

Stoptober

Partner Toolkit

October 2026

Contents

All about Stoptober (and why it matters)	3
Stoptober Campaign	4
Stoptober 2025 in review	6
Our approach for 2025	7
 Guide to assets	 8
Themes and formats	9
Tips by format	18
 Tips for planning activity	 27
How you can support Stoptober	28
Key messages	29
Tips for activity	30
Quit smoking and health tools	38
 Evaluating your Stoptober	 41
 Further info	 46
Facts and stats	47
References	50



ALL ABOUT STOPTOBER

(and why it matters)

So what is Stoptober?

Welcome!

Every October, we run Stoptober, our annual mass participation stop smoking campaign.

The goal is simple: we want to encourage the remaining 4.4 million people who smoke in England to quit for good, by showing that they don't need to quit on their own.

Stoptober is a great opportunity to promote the range of national and local support available and, as a result, increase successful quit attempts.

And that's where you come in. We're inviting you to share this year's motivational content, made to help you signpost people who smoke to your local services or national support tools.



Why it matters

Smoking is still a significant issue.

- Smoking remains the single biggest cause of preventable ill health and death.
- Smoking is estimated to cost society £21.9 billion per year in England.
- This includes an annual £18 billion loss to productivity through smoking-related lost earnings, unemployment, and early death.
- Smoking is estimated to cost the NHS and social care £3 billion per year, resources that could be freed up to deliver millions more appointments, scans, and operations.
- Using willpower alone remains the most common approach to quitting smoking despite the fact it's been proven to be the least effective.
- Three-quarters of people who smoke wish they had never started

But there is reason to be hopeful.

- From 1 January 2027, it will be illegal to sell tobacco products to anyone born on or after 1st January 2009, creating the UK's first smoke free generation.
- For those who already smoke, quitting for 28 days means they are five times more likely to quit for good - which is the evidence base on which Stoptober was first created.
- Since 2012, Stoptober has encouraged and helped millions of people to quit smoking.
- With your support, this year we can help the remaining four million people who still smoke in England to give quitting a go.

Together, we can put
an end to smoking.

Stoptober 2025 in review

Thank you to everyone who supported Stoptober last year.

Encouragingly, nearly 70% of local authorities adapted our resources for local audiences. This generated exciting and relevant materials on socials, websites, and in premises, as well as in many different external settings ranging from roadshows to 'out of home' advertising.

Thank you also to over 100 partner organisations who shared feedback via our evaluation survey. This, alongside the learnings from our new Stoptober Working Group sessions, provided us with valuable insights that have shaped this year's campaign materials.



Our approach for 2026

The positive feedback from Stoptober 2025 confirmed that the more motivating, varied, and adaptable campaign materials should remain for 2026, and highlighted opportunities to create new engaging content. Our new Stoptober Working Group – comprising partners from all regions and a variety of organisations – helped us decide how best to do this.

Firstly, alongside the existing assets, we have introduced three new themes of content focussing on:

- Mental health – which highlights the relationship between smoking and stress
- Closer each time – which tackles the stigma of taking multiple attempts to quit
- For everyone – which emphasises the positive impact of quitting smoking on your family

Secondly, the Stoptober logo now always includes the ‘Let’s Quit Smoking Together’ tagline alongside it to ensure all materials are clearly about quitting smoking. This tagline effectively speaks to the variety of support available, as well as the core idea of a mass participation quit smoking moment, and so it’s here to stay!

Finally, many partners asked for advice on how best to use campaign assets, engage audiences and evaluate impact. In response, we’ve added more guidance and templates to this toolkit to help you.



GUIDE TO **ASSETS**

Themes and formats

Stoptober's ready-to-use and editable assets are grouped by themes. These include:

What's included:

Theme	Available assets
Stoptober awareness	Social (singles, carousels, animations, end frame, animated stickers), display advertising (posters, billboards, digital screens), email signatures
Marking milestones	Social (singles, carousel, animated stickers)
Quit tips	Social (singles)
People spotlights	Social (singles, animated stickers)
Quitting aids and tools	Social (singles, carousel)
Mental health	Social (single, carousel, animations), display advertising (poster, digital screen)
Closer each time	Social (singles, animation), display advertising (posters, billboards, digital screens)
For everyone	Social (singles), display advertising (poster, digital screen)

Please note: Generative AI has been used to create imagery featured on some of the assets. These assets are labelled as 'AI' in the file name when you download them or open them in Canva.

Stoptober awareness

These assets are designed to launch the 2026 campaign, build momentum and encourage people who smoke to start planning their quit attempt.

Above all, they show that Stoptober (and quitting smoking) can be a team effort rather than something people have to do alone. People who want to help and support tools are on-hand to help you through.

These include high-level messages that speak to ALL audiences. They don't specifically reference themes such as mental health and family benefits of quitting, that other assets are designed for.



Best used for:

These are designed for campaign launch activity and encouraging people to take their first step towards quitting.

Use these assets to make quitting feel positive, achievable and supported. Focus on social proof, using messages such as “Join millions of people who have quit smoking with Stoptober,” alongside the core statistic: “Stop smoking for 28 days and you’re five times more likely to quit for good.”

The tone should feel motivating and inclusive. “Let’s quit together” reinforces the idea that support is available throughout Stoptober, while people who struggle to stay quit or are quitting later in life should still feel encouraged to keep going.

Marking milestones

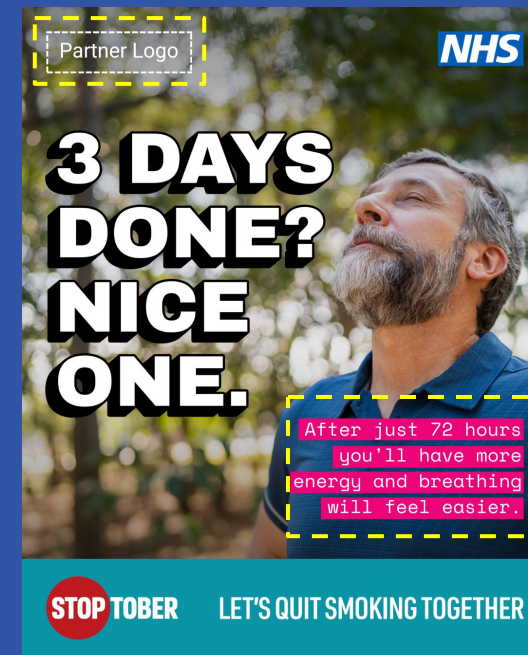
These assets are designed to celebrate key milestones along the quit journey, from the first day to the first month and beyond.

They offer a way to acknowledge progress, no matter how big or small, helping quitters feel proud of how far they've come.

They also highlight key benefits achieved at each point - for example, improved circulation after 2 weeks of quitting.

Best used for: Partners can use these to sustain commitment, showing ongoing support at every stage.

Partner logo, headline and subheadline are editable.



Quit tips

These assets help keep quitters on track, by providing practical, useful advice.

They feature tips that partners can share regularly to boost morale and support people through their quit smoking journey.

Best used for:

This content is perfect for demonstrating your service's expertise by sharing practical, feasible advice to help people successfully quit smoking.

Partners have the option to use the tips in templates, or to edit text to share their own.



