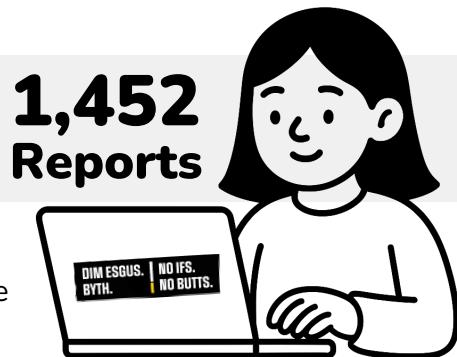


Impact Report 2022-2025

Strengthening Enforcement Across Wales

The No Ifs. No Butts. reporting website has become the leading public channel for reporting illegal tobacco, illegal vapes and underage sales in Wales.

Since its launch in March 2022, it has generated 1,452 reports across the UK, with 882 reports (61%) from Wales. The website serves as a critical intelligence tool, directly supporting Trading Standards and multi-agency enforcement.



From Baseline to Breakthrough

2016/17 (Pre-Portal):

- **261 reports of illegal tobacco** received by Trading Standards across Wales (Apr 2016 - March 2017).
- **221 enforcement visits**, of which 81 led to seizures and 42 to prosecutions.
- **449,540 cigarettes and 1,528 kg of hand-rolling tobacco seized**.
- Public awareness low: only **13% said they would report to Trading Standards**, with most defaulting to the police.

2022-2025 (Portal Era):

- **1,452 reports logged UK-wide, with 882 from Wales**
- Public reporting has climbed steadily since launch, rising from **195 reports in 2022 to 558 in 2025** - an almost three-fold increase in just three years.
- In Wales there were **271 reports in 2025**, the highest annual total since launch
- Intelligence flows to enforcement teams on a **weekly basis**, identifying stash locations, corroborating existing intelligence and justifying unannounced inspections
- The website provides live intelligence enabling raids, seizures and shop closures

Impact: In four years, annual reports have nearly doubled those received by Trading Standards across Wales in 2016/17. The No Ifs. No Butts. reporting portal is unique to Wales, gathering intelligence to strengthen enforcement at regional and national levels.

Enforcement Value

Joint Enforcement - “The No Ifs. No Butts. portal is essential for targeting illegal tobacco enforcement by Trading Standards in Wales. Crucially, the portal has encouraged joint Police and Trading Standards enforcement, identifying links to drugs, safeguarding concerns, and immigration offences.” - *Martin Tavener Regional Investigation Team - Operation CeCe*

Surveillance Time - 122 Welsh reports (13.8%) detailed concealment methods such as hidden compartments, vehicles or off-site storage. This intelligence has saved officers significant surveillance time and supports joint enforcement across Trading Standards, police and immigration

National Co-ordination - No Ifs. No Butts. intelligence directly supports the national effort to tackle illegal tobacco. Under Operation Cece, the joint HMRC and Trading Standards programme, **more than 6 million cigarettes have been seized in Wales since March 2021.**

Product Trends

Portal data reveals what communities are most concerned about and gives Trading Standards early warning of emerging problems. Illegal vapes now feature heavily in the reports:

- **Across Wales (2022–2025):**
 - **Illegal tobacco:** referenced in **66.8%** of reports
 - **Illegal vapes:** referenced in **56.1%** of reports
 - **Cannabis:** referenced in **16.2%** of reports
 - **Underage sales:** referenced in **34%** of reports

The website captures crossover activity between illegal tobacco, vapes, underage sales and drugs, helping officers target resources more effectively.

Legislation Impact

Following the June 2025 disposable vape ban:

- Vape-related reports in Wales increased by 58% within three months
- In 2025 alone, 65.3% of Welsh reports referenced illegal vapes
- Reports linking vapes and underage access rose from 9% of Welsh reports in 2022 to 36.5% in 2025

Community Engagement and Campaign Reach



57,000+ unique portal visitors since launch.



Campaign bursts consistently trigger **Google search spikes** for terms like “*report shop selling vapes to kids*” Campaign investment has delivered cost-efficient reach and conversions into reports:

Digital Ads:

- 1.3 million impressions, reaching 850,000+ people
- 50,000+ clicks to the reporting website
- Social media advertising, cost per click reduced from £0.68 (2023) to £0.13 (2025) due to testing different colours, headlines and messages. (Typical UK campaigns cost £0.50-£1.50 per click, making No Ifs. No Butts. one of Wales's most cost-effective campaigns.)
- Snapchat ads delivered 32,961 clicks at £0.03 each

Radio and Audio:

- Across two phases, **campaigns delivered 343,000+ impressions with 95-99.5% listen-through rates**, extending reach beyond digital platforms.

The No Ifs. No Butts. campaign was launched in 2022 with support from the Welsh Government, backed by a £50,000 media spend. Communications agency Freshwater led the initial project.

"As one of Wales's leading marketing and communications agencies, we are proud to see that No Ifs. No Butts. is one of the nation's most effective community-focused campaigns. Its success proves the value of brand growth and the importance of continued investment to sustain impact." - **Project lead Nicola Roberts, Director at Freshwater.**

Community Reporting Zones

- Newport (22.7%) and Cardiff (18.6%) account for over 41% of all Welsh reports.
- North Wales authorities (Wrexham, Flintshire and Denbighshire) account for 22.6% of reports.

Key Drivers of Reporting Hotspots

- Campaign bursts: North Wales saw a 600% increase in reports during the 2023 push.
- Visible enforcement activity: High-profile interventions, including sniffer dogs, raids, and widespread shop closures, created spikes in community reporting.
- Heightened community concern and awareness:

The portal's reporting hotspots mirror the **visibility of enforcement activity** (Newport) and the impact of **campaign activity** (North Wales). This demonstrates the system's capacity to increase public reporting likelihood when enforcement visibility and awareness campaigns are present.

The Scale of the Challenge

With **325,000 smokers in Wales** and illegal tobacco estimated at **10% of the market**, around **142 million illegal cigarettes are smoked each year - nearly 400,000 every single day**.

The **seizure of 6 million illegal cigarettes** is impressive but **effective enforcement and strong public engagement must go hand in hand**. Campaign work and public awareness create the conditions for intelligence to flow, while enforcement ensures that intelligence is acted upon.

By building trust and engaging communities, the No Ifs. No Butts. portal ensures enforcement is informed, targeted, and more effective. To maximise this impact, we need close partnership to turn community intelligence into coordinated action.

Future Direction

With stable funding, the No Ifs. No Butts. portal can evolve into **permanent national infrastructure** for tackling illegal tobacco, illegal vapes, and youth access.

As Wales prepares for the implementation of the **Tobacco and Vapes Bill**, the portal is uniquely placed to:



Provide vital support to enforcement and compliance with the Tobacco and Vapes Bill, ensuring rapid public reporting of breaches and actionable intelligence for Trading Standards.



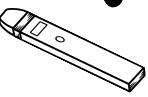
Enhance intelligence-sharing across agencies, enabling faster responses and stronger coordination.



Support targeted activity in hotspot communities, where illegal sales and youth access are most prevalent.



Strengthen Wales' ability to respond rapidly to emerging illicit products and changing tactics in the market.



Lock in momentum post-2025 disposable vape ban, sustaining the surge in public engagement and reports.