



North of England **Tackling Illicit Tobacco** **for Better Health**

Cumbria Strategic Partnership
20 May 2010

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Illegal tobacco – protecting our families and communities

In this session we will look at:

- Why we need to act
- What we are doing to reduce the supply
- What we are doing to reduce the demand
- How joint work at local level can support different agendas and offer better VFM

Why we need to act

- Smoking prevalence is highest in the North of England at 23%
- In some deprived wards prevalence exceeds 50%
- Cheap tobacco increases social inequalities and health problems
- ALL cigarettes and HRT (including illicit) are harmful to health
- Counterfeit cigarettes and HRT can contain: floor sweepings, leaves, pesticides
- Significant buying of illicit tobacco amongst adults. But even higher amongst 14 -17 year olds
- Buyers of cheap illicit smoke more and admit it keeps them smoking

Why we need to act

- Illicit cigarettes represent around 13% of the UK market
- Illicit HRT represents nearly 50% of the UK market
- Tobacco smuggling costs around £2.6bn in lost revenue
- Organised crimes behind illicit tobacco include:
 - other counterfeit goods (DVDs, hair straighteners, clothing, Ugg boots)
 - counterfeit alcohol & drugs
 - child exploitation (as runners and sellers of illicit products)
 - weapons (knives & guns)
 - money laundering
 - funding of terrorism (IRA, Taliban, al-Qaeda, Hezbollah, PKK)

NW tobacco impacts

- Around 13,000 people in North West die from smoking each year – including nearly 1,000 in Cumbria
- The habit kills more than the next five leading causes of death combined
- Cost to NHS in North West £194 million annually
1% prevalence drop = £7.2million/annum saving
- Cost to NW employers £54.75 million annually from excess sickness due to smoking only
1% prevalence drop = £2.3million/annum saving
- Greatest preventable cause of health inequalities

Health Select Committee Report on Health Inequalities, March 09

“Unfortunately, tobacco smuggling, by offering smokers half price cigarettes, negates the positive impact of pricing and taxation policies. Tobacco smuggling has a disproportionate impact on the poor, particularly young smokers. Some progress has been made in this area but not enough..”

‘A Smokefree Future’: new tobacco control strategy

- But we *are* stepping up the crackdown in the North
- New Government tobacco control strategy for England, published February 2010, cited North of England Programme as model approach to tackle illicit tobacco
- Highlighted that ‘an unflinching commitment to coordinated partnership’ is vital for success

Why work in partnership?

- HMRC and UKBA lead nationally on tackling illicit tobacco, but recognise important regional and local leadership role of local authorities e.g. through trading standards
- Joint efforts are crucial to harnessing engagement of 79% of public who want crackdown on illicit tobacco
- NHS can act as supportive ally

Threatens what we have achieved

- Price mechanism as one of the most effective policy levers - being undermined by sales of illicit tobacco
- Other measures – age of sale, pictorial warnings undermined
- CRUK paper 2008 - smuggled tobacco likely to kill four times more people than illicit drugs
- Needs to be part of holistic and comprehensive tobacco control strategy

Why work across the North?

- Magnitude of the tobacco epidemic we face necessitates industrial scaling of programmes at all levels in the system
- Greater scale of illicit tobacco available across the North
- Pan-regional level programmes amplify and add value to national, regional and local level programme interventions

North of England population survey research

6084 interviewees (street and telephone) across all 49 local authority TS areas in the North

- 23% smoking prevalence overall (14% of 14-15 yr olds; 29% of 16-17 yr olds)
- 1:5 smokers buys illicit - more likely in HRT smokers
- More likely to be young male buyers and sellers but spans all social classes
- On average illicit buyers smoke 2 more cigs a day than non illicit smokers (18 v 16)
- 64% of buyers indicate makes it possible to smoke when they could not afford to otherwise
- Of illicit bought - 19% foreign brand and 25% felt to be counterfeit

North of England population survey research

- Buyers motivated through price, convenience (bulk) and availability
- Illicit buyers not put off by potential ‘undesirable’ substances
- 57% of population classified as very uncomfortable with sale and purchase of illicit tobacco:
 - 27% of all likely to report if selling illicit
 - 75% would if sales to children suspected
- Just under a third associate the trade with forms of major crime
- **A third of all smokers aged 14-17 buy illicit and average accounts for almost half of total consumption**

North of England population survey research

- In Cumbria illicit tobacco is a significant concern in the community
- Over 75% of people thought illicit tobacco ‘a danger to kids because it can be bought easily and cheaply’
- And over 60% of local people surveyed thought that the trade ‘brings crime into the community’

