

Briefing Note

To	Health and Wellbeing Board Members
From	Lizzie Howard, Tobacco Control Officer & Lee Buggie, Public Health Specialist
Subject	Tobacco Control Update
Purpose	To provide an update on tobacco control activity in Bury and national policy developments
Decision required	None
Status	Not confidential

Recommendations:

The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:

- Endorse the creation of a **Bury Tobacco Alliance** to coordinate local action and co-production.
- Support **targeted investment (Swap to Stop)** in high-prevalence groups and community-led interventions.
- Advocate for **smoke-free policies** in housing, schools, workplaces, and public spaces.
- Champion **innovation**, including Allen Carr seminars and youth vaping education.
- Commit to **regular updates** on smoking prevalence and inequalities as part of board agendas.

1. National Policy Context: The Tobacco and Vapes Bill

The Tobacco and Vapes Bill 2024–25 was introduced in the House of Commons on 5 November 2024 and passed its third reading on 26 March 2025. It is currently at Committee Stage in the House of Lords (last update 31 July 2025). Subject to passage, the Bill will:

- **Create a smoke-free generation** by prohibiting sales of tobacco, herbal smoking products and cigarette papers to people born on/after 1 January 2009.
- **Strengthen youth vaping controls** via powers on product requirements (e.g., flavours, nicotine content limits for specific products, child-appealing packaging), advertising and promotion (including online), point-of-sale/display, and give-away/samples, alongside improved age-verification obligations.
- **Extend smoke-free** legislation to outdoor spaces (playgrounds, near schools, hospital campuses), subject to regulations.
- **Modernise enforcement**, introducing/enhancing fixed penalty notices, closure powers, seizure powers for oral tobacco/snus, cross-agency data sharing, and expanded registration/licensing.
- **Standardise offences** (e.g., proxy purchasing), tighten age-of-sale notices, and consolidate advertising controls across media and platforms.
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Single use (disposable) vapes are banned from 1 June 2025. Trading Standards have powers to enforce, seize, and prosecute, supporting local youth vaping plans and illicit market disruption.

2. Bury Local Context and Tobacco Control Alliance

Bury will launch the Tobacco Control Alliance on 1 October 2025. This multi-agency partnership will lead the refresh of Bury's Tobacco Control Plan and provide a coordinated system-wide approach to reduce smoking prevalence and achieve Smokefree Bury by 2030.

The Alliance brings together Trading Standards, Bury ICB, Early Break, GM Police, Making Smoking History (MSH), Council services, and other partners. Its work is structured around four core workstreams:

- **Prevention**
- **Supporting smokers to quit**
- **Reducing health inequalities**
- **Effective enforcement**

The Alliance will focus on priority populations, including:

- Renters in social housing (29.6%)
- Residents who have never worked or are long-term unemployed (25.7%)
- Routine and manual workers (21.1%)
- Adults with long-term mental health conditions (20.6%)
- Residents in areas of deprivation (21.7%)
- Children and young people
- Mothers smoking at time of delivery (SATOD) (5.5%)

While overall smoking prevalence in Bury Adults (18+) is gradually reducing (10.5% in 2023/24), rates are rising in most target populations, except SATOD (Smoking At Time Of Delivery), which is declining. This positive trend reflects progress in reducing smoking during pregnancy. Continued efforts such as the NHS smoke-free pregnancy incentive scheme are needed to maintain and build on this improvement.

The Bury Tobacco Control Alliance is well placed to translate the **Greater Manchester Making Smoking History strategy** into local action. The MSH strategy emphasises system-wide collaboration, targeted interventions to address inequalities, and a population health approach to support Smokefree ambitions. By aligning Bury's Alliance workstreams with MSH priorities, the Alliance can strengthen local delivery, ensure consistent messaging, and leverage regional resources to support cessation, prevention, and enforcement activities.

3. Local Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant (LSSSG)

The LSSSG is a ring-fenced grant paid to local authorities for five years to support local stop smoking services. Bury received £207,932 in 2024/25 and £209,301 for 2025/26, intended to expand services, build capacity, increase quit attempts, and improve outcomes.

The LSSSG has supported the Bury Live Well Service, which provides accessible, evidence-based

support through a place-based team of Health & Wellness Coaches across the borough's five neighbourhoods. During 2024/25, 489 people were referred for smoking cessation support, with 470 setting a quit date. Additional grant-funded posts include 2 full-time Health & Wellness Coaches focusing solely on smoking cessation and 1 full-time Tobacco Control Officer within Public Health, strengthening links with primary care, housing providers, and homelessness outreach.

