

### Annual report on work on vaping in 2023

Southampton City Council is committed to reducing tobacco-related harm, as outlined in the Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs strategy. Part of this response is the use of nicotine e-cigarettes/vapes as an evidence based tool for stopping smoking, recommended by NICE [Recommendations on treating tobacco dependence | Tobacco: preventing uptake, promoting quitting and treating dependence | Guidance | NICE](#)

For people who smoke, switching to vaping can be an effective tool and less harmful than tobacco. During 2020 to 2021 vaping was nationally associated with the highest rates of successful quits. [Nicotine vaping in England: 2022 evidence update main findings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

A recent Cochrane review (January 2024) reported that nicotine e-cigarettes can help people to stop smoking for at least six months. Evidence showed they worked better than nicotine replacement therapy, and probably better than e-cigarettes without nicotine. [Electronic cigarettes for smoking cessation - Lindson, N - 2024 | Cochrane Library](#)

**Public Health advice** remains clear that for adults who smoke, switching to vaping can be an effective tool and less harmful than tobacco, however, if you do not smoke, do not vape – whatever your age. It is not completely harmless, and the long-term effects are unknown.

**Safe disposal of single use vapes.** Working in collaboration with the council Waste Management and Communications teams, clear messaging has been shared regarding the safe disposal of all vapes. This encourages people to dispose of vapes safely by returning them to a vape retailer or taking them to a dedicated collection point at your local Household Waste Recycling Centre [Household Waste Recycling Centre](#).. More and more big retailers now also have collection points. The importance of never throwing vapes in household waste or recycling bins, as they can cause serious fires, hurt crews and slow down bin collections has been highlighted. <https://www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk/>

**Trading Standards** have carried out several raids to seize illicit vapes and where products have been sold underage.

#### **Southampton city council activity during 2023 included:**

- Monitoring research, data, government debates & committees, position statements, media announcements, responding to queries.
- Tobacco, alcohol, drugs and vaping in young people needs assessment carried out.
- Establishing a cross council vaping group with the purpose of:
  - To better understand the rapidly developing agenda
  - To identify and prioritise the key issues (young people)
  - To share intelligence and respond to ongoing queries
- Coordinating a council response to government consultation on “Creating a smokefree generation and tackling youth vaping” [Creating a smokefree generation and tackling youth vaping consultation: government response - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

- Continuing Professional Development to the PSHE Network and training for teachers, Education Oversight group updates, presentations to Headteacher forums.
- Commissioning training for Health and Care Practitioners, delivered by Southampton Smokefree Solutions.
- Co-production of resources on the safe disposal of vapes for practitioners and organisations across the city.
- Contribution to national, regional & local resources and guidance, including information for schools.
- Sharing regular updates on sources of support, guidance & resources for local schools
- Successful bid for national Swap2Stop scheme providing free vape kits to groups with higher smoking prevalence and unmet need.