

GREATER MANCHESTER SMOKEFREE SPACES

PUBLIC CONSULTATION REPORT



**MAKE
SMOKING
HISTORY**

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ABOUT

This report was commissioned by Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership.

Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership brings together health and social care partners across Greater Manchester to improve the health and wellbeing of the 2.8 million people who live in Greater Manchester. It connects NHS Greater Manchester, NHS Trusts, and NHS primary care providers with Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 10 local councils and partners from the Voluntary, Community, Faith, and Social Enterprise (VSCFE) sector as well as Healthwatch and Trades Unions.

Together as partners, we take actions which make a difference to the health of the population of Greater Manchester.

www.gmintegratedcare.org.uk

CONTACT US

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FOREWORD

By Paul Dennett, Chair of Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership Board and Deputy Mayor for Greater Manchester.

In Greater Manchester, it is our ambition to make smoking history and ensure longer, healthier lives for our residents. We have already made great progress, with smoking rates falling to one in six people smoking. But we need to do more if we are going to save more lives and prevent our children from ever starting to smoke tobacco.

Smokefree spaces play an important role in this journey. They promote healthy behaviours to children and young people, encourage smokers to quit and make it easier for ex-smokers to stay smokefree.

That's why we're proud to be working with the global network, Partnership for Healthy Cities, to create smokefree spaces which everyone can enjoy. We're taking learnings from metropolitan cities like Melbourne and New York to expand smokefree spaces across Greater Manchester.

The reality is that smoking is still devastating our communities, with up to two in three long-term smokers dying prematurely from an addiction which often starts in childhood. We need to embrace initiatives such as smokefree spaces to tackle this public health challenge.

In Greater Manchester, we are creating an environment where smoking is not the cultural norm and we do everything we can to protect people from its harms. This isn't just about reducing smoking rates; it's about transforming lives, communities, and the entire city-region. It has been fantastic to hear people's views and the consultation has provided valuable insights into public support, concerns, and suggestions for implementing smokefree spaces, which will inform our strategy moving forward.

As a city-region, we are ready to learn, adapt and work together to create an environment that promotes health and wellbeing for all.

**WE ARE CREATING AN
ENVIRONMENT WHERE
SMOKING IS NOT THE
CULTURAL NORM AND WE
DO EVERYTHING WE CAN
TO PROTECT PEOPLE
FROM ITS HARMS.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents findings from Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership's public consultation on plans to make more outdoor public spaces smokefree.

As a key initiative for the city-region, the consultation asked members of the Greater Manchester public and local businesses for their views and attitudes towards smokefree places, including preferences on the types of spaces people would like to see smokefree, messages they'd like to hear, what they think about topics such as vaping and what we need to do to make Greater Manchester's outdoor spaces accessible and enjoyable for everyone.

The findings – gathered from non-smokers and smokers alike – showed a collective desire to not only protect our communities by introducing more smokefree outdoor spaces, but ultimately to make smoking history.

Overall we found:

- Significant public support to make smoking history.
- Overwhelming support to make more spaces smokefree, especially in healthcare and child-friendly settings.
- Public appetite to make outdoor spaces more enjoyable and inclusive for everyone. People are proud of the city-region and support initiatives to make where we live and work better for everyone.
- The effectiveness of messages focusing on protecting future generations and making spaces more enjoyable for everyone.
- Public opinion is divided on whether vaping should be allowed in smokefree spaces. There are growing concerns around vaping and young people, highlighting the need to weigh the benefits of vaping as a quit aid against the risk of normalising vaping for young people.
- The need for a comprehensive and considerate approach when implementing smokefree spaces, addressing concerns around enforcement and ensuring a positive experience for all, including smokers.

INTRODUCTION

In spring 2022, Greater Manchester joined the prestigious global network, Partnership for Healthy Cities – an initiative supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies, the World Health Organization (WHO), and Vital Strategies.

The Partnership for Healthy Cities is a network of 70 cities around the world committed to saving lives by preventing noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) and injuries.

The city-region was awarded \$100,000 from the Partnership for Healthy Cities to set up smokefree spaces and address the cultural changes they may bring – an evidence-based intervention that is proven to reduce tobacco-related harm.

Smokefree spaces are a crucial part of our strategy to make smoking history in Greater Manchester. They protect people from tobacco harm and help to change cultural norms around smoking.

Smoking tobacco is still the single largest cause of preventable deaths globally. In Greater Manchester more than 5,000 adults die from smoking-related diseases every year.

The aim of the smokefree spaces initiative is to protect local residents and visitors from the serious and life-threatening illnesses caused by tobacco.

To move it forward, we set out to discover what people would like to see when it comes to smokefree spaces, what they'd like to hear from us, their views on the issues that matter and the action they'd like us to take.

A consultation was launched to gather public opinions on our plans, informing future policy and helping our partners across Greater Manchester bring about positive change.