People spotlights:

Team photos and quotes

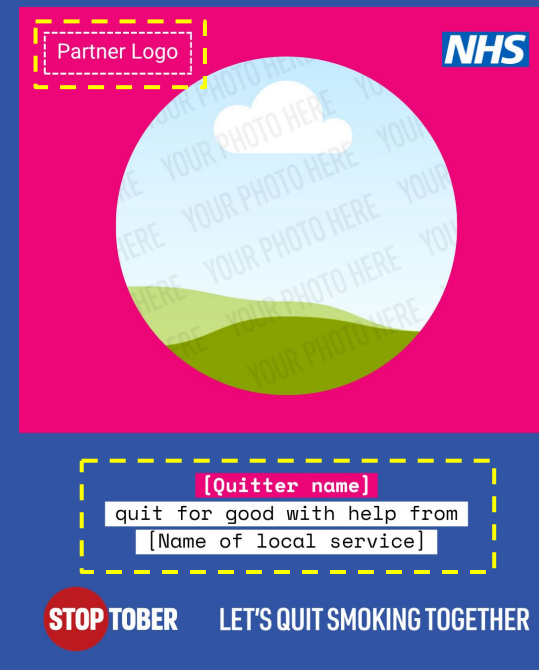
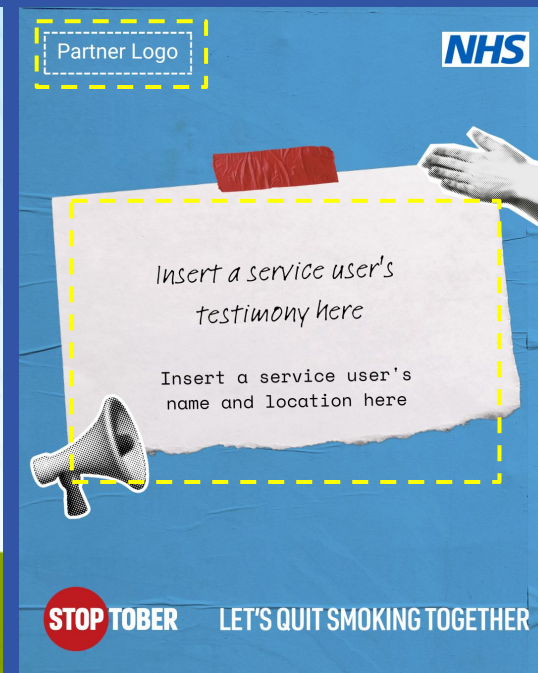
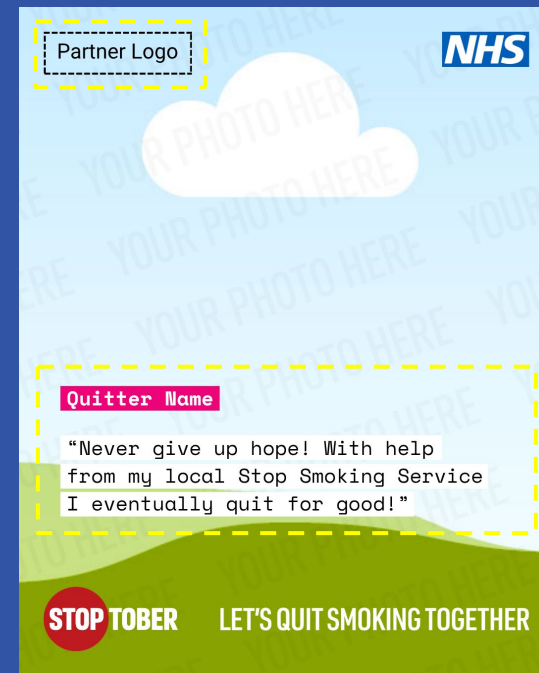
Partners can also share photos and messages from local support teams, such as a Local Stop Smoking Service.

Best used for:

These help to reassure our audience that real people can help them at every step of their quit journey, and that accessing support means they are more likely to quit successfully.

Note that partners can add their own photos and messages to these assets.

Partner logo, headline photo caption and photo are editable.



Quitting aids and tools

These assets help turn motivation into action by showcasing various free quitting aids and digital tools available for those wanting to give up smoking. They can be used with all of the core themes: 'Stoptober awareness', 'Closer each time', 'Mental health' and 'For everyone'.

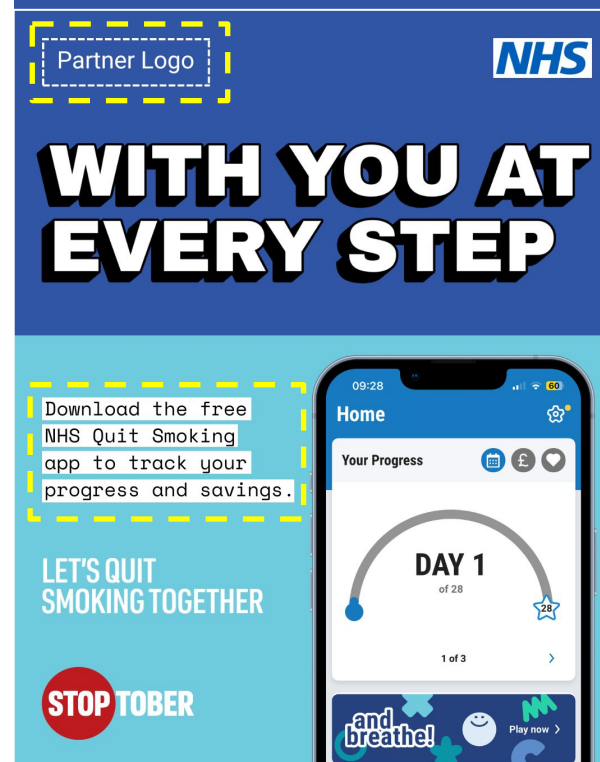
These assets can and should be used throughout to remind people that support is available at every stage of their quit attempt.

Multiple support options are featured in these assets, including the Personal Quit Plan, the NHS Quit Smoking App, Local Stop Smoking Services, and quit smoking aids such as vapes and nicotine replacement therapy. These tools can help people plan their quit attempt, manage cravings and avoid relapse, making them more likely to quit successfully.

Best used for:

This content type is particularly useful for people who are ready to quit or who want extra support during difficult moments. Use these assets in the rally period before October to help people plan their quit ahead of Stoptober, and throughout the campaign period.

