



Borough of Telford and Wrekin
Health and Wellbeing Board
Thursday 17 September 2026
Smokefree Update

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Kelly Middleton - Cabinet Member for Public Health and Unlocking Opportunities for All
Lead Director:	Helen Onions - Director of Public Health
Service Area:	Health & Wellbeing
Report Author:	Sonya Durkin-Jones - Public Health Programme Officer
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Wards Affected:	All Wards
Key Decision:	Not Key Decision
Forward Plan:	Not applicable
Report considered by:	H&WB 17.09.2026

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Health & Wellbeing Board is requested to endorse and support the Smokefree Telford & Wrekin Delivery Plan, produced in response to the recommendations of the 2025 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health.

2. Purpose of Report

- 2.1. The Health & Wellbeing Board supported the 2025 Annual Public Health Report findings and approved the recommendations to develop a comprehensive plan to deliver Smokefree Telford & Wrekin ambitions.
- 2.2. This report provides an update on the Smokefree Delivery Plan and the work being progressed across council teams and partners on the commitments, as well as an update on national legislative changes aimed at reducing smoking and vaping-related harm.
- 2.3. The key updates in this report are:

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- Smoking prevalence figures and the number of quitters
- An introduction to the Smokefree Telford & Wrekin Delivery Plan
- A summary of achievements aligned to our Smokefree commitments
- An overview of recent National Legislation - The Tobacco & Vapes Act 2026.

3. Background

- 3.1 Tobacco-related harm is the single largest driver of reduced life expectancy due to the increased risk of a wide range of chronic diseases. Smoking is a key cause of health inequalities given the well-known link with social disadvantage. Despite decades of public awareness campaigns and regulation, smoking remains one of our most significant public health challenges.
- 3.2 Vaping is less harmful than smoking tobacco and can help people to quit, but the increase in vaping among children and young people who have never smoked is a major concern.
- 3.3 The UK Government's primary public health goal is to make England "Smokefree" by 2030. This ambition is officially defined as reducing the proportion of adult smokers to 5% or less of the population. To enable and address this goal, the government has set goals across NHS and local government services that aim to support the nation in quitting smoking.
- 3.4 The 2025 public health report described the key elements of a Smokefree ambition and proposed the development of a comprehensive plan to deliver Smokefree Telford & Wrekin across Health & Wellbeing Board partners, through the following commitments:
- Reduce the number of people who smoke, by supporting more people to quit in community and NHS settings.
 - Protect children and young people against smoking, vaping (and other nicotine products).
 - Create more Smokefree places to protect children and vulnerable people from second-hand smoke.
 - Enhance enforcement and tackling of illicit tobacco and vapes.