This report publishes the findings of the public consultation.

METHODOLOGY

The consultation was carried out between 15 August and 23 September 2022, and included face-to-face conversations in Manchester city centre, online focus groups, an online survey, and an in-depth market research survey with a representative sample of Greater Manchester residents.

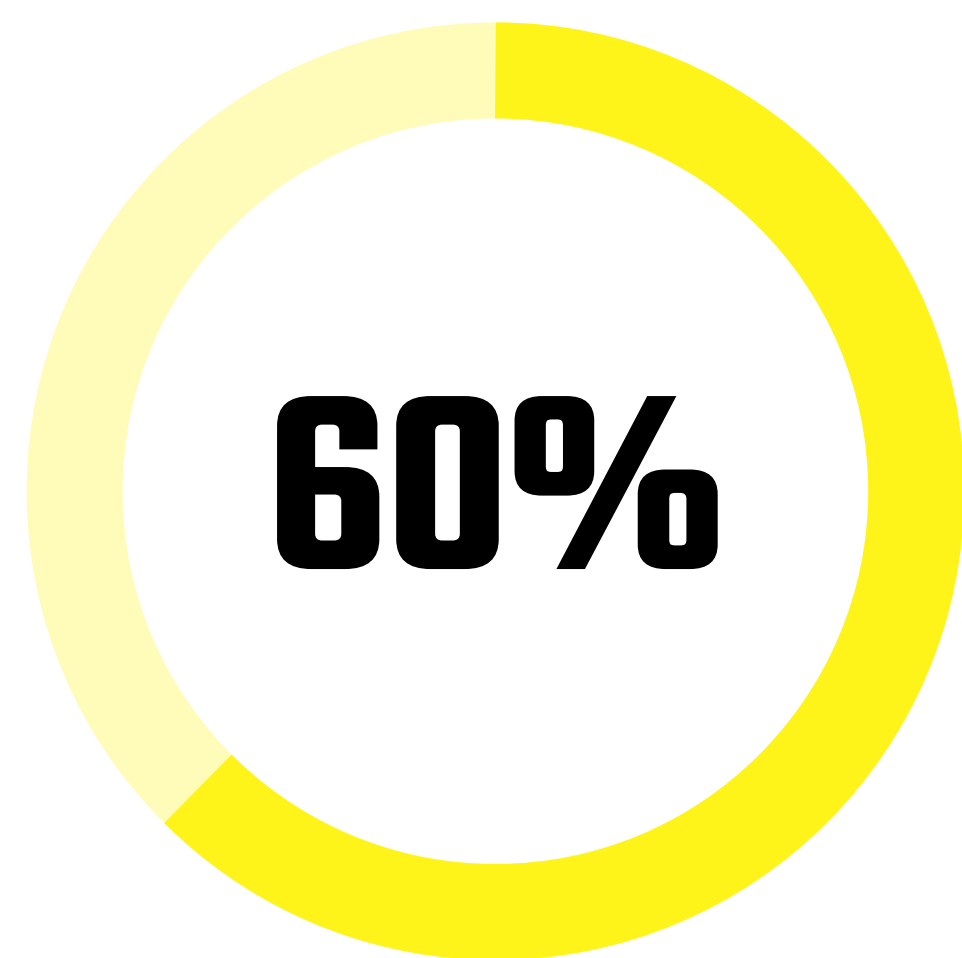
In total, 2,755 people aged 18 and over responded – 60% of respondents had never smoked, 24% were former smokers and 16% were current smokers, in line with Office for National Statistics (ONS) estimates of smoking prevalence in Greater Manchester.

“WE APPLAUD GREATER MANCHESTER FOR CREATING AN OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS TO HELP ENSURE THE SPACES THEY USE EVERY DAY WILL BE SMOKEFREE. THROUGH THIS WORK, GREATER MANCHESTER IS BUILDING A LEGACY AS A CITY-REGION THAT CARES DEEPLY ABOUT HEALTH AND WELLBEING, NOT JUST NOW BUT WELL INTO THE FUTURE.”