2024/25 Outcomes:

- **Youth vaping education:** Commissioned Early Break to deliver presentations in primary and secondary schools and colleges. Over 15 sessions were delivered to students and teachers. Awareness posters on the harms of nicotine and illicit vapes were co-produced.
- **Workplace wellbeing sessions:** Introduced through Bury Live Well Service, targeting routine and manual workers, linked to Bury Regeneration construction projects.
- **VBA+ delivery across communities:** Commissioned PaSH partnership (BHA for Equality, George House Trust, and LGBT Foundation) to provide VBA+ sessions at community venues.
- **Digital health promotion campaigns:** Delivered locally and across Bury, using digital screens to highlight support for quitting smoking and the benefits of stopping.

2025/26 Deliverables:

- **Expand youth campaigns:** Early Break to extend work to school nurses, Bury Care Leavers, and update presentations to include other nicotine products such as pouches ("snus"). Introduce lunch-and-learn sessions for parents and guardians.
- **Smoke-free spaces:** Establish in schools, public areas, and workplaces, aligned with the Tobacco and Vapes Bill and GM Making Smoking History strategy.
- **Stoptober campaign:** Use GP data to text all registered smokers in Bury, offering place-based support with weekly community drop-ins across all five neighbourhoods.
- **Allen Carr Easyway Seminars (pilot):** Targeting routine/manual workers and residents in IMD 1 & 2 postcodes, this pilot offers an alternative, non-prescribed smoking cessation method using evidence based outside of traditional treatment pathways.
- **Bury FC collaboration:** Raise awareness among fans who may smoke, promoting local stop smoking services.
- **Alliance coordination and pilot projects:** The Tobacco Control Alliance will provide a forum to coordinate initiatives and may support pilot projects to further reduce smoking prevalence.

By linking local activity with the Greater Manchester Making Smoking History strategy, the Alliance can align priorities, share best practice, and ensure consistent, evidence-based approaches to smoking prevention, cessation, and enforcement. This partnership approach will be crucial in addressing inequalities and driving Bury toward its Smokefree 2030 ambition.

4. Swap to Stop Scheme

In addition to increasing investment in smoking cessation services, the government have introduced an innovative scheme called 'Swap to Stop'. This scheme aims to boost smoking cessation work at a grass roots level by providing up to one million vapes and starter kits across England, to enable services to support even more adult smokers to make a "quit" attempt.

133 vape starter kits have been distributed to those utilising 'Swap to Stop' in 2024/25 through our Bury Stop Smoking Service and Adullam Homes.

In 2025/26 we are in the process of expanding our pathway to include **vape kit vouchers** which will

be redeemable through the online portal (links received via email or text referrals).

Also the introduction of a '**Train the Trainer**' package is currently being developed by the PH team in order to widen the Swap to Stop offer. This will focus on training staff to provide Very Brief Advice (VBA)+ and Swap to Stop vaping kits to individuals identified as current smokers. VBA+ involves asking patients about their current smoking status and advising them on the best methods of stopping smoking available to them. Training will be provided for front line staff working throughout the four Primary Care Networks and Bury VCSE organisations. Individuals will be followed up at 4 weeks to record their quit status.

5. Tobacco Enforcement and Illicit Produce Seizures

Tobacco control enforcement continues to be a vital component of reducing the availability of illicit tobacco and vaping products across Bury. During **2024/25**, enforcement activity resulted in seizures with a total street value of **£120,000**, including:

- 39,660 illicit cigarettes (1,983 packs)
- 9.4 kg of illicit hand-rolling tobacco (188 packs)
- 7,425 illegal vapes, 4 kg of shisha, 28,000 pieces of hand-rolling tobacco packaging, and a hand-rolling tobacco mixing machine

Since the start of the current financial year (**1 April 2025**), early enforcement actions have already resulted in seizures with a total street value of **£53,500**, including:

- 1,583 illicit vapes seized
- 2,087 packs of cigarettes (41,740 sticks)
- 212 packs of hand-rolling tobacco (10.55 kg)

These figures demonstrate the continued commitment of Bury Trading Standards and partner agencies to tackling illicit tobacco and vaping products, protecting local communities, and reducing access to harmful products.

With the introduction of the **Tobacco and Vapes Bill**, local authorities will gain additional powers to strengthen enforcement, including restrictions on the sale of vapes and tobacco products, regulation of marketing, and improved oversight of retail compliance. This will complement ongoing enforcement activity and the work of the Bury Tobacco Control Alliance, helping to reduce smoking prevalence, support cessation, and protect populations most at risk from tobacco-related harm.