For more information on promoting national tools, go to page 42



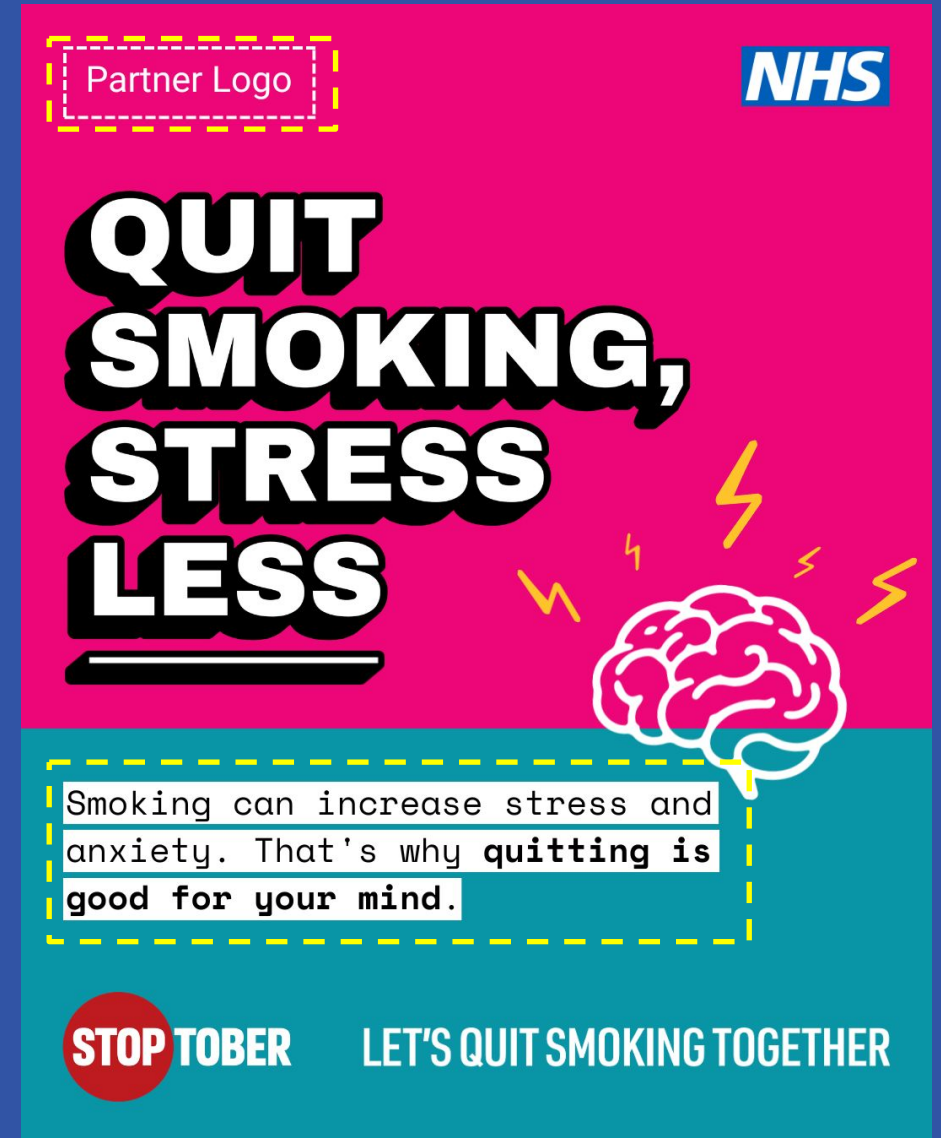
Mental Health

These assets focus on the connection between smoking, stress and mental wellbeing. They help challenge the misconception that smoking relieves stress by explaining how it can contribute to a cycle of stress and anxiety, while acknowledging that withdrawal symptoms can temporarily affect mood and anxiety levels.

Quitting can have a positive impact on mental wellbeing over time, with many people feeling less stressed, less anxious and more in control once withdrawal symptoms ease. Use these assets with a calm, supportive and non-judgemental tone, reassuring people that withdrawal symptoms are temporary and signposting support such as local Stop Smoking Services, the NHS Quit Smoking app and stop-smoking products.

Best used for:

These assets help bust the myth that smoking relieves stress and highlight the mental wellbeing benefits of quitting. Focus this activity on people who are concerned that quitting could negatively affect their mental health, or who worry about losing a coping mechanism.



Closer each time

Evidence shows that it can take up to 30 attempts to quit smoking successfully. These assets are designed to engage those who have tried to quit but returned to smoking and feel unsure about making another quit attempt. They reinforce the message that previous unsuccessful quit attempts are not a failure, and that every attempt can bring someone a step closer to quitting for good.

Use these assets with a positive, supportive and forward-looking tone. Encourage people to see each quit attempt as a valuable learning experience, helping them better understand their triggers and build confidence for the future. Avoid language that suggests people must start again from the beginning. Instead, reinforce that the experience and smoke-free days they have already achieved still count.

Best used for:

These assets work well for engaging people who feel discouraged by a recent relapse or previous unsuccessful quit attempt. Use them to replace feelings of failure with a sense of progress and motivate people to try again this Stoptober.



For everyone

These assets highlight the positive impact that quitting smoking can have on both the person who smokes and the people around them. They showcase a range of benefits, including improved health and wellbeing, saving money, and positive changes for family life.

Use these assets to encourage quit attempts in those who prioritise their family's health and wellbeing as their main reason to quit, and emphasise that quitting can make a meaningful difference to everyday lives. They could also be used in a maternal smoking cessation context.

Best used for:

These assets are suitable for a broad audience and work well when promoting the wide-ranging benefits of quitting. Use them to inspire quit attempts by showing the positive changes that can come from becoming smoke-free, both for individuals and those closest to them. This content works well with captions that invite the audience to comment with the person they're quitting for.



Tips by format

Social singles

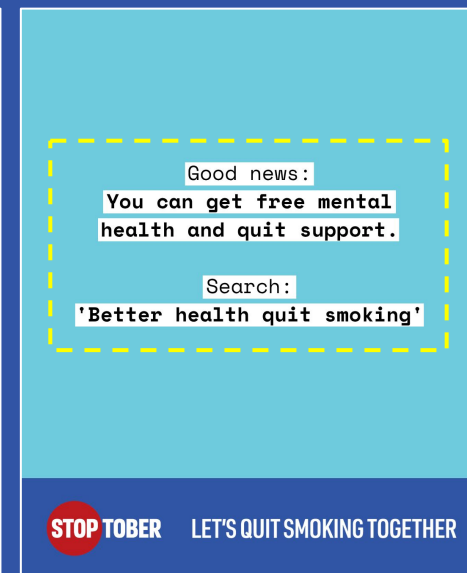
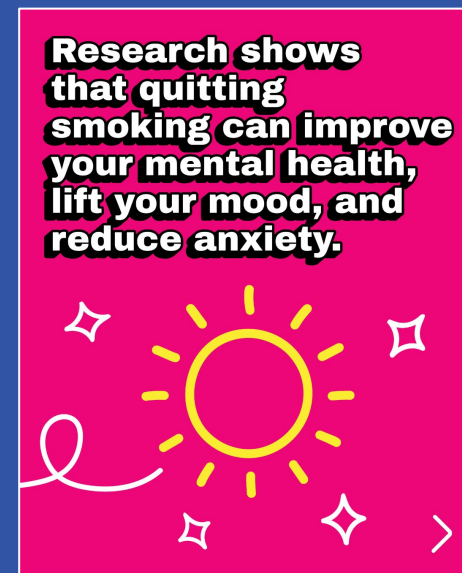
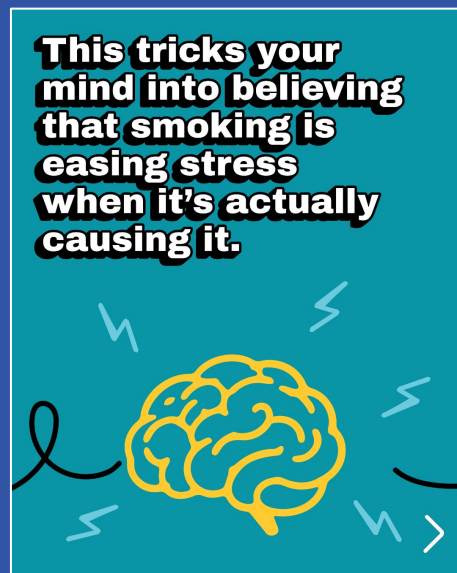
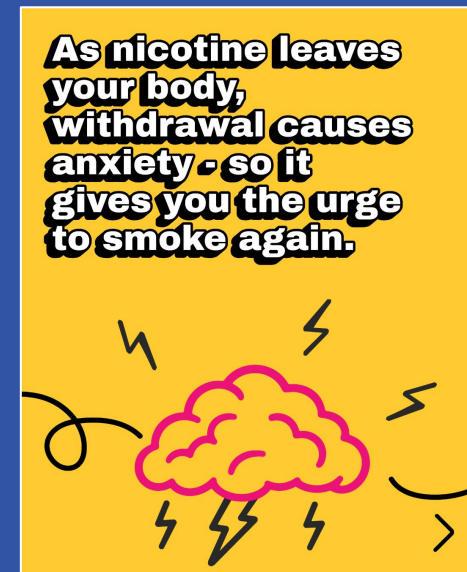
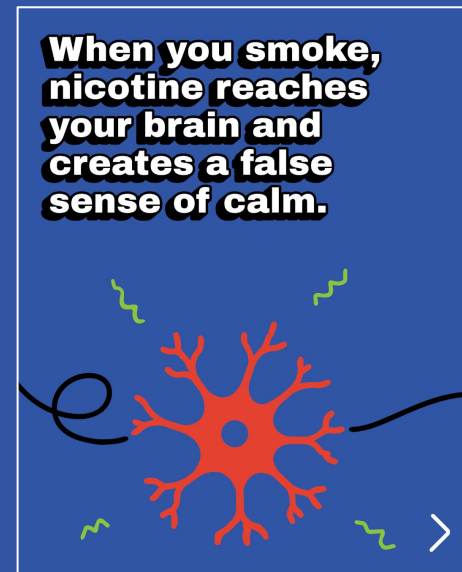
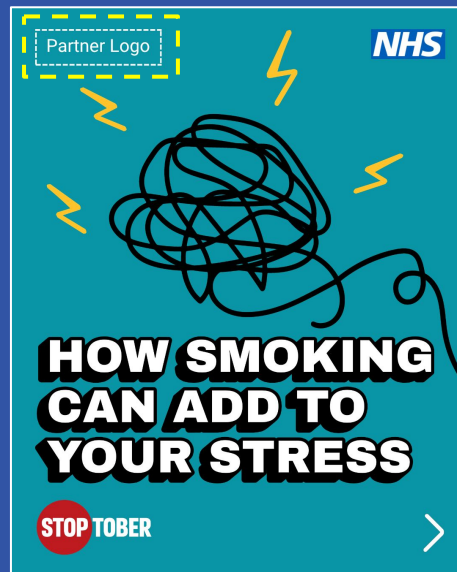
These are best for simple, high-impact messages. Use these to raise awareness, drive action or give a timely motivational nudge.

