

The Smokefree Great Britain Survey 2020¹

Public Opinion in the South East

In 2018, 12.9% of people in the South East continue to smoke.² Smoking killed 35,378 people in the South East from 2016-18³ and remains the leading cause of preventable illness and premature death in England.⁴

In 2020, the South East supported Government action to tackle tobacco

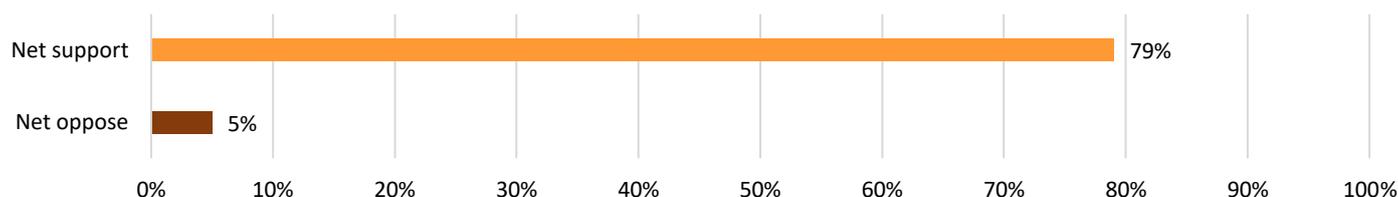
- More than three quarters (79%) of adults in the South East support activities to limit smoking or think the government could do more
- 6% of adults in the South East think the Government is doing too much (3%) or far too much (3%)
- In the South East, the proportion of respondents who think the Government could do more to limit smoking has grown substantially from 29% in 2009⁵ to 46% in 2020
- 76% of people in the South East support the Government's ambition to reduce smoking prevalence to 5% or below (fewer than 1 in 20 people) by 2030, with just 6% opposing.

What further action should be taken to tackle tobacco?

A levy on tobacco manufacturers

Adults in the South East strongly support tobacco manufacturers being required to pay a levy to Government for measures to help smokers quit and prevent young people from taking up smoking. 79% of the South East support this, with only 5% opposing it.

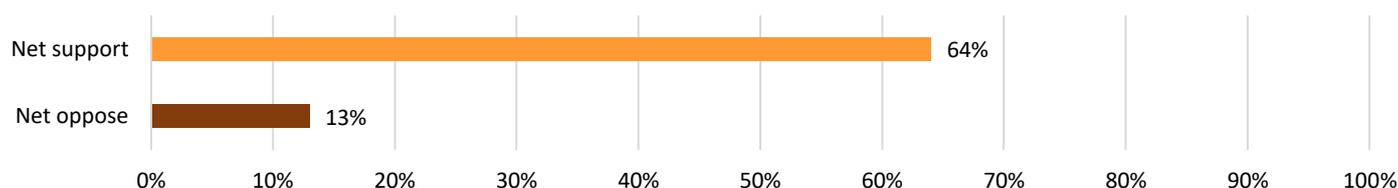
South East support for a tobacco levy or license fee paid by tobacco manufacturers to Government



Increasing the age of sale from 18 to 21

The majority of adults in the South East support increasing the age of sale for tobacco from 18 to 21, with few opposing it. There is good evidence that raising the age of sale of tobacco to 21 will have a substantial positive impact on public health and save lives.⁶

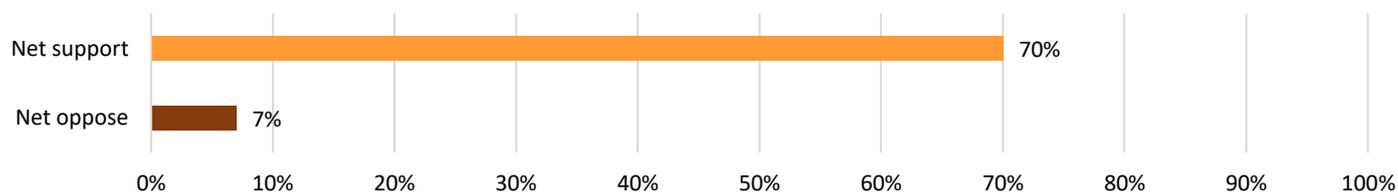
South East support for increasing the age of sale for tobacco to 21



Pack inserts

Nearly two thirds (70%) of adults in the South East support requiring cigarette packs to include inserts with Government mandated information about quitting, compared to 7% who oppose it. Research from Canada, where pack inserts are used, shows they have been effective in promoting quitting,⁷ whilst UK research shows use of such inserts is supported by smokers diverse in age, gender and social grade.⁸

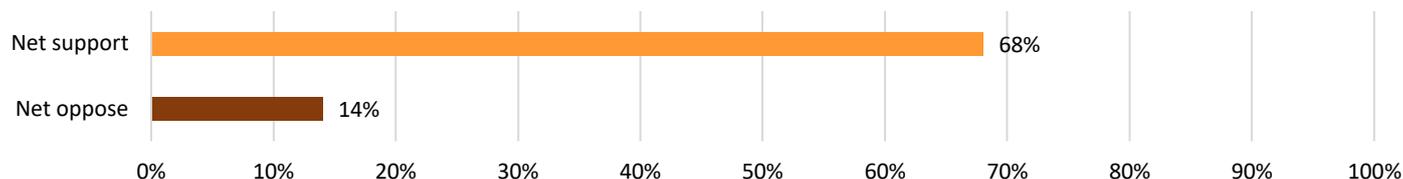
South East cigarette packs to include inserts with Government information about quitting



