

**Illicit and illegal tobacco in North Central and North  
East London**

**A report on smokers' perceptions, supply and demand**

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## **Introduction**

The smoking related health burden is well-documented. It causes some 100,000 deaths a year in the UK, 86,000 deaths a year in England and for every smoking death it is estimated that there are 20 people with smoking related illnesses<sup>1</sup>. Equally Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) estimates that in 2012-13, the illicit market share for cigarettes was 9% indicating a 'tax-gap' of £1.1 billion (e.g. the gap between the tax owed and collected) and that illicit hand-rolling tobacco accounted for 36% of the market with a tax-gap of £900m. An understanding of the trade in illicit and illegal trade in tobacco products is therefore important from both a health and economic perspective.

## **Background**

In April 2013, the South East London Illicit Tobacco Group commissioned a survey of their respective boroughs (Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark) to gain insights into the market for illegal and illicit<sup>2</sup> tobacco in the respective boroughs. In May 2015 the boroughs of Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Islington, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest commissioned the same survey in their boroughs. The same survey methodology and company was used in both instances with a few additional questions added to the survey on attitudes.

The seven boroughs involved in the survey in NC NE London are very different: 2011 census data indicates that population size varies from 220,338 in Camden to 312,466 in Enfield; over-18 smoking prevalence ranges from 15.8% in Enfield to 21.7% in Islington, the 'White British' population from 48% in Islington to 31% in Tower Hamlets (compared to 80% in England and 45% in London) and the over 50's population from 28.8% in Enfield to 15.8% in Tower Hamlets.

## **Methods**

Each borough was asked to identify up to 6 sites for surveying smokers (mostly) based on footfall, high levels of deprivation, high smoking prevalence or a combination of the three. Surveys took place between June and August 2015.

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<sup>1</sup> ASH Factsheet. Smoking statistics; Illness and Health. Nov 2014.

<sup>2</sup> Illicit and illegal tobacco is that which has been smuggled, without lawful tax being paid (including from a lower to a higher tax country), counterfeit cigarettes / tobacco and illegally manufactured tobacco products. (Illicit Trade in Tobacco, ASH Factsheet, April 2015).

## Results

A total of 1,263 questionnaires were completed of which 35 (2.8%) respondents had never smoked and a further 15 (1.2%) had stopped smoking for more than 12 months. These were excluded from the analysis.

### Gender

Of the 1,213 smokers 733 (60.4%) were male. The highest percentage of male respondents (67.6%) was in Haringey and the lowest (53.6%) in Hackney (Table 1):

**Table 1: Gender of survey participants**

Borough (residence)	Male		Female		Total
	no.	%	no.	%	
Camden	102	60.7%	66	39.3%	168
Enfield	107	59.1%	74	40.9%	181
Hackney	96	53.6%	83	46.4%	179
Haringey	117	67.6%	56	32.4%	173
Islington	97	55.7%	77	44.3%	174
Tower Hamlets	103	66.9%	51	33.1%	154
Waltham Forest	111	60.3%	73	39.7%	184
Grand Total	733	60.4%	480	39.6%	1213

### Age

17 (1.4%) of smokers were under 18 e.g. under the age at which it is legal to buy cigarettes. Slightly more than a quarter (27.9%) of respondents were aged 25-34 and a fifth (19.0%) aged 35-44 or 45-54 (18.0%) (Table 2):

**Table 2: Ages of survey participants**

Borough (residence)	14 to 17		18 to 24		25 to 34		35 to 44		45 to 54		55 to 64		Over 65		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Camden			40	23.8%	56	33.3%	30	17.9%	24	14.3%	14	8.3%	4	2.4%	168
Enfield	9	5.0%	35	19.3%	37	20.4%	27	14.9%	34	18.8%	23	12.7%	16	8.8%	181
Hackney	3	1.7%	28	15.6%	57	31.8%	36	20.1%	29	16.2%	18	10.1%	8	4.5%	179
Haringey	1	0.6%	23	13.3%	52	30.1%	46	26.6%	28	16.2%	19	11.0%	4	2.3%	173
Islington			32	18.4%	53	30.5%	27	15.5%	33	19.0%	23	13.2%	6	3.4%	174
T Hamlets	2	1.3%	37	24.0%	33	21.4%	25	16.2%	34	22.1%	17	11.0%	6	3.9%	154
W Forest	2	1.1%	35	19.0%	51	27.7%	39	21.2%	36	19.6%	14	7.6%	7	3.8%	184
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>19.0%</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>27.9%</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>19.0%</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>18.0%</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>10.6%</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>1213</b>

### Ethnicity

493 (39.0%) were English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British, 178 (14.1%) had an Asian background and 156 (12.6%) an African background (table 3).

**Table 3: Ethnicity of respondents**

Ethnicity	Number	%
African	74	6.2
Other	12	1.0
Other Black African	11	0.9
Other ethnicity	11	0.9
Other mixed ethnicity	14	1.2
Other white	208	17.3
Arab	14	1.2
Bangladeshi	61	5.1
Caribbean	53	4.4
Chinese	10	0.8
English/Welsh/Northern Irish/British	498	41.4
Indian	38	3.2
Irish	37	3.1
Pakistani	47	3.9
White and Asian	23	1.9
White and Black African	38	3.2
White and Black Caribbean	44	3.7
Blank	10	0.8

### **Working status**

891 (71.5%) were working including home care and 184 (14.6%) were either students, retired, sick or unemployed (Table 4).

**Table 4: Working status of respondents**

Occupation	Number	%
Fulltime student	74	6.2
Home carer (unpaid)	19	1.6
Intermediate	128	10.7
Managerial / professional	221	18.4
Never worked / long-term unemployed	79	6.6
Retired	70	5.8
Routine / manual	386	32.1
Self-employed	150	12.5
Sick / disabled / unable to work	38	3.2
Unable to code	5	0.4
Blank	31	2.6

### **Smoking by borough in survey participants**

The number of survey participants who were current smokers ranged from 154 in Tower Hamlets to 184 in Waltham Forest (Table 5).

**Table 5: Survey respondents by borough and smoking status:**

Borough (residence)	Ever smoked cigarettes (packed or HRT)		Never smoked cigarettes (packet or HRT)	Total
	Current smoker or quit in the last 12 months	Not current smoker		
Camden	168	2		170
Enfield	181			181
Hackney	179	1	3	183
Haringey	173			173
Islington	174			174
Tower Hamlets	154	6	27	187
Waltham Forest	184	6	5	195
<b>Grand Total</b>	1,213	15	35	1,263

### **Quit attempts**

Excluding 24 non-responses, 886 (71.5%) of respondents had made a quit attempt in the past (Table 6).

**Table 6: Number / percentage of respondents who had previously made a quit attempt**

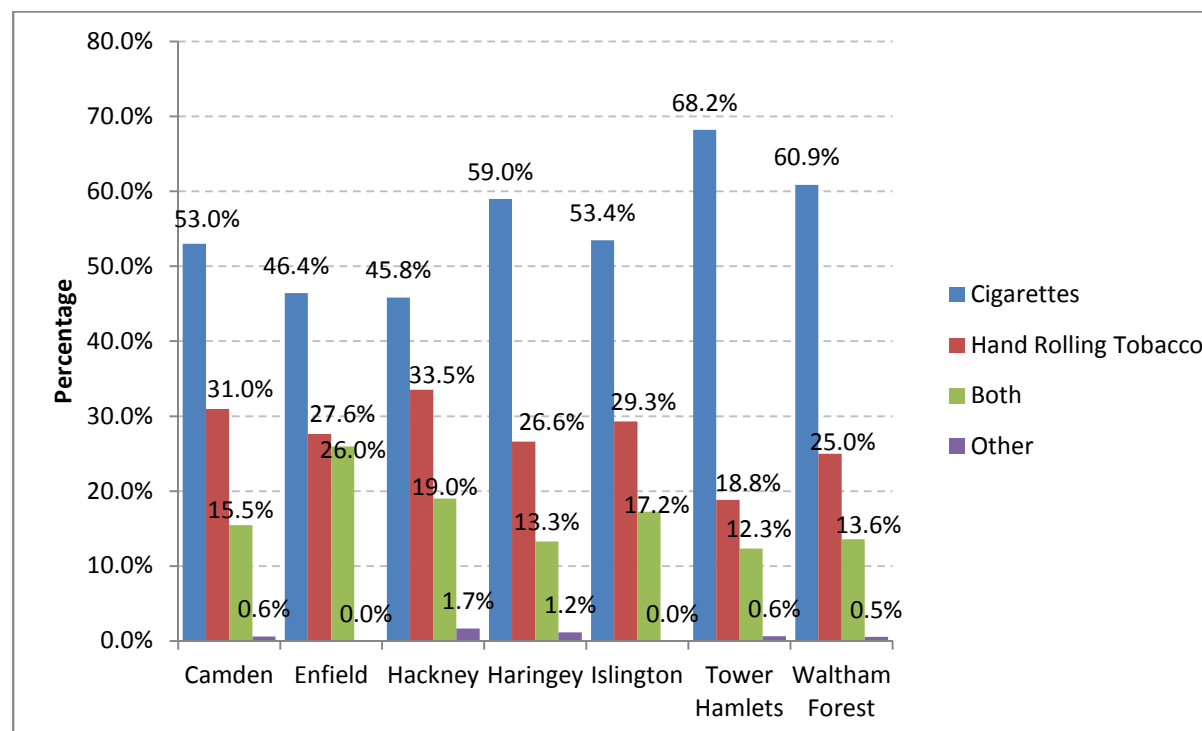
Borough	Previously made quit attempt Number (%)	Never made quit attempt Number (%)
Camden	127 (75.6)	41 (24.4)
Enfield	125 (70.6)	52 (29.4)
Hackney	143 (80.3)	35 (19.7)
Haringey	127 (73.4)	46 (26.6)
Islington	129 (74.1)	45 (25.9)
Tower Hamlets	96 (73.2)	35 (26.38)
Waltham Forest	139 (78.1)	39 (21.9)
All seven boroughs	886 (75.1)	293 (24.9)

### **Types of tobacco products consumed**

667 (55%) of smokers smoked cigarettes, 334 (27.5%) used hand rolled tobacco (HRT) and 204 (16.8%) both. Four people (0.3%) chewed tobacco, two (0.2%) smoked cigars and one (0.1%) smoked a pipe. One blank 'other' response was received. The percentage of people smoking cigarettes was highest in Tower Hamlets (68.2%) and lowest in Hackney (45.8%). The

percentage of people using HRT was highest in Hackney (33.5%) and lowest in Tower Hamlets (18.8%). The percentage of people using both was highest in Enfield (26.0%) and lowest in Tower Hamlets (12.3%) (Graph 1):

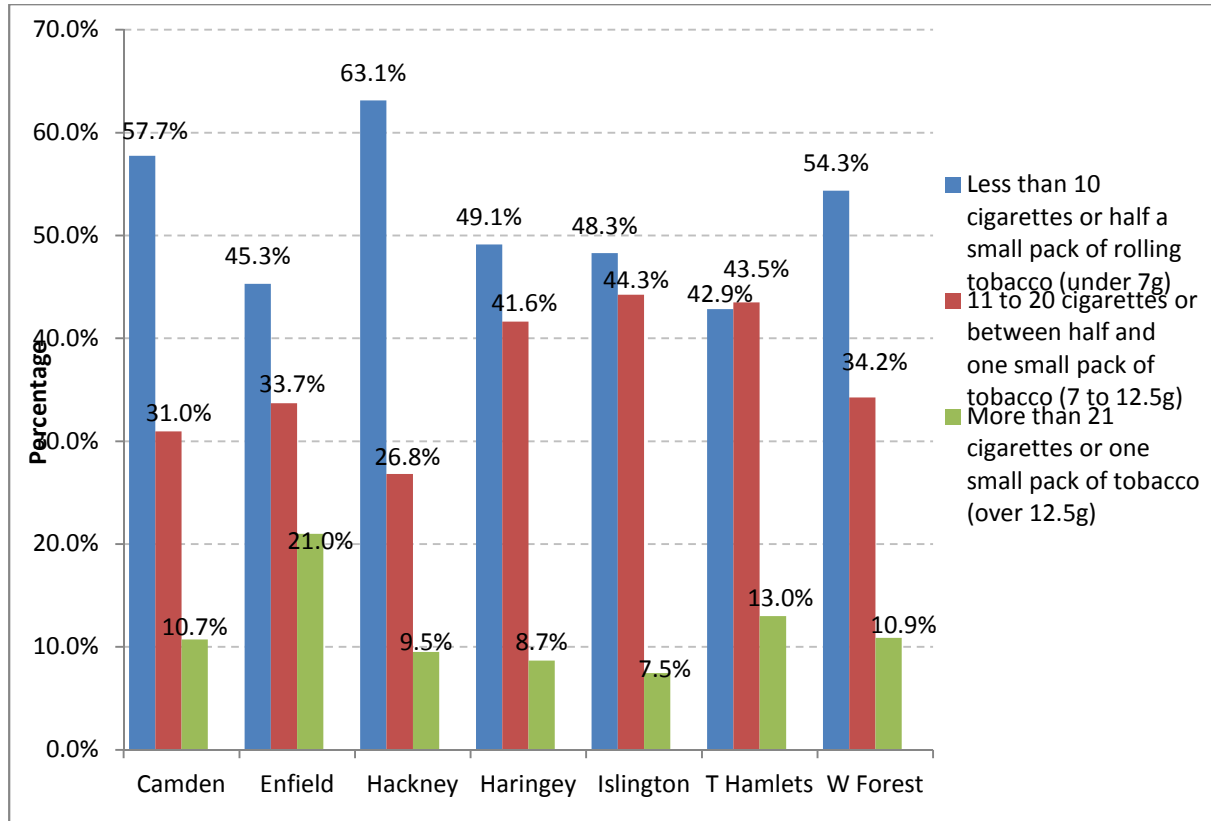
**Graph 1: Type of tobacco products consumed by borough**



