

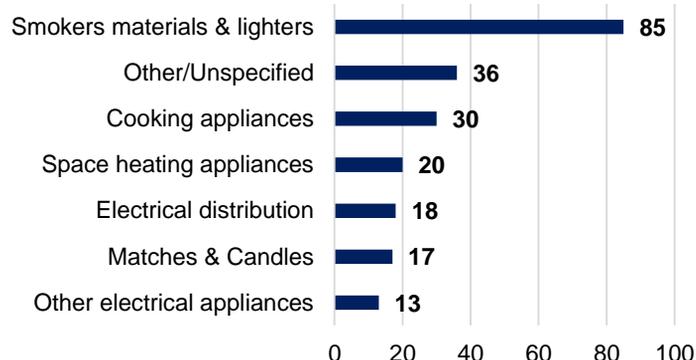
# Tobacco Alliance FAQ: Fire Services

## What is a Tobacco Control Alliance?

Tobacco control is a co-ordinated, comprehensive approach to reduce smoking prevalence. Alliances are local partnerships within local authority boundaries working together to effectively reduce smoking rates and tackle health inequalities.

### Smoking-related fires

- Each year around **2,700 in England** are caused by cigarettes and smoking related materials.
- Smoking related fires caused **85 deaths in 2013-2014**.
- The overall cost of smoking related fires is around **£259m** every year (ASH, [Local costs of smoking](#)).



**Causes of fires in Great Britain resulting in fatalities 2013-2014** ([DCLG, Fire Stats GB](#))

## The role of fire services in a tobacco control alliance

Fire services actively engaged with tobacco control partners through a local alliance can play a key role in improving the health and safety of local communities. Examples of potential activity includes:

- Providing [Very Brief Advice](#) on smoking cessation to members of the public.
- Handing out stop smoking service referrals cards.
- Offering home visits to assess fire risk, provide personalised advice and fit smoke alarms
- Encouraging those who do smoke to smoke outside, thereby reducing the impact of passive smoking and risk of accidental fires.

## What can fire services gain from alliance work?

The provision of harm reduction messages and communication of tobacco control messages is key to preventing fires caused by cigarettes and smoking materials. Smoking can also distract drivers, causing accidents which fire services have to respond to.

By sitting on a Tobacco Control Alliance, fire departments will benefit from working in collaboration to drive down smoking rates and as such reduce the numbers of smoking related fires.



## Case Study: Telford & Wrekin

Fire and Rescue Service and Public Health teams identified smoking cessation and falls prevention as areas of overlapping concern. Through 'Safe and Well' home checks for vulnerable members of the community, the fire service were able to discuss fire risk as well as health and wellbeing outcomes.

Working together, Public Health and the Fire Service developed a specifically tailored 'Making Every Contact Count' brief intervention which included advice and key messages for fire officers to provide. Local fire officers have been trained to deliver very brief advice, promote smoke free homes and inform residents of ways to report illicit tobacco sales.

