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Negotiating access to tobacco following the
increase in the minimum age of sale in the UK: a
study of young people from two disadvantaged
communities in Scotland

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Abstract

Creating a Tobacco Free Generation: a Tobacco Control Strategy for Scotland sets out the Scottish Government's ambition to create a tobacco free generation of Scots by 2034. Smoking initiation occurs primarily in adolescence, and the national preventive strategy is correspondingly structured around a range of measures to reduce the availability, affordability and attractiveness of cigarettes and other tobacco products for children and young people. Primary among these are the increase in the minimum age of sale of tobacco from 16 to 18 years instituted in the UK in October 2007, and the ban on the display of tobacco and smoking related products in shops introduced in the Tobacco and Primary Medical Services Scotland Act 2010. This thesis explores young people's smoking and cigarette access behaviours in the context of the increase in the age of sale of tobacco from 16 to 18 years in 2007, and their perceptions and representations of cigarette brand image in the context of the impending ban on point of sale displays and in anticipation of the introduction of generic cigarette packaging in the UK.

A combination of individual, paired and triadic interviews were undertaken with a total of 60 13-15 year old young people recruited from youth clubs and other third sector organisations in two disadvantaged communities in Edinburgh. Around half the participants were regular smokers – defined as smoking a cigarette a day or more – with the remainder reporting 'occasional' or 'experimental' smoking, defined as intermittent smoking or having tried smoking on one or more occasions. Interviews focussed on participants' usual cigarette sources, ability to access tobacco, participants' favoured cigarette brands and their perspectives on recent legislative measures to reduce the attractiveness of cigarettes and other tobacco products for children and young people.

Despite the increase in the minimum age of sale, most participants sourced cigarettes from shops, either directly or through intermediaries, and few reported any difficulties securing regular access to tobacco. Retail purchases were described in terms of a progression from more to less targeted purchasing strategies, with those experiencing difficulties buying cigarettes directly employing a range of strategies to identify and target retailers amenable to selling cigarettes to underage customers.

Proxy purchases, i.e. purchases made through intermediaries, represented the predominating mode of acquisition among participants, and were described in terms of a progression from less to more targeted third party recruitment strategies, with older and more experienced regular smokers learning to identify and target particular types of individual for proxy purchases. Participants also had recourse to tobacco from a range of social and illicit sources, including ‘fag houses’, although these were not routinely accessed.

The diverse cigarette sources identified by participants were not perceived to be equivalent, however, but were rather represented in terms of the parallel acquisition of a range of smoking related competencies. Participants’ diverse modes of tobacco acquisition, as such, reflected not merely their smoking status, with rates of retail cigarette purchasing increasing with age and regular smoking, but their status as a smoker through building symbolic capital. Participants foregrounded their smoking related knowledge and competencies to frame themselves as more or less ‘autonomous’ smokers. In discussions about participants favoured cigarette brands, participants would similarly foreground their knowledge of a range of perceived brand characteristics to frame themselves as more or less ‘discerning’ smokers.

The importance of cigarette access and branding in shaping participants’ smoking identities has clear implications for smoking prevention policy, in terms of challenging the implied equivalence between the diverse cigarette sources available to young people routinely implied in the youth access literature and underscoring the importance of limiting the visual cues in cigarette packaging and point of sale advertising that facilitate the continued use of cigarettes as an ‘identity tool’.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own work and that it has not been submitted in whole or part for any other degree or professional qualification.

Thomas Aleksander Tjelta

Date: 31.8.2014

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1 Introduction

The hazards of tobacco use have been comprehensively documented for a half-century (U.S Department of Health and Human Services, 2004). Smoking remains the most significant preventable cause of premature death and ill health in the developed world (NHS Health Scotland and ASH Scotland, 2007, Edwards, 2004, Doll et al., 1994, Peto et al., 1994), and has been implicated in an estimated 1 in 4 deaths in middle age in the UK (Peto et al., 1994, NHS Health Scotland and ASH Scotland, 2007). Smoking has also been estimated to account for over half the variance in excess mortality between the social classes, and remains a critical public health concern despite significant developments in tobacco control over the past decade, including the development of targeted smoking cessation services, the prohibition of tobacco advertising and promotion and the introduction of comprehensive smoke free legislation (Action on Smoking and Health, 2008). Smoking initiation occurs primarily in adolescence (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012) and *Creating a tobacco free generation: a Tobacco Control Strategy for Scotland* is correspondingly structured around a range of measures to reduce the availability, affordability and attractiveness of cigarettes and other tobacco products for children and young people (Scottish Government, 2013).

The potential for supply side interventions to impact on youth smoking prevalence can be traced back to the publication of the Royal College of Physicians' (RCP) *Smoking and Health* report in 1962, which highlighted a widespread disregard for minimum age laws among tobacco retailers and the ready availability of cigarettes from cigarette vending machines to recommend specific government action to reduce illegal sales to children (Royal College of Physicians, 1962). The range of measures considered by the Cabinet committee convened to review the RCPs' recommendations, however, including: (i) increasing the minimum age of sale to 17 or 18 years; (ii) introducing more robust controls on the sale of cigarettes from vending machines; (iii) prohibiting sales of fewer than 10 cigarettes, and (iv) introducing a register of tobacco retailers, were ultimately rejected (Cruickshank, 1964, Action on Smoking and Health and Royal College of Physicians, 2002). At the

end of the 20th century, following 40 fatal years of governmental inaction (Action on Smoking and Health and Royal College of Physicians, 2002), commentators continued to highlight a widespread disregard for minimum age laws among tobacco retailers, including the practice of selling single cigarettes to children (Amos, 1990, Bradley, 1983, Raw, 1990, Jarvis and McNeill, 1990). Smoking prevalence among school age children in the UK increased through the early 1990s (Boreham and Shaw, 2001a).

Similar concerns in relation to illegal sales were being highlighted in the US (Cummings and Marshall, 1988, DiFranza et al., 1987, Altman et al., 1989). In 1986, for example, DiFranza's (1987) 11 year old daughter was able to make cigarette purchases in 75 of 100 retailers in Massachusetts, despite the introduction of legislation increasing the minimum age of sale in the state to 18 years in 1985 (DiFranza et al., 1987). The Synar amendment therefore required US states to establish and enforce laws prohibiting the sale of cigarettes to children under 18 years from 1992 (DiFranza and Dussault, 2005). Despite the widespread implementation and routine enforcement of minimum age laws in the US in the 1990s, however, rates of regular smoking among school age children increased (Johnston et al., 2001). Reviews of studies investigating the impact of youth access interventions, which include primarily US-based studies, have therefore generally concluded that while interventions combining retailer education with robust sales law enforcement activity may increase rates of sales law compliance among tobacco retailers, there is limited evidence to suggest such interventions are likely to impact meaningfully on youth smoking prevalence (Stead and Lancaster, 2005, Richardson et al., 2009, Richardson et al., 2007, Thomas et al., 2008).

The failure of youth access interventions to impact meaningfully on youth smoking prevalence in the US polarised opinion in tobacco control at the turn of the century. On the one hand, commentators highlighted an increased reliance on social cigarette sources among school age children post-Synar to ask: 'Is it time to abandon youth access tobacco programmes?' (Ling et al., 2002). If demand simply shifts to social sources of tobacco where retail cigarette access is curtailed, even very high compliance rates among tobacco retailers are unlikely to impact meaningfully on

cigarette availability, and therefore unlikely to curtail youth smoking prevalence (Castrucci et al., 2002, Fichtenberg and Glantz, 2002, Craig and Boris, 2007, Glantz, 2002). On the other hand, commentators argued that the increase in social tobacco acquisition was likely to be relative as opposed to absolute, that retail and social cigarette sources are not mutually exclusive, with social markets reliant on some young people continuing to make retail purchases to supply their friends, and that reviews of the relevant literature had inappropriately pooled studies in which cigarette access had been curtailed with those in which interventions had failed to reduce youth cigarette access (DiFranza, 2003, DiFranza, 2000).

The youth access literature, as such, is characterised by uncertainties, and it is the context of these uncertainties that the increase in the minimum age of sale from 16 to 18 years in the UK was instituted in October 2007. In contrast with the US experience post-Synar, where youth smoking rates remained stable despite very high levels of sales law enforcement (Johnston et al., 2001), the increase in the minimum age of sale in the UK coincided not only with decline in the proportion of young people reporting ‘usually’ buying cigarettes from shops in national surveys, but also with a significant reduction in youth smoking prevalence (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012, Millett et al., 2011, Fidler and West, 2010). The proportion of 15 year olds reporting regular smoking in the Scottish Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use (SALSUS) surveys, for example, fell from 12% and 18% among boys and girls respectively in 2006 to 11% and 14% in 2010 (Black et al., 2012, Maxwell et al., 2007). Regular smoking among 15 year olds in England declined by a similar margin, from 16% and 24% among boys and girls respectively in 2006 to 10% and 14% in 2010 (Fuller, 2012, Fuller, 2007). Given the range of controversies surrounding the impact of youth access interventions on youth smoking, however, the extent to which the decline in youth smoking prevalence is attributable to the increase in the minimum age of sale is difficult to determine.

DiFranza (2010), a vocal advocate for youth access interventions since the 1980s (DiFranza, 2005), suggests that the increase in the minimum age of sale may have impacted on youth smoking prevalence by increasing the effectiveness of UK local authority trading standards officers’ retailer education and test purchasing visits,

thereby reducing the availability of cigarettes and other tobacco products for children and young people (DiFranza, 2010). This assessment is problematised, however, by the relatively low levels of enforcement activity undertaken by trading standards in the UK (Department of Health, 2011, SCOTSS, 2011), by the very low proportion of school age children reporting ‘difficulties’ sourcing cigarettes from shops (Fuller, 2012), by the very low reported rates of sales refusals among school-age children (Fuller, 2012, Black et al., 2012), and by the range of available alternatives to retail cigarette purchases for young people where cigarette access is curtailed.

Qualitative studies undertaken following the increase in the age of sale have consistently shown that young people experiencing difficulties making retail purchases have recourse to a range of alternative cigarette sources, including proxy purchases, i.e. retail cigarette purchases made through intermediaries (Donaghy et al., 2013, Robinson and Amos, 2010, Borland and Amos, 2009). These cigarette purchases by proxy have come to represent the predominating mode of tobacco acquisition among school age children in the UK (Fuller, 2012, Black et al., 2012), and young people appear to experience little difficulty recruiting third parties to make them (Robinson and Amos, 2010, Donaghy et al., 2013). Qualitative studies have also highlighted the availability of cigarettes from various social sources, including via social sales in schools (Croghan et al., 2003, Turner et al., 2004), and the importance of interpersonal cigarette exchanges both in terms of facilitating youth cigarette access and in functioning as an informal currency in the context of young people’s social worlds (Walsh and Tzelepis, 2007, Cullen, 2010, Haines et al., 2009, Donaghy et al., 2013, Robinson and Amos, 2010).

It is in this latter context that this study seeks to make a novel contribution to research. While the SDD and SALSUS have reported on young people’s usual cigarette sources since the 1980s, and while a number of qualitative studies have elaborated on the range of sources accessed by young people in more detail to highlight the diverse modes of social tobacco acquisition employed by young people (Croghan et al., 2003, Turner et al., 2004) and/or the range of strategies employed in negotiating access to tobacco via proxy purchases (Robinson and Amos, 2010, Borland and Amos, 2009, Donaghy et al., 2013), no studies to date have considered

the meaning or subjective significance of these diverse social and retail cigarette sources in the context of young people's social worlds. While national surveys have shown a decline in the proportion of school-age regular smokers reporting 'usually' buying cigarettes from shops (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012), young people's usual cigarette sources are likely to vary between contexts. Studies have shown that tobacco products are more likely to be perceived to be readily available in areas with higher retailer densities, and that retailer densities vary between communities with contrasting socioeconomic profiles (Yu et al., 2010, Nelson et al., 2011, Schneider et al., 2005). Millet et al (2011) found that the increased difficulties associated with retail cigarette access following the increase in the minimum age of sale may be limited to children from more affluent backgrounds. Young people from disadvantaged communities may also be more likely to have recourse to diverse sources of illicit or counterfeit tobacco (West et al., 2007, Crossfield et al., 2010). This thesis aims to address this gap.

The potential for advertising restrictions to impact on youth smoking prevalence can also be traced back to the publication of the first Smoking and Health report in 1962, which highlighted a concurrent increase in tobacco advertising expenditure and smoking prevalence in the UK and observed that the 'romantic allusions' in tobacco advertising appeared to be designed to appeal in particular to young people (Royal College of Physicians, 1962). In contrast to the literature on youth cigarette access, which has been characterised by controversies, evidence for the impact of tobacco advertising restrictions on youth smoking prevalence is relatively unequivocal (Davis et al., 2008), with any controversy limited to the specification of causal pathways through which tobacco advertising impacts on young people's smoking related attitudes, intentions and behaviours (U.S Department of Health and Human Services, 2012). Following the ban on tobacco advertising and promotion in the UK under the Tobacco Advertising and Promotions Act 2002, tobacco industry marketing practices, and efforts to reduce the perceived 'attractiveness' of cigarettes and other tobacco products for children and young people, have been increasingly concentrated at the point of sale (Scottish Government, 2013).

Point of sale (PoS) cigarette displays were prohibited in the UK under the Tobacco and Primary Medical Services (Scotland) Act 2010 and Health Act 2009. PoS displays in larger retailers in Scotland were banned from April 2013, with the legislation extending to cover all retailers from 2015. Proposals to prohibit cigarette pack advertising through the introduction of plain or generic cigarette packaging in the UK are also currently under consultation. Studies investigating the impact of point of sale cigarette displays and cigarette branding have tended to explore the association between exposure to point of sale advertising and youth smoking status or intentions to smoke. Young people's intentions to smoke, in turn, are influenced variously by a range of perceptions pertaining both to the act of smoking in general and to individual brands in particular. Studies investigating the anticipated impact of the introduction of plain or generic cigarette packaging have therefore focussed on young people's perceptions of a range of factors associated with cigarette brand image, for example product harm, strength and various measures of subjective appeal. These have generated clear and consistent evidence that generic packaging is likely to contribute to a small but important reduction in youth smoking prevalence (Chantler, 2014).

The focus on branding in this study, however, emerged 'in vivo' during the course of interviews. This afforded a novel opportunity to explore the particular salience of cigarette branding from the perspectives of young people. Rather than focussing on the identification of differences between brands, or the specification and application of criteria through which to assess these, this study rather reports on the range of characteristics spontaneously raised by study participants in order to explicate their individual product preferences. While some of these characteristics correspond closely with the range of dimensions explored in other work on cigarette branding, participants accounts have not been marshalled to comment specifically on issues pertaining to the prospective introduction of plain packaging or ban on PoS displays. Keller's (1993) model of customer based brand equity, rather, has been employed as a means of framing the relationship between the range of brand attributes identified as meaningful for participants, and the likely impact of the point of sale display ban and generic packaging in terms of removing the visual cues through which cigarette brands are primarily differentiated.

This thesis aims to examine young people's smoking and cigarette access behaviours in the context of the increase in the minimum age of sale of tobacco from 16 to 18 years in October 2007, and to explore participants' perceptions and representations of cigarette brand image in the context of the ban on PoS cigarette displays. Chapter 2 reviews literature relevant to the aims of this study, and is divided into three sections. The first examines trends in youth smoking and recent developments in UK tobacco control policy to outline the overarching policy context in which the increase in the minimum age of sale was instituted, in which the PoS display ban is being phased in and in which generic packaging may ultimately be introduced. This section also considers some of the primary correlates of youth smoking to highlight the range of social influences on youth smoking initiation, and foreground the primary social contexts in which young people's cigarette access behaviours are enacted.

The second section focuses on studies reporting on the 'availability' of cigarettes and other tobacco products for children and young people, examining young people's 'usual' cigarette sources, the perceived availability of cigarettes, and reviews of interventions to reduce tobacco sales to minors. The third focuses on the 'attractiveness' of cigarettes and other tobacco products for children and young people, focussing in particular on cigarette branding and studies investigating the effects and anticipated effects of PoS cigarette display bans and generic cigarette packaging on young people's smoking related behaviours and attitudes.

Chapter 3 details the methodology developed for this study, including the ontological and epistemological stance informing the selection of appropriate methods in this study and highlighting the particular contribution and salience of examining young people's views and perspectives in this context. This chapter also provides an account of the research process, including ethical considerations, the recruitment and interviewing of participants, and issues pertaining to data management and analysis.

Chapter 4 introduces the study participants and the communities in which they were interviewed, considers their definitions of smoking and accounts of smoking initiation, and highlights participants' representations of the ubiquity of smoking at home, at school and within the study communities.

Chapter 5 describes the range of usual cigarette sources accessed by participants, including retail sources, social sources and proxy cigarette purchases. This chapter also considers the range of strategies employed by participants in negotiating access to tobacco, identifying differences in participants 'usual' cigarette sources by age and smoking status, and considers a range of informal rules around cigarette access.

Chapter 6 describes participants' individual brand preferences and loyalties, and considers the language employed by participants in communicating these through a range of perceived brand characteristics. Keller's (1993) model of customer based brand equity is employed as a means of locating participants' representations of the defining characteristics of their favoured brands in the context of the range of attributes comprising brand image.

Chapter 7 explores participants' perceptions and representations of the perceived 'impact' of the increase in the minimum age of sale on their ability to access cigarettes, and their responses to the prospect of a ban on point of sale displays and the eventual introduction of plain or generic cigarette packaging.

Chapter 8 locates findings in the context of relevant literature on youth smoking, cigarette access, and cigarette branding to consider the contribution of this study to research in this area and highlight implications for tobacco control policy, research and practice.

2 Literature review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of literature pertaining to youth cigarette access and cigarette branding. This thesis aims to examine young people's smoking and cigarette access behaviours in the context of the increase in the minimum age of sale of tobacco from 16 to 18 years in the UK in October 2007, and to explore participants' perceptions and representations of cigarette brand image in the context of the prospective ban on point-of-sale cigarette displays and in anticipation of the introduction of generic packaging in the UK. The literature review is therefore divided into three sections. The first provides an overview of recent developments in tobacco control to consider the broader policy context in which the legislation has been instituted, and considers some of the primary factors associated with youth smoking initiation to highlight the range of individual and social factors influencing youth smoking behaviour, and delineate the primary social contexts in which young people's smoking and cigarette access behaviours are routinely enacted.

The second section examines young people's cigarette access behaviours in more detail, focussing on studies examining young people's usual cigarette sources, the perceived availability of cigarettes, and the impact of minimum age laws and other interventions to reduce tobacco sales to minors. The third section considers the influence of tobacco advertising and promotion on adolescent smoking uptake, focussing in particular on studies investigating the anticipated impact of point of sale display bans and generic packaging on adolescent smoking. Cigarette brand image is foregrounded in this section in order to demonstrate the continued relevance of studies reporting on more traditional forms of advertising following the implementation of the Tobacco Advertising and Promotions Act 2002.

Medline, EMBASE, ASSIA and PsychINFO were searched by combining a range of terms including tobacco/smoking/cigarette\$/ and child\$/youth/young people, with sourc\$/access\$/supply\$ to identify literature relevant to the focus on cigarette access during the preliminary stages of this study. As the secondary focus on cigarette branding emerged during fieldwork, additional searches were carried out using

additional terms including brand image/brand equity. The identification of relevant literature has been an iterative process, with further searches carried out as additional themes emerged. All searches were limited to studies published in English.

2.2 Young people and smoking

2.2.1 Introduction

This section locates the decline in youth smoking prevalence in the UK since the 1990s in the context of contemporaneous developments in tobacco control, and examines some of the primary correlates of youth smoking to highlight the range of factors associated with youth smoking initiation and delineate the policy context in which recent legislation to reduce the availability and attractiveness of cigarettes and other tobacco products for children and young people is being implemented.

2.2.2 Smoking prevalence and trends

The English Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use Series (SDD) (Fuller, 2012) (Figure 1) and Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Surveys (SALSUS) (Black et al., 2012) (Figure 2) show a clear decline in ever smoking prevalence, the inverse of the proportion of respondents reporting never having tried smoking, following an increase in youth smoking in the 1990s. Between 2000 and 2010, the proportion of respondents reporting ever smoking declined from around a half and two thirds among 13 and 15 year olds respectively in 2000 to around a quarter and a half in 2010, compared with a ~ 5% increase in the 1990s (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012, Boreham and Shaw, 2001a, Boreham and Shaw, 2001b). Rates of regular and occasional smoking – defined as smoking a cigarette a week or more and smoking sometimes, but not as many as one a week – have followed a similar trajectory, increasing through the early 1990s and declining thereafter. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate changes in regular smoking prevalence among 13 and 15 year olds in England and Scotland by sex since 1990 (Black et al., 2012; Fuller, 2012).

Figure 1: Regular smoking prevalence among 13 and 15 year olds in England 1990-2010 by sex: SDD 1990-2010

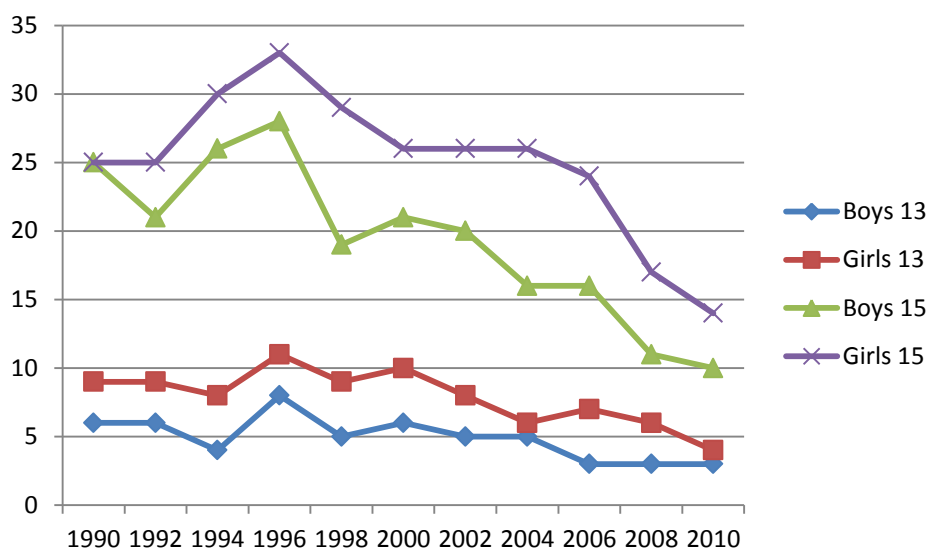
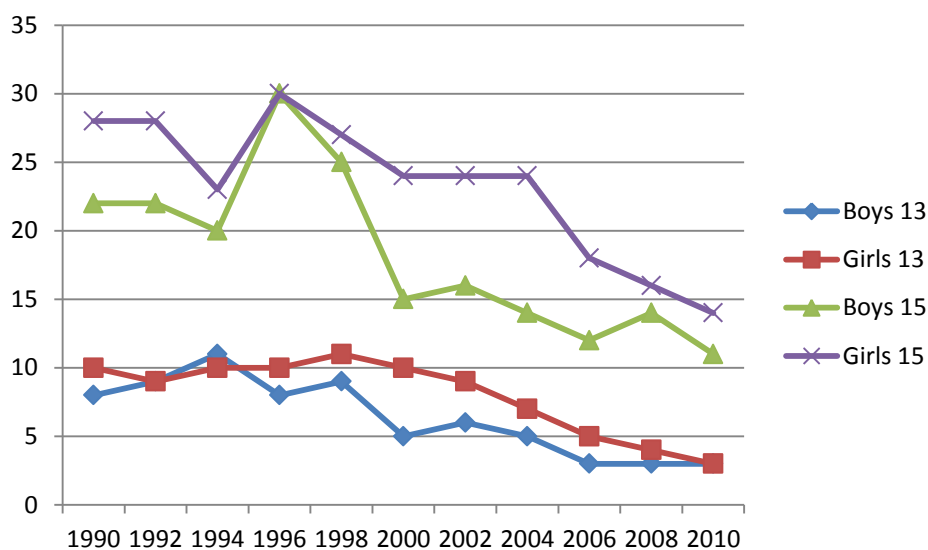


Figure 2: Regular smoking prevalence among 13 and 15 year olds in Scotland by sex: SDD 1990-2000, SALSUS 2002-2010

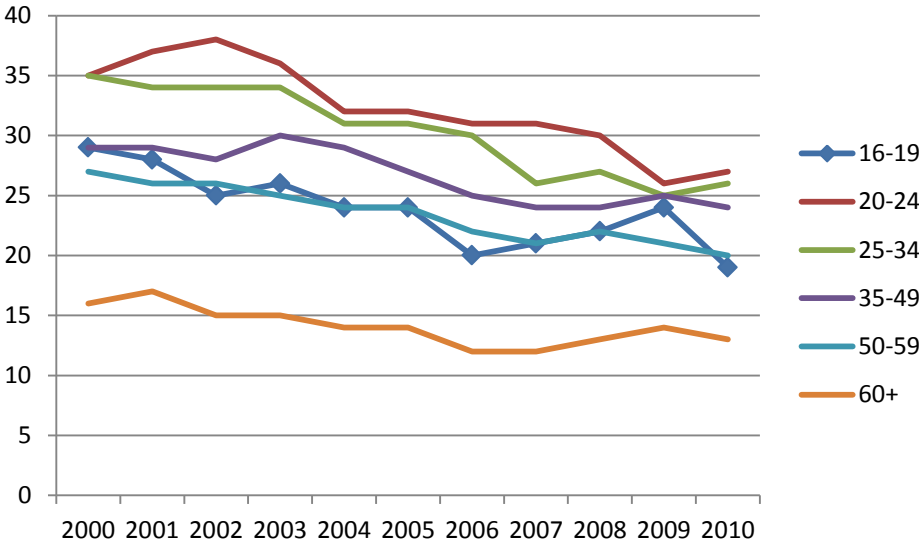


Regular smoking prevalence among 15 year olds has more than halved from a peak of ~30% in 1996 to ~20% in 2000, and, following a relatively stable period in the mid-2000s, to 12 and 13% in England and Scotland respectively in 2010 (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012). Rates of regular smoking among 13 year olds have declined by around two-thirds, from 10 and 9% in England and Scotland in 1996 to 3% in

2010. Rates of regular smoking in both England and Scotland increase with age and have consistently remained higher among girls. In England, where the SDD reports on smoking among 11-15 year olds, the odds of regular smoking increased significantly ($p < 0.001$) by single year of age ($OR = 1.65$) in 2010, and girls remained more than twice as likely to report regular smoking as boys ($OR = 2.08$) despite a clear reduction in the ‘gender gap’ since 2006. SALSUS surveys show comparable variation by age and sex in Scotland, with the decline in regular smoking since the 1990s accounted for primarily by reduced smoking among 15 year old boys. This gap has closed to $< 5\%$ in 2010.

Rates of regular smoking continue to increase with age into early adulthood, with rates of current smoking as reported in the General Lifestyle Surveys (GLS) (Figure 3) consistently highest among 20-24 year olds and falling with age thereafter (Office for National Statistics, 2013). Despite an overall downward trend, however, the proportion of 16-19 year olds reporting current smoking – defined as smoking ‘at all these days’ in the relevant surveys – increased from 20% in 2006 to 24% in 2009, falling thereafter to 19% in 2010:

Figure 3: Regular smoking prevalence by age: GLS 2000-2010



SDD surveys (Fuller, 2012) also show a decline in past-week cigarette consumption since the 1990s, with mean weekly consumption among 11-15 year old regular smokers falling from 56 cigarettes in 1998 to 46 in 2000 and 36.5 in 2010 (Fuller, 2012). Reported past-week consumption varies year on year, however, and the relevant figures are not age adjusted. The decline in cigarette consumption may therefore be attributable in part to changes in the distribution of regular smoking by age. In Scotland, where the SALSUS reports on average weekly (2002-2008) and past-week cigarette consumption by age and smoking status, past-week consumption among 13 and 15 year old regular smokers declined somewhat while average consumption increased to 2008 (Black et al., 2012). Average consumption is somewhat higher among boys than girls, although this difference is confined to younger pupils in the SALSUS. In 2010, mean past-week consumption among 13 year old boys reporting regular smoking was 44 cigarettes, compared with 32 for girls. Equivalent figures for 15 year olds were 48 and 45 respectively (Black et al., 2012).

Past week consumption figures also highlight some of the difficulties inherent in attempting to capture youth smoking rates in surveys. Young people's smoking trajectories are characterised by intermittence and experimentation prior to the establishment of more discrete and stable adult smoking patterns, and prevalence estimates vary both within and between surveys. In 2010, for example, more than 80% of regular smokers and 20% of occasional smokers in Scotland reported past week consumption levels consistent with daily smoking, and a consistent minority of ex-smokers and those reporting having tried smoking in the SDD report past-week consumption levels consistent with regular smoking (Fuller, 2012). The Health Behaviour in School-age Children Surveys (HBSC) (Currie, 2012) reported regular smoking prevalence rates for 13 year old boys twice as high as those in the SDD in 2001/2 and 2005/6, while the Health Survey for England consistently reports lower 'ever' smoking prevalence estimates for 15 year olds (NHS Information Centre, 2012).

The decline in youth smoking prevalence and cigarette consumption since the 1990s has coincided with changes in young people's smoking-related attitudes, in particular

those of non-smokers. Both the SDD and SALSUS report on smoking related attitudes through respondents' agreement or disagreement with a range of positive and negative smoking-related statements, and factors associated with the social and home environments including perceived peer smoking prevalence and smoking in the home. While rates of agreement with a range of 'negative' smoking-related statements have consistently remained very high among both regular and non-smokers, with <95% of respondents agreeing for example that smoking causes lung cancer, agreement with the range of 'positive' smoking-related statements varies by smoking status. In the 2010 SALSUS, for example, almost all girls (91%) reporting regular smoking agreed that smoking: 'helps people relax if they feel nervous', compared with less than two-thirds (61%) of non-smokers (Black et al., 2012)

The differences in the smoking-related attitudes of regular vs. non-smokers increased in 2008 following a decline in the proportion of non-smokers agreeing with the range of 'positive' smoking-related statements (Black et al., 2009, Fuller, 2009). In the 2006 SALSUS, for example, around three-quarters (74%) of non-smoking girls agreed that smoking: 'helps people relax if they feel nervous', compared with 59% in 2008 and 61% in 2010 (Black et al., 2012, Black et al., 2009, Maxwell et al., 2007). The increasingly 'anti-smoking' stance this implies is particularly apparent among younger pupils. In 2006, for example, over a half (51%) of 13 year old non-smoking girls agreed that: 'smokers stay slimmer', compared with 29% in 2008 and 2010 (Black et al., 2012, Black et al., 2009, Maxwell et al., 2007). Perhaps more significantly given the high incidence of experimentation in the relevant age group, the proportion of 13 year olds agreeing that: 'smokers are more fun' also declined significantly from around a third (31%) in 2006 to only 3% in 2008 and 2010 (Black et al., 2012, Black et al., 2009, Maxwell et al., 2007).

SDD surveys report on levels of agreement with a range of equivalent statements by age and past-week smoking status. While less change is evident over time in these surveys, these also show a decline in the perceived acceptability of youth smoking, with the proportion of pupils agreeing that: 'it's ok to try smoking once to see what it's like' falling from over a half in 2001 to 35% in 2010 (Fuller, 2012, Boreham and Shaw, 2002). Estimations of peer smoking prevalence have also declined over time,

and fewer children are reporting smoking among parents and other family members (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012).

The decline in regular smoking in the late 1990s has coincided with significant developments in tobacco control. The Smoking Kills white paper (Department of Health, 1998) was launched in 1998, representing the first proportionate governmental response to tobacco since Royal College of Physician's Smoking and Health reports were published in the 1960s (Royal College of Physicians 1962). Smoking Kills introduced a comprehensive tobacco control strategy for the UK including above inflation taxation, funding for comprehensive cessation services, and specific measures to reduce rates of incident smoking among young people. Targeted cessation services were delivered initially through Health Action Zones in England (Woods et al., 2003, Chesterman et al., 2005, Action on Smoking and Health, 2008) and the introduction of a voluntary Public Places Charter anticipated the implementation of smoke-free legislation in Scotland and England in 2006 and 2007 respectively (Health and Social Care (Scotland) Act 2005, Health Act 2006).

While the strategy outlined in Smoking Kills (1998) represented significant progress, however, it was compromised in the first instance by a failure of political commitment in relation to preventive measures to discourage the uptake of smoking among young people. While the SDD surveys indicated that most children continued to source cigarettes from shops (Jarvis, 1997), for example, under-age sales were addressed firmly in the context of a commitment to the status quo: existing duties on local authorities under the Children and Young Persons (Protection from Tobacco) Act 1991 to consider the extent to which an enforcement campaign may be appropriate in their local area annually were considered sufficient to address underage sales, along with the development of a new local authority Enforcement Protocol (Secretary of State for Health and Secretaries of State for Scotland Wales and Northern Ireland 1998).

