



Stoptober

Partner Toolkit

October 2025

Contents

All about Stoptober (and why it matters)	3
Stoptober Campaign	4
Stoptober 2024 in review	6
Our approach for 2025	8
Tools to help you	10
How you can support Stoptober	11
Activities to consider	12
The 2025 campaign	14
Guide to assets	15
Introducing Stoptober 2025	17
Key messages	30
Better health tools	32
Evaluation	34
Further info	35
Facts and stats	36
Further insights	38
References	39



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 5.3 million smokers 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 smokers 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 £21.3 billion per year in England.
- This includes an annual £18 billion loss to productivity through smoking-related lost earnings, unemployment, and early death.
- 230,000 households live in smoking-induced poverty.
- 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. This is in spite of the fact it's been proven to be the least effective.

But there is reason to be hopeful.

- If a smoker makes it to 28 days smoke-free, they are five times more likely to quit for good.
- Since 2012, Stoptober has helped millions of people attempt to quit smoking.
- With your help, this year we can encourage the remaining five million smokers in England to give quitting a go.

Together, we can

put an end to smoking.

Stoptober 2024 in review

Thank you to everyone who supported Stoptober last year.

The good news is that it remains a key calendar moment and more of you are supporting it each year. Downloads of campaign resources were up 122% from 2023.

As well as making great use of our Stoptober assets, we also saw partners creating their own local activity. These ranged from paid media, physical displays and roadshows to local PR, stakeholder webinars and even launching new services.

Thank you too, to the 95 partners who shared feedback via our evaluation survey. This provided us with valuable insights that have shaped this year's campaign.



Stoptober 2024 in review

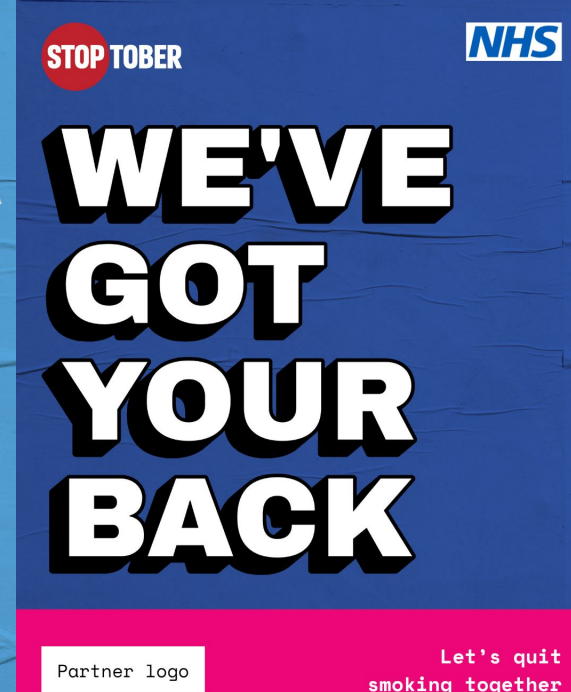
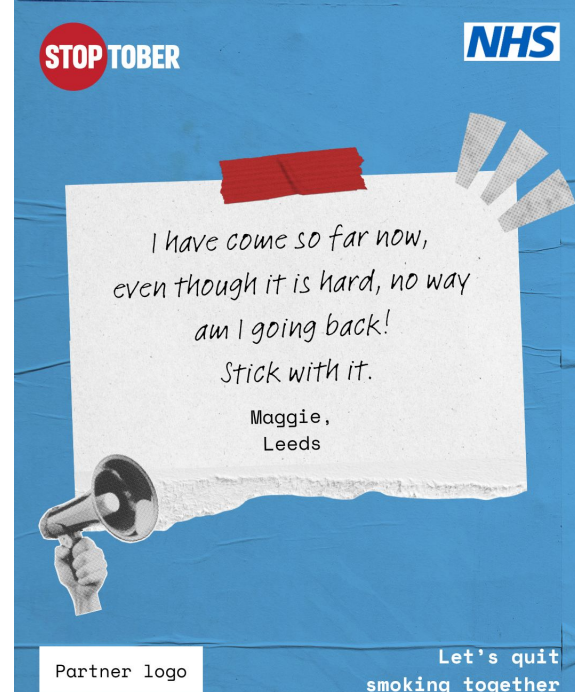
You told us that:

- The campaign assets were clear, supportive, motivating and informative.
- You appreciated having access to resources earlier than previous campaigns, and you'd like to have them even earlier, if possible.
- Focusing on a 'quit for 28 days' message may be intimidating and off-putting for some of our audience, so it may be better to lead with a more general quit message and include 'quit for 28 days' in secondary messaging.
- Almost half of you used Stoptober to promote local stop smoking services.
- We saw lots of signposting to national support such as the Better Health quit smoking website and the NHS quit smoking app.
- You mainly promoted Stoptober through social media, physical displays and information on websites.
- Some partners dedicated budget to promoting Stoptober which helped increase sign-ups to local services.
- A few of you found evaluating the impact of local activity challenging, so more guidance would be helpful.
- And - phew! - all of you said you would be likely to support Stoptober again.