Partner logo, headline and subheadline are editable.



Carousels

These are designed to provide more in-depth information: for example, explaining the many benefits of quitting.



Animations

Animations are designed to capture attention quickly, Use animations where movement will help your message stand out, including Reels, Stories, paid social, websites and digital screens.

Note, animations are not editable.



End frame

Use this at the end of your own short videos, so that every piece of content ends with a clear, consistent call-to-action.

The 9:16 version should be used in Reels, Stories and Shorts. A 4:5 version is also available for in-feed video posts.

Note, end frames are not editable.



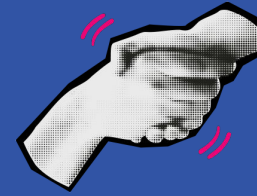
Social quitter animated stickers

These can be used by partners and quitters to enhance photo and video content.

Partners should use the stickers in their own content, while also inviting quitters to find and use them in their own posts.

Sticker types

- Stoptober awareness: For partners to use in campaign launch, countdown and participation content. Includes “Let’s quit together this Stoptober” and graphic-only hands.
- Milestones: For quitters to share progress at key points, such as one week or 28 days smoke free. Partners should prompt people to use these and celebrate posts they are tagged in.
- Successful quits: For quitters to announce that they have stopped smoking. Partners can encourage their use and respond with support and congratulations.



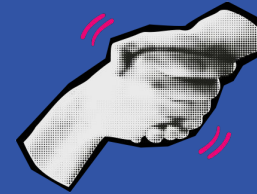
Social quitter animated stickers

Best practice

- Use stickers to support a clear message or call to action.
- Add them to your own Stories, photos and videos where a template is not being used.
- Invite quitters to share their progress using the stickers.
- Engage with people who use them through comments, replies and reposts.

To find them, search “Stoptober” when creating Instagram Stories or Facebook posts. The Giphy stickers are also available on Snapchat, TikTok and X.

Note: these are not editable.



Display advertising

(posters and digital screens)

Use these in local settings to keep Stoptober visible. These are designed to raise awareness in local settings where people are already thinking about their wellbeing.

Use them in waiting rooms, consultation rooms, pharmacies, libraries, community spaces, workplaces and local service settings.

Partner logo, CTA and QR code are editable.

Note: Posters are digital and print-ready so partners can print locally. Printed versions are not being provided this year.



Display advertising (billboards)

These assets are designed for larger local placements, helping Stoptober messages show up in everyday spaces.

Partner logo and the call-to-action are editable.



Email signatures

These simple, ready-to-use assets turn everyday emails into campaign reminders.

Add the campaign message or call-to-action to staff email signatures so that you can spread awareness with every message you send.



The partner logo is editable.

TIPS FOR PLANNING ACTIVITY

How you can support Stoptober

Whilst Stoptober officially starts on 1st October, we encourage you to start raising awareness of the campaign and encouraging people who smoke to prepare for their quit attempt around two weeks in advance (i.e. from mid-September).

Here are some suggestions of activity you may wish to undertake:

- Scheduling content with Stoptober's key messages for newsletters, websites and intranets.
- Planning social media content / takeovers using Stoptober assets.
- Creating displays / sharing assets with partners in your area for use in their premises.
- Organising community outreach activities.
- Using the opportunity to launch a relevant new service or offer.
- Undertaking PR activity with local media, using spokespeople or case studies of people who have successfully quit smoking.
- Raising awareness of the campaign amongst healthcare professionals.
- If you have budget, consider running paid media advertising such as out-of-home or paid social media (Meta ads, Meta boosted posts, etc).
- At a local level, we strongly recommend using Stoptober as an opportunity to signpost to local stop smoking services and information.



Key messages

Below are some motivating statements we recommend including in your communications.

Please see the accompanying messaging calendar for daily content in the Campaign Resource Centre.

- Let's quit smoking together this Stoptober. There's no need to go it alone. It's much easier to stop smoking when you get the right support, and there are lots of options to choose from.
- Millions of people have quit smoking with Stoptober.
- Join thousands of other people committing to quit smoking this October.
- Quitting smoking is the best thing you can do for your health. When you stop you'll experience health benefits almost immediately.
- Stop smoking for the 28 days of Stoptober and you're five times more likely to quit for good.
- It's never too late to quit smoking. Even if you've tried quitting before, give it another go this Stoptober.
- Free expert support from your local stop smoking service is proven to give you the best chance of quitting successfully.
- From 1 January 2027, it will be illegal to sell tobacco products to anyone born on or after 1st January 2009, creating the UK's first smoke free generation. For those who smoke already, we are here to help. Let's quit smoking together this Stoptober.
- NHS Better Health offers a range of free quitting support. This includes the NHS Quit Smoking app, a personal quit plan tool, help to find a local stop smoking service and advice on quitting techniques such as switching to vapes.

In person activity

Bring Stoptober into the places where those who smoke already spend time.

