily
  - People with diagnosed mental health conditions die an average of 10-20 years earlier - smoking contributes significantly to this.
- **Pregnancy**
  - Smoking in pregnancy has well known detrimental effects for the growth and development of the baby
  - 7.4% of women recorded as smoking at the time of delivery in Leicester
- **Those living in social housing** - significantly more likely to smoke (1 in 3)

# THE TOBACCO AND VAPES BILL

*The Tobacco and Vapes Bill introduces significant measures to reduce smoking and regulate vaping, aiming to create a smoke-free generation and address public health concerns.*

## Tobacco control measures

- **Generational ban on tobacco sales:** The bill proposes making it illegal to sell tobacco products, herbal smoking products, and cigarette papers to anyone born on or after 1 January 2009. This means individuals currently aged 15 or younger will never be able to legally purchase tobacco, effectively phasing out smoking over time.
- **Extension of smoke-free areas:** The legislation includes the provision to expand the indoor smoking ban to specific outdoor spaces. This will be subject to consultation after the legislation is approved. These may include children's playgrounds, areas outside schools, and hospital grounds. This initiative aims to protect children and vulnerable individuals from second-hand smoke.

# REGULATION OF DISPOSABLE VAPES

- **Ban on disposable vapes:** To combat the rise in youth vaping and environmental concerns, the government has announced a ban on disposable vapes, effective from 1st June 2025. This measure seeks to reduce the appeal and accessibility of vaping products to children and young people.
- **Restrictions on vape flavours and packaging:** To reduce their appeal to young people, plain packaging and prohibiting flavours that are particularly attractive to children, such as sweets or desserts will be mandated.
- **Retailer licensing:** Additionally, the retailer licensing scheme ensures that businesses selling tobacco and vaping products must obtain a licence, enabling the local authority to better monitor sales, enforce compliance, and tackle illicit trade effectively.

# TOBACCO CONTROL STRATEGY - VISION

**“A smoke-free Leicester – to make Leicester smoke free by 2030”**

## **Areas of priority:**

- *Partnership working to address tobacco control within Leicester City*
- *Achieving a smoke free generation - when the number of smokers in the population reaches 5% or less*
- *Smoke free pregnancy for all*
- *Reducing the inequality gap for those with mental ill-health*
- *Deliver consistent messaging on the harms of tobacco across the system*
- *Continue to improve the quality of our services and understand impact through data collection*



## CURRENT ACTION - EXAMPLES

- **Supporting smoke-free** workplaces, mental health units, hospital sites and smoke-free homes/ cars. Protects people from exposure to second-hand smoke and helps smokers to reduce their tobacco use.  
- **Step Right Out** is a campaign about how to maintain a smoke-free home. People pledge to maintain a smoke-free home
- **Care experienced young people** - provision of training and support to staff and carers who work with care-experienced young people & development of a bespoke model of support for those who already smoke
- **Social housing** - working to support tenants by raising awareness of the impact of smoking and second-hand smoke and signposting to smoking cessation services
- **Wider workforce training**
- **Work with Turning Point** to support clients to quit smoking
- **Communications toolkit & communication campaigns** to increase awareness and signpost to services
- **Reducing the sale of illicit tobacco and e-cigarettes** – Trading Standards

## SMOKING CESSATION - LIVEWELL

- Aims to help residents of Leicester to successfully quit smoking. The programme runs for 12 weeks, with a team of specialist, trained advisors that will offer behavioural support either over the phone or face to face every week to suit the client's needs.
- During the 12 weeks a stop smoking advisors and clients work together to change habits and behaviours associated with smoking. Clients will be provided with up to two forms of nicotine replacement therapy or an e-cigarette free of charge
- The service currently supports clients who are smoking Tobacco, Cigarettes, Cigars and Pipes as well as alternative methods of using tobacco such as Shisha
- In 2022/23, 1633 clients set a quit date and 57% of these clients quit smoking at 4 weeks. A recent evaluation also showed that the service is successfully accessing clients from the most disadvantaged areas of the city and is appropriately targeted.



# GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT

During 24/25 community smoking cessation services have seen a considerable increase in funding. Nationally commitment of an additional £70 million funding per year for local stop smoking services.

- Leicester City has been allocated 456k per year for 5 years
- Funds should be spent principally on smoking cessation activities (including stimulating demand)
- Not intended for supporting enforcement or youth vaping

The aim of the funding is to:

- Stimulate more quit attempts by providing more smokers with advice and swift support
- Link smokers to the most effective interventions to quit
- Boost existing behavioural support schemes designed to encourage smokers to quit
- Build capacity in local areas to respond to increased demand
- Strengthen partnerships in local healthcare systems

Services provide data on number of quit dates set and number of successful quits (at 4 weeks) achieved. The targets are more ambitious year on year.