### **Quantity of tobacco consumed**

Slightly over half (51.7%) of smokers reported that they smoke less than 10 cigarettes / a day or half of a small pack of rolling tobacco (under 7g). 440 (36.3%) indicated that they smoke between 11 and 20 cigarettes a day or between half and one small pack of tobacco (7 to 12g) and 11.6% indicated that they smoke 21 or more cigarettes or one small pack of tobacco (over 12.5g). The percentage of people smoking less than 10 cigarettes / less than 3.5g of HRT was lowest in Tower Hamlets (42.9%). The percentage of people smoking 21 or more cigarettes / 12.5g or HRT was highest in Enfield (21.0%) (Graph 2):

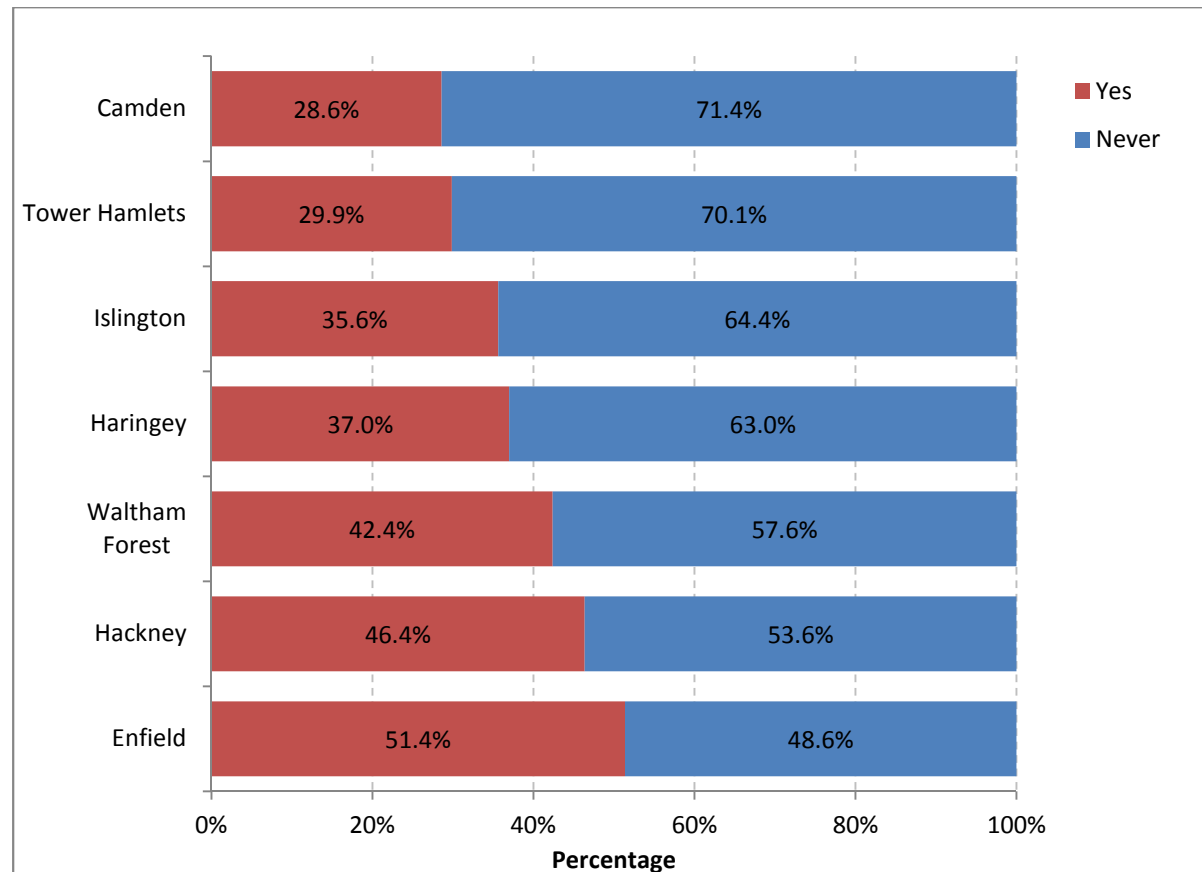
**Graph 2: Quantity of tobacco consumed by borough**



### Frequency of being offered 'cheap' tobacco

Smokers were asked if they had been offered 'cheap' tobacco in the last year. 474 (39.1%) reported that they had. Enfield had the highest percentage of smokers who had been offered cheap tobacco (51.4%) and Camden the lowest (28.6%) (Graph 3):

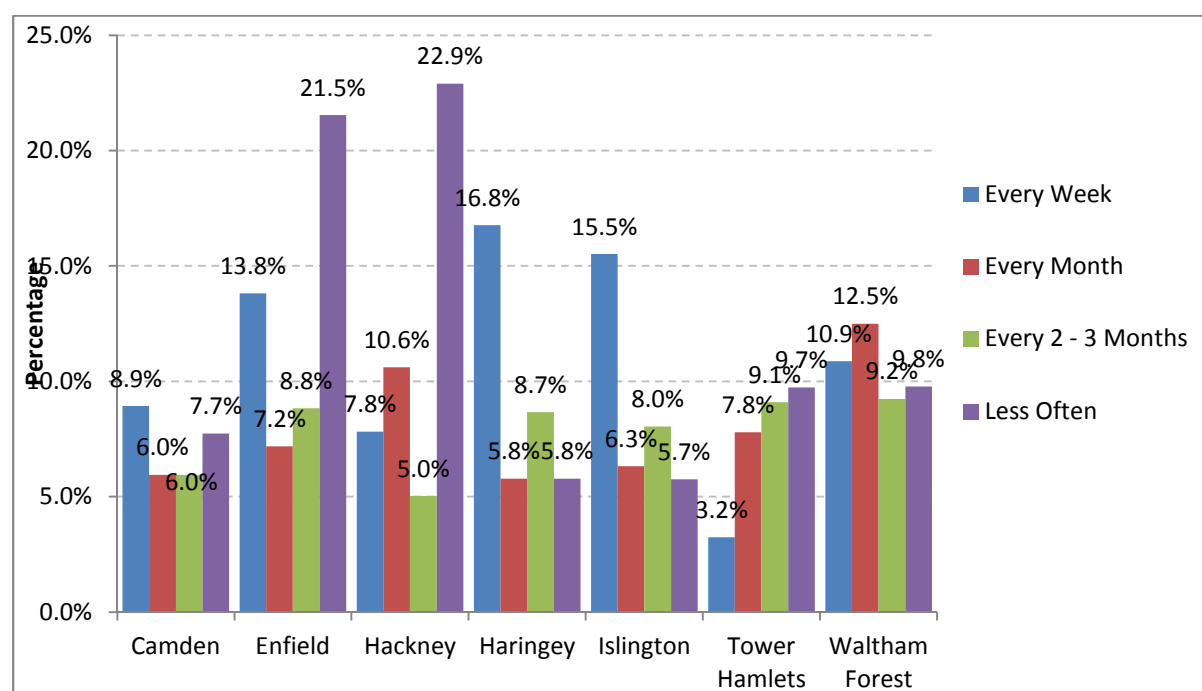
**Graph 3: Percentage of participants who had been offered cheap tobacco by borough**



135 (11.1%) of smokers reported that they were offered cheap tobacco every week whereas 739 (60.9%) had never been offered cheap tobacco. The highest percentage of smokers being offered cheap tobacco every week was in Haringey (16.8%) the lowest in Tower Hamlets (3.2%). The highest percentage of people never being offered cheap tobacco was in Camden (71.4%) and the lowest in Enfield (48.6%) (Graph 4):



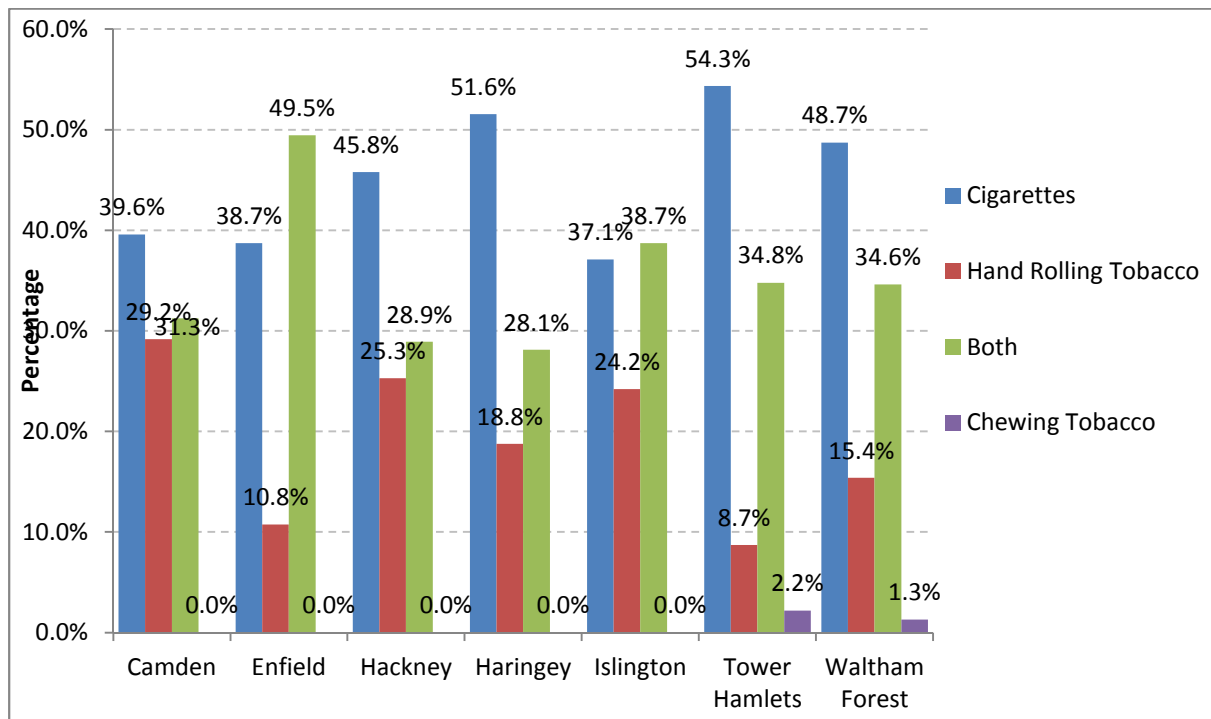
**Graph 4: Frequency of being offered cheap tobacco by borough:**



#### **What cheap tobacco was offered?**

474 (39.1%) of smokers had been offered some form of cheap tobacco in the past year. 212 (44.7%) who had been offered 'cheap' tobacco had been offered cigarettes, 88 (18.5%) HRT and 170 (35.9%) both. Four people had been offered chewing tobacco. The highest percentage of those offered cigarettes was in Tower Hamlets (54.3%) and the lowest Islington (37.1%). The highest percentage of those offered HRT was in Camden (29.2%) and the lowest Tower Hamlets (8.7%). The highest percentage of those offered both was in Enfield (49.5%) and lowest in Haringey (28.1%) (Graph 5):