4. Key updates

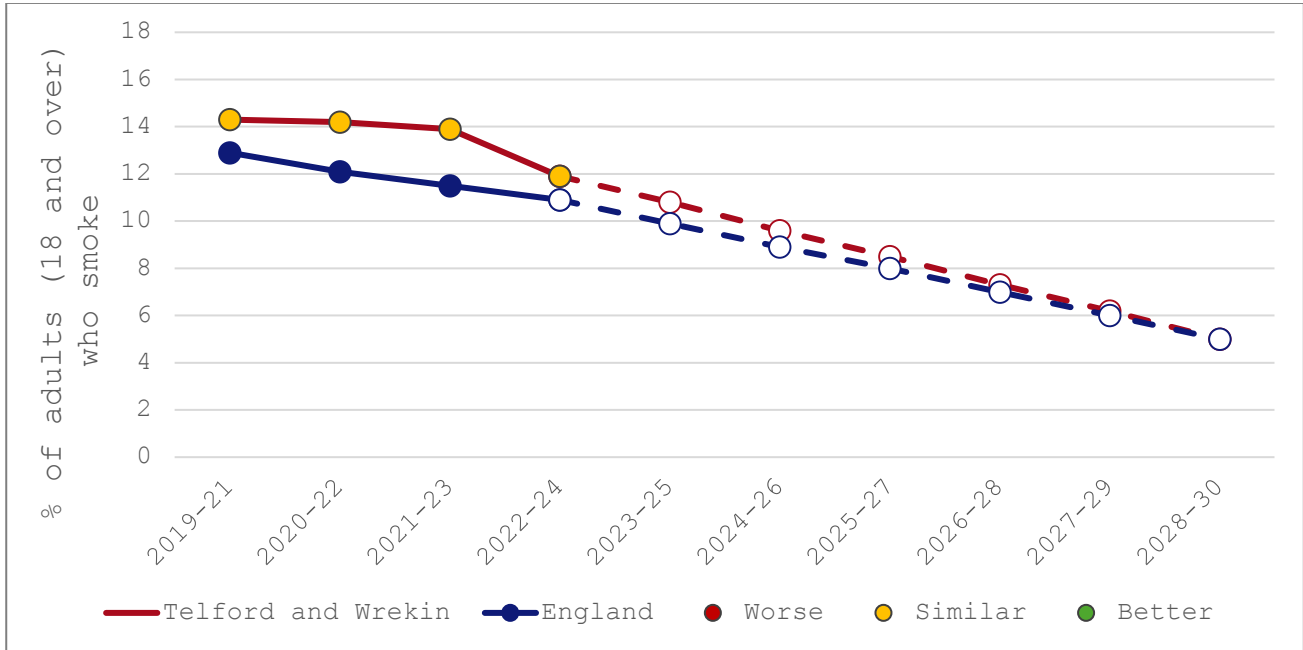
4.1 Overview of local smoking picture

- 4.1.1 The adult smoking prevalence figure reported in the annual public health report last September was 14.5% (based on 2023 data). The figure was derived from the Annual Population Survey, and this data is now being published on a 3-year-rolling average basis due to the sample size. The latest published figure for smoking prevalence for the period 2022-2024 for Telford & Wrekin is 11.9%, which is lower

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than the 13.9% figure for the 3-year-period 2021-23. It is expected given the reducing trend since 2019, that Telford & Wrekin will reach the Government's Smokefree target of 5% by the end of the decade. (Figure 1)

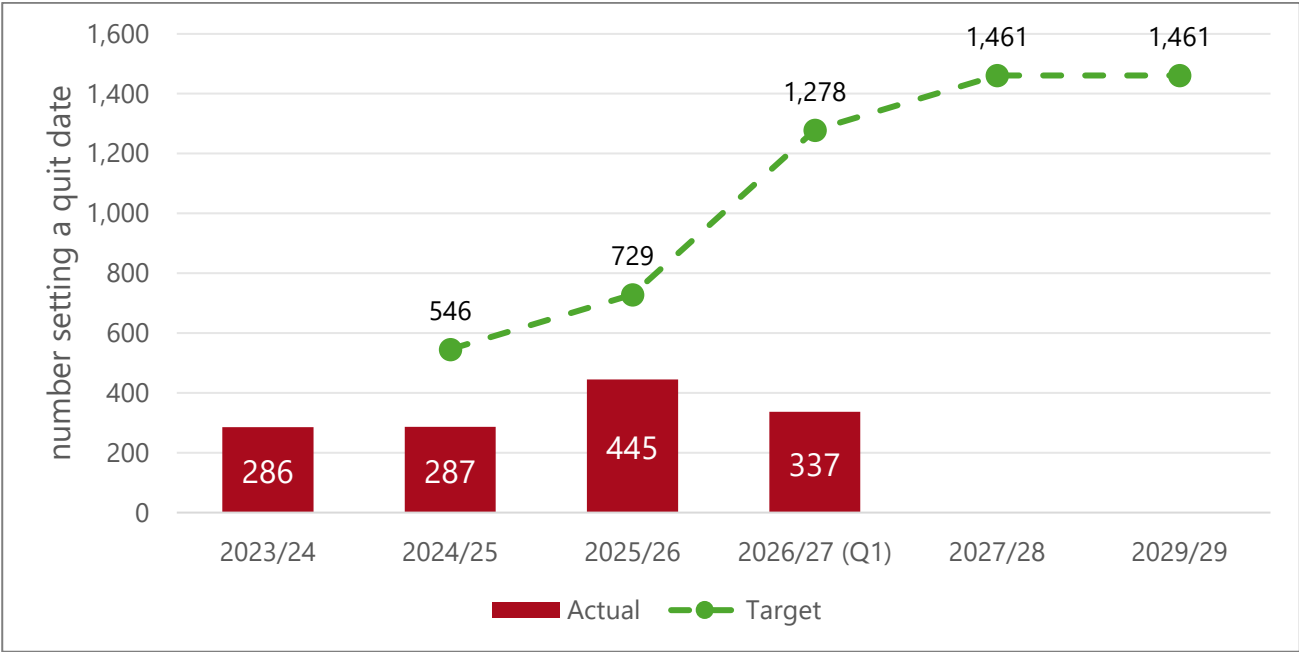
Figure 1 Smoking prevalence in adults (aged 18 and over) and projection to the Smokefree ambition in 2030



