

The Smokefree Great Britain Survey 2021¹

Public Opinion in the South East

In 2019, [12.2% of people in the South East continued to smoke](#). Smoking kills around [17,700 people a year in the South East](#).² It remains [the leading cause of preventable illness and premature death in England](#).

In 2021, the South East supported Government action to tackle tobacco

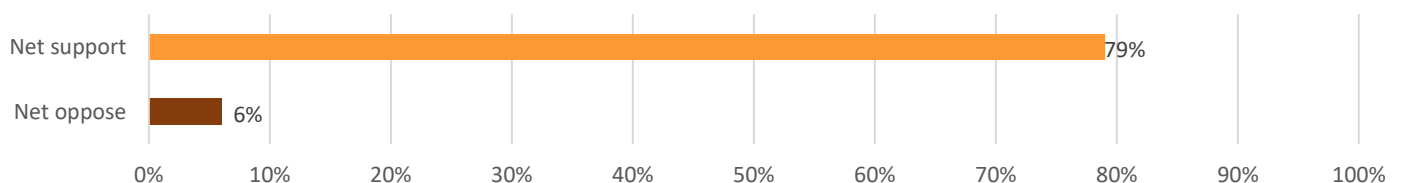
- Four in every five (79%) adults in the South East support activities to limit smoking or think the government could do more.
- 6% of adults in the South East think the Government is doing too much (3%) or far too much (3%).
- In the South East, the proportion of respondents who think the Government could do more to limit smoking has grown substantially from [29% in 2009](#) to 47% in 2021.
- 77% of people in the South East support the Government's ambition to reduce smoking prevalence to less than 5% (fewer than 1 in 20 people) by 2030 with just 7% 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 adults in the South East support this, with only 6% opposing it.

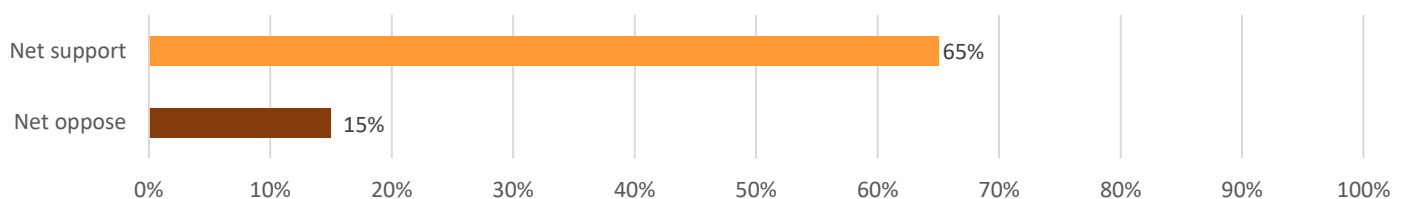
The South East's support for a tobacco levy paid by tobacco manufacturers to Government



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.

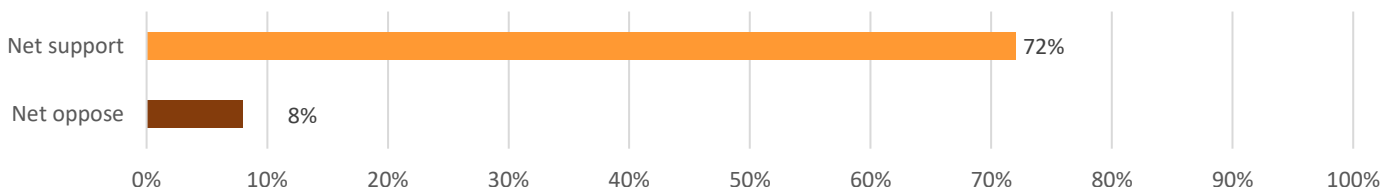
The South East's support for increasing the age of sale for tobacco to 21



Pack inserts

Three fifths (72%) of adults in the South East support requiring cigarette packs to include inserts with Government mandated information about quitting, compared to 8% who oppose it. [Research from Canada](#), where pack inserts are used, shows they have been effective in promoting quitting, whilst [UK research](#) shows use of such inserts is supported by smokers diverse in age, gender, and social grade.