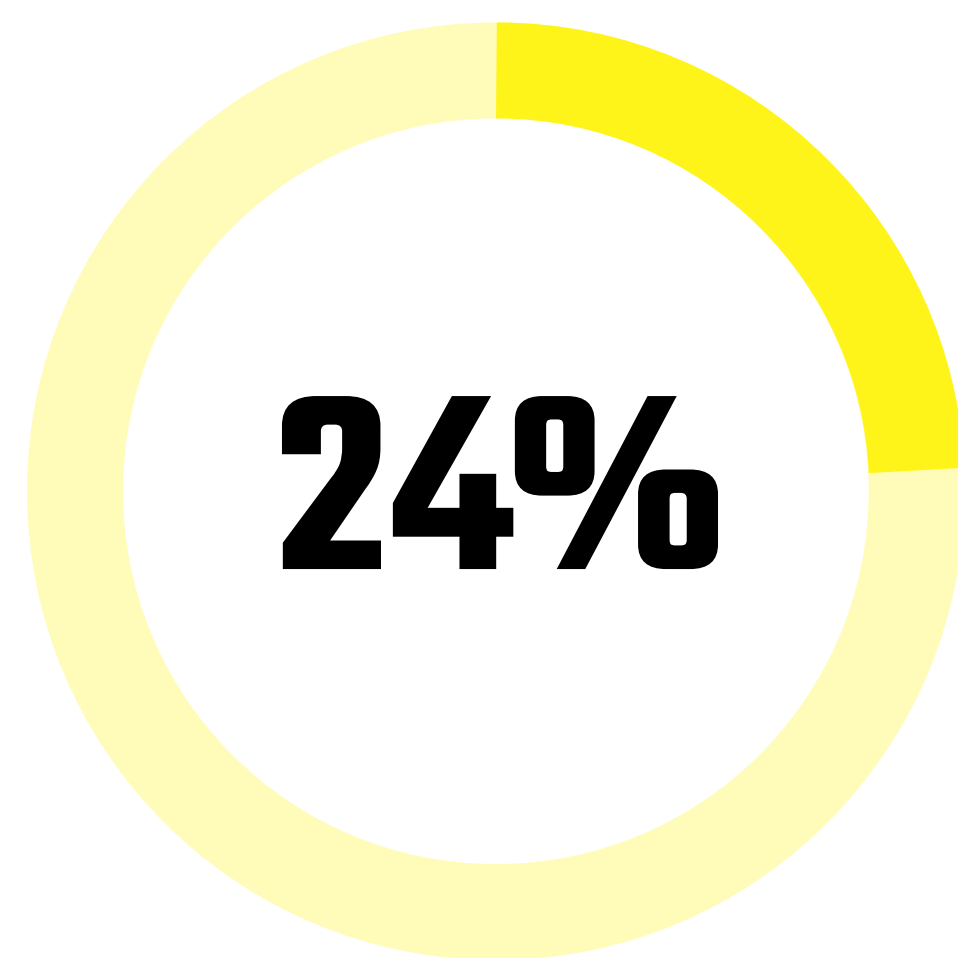
Ariella Rojhani,
Director of the Partnership for Healthy Cities.

WHO RESPONDED

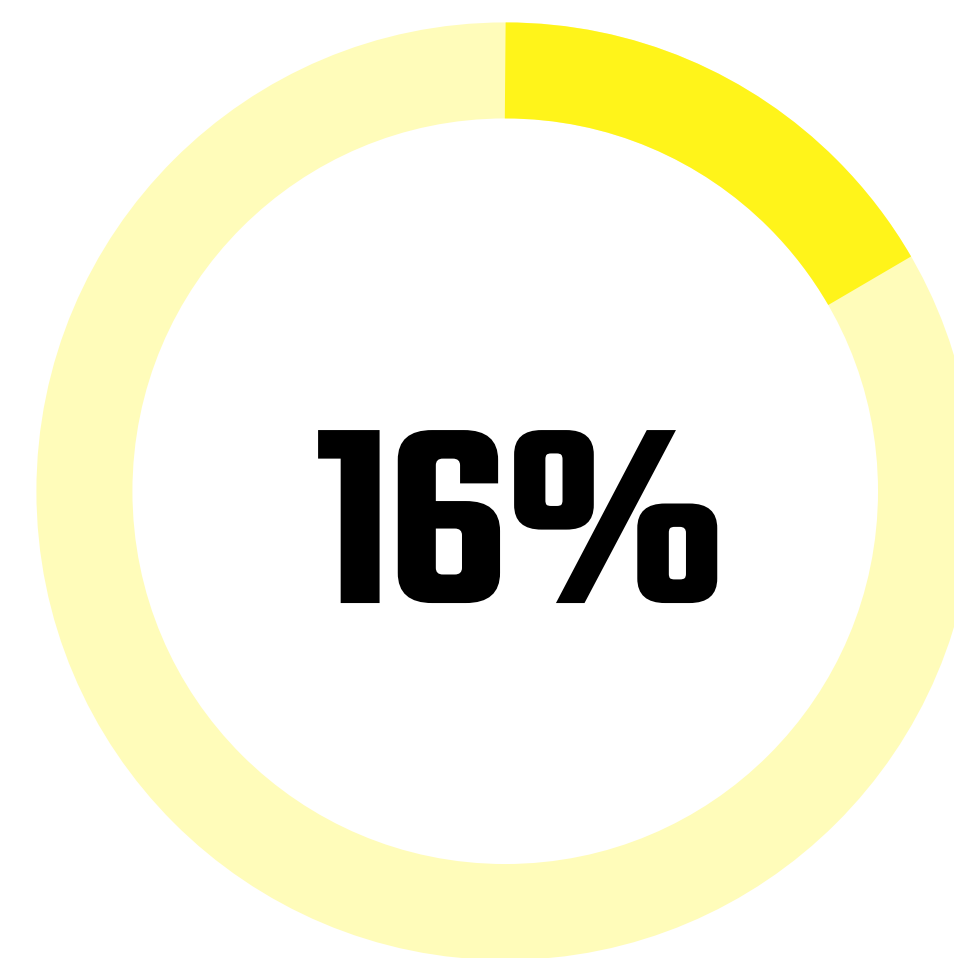
In total, 2,755 people aged 18 and over responded.



