

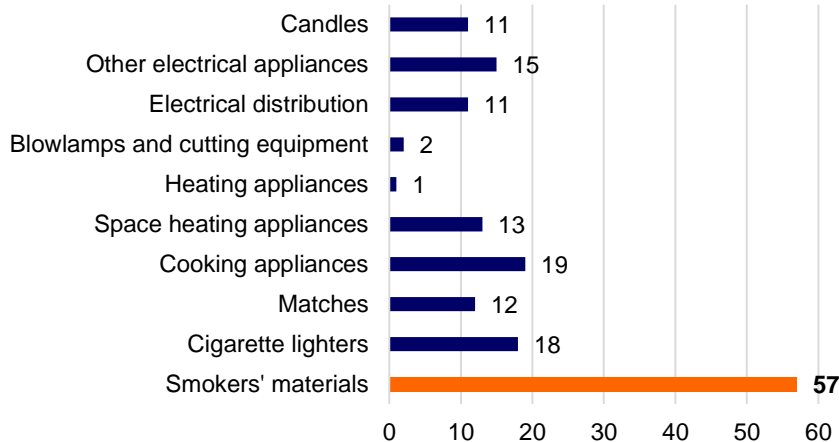
# Tobacco Alliance FAQ: Fire & Rescue Services

## What is a Tobacco Control Alliance?

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

### Smoking-related fires

- In England in 2018/19, [3,742 fires were caused by smoking materials](#)
- Smoking materials are the single largest cause of fatalities from house fires
- The overall cost of smoking related fires is around [£324 million every year](#)



[Fatalities by source of ignition in England, 2018/19](#)

## What can Fire Services contribute to the alliance's work?

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

- Delivering 'Safe and Well' home visits to assess fire risk, provide personalised advice and fit appropriate fire alarms
- Providing [Very Brief Advice](#) on smoking cessation to members of the public
- Referring people who smoke to local stop smoking support
- Encouraging those who do smoke to keep their home smokefree and providing advice how to do so, including harm reduction advice

## What can Fire Services gain from alliance work?

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

By sitting on a Tobacco Control Alliance, fire departments will benefit from working in collaboration to drive down smoking rates and receive appropriate support and training to deliver smokefree homes messaging, consequently reducing the numbers of smoking related fires.



**More information...** See ASH's 2018 report, [Smoking in the Home: New solutions for a Smokefree Generation](#) for more detail on the role F&R Services can play in tobacco control

# Fire & Rescue Services: Case Study

## Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service

The Greater Manchester tobacco control strategy, '[Making Smoking History, A Tobacco Free Greater Manchester 2017-2021](#)' aims to reduce adult smoking prevalence by a third from 18.4% to 13% by the end of 2020. A partnership called 'Making Smoking History in Greater Manchester' supports the implementation of this ambitious plan. Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue service (GMFRS) is actively involved in the partnership because 49% of accidental fire deaths in Greater Manchester are caused by smoking materials and so working within the partnership to ensure smokers have access to fire safety advice and interventions is vital. Furthermore, GMFRS views all activity to reduce smoking prevalence as a vital tactic in the long term reduction of smoking related fires.



GREATER MANCHESTER  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

GMFRS's supports the partnership's programme of campaigns to reduce smoking prevalence by distributing campaign literature during Safe and Well visits and delivering campaign messages using social media and at community events. Guidance, training and referral pathways are in place that enable GMFRS staff to deliver Very Brief Advice to smokers and refer or signpost those who want to make a quit attempt to services that can support them to do this.

To strengthen the approach, the partnership is producing an electronic learning package to teach non-health professionals about how to deliver Very Brief Advice to smokers. The package will provide interactive theory followed by short film clips showing Very Brief Advice in action. The film footage includes firefighters delivering Very Brief Advice in a home setting during a staged Safe and Well visit. Once produced, the learning will be rolled out to operational and non-operational delivery staff across GMFRS.

Finally, the partnership provides GMFRS with a network for reaching smokers with fire safety advice and interventions including Safe and Well visits. Partners are encouraged to distribute smoking related fire safety literature and integrate fire safety into conversations with people who smoke. Referral pathways for Safe and Well visits are established in most boroughs in the county and GMFRS continues to work with partners to deliver visits and fire safety advice to smokers as a priority group.

Example resources from Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service:

- [Smoking-related fires and tobacco control guidance](#) setting out GMFRS strategy to reduce the risk of smoking-related fires, injuries and deaths and to work collaboratively with partners and tobacco alliances across Greater Manchester
- [Ask and Offer](#) setting out what GMFRS can offer their colleagues working in tobacco control and what they ask in return, overall helping to clarify the GMFRS's role as part of a comprehensive approach