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**Government Announcement on Disposable
Vapes.**

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Purpose of the report

Government Announcement on Proposed Ban of Disposable Vapes.

1. On the 28 January 2024 the Government announced that disposable vapes will be banned in the UK as part of the Government's plans to tackle the rise in youth vaping and protect children's health.



- Ban on disposable vapes which have driven alarming rise in youth vaping.
- New powers to restrict vape flavours, introduce plain packaging and change how vapes are displayed in shops so they don't appeal to children.
- New law will make it illegal to sell tobacco products to anyone born on or after 1 January 2009, delivering on the pledge to create a smokefree generation.

2. Disposable vapes will be banned in the UK. The measure comes as part of the Government's response to its consultation on smoking and vaping, which was launched in October 2023.

3. Recent figures show the number of children using vapes in the past 3 years has tripled. Use among younger children is also rising, with 9% of 11- to 15-year-olds now using vapes. The long-term health impacts of vaping are unknown, and the nicotine contained within them can be highly addictive, with withdrawal sometimes causing anxiety, trouble concentrating and headaches. While vaping can play a role in helping adult smokers to quit, children should never vape.

4. Disposable vapes have been a key driver behind the alarming rise in youth vaping, with the proportion of 11- to 17-year-old vapers using disposables increasing almost ninefold in the last 2 years.

5. New powers will be introduced to restrict flavours which are specifically marketed at children and ensure that manufacturers produce plainer, less visually appealing packaging. The powers will also allow Government to change how vapes are displayed in shops, moving them out of sight of children and away from products that appeal to them, like sweets.

6. To crack down on underage sales, the government will also bring in new fines for shops in England and Wales which sell vapes illegally to children. Trading Standards officers will be empowered to act 'on the spot' to tackle underage tobacco and vape sales. Vaping alternatives - such as nicotine pouches - will also be outlawed for children who are increasingly turning to these highly addictive substitutes.

7. The Government has reiterated its commitment to bring about the first smokefree generation and introduce legislation so children turning 15 in 2024 or younger can never legally be sold tobacco.

8. Smoking is the UK's single biggest preventable killer - causing around 1 in 4 cancer deaths and leading to 80,000 deaths per year - so stopping young people from ever starting to smoke is seen as protecting an entire generation, and future generations, from smoking harms as they grow up.

9. To help ensure the success of the smokefree generation plan, £30 million new funding a year will be provided to bolster enforcement agencies - including Border Force, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and Trading Standards - to implement these measures and stamp out opportunities for criminals.

10. Chief Medical Officer Professor Chris Whitty said:
"Smoking damages and cuts short lives in extraordinary numbers. Stillbirths, cancer, asthma, dementia, stroke, and heart failure - smoking causes disability and death throughout the life course. If passed, this legislation would have a major public health impact across many future generations."

11. Dame Rachel de Souza, the Children's Commissioner for England, said:
"As Children's Commissioner, I want all children to grow up healthy and well, which is why I have been calling for disposable vapes to be banned, to protect children and prevent them from becoming addicted. I am absolutely delighted that the government has listened to the appeals that I, and many others, have made to ban disposable vapes. I also welcome the decision to create far tighter restrictions on marketing and flavours of vapes, so they aren't so appealing to children and young people. When I asked children a couple of years ago about all aspects of their health and wellbeing, I was shocked and concerned to hear from children as young as twelve who told me that vaping was normalised among their peers - even on school premises. This announcement will help tackle that issue and I know that many children and parents will be extremely relieved."

12. The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) Vice President for Policy, Dr Mike McKean, said:

"We are delighted that the Westminster government has heard our calls and is rightly prioritising the health and wellbeing of our children and the planet. Bold action was always needed to curb youth vaping and banning disposables is a

meaningful step in the right direction. I am also extremely pleased to see further much needed restrictions on flavours, packaging and marketing of vapes, which RCPCH has repeatedly called for.

As a respiratory consultant it is not lost on me that smoking remains the single biggest cause of preventable illness and disease in the UK. We know this because we have sixty plus years of research and data on cigarette use on a population level. But the research and data around widespread e-cigarette use is still very much in its infancy. The long-term impacts, especially for children and young people, remain unknown.

Government must swiftly lay the legislation to ensure it can be fully considered in this Parliament. We look forward to seeing more details about these landmark plans, especially in terms of implementation, enforcement, and monitoring.”

13. Councillor David Fothergill, Chairman of the Local Government Association’s (LGA) Community Wellbeing Board said:

“We are delighted that the government has listened to the longstanding concerns of the LGA and councils and is taking decisive action to ban sole use vapes. Disposable vapes are inherently unsustainable products, meaning an outright ban remains the most effective solution to this problem.

Single use vapes blight our streets as litter, are a hazard in our bin lorries and are expensive and difficult to deal with in our recycling centres. Their colours, flavours and advertising are appealing to children and are a risk to the health of young people.

We look forward to working with the government and others to enforce this ban as well as ensure plans for a smokefree generation are a success.”

14. Allison Ogden-Newton OBE, Chief Executive of environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy, said:

“The announcement of a ban on disposable vapes is great news for the environment. Our surveys show that disposable vape litter has doubled in the past 2 years alone and last year more than 16% of the sites we surveyed were blighted by these single-use items, posing a significant risk to wildlife, and polluting our streets, parks, and beaches. An estimated 260 million are thrown away in this country every year, wasting precious scarce resources, including lithium”.

Recommendation

15. The Committee is asked to note the information.

Further information can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/disposable-vapes-banned-to-protect-childrens-health>

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