Have never smoked.



Are former smokers.



Are current smokers.

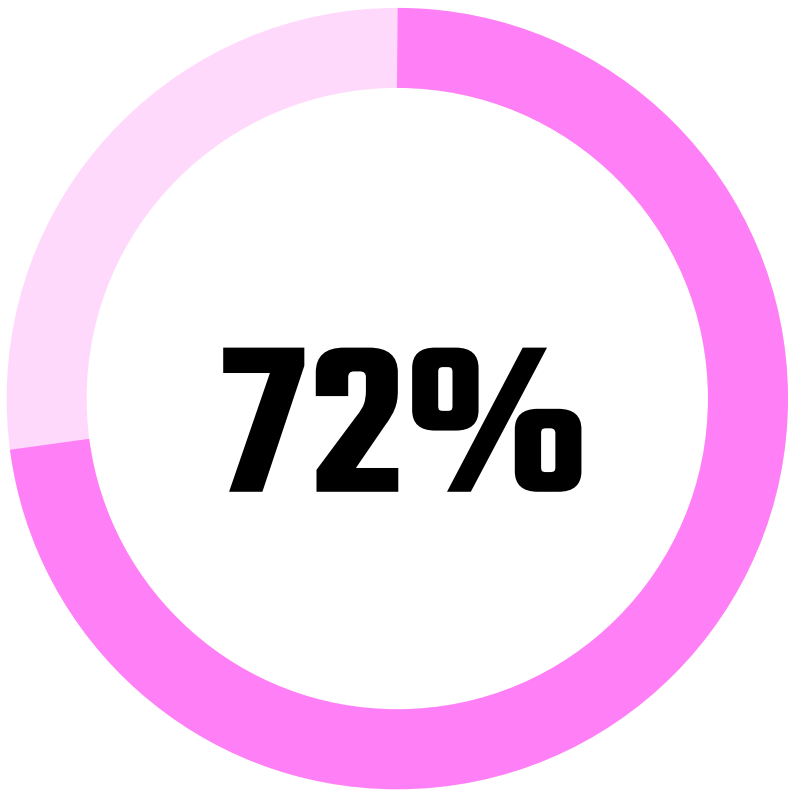
Most people who took part live in Greater Manchester (94%), but people who lived outside of Greater Manchester (5%), or outside of the UK (1%) were also included as representative of visitors for work or leisure.

SECTION ONE: PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR SMOKEFREE SPACES

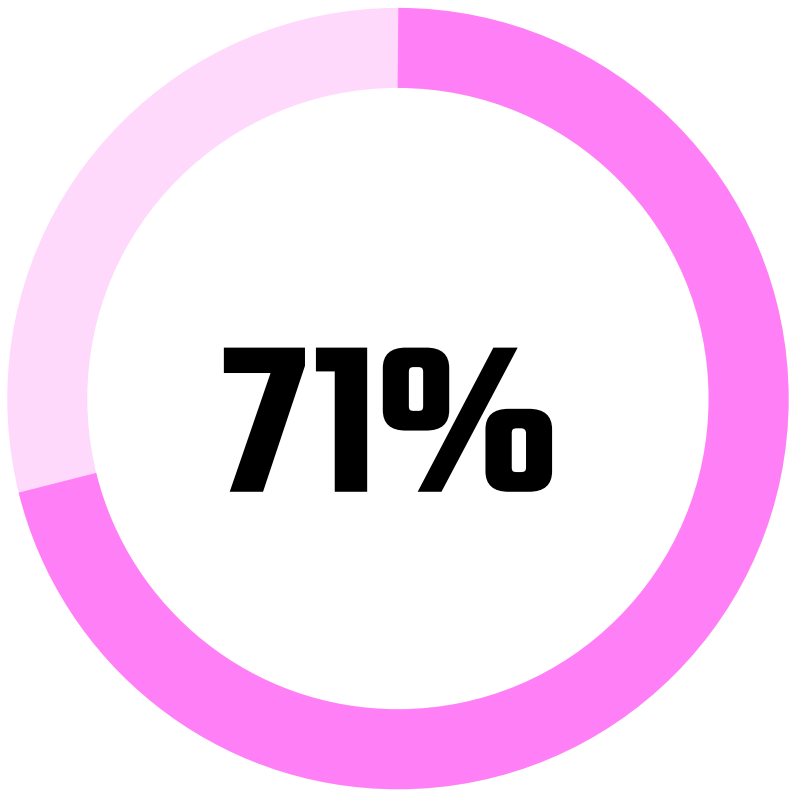
Understanding public support for smokefree spaces has been a crucial aspect of the consultation. We wanted to know how many people back the initiative and why, as this information will guide our future policy decisions.