Source: [Public Health Outcomes Framework - Data | Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care](#)

4.1.2 The Council's Healthy Lifestyles Team has recruited further Stop Smoking Advisors to increase the number of smokers in Telford & Wrekin setting a quit date, in line with targets set by the Office of Health Improvement & Disparities. The Team supported 445 smokers to set a quit date during 2025/26, compared to 287 in the previous year, and the number setting a date during April-June 2026 exceeded the total number seen in 2024/25. (Figure 2)

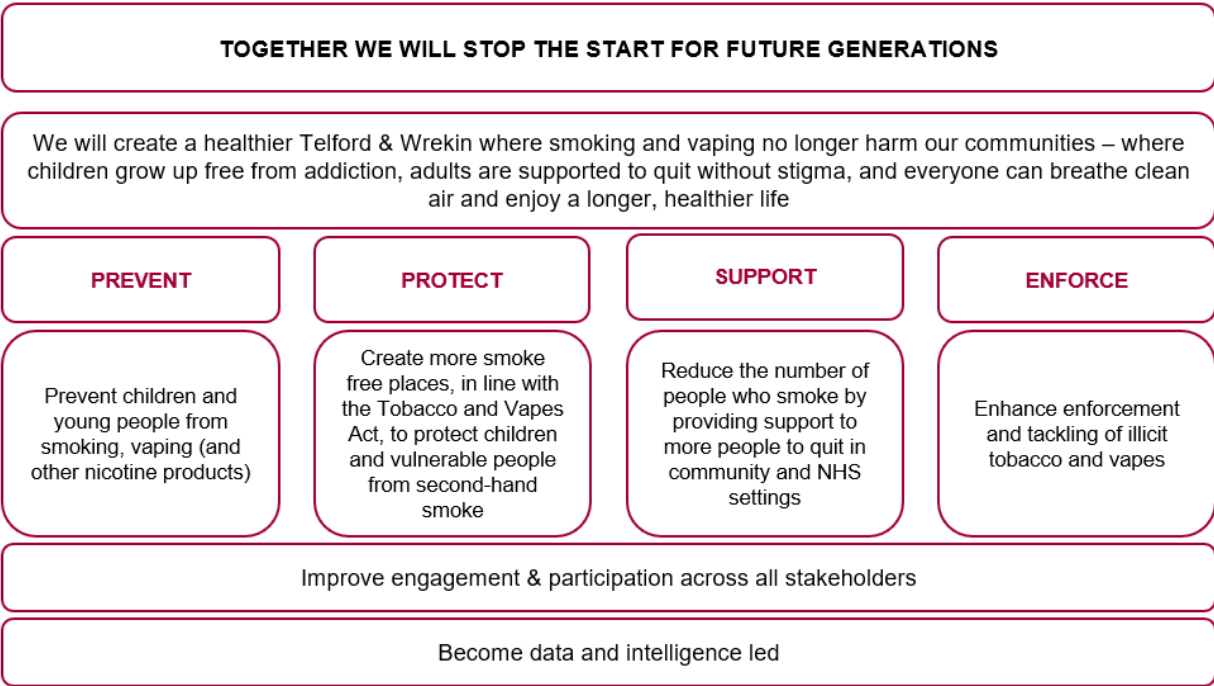
Figure 2 Number of smokers setting a quit date and targets



4.1.3 A total of 226 clients who were supported by our Stop Smoking Advisors during 2025/26 remained quit after 4 weeks. The 4-week-quit rate for this period was 54% of those setting a date, which is slightly higher than the national average rate for England (53%).