Our approach for 2025

As our partner-led approach for Stoptober 2024 was a success, we've created a fresh new suite of assets to help you promote Stoptober in a similar way this year.

We also strongly encourage you to create your own communications such as PR, case studies, blogs and displays. In particular, please urge smokers to seek out quitting support. More thoughts on potential local activity you can create are included in this toolkit.



Your feedback

1. It would be useful to have more social assets to keep momentum going throughout the campaign period.
2. You couldn't localise the resources because you don't have access to Adobe In-Design.
3. You weren't aware of our 'always on' printed assets that could support your activity.
4. It would be helpful to get the resources earlier than late-August.
5. You wanted some physical resources sent to you, rather than everything being download only.
6. The partner evaluation survey was a good way for you to share feedback about your activity and results.

Our response

1. We have created a whole calendar of daily posts, from the 15th September to 31st October.
2. We've ensured that the localisable resources are editable via Canva, which many of you use.
3. We've outlined our printed materials available for you to use starting on page 29.
4. We've set ourselves a target to release the resources in early August.
5. We're aiming to provide printed poster packs for use in stalls or displays.
6. We'll share a mid-campaign survey to gain feedback in real time.

TOOLS TO HELP YOU

How you can support Stoptober

**Do you work for a Local Authority or ICB?
An NHS Trust or a charity?
A service provider or an employer?**

Then you can help in lots of ways.

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

This is what we call the 'rally' phase of the campaign.

We don't recommend starting your activity earlier than this, as research has shown that campaigns with a rally phase longer than two weeks can lose momentum before the main, 'support' phase begins.

As such, we have designed activity that you can share to build and retain momentum.



Activities to consider

- 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.

Partners have shown it works...

East Riding's example proves that committing to a broad multi-channel campaign can achieve excellent results for your organisation, while making a real impact on quitting.

They took part in Stoptober 2024 to promote their newly commissioned Local Stop Smoking Service (LSSS) provider, Xyla. The core objective was to increase referrals to the LSSS. They focused campaign efforts on Bridlington, an area with high smoking prevalence.

Using the wide range of Stoptober resources available and the stop smoking grant, they delivered an effective campaign.

This combined paid advertising, digital and social media communications, radio, community outreach, internal stakeholder engagement, and more than 30 in-person engagement events.

The campaign successfully met its targets. Their Facebook campaign generated 1,316 clicks, targeted digital radio achieved more than 15,000 impressions. And most significantly, Xyla reported a 131% increase in referrals to the stop smoking service year-on-year.



The 2025 campaign

The 2025 campaign focuses on the core message of ‘Let’s quit smoking together this Stoptober’.

This conveys strength in numbers - it allows us to reassure people that when quitting, they’re part of a large and supportive community, and to make them feel that quitting is becoming ever more popular with people like them.

It also refers to the vast range of support that’s available to help people quit successfully. Ultimately, our aim is to let the smoker know that they are not alone in their quit attempt.

The campaign resources feature a bold, positive headline that catches the eye, alongside a call to action (CTA). They are always helpful: whether providing a useful tip, inspiring self-belief or helping people know where to turn for help. We feature uplifting photography that depicts real, relatable people.



Guide to assets

We've developed a range of assets for you to promote Stoptober across your channels.

This includes:

- Social statics
- Social carousels
- Social animations
- Social quitter stickers
- A3 posters
- Out-of-home billboards
- Digital screens
- An email signature



Guide to assets

We recommend using a variety of different asset types together, as well as a wide range of messages, for maximum effectiveness.

They have all been created so that they are ready to go - they can be simply run without amends. However, you also have the option to edit parts of the templates to include your own branding and local information. For example, you may wish to promote a specific stop smoking service or other support option in your area.

If you are a public sector organisation or service provider and wish to customise your own assets, you can request a link to Canva artwork by emailing: **partnerships@dhsc.gov.uk**.

To maintain a consistent and high-quality campaign, it's vital that some elements of our assets remain fixed. These include the core Stoptober and NHS logos and our strapline, where it appears (Let's quit smoking together).

For some core Stoptober assets, we've also fixed the headlines. But for other assets where you'll want to introduce your own content, such as tips, quitter quotes and motivational messages.