It's happening in Cumbria

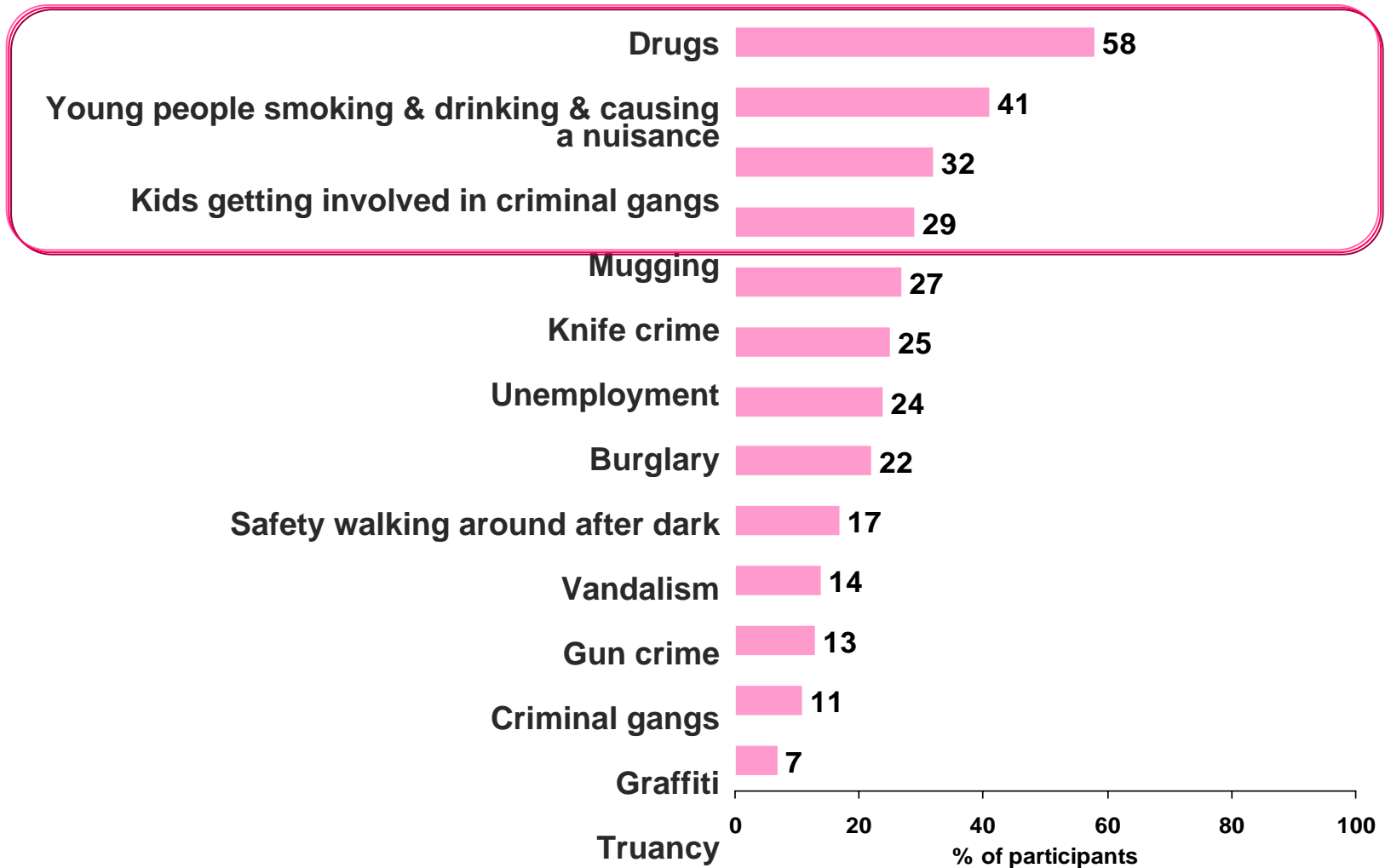


“Crackdown on counterfeit and underage tobacco sales

Trading standards has vowed to stamp down on counterfeit cigarettes and underage sales following the conviction of a man who sold fake cigarettes to kids from his ice cream van. Anthony Thomas Wharton pleaded guilty at Furness Magistrates' Court to selling counterfeit cigarettes and unauthorised use of a trademark following a trading standards investigation. The court was told that Wharton, 61, had targeted children from his ice cream van, selling counterfeit Regal cigarettes at £3.50 a packet. Wharton, of Marsden Street, Barrow, was given a 12-month community order, requiring him to do 60-hours of unpaid work and pay £350 costs to Cumbria County Council”

North West Evening Mail, October 2009

Concerns in communities



Isn't this just a Customs issue?