## USE OF NEW FUNDING

- **Increase staffing** - providing extra capacity to support clients to quit smoking but also to undertake more engagement in the community to ensure that smokers are made aware the service exists. 4 new engagement workers are working throughout the city, with a particular focus on areas and groups with the highest rates of smoking.
- **Additional training** will also be provided to a wide range of staff including primary care, community mental health teams, dentists, pharmacists and opticians to ensure that they have the skills to raise the issue of smoking and know where to refer patients.
- **Increased NRT and e-cig costs**
- **A social marketing and communications campaign** targeted at areas of city with highest rates of smoking
- **Wider tobacco control measures** e.g. Step Right Out campaign

# CURE PROGRAMME – UHL INPATIENTS

- The NHS Long Term Plan outlined a requirement to provide all people admitted to hospital, who smoke, with an NHS-funded in-house tobacco treatment service by 2023/24.
- Started in 2020 at Glenfield Hospital and has now reached full implementation, operating at Glenfield Hospital, Leicester Royal Infirmary and the General Hospital as of April 2023.
- An advisor visits smokers at their bedside, offering NRT for their stay in the hospital and support to quit once they leave hospital.
- Since CURE launched, 6915 smokers have been seen by the CURE team and offered support to quit smoking. Over 40% agree to be referred into the community-based smoking cessation services for support once they leave hospital.
- Training has been provided to 4,675 staff across UHL to support them to discuss smoking and understand the benefits that quitting can bring for patients

# MENTAL HEALTH INPATIENTS

- Smoking rates amongst those with severe mental illness are very high - smoking cessation support for inpatients on LPT mental health wards has been in place since 2022
- Smoking on mental health wards has historically been used as a way of managing stress and anxiety. The LPT smoke-free sites policy has helped to move away from this culture to empower and motivate people being admitted to mental health wards to access smoke-free support and improve their mental and physical health.
- The aim of the smoke-free service at LPT is to provide specialist behavioural support, nicotine replacement therapy and e-cigarettes throughout the person's stay on the ward and support post-discharge where required.

# PREGNANT WOMEN

- All pregnant women have carbon monoxide readings taken at their booking appointment with their midwife, and at all other antenatal contacts. Referred on an opt out basis to smoking cessation services.
- Advisor will support the woman through her pregnancy and provide her with regular contact face to face or over the phone as well as access to NRT or e-cigarettes. Provided with vouchers when they reach certain milestones in their quit journey.
- Pregnant women who smoke admitted into the UHL maternity units during their pregnancy are automatically referred to an advisor for smoking cessation support whilst in hospital and supported post-discharge.
- Training has been provided to maternity staff to improve the confidence, capability and knowledge to talk about smoking cessation and ensure timely access to behavioural support.

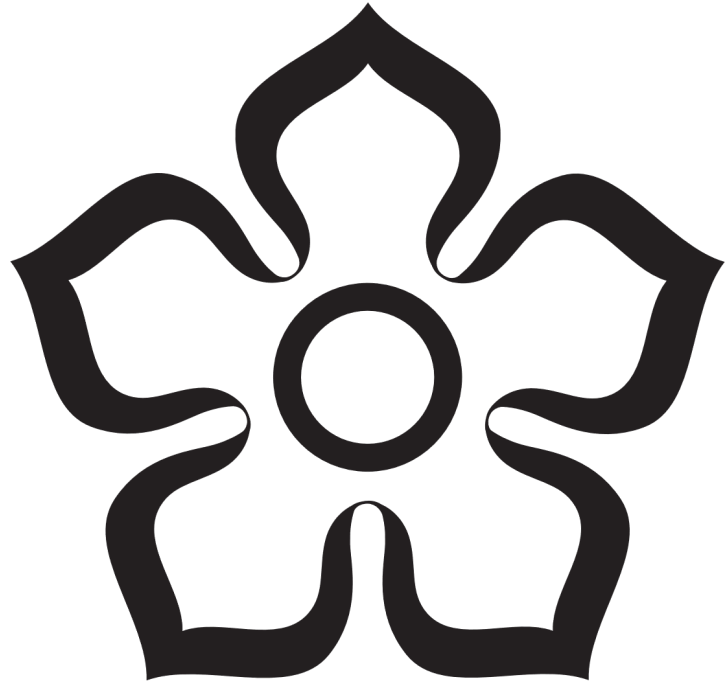
# VAPING

- Estimated 9% of Leicester adults vape (5% regularly and 4% occasionally)
- Whilst vaping is becoming more and more recognised as one of the most effective quit aids for smokers, vaping amongst children and young people is a growing concern, both nationally and locally.
- Local data indicates that 12% of children and young people have tried vaping (20% of 14-15 year olds) and 6% of 14-15 year olds regularly vape.
- There is still a lot of confusion amongst the public regarding the safety of vaping compared to smoking and a lot of inaccurate perceptions.

# EAST MIDLANDS STATEMENT ON VAPING

## Key messages include:

- “If you smoke, vaping is much safer; if you don’t smoke, don’t vape.”
- “Though not risk free, vaping is considerably safer than smoking. As such, we encourage smokers across the East Midlands to switch to vaping to reduce the harm from combustible tobacco.”
- “E-cigarettes are an effective stop smoking aid, especially when combined with behavioural support. We encourage smokers who want to switch to vaping to do so with the help of their local stop smoking service.”
- “E-cigarettes are an age restricted product, and we are against inappropriate marketing practices that promote them to under 18’s. Trading Standards should be given the tools necessary to undertake enforcement work and other measures to protect children and young people across the East Midlands.”
- Whilst some questions remain on their safety and efficacy in pregnancy, pregnant women who want to switch to vaping should not be discouraged from doing so providing they understand that e-cigarettes are not medically licensed.



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THANK YOU FOR  
LISTENING

ANY QUESTIONS?