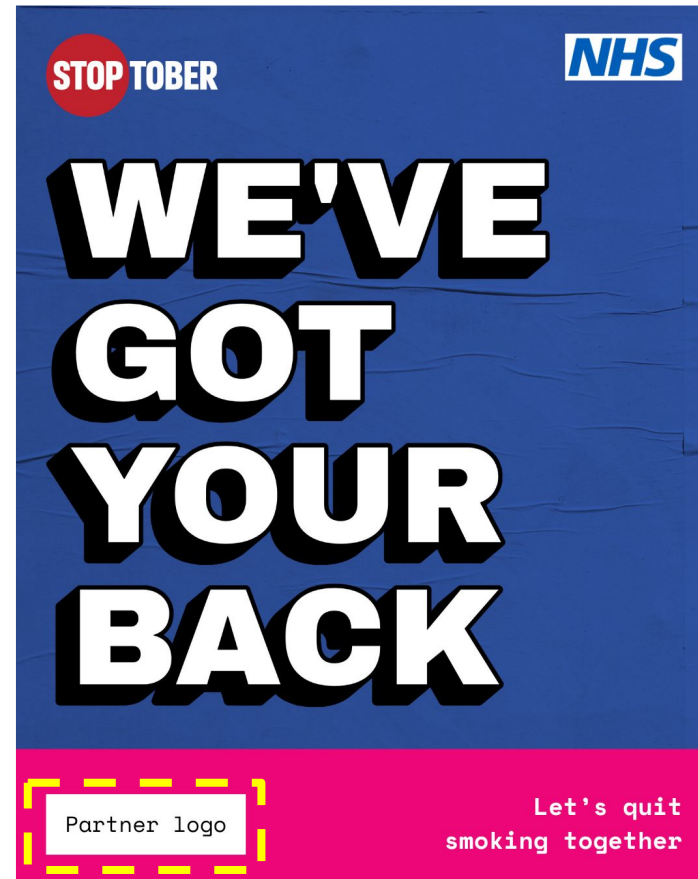
Please note that a separate copy schedule is provided as a spreadsheet in the Campaign Resource Centre, with additional messaging such as tips and tricks and motivational ideas.



Social statics: introducing Stoptober

These assets are designed to kick off the Stoptober campaign, introducing our new look and feel for 2025.

These assets also include information on the tools available for people, including our Quit Smoking app.

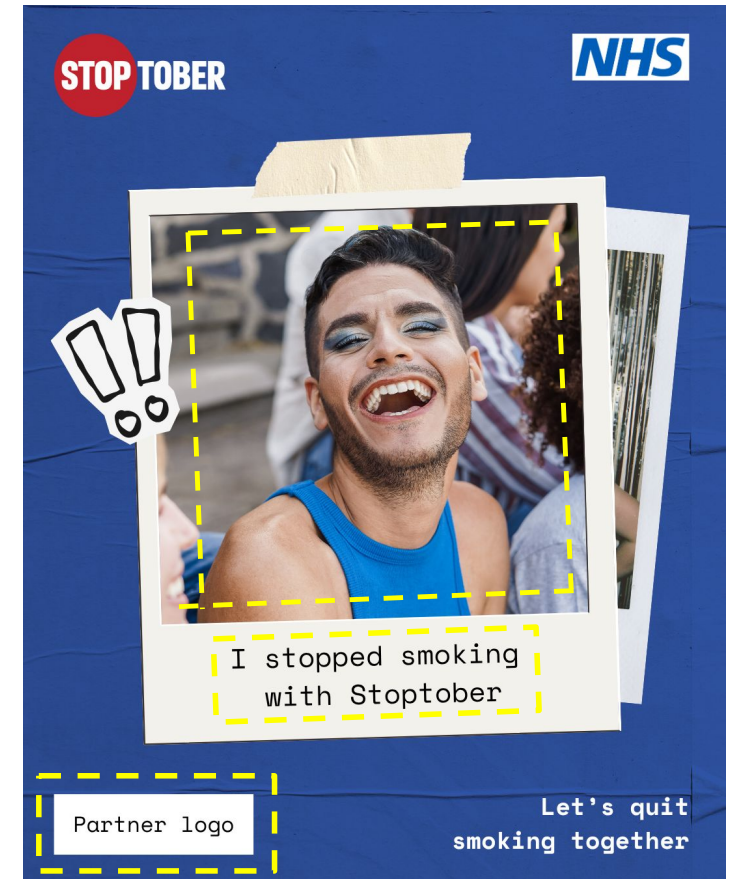


Partner logo is editable.

Social statics: community support

These assets are designed to promote - and show! - local services. For example, partners can add a team photo to the frame.

Quitter assets also allow you to create assets showing photos of real quitters, inspiring others.



Partner logo, headlines and photo are editable.