The political message was similarly equivocal in relation to point-of sale advertising. While: 'The Government believes that [being confronted with promotional materials] is harmful to children, and increases the likelihood of their starting to smoke' (Secretary of State for Health and Secretaries of State for Scotland Wales and

Northern Ireland, 1998: 3.10) support for the relevant EU Directive had always been contingent on the proposed advertising ban permitting tobacco products to be displayed for normal sale, and the net result was an interpretation of: ‘what is meant by "advertising aimed at purchasers" in such a way as to limit [advertising] strictly to the gantries displaying tobacco products themselves and their prices [...] aiming to protect children as far as possible from exposure to pro-tobacco messages in shops, whilst taking account of the legitimate desire of retailers to display products for sale and indicate their prices’ (Secretary of State for Health and Secretaries of State for Scotland Wales and Northern Ireland, 1998: 3.12)

In the case of cigarette vending machines, similarly, and while contemporaneous survey data indicated their use by one in three children (Jarvis, L. 1997), the: ‘specific action’ (Secretary of State for Health and Secretaries of State for Scotland Wales and Northern Ireland 1998) proposed by government amounted to the endorsement of existing codes of practice introduced and regulated by the National Association of Cigarette Machine Operators, albeit revised to prioritise the siting of machines in supervised areas. While *Smoking Kills* outlined a comprehensive tobacco control strategy, then, this was not fully implemented in the first instance, with a proliferation of voluntary agreements and industry codes of practice evocative of distractions engendered by the ‘low tar lie’ in previous decades (Leavell, 1999), as tobacco companies conflated ‘light’ cigarettes with harm reduction.

The Public Places charter, for example, afforded ample opportunity for pre-emptive industry manoeuvring via organisations such as AIR, an ostensibly independent organisation managed by Corporate Responsibility Consulting Ltd, funded by the Tobacco Manufacturers’ Association and generating evidence for the popular desirability of maintaining the status quo (BAT, 2001). The shift from a clear commitment to a voluntary approach to clean-air laws in 1998 to the implementation of comprehensive smoke free legislation a decade later was ultimately forced by the combination of an effective advocacy coalition working to garner public and media support (Arnott et al., 2007) and the precedent set by the successful implementation of smoke free legislation in Ireland in 2004.

That smoke-free legislation resulted as much from political expedience as political will is implicit in the Scottish Executive's *A Breath of Fresh Air for Scotland* (Scottish Executive, 2004). Published in 2004, the action plan was informed by recommendations from *Reducing Smoking and Tobacco-Related Harm* published jointly by NHS Health Scotland and ASH Scotland in 2003 (NHS Scotland and ASH Scotland, 2003). While *Reducing Smoking and Tobacco-Related Harm* (2003) suggested that increased smoke-free provision was unlikely to be achieved without legislation, and while the plan acknowledged the role of legislators in forming as well as following public opinion, the Scottish Executive remained committed to voluntary agreements and monitoring the introduction of smoke-free legislation in Ireland rather than: '[attempting] to force public opinion on what remains essentially an issue of personal behaviour' (Scottish Executive, 2004: 5.10).

Despite some equivocation in relation to clean-air laws, however, *A Breath of Fresh Air for Scotland* acknowledged the contribution of *Smoking Kills* in providing a template for the development of a comprehensive Scottish tobacco control strategy, and summarised the contemporaneous Scottish position succinctly:

Since 1999, the Scottish Executive has been driving forward implementation in a Scottish context of the comprehensive tobacco control programme set out in the UK White Paper Smoking Kills. Working with our partners, we have delivered new and expanding cessation services, high quality communications campaigns, Nicotine Replacement Therapy on prescription, a ban on tobacco advertising, enhanced health warnings on cigarette packets and tobacco test purchasing pilots. Whilst these are substantial achievements, the Scottish Executive believes that the time is right to step up the pace of advance and come forward with a new action plan which can take us even further (Scottish Executive, 2004).

While the action plan did not propose measures radically different from those outlined in *Smoking Kills*, *A Breath of Fresh Air for Scotland* signalled a clear political commitment to the development of the Scottish tobacco control agenda, specifically in relation to health inequalities - a priority agenda outlined in *Improving Health in Scotland: the Challenge* in 2003 - and also, crucially, the development of a more robust, evidence-informed preventive strategy to reduce rates of incident smoking among young people (Scottish Executive, 2004: 3.6). The Tobacco Control

Strategy Group was upgraded to a Ministerial Working Group, and a short-life expert Smoking Prevention Working Group was established to inform a new long-term smoking prevention strategy. The group's remit included a review of the evidence base for increasing the minimum age of sale 18 years, a move endorsed by the British Medical Association (BMA Scotland, 2006), and *Towards a Future Without Tobacco: The Report of the Smoking Prevention Working Group* was published in 2006 (Scottish Executive, 2006).

A Breath of Fresh Air for Scotland had also signalled a commitment to de-normalise smoking, to: 'reverse the traditional paradigm within which young people are tempted to start smoking by the desire to 'fit in' to one in which smoking is not considered to be a normal 'social behaviour' (Scottish Executive, 2004: 5.10) and *Towards a Future Without Tobacco* was correspondingly structured around a series of recommendations to reduce: 'the availability, affordability and attractiveness of cigarettes and other tobacco products to young people' (Scottish Executive 2006). These included recommendations in relation to tackling under-age sales and point-of-sales advertising: issues *Smoking Kills* had failed adequately to address.

In terms of under-age sales, international evidence for the effectiveness of rigorous sales law enforcement campaigns relative to voluntary agreements and retailer education initiatives (Stead and Lancaster, 2005) was cited in recommending the development of local authority trading standards test-purchasing initiatives, the introduction of heavier fines and penalties for sales law infringements and a negative licensing scheme for tobacco retailers (Scottish Executive, 2006: 3.6, 3.8). While the international evidence-base is insufficiently conclusive to associate increasing the age of sale straightforwardly with reduced youth smoking prevalence, the move was recommended to reflect the broader values of the national and global tobacco control agendas and the hazards of tobacco use (Scottish Executive, 2006). The increase in the minimum age of sale of tobacco from 16 to 18 years was duly implemented in October 2007 (*Smoking, Health and Social Care (Scotland) Act 2005 (Variation of Age Limit for Sale of Tobacco etc. and Consequential Modifications) Order 2007*, *The Children and Young Persons (Sale of Tobacco etc.) Order 2007*).

Evidence for the impact of tobacco advertising on adolescent smoking uptake and the particular susceptibility of young people to advertising exposure (Pierce, J. P., Gilpin, E. A. et al. 1991; Pollay, R. W., Siddarth, S. et al. 1996; Lovato, C., Linn, G. et al. 2003) was also cited in the report to highlight the continued exposure of young people to tobacco displays in retail environments, and to smoking related imagery in other media following the implementation of the Tobacco Advertising and Promotions Act 2002. Governmental endorsement of EU efforts to introduce pictorial warnings on cigarette packets was recommended, along with efforts to impact on the portrayal of tobacco in other media and prohibit point of sale (PoS) cigarette displays, replacing these with a simple list of brands and prices (Scottish Executive, 2006: 3.37, 3.38, 3.39).

While no specific recommendations were made in relation to cigarette vending machines, their contribution to the failure of existing youth access policies was highlighted in the context of relevant SALSUS data, and by 2008 a commitment to consider legislative efforts to reduce underage sales from cigarette vending machines had been incorporated in the broader statutory controls agenda (Scottish Government 2008). In 2010, a ban on PoS cigarette displays, a negative licensing scheme for breaches of sales laws and the prohibition of the sale of cigarettes from vending machines was incorporated in the Tobacco and Primary Medical Services (Scotland) Act 2010, with the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act and Health Bill 2009 introducing similar legislation for England and Wales. PoS cigarette displays were prohibited in larger retailers in Scotland from 2013. This will be extended to prohibit PoS cigarette displays in smaller retailers from 2015.

2.2.3 Determinants of youth smoking

A range of factors pertaining to young people's personal, social and cultural environments have been associated with youth smoking initiation and progression to regular smoking. These were reviewed in detail in the recent PHRC review commissioned by the Department of Health to inform smoking prevention policy in England (Amos et al., 2009). This section considers some of these factors to

highlight the primary social contexts in which young people's cigarette access behaviours are enacted, and in which their perceptions and representations of cigarette brand image acquire meaning.

2.2.3.1 Age and gender

Both the SDD and SALSUS show a clear increase in smoking prevalence with age (See Figures 1 and 2). In the 2010 SALSUS, around a fifth (21%) of 13 year olds were classified as ever smokers – the inverse of the proportion of pupils reporting never having tried smoking – compared with around a half (45%) of 15 year olds. In England, where the SDD reports on smoking among 11-15 year olds, rates of ever smoking increased by a similar margin from 23% to 49% among 13 and 15 year olds respectively, and rates of regular smoking increased significantly ($p < 0.001$) by single year of age (OR=1.65), from less than 0.5% among 11 year olds to 12% among 15 year olds. The General Lifestyle Surveys (GLS) suggest that smoking prevalence continues to increase with age into early adulthood, with rates of current smoking consistently highest among 20-24 year olds (Office for National Statistics, 2013). In Scotland, where the Scottish Health survey reports on current smoking among 16-24 year olds, smoking prevalence is highest among 25-34 year olds (Bromley et al., 2013). Current smoking is defined as 'smoking at all these days' in the relevant surveys.

While youth and adult surveys are not directly comparable, employing different survey instruments in differing fieldwork contexts, it is worth highlighting that while smoking prevalence continues to increase with age into the mid-20s, rates of never-smoking among adults are broadly comparable with those reported by 15 year olds in the SDD and SALSUS. In 2010, for example, 54% of 25-34 year olds in the Scottish Health Surveys reported never having smoked regularly or never having smoked at all, compared with 55% of 15 year olds reporting never smoking in the SALSUS (Black et al., 2012). While the various framing of the questions and cross-sectional nature of the data precludes further elaboration in this context, it is worth observing that over two-thirds (68%) of current smokers in the GLS reported smoking regularly

before the age of 18, and 85% before the age of 20 (Office for National Statistics, 2013). The impression engendered by the surveys, then, is of a clear increase in smoking experimentation during adolescence and the subsequent sedimentation of these behaviours into more stable patterns of current cigarette smoking in adulthood.

The impression engendered by these surveys is supported by longitudinal studies on youth smoking. In The Edinburgh Transitions study, for example, two-thirds (66%) of those respondents reporting smoking at age 12 were still smoking a year later at 13, with four-fifths (79%) smoking at ages 14 and 15 (McVie and Bradshaw 2005).. Of those reporting daily smoking at 12, over half (56%) reported daily smoking at 13, with 78% and 70% reporting daily smoking at ages 14 and 15. As such, around a half of those who had quit by age 13 had resumed smoking a year later, with most continuing to smoke the following year. While the proportion of participants reporting daily smoking increased from 3% at age 13 to 17% at age 15, the proportion reporting never smoking remained stable. Early experimentation therefore predicted regular smoking in the cohort, and the continuity of smoking behaviour was found to increase with age (McVie and Bradshaw 2005). The MRC Twenty 07 study supports this assessment: only 2% of those reporting current smoking at 15 had stopped smoking by the age of 18 (Sweeting and West, 2006).

The SDD and SALSUS also show clear variation in smoking prevalence by sex, although the resulting 'gender gap' has closed in recent years as discussed in Section 2.2.2. In the 2010 SALSUS, for example, 11% and 14% of 15 year old boys and girls respectively reported regular smoking, compared 14 and 24% in 2006 (Black et al., 2012). Differences in regular smoking among younger respondents have consistently remained more modest, and both the GLS and Scottish Health Surveys report comparable levels of current smoking among men and women between the ages of 16 and 24 (Office for National Statistics, 2013, Bromley et al., 2013). Despite a clear reduction in the gender gap, however, both the SDD and SALSUS continue to report higher levels of smoking among girls. In the 2010 SDD, for example, girls were more than twice as likely (OR=2.08) to report regular smoking as boys. These differences vary between contexts, however: in the 43 countries and regions contributing to the Health Behaviours in School Age Children survey in 2010,

significant differences in regular smoking among 15 year olds by sex was reported in 15 countries and regions. Smoking prevalence was generally higher among boys, being higher among girls in the UK, Spain and Czech Republic only (Currie, 2012).

2.2.3.2 Parents and peers

A review of studies published between 1980 and 2000 (n=87) and investigating the respective and combined influences of parental and sibling smoking on youth smoking initiation and progression to regular smoking suggests familial effects may be modest relative to previous estimates (Avenevoli and Merikangas, 2003). Where significant parental effects were identified in the studies these tended to be limited and were often eliminated when other variables were included in statistical models. Support for the dose-response relationship implied by the increase in ‘regular’ smoking among young people with the number of smokers in the home reported in the SDD and SALSUS was also found to be inconsistent (Avenevoli and Merikangas, 2003, Fuller, 2007, Black et al., 2012).

Sibling smoking was found to be more consistently predictive of youth smoking (Avenevoli and Merikangas, 2003), although fewer studies investigated these effects (Avenevoli and Merikangas, 2003). A range of methodological and measurement issues were highlighted as problematising the assessment of the predictive power of both parental and sibling smoking in multivariate models, however, including a lack of standardised instruments, a failure to control for a range of confounders and an over-reliance on cross-sectional data, with the authors suggesting that the nature of parental influences on adolescent smoking uptake may rather be inadequately understood. (Avenevoli and Merikangas, 2003). Attention has also been drawn to the diverse nature of young people’s smoking trajectories and transitions, to the artificial nature of traditional categorisations of smoking behaviour and to the multi-dimensional nature of family forms and influences (Darling and Cumsille, 2003).

The Liverpool Longitudinal Study, for example, suggests parental smoking may represent a major factor in adolescent smoking experimentation and ‘ever’ smoking among younger children (Woods et al., 2008, Milton et al., 2004). The 20 year

follow-up of the Australian Schools Health and Fitness Survey, by contrast, found that parental smoking was not associated with smoking experimentation after adjusting for area-based SES, ethnicity, living arrangements, school type and school-assessed scholastic ability (Paul et al., 2008). Given the clear association between parental smoking and smoking in adulthood, however, the authors support the concept of a ‘sleeper effect’, with parental smoking exerting an influence in the longer term (Paul et al., 2008, Avenevoli and Merikangas, 2003).

A study reporting on a subset of 650 participants from the Health and Behaviours in Teenagers Study in London living with a step-parent who smokes also found that these individuals remain significantly more likely to smoke after adjusting for gender, ethnicity and SES (Fidler et al., 2008). A longitudinal survey of 1009 15 year olds in Scotland also found that respondents with parents that smoked were significantly more likely to smoke at 1 year follow up, although no significant variation by parental smoking status was identified in the longer term (West et al., 1999).

Despite equivocal evidence for the impact of parental smoking on young people’s smoking behaviours, however, young people living with other smokers in the home are more likely to be ‘open’ as opposed to ‘secret’ smokers, more likely to be allowed to smoke in the home and more likely to report permissive parental attitudes to smoking (Maxwell et al., 2007, Fuller, 2007). Permissive attitudes and parental modelling of smoking behaviours are likely to increase susceptibility to smoking in the longer term (Paul et al., 2008, Bandura, 1989, Avenevoli and Merikangas, 2003). Parents have also been identified as a primary source of young people’s first cigarette (DiFranza and Coleman, 2001a, Milton et al., 2008), although few regular smokers in the SDD and SALSUS report ‘usually’ sourcing cigarettes from parents. Young people’s usual cigarette sources are considered in detail in Section 2.3.4.

Young people’s smoking behaviours are overwhelmingly located in social contexts (Fuller, 2007, Maxwell et al., 2007, Kobus, 2003), and this social dimension is foregrounded in a review of qualitative studies published in English to 2002 (Walsh and Tzelepis, 2007). Of 48 studies investigating peer influences on adolescent tobacco use, 19 represent smoking as a social and group activity fostering a sense of

acceptance and membership. Four specifically highlight the role of smoking in facilitating integration in new social environments, with three exploring the role of rituals associated with procurement in initiating interpersonal exchanges (Walsh and Tzelepis, 2007). Smoking has also been identified as representing a means by which to assert status and negotiate social hierarchies, in particular among girls (Walsh and Tzelepis, 2007, Michell and Amos, 1997).

UK studies investigating smoking in the context of peer group hierarchies have identified 'top' girls, 'low status' students and 'troublemakers', primarily boys, as most likely to smoke, with 'middle' status pupils least likely to start smoking (Michell and Amos, 1997, Turner et al., 2006). Physical activity and participation in sports have been identified as exerting a protective effect on boys, functioning as alternative markers of social status and emergent 'adult' male identities (Wichstrøm and Wichstrøm, 2009, Kujala et al., 2007, Michell and Amos, 1997). Studies in the US and New Zealand have reported similar findings, with non-smoking behaviour associated with intermediate social status and physically active groups (Walsh and Tzelepis, 2007, Kobus, 2003).

Young people also demonstrate an awareness of the way in which their smoking behaviours are likely to be influenced by others, with some young people proactively seeking opportunities for experimentation through association with other smokers (Michell and West, 1996). Longitudinal studies have also found that smoking uptake is generally antecedent to changes in the composition of young people's friendship groups (West et al., 1999, deVries et al., 2006). This suggests that peer selection may be more important than peer pressure in terms of influencing youth smoking. While instances of direct and coercive 'peer-pressure' have been reported in the literature (Michell and West, 1996, Michell and Amos, 1997, Walsh and Tzelepis, 2007), peer influence appears to be primarily normative rather than coercive, with young people expressing a motivation to smoke in terms of a desire to 'fit in' rather than any overt pressures to conform (Walsh and Tzelepis, 2007, Kobus, 2003, Denscombe, 2001).

2.2.3.3 Socioeconomic status

Hanson and Chen's (2007) review of studies conducted between 1970 and 2007 examining variation in adolescent health behaviour by parental socioeconomic status (SES) identifies consistent variation in smoking prevalence by SES among 10-21 year old children and young adults. Of 44 studies included in analyses, 18 reported a negative correlation between SES and smoking, with a further 12 finding a negative association between SES and smoking in at least one study population sub-group (Hanson and Chen, 2007). In total, over two-thirds of the studies found a significant negative correlation between SES and smoking, with less than a fifth identifying any positive association and 9 identifying none. Analyses of a subset of 21 'high quality' studies, those including a representative sample of over 500 participants and an SES range reflecting national demographics, revealed a similar picture, with more than two-thirds supporting a negative association between parental SES and adolescent smoking (Hanson and Chen, 2007).

The identified association between SES and smoking status was strongest in younger cohorts (Hanson and Chen, 2007). Ten of 12 studies reporting on smoking prevalence by SES among 10-14 year olds found significantly higher smoking prevalence rates in lower SES groups. In Wardle et al's (2003) study of the first wave of data from the HABITS study in London, for example, 11 and 12 year olds boys and girls in the most deprived group were almost twice as likely (OR=1.9 for boys) and more than three times as likely (OR=3.2 for girls) respectively to report ever smoking as those in the least deprived groups (Wardle et al., 2003). Of 15 studies reporting on smoking prevalence among 15-21 year olds, only 8 identified a significant negative correlation between SES and smoking, with three reporting a positive correlation and four identifying none (Hanson and Chen, 2007). The weaker association between SES and smoking in older cohorts is consistent with the 'equalisation in youth' hypothesis, which proposes that familial influences become secondary to peer effects and broader social imperatives in later adolescence (West, 1997, West and Sweeting, 2004, Hanson and Chen, 2007).

The weaker association between SES and youth smoking in later adolescence may also be associated with the various specification of smoking variables in these

studies. In the West of Scotland 11-16 study, for example, SES was significantly ($p < 0.05$) associated with ever-smoking at age 11 and with daily smoking at ages 13 and 15 (West et al., 2007). In the Liverpool Longitudinal Study, home deprivation was strongly associated with regular smoking, but only significantly ($P < 0.05$) at 16 years. The strength of the association between deprivation and adolescent smoking may therefore vary with the definition of smoking employed, particularly among older adolescents, with studies adopting a 'current' smoking definition least likely to show a positive socioeconomic gradient because the social patterning of occasional and regular smoking run in opposite directions (West et al., 2007b). The 2010 SALSUS supports this assessment, with regular smokers more likely to live in the most deprived areas, and with those living in the most deprived areas more likely to report higher rates of past-week cigarette consumption (Black et al., 2012).

West et al (2007) also used data from the West of Scotland study to disaggregate the effects of SES and personal income, with those in lower SES groups in this study reporting significantly ($p < 0.05$) higher levels of income than those in higher SES groups (West et al., 2007a). These effects were found to be attenuated after controlling for personal income, while remaining significant. The effect of personal income on smoking status was also found to vary by SES, exerting a significant effect on smoking in non-manual groups compared with little or no effect in others. The authors suggest that this may result from greater exposure to non-retail and social sources of tobacco among young people living in more deprived communities, and correspondingly reduced price sensitivity (West et al., 2007). However: given the steep socioeconomic gradient in adult smoking and that parents represent a primary source of their children's first cigarette the failure to adjust for parental smoking in these studies is problematic.

2.3 Reducing availability

2.3.1 Introduction

The minimum age of sale was raised from 16 to 18 years in the UK in October 2007 as part of a range of measures to reduce the availability, affordability and attractiveness of cigarettes and tobacco products for children and young people (Scottish Executive, 2006). School-age children in the UK have traditionally experienced very little difficulty sourcing cigarettes from shops, however, and it was broadly recognised that increasing the age of sale was unlikely to impact meaningfully on youth smoking and cigarette access without robust sales laws and robust sales law enforcement (Scottish Executive, 2006). An Enhanced Tobacco Sales Enforcement Programme (ETSEP) was therefore launched in Scotland in February 2009, setting minimum targets for local authority trading standards retailer education and test purchasing initiatives (SCOTSS, 2011). The Tobacco and Primary Medical Services (Scotland) Act 2010 enacted legislation to support sales law enforcement activities, including tobacco retailer registration and a graduated penalty system for infringements, including banning orders.

The ETSEP aimed to: (i) reduce the proportion of 15 year old regular smokers sourcing cigarettes from shops to 50% by 2010, and; (ii) reduce the proportion of 15 year old boys and girls reporting regular smoking to 10.5 and 16% respectively. Process measures included: (i) subjecting 10% of all tobacco retailers to test purchases and 20% to educational site visits annually, thereby; (ii) reducing illegal sales rates to underage volunteer ‘test purchasers’ to 19% by 2010 (SCOTSS, 2011). In 2009/10, Trading Standards in 20 of 34 Scottish authorities duly subjected 10.4% of all identified tobacco retailers to test purchases, generating a failure rate of 15.6% from 2055 attempts. Failure rates on follow-up declined to only 9% (SCOTSS, 2011). This coincided with a decline in the proportion of 15 year old regular smokers reporting ‘usually’ buying cigarettes from shops, from 82% in 2006 to 54% in 2010, and a decline in regular smoking from 12 and 18% among boys and girls respectively in 2006 to 11 and 14% in 2010, thereby approximating the designated programme targets (Black et al., 2012, Maxwell et al., 2007).

The ETSEP was explicitly evidence based: reviews of the youth access literature have consistently shown that combination strategies incorporating retailer education, sustained sales law enforcement and graduated penalty systems consistent with those introduced in the Tobacco Act 2010 are most likely to increase sales law compliance among tobacco retailers (Richardson et al., 2009, Stead and Lancaster, 2005, DiFranza, 2011). While English authorities have not been subject to minimum targets, levels of enforcement have been comparable with those in Scotland, with English authorities generating a test purchasing failure rate of 15% from 5240 test purchases in 2009/10 (Department of Health, 2011). This coincided with a comparable decline in retail purchases among 15 year old current smokers in England, from 77% in 2006 to 50% in 2010, and a decline in regular smoking from 16 and 24% among boys and girls respectively in 2006 to 10 and 14% in 2010 (Fuller, 2007, Fuller, 2012). This section considers the relationship between the enactment and enforcement of minimum age laws and youth smoking prevalence.

2.3.2 Increasing the minimum age of sale

In a review of over 800 published articles and government reports pertaining to the implementation and enforcement of tobacco sales laws, DiFranza (2011), a vocal advocate for youth access interventions since the 1980s, concludes: ‘it cannot be expected that enacting a law, no matter how strong, will have any impact on adolescent smoking in the absence of effective enforcement’ (DiFranza, 2011: 437). The author cites a seminal study in which his 11 year old daughter was successful in 75 of 100 attempts to purchase cigarettes from retailers in central Massachusetts in 1987, despite an increase in the minimum age of sale to 18 years in 1985, to illustrate a widespread disregard for minimum age laws among tobacco retailers in the US in the absence of effective law enforcement (DiFranza, 2005, DiFranza et al., 1987, DiFranza, 2011). Croghan and colleagues (2005) identified similar rates of non-compliance among tobacco retailers in the UK prior to the increase in the minimum age of sale, with underage volunteers successfully making cigarette purchases in 31 of 38 premises in the West Midlands (Croghan et al., 2005).

Interventions to reduce tobacco sales to minors, including studies reporting on compliance rates among tobacco retailers, are examined in section 3.3.3. The salient point here is that the effectiveness of these interventions is broadly acknowledged to be contingent on sales law enforcement rather than on the enactment of legislation (Difranza, 2011, Stead and Lancaster, 2005, Richardson et al., 2009). Indeed, Schnohr and colleagues (2008) identified a positive association between minimum age laws and youth smoking in the 27 European countries contributing to the 2001/2 Health Behaviours in School Age Children Surveys, with youth smoking prevalence highest in countries prohibiting the sale of tobacco to children under 16 years (Schnohr et al., 2008). This included the UK in 2001/2, and SDD and SALSUS surveys have consistently shown that school-age children in the UK reporting regular smoking most commonly source cigarettes from shops, despite existing age laws, in each year since the SDD was launched in 1982 (See Figure 4).

In 2006, for example, the year immediately prior to the increase in the age of sale, 76% of 15 year old regular smokers in Scotland and 65% of 11-15 year old regular smokers in England reported 'usually' buying cigarettes from shops (Maxwell et al., 2007, Fuller, 2007). In Scotland, where the SALSUS reports on young people's usual cigarette sources by age and smoking status, retail cigarette purchases also represented the predominating mode of acquisition among 13 year old regular smokers (Maxwell et al., 2007). In England, where the SDD reports on 'perceived availability' and sales refusals, only 24% of current smokers rated retail purchases as 'difficult', and only 22% reported having been refused a sale during their last purchase attempt. Even among 11 and 12 year olds, only 55% reported sales refusals in the past year (Fuller, 2007). 'Usual' sources of cigarettes among school age children will be examined in section 2.3.4. The salient point is that the increase in the minimum age of sale was not anticipated to impact meaningfully on youth smoking and cigarette access in the absence of effective law enforcement (Scottish Executive, 2006).

The implementation of the legislation, however, coincided not only with an unprecedented reduction in the proportion of young people sourcing cigarettes from shops, but with a significant decline in youth smoking prevalence. Miller et al

(2011), for example, used data from the SDD Surveys to show a significant decline in regular smoking among 11-15 year olds between 2006 and 2008, and Fidler and West (2010) used data from the Smoking Toolkit Study to highlight a comparable decline in current smoking among 16 and 17 year olds (Millett et al., 2011, Fidler and West, 2010). Given a clear consensus that the enactment of minimum age laws does not affect youth smoking, and that no comparable effect has been observed following equivalent increases in the minimum age of sale in Finland, Denmark, Spain and the Republic of Ireland (Currie, 2012, Rasmussen and Due, 2011), these findings merit further elaboration. In the Republic of Ireland, for example, regular smoking among 13 and 15 year olds remained stable between 2001/2 and 2005/6 despite an increase in the minimum age of sale to 18 years in 2002 and the advent of smoke free public places in 2004, while regular smoking among 15 year old boys and girls in England fell from 21.1 and 27.9% among boys and girls respectively in 2001/2 to 13 and 18% in 2005/6 (Currie et al., 2004, Currie et al., 2007).

Millett, Lee et al used data from the 2003- 2008 SDD surveys to report on changes in regular smoking among 11-15 year olds in England following the increase in the age of sale (Millett et al., 2011). Multivariate logistic regression was used to control for student characteristics, substance use and secular trends, and to determine whether the law had a differential impact on students in receipt of free school meals. The legislation was significantly associated with reduced smoking prevalence (OR=0.67, $p<0.001$), and while pupils in receipt of free school meals were significantly more likely to smoke (OR=1.87, $p<0.001$), the effect of the legislation was neutral with regard to disparities (Millett et al., 2011). The impact of the legislation on patterns of cigarette access was also assessed and will be examined in Section 2.3.5. The authors acknowledge a range of limitations, however, including a reliance on self-reported measures of tobacco use and the problems inherent in assessing trends using cross-sectional data. SDD 2007 data were also excluded as the legislation was enacted that year (Millett et al., 2011).

However, the omission of the 2007 data is problematic. The proportions of 11-15 year olds in England reporting regular (and occasional) smoking were identical in 2007 and 2008, with rates of never smoking increasing by just 1% (Fuller, 2008,

Fuller, 2009). As such, any changes in regular smoking prevalence between 2006 and 2008 occurred between September 2006 and December 2007, allowing for data collection and fieldwork. The minimum age of sale was increased on October 1st 2007, and while it is clearly possible that the legislation impacted pre-emptively on smoking uptake, or that sales law compliance among tobacco retailers increased following educational visits from trading standards officers, this would appear to be unlikely for a number of reasons.

Firstly, because the decline in regular smoking observed among 11-15 year olds between 2006 and 2008 is primarily accounted for by reduced smoking prevalence among 15 year olds. Rates of regular smoking among 13 year olds were identical in 2006 and 2008, and increased between 2007 and 2008, compared with a 30% decline in regular smoking among 15 year olds (from 20% in 2006 to 15% in 2007 and 14% in 2008). Older and more habituated smokers are less likely to experience sales refusals, more likely to have recourse to a range of alternative sources of tobacco, and therefore presumably less likely to modify their smoking behaviours in response to sales restrictions: in their 9 year follow-up of a sustained programme of sales law enforcement on the Central Coast in New South Wales in Australia, Tutt et al (2009) make precisely this point, concluding that the short-term impact of the intervention was confined to younger children, with the subsequent decline in smoking among older young people corresponding with the aging of the virtual 'cohort' (Tutt et al., 2009).

It is therefore unlikely that the decline in youth smoking resulted from reduced cigarette availability. Smoking among younger children remained stable, with the decline in regular smoking prevalence confined to older groups. Nor did the reduction in regular smoking among 15 year olds coincide with an increase in occasional smoking between 2006 and 2008, or in ever smoking between 2007 and 2008 (Fuller, 2012). The decrease in regular smoking among 15 year olds is therefore also unlikely to result from a reduced rate of progression to regular smoking, and while it is possible that the prospect of the legislation may have impacted on smoking initiation among 15 year olds pre-emptively, this may overestimate the reach of the associated publicity. Nor is there any precedent for suggesting that the

prospect of the legislation may have impacted on sales. Reviews of the relevant literature have consistently concluded that retailer education does not impact on sales law compliance among tobacco retailers (Stead and Lancaster, 2005, Difranza, 2011, Richardson et al., 2009).

Fidler and West (2010) used data from the Smoking Toolkit Study, a monthly cross sectional household survey, to report on the impact of the increase in the age of sale on current smoking among 16-17 year olds. Data from the 12 months preceding and 19 months after the enactment of the legislation were combined to construct a dichotomous variable with logistic regression used to examine differential effects by age. The percentage difference in current smoking pre and post-legislation was found to be significantly greater among the under 18s (7.6%) (Fidler and West, 2010). The authors acknowledge a range of limitations, including low power. However, they conclude that as the legislation was anticipated to impact primarily on under 18s, and as General Household Surveys suggest the rate of decline among younger adults was previously comparable with that among older groups, the study provides support for the utility of legislating in this context (Fidler and West, 2010).

However, the failure to control for secular trends in this study is problematic. While the construction of a dichotomous variable to assess the relative decline in smoking prevalence pre and post legislation by age may represent a legitimate undertaking, the salient outcome measure is not the relative decline in smoking pre and post legislation by age but rather the relative decline in smoking pre legislation by age relative to the relative decline in smoking post-legislation by age over an equivalent period. If the rate of decline in current smoking among 16 and 17 year olds accelerated following the increase in the minimum age of sale, and rates of decline in the adult population remained stable, or if current smoking remained stable or increased among 16 and 17 year olds to a lesser extent than that observed in the adult population, this is presumably interesting. While the authors represent the failure to incorporate measures of retailer compliance in analyses as a limitation, this is arguably incidental. Irrespective of the given mechanism, if the increase in the minimum age of sale has impacted on youth smoking we would expect to see an

increase in the relative rate of decline in youth smoking prevalence rather than merely a decrease in youth smoking prevalence over the period.