Smoking in cars

Banning smoking in all cars is supported by 68% of adults in the South East and opposed by just 14%. Smoking in cars results in concentrations of toxins much higher than are normally found elsewhere – up to 11 times higher than you used to find in the average smoky pub.⁹

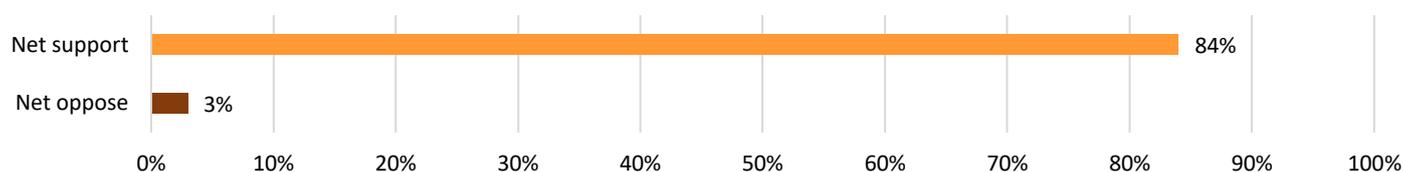
South East support for a ban on smoking in all cars



Tobacco retail licensing

81% of adults in the South East support the introduction of a licence to sell tobacco which can be removed if retailers are caught more than once selling to underage smokers, with only 3% opposing.

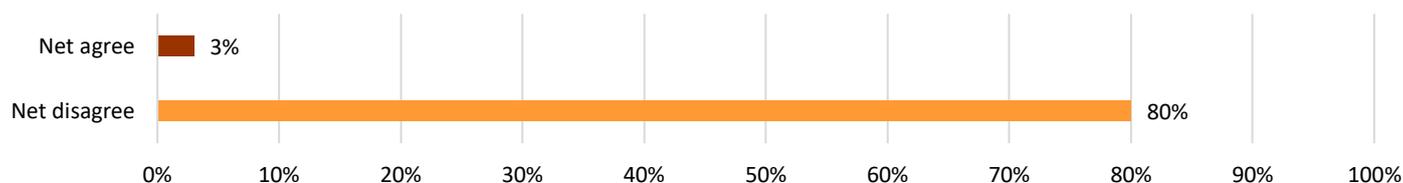
South East support for tobacco retail licensing in England



In 2019, public belief in tobacco companies offers of help was extremely low in the South East¹⁰

Tobacco manufacturers increasingly claim they want to help people stop smoking and are trying to influence public health policy, for example by offering funding in exchange for relaxing of advertising regulations on new products.¹¹ The public understands the tobacco industry are not to be trusted: only 3% of people in the South East agree with the statement: 'I believe tobacco companies when they say they want to help people quit smoking'.

South East: 'I believe tobacco companies when they say they want to help people quit smoking'



1 All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc Smokefree Britain Survey 2020. The total sample sizes was 10749 adults in England. The unweighted sample for the South East was 1682. Fieldwork was undertaken between: 17th February 2020 to 11th March 2020. The survey is carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).

2 Public Health England, Local Tobacco Control Profiles: South East smoking prevalence in adults: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/tobacco-control/data#page/4/gid/1938132886/pat/15/par/E92000001/ati/6/are/E12000008/iid/92443/age/168/sex/4>

3 Public Health England, Local Tobacco Control Profiles: South East smoking attributable mortality: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/tobacco-control/data#page/4/gid/1938132887/pat/15/par/E92000001/ati/6/are/E12000008/iid/92443/age/168/sex/4>

4 NHS Digital. 'Health Survey for England 2014 Trend Tables Commentary'. 2015. Page 20.

5 Smokefree: The First Ten Years, Tackling the smoking epidemic in England: the views of the public, ASH 2017: <http://ash.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/170107-Smokefree-the-first-ten-years-FINAL.pdf>

6 IOM (Institute of Medicine). Public health implications of raising the minimum age of legal access to tobacco products. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. 2015. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK310412/>

7 Thrasher JF, Swayampakala K, Cummings KM, et al. [Cigarette package inserts can promote efficacy beliefs and sustained smoking cessation attempts: A longitudinal assessment of an innovative policy in Canada](#). Prev Med 2016;88:59–65

8 Moodie C. [Adult smokers' perceptions of cigarette pack inserts promoting cessation: a focus group study](#). Tobacco Control 2018;27:72-77

9 Sendzik T, Fong GT, Travers MJ, Hyland A. An experimental investigation of tobacco smoke pollution in cars. Nicotine Tob Res. 2009;11(6):627–634. doi:10.1093/ntr/ntp019

10 YouGov Plc Smokefree Britain Survey 2019. The total sample sizes was 10338 adults in England. The unweighted sample for the South East was 1732. Fieldwork was undertaken between: 12th February 2019 to 10th March 2019. The survey is carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).

11 The Guardian. [Philip Morris drew up plan for £1bn tobacco transition fund](#). February 2020 [accessed April 2020]