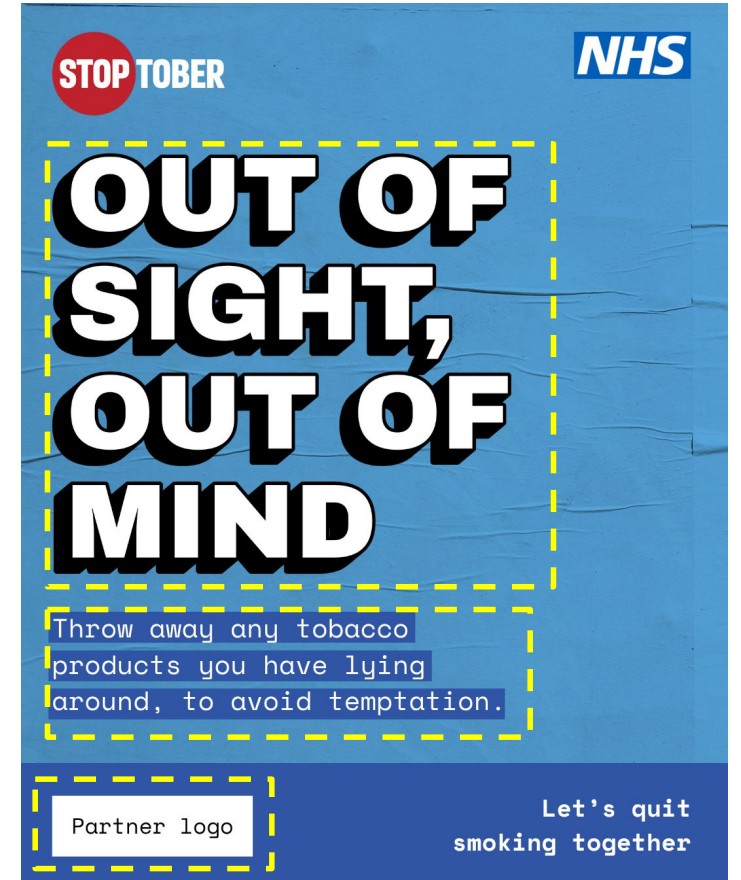
Social statics: tips and motivation

These assets are designed to help keep quitters motivated and on track.

They feature helpful tips and encouraging quotes that partners can share regularly to boost morale and support quitters through their journey.

These simple, uplifting messages are easy to personalise and perfect for maintaining momentum between milestones.

Partner logo, headline, sub headline and photo are editable.