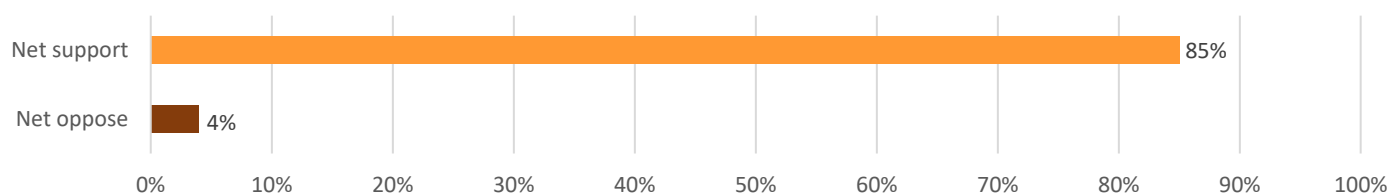
The South East's support for cigarette packs to include inserts with Government info about quitting



Tobacco retail licensing

85% 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 4% opposing.

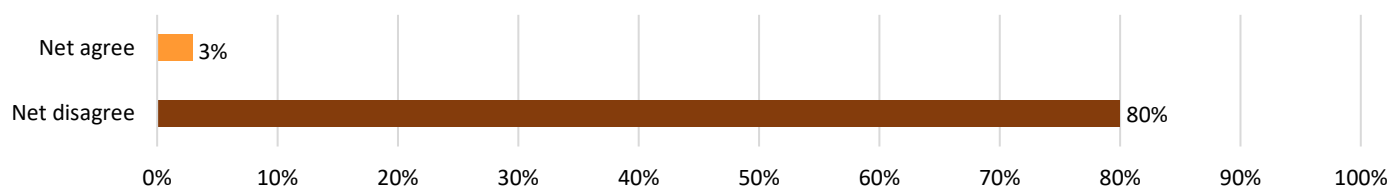
The South East's support for tobacco retail licensing in England



In 2019, public belief in tobacco companies offers of help was extremely low in the South East³

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

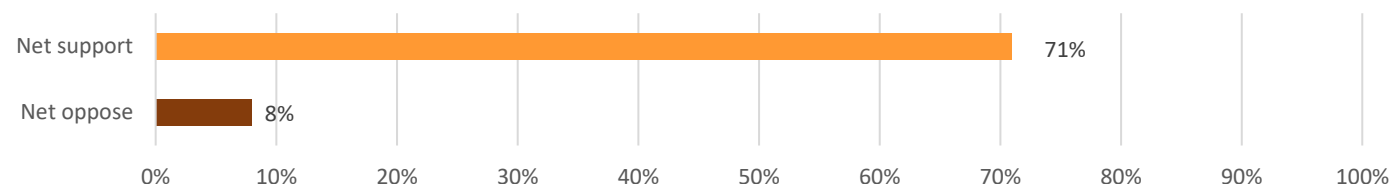
The South East: 'I believe tobacco companies when they say they want to help people quit smoking'



Dissuasive cigarettes

71% of adults in the South East support the introduction of health warnings printed on cigarette sticks, with only 9% opposing. In a [2020 study](#) of 600 people, 84-91% said they would not try dissuasive cigarettes.

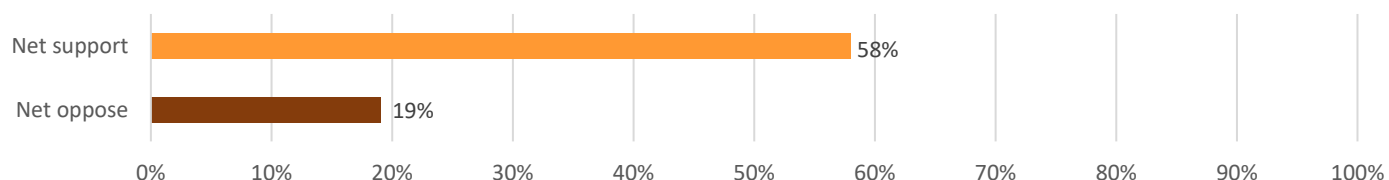
The South East's support for dissuasive cigarettes in England



Incentive schemes for pregnant women

[A 2014 study](#) of 600 women in Glasgow found that providing financial incentives improves a pregnant woman's chances of quitting smoking. After being told about the trial, around three fifths (58%) of adults in the South East support offering pregnant women financial incentives alongside stop smoking treatment to help quit smoking, compared to 19% who disagree.

The South East's support for financial incentive schemes for pregnant women



1 All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc Smokefree Great Britain Survey 2021. The total sample size was 10211 adults in England. The unweighted sample for the South East of England was 1756. Fieldwork was undertaken between: 18th February 2021 to 18th March 2021. The survey is carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all adults in England (aged 18+).

2 Calculated by halving the number of deaths between 2016-2018 in the region to get a yearly average from the PHE Local Tobacco Control Profiles.

3 YouGov Plc Smokefree Great Britain Survey 2019. The total sample size was 10338 adults in England. The unweighted sample for the South East of England 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 adults in England (aged 18+).