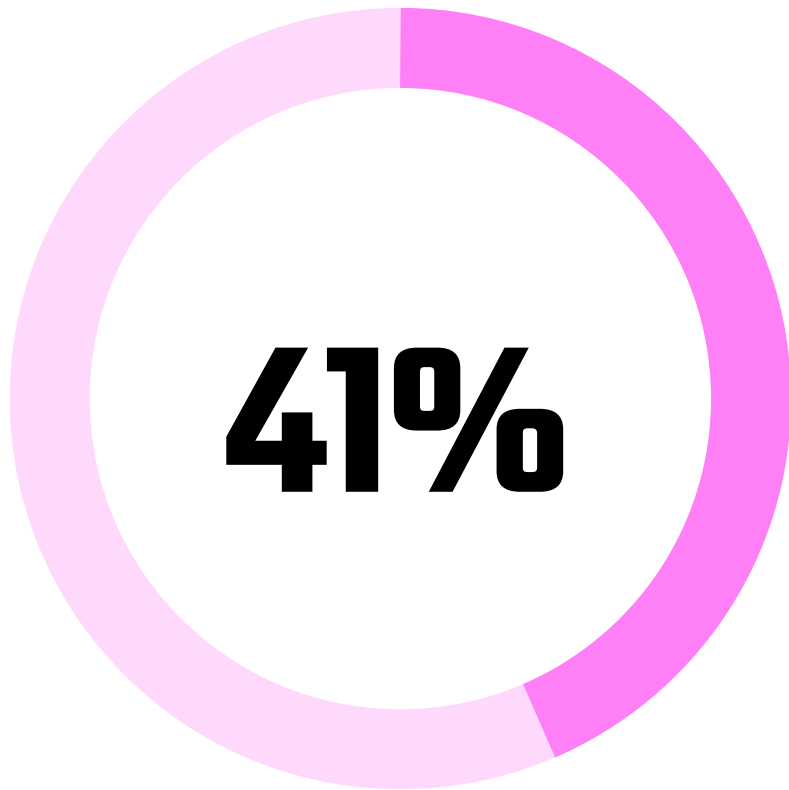
WHAT THE PUBLIC TOLD US



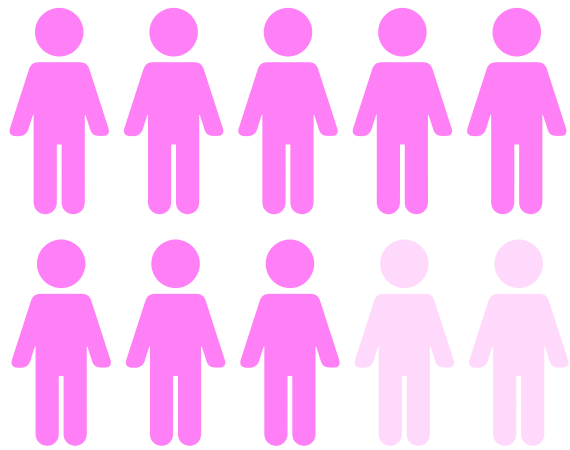
Expressed a desire to make smoking history in Greater Manchester.



Believe smoking should only be allowed in designated spaces.

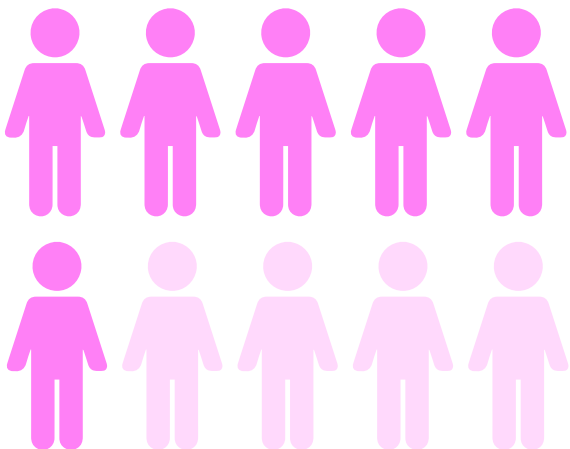


Believe smoking should be banned altogether.



8 IN 10

People in favour of smokefree areas.



6 IN 10

Smokers agreed with this proposition.

