

## Parliamentary brief for King's Speech July 2024

### Prioritise reintroduction of the Tobacco & Vapes Bill

Health leaders, the organisations endorsing this brief and over 1,000 health professionals [urge the government to commit to reintroduction of the Tobacco and Vapes Bill as a priority in the King's Speech.](#)

The Bill will:

- Phase out the sale of tobacco.
- Give government powers to curb youth vaping while ensuring adult smokers can still use vapes to quit.

The House of Commons has already voted overwhelmingly to pass the Bill at its second reading, it has been scrutinised in committee, and with minor amendments can and should pass rapidly through parliament and on to the statute book.

Then and only then can the much needed regulations to prevent vapes from being branded and advertised to appeal to children be implemented.

### Raising the age of sale will protect the next generation

Smoking is uniquely lethal, killing [two thirds](#) of lifelong smokers, and therefore requires a unique regulatory approach. That is what this Bill delivers, phasing out the sale of tobacco by raising the age of sale for **all** tobacco products by one year every year from 2027 onwards.

Smoking is the leading cause of premature death and disability, responsible for [half the difference](#) in healthy life expectancy between rich and poor. Most adult smokers started smoking as children and every day around [350 young adults](#) aged 18-25 start smoking regularly, risking being trapped into a lifetime of addiction and premature death. [Two out of three](#) people who try one cigarette become daily smokers, and [three-quarters of smokers](#) would never have started if they had the choice again.

### Vaping is an adult quitting aid not a children's toy

Over [6 million people smoke](#) in the UK and vaping is the most [popular](#) and [effective](#) quitting aid which is available over the counter, supported by Stop Smoking Services and



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[recommended by NICE](#). Quitting [halves the risk of heart attack](#) a year after quitting, improves mental health to the same extent as [anti-depressants](#), and can nearly [double the life expectancy](#) of smokers diagnosed with lung cancer. Ex-smokers have better health and well-being, longer healthy life expectancy, and are [more likely to be in employment](#) than people who smoke.

### **Tougher regulations are needed to curb youth vaping**

While vapes are a valuable adult quitting aid, vaping is not risk free and action is needed to curb [increases in underage vaping](#) seen in recent years. To [quote Professor Sir Chris Whitty](#), the CMO, “If you smoke, vaping is much safer; if you don’t smoke, don’t vape; marketing vapes to children is utterly unacceptable.”

The [Tobacco and Vapes Bill](#) gives government the primary powers which are required in order to be able to:

- Prohibit branding on vapes appealing to children, such as sweet names and bright colours.
- Prohibit the handing out of free vapes to children.
- Regulate vape contents, flavours and other product features
- Regulate vape displays and promotion in shops.
- Extend regulations to zero nicotine vapes and other nicotine products like pouches.

Environment regulations have been consulted on which would ban disposable vapes from [April 2025](#) and HM Treasury has consulted on the introduction of a tax on e-liquid by [October 2026](#). **But without the Tobacco and Vapes Bill the government does not have powers to stop the marketing of vapes to children.**

The Public Bill Committee reviewed the legislation and decided that with minor amendments, for example to strengthen restrictions on advertising, the Bill was fit for purpose. We agree and urge government to bring back the Bill without delay.

[A more detailed brief on raising the age of sale prepared for second reading of the Bill is available online.](#) For further information, speaking notes or constituency briefings contact [publicaffairs@ash.org.uk](mailto:publicaffairs@ash.org.uk)

