

Tobacco and Vapes Act 2026 - London partner briefing

Edition 1 – July 2027

The Tobacco and Vapes Act has now passed into law, marking the start of a major shift in how England regulates tobacco, vapes and nicotine products. With the law now in place, London partners can expect a steady rollout of new rules, enforcement powers and public-facing communications over the coming months and years.

Where implementation stands

The Smokefree Generation age-of-sale comes into force on 1 January 2027, beginning the phased approach that prevents anyone born on or after 1 January 2009 from ever being legally sold tobacco.

A range of measures will come into force on 29 October, six months after Royal Assent. These do not require consultation, and include:

- New age-of-sale (18) restrictions for all nicotine products and no-nicotine vapes
- Ban on free distribution of vapes and other consumer nicotine products
- Ban on vending machines for vapes and nicotine products, except in adult inpatient mental health settings in England and Wales
- New fixed-penalty powers for Trading Standards

A ban on vape and nicotine product advertising and sponsorship, comes into force on 1 June 2027.

These changes significantly expand Trading Standards' enforcement toolkit and tighten access to nicotine products across all settings.

Additional government powers coming next

The Act also gives government wide-ranging powers that will be enacted between 2027 and 2029, following consultation. These include the ability to:

- Restrict packaging, display and contents of vapes and nicotine products
- Introduce smoke free, heated tobacco-free and vape-free public spaces
- Create retail licensing and registration schemes for tobacco and nicotine products

This sets the stage for a more regulated retail environment and clearer national standards for how nicotine products are sold and promoted.

Supporting information and national communications

DHSC guidance is close to completion, and several Statutory Instruments - covering areas such as age-verification requirements, display of products, test purchasing and age-of-sale warning notices - are expected to be laid after the summer recess.

A DHSC national public awareness campaign is in development and expected to be launched in November, following Stoptober, and will aim at:

- Raising awareness among the general public
- Informing young people of the impact of the act
- Building consumer awareness of the new rules

This campaign will be the main vehicle for explaining the Smoke Free Generation policy and the other related measures. There will be a steady flow of communications from summer into the new year, with smoking cessation messaging running alongside the Smoke Free Generation messaging.

Additionally, there will be communications targeted at enforcement partners to ensure maximum support and understanding of the new rules.

The Association of Convenience Stores has launched a campaign that it developed in consultation with the DHSC, [Decline 09](#), to help retailers prepare for the upcoming age-verification rules.

For more information on all aspects of the Tobacco and Vapes Act see the dedicated area on the [ASH website](#).

Planned London activity

London will maintain an aligned approach to ensure boroughs have content they can use locally. The London Tobacco Alliance working with its key partners will be supporting the implementation of the Act and to help avoid duplication, share expertise and develop assets that can be used across London.

This includes:

- [A briefing that can be used in school/college bulletins](#)
- Regular updates to London stakeholders
- A youth explainer film, created *by young people for young people*
- Additional youth engagement assets
- A half-day implementation event, developed in partnership with [London Trading Standards](#) (LTS) in the autumn, delivered alongside the annual LTA event
- Development of London-wide assets, as appropriate, and adaptable materials to support implementation
- Continued alignment with LTS on regulations, enforcement and training

This coordinated approach aims to give boroughs, NHS partners and community organisations clear, consistent tools to support the Act's rollout.

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