

Tobacco Alliance FAQ: Trading Standards

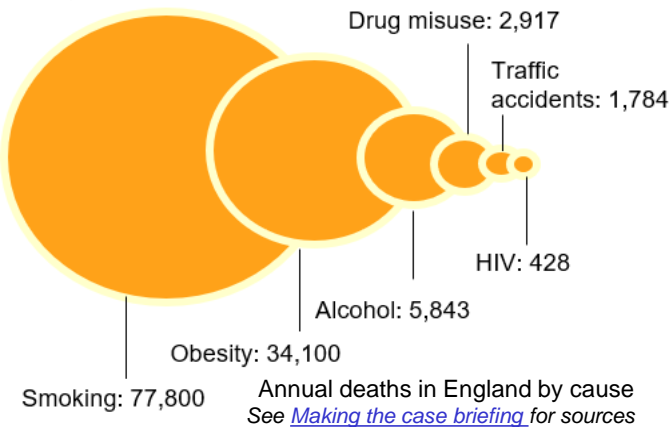
What is Tobacco Control?

A co-ordinated and comprehensive approach to reducing the prevalence of smoking. There are six internationally recognised strands of tobacco control which are: stopping the promotion of tobacco; making tobacco less affordable; effective regulation of tobacco products; helping tobacco users to quit; reducing exposure to second-hand smoke; and effective communications for tobacco control.

What is a Tobacco Control Alliance?

Local partnerships within local authority boundaries working on effective local activity to reduce smoking rates and tackle health inequalities. Alliances typically include a wide range of members, from trading standards and environmental health to fire and rescue, education, health staff, childrens' services, as well as elected members and local NGOs and businesses.

Why is tobacco control important?

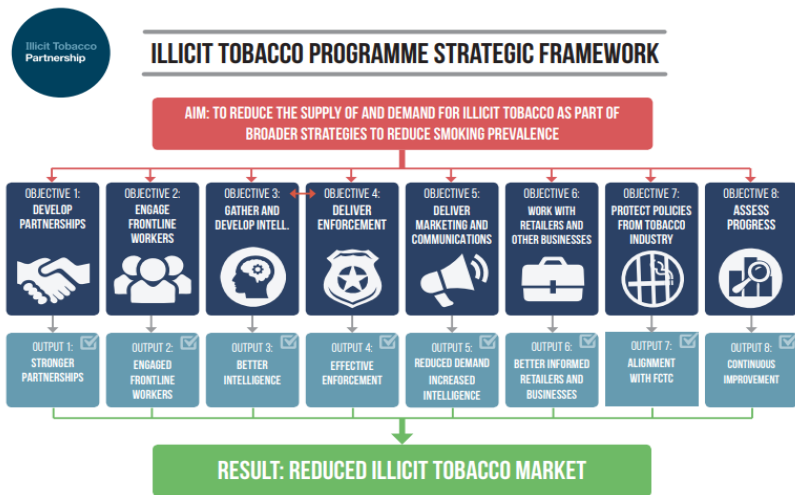


The role of Trading Standards in reducing smoking

- Enforcing tobacco-related legislation e.g. point of sale and standardised packaging regulations
- Reducing underage sales of age-restricted products, including tobacco
- Reducing the availability of illegal tobacco products
- Monitoring compliance with Tobacco Advertising and Promotion Act
- Monitoring compliance with Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016 (TRPR)

How can Trading Standards contribute to a Tobacco Control Alliance?

- Work alongside alliance partners such as the police, housing and HMRC to **tackle illicit and niche tobacco products such as oral tobacco**
- **Work with local traders** to develop their knowledge on a range of tobacco control issues
- **Contributing to work on reducing youth smoking prevalence** alongside alliance partners in education, schools and youth services
- **Sharing information** to help public health professionals identify at-risk groups



What can Trading Standards gain by being members of an alliance?

- **Intelligence leads from teams working directly with the public:** Public health teams and smoking cessation advisors may also be able to include phone numbers for reporting lines on public facing publications
- **Increased profile for tobacco control work:** Messages coming from an Alliance of organisations working collaboratively to tackle tobacco are more powerful than individual departments or officers – alliances can also ensure messaging in press releases and public facing communications are accurate and on message
- **Increased impact for tobacco control work:** Alliances provide an opportunity to increase the effectiveness of smoking prevention and cessation activities by co-ordinating the work of different partners



Trading Standards: Alliance Case Study

Durham County Council Trading Standards

Durham County Council is one of seven North East councils to commission the Fresh comprehensive tobacco control programme and the council's Trading Standards team is an active member of Durham's local tobacco control alliance, with raising awareness of illicit tobacco, gathering intelligence and enforcement being key elements of the local tobacco action plan.



At a local level the Trading Standards team is engaged in a variety of local tobacco control work. This includes dealing with complaints and compliance monitoring around under-age sales of tobacco products, and tackling illicit tobacco products.

Work on illicit tobacco is intelligence led, including proactive inspections of retail premises with detection dogs and the execution of warrants on domestic and private property in addition to undertaking of financial investigations to pursue monies attributed to criminal activity, when needed. As an active member of the County Durham Tobacco Control Alliance, Trading Standards is able to engage in a broad range of tobacco control activity alongside the council's public health team such as promoting the Fresh 'Keep It Out' campaign with retailers and the public. The campaign aims to reduce comfort levels with the illicit tobacco trade and generates intelligence through dedicated reporting channels on where illicit sales are taking place. This intelligence is then developed and actioned where appropriate.

A recent example of success from the campaign for the team came when a tip off provided through the Keep It Out campaign led Trading Standards to a couple in their sixties who were selling illegal tobacco products from their home. They were ordered to pay more than £1,000 and over 300 cigarettes and nearly a kilogram of tobacco were seized from the property.

The Trading Standards team is also able to promote the campaign and requests for other tobacco-related intelligence via exciting and new networks and partnerships, for example, the Keep It Out materials are distributed via the Pub Watch Scheme and through teams within the team's wider service during inspection visits to a variety of training premises across the county. The team is also able to distribute materials and information, including press releases on prosecution outcomes through alliance and other partners, further raising the profile of tobacco control work. The team regularly provide update presentations to the County Durham Tobacco Control Alliance in addition to training on illicit tobacco to alliance partners and is a regular attendee and contributor.

Whilst at a regional level the Trading Standards team is partnered with Fresh, at a local level the team considers the County Durham Tobacco Alliance members to be key partners and it is also able to work closely with the police and HM Revenue & Customs. As the above demonstrates, participation in the alliance means County Durham Trading Standards is able to better meet its objectives whilst also supporting tobacco control efforts and the objectives of alliance partners, thereby collaboratively achieving safer, healthier communities across Durham.

For information and reserouces on tackling the illicit tobacco trade, see www.illicit-tobacco.co.uk