4.2 Smokefree Delivery Plan Overview

4.2.1 The Smokefree Delivery Plan framework which has been developed with HWB partners over the past year, is based on the four commitments set out in the 2025 annual report, which are captured under the following headings: Prevent, Protect, Support and Enforce.



4.2.2 Given that smoking is a complex social and health issue, becoming Smokefree has been progressing through focussed efforts across multiple teams across the Council, in the NHS and our community and voluntary sector partners. This cross-system approach has included:

- Engagement of system partners across Shropshire Telford & Wrekin
- Assessment of gaps and barriers in existing services and pathways
- Outcomes of the tobacco workshop with partners from the NHS, social care, Public Health, the voluntary and community sector, trading standards and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Consideration of the upcoming provisions of the Tobacco and Vapes Act 2026.

4.2.3 Improving engagement and participation across all stakeholders is an important strand of the delivery plan. The newly appointed Public Health Programme Officer for Smokefree is increasing internal and external collaboration and has become chair of the Shropshire Telford & Wrekin Tobacco Steering Group, which includes key NHS colleagues.

4.3 Delivery on our Smokefree Commitments

4.3.1 The following sections summarise highlights delivered across our Smokefree plan in the past 12 months. This includes work to take on the responsibilities within the new Tobacco & Vapes Act 2026.

4.3.2 PREVENT - Prevent children and young people from smoking, vaping (and other nicotine products):

- Public Health Commissioning Team collaboration with the School Nursing Service embedded in schools and colleges. The Personal, Health and Social Education curriculum has been enhanced with smoking and vaping awareness sessions led by our school nurses in 56 primary schools and 12 secondary schools, delivering smoking prevention advice and secondary school drop-ins.
- The Children & Young People's Vaping position statement, approved by HWB in September 2023, is currently being refreshed and to align with the new Tobacco & Vapes Act and corporate smoking policies update.
- Telford & Wrekin Crucial Crew community safety roadshow, which is the longest running in the country, offered a broad awareness programme aimed at year 6 pupils in July, involving over 1,380 pupils in 2026.
- Guidance has been issued to schools on asthma policies and 18 of our schools (24%) are now accredited in the Asthma Friendly schools programme, which requires schools to implement and strictly enforce comprehensive, smoke-free site policies that prohibit both smoking and vaping.

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- Healthy Telford online includes links and resources to encourage smokers to seek support people on their journey – including our latest advice and awareness campaign material such as Crush the Habit.
- Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service have committed to including a quit smoking referral pathway as part of their home fire safety visits.

4.3.3 PROTECT - Create more Smokefree places, in line with the Tobacco & Vapes Act 2026, to protect children and vulnerable people from second hand smoke:

- The Health Protection Team lead the approach to Smokefree and have also participated in the Government consultation on aspects of the Act intended to expand mandatory Smokefree places into areas such as school playgrounds and hospital grounds.
- The Healthy Lifestyles team is working with local employers on the Healthy Telford Partner Programme, to encourage Smokefree areas in workplaces and raise awareness of our stop smoking services.

4.3.4 SUPPORT - Reduce the number of people who smoke by providing support to more people to quit in community and NHS settings:

- The Healthy Lifestyles Team have successfully recruited 5 new Stop Smoking Advisors with diverse backgrounds and experience to support people across our communities to access the service and reduce inequalities.
- The number of face-to-face clinics offered at in our 8 Live Well Hubs has expanded and the Healthy Hearts/Here to Help bus includes smoking prevention advice.
- Collaboration with the NHS Lung Cancer Screening Programme has increased referrals into the service. Since January 2026, over 1000 referrals have been received by this pathway and 50% have set a quit date
- The Crush the Habit campaign supports self-referrals into the service and continues to successfully engage smokers with over 2.5 million impressions, more than 109,000 interactions and 16,500 click through leading individuals to commit to quit. Paid advertising took place over spring/ summer 2026 and the initial response has been positive across social media, bus backs, and local news outlets - the Shropshire Star and Telford Journal.
- The Shrewsbury & Telford Hospital Acute Tobacco Dependency Treatment Service uses an early intervention model, and smoking cessation screening is a mandatory assessment. The Maternity Smoking Cessation Service is well

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embedded and the smoking at time of delivery is now 4.8% across Shropshire Telford & Wrekin, which is lower than the Government target of 6% (for SATOD) for the first time.

- Family Nurses deliver Health Visiting as a more intense, targeted intervention to young, first-time mums and they deliver effective health education interventions, including the use of carbon monoxide monitoring to support smoking cessation. This has contributed to a **100% rate of non-smokers at programme graduation**, highlighting the positive impact of targeted, evidence-based support.
- Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust support patients admitted for mental health problems with the offer of vapes to support tobacco withdrawal, and in 2025/2026 over 30% of mental health inpatients were offered this Swap to Stop support.

4.3.5 ENFORCE - Enhance enforcement and tackling of illicit tobacco and vapes:

- The Council's Trading Standards Team lead work on enforcement and the Tobacco & Vapes Act 2026 will introduce retail licensing responsibilities for the Licensing Team. The Act will also expand the Smokefree place enforcement requirements which lie with the Health Protection Team, and the current arrangements are being reviewed in light of the new provisions expected.
- In 2025/26, to July 2026, 4 underage vape sales have been detected during intelligence led visits – one case resulting in the successful prosecution of the seller, a fine and costs awarded to the council.
- In addition to this, 16,560 (820 packs) cigarettes and 11.5 kg of hand rolling tobacco have been seized from 6 premises, with the price of a pack of 20 illegal cigarettes ranging from £4.50 to £7.50.
- Public Health witness statements are being used for the first time to support Trading Standard prosecutions, and positive case studies are being collated for learning internally, but also for sharing externally.
- Trading Standards have continued their collaborative enforcement work with the Police to deter and detect underage sales and to interrupt the supply of illicit tobacco and nicotine products. This includes working with store front landlords to stop illicit supplies moving location after detection.

4.4 The UK Tobacco & Vapes Act 2026 update

4.4.1 The Act received Royal Assent on 29th April 2026 and this landmark legislation aims to create a "smoke-free generation" by phasing out tobacco sales to younger people and tightening regulations on access to tobacco and vaping. The main elements of the Act include:

- **Generation Ban Implementation:** It will be illegal to sell tobacco products to anyone born on or after 1 January 2009, with the law taking effect from 1 January 2027.
- **Retail Changes:** A mandatory licensing scheme for retailers selling tobacco and vape products. New "on-the-spot" fines can be issued by Trading Standards for selling tobacco or vapes to under-18s.
- **Smoke-Free Places:** Extended smoke-free and vape-free areas, including banning smoking/vaping in outdoor areas such as playgrounds and near school/hospital entrances.
- **Vape Regulations:** Restrictions on vaping advertising, packaging, and flavours are included to curb youth uptake.

4.4.2 The Tobacco and Vapes Act 2026, introduces significant new responsibilities for Smokefree related services across local authorities, and preparations for these new provisions in the Council include the following:

- The Trading Standards Team is planning for major changes that will be necessary under the Act, including: the use of Fixed Penalty Notices, enforcement of the generational tobacco ban and enhanced illicit product enforcement due to new duties to curb the sale of illegal, non-compliant, or unregulated tobacco and vapes, especially those appealing to children.
- The Licensing Team is preparing for a new mandatory retail licensing scheme and anticipating a retail licensing system and enforcement changes.
- The Environmental Health Team is reviewing existing Smokefree area enforcement activities in line with the new provisions within the Act.
- The Public Health Team is preparing for expansion of service needs due to the inclusion of the generational tobacco ban, changes to vape restrictions, in school & college awareness campaigns with new prevention and support measure to include vaping.