WHAT THE PUBLIC TOLD US

The consultation revealed:

- An overwhelming majority (72%) of respondents expressed a desire to make smoking history in Greater Manchester, a sentiment shared by almost half (49%) of current smokers who took part.
- A significant number of participants (71%) believe smoking should only be allowed in designated spaces, a view echoed by 47% of smokers.
- A substantial number of respondents (41%) believe smoking should be banned altogether.

Do people support the extension of smokefree spaces?

- There was strong support for more smokefree spaces with almost 8 in 10 people (79%) in favour. Even among smokers – 6 in 10 (62%) agreed with this proposition.
- 47% of respondents living outside the city centre said they would visit more often if there were more smokefree spaces.
- More than three quarters (78%) say it would make their visit to the city centre more enjoyable.

THE TOP THREE REASONS FOR SUPPORTING SMOKEFREE SPACES



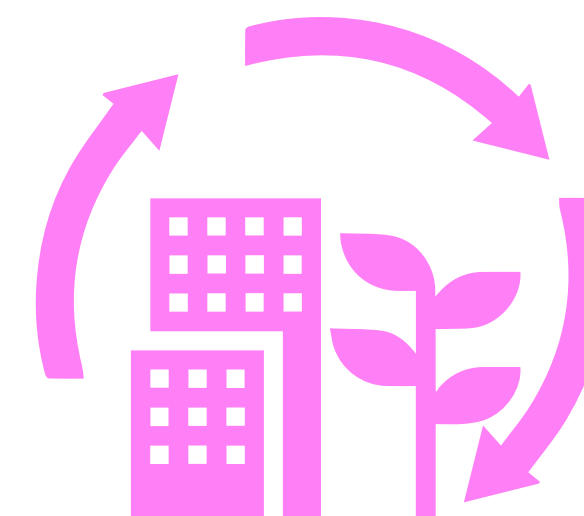
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Protecting people from the detrimental health effects of second-hand smoke.



2

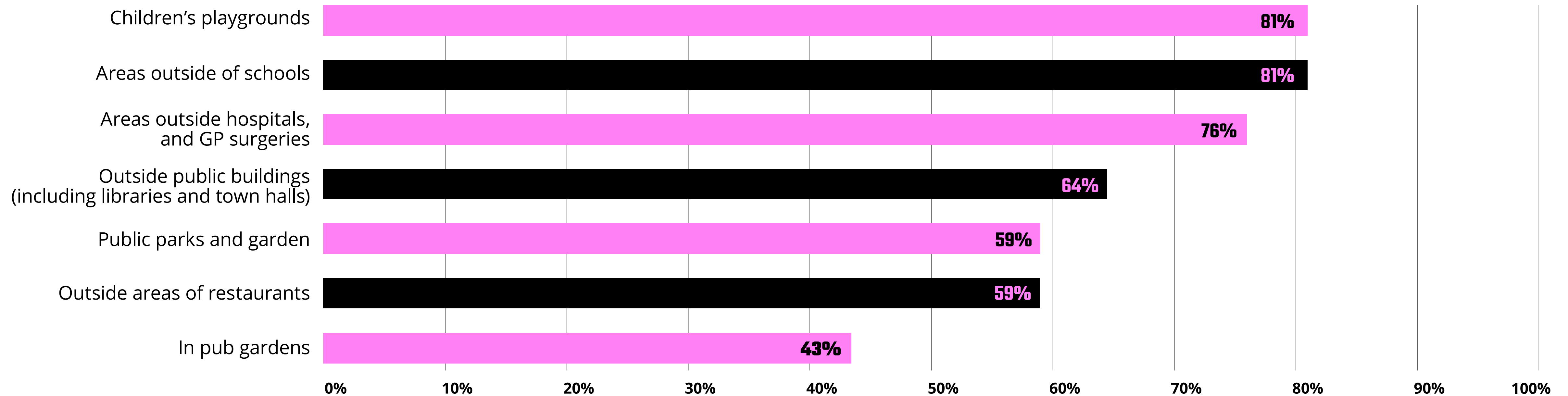
Preventing smoking being normalised to children and young people.



3

Contributing to a healthier Greater Manchester for everyone by discouraging smoking.

SPACES THE PUBLIC WOULD LIKE TO SEE GO SMOKEFREE



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

The results from the consultation demonstrate a significant public appetite for more smokefree public spaces.

The level of support not only validates our efforts but also informs our strategies as we strive to make smoking history in Greater Manchester.

Crucially, this positive response shows that the population is receptive to health-conscious initiatives, and is particularly supportive of measures that protect children and guard against second-hand smoke. Spaces linked to children or healthcare are at the top of the list for transitioning to smokefree status. This feedback is invaluable as we plan the next steps for the initiative, guided by the public's vision for a healthier Greater Manchester.



“THEY’RE SPACES OF BEAUTY AND NATURE WHERE FAMILIES VISIT AND SHOULD BE FREE FROM SMOKE.”

Member of the public in favour of making public parks smokefree.

SECTION TWO: VIEWS ON VAPING IN SMOKEFREE SPACES

In a time where vaping has become increasingly popular, we need to understand public perceptions surrounding its use in public spaces.

Vaping mimics the sensation of smoking and contains nicotine, which assists in reducing cigarette cravings for people trying to quit smoking. Unlike tobacco cigarettes, vapes do not burn tobacco or produce harmful chemicals like tar and carbon monoxide.

Although not entirely risk-free, vaping is substantially less harmful than smoking tobacco, making it an effective stop smoking aid. There is no known evidence that exhaled vapour is harmful to others, unlike second-hand smoke from cigarettes which is known to be very harmful. As we work to roll out our strategy, understanding the public's views on vaping was a crucial part of our consultation.



WHAT THE PUBLIC TOLD US

People’s views on vaping are far from unanimous. The consultation found that many smokers had tried vaping and think it’s a good way to quit. But there was concern driven by the increase in young people vaping and risks that **allowing vaping in smokefree spaces could normalise vaping for young people.**

The consultation brought out the following findings:

- The public’s opinion is split on whether smokefree spaces should allow vaping.
- There are growing concerns around vaping and young people, highlighting the need for careful consideration and stronger regulation.



THE PICTURE AROUND VAPING

29%	of respondents had tried or used vapes – the vast majority of whom had done so in order to cut down or quit smoking.
47%	think that vaping is a good way to quit.
55%	think vapes are either less or a lot less harmful than cigarettes.
10%	think vaping is more harmful than cigarettes.



POINTS OF CONCERN

71%	say they are worried about vaping and young people.
65%	are worried that vaping could become as significant a societal issue as smoking in the future.
57%	believe vaping shouldn’t be allowed in smokefree spaces.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

The consultation shows mixed views towards vaping, highlighting the importance of considering public opinion when shaping future policies.

Many see vaping as a potential issue, particularly its appeal to young people, which we must acknowledge and understand.

However, it is crucial to remember that vaping is not smoking. The prevalence of vaping among young people, while a concern, is still relatively low, especially compared to the significantly higher health risks associated with smoking.

Public concerns about young people's access to vaping devices and their potential misuse should be carefully considered when framing policies for smokefree spaces.

The issue is nuanced and complex, which calls for a balanced approach. Policymakers need to weigh up the necessity of protecting children and young people from ever vaping, while encouraging existing smokers to quit tobacco smoking. In addition, other considerations include the impact vaping has on the environment and the community in terms of litter and anti-social behaviour. This consultation has provided valuable insights that will be critical to the policy-making process as we move forward.

SECTION THREE: MESSAGING THAT RESONATES

Effective communication is vital for implementing any policy change. The messaging needs to resonate with the public for them to get on board with the proposed changes.

Hence, during the consultation, we sought to understand the type of communication that the public finds appealing and relevant. This will assist us in crafting effective strategies to garner widespread support for the smokefree spaces initiative.



WHAT THE PUBLIC TOLD US

The consultation showed that:

- The messages that focus on protecting future generations and enhancing public spaces resonate most with the public.
- People perceive smokefree spaces as beneficial in protecting others from second-hand smoke and discouraging children from starting smoking.
- Communicating the universal benefits for everyone (health, finance, litter) is generally well-received and viewed as credible and inclusive.

**BENEFITS FOR
EVERYONE**

Significant benefits of smokefree spaces:

Interestingly, the most highly perceived benefits of smokefree spaces mirror the themes identified earlier in this report, including:

- Preventing children from witnessing adults smoking, thereby setting a healthier example.
- Shielding the public from the harms of second-hand smoke.
- Promoting a healthier environment for everyone in Greater Manchester.

WHAT DID SMOKERS SAY?

Notably, when it comes to influencing smokers to change their behaviours, the presence of children significantly impacts their decision. The proposal of designated smoking areas, though controversial, and the use of clear signage, can play a role in encouraging compliance.



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

The findings offer valuable insights into the type of messaging that the public wants to hear about smokefree spaces.

This will guide the next stages of policy implementation and help craft effective communication strategies for the public.

The communications strategy has an opportunity to capitalise on the sense of pride, inclusivity, and desire to protect children and young people in Greater Manchester. By highlighting the excellent outdoor spaces we have and the collective responsibility to keep them enjoyable for everyone, we can create a movement that unites Greater Manchester, rather than alienating smokers. This approach ensures that the message is a call to arms for all residents to protect and enhance our shared public spaces.

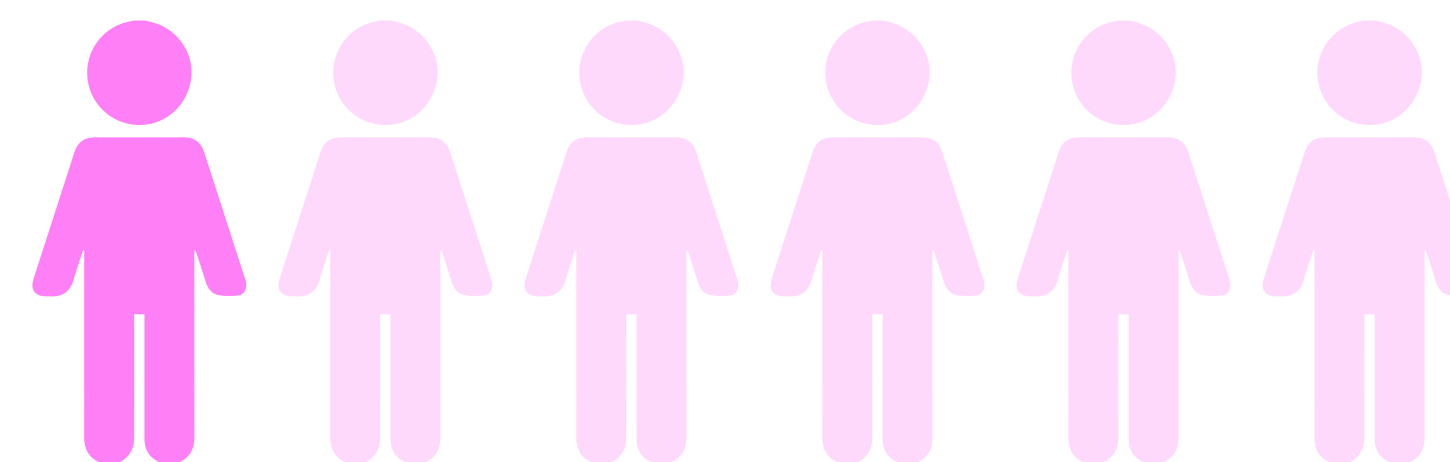
PRIDE

INCLUSIVITY

DESIRE

SECTION FOUR: IMPLEMENTING SMOKEFREE SPACES

While the public overwhelmingly supports the establishment of smokefree spaces, policymakers, landowners and organisations must consider how to implement this initiative effectively and practically. The strategies and measures to be put in place warrant careful deliberation.



**FEWER THAN 1 IN 6 PEOPLE (15.4%)
IN GREATER MANCHESTER SMOKE.**

Source: Office for National Statistics Annual Population Survey 2021.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Implementing smokefree spaces necessitates a thoughtful and comprehensive approach. Places that adopt smokefree status should take time and care to educate visitors about new smokefree policies and ensure a positive experience for everyone, including smokers. Enforcement should focus on education and understanding rather than punitive measures, thereby fostering a more inclusive and cooperative atmosphere.

Rather than viewing this as an outright “ban” on smoking, smokefree policies should be positioned to enhance the enjoyment of shared outdoor spaces. This approach does not demonise smokers but emphasises the benefits of smokefree spaces for everyone. It recognises the minority who smoke, while also respecting the majority’s preference for smokefree spaces.

Whether or not vaping is allowed in a smokefree space should be at the discretion of the landowner when considering the type of space, the ages of people frequenting and what will most effectively help people to not smoke during their visit.

We also acknowledge the need to address specific concerns related to certain spaces. For instance, while the feedback indicated less public support for smokefree policies outside pubs, we also note that Manchester introduced a successful smokefree

pavement licence scheme in 2020 for all new outdoor seating for cafes, restaurants and bars. Hospitality businesses should also take into consideration learnings from the public reaction to 2007 smokefree legislation which showed support significantly increased after the legislation was introduced.

Introducing changes always presents challenges, but we know that people generally desire healthier, greener, smokefree spaces. These spaces should be introduced thoughtfully and sensitively, considering both residents and local businesses. There is robust support for introducing smokefree areas where children are most at risk from exposure to smoking, the effects of second-hand smoke, and in healthcare settings.

CONCLUSION

The Greater Manchester public consultation on smokefree spaces has provided invaluable insights that will guide our strategies and policies in the coming years. The findings clearly demonstrate strong public support for making smoking history and extending smokefree spaces.

We have a public mandate to introduce more outdoor smokefree spaces across the city-region and work towards a healthier Greater Manchester.

Our focus now is to use these findings to further our efforts to make Greater Manchester a healthier and more enjoyable place for all residents and visitors. This will involve continued collaboration with our partners, thoughtful communication that resonates with the public, and careful implementation of smokefree spaces.

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We would like to thank everyone who participated in the consultation. Your voices and opinions are crucial in helping us shape a healthier future for Greater Manchester.

**TOGETHER WE WILL
MAKE SMOKING HISTORY.**



MAKE SMOKING HISTORY