

The Oxfordshire Tobacco Control Strategy and Local Government Declaration

Summary

In 2018 the Oxfordshire Tobacco Control Alliance (OTCA) was formed. This is a partnership of local organisations who are committed to working collaboratively to eliminate the use of tobacco in Oxfordshire. As part of a peer review of the local tobacco control system in Oxfordshire (CLearR) recommendations included developing a tobacco control strategy and for Local Government to demonstrate leadership in tobacco control by committing to sign up to the National Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control.

Information on Tobacco Use

Smoking is the single greatest cause of premature death and disease in our community. Every year in England more than 80,000 people die from smoking related diseases. This is more than the combined total of the next six causes of preventable deaths, including alcohol and drugs misuse. On average a smoker loses 10 years of life.

Between 2015-17, 2,132 people died from smoking-related causes in Oxfordshire. Likewise, the impact of smoking on ill health is huge. In 2017/18 an estimated 4,036 hospital admissions in Oxfordshire were attributable to smoking.

In Oxfordshire, in 2018, an estimated 10.1% of adults were smokers (England, 14.4%) which equates to approximately 54,804 smokers across the County.

Reducing smoking amongst the most disadvantaged in our communities is the single most important means of reducing health inequalities
Oxfordshire biggest smoking inequality is, 17.0% of routine and manual workers in Oxfordshire were smokers (England is 25.4%).

Those adults with long term mental health condition was whose smoking prevalence is 22.7% within Oxfordshire (England 26.8%).

Reducing smoking in our communities significantly increases household incomes and benefits the local economy

The annual cost of smoking to the UK national economy has been estimated at £13.7 billion. A smoker consuming a pack of twenty cigarettes a day will spend around £2,500 a year on their habit.

Residents in Oxfordshire spend approx. £73.7m a year on tobacco products.

It is estimated that smoking in Oxfordshire each year costs society a total of approx. £121.7m in lost productivity, health and social care costs. A breakdown of the costs of tobacco is shown in diagram 1 below.

The Oxfordshire Tobacco Control Strategy

Tobacco control is an umbrella term often used to describe the broad range of activities that aim to reduce smoking prevalence and/or reduce exposure to second-hand smoke and the morbidity and mortality it causes. In 2017 the Government

published its Tobacco Control Plan for England 2017-22¹ to pave the way for a smoke free generation. When the prevalence of smoking is below 5% it is considered that the population is smoke free. The national aim is to reduce the prevalence of smoking to below 5% by 2030.

The key aim of the Proposed Oxfordshire strategy is to reduce the prevalence of smoking in the adult population below 5% by 2025 and make Oxfordshire the first smoke free County in England.

Oxfordshire in line with many other areas has primarily focussed on smoking cessation services. With the prevalence of smokers in the County at 10.1% we need to adopt a different approach which addresses the wider underlying issues surrounding smoking if we want to see tobacco use eliminated in Oxfordshire.

