



Illegal Tobacco

What is Illegal Tobacco?

Lots of people think illegal tobacco just means cigarettes that have been brought in as duty free. But in fact they come in many different forms and it's often tricky to tell the difference between them.

Illicit tobacco falls into several categories: smuggled, bootlegged, counterfeit or 'illicit whites': the latter being cigarettes manufactured specifically for the illegal market.

Why is it an important issue?

The easy availability of illegal tobacco, which is sold at half or a third of the legal retail price, encourages people to keep smoking and smoke more. It makes it easier for children and young people to smoke. In fact, more children and young people are being offered illegal tobacco than adults. Dealers encourage young and vulnerable people to visit tab houses, putting them in risky situations with people who may also sell drugs and alcohol.

Illegal tobacco has strong links to organised crime, so many of the people smuggling, distributing and selling it are involved in drug dealing, money laundering and other crime.

What is being done about it?

Local people, local police, trading standards and many other organisations are all playing their part in a coordinated, national effort to stamp out the illegal tobacco trade.

Since 2001 HM Revenue and Customs has seized over 14 billion cigarettes and broken up over 370 criminal gangs.

What can you do to help?

The key to fighting the illegal tobacco trade is local information.

More and more people are giving anonymous information about dealers in their area by phoning **Crimestoppers** on **0800 555 111** or by giving information anonymously via www.crimestoppers-uk.org

It's completely anonymous. Crimestoppers don't take your details, only the information you can provide.