5. Alternative Options

5.1 Not Applicable

6. Key Risks

- 6.1 Lack of local comprehensive collaboration on the Smokefree agenda would likely mean smoking prevalence in our borough reduces more slowly than other parts of the country, and as such the harms and impact highlighted in the public health report would persist.

7. Council Priorities

- 7.1 Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 The ongoing work and delivery plan presented within this report will be delivered by the Council working with Health and Voluntary Sector partner organisations and will be subject to resources available at a partnership level.
- 8.2 The Council has a budget funded by Public Health grant of £555k in 2026/27 to deliver local stop smoking initiatives and interventions, and a further £106k to deliver other areas of work i.e. communications & publicity, etc. Therefore, a total of £661k is available in 2026/7 to deliver the Council's work and services set out in the delivery plan working in collaboration with other organisations.
- 8.3 The Government directed grant to fund local smoking cessation services and support (known as Local Stop Smoking services & support grant) is now included as part of the overall Public Health grant from 2026/27 and is ongoing. It remains a ring-fenced grant allocation and must be spent in line with grant conditions.
- 8.4 The Council will engage in the design and implementation of the multi-agency strategy within existing resources, however, should there be additional resources required for the Council to deliver it's part then this would be considered as part of the usual Governance process for setting the Medium-term financial strategy.

9. Legal and HR Implications

- 9.1 The Director of Public Health has a statutory duty to prepare an annual report on the health of the people in the local authority under Section 73B (5) of the National Health Service Act 2006 (as amended). The report must be published by the local authority under Section 73B (6). The attached Delivery Plan and T&W Service Update is part of the ongoing work to enable the 2025 Smokefree strategy within the 2025 report.

10. Ward Implications

10.1 Borough-wide impact, but particularly wards with highest levels socio-economic deprivation.

11. Health, Social and Economic Implications

11.1 Smoking increases the risks of lung cancer, and other cancers, heart disease, stroke, respiratory disease and dementia. Half of the life expectancy gap between the most deprived and most affluent communities - 8.8 years for males and 6.4 year for females in Telford & Wrekin, are due to smoking. Second hand smoke exposure affects babies, children and young people, and vulnerable adults.

11.2 Smoking places significant financial costs burdens on statutory services, the economy and society more broadly, due to loss of productivity, unemployment, health and social care, as well as the impact of fires.

12. Equality and Diversity Implications

12.1 Smoking has significant implications for equality and diversity, particularly in how it reinforces health and social inequalities. It disproportionately affects individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, including those with lower incomes, certain ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ communities, and people with mental health conditions. These groups often face higher smoking rates due to targeted marketing, social stressors, and limited access to cessation support.

12.2 In the workplace, smoking policies that lack inclusivity can further marginalise these individuals, especially if they do not provide equitable access to quitting resources or accommodate cultural and social needs. Addressing smoking through an equality and diversity lens means recognising these disparities to ensure that local partnership action is inclusive, supportive, and tailored to the needs of vulnerable populations.

13. Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications

13.1 Smoking has a considerable impact on climate change and the environment globally, contributing to: deforestation, pollution, and resource depletion. Tobacco farming results in the loss of 100,000s of hectares of forest each year, reducing biodiversity and carbon absorption. Farming consumes vast amounts of water and depletes soil through heavy pesticide use. The Tobacco industry emits millions of tonnes of CO₂ annually through cultivation, manufacturing, and transportation processes. Cigarette butts, among the most littered items globally, release toxic chemicals and microplastics into ecosystems. The rise of disposable e-cigarettes has further added to electronic and plastic waste. Environmental harms are disproportionately felt in low-middle income countries where tobacco is grown.

14. Background Papers

- HWB September 2025 - Annual Public Health Report 2025 Towards a Smokefree Future

15. Appendices

A Telford & Wrekin Smokefree Future Delivery Plan 2026 - 2028

16. Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Director	30/07/2026	30/07/2026	HO
Legal	30/07/2026	18/08/2026	ON
Finance	30/07/2026	08/09/2026	RP