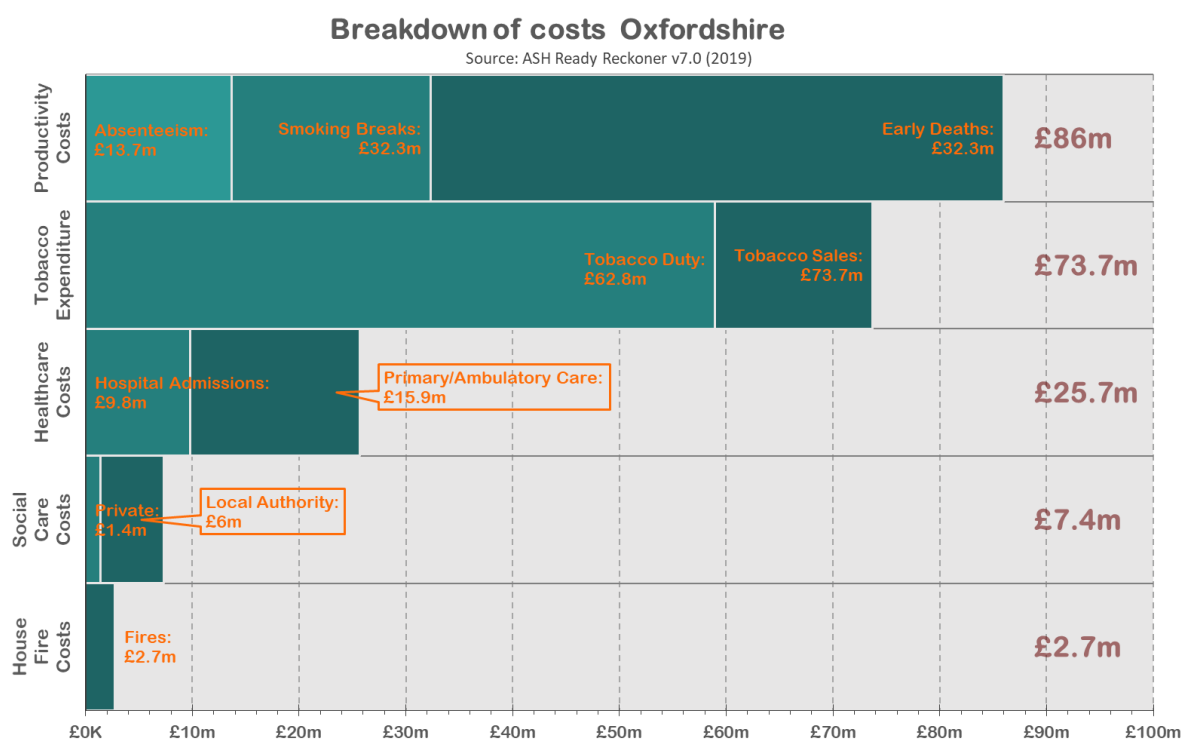


Diagram 1. Breakdown of Costs due to smoking in Oxfordshire

With our overall adult population now approaching single figures now is the time for an ambitious vision and a wider system approach to eliminating tobacco use from our communities. To achieve this wider system approach, the strategy employs four pillars:

- Prevention
- Local regulation and enforcement
- Creating smoke free environments
- Supporting smokers to quit

¹ Department of Health (2017) Towards a smoke-free generation: a tobacco control plan for England <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/towards-a-smoke-free-generation-tobacco-control-plan-for-england>

Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control

The Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control is a statement of a council's commitment to ensure tobacco control is part of mainstream public health work and commits councils to taking comprehensive action to address the harm from smoking. The Declaration commits councils to working towards:

- Reduce smoking prevalence and health inequalities
- Develop plans with partners and local communities
- Participate in local and regional networks
- Support Government action at national level
- Protect tobacco control work from the commercial and vested interests of the tobacco industry
- Monitor the progress of our plans
- Join the Smokefree Action Coalition

Since it was launched in May 2013, over 120 councils across the country have signed up to it.

The County Council and District Councils have already developed or are embarking on work to meet the commitments of the declaration including;

- Reducing smoking prevalence and inequalities
- Developing plans and joint working with local partners and communities
- Collaboration of increasing local enforcement and regulation
- Developing a local tobacco control strategy
- Participation in local and regional networks
- Clear governance and monitoring systems

The existing and emerging work being delivered by local partners will greatly benefit from visible leadership and commitment to eliminating tobacco use in Oxfordshire. By signing the Declaration, Local Government organisations in Oxfordshire would be demonstrating clear leadership and intention in tobacco control.

There is a similar declaration for the NHS (NHS Smokefree Pledge). Public Health is securing support for the strategy from OCCG, Oxford Health, and OUHFT who will all also sign up to the NHS pledge.

Marketing Signing up to the Declaration and Strategy Consultation

National no smoking day is on 11th March 2020. There is a unique opportunity for a high-profile launch of the consultation for the strategy on 11th March. There would be even more impact and positive press for all organisations if they were all to sign up to the declaration on 11th March as well. The Director of Public Health fully supports this ambition to combine these events to maximise the public impact and raise the profile of tobacco use and the commitment to address this issue.

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