- Share information in GP practices, pharmacies, libraries, community centres, workplaces and local service settings.
- Share digital and print-ready assets with local partners so they can use them in their own spaces.
- Use Stoptober to launch or promote a local stop smoking offer, drop-in session or appointment drive.
- Equip healthcare professionals and frontline staff with key messages so they can start supportive conversations.
- Identify local spokespeople, including successful quitters, advisers or clinicians, for PR or community content.
- We've identified key groups where smoking prevalence is high. These include routine and manual workers (such as labourers, hairdressers, lorry drivers, and hospitality staff), unemployed people, those with severe and common mental illness, white males, and the LGBTQ+ community. Consider outreach activity where these key groups are. For example, using digital screens near building sites. You can also partner with local employers (e.g. construction, hospitality, delivery) and invite them to share activity with their workforce.



Online activity

Text-only content

- We have provided templates for static assets, but you can also post text-only where using the templates is not practical, or when you feel it's valuable to share a longer quote.
- These could feature quotes from people that have successfully quit. Just make sure you get their permission first. Whatever quotes you choose should be succinct and to the point (e.g. 'It was easier to quit than I thought').
- You could also post your own messages in text-only posts. Examples of these include quit tips (e.g. Trying to quit? You could try NRTs...), or messages of encouragement (e.g. Just one week of Stoptober to go! Stay strong...).
- Another option is to reshare quitter case studies that are already published and available online.
- Whatever content you choose for them, the more heartfelt and personal these text-only posts are, the better. Consider posting from a team member's personal profile, or attaching their name to their quote/recommendation, rather than just sharing on behalf of your organisation. It's the same principle as personalised staff recommendations in a bookshop.

Online activity

Caption copy

- Keep caption copy that accompanies posts simple, direct and supportive.
- Get quickly to the support you are offering and provide hyperlinks to specific products and services.

Direct-to-camera videos

You can post short videos created by quitters and local services.

- For example, a quitter video where they describe the quit smoking tool they found most useful in quitting.
- Also consider sharing a video from a member of the Local Stop Smoking Service, where they explain the different ways they can support quitters.

Sparking and managing conversations

- On Facebook, encourage conversation by using questions and invitations that prompt comments and sharing. Examples to try include:
 - What helped you get through cravings?
 - What's your reason for quitting this Stoptober?
 - Share one tip that helped you stay smoke-free.
 - Comment with a 💪 if you're taking on Stoptober.
 - Send this to someone starting Stoptober.
 - Tag your quit buddy.

Respond to audience comments on your activity wherever possible, especially when people ask about local support.

- Approach commenters for permission to reshare their comments. You can add your own messages when you reshare e.g. 'Bella found her local Stop Smoking Service helped her finally quit. They could help you too.'



Online activity

Reels

- When creating videos, apply captions so that they work without sound.
- Use trending audio (e.g. add the track from within Instagram). You must ensure your chosen track is appropriate, positive and safe for the campaign.
- You can also boost engagement by posting static content within Reels, adding trending audio - so they effectively become video content.

Social media content takeovers

- Consider planning a social media takeover. This is a set period of time where you exclusively post Stoptober content on a social media profile.
- For example, invite your Local Stop Smoking Service to take over a Local Authority's social feeds.

Scheduling content

- Plan your Stoptober content as a journey, not a one-off burst. Schedule campaign content in advance across social channels, newsletters, websites and intranets.
- Use a mix of campaign messages across the month: motivation, quit tips, testimonials, smoke-free benefits, local service content and support tools. This ensures activity speaks to a wide audience and communicates a variety of motivations to quit.
- Also, boost priority posts or run paid social if you have the budget, especially around key moments such as launch, Day 3, Week 3 and the end of October.



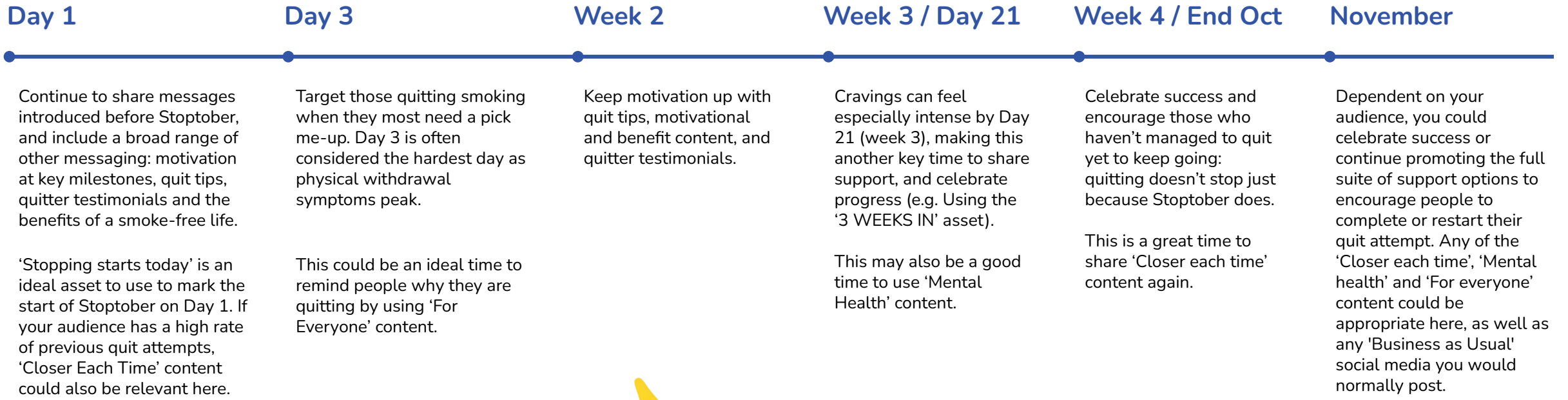
Online activity



A simple schedule can follow this pattern:

Before October

Start raising awareness of the campaign and encouraging quitters to prepare around two weeks in advance (i.e. from mid-September). We want this to feel like a team sport, so key messages should focus on social proofing: 'Join millions of people who have quit smoking with Stoptober'. We also suggest using a core statistic to motivate people to see Stoptober through: 'Stop smoking for 28 days and you're 5 times more likely to quit for good'. Finally, we'd recommend promoting quit smoking tools which can help people plan their quit, such as the Personal Quit Plan.



Partners have shown it works...

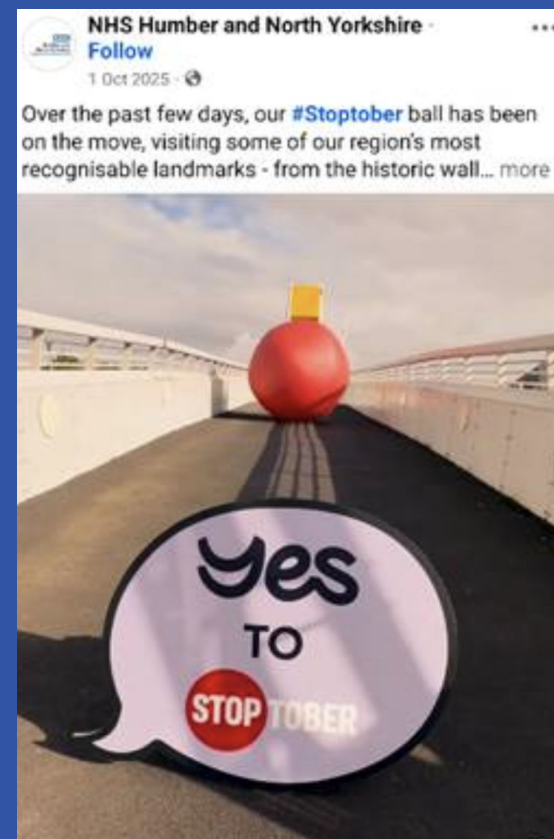
For Stoptober 2025, North East Lincolnshire Council (NELC) and the Centre for Excellence (CfE) demonstrated how partners can use Stoptober resources in a coordinated approach to take people from awareness to action.