- No! It's very much an issue for a wide range of 'system partners' (e.g. LA, HMRC, police, health, education, third sector)
- Illicit tobacco trade undermines community cohesion, involves organised criminality and has strong linkages to other crimes
- Problems associated with illicit tobacco will resonate in every local authority through, for instance, Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and LAAs
- Goes to the most vulnerable, undermines price and other tobacco control measures such as age of sale regulation – key TS area
- **Fact:** Despite all the impressive tobacco control initiatives we have introduced: **smoking rates in our deprived communities remain stubbornly high**

Illicit tobacco – activity to date

- Raised the profile within trading standards and Councils
- New Regional Illicit Tobacco Team and HMRC Inland Detection Teams
- Single Point of Contact in each TS department in NW
- Identifying the problem:
 - Young Persons Survey 2007 & 2009 & market assessment
 - Increased activity = increased intelligence
- Scanners for each TS department and coordinated enforcement activity
- Paved way for a regional and local approaches to really make a difference

Regional illicit tobacco team

- New team in place from March 2010 – 2 enforcement officers and 1 team manager supported by Regional Intelligence Officer
- Developing effective regional intelligence gathering and assessment to improve the collection and dissemination of intelligence and to help identify ‘hotspots’
- Can provide extra capacity to help local trading standards departments to tackle illicit tobacco through supported enforcement, partnership working and by being better placed to potentially identify external funding
- Regional enforcement: helping tackle large scale criminal networks by facilitating joint operations and coordinating regional communications activity

Value of local contributions

- **Ensuring adequate focus and resourcing**
 - Service planning
 - Joint commissioning.
- **Develop Partnerships**
 - Tobacco control strategies to take lead
 - Police, HMRC, PCTs etc
- **Engage health and community workers**
 - Stop smoking services
 - Community development
 - EHOs
 - Which leads to.....
- **Identify informal markets, generating and sharing intelligence**

Value of local contributions

- **Preventative action**
 - Market disruption
 - Key roles for tobacco alliances
- **Effective targeted enforcement**
 - Based on good intelligence and information.
 - NB Please keep us informed
- **Marketing and communications**
 - Need to ensure communications plans and programmes link into overall marketing strategy
- **Working with businesses**
 - Displacement is and will be a problem
- **Support the NoE programme!**

Reducing the demand

- Public-facing marketing campaign will start 21 June
- 6 sheet and 48 sheet posters, radio, ambient (pubs and clubs). New web site www.get-some-answers.co.uk
- Wide range of materials to raise awareness and discussion
- Calls to action:
 - find out more from web site, discuss with family & friends
 - call Crimestoppers
- Materials available to PCTs & LAs. Larger supplies available at relatively low cost



www.illicittobacconorth.org



HOW DO OUR KIDS AFFORD CIGARETTES?
 ILLEGAL TOBACCO MAKES IT EASIER FOR OUR KIDS TO SMOKE.
GET-SOME-ANSWERS.CO.UK


CALL TO SHARE INFORMATION
 IT'S ANONYMOUS AND FREE


ILLEGAL TOBACCO
 KEEP IT OUT

WHY IS ILLEGAL TOBACCO SO EASY TO GET HOLD OF?
 MORE AND MORE CRIMINALS SEE IT AS AN EASY WAY TO MAKE SOME CASH. BUT WHAT ELSE ARE THEY SELLING?
GET-SOME-ANSWERS.CO.UK


CALL TO SHARE INFORMATION
 IT'S ANONYMOUS AND FREE


ILLEGAL TOBACCO
 KEEP IT OUT

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WHY HAS SHE BEEN ABROAD AGAIN?
 CRIMINALS ARE USING CASH-STRAPPED FAMILIES TO GET ILLEGAL TOBACCO INTO OUR AREA.
GET-SOME-ANSWERS.CO.UK

 **CALL TO SHARE INFORMATION**
 IT'S ANONYMOUS AND FREE

 **ILLEGAL TOBACCO**
 KEEP IT OUT

WHY ARE THESE CRIMINALS HANGING AROUND OUR STREETS?
 ILLEGAL TOBACCO — IT'S NOT JUST PEOPLE YOU KNOW WHO ARE SELLING IT.
GET-SOME-ANSWERS.CO.UK

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Thank you
Any questions?

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