To summarise: while the increase in the minimum age of sale has coincided with significant reductions in youth smoking, there is limited evidence to suggest that the decline in youth smoking results directly from the enactment of this legislation. Reviews of the youth access literature have consistently shown that the enactment of laws is unlikely to impact on youth cigarette access in the absence of robust sales law enforcement, and therefore unlikely to impact on youth smoking. Reviews of interventions to reduce tobacco sales to minors are considered in more detail below.

2.3.3 Enforcing the minimum age of sale

In their systematic review of interventions to reduce tobacco sales to minors, Fichtenberg and Glantz (2002) conclude that youth access interventions do not affect youth smoking (Fichtenberg and Glantz, 2002). Analyses incorporated data from 8 studies reporting either retailer compliance and smoking prevalence, and/or smoking prevalence in intervention and control communities. All assessed compliance via test purchases using 7-17 year old volunteers. Retailer compliance was not associated with regular or 30-day smoking prevalence, and there were no significant differences in smoking between intervention and control communities. Increased compliance with sales laws was not associated with reduced youth smoking, and there was no evidence for a threshold effect after compliance reached a certain level (Fichtenberg and Glantz, 2002). While acknowledging that youth access interventions may impact on availability, the authors suggest preventive efforts may be more appropriately be invested in interventions that have proven to be effective (Fichtenberg and Glantz, 2002).

Youth access interventions have been broadly acknowledged to impact on compliance since Stead and Lancaster (2000) published the first iteration of their Cochrane review in 2000. This included 27 studies reporting on the impact of retailer education and/or sales law enforcement activity on either retailer compliance and/or perceived ease of cigarette access and/or youth smoking prevalence (Stead and

Lancaster, 2000). Most were US studies examining compliance with local ordinances following the enactment of the Synar amendment in 1992 (DiFranza and Dussault, 2005). Six of 11 controlled studies and all uncontrolled studies identified increased rates of post-intervention compliance among tobacco retailers (Stead and Lancaster, 2000). The authors highlight several limitations in these studies, however, including the problems inherent in equating ‘compliance’ with ‘real world’ cigarette availability. The review concluded there was limited evidence for any associated impact on ‘perceived availability’ or youth smoking prevalence (Stead and Lancaster, 2000).

This is reflected in contemporaneous US surveys (Johnston et al., 2001, Johnston et al., 2004). Between 1992 and 2000, for example, the number of states enforcing sales laws increased from 0 to 54 (DiFranza and Dussault, 2005). Minimum targets were introduced in 1996 requiring states to reduce violation rates to 20%, and, by 2000, the number of states achieving these targets had increased from 4 to 32 (DiFranza and Dussault, 2005). Despite increased compliance with sales laws among tobacco retailers, however, and a decline in the proportion of 14-17 year old current smokers reporting ‘usually’ buying cigarettes from shops in national surveys, from 38.7% in 1995 to 23.5% in 1999 (Johnston et al., 2001, Johnston et al., 2004), smoking prevalence increased, and both the perceived availability of cigarettes and proportion of pupils never asked for proof of age remained consistently very high (~90% and ~70%) (DiFranza, 1999, Jones et al., 2002). This may be explained by the concurrent increase in the proportion of students reporting ‘usually’ making proxy purchases, or resorting to other social sources of tobacco (Jones et al., 2002).

The failure of youth access interventions to curtail youth smoking polarised opinion in at the turn of the century. On the one hand, commentators cited evidence for increased social market activity post Synar and a lack of clear evidence for any impact on youth smoking prevalence or self-reported ease of access to ask: ‘Is it time to abandon youth access tobacco programmes’ (Ling et al., 2002). If demand simply shifts to social sources of tobacco where retail access is curtailed, even very high rates of retailer compliance are unlikely to impact on availability, and therefore unlikely to curtail youth smoking (Ling et al., 2002, Fichtenberg and Glantz, 2002,

Glantz, 2002, Castrucci et al., 2002, Craig and Boris, 2007). On the other hand, commentators argued that retail and social cigarette sources are not mutually exclusive, and that a decline in retail cigarette access should eventually result in reduced social cigarette availability, with social availability contingent on some young people continuing to source cigarettes from shops. Some commentators also suggested that the increase in social market activity was likely to be relative as opposed to absolute; that social and commercial sources were not mutually exclusive, and that retailer compliance rates did not appropriately reflect young people's 'real world' ease of cigarette access (DiFranza, 2000, Forster et al., 2003).

Subsequent studies have highlighted the artificiality of the test purchasing protocols used to assess compliance. DiFranza et al (2001), for example, found that underage smokers attempting cigarette purchases were six times more likely to make a successful purchase than the underage non-smokers traditionally employed in assessing retailer compliance, who are not permitted to lie about their age or present identification. Klonoff et al (2003) similarly found that 68% of 17 year olds making non-tobacco purchases from retailers on four occasions were able to make cigarette purchases on the fifth, compared with only 6% of those who had not made the initial 'familiarisation visits' to retailers. Whether the higher rate of sales to young people presumably recognised by the retailers results from the relationships developed during the familiarisation visits or merely from a perception that repeat customers are unlikely to be test purchasers is difficult to assess.

Other commentators highlighted the relative density of tobacco retailers as a factor influencing cigarette access in this context, highlighting for example that retailers sales rates do not account for the volume of retailers in a given locality, and that as a consequence retailer sales rates do not reflect the overall number of retailers in a given locality selling cigarettes to underage customers (Jason et al., 2003). DiFranza (2005) in particular has also consistently criticised the exclusion of uncontrolled studies from reviews on youth cigarette access, suggesting that the most important measure of quality in a supply side intervention is whether the intervention reduces availability, and that both Stead and Lancaster (2005) and Fichtenberg and Glantz's (2002) reviews inappropriately pooled studies in which the supply of cigarettes to

young people has been shown to be disrupted with those in which the intervention did not successfully curtail supply (DiFranza, 2005, DiFranza, 2000). Reviews including uncontrolled studies have subsequently concluded that in every study reporting a decline in youth cigarette access, a decline in youth smoking is also reported (DiFranza, 2005, DiFranza, 2011). Given that DiFranza et al's (2001) work has been instrumental in highlighting the artificiality of the measures of youth cigarette access employed in these studies, however, these intermediate outcomes merit further examination. This is considered in more detail below.

2.3.4 Usual sources, tobacco sales and perceived availability

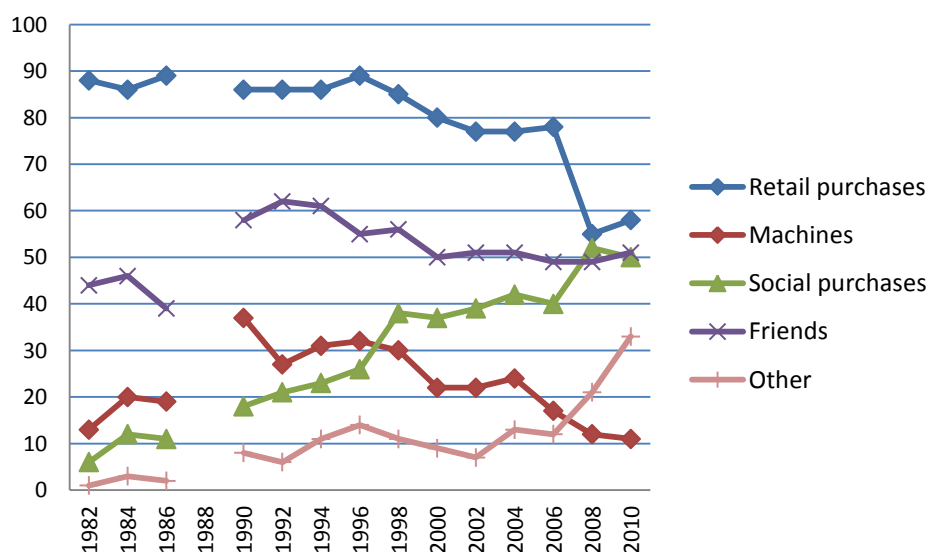
The SDD surveys have reported on 'usual' sources of cigarettes among 11-15 year olds in England since 1982, with the SALSUS superseding the SDD in Scotland from 2002 to report on 'usual' sources of cigarettes among 13 and 15 year olds. In 1990, purchases from: 'shops' were subcategorised to include purchases made from: 'Newsagents/ Tobacconists/Sweetshops'; 'Supermarkets'; 'Garages', and; 'Other types of shop', as were purchases from social sources in 1996 to include those made from: 'Friends and Relatives' and 'Someone Else'. Purchases from the: 'Internet' and 'Street markets' were included in both surveys from 2004/6, with the SALSUS incorporating an additional response option for cigarettes acquired from: 'Ice-cream or burger vans' in 2008. In 2010, both surveys incorporated questions on proxy purchases, or retail cigarette purchases made through intermediaries. These were included as additional response options in the SALSUS and incorporated alongside questions on 'perceived availability' and sales refusals in the SDD.

SDD surveys report on 'usual' sources of cigarettes among 11-15 year olds by age, sex and smoking status, with the SALSUS surveys reporting on 'usual' sources of cigarettes among regular and occasional smokers by age and sex. While the surveys are therefore not directly comparable, the impression generated by each is broadly consistent, with older and more experienced 'regular' smokers 'usually' buying cigarettes from shops and with younger and/or occasional smokers ostensibly more reliant on alternative social sources of tobacco. In 2010, for example, regular

smokers in both England and Scotland were at least twice as likely as occasional smokers to report ‘usually’ buying cigarettes from shops (Fuller, 2012, Black et al., 2012). SDD surveys report comparable variation by age, with 50% of 15 year olds making retail cigarette purchases compared with 25% of 11-13 year olds. In Scotland, where the SALSUS reports on ‘usual’ sources among regular and occasional smokers by age and sex, 15 year olds were only ~15% more likely than 13 year olds to buy cigarettes from shops. This discrepancy may be associated with a failure to adjust for smoking status in the SDD.

With this proviso, and to highlight trends over time, Figure 4 shows changes in the most commonly reported ‘usual’ sources of cigarettes among 11-15 year old regular smokers in England since 1982 (Fuller, 2012).

Figure 4: ‘Usual’ sources of cigarettes among 11-15 year old regular smokers in England: SDD 1982-2010



Retail cigarette purchases have consistently represented the predominating mode of tobacco acquisition among regular smokers in England and Scotland since the SDD was launched in 1982. Until 2006, these represented a ‘usual’ source of cigarettes for >75% of 11-15 year old regular smokers in England and >80% of 15 year old regular smokers in Scotland. The proportion of respondents sourcing cigarettes from shops

declined significantly following the increase in the age of sale, however, from 78% among 11-15 year old regular smokers in England in 2006 to 55% in 2008, and from 82% to 54% among 15 year old regular smokers in Scotland. In 2010, just over a half (58%) of 11-15 year old regular smokers in England reported 'usually' making retail purchases, primarily (49%) from newsagents and similar retailers, with around a sixth (16% and 15%) buying cigarettes from garages and supermarkets and 9% making purchases from 'other' types of shop. The SALSUS reports comparable patterns of cigarette acquisition among 15 year old regular smokers in Scotland, with around a half (54%) making retail purchases, primarily (46%) from newsagents, and with 13% buying cigarettes from garages and supermarkets and 6% from 'other' types of shop (Black et al., 2012).

A consistent proportion of regular smokers have also reported being given cigarettes, primarily by friends, with ~10% and ~15% of regular smokers in England and Scotland given cigarettes by parents and siblings respectively (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012). Among 11-15 year old regular smokers in England the proportion given cigarettes by friends has remained relatively stable at around 50% since 2000, and remained ~ 5% higher among 15 year olds. In Scotland, the equivalent proportion among 15 year old regular smokers is somewhat lower. Thirteen year old regular smokers in Scotland were less likely than their 15 year old counterparts to be given cigarettes in 2010, and the difference is therefore unlikely to be attributable to a failure to adjust for age and smoking status in the SDD. While the proportion of occasional smokers given cigarettes is somewhat higher than among regular smokers, these are less likely to report 'open' smoking or smoking in the home, and this is reflected in the very low proportion of occasional smokers given cigarettes by family members. Regular smokers are around twice as likely to report 'usually' being given cigarettes by siblings, and ten times more likely to be given cigarettes by parents. In England, 20% of regular smokers and 15% of occasional smokers also reported being given cigarettes by 'someone else' in 2010 following the introduction of the relevant response option.

An increasing proportion of young people have reported 'usually' buying cigarettes from others, either from 'friends and relatives' or 'someone else' (Fuller, 2012,

Black et al., 2012). These social purchases succeeded vending machines as the third most commonly reported source of cigarettes among regular smokers in England in 1998, although this is likely to result in part from the sub-categorisation of social purchases into those made from ‘friends and relatives’ and ‘someone else’. Since 1998, however, the proportion of regular smokers in England buying cigarettes from others, primarily from ‘friends and relatives’, has continued to increase from 38% to 50% in 2010, with 11-13 year olds more likely to report buying cigarettes from others in 2010 than from all other retail sources combined. The SALSUS shows a parallel increase in social purchases among 13 and 15 year olds to 2008 – albeit from a lower baseline – and a clear decline in social purchases in 2010, with less than a third of regular smokers and only a fifth of occasional smokers buying cigarettes from others. This may be associated with the inclusion of proxy purchases as discrete response options in the SALSUS: ‘I buy cigarettes from someone else’ is likely to represent the closest available approximation to ‘I ask someone else to buy me cigarettes’ available in the SDD.

While the SDD also charts an increase in the proportion of respondents ‘usually’ accessing cigarettes from other sources, this category includes cigarettes acquired from the internet from 2002, from street markets from 2004 and from ‘someone else’ from 2010. In both the SDD and SALSUS, the inclusion of additional response options has rather contributed to very low numbers of pupils reporting: ‘I get cigarettes/tobacco in some other way’. Between 2006 and 2008, the proportion of 13 year old regular smokers in Scotland ‘usually’ accessing other sources fell from 13% to 0% following the introduction of the ‘ice cream or burger van’ response option (Maxwell et al., 2007, Black et al., 2009). The equivalent proportion also halved among 15 year olds. In England, by contrast, the proportion of regular smokers ‘usually’ accessing other sources more than doubled among regular smokers and trebled among 15 year olds (Fuller, 2007, Fuller, 2009). This suggests an increasing proportion of regular smokers and older pupils in England failed to identify an appropriate response option following the increase in the age of sale in 2007. In 2010, regular smokers in England remained 6 times more likely to get cigarettes ‘some other way’ than in Scotland, where proxy purchases were included as discrete response options.

In summary, both the SDD and SALSUS chart a clear decline in retail cigarette purchases and an increase in social purchases following the increase in the age of sale in the UK. This is consistent with the hypothesis that supply shifts to social sources of tobacco where retail access is curtailed, and the curtailment of retail cigarette access is also implied by an increase in the proportion of respondents reporting difficulties sourcing cigarettes from shops. Perhaps most significantly, however, the incorporation of a discrete response option for proxy purchases in the SALSUS in 2010 coincided with a clear decline in the proportion of young people reporting ‘usually’ buying cigarettes from others or from ‘other’ unspecified sources, compared with an increase in both in the SDD where an equivalent response option for proxy purchases was not included. This highlights a need to exercise caution in interpreting the range of ‘usual’ cigarette sources included in the SDD and SALSUS. The SDD also fails to control for age in reporting variation by smoking status and vice versa. As such, the decline in retail cigarette access among regular smokers may be attributable, in part, to changes in the distribution of regular smoking by age.

2.3.5 Perceived availability and sales refusals

Both the SDD and SALSUS incorporate questions on purchase attempts and sales refusals. In the SALSUS, the relevant question was incorporated in 2010, with pupils prompted to indicate whether they: (i) successfully purchased cigarettes in the past week; (ii) attempted a cigarette purchase but were refused; (iii) did not attempt to purchase cigarettes, or; (iv) have never attempted to purchase cigarettes. More than a half of both 13 and 15 year old regular smokers reported making successful purchase attempts in the past week, with less than 10% having tried but been refused. Among occasional smokers, 16% of both 13 and 15 year olds made successful purchases, with even fewer having tried but been refused than among regular smokers. Boys were more likely than girls to report making both successful and failed purchase attempts, and little difference is evident by age. 13 year old boys were most likely of all to report past-week purchases, and more 13 year old regular smokers reported past week purchases than reported ‘usually’ sourcing cigarettes from shops.

The SDD incorporates a broader range of questions to report on: (i) the proportion of pupils attempting purchases in the past year; (ii) the proportion of these refused a sale at least once; (iii) the proportion refused at their last purchase attempt, and; (iv) their perceptions of their relative 'ease' of cigarette access. The proportion of 11-15 year olds attempting cigarette purchases in the past year has declined considerably from 32% in 1990 to 7% in 2010. Consistent with the increase in regular smoking among older pupils in particular in the 1990s, the proportion of 15 year olds making past year purchases peaked at 57% in 1998, before declining to 18% by 2010. It is worth observing, however, that the decline in retail cigarette access followed rather than preceded the decline in youth smoking. This has implications in terms of the interpretation of studies reporting on the impact of interventions to reduce tobacco sales to minors, with reduced retail cigarette access representing not merely a cause but also a consequence of reduced youth smoking prevalence.

The proportion of pupils reporting past year refusals has historically been higher among younger respondents. In 2008, however, 13 year olds were both less likely than in previous years and less likely than their older counterparts to report past year sales refusals (Fuller, 2009). This remains the case in 2010, with reported refusals increasing with each year of age (Fuller, 2012). The proportion of pupils refused at the last purchase attempt, however, may represent a more reliable measure of refusals, and affords a more direct comparison with the SALSUS data. Given that the relevant questions were only included in the SALSUS from 2010, however, Figures 5 and 6 therefore illustrate changes in the proportion of pupils refused at the last purchase attempt, and perceived ease of access respectively by age since 2002 (Fuller, 2012):

Figure 5: Proportion of pupils in England refused a sale at their last purchase attempt by age: SDD 2002-2010

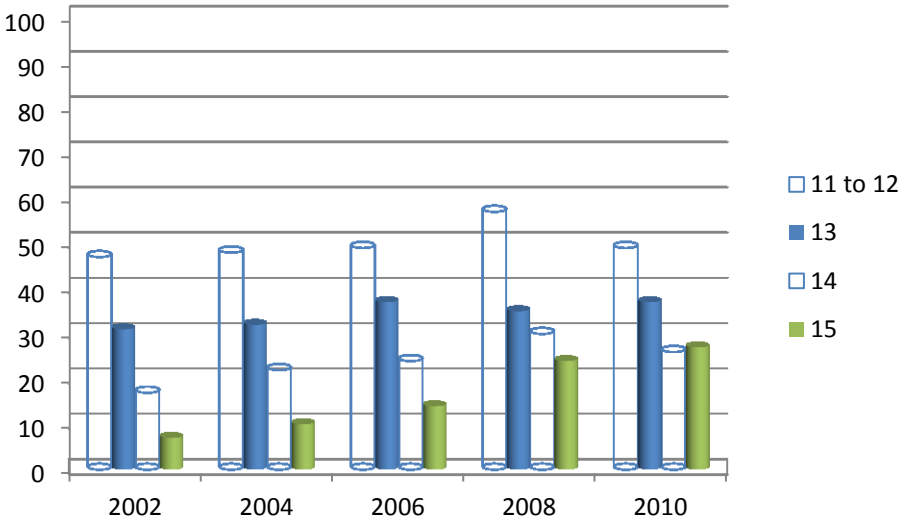
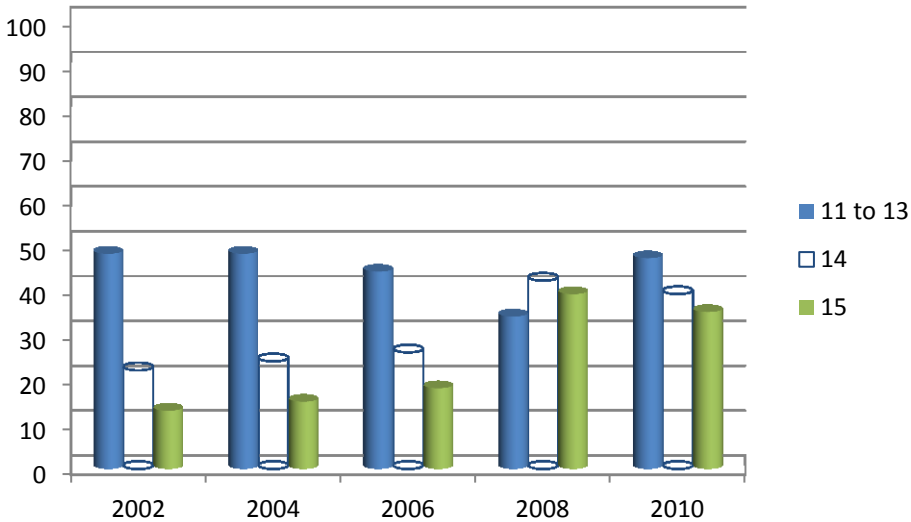


Figure 6: Proportion of pupils in England rating cigarette purchases as 'difficult' by age: SDD 2002-2010



Consistent with the impression engendered by the SALSUS, the proportion of pupils reporting being refused a sale during their last purchase attempt has remained consistently very low, increasing from 15% among 11-15 year olds in 2000/2002 to 30% in 2010. The increase in refusals overall is primarily attributable to increased

reports of refusals among older respondents. Reported refusals among 15 year olds, for example, increased by 10% in 2008 and effectively doubled between 2006 and 2010. Among 13 year olds, by contrast, reported rates of sales refusals were identical in 2006 and 2010, and somewhat lower in 2008 than in previous years. This ostensible discrepancy may be explained variously, and will be revisited in the discussion. It is also important to highlight in this context that Millett et al's (2011) secondary analysis of the SDD surveys found that the increase in the proportion of pupils reporting 'difficulties' making retail cigarette purchases following the increase in the minimum age of sale may be limited to children from more affluent backgrounds. Differences were not significant among pupils in receipt of free school meals (Millett et al., 2011).

2.3.6 Expanding on young people's 'usual' sources of tobacco

A number of studies based primarily in the US (Saunders, 2011, Kaestle, 2009, Pokorny et al., 2006, Williams and Mulhall, 2005, Johnston et al., 2004) Canada (Vu et al., 2011, Leatherdale et al., 2011, Leatherdale, 2005) and New-Zealand (Nelson et al., 2011, McGee et al., 2002, Laugesen and Scragg, 1999) have examined correlates of young people's usual cigarette access behaviours using cross-sectional surveys, and report findings consistent with the impressions engendered by the SDD and SALSUS: younger children and experimental smokers are more likely to rely primarily on social sources of tobacco, with older young people and more habituated regular smokers more likely both to buy cigarettes and to access a broader range of sources. The primary relevance of these studies is to confirm that older children are more likely to access a broader range of sources: the range of 'usual' sources included in the SDD and SALSUS are not mutually exclusive, and while older respondents tend to identify a greater number of 'usual' cigarette sources any overlap between these sources is not reported (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012).

Robinson et al (2006) report similar findings in their longitudinal study of the cigarette access patterns of baseline 13 year olds in the US (Robinson et al., 2006). At ages 14 and 15, continuing smokers were more likely to source cigarettes from

shops, with the proportion making retail purchases increasing from 11.5% at baseline to 20.4% and 27% at T1 and T2 (Robinson et al., 2006). The proportion of continuing smokers sourcing cigarettes from friends also increased during the course of the study, from 30.4% to 38.3%. The increase in the social sourcing of tobacco among continuing smokers coincided with an increase in the proportion reporting smoking among friends, with the social networks of continuing smokers evolving to support their tobacco use (Robinson et al., 2006).

This impression was compounded by the lack of any variation in respondents' usual cigarette sources at smoking onset: those initiating smoking at ages 14 and 15 relied on the same sources as those who started smoking aged 13 years (Robinson et al., 2006). This implies that the greater rate of retail cigarette purchasing among older young people routinely reported in studies using cross-sectional data – and the broader range of sources they reportedly access – may result from 'age' representing a proxy for levels of 'experience'. The extent to which this applies to any variation by age reported in the SDD and SALSUS, however, is difficult to determine given the proximity of 15 year olds in the UK to the minimum age of sale before 2007.

While young people's age relative to the prevailing minimum age of sale in a given jurisdiction is clearly likely to impact on their relative ease of retail cigarette access, the increasing reliance of continuing smokers on retail sources of tobacco over time suggests there are several other factors involved in securing retail access to tobacco. A primary focus in the youth access literature in the US in the 1990s, for example, was on the range of factors predicting successful retail purchases among young people. Landrine et al (1997) cited evidence of higher rates of purchases among girls and children presenting with letters purportedly from parents to highlight the socio-cultural variables impacting on sales rates and criticise the 'implied profit motive hypothesis' according to which tobacco retailers sell cigarettes to underage young people to increase profits (Klonoff et al., 1997). Subsequent research focussed on variations in sales rates by ethnicity (Landrine et al., 1997, Klonoff et al., 1997) and retailer behaviour (Klonoff and Landrine, 2004, Landrine et al., 1996).

Socio-cultural variables, however, are culturally specific, and not readily generalisable to the UK context. Further, the framing of age verification requests as

an independent variable in these studies is problematic. Age verification requests were mandated by Californian law, and as such both age verification requests and sales refusals are contingent on the willingness of retailers to comply with sales laws. These studies have been instrumental, however, both in terms of informing the 'challenge 25 policies' endorsed by trading standards and routinely employed by retailers in the UK, and of highlighting, albeit implicitly, that young people are not merely passively subject to the structural constraints imposed by the legislative and policy environment. Klonoff's (2003) study on the 'ecological' validity of test purchases, for example, in addition to highlighting the lack of equivalence between retailer sales rates as assessed via test purchases and young people's 'real world' ease of cigarette access, demonstrates that young people are able to circumvent sales laws through a range of alternative sources and cigarette access strategies.

DiFranza (2001), for example, examined young people's usual sources of cigarettes in communities in the US with strong enforcement of youth access laws and found that young people were readily able to circumvent sales laws by identifying and targeting retailers identified as amenable to selling cigarettes to underage customers, or having friends, family or passers-by make proxy purchases on their behalf. Qualitative studies undertaken with young people in the UK report similar findings, with young people targeting complicit or otherwise amenable tobacco retailers (Turner et al., 2004, Robinson and Amos, 2010, Donaghy et al., 2013) and/or recruiting friends, family and others to make proxy purchases on their behalf (Donaghy et al., 2013, Robinson and Amos, 2010, Borland and Amos, 2009). Proxy purchases have been found to represent a particularly important source of cigarettes among school age children following the increase in the minimum age of sale (Borland and Amos, 2009, Robinson and Amos, 2010, Donaghy et al., 2013).

Borland and Amos (2009), for example, identified three distinct groups of young people in their qualitative study of cigarette access among 16 and 17 year olds in Lothian: two comprising those either able or unable to make retail cigarette purchases both before and after the enactment of the legislation, and the third comprising young people who acknowledged that the legislation had impacted on their ability to access cigarettes. These relied on their friends or passers-by to make

proxy purchases on their behalf (Borland and Amos, 2009). Subsequent studies undertaken with 12-15 year olds in Birmingham and 14-16 year olds in Scotland suggest that younger children in particular may avoid attempting direct cigarette purchases, recruiting others to make proxy purchases on their behalf, including in return for payment (Robinson and Amos, 2010, Donaghy et al., 2013).

Qualitative studies have also highlighted the availability of cigarettes from diverse social and illicit sources. Turner et al (2004), for example, highlighted the sale of single cigarettes to children from ice cream vans near schools, precipitating the inclusion of cigarettes acquired from ice cream or burger vans as a discrete response option in the SALSUS from 2008 (Black et al., 2009). Participants in Borland and Amos' (2009) study also claimed to make purchases from vans, although these have not been identified as a source of cigarettes by participants in subsequent studies. Several studies have highlighted the availability of illicit or counterfeit product among young people in both England and Scotland, including via 'fag houses' (Crossfield et al., 2010, Robinson and Amos, 2010, Donaghy et al., 2013). While these have been identified as a usual source of cigarettes among young people in the north of England (Crossfield et al., 2010), however, Robinson and Amos (2010) and Doneghy et al's (2013) studies suggest these sources may not always be popular.

Several studies have also highlighted the ready availability of cigarettes for sale in schools (DiFranza and Coleman, 2001, Croghan et al., 2003, Turner et al., 2004, Donaghy et al., 2013). Croghan et al's (2003) mixed method study on cigarette access among 13 to 15 year old young people in Birmingham, for example, found that young people accessed cigarettes variously from social sources: 'for money, for free, or in anticipation of future reciprocation' (Croghan et al., 2003: 67). Among regular smokers, social purchases were described as a convenient means by which to access cigarettes in situations where retail cigarette access was experienced to be difficult, for example during school. Occasional smokers, meanwhile, bought single cigarettes from social sources to avoid the risk of detection associated with carrying packets of cigarettes on their person. There was also a perception, however, that informal vendors profited from these transactions, charging up to £1 per cigarette. Distinctions were therefore drawn by participants between cigarettes exchanged with

friends, who supplied at cost or in anticipation of future reciprocation, and others who profited from social sales (Croghan et al., 2003).

Vendors also reported varying motivations for selling cigarettes to other pupils (Croghan et al., 2003). Most were also smokers, and claimed not to be motivated primarily by profit. Many sold cigarettes to sustain their own smoking, however, and one enterprising individual: ‘talked about stealing four cigarettes from his mother in the morning, using the profits from selling them to buy 10 cigarettes, selling three or four, smoking two or three, and replacing four in his mother’s packet each evening. Another purchased packets of 10 cigarettes daily, selling half to fund the following day’s cigarette purchases’ (Croghan et al, 2003: 72).

Turner et al. (2004) identified similarly high levels of social market activity in one of the two secondary schools included in their mixed method study on youth cigarette access among 13 and 15 year olds in Scotland. Smoking prevalence and the perceived ease of cigarette access also varied between schools. The authors highlight, as such, what they describe as a circular relationship between youth cigarette access and youth smoking, with higher levels of smoking generating higher levels of cigarette availability and vice versa. While this assessment is supported by contemporaneous studies on youth access (Forster et al., 2003), it is problematised by inconsistencies between the qualitative data generated via interviews and focus groups and findings from the questionnaire surveys undertaken concurrently. Participants who highlighted the higher levels of social and commercial cigarette availability in interviews, for example, were drawn from the school in which 15 year olds were more likely rate cigarette access at school as ‘difficult’, and less likely than those at the other school to source cigarettes from fellow pupils (Turner et al., 2004).

Croghan et al’s (2003) study raises similar questions in terms of the interpretation of findings from surveys and other qualitative studies on youth access. While results from qualitative interviews and focus groups provided rich contextual data on the social availability of cigarettes in schools, only 12 of 214 smokers reported buying cigarettes from other students in the questionnaires (Croghan et al., 2003). None of these pupils were regular smokers. The very low number of pupils making social purchases highlights a need to exercise caution in interpreting the impressions of

young people's usual cigarette sources engendered both through qualitative work and surveys. Croghan et al's (2003) questionnaires, for example, included 11 discrete categories of social acquisition, including buying, borrowing and stealing cigarettes from various sources. Despite this, the most commonly reported social source of cigarettes, aside from being given cigarettes by friends, was simply 'unknown' (Croghan et al., 2003).

2.4 Reducing attractiveness

2.4.1 Introduction

This section examines literature pertaining to the relationship between tobacco advertising and promotion and young people's smoking related behaviours and attitudes. The potential for tobacco advertising to impact on youth smoking was highlighted in the original Royal College of Physician's (1962) Smoking and Health report, which noted a concurrent increase in tobacco advertising expenditure and smoking prevalence in the UK, and that the 'romantic allusions' in advertisements appeared designed to appeal to young people in particular. The tobacco industry has maintained that tobacco advertising exists to increase brand share as opposed to expanding the existing market through increasing consumption, deterring quit attempts or increasing rates of incident smoking among young people (U.S Department of Health and Human Services, 2012). In the absence of any clear evidence to the contrary, the RCP report deferred to this position, concluding that it is unlikely that the increase in advertising expenditure is causally linked with increased smoking prevalence, and citing the Czechoslovakian 'dark market' as an example of a jurisdiction in which smoking rates had increased by a similar margin to those in the UK in the absence of tobacco advertising (Royal College of Physicians, 1962).

