

Sustainability Charter



INTRODUCTION:

Vape Business Ireland (VBI) is the country's leading representative body that supports, advises and guides the sellers of vape products, who in turn, help smokers to make the transition to a less harmful alternative. VBI represents the Irish vaping industry **in advocating for harm reduction, youth access prevention, evidence-based regulations and best-in-class quality and safety standards.**

The vaping sector in Ireland continues to grow and is currently comprised of over 300 vape retailers who serve the needs of approximately 200,000 vapers. As an organisation, VBI represents the interests of our Members; to ensure that the efficacy of vaping as a reduced risk product is fully recognised.

VBI firmly believes that vaping has a significant role to play in reducing Ireland's smoking rate and ultimately, achieving the Irish Government's objective of a Tobacco Free Ireland (5% smoking prevalence by 2025). In this, Ireland should be guided by the example of Sweden; a country which has adopted a progressive policy of ensuring that vaping products remain accessible and affordable. As a result, Swedish lung cancer deaths are less than half the EU average, and the country remains on track to become the first smoke-free country in Europe by 2023. **As the leading trade association for vape retailers, VBI is committed to promoting sustainability.**

In this context, VBI notes the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications' recent public consultation on Disposable Vaping Devices - which, among other policy measures - proposes a full statutory ban on the sale of disposable vaping products. As was detailed in our submission to the consultation, VBI contends that introducing such a ban would be a disproportionate policy response; and that instead, greater emphasis should be placed on enforcing existing WEEE regulations and **in improving consumer education, while exploring methods to improve the environmental credentials of our industry.**

VAPING

IN IRELAND

Vaping products are at least

95%

less harmful than
combustible cigarettes

Public Health England (2015) and Office for
Health Improvement and Disparities (2022)

94.6%

of vapers use non-
tobacco flavours

European Tobacco Harm Reduction
Advocates (2021)

2x

Vaping can be up to **twice**
as effective in helping
smokers to quit

Cochrane Review (2022)

79%

of smokers in Ireland **want**
to quit

Health Service Executive (2019)

38%

of those who had **successfully**
quit smoking used a vaping
product in their attempt,
compared with 10% who used
nicotine replacement therapy

Healthy Ireland Survey (2019)

2x

Vaping is cost effective than-
combined nicotine replacement
therapy **costs almost twice** as
much as vaping

HIQA Health technology assessment of
smoking cessation interventions (2017)

ENCOURAGE RE-USE AND RECYCLE

In order to minimise the environmental impact of vaping products, VBI and our Members will engage with e-waste collectors, such as WEEE Ireland, **to promote the responsible disposal and where possible, the recycling of batteries contained in vaping products. Customers will also be educated about proper disposal.**

VBI will continue to play its part here with consumer awareness campaigns which encourage responsible disposal; and we will keep informed as to the latest technological innovations in battery recycling.

We acknowledge that some adult smokers will prefer an entry-level product - such as a pre-filled or single-use device – as a means to try vaping before moving away from smoking fully. However, where appropriate and reasonable, we will recommend that customers consider purchasing a rechargeable device with a refillable tank and/or cartridges.



SUSTAINABLE RETAIL

At VBI, we are committed to adopting sustainable practices, and embracing new innovations which help to improve the environmental credentials of the products that our Members sell. As the country's leading representative body for the vaping sector, we support our Members in sourcing best practices in the area of sustainability, drawing on international experience. **We continue to keep abreast of the latest innovations which promote the recycling and reuse of all categories of vaping products.**

With more than 200,000 vapers across the country, our industry has a central role to play in supporting Ireland as it moves away from a 'take-make-waste' economy, towards a circular economy.

A circular economy is a model of production and consumption, which embraces reusing, repairing, recycling and refurbishing of existing materials, where possible. The Irish Government has implemented policies and regulations to enable sectors and industries to contribute to the circular economy. As a proactive partner to the Government, VBI will work to build on this progress and to advance the broader objectives of the national sustainability agenda.

It is in this spirit that we publish the VBI Sustainability Charter and share our commitments.



EMBRACE ECO-FRIENDLY DELIVERY SERVICES

As an organisation and as an industry, our sustainability strategy will also incorporate an environmentally conscious approach to delivery and shipping practices.

As **online orders are a popular method of purchase for many of Ireland's 200,000 vapers**, VBI and our Members will work to minimise packaging materials such as bubble and paper wrap. We will also work with our delivery partners to consolidate orders into one vehicle where feasible.

In addition, we will encourage our customers to support this ambition by offering flexible delivery slots, and where available, the option of an eco-friendly delivery. **For local or nearby deliveries, VBI and our Members will make efforts to prioritise zero-emission, last-mile delivery options, such as e-bikes and e-scooters.**



REDUCE WASTE ACROSS ALL BUSINESS SEGMENTS

Reducing waste across our business segments is a further example of our commitment to adopting sustainable business practices as Members of VBI.

We will endeavour to reduce paper billing, and where feasible, to phase it out and offer our customers the option to have a digital receipt delivered via e-mail or text. Where customers wish to purchase gift cards, we will offer digital options where applicable.

When storing products, we will prioritise eco-friendly options such as quality cardboard that can be used and re-used, over time.

We will avoid the use of plastics where possible, and we will work to perform regular waste audits to assess where improvements can be made.



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