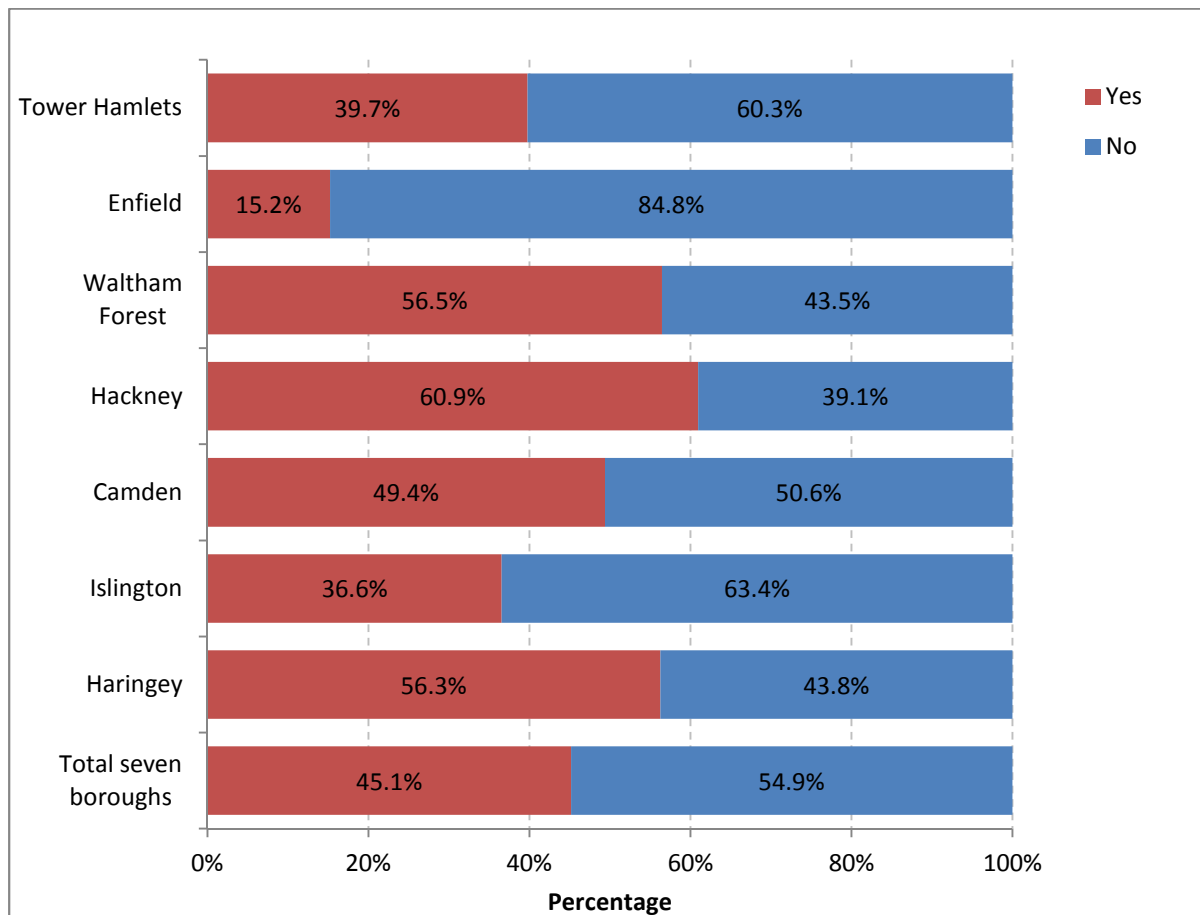
**Graph 5: Cheap tobacco offered by borough**



### **Purchasing of cheap tobacco**

Of the smokers who had been offered cheap tobacco in the past year 260 (54.9%) had made a purchase. The borough with the highest percentage of smokers who were offered and accepted cheap tobacco was Hackney (60.9%) and the lowest Enfield (15.2%) (Graph 6):

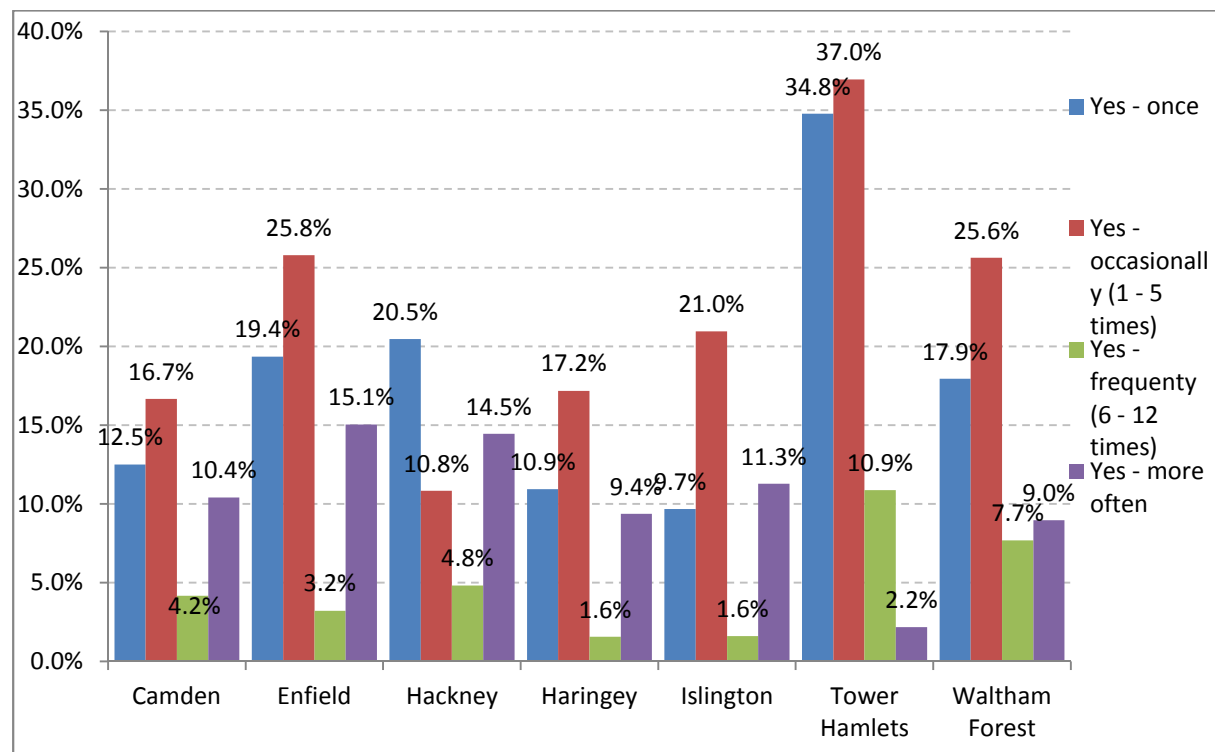
**Graph 6: Percentage of smokers being offered and buying cheap tobacco by borough:**



### **Frequency of buying cheap tobacco**

Of these, 85 (32.8%) had only bought it once. 100 people (38.6%) one to five times / year, 22 (8.5%) 6-12 times). 52 (20.1%) people reporting buying more frequently (13 times or more). Frequent purchase was highest in Tower Hamlets (10.9%) and lowest in Haringey and Islington (1.6%) (Graph 7):

**Graph 7: Frequency of purchasing cheap tobacco by borough:**



### **How much is bought?**

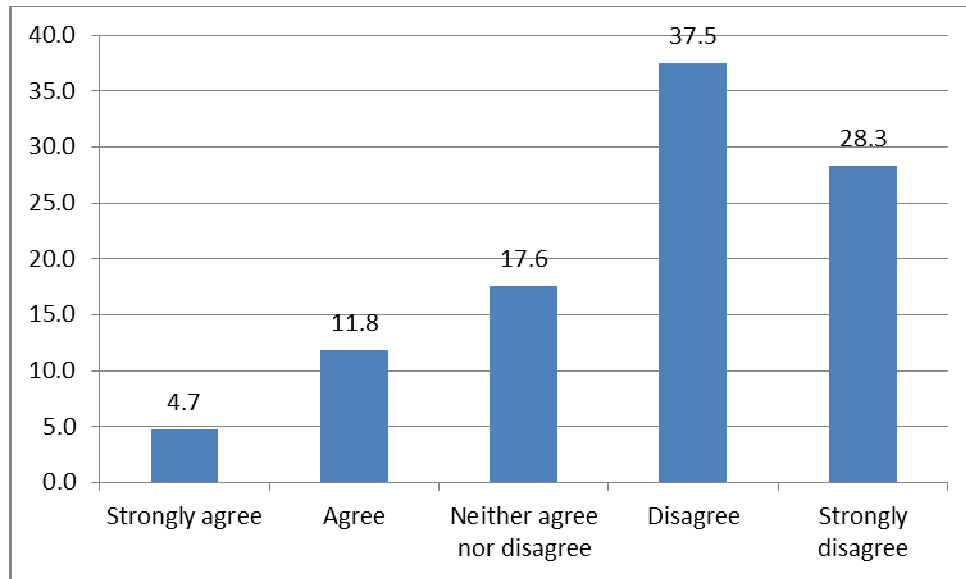
Smokers were asked how much of their tobacco consumption was cheap tobacco. 958 (76%) of respondents did not reply.

## Attitudes towards cheap tobacco

### Harm

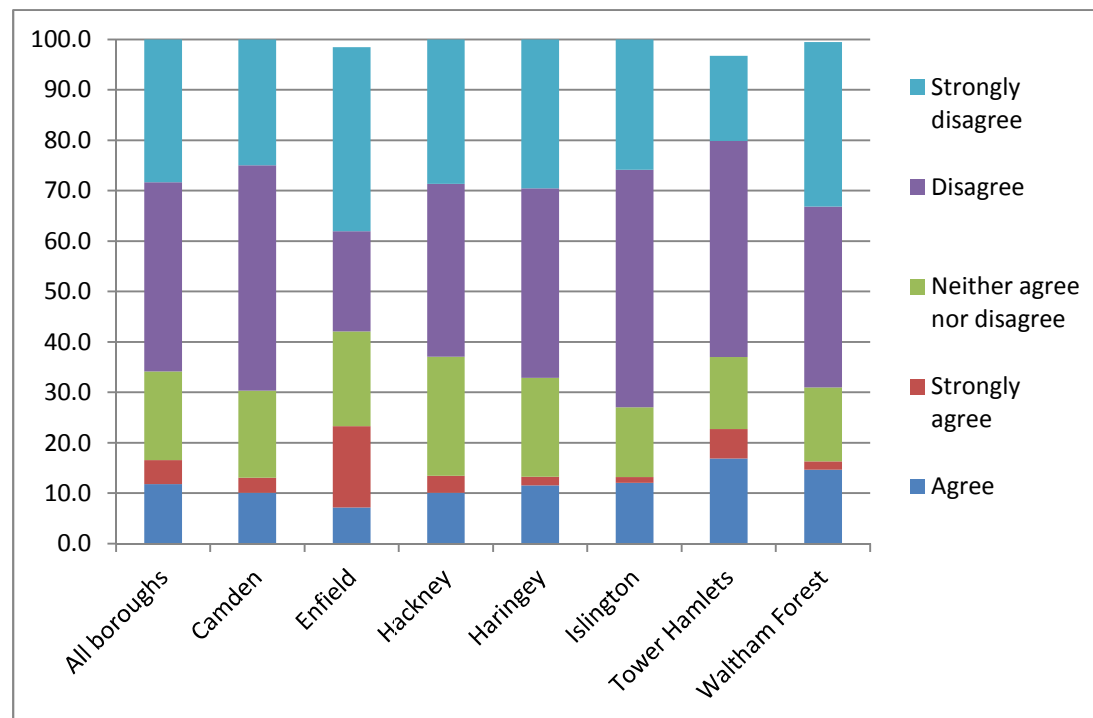
1203 people responded to the statement 'they don't do anyone any harm'. 199 (16.5%) either agreed or strongly agreed whilst 593 (65.8%) disagreed or strongly disagreed (Graph 8):

**Graph 8: Percentage of respondents agreeing / disagreeing with statement that cheap tobacco 'Doesn't do anyone any harm'**



This can be further broken down by borough; highest level of agreement with this statement was in Enfield where 23.3% of people either agree or strongly agreed with the statement. Highest levels of disagreement was in Islington where 64.0% of people either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement: (Graph 9)

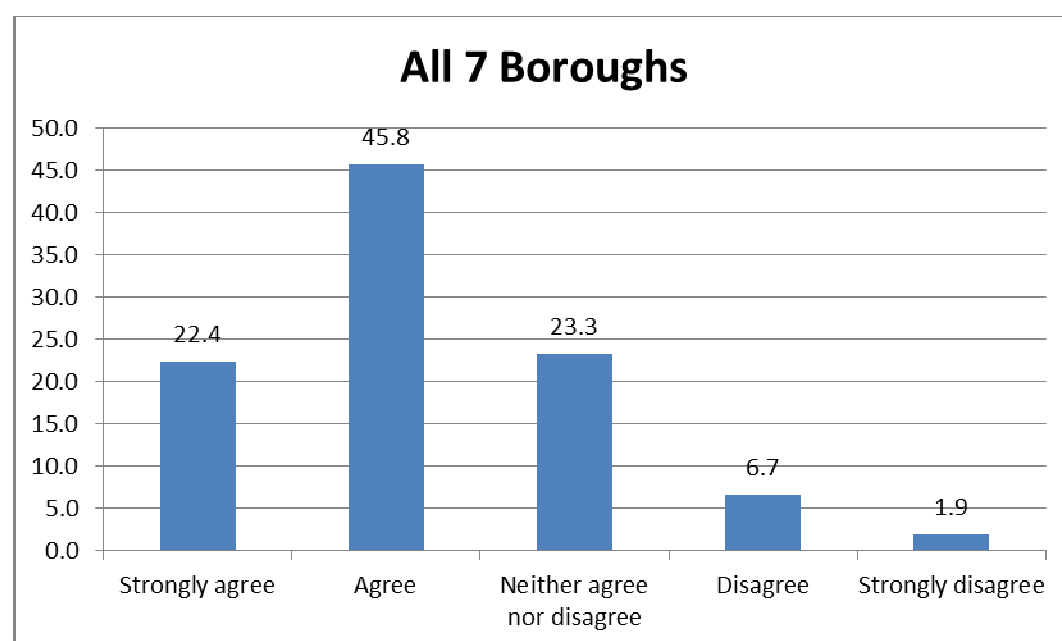
**Graph 9: Agreement and disagreement with the statement that cheap tobacco ‘doesn’t do anyone any harm by borough:**



## Tax

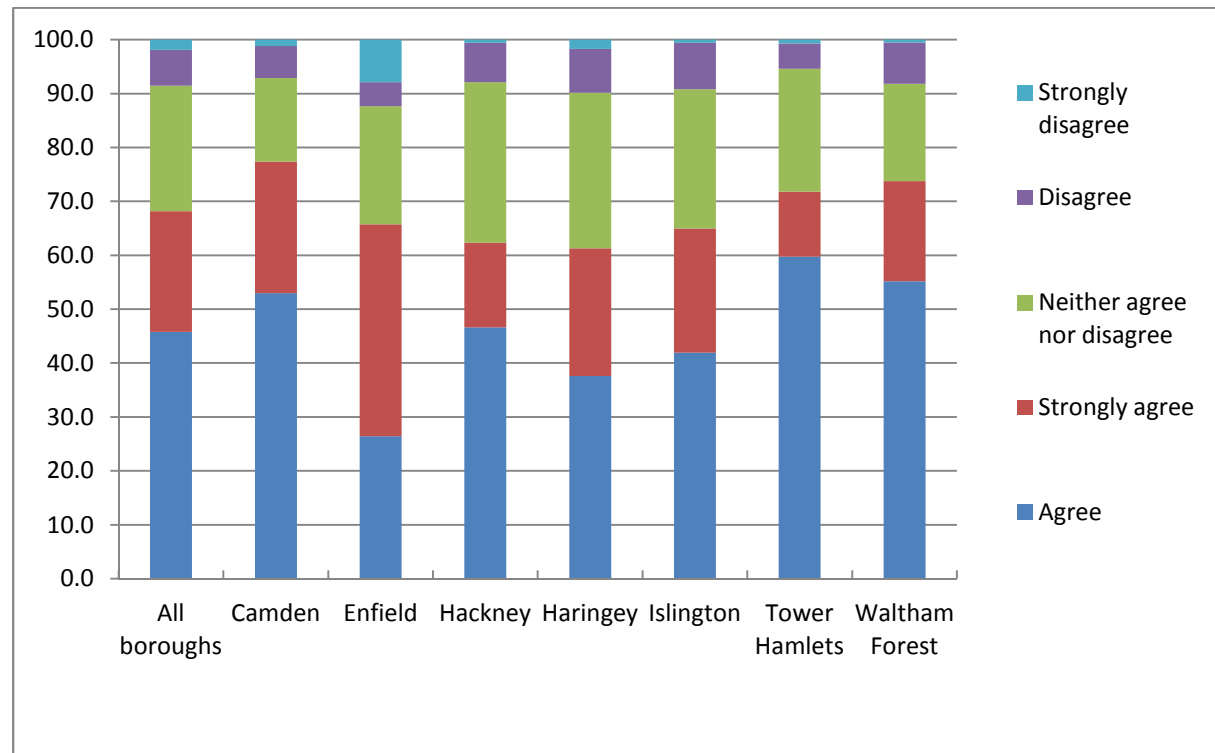
1203 responses to the statement ‘cheap tobacco trade results in a loss of tax revenue to the UK’. 820 people (68.2%) either agreed or strongly agreed, 103 (8.6%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed (Graph 10):

**Graph 10: Percentage of smokers agreeing or disagreeing to statement that cheap tobacco results in a loss to the UK tax revenue.**



Highest levels of agreement with this statement were in Camden where 77.4% of people agree or strongly agreed. Highest levels of disagreement were in Enfield where 11.4% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed (Graph 11).

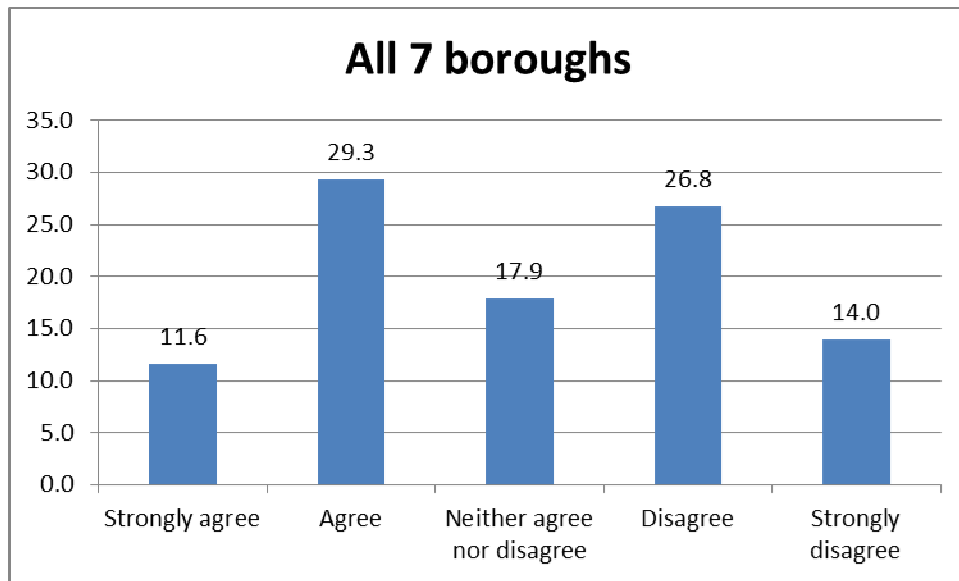
**Graph 11: Agreement and disagreement with the statement that ‘cheap tobacco results in a loss of tax revenue to the UK**



### **Cheap tobacco allowing smoking when otherwise unaffordable**

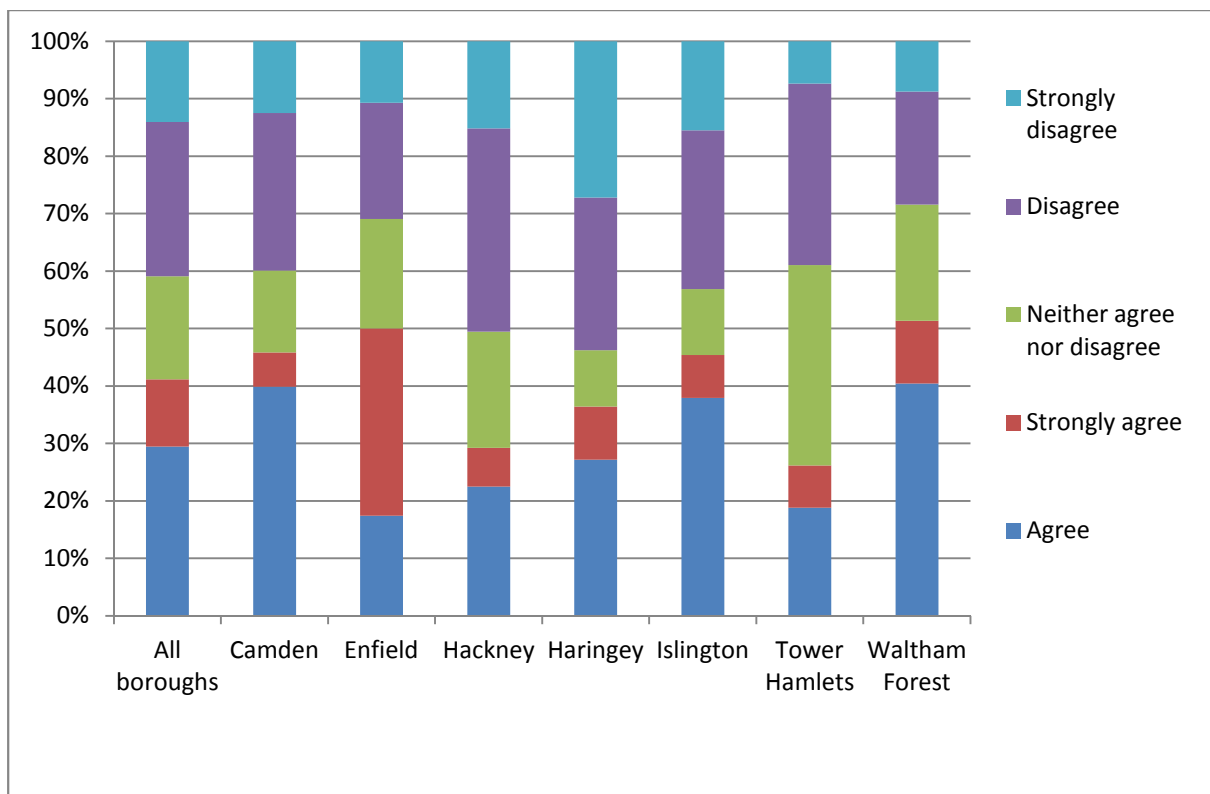
1203 people responded to the statement that cheap tobacco makes it ‘possible to smoke when I otherwise couldn’t afford it’. 493 (40.9%) either agreed or strongly agreed, 490 (40.7%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed (graph 12)

**Graph 12: Percentage of smokers agreeing or disagreeing with statement that cheap tobacco makes it possible for them to smoke when otherwise they couldn’t afford it.**



Highest levels of agreement with this statement were in Waltham Forest where 51.3% either agreed or strongly agreed. Highest levels of disagreement were in Haringey where 53.8% of people either disagreed or strongly disagreed (Graph 13).

**Graph 13: Agreement and disagreement with the statement that cheap tobacco makes it 'possible to smoke when otherwise I couldn't afford it'**

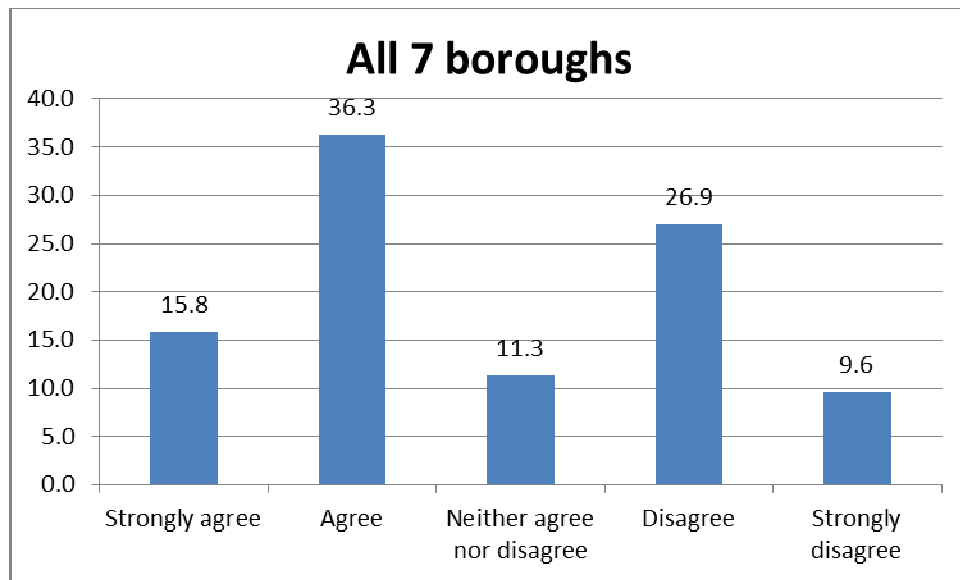




### **The availability of cheap tobacco makes it more difficult for smokers to quit**

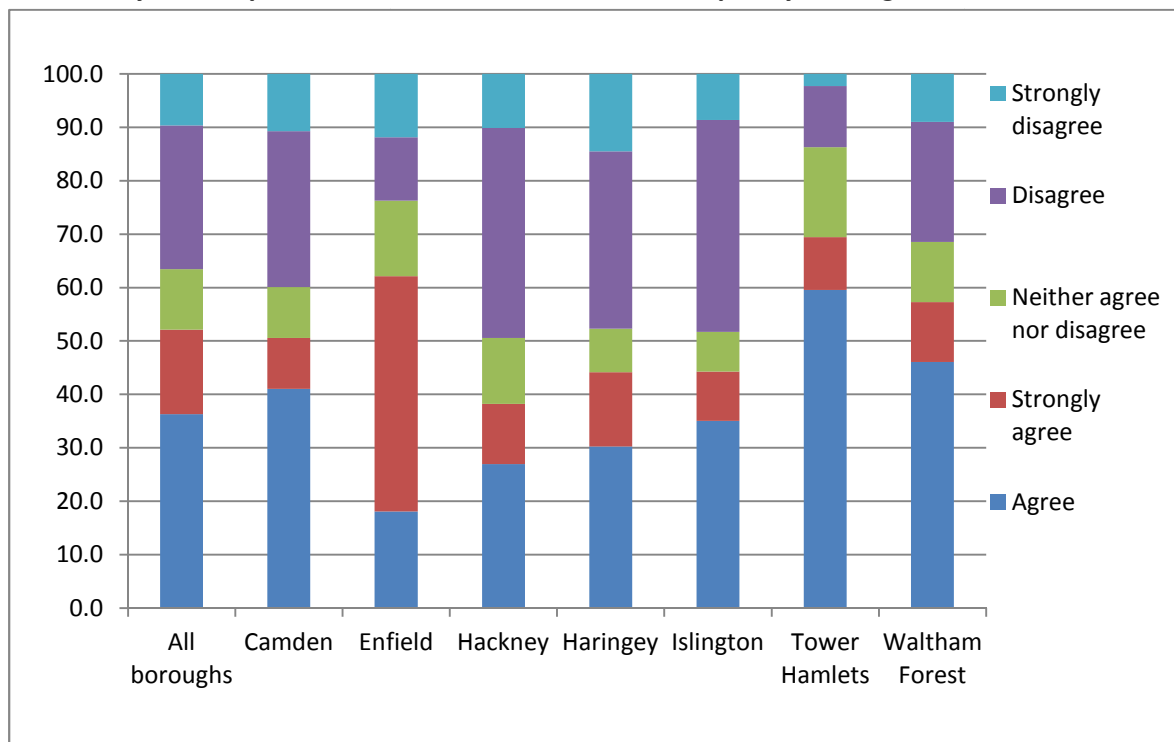
627 (52.1%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the availability of cheap tobacco makes it more difficult for smokers to quit. 440 (36.6%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

**Graph 14: Percentage of smokers agreeing or disagreeing with the statement that the availability of cheap tobacco makes it more difficult to quit.**



This can be further broken down by borough; in Tower Hamlets 69.4% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, in Hackney this was 38.2%.

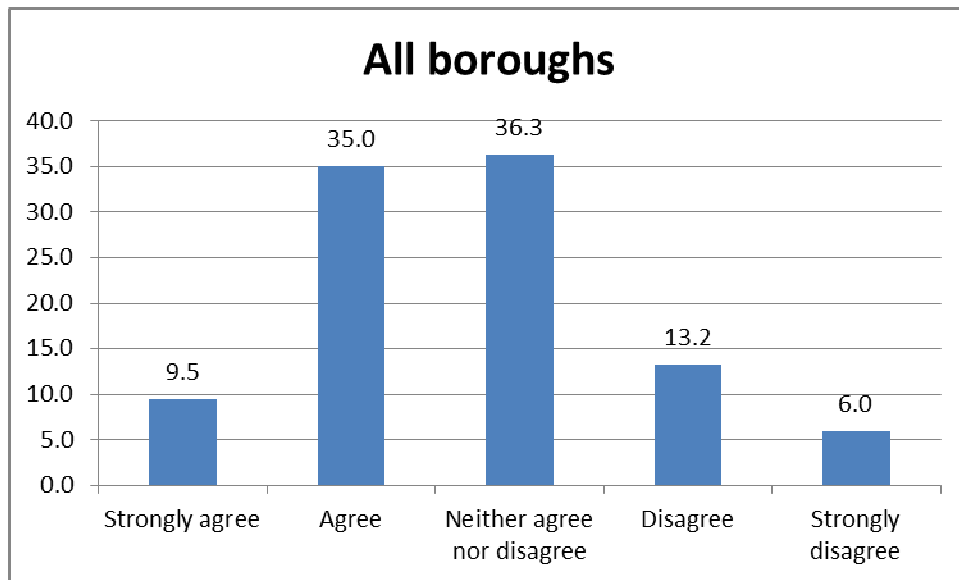
**Graph 15: Percentage of respondents agreeing or disagreeing with the statement that the availability of cheap tobacco makes it more difficult to quit by borough**



### Convenient to buy in bulk

535 (44.5%) of respondents thought that illegal / illicit tobacco was convenient to buy in bulk, 231 (39.5%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed

**Graph 16: Agreement / disagreement with the statement that cheap cigarettes are convenient to buy.**



Agreement with this statement was highest in Tower Hamlets (50.3%). Disagreement was highest in Haringey (31.2%):

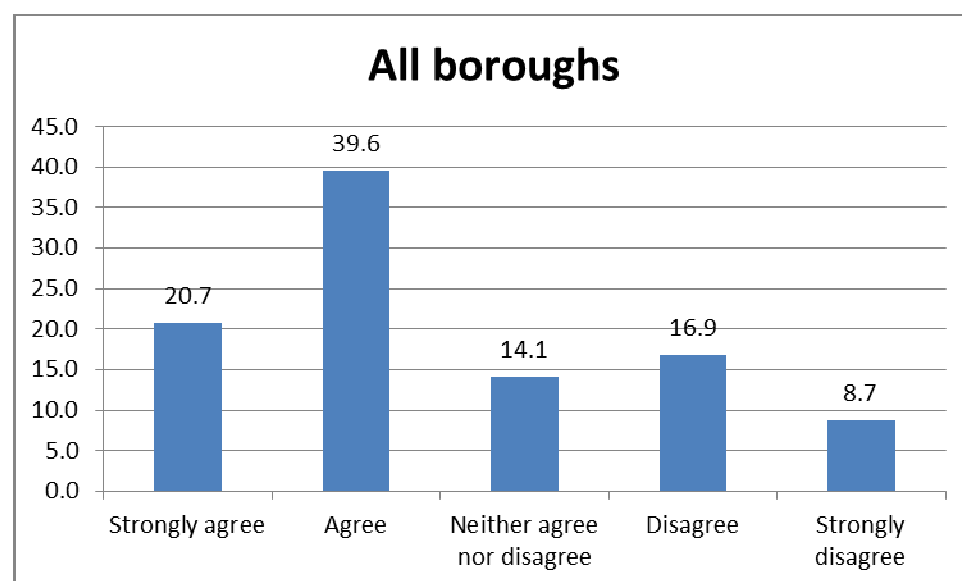
**Graph 17: Agreement / disagreement with the statement that cheap cigarettes are convenient to buy by borough:**



**Something should be done to stop cheap tobacco being sold**

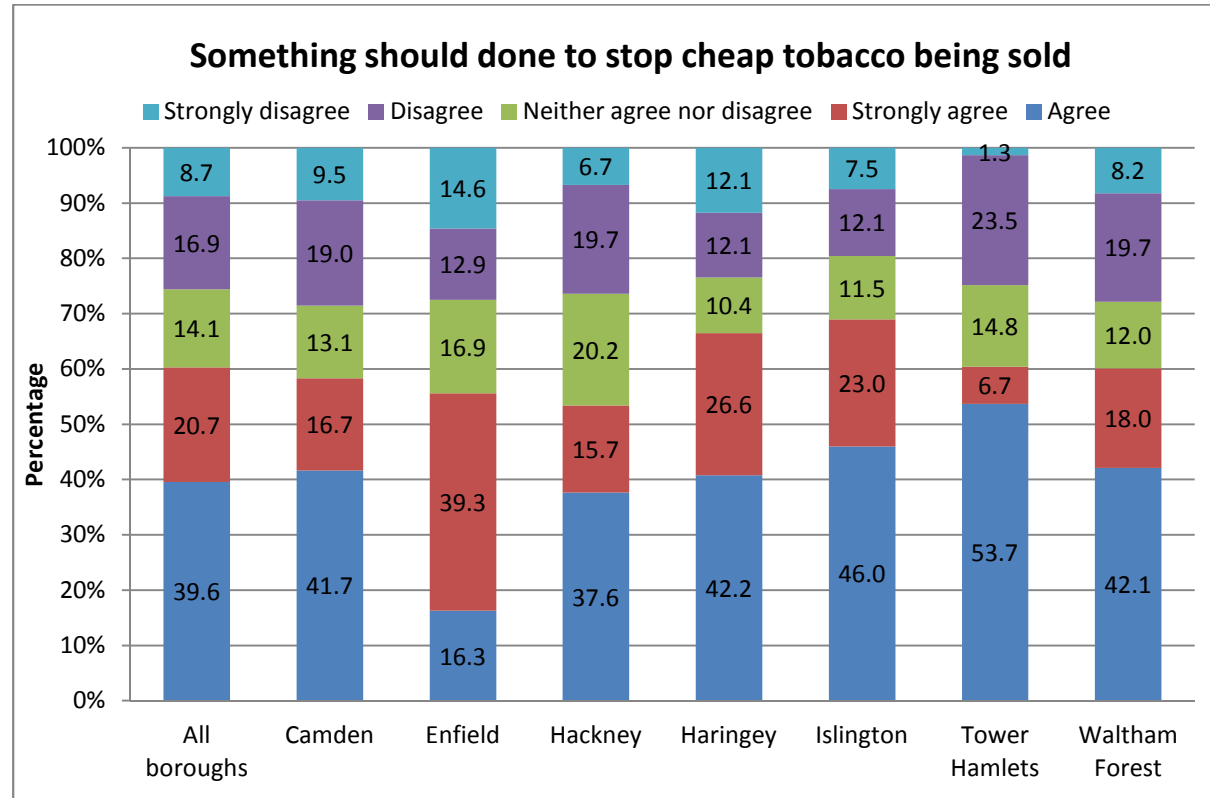
729 (60.3%) either agreed or strongly agreed that something should be done to stop cheap tobacco being sold. 308 (25.6%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

**Graph 18: Percentages of respondents agreeing / disagreeing with the statement that 'something should be done to stop cheap tobacco being sold'**



Agreement with this statement was highest in Islington (69%). Disagreement was highest in Camden (28.5%):

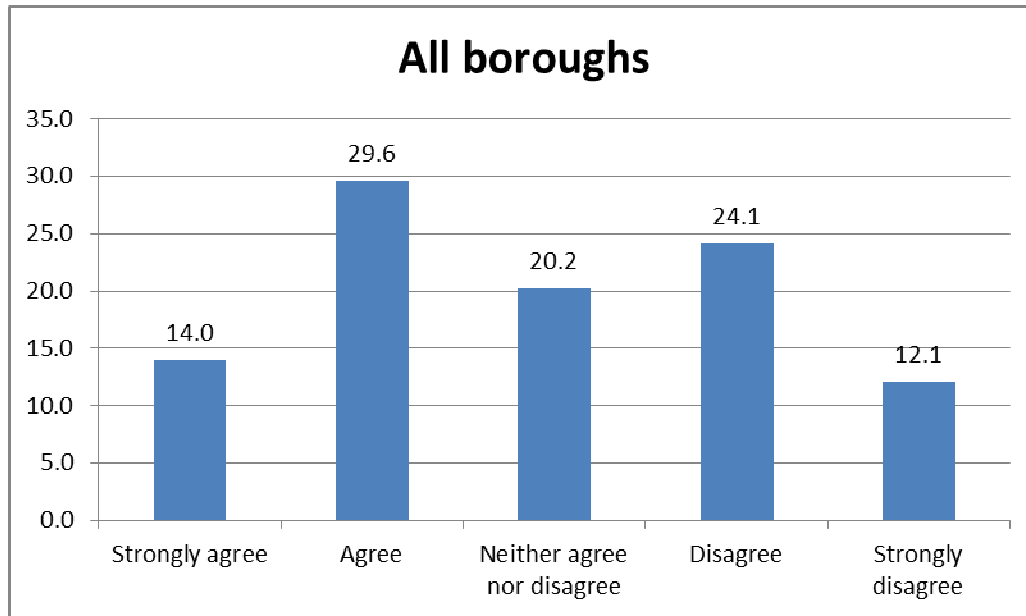
**Graph 19: Percentages of respondents agreeing / disagreeing with the statement that 'something should be done to stop cheap tobacco being sold' by borough:**



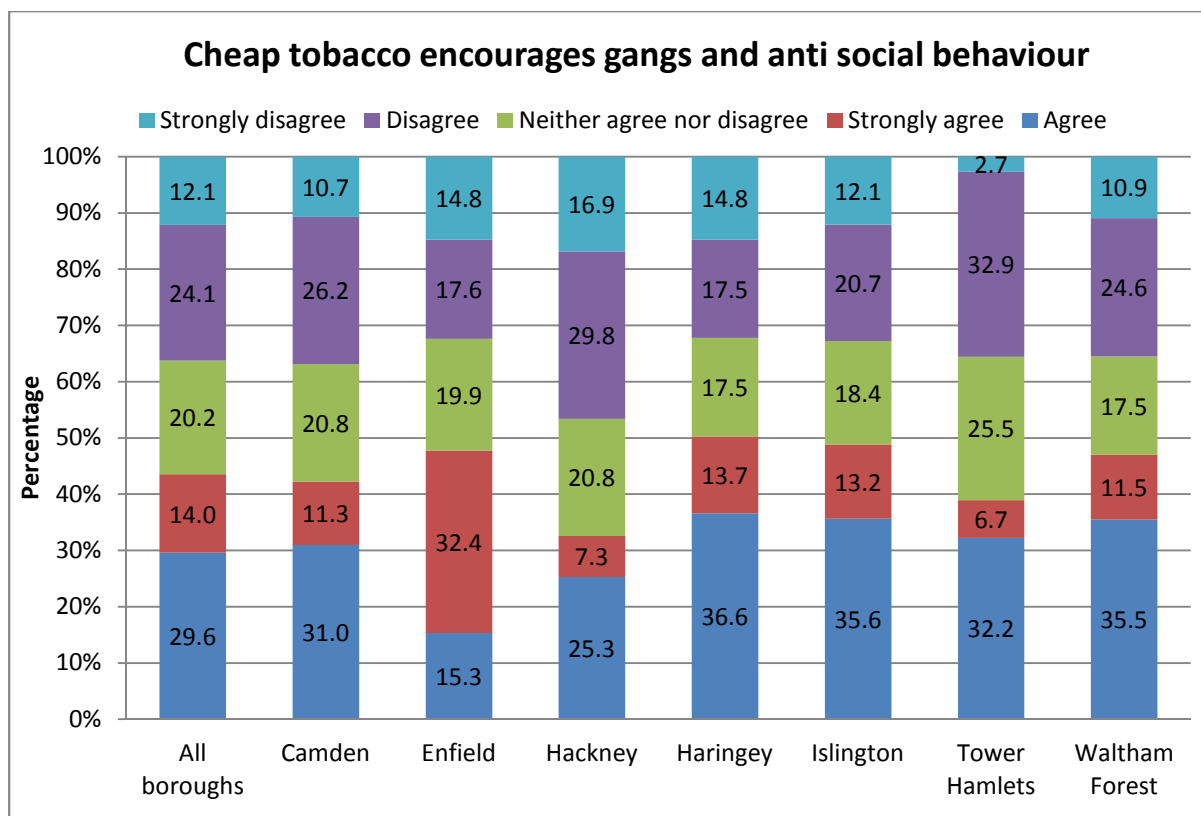
### The cheap tobacco trade encourages gangs and antisocial behaviour

524 (43.6%) of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the cheap tobacco trade encourages gangs and antisocial behaviour. 436 (36.2%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

**Graph 20: Agreement / disagreement that cheap tobacco encourages gangs and anti-social behaviour:**



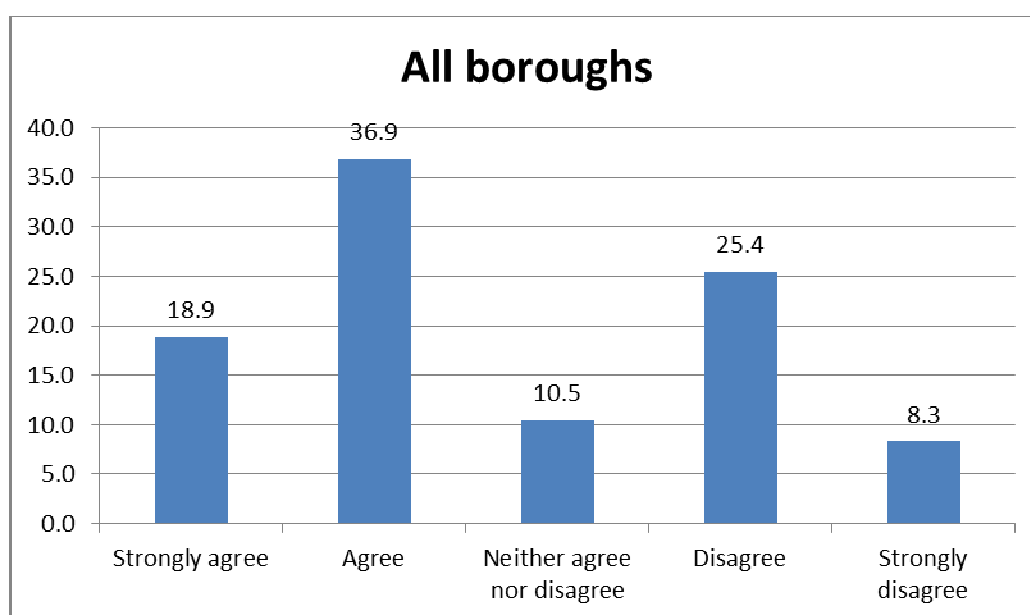
Agreement with this statement was highest in Haringey (51.1%) and lowest in Hackney (32.6%) (graph 21):



### Cheap tobacco makes it easier for children to take up smoking

671 (55.8%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that cheap tobacco makes it easier for children to take up smoking. 406 (33.7%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

**Graph 22: Agreement / disagreement with statement that cheap tobacco makes it easier for children to take up smoking:**



Agreement with this statement was highest in Islington (62.9%) and lowest in Hackney 36.6%):

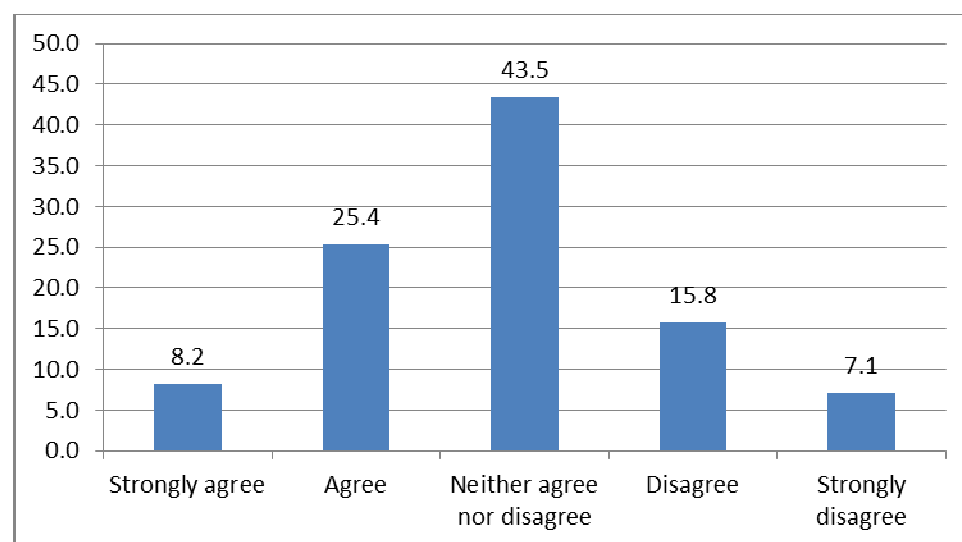
**Graph 23: Agreement / disagreement with statement that cheap tobacco makes it easier for children to take up smoking by borough**



### Cheap tobacco makes it easier to buy in small quantities

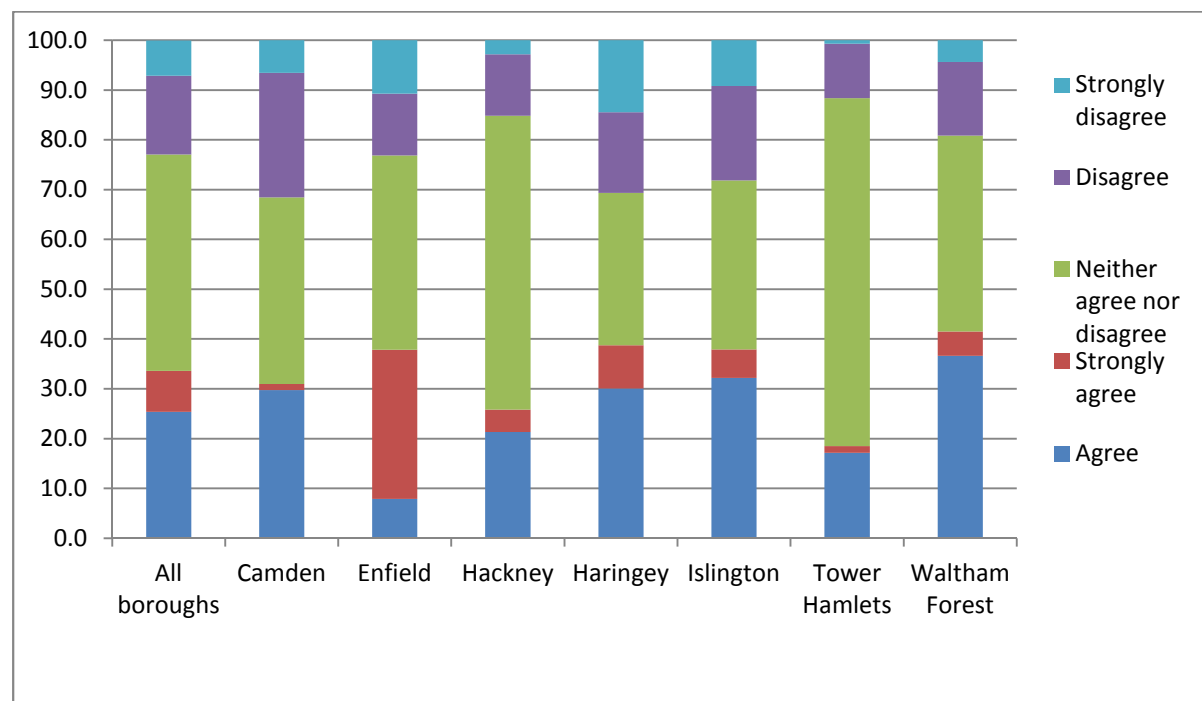
404 (33.6%) of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that cheap tobacco made it easier to buy in small quantities. 175 (22.9%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

**Graph 24: Percentage agreement with statement that cheap tobacco makes it easier to buy in small quantities**



**Graph 25: Percentage agreement with statement that cheap tobacco makes its easier to buy in small quantities by borough**

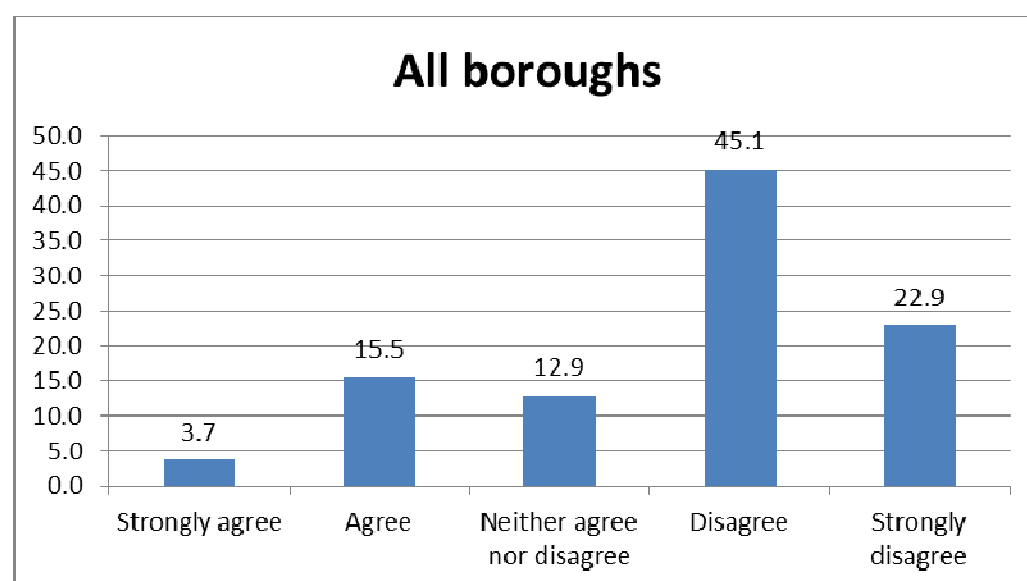
Agreement with cheap tobacco makes it easier to buy in small quantities was highest in Waltham Forest (41.5%) and lowest in Tower Hamlets (18.5%):



### Everyone does it

230 (19.2%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that everyone buys cheap tobacco. 818 (68.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.

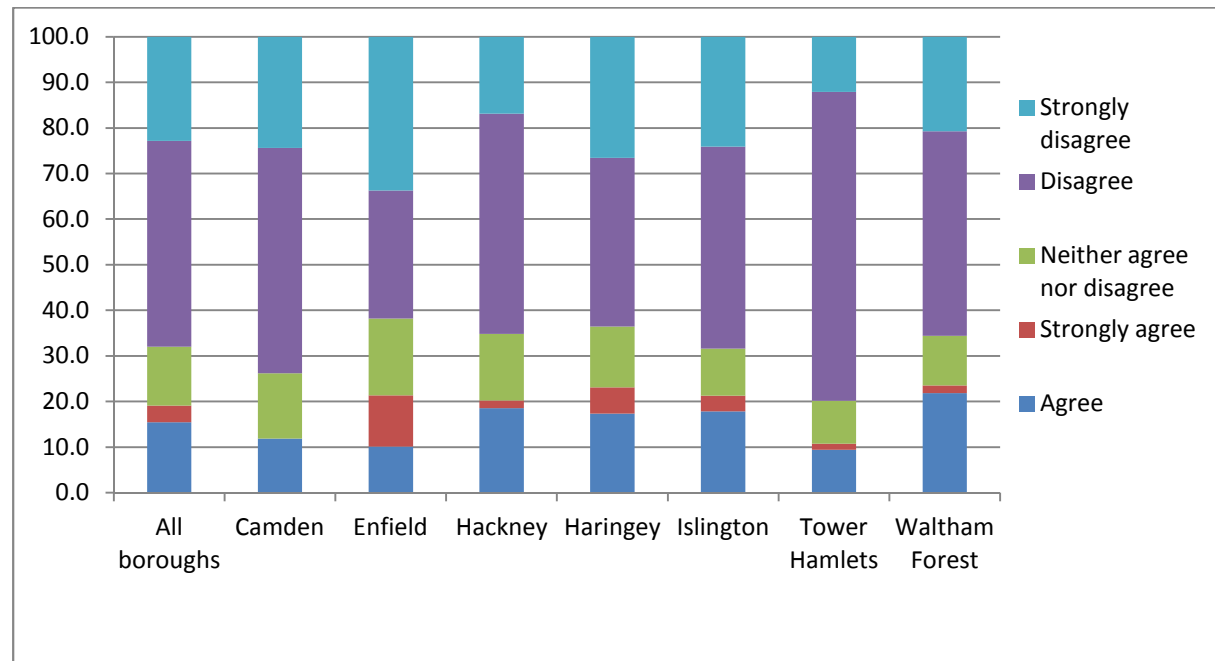
**Graph 26: Percentage of people agreeing / disagreeing with the statement that 'everybody does it'**





Agreement with this statement was highest in Haringey (23.1%). Disagreement was highest in Tower Hamlets (79.9%) and lowest in Enfield (61.8%)

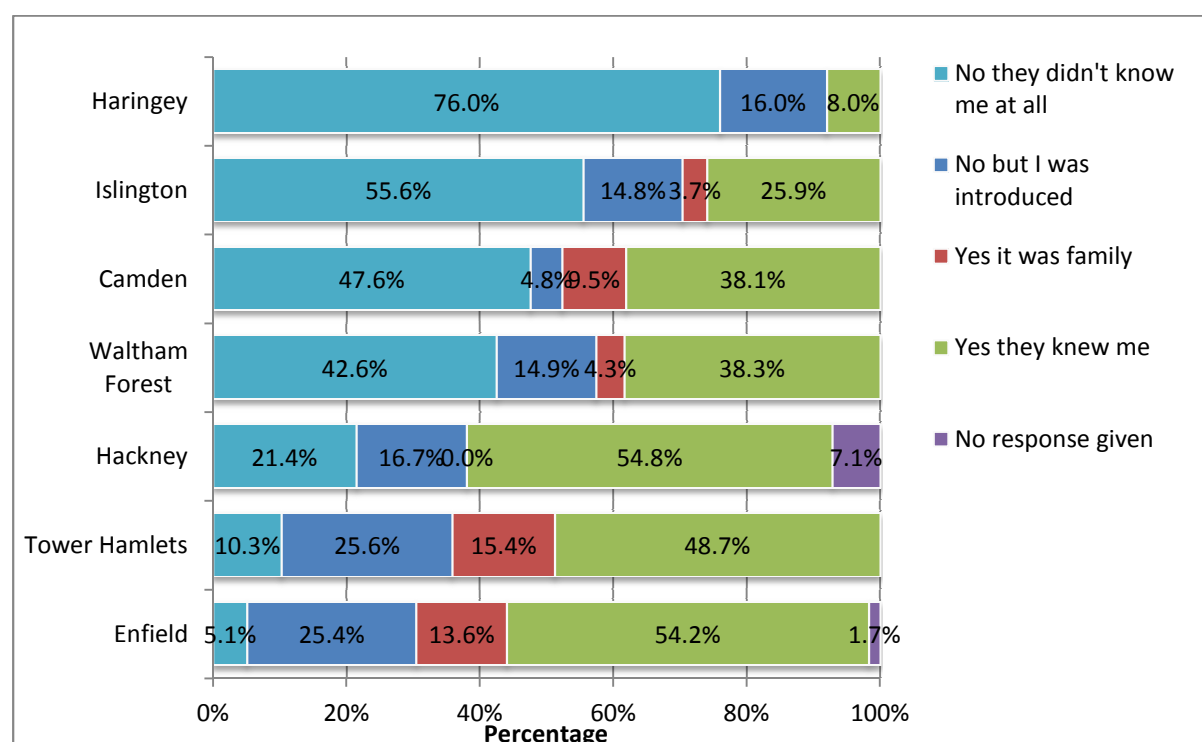
**Graph 27: Percentage of people agreeing / disagreeing with the statement that ‘everybody does it’ by borough:**



### Familiarity with seller

109 (41.9%) of purchasers knew the person from who they bought cheap tobacco. This ranged from 24% in Haringey to 95% in Enfield. 15.4% of purchases in Tower Hamlets were from ‘family’, in Hackney and Haringey this was zero (Graph 28):

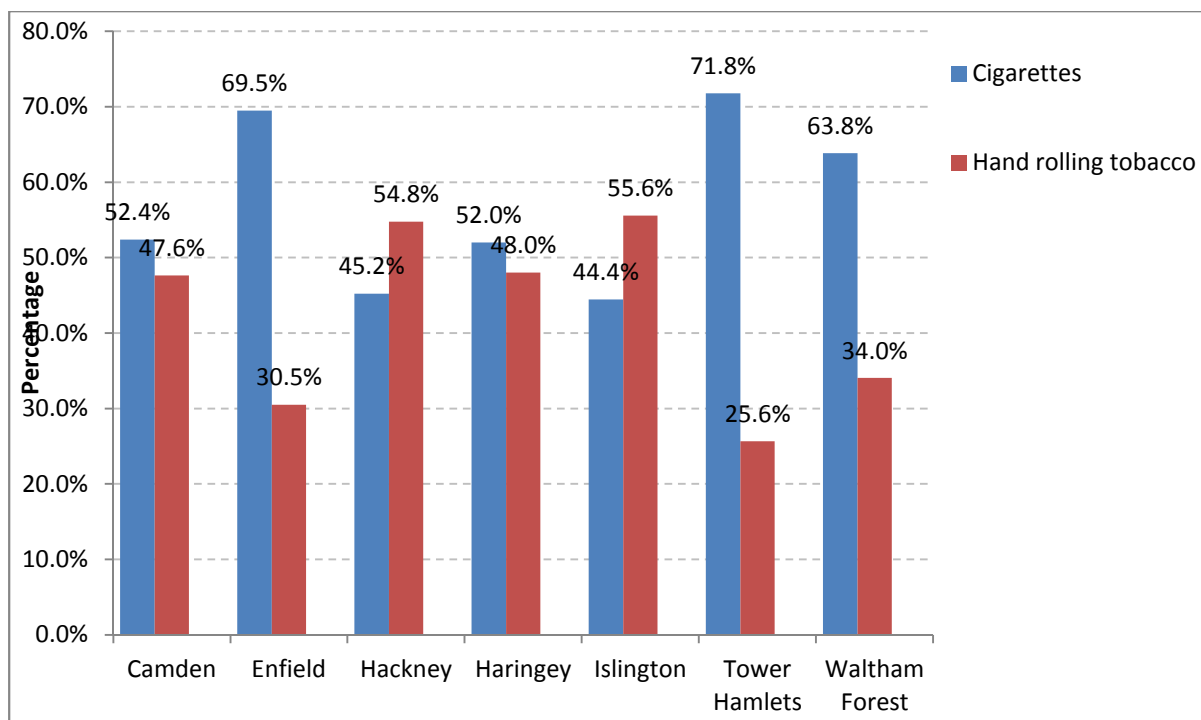
**Graph 28: Percentage of purchasers who knew the seller by borough:**



### What was bought?

154 (59.2%) of smokers who bought cheap tobacco bought cigarettes, 104 (40%) bought HRT. The highest percentage of smokers buying cigarettes was in Tower Hamlets (71.8%), the lowest in Islington (44.4%). The highest percentage of smokers buying HRT was in Islington (55.6%), the lowest in Tower Hamlets (25.6%) (Graph 28):

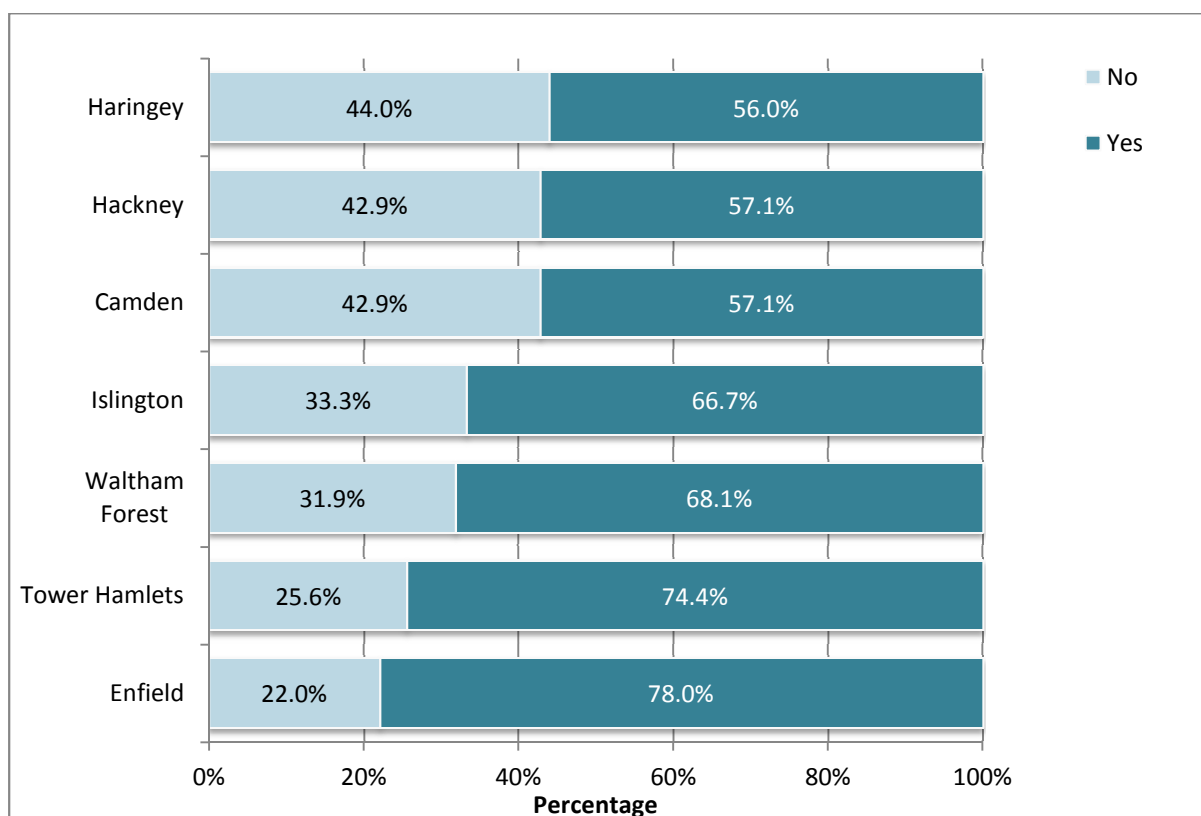
Graph 28: Percentage of smokers who bought cheap tobacco buying cigarettes or hand-rolled tobacco (HRT) by borough:



### Repeat purchases

67% of purchasers said that they would buy cheap tobacco again. 46 (78%) of purchasers in Enfield replied yes, 14 (56.0%) in Haringey (Graph 29):

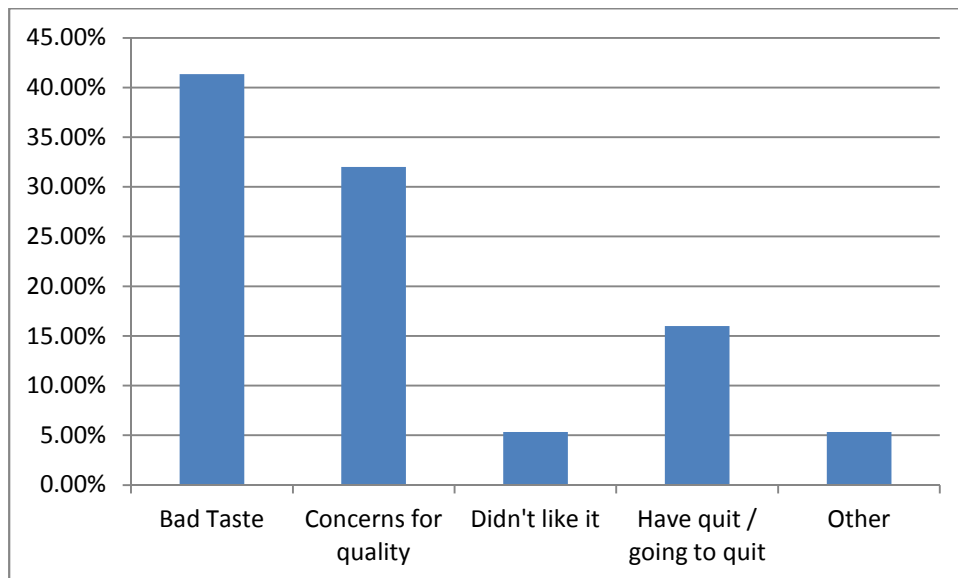
**Graph 29: Percentage of purchasers of cheap tobacco who would buy it again by borough:**



### Reasons for not buying cheap tobacco again

75 (28.8%) of those who had bought cheap tobacco said that they would not buy cheap tobacco again; 31 (41.3%) because of taste, 24 (32%) because of concerns about quality, four (5%) because they did not like it, 12 (16%) because they had or were going to quit and 4 (5%) for 'other reasons' (Graph 30)

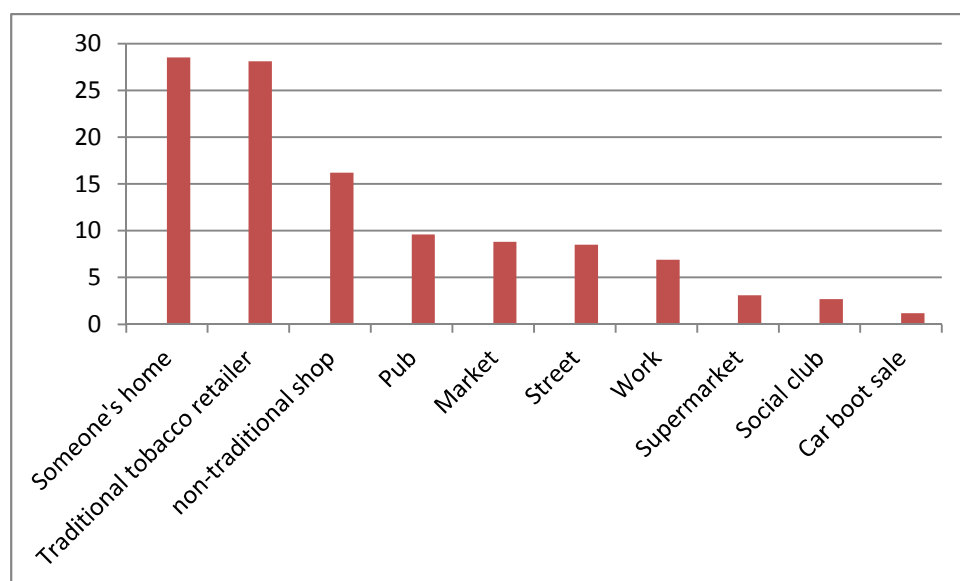
**Graph 30: Reasons for not buying cheap tobacco again:**



### Where was cheap tobacco bought from?

Very few respondents indicated where they purchased cheap tobacco from. 74 (28.5%) indicated that they purchased at least some tobacco from someone's home, 73 (28.1%) from a traditional tobacco retailers, 42 (16.2%) from a non-traditional shop, 25 (9.6%) from the pub, 23 (8.8%) from a 'market', 22 (8.5%) from 'the street', 18 (6.9%) from work, eight (3.1%) from a supermarket, seven (2.7%) from a social club and three (1.2%) from a car boot sale (Graph 31):

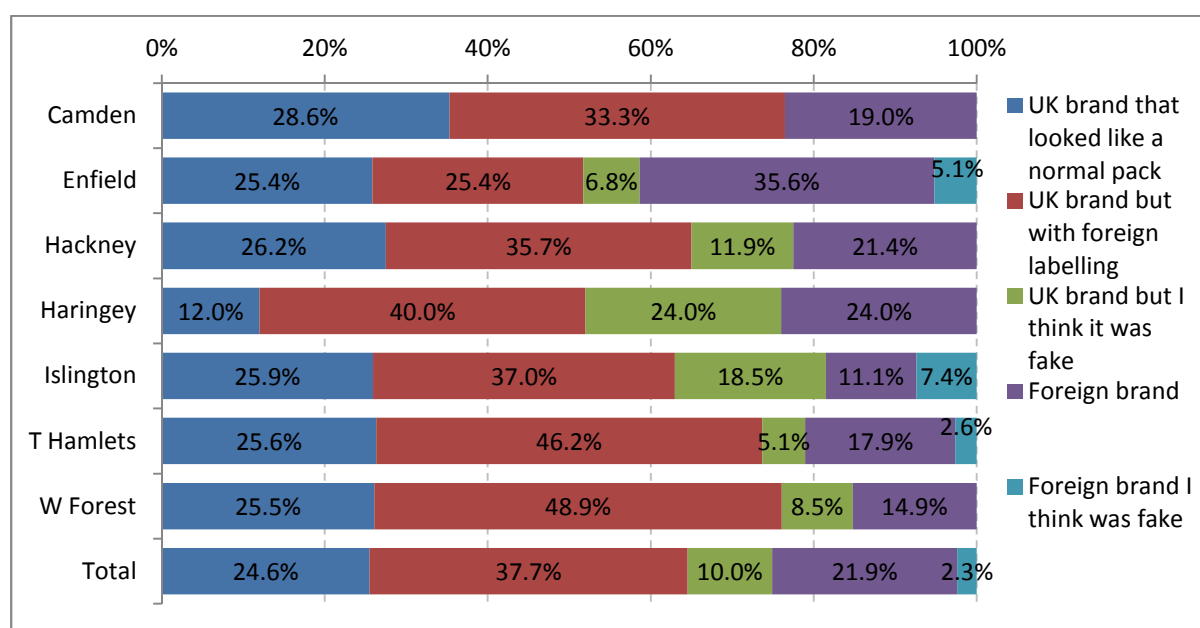
**Graph 31: Locations where smokers bought cheap tobacco (percentage)**



### Brands bought

162 purchasers (62.3%) bought what they thought was a UK brand or a UK brand with foreign labelling. 57 purchasers (21.9%) bought a foreign brand and 32 people 12.3% of purchasers bought what they thought was either a UK or foreign fake brand. The highest percentage of purchasers buying UK brands was in Waltham Forest (74.5%) and the lowest in Enfield (50.8%). 32 (12.3%) of purchasers thought they were buying fake brands with the highest percentage in Islington (25.9%) and lowest in Camden (0.0%) (Graph 12):

**Graph 12: Purchasing of brands by borough:**



### Cost of cheap tobacco

The average cost of cheap tobacco was as follows (table 1):

Table 7: Average cost of cheap tobacco purchased:

	No. respondents	Average cost
10 sticks or small 12.5g pack	19	£3.15
Pack of 20 or medium 25g pack	210	£4.27
50g bag	14	£9.50
Carton of ten packets	1	£35
Not enough information	16	-

## Discussion

This survey sought to understand smokers' behaviour and attitude towards the purchasing of illegal and illicit tobacco across seven boroughs in north central and north-east London. Any results including comparisons between boroughs must be treated with caution as a) results are self-reported and asking about illicit / illegal behaviour does not always elicit honest answers and b) results may be biased by the locations chosen by boroughs for the survey. Despite the limitations outlined above, it does seem that illicit or illegal tobacco is both widely available within the survey areas and purchased across all age group: 39% of smokers reported having been offered cheap tobacco at least once and 11% every week in the past year. Cigarettes and HRT were by far the most commonly offered and purchased cheap tobacco across all boroughs. Most transactions across all boroughs (apart from Tower Hamlets) were of less than 10 cigarettes / 3.5g of HRT though in Enfield 21% of purchases were for more than 21 cigarettes / 12.5g of HRT.

As implied by purchasing behaviour, the illicit / illegal tobacco market seemed to enjoy widescale acceptance, at least amongst the smokers surveyed: 55% of those offered cheap tobacco had bought it at least once. Of the 29% who would not purchase again, reasons given were mainly to do with issues of quality and taste. There is a familiarity between purchasers and sellers; some 42% of smokers had purchased from people they knew and 67% of purchasers said that they would do so again.

Despite the above, smokers were also conscious of the dangers and harms of illicit / illegal tobacco: 66% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that 'cheap cigarettes don't do anyone any harm'; a similar percentage that cheap cigarettes result in a loss of tax revenue and 52% that the availability of cheap tobacco makes it more difficult to quit. 41% of respondents thought that cheap tobacco makes it possible to smoke when people could not otherwise afford it (though 41% disagreed) and 52% that the availability of cheap tobacco made it more difficult to quit (this is in a sample in which 70% had tried to quit at least once). There was limited understanding of the links between cheap tobacco and children taking up smoking (only 56% agreed that it made it easier for children to take up smoking) and between cheap tobacco and organised crime: 44% believed that cheap tobacco encouraged gangs and antisocial behaviour. Interestingly 60% agreed that something should be done to stop cheap tobacco being sold, only 26% disagreed. Nor was the purchasing of cheap tobacco seen as undertaken by every smoker: 68% disagree with the statement that 'everyone does it'.

Data was lacking on sources and quantity of cheap tobacco purchased. However, results indicate that people bought from sources they knew (42%) and of those who bought cheap tobacco, 67% indicated that they were likely to do so again in the future. Where respondents would not buy again it was usually for reasons of quality (41%) and taste (32%). The most common places for purchase were someone's home, a traditional tobacco retailer and a non-traditional shop. Purchasing was predominantly what was thought to be either UK brands or UK brands with foreign labels.

Assuming an average cost of £5 for 10 and £9 for 20 (Sainsburys website, 25<sup>th</sup> October 2015) cheap tobacco is being sold at approximately 65% and 47% of retail price.

## **Conclusion**

Cheap tobacco is widely available across North Central and North East London. Approximately 20% of smokers have bought it and of those approximately two thirds would buy it again. There is a strong awareness of the implications of this for both personal behaviour: primarily it makes quitting more difficult and for the wider society; loss of tax revenue, links to crime and making it easier for children to become smokers. Despite purchasing behaviour, a majority of smokers want 'something to be done' about cheap tobacco.

## **Key messages**

- Cheap tobacco is widespread across North East and North Central London
- The negative implications of this for smokers and wider society is (mostly) both known and accepted by smokers
- The potential impact of cheap tobacco on uptake of smoking by children is less well known
- Smokers want 'something to be done' about illegal and illicit tobacco