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**Bath & North East  
Somerset Council**

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**Improving People's Lives**

# **Should we ban disposable vapes?**

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Public Health**

September, 2023

# Why is this debate happening?

- Growing concerns over youth vaping rates – smoking rates are declining but vaping amongst 12-17yr olds is increasing
- The environmental impacts caused by disposable vapes being difficult to recycle / limited recycling options for users / poor governance across retailers

# What do we need to consider?

## **The pros and cons of a ban of disposable vapes – and how the decision will impact the following:**

- Information communicated to smokers – balance the message in line with Swap to Stop
- Recycling behaviour – environmental impacts of other products, specifically cigarettes
- Regulation / legislation across industry / impacts of illegal vape and capacity of Trading Standards
- Associated costs
- Impact on youth vaping rates / smoking rates

# There are four main themes to this presentation:

Disposable vapes  
– what they are  
and who is using  
them?

Background  
information

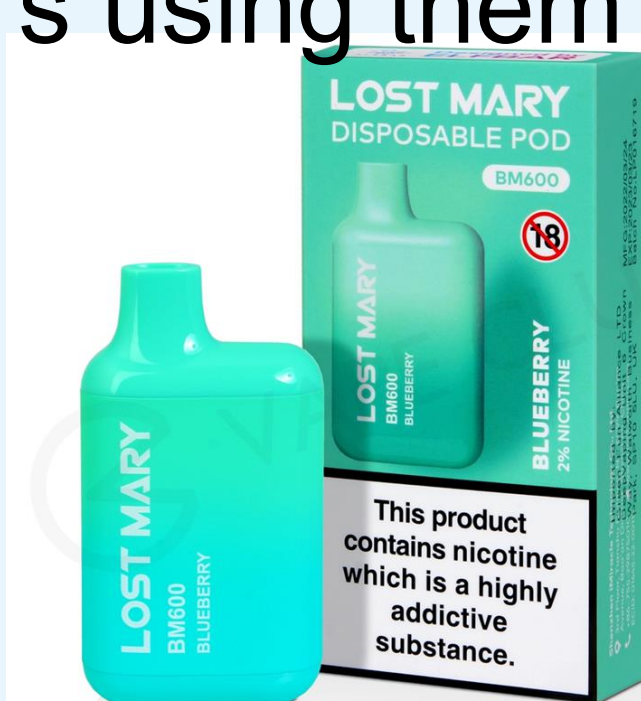
Options available  
– pros & cons

What about  
cigarettes?

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

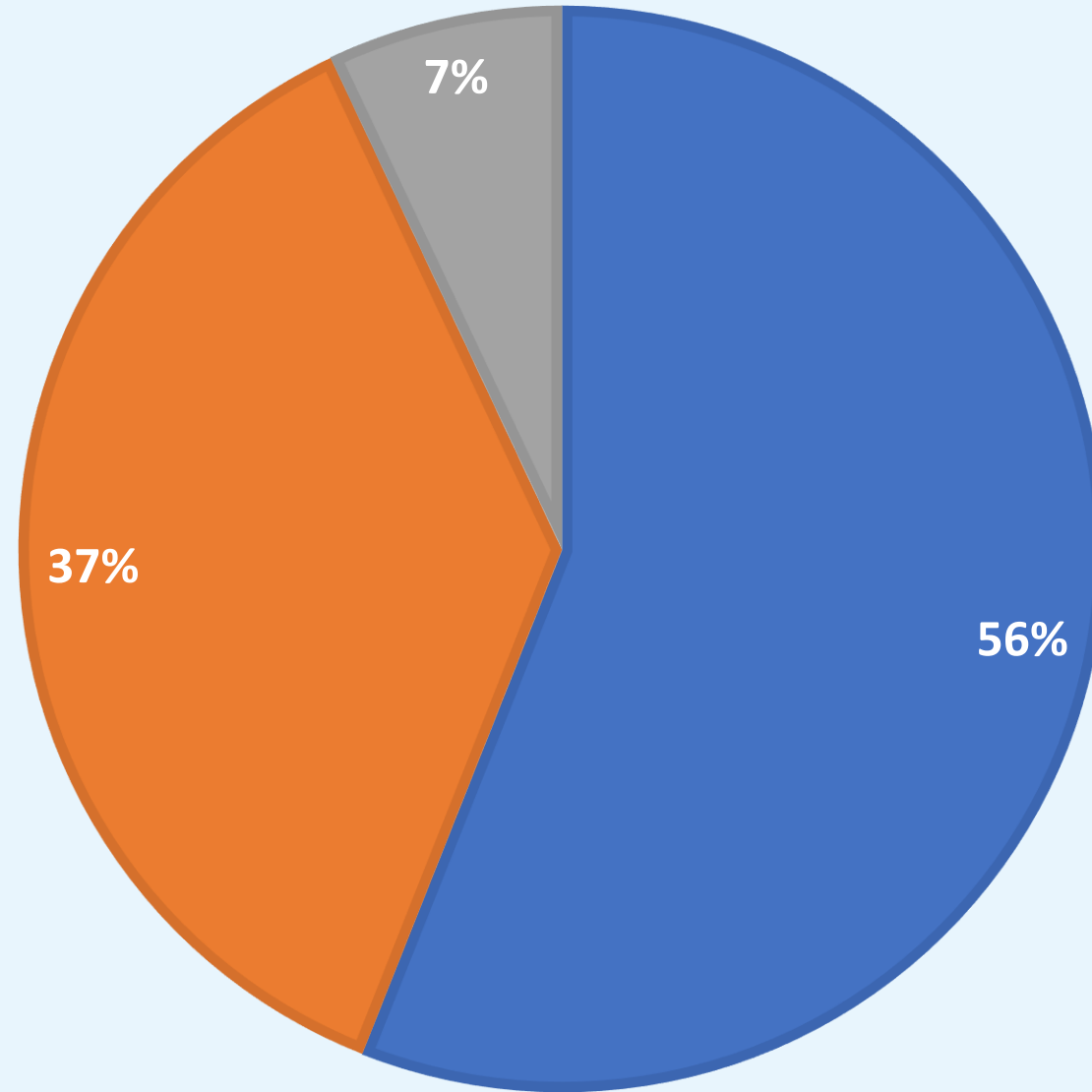
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graph LR; A[Disposable vapes – what they are and who is using them?] --> B[Background information]; B --> C[Options available – pros & cons]; C --> D[What about cigarettes?]; D --> E[ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS];
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# Disposable Vapes – what are they and who's using them?

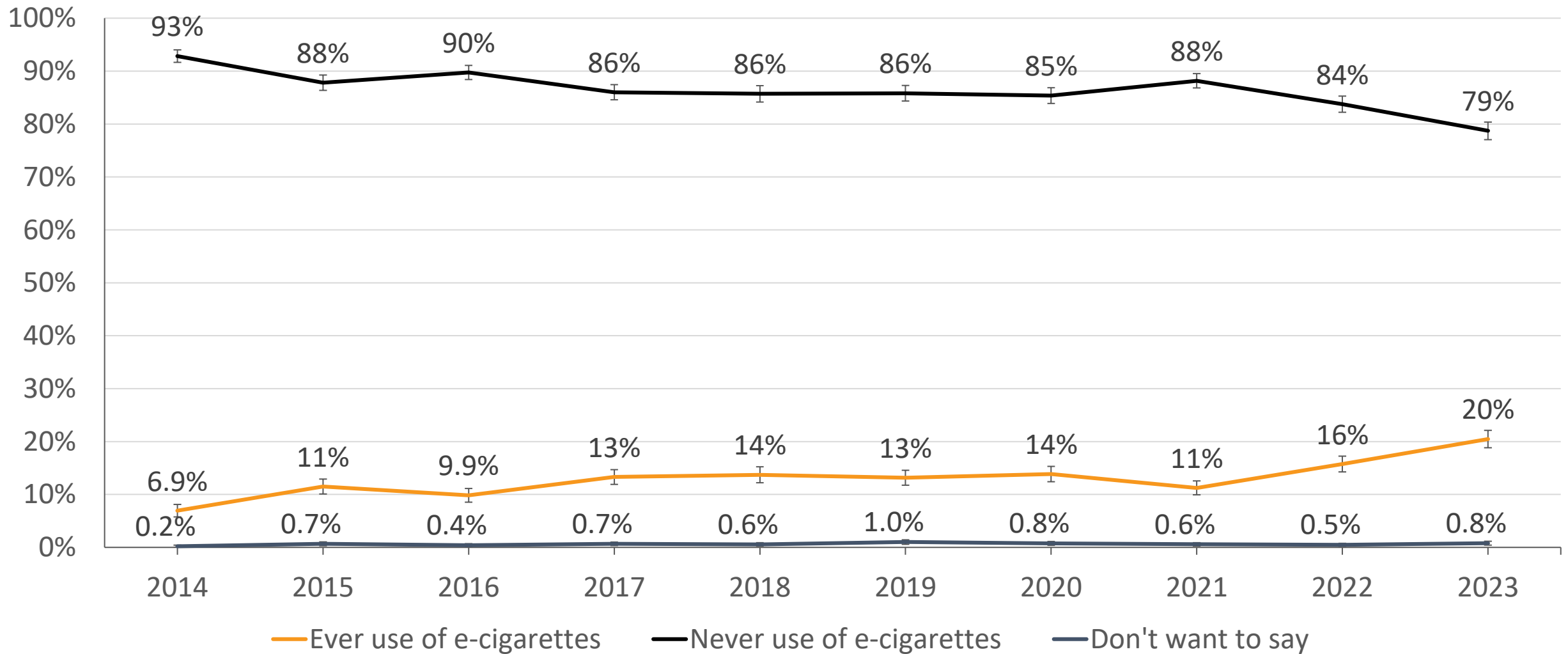


■ ex-smokers ■ smokers ■ never smokers

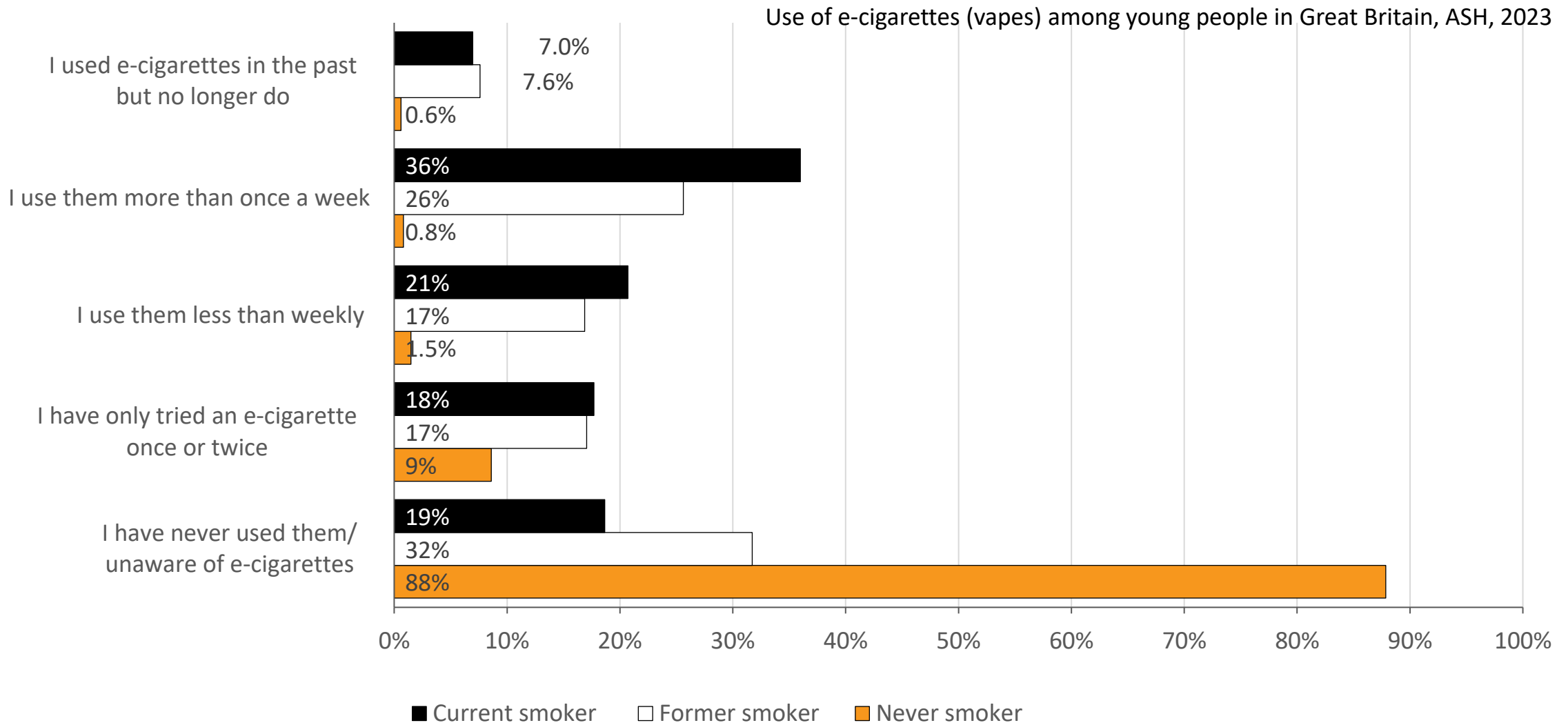
The majority of  
vape users are  
adult smokers



# Most 11-17 year olds have never vaped



# Vaping is much more common among children who also smoke, or have smoked



# Disposable vape use among current vapers up since 2021

Use of disposable vapes has **grown rapidly** in the last two years, particularly among children and young adults

The proportion of young people currently vaping has more than doubled since 2021

**Experimental vaping** (trying once or twice) has grown by 50%

Adult use of disposable vape is also increasing

2023 ASH data revealed disposable vape use had **overtaken rechargeables**

ONS data shows **one in 15 women** aged 16-24 vaped daily – overtaking their male counterparts



# The environmental impacts

Research commissioned by Material Focus in May 2022 found that **at least 1.3 million disposable vapes are thrown away every week**, equivalent to over 67 million a year. These products contain plastic, metals, lithium batteries etc which must be properly recycled to avoid them becoming hazardous and to protect the environment. **Few consumers are disposing of products responsibly.**

**Recycling behaviour is challenging to change.** It usually takes regulation, industry, and others working together to change consumer behaviour. Removing the source of waste is known to be effective.

**Environmental impact of other products:** It is also important to acknowledge the huge negative environmental impact of cigarette butts which contain plastic and take years to biodegrade. Trillions of cigarette butts are thrown into the environment every year. Other consumer products made of plastic containing batteries (e.g. kids toys) also cause serious environmental impact.

# B&NES stop smoking support

B&NES commissions a vape friendly stop smoking service

- More focused on reusable vapes
- Use disposable vapes for some vulnerable groups of smokers e.g. pregnant women, inpatients

B&NES intends to sign up to the Governments Swap to Stop programme (Oct 23)

- This entails offering free vape starter kits to smokers wanting to quit

# Tackling the issue - Option 1: Ban Disposable Vapes

Benefits	Challenges	Mitigation
No disposables legally able to be sold in the country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ban on importation as well as selling needed</li> <li>• Capacity to enforce ban</li> <li>• Possible illegal market growth</li> <li>• Problems and cost associated with disposal of seized products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include importation and manufacture</li> <li>• Increased resources for enforcement and disposal</li> <li>• Needs to include all disposables including 0 nicotine</li> </ul>
Reduce exposure of disposable vaping products to children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reusable vapes still attractive / accessible to children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treat all vaping products similar to tobacco – restrictions on placement, and promotion</li> </ul>
Reduce usage amongst children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to illegal products could increase risks to health</li> <li>• Reduced access for vulnerable adult smokers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase enforcement</li> <li>• Suitable reusable alternatives needed</li> </ul>
Reduce impact of this type of product on the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illegal products can't be controlled in the same way as legal products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources to support responsible recycling for all vape products</li> </ul>
Sends a clear message that vaping is harmful to children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May deter smokers from using vapes as a quit method</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear messaging / communication of vaping benefits for adult smokers</li> </ul>

# Tackling the issue - Option 2: Regulation and Taxation

Benefits	Challenges	Mitigation
Make all vapes liable to an excise tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited resources for enforcement</li> <li>Anti smuggling strategy needed</li> <li>Price increases across all vapes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More powers &amp; resources to boarder force / HMRC/TS</li> <li>Make reusable vapes zero rated – to ensure affordability to adult smokers</li> <li>Ring fence income for enforcement at local and regional level.</li> </ul>
Prohibit branding that appeals to children (all vapes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change all legislation / policy around marketing / product placement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take same approach as tobacco</li> </ul>
Prohibit promotion of all vapes in shops – behind the counter displays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change all legislation / policy around marketing / product placement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take same approach as tobacco</li> <li>Restrictions to apply to non-specialist retailers</li> </ul>
Require importers / sellers to cover recycling costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pushes costs / responsibility onto industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resource and strategy to enforce</li> </ul>
Make it an offence to import products that do not meet UK standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non compliance</li> <li>Capacity to enforce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase boarder controls, powers and sanctions</li> </ul>

# What are others doing ?

USA	Banned Juul in 2019	Sellers need to be registered	Strict age verification requirements
New Zealand	Banned vapes without removable or replaceable batteries (Aug 23)	Restricting vape shops near schools & community meeting places	Enforcing flavour labelling restrictions
Australia	Complete ban on general sale of all vaping products	Vapes available with a prescription	
China and Brazil	All vaping products banned		

# If we ban disposable vapes, should we also ban cigarettes?

## Environmental Impact

- 62% of people drop litter, of which 35% is made up of smoking materials
  - The majority of cigarette filters are non-biodegradable
- Smokers in B&NES consume around 223,490 cigarettes every day. Of these, roughly 195,470 are filtered resulting in around:



This represents 12 tonnes of waste annually, of which 5 tonnes is discarded as street litter that must be collected by the Local Government.

That's enough cigarette butts being discarded on the street to fill 220 standard wheelie bins every year (and that's not counting cigarette packaging and other smoking-related litter!)