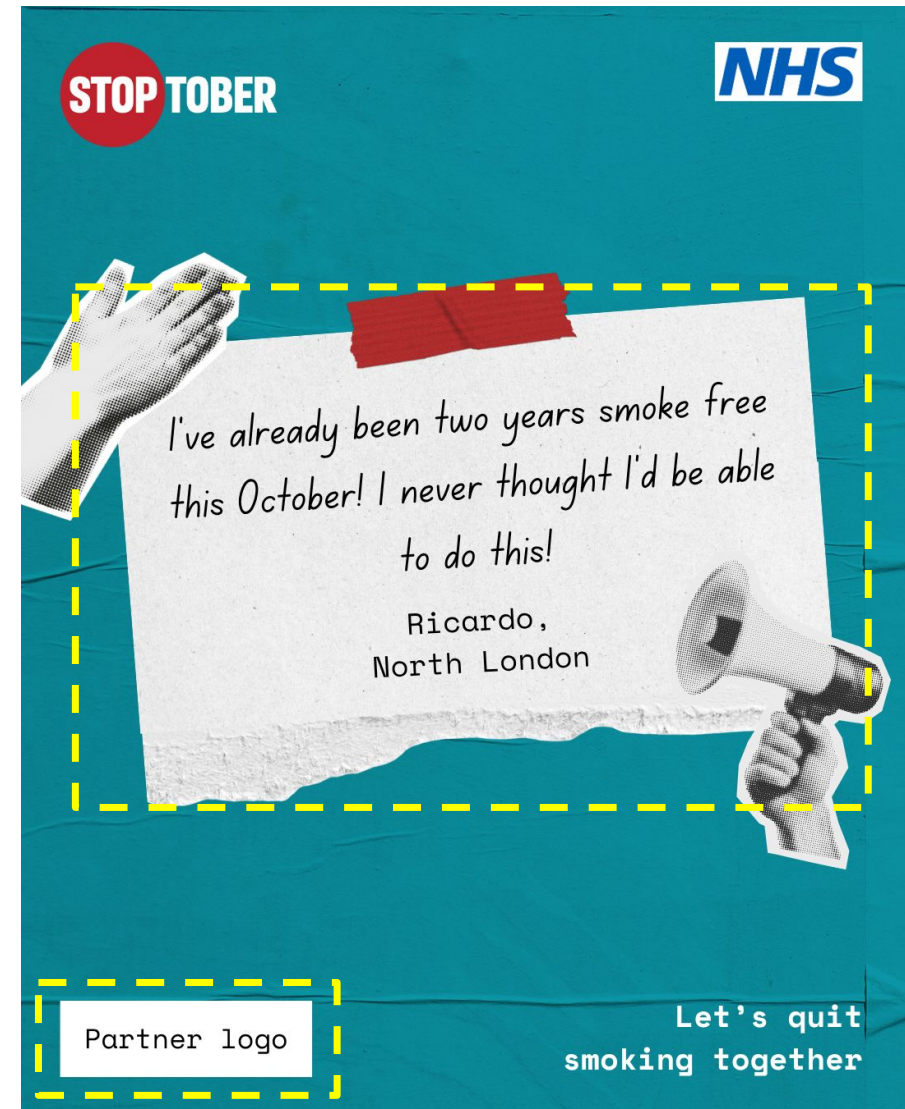
Social statics: tips and motivation

These assets are designed to highlight real stories from people who've successfully quit smoking.

By sharing authentic testimonials, partners can show that quitting is possible and worth it.

These personal experiences help make the message relatable and inspiring, giving others the confidence to start (or stick with) their own quit journey.

Partner logo and testimonial are editable.



Social statics: 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. Partners can use these to encourage continued commitment and show ongoing support at every stage.



Partner logo, headline and subheadline are editable.

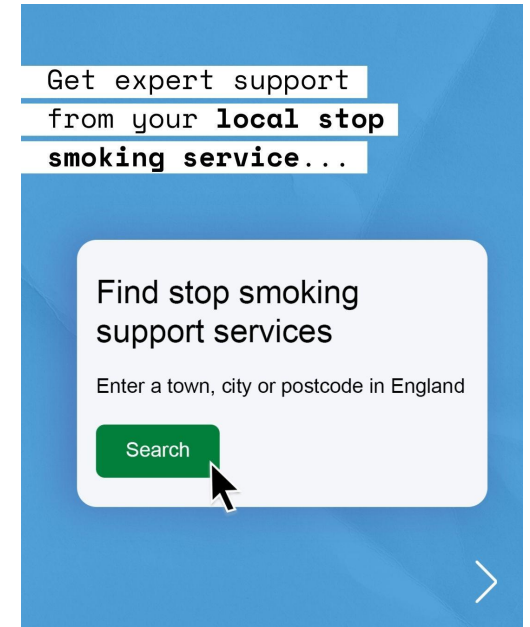
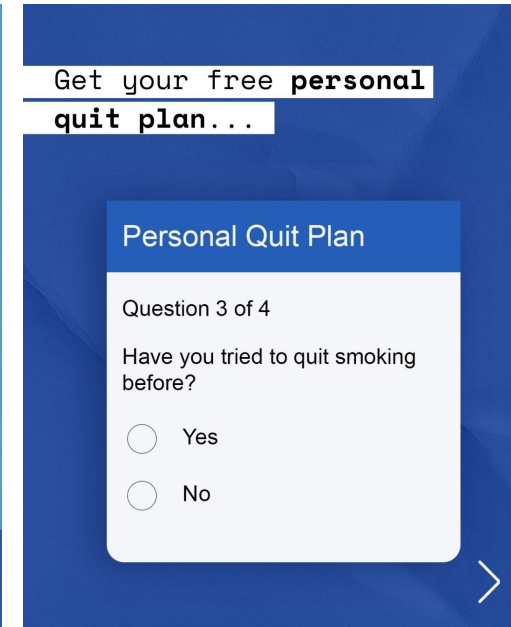
Social carousels

These carousel posts are designed to break down helpful information into easy-to-digest, swipeable content.

They're perfect for explaining quit tools, support options, and the benefits of quitting in a more detailed and engaging way.

By using a step-by-step format, partners can educate and inform while keeping audiences interested and motivated to take action.

Partner logo is editable.



Social animations

These animated assets are designed to capture attention quickly, while educating and entertaining in equal measure.

Animations are an effective way to simplify key messages, bring facts to life, and add energy to important topics.

They're ideal for social platforms where more people are spending time watching videos.



Not editable.

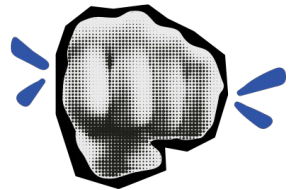
Social quitter animated stickers

These provide a fun way for successful quitters to share their achievement with the world - by simply adding a sticker to their post. We've created a variety to choose from.

We encourage you to create content inviting quitters to use them.

Simply search 'Stoptober' when creating Stories on Instagram or posting on Facebook. Our Giphy stickers are also available on Snapchat, TikTok and X – so feel free to use them across those platforms too!