The authors caution, however, that: 'it would be unwise [...] to conclude from this comparison that advertising is without effect on cigarette consumption; for the factors that determine this are certainly complex and a solitary comparison between two countries that differ in so many ways may be misleading' (Royal College of Physicians 1962: 8). Their words have proven prescient, with the tobacco industry maintaining its position that advertising does not impact on consumption through the following decades by referring to the Russian market, in which high smoking rates persisted in the absence of tobacco advertising, or to econometric studies failing to distinguish between jurisdictions without advertising and those in which advertising bans have been effected in the interest of the public health (U.S Department of Health and Human Services, 2012). Econometric studies of the relationship between advertising and smoking prevalence have also been criticised for failing adequately

to account for the ‘totality’ of advertising in a given jurisdiction by failing to account for diverse forms of tobacco advertising and promotion, for subscribing to a hypodermic model of advertising according to which ‘exposure’ is considered synonymous with ‘effect’ and for failing to report on differences between population subgroups, in particular on the relationship between advertising and smoking among young people (U.S Department of Health and Human Services, 2012).

By the 1980s, research examining the relationship between tobacco advertising and adolescent smoking had evolved in sophistication to focus on variations on the ‘romantic allusions’ to which Smoking and Health refers; on the relationship between youth smoking and cigarette brand imagery (Davis et al., 2008, O’Connell et al., 1981). This body of research interpolates a range of psychological models between exposure to advertising and its effects. These are reviewed in detail by Davis et al (2008) in the NCI Tobacco Control Monograph Series on The Role of the Media in Promoting and Reducing Tobacco Use, but the rationale driving each is reducible to the following proposition: exposure to tobacco advertising impacts on young people’s smoking related perceptions and attitudes, which impact in turn on young people’s smoking related intentions and behaviours. O’Connell et al (1981), for example, found that ‘approval’ of tobacco advertising was more strongly associated with youth smoking in a cross sectional sample of Australian adolescents than all other factors excluding peer smoking. Contemporaneous surveys in the US and Australia reported that adolescent smokers select the most heavily advertised brand at up to twice the rate of their adult counterparts (Chapman and Fitzgerald, 1982, Davis et al., 2008). In investigating the specificities of these relationships, Aitken et al (1985) found that children as young as twelve were particularly receptive to the brand ‘personalities’ projected in tobacco advertising, associating ‘Kim’ for example, a popular brand of cigarettes marketed at women, with a range of positive user attributes including: feminine, sociable, trendy and sporty (Aitken et al., 1985).

Drawing on this and other evidence of the impact of tobacco advertising on youth smoking prevalence, Article 13 of the World Health Organisation’s Framework Convention for Tobacco Control (FCTC) stipulates that all parties implement a comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship, with Article

11 making further stipulations on product packaging and labelling (World Health Organisation, 2003). The implementation guidelines define a comprehensive ban as prohibiting direct advertising, for example in the broadcast and print media and at the point of sale, and indirect advertising, for example through the distribution of free product samples, brand stretching and sharing, or through product placement and smoking related imagery in film and television (World Health Organisation, 2009). Packaging and labelling requirements include mandatory government health warnings covering at least 30% of the principal display areas, and prohibit the use of misleading terms, trademarks and descriptors. Parties are also urged to consider introducing plain or generic packaging to increase the visibility and salience of health warnings, and to limit opportunities for tobacco companies to communicate with prospective customers through cigarette brand imagery and various product packaging innovations (World Health Organisation, 2009).

Most forms of tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship were phased out in the UK between 2003 and 2005 under the Tobacco Advertising and Promotion Act 2002 (TAPA). This included a ban on advertising on billboards and in cinemas, in newspapers and magazines, on domestic and international sponsorship, on direct mailing and on-pack promotions, and placed restrictions on tobacco advertising at the point of sale. Where traditional advertising has been regulated, however, tobacco industry marketing has been invested in developing alternative marketing practices (Davis et al., 2008). In the US, for example, tobacco industry spend on price promotions increased from ca. 20% of overall spend in the 1970s to 84% in 2008 (U.S Department of Health and Human Services, 2012). In the UK, and other jurisdictions with comparable restrictions on ‘direct’ price promotion, tobacco packaging has come to represent the industry’s primary promotional vehicle. Price marking, for example, has been used to circumvent restrictions on ‘money off’ vouchers and similar discount schemes to communicate ‘value’ to the consumer (Moodie and Hastings, 2009). The aggregate effect these marketing communications is concentrated in ‘power walls’ at the point of sale (Hastings et al., 2008).

Point of sale displays or ‘power walls’ are defined as advertising under the terms of the FCTC, and have been prohibited in a number of jurisdictions including Iceland,

Finland, Norway, Ireland, Thailand, Canada, Australia and New Zealand (Action on Smoking and Health, 2012, McNeill et al., 2010, Kickling and Miller, 2008, Brown et al., 2012). The Tobacco and Primary Medical Services (Scotland) Act 2010 extended the provisions set out in the TAPA to prohibit point of sale displays in supermarkets and larger premises in Scotland from 2013 and in smaller retailers from 2015. The Health Act 2009 introduced similar provisions for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Scottish legislation was subject to a legal challenge by Imperial Tobacco, who maintaining that prohibiting PoS displays was beyond the legislative competence of the Scottish Government. This contention was rejected by the Supreme Court in December 2012 (The Supreme Court, 2012).

This section examines literature pertaining to the relationship between tobacco industry marketing practices and adolescent smoking. Section 2.4.2 examines evidence for the impact of tobacco advertising and promotion on youth smoking initiation and progression to regular smoking. Sections 2.4.3 and 2.4.4 examine studies evaluating or anticipating the impact of PoS display bans and generic cigarette packaging, while Section 2.4.5 considers the notion of cigarette brand image as a means by which to integrate these otherwise disparate foci. Tobacco packaging still prominently displays brand names and logos, with colours, descriptors, textures and pack design innovations communicating a range of specific product attributes to the consumer. Cigarettes are also displayed in social situations, functioning as socially visible ‘badge products’ (Wakefield et al., 2002). Levels of brand awareness and recognition are therefore likely to remain high among young people in the absence of conventional forms of tobacco advertising and promotion.

2.4.2 Tobacco advertising and promotion

In their Cochrane Review on the impact of tobacco advertising and promotion on adolescent smoking, Lovato, Watts and Stead (2011) identify 19 longitudinal studies examining the relationship between baseline measures of receptivity, exposure to or approval of tobacco advertising and progression to current, regular or daily smoking among non-smokers between the ages of 8 and 18 years at baseline. Eleven of the

studies followed up a cohort of adolescents once between four months and six years after baseline, with 8 studies following up their cohorts two to three times over 18-72 months. Ten of 11 studies measuring tobacco advertising receptivity reported a significant positive association with smoking uptake, and 5 found a significant positive association between exposure to advertising and adolescent smoking. Three studies indicated a relationship between young people's approval of tobacco advertising and smoking, with only one of the 19 studies failing to find a significant association between tobacco industry marketing efforts and adolescent smoking uptake (Lovato et al., 2011).

The two UK based studies included in the review report differences in the impact of cigarette brand awareness on smoking uptake by sex. Charlton et al (1989) surveyed a cohort of 2338 12 and 13 year olds in the North of England at baseline and 4 months later and found that brand awareness predicted smoking uptake among girls but not boys (Charlton and Blair, 1989). While et al (1996) conducted annual surveys with a cohort of 1490 9 and 10 year olds at baseline and found that girls identifying the most heavily advertised brands were over twice as likely as those naming less advertised brands to start smoking. No equivalent difference was identified among boys (While et al., 1996). Charlton et al (1989) suggest the stronger association between brand awareness and smoking uptake among girls may reflect their higher rates of exposure to smoking related imagery in other media. This will be discussed in elaborating on cigarette brand image. While et al (1996) do not elaborate on differences by gender, although it is worth iterating that only girls identifying the most heavily advertised brands were more likely to smoke. Girls and boys identifying other brands were no more likely to smoke than those identifying none.

Seven studies identified a dose-response relationship between exposure to advertising and youth smoking uptake. Gilpin et al (2007), for example, followed up two cohorts of 12 to 15 year olds drawn from the California Tobacco Survey 3 and 6 years after baseline. While the rate of progression to regular smoking varied between cohorts, receptivity to tobacco advertising increased the odds of smoking by a similar margin in each (Gilpin et al., 2007). Moderate receptivity to advertising, defined in terms of respondents' ability to nominate a frequently advertised cigarette brand,

increased the odds of smoking initiation by 46%. High receptivity, defined in terms of respondent's ownership of or willingness to own a tobacco promotional item, increased the odds of smoking initiation by 84%. Henriksen et al (2010) found that the odds of smoking initiation also increased with the frequency of young peoples' visits to convenience stores. This will be examined in Section 2.4.3.

Results from cross-sectional studies were excluded from the Cochrane review but included in the NCI Tobacco Control Monograph Series review on the role of the media in promoting and reducing tobacco use (Davis et al., 2008). This included 52 cross-sectional studies reporting on the relationship between various measures of exposure to cigarette advertising and adolescent smoking. Studies investigating the relationship between brand awareness and receptivity to tobacco advertising showed the most consistent association between tobacco marketing and adolescent smoking behaviour. All 18 studies examining the relationship between receptivity to advertising and youth smoking prevalence – primarily by assessing respondents' ownership of or willingness to use a tobacco promotional item – reported a significant association between tobacco marketing and either youth smoking status or susceptibility to smoking. Eleven of 12 studies examining the relationship between brand recognition and smoking through respondents' ability to identify brands from advertisements in which the brand names had been obscured also found a significant association between brand recognition and smoking status.

Twelve of 15 studies investigating young people's attitudes to advertising also reported a positive association between positive attitudes towards or opinions on advertising and various measures of smoking status, with 17 positive relationships between exposure and youth smoking identified in the 23 studies measuring exposure to advertising by self-report (Davis et al., 2008). Eleven of these controlled for social influences, and found that exposure remained significantly associated with youth smoking after adjusting for peer and/or parental smoking. MacFadyen et al's (2001) cross-sectional study on 15 and 16 year old young people's awareness of tobacco marketing in the UK, one of 5 UK studies among the 52, also identifies a dose response relationship between advertising exposure and youth smoking prevalence,

with the odds of current smoking increasing with the number of marketing communications with which respondents were familiar (MacFadyen et al., 2001).

Of the other 4 UK based studies, 2 measured brand recognition and recall among school age children in Glasgow in the 1980s (Aitken et al., 1987, Aitken and Eadie, 1990), and are included among the 11 in which advertising exposure was found to be significantly associated with youth smoking after controlling for peer and/or parental influences. Potts et al's (1986) study is included among those in which attitudes towards advertising were found to vary by respondent's smoking status (Potts et al., 1986), and Ledwith (1984) found that children's levels of knowledge and perceptions of cigarette brands – specifically Embassy and Benson & Hedges – were associated with their levels of exposure to the tobacco-sponsored world snooker championships on television some 20 years before promotions of this kind were prohibited under the TAPA (Ledwith, 1984).

While most studies included in reviews on the impact of tobacco advertising and promotion on youth smoking have focussed on the kind of marketing communications prohibited under the TAPA, an increasing number of studies have reported on the impact of exposure to tobacco-related imagery in other media. The 2012 US Surgeon General's report on youth smoking prevention, for example, includes 17 studies investigating the relationship between various measures of exposure to smoking in films and both youth smoking initiation and intentions to smoke (U.S Department of Health and Human Services, 2012). Exposure to smoking in films was consistently associated both with youth smoking initiation and intentions to smoke, with the association strongest in studies using cued recall measures of film titles on which content analyses have been performed to assess exposure. The impact of exposure was also found to vary with ethnicity. Of 6 longitudinal studies using cued recall measures to assess exposure, four reporting on the effect of exposure on white adolescents from the US and Germany generated relative risk estimates in the 2-3 range, while smaller estimates were generated for US Latinos and findings were null for Mexican adolescents.

The authors suggest that the strength of association between smoking in films and adolescent smoking may therefore vary with the strength of national advertising

restrictions (U.S Department of Health and Human Services, 2012), although the effect of exposure has been found to be consistent across six European countries with varying tobacco control policies (Morgenstern et al., 2011), and variation in the effects of exposure by ethnicity has been identified in other cohorts. Tanski et al (2012), for example, found that exposure to smoking in films predicted smoking uptake among white but not black adolescents in a multi-ethnic cohort of 4511 10-14 year old baseline never smokers, despite black adolescents reporting higher levels of exposure overall. However, a dose response relationship was identified between exposure to smoking by black actors in films and smoking uptake among black adolescents (Tanski et al., 2012), suggesting the stronger effect of exposure on white adolescents may be attributable to the greater number of white actors in the types of films most commonly included in analyses, although the susceptibility of white adolescents to smoking related imagery in films did not vary with the ethnicity of the actor.

Three recent UK studies have also examined the impact of exposure to smoking in films on adolescent smoking behaviour. Hunt et al (2011) surveyed 1999 Scottish 15-16 year olds in 2007 using cued recall and a measure of repeat viewings to estimate exposure. Rates of past year smoking were significantly higher among pupils reporting higher levels of exposure to smoking related imagery in films, with 33% of those reporting the highest levels of exposure having tried smoking compared with 15% among those with the lowest levels (Hunt et al., 2011). Past year smoking also varied with levels of parental monitoring, with rates of past year smoking higher among those whose parents did not impose restrictions on their media use. Even after controlling for a range of characteristics including restricted media use, those reporting higher levels of exposure were over twice as likely as others to report smoking in the past year. Watching films with friends conferred similar risks, and watching films with parents was identified as exerting a protective effect, although the association was less robust.

Waylen et al's (2011) cross-sectional study on the relationship between exposure to films and smoking status among 15 year olds in a Bristol based birth cohort reported similar findings, with adolescents reporting higher levels of exposure to smoking in

films almost twice as likely to report ‘ever’ smoking as those reporting lower levels of exposure. While the impact of exposure was attenuated after including a range of familial and behavioural factors, those in the highest exposure quartile remained 59% more likely than those in the lowest to report ever smoking (Waylen et al., 2011).

The relationship between exposure and current smoking, defined as regular or occasional smoking in this cohort, was largely attenuated after controlling for familial factors. Morgenstern et al’s (2011) study examining exposure to smoking in films and youth smoking in 6 European countries identified a significant relationship between exposure and youth smoking in all six countries, and found that the strength of the relationship was strongest among Scottish adolescents, with those in the highest exposure quartile almost 3 times more likely to have tried smoking than those in the lowest quartile.

While exposure to smoking in films has been clearly associated with adolescent smoking initiation and intentions to smoke, there is less evidence for any corresponding impact on young adults, or on more regular and established smoking behaviours. Song et al (2007) examined the impact of exposure to smoking in films on 18-25 year olds in the US, and found that while exposure to smoking in film was associated with current smoking, defined as smoking at least once in the past 30 days, exposure was not associated with established smoking – defined as having smoked at least 100 cigarettes – after controlling for smoking among friends and family (Song et al., 2007). Hunt et al’s (2009) follow-up of 19 year olds from the West of Scotland 11-16/16+ cohort found no association between exposure and current or ever smoking among young people in Scotland (Hunt et al., 2009). Song et al (2009) suggest the relationship between exposure to smoking in movies may be mediated via peer and parental influences, to the extent that parents and peers are also influenced by advertising, with Hunt et al (2009) similarly suggesting the impact of exposure on older adolescents may simply be ‘swamped’ by other more salient factors in later adolescence.

The relationship between tobacco advertising and exposure to tobacco related imagery in other media and youth smoking prevalence is mediated through young people’s smoking related attitudes, perceptions and a diverse range of environmental

factors. The relationship between these is complex and multifaceted, and conceptualised variously in the literature. The 2012 US Surgeon General's report draws on the Theory of Triadic Influence (TTI) to frame the relationship between tobacco marketing and adolescent smoking in terms of 3 dimensions: the personal, social and environmental (U.S Department of Health and Human Services, 2012). The TTI proposes that factors impacting on health behaviours can be arranged by different levels of causation within these respective 'streams of influence' (Flay et al., 2009). An individual's social location, for example, represents an 'ultimate' cause of smoking in the environmental stream of influence. This is mediated through 'distal' causes – for example an individual's cultural identity and health related knowledge – to impact on smoking prevalence through a range of 'proximal' causes, for example through smoking related attitudes and the perceived utility of smoking.

Tobacco advertising and promotion, as such, may not exert a direct effect on the proximal causes of smoking, for example on young people's intentions to smoke, but rather on factors related more 'distally' or 'ultimately' to smoking, for example on pro smoking social norms, with exposure to smoking related imagery affecting young people's perceptions of the prevalence and by implication the social acceptability of smoking. Brown and Moodie (2009), for example, employed the Theory of Normative Social Behaviour as a mediator between exposure and young people's intentions to smoke in evaluating the impact of the Tobacco Advertising and Promotion Act 2002, measuring descriptive and injunctive norms through questions on perceived smoking prevalence and sibling approval (Brown and Moodie, 2009). Variations on this rationale are prevalent in the clear majority of studies using proxy measures of exposure to examine the relationship between advertising and adolescent smoking, including for example brand awareness and recognition or young people's willingness to own a tobacco promotional item.

2.4.3 Point of sale displays

In their systematic review of studies examining the impact of tobacco promotion at the point of sale (PoS), Paynter and Edwards (2009) identify 10 studies which

examined the effect of PoS advertising on young people's smoking related attitudes and behaviours. All seven cross-sectional studies investigating the association between PoS marketing and smoking behaviour identified a significant positive association between diverse measures of exposure and smoking status, although each is problematized by methodological limitations and/or a failure to control for confounders (Paynter and Edwards, 2009). The two most recent studies included in the review used area based measures to assess exposure to PoS advertising among young people in Canada and the US (Lovato et al., 2007, Slater et al., 2007), and are cited in the US Surgeon General's report on youth smoking prevention as evidence for the impact of PoS advertising on: (i) school-level smoking prevalence, and; (ii) smoking initiation and progression (U.S Department of Health and Human Services, 2012). As Paynter and Edwards (2009) observe, however, the former crudely dichotomises smoking status and fails to control for confounders, while the latter models theoretical transitions using cross sectional data.

Perhaps more importantly, most of the studies included in the review were carried out in jurisdictions with very weak advertising restrictions. MacFayden et al (2001), for example, surveyed 629 15 and 16 year olds in the North of England to investigate the impact of exposure to the range of marketing communications prevalent in the UK at the time (MacFayden 2001). While these included PoS advertising, the study also assessed exposure to advertising on posters and billboards, and did not assess exposure to tobacco displays. While significant differences were identified in respondents' awareness of price promotions or cigarette pack design by smoking status these effects were attenuated after controlling for confounders. Respondents' levels of awareness of advertising overall, however, were consistently very high, with ~ 90% of both smokers and non-smokers reporting exposure to advertising on posters and billboards, and with all reporting exposure to advertising at the PoS. It is therefore likely that the association between PoS advertising and youth smoking status will be stronger where other marketing communications have been prohibited.

Mackintosh et al (2012), for example, surveyed 1401 11-16 year olds in the UK 5 years after the implementation of the Tobacco Advertising and Promotions Act 2002, and found that noticing cigarette displays was significantly associated with

susceptibility to smoking among 956 never smokers after controlling for a range of smoking-related and demographic variables, with those having seen displays in the past month almost twice as likely as others to be susceptible to smoking: defined as the absence of firm intentions never to smoke in this study. Respondents rating cigarette displays as more attractive were also somewhat more likely to be classified as susceptible to smoking (Mackintosh et al., 2012). Perez et al (2012) reported similarly high levels of exposure to ‘below the line’ advertising among 12-24 year olds in Australia, despite the implementation of a comprehensive advertising ban including PoS displays some 6 months previously (Perez et al., 2012). Most respondents had been exposed to ‘below the line’ marketing in the past month, with around a third reporting exposure to PoS displays despite their prohibition. Exposure to PoS displays was not associated with ever smoking status, although this may be associated with the broad age range included in the sample: tobacco marketing communications have been shown to impact primarily on smoking initiation and susceptibility to smoking in younger cohorts (U.S Department of Health and Human Services, 2012).

Henriksen et al’s (2010) study provides some longitudinal support for an association between exposure to PoS advertising and youth smoking initiation. The study followed up a cohort of 1681 11-14 year old baseline never smokers at 12 and 30 months using a combination of self-report and the frequency of shop visits to assess PoS exposure. The weekly number of brand impressions to which respondents were exposed was also calculated. After 12 months, 18% of respondents had initiated smoking, with the incidence of smoking varying between 9% among those visiting shops less than twice per month to 28% among those visiting shops at least twice per week (Henriksen et al., 2010). Smoking initiation also varied with exposure to cigarette brand impressions. Even after adjusting for multiple risk factors including smoking among friends and family, the odds of initiation more than doubled for those visiting shops at least twice per week, and for those exposed to a higher number of impressions. Smoking initiation was also associated with self-reported exposure to PoS advertising at 30 months but not at 12 months.

Paynter and Edwards (2009) also carried out a further study examining the association between exposure to PoS advertising and youth smoking status following the publication of their review, and found a clear and consistent association between diverse measures of advertising exposure and smoking status among 14 and 15 year olds in New Zealand. Both the reported frequency of shop visits and self-reported levels of exposure – or the consistency with which young people reported ‘noticing’ tobacco during shop visits – were significantly associated with current and experimental smoking, and with susceptibility to smoking. The association was strongest for current smokers, who were almost 7 times more likely than others to report noticing cigarettes every time they visited shops, or over three times as likely after controlling for confounders including smoking among family and friends (Paynter et al., 2009). Smoking was also associated with the frequency of shop visits, with those visiting shops daily almost three times as likely to have tried smoking, although an interaction effect was identified between the frequency of shop visits and current smoking status, with the frequency of shop visits varying inversely with socioeconomic status.

Both studies provide evidence that rates of adolescent smoking vary with the self-reported frequency of shop visits, although the extent to which these represent a reliable proxy for exposure to PoS advertising is difficult to determine. While more frequent shop visits are self-evidently likely to be associated with higher rates of exposure to PoS advertising, regular smokers are also both more likely to visit shops more often to buy cigarettes and more likely to notice cigarettes. While Henriksen et al’s (2010) study provides some longitudinal evidence that the frequency of shop visits predict experimentation with smoking, this uses a dichotomised measure of peer smoking in multivariate models, and the strength of association between peer smoking and ever smoking in the baseline sample using this measure is comparable with that for ownership of a tobacco promotional item. The peer smoking variable is therefore poorly specified, with the intensity of young people’s exposure to retail environments varying with peer smoking. Rates of both youth smoking initiation and exposure to retail environments are likely to vary with peer smoking prevalence.

2.4.4 Generic packaging

In their review of 37 studies examining the impact of plain or generic packaging on product appeal, the salience of government health warnings and perceptions of product strength and harm, Moodie et al (2012) identified 16 studies focussing on young people in these contexts, 6 conducted in the UK (Moodie et al., 2012b). A further 17 studies were included in an updated iteration of the review in 2013, 7 conducted in the UK (Moodie et al., 2013). All studies comparing branded vs plain packaging found that branded packaging was rated significantly more appealing by respondents, and studies investigating the attractiveness of progressively plainer packaging found that pack ratings varied with the number of branding elements removed. While all studies are subject to methodological constraints, employing a range of intermediate outcome measures, findings are remarkably consistent, and point in a single direction (Chantler, 2014).

Germain et al (2010), for example, exposed 1087 Australian 14-17 year olds to one of 15 progressively plainer cigarette packets, and found that as colour, imagery and branded fonts were progressively removed respondents rated the packs less favourably. Plainer packaging was also associated with less favourable expectations of the taste of the product, and less favourable perceptions of typical user attributes (Germain et al., 2010). Moodie et al (2012) identified similarly negative user imagery among 10-17 year olds in Scotland, with respondents associating plain packaging with ‘unpopular’, ‘unfashionable’, ‘boring’ and ‘older’ people (Moodie et al., 2012a). Plain packaging may also increase the salience of government health warnings. Qualitative studies undertaken with young people in New-Zealand (Beede et al., 1990), Australia (Centre for Behavioural Research in Cancer, 1992) France (Gallopel-Morvan et al., 2013) and Belgium (Van Hal et al., 2012) suggest plain packaging may also increase the relative prominence of government health warnings by removing the additional visual cues associated with cigarette branding.

Studies investigating the impact of plain packaging on respondents’ recall of government health warnings report mixed results. Rootman (1995), for example, compared recall among young people in Ontario and Chicago following exposure to branded and unbranded packaging with Canadian and US government warnings. In

Ontario, 82% of daily smokers recalled the government health warnings on the plain packs, compared with 62% for the branded packs (Rootman et al., 1995). However, no equivalent difference was observed in the Chicago sample. Moodie et al (2012) suggest this may result from the relative prominence of Canadian health warnings, positioned on the front as opposed to the side of the packet. Germain et al (2009), however, found no association between progressively plainer packaging and recall of government health warnings, even when the size of the warnings was increased (from 30%) to cover 80% of the cigarette pack face.

There is clear and consistent evidence, however, that packaging influences young people's perceptions of product harm. Moodie et al (2012) identified 7 studies examining young people's perceptions of harm, 3 conducted in the UK. Hammond et al (2009) surveyed 516 adults and 806 11-17 year olds online, directing respondents to rate pairs of cigarette packs including branded packs and both white and brown plain packs in terms of product attractiveness, taste, tar content and relative health risks. Young people were also asked which cigarettes they would be most likely to try. Consistent with results from other studies, young people were more likely to rate products using descriptors including 'smooth' or 'gold' as less harmful than identical packs with these product descriptors removed. Where plain and branded packets were compared, plain packets were rated as less attractive, and respondents were less likely to report being tempted to try them. Where brown packets were compared with branded packets, the former were also less likely to be rated as presenting lower health risks (Hammond et al., 2009).

2.4.5 Cigarette brand image

While the causal relationship between tobacco advertising and youth smoking initiation has been demonstrated through a range of cross sectional, prospective and econometric studies (Lovato et al., 2011, Davis et al., 2008, U.S Department of Health and Human Services, 2012), the nature of the relationship remains less clearly understood. Early econometric studies compared advertising spend and smoking prevalence between countries, failing to address the differential impact of different

forms of advertising on different population sub-groups, and subscribing to the ‘hypodermic’ or ‘cause and effect’ model of advertising according to which expenditure is treated as synonymous with its effect (Davis et al., 2008, Chapman, 1989). Chapman (1989) highlights what he refers to as the ‘quantification problem’ in this context: the problems associated with attempting to account for the totality of advertising exposure in a given jurisdiction, in measuring the effects of partial advertising restrictions as funds are diverted into sponsorship and other forms of promotion, and the challenges of isolating the effects of advertising from other influences on tobacco use. The problem, essentially, is attempting to assign numeric values to an: ‘essentially dynamic, qualitative variable’ (Chapman, 1989: 1271).

Subsequent studies have therefore interpolated a range of psychological models between exposure to tobacco marketing and its effects (Chapman 1989). These models are reviewed in detail in the NCI Tobacco Control Monograph Series on The Role of the Media in Promoting and Reducing Tobacco Use (Davis et al., 2008), but the rationale underpinning each is essentially reducible to the following proposition: tobacco advertising and promotion impacts on young people’s smoking related attitudes and perceptions, which impact in turn on their intentions to smoke and ultimately their smoking behaviour. One of the primary factors mediating the relationship between tobacco advertising and promotion and youth smoking behaviour is cigarette branding, or cigarette brand image (Eadie et al., 1999, Hastings and MacFadyen, 1998, Hastings et al., 1994, Barnard and Forsyth, 1996). Marketing theory suggests tobacco advertising represents one among a number of key marketing variables designed to communicate a desirable brand identity to create positive perceptions about a given brand among consumers (Eadie et al., 1999, Keller, 1993). Where brand identity refers to the range of brand attributes communicated via marketing, brand image refers to the range of perceptions subjectively associated with the brand in the mind of the consumer (Keller, 1993).

The focus on brand image in the tobacco advertising literature can be traced back to Aitken et al’s (1985) study in the 1980s, which demonstrated high levels of awareness of and engagement with tobacco advertising among young people in Glasgow, including in terms of the identification of the range of typical user imagery

discussed in Section 2.4.1. In the 1990s, commentators highlighted the widespread use of imagery designed to appeal in particular to young people in tobacco advertisements, locating this in the context of the concurrent increase in youth smoking in the UK and the US (Pierce et al., 1991, Pierce et al., 1999, Hastings et al., 1994). As a consequence, youth oriented brand ambassadors such as Joe Camel and Embassy Regal's 'Reg' were ultimately withdrawn from sale (Davis et al., 2008, Hastings et al., 1994). The current focus on brand image follows the ban on traditional forms of tobacco advertising under the Tobacco Advertising and Promotions Act 2002, with tobacco industry marketing efforts to generate positive brand imagery increasingly concentrated on cigarette packaging innovations, and at the PoS (Wakefield et al., 2002, Grant et al., 2008, Moodie and Hastings, 2011).

Despite the advertising ban, for example, almost 90% of 15 year old regular smokers and almost two thirds of 15 year old occasional smokers were able to identify three or four cigarette brands in the 2010 SALSUS, and even pupils who had never smoked were most commonly able to identify one or two (Black et al., 2012). While brand awareness represents only one of a range of dimensions comprising cigarette brand image (Keller, 1993, Grant et al., 2008), Scheffels' (2008) qualitative study on young adult smokers' perceptions of cigarette brands and pack design in Norway suggests that even in the absence of other forms of advertising – tobacco advertising has been banned in Norway since 1975 – young people draw clear distinctions between brands, using differences in packaging or pricing to communicate the meaning of these differences in terms of their individual and social identities, or position within social hierarchies. Participants' perceptions of differing brands varied, for example, in terms of their perceived availability, with less readily available brands associated with relative exclusivity, while Prince, a popular brand of cigarettes in Norway, was associated with a 'lower class' identity both in positive terms, in terms of signalling a lack of 'snobbery', and in more negative terms in signalling 'commonness' or lower social status (Scheffels, 2008).

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has located the decline in youth smoking prevalence in the UK since the 1990s in the context of contemporaneous developments in tobacco control, and examined both the youth access literature and that pertaining to recent legislative efforts to reduce the ‘attractiveness’ of cigarettes and other tobacco products for children and young people through the prohibition of PoS cigarette displays and introduction of generic packaging. While youth access interventions have been implemented in a number of jurisdictions and are acknowledged to represent an important component of a comprehensive tobacco control strategy (Scottish Government, 2008), there is limited evidence to suggest that enacting minimum age laws in isolation is likely to impact on youth cigarette access or youth smoking prevalence (Stead and Lancaster, 2005, Richardson et al., 2009, Main et al., 2008). While there is some evidence to suggest that consistent and robust sales law enforcement may impact on sales law compliance among tobacco retailers (Stead and Lancaster, 2005, Richardson et al., 2009), the levels of sales law enforcement activity undertaken by trading standards officers in the UK (SCOTSS, 2011, Department of Health, 2011) are considerably lower than those undertaken in jurisdictions in which compliance rates were found to have increased post-intervention (Stead and Lancaster, 2005).

Despite this, the SDD, SALSUS and Smoking Toolkit surveys have all shown significant reductions in youth smoking prevalence following the increase in the minimum age of sale (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012, Millett et al., 2011, Fidler and West, 2010), with changes in young people’s ‘usual’ cigarette sources and perceived ease of cigarette access also reported in the SDD and SALSUS (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012). This may imply that the decline in youth smoking prevalence may be attributable, at least in part, to restrictions placed on retail sales (DiFranza, 2010). The impressions generated through these surveys, however, should be interpreted with caution. While rates of regular smoking among young people in England declined significantly between 2006 and 2008 (Millett et al., 2011), rates of regular smoking in 2007 and 2008 were identical (Fuller, 2007, Fuller, 2008). Further, rates of regular smoking among 15 year old girls in Scotland declined by only 2% between

2006 and 2008, compared with 4% between 2004 and 2006, and rates of regular smoking among 15 year old boys increased by 2% (Black et al., 2012). Associating the increase in the minimum age of sale causally with the decline in youth smoking prevalence between 2006 and 2008 is therefore problematic. The consistent decline in youth smoking prevalence since the late 1990s and significant developments in tobacco control have been highlighted in this chapter, and isolating the impact of the increase in the minimum age of sale on youth smoking prevalence is beyond the scope of this study.

Equating changes in young people's usual cigarette sources and perceived ease of cigarette access straightforwardly with reduced 'availability' is also problematic. The increase in the proportion of respondents in the SDD making purchases of 20 cigarettes relative to those making purchases of 10 cigarettes between 2006 and 2008 may suggest young people are simply buying a greater quantity of cigarettes less often (Black et al., 2009, Fuller, 2009). Even assuming that retail cigarette purchases have become more 'difficult' to make following the enactment of the legislation, qualitative studies have shown that young people have recourse to alternative sources when retail cigarette access is curtailed. Studies published following the implementation of the Synar Amendment in the US, for example, highlight the range of social sources available to young people, which are similar to those found in the UK (Croghan et al., 2003, Turner et al., 2004). Studies published following the increase in the minimum age of sale in the UK, meanwhile, have focussed on the role of proxy purchases in facilitating youth access to tobacco (Borland and Amos, 2009, Robinson and Amos, 2010, Donaghy et al., 2013). While retail cigarette access may have been curtailed to an extent, then, there is little evidence to suggest that reduced rates of retail cigarette access may be equated with reduced 'availability'. Further, findings from Millett et al's (2011) study suggest that the increased 'difficulty' associated with making retail cigarette purchases may be limited to children from more affluent backgrounds, which raises concerns in terms of efforts to ameliorate health inequalities through tobacco control policies.

The youth access literature, as such, should be interpreted with caution. It is simultaneously both extensive, DiFranza's (2011) review of interventions to reduce

tobacco sales to minors encompassed over 800 articles and reports, and fundamentally constrained by a tendency for studies to draw varying conclusions from the interrelationships between a limited number of variables. Intervention studies measure and attempt to associate changes in retailer sales rates, young people's usual cigarette sources or perceived ease of cigarette access post-intervention with changes in youth smoking prevalence, while reviews reach contrasting conclusions depending on whether uncontrolled studies are included or excluded from analyses. However, neither retailer sales rates nor self-reported ease of cigarette access represent particularly illuminating measures of 'real world' cigarette availability (Klonoff and Landrine, 2003, DiFranza et al., 2001) This raises a range of issues in interpreting results from intervention studies. Irrespective of real world availability, it is likely that interventions to reduce tobacco sales to minors through repeat test purchases will increase rates of 'compliance' among tobacco retailers on retest (Stead and Lancaster, 2005, Richardson et al., 2009). If a concurrent or subsequent decline in youth smoking is recorded in a given study, this is interpreted as evidence for the efficacy of youth access interventions. If a concurrent or subsequent decline in youth smoking is not recorded, this is interpreted as evidence of the failure of the intervention to curtail youth access, rather than as the failure of access interventions to curtail youth smoking.

The range of 'usual' cigarette sources reported in the SDD and SALSUS also require careful interpretation. The 'usual' cigarette sources included in the surveys are not mutually exclusive, with respondents directed to select more than one source if that source is accessed 'often' (Fuller, 2012, Black et al., 2012). Nor is the relative importance of the diverse range of sources accessed by young people addressed, including for example in terms of the volume of cigarettes acquired from each. Qualitative studies have contributed to a more nuanced understanding of the diverse sources accessed by young people, identifying the range of strategies employed by young people in identifying amenable tobacco retailers (DiFranza and Coleman, 2001), and/or highlighting the primacy of proxy purchases in facilitating youth cigarette access (Borland and Amos, 2009, Robinson and Amos, 2010, Donaghy et al., 2013). Once more, however, these studies tend to frame the diverse range of sources accessed by young people as equivalent. While qualitative studies have

highlighted the important social role of interpersonal cigarette exchanges in terms of facilitating young people's integration in new social environments (Walsh and Tzelepis, 2007), exploration of this social dimension of youth cigarette access is markedly absent from the literature.

Studies reporting on the relationship between PoS cigarette advertising or cigarette branding and adolescent smoking have also tended to focus primarily on the interrelationships between a range of variables, highlighting for example the relationship between various measures of exposure to PoS advertising and adolescent smoking (Paynter and Edwards, 2009), or young people's perceptions of product harm and strength, the perceived salience of government health warnings and various measures of subjective appeal following exposure to branded and generic cigarette packaging (Moodie et al 2012). Once more, however, the specification of variables in these studies is often problematic. Equating exposure to PoS advertising with the frequency of shop visits made by young people, for example, is problematised by the relative frequency with which young smokers are likely to visit shops to buy cigarettes, or indeed the frequency with which their non-smoking friends may accompany them on these visits. Studies examining young people's perceptions of generic and branded cigarette packaging, similarly, focus on a range of intermediate outcomes that may not affect youth smoking (Chantler, 2014). Perceptions of relative harm, for example, may be unlikely to influence young people's smoking behaviour. Both the SDD and SALSUS show a near universal awareness of the deleterious health effects of smoking among young people (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012).

The impact of tobacco advertising and promotion on youth smoking, however, is well documented (Lovato et al., 2003), and there is sufficient evidence from Moodie et al's (2012) systematic review to suggest that the introduction of generic packaging in the UK would be likely to contribute to a modest but important reduction in smoking prevalence over time, in particular among children and young people (Chantler, 2014). As with the literature on youth access, it is the diverse pathways of influence linking exposure to PoS advertising or cigarette branding with youth smoking that remain under explored (Chantler, 2014).

This study aims to address these gaps in the existing literature on youth cigarette access and cigarette branding by undertaking a qualitative exploration of how young people access cigarettes following the increase in the minimum age of sale. It will consider not only the range of cigarette sources routinely accessed by young people but also how and why these sources are represented as or experienced to be important or subjectively meaningful for young people in the context of their social worlds. In addition, this study affords a novel opportunity to consider how the range of factors pertaining to cigarette branding and contemporaneous legislative measures impact on the perceived attractiveness of cigarettes and other tobacco products for young people, in order to explore in more detail the ways in and extent to which tobacco industry marketing communications and young people's individual cigarette brand preferences intersect.

3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This study examines young people's smoking and cigarette access behaviours following the increase in the age of sale in the UK, and explores participants' diverse representations of cigarette brand image in the context of the impending ban on point-of-sale displays, and in anticipation of the introduction of generic packaging in the UK. This chapter outlines the methodological framework developed for this study. The first section addresses the overarching theoretical framework, locating the selected methods in the context of broader discourses around the construction of knowledge. The second section details the application of the epistemological stance to the chosen methods of data collection.

3.2 Developing the study design

3.2.1 Ontology in social research

Ontology in social research is concerned with whether and the extent to which reality 'exists', whether this reality is governed by immutable and universal laws and whether human behaviour creates, is influenced by or is determined by these. Epistemology is concerned with conceptualisations of knowledge and knowing, or how reality may most appropriately be accessed, represented, replicated and reproduced (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). The former is commonly represented in terms of a virtual spectrum. Ritchie and Lewis (2003), for example, identify three primary ontological stances: (i) 'realism', the conceptualisation of reality and its social representation as inherently discrete and distinguishable entities; (ii) 'materialism', which postulates the existence of concrete phenomena alongside subjective experience and other 'epiphenomena', and; (iii) 'idealism', the conceptualisation of reality as indistinguishable from its social representation (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Della Porta and Keating (2008) draw parallel distinctions between: (i) 'nominalists', for whom categories or classifications are arbitrarily assigned and socially constructed, and (ii) 'realists', for whom natural categories exist independently of their social representation(s) (Della Porta and Keating, 2008).

Hammersley's (1992) subtle realism represents something of an intermediate, assimilative middle-ground within this polemic, a reframing of positivist or 'naïve realist' notions of 'immutability' to suggest that reality may at least be incrementally 'represented' if not straightforwardly 'reproduced' (Hammersley, 1992: 69). This stance has been criticised as constituting a conflation of inherently irreconcilable constructs, as a: 'smorgasbord approach to theory [that generates] endless possibilities for the epistemological shopper who is free to select [...] explanations of the social world to fit fashionable or practical purposes' (Banfield, 2004: 55-57). These criticisms, however, serve equally to highlight an inherent utility. As Wacquant (1992) observes: 'the particular difficulty of sociology [...] is to produce a precise science of an imprecise, fuzzy, woolly reality. For this it is better that its concepts are polymorphic, supple, and adaptable, rather than defined, calibrated, and used rigidly' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 23). In generating theoretical models that transcend the limitations of the more traditional methodological orthodoxies this is precisely what Hammersley and the 'conflationist theorists' (Banfield, 2004) have achieved. This study therefore aligns itself explicitly with advocates of the pragmatic methodological paradigm, engaging with relevant literature on an essentially utilitarian basis: that of its fundamental 'fitness for purpose' (Silverman, 2005; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003).

The ontological 'dilemma' is whether and the extent to which 'reality' exists. If not, 'subtle realism' and what Banfield (2004) describes as conflationist models are indeed of limited utility: construction supersedes construct as the principal object of investigative interest, and interpretive orthodoxies become instrumental in promoting evidential consistency and methodological transparency. The representation achieves no ontological status beyond the context of its reproduction. If reality does, however, exist beyond its social representation, then the object of investigation takes precedence over the process or means of representation, and focus shifts to the various means by which identified phenomena may most appropriately be replicated, represented, approximated or reproduced: depending on the peculiarities of one's particular philosophical allegiances. To what extent, then, is reality 'real' for the 'subtle realist'? Hammersley (1992) suggests: 'we can maintain a belief in the existence of phenomena independent of our claims about them, and in their

knowability, without assuming we have unmediated contact with them and therefore that we can know with certainty whether our knowledge about them is valid or invalid' (Hammersley, 1992: 50).

In the place of the naïve realist's 'immutability', then, Hammersley interpolates a probabilistic assessment of construct 'validity': the credibility of postulated knowledge becomes contingent: 'on the compatibility of [a given] claim, or evidence for it, with the assumptions about the world that we currently take to be beyond reasonable doubt; and/or on the likelihood of error, given the conditions in which the claim was made' (Hammersley, 1992: 51). While 'assumptions we currently take to be beyond reasonable doubt' do not constitute a particularly illuminating measure of the 'real', distinguishing what is from what is not is fundamental to the subtle realist enterprise. Adherents are therefore necessarily: 'more vigilant regarding the dangers of error than naïve realism would lead us to be. We must accept that we necessarily rely on cultural assumptions, and that these can lead us astray, just as easily as leading us in the right direction' (Hammersley, 1992: 52). While vigilance presumably represents an insufficient safeguard against error, Wacquant's (1992) caution merits iteration a final time: capturing and examining the complexities of a polymorphic, 'woolly' reality necessitates engagement with correspondingly flexible theoretical models (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992).

Questioning the extent to which reality is real for the subtle realist is therefore something of a meaningless exercise: 'reality' is represented as 'real' – in the proverbial and tautological nutshell – insofar as the prevailing evidence base has succeeded in 'illuminating' its various facets. The criteria by which validity is to be assessed remain unspecified, and Hammersley's (1992) work has been criticised for its 'ontological shyness' (Banfield, 2004). Rather than interrogating the ontological status of the subtle realist's reality, however, it may be more useful, in the current context, to consider the extent to which it is at least theoretically 'realisable'. Here, Hammersley (1992) is more forthcoming: in assessing the 'realness' of reality, or in contributing to its incremental representation:

We are not faced [...] with a stark choice between words and numbers, or even between precise and imprecise data; but rather with a range from more to less

precise data. Furthermore, our decisions about what level of precision is appropriate in relation to any particular claim should depend on the nature of what we are trying to describe, or on the likely accuracy of our descriptions, on our purposes, and on the resources available to us; not on ideological commitment to one methodological paradigm or another (Hammersley, 1992: 163).

3.2.2 Epistemology and qualitative method

Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism provides a theoretical framework broadly congruent with the fundamental tenets of the subtle realist epistemological stance. Like Hammersley (1992), Blumer (1969) rejects both realist and idealist orthodoxies to furrow the more fertile, interpretive middle-ground, locating meaning in the empirical world rather than the ideological precepts of a given method (Blumer, 1969). Unlike Hammersley (1992), however, Blumer (1969) is scrupulous in defining concepts and expanding on the implications of his theoretical assumptions:

Symbolic interactionism rests in the last analysis on three simple premises. The first premise is that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings things have for them [...] The second premise is that the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows. The third premise is that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things he [sic] encounters (Blumer, 1969: 2).

Blumer's (1969) first premise foregrounds the role of 'meaning' in social enquiry. Concern with cause and effect and the specificities of behaviour and behavioural determinant, he suggests, are misplaced: the relationships between these concepts are contextually relative and therefore fundamentally unknowable. The symbolic interactionist is rather concerned with the intersubjective meanings encoded in objects and in individual action (Blumer, 1969). This premise represents an iteration of a recurrent commentary on the positivist research bias in the social sciences, with meanings subsumed in the delineation of variables (Blumer, 1969, Poland et al., 2005, Denscombe, 2001). As Poland et al (2005) observe: studies mapping associations between concepts constrained as variables may indicate what factors

may be most relevant – for example in understanding smoking among young people – but little about how or why these factors are important (Poland et al., 2005).

Youth smoking, for example, is strongly associated with peer smoking (Fuller, 2009; Kobus, 2003). The identification of these statistical patterns of association, however, sheds little light on the diverse pathways of influence between them, or the proposed mechanisms of causation (Gerring, 2005). While these may be framed variously for example in terms of the relative primacy of peer influence or selection processes, peer smoking is ultimately neither a necessary nor sufficient condition to cause smoking, and attention may therefore more appropriately be paid to examining the specificities of the ‘empirical world’ in the context of which these behaviours are enacted, rather than attempting to understand that world through the relative abstraction of statistical enquiry (Blumer, 1969). Young people with friends who smoke are self-evidently more likely to be exposed to pro-smoking social environments: the specificities of these environments, and how and why they impact on individual level health behaviours merits closer examination.

Blumer’s (1969) second premise foregrounds the role of interaction in the construction of meaning. Symbolic interactionism rejects notions of meaning as inherent in objects or as the product of psychological affect to suggest these arise explicitly through interaction (Blumer, 1969). To an extent, this is self-evidently true: a chair is a consensus; it becomes a chair at the point at which the conceptual framework specifying its constitution encompasses the object so defined: the chair is a chair by virtue of its designated function. This does not imply the chair is not a chair when not in use, but rather that its being is determined by its ascribed use, by collectively negotiated ‘meaning’. If an object arises with all the essential attributes of a chair, for example as a consequence of the inexpert felling of a tree, the object remains a ‘log’ until its alternate use is sanctioned, and reverts at the point of its incineration. Object and meaning are products of a social consensus.

Aside from any ‘meaning’ arising from the chair itself, a chair may be also be imbued with more abstracted ‘meanings’, for example via an individual’s investment in the chair’s construction, or sentimental attachment to its constructor; or indeed through a perceived affinity with the historical context of its origination. In these

instances, however, the definition of ‘meaning’ is effectively diverted from the chair to other less tangible objects or phenomena: to any number of the range of factors influencing subjective assessment of aesthetic appeal, for example. ‘Meaning’ no longer pertains to the chair but is misstated in contemplation of its antecedent ‘causes’. Symbolic interactionism does not, to iterate: ‘see meaning as rising from a coalescence of psychological elements in the person [but] as arising in the process of interaction between people’ (Blumer, 1969: 4).

If we accept, then, that: ‘the meaning of a thing for a person grows out of the ways in which other persons act towards the person with regard to the thing’ (Blumer, 1969: 4), and that individual actions are mediated through these processes, what are the primary methodological implications? Firstly, Blumer (1969) suggests, meanings are not converted into a virtual social currency, but are rather interpreted reflexively by ‘actors’. This involves two distinct steps:

First, the actor indicates to himself the things towards which he [sic] is acting; he [sic] has to point out to himself [sic] the things that have meaning. The making of such indications is an internalised process in that the actor is interacting with himself [sic]. Second, by virtue of this process of communicating with himself [sic], interpretation becomes a matter of handling meanings. The actor selects, checks, suspends, regroupes, and transforms the meaning in light of the situation in which he [sic] is placed and the direction of his [sic] action. Accordingly, interpretation should not be regarded as a mere automatic application of established meanings but as a formative process in which meanings are used and revised as instruments for the guidance and formation of action (Blumer, 1969:5).

The intersection of the in/extrinsic, here, the individual and structural, feeds into broader sociological discourses concerned with signification, lifestyle and late-modern identity construction (Bourdieu, 1977, Giddens, 1986, Denscombe, 2001, Miles, 2000). In the methodological context, the epistemological implication is clear: if the world is constituted by individual actors negotiating the intersection of collectively ascribed and reflexively interpreted ‘meanings’, the application of inflexible rules or testable hypotheses is rendered redundant: meanings are not stable or theoretically generalisable constructs (Blumer, 1969).

For example: Turner et al (2006) conducted a study mapping associations between smoking-related attitudes, popularity scores and social group membership among 13 and 15 year olds in 2 schools in Scotland, UK (Turner et al., 2006). Questionnaires were administered to assess smoking and attitudinal variables. Sociometric measures facilitated further examination of variation by social network position. NEGOPY was used to calculate popularity scores on the basis of the number of friendship nominations received and single-sex discussion groups were held with 13 year olds: half focussing on curricular issues and the other half on peer structures and the composition of friendship groups (Turner et al., 2006).

Smokers in both schools were identified as less likely to be group members and more likely to be located in friendship dyads or to be isolates than non-smokers (Turner et al., 2006). This was most apparent in school 2, with less than a fifth (18.2%) of smokers located in larger social groups compared with 40.7% of non-smokers. In school 1, differences were relatively modest, with 51.7 % and 59% of smokers and non-smokers respectively located in 'groups'. While smokers in school 1 were more likely than non-smokers to be assessed as popular, however, with differences accounted for primarily by the relative popularity of current smoking 'top' girls (Michell and Amos, 1997), none of those reporting current smoking in school 2 were identified as popular (Turner et al., 2006).

The 'meaning' of smoking, then, insofar as 'meaning' is implied in what is captured in popularity scores and sociometrics, clearly varies between settings. The identified relationships between sociometric position, popularity scores and smoking status may be self-evidently interesting. While these relationships are highlighted, however, the study sheds little light on their nature, nor on the extent to which popularity scores may reflect social connectedness, the extent to which sociometric position may reflect social location, or smoking status the specificities of young peoples tobacco use.

To illuminate or represent the social world, then, one must recourse to a direct examination of that world: 'not to a contrived laboratory setting, not to a scheme of operationalizing concepts, not to a testing of hypotheses, and not to a scrutiny of whether premises can be made to fit a protocol of research procedure. The premises of symbolic interactionism are simple. [They] can be

readily tested and validated merely by observing what goes on in social life under one's nose' (Blumer, 1969: 50).

Given a fundamental concern with the ways in which young people negotiate and attribute meaning, this study will engage with the symbolic interactionist perspective to conceptualise children and young people as competent social actors exercising agency or autonomy within given socio-cultural and structural constraints, principally via a negotiation of collectively ascribed meanings (Blumer, 1969). The qualitative data, as such, will be considered to illuminate facets of an external and incrementally verifiable 'reality', albeit one mediated through the values and perspectives of the researcher (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003).

These philosophical assumptions will be considered congruent with the parameters implied by sociological models in framing the dialectical relationship between structure and agency in shaping human experience (Giddens, 2001, Bourdieu, 1977): congruent, equally, with psychological models interpolating various mechanisms of cognitive mediation between stimulus and response to examine the interplay of personal and environmental behavioural determinants (Murphy and Bennett, 2002, Miller, 2003, Bandura, 1978, Bandura, 1989). The proposed operationalisation of this theoretical framework is detailed below.

3.2.3 Study aims and objectives

This study has two overarching aims and four objectives.

Aims:

1. To explore young people's smoking and cigarette access behaviours in the context of the increase in the age of sale of tobacco from 16 to 18 years effected in the UK in October 2007.
2. To explore young people's perceptions and representations of cigarette brand image in the context of the impending ban on point of sale displays and in anticipation of the introduction of generic packaging in the UK.

Objectives:

1. To describe the cigarette access behaviours of young people aged 12-17 years in two disadvantaged communities in Edinburgh.
2. To explore participant's perceptions and representations of the diverse rituals and currencies associated with cigarette access and exchange from both social and commercial cigarette sources.
3. To contrast the experiences of younger and older participants in the context of identified differences between the two study communities.
4. To consider the qualitative research findings in the context of relevant national survey data on youth smoking and cigarette access to identify implications for tobacco control policy, research, and practice.

3.2.4 Rationale for methods

The choice of method is most appropriately informed by reflection on the nature of the question to be addressed (Hammersley, 1992, Silverman, 2005, Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Ritchie and Lewis (2003) emphasise the importance of achieving a balance between the type of methods considered most likely to 'illuminate' the topic, presenting practical considerations and the particular epistemological and ontological stances informing the research perspective. The researcher is directed to consider: (i) context, or the extent to which phenomena of interest are amenable to the formalities of the chosen methodologies; (ii) whether these will generate in-depth and reliable data, and; (iii) the extent to which observed phenomena are foregrounded by the participant or mediated through the interpretive paradigm adopted by the researcher (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003).

In terms of the former, context is clearly critical in terms of examining young people's smoking and cigarette access behaviours. Smoking is a socially located and socially structured phenomenon, and clearly linked with a range of factors including those most pertinent to the aims of this study. The relationships between these factors are not readily disaggregable, however, and resisting the reductionist tendency to consider these in terms of identified relationships between variables is fundamental to this undertaking (Hammersley, 1992; Blumer, 1969; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). While there is a suggestion that 'naturally occurring data' may be most appropriate in

illuminating phenomena of interest in instances where ‘context’ is critical to understanding (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003), observational and experiential strategies in isolation are unlikely in this instance to provide sufficiently nuanced data. Smoking and cigarette access behaviours are embedded in the fabric of young people’s identities and social networks, and unravelling these is likely to require analysis of generated textual data.

Ritchie and Lewis (2003) identify four primary means of data generation: (i) biographical methods, which use life stories, narratives and biographies to illuminate phenomena; (ii) individual interviews, which provide a platform for in-depth exploration of individual perspectives and personal context; (iii) paired or triadic interviews, which generate insights into complex phenomena, achieving a compromise between the ‘depth’ of the individual interview and ‘breadth’ afforded by more discursive formats, and; (iv) focus or discussion groups, considered particularly appropriate in cases where group dynamics constitute or contribute meaningfully to the principal object of investigative interest (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). These may either be used in isolation or in combination with other methods: participant observation, for example, may precede individual interviews, or these may be undertaken alongside focus groups to generate differing perspectives or accounts. The process of ‘triangulation’, or the use of multiple methods to ‘replicate’ findings, has also been posited as a means of conferring robustness. While this may represent a compelling proposition for the ‘naïve realist’, however, the notion is not readily reconcilable with the ‘interpretivist’ conceptualisation of reality as contextually relative, and it may be more appropriate to suggest that the production of consonant findings from varying methods may corroborate or reassure rather than validate per se: the absence of corroboration should not be considered to provide grounds for refutation (Barbour, 2001).

3.2.5 Selecting methods

Naturally occurring data are not available in the current context, nor do observational methods in isolation lend themselves readily to illuminating complex interactive processes. To a point, clearly, the social processes underlying the

phenomena of interest can be assessed through observational fieldwork: by identifying, for example, the social spaces in which young people's smoking behaviours are routinely enacted, or recording the frequency of cigarette purchases by ostensibly underage young people from a given premises. As Poland et al (2005) observe, however, albeit in a different context: this may tell us something about what is happening – albeit on a limited and somewhat speculative basis – but little about how or why it is happening. To iterate: young people's smoking and cigarette access behaviours are embedded in the fabric of their identities and social networks, and unravelling these requires in-depth analysis of generated textual data.

Interviews and focus groups represent the primary means of data generation in social research. The former lend themselves well to detailed exploration of complex processes and systems, and to cases in which phenomena are located explicitly in the context of subjective discourses (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). The latter lend themselves more readily to cases in which group dynamics are to be foregrounded, and in which complex, difficult or otherwise abstract, intangible or conceptual issues are explored (Barbour and Kitzinger, 1999, Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Each confers advantages and disadvantages. Smoking, for example, represents a 'difficult' issue insofar as young people's smoking-related experiences are likely to require unravelling or prompting on the part of the researcher: attempts to simply 'unpack' these is likely to result in a 'question and answer' session, with participants furnishing what they perceive to be the requisite or anticipated responses in these contexts (Rugkasa et al., 2001). Some of the relative advantages and disadvantages of interviews and focus groups are explored in more detail in the following sections.

3.2.5.1 Individual interviews

How then, are interviews likely to generate meaningful data in the current context? As Blumer (1969) observes, the researcher enters the empirical world with at best a limited understanding of the actions and experiences of those involved in the given sphere of life. As such, the initial position of the researcher is that of 'outsider'. In spite of this, the views and perspectives of the researcher will inevitably come to bear on the research process: notions of 'neutrality' and 'objectivity' are effectively

misplaced here (Blumer, 1969). While ‘symbolic interactionism’ is primarily concerned with the construction of meanings through social interaction, the utility of generated data in the current context is in shifting the relative onus of interpretation from the researcher to research participants (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). As Denscombe (2001) observes, the choice may equally be framed pragmatically: if the primary object of investigative interest is the meaning and significance of smoking for young people, then this is in many respects self-evidently most appropriately realised by: ‘listening to the voices of young people and hearing what they have to say’ (Denscombe, 2001: 162).

This does not imply that data generated via qualitative interviews are somehow value-neutral: it is ultimately the researcher who: ‘draws out [...] meaning and makes it explicit’ (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003: 57). As Schostak cautions:

Don't be misled. The interview is not a simple tool with which to mine information. It is a place where views may clash, deceive, seduce, enchant. It is the inter-view. It is as much about seeing a world - mine, yours, ours, theirs - as about hearing accounts, opinions, arguments, reasons, declarations: words with views into different worlds (Schostak, 2005).

While the interview data are themselves products of interpretive processes, these, unlike those generated via observational methods, are explicitly rooted in the articulated perspectives of young people. From the ‘symbolic interactionist’ perspective, while abstracted from the ‘immediacy’ of observed social interactions, interviews therefore afford an opportunity to learn about the meaning invested in an object through narration, through the way in which the actor acts towards an object or relates its subjective significance to him or her (Blumer, 1969: 11). While these communications are not value free, and the researcher should not simply apply a retrospective theoretical schema to illuminate a generated account, a subjective, mediated facet of reality may ultimately be represented with the following provisos.

Firstly, the degree of structure imposed on proceedings must be accounted for. Interviews are commonly discussed in terms of structured, semi-structured or unstructured formats, with the latter representing something of a misnomer given the formalities encoded in the process (Mason, 2002). More accurately, interviews may be represented along a continuum from more to less structured, and the extent of

structuring, clearly, has certain implications. A very structured interview, for example, may effectively constitute a verbal survey, providing ample opportunity to elicit responses to any number of questions but affording very little opportunity to extrapolate or uncover themes and topics of particular significance for participants. An unstructured interview, by contrast, insofar as the latter premise is achievable, affords ample opportunity to pursue avenues of inquiry at the direction of research participants but risks digression from the topic or protracted periods of silence during which neither the researcher nor participants are prepared to formulate a meaningful agenda (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003).

Secondly, the power relations encoded in the interview process must be addressed. The respective social positions of young people and adults, embedded primarily in the unequal power relations between parent and child, pupil and teacher, may also characterise the relationship between the researcher and research participants. In a school setting, for example, young people's experiences of being 'questioned' are inextricably associated with expectations: of providing the right answer to a given question, for example. Their responses may therefore be effectively conditioned in these contexts. While avoiding recruitment through schools may ameliorate these concerns to an extent, there is nevertheless a possibility that young people – especially in youth clubs or in more formal settings – may feel compelled to provide the 'right' answer rather than accessing and sharing more 'private' or subjectively meaningful accounts. While this obstacle is fundamentally insurmountable, efforts were made in this study to ensure that sufficient time was invested in the establishment of rapport with eventual study participants, and in promoting a relaxed and conducive interview environment.

3.2.5.2 Focus groups

Proponents of focus groups suggest that these may compensate to an extent for the relative artificiality of the interview format, shifting control to the study participants (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). These may also confer advantages in terms of illuminating the dynamics of group processes (Barbour and Kitzinger, 1999; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Indeed, a defining feature of focus groups is this explicit emphasis

on exploring interactive processes (Barbour and Kitzinger, 1999). It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that the undertaking of these represents Blumer's (1969) single procedural stipulation (Blumer, 1969). While the 'empirical world' is to be illuminated through the identification and iterative application of the methods most appropriate for accessing descriptive accounts, consistent with the current 'pragmatic' methodological focus:

The depiction of key objects that emerge from such accounts should, in turn, be subject to probing and critical collective discussion by a group of well informed participants in the given world. This latter procedure is a "must" to guard against the deficiencies of individual accounts [...] One should sedulously seek participants in the sphere of life who are acute observers and who are well informed. One such person is worth a hundred others who are merely unobservant participants. A small number of such individuals, brought together as a discussion and resource group, is more valuable many times over than any representative sample (Blumer, 1969: 41-52)

While concurring with Blumer (1969) in identifying focus groups as critical to the iterative verification of identified themes, however, this study will utilise a combination of individual, paired and triadic interviews, and the latter will not be considered inherently preferable to the former. The decision to utilise a combination of methods, rather, was informed by empowerment values, and anticipated both to promote participant engagement and to build some flexibility into the research design to accommodate the various contexts in which interview data were generated. While a well-informed group of participants may indeed provide a useful counterfoil to the 'deficiencies' of individual accounts, focus groups are not themselves without limitations.

While focus groups facilitate a more 'naturalistic' expression of young people's lived experience, these also displace the primary focus from the individual to the group. In the current context, rather than focussing on individual experiences, for example on where individuals access cigarettes and the particular significance of these varying cigarette sources for him or her, the emphasis shifts to 'typical' or hypothecated exemplars of such experiences. This risks sacrificing the relative integrity of first-hand accounts for the benefit of a collectively negotiated consensus. While this study is concerned with the meanings of particular behaviours and transactions, the

particularities of individual accounts remain of equal interest in illuminating the specificities of young people's smoking and cigarette access behaviours.

Paired or triadic interviews, then, represent the procedural equivalent of Hammersley's (1994) intermediate, assimilative 'middle ground', approximating both the 'depth' of the individual interview and 'breadth' facilitated by social interaction in focus or discussion groups (Highet, 2003, Amos and Bostock, 2007). Paired and triadic interviews are also recognised to be a useful means by which to ameliorate potential ethical concerns in these contexts, promoting participant engagement in the research process. As Highet (2003), for example, observes following her qualitative study of cannabis use among 13-15 year old young people in Edinburgh in 2002:

At the early stage of negotiating access, [the paired interview] format, together with a flexibility of approach which offered young people a choice, represented a good 'fit' with informal settings. Such an approach is consistent with youth work values and in most cases was rewarded with a cooperative and supportive response from adult gatekeepers [...] Paired interviews were also relatively easy to set up and suffered a very low drop-out rate. Participants who were comfortable and familiar with one another, and who had some degree of control over the interview, also offered a more naturalistic context and facilitated a better balance in the relationship between interviewer and participants. This facilitated the process of developing trust and rapport and helped to generate high quality data (Highet, 2003:104)

A combination of individual, paired and triadic interviews will therefore be considered the most appropriate means of accessing young people's narratives here. This study utilises semi-structured interviews, and a topic guide was developed to cover the primary bases (See Appx. A). This was referred to flexibly and adapted to the contexts in which the interviews were undertaken. These were various, with participants recruited from a variety of settings. Clearly, some interviews were more 'productive' than others, and some participants contributed more than others to discussion. The topic guides therefore functioned as a virtual 'safety net' in these contexts: for example in instances where initial efforts to generate 'rapport' failed to segue into an informal and conducive discussion of relevant topics.

This section has highlighted the importance of utilising varying methods to generate varying perspectives on young people's smoking and cigarette access behaviours (Barbour, 2001; Hammersley, 1992; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). This study adopts a subtle realist ontological stance (Hammersley, 1992), retaining the naïve realist notion of the existence of an independently verifiable 'reality' while employing more flexible, interpretive criteria in the verification of and engagement with extant phenomena (Hammersley, 1992). These will be considered to exist independently of their social representation while accessible primarily in this context (Hammersley, 1992; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). This will be considered to represent a useful strategy for reconciling the contributions of qualitative and quantitative research findings in the current context (Mays and Pope, 2000), with surveys and qualitative work on youth cigarette access illuminating discrete facets of a complex social world.

3.3 Talking about cigarettes and smoking

3.3.1 Study Communities

Youth smoking prevalence varies between communities, as do young people's smoking related attitudes and 'usual' cigarette sources. The decision to locate the study in two communities was therefore made on the basis of: (i) evidence for inter-community variation in young people's smoking and cigarette access behaviours (Turner et al., 2006, Turner et al., 2004, West et al., 2004) and; (ii) inter-community variation in illicit tobacco availability (Crossfield et al., 2010, Hughes et al., 2011). Exploring young people's smoking and cigarette access behaviours in two communities with similar socioeconomic profiles was also anticipated to facilitate comparison between study groups, enhancing the 'robustness' of eventual findings (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Communities 'P' and 'Q' were selected on the basis of deprivation scores as assessed by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). This divides Scotland into 'datazones' containing 350 households, and ranks these by 7 domains to identify pockets or concentrations of deprivation within local authorities. Young people from less affluent backgrounds are more likely to have parents who smoke, more likely to have friends who smoke and more likely to attend schools with higher smoking prevalence rates (Pearson et al., 2006, West et al., 2004,

Currie et al., 2007, Taulbut and Gordon, 2008). Retailer density was also assessed via observational fieldwork, with higher retailer densities associated with increased tobacco availability (Henriksen et al., 2008, Leatherdale and Strath, 2007).

Community ‘P’ is consistently ranked in the 5th centile by SIMD. It is relatively contained or bounded, surrounded by open spaces and common land on all sides. It is served by two primary schools and a single secondary school, and local retail outlets are concentrated on a primary thoroughfare. Community ‘Q’, by contrast, while encompassing a number of postcodes in the 5th SIMD centile, is less clearly defined spatially and interspersed with more affluent or ‘gentrified’ neighbourhoods. The community intersects the catchment areas of 4 primary and 3 secondary schools, and is served both by a centralised shopping area and a number of satellite precincts. Communities with broadly comparable socioeconomic profiles were selected to avoid arbitrarily framing any presenting contrasts as resulting straightforwardly from socioeconomic differences. This study aims to explore participants’ smoking and cigarette access behaviours in the social context.

3.3.2 Participants and recruitment

This study examines young people’s smoking and cigarette access behaviours in the context of the Scottish and UK governments’ efforts to reduce the availability, affordability and attractiveness of cigarettes and other tobacco products for children and young people. While there is clearly a case for seeking the views and experiences of older adolescents in this context, the 16 and 17 year olds effectively ‘disenfranchised’ by the increase in the minimum age of sale, older adolescents have consistently reported very little difficulty sourcing cigarettes from shops (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012). The decision to recruit 13 and 15 year old young people to the study was therefore made on the basis of their encompassing: (i) the transition from experimental to more habituated ‘regular’ smoking as evidenced by the increase in ‘regular’ relative to ‘ever’ smoking by single year-of-age in national surveys (Fuller, 2012); (ii) the transition from experimental, opportunistic tobacco acquisition to more stable ‘adult’ patterns of retail cigarette purchasing (Fuller, 2009, Leatherdale, 2005, Wiltshire et al., 2005), and; (iii) their representing the group in

relation to which the increase in the age of sale is most likely to reinforce notions of smoking as an ‘adult’ behaviour (Milton et al., 2008).

Regular (weekly) smoking among 13 and 15 year olds varied between 5 and 15% in Scotland in 2008, and 3 and 13% in 2010 (Black et al., 2009, Black et al., 2012). As such, 13 and 15 year old smokers represent a ‘scattered’ population, not readily accessed through probability sampling despite a likely concentration of smoking in disadvantaged communities (Taulbut and Gordon, 2008). Recruitment through organisations working with young people is considered an appropriate alternative strategy in such instances, with schools, for example, concentrating the relevant study population in space and time and in an accessible, controlled environment (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Given that young people excluded from school are more likely to report regular smoking (Black et al., 2009, Fuller, 2009), however, that regular smokers are more likely to source cigarettes from a greater number of social and commercial sources (Castrucci et al., 2002, Forster et al., 2003, Leatherdale, 2005, Rainio and Rimpela, 2009, Widome et al., 2007) and more likely both to access and supply social markets (Forster et al., 2003, Dent and Biglan, 2004), recruitment through schools risks under-representing those best placed to illuminate the phenomena of interest.

Despite schools representing an obvious ‘locus’, then, and having been accessed in a number of studies examining young people’s ‘usual’ cigarette sources (Croghan et al., 2003, Turner et al., 2006, Turner et al., 2004), the decision was therefore made to target youth clubs and organisations offering health and other services to young people. These also ‘concentrate’ the study population in space and time. Here, however, attendance is not mandated, and recruitment through these organisations is considered congruent with broader efforts to ameliorate power relations and enable prospective participants to assume control of the nature and extent of their involvement in the research process (Highet, 2003, Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). A number of youth organisations were identified through online searches, during observational fieldwork/familiarisation visits and through contact with a range of relevant stakeholders, and were contacted via email in the first instance. Participants were ultimately drawn from 7 organisations: two ‘drop-in’ centres offering sexual

health advice and counselling services to young people, 3 youth clubs offering a range of organised social activities, and, in community P, a boxing club and a Christian charity offering support services to families in the local area.

3.3.3 Negotiating access and developing relationships

Developing research ‘relationships’ is an important design and planning issue (Maxwell, 1996). The process requires patience and sensitivity, and can be critical to the success or otherwise of a given project. Ritchie and Lewis (2003) suggest the following hallmarks of effective engagement: (i) sensitivity to organisational hierarchies in identifying and building relationships with ‘gatekeepers’; (ii) remaining clear in relation to the stated aims and purpose of the project; (iii) being explicit in communicating the time and input required of participants; (iv) being explicit in communicating the dissemination of findings; (v) being responsive and sympathetic to any concerns and reservations, and; (vi) making adjustments to accommodate these (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). The process is also clearly served by maximising the relevance of the project for participants and the organisation involved. Utility is commonly discussed in terms of cost and benefit, and gratuity payments or small ‘tokens’ of appreciation are generally considered acceptable inducements for participants, although the offer of these must not be made explicit or contingent on ethical grounds. Participants were therefore given vouchers in the amount of £10 redeemable in a range of appropriate retail outlets.

The aims and purpose of the project were clearly stated on the information sheets provided to participating organisations (See Appx. B), along with the commitment required of participants and issues pertaining to confidentiality and the dissemination of findings. The commitment required of participating organisations was negotiated with individual gatekeepers: contacting participating organisations in advance ensured that by the time I made contact in person or via telephone the role of ‘gatekeeper’ had already either been assumed by the service manager or delegated to a member of the team. While all expressed an interest in the aims and purpose of the research, discussion with gatekeepers was primarily focussed on presenting practicalities and the nature and value of the inducements on offer to participants.

Most had previous experience in accommodating research projects, and clear preferences in terms of how to manage the process. Recruitment therefore varied considerably between contexts: in one of the health services, the process was managed end-to-end by a gatekeeper who provided information and consent forms to prospective participants as part of her outreach work and scheduled interviews during the centre's weekly 'drop-in' sessions. At another, I attended these drop-in sessions myself, developing relationships with service users over the course of several weeks to generate interest in the study and identify and recruit participants.

The process varied similarly between the youth club settings. In one, the service manager was committed to other projects when I made contact in the first instance, but requested the information/consent materials and subsequently scheduled interviews some months later, once more managing the process end-to-end. In another, by contrast, I was introduced to the club facilitator by a manager in a community centre I had met in arranging to introduce myself to the local boxing club, and attended in an informal capacity for a number of weeks: participating in organised activities, engaging prospective participants in conversation and carrying out interviews on an ongoing basis. While it is clearly both necessary and desirable to adjust the recruitment strategy to accommodate the needs of participating organisations, and very helpful to have gatekeepers manage the recruitment process end-to-end, the investment made in establishing relationships with prospective participants where this was practicable paid dividends in terms of the quality of the resulting data, particularly in terms of promoting interaction between participants in focus groups. The extent to which this results from the preparatory work undertaken in these contexts or simply reflects a degree of research fatigue among participants where recruitment was expedited by gatekeepers who were clearly already very familiar with the research process is difficult to determine.

In each instance, young people expressing an interest in participating in interviews received information and consent materials at least a week in advance of the interviews (See Appx. C). Although all were informed they were entitled to withdraw consent at any time, none chose to do so. Participants were also provided with information sheets and opt-out consent forms for the benefit of parents and

carers (See Appx. D). The use of opt out as opposed to opt in consent forms is elaborated in Section 3.4

3.3.4 Familiarisation visits and observational fieldwork

In addition to the practical considerations involved in negotiating access and developing research relationships, observational methods were employed both in advance of and during this study. In addition to mapping tobacco retailer locations, several weeks were invested in identifying and carrying out familiarisation work in communities P and Q. This included mapping youth clubs and other third sector organisations, undertaking discursive interviews with tobacco retailers, trading standards officers, community police and youth club convenors, and carrying out participant observation to the extent that familiarisation work in the study communities involved regular interaction with young people, not all of whom elected ultimately to be interviewed. As a consequence, findings from ‘informal’ interviews and field-notes have not been included explicitly in analyses. This observational work served, however, to facilitate more discursive interviews than the notion of semi-structured interviewing implies, and to generate impressions of the life-worlds and smoking-related practices of participants in which to contextualise the subsequent analysis.

While observational methods are commonly used in the exploratory phase of qualitative research projects to generate a more detailed understanding of context (Robson, 1996), ethnographers have traditionally immersed themselves in the field for a period of several years in order to attune themselves to its temporal rhythms, language and social structures (Okely, 2012). However, the extent of immersion appropriate in a given context may also be determined pragmatically on the basis of presenting practical considerations. Gold (1958), for example, distinguishes between four discrete roles in field observation: (i) the complete participant, which implies total immersion in the field and some obfuscation of the observer role; (ii) the participant as observer, in which the researcher’s role as observer is made explicit; (iii) the observer as participant, in which the researcher has only minimal

involvement in a given social setting, and; (iv) the complete observer, which implies no direct interaction with informants on the part of the researcher. Ethnographic work will typically entail some negotiation of the participant as observer role, while the observer as participant role is commonly adopted in studies involving one-off interviews (Gold, 1958). Both extremes of this spectrum raise issues in relation to informed consent, primarily through the obfuscation of the role of the researcher.

The complete observer role, however, may also function as a prelude to the participant as observer role in community studies (Gold, 1958). In their ethnographic work exploring the social context of young people's health-related behaviours, for example, Pavis et al. (1999) effectively adopted the role of the complete observer in the first instance in order to overcome some of the challenges and limitations associated with 'cold approaching' young people i.e. approaching prospective study participants proactively. During the initial stages of fieldwork, the researcher would rather aim to make themselves visible to young people, for example by sitting on a bench eating food or drinking near a favoured 'hang-out'. Over time, the researcher came increasingly to be recognised and approached by groups of young people as a consequence of what the research team refer to as 'the intrigue factor', with the role of the researcher subsequently shifting to that of participant as observer as levels of interaction with informants increased. At this stage, the role of the researcher was made explicit.

A similar strategy was employed in this study. While groups of young people were not approached proactively during familiarisation visits, the time invested in observational work in the study communities clearly resulted in some interactions and observations taking place beyond the immediate context of the interviews, both with eventual study participants and others. The time invested in mapping retailers and youth oriented services, for example, afforded ample opportunities to identify areas in which young people congregated, and to observe, for example, unsuccessful cigarette purchasing attempts at first hand. Congregations of young people outside the youth clubs in particular also afforded opportunities to observe the social practices involved in negotiating interpersonal cigarette exchanges, including the particular salience of cigarette branding in this context. Over time, young people

became increasingly aware of my role as a researcher, having either been present on an occasion on which this was explained to a group of young people, or following an approach motivated by what Pavis et al. (1999) refer to as the intrigue factor.

3.3.5 Conducting interviews

A total of 28 interviews were carried out concurrently in communities P and Q between March and December 2010 with a total of 60 young people between the ages of 12 and 17. Participants were recruited purposively on the basis of their smoking or having an interest in/some other involvement with tobacco. While recruitment was exclusively targeted at 13 and 15 year olds, and I had hoped ultimately to achieve an approximately balanced sample by age and gender, the decision to interview self-selecting friendship pairs and triads necessitated ‘relaxing’ these inclusion criteria somewhat: 15 year olds, for example, would often present with older friends, and several friendship groups comprising 15 and 16 year olds asked to be interviewed separately. Despite some necessary compromises, however, the final sample was approximately balanced by community, age and gender (See Table 1).

Table 1: Intended number of interviews and interviews completed

Table 1a: Target number of interviews

Community	Sex	Age 13	Age 15	Participants
P	M	3	3	12 ± 6
	F	3	3	12 ± 6
Q	M	3	3	12 ± 6
	F	3	3	12 ± 6
TARGET		Interviews		Participants
		24		48 ± 24

Table 1b: Interviews completed

Community	Sex	Age 13	Age 15	Participants
P	M	4 ¹	2	13 ¹
	F	4	4	19
Q	M	6	3	19
	F	2	3 ¹	9 ¹
SAMPLE		Interviews		Participants
		28 ¹		60 ¹

¹ including pilots

As highlighted in section 3.3.2, the decision to target 13-15 year old young people was made on the basis of their encompassing the transition from experimental to more habituated, regular smoking, and from opportunistic, social tobacco acquisition towards more stable retail cigarette purchasing patterns. It became very apparent during the course of the familiarisation work described in the previous section, however, both that young people's social networks comprised individuals of varying ages, and that older young people would often supply their younger friends with cigarettes, either directly or through proxy purchases.

The more formal congregation of young people in the youth clubs, for example, would often dissolve into informal congregations of young people in the surrounding parks and streets. At weekends in particular, many young people attended the youth clubs in advance of spending time with friends elsewhere, with the liminal spaces outside the youth clubs representing a locus for some local tensions, in particular in terms of the use of alcohol. One youth club had therefore instituted a policy to limit the number of times young people were permitted to enter/exit the youth club in the course of a given night, ostensibly to smoke, and all had policies prohibiting entry to young people under the influence of alcohol, although these were applied more flexibly. One of the clear benefits of continuing observational work in this context was to facilitate the recruitment of these otherwise unidentifiable suppliers/facilitators. Interaction with participants over a period of time raised awareness of the study within these informal social congregations, and several individuals who did not ordinarily frequent the youth clubs attended on successive weeks specifically to be interviewed.

The ongoing observational work also ensured that interviews rarely represented one-off interactions. While all participants were provided with information sheets, few read them: most were familiar with the aims of the research through previous encounters either with me or with others who had already been interviewed. Topic guides were revised following the initial pilot interviews and contained a series of questions on smoking and smoking related attitudes, sources of cigarettes, and young people's views, experiences and perceptions around the increase in the age of sale and related policy developments, but were rarely used, other than as an occasional

point of reference at the end of interviews to make sure that relevant subject matter had been adequately addressed. On several occasions, further interaction with participants took place following interviews: on one occasion, for example, I was asked by two participants to take them to a local retail park to spend their vouchers at a music store, while on another I was approached by a girl who had generated additional interest in the study among her peers by managing to buy a new dress with her voucher.

The observational work also proved valuable in terms of contextualising participants' accounts in the course of analysis. Where participants referred to other young people, for example, these were ordinarily known to me. Where participants referred to the police, similarly, these were individuals with whom I had already spoken, and among tobacco retailers in particular their representations of youth cigarette access resonated clearly with those expressed by participants. An employee in one of the shops identified by participants as amenable to selling cigarettes to underage young people, for example, claimed not to sell them cigarettes himself, but regularly to be accosted by young people telling him his 'owner' did, and that he ought to do likewise.

While the 'relaxation' of the inclusion criteria to accommodate a broader age range problematises straightforward comparisons by age, it also conferred clear advantages, in combination with the observational fieldwork, in particular in terms of capturing the clear overlap between youth cigarette access and the social supply of cigarettes. Further, the use of qualitative methods, certainly the combination of qualitative methods employed here, precludes straightforward 'disaggregation' of the data along these lines. Young peoples' views and experiences or identified 'facets' of reflexively negotiated meanings, are neither stable nor generalisable constructs, and while delineating less abstract variables engenders a certain comfort or security there is no precedent - given the chosen methodological stance - for conceptualising 'age' and 'gender' as transcending context or obviating the need for a more sensitive operationalisation of concepts.

With this proviso, the ages of participants are detailed in Table 2. Thirteen year olds elected more frequently to be interviewed with friends of a similar age, while 15 year

olds tended to present with a broader (age) range of friends and to opt for individual interviews. As such, approximately two thirds of the sample comprises 12-14 year olds. Fourteen year olds most commonly presented in interviews with older friends, however, and discriminating between younger and older participants along these lines ie 12-13 year olds and older young people generates an approximately balanced sample by age and gender.

Table 2: Study participants by age and sex

	12-14 years	15-17 years
Male	19 ¹	10
Female	16	11 ¹

	12-13 years	14-17 years
Male	15 ¹	14
Female	13	14 ¹

¹ excluding pilots

3.3.6 Data management and analysis

Interview and focus group data were transcribed and fieldnotes maintained throughout the course of the study. Transcripts were managed in NVivo v.8 and a conceptual framework was developed to facilitate a thematic analysis. The first stage of coding involved identifying and separating descriptive themes: separating discussion pertaining to cigarette access from discussion pertaining to cigarette branding, for example. While relevant themes were identified during the familiarisation process (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003), overarching themes included: familial relationships; social networks; community/social location; cigarette access and supply; demographics/smoking status etc. These emergent themes informed the development of an index to disambiguate the data. This was applied systematically to the whole data set. Following this initial application, indices were revised to reflect emergent thematic categories and subcategories. Existing categories were also expanded and collapsed as appropriate (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Thereafter, data

were sorted by theme or concept using NVivo v.8 and synthesised in anticipation of their eventual dissemination.

Ritchie and Lewis (2003) foreground three essential considerations to ensure the maintenance of originality and the preservation of context during data synthesis. Accordingly: (i) key terms, expressions or phrases were preserved in their original form; (ii) interpretation was minimised to ensure the original syntax could be revisited during subsequent analyses; and (iii) selectivity was minimised to ensure that material that was not immediately or obviously relevant in the first instance but proved illuminating during the subsequent interpretive analytical phase was not omitted (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Interviews were transcribed verbatim and fieldnotes maintained to record any interactions not readily captured in the primary data (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). This study attempted a modified grounded theory approach, and a thematic analysis was undertaken. While the approach is modified by virtue of the process being informed by relevant literature and hypotheses, however: ‘the fundamental contribution of grounded theory methods resides in offering a guide to interpretive theoretical practice not in providing a blueprint for theoretical products’ (Charmaz, 2006). Qualitative research is a creative, iterative process, and this kind of flexible application is considered permissible by its exponents (Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

Grounded Theory is underpinned by a number of assumptions broadly congruent with symbolic interactionism (Grbich, 2009). Strauss and Corbin (1998), for example, reference Blumer’s (1969) work explicitly in elaborating on the specification of concepts and their interrelationships. In practical terms, Grounded Theory involves: ‘coding data and then grouping those codes into concepts in an increasingly hierarchical fashion’ (Wasserman et al., 2009). Theoretical models subsequently emerge as concepts are translated into theoretical propositions. The process is iterative, with preliminary analyses informing subsequent data-collection cycles (Grbich, 2009). Efforts were made, as such, to identify emergent themes and engage with the subject matter most apparently salient for participants. For example, while discussion relating to branding did not feature in the original topic guides, related subject matter was consistently foregrounded by participants. These topics

were therefore included in subsequent interviews. Grbich (2009) describes analysis as an idiosyncratic process most appropriately guided by the individual preferences of the researcher (Grbich, 2009). I find a certain comfort in this assertion. My initial efforts to formalise a preliminary analysis were not entirely successful, consisting of an experimental exercise in conceptual mapping. This was sabotaged by my tendency to abstract too readily from the data in an effort to generate a ‘coherent’ framework: attempting to synthesise the data at this very early stage resulted in a tendency to foreground issues or individual interviews I considered particularly apposite.

What I ultimately attempted instead is a modified ‘concept mapping’ of individual interviews to identify relationships between constituent ‘units’ of discussion, involving only minimal abstraction from the data. For example, cigarette access and supply unambiguously constitute recurrent topics or ‘units of discussion’ if only by virtue of my explicit prompting where interviews failed to converge organically on related topics. Participants’ contributions in this context are in turn relatively straightforwardly divisible into constituent sub-‘units’: their accounts of proxy or first person cigarette purchases, for example, or sourcing cigarettes from friends or parents. Thereafter, further commonalities were evident: discussion often focussed on particular individuals recruited for proxy purchases, for example, or on particular strategies for negotiating access to tobacco via shops. NVivo v.8 was used to code the data and retrieve sections of text addressing related subject matter. A structured, hierarchical framework was developed to facilitate thematic analysis, with codes revised and omitted as appropriate.

3.4 Ethics

The Research Ethics Committee of the School for Health in Social Science raised a number of issues in relation to the original submission (See Appx. E). Most of these concerns were remedied with minor revisions to information sheets and consent forms. The committee also suggested that insufficient attention had been paid to explicating the nature of the information sought from participants and issues around ‘power’ and ‘informed consent’. These issues are therefore considered briefly here.

In terms of the former, topic guides were modified following pilot interviews and do not include probes for names of individual suppliers or foreground sensitive issues or illegal activity. Sensitive information was not shared with external agencies, and disclosures were to be addressed in the context of relevant organisational child protection policies. None arose in the event.

A concern with power and informed consent is also implied in the intention to avoid recruitment through schools. Aside from the unequal social positions of pupils and teachers and concerns in relation to adequate representation from 'hard to reach' groups, Powell and Smith (2009), highlight limitations on young people's freedom to decline participation in formal educational settings, suggesting that the in/exclusion of young people is driven by the varying agendas of gatekeepers in these contexts. These power differentials are equally relevant in addressing the question: 'what constitutes informed consent and who should give it?' Such concerns feed into discourses surrounding children's right to participate in matters concerning their welfare. Children and young people's right to be consulted on matters concerning their welfare is encoded both in the Children Act 1989 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, reflecting a broader paradigmatic shift from the age-stage developmental model of childhood towards a constructivist model positing a plurality of childhoods in place of the 'universal' or archetypal child (Woodhead and Faulkner, 2000).

Consultation is also encoded in the Scottish Government's commitment to accessibility and transparency in developing the democratic process (Scottish Office, 1998), and in the national preventive agenda. *Towards a Future Without Tobacco* (2006) emphasises the importance of consultation with young people in driving forward the agenda outlined in *Scotland's Future is Smoke Free: A Smoking Prevention Action Plan* (2008). This agenda has also been broadly welcomed by children and young people themselves (Stafford et al., 2003). This study therefore sought consent from the prospective participants in the first instance, providing information sheets and opt-out forms for the benefit of parents and carers. If young people are to be cast as competent social actors, they must also be considered capable

of exercising independent choices in relation to their participation in the research process (Munford and Sanders, 2004)

Qualitative data were generated through interviews and focus groups, and these also require due consideration of a range of ethical issues. Mason (2002), for example, directs the researcher to consider: (i) the nature of the interview questions; (ii) their framing; (iii) the nature of the role of the researcher; (iv) issues surrounding confidentiality and anonymity; and (v) presenting power dynamics (Mason, 2002: 79-80). In terms of the former, the situated and contextually relative nature of generated data is explicitly recognised in this study, and a focus has been maintained on accounts of individual experiences rather than on more generalised narratives. Topic guides were used to maintain a focus on the phenomena of interest, and prompts were used to stimulate discussion only where this was necessary. These were not, however, used to foreground 'sensitive' issues, or 'drive' the interview agenda. Experiences of direct or coercive pressure to smoke, for example, were foregrounded spontaneously by participants, as were the names of retailers and individuals selling cigarettes to underage customers. These have been anonymised.

Nor were questions framed in such a way as to 'catch out' or otherwise confuse participants (Mason, 2002: 79). To iterate: these were developed in the context of Blumer's (1969) focus on the social construction of meaning, and no attempt was made to disaggregate the complex range of factors influencing young people's smoking and cigarette access behaviours. Equally, while the study aims to explore these behaviours in the context of the increase in the minimum age of sale and related policy developments, these policies were not explicitly foregrounded in interviews. These were considered, rather, to constitute facets of the aggregation of influences impacting on individual health behaviours.

In recognition of the potential for the researcher to shape or dictate young people's narratives, discussion was only 'led' where: (i) the subject migrated to inappropriate or irrelevant territory; (ii) participants appeared uncomfortable or distressed; or (iii) discussion raised child protection issues or constituted a report of criminal activity, in which case relevant organisational policies would have been followed and the local child protection officer/police informed as appropriate. Once more, this proved not to

be an issue. Participants were only prompted in instances where: (i) discussion migrated to inappropriate or irrelevant territory; and (ii) where silences proved uncondusive to the interview process. While none of the topics covered were anticipated to foreground criminal behaviours or raise child protection concerns, these eventualities required consideration in the first instance in light of the intention to focus on social and family contexts and explore young people's cigarette sources.

Confidentiality and anonymity was assured through adherence to relevant University of Edinburgh guidelines: recordings and transcriptions were securely stored, and transcripts were coded and anonymised. References to identifiable 'others' or specific places were also omitted or coded as appropriate. The importance of confidentiality was also iterated verbally for the benefit of all participants; particularly those participating in group discussion in order to minimise 'leakage', ie the transfer of information to outsiders. Data will be deleted following the completion of this thesis in accordance with the University of Edinburgh confidential waste disposal guidelines. As this research was carried out with children under 16 years of age and included visits to a range of third sector organisations working with young people, a criminal records check was obtained from Disclosure Scotland.

3.5 Reflexivity

The term reflexivity is derived from ethnomethodology but is most commonly employed as a means of highlighting the situated, contextually relative nature of the qualitative data in the current context and the role of the researcher in its co-construction (Silverman, 2005; Underwood et al., 2010). While this concern has been addressed elsewhere in this chapter, for example in Ritchie and Lewis' (2003) concern with interpretation in the analytical process or Schostak's (2005) caution against the perils of 'data mining', there is a clear difference between acknowledging having a role in the co-construction of data and reflecting critically on the nature and extent of one's various influences on the research process (Randall et al., 2006). Pillow (2003), for example, suggests reflexive practice requires the researcher to account for the diverse ways in which a range of individual characteristics including

age, gender, race, class, sexuality and ethnicity influence all stages of the research process (Pillow, 2003).

I, for example, am a Norwegian male in my 30s, and have experience working with children and young people in various roles and contexts including in residential care, children and families duty teams and young offenders institutions. As such, many of the practicalities associated with negotiating access, recruiting and interviewing involved work with which I was already broadly familiar. Having been involved in setting up a 'link-up' service in the past, for example, I was relatively comfortable with networking to the extent that this applies to walking the streets on a winter evening, seeing lights on in a public building and going in to introduce myself. I have also spent several years interviewing children to the extent that this applies to formal social services assessments, informal interactions in residential care or teaching work in young offenders' institutions. What effect my background and experiences may have had on proceedings specifically, however, is more difficult to determine.

Finlay (2002) highlights the dangers of what she describes as 'infinite regress' in this context: 'with researchers getting lost in endless narcissistic personal emoting or interminable deconstructions of deconstructions where all meaning gets lost' (Finlay, 2002: 226). Personal revelations are only as pertinent as their pertinence in the broader context of a given study, and in this case my hope is that that pertinence is limited. I did spend time thinking about what to wear and wondering how to present myself, for example, but decided against attempting anything too contrived on the basis that dressing for the occasion would be more likely to identify me as someone dressing for the occasion rather than conferring belonging or whatever else I may have been attempting. I am presumably not entirely well placed to divine what mode of dress is deemed appropriate for someone in my position by a 12-17 year old in any event, and with luck it will have been what I was wearing by virtue of my wearing it, with me and eventual study participants engaged in the co-construction of appropriate public health research dress.

Nor did I present myself as a public health researcher, social or youth worker. In the latter case because any experiences participants and participating organisations may have previously had with social services may not necessarily have been uniformly

positive, and I was not attending formally in that capacity. In the former case primarily because what it means to be a researcher in this context is likely to represent a more nebulous and problematic concept for eventual participants than it is for me. I am a public health researcher only to the extent that I am currently a student in the field, and am comfortable confusing what I am with what I do. In most cases, I am fairly confident that participants viewed me primarily as an extension or proxy agent of whatever organisation I was recruiting through. It was apparent, for example, that participants recruited through organisations offering sexual health and advice services to young people were particularly familiar with rules around confidentiality, and appeared very comfortable disclosing personal information, presumably as a consequence.

I have also smoked for many years, and invested efforts in considering how to address any relevant questions in this context as they arose, in discussion with my supervisors. Clearly, given the research topic, it had been agreed early on that I would not be smoking in the study communities. There also appears to be a consensus that disclosing personal information during data collection may be ill advised (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). However, given that most interviews were undertaken with young people I had already met, any personal questions participants were inclined to ask had ordinarily been addressed, and as such were unlikely to lead to protracted digression from relevant subject matter. Further, given the discursive interview format and what I was asking of participants, I feel it would have been inappropriate to refuse to engage straightforwardly with questions as these arose. This study focusses on young people's articulated views and perspectives, and my role in interviews was to facilitate their expression. Where attention focussed on me temporarily I answered questions directly.

To an extent, this also ameliorated broader concerns in relation to 'ongoing' consent (Warin 2011). Participants had agreed to participate in 'Talking about Cigarettes and Smoking', as opposed to 'Answering Questions' or 'Being Interrogated about Cigarettes and Smoking', and a refusal to engage with presenting questions on my part would presumably have implied a breach of contract, or at least imposed an unnecessary degree of artificiality on proceedings. My role in interviews, to iterate,

was to remove myself and the formal interview agenda from proceedings as far as this was achievable. This was not in the belief that this somehow absolves me from engaging critically with the data, including in relation to my role in its construction, but rather because what I tried to do wherever possible was simply engage young people in conversation: drawing on whatever experience I have to listen to participants to the extent that this was possible, and to talk to the extent that this was necessary.

3.6 Study strengths and limitations

This qualitative study aims to examine young people's smoking and cigarette access behaviours in a particular temporal and community context. As a consequence, results are not generalizable beyond the context of the particular groups of young people participating in the study. The fieldwork also coincided with the school holidays, which presented challenges in terms of recruitment. However, the range of 'usual' cigarette sources routinely accessed by young people are adequately captured in the SDD and SALSUS, and previous mixed method studies have shown that qualitative research is more conducive to examining these 'usual' cigarette sources in more detail (Croghan et al., 2003). This study also aims to consider the meaning or subjective significance of participants' usual cigarette sources in the context of their social worlds, which lends itself to the analysis of generated textual data as discussed in section 3.2.4. The observational work carried out both in advance of and during the study, equally, generated context in which to frame the subsequent analysis.

3.7 Summary

The selection of a combination of observational methods, interviews and focus groups in this study may be summarised as follows. Observational methods were considered to represent a necessary component of any attempt to access and represent young people's social worlds (Blumer, 1969). Observational methods were also necessarily involved in familiarisation visits to the study communities, to youth

organisations within these communities and to the social spaces in which young people enact their smoking and cigarette access behaviours.

Offering participants a choice of methods was considered congruent with broader ethical considerations and attempts to address the imbalance in the 'power' dynamic between the researcher and research participants. On a pragmatic level, offering participants a choice was also considered likely to increase participation and engender discussion and interest within the 'informal' research settings. Individual interviews were considered to be particularly conducive to exploring the role and symbolic function of tobacco, and likely to generate more illuminating accounts of smoking initiation or otherwise potentially 'difficult' issues which may have remained untapped in more 'public' group discussions. Using paired and triadic interviews, meanwhile, was anticipated to promote a degree of 'ecological validity'. Smoking behaviours are overwhelmingly enacted in social contexts, and self-selecting groups, as such, will be considered to constitute microcosmic representations of these social contexts.

4 Talking about cigarettes and smoking

4.1 Introducing the study participants

As described in the previous chapter, a total of 60 young people were interviewed between March and December 2010, with the contributions of 56 young people included in analyses. Of the 56, around a half (n=29) were recruited from community 'P', around a half (n=29) were male, and a half (n=28) were aged 12 or 13 years at the time the interviews were undertaken. Participants are identified in the text hereafter by number and the communities in which they were interviewed. P1, for example, therefore refers to the first participant interviewed in community 'P'. The sex, age and smoking status of participants is also included in parentheses. P1 (M16R) therefore indicates that P1 is a 16 year old regular smoker. Participants' smoking status was assessed qualitatively through the interview transcripts. 'Regular smokers' refers to participants reporting daily smoking, with 'occasional smokers' referring to participants reporting intermittent 'casual' or 'social' smoking, including those smoking weekly for example at school or during weekends. 'Tried smoking' refers to those who reported having tried smoking on one or more occasions, with 'ex-smokers' referring to participants who reported having made a decision to quit smoking following their last cigarette.

These smoking categories therefore broadly reflect those employed in the SDD and SALSUS (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012), with the clear exception of 'regular' smoking referring to daily as opposed to weekly smoking. The decision to distinguish daily smokers from others was made on the basis of: (i) the high prevalence of regular daily smoking in the sample, with a half of all participants reporting smoking one or more cigarettes daily, and; (ii) the clear qualitative differences that exist between individuals accepting ad-hoc offers of cigarettes from friends at weekends and those making daily cigarette purchases to sustain an entrenched smoking habit. These differences are considered in more detail in the following section. While the classification of participants' smoking status was not unproblematic, Table 3 summarises the age, sex, ethnicity and smoking status of the 56 participants included in the final sample for illustrative purposes.

Table 3: Sample composition

		P	Q	n=	%=	
Sex	Male	10	19	29	52	
	Female	19	8	27	48	
Age	12	5	3	8	14	
	13	9	11	20	36	
	12-13	14	14	28	50	
	14	3	4	7	13	
	15	3	6	9	16	
	16	7	1	8	14	
	17	2	2	4	7	
	14-17	15	13	28	50	
	Ethnicity	White Scottish	28	27	55	98
		African Scottish	1	0	1	2
Smoking status	Regular	18	10	28	50	
	Occasional	4	1	5	9	
	Tried	3	8	11	20	
	Ex	3	3	6	11	
	Never	1	5	6	11	
	Non-regular	11	17	28	50	
Education	School A	23	0	23	41	
	School B	1	0	1	2	
	School C	0	17	18	32	
	School D	0	5	5	9	
	School E	0	1	1	2	
	School F	0	1	1	2	
		24	24	48	86	
	NEET	5	3	8	14	

4.2 Smoking status and cigarette consumption

It became apparent during the course of the interviews that the designation of ‘regular smoker’ for individuals smoking a cigarette a week or more was inconsistent with the views expressed by participants. The clear majority of those identifying themselves as smokers claimed to smoke at least a cigarette a day, with most claiming to smoke between 5 and 20 cigarettes depending on a range of factors including the availability of cigarettes and the social activities in which they were engaged. P1 (M16R), for example, had recently been discharged from the army on medical grounds, and had returned to the local area, suggesting that: *‘when I’m bored I smoke, and when I’m not bored I dinnae smoke...I mean...If I’m up here, even for two hours, I’ll smoke a couple of fags, but if I was out for two hours I’d be smoking six...seven. But down there, lucky if I was getting two fags a day’*. None of those describing themselves as ‘smokers’ claimed to smoke less than four or five cigarettes on a ‘typical’ day, with most smoking first thing in the morning, either at home or on their way to school, at least twice during the school day at: *‘break and lunch’* and after school with friends.

All participants identifying themselves as ‘smokers’, as such, reported regular ‘daily’ smoking, with those who smoked less frequently typically identifying themselves as ‘social’ or non-smokers in the first instance – particularly when presenting in interviews with regular daily smokers, or simply equivocating. Qs 5, 6 and 7 (M15T M16O M17R), for example, illustrate the case as follows:

TT: And are you guys smokers aswell, or you don’t smoke?

Q5: Nah...

Q7: I’m a smoker...

Q6: Not so much...

TT: You do...you don’t and you don’t? Why’s that...Is that like a conscious decision with you guys?

Q6: Sometimes. It depends...

TT: So you do smoke like sometimes?

Q6: *No I've stopped smoking. I do....well, sometimes I do.*

TT: *But you wouldn't call yourself a smoker?*

Q6: *Nah. Casual....Some....sometimes.*

TT: *Aha. Out of interest...why...why wouldn't you call yourself a smoker...if you smoke sometimes? Does that not count?*

Q6: *Nah*

TT: *How much do you have to smoke to be a smoker?*

Q6: *A lot. Like every day...*

The account follows discussion around the prevalence of smoking at school and in the local community, with Q7 (M17R), the only participant to identify himself as a 'smoker' in the first instance, suggesting: *'I'm a smoker'* where Q5 (M15T) and Q6 (M16O) responded: *'Nah'* and: *'Not so much'* respectively. Q6 (M16O) identifies himself as a 'casual' smoker on the basis he no longer smokes: *'a lot'*, unlike Q7 (M17R), whom he describes as smoking: *'like a chimney'*. It transpires, however, that Q6 (M16O) had also previously been a smoker: *'but I've stopped ... 'cos I've been grounded for ages...I've not been out with friends...so I haven't...really'*, suggesting that the duration of his 'not really' smoking corresponds with the duration of his 'grounding'. Q5 (M15T) had also smoked on occasion, acknowledging later in the interview that: *'Aye, I have smoked but I dinnae!'* Consistent with the majority of other participants, both self-identification as a smoker and the identification of others as smokers was represented as contingent on higher levels of consumption.

Of the four remaining occasional smokers, P4 (F14O) and P10 (F16O) also suggested they did not smoke in the first instance before presenting themselves as 'social' smokers in the second, accepting offers of cigarettes from others at weekends and in particular when they were drinking. P10 (F16O), for example, suggested: *'although I'll smoke on the weekends I'm never tempted at all...during the week at all...like I'll have a laugh and say: "Oh, that fag looks tempting" like, for a joke and that, but...I never really need one. It's only when I drink, and then everyone starts to press me, it's: "I need a fag". I'm always half out of my face when I start to smoke'*. This distinction between smokers and 'casual' or 'social' smokers was also

highlighted by P12 (F16R), who smoked a packet of cigarettes a day but described herself as: *'sort of like a semi-social smoker'* on the basis that she occasionally refrained from smoking: *'like if my mum cuts me off with no money or something'*. While regular smokers did not represent themselves as 'addicted' to smoking, positing varying iterations of the assertion: *'I can take it or leave it'* when the subject arose in interviews, this nevertheless represents a principal distinction between regular and occasional smokers: the latter were those who not only suggested they could, but also that they actually did, on occasion, 'leave it'.

P16 and P17's (F13O and F12O) smoking status was more difficult to assess. Both presented in a triadic interview with P18 (F12T) and had clearly rehearsed their performance to a greater extent than other participants, appearing particularly careful to manage the impressions they conveyed. Each represented themselves as having 'tried' smoking in the first instance, and maintained a clear party line on the subject during the early phase of the interview, before acknowledging during the latter stages that they had, indeed, tried smoking: *'a couple of times...when we're drunk'*. Their drinking was represented as a regular activity, however, undertaken on a weekly basis, and P16 (F16O) eventually broke ranks during the course of the interview to instruct P17 (F12O) to: *'just admit it [ie to her smoking]'*, while appearing more reluctant to acknowledge what I presume to be her own smoking. P17 (F12O) was observed smoking while under the influence of alcohol during familiarisation visits. This will be discussed in more detail in exploring the settings in which participants were interviewed. The salient point is that P17 (F12O) was observed smoking on successive weeks during fieldwork, and was therefore included among those classified as 'occasional' smokers.

P16's (F13O) smoking status remains more elusive. P16 (F13O) was somewhat older than her friend and cousin (P17 and P18), and maintained a dominant role in the course of discussion throughout the interview, as evidenced, for example, by her instructing her cousin to *'just admit'* to smoking. There were a number of inconsistencies in her account, however, which suggest that the 'secret' these participants were aiming to maintain relates to the involvement of the family in the trade of illicit tobacco rather than their smoking behaviour. In discussing the

availability of illicit tobacco, for example, P17 (F12O) mentioned on several occasions: *'it's my mum...my friends gran what does it', [ie sells illicit tobacco]* with P18 (F12T) interjecting to ask: *'Could I just ask...Who does this get shown to?'* In the course of discussion pertaining to proxy purchases, P16 (F13O) similarly suggested: *'like we...like my pals just get junkies and...people that are out of their face or drunk and that to go in and get fags'*, before acknowledging that she also bought cigarettes: *'for my mum'* on occasion. In describing the mechanics of the transaction, however, P16 (F13O) once more reverts to the first person singular framing: *'I went: "Could you get fags for...my mum please" and they went: "Aye, what do you want" and I just said what I wanted'*, with P17 (F12O) interceding enthusiastically to remind her: *'No! what your mum wanted'*. P17's (F12O) intercession suggests she was perhaps reluctant to appear alone in having provided an unintended glimpse behind the scenes.

The intention, clearly, is not to interrogate the veracity of participants' accounts, but rather to make explicit this presentational element to highlight some of the difficulties inherent in attempting to capture and categorise participants' smoking status in interviews. All those identifying themselves as smokers and most of those identifying themselves as 'casual' or 'social' smokers, appeared familiar with a range of attributes and behaviours or the 'body of knowledge' and range of 'dispositions' associated with the act of smoking. Berger and Luckmann (1967) refer to these as 'standards' set for role performers, suggesting these are known, and it is known that they are known. Every actor can therefore be held responsible for abiding by these standards, which are taught as part of the institutional tradition and used to verify the credentials of the role performer (Berger and Luckmann, 1967: 90). It is possible, therefore, that in groups in which smoking is associated with elevated status or synonymous with the embodiment of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984), those participants equivocating or 'playing down' their smoking status may have made more confident claims in relation to their smoking if their friends were not in a position to apply 'sanctions'.

Q6 (M16O), for example, had previously been a regular smoker, and is therefore clearly familiar with the standards or range of competencies associated with the role,

describing himself as *'not so much'* a smoker immediately after Q7 (M17R) suggests straightforwardly that he is. To do otherwise would leave him vulnerable to challenges along the lines he effectively pre-empts by foregrounding these smoking related competencies himself: framing daily smoking as a requisite dimension of what it means to be a 'smoker' in this context. Other attributes associated with smoking as a social role are considered in the following Chapters, and are examined in more detail in revisiting these themes in the discussion in Chapter 8. The salient point here is that participants' representations of themselves as smokers, as 'social' or 'casual' smokers or indeed as vehemently anti-smoking constitute dimensions of performances that vary both with the contexts in which the accounts were constructed and with the relationship between participants.

It was very apparent, for example, that the only interview in which more experienced regular smokers repeatedly deferred to the views and perspectives of a non-smoker was that in which participants were not only acquainted through the youth centre in which they were interviewed, but also through the local boxing club. Ps 25 and 26 (M13R and M13R) presented in a triadic interview with P24 (M16T), and responded to questions around smoking in the first instance as follows:

TT: So obviously my thing I'm looking at is...is smoking...and...Would you say smoking is...what? a relatively common thing...among people around here...

P25: Aye...

TT: Sort of thinking about school, or family, or...[P24 points at the others] What does that mean?

P24: Think...both of them...

TT: Oh both of them...Does that mean you don't?

P24: Aye, I dinnae...

TT: You don't?

P25: He be...he's a good boxer...

In contrast with the majority of other interviews then, in which more experienced regular smokers tended to seize the initiative by foregrounding their smoking related knowledge, P24 (M16T) took centre stage during the initial stages of the interview to describe how he had tried smoking when he was 6 years of age but suggested: *'I just*

think it's wrong...smoking at 16 and that...18'. The moral discourse foregrounded by some participants in elaborating on the increase in the minimum age of sale is considered in more detail in Chapter 7. The salient point here is that P24s (M16T) interjection set a precedent for the remainder of the interview. P25 (M13R) immediately associates P24's (M16T) not smoking with his being a good boxer, and both P25 and P26 (M13R and M13R), in contrast with the clear majority of regular smokers, subsequently expressed contrition in relation to their smoking during the course of the interview, suggesting that in this instance, their social role as smokers was secondary to their role as junior members of the boxing club.

4.3 Accounts of initiation

All participants represented smoking as ubiquitous, with most mentioning parental smoking and all articulating iterations of the perception that 'everyone smokes around here' both in school and in the local community. Particular social spaces in which smoking was enacted were identified, and all participants described social contexts in which cigarettes were freely available for the benefit of the uninitiated. First-time use was overwhelmingly located in this context: in terms of electing on a particular occasion to accept rather than reject the offer of cigarettes. Individual motivations for electing to accept rather than refuse the offer of cigarettes were communicated variously, however. Older participants and those recounting more distant recollections tended to supply more reflective accounts, often locating their motivations explicitly in the context of peer influence and selection processes. Younger participants and those recounting more recent experiences tended to be more ambivalent, though several evoked the notion of 'peer influence' in articulating iterations of the idea that they had tried smoking: *'because everyone else is doing it'*. Precisely what is communicated by references to peer influence in these contexts, however, merits elaboration: P9 (F15R), for example, describes her own initiation with reference to 'peer pressure'. The framing, however, is somewhat ambivalent:

P9: It's only 'cos....It's only 'cos of them...that I started smoking but not really...I...I'd say it's more like peer pressure...

P8: [Laughs] You never said take a draw o' the fag...

P9: You said...

P8: I never...

P9: Kerry did...

P8: Kerry did...

P9 (F15R) creates an artificial distance here between the notion of 'peer pressure' on the one hand and the suggestion: 'I smoke because of them' on the other. To suggest: 'I smoke because my friends do' is suggestive of a 'causal' relationship, foregrounding a sense of moral accountability, and P9 (F15R) immediately equivocates, suggesting: '*...but not really, I'd say it's more like peer pressure*'. Her assertion is also immediately challenged by her friend, with whom she proceeds to negotiate a 'transfer of blame' to a third party. When prompted to elaborate on the implied distinction between 'peer pressure', ostensibly on the one hand, and her friend 'Kerry' compelling her to smoke on the other, P9 (F15R) responds as follows:

TT: What...you...you said peer pressure...that's quite interesting...what, I mean what do you mean by peer pressure?..

P9: Like...I don't know...

TT: 'Cos it's something lots of people say isn't it...it's like peer pressure but what does that actually mean...does that mean people kind of putting a cigarette in your mouth and lighting it and saying: 'go on, have some of that?' ...

P8: [Laughs]

TT: Or is it like just 'cos everyone else is doing it...and you sort of...

P9: Aye...it's just like you're following...the crew really...

TT: Right, right...

P8: That's why everybody does it in high school 'cos everyone else does it...

'Peer pressure', then, represents a means by which to abstract accountability from the level of interpersonal relationships in this context. P9 (F15R) clearly indicates that her first smoking related experience followed her friend compelling her to: 'take a draw'. In introducing the notion of peer pressure, however, P9 (F15R) effectively shifts 'culpability' from her friend to the posited mechanism of transmission. Peer pressure is represented as a discrete phenomenon, and the direction of causality of

blame is no longer an issue: the application and experience of social ‘pressure’ come to be represented as merely obverse or complementary negotiations of a social role. P9’s (F15R) initial framing of social influences in the context of the ‘I’ and ‘they’, equally, generates an artificial and presumably unintended ‘distance’ in the first instance, with the notion of ‘peer pressure’ introduced to bridge the gap. This is implicit in the subsequent reframing of ‘pressure’ in the relatively voluntaristic context of: ‘following the crew’, and in P8’s (F17R) suggestion that ‘everyone smokes at school because everyone else does’. ‘Peer pressure’, or social influence, is dissipated via social networks, and the subject and object of influence become intertwined. It is ultimately not so much a case of ‘I smoke because they do’ as ‘we smoke because we do’. Smoking, as such, is represented as a negotiated facet of the social group identity. This was equally evident in discussion around the occupation of the various spaces in which smoking was routinely enacted:

TT: So is it...is it just like people who smoke who go there then or is there like...

P8: Aye...

TT: Yeah?...

P9: Aye, there’s sometimes...

P8: Some people who go down there...

P8/P9: Dinnae smoke...

P9: But it’s only wi’ their pals...

P8: That’s ‘cos their pals smoke...they go down...

TT: Right...

P8: Then they always end up smoking theirselves anyway...

While most participants resisted the suggestion that smoking was a condition of social group membership, occupation of the ‘spaces’ in which smoking is enacted in school is clearly contingent on individual smoking to an extent. Non-smokers are not proactively excluded, but rather the social dimension of the phenomenon is incidental: the congregation is a product of individual-level behaviours enacted in a social context. While non-smokers may be present in the congregation by virtue of: ‘*their pals’ smoking*’, their legitimacy is conferred by proxy. Social group membership is ultimately achieved via individual-level smoking, to which the

uninitiated invariably accede: 'They always end up smoking themselves'. Q1 (F15R), for example, evokes this dynamic in recounting her experience of asking for a cigarette: *'cos they were all smoking, and I was like: 'I'm the only one left out', and Qs2, 3 and 4 (M17R, M14R, M15R) similarly articulated the apparently ubiquitous perception that 'everyone smokes' in explicitly membership-oriented terms:*

TT: Right Ok you have to put the hard yards in do you?...and...Smoking. Obviously I'm doing smoking, so...is that...what...an issue in [Community Q]?... do people your age smoke, is there not...

Q1: All of our people...

Q2: Everyone that we ken smokes basically...

Q3: All of them...all of them...

Others foregrounded the notion of peer pressure straightforwardly to reject it as a motivating factor in the context of their own initiation. P1 (M16R), for example, rejects 'peer pressure' as a factor in his own initiation, structuring his account around notions of choice and self-determination:

P1: Aye. I've smoked for a few years...just...a lot of people in my family smoke eh I think it's just... a thing I wanted to do...well it's not that I wanted to do like...just...I dunno just one day I was out...wasnae peer pressure...somebody offered me a fag I just went...I may as well...see what it's like, 'cos everyone tried it eh... see what it's like and I just liked it and stuck wi'it...

TT: Yeah...why, why isn't that peer pressure...

P1: Nah it wasnae it was just like...they were all...everyone else was...well, there was a few people didnae smoke and there was quite a lot of us out, and quite a lot of people were smoking: 'Anyone...anyone want a fag?', and I just went: 'I'll take one'...I just wanted to see 'cos my dad and all smoked eh but I was like...what...first time I ever tried smoking I was about thirteen or something...but i didnae have a clue...about twelve or thirteen and I didnae have a clue...

Despite the voluntaristic emphasis, however, the ubiquity of smoking in the context of the immediate social and family environments is foregrounded once more, and the ostensibly autonomous framing is juxtaposed with the more critical retrospection: *'I didnae have a clue...about twelve or thirteen and I didnae have a clue'*. Normative influences, equally, are implied in the recognition that: *'I wanted to see... 'cos my*

dad and all smoke’, and the sense of succumbing to the normative social order is broadly congruent with the experiences of other participants.

Indeed, only two participants provided accounts of direct, coercive pressure to smoke: both with reference to social groups of which they were no longer members. P13 (M16R) started smoking at the age of seven because: ‘I wanted to be part of this gang and that, and I wasn’t able to be a part unless I smoked’, and P26 (M13R) describes his first smoking related experience as follows:

P26: *I was like...it was basically bullied when I was a wee laddie...I tried it, and then...I never...I dinnae want to, I was like... ‘cos we were playing this game when I was wee...like wee...and then they tied me up to a thing, and then...when I used to get bullied and then...*

P24: *Who done that?*

P26: *What?*

P24: *Who done that?*

P26: *I dunno whe...who it...[unintelligible] used to muck about with round my house...*

P24: *Yeah that’s it...*

P26: *And then I got tied to the thingy, and then they were...I had a choice...to pull my trousers down or to...take a draw so I took a draw...then I was like: [Unintelligible]’...They told me to take a draw and say: ‘Ooh! No no!’ And I done it, and I was like pure choking, and then...they left me all tangled up and I was like there ‘to like 8 o’clock... ‘till 3...3 ‘till 8 and I was just standing there ‘cos I couldnae get oot and all that...arms were tied behind the pole and I was like that [Demonstrates] ...and err...somebody phoned me, and I was like...trying to get in my pocket...and I got it and I was like that [Demonstrates]...getting it up and I was like: ‘Hello’ and I pressed speaker...and then I went to my...sister: ‘Come on and untie me’...and then she came along and untied me, and then...*

TT: *Right. What...what kind of led up to that then...Who were these people and why...I mean what was going on?*

P26: *Ah it was just this laddie...who I used to muck about with...who’s name’s Leon, and then...we went and then...he got his pals, and I didnae know them, and then they were the people who done it, so...*

TT: *Right. Right right. That...that was the first time you tried smoking was it?*

P26: *[Indicates affirmative] ...*

P26 (M13R), however, as discussed in the previous section, was one of those presenting in a triadic interview with others with whom he was acquainted through the boxing club. His presentation as a victim of peer pressure follows an earlier exchange during which he claimed he had been forced into smoking, to which P24 (M16T) responded: *‘There’s a simple logic you say...: “Nah, I dinnae want it...No”’*. The account, as such, may be interpreted as a means of underscoring his lack of ‘culpability’ for smoking for the benefit of P24 (M16T) who clearly disapproved. The intention is not to question the veracity of the account, however, but rather to make this presentational element explicit.

4.4 Participants’ social networks

Participants’ representations of their social networks and leisure-time pursuits varied primarily by age and smoking status. Older participants, those aged 15 years or more, and younger participants presenting in paired and triadic interviews with older friends tended to represent their social worlds as existing primarily beyond the boundaries implied by the immediate neighbourhood and school environments. Three participants in each community had already left school, all except P1 (M16R) at the end of the previous term, with P12 (F16R) having left School A for a trial period at a school in another part of the city. Each of these participants generated a clear sense of distance between their representations of ‘self’ and ‘place’ in their accounts. P1 (M16R), for example, described how he had left school the previous year: *‘and it was like: school...college...army. It’s just like a...like a massive leap...and it’s like: “whoa! What am I doing here?” Like see when I was going down on the train...I was like: “Whoa! What am I doing? I’m away for 6 weeks and I’m...I’m gonna get paid”’*.

Having experienced what he described as a significant life transition, P1 (M16R) was no longer interested in congregating on the streets with other young people in Community P, suggesting that: *‘I hate it up here’* and focussing on what he hoped would be his imminent return to the army: *‘I dinnae really go out much to be honest with you. I sit and play Call of Duty every night, so I dinnae...I’d no’ say I’ve not got*

a social life 'cos I have got a social life but...I'll go to the gym a lot...but like since I've came back I've no' been bothered'. P13 and P14 (M16R and M17R) had also left school and expressed a similar lack of affinity with the local area, describing Edinburgh as: *'amazing...except Community P'* and recommending earnestly: *'dinnae live here...dinnae buy a house here'*. Like P1 (M16R), both preferred to spend their leisure time elsewhere:

TT: *But why...Why do you say it's a boring place to live?*

P13: *'Cos there's... There's nothing to do, and...*

P14: *There's nothing to do...If it wasnae for the astro at [School A] then I don't know what I'd do...*

TT: *Fair Enough...And what erm...What sort of things are there to get up to that...I mean you must do something...Evenings and weekends, things like that...*

P14: *Girlfriend...*

TT: *You've got a girlfriend is it? So that's what's kind of taking up all your time nowadays...*

P13: *Flirting...Buses [Laughs]...I don't ...We go uptown...*

P14: *Aye uptown...*

P13: *On a Friday...and a Saturday...Jumping buses and flirting wi' the lasses...I get into...*

P14: *Most of them you get ID...*

P13: *Well...I dont' need ID, I get into the [Name] pub ken at [Street]...Where the [Landmark] is...I get into a pub there, and the [Name]near the [Park]...Err...the [Name]...club aswell...*

P14: *And [Name]...*

TT: *Right...*

P13: *Aye I love [Name]...*

The account is fairly typical, with 'uptown' representing the preferred destination for older participants, in particular at weekends. Qs 2, 3 and 4 (M17R, M14R and M15R), for example, also complained that they were limited to: *'playing football and that'* during the week, suggesting that: *'It's quite crap around here'* and preferring to spend their time: 'uptown' at weekends with what they referred to as: *'our people'*. Q4 (M15R) was careful to add that these were: *'no' gangs...just like a couple of*

different groups of boys an' that'. P10 and P11 (F16O and F16N) were also frustrated with there being: 'nothing to do' in the local area, and were therefore: 'never really in [Community P]. We're always uptown or at a friend's house'. Being 'uptown', according to Q2 (M17R), consisted of buying alcohol and: 'just sit[ting] about the streets. We'll have a bevvie, then we end up drinking too much and can't remember what we're doing'. Qs 3 and 4 (M14R and M15R) concurred with this assessment, adding: 'something always ends up happening though eh... Usually we end up in somebody's house or something... don't even know who they are sometimes'. P10 and P11 (F16O and F16N) also congregated uptown with: 'a lot... a lot a lot' of people at weekends, and mentioned particular places in which they would: 'mess around', with a particular favourite being: 'a chip shop... behind there. It's like... they have big heaters [ventilation], and so if you stand there it's so warm'.

The social networks of younger participants, by contrast, were more frequently limited to acquaintanceships developed through school and their attendance of the various youth clubs in Communities P and Q in which fieldwork was undertaken. As such, while older participants commonly represented their attendance of the youth clubs in terms of there being 'nothing else to do' in the local area, or attended these on a Friday night in advance of going 'uptown' or elsewhere, the social worlds of younger participants were more readily accessible during the course of fieldwork. In community P, in particular, young people would move between the formal youth club setting and informal congregations of young people on the streets. These appeared primarily to facilitate smoking and drinking, and while smoking was permitted outside the premises alcohol use was not. Despite this, several younger children were observed, on multiple occasions, to be under the influence of alcohol, including during interviews.

4.5 Summary

Participants' identification of themselves and others as smokers, then, was contingent on higher levels of tobacco consumption, with those identified as regular smokers smoking a cigarette a day or more. Those reporting lower levels of consumption,

including weekly smokers, were more ambivalent in relation to their smoking, and were therefore categorised as occasional smokers. Those who had tried smoking on one or more occasions were identified as experimental smokers, with the remainder comprising ex-smokers and the few participants who had never smoked. Regular smokers framed their accounts of smoking initiation in the context of notions of voluntarism and individual competence. Experimental smokers, by contrast, framed their smoking related experiences as virtual products of an aggregation of external influences, consistent with P26's (M13R) account of peer pressure. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5 in elaborating on the practice of 'gifting' others cigarettes. Participants social networks varied by age. Older participants associated with a broader range of acquaintances in a broader range of contexts, while younger participants were more immersed in the immediate neighbourhood environments.

5 Sources and access

5.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the primary modes of tobacco acquisition identified by study participants. These are broadly divisible into retail purchases, proxy purchases, and diverse modes of social tobacco acquisition. ‘Retail purchases’ refers to first-person cigarette purchases from shops, and will be described in Section 5.2 in terms of a progression from less to more targeted purchasing strategies. These include (i) ‘non-targeted’ purchases, or instances in which participants were readily able to secure retail cigarette access without employing intermediaries or targeting particular premises; (ii) ‘targeted’ purchases, or instances in which participants identified a particular retailer or retailers willing to sell cigarettes to underage customers, often at a premium, and (iii) ‘strategic’ purchase attempts, referring to the range of strategies employed by young people in attempting to avoid sales refusals.

‘Proxy purchases’ refers to retail cigarette purchases made through intermediaries, and will be described in Section 5.3 in terms of a progression from less to more targeted third-party or proxy purchaser recruitment strategies. These include: (i) ‘no recruitment’, or instances in which participants had already established a regular supply of tobacco through a particular individual or individuals; (ii) ‘targeted recruitment’, or instances in which participants had secured a regular supply of tobacco through particular ‘types’ of individual, and; (iii) ‘non-targeted’ recruitment, or instances in which participants had yet to identify particular individuals or ‘types’ of individual amenable to making proxy purchases on their behalf. ‘Social acquisition’ refers to all other interpersonal exchange of tobacco whether for money, for free or in anticipation of future reciprocation (Croghan et al., 2003).

The social availability of tobacco in communities ‘P’ and ‘Q’ is elaborated in section 5.4, including: (i) ‘gifted’ cigarettes, or instances in which neither reciprocation in kind nor remuneration was implied in the act of giving; (ii) reciprocal exchanges, in which an expectation of repayment in kind is encoded in the act of giving, and; (iii) findings pertaining to social and illicit markets, referring to the availability of

cigarettes for sale in schools, and illicit or counterfeit product reportedly available for sale in shops and via ‘fag houses’ in the local areas.

5.2 Retail purchases

The SDD and SALSUS report on ‘usual’ sources of cigarettes among representative samples of 11-15 year olds in England and 13 and 15 year olds in Scotland (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012). The proportion of respondents reporting ‘usually’ buying cigarettes from shops – primarily from newsagents and similar retailers – has consistently remained very high, with retail cigarette purchases representing the predominating mode of tobacco acquisition among older and regular smokers in particular. Retail cigarette purchases declined following the increase in the age of sale, however, with the proportion of 15 year old regular smokers in Scotland buying cigarettes from shops falling from 82% in 2006 to 57% in 2008 (Black et al., 2009).

In 2010, 54% of 15 year old and 46% of 13 year old regular smokers in Scotland reported ‘usually’ buying cigarettes from shops (Black et al., 2012), and young people in Edinburgh were somewhat more likely to buy cigarettes from shops than the Scottish national average (ISD Scotland, 2011). This may be associated with a higher concentration of tobacco retailers in the city, with rates of retail cigarette purchasing among young people varying with the density of tobacco retailers (Leatherdale and Strath, 2007, Nelson et al., 2011). The following section presents findings from this study pertaining to participants ‘usual’ retail cigarette sources.

5.2.1 Non-targeted purchases

Discussion pertaining to retail cigarette access was foregrounded by all participants, with most of those reporting regular smoking responding to direct questions around cigarette access, for example: ‘*So where do you get cigarettes*’, with variations of the ostensibly credible assertion: ‘*I get cigarettes from shops*’. The impression of almost universal retail cigarette availability this engenders, however, is misleading. Follow-up questions revealed that what were represented as retail cigarette purchases in the

first instance were almost invariably made through intermediaries. P9 (F15R), for example, made frequent references to buying cigarettes from shops throughout her interview, despite acknowledging that she avoided buying cigarettes ‘directly’ from retailers because of the embarrassment associated with age verification or ID requests and subsequent sales refusals.

The tendency for study participants to obfuscate third party involvement in their retail cigarette purchases is illustrated particularly succinctly in the following account, in which Ps 27, 28 and 29’s (F13R, F16R and F12R) are prompted to elaborate on the mechanics of the relevant transaction:

TT: Right. So what...always...you buy your own cigarettes do you...

P28: Aye...

TT: Right Ok...How...how does that work?

P28: Go to the shop and buy them...

TT: Nah, but I mean do...

P27: Some...you wait, until somebody says: ‘Can you go in the shop for me, to buy’...

P28: Or I just send my mum in...

P27: Go: ‘Ten Richmond Kingsize please’, and they go in and get them...

P28: No, it’s 20 Richmond Kingsize...

P27/29: [Laugh]...

TT: So sorry you...you get someone to go in...

P28: I get my mum to go to the shop for me...

What are represented here as ‘first person’ retail cigarette purchases in the first, second, and third instances are revealed to be proxy purchases in the fourth, following probing around: (i) their regularity: ‘*you always buy your own cigarettes?*’; (ii) the mechanics of the relevant transaction: *so how does that work?*’; and (iii) a final challenge: ‘*Nah...but I mean...*’. The account is fairly typical of those furnished by younger regular smokers in particular, being exceptional primarily by virtue of the proximity of the follow-up questions in the narrative. Indeed, of 34 participants making regular cigarette purchases from shops, only three made these without

regularly employing intermediaries. Like P9 (F15R), most of those attempting ‘first person’ retail purchases were ultimately deterred from making subsequent purchasing attempts by the embarrassment associated with sales refusals, and resorted to making proxy purchases instead.

All participants attempting retail cigarette purchases had experienced sales refusals on occasion: most on more than one, and even older and more ‘habituated’ regular smokers represented the experience of sales refusals as ubiquitous. Q7 (M17R), for example, suggested he relied exclusively on proxy purchases, because: *‘I’ve already been in [to all the local shops]. They all ask for ID’*, and Q2 (M17R) encapsulates the associated frustration of the entire cohort in this context in the following extract:

TT: Have any of you ever experienced kind of going into a shop and being...asked for ID...

Q2: Oh aye...

Q3: Aye all the time...

Q4: I...

Q2: Aye...it’s so...fucking...annoying...

TT/All: [Laugh]

While cigarette access was represented as straightforward, then, with most participants articulating iterations of a perception that: ‘it’s easy to get fags’, retail cigarette access was not. Most accounts of retail cigarette access were furnished by participants either targeting particular retailers identified as amenable to serving underage customers or resorting to the range of cigarette access ‘strategies’ elaborated in Section 4.2.3. ‘Non-targeted’ purchases therefore refers to only three instances in which participants reported making regular retail purchases without either: (i) employing intermediaries; (ii) ‘targeting’ particular retailers, or (iii) merely embellishing or elaborating on unsuccessful purchasing attempts.

All three were 16 year old regular smokers interviewed in community P. P1 (M16R) presented in an individual interview and had recently joined the army, having recently returned to the local area following a medical discharge for a back injury. P12 (F16R) presented in an individual interview and had started a three month trial at an independent school in another part of the city. P13 (M16R) presented with P14

(M17R), who ordinarily sourced ‘duty free’ tobacco from his father. Each spent time outside the local community, sourcing cigarettes indiscriminately from retailers throughout the city. P12 (F16R), for example, suggested he bought cigarettes ‘everywhere’, before acknowledging that: ‘*my shop in [Community P] is the only shop in Edinburgh that does not sell me...I kid you not*’. P13 (M16R) also claimed to buy cigarettes ‘everywhere’, before suggesting that he tended to avoid larger retailers on the basis that these were likely to request ID. P1 (M16R) was more pragmatic, suggesting: ‘*I go into shops and I’ll ask: if they dinnae [sell me cigarettes] they dinnae and I’ll just go into another shop and I’ll usually get served. I usually get served most places*’.

The ‘credibility’ engendered by the relative modesty of P1’s (M16R) claim in this context – ‘*if they dinnae they dinnae*’ – is compounded by his candour on the subject of sales refusals. While P12 (F16R) and P13 (M16R) were reluctant to concede such ‘admissions’, with each requiring prompting to ultimately ‘recall’ being subject to age verification requests on a single occasion, P1 (M16R) foregrounded the subject repeatedly throughout the interview, drawing a clear biographical distinction between his representation of ‘I’ as I am and as I formerly was:

TT: I mean you said that in your experience...errr....it’s relatively straightforward to get hold of cigarettes...

P1: Aye no’...like real fags really...well it is for me ‘cos...I dinnae get ID’d very many places, I dinnae look sixteen...

TT: Nah. You don’t. No [Laughs]

P1: So it doesnae really affect me...

TT: No, no...

P1: But...it still affected me when I was younger, standing outside the shops: ‘can you go in the shop for me’...I...I I didnae ask people...I’ve got a thing for...I didnae ask people anything...I didnae like getting...I didnae like getting told no. It’s not like I dinnae like... I dinnae get angry or...I just dinnae like...I think it’s embarrassing getting said: ‘nah, sorry pal, I cannae’ I just dinnae like it...

The interview was characterised by this ongoing parallel narrative, with P1 (M16R) juxtaposing his former ‘deficiencies’ with his latterly acquired ‘competencies’ in this context. P12 (F16R) and P13 (M16R), by contrast, appeared effectively to have

expunged any deficiencies – for example the experience of sales refusals – from their biographical narratives: both claimed never to have been ID'd, with P13 (M16R) in particular elaborating at length to assert that he was also able to enter pubs and nightclubs unchallenged and had even been asked for ID on the bus one time because the driver claimed he looked 'too old': *I said: "A child daysaver" and they went: "You look about nineteen". I was like: "Cheers...a child daysaver"*.

P12 (F16R) similarly foregrounded her ostensibly 'adult' presentation in this context, suggesting that: *'It makes me feel kind of sad I don't get ID'd, I feel so old...I really do if...I'm like...do I look old?'*, appearing to solicit affirmation of her adult presentation from the interviewer. Each of these participants, then, was acutely aware of the critical distinction between themselves and others, of the implied acknowledgement of their credible 'adult' presentation that retail cigarette purchases conferred. P1 (M16R), for example, makes this explicit in highlighting the distance between 'self' and 'other' in framing retail purchases as 'difficult' for others but not for me because: *'I dinnae look sixteen'*, and Ps12 and 13 (F16R and M16R) were similarly concerned with representing themselves as 'looking older' in this context.

While neither juxtaposes their representation of self with a generalised 'other' (Goffman, 1969) in the first instance, each was adamant when prompted to elaborate on the subject that the representation of universal and straightforward retail cigarette availability their accounts engendered did not apply to others:

TT: Right. Do you think that's a common experience? Do you think most people find it quite easy...

P12: No...

TT: Nah, right Ok. So your friends...have more problems...

P12: I have...Like normally because I'll go in and I'll buy about five packets of cigarettes...because I'm buying for other people too...

TT: Ah right, Ok...Do you...is that like just close friends you buy cigarettes for then or is it...

P12: Yeah. I...I have a policy I know that seems like contradictory...I don't buy for people under the age of like sixteen...Unless I know them really well...

TT: Aha. Can I ask why that is...Is it...Is there something...

P12: *I don't want to encourage other people...Just because I do it doesn't mean I want other people to do it...Like...You get like these...like people who are in the year below me...at [my School]...they have a habit of wanting to be friends with me...And like OK that's cool right...but I'm not gonna buy you cigarettes and alcohol so that...you can feel part of something, that's not fair...Not gonna encourage that...*

TT: *What...Do you think maybe they want to be friends with you because they think...you can get things they can't...*

P12: *Pretty much...*

Perhaps realising that she has neglected to represent the generalised other from which she is seeking to distance herself, P12 (F16R) elaborates on her emphatic: *'No' [mine is not the common experience]* to communicate the power that her elevated status affords her. Consistent with P1 and 13 (M16R and M16R), P12 (F12R) was called upon to make proxy purchases for other young people, and thereby effectively determined the criteria involved in discriminating legitimate from illegitimate recipients. Consistent with the majority of older participants, P12 (F16R) avoided making purchases on behalf of young people: *'under the age of like sixteen...unless I know them really well'*. P1 (M16R) similarly highlighted a sense of moral accountability for the welfare of younger children, before prevaricating along equivalent lines: *'I just dinnae give people younger than me fags. Unless it was like a good pal of mine...Or a pal or...something like that then I would give them [a cigarette], aye. But I wouldnae like to give them it'*.

Friends, then, are 'legitimate' recipients, while underage young people generically are not, unless, in the words of P1 (M16R), they are a close friend, or a friend, or something. Discussion pertaining to the criteria employed by participants in discriminating 'legitimate' from 'illegitimate' recipients are considered in more detail in Chapter 8. The salient point here is that participants who had acquired the requisite social competencies to make regular 'first person' cigarette purchases were acutely aware of the distinction between themselves and others this implied, and the power this conferred in terms of their position within the social group hierarchy.

5.2.2 Targeted purchases

‘Targeted purchases’ refers to cases in which participants reported making retail cigarette purchases from particular individuals or premises they had identified as willing to supply them with cigarettes. While only the three participants discussed in the previous section sourced cigarettes exclusively from shops without either employing intermediaries or targeting particular premises, 23 of 28 regular smokers claimed to source cigarettes from shops ‘directly’ on occasion. These are broadly divisible into those representing these ‘targeted’ retail cigarette purchases as their primary mode of tobacco acquisition, and those making targeted purchases on an occasional or ad hoc basis to supplement more regular proxy cigarette purchases.

Of the 23 participants, around a half made occasional targeted purchases. P2 (F15R), for example, mentioned a retailer that consistently sold her cigarettes, but claimed to ordinarily make purchases through intermediaries because the shop was some distance away, and proxy purchases were not represented as problematic. Similar sentiments were expressed by others, with Ps 21, 22 and 23 (M14R, M13R and M14R), for example, presenting the case as follows:

P23: So it's like...This shop uptown, I can get selt whenever I want...

TT: Right, right...

P22: Huh! Fuck going all the way uptown for fags eh...

P23: Ah. Ken...

TT: But if...if there's a shop where you can get cigarettes yourself, why...why do you get other people to do it?

P22: 'Cos...

P21: 'Cos [Shop]'s a trek...the town, you need to buy bus fares...

P23: Aye, exactly...

Ps 21, 22 and 23's (M14R, M13R and M14R) account is broadly consistent with that of other participants claiming to make occasional targeted purchases, with most suggesting they ultimately preferred to make purchases through intermediaries because of the inconvenience associated with seeking out the particular individual or retailer willing to sell them cigarettes. These participants tended not to foreground sales refusals as a factor in their proxy purchasing, and the ontological status of the

shops is clearly difficult to assess. Q11 (F14R), for example, claimed at various points in her interview to: (i) never have been ID'd and to know of several shops willing to sell her cigarettes; (ii) to know of only one, where: *'most o' them just sell me'*, and (iii) to buy cigarettes primarily through intermediaries.

While the 'veracity' of the account is immaterial, the salient point is that most participants experienced sales refusals, and it is likely that some of those claiming to make occasional targeted purchases were either embellishing on a single successful transaction or straightforwardly manufacturing their accounts. In triadic interviews with younger children in particular, for example, participants tended to recall having made retail purchases from a particular retailer in succession, and appeared focussed on maintaining a collective front in this context, avoiding challenging each other's assertions. This may result from a reluctance to 'reveal' themselves either to the interviewer or each other as lacking the requisite social competencies to secure retail cigarette access or may simply represent a presentational device to support the framing of proxy purchases as a preferred option as opposed to a necessary recourse: as a credible, ostensible 'alternative' to retail purchases.

Certainly, those participants making more regular targeted purchases appeared to value their sources more highly than those framing proxy purchases as credible alternatives to retail purchases, and given both the frequency with which participants experienced sales refusals and the clear benefits associated with securing retail access to tobacco this is understandable, and lends their accounts a certain credibility. P8 (F17R), for example, had sacrificed portions of her driving lessons to brandish car keys at her local newsagent, and sought assurances from the outset that her sources would not be compromised: *'See if we get sold in shops...you arenae gonna grass us up!'*, and Qs 2, 3 and 4 (M17R, M14R and M15R) were similarly concerned with protecting their sources' anonymity:

TT: Right...But like...the three of you are all saying that it's not...that...difficult to get hold of cigarettes...anyway...

Q4: Nah...

TT: And all three of you are... under 18...

Q3/4: Aye...

Q2: Don't want you to going away with this information and making the shops not sell us...

Q3: Aye they don't ken though...

TT: What? Sorry?...

Q3: They don't ken what shops...

Qs 2, 3 and 4 (M17R, M14R and M15R) claimed to make regular 'targeted' purchases from shops, and Q3 (M14R) immediately responds to Q2's (M17R) concerns: *'Don't want you [to make] the shops not sell us'* by reminding him: *'They don't ken what shops'*: clearly anticipating the eventuality his friend presents. Q3's (M14R) confidence in this assertion presumably results from a calculated effort to maintain his sources' anonymity throughout the interview, given these sources also supplied him with cigarettes to sell at school. Q3 (M14R) was also one of several participants to frame tobacco retailers as 'complicit' in this context, relating the mechanics of the transaction as including a tacit understanding that: *'You dinnae do it in front of other customers, 'cos they obviously don't wanna get caught for it'*. The retailers' ostensible complicity is subsequently made explicit:

TT: Right. Rightrightright...But you...you reckon...you reckon they know you're not 18 then do you...you reckon it's kind of...

Q3: Aye they would ken probably...

TT: Right...Have you...

Q3: Some shops do...I dunno if others...Some o' them might think I'm 18 I dunno [Tiny Laugh]...

Ps 21, 22 and 23 (M14R, M13R and M14R) also framed retailers as complicit in describing their targeted cigarette purchases, mentioning a shop in which the retailer reportedly turned off the surveillance cameras to serve underage customers. Ps 13 and 14 (M16R and M17R) mentioned a shop from which they claimed to be able to buy cigarettes from the age of nine, though it had subsequently ceased trading, and several participants in community Q identified a retailer reported to sell cigarettes to underage customers for a premium as discussed in Section 5.4.1.2.

Others targeted retailers with whom they had existing social or familial relationships. Q2 (M17R), for example, suggested he was able to buy cigarettes from a particular

retailer because: *'I used to work wi' one of their brothers, and that's how they ken me. They just think I'm 18, so I was like: "Allright"*, and P28 (F16R) bought cigarettes during the morning specifically: *"Cos my dad's pal works in the shop in the mornings'* and her father permitted her to smoke. P11 (F16N) invested efforts in developing relationships with retailers 'uptown', and P8 and P9 (F15R and F17R) invested time in 'flirting' with retailers to secure a sale. Identifying retailers willing to supply cigarettes to underage customers was therefore represented as contingent on a combination of participants' ability to present as credible adults, to draw on their social networks to circumvent sales laws, or to establish new relationships with retailers through conversation or flirtation. The range of strategies employed by participants in attempting retail purchases are considered in more detail in the following section.

5.2.3 Strategic purchase attempts

Strategic purchasing attempts refers to the range of strategies devised by participants in attempting retail cigarette purchases in order to identify retailers, or what were frequently described as: 'good shops', amenable to selling cigarettes to underage customers, including coercive strategies, dressing 'older', and the imaginative use of props. While all participants attempting retail cigarette purchases had experienced sales refusals on occasion, individual responses in these contexts varied. Some participants represented their responses as pragmatic. P25 (M13R), for example, claimed not to be fazed by the experience, suggesting: *'I was allright ab...with it, 'cos I ken I wasnae 18'*. Others expressed some embarrassment, and avoided making subsequent purchase attempts, while others took exception to what they perceived to be an affront or direct provocation and became confrontational.

Q2 (M17R), for example, claimed to have a friend who: *'goes mental, because he's nineteen years old and he looks about fifteen'*, and Q12 (F15R) was similarly aggrieved by her experiences of sales refusals, suggesting: *'You just go "raj" at them at the counter. if you're like: 'You will be'. 'Got ID?' 'No, I've no' but you will be'*, her ire communicated by her staccato delivery and irregular syntax. Perhaps the most

extreme account of protestation in this context was furnished by Qs 8 and 9 (F14R and F13T), however, who had witnessed the evident fury of a mutual friend on being refused a sale. Their account follows discussion around the introduction of fixed penalty fines for underage purchases, and Q9 (F14T) was moved to express support for the legislation out of sympathy for the plight of the retailer:

Q9: They go in and they ask them and they say they've got...like...they've no' got ID, and then they say...they're going to blow up the shop and all that...

TT: [Massive Laugh]

Q9: [Little Laugh] That's what they say...

TT: Oh right [Laughs]...Do they?...

Q8: [Laughs] I'll blow up your shop!...

Q9: That's what they say...

Q8: I ken that's what she said...

TT: What, what did the...what did the guy say, or the girl behind the...counter?

Q9: Just...they just tell them to go away, and if they dinnae go away they'll just call the police on them...

Coercion was uniformly represented as an ineffectual cigarette access strategy, however. None of those witnessing aggressive behaviour or attempting a similar 'coercive' strategy recalled these having generated a sale. Q2 (M17R) suggested he had managed to: '*talk someone around*' on occasion, and several participants claimed to have used either fake ID or borrowed ID from an older friend or family member to secure a sale. None of those using fake IDs, however, made regular cigarette purchases: securing retail cigarette purchases was contingent on credible 'adult' presentation, and this represents one of the few areas of discussion where the accounts of participants diverged clearly by gender.

Male participants tended to equate age with physical development, with P13 (M16R), for example, drawing a distinction in this context between: '*people that are our size and people that are small*'. Q12 (M13T) made an equivalent observation from the inverse perspective, suggesting that: '*people our age who are quite tall get sold*'. Female participants, by contrast, tended to represent the impressions they conveyed as being subject to manipulation. P12 (F16R), for example, suggested that her

primary strategy was to: *'Just be confident, and...if you're confident... yeah, no one can say you're not that age...They can ask for ID yeah...but as long as you're like confident...borderline cocky...You can see if you can get away with it. See that's what gives away people's ages...How they act. How they react, and stuff. Like if someone asks for ID you're like...if you panic...they're like: 'No'. If you don't panic and you're chilled, and you just talk to them...When you go in say: 'Hi', chat. Don't just go in: 'Can I get this?' and then...Like if you go in like that they're instantly ask you for ID...'*

This knowledge was shared by others who invested efforts in developing relationships with retailers. Several girls highlighted the utility of 'dressing older' in this context, with Q1 (F15R), for example, clearly outraged following the failure of the tobacco retailer to recognise the efforts she had make in order to convey her 'eighteen or nineteeness' here:

Q1: Even...I had make-up on the other week there...and I was like: 'Oh my God I'd better have make-up on eh' and I like put make up on and make me look...older...I went down...she down...along the road eh, I went: '[Unintelligible] fags and the wee one was sleeping and then she...she just got the wee one put to sleep, just went...no' actually put to sleep...she just fell asleep...

TT: Right, right...

Q1: And then...so I put her in the bed eh...and then...like: 'Right. I'll go down for fags'...and I looked eighteen twenty-one...eighteen nineteen...I never got selt...

TT: Right. Right right right...

Q1: I like: 'Oh my god...that's so bad'...

Others went to even greater lengths to convey their adult presentation. P27 (F13R), for example, made visits to tobacco retailers when she was looking after her cousin and: *'pretending that was my bairn'*. When the retailer asked her for identification, she became increasingly irritated: *'I was raging'*, insisting she simply didn't have her ID with her and looking for her Scottish Gas card to demonstrate that she had more pressing concerns to contend with than the retailers refusal to believe her age. These differences in the strategic purchasing attempts of male and female participants

reflect both the performative nature of young people's presentation in these contexts and their construction of gendered identities.

5.2.4 Summary

Consistent with the impression engendered by the SDD and SALSUS, then, discussion around retail cigarette access was foregrounded by all participants: particularly older and regular smokers. Most reported having attempted retail purchases on occasion, though these attempts were frequently met with sales refusals. Only 6 participants made retail cigarette purchases with any regularity: all 16 year old participants recruited from Community P and all regular smokers with the exception of a 16 year old non-smoker who made regular retail purchases for friends. Some younger individuals also claimed to make occasional retail purchases from specific premises. None appeared to make these with any regularity, however, and the veracity of their accounts is difficult to assess.

5.3 Proxy purchases

Proxy purchases represented the predominating mode of tobacco acquisition among the clear majority of study participants: of 34 participants routinely sourcing cigarettes for personal consumption, 22 relied either primarily or exclusively on proxy purchases. Even experimental and never smokers were broadly familiar with the processes involved in making these, and several had either made or been involved in making proxy purchases themselves. Q15 (M13T), for example, presented in an individual interview, and had only tried smoking on a single occasion because his friends used to smoke, and: *'they were like: "Ah look at this, this is amazing'*. Q15 (M13T) was clearly unimpressed with his only smoking related experience, however, despite having been taught how to inhale, recalling that: *'I didn't like it. 'Cos I started coughing'*. While his friends were smoking, however, Q15 (M13T) had joined them in attempting to make proxy purchases, and related the process as follows:

TT: *And you all decided to go to a shop, to...to try and get someone to go in. Did...How...how did it work. I mean is it...?*

Q15: *They just...they go past and you go: 'Excuse me...can you...go in the shop for me'...*

TT: *Aha...and they...*

Q15: *And most of them say nothing...not if it's fags...*

TT: *They say that before you've even asked if it's...*

Q15: *They go: 'Excuse'...if you say: 'Excuse me' they say [nothing] if it's fags...*

TT: *Ah right, Ok...But then one person said: 'Yes'...*

Q15: *[Indicates affirmative]...*

TT: *Aha. And er...Like if you're in that sort of situation how do you decide who to ask?*

Q15: *Everyone that walks past you you just ask...*

TT: *You just ask everyone do you...?*

Q15: *[Indicates affirmative]...*

The account is fairly typical, with experimental and non-smokers involved in proxy purchases and regular smokers recalling early or 'experimental' efforts describing standing outside shops, often in large groups, asking passers-by to make purchases on their behalf using similarly indiscriminate recruitment strategies: *'Everyone that walks past you you just ask'*. Once a prospective purchaser has been identified, he or she would then be asked to buy several packets of cigarettes on behalf of the group. These indiscriminate recruitment strategies were rarely successful, however: as Q8 and Q9 (F13R, F13T) observe, most people: *'just ignore you, or go: 'Nah! Sorry! And then walk away'*. Even where individuals willing to make proxy purchases on behalf of the group were ultimately identified, the logistics involved in the transaction presented difficulties. Q15 (M13T), for example, recalled the episode above because the purchaser: *'went and [bought] like seven different things for like seven different people, and then he got caught... the guy who went in'*, and P1 (M16R) similarly suggested that when young people congregate in large groups to make proxy purchases: *'the people in the shop get wise to it, 'cos...somebody's walking in the shop: "Can I get...err...ten Richmond, ten Lambert and Butler [Laughs] err...twenty...what was it?" It's just like...deary me...'*

Participants making more regular proxy purchases therefore tended to avoid these kinds of indiscriminate recruitment strategies, approaching prospective purchasers individually or in smaller groups and targeting particular ‘types’ of individuals identified as amenable to making proxy purchases. Descriptions of these individuals varied with participant’s levels of experience. P15 (M12Ex), for example, had made proxy purchases on only three or four occasions, and avoided asking ‘older’ people to go in. Ps 19 and 20 (F12R, F13R) concurred with this assessment:

TT: So which strangers...do you ask? How do you decide whether to ask someone to go in or not...

P19: Nah an old man...we dinnae ask, ‘cos they’re old...mans...

P20: [Laughs]...

TT: You don’t ask old men?

P19: Nah.

TT: So what? Young women?

P20: [Anybody]...

P19: People that don’t look old...

P20: [Laughs]...

P19: That we think...would go in...

TT: People that what?

P20: People that look that they’d go in if they’re quite young...

TT: And what...So quite young people look like they’d go in?

P20: Like twenties...

P20 (F13R) claimed to have been smoking regularly for a year and a half, and P19 (F12R) had started smoking more regularly during the past few months, having previously relied on social sources of tobacco, or, as she described it somewhat disparagingly, on: ‘*trying to grab other people’s fags*’. Both sourced cigarettes through: ‘*a woman that stays next to us...her brother’s pals wi’ my brother and she goes in all the time for everybody*’, but occasionally resorted to recruiting ‘strangers’ on the street for proxy purchases. Their account, as such, is fairly typical, with most participants requiring regular access to tobacco to sustain more regular smoking mentioning individuals in their existing social networks prepared to make regular proxy purchases on their behalf. These included friends and family, or – less often –

particular individuals whose movements were sufficiently predictable to ensure they were worth 'seeking out'. P9 (F15R), for example, identified a: '*wee old man*' in community P as the 'one o' clock man' due to his apparent willingness to make cigarette purchases for underage young people during lunch. Naturally enough: '*he's called the one o' clock man, 'cos he's always at the shop at one o' clock*'.

Further prompting around the specific characteristics of the types of individual considered amenable to making proxy purchases, however, invariably elicited one of two responses. Younger and less experienced participants, those relating more limited experiences of indiscriminate third party recruitment strategies or simply avoiding 'older' people tended to simply restate their original assertion, suggesting: '*you just ask anyone*, or avoiding older people on the basis that: '*they won't go in for you*'. Older participants and more experienced regular smokers, by contrast, elaborated in more detail in this context to characterise the types of individual amenable to making proxy purchases. Qs 10, 11 and 12 (F15R, F14R and F13R), for example, presented in a triadic interview in community Q, and claimed previously to have made targeted retail purchases from shops. Since being 'grassed up', however, these participants were no longer able to buy cigarettes, and resorted to making proxy purchases instead:

Q12: I used to get sold...somewhere...but then they stopped selling me, because someone grassed them up and it was raging...

Q11: Aye. And now we just get pe...junkies to buy them...

Q12: And then we get like pure junkies to go in. It's like: 'Alright mate. Go in the shop?' and they'll be like [Submissive voice]: 'Aaye', and then they try to do Sally or one of them tried something...

Q10: Just junkies...people that look like junkies...

TT: And how...how do you spot a junkie? If I was like getting a sort of...

Q11: No. It's anyone's on the street....

Q12: Mmmmmmm!!!

Q11: 'Can you go in the shop for me mate' 'Aye. Gimme your money'. And...if you're...

Q10: Guys with cottons on...

Q12: Are you trying to call me a junkie 'cos I wear cottons...

Q10: *Nah....nah...basically like that...*

Q12: *No. If their faces are like slapped about like this, their nose is like this or they've...you know arms like all needleified, or they're just like: 'Arlymnouiowghio' then you ken they're a junkie...*

Q10: *Or they've got like pale skin...*

Q12: *Or they're sitting on the benches at [the local supermarket]...*

Q11: *When you mean like junkies they mean like...people who go in the shop for you...*

Q12: *And people who are addicted to drugs...*

The account is fairly typical, with most of those compelled to make regular proxy purchases targeting individuals described as: 'randoms', 'chavs', 'neds', 'hobos', and most commonly 'junkies', often preceded by the diminutive 'wee'. In contrast to the accounts of participants relating their experiences of indiscriminate proxy purchasing attempts, those targeting 'junkies' almost invariably claimed that their proxy purchasing attempts were successful. As P26 (M13R) observes: *'like somebody who takes drugs and that goes in for you like that [Snaps fingers] because, like ...They go in for you because they're junkies'*. Consistent with Q11's (F14R) assertion that: *'when they [say] like junkies they mean like people who go in the shop for you'*, there is a sense of ambiguity in P26's (M13R) statement, in terms of the extent to which the designation of the term is associated with a consistent set of characteristics other than the apparent willingness to make proxy purchases on behalf of underage young people. This will be revisited in Chapter 8.

Like Q12 (F13R) and P26 (M13R), younger participants in particular tended to represent 'junkies' as individuals with alcohol or substance misuse issues, with several suggesting that their willingness to make proxy purchases on behalf of underage young people may be associated with the lack of judgement precipitated by inebriation, or with a lack of the requisite means to buy cigarettes themselves. Qs 24 and 25 (F13T, F15Ex), for example, claimed to target individuals: *'who drink, don't like wash and stuff and look like tramps'* for proxy purchases, and explained their reasoning as follows:

TT: *Right. And why do the Junkies as you put it...go in do you think?*

Q25: *Because most of the time they don't have fags...like they...*

Q24: *Because they...they don't have money to buy cigarettes, and then they want...one to go fer...going in for you...*

Q25: *Yeah...So they'd get something for going in...because like sometimes most of them don't have anything 'cos you can tell, 'cos they're like [Imitation]...*

All: *[Laugh]...*

Q25: *It's true! They're always like [Imitation]...*

TT: *So what do they get for going in?*

Q25: *A fag...or something like that...*

Q25 (F15Ex) was also one of two participants to refer to the interviewer directly in this context, suggesting: *'We wouldn't ask you 'cos you look posh'* and identifying 'posh' people as unlikely proxy purchasers: *'You'll ask Junkies 'cos they'll ask for [a cigarette], so you're like: "Here!" 'cos you're giving them something for going in. But if they're posh or something you ken they're not gonna do it'* the implication, presumably, being that 'junkies' make proxy purchases for material gain. The account is interesting, however, when considered in combination with the only other interview in which the interviewer was referred to directly by participants as a prospective proxy purchaser.

Ps 27, 28 and 29 (F13R, F16R and F12R) presented in a triadic interview in community P. P27 was P28's cousin, and P29 was P28's niece. P28 (F16R) made occasional proxy purchases on behalf of her younger relatives on occasion. More often, however, P27 and 29 (F13R and F12R) made proxy purchases from 'junkies', with P27 (F13R) iterating that: *'you have to make sure it's a druggie or [they] don't do anything'*. Like Q25 (F15Ex), Ps 27, 28 and 29 (F13R, F16R and F12R) equate the willingness of 'junkies' to make proxy purchases with their relative material deprivation, responding to prompting around the likely motivations of prospective proxy purchasers with interjections of *'Can I get your change pal'* and *'I'm keeping your 12p'*. When prompted to elaborate in this context, however, these participants responded as follows:

P27: *Ken like people like...No' like people like you, because they're all the same but...like people that dinnae take drugs or that...they dinnae go in the shop for you but druggies can do whatever...*

P28: *Who says he doesnae take drugs but...*

P27: *Would you go in the shop for me...would you go in the shop for me if I asked you?*

TT: *Well I can't, because I'm doing tobacco research, so I would get in trouble if I did that...*

P27: *So ken if I went: 'Would you go in the shop for me' you'd go: 'No, 'cos it's my job not to get...like people to smoke'...*

TT: *I would have to do that, yeah...*

P27: *Mmm...*

P28: *Then I would: 'Go in the shop for me, I'll batter you' [Laughs]...*

P27: *[Laughs] You were doing that, you were going: 'Get in the shop! Now!' [Laughs]...*

The account is interesting primarily for two reasons. Firstly, because P27 (F13R) assertion that: *'druggies can do whatever'* illustrates the widespread perception that proxy purchases were illegal at the time. Q8 (F14R), for example, suggested she didn't take offence when people refused to make proxy purchases on her behalf, suggesting: *'Doesn't bother me eh. I mean you're asking them to do something illegal. If they don't want to do it it's their choice'*. Secondly, P28's (F16R) implied threat of the use of violence: *'Go in the shop for me, I'll batter you'*, and P27's (F13R) recollection of her friend having presented in this manner during a previous encounter: *'You were doing that, you were going: "Get in the shop, Now!"'*, highlights the way in which regular smokers describing proxy purchases were concerned with representing themselves as occupying a dominant role in these transactions.

5.4 Social sources

The SDD and SALSUS report on 'usual' sources of cigarettes among representative samples of 11-15 year olds in England and 13 and 15 year olds in Scotland. The proportion 'usually' given cigarettes – primarily by friends – has consistently remained very high, with 'gifted' cigarettes representing the most commonly reported source of tobacco among younger and less habituated smokers. Following a

decline in retail cigarette purchases in 2008 these have also come to represent the most commonly reported ‘usual’ source of cigarettes among older and more habituated ‘regular’ smokers (Fuller, 2012, Black et al., 2012).

In Scotland, where ‘usual’ sources are reported by age and smoking status as opposed to one or the other, 15 year old regular smokers remain marginally more likely to report buying cigarettes, although the proportion usually buying cigarettes from shops declined further in 2010 following the inclusion of a response option for proxy purchases (Black et al., 2012). In England, where results are not reported separately by gender, ‘gifted’ cigarettes represent the most commonly reported ‘usual’ source of cigarettes among all groups (Fuller, 2012). Both SDD and SALSUS surveys discriminate between cigarettes given by friends, parents and siblings, and report on social purchases from ‘friends and relatives’ or ‘someone else’. The surveys do not discriminate between different types of ‘giving’, however, and do not report on the volume of cigarettes acquired from these sources, or on illicit or blackmarket sources of tobacco.

5.4.1 Social and illicit markets

‘Social and illicit markets’ refers to the availability of cigarettes for sale in schools and to illicit or counterfeit product available from shops or via ‘fag houses’ in communities P and Q. The latter are premises in which illicit tobacco is sold ‘informally’ for around half the standard retail cost. All participants foregrounded the social availability of tobacco for sale in schools, and participants in community P consistently identified fag houses as potential sources of tobacco. In community Q, however, none were aware of any fag houses in the local area, though several mentioned a shop that sold individual cigarettes or ‘singles’ for 20 pence, though this had since ceased trading.

5.4.1.1 Social markets

All participants mentioned the social availability of cigarettes for sale in schools. Most were either pupils or ex-pupils at one of three secondary schools in the two study communities, and participants from each identified particular social spaces in which pupils would congregate to smoke before and during school hours. These were designated: (i) ‘the Hawthorns’, referring to the grounds of a charitable foundation bordering School A; (ii) ‘the Trees’, located in a public park adjacent to School B, and; (iii) ‘the Walkway’, a pedestrian thoroughfare dissecting School C. These were identified as loci for interpersonal cigarette exchanges, with individual cigarettes or ‘singles’ perceived to be readily available for sale in each.

In the following excerpts, for example, Q1 (F15R) foregrounds the social availability of cigarettes for sale unprompted in elaborating on her mention of ‘the Trees’, with Ps 21, 22 and 23 (M14R, M13R, M14R) similarly foregrounding ‘social markets’ in describing their route to school via the ‘Hawthorns’:

TT: What’s the trees sorry?

Q1: Ah no...it’s a thing wi’ trees...and we’ll stand there at break and lunch...and probably in the morning after school wait for everyone... ‘cos like if we haven’t got fags we ask them or give them 10p or something...if we’ve got....

TT: Give...give who 10p sorry?

Q1: The people...our friends...

P23: And...when you’re cutting through the Hawthorns they all stand at the top and you can like...you can...see them and you just like...All your pals are doing it so you just want to...copy them...

P21: And then you just whip out a fag and walk up wi’ a big 20 pack...[to help you] these poor guys: [whining voice] ‘Uh...gid’ ye a faaag’ ...they all stand there [looking] for a fag...

P22: It’s what they’re all like man...In the morning...you walk up to school and they’re all piling up to: ‘gissa fag gissa fag gissa fag’...

P21: They’re like: [Whiny voice] ‘I’ll pay you a fiver for a faaag’...

Consistent with the accounts of others, social markets are essentially represented as constituting auxiliary options in the context of the reciprocal ‘marketplace’ in these accounts. Even participants reporting making regular social sales located the ‘initiative’ with the prospective purchaser in these contexts: social sales were not ‘generated’ proactively by the vendor but rather followed failures on the part of the prospective purchaser to enter into reciprocal exchanges. Q1 (F15R), for example, suggests ‘*we ask them*’ before offering them money, and Ps 21 22 and 23 (M14R, M13R, M14R) represent the offer of ‘a fiver’ as following repeat attempts – indeed entreaties – to secure a cigarette for free: ‘*gissa fag, gissa fag, gissa fag*’.

Also evident is a clear difference in cost between Q1’s (F15R) ‘tenpence’ and P21’s (M14R) ‘fiver’. While the ‘fiver’ remains rhetorical, the offer having failed to materialise, prices were represented as ranging between tenpence and £2.30 for a single cigarette, with the modal average being 50 pence per cigarette or approximately twice the standard retail cost pro rata. As with reciprocal exchanges, prices were frequently negