Use of vapes and other novel tobacco and nicotine products among adults in Great Britain

ASH Fact Sheet | July 2026

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Executive summary

This 2026 fact sheet presents an overview of vaping behaviour among adults in Great Britain. Drawing on ASH Smokefree GB survey data (n=13,259), key findings include:

- **10% of adults in Great Britain aged 18+ vape** (an estimated **5.5 million people)**. This is unchanged from last year.
- **11% of GB adults aged 18+ smoke**, a fall from 13%, which was the prevalence from 2021 to 2025.
- **Among adults who currently vape, 60% used to smoke but have now given up (3.3 million people)**, though 32% are still smoking (1.7 million people).
- Misconceptions about vaping harms remain high: **52% of adults who smoke believe vaping is as harmful or more harmful than smoking**.
- **Disposable vape use peaked in 2023,** when 31% of adults who vaped mainly used disposables, and has fallen to 8%.

1. Trends in vaping behaviour

Vaping prevalence over time

- From 2012 to 2026, current vaping prevalence rose from 1.7% to 10.3%. Growth slowed after 2024, suggesting a plateau.
- Currently there are an estimated 5.5 million vapers in Great Britain.
- A quarter (26%) of adults have ever tried vaping.

Vaping by smoking status

- Current smokers: 30% vape (1.7 million).
- Ex-smokers: 19% vape (3.3 million).
- Never-smokers: 1.5% vape (400,000).

Vaping by age and socioeconomic status (SES)

- Vaping has plateaued across all age groups. It is lowest in those aged 55 or over (6%) and highest in those aged 25-34 (15%).
- There has been an increase in 18-24 year olds trying vaping (from 32% in 2025 to 39% in 2026), but no change in current use which has been stable at 11% since 2021.
- Vaping is more common in more disadvantaged groups, reflecting their higher rates of smoking (ABC1 9% vape, C2DE 12% vape).

Duration and frequency

- Daily vaping has increased, so now 7.8% of adults vape every day, up from 4.5% in 2020.
- Of ex-smokers who vape, 88% vape daily and 60% of dual users do.
- Daily smoking is declining, falling from 9.7% of people in 2020 to 6.6% in 2026.
- 59% of ex-smokers who vape have done so for over 3 years.

1.1 Vaping prevalence over time

- From 2012 to 2024, current vaping prevalence rose from 1.7% to 10.7%. In 2025, 10.4% vaped, and in 2026 10.3%, suggesting a plateau.
- Currently there are an estimated 5.5 million adult vapers in Great Britain.
- A quarter (26%) of adults have ever tried vaping.

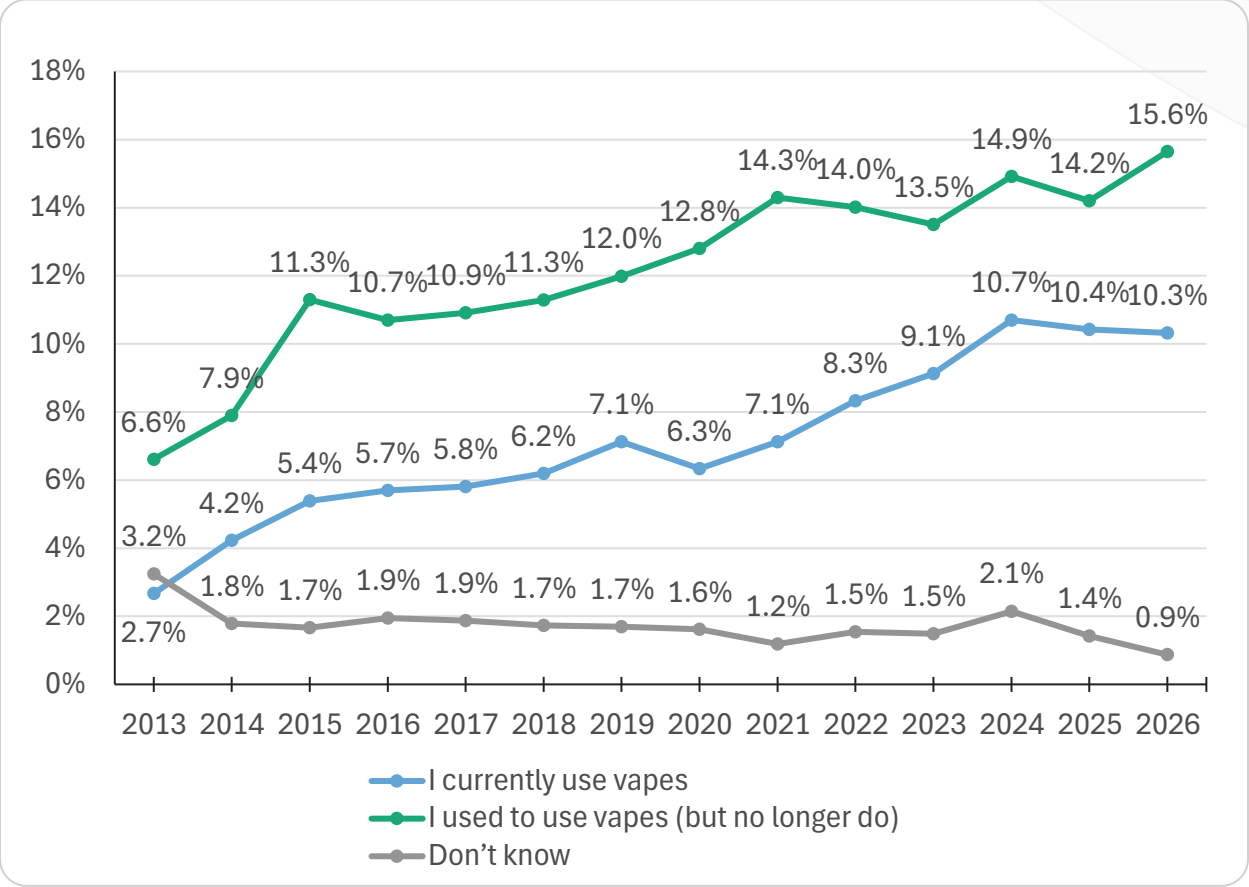
Table 1. Number of current vapers among adults in Great Britain (2012-2026)

	% adult population who currently vape	Percentage point change (YoY)	Rate of Growth (YoY)	Number of current adult vapers (millions)
2012	1.7%	-	-	0.8
2013	2.7%	1.0%	+62%	1.3
2014	4.2%	1.6%	+60%	2.1
2015	5.4%	1.2%	+29%	2.7
2016	5.7%	0.3%	+7%	2.9
2017	5.8%	0.1%	+3%	2.9
2018	6.2%	0.4%	+7%	3.2
2019	7.1%	0.9%	+16%	3.6
2020	6.3%	-0.8%	-11%	3.3
2021	7.1%	0.8%	+13%	3.7
2022	8.3%	1.2%	+18%	4.3
2023	9.1%	0.8%	+10%	4.8
2024	10.7%	1.6%	+17%	5.7
2025	10.4%	-0.3%	-3%	5.6
2026	10.3%	-0.1%	-1%	5.5

Estimates are based on the nearest available GB adult population estimates (in this case, both 2025 and 2026 estimates are calculated using 2024 GB population [1]).

Current vaping grew most rapidly between 2020 and 2024 and appears to have now plateaued (Figure 1). The majority (73%) of GB adults have never tried a vape, 26% have ever tried one and 1% didn't know.

Figure 1. Vaping by GB adults (2013-2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2013-2026. Unweighted base: All adults (2013=12,171, 2014=12,269, 2015=12,055, 2016=12,157, 2017=12,696, 2018=12,767, 2019=12,393, 2020=12,809, 2021=12,247 2022=13,088, 2023=12,271, 2024=13,266, 2025=13,314, 2026=13,259)

Among the group who used to vape but no longer do, 44% used to smoke but have also given that up, 29% currently smoke and 28% have never smoked.

1.2 Vaping by smoking status

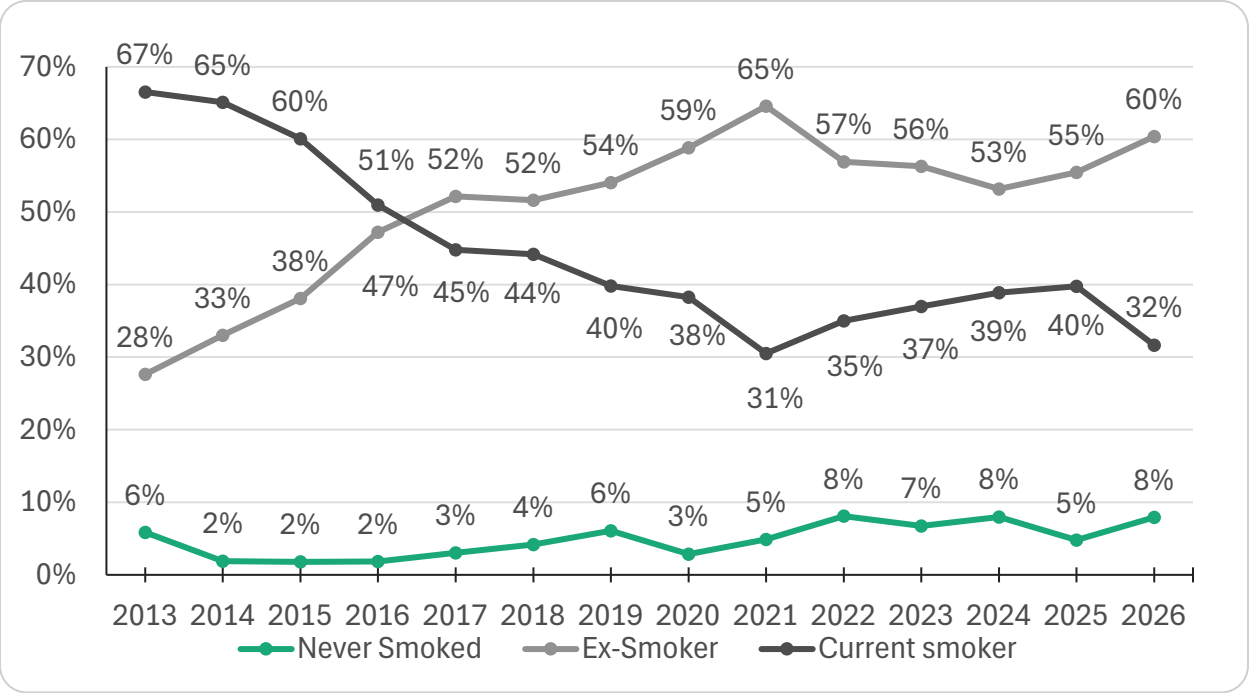
- **Current smokers**: 30% vape (1.7 million)
- **Ex-smokers**: 19% vape (3.3 million)
- **Never-smokers**: 1.5% vape (400,000)

For definitions and question wording, see Appendix 5.

Vaping is much more common among current and ex-smokers (Figure 2). Of the 10.3% of current vapers (an estimated 5.5 million adults), 60% (3.3 million) are ex-smokers, 32%

(1.7 million) are current smokers and 8% (400,000) are never smokers. The proportion of vapers who also smoke tobacco fell from about two-thirds in 2013 (67%) to about one-third in 2021 (31%), then rose slightly between 2021 and 2025, before falling again in 2026. Conversely, the proportion of vapers who were ex-smokers rose until 2021. After 2021 there was a significant decrease in the proportion of current vapers who are ex-smokers, from 65% in 2021 to 53% in 2024, rising again to 60% in 2026.

Figure 2. Smoking status of adults who vape, GB adult vapers (2013–2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2013-2026. Unweighted base: Adult current vapers (2013=325, 2014=498, 2015=614, 2016=667, 2017=669, 2018=738, 2019=854, 2020=787, 2021=826, 2022=1,089, 2023=1,079, 2024=1,408, 2025=1,328, 2026=1,318)

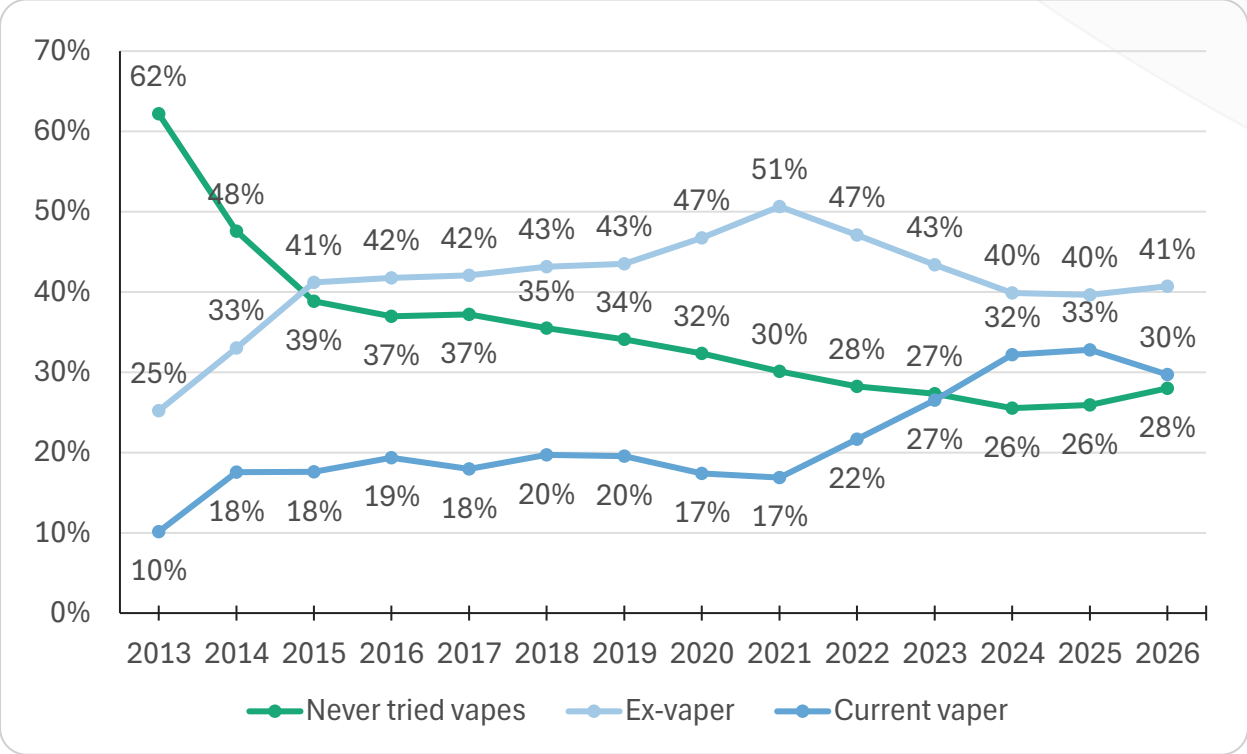
Vaping prevalence among smokers

Vaping among smokers increased rapidly between 2013 and 2014, remained relatively stable until 2021, then rose sharply following the introduction of modern disposable vapes to the market. This increase was largely fuelled by smokers who had previously tried vapes starting to use them again.

There remains a fair proportion of smokers who have never tried vaping, 28% in 2026 (Figure 3).

As observed among all adults, the increase in vaping among smokers has recently stalled with no significant change in the levels of use since 2024. An estimated 1.7 million smokers currently vape, 2.4 million have tried vaping but no longer vape and 1.6 million have never vaped.

Figure 3. Vaping status of adults who smoke, GB adult smokers (2013-2026)

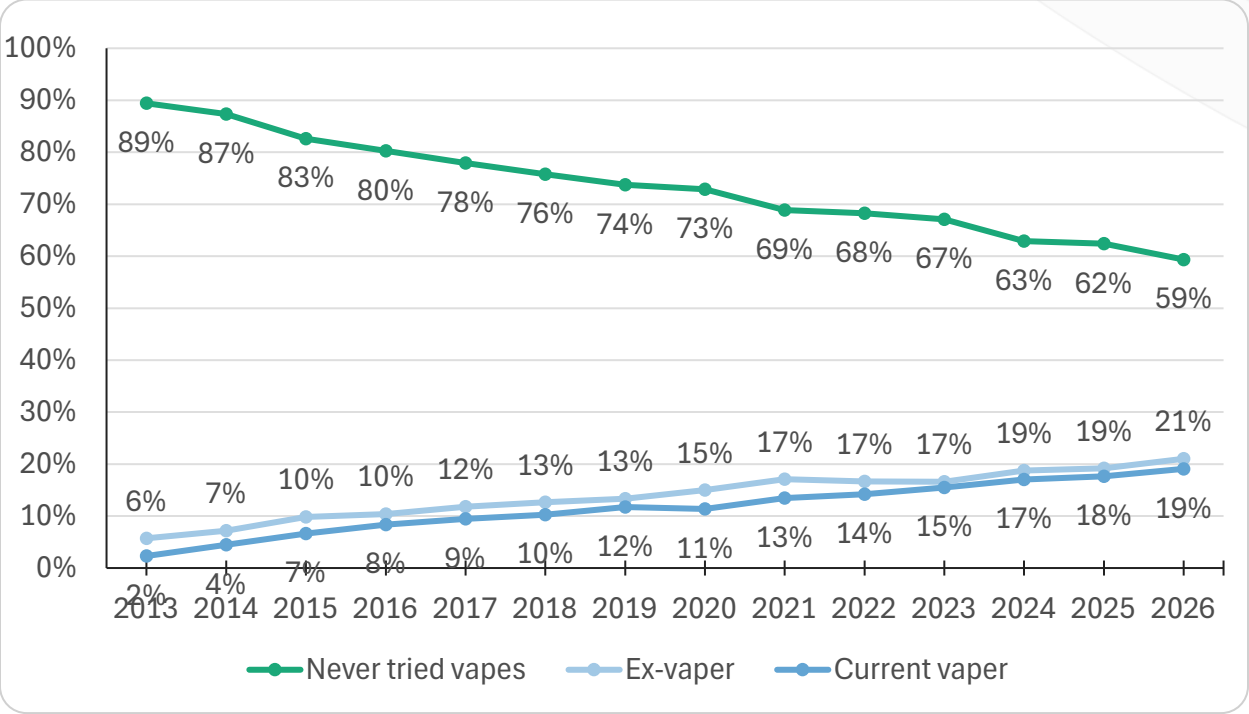


ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2013-2026. Unweighted base: Adult current smokers (2013=1,895, 2014=1,776, 2015=2,037, 2016=1,704, 2017=1,632, 2018=1,633, 2019=1,777, 2020=1,694, 2021=1,512, 2022=1,751, 2023=1,517, 2024=1,695, 2025=1,628, 2026=1,431)

Vaping prevalence in ex-smokers

About one in five ex-smokers currently vape (19%, Figure 4), and a further 21% have tried vaping but no longer vape. This means there are an estimated 3.3 million ex-smokers who currently vape and 3.7 million ex-smokers who have tried vaping but no longer do it.

Figure 4. Vaping status of ex-smokers, GB adult ex-smokers (2013-2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2013-2026. Unweighted base: Adult ex-smokers (2013=4,303, 2014=4,498 2015=3,889, 2016=4,354, 2017=4,438, 2018=4,388, 2019=4,150, 2020=4,283, 2021=4,228, 2022=4,207, 2023=4,105, 2024=4,232, 2025=4,196, 2026=4,129)

Over a quarter (27%) of ex-smokers say they used a vape to quit smoking, amounting to 4.8 million people. Some ex-smokers quit many years ago, before e-cigarettes were available.

More than half (58%) of ex-smokers who quit in the last five years say they used a vape to quit, which amounts to 2.5 million ex-smokers. Among those who quit smoking using a vape in the last 5 years, 67% are still vaping while 32% have quit vaping as well (Table 2). The remaining 2% can't recall or gave an invalid answer.

Table 2. Current vaping status in GB adult ex-smokers who quit smoking in the last five years using a vape (2026)

GB adult ex-smokers who quit smoking in the last five years using a vape	Currently vape	Have quit vaping	Can't recall/ invalid answer	ALL
%	67%	32%	2%	100%
Approx. number of people	1.6 million	780K	40K	2.5 million

ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2026. Unweighted base: Adult ex-smokers who quit in the last 5 years using a vape n=585

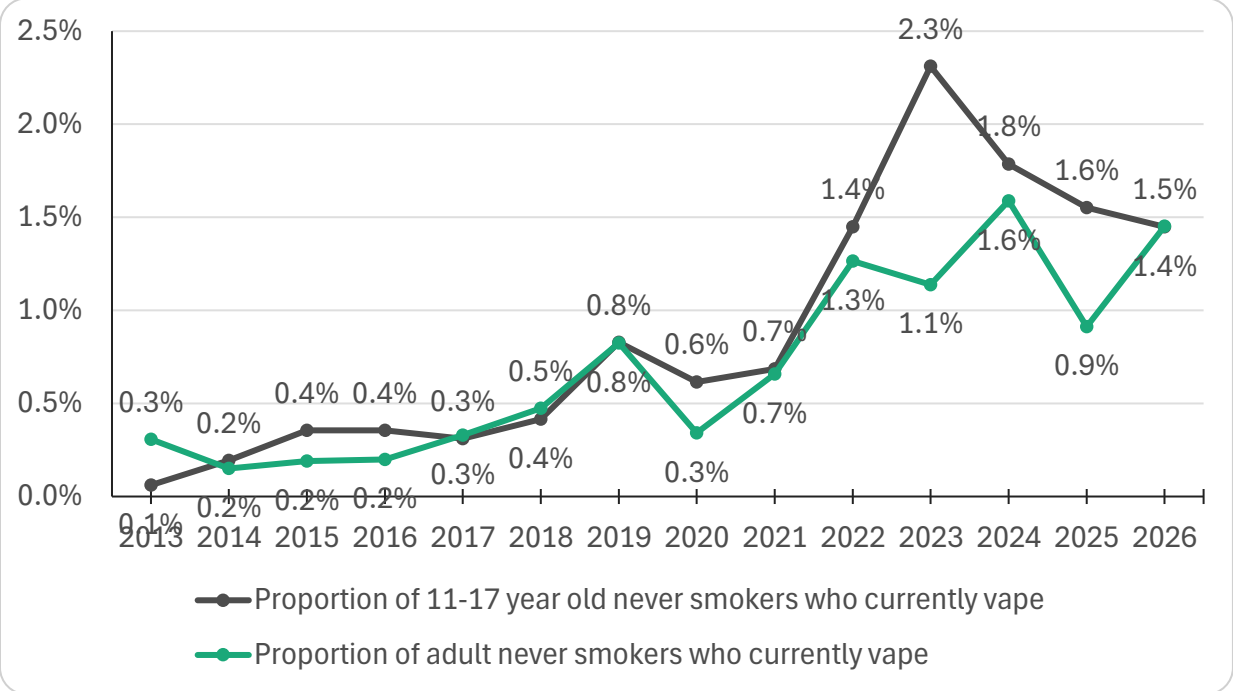
Our findings are consistent with the Smoking Toolkit Study (an ongoing series of monthly surveys of the adult population of England) which shows that vapes are the most popular quitting aid and that there is a clear association between changes in population rates of quitting smoking and prevalence of vaping.[2] For further discussion of the STS, see Appendix 1. If the association is causal, then the use of e-cigarettes in quit attempts is estimated to have helped in the region of 30,000 to 50,000 additional smokers to successfully quit each year in England since 2013.[3]

Our findings are also consistent with randomised controlled trials which provide good evidence that vapes that contain nicotine are an effective quitting aid. A Cochrane systematic review of the evidence concludes that there is high certainty evidence that vapes that contain nicotine increase long-term quit rates to a greater extent than Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT).[4] Furthermore, there is high certainty evidence that nicotine e-cigarettes, varenicline and cytisine are the stop-smoking aids most likely to help people quit smoking.[5] Varenicline and cytisine are only available on prescription and were used in less than 1% of quit attempts in 2022.[6]

Vaping behaviour in never smokers

About one in 70 adults who have never smoked currently vape (1.5%, Figure 5). Vaping among 11–17-year-olds who have never smoked also remains low at 1.4%. For more information on vaping among young people see Use of vapes (e-cigarettes) and other novel tobacco and nicotine products among young people in Great Britain.

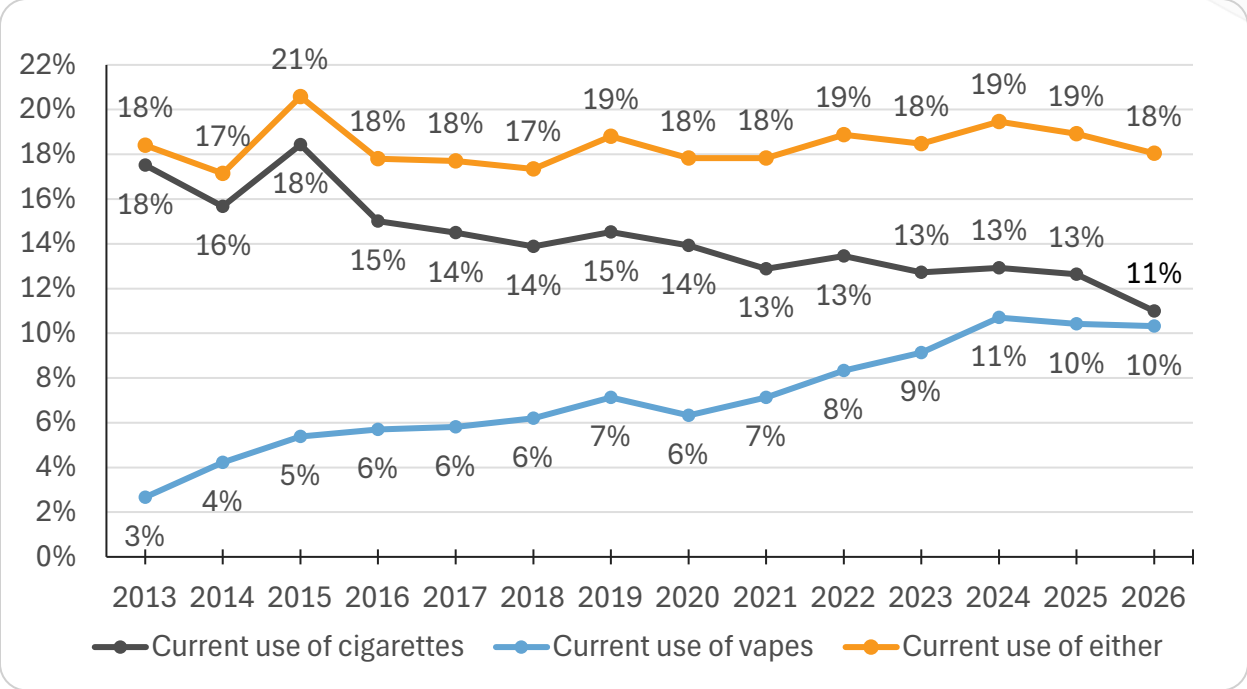
Figure 5. Proportion of never smokers who currently vape, GB youth never smokers aged 11-17 and adult never smokers (2013-2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Youth & Adult Surveys, 2013-2026. Unweighted base: youth never smokers, adult never smokers. See counts Table 5 in appendix.

The overall proportion of adults who are vaping, smoking or doing both has remained similar since 2015. (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Current use of cigarettes and/or vapes, GB adults (2013-2026)



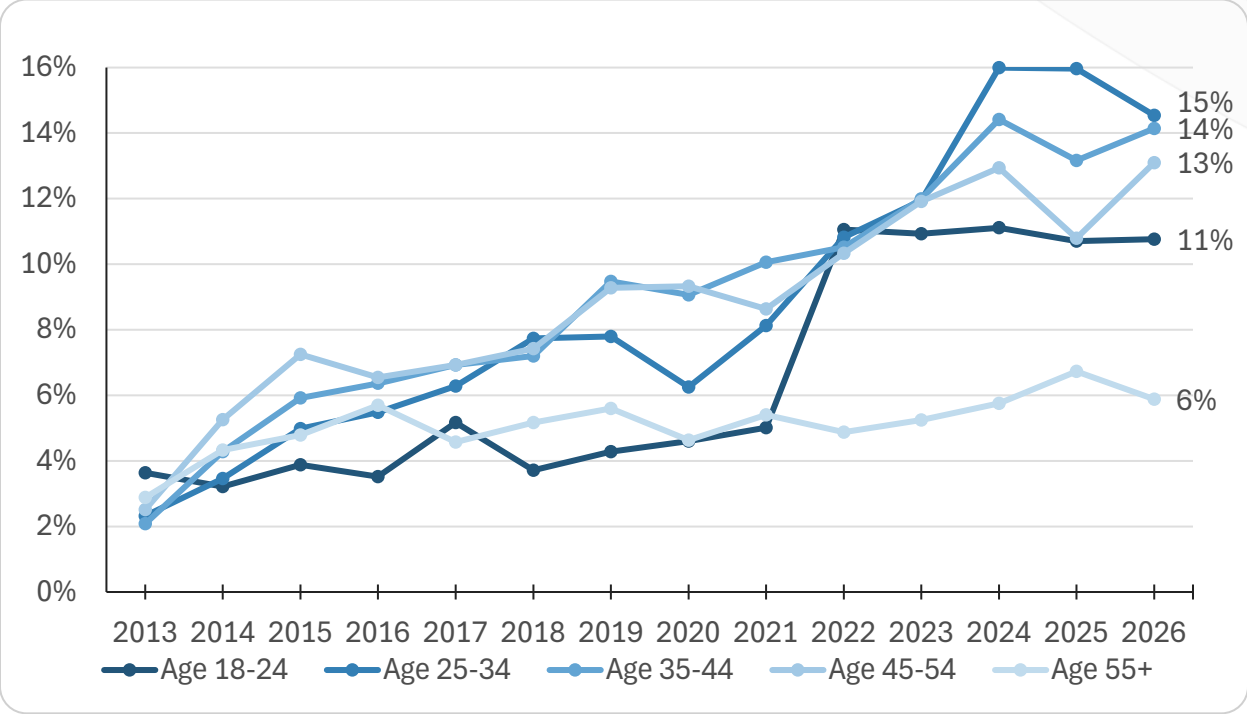
ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2013-2026. Unweighted base: All adults (2013=12,171, 2014=12,269, 2015=12,055, 2016=12,157, 2017=12,696, 2018=12,767, 2019=12,393, 2020=12,809, 2021=12,247 2022=13,088, 2023=12,271, 2024=13,266, 2025=13,314, 2026=13,259)

1.3 Vaping by age and SES

- Vaping has plateaued across all age groups. It is lowest in those aged 55 or over (6%) and highest in those aged 25-34 (15%).
- There has been an increase in 18-24 year olds trying vaping (from 32% in 2025 to 39% in 2026) but no change in current use which has been stable at 11% since 2021.
- Vaping is more common in more disadvantaged groups, reflecting their higher rates of smoking (ABC1 9% vape, C2DE 12% vape).

In the ASH/ YouGov survey, vaping is most common in 25–34-year-olds (15%, Figure 7) and 35–44-year-olds (14%). This differs from insights from the Smoking Toolkit Study run by UCL which finds vaping to be most common among those under 25. The difference is likely linked to different sampling, questions and definitions in the two surveys. Common across both surveys is that vaping among younger adults has plateaued over the last couple of years.

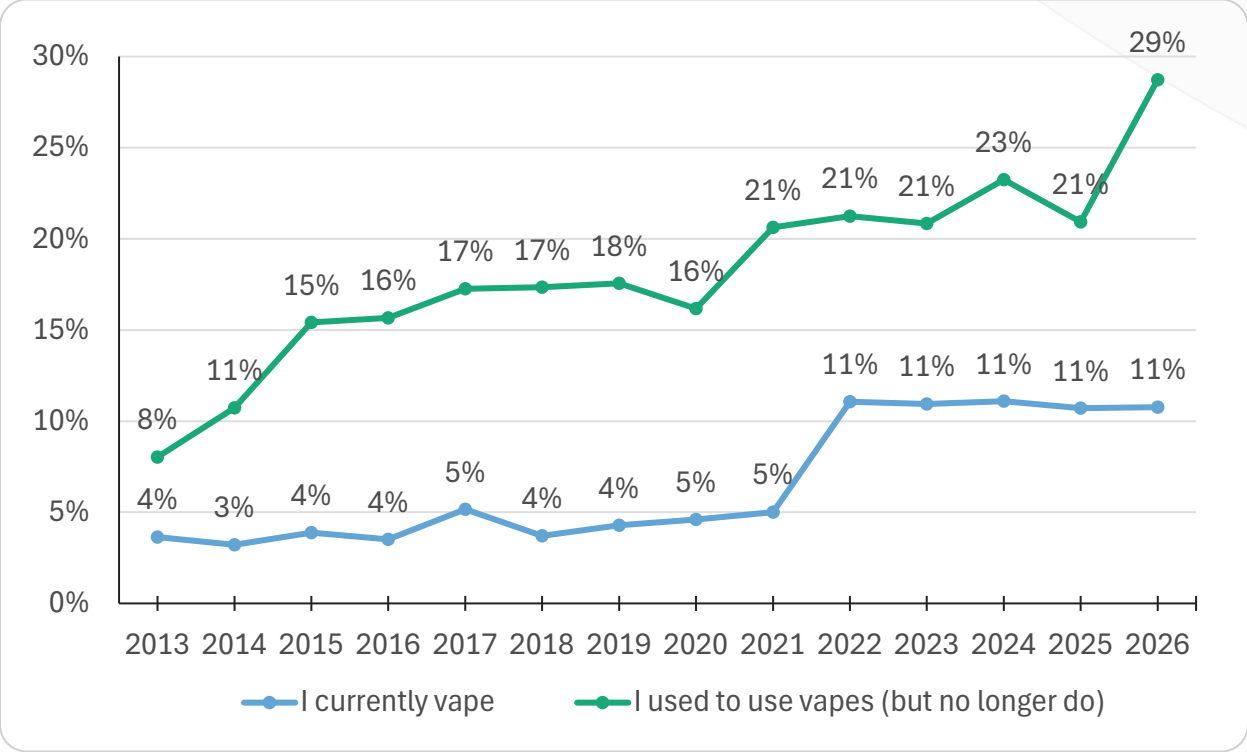
Figure 7. Current use of vapes in different age groups, GB adults (2013-2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2013-2026. Unweighted base: see counts Table 6 in appendix.

Ever having tried vapes is over three times the level of current use among 18–24-year-olds in the ASH survey (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Use of vapes by 18–24-year-olds (2013-2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2013-2026. Unweighted base: Adults aged 18-24 (2013=1,324, 2014=1,026, 2015=1,305, 2016=1,181, 2017=1,246, 2018=1,300, 2019=1,604, 2020=1,336, 2021=1,194, 2022=2,127, 2023=1,407, 2024=2,365, 2025=2,241, 2026=2,323)

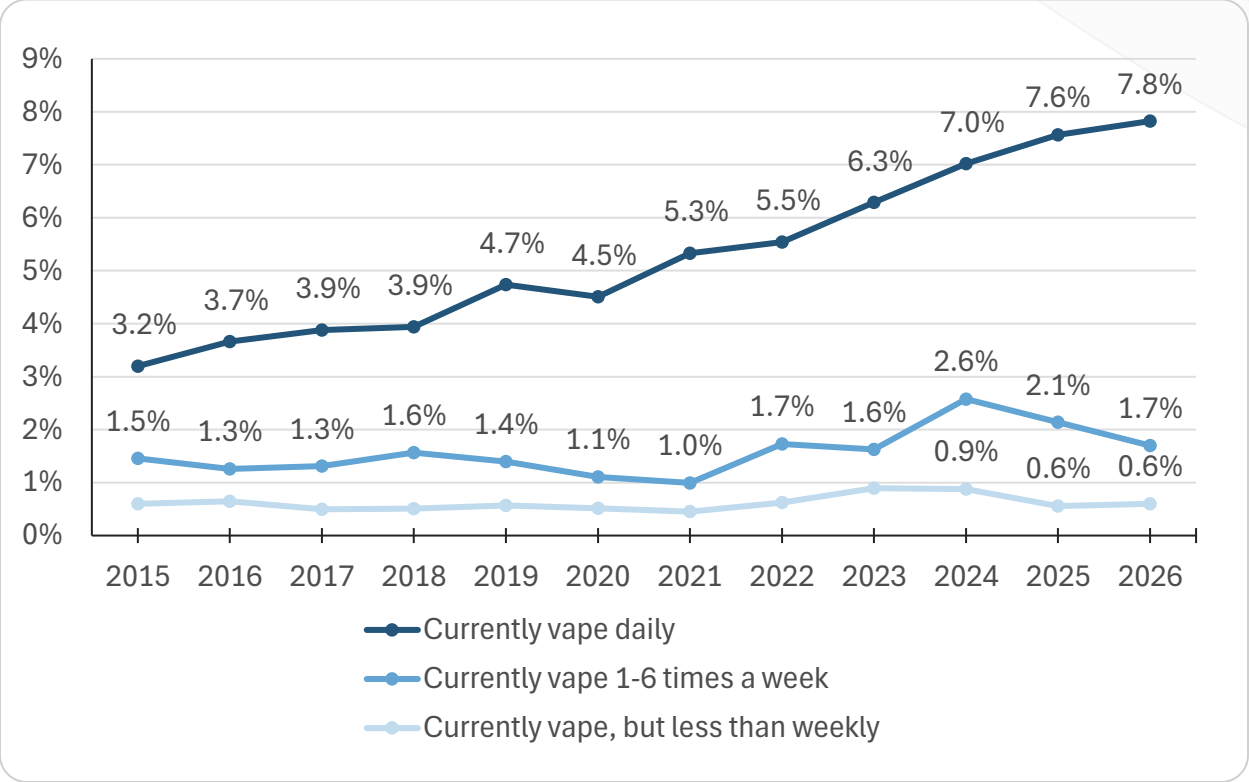
Vaping is more common among more disadvantaged groups reflecting that smoking is also concentrated in these populations. In the ASH/YouGov survey, 12% of those in social grades C2, D or E vape, compared with 9% of those in social grades A, B or C1.

1.4 Duration and frequency

- Daily vaping has increased, so now 7.8% of adults vape every day, up from 4.5% in 2020.
- Of ex-smokers who vape, 88% vape daily and 60% of dual users do.
- Daily smoking is declining, falling from 9.7% of people in 2020 to 6.6% in 2026.
- 59% of ex-smokers who vape have done so for over 3 years.

Daily vaping has increased significantly in recent years from 4.5% of the population in 2020 to 7.8% in 2026 (Figure 9). From 2020 to 2026 non-daily vaping has remained at a similar level meaning that the rise in vaping during this time has largely been in daily use.

Figure 9. Vaping frequency, GB adults (2015-2026)

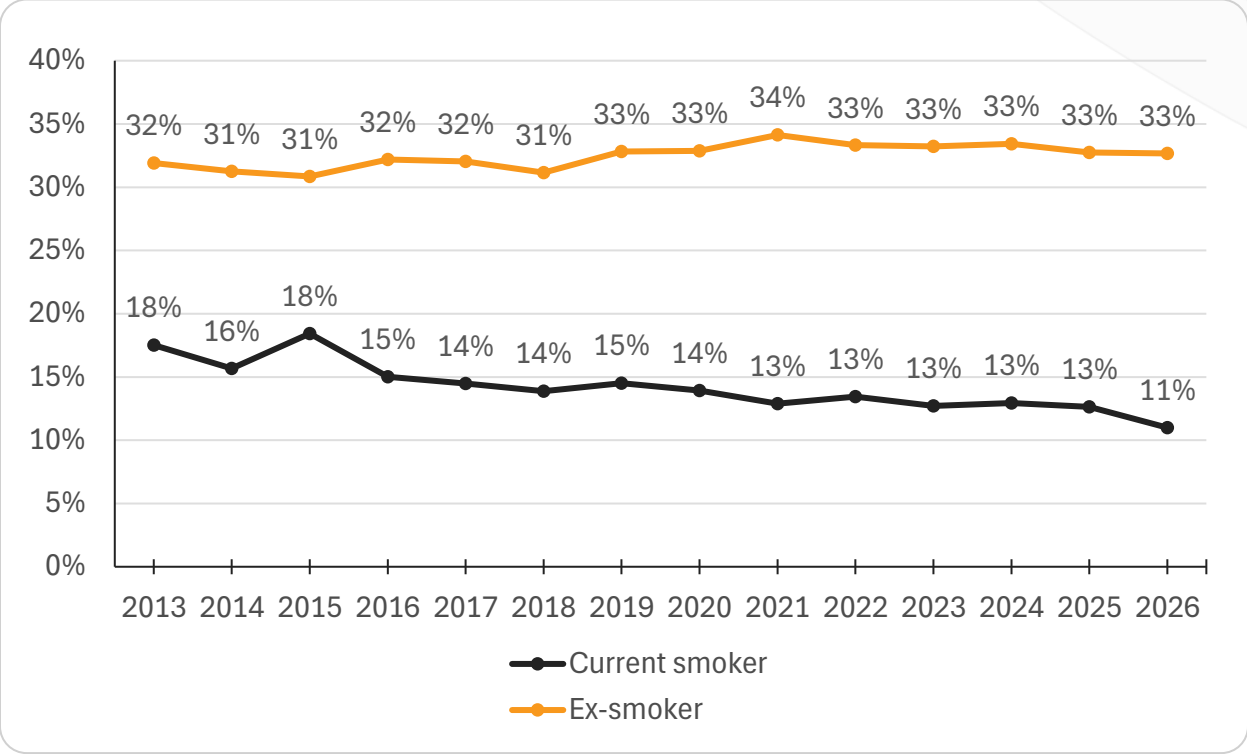


ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2015-2026. Unweighted base: All adults (2015=12,055, 2016=12,157, 2017=12,696, 2018=12,767, 2019=12,393, 2020=12,809, 2021=12,247 2022=13,088, 2023=12,271, 2024=13,266, 2025=13,314, 2026=13,259)

It seems likely that daily vaping is displacing at least some smoking. [7, 8]

Smoking rates in the UK have been steadily decreasing for the past 50 years. [9] In the ASH survey in 2008, 24% of adults smoked, compared with 11% of adults in 2026 (Figure 10).

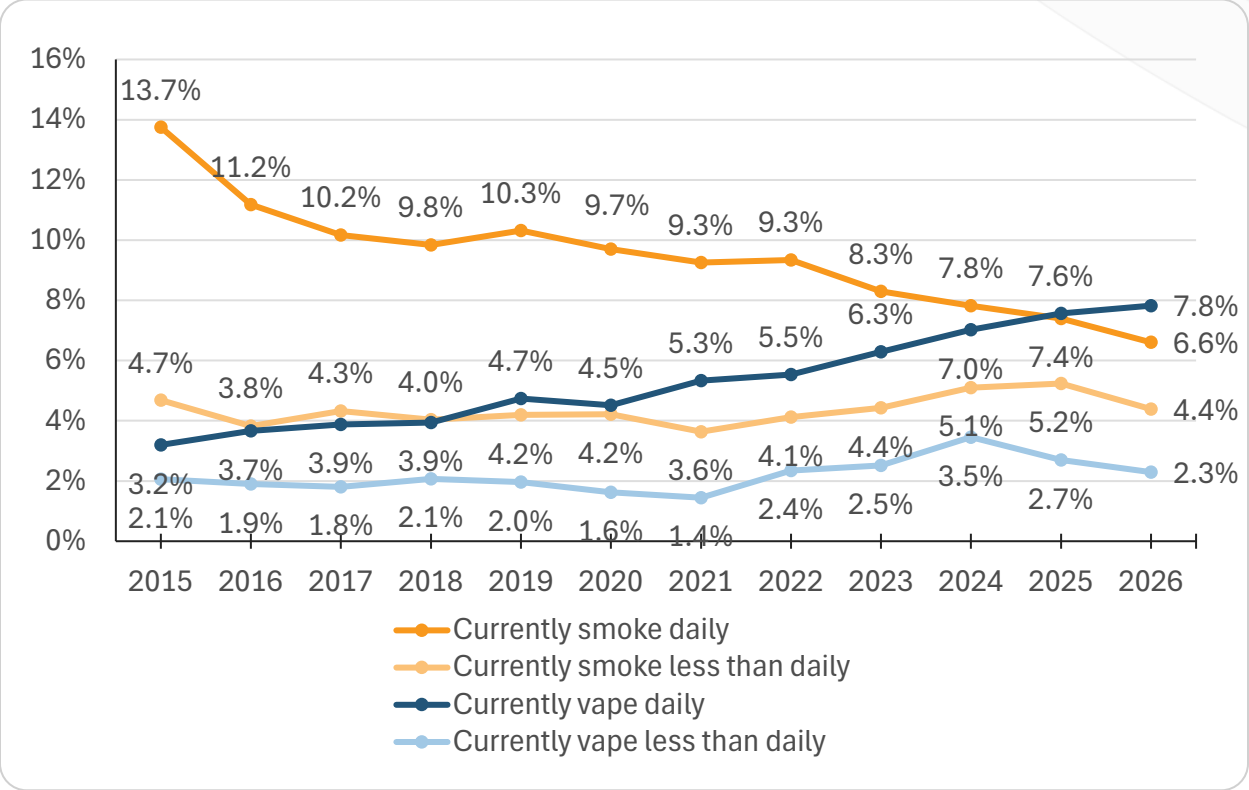
Figure 10. Smoking status of GB adults (2013-2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2013-2026. Unweighted base: All adults (2013=12,171, 2014=12,269, 2015=12,055, 2016=12,157, 2017=12,696, 2018=12,767, 2019=12,393, 2020=12,809, 2021=12,247 2022=13,088, 2023=12,271, 2024=13,266, 2025=13,314, 2026=13,259)

Daily smoking has dropped from 9.7% in 2020 to 6.6% in 2026 during the period that daily vaping has grown (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Smoking and vaping frequency, GB adults (2015-2026)

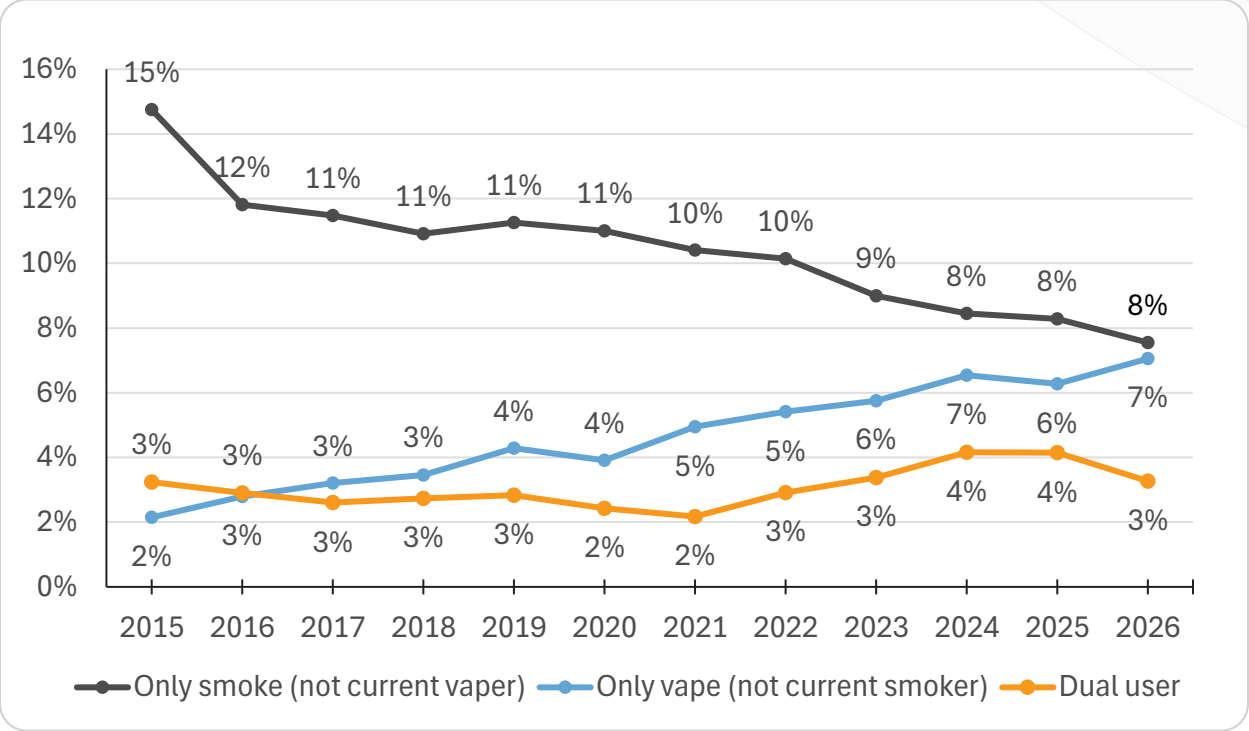


ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2015-2026. Unweighted base: All adults (2015=12,055, 2016=12,157, 2017=12,696, 2018=12,767, 2019=12,393, 2020=12,809, 2021=12,247 2022=13,088, 2023=12,271, 2024=13,266, 2025=13,314, 2026=13,259)

The proportion of adults who smoke but do not vape has almost halved between 2015 (15%) and 2026 (8%, Figure 12). Over the same time, the proportion of adults who vape but do not smoke has more than trebled, from 2% in 2015 to 7% in 2026.

Over the same period, 2-4% of adults both smoked and vaped. While the overall rate of dual use is similar in 2015 and 2026, it was significantly higher than usual in 2024 and 2025 (4%), but has fallen in 2026 (3%).

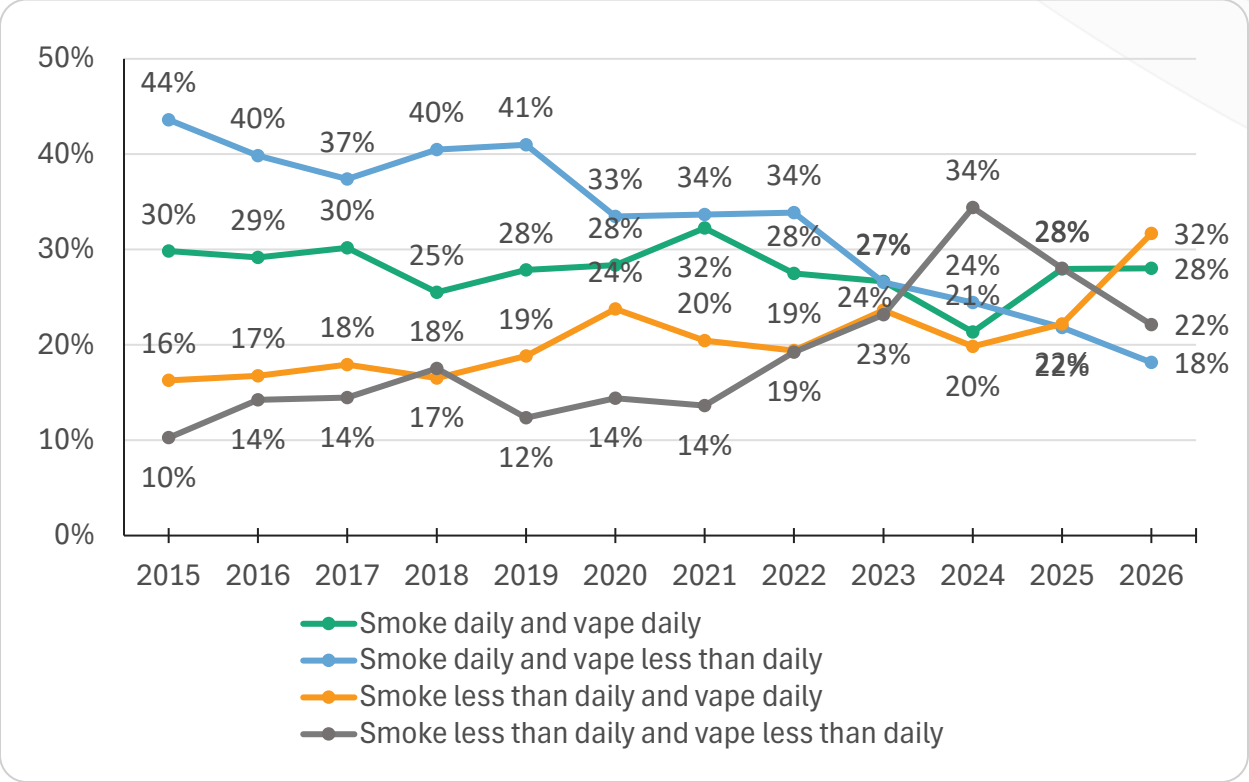
Figure 12. Exclusive smoking, exclusive vaping and dual use, GB adults (2015-2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2013-2026. Unweighted base: All adults (2013=12,171, 2014=12,269, 2015=12,055, 2016=12,157, 2017=12,696, 2018=12,767, 2019=12,393, 2020=12,809, 2021=12,247 2022=13,088, 2023=12,271, 2024=13,266, 2025=13,314, 2026=13,259)

In 2015 it was most common for dual users to vape non-daily and smoke daily (44% of dual users, Figure 13), but in 2026 this is now less common (18%). Over the same period there has also been an increase in proportion of dual users who both vape and smoke non-daily (from 10% to 22%), and who vape daily while smoking less than daily (from 16% to 32%).

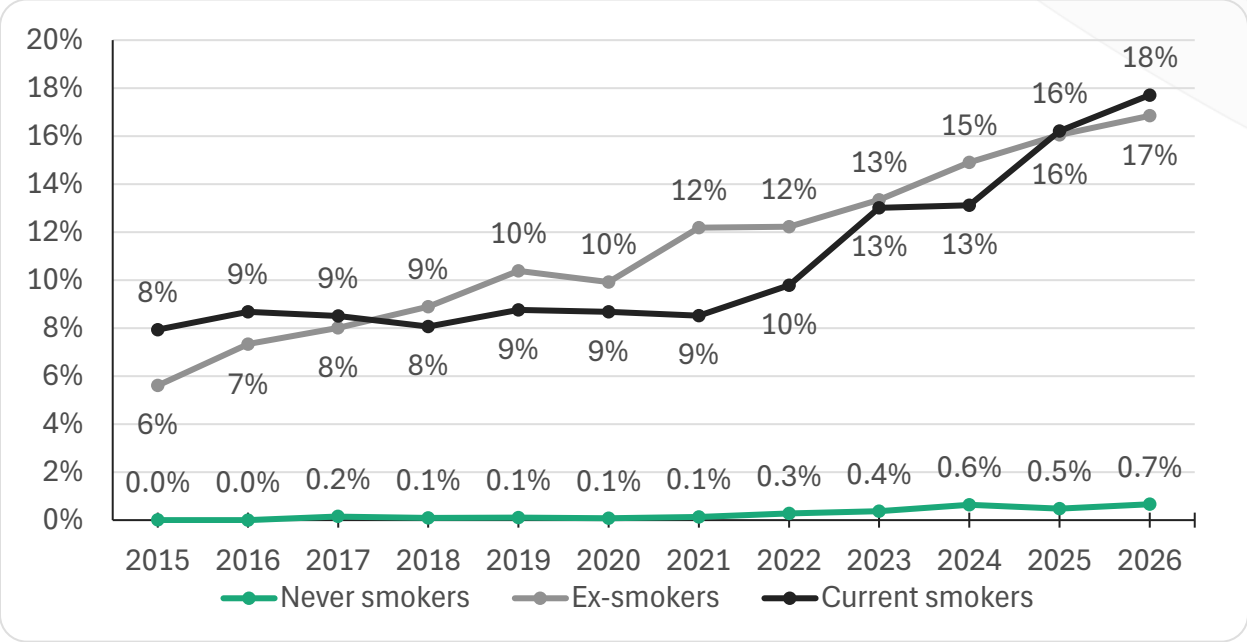
Figure 13. Smoking and vaping frequency combinations, GB dual users (2015-2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2015-2026. Unweighted base: Current smokers who also currently vape, excluding those who have vaped 'once or twice' or don't know their frequency of vaping (2015=359, 2016=321, 2017=288, 2018=300, 2019=320, 2020=280, 2021=239, 2022=381, 2023=379, 2024=541, 2025=523, 2026=436).

While daily vaping is common among ex-smokers (17% of all ex-smokers) and current smokers (18%), it is not common among never smokers who vape (0.7%). However, daily vaping in this group has still risen significantly since 2021 (Figure 14).

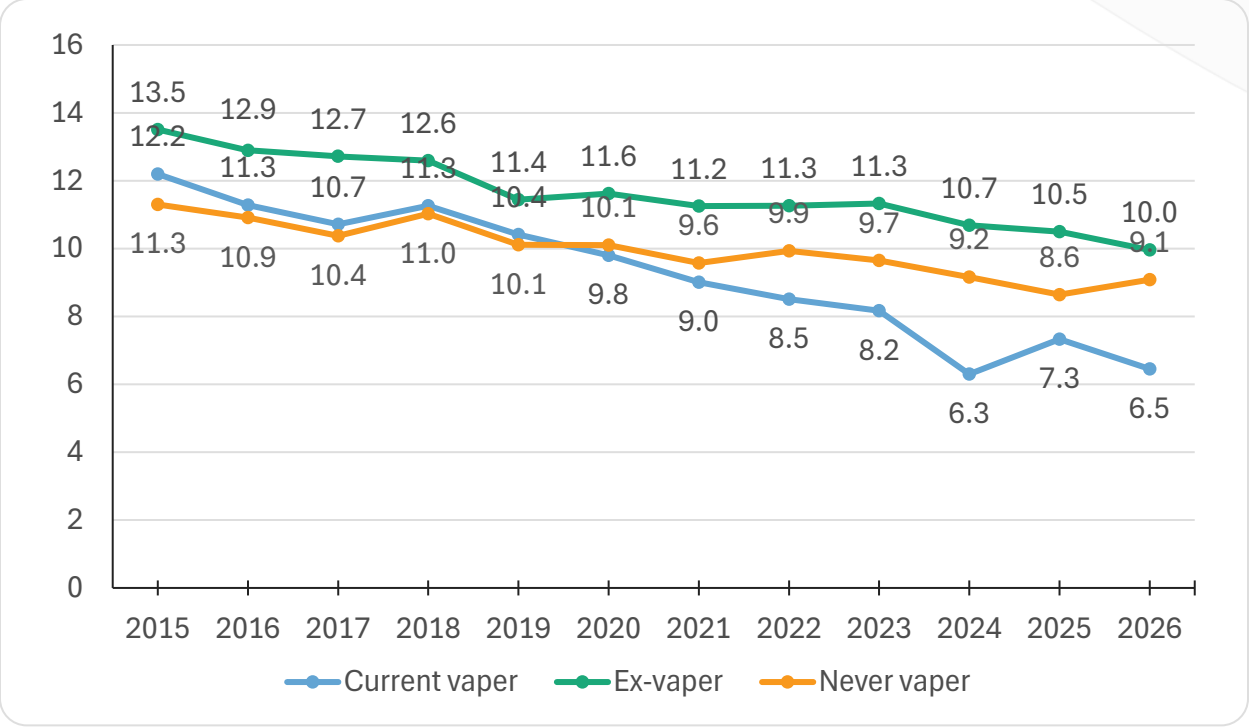
Figure 14. Daily vaping by smoking status, GB adults (2013-2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2015-2026. Unweighted base: Adults who never smoke, are ex-smokers and currently smoke, see counts Table 7 in appendix.

The average number of cigarettes smoked by smokers has fallen by more in current vapers (from 12.2 per day in 2015 to 6.5 in 2026; a 47% decrease, Figure 15), than in ex-vapers (26%) or never vapers (19%).

Figure 15. Average number of cigarettes per day by vaping status, GB adult smokers (2015-2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2015-2026. Unweighted base: Adults who currently smoke, see counts Table 8 in appendix. Answers to number of cigarettes per day are banded, so average cigarette numbers are approximated by using the middle values.

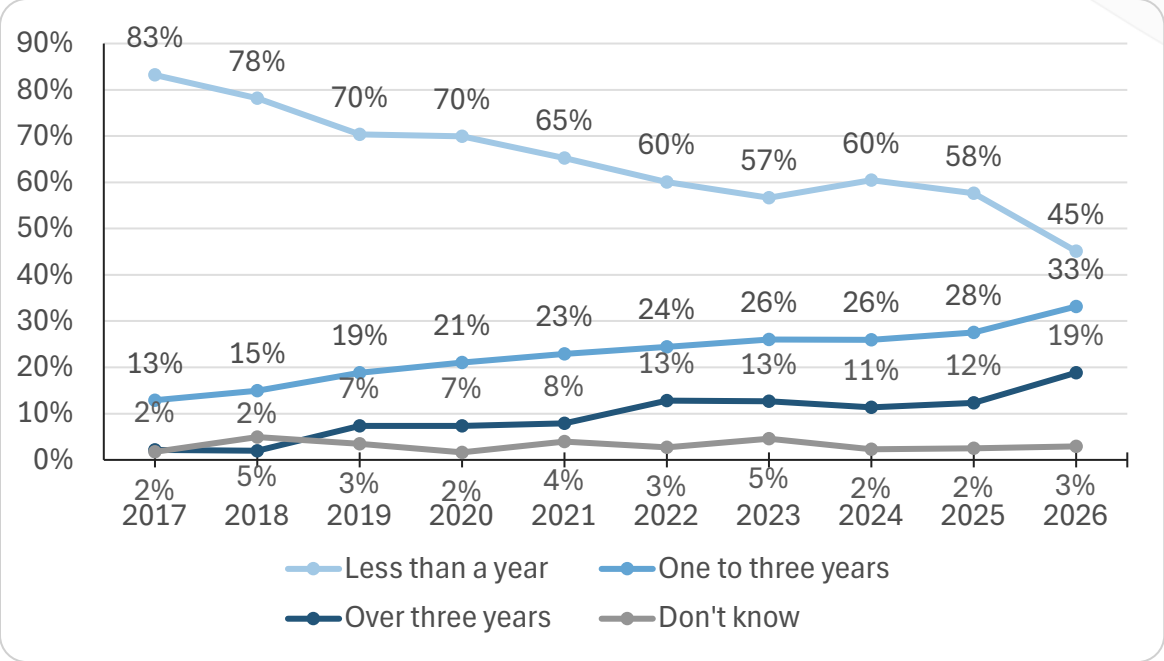
Vaping duration in ex-smokers

Among those who have vaped or currently vape, vaping over a number of years after quitting smoking is common. Our survey finds that 59% of people who no longer smoke but still vape have vaped for more than 3 years.

However, many people also stop vaping after they have quit smoking. The duration of use varies but on average among those who used a vape to quit smoking the duration of vaping is around 3 years.

The proportion of ex-smoker, ex-vapers that used vapes for less than a year has fallen over time from 83% in 2017 to 45% in 2026 (Figure 16). The proportion using vapes for over a year before stopping has more than trebled from 15% in 2017 to 52% in 2026, with 19% saying they vaped for more than three years before stopping.

Figure 16. Duration of vaping by ex-cigarette smokers who have also stopped vaping, GB adult ex-smoker ex-vapers (2017-2026)

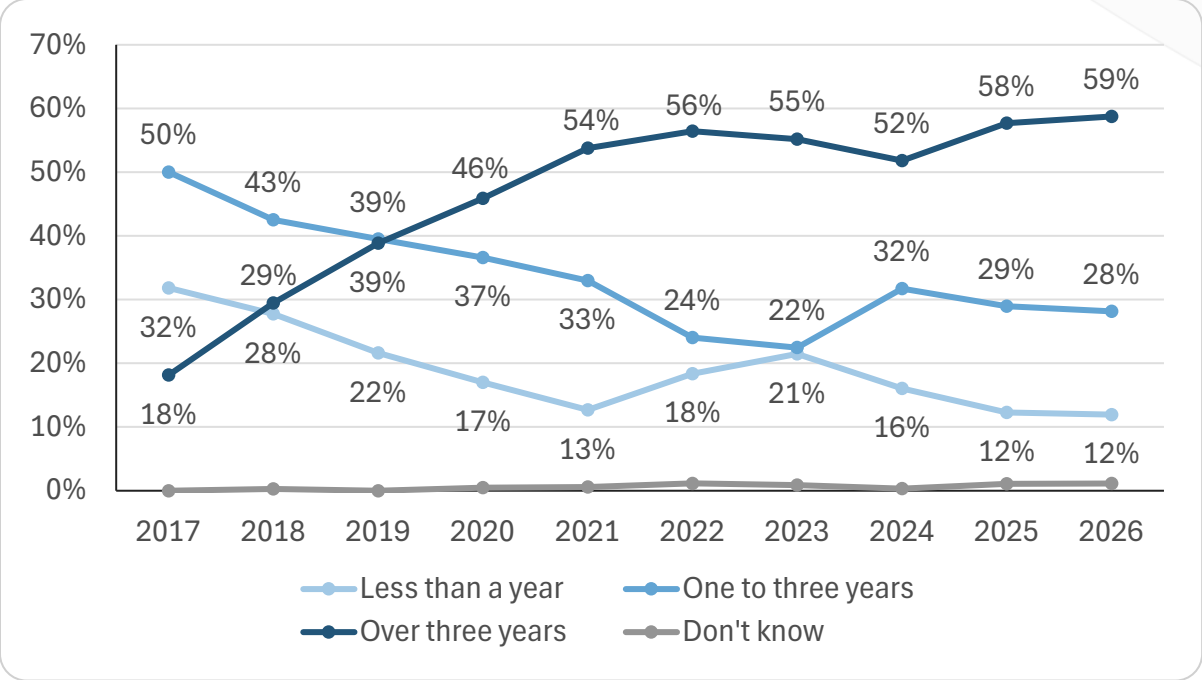


ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2017-2026. Unweighted base: Adult ex-smokers who no longer vape but once did, excluding those who have vaped 'once or twice' or don't know their frequency of vaping (2017=233, 2018=242, 2019=272, 2020=321, 2021=402, 2022=418, 2023=407, 2024=461, 2025=536, 2026=573)

In 2026, more than half (59%) of ex-smokers who vape said they had been vaping for over 3 years, compared with 18% in 2017 when we started asking this question (Figure 17).

- 12% have vaped for under 1 year
- 28% have vaped for 1 - 3 years
- 21% have vaped for 3 - 5 years
- 27% have vaped for 5 - 10 years
- 10% have vaped for over 10 years

Figure 17. Duration of vaping by ex-cigarette smokers who currently vape, GB adult ex-smokers who currently vape (2017-2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2017-2026. Unweighted base: Adult ex-smokers who currently vape, excluding those who have vaped 'once or twice' or don't know their frequency of vaping (2017=357, 2018=399, 2019=456, 2020=473, 2021=533, 2022=586, 2023=604, 2024=722, 2025=713, 2026=752)

Many people who were both ex-smokers and ex-vapers had previously vaped regularly, with 40% saying they vaped daily and 51% at least weekly. Most ex-smokers who currently vape do so daily (88%), with 97% vaping at least weekly.

2. Motivations and attitudes

Reasons for use

- Ex-smokers: quitting (24%), stress (17%)
- Smokers: reduce smoking (17%), enjoyment (15%)
- Never-smokers: stress (29%), enjoyment (26%)

Satisfaction and barriers

- 63% of ex-smokers who vape find vaping as or more satisfying than smoking
- Barriers faced by smokers to vaping: fear of substituting one addiction for another (25%), safety concerns (20%)

Misperceptions of harm

- 54% of people believe vaping is as/more harmful than smoking
- Misperceptions are highest among smokers who have never vaped (61%) and smokers who have stopped vaping (58%)

Quitting vaping

- 19% of those who have tried to quit vaping using a particular method have used smoking as an aid to quit vaping

2.1 Reasons for use

- Ex-smokers: quitting (24%), stress (17%)
- Smokers: reduce smoking (17%), enjoyment (15%)
- Never-smokers: stress (29%), enjoyment (26%)

Reasons for vaping

Among those who vaped more than once or twice, the four main reasons for vaping are as an aid to quitting smoking (18%), followed by enjoying the experience (16%), to help with stress or mental health (16%) and preventing relapse (12%).

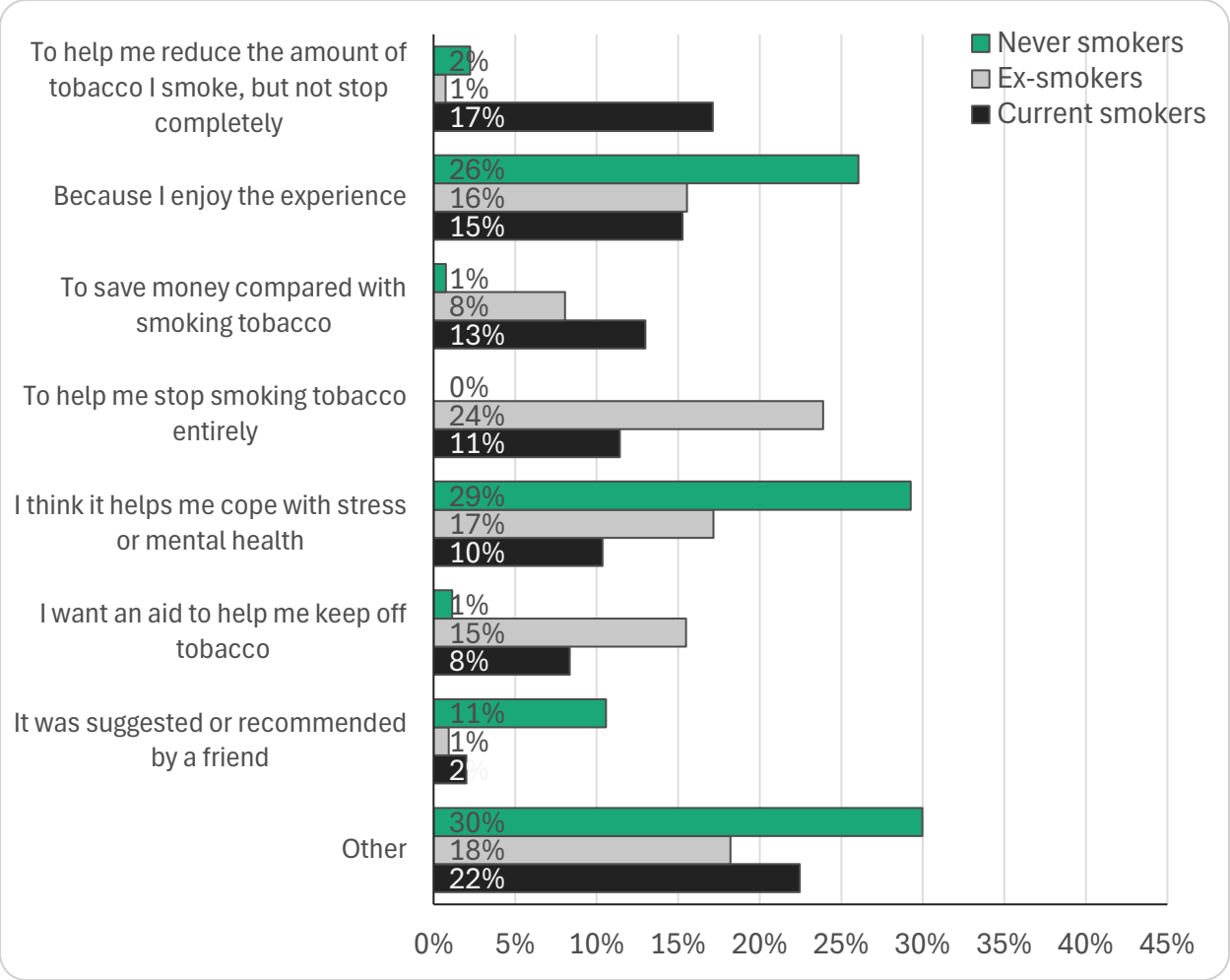
Reasons for vaping by smoking status

When ex-smokers who vape are asked for their main reason for vaping, the most frequently cited reasons are to help them quit smoking (24%), to cope with stress or mental health (17%), enjoying the experience (16%) and as an aid to keep off tobacco (15%). (Figure 18)

The main reasons that dual users (current vapers who also smoke) give for vaping are to help them to reduce the amount smoked (17%), enjoying the experience (15%), to save money compared with smoking tobacco (13%) and to help stop smoking tobacco entirely (11%).

The three main reasons for vaping among never smokers are a reason not listed (30%), to cope with stress or mental health (29%), enjoying the experience (26%) and that it was suggested or recommended by a friend (11%).

Figure 18. Main reason for vaping by smoking status, GB adult vapers (2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2026. Unweighted base: Adults who currently vape, excluding those who have vaped 'once or twice' or don't know their frequency of vaping (Smokers=436, Ex-smokers=752, Never smokers=107)
Other options to choose are grouped under 'Other':
'I need something to help deal with situations where I cannot work (e.g. workplaces, bars or restaurants'
'To avoid putting those around me at risk due to second-hand tobacco smoke'
'Because I feel I am addicted to smoking tobacco and can not stop using it even though I want to'
'Just to give it a try'
'It was advised by a health professional'
'I think it helps me control my weight'
'Other'
These were all chosen by less than 10% of any group.

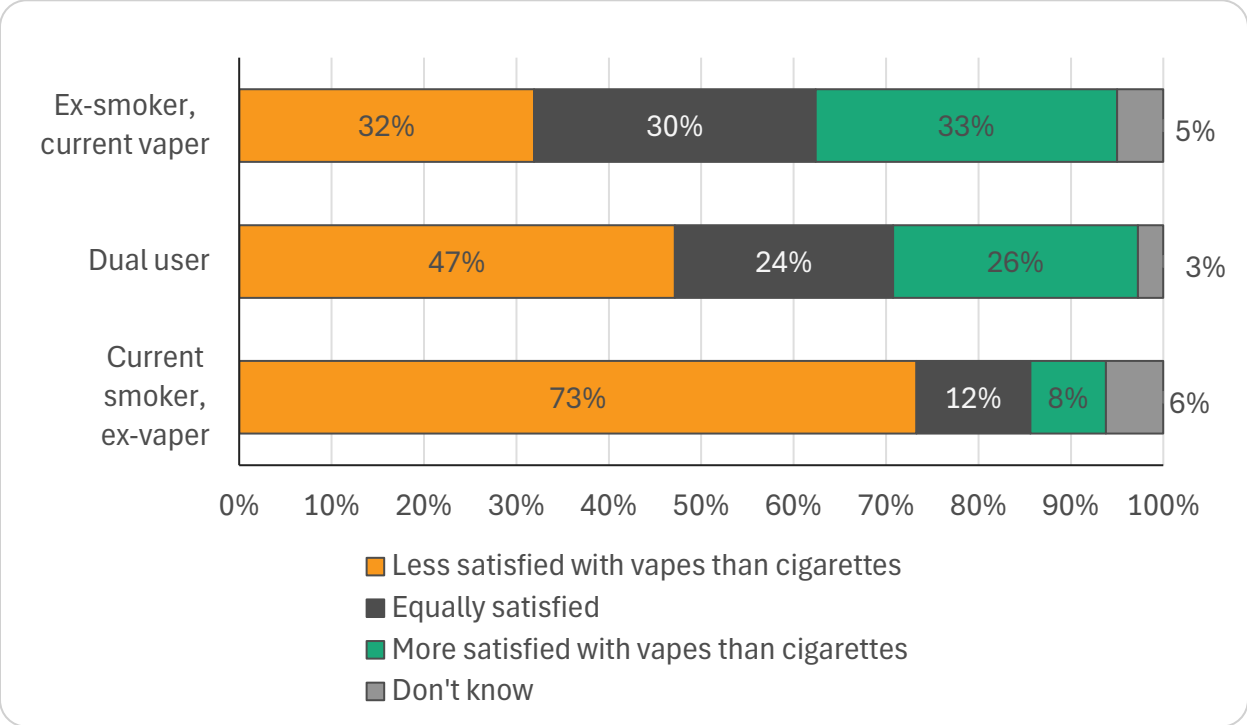
2.2 Satisfaction and barriers

- 63% of ex-smokers find vaping as or more satisfying than smoking
- Most common barriers preventing smokers from trying vapes: fear of substituting one addiction for another (25%), safety concerns (20%)

Those who tried vaping were also asked how satisfying they found it in comparison with smoking:

- **Ex-smokers who currently vape:** Nearly two thirds of e-cigarette users who no longer smoke find vaping more or equally satisfying compared with smoking (63%). The proportion finding it less satisfying is 32% (Figure 19).
- **Smokers who currently vape (dual users):** Half (50%) of vapers who also smoke find vaping more or equally satisfying compared with smoking, while 47% find it less satisfying.
- **Smokers who are ex-vapers:** Three quarters of current smokers who tried vaping but stopped found vapes less satisfying than cigarettes (73%).

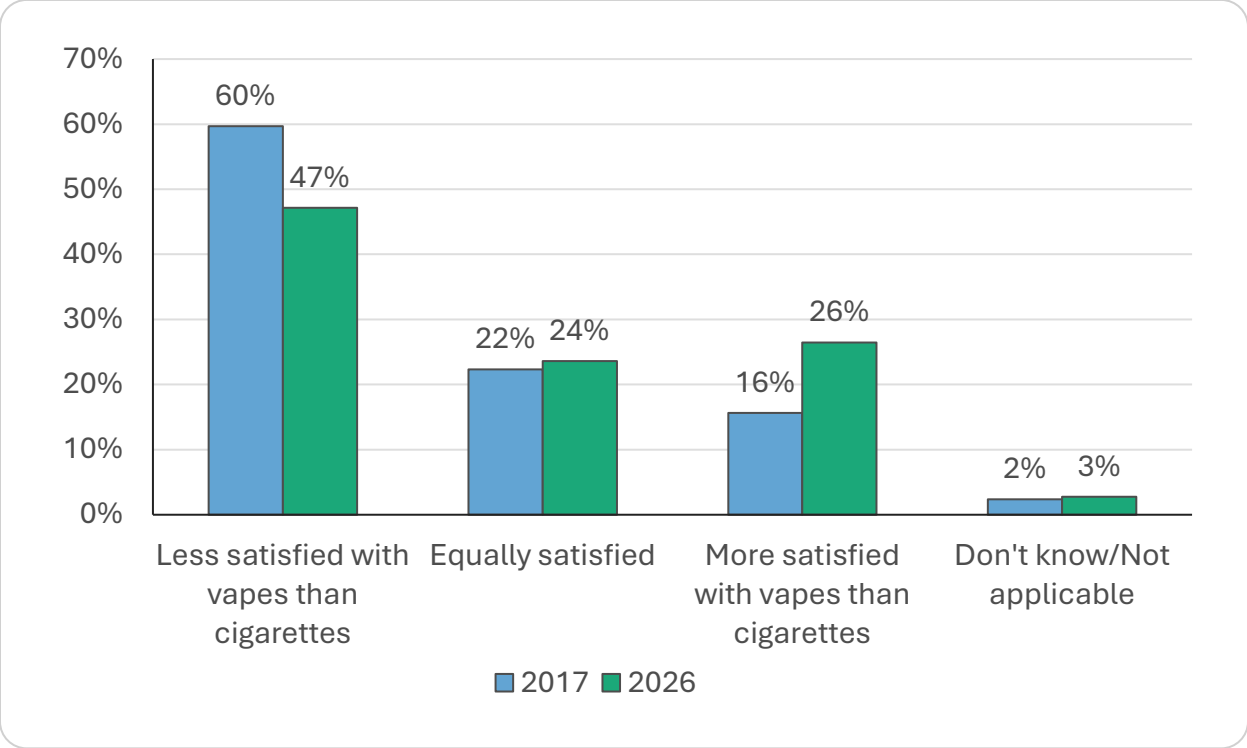
Figure 19. Vaping satisfaction levels compared with cigarette smoking, GB adults (2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2026. Unweighted base: Adults who have ever smoked and ever vaped, excluding those who have vaped 'once or twice' or don't know their frequency of vaping (ex-smoker current vaper=752, dual user=436, current smoker, ex-vaper=321)

Among dual users, there has been a small fall since 2017 in the proportion who think vaping is less satisfying, and a small increase in those finding vaping as or more satisfying (Figure 20).

Figure 20. Vaping satisfaction levels, GB adults who currently smoke and vape (2017 & 2026)



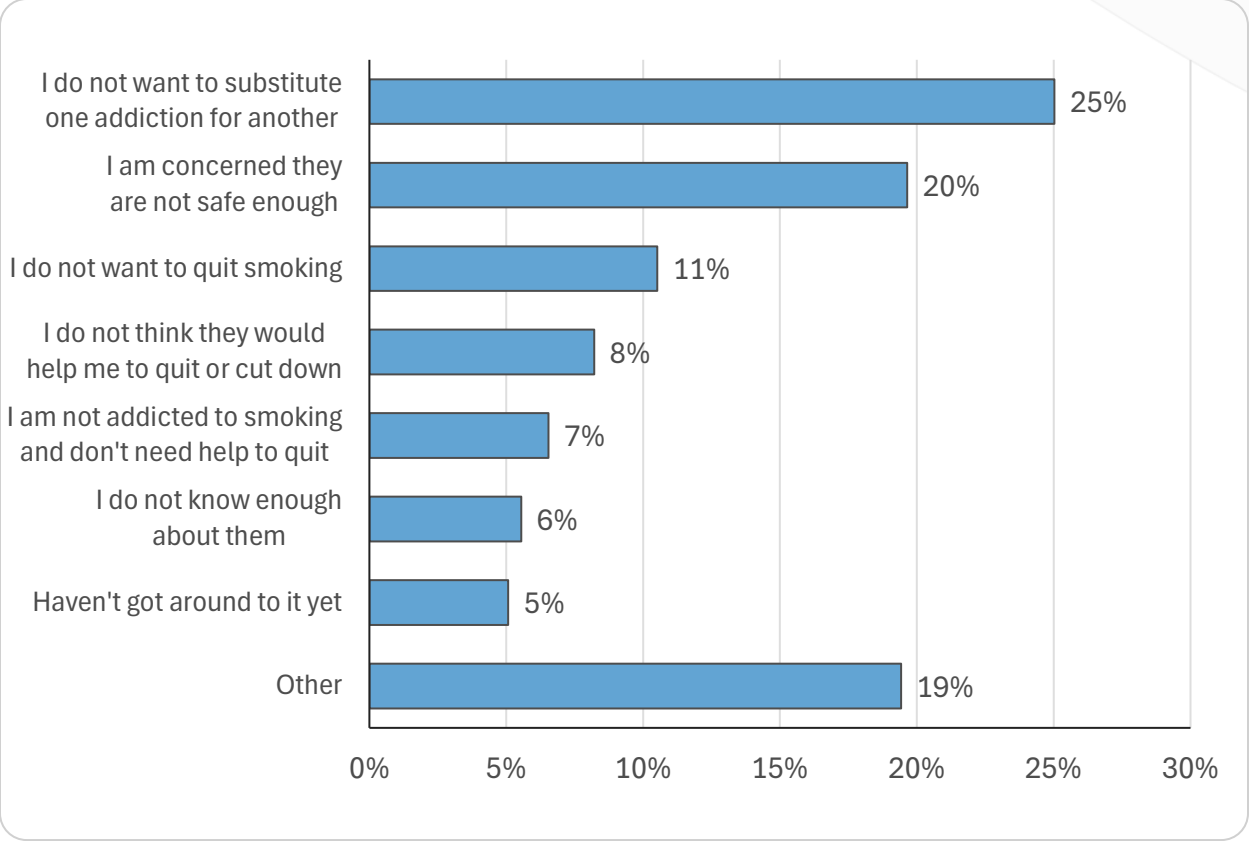
ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2017 & 2026. Unweighted base: Adults who currently smoke and currently vape, excluding those who have vaped 'once or twice' or don't know their frequency of vaping (2017=288, 2026=436)

Barriers to smokers switching to vaping

Just over a quarter of smokers (28%) have not yet tried vapes. The top four reasons given for not trying vapes are:

- I don't want to substitute one addiction for another (25%, Figure 21)
- I am concerned they are not safe enough (20%)
- I do not want to quit smoking (11%)
- I do not think they will help me quit or cut down (8%)

Figure 21. Main reason for not trying vaping among smokers, GB adult smoker never-vapers who have heard of vapes (2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2026. Unweighted base: Adults who are current smokers, who have not tried vapes but had heard of them (n=350)
Other options to choose are grouped under 'Other':
'I do not like the way they look'
'They cost too much'
'I'm using other things to help me quit smoking'
'I would be embarrassed to use them in public'
'There are too many products to choose from'
'They are difficult to get hold of'
'Other'
'Other' was chosen by 5% and the other options by 5% or less of the 2026 cohort.

Four in ten smokers (41%) have tried but no longer use vapes. Although the question wasn't asked in 2026, in 2025 the main reasons cited for stopping using them were:

- 25%: vaping did not feel like smoking a cigarette
- 18%: vaping did not help them deal with cravings
- 12%: they had only tried them to see what they were like
- 10% made them feel unwell
- 9% not safe enough
- 7% didn't like the taste

Some of this group stopped vaping some time ago (35% more than two years ago, 17% more than five years ago). The design of vape products has changed in the last few years, and some of these issues might apply less to vapes currently on the market.

2.3 Misperceptions of harm

- 54% believe vaping is as/more harmful than smoking
- Misperceptions are highest among smokers who have never vaped (61%) and smokers who have stopped vaping (58%)

While vaping is not completely risk-free, the level of risk is much lower than for smoking. However, despite growing evidence to support this, NICE recommendation of vapes as a quitting aid and government investment in a 'swap to stop' scheme harm misperceptions are now as inaccurate as they have been at any point this survey has been conducted.

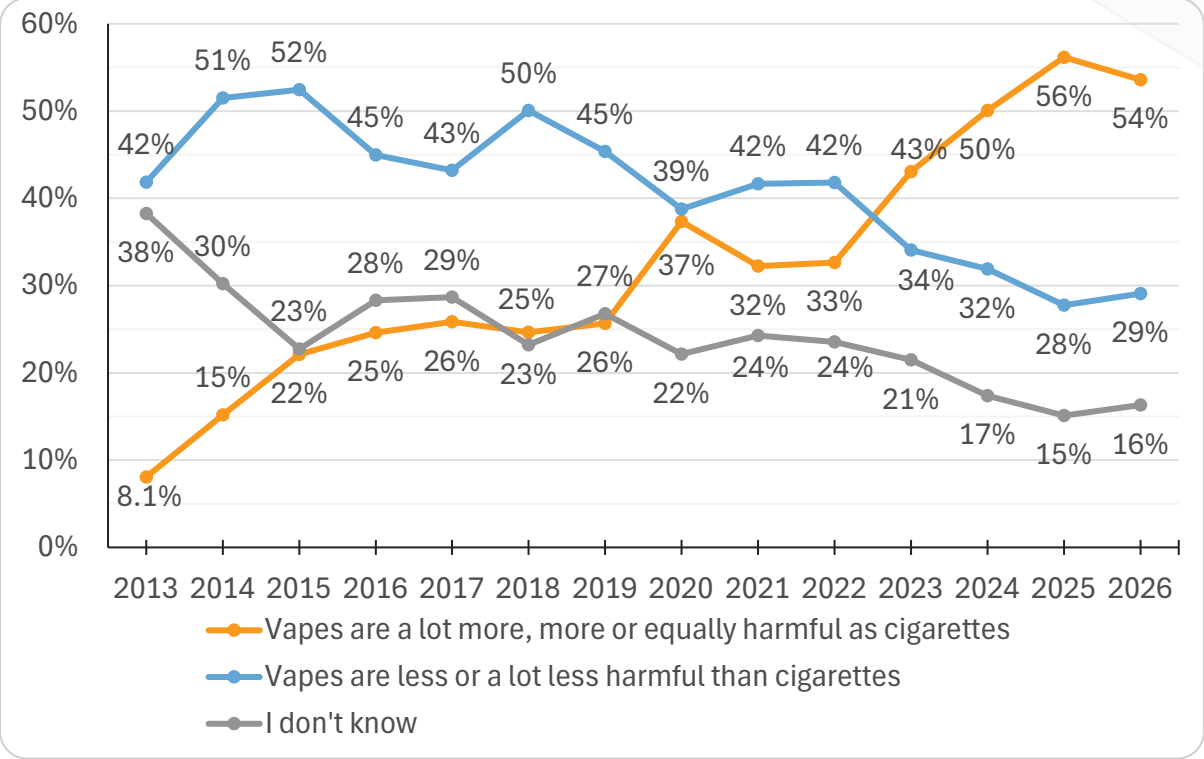
All adults

From 2016 to 2019 around one in four adults inaccurately believed vaping to be as, or more harmful than smoking, with between 43% and 50% believing it to be less harmful (Figure 22). In 2020 inaccurate views rose significantly to 37% and accurate views declined to 39%. The likely driver for this change in public perception was significant media coverage of injuries to health in the US from vaping products banned in the UK. [10] [11]

Between 2022 and 2025, misperceptions about the harms of vaping rose sharply each year, with over half (54%) of adults in 2026 believing vaping to be more or equally harmful compared with cigarettes. In 2026, three people in ten (29%) correctly believe that vapes are less harmful than tobacco cigarettes (23% "less", 6% "a lot less").

The drop in the accurate public understanding that vaping is less harmful than smoking in the past two years could be linked with widespread media coverage of youth vaping which has not always clearly distinguished the differences between the harms from smoking and vaping.

Figure 22. Perceptions of harm of vapes compared with cigarettes, GB adults who have heard of vapes (2013-2026)



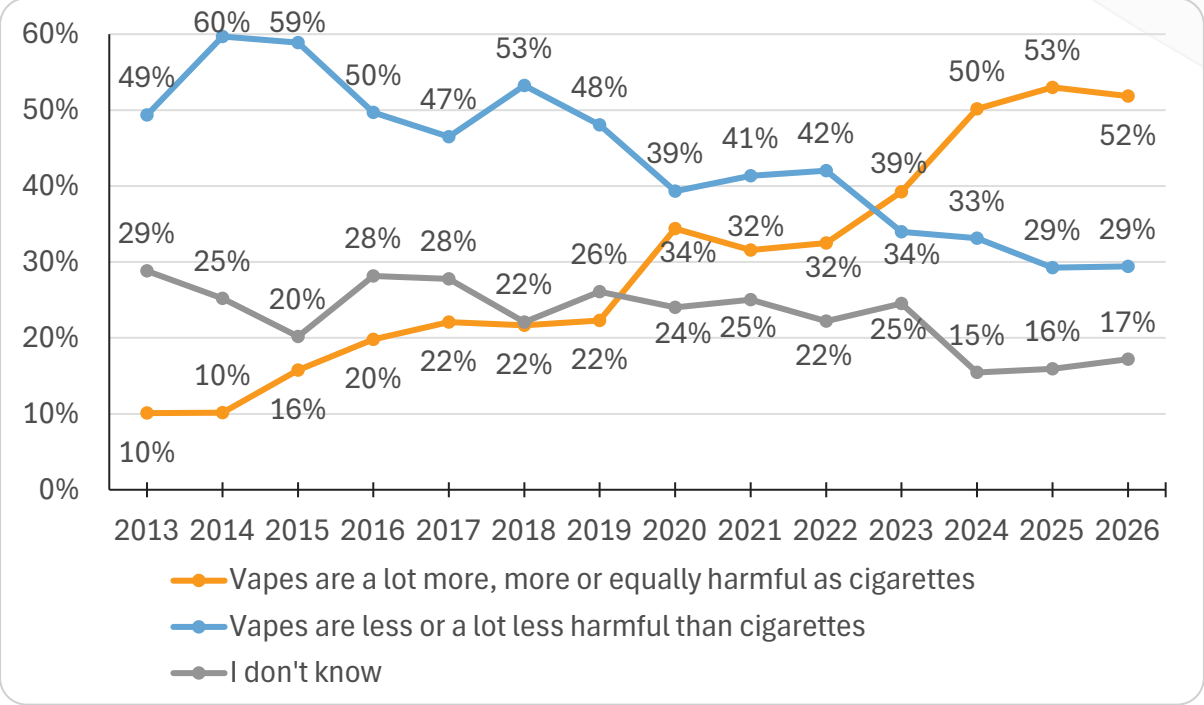
ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2013-2026. Unweighted base: Adults who have heard of vapes (2013=8,936, 2014=11,307, 2015=11,340, 2016=11,489, 2017=12,101, 2018=12,070, 2019=11,634, 2020=11,954 2021=11,429, 2022=12,039, 2023=11,327, 2024=6,107, 2025=12,362, 2026=12,402). Options not shown on the graph are 'Vapes are completely harmless' (0.3% in 2026) and 'NA – I believe cigarettes are harmless' (0.7% in 2026). See also footnote [1].

Smokers' perceptions of harm

A similar pattern can be seen among smokers' perceptions of harm. In 2026 (Figure 23) more than half (52%) believe that vaping was more or equally harmful. The proportion thinking that vaping is less or a lot less harmful than smoking is the same as that among all adults (29%).

[1] Before 2024, the wording referred to "regular cigarettes". Due to concern that "regular cigarettes" implied that vapes were a type of cigarette, in 2024, the sample was split, with a random assignment to either the "regular cigarettes" wording or a new "tobacco cigarettes" wording. The "tobacco cigarettes" 2024 responses are shown in the graph, but results were very similar across the two conditions. From 2025 onwards, the "tobacco cigarettes" wording is used.

Figure 23. Perceptions of harm of vapes compared with cigarettes, GB adult smokers who have heard of vapes (2013-2026)



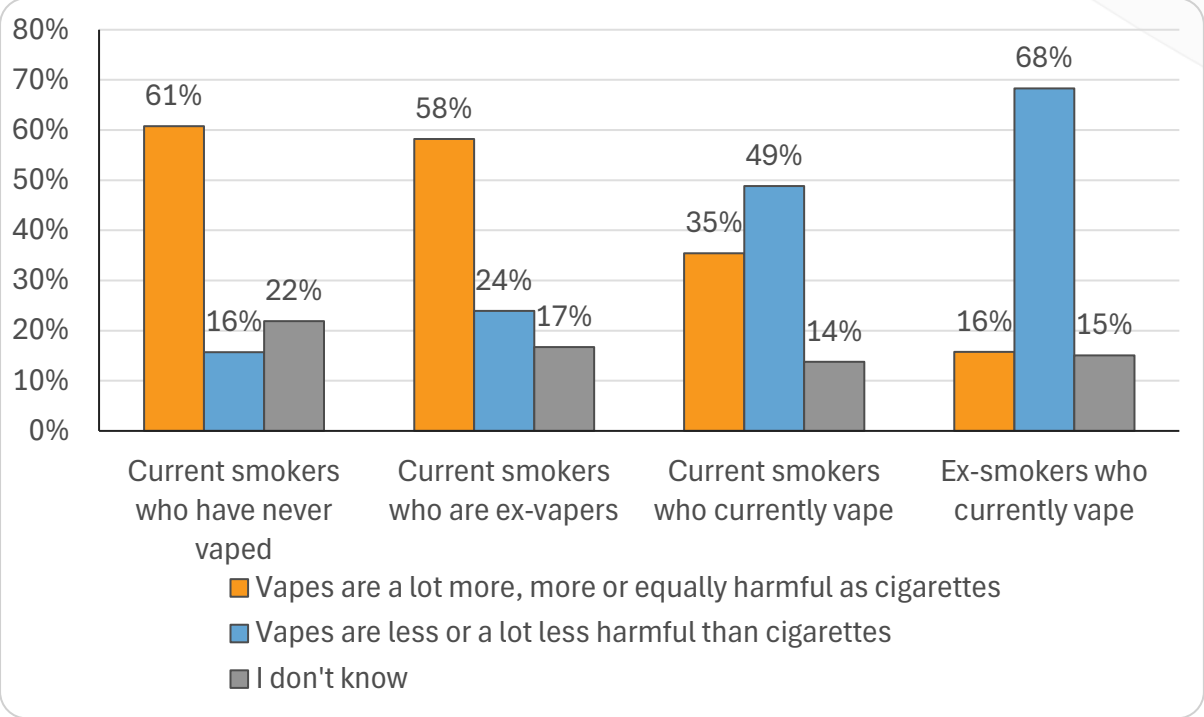
ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2013-2026. Unweighted base: Adult current smokers who have heard of vapes (2013=1,720, 2014=1,705, 2015=1,945, 2016=1,639, 2017=1,569, 2018=1,566, 2019=1,679, 2020=1,599 2021=1,438, 2022=1,641, 2023=1,426, 2024=816, 2025=1,555, 2026=1,377). Options not shown on the graph are 'Vapes are completely harmless' (0.6% in 2026) and 'NA – I believe cigarettes are harmless' (0.9% in 2026). See also footnote [1].

Smokers who currently vape have slightly more accurate perceptions of their harm, with 49% thinking that vapes are less harmful and 35% thinking that they are more or equally harmful (Figure 24). In 2019, only 9% thought vaping was as or more harmful as smoking (Figure 25).

Ex-smokers who currently vape have the most accurate perceptions of the harm of vapes, but the trend in misperceptions is still upwards. In 2026, 68% of them correctly thought that vapes are less harmful than smoking and 16% said that vapes are more or equally harmful (5% in 2019) (Figures 24 and 25).

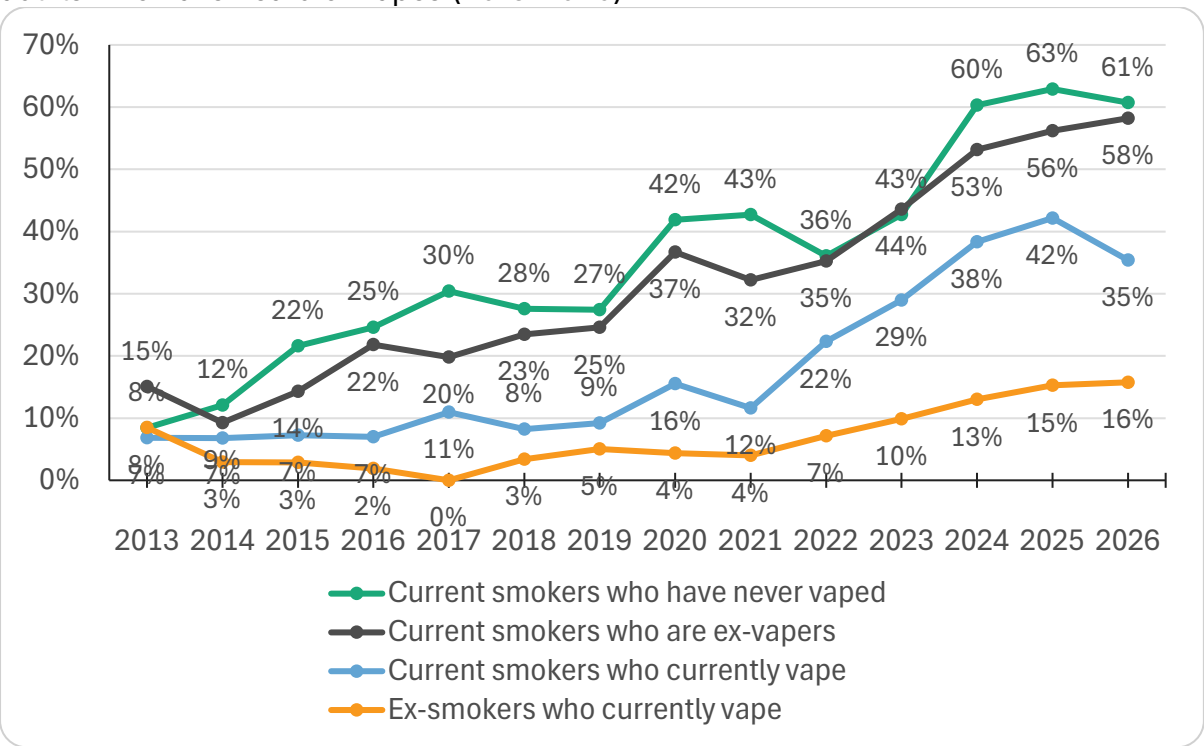
Misperceptions about the relative harms of vapes compared with cigarettes among smokers are highest among those who have never tried vaping. The proportion of current smokers who have never tried vapes who believe they are more than or equally as harmful as cigarettes has increased from 27% in 2019 to 61% in 2026 (Figure 25).

Figure 24. Perceptions of harm of vapes compared with cigarettes among different groups, GB adults who have heard of vapes (2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2026. Unweighted base: Adults who have heard of vapes (Current smokers who have never vaped=350, Current smokers who are ex-vapers=590, Current smokers who currently vape=437, Ex-smokers who currently vape=760). Options not shown on the graph are 'Vapes are completely harmless' and 'NA – I believe cigarettes are harmless'. See also footnote [1].

Figure 25. Incorrect perceptions of relative harm of vaping among different groups, GB adults who have heard of vapes (2013-2026)

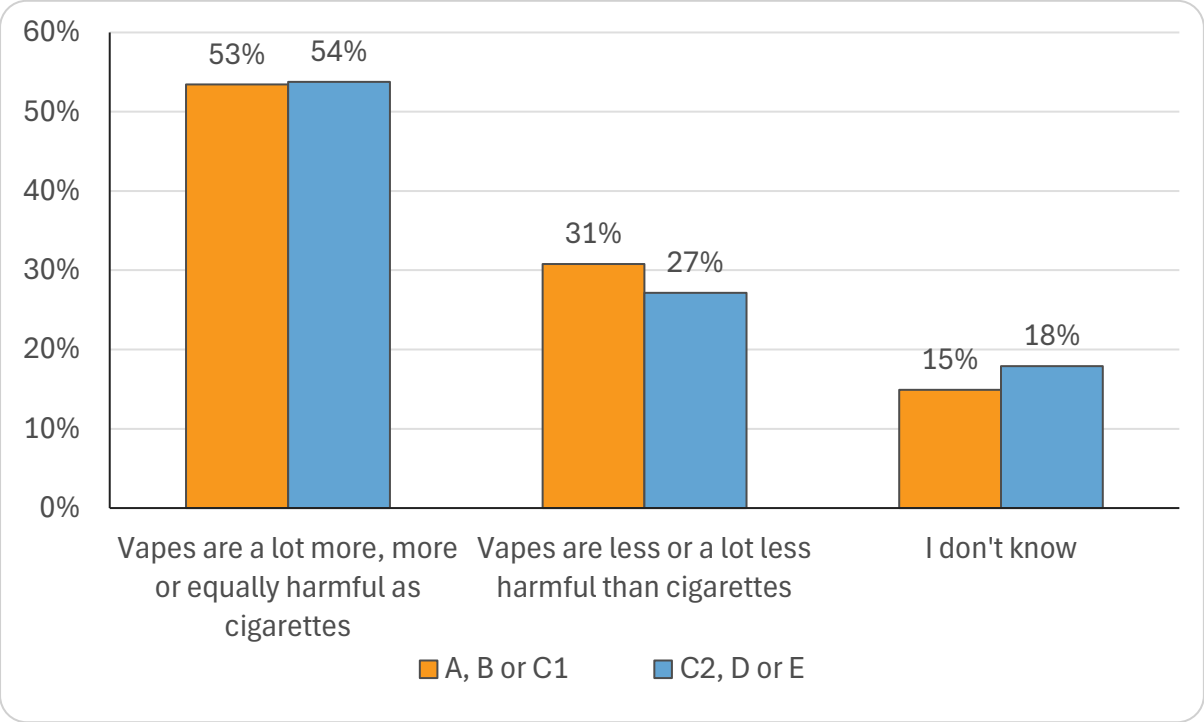


ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2013-2026. Unweighted base: Adults with different smoking and vaping statuses who have heard of vapes – proportion who believe that vapes are more or equally harmful as cigarettes. See counts Table 9 in appendix.

Differences by social grade

Among people who smoke, there is no clear difference in the accuracy of views by social grade in 2026 (Figure 26).

Figure 26. Perceptions of harm of vapes compared with cigarettes by social grade, GB adult smokers who have heard of vapes (2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2026. Unweighted base: Smokers who have heard of vapes (ABC1=7,158, C2DE=5,244)

The views of health professionals

Many health and social care employees lack patient-facing roles. Even so, 52% of the 856 surveyed staff wrongly believe vaping matches or exceeds smoking in harm. Although high, this is a decline from 2025, where 60% of people in health or social work roles held this misconception.

Inaccurate views about nicotine

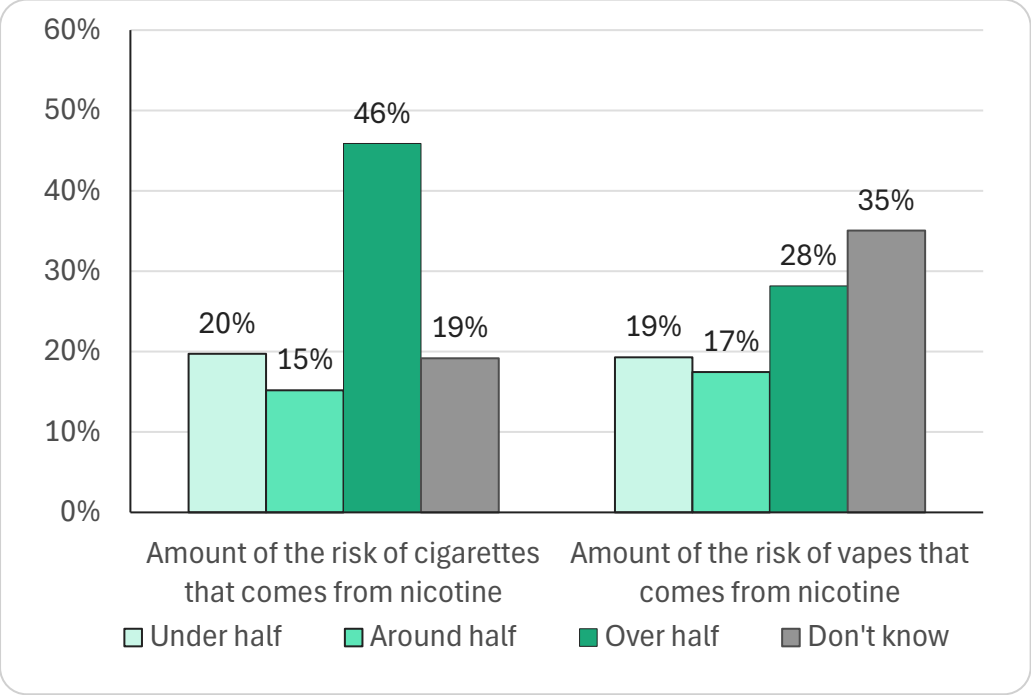
The public have long held inaccurate views about the harms from nicotine. While people are addicted to nicotine, it is the other components in tobacco smoke that pose the health risks. This is poorly understood by nearly every group including health professionals.

In 2025, 61% of adults surveyed believed that half or more of the health risks of smoking are due to nicotine (for question wording, see Appendix 5).

In the same survey respondents were asked for their views about the contribution of nicotine to any health harms from vaping. While it is difficult to estimate the exact health harms from vaping, it is expected that any harms from nicotine will be low.

While ‘don’t know’ was the most common response (35%), 46% still believed that half or more of the health risk of vaping came from nicotine (Figure 27).

Figure 27. Perception of the health risk of vapes that comes from nicotine, GB adults (2025)



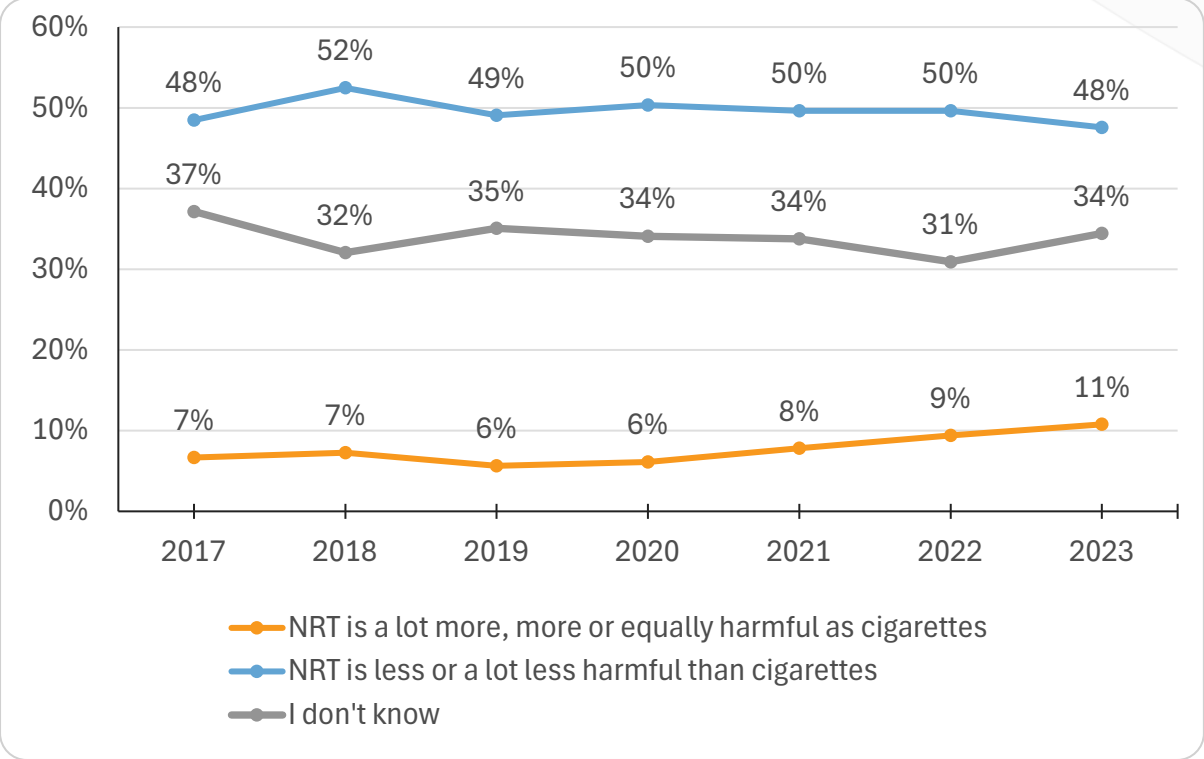
ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2025. Unweighted base: GB adults (n=13,314). Questions not asked in 2026.

Perceptions of harm from Nicotine Replacement Therapies (NRT)

From 2017 to 2023 we asked people for their views of the relative harms of NRT compared with tobacco smoking. NRT is a licensed medication with minor side effects, which is recognised as an essential medicine by the WHO. [12]

Understanding of the relative risk of NRT compared to smoking among smokers remained poor up to 2023 (Figure 28). However, it is considerably better than their understanding of the relative risk of vaping and smoking (Figure 23). In 2023 a third (34%) of smokers said that they did not know how harmful NRT is compared to smoking, 11% thought it was more than or equally as harmful as smoking, and 48% correctly identified NRT as being less harmful than smoking.

Figure 28. Adult smokers' perception of NRT compared with regular cigarettes, GB adult smokers (2017-2023)



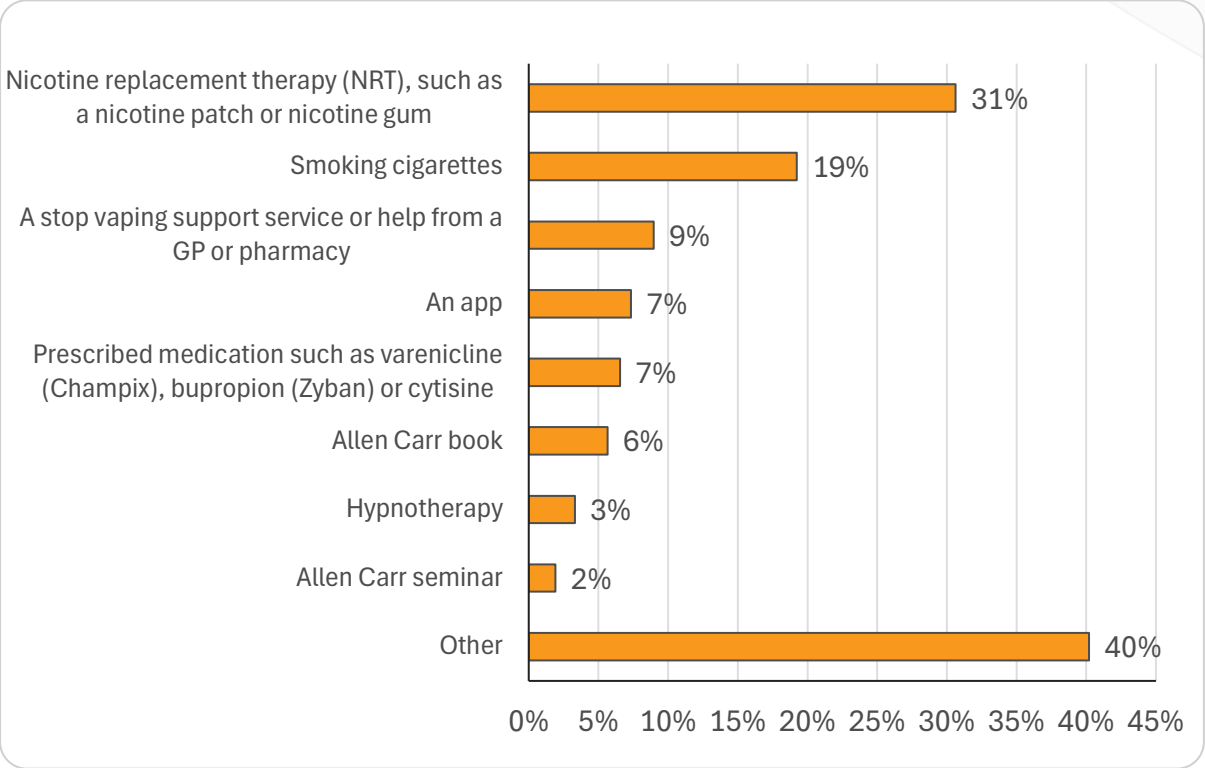
ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2017-2023. Unweighted base: Adult current smokers (2017=1,632, 2018=1,633, 2019=1,777, 2020=1,694, 2021=1,512, 2022=1,751, 2023=1,517). Question not asked since 2023.

2.4 Quitting vaping

About three quarters (74%) of people who have ever vaped ('ever vapers') and a third (36%) of current vapers had ever tried to quit vaping. Most ever vapers who have tried to quit did so without using a particular method (63%)

Concerningly 19% of people who have ever tried to quit vaping using a method have used cigarettes as a quit aid (Figure 29). It was the second most popular named method from the list.

Figure 29. Methods used to try to quit vaping, GB adult ever vapers who tried to quit using a particular method (2026)



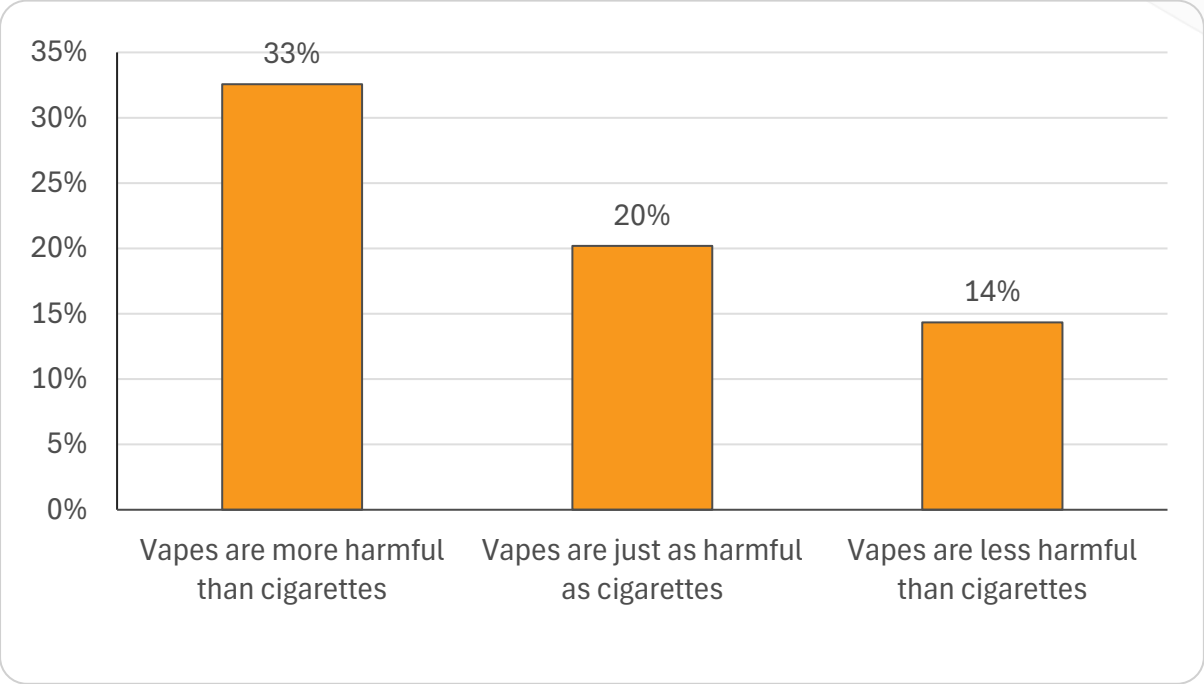
ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2026. Unweighted base: Adults who have ever vaped and have tried to quit vaping using a particular method (n=940).

Misconceptions and choices about health

If people have misconceptions about the relative harms of vaping and smoking, this may influence decisions they make about their health.

A person who vapes and believes that smoking is less harmful than vaping might use smoking as a vaping quit aid, intending to reduce risk. One in three ever vapers who believe vaping to be more harmful than smoking and have tried to quit attempted to do so by smoking (33%), compared with 20% of those who think they are equally harmful and 14% of those who think that smoking is more harmful. (Figure 30)

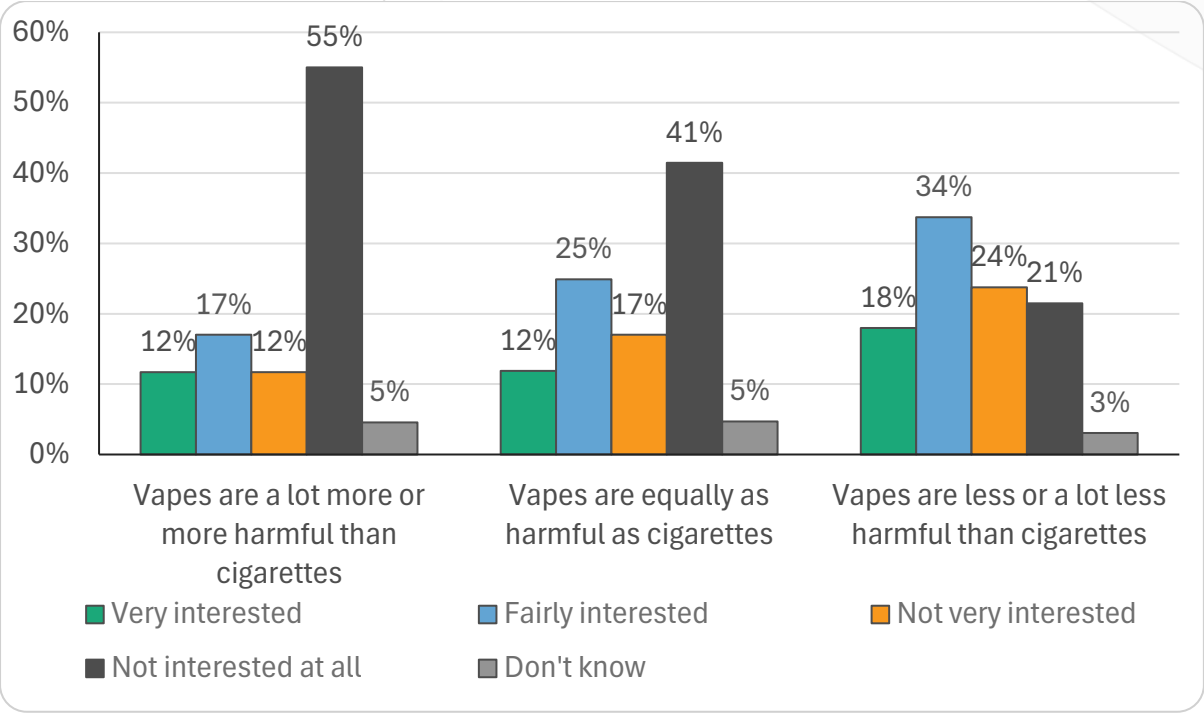
Figure 30. Using cigarettes to attempt to quit vaping by views on relative harm of vapes and cigarettes, GB ever vapers who have tried to quit using a particular method (2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2026. Unweighted base: Ever vapers who have tried to quit using a particular method (who believe that vapes are more harmful than cigarettes=161, who believe that vapes are equally as harmful as cigarettes=296, who believe that vapes are less harmful than cigarettes=332). Options not shown on the graph are' 'Don't know', 'Vapes are completely harmless' and 'NA – I believe cigarettes are harmless'.

Smokers who don't vape and who hold these incorrect health beliefs are also less likely to say they would be interested in trying a vape that was given to them for free by a health professional. While 52% who believe vapes to be less harmful than cigarettes would be 'very' or 'fairly' interested, only 37% of those who think they are equally harmful would be interested, and 29% of those who believe vapes are more harmful (Figure 31).

Figure 31. Interest in being given a vape for free by a health professional, GB current smokers who don't currently vape (2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2026. Unweighted base: Smokers who don't currently vape but who do know what a vape is (who believe that vapes are more harmful than cigarettes=234, who believe that vapes are equally as harmful as cigarettes=331, who believe that vapes are less harmful than cigarettes=195)

3. Devices, flavours, and nicotine use

Device types

- Main device: 48% tank systems, 42% pod devices, 8% disposables
- Disposable use peaked in 2023 at 31% and has declined following the ban on disposable devices
- Most popular brands:
    - Disposables: Lost Mary (44%), Elf Bar (36%), Crystal Bar (30%)
    - Pod devices: Lost Mary (29%), Elf Bar (18%), Crystal (14%)
    - Tank systems: Vaporesso (23%), Smok (14%), Innokin (13%), Apsire (13%)

Predicted and actual behaviour change following disposables ban

- Most disposable users vaped the same amount (43%) or less (43%) following the disposables ban
- Most reported smoking the same amount (70%), but 13% reported a rise in their smoking

Disposal and reuse of vapes

- Vapers often dispose of their vapes in the general rubbish (40%)
- 27% never or rarely reuse vapes
- 47% reuse vapes more than 10 times

Flavour preferences

- Most popular: Fruit (60%), Menthol/Mint (15%), Tobacco (9%)
- 43% of vapers sometimes or always use ‘ice’ flavours

Nicotine strength and consumption

- 84% used strength within legal limits in 2025 (<=20mg/ml), with most of the remainder unsure what strength they use
- 30% of vapers have reduced nicotine strength over time
- 10% currently use "shake and vape" products

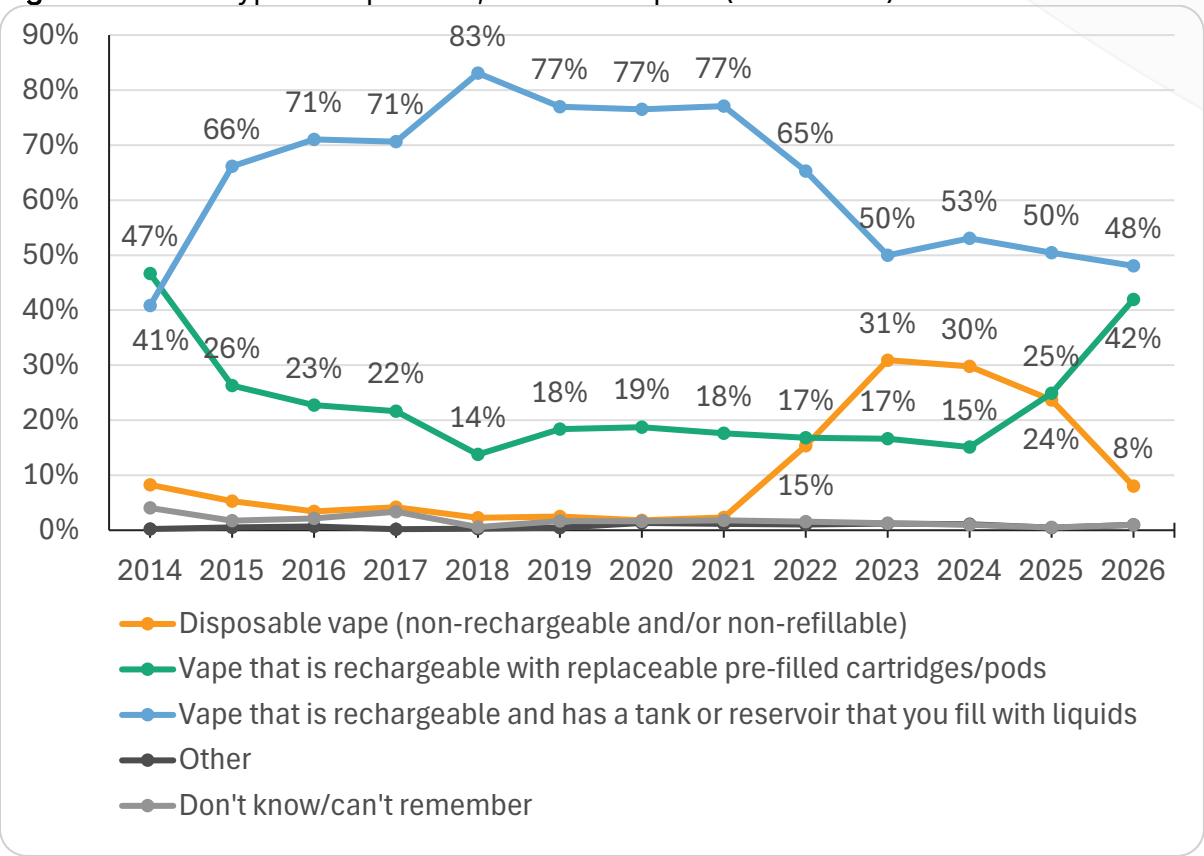
3.1 Device types

- Main device: 48% tank systems, 42% pod devices, 8% disposables.
- Disposable use peaked in 2023 and has declined following the ban on disposable devices.
- Most popular brands:
    - Disposables: Lost Mary (44%), Elf Bar (36%), Crystal Bar (30%)
    - Pod devices: Lost Mary (29%), Elf Bar (18%), Crystal (14%)
    - Tank systems: Vaporesso (23%), Smok (14%), Innokin (13%), Apsire (13%)

Vape device types

The most commonly used type of vape remains a refillable tank system, with 48% of current vapers reporting that they currently use this as their main vaping device (Figure 32). However, their popularity among vapers has fallen since 2021 (77%). The relative popularity of disposable vapes rose rapidly between 2021 and 2023 from 2% to 31% of current vapers but ahead of and following the disposables ban this has since fallen with 8% of current vapers reporting these as their main device in 2026. As the use of disposables has fallen there has been an increase in use of pod devices (15% in 2024, 25% in 2025 and 42% in 2026) likely due to disposable brands moving into these products. This pattern is also found in the Smoking Toolkit Study. [13]

Figure 32. Main type of vape used, GB adult vapers (2014-2026)

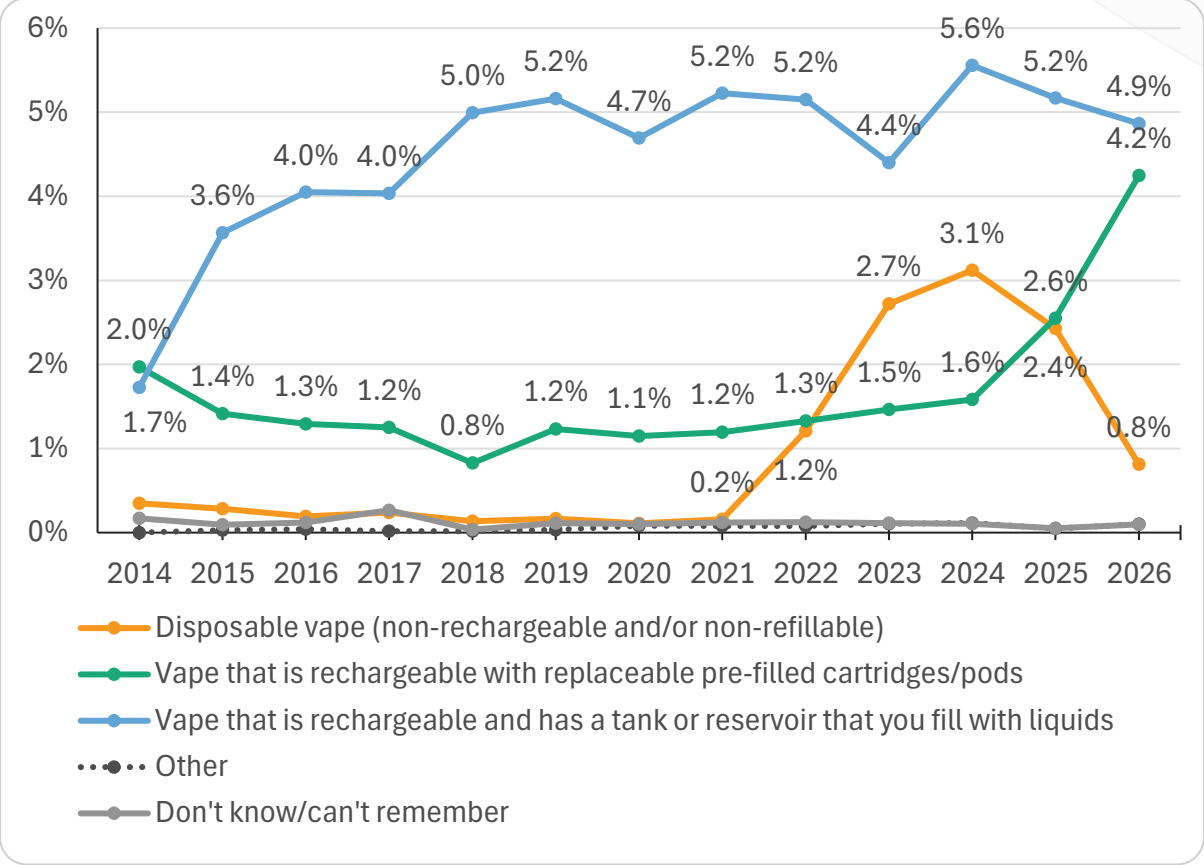


ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2014-2026. Unweighted base: Adults who currently vape, excluding those who have vaped 'once or twice' or don't know their frequency of vaping from 2017 onwards (2014=498, 2015=614, 2016=667, 2017=657, 2018=715, 2019=800, 2020=767, 2021=790, 2022=1,033, 2023=1,042, 2024=1,374, 2025=1,306, 2026=1,295)

As vaping prevalence increased over the period 2021-2024, it is useful to see the prevalence of vaping by device type over the entire population. The fall in the relative popularity of tank-type devices (Figure 32) didn't correspond with a fall in the absolute numbers of people using these devices (Figure 33), due to an increase in the number of vapers over the same period. In 2018, 5% of all adults used tank type devices, which has remained fairly stable since.

In 2021, 0.2% of all adults used disposable type devices, compared with 3.1% in 2024. The proportion fell to 2.6% in 2025 and 0.8% in 2026, representing a significant reduction in the number of disposable vape users in GB, from about 1.7 million in 2024 to 440K in 2026. In the 2025 fact sheet, the number of disposable users was incorrectly calculated and reported as 170K, but should have said 1.3M.

Figure 33. Proportion of adult population currently vaping by device type, GB Adults (2014-2026)

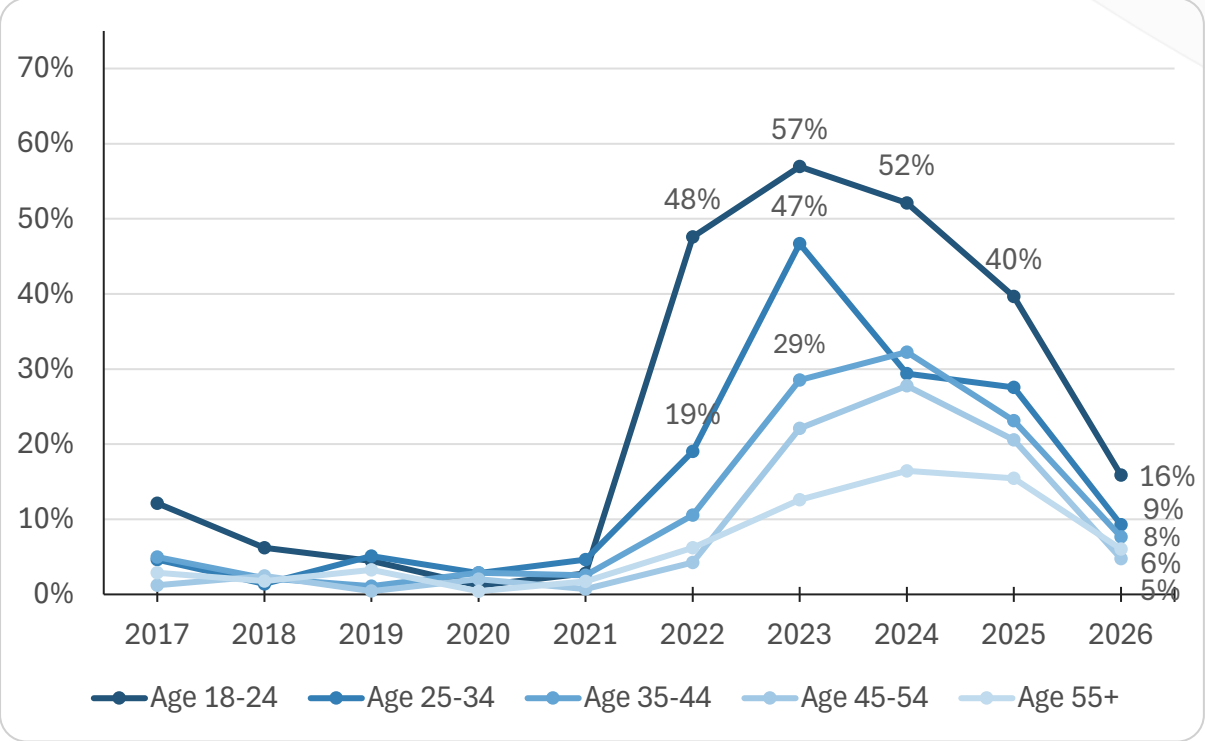


ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2014-2026. Unweighted base: All adults (2014=12,269, 2015=12,055, 2016=12,157, 2017=12,696, 2018=12,767, 2019=12,393, 2020=12,809, 2021=12,247 2022=13,088, 2023=12,271, 2024=13,266, 2025=13,314, 2026=13,259). Proportion of all adults who currently vape using a given type of device (excluding those who only vaped once or twice or DK frequency of vaping from 2017 onwards)

Younger adults were the primary driver of the rapid rise in using disposable vapes as the main type of vape between 2021 and 2023. (Figure 34). For 18–24-year-olds, more than half of current e-cigarettes users (57%) used disposables as their main type in 2023, an increase from only 3% in 2021. In 2023, 69% of 11-17 year olds who vaped used disposables as their main type of device. [14]

However, the overall popularity of disposable vapes among adult vapers appears to have peaked in 2023 (Figure 34), a decline following the announcement in January 2024 that the government would implement a ban on the sale of disposable vapes. [15] This decline has been clear among all age groups. The use of disposable vapes has also declined in 11-17 year old vapers (13% in 2026).[14]

Figure 34. Proportion of different age groups of vapers who choose mainly disposable vapes, GB adult current vapers (2017-2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2017-2026. Unweighted base: Adult current vapers, excluding only tried once or twice and don't know freq. of use. See counts Table 10 in appendix.

Brands of vapes

Vapers were asked about all the brands of vapes they used, with multiple responses encouraged.

- For current vapers who mainly use disposable vapes, the most popular brands in 2026 were Lost Mary (44%), Elf Bar (36%), Crystal Bar (30%) and Blu Bar (13%)
- For current vapers who mainly use cartridge type devices, the most popular brands were Lost Mary (29%), Elf Bar (18%), Crystal (14%), Vuse (11%) and IVG (11%).
- The most popular brands for current tank device users were Vaporesso (23%), Smok (14%), Innokin (13%), Apsire (13%).

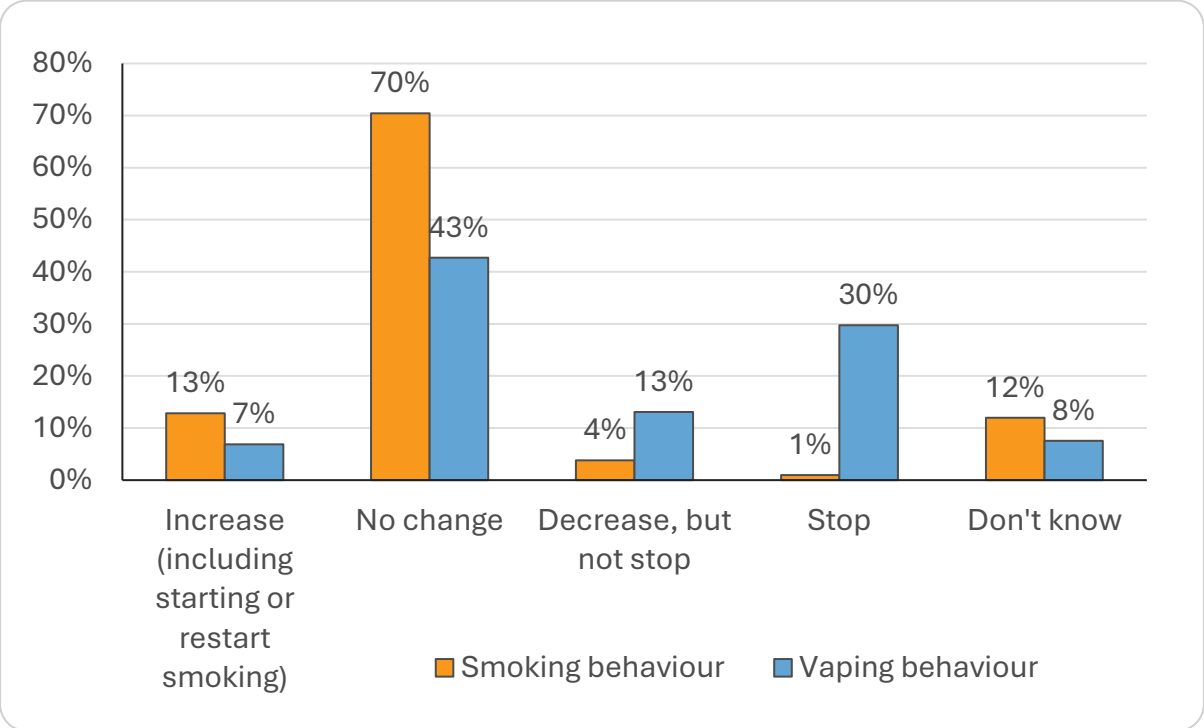
Brands that were previously popular in the disposables category (Elf Bar, Lost Mary, Crystal Bar) appear to have gained market share in the pod category as these brands have brought out pod versions of their disposable products.

3.2 Predicted and actual behaviour change following disposables ban

While it is difficult for people to accurately predict what their behaviour will be in the future in response to policy changes, it is a way to assess the potential impact policies may have. In the 2026 survey, ASH asked vapers how they responded to the implementation of a regulatory change (ban on disposable vapes) and how they might respond to one hypothetical regulation (restrictions on vape flavours, section 3.2). In 2026, we asked those who reported that they had used mainly disposable vapes immediately before the ban in 2025 how their smoking and vaping behaviour had changed in the three months following the ban. They were equally likely to say they had stopped (30%) or decreased (13%) their vaping as to say that they had maintained the same level (43%), and it was fairly uncommon to report an increase in vaping (7%) or not know (8%) (Figure 35).

The survey also asked these vapers how, if at all, their smoking behaviours had changed following the disposables ban. A majority reported that their smoking had not changed (70%), with a minority reporting that their smoking had increased (13%), decreased (4%) or stopped (1%).

Figure 35. Behaviour immediately after disposables were banned, GB adult vapers who mainly used disposables in March/April 2025 (2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2026. Unweighted base: Adults who mainly vaped using disposables in March/April 2025 (excl. once or twice/DK frequency of vaping) (n=437)

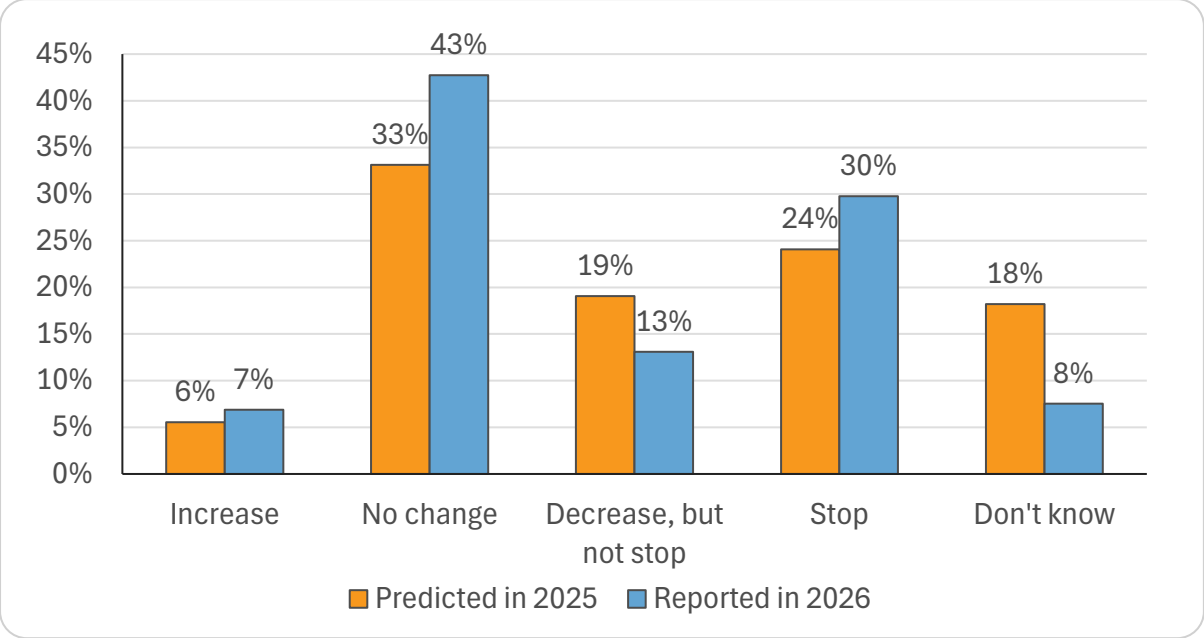
The majority of those who were using disposable vapes before the ban and continued vaping after it reported that they had switched to using a reusable type of device (51%). However, continuing to use disposable devices was not unusual, with 30%

saying they could still get disposable vapes and 24% that they used disposables vapes that they had stockpiled prior to the ban.

The previous year, in 2025 we asked the equivalent group of vapers how they expected to respond to the disposables ban. Most predicted that they would switch to a reusable type of vape (78%) with 22% saying they would still try to get illicit vapes. The option to stockpile vapes ahead of the ban was not suggested in 2025.

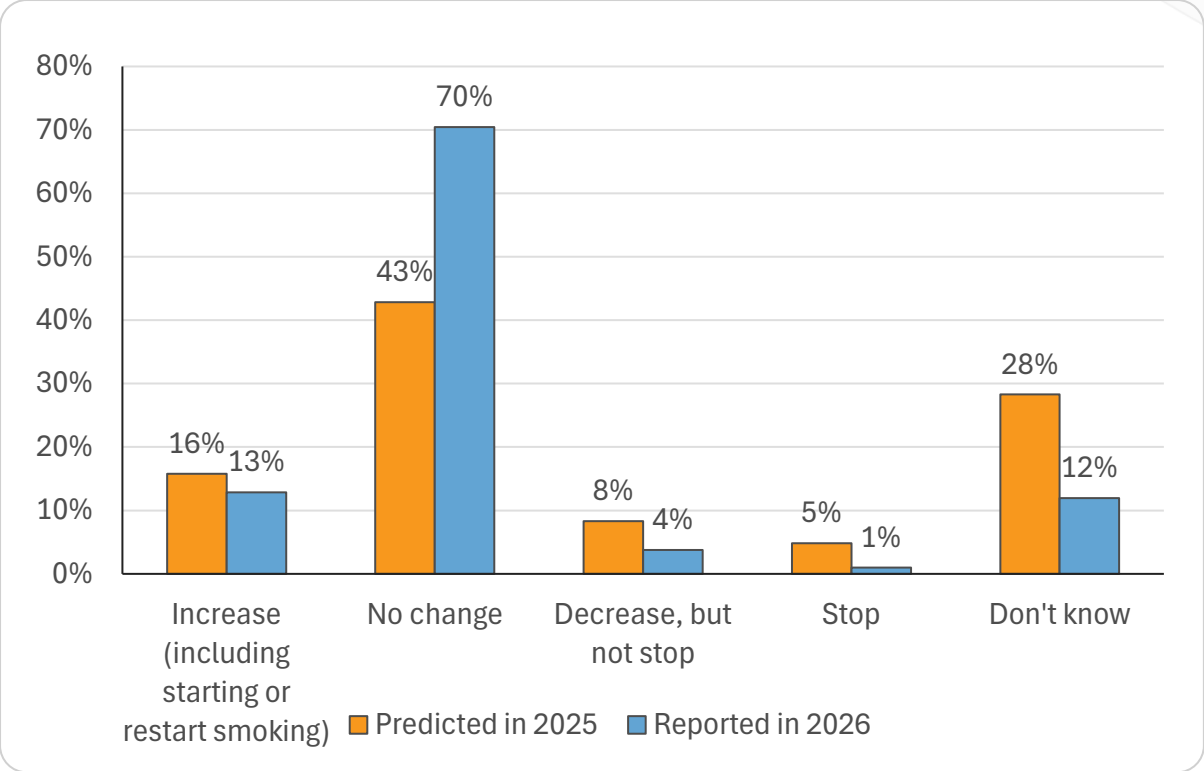
Figures 36 and 37 below show the predicted and actual reported behaviour change in people who vaped using mainly disposables ahead of the disposables ban.

Figure 36. Predicted and actual reported **vaping** behaviour immediately after disposables were banned, GB adults who vaped immediately before the disposables ban (2025 & 2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2025 & 2026. Unweighted base: Adult current vapers (excl. once or twice/DK frequency of vaping) (2025, n=327); Adults who mainly vaped using disposables in March/April 2025 (excl. once or twice/DK frequency of vaping) (2026, n=437)

Figure 37. Predicted and actual reported **smoking** behaviour immediately after disposables were banned, GB adults who vaped immediately before the disposables ban (2025 & 2026)



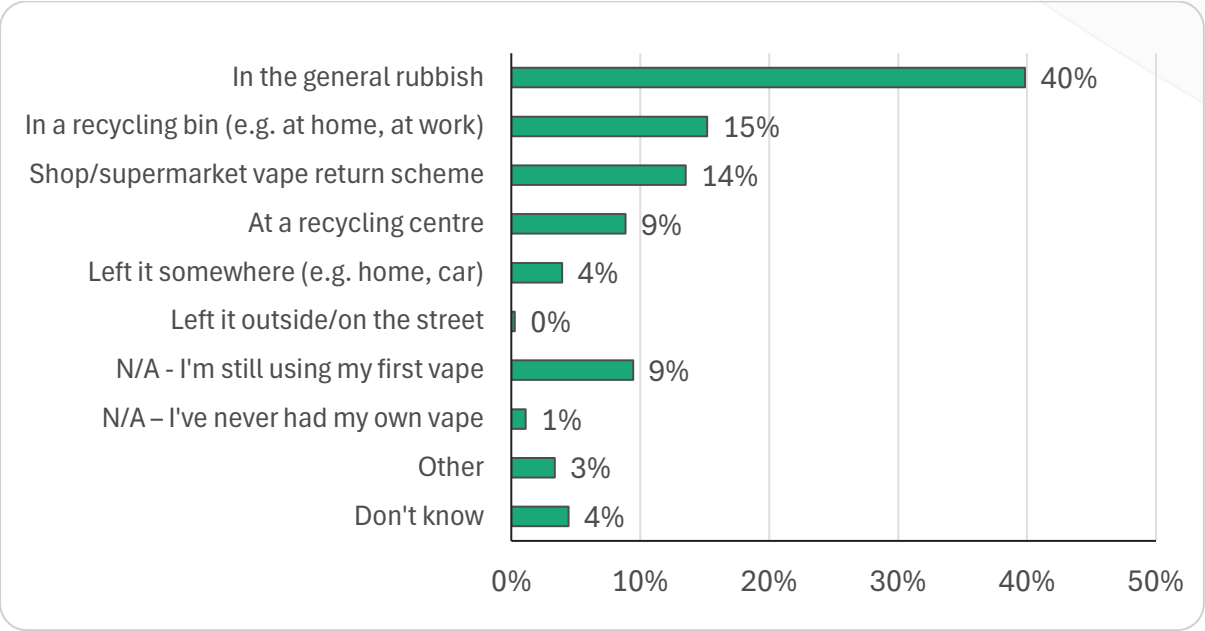
ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2025 & 2026. Unweighted base: Adult current vapers (excl. once or twice/DK frequency of vaping) (2025, n=327); Adults who mainly vaped using disposables in March/April 2025 (excl. once or twice/DK frequency of vaping) (2026, n=437)

3.3 Disposal and reuse of vapes

Disposal of vapes

For the first time in 2025 we asked people how they dispose of their vapes. A concerningly high proportion do so through general rubbish collections (40%, Figure 38). Only 14% report disposing of them through a return scheme which retailers are legally required to provide.

Figure 38. Method of disposal for most recent vape, GB adult current vapers (2026)

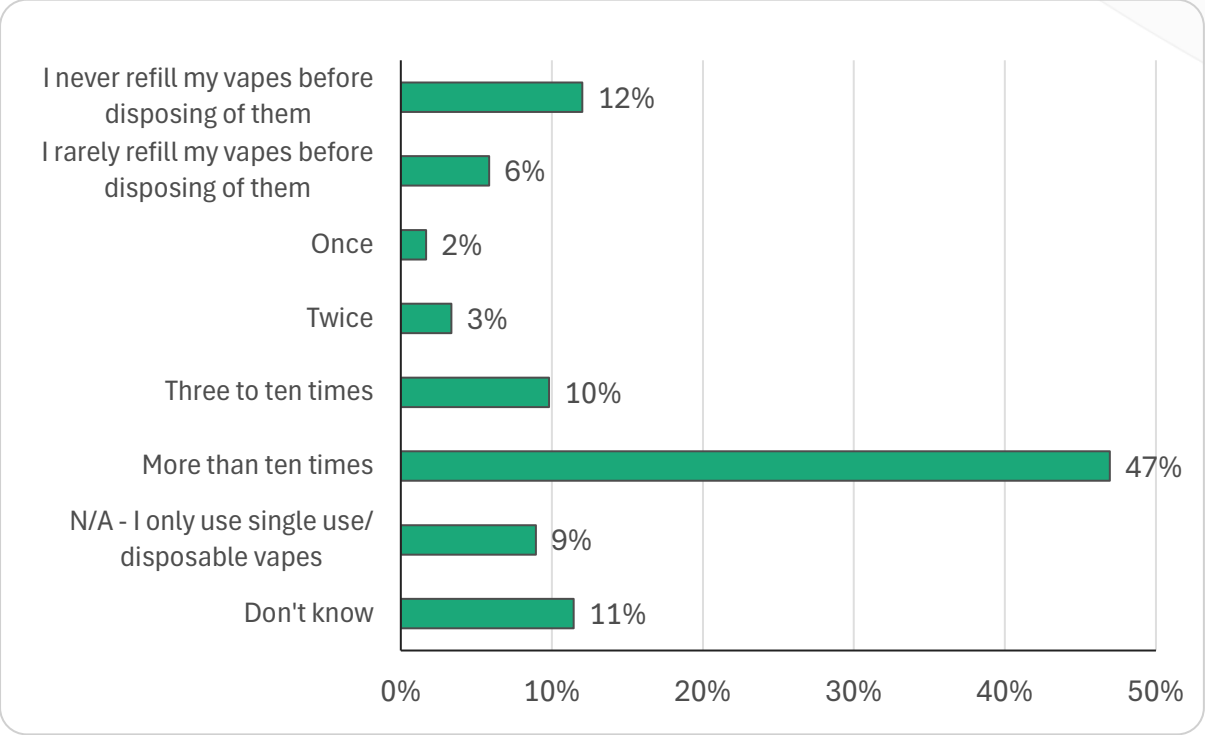


ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2026. Unweighted base: Current vapers, excluding 'once or twice' and DK frequency (n=1,295)

Refill behaviours

For the first time in 2026 we asked people how frequently they refilled their device to better understand if those who used refillable products were doing so. Among those who dispose of their vapes, 27% report they rarely or never refill their products before disposal, or that they only use disposable vapes (Figure 39). By contrast 47% reported refilling products more than 10 times before disposal.

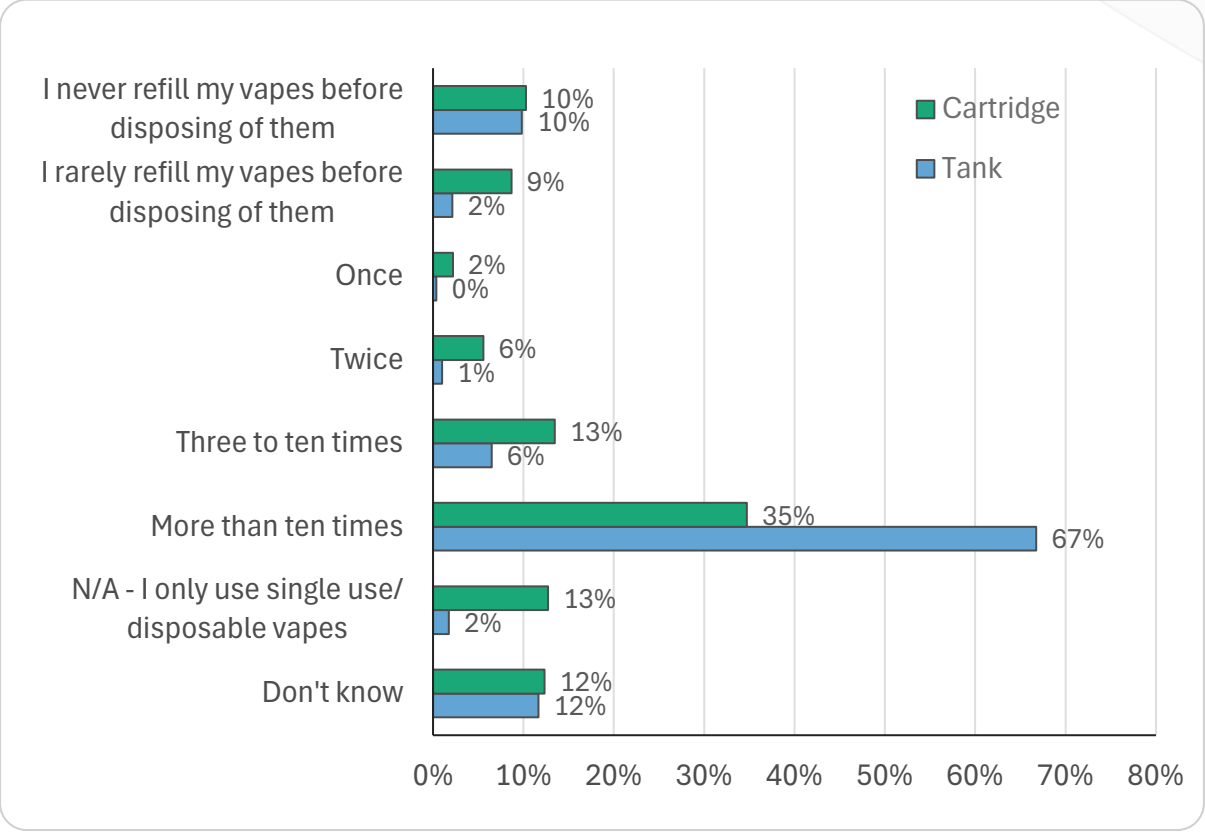
Figure 39. Typical number of times vape is refilled before disposal, GB adult current vapers who dispose of their vapes (2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2026. Unweighted base: Current vapers who dispose of their vapes, excluding 'once or twice' and DK frequency (n=1,096)

Two-thirds of current vapers who dispose of their devices and who mainly used tank type devices refilled them more than 10 times (67%), compared with 35% of those who mainly used cartridge type vapes (Figure 40).

Figure 40. Typical number of times vape is refilled, GB adult current vapers who dispose of their vapes (2026)



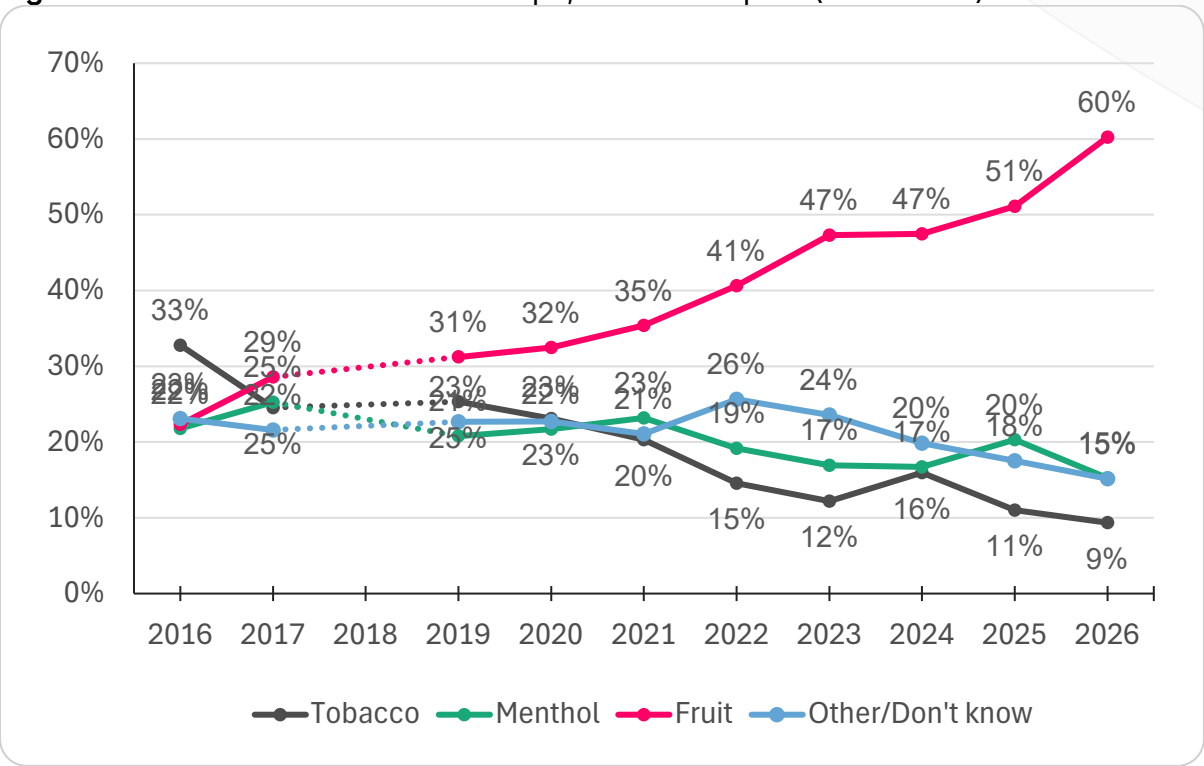
ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2026. Unweighted base: Current vapers who dispose of their vapes, excluding 'once or twice' and DK frequency (Mainly Cartridge=476, Mainly tank=504)

3.4 Flavour preferences

- Most popular: Fruit (60%), Menthol/Mint (15%), Tobacco (9%)
- 43% of vapers sometimes or always use 'ice' flavours

There were statistically significant changes in the most popular flavours used by adult vapers between 2016 and 2026. In 2016, tobacco was the most popular flavour (33%), followed by fruit and menthol/mint (both chosen by 22%). By 2026 fruit flavours were by far the most popular (60%), followed by menthol/mint (15%) and tobacco (9%) (Figure 41). The next most popular are sweet or soft/energy drink flavours, little changed between 2016 and 2026 at 10% and 6% respectively.

Figure 41. Main choice of flavour of vape, GB adult vapers (2016-2026)

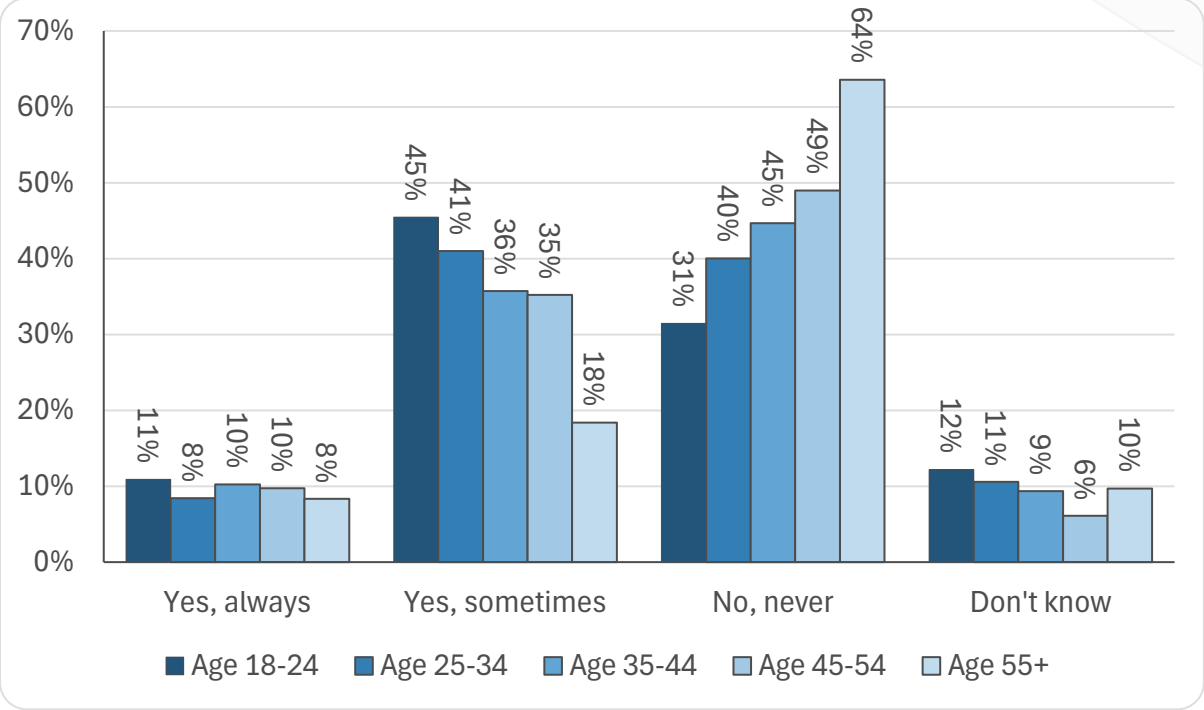


ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2016-2026. Unweighted base: Adult current vapers (2016=667, 2017=669, 2019=854, 2020=787, 2021=826, 2022=1,089, 2023=1,079, 2024=1,408, 2025=1,328, 2026=1,318)

Fruit flavour vapes are the preference for the majority of people who vape, regardless of smoking status (56% of never smokers, 62% of current smokers and 60% of ex-smokers). Younger adults are especially likely to prefer fruit flavours (73% of 18-34 year olds, compared with 41% of those aged 55+).

As well as types of flavours, respondents were also asked if they used 'ice' flavours. These are products with ingredients designed to give a cooling sensation when used. These flavourings have been shown to increase the appeal of products [16]. Among all vapers, 43% use ice flavours sometimes (34%) or always (9%). The use of ice flavours varies by age with younger vapers more likely to use them than older vapers (Figure 42).

Figure 42. Use of ice flavours in vapes, GB adult current vapers of different ages (2026)



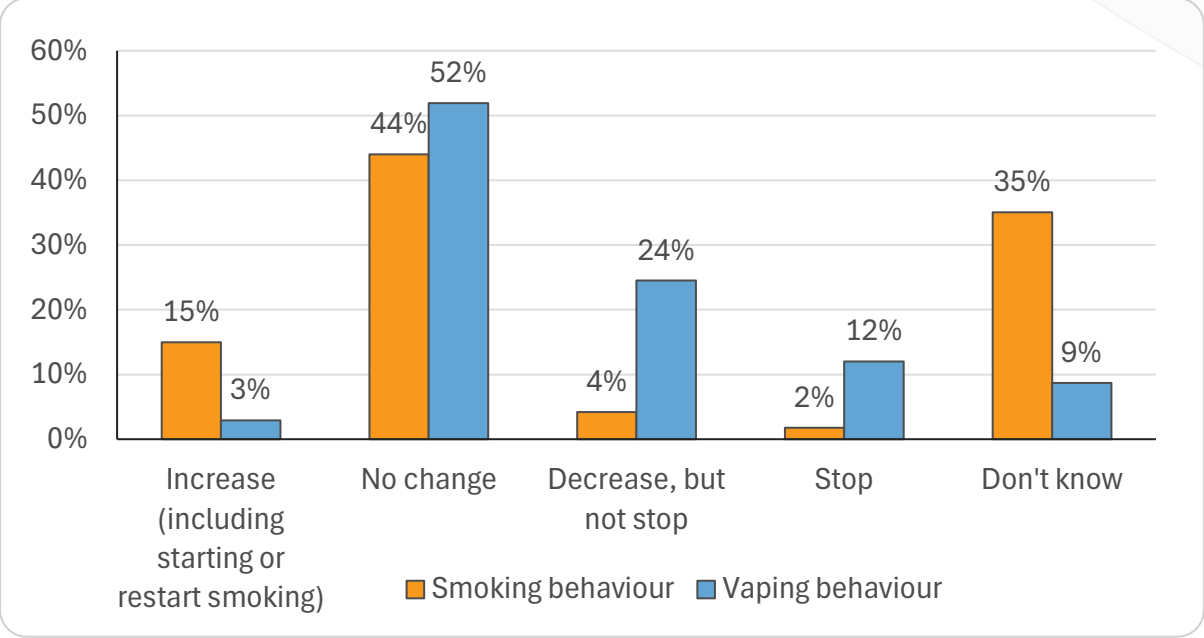
ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2026. Unweighted base: Adult current vapers. Age 18-24: 251, Age 25-34: 242, Age 35-44: 300, Age 45-54: 218, Age 55+: 307

Hypothetical flavour restrictions

We asked current vapers what impact a flavour ban that limited flavours to tobacco, menthol and mint would have on their behaviours. Many did not believe it would change their vaping (52%) or smoking (44%) behaviour (Figure 43). More anticipated that it would drive reduction in vaping behaviour (37%) than an increase (3%) and 9% didn't know. However, more believe it will cause an increase in their smoking (15%) than a decrease (4%) or stop (2%).

Among those who report they would continue to vape, a majority report they would use legally available flavours (65%). However, others also report that they would stockpile other flavours before the ban is implemented (30%), access illegal flavours (14%) or that they would make their own liquids (7%), the last two of which could expose users to greater risks. Only 7% said that they would use unflavoured vapes.

Figure 43. Predicted behaviour if vape flavours are limited to tobacco, menthol and mint, GB adult vapers (2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2025. Unweighted base: Adults who currently vape, excluding those who have vaped 'once or twice' or don't know their frequency of vaping (n=1,295)

3.5 Nicotine strength and consumption

- 82% use strength within legal limits (<=20mg/ml), with most of the remainder unsure what strength they use
- 27% of vapers have reduced nicotine strength over time
- In 2025, 10% of vapers currently used "shake and vape" [2] products

The Tobacco Products Directive (TPD) [17] imposed a cap on nicotine levels of 20 mg/ml or 2%. In 2016, before the legislation was introduced, more than three quarters of current or former vapers surveyed by ASH vaped liquids with concentrations of nicotine of 18 mg/ml or less (77%), with nearly half (49%) using e-liquid containing 12 mg/ml or less. One in ten (10%) used more than 18 mg/ml (the legal limit of 20 mg/ml was only included as a specific break point from 2017 onwards). In 2017, at the time the sell through period was coming to an end, 5.9% of current vapers were using above the TPD limit, falling to 0.9% by 2022 (Table 3).

In 2026, 1.4% of current vapers who vape with nicotine said they use nicotine strengths above the legal limit, and 17% did not know what strength they used.

[2] Larger bottles of zero-strength liquid are on sale alongside smaller bottles with the highest legal limit nicotine strength liquid, sold to be mixed together, also known as short-fills.

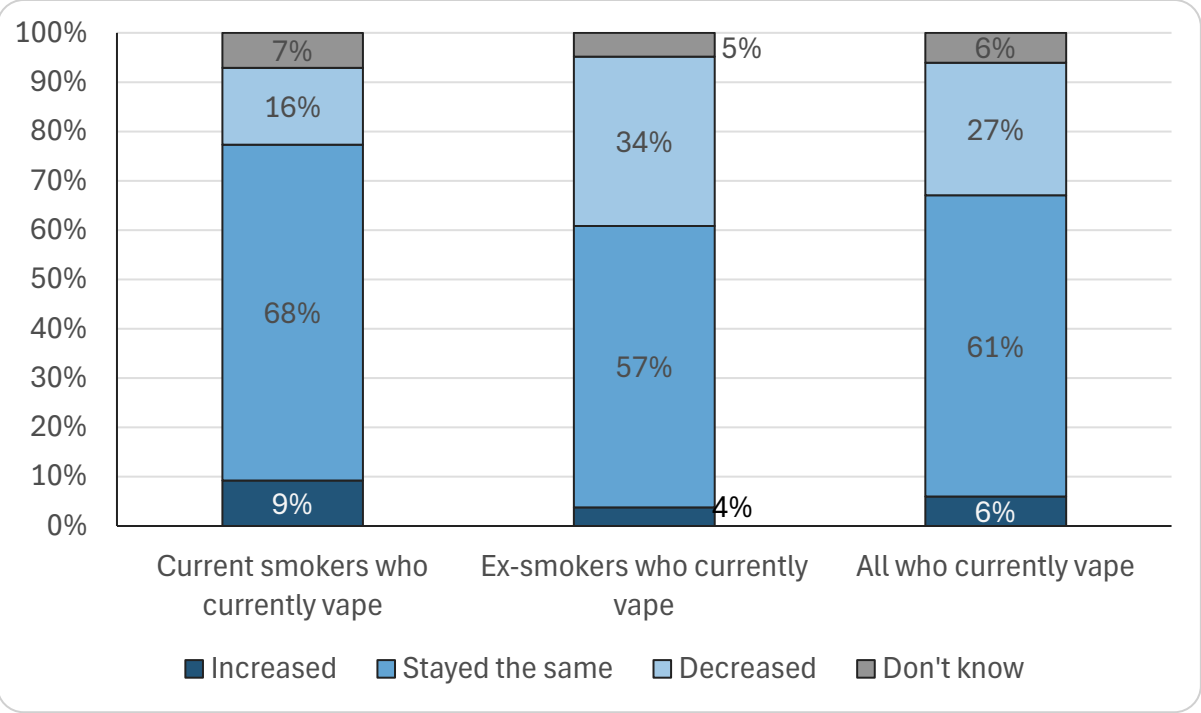
Table 3. Strength of nicotine used, GB adult current vapers, excluding those who don't use nicotine (2017-2026)

	TPD level (20mg/mland lower)	Higher than TPD (over 20mg/ml)	Don't know
2017	85%	5.9%	9.5%
2018	90%	2.1%	8.4%
2019	88%	2.0%	9.8%
2020	91%	2.1%	7.0%
2021	92%	1.5%	6.5%
2022	90%	0.9%	9.0%
2023	86%	1.2%	12.9%
2024	86%	2.3%	11.7%
2025	84%	2.4%	13.2%
2026	82%	1.4%	16.9%

ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2017-2026 -Unweighted base: Current adult vapers, excluding those who don't use nicotine (2017=597, 2018=365, 2019=720, 2020=693, 2021=633, 2022=938, 2023=953, 2024=1,311, 2025=1,240, 2026=1,236)

In 2026, 61% of current vapers say they use the same strength e-liquid as when they started, while 27% have decreased the strength. Only 6% have increased the strength over time (Figure 44). Vapers who have quit smoking are more likely than dual users to report using a lower nicotine strength over time (34% of ex-smokers who vape say the strength they use has decreased compared with 16% of current dual users).

Figure 44. Change over time of e-liquid nicotine strength among current vapers, GB adult current vapers (2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2026. Unweighted base: Adult current vapers excluding those who

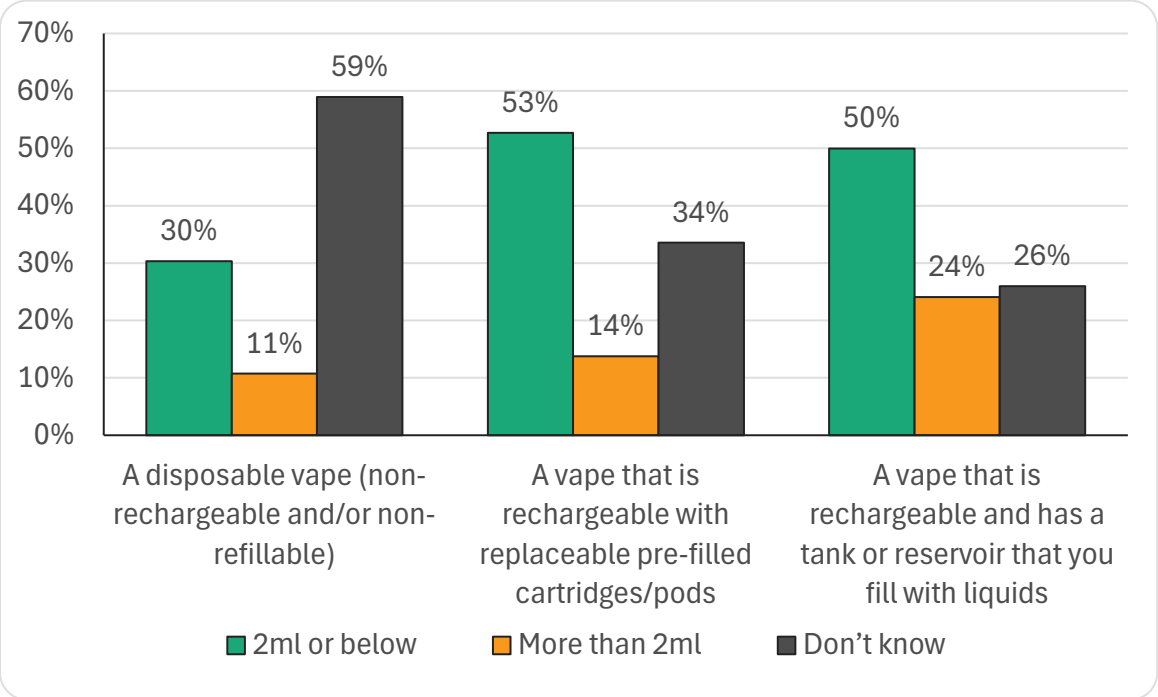
have vaped 'once or twice' or don't know their frequency of vaping (Current smokers=436, Ex-smokers=752, All who vape=1,295)

Volume of e-liquid used

Legislation limits the volume of e-liquid in a vape to less than 2ml and dedicated refill bottles for tank-type devices to 10ml. In 2016, prior to this legislation coming into force, 44% of those vaping daily and using a tank device reported using 2ml or less a day with 0.2% reporting using more than 10ml of liquid a day. In 2023, 28% of all daily vapers who mainly use a tank device used 2ml or less a day and 3.1% more than 10ml a day.

In 2025 we asked people what volume of liquid their device usually contained (Figure 45). The majority of disposable vape users didn't know (59%), while more users of pods and tank devices were aware, 'don't know' was still a common answer (34% and 26%). Those using tank devices were most likely to report their products where above the legal tank size (24%) however this remained uncommon for users of disposables (11%) and pods (14%).

Figure 45. Volume of liquid usually used in vapes by device type, GB adult vapers (2025)

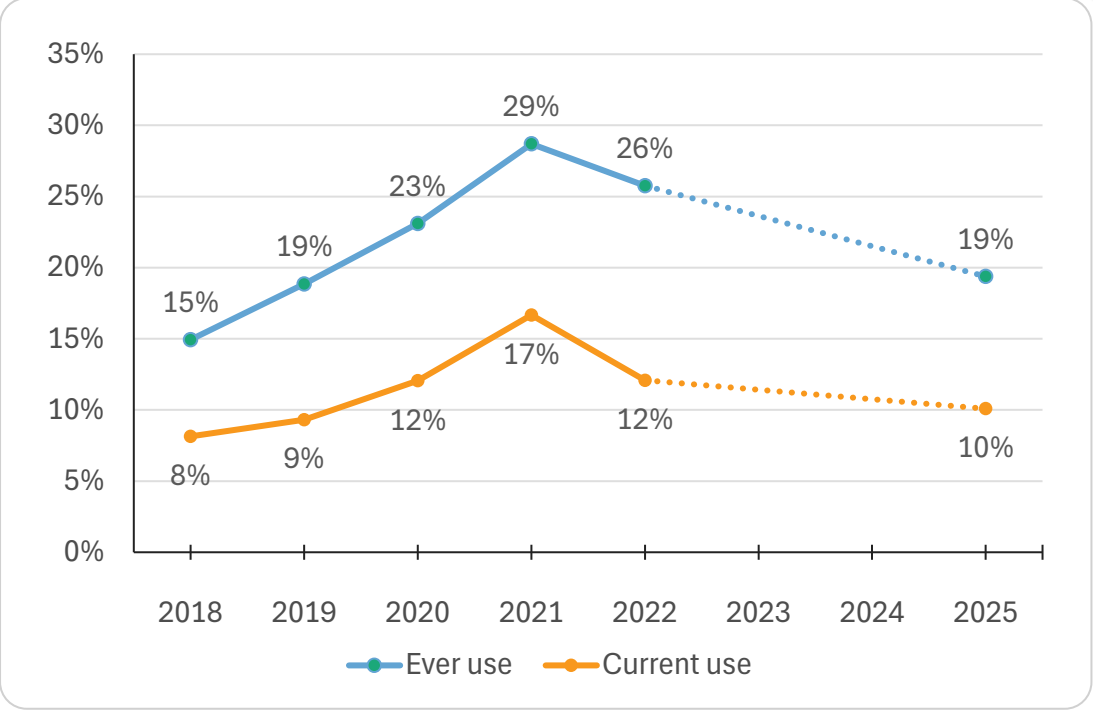


ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2025. Unweighted base: Current vapers (Mainly disposable users=327, Mainly cartridge users=320, Mainly tank users=646)

Shake and vape

To get around the volume limits, larger bottles of zero-strength liquid are on sale alongside smaller bottles with the highest legal limit nicotine strength liquid, sold to be mixed together. This is sometimes marketed as short-fills or 'shake and vape'. In 2025, 19% of current vapers who mainly use tank devices and/or who use nicotine reported ever using 'shake and vape' products, and 10% reported using them currently (Figure 46). This trend has been declining since 2021, although note that the structure of the question changed substantially between 2022 and 2025.

Figure 46. Use of shake and vape, GB adult current vapers who mainly use tank devices and/or use nicotine in their vapes (2018-2022; 2025)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2018-2022; 2025. Unweighted base: All adult current vapers (excluding those who have vaped 'once or twice' or don't know their frequency of vaping), who use tank in main device or use nicotine in vapes or both (2018=696, 2019=775, 2020=742, 2021=768, 2022=992, 2025=1,263). Question not asked in 2023-2024. The 2025 answers are rebased to make it possible to compare with earlier years. The wording of the question was different before 2025, so the comparison is not exact. The ever use/current use wording aligns with the new wording, with older wording asking about regular/on occasion/never use. Use 'on occasion' is interpreted as 'ever' but not 'current' use.

4. Source of products and awareness of promotion

4.1 Sources of products

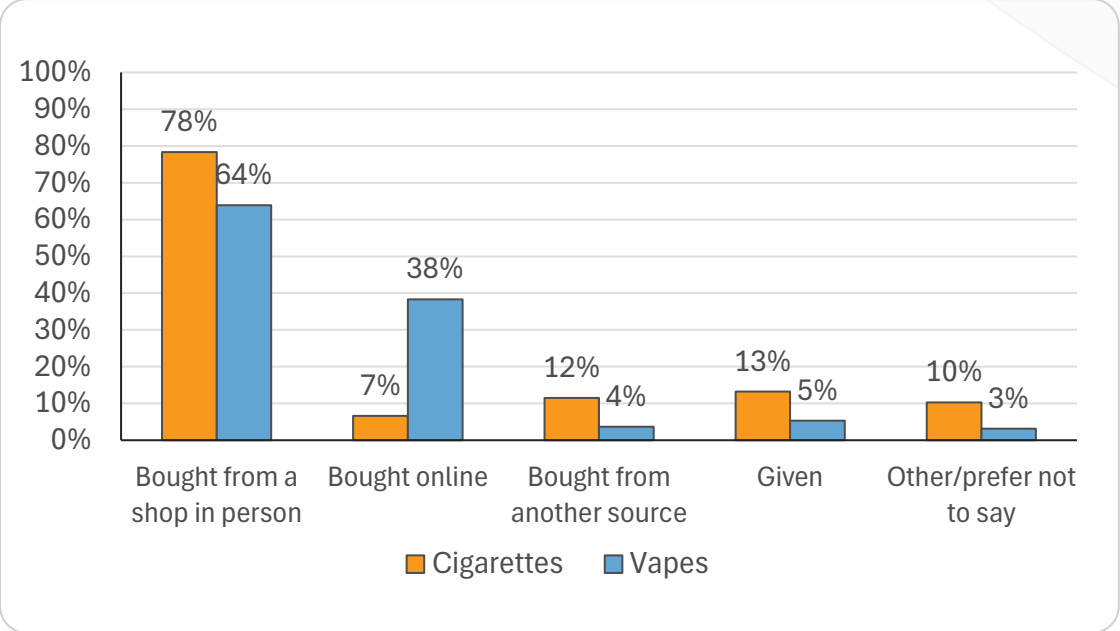
- 31% of vapers use vape shops; 38% purchase online
- Smokers favour supermarkets and corner shops

There are some differences in the way in which people who smoke and people who vape access their products of choice. While 54% of smokers usually buy their cigarettes from supermarket, only 19% of vapers get their vapes there. Smokers are also more likely to get them from a newsagent, corner shop or off-license (39% vs 24% of vapers) or from a petrol station or garage (13% vs 6% of vapers). Overall, 78% of smokers got their cigarettes from a shop, compared with 64% of vapers (Figure 47, multiple responses permitted).

About 3 in 10 of vapers (31%) usually get their vapes from a vape shop. Far more vapers get their vapes from the internet than smokers buy their cigarettes there (38% vs 7%, Figure 47). These patterns are similar if you compare only dual users, which suggests that it is something about the products rather than the people which means purchasing patterns are different. play (Figure 48).

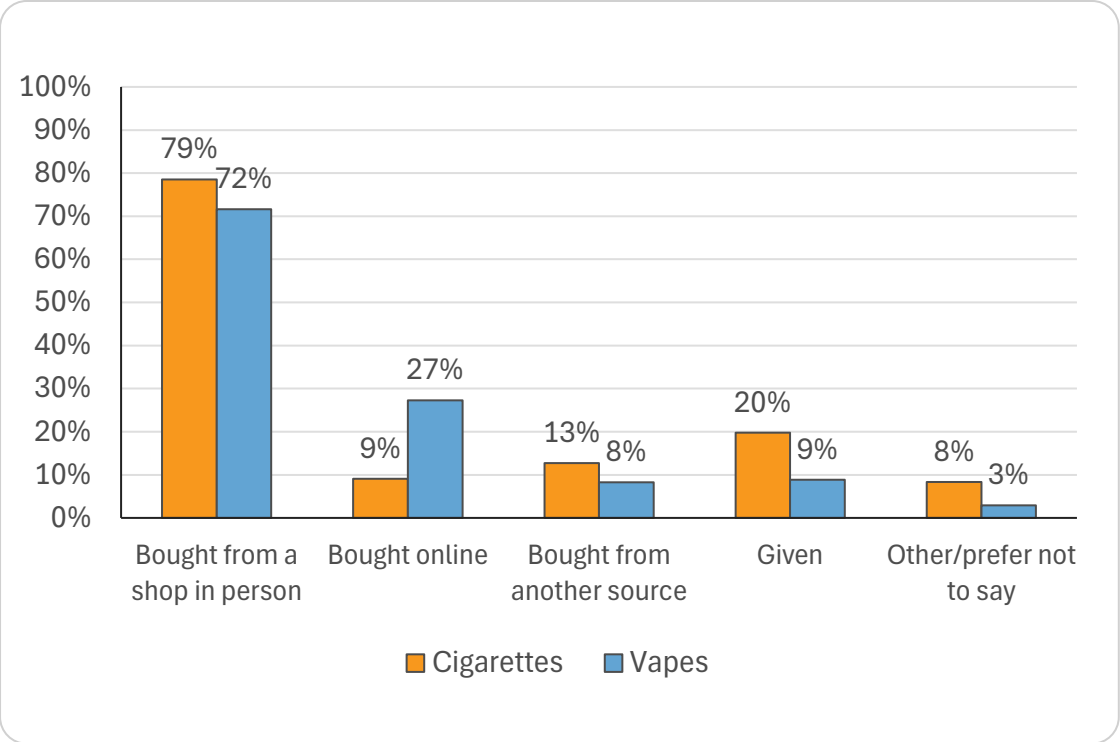
One in ten smokers (10%) get cigarettes by being given them by friends, compared with only 2% of vapers. About one in a hundred vapers (1%) get their vapes through a smoking cessation service or app.

Figure 47. Usual source of vapes and usual source of cigarettes, GB adult vapers and GB adult smokers (2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2026. Unweighted base: Adult current vapers, excluding those who have vaped 'once or twice' or don't know their frequency of vaping (1,295), adult current smokers (1,431). Multiple answers permitted.

Figure 48. Usual source of vapes and usual source of cigarettes, GB adult dual users (2026)

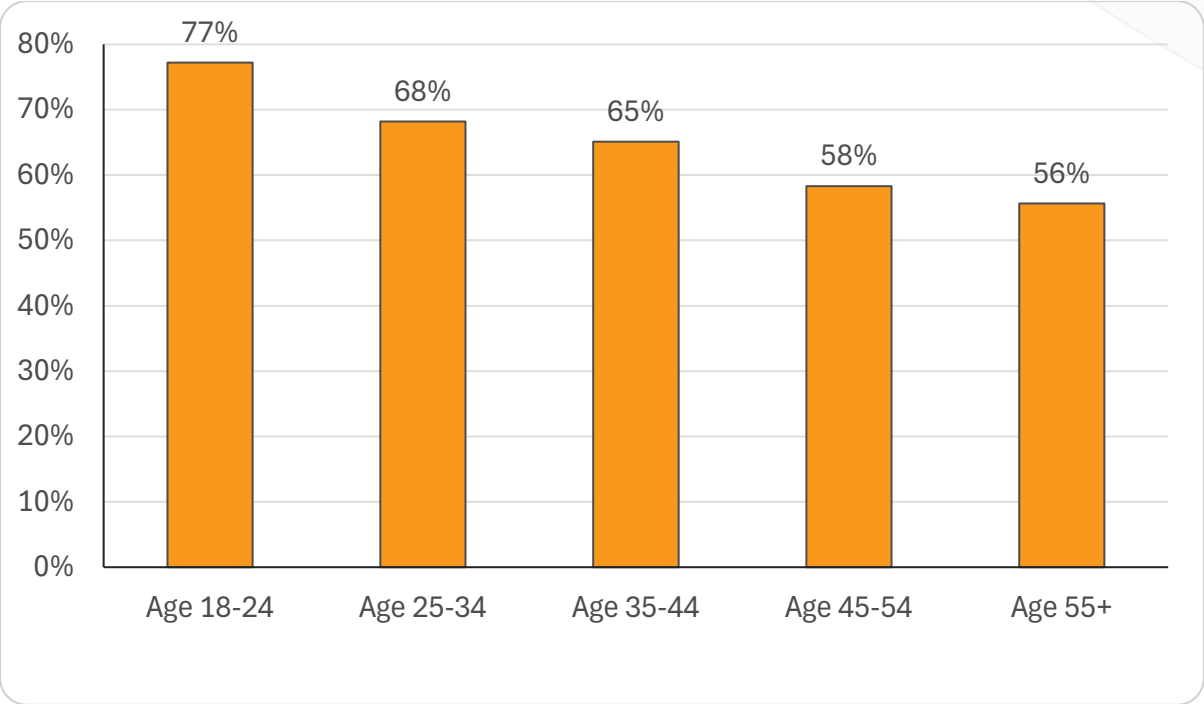


ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2026. Unweighted base: Adult current smokers who vape, excluding those who have vaped 'once or twice' or don't know their frequency of vaping (n=436). Multiple answers permitted.

4.2 Awareness of promotion

A majority of adults (62%) believe they have seen vapes being promoted. However, this varies by age. Younger adults are more likely to say they are aware of vape promotion and older adults least likely to say they are aware (77% of 18–24-year-olds compared to 56% of people aged 55 or over, Figure 49).

Figure 49. Proportion of adults aware of vape promotion by age, GB adults who are aware of vapes (2026)

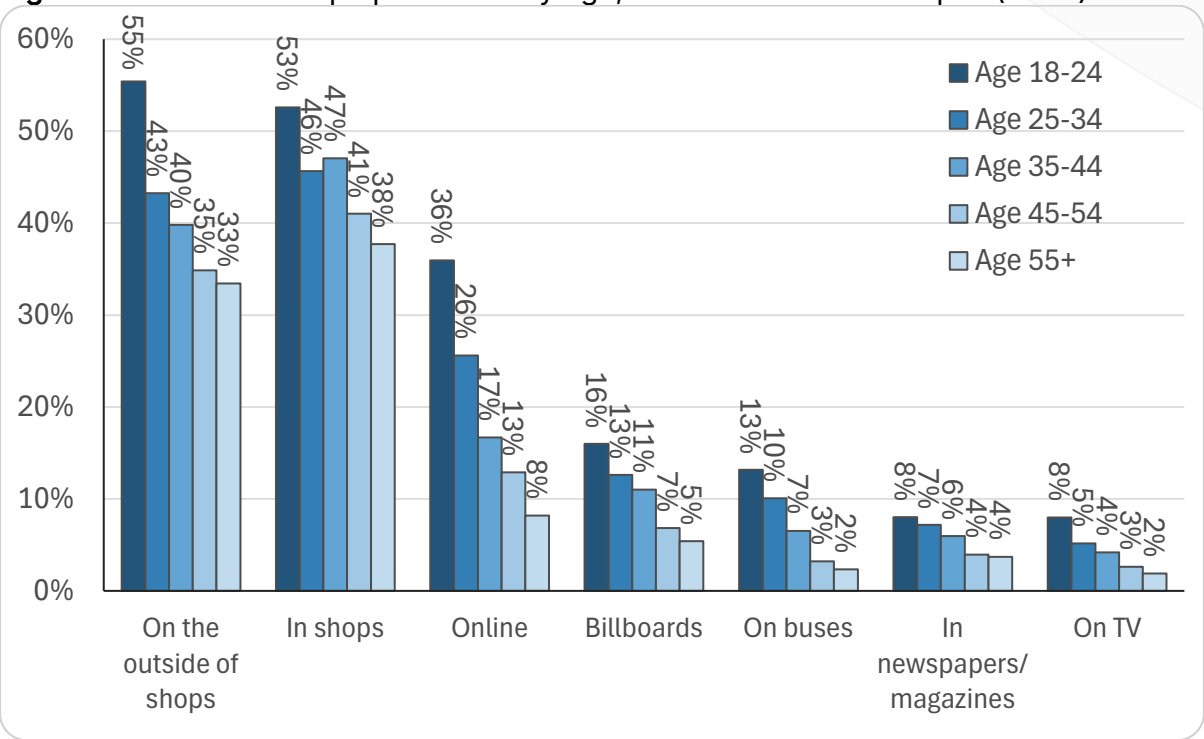


ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2026. Unweighted base: GB adults who have heard of vapes (Age 18-24: 2,141, Age 25-34: 1,581, Age 35-44: 2,037, Age 45-54: 1,646, Age 55+: 4,997)

The most common source of vape promotion is in shops, with just under half of adults reporting they have seen vapes promoted in these settings (42%). The next most common place is on the outside of shops (e.g. posters, retail signage; 38%). The third most common place is online (16%).

This again varies by age. Younger adults are more likely to be aware of vape promotion in all settings than older adults, particularly online when they are 4 times as likely to be aware of promotion if they are 18-24 than 55 or over (36% versus 8%, Figure 50).

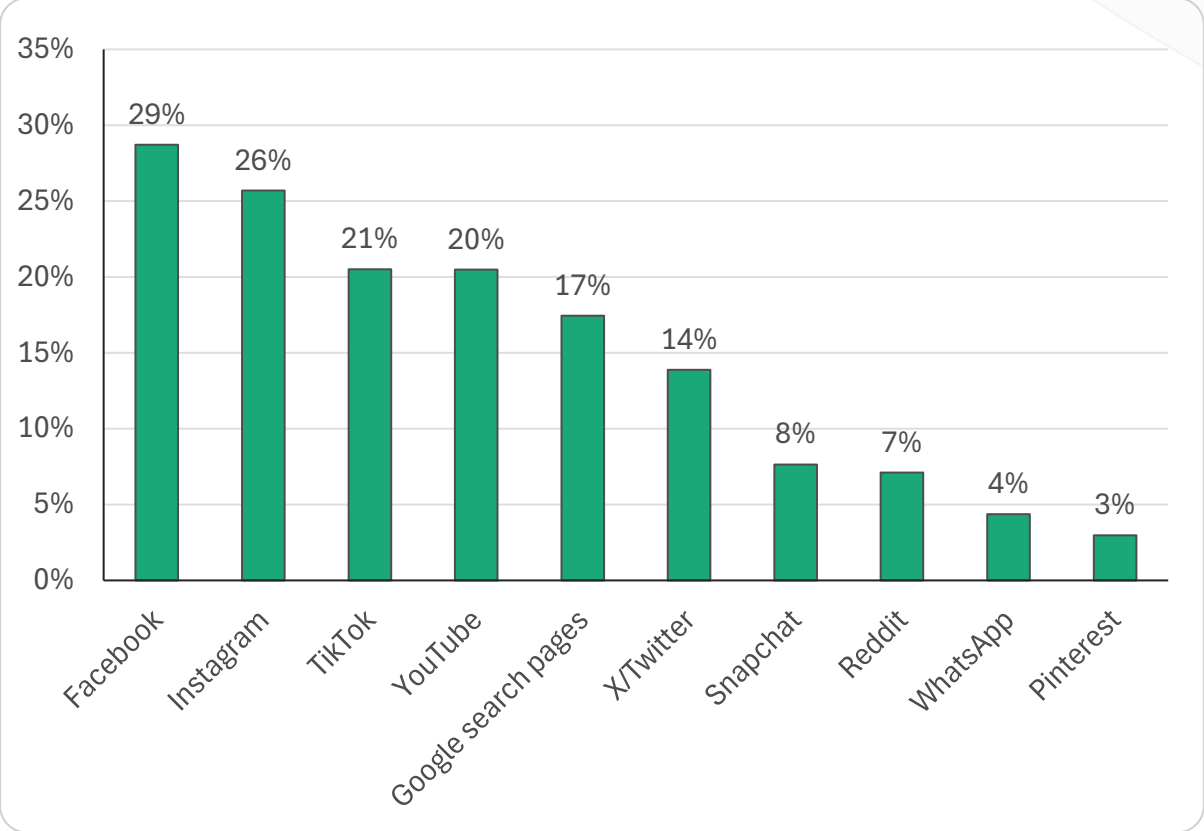
Figure 50. Source of vape promotion by age, GB adults aware of vapes (2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2025. Unweighted base: GB adults who have heard of vapes (Age 18-24: 2,141, Age 25-34: 1,581, Age 35-44: 2,037, Age 45-54: 1,646,Age 55+: 4,997). Multiple responses allowed.

While a lot of people don't recall where they saw promotion online (31%) the most common place online that people report seeing vapes promoted is on Facebook (29%, Figure 51) followed by Instagram (26%), TikTok (21%) and YouTube (20%). However, again there was variation for the youngest adults. While Facebook was the most common place for all age groups 35 and over, among those 18-24 Facebook (16%) was the 6th most common place, with Instagram (41%), TikTok (35%), YouTube (25%) X/Twitter (18%) and Snapchat (17%) all being more common. This likely reflects different patterns of online activity.

Figure 51. Top 10 most common places people reported seeing online vape promotion, GB adults who have seen vapes promoted online



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Survey 2026. Unweighted base: GB adults who have heard of vapes and who have seen them promoted online (n=2,156). Multiple responses allowed.

5. Other nicotine/tobacco products

Nicotine pouches

- 1.4% of adults currently use nicotine pouches (about 770,000 adults in GB)
- Over half of adults are aware of nicotine pouches (62%)
- Use of nicotine pouches is much higher among current (5.1%) or ex-smokers (2.1%) than those who have never smoked (0.3%)

Heated tobacco products

- Current use among all adults is 0.5%, current use among current smokers is 2.7%
- 26% of adults are aware of heated tobacco products

Shisha

- 2.2% of adults use shisha at least yearly
- 0.8% use shisha once a month or more

5.1 Nicotine pouches

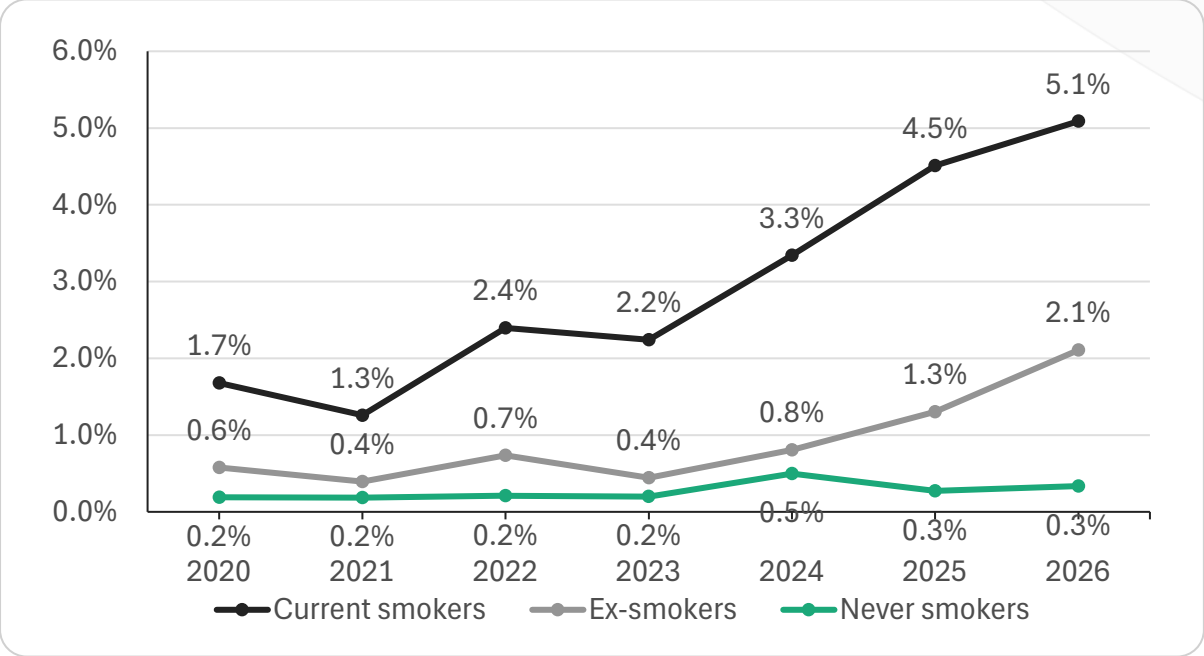
About one adult in 70 currently use nicotine pouches (1.4%). This is equivalent to around 770,000 adults in GB. A further 5.2% of adults have tried them in the past but no longer use them. More than half of adults surveyed were aware of nicotine pouches (62%).

Men are more likely than women to have ever tried nicotine pouches (8.5% of men, 4.9% of women). They are also more likely to currently use them (2.0% of men, 0.9% of women).

The use of nicotine pouches is much higher among current smokers (5.1%) or ex-smokers (2.1%) than those who have never smoked (0.3%, Figure 52). Most ex-smokers will have quit before the promotion of nicotine pouches. The rate of current use of nicotine pouches among those who quit smoking in the last year is 5.8%, significantly higher than ex-smokers in general. Use of nicotine pouches has more-than doubled among smokers and ex-smokers since 2023, but there is no clear indication that the proportion of never smokers who use nicotine pouches has increased (Figure 52).

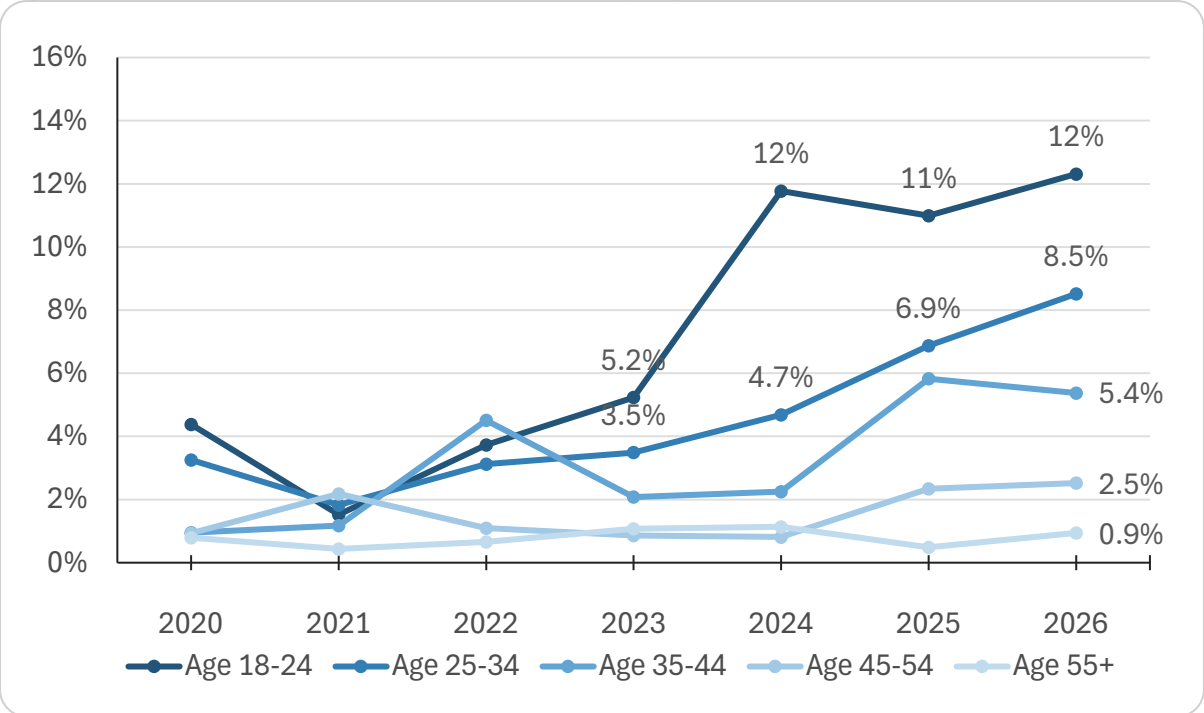
Younger smokers are much more likely than older smokers to use nicotine pouches (Figure 53). In 2026, 12% of 18-24 year old smokers currently used nicotine pouches, compared with 0.9% of those aged 55 and over.

Figure 52. Current use of nicotine pouches by smoking status, GB adults (2020-2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2020-2026. Unweighted base: Adult smokers, ex-smokers and never smokers – proportion who currently use nicotine pouches. Sample counts in Table 7 in appendix.

Figure 53. Current use of nicotine pouches by age, GB smokers (2020-2026)



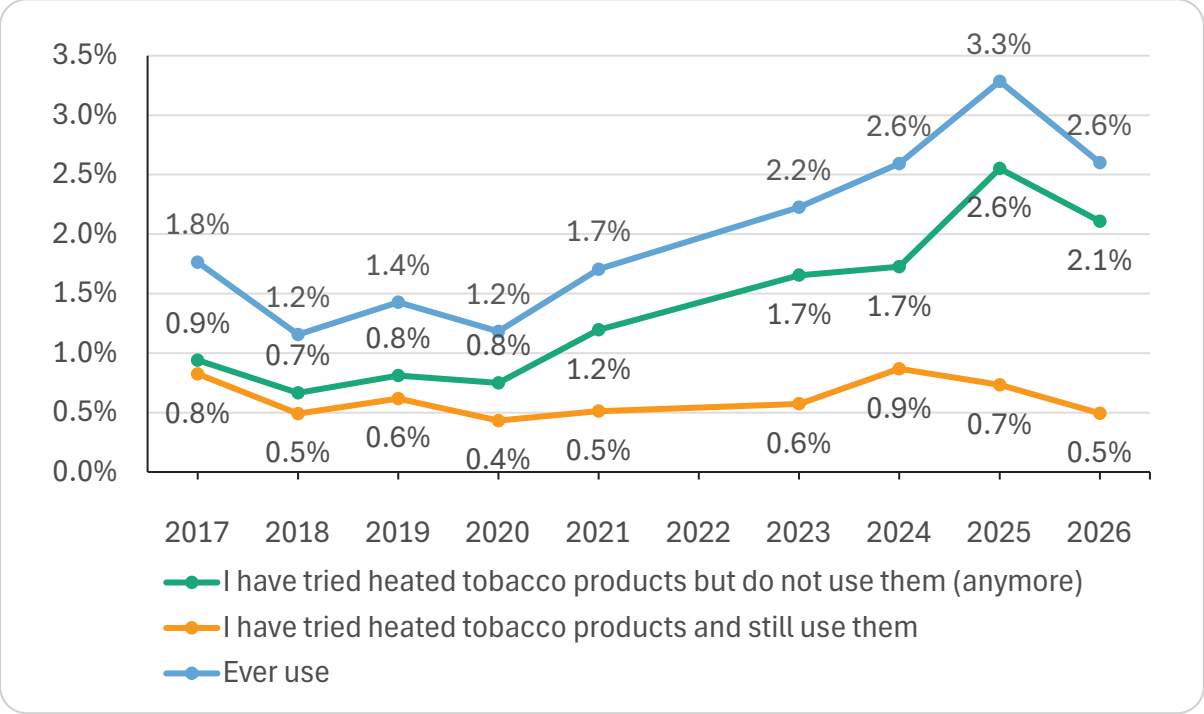
ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys 2020-2026. Unweighted base: All adult smokers. Sample counts in Table 11 in appendix.

See also: ASH Key topic: Nicotine pouches

5.2 Heated tobacco products

About one in two hundred adults (0.5%) currently use heated tobacco products (sometimes called heat not burn products), and a further 2.1% have used them in the past (Figure 54). Among current smokers, 2.7% currently use HTPs. One in four adults are aware of heated tobacco products (26%), and half of smokers are aware of them (49%).

Figure 54. Use of heated tobacco products, GB adults (2017-2026)



ASH Smokefree GB Adult Surveys (2017-2021 & 2023-2026). Unweighted base: All adults (2017=12,696, 2018=12,767, 2019=12,393, 2020=12,809, 2021=12,247, 2023=12,271, 2024=13,266, 2025=13,314, 2026=13,259)

See also: ASH Key Topic Heated tobacco

5.3 Shisha

About one in twenty adults report using shisha at least yearly (2.2%), including 0.8% who use it at least monthly. Shisha use is more common among current smokers (3.2% use at least monthly) than ex-smokers (0.6% use at least monthly) or never smokers (0.5% use at least monthly).

This question is not included in the survey every year, but there have been no clear changes in the proportion of adults or adult smokers using shisha since 2017.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Methodology and survey weighting
Appendix 2: Sample sizes for figures
Appendix 3: Comparison with other surveys (ONS, STS)
Appendix 4: Regulatory summary
Appendix 5: Definitions and survey questions

Appendix 1: Methodology and survey weighting

Methods
This briefing reports the results of the ASH Smokefree GB surveys on the use of vapes among adults in Great Britain. All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. ASH included questions on vape use in this annual survey starting in 2010, with questions initially addressed only to smokers. ASH updated its annual survey with questions on e-cigarettes addressed to all respondents from 2012 onwards. (Appendix Table 4). These surveys have all been carried out online once a year in Spring by YouGov. All figures have been weighted and are representative of GB adults (aged 18+). Not all questions are asked every year, especially where answers have proven stable in the past. A few new questions are also introduced each year. ASH has also carried out a survey of youth vaping (11-18-year-olds) since 2013. Most results are reported for 11-17 year olds only, and from 2026 the youth survey will only include 11-17 year olds. This analysis is published separately.[14]

Calculations of the total number of vapers in Great Britain set out in Table 1 are by ASH. In each of the years we applied the proportions of e-cigarette use in the YouGov survey to the most recent available ONS mid-year GB population estimates at the time the YouGov data was gathered.[1] In 2025 and 2026 the 2024 population estimate was used. Percentages in this report are given to the nearest whole number, or to one decimal place in a context where it's helpful. As a result, some sums may appear out by ±1 percentage points due to rounding error.

The word significant is used where 95% CI error bars don't overlap, and all comparisons that are emphasised in the text are significant differences. However, no specific hypothesis test was used and there is no correction for multiple comparisons.

Table 4. History of ASH Smokefree GB Surveys

Year	Sample Size	Dates
2008	3,329	20th – 25th February
2009	13,075	25th – 30th March
2010	12,597	17th - 22nd March
2012	12,436	27th February – 16th March
2013	12,171	1st – 19th February
2014	12,269	5th – 14th March

2015	12,055	26th February – 12th March
2016	12,157	2nd – 23rd March
2017	12,696	16th February – 19th March
2018	12,767	8th February – 6th March
2019	12,393	12th February – 10th March
2020	12,809	17th February – 11th March
2021	12,247	18th February – 18th March
2022	13,088	16th February – 21st March
2023	12,271	22nd February – 15th March
2024	13,266	29th February – 18th March
2025	13,314	10th February – 10th March
2026	13,259	18th February – 19th March

COVID-19

The YouGov data collection for the ASH Smokefree surveys occurs in February and March, so we do not expect that the 2020 data was significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The data in subsequent years may capture changes in smoking and vaping attitudes and behaviours that are causally related to the pandemic or lockdown. In 2020, data collection for both the Annual Population Survey [18] and the Smoking Toolkit Study [19] had to be changed from face-to-face to telephone interviews. This means it is difficult to determine how far the changes in vaping patterns in these surveys were due to changes in the mode of data collection and how far they were directly due to COVID-19. To compensate for the change of modality, the APS made a statistical adjustment to the data for 2020 onwards, which has since been revised a second time. [20] The ASH Smokefree survey has always been online, so did not have a discontinuity in method during the pandemic.

Appendix 2: Sample sizes for figures

Table 5. Sample sizes for Figure 5

Year	Youth never smokers	Adult never smokers
2013	1,552	5,973
2014	1,496	5,995
2015	1,478	6,129
2016	1,466	6,099
2017	1,764	6,626
2018	1,486	6,746
2019	1,600	6,466
2020	1,640	6,832
2021	1,785	6,507
2022	1,723	7,130

2023	1,673	6,649
2024	2,043	7,339
2025	2,070	7,490
2026	2,224	7,699

Table 6. Sample sizes for Figure 7

Sample counts	Age				
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
2013	1,324	1,180	1,758	2,351	5,558
2014	1,026	957	1,496	2,252	6,538
2015	1,305	1,472	1,958	2,844	4,476
2016	1,181	1,056	1,733	2,281	5,906
2017	1,246	995	2,018	2,911	5,526
2018	1,300	1,085	1,926	2,936	5,520
2019	1,604	1,514	1,810	2,466	4,999
2020	1,336	1,807	1,953	1,955	5,758
2021	1,194	1,759	2,045	1,920	5,329
2022	2,127	1,856	2,193	1,891	5,021
2023	1,407	1,723	2,149	1,901	5,091
2024	2,365	1,982	2,146	1,939	4,834
2025	2,241	2,008	1,962	1,859	5,244
2026	2,323	1,711	2,196	1,753	5,276

Table 7. Sample sizes for Figures 14, 52 and 54

Year	Never smokers	Ex-smokers	Current smokers
2015	6,129	3,889	2,037
2016	6,099	4,354	1,704
2017	6,626	4,438	1,632
2018	6,746	4,388	1,633
2019	6,466	4,150	1,777
2020	6,832	4,283	1,694
2021	6,507	4,228	1,512
2022	7,130	4,207	1,751
2023	6,649	4,105	1,517
2024	7,339	4,232	1,695
2025	7,490	4,196	1,628
2026	7,699	4,129	1,431

Table 8. Sample sizes for Figure 15

Year	Current smokers who vape	Current smokers who used to vape	Current smokers who have never vaped
2015	336	811	826
2016	330	703	645
2017	293	676	630
2018	308	710	594
2019	335	781	614
2020	292	815	540
2021	250	771	548
2022	394	815	484
2023	388	666	416
2024	547	676	427
2025	531	638	431
2026	437	590	383

Answers to number of cigarettes per day are banded, so average cigarette numbers are approximated by using the middle values.

Table 9. Sample sizes for Figure 25

Year	Ex-smokers who currently vape	Current smokers who have never vaped	Current smokers who currently vape	Current smokers who are ex-vapers	Never smokers who have never vaped
2013	93	1,058	221	441	3,945
2014	167	816	324	565	5,338
2015	239	768	366	811	5,608
2016	329	606	330	703	5,571
2017	361	600	293	676	6,146
2018	403	548	308	710	6,136
2019	465	563	335	781	5,767
2020	475	492	292	815	6,083
2021	541	417	250	771	5,672
2022	594	432	394	815	5,938
2023	617	372	388	666	5,607
2024	375	203	270	343	2,952
2025	721	386	531	638	6,219
2026	760	350	437	590	6,277

Table 10. Sample sizes for Figure 34

Year	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
2017	52	53	127	190	235
2018	50	68	129	199	269
2019	56	101	159	223	261
2020	55	104	168	176	264
2021	52	129	177	156	276
2022	217	181	217	188	230
2023	147	192	238	207	258
2024	247	309	302	241	275
2025	234	299	246	191	336
2026	247	235	295	217	301

Table 11. Sample sizes for Figure 53

Year	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
2020	166	278	323	332	595
2021	150	255	331	249	527
2022	329	281	350	289	502
2023	220	235	338	268	456
2024	280	369	321	259	466
2025	294	340	283	230	481
2026	328	210	235	231	427

Appendix 3: Comparison with other surveys (ONS, STS)

Since the ASH-commissioned Smokefree GB survey first started, there have been a number of other surveys which have gathered data on e-cigarette use. The Smoking Toolkit Study is probably the most extensive of these and tracks both smoking and vaping throughout the year. [21] The study started in England in January 2007 and expanded to Scotland and Wales in December 2020. The countries' surveys are reported separately rather than together as Great Britain, and only the England data are discussed here.

The trends are similar in both surveys, [22] although the vaping prevalence among never smokers has always been a little lower in the ASH survey. However, both surveys find a similar trend over time, with an increase in vaping among never smokers in 2023-2024. The surveys differ in the rates of vaping among younger adults, with the STS finding a higher overall rate of vaping among 16-24s. Differences are likely due to different sampling methods, question design or collection methods. For further information see the Smoking Toolkit Study.

Another major survey covering vaping in GB is the Annual Population Survey, conducted by the ONS. In 2024, their most recent survey at the time of publication,

they found that "Around 2.7% of those who had never smoked reported using an e-cigarette daily or occasionally.", which is an increase from 1.5% in 2021. [23] Like the STS, this rate is higher than was found in the 2021-2023 ASH surveys (0.7%, 1.3% and 1.1% respectively). However, all three surveys do find a significant increase of vaping among never smokers over the period 2021-2023/4.

Appendix 4: Regulatory summary

E-cigarette regulations

From the 1st June 2025, disposable vapes have been banned. The 2026 wave of this survey was the first ASH survey conducted since this regulation came into force. The Tobacco and Vapes Bill has been passed and is due to come into force on 1st Jan 2027.

In 2015, a minimum age of sale for e-cigarettes of 18 was introduced, making it illegal to sell e-cigarettes containing nicotine to under 18s or to purchase them on behalf of under 18s. [24]

From 20th May 2016, a regulatory framework for e-cigarettes was introduced in the UK under the EU Tobacco Products Directive (TPD) Article 20.[17] The regulations are due to be updated and strengthened following a review in 2023, but the timescale and content of the revised regulations has still to be decided at time of publication of this factsheet.

In line with the TPD since 2016 the advertising or promotion, directly or indirectly, of electronic cigarettes and re-fill containers on a number of media platforms, including on television, radio, newspapers and magazines, was prohibited. The only advertising still allowed is at point of sale and other local advertising such as on billboards and public transport.

The new product rules under the TPD for electronic cigarettes introduced a notification process for manufacturers and importers in May 2016. [25] See below for a summary of the key product standards:

Nicotine strength of e-liquid

- Electronic cigarettes which contain up to 20 mg per ml of nicotine are regulated as consumer products.
- Products containing over 20mg per ml of nicotine cannot be sold unless they have a medicinal licence. [26]
- Zero nicotine products are not included in the TPD and do not require a medicinal licence.

Quantity of e-liquid

- Disposable electronic cigarettes, cartridges and tanks can contain a maximum of 2ml of e-liquid, while dedicated refill containers can contain up to 10ml.

Safety

- Products must be child-resistant and tamper evident.

Health warnings

- The pack must carry a health warning covering 30% of the surfaces of the unit packet and any outside packaging stating *'This product contains nicotine which is a highly addictive substance.'*

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is the competent authority for the notification scheme for e-cigarettes and refill containers in the UK. [27] Consumers and healthcare professionals can report side effects and safety concerns with e-cigarettes or refill containers to the MHRA through the Yellow Card reporting system. [28] They can also report products suspected to be defective or non-compliant to their local Trading Standards service or to TPDsafety@mhra.gov.uk.

The Yellow Card Scheme was put in place for e-cigarettes on 20 May 2016. Between then and January 2022, MHRA received 257 Yellow Card adverse reaction reports covering 720 adverse reactions. [29] The MHRA assesses all reports received in associated with nicotine-containing e-cigarettes and should any potential safety concerns be identified regulatory action would be taken and communicated as appropriate. The MHRA also receives reports of potential safety concerns and works with local Trading Standards teams to investigate as needed.

ASH asks vapers questions about the type of product they use to inform our understanding of the impact of the current regulations and how the market for vapes is evolving.

Appendix 5: Definitions and survey questions

Vaping and smoking questions and definitions

This is the question that adults were asked about their vaping status:

The following question relates to vapes. These products are sometimes called e-cigarettes. Which of the following statements BEST applies to you?

1) I have never heard of vapes (e-cigarettes) and have never tried them
2) I have heard of vapes (e-cigarettes) but have never tried them
3) I have tried vapes (e-cigarettes) but do not use them (anymore)
4) I have tried vapes (e-cigarettes) and still use them
5) Don't know

"Current vapers" are defined as those answering 4)
"Ex-vapers" are defined as those answering 3)
"Never vapers" are defined as those answering 1) or 2)

Before 2024, the question was phrased as "E-cigarettes are also sometimes called vapes or vaping devices. Which of the following statements BEST applies to you?". Before 2024 answers had the words "vapes" and "e-cigarettes" in swapped positions.

This is the question that adults were asked about their smoking status:

Smoking in this survey refers to all burnt tobacco products. It does NOT include vapes (e-cigarettes). Which of the following statements BEST applies to you?

1) I have never smoked
2) I used to smoke but I have given up now
3) I smoke but I don't smoke every day
4) I smoke every day

"Current smokers" are defined as those answering 3) or 4)
"Ex-smokers" are defined as those answering 2)
"Never smokers" are defined as those answering 1)

Before 2024 the question had the words "vapes" and "e-cigarettes" in swapped positions.

These questions asked people about the portion of smoking and vaping health harms that come from nicotine:

According to what you know or believe, what proportion, if any, of the health risks of smoking comes from nicotine in cigarettes?
and
According to what you know or believe, what proportion, if any, of the health risks of vaping comes from nicotine in vapes (e-cigarettes)?

1) None or very small
2) Some but well under half the risk
3) Around half the risk
4) Much more than half the risk
5) Nearly all of the risk
6) Don't know

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Reviewers:
Prof Sarah Jackson, UCL
Prof Leonie Brose, KCL
Prof Jamie Brown, UCL

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