Not editable.



Posters: A3

These A3 posters are designed to raise awareness in health settings, where people are already thinking about their wellbeing.

Ideal for waiting areas, consultation rooms, or community noticeboards, they help spark curiosity and start conversations about quitting.

With clear messaging and eye-catching design, they offer a low-effort, high-impact way for partners to promote support services and remind people that help is available.

Partner logo, CTA and QR code are editable.



Out-of-home billboards

Created to expand our campaign reach, these assets will get the key messages seen by the wider public.

These are available as Adobe InDesign files which enable you to produce localised artwork to the required standard.



Partner logo and CTA are editable.

Digital screens

These assets are designed for TVs and other digital displays. They are perfect for work areas and waiting rooms.



Partner logo, CTA and QR code are editable.

Email signature

This simple, ready-to-use asset turns everyday emails into powerful reminders.

By adding the campaign message or call-to-action to staff email signatures, partners can easily spread awareness with every message they send.

It's an easy way to keep sharing Stoptober messaging without any extra effort.

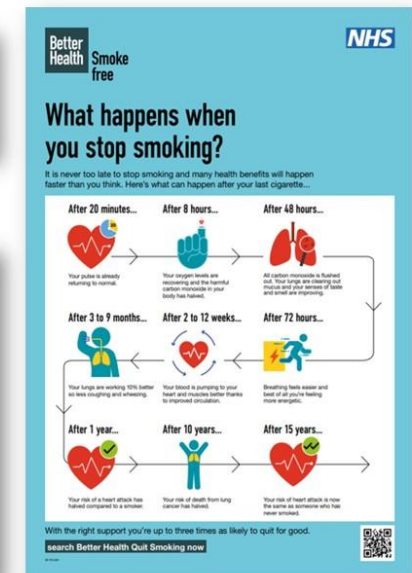
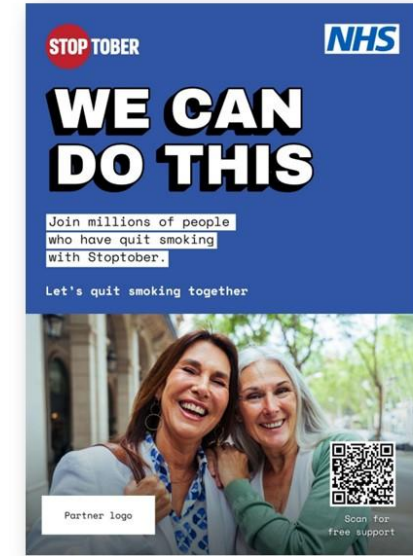


Partner logo is editable.

Printed materials to support you

In addition to our digital Stoptober campaign assets, a range of printed materials are **available to order free of charge** from the DHSC Campaign Resource Centre. These include:

- Stoptober campaign posters
- Stoptober Logo poster
- Wallet card promoting the benefits of quitting smoking, plus information on the support available when quitting
- Business card with details for the NHS Quit Smoking app and the Personal Quit Plan
- Quit smoking 'easy read' leaflet
- Benefits of quitting smoking poster



Key messages

Below are some motivating statements we recommend including in your communications. You could use them for caption copy accompanying a social media post, in a newsletter or on your website.

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

- Let's quit 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 smokers committing to quit 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. Some services are now able to offer free vape starter kits too through the National Swap to Stop scheme, along with other nicotine replacement therapies and support.
- 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.

Article template / press release

If you're able to share a longer messages, for example in an email or online article, you can use the following templates as a guide.

'Let's quit smoking together this Stoptober'

Stoptober is back, and we're calling on England's smokers to join millions of others who have quit successfully with the campaign.

Over 5 million adults in England still smoke. Smoking causes 75,000 deaths a year, making it the biggest cause of preventable illness and death. Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do for your health. The good news is, if you quit smoking for 28 days, you're five times more likely to quit for good.

Going 'cold turkey' is still the most common way that people attempt to give up, but quit attempts are successful more often when using quit smoking support.

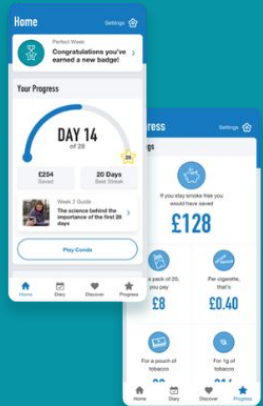
That's why this year's Stoptober campaign is encouraging smokers to quitting this October by exploring the free support available. We want aspiring quitters to know that we have their back and by taking part in Stoptober, they are more likely to succeed.

There's a wide range of free quitting tools available, including the NHS Quit Smoking app, the Personal Quit Plan, expert support from local stop smoking services and a Smokefree Facebook support group. There's also lots of information about aids such as nicotine-free medicines, nicotine replacement therapies and vaping, available at [nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking](https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking). Together, we can do this.

[Insert details here of local quit smoking support and quotes from local spokespeople].

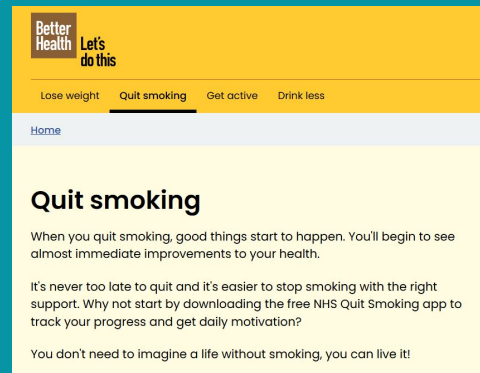
Better Health tools

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.



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

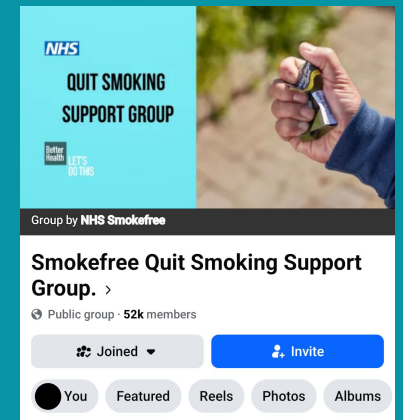
1. Track progress
2. See money saved
3. Get daily support



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](#).



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.

Perhaps your quitter would benefit from mental health support or wants to get active as part of a holistic health improvement plan? Feel free to browse our tools and guidance and use whatever is right for you.



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.

Evaluation

Evaluating campaigns is important to ensure future activity is as effective as possible and it allows us to demonstrate the impact they have. We would really appreciate your help with this in the following ways.

Share examples of local activity

We love to see examples of local activity, whether that's a quick email explaining what you've done, photos of displays or screenshots of online activity. We're also really interested to see any metrics you have captured, such as website visits or social media reach/interaction. These can be sent to partnerships@dhsc.gov.uk.

Monitor stop smoking service data

If you're using Stoptober as an opportunity to promote local stop smoking services, it would be great to see any change in the number of smokers accessing them – e.g. an uptick in sign-ups during the month of October compared to prior months. Again, this information can be sent to partnerships@dhsc.gov.uk.

Complete our evaluation survey

Midway through activity, we will get in touch with a short online survey. This is your opportunity to share feedback on the assets and resources we've provided, along with details of your local activity. We will also ask about future campaigns to identify areas where we can make improvements.

Request trackable links

If you are signposting people to the Better Health website from your online communications, we are able to provide unique links which enable you track the user journey and help with your evaluation. Please email partnerships@dhsc.gov.uk if you would like more information.

FURTHER
INFO

Facts and stats: smoking

- Since 2011, adult smoking prevalence in England has dropped from 19.8% to 11.6%. (i)
- In England, more men smoke than women (13.4% vs 9.9%). (vi)
- There are currently around 5.3 million adult smokers in England. (vii)
- Attempting without support is the most common approach to quitting, followed by vaping, using NRT products, prescribed medication and accessing a local stop smoking service. (xvi)
- Between 2011 and 2024 in England, the proportion of cigarette smokers who are not daily users has increased by 232%. They now represent 27% of the smoking population. (ii)
- Smoking is the single biggest behavioural cause of preventable illness and death in England. Every year nearly 75,000 people in the UK die from smoking, with many more living with debilitating smoking-related illnesses. (iii)
- Up to two-thirds of deaths in current smokers can be attributed to smoking. (iv)
- Smoking causes one in four of all cancer deaths in England. (iv)
- On average, someone who smokes loses approximately 20 minutes of their life for every cigarette they smoke. (v)
- For England, the prevalence of current smokers in 2023 was highest in the Yorkshire and the Humber (12.7%) and lowest in the South-East region. (10.6%) (vi)

Facts and stats: smoking

- Smoking is estimated to cost society £21.3 billion per year in England. This includes an annual £18 billion loss to productivity through smoking-related lost earnings, unemployment, and early death. (xv)
- Smoking is estimated to cost the NHS and social care £3 billion per year. (xv)
- The national average spend on tobacco is around £2,338 per smoker, per year. (vii)
- Evidence shows that once people have got past the short-term withdrawal stage of quitting, anxiety, depression and stress are reduced and their positive mood is increased, compared with people who continue to smoke. (x)
- For symptoms of anxiety and depression, stopping smoking is as effective as taking antidepressants. Just six weeks after quitting, people start feeling happier as well as healthier. (x)
- For 2024-2025 financial year 238,166 attempts to quit smoking using stop smoking services (SSS) were made. (viii)
- 29,413 (12%) people used NRT and nicotine vapes at the same time and achieved a 61% success rate. (viii)
- The most common trigger for quitting smoking is a future health concern, followed by cost, a current health concern, or a comment by family/friends. (xi)
- 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)

Further insight: smokers

- More men smoke than women. (vi)
- Those aged 25 to 34 years are most likely to smoke, while those aged 65 years and over are least likely to smoke. (ix)
- Those aged 18 to 24 years have seen the largest reduction in smoking prevalence between 2011 and 2023. (ix)
- People in a mixed ethnic group are more likely to smoke, but large differences were seen between sexes particularly in Asian (11.2% in men, 2% in women), Chinese (8.9% in men, 3.5% in women) and Black (9.1% in men, 4.8% in women) groups. (xiv)
- The prevalence of current smokers in England is highest in the Yorkshire and Humber region and lowest in the South-East. (vi)
- The proportion of current smokers is significantly higher among people who identified as gay or lesbian than among heterosexual people. (i)
- Three-quarters of smokers wish they had never started smoking. Of the people who currently smoked in 2023, 55.9% intended to quit smoking. (i)
- Routine and manual workers such as labourers, bar staff, lorry drivers, receptionist and care workers are more than twice as likely to be smokers as other occupations. (i)
- A higher proportion of unemployed people are currently smokers compared with people that are in paid employment. (i)
- People with no qualifications are more likely to be current smokers compared to those who reported a degree as their highest level of education. (i)
- People living in social housing are three times as likely to be smokers compared to those who have a mortgage. (i)
- People who are cohabiting or single are more likely to be smokers than those who are married or in a civil partnership. (i)
- People with long-term mental health conditions are much more likely to smoke. A myth prevails that smoking is a relaxant, when in fact it increases anxiety. (i)

References

- i. ONS. *Adult smoking habits in the UK: 2023*. October 2024. <https://bit.ly/4k0bHmm>
- ii. Jackson, S.E., Brown, J., Shahab, L. et al. *Trends in non-daily cigarette smoking in England, 2006–2024*. *BMC Med* 22, 426 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12916-024-03635-1>
- iii. Action on Smoking and Health (ASH), *Smoking Statistics*. 2024. [Smoking-Statistics-Fact-Sheet.pdf](#)
- iv. E. Banks, G. Joshy, M.F. Weber, B. Liu, R. Grenfell, S. Egger, E. Paige, A.D. Lopez, F. Sitas, V. Beral. *Tobacco smoking and all-cause mortality in a large Australian cohort study: findings from a mature epidemic with current low smoking prevalence*. *BMC Medicine* 2015: volume 13, number 38. <https://bit.ly/3l4s5EY>
- v. S. Jackson, M. Jarvis, R. West, *The price of a cigarette: 20 minutes of life?* December 2024. <https://bit.ly/4k4BPN0>
- vi. Office for Health Improvement & Disparities Smoking profile for England, *Statistical Commentary - October 2024 update*. 2024. <http://bit.ly/453Cp88>
- vii. Action on Smoking and Health (ASH), *ASH Ready Reckoner*. 2024. [ASH Ready Reckoner - ASH](#)
- viii. NHS England, *Statistics on Local Stop Smoking Services*. 2025. <http://bit.ly/4mdmuLp>
- ix. ONS, *Adult smoking habits in the UK: average cigarette consumption methodology*. June 2024. <http://bit.ly/4oeLl3q>
- x. Cochrane Reviews, *Smoking cessation for improving mental health*. March 2021. <http://bit.ly/3GIMsHO>
- xi. S. Jackson, S. Cox, V. Buss, J. Brown, *Trends in motives for trying to stop smoking: a population study in England, 2018–2023*. April 2024. [Trends in motives for trying to stop smoking: a population study in England, 2018–2023 | BMJ Public Health](#)
- xii. DHSC, *Better Health Quit Smoking*. 2025. [Quit smoking - Better Health – NHS](#)
- xiii. NHS England, *Statistics on Public Health, England*. 2021. [Part 2: Smoking-related mortality - NHS England Digital](#)
- xiv. Action on Smoking and Health (ASH), *Tobacco and Ethnic Minorities*. March 2024. <http://bit.ly/4fakktY>
- xv. Parliament UK, *Tobacco and Vaping bill*. 2025. [House of Lords](#):
- xvi. Gov.uk, *Health matters: stopping smoking*. 2019. [Health matters: stopping smoking – what works? - GOV.UK](#)

Get in touch

We hope you've found this toolkit useful.

We'd love to see any examples of local activity and also hear your feedback on the campaign - please email partnerships@dhsc.gov.uk.