As Katy from CfE explained, “CfE’s role at regional level was to highlight the harms of smoking and raise intention to quit, while NELC and other localities were the friendly helpers to engage directly with those who smoke via events and communications, to drive into services to help them stop.”

The regional campaign used paid social media, PR activity and Stoptober messaging to develop awareness and motivate quit attempts across Humber and North Yorkshire. NELC then built on this locally through paid and organic social media, case studies, staff communications, out-of-home advertising and local media coverage, helping connect residents with stop smoking support.

Holly from NELC said that “the Stoptober resources and editable Canva assets made it easy to tailor materials with local branding, website details and QR codes while maintaining a consistent campaign look and feel.”

Working together with these resources delivered strong results. The regional campaign reached more than 304,000 people across Humber and North Yorkshire, while NELC reached around 76,000 people locally, increased website traffic and saw October stop smoking referrals rise by 40% year-on-year.



**Centre for
Excellence**



Article template / press release

If you're able to share a longer message, for example in an email or online article, you can use the following template as a guide. This template can be tailored according to your service's focus or preferred theme.

'Let's quit smoking together this Stoptober'

Stoptober is back, and we're calling on the 4.4 million people in England who still smoke to join millions of others who have quit successfully with the campaign.

Smoking remains the biggest cause of preventable illness and death, and quitting is one of the best things you can do for your health. The good news is that if you stop smoking for 28 days, you're five times more likely to quit for good.

Optional mental health paragraph:

Many people think smoking helps them cope with stress, but evidence shows that quitting smoking can improve mental wellbeing, lift your mood and reduce anxiety. This Stoptober, we're encouraging people to escape the cycle of stress and smoking, and discover the benefits of a smoke free life.

Optional 'For everyone' paragraph:

Quitting smoking doesn't just improve your own health and wellbeing: when you quit, your family wins too. Whether it's being there for loved ones, protecting them from second-hand smoke or simply having more money to spend on the things that matter, stopping smoking can have a positive impact on those around you.

Optional 'Closer each time' paragraph:

It's never too late to quit, even if you've tried before. Every attempt to quit counts, and with the right support, you're more likely to succeed. If your quit didn't go to plan, don't worry - people can make many attempts before quitting for good, and Stoptober is a great time to give it another go.

It's much easier to stop smoking when you get the right help, and there's a wide range of free quit smoking support available, including the NHS Quit Smoking app, Personal Quit Plan and expert help from local stop smoking services. You'll also find advice on quitting aids such as nicotine replacement therapies and vaping at nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking, to help you find the support that's right for you.

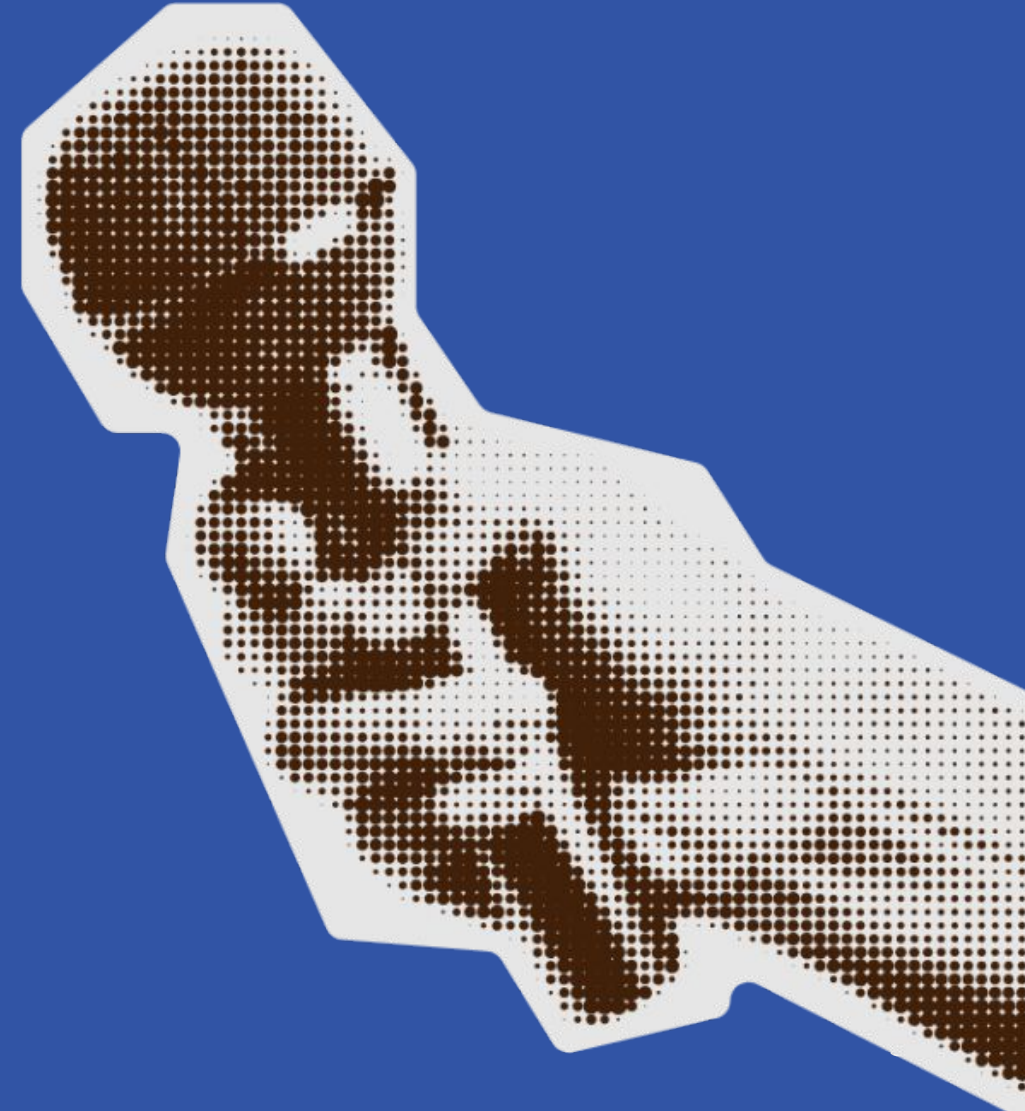
Radio / audio script

If you have the resources to create a pre-recorded announcement on local radio, you can use this script as a guide:

“It’s never too late to quit smoking, and even if you’ve tried before, Stoptober is the perfect time to give quitting another go. Quit for 28 days and you’re five times more likely to quit for good.

With help from [LOCAL STOP SMOKING SERVICE NAME] you can manage cravings and get a free plan that works for you.

From cost savings to health improvements, there are so many reasons to quit smoking. Let’s quit smoking together this Stoptober – search [LOCAL STOP SMOKING SERVICE NAME].”



Free quit smoking digital tools

You may want to include signposting to national tools in your Stoptober activity. We have 2 main quit smoking tools.

1. The Personal Quit Plan

This free, [web-based tool](#) asks some simple questions to create a tailored quit smoking plan. By using this tool people can:

- Prepare for their quit date.
- See how much money they could save.
- Stay focused on their reasons for quitting.
- Understand and manage their triggers.
- Find the right products and support.
- Sign up to a 28-day email programme.

Of those who complete the plan and sign up to the optional 28-day programme, 65% report being able to quit for good.

Please note that this tool can triage to Local Stop Smoking Services.

2. The NHS Quit Smoking App

This [free app](#) has helped over one million people quit smoking - and on average, 1 in 2 people reach 28 days smoke free when using it. It helps users:

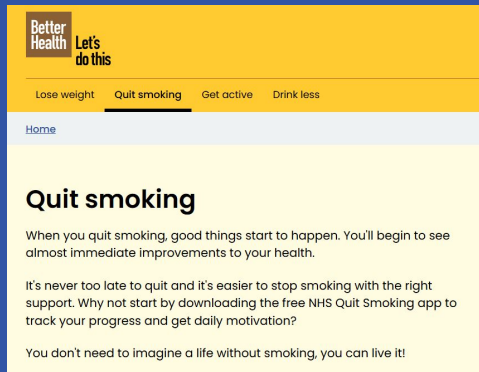
- Manage cravings and triggers with distraction activities.
- Stay focused with daily support and inspiration.
- Track their smoke-free streak.
- Track how much money they have saved.

‘Always on’ (year-round) promotional materials for both the PQP and the app can be found here: [The Power to Quit Smoking | Campaigns | Campaign Resource Centre](#).

If you’ve any questions about promoting these tools, including in combination with other offers or apps, please contact us via Partnerships@dhsc.gov.uk.

Better Health tools

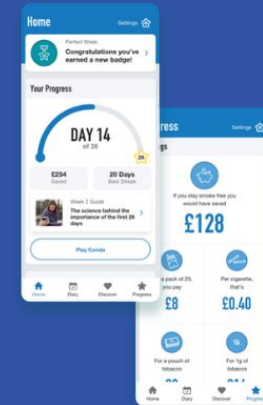
Better Health has a range of content and tools to help smokers make a successful quit attempt, all of which can be accessed at www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking.



Find NHS-trusted advice, support and quit smoking benefits on the Better Health Quit Smoking website available [here](#).

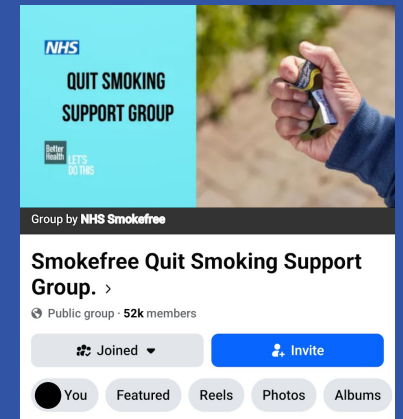


Answer a few simple questions to find the right support for you in a free Personal Quit Plan. Get your plan [here](#).



Get our free NHS Quit Smoking app on the [Apple App Store](#) or [Google Play](#). Based on a 28-day programme, it helps you:

1. Track progress
2. See money saved
3. Get daily support



Join the friendly and supportive Smokefree Quit Smoking Support Group on [Facebook](#) and connect with over 50,000 members also giving up smoking.

Wider health-related tools

We appreciate that when encouraging and helping people to stop smoking, you may find it useful to signpost to wider behaviour change tools.

This year, we have included some Mental Health themed Stoptober assets. As a result, we particularly encourage promotion of the Every Mind Matters Mind Plan, which offers practical support to help people manage stress, improve their mental wellbeing and build healthy coping strategies during their quit journey.

Alongside this, tools such as Active 10, Couch to 5K, Drink Free Days and the NHS Weight Loss Plan can support wider lifestyle changes and help people improve their overall health and wellbeing.

As well as tools, there are many campaign materials relating to these topics and more on our [Campaign Resource Centre](#). If you ever have any questions about using these materials, please contact us via partnerships@DHSC.gov.uk.



EVALUATING YOUR STOPTOBER

Evaluate your Stoptober campaign

You want to measure the impact of your Stoptober activity, but you're not sure how? We recommend:

Keeping it simple

Focus on a few measures that directly link to what you're trying to achieve, whether that's increasing referrals into your stop smoking service or driving more people to your website. Make sure you're telling a clear story of your impact.

Before you start:

Decide what success looks like and record a baseline or performance you want to compare to, such as your usual referral numbers or website traffic. Generate ways to collect feedback, such as a 'where did you hear about us' question in enquiry forms.

During the campaign:

Track what you deliver (e.g. social posts, emails, events), how many resources you spend (e.g. time, money), how people engage with the campaign (e.g. reach, clicks, shares, comments), and performance indicators (referrals, enquiries, website visits, feedback).

After the campaign:

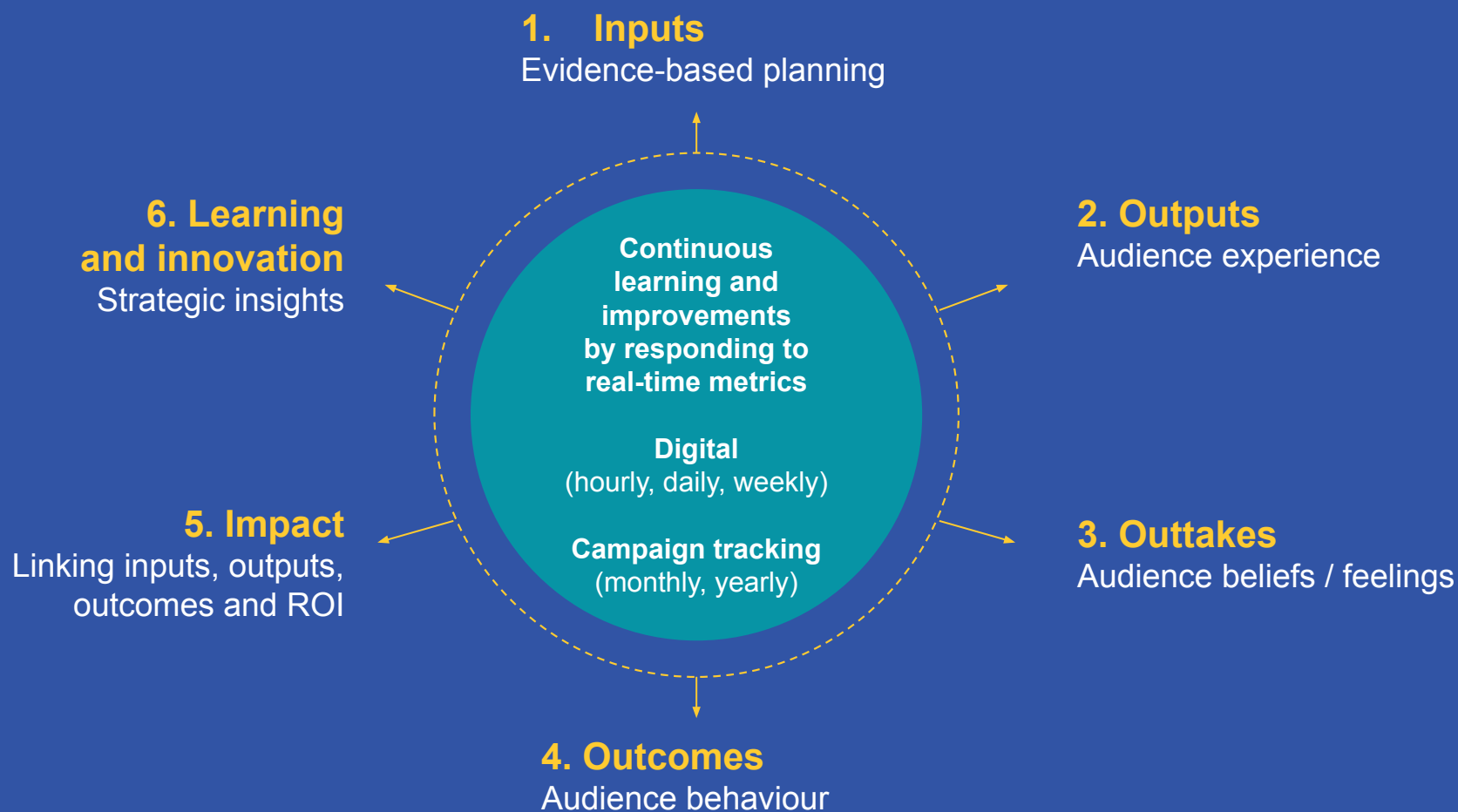
Summarise everything you have tracked over the campaign period. Look for patterns by theme, format, audience and timing. Having a mix of quantitative and qualitative data builds a fuller picture. Remember that smaller numbers can still be valuable when content reaches the right audience or prompts meaningful action.

Finally:

Compare your results with your baseline, and note what you would do again vs what you would do differently. A few simple measures, combined with real-world feedback and success stories, can provide strong evidence of impact and help shape future activity.

Evaluate your Stoptober campaign

The Government Communication Service has lots of helpful advice, including the **GCS evaluation cycle**.



For more information, visit <https://www.communications.gov.uk/publications/evaluating-low-no-cost-communications/>.

Finding data to evaluate: What to track

Non-paid social media

Use platform analytics, such as Meta Business Suite or Page Insights, to track:

- Reach and impressions.
- Likes, comments, shares and saves.
- Engagement rate.
- Link clicks and click-through rate (CTR).
- Video views, watch time and completion or view-through rate.
- Comments, questions and messages showing audience response.

Meta Business Suite provides insights across organic and paid Facebook and Instagram activity. ([Facebook](#))

Paid social media

Use the advertising platform's reporting tools to track:

- Spend, reach and frequency.
- Impressions and cost per thousand impressions (CPM).
- Link clicks, CTR and cost per click.
- Video views and view-through or completion rate.
- Landing-page visits and completed actions, where tracking is available.

Finding data to evaluate: What to track

Website and service activity

- Visits to campaign or local service pages.
- Calls, enquiries, referrals, bookings or sign-ups.
- Traffic generated through trackable campaign links.
- Changes in service interest during and after Stoptober.

Qualitative feedback

- Capture comments, questions, testimonials, photos and feedback from quitters, staff and community partners. These insights can provide useful context that numbers alone cannot. ([Government Communications Service](#))

FURTHER
INFO

Facts and stats: Smoking prevalence in England

- Since 2011, adult smoking prevalence has dropped from 19.8% to 10.4%. (i)
- There are currently around 4.4 million adults in England who smoke. (i)
- More men smoke than women (12.2% vs 8.7%). (i)
- In 2024, the prevalence of current smokers was highest in the Yorkshire and the Humber region and lowest in the South-East region. (i)
- People aged 25 to 34 years are most likely to smoke, while people aged 65 years and over are least likely to smoke. (i)
- People aged 18 to 24 years have seen the largest reduction in smoking prevalence between 2011 and 2024. (i)
- Evidence suggests that the proportion of cigarette smokers that are not daily smokers has increased since 2006 and they are now estimated to represent 27% of the smoking population. (ii)
- Black, Asian, and Chinese people are less likely to smoke than white people. People with mixed ethnicity are more likely to smoke than white people. (i)
- Large differences in smoking prevalence are seen between sexes, particularly in Asian (11.7% in men, 2.1% in women), Chinese (6.4% in men, 2.7% in women) and Black (9.0% in men, 4.3% in women) groups. (i)
- Routine and manual workers such as labourers, bar staff, lorry drivers, receptionist and care workers are more than twice as likely to smoke as other occupations. (i)
- A higher proportion of unemployed people currently smoke compared with people that are in paid employment. (i)
- People with no qualifications are more likely to smoke compared to those who reported a degree as their highest level of education – over 25% of people with no qualifications currently smoke. (i)
- People renting from a local authority or housing association are more than three times as likely to smoke compared to those who have a mortgage. (i)
- According to the most recent data, people with a long-term mental health condition were 2.5x more likely to smoke. (Xxi)
- While a decrease in smoking rates has also been seen among adults with a long-term mental health condition – falling from 35.3% in 2013 to 2014 to 26.8% in 2018 to 2019 – prevalence remains substantially higher, despite the same levels of motivation to quit. (xviii)

Facts and stats: Harms and impacts of smoking in England

- Smoking is the leading preventable cause of death, disability and ill health in this country (xxii).
- Up to two-thirds of deaths in people who smoke can be attributed to smoking. (iv)
- Tobacco smoke is estimated to be responsible for nearly one fifth (64,500) of all new cancer cases a year and causes 27% of all cancer deaths in the UK. (xxx)
- Every year around 64,000 people in England die from smoking. (xiii)
- In England, there are over 400,000 hospital admissions a year attributed to smoking. (xvii)
- People with poor mental health die on average 10 years earlier than the general population, and smoking is contributing significantly to this. (Xxiv)
- On average, someone who smokes loses approximately 20 minutes of their life for every cigarette they smoke. (v)
- When measured in indoor places, short and long-term second-hand smoking has been proven to cause several health issues. Short-term exposure effects include eye irritation, headaches, coughs, sore throat, dizziness and nausea. Following longer term exposure, increased health risks include lung cancer and heart disease. Second-hand smoking has also been associated with breast and other cancers, stroke and dementia. (xxx)
- Smoking is estimated to cost society £21.9 billion per year in England. This includes an annual £18.6 billion loss to productivity through smoking-related lost earnings, unemployment, and early death. (vii)
- Smoking is estimated to cost the NHS and social care £3 billion per year. (vii)
- The national average spend on tobacco is around £2,964 per smoker, per year. (vii)

Facts and stats: Quitting behaviours and benefits

- Attempting to quit smoking without support is the most common approach, followed by vaping, accessing a local stop smoking service, using NRT products and prescribed medication. (xxv)
- For 2024-2025 financial year, 238,166 attempts to quit smoking were made using stop smoking services. (viii)
- The most common trigger for quitting smoking is a future health concern, followed by cost, a current health concern, or a comment made by family/friends. (xi)
- The average number of quit attempts that people make before quitting is 30. (xx)
- Three-quarters of smokers wish they had never started. (xxvi)
- Studies show that when people stop smoking: anxiety, depression and stress levels can be lower, quality of life and positive mood can improve. (x)
- Research shows smokers can mistake the ability of a cigarette to relieve withdrawals as helping them cope with stress or mood (xxxi)
- When you quit smoking the benefits start almost immediately. After just 8 hours harmful carbon monoxide levels in your blood will have reduced by half. After 48 hours your senses of taste and smell are improving. After 2 to 12 weeks circulation will have improved, and after 3 to 9 months lung function increases by up to 10%. (xii)
- Studies have suggested that non-smokers that are exposed to second-hand smoke have an 18% increased risk of death from all causes (xxvii), an increased risk of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) (66%) (xxviii), cardiovascular disease (CVD) (23%) (xxvii) and stroke (35%) (xxviii). There is also an increased risk of lung cancer (24%) (xxix)
- Eliminating secondhand smoke could prevent tens of thousands of childhood illnesses every year (xix)

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LET'S QUIT SMOKING TOGETHER



Get in touch

We'd love to see any examples of your activity, whether screenshots, links, or photos of displays - please email partnerships@dhsc.gov.uk.

We'll also be sharing a feedback survey in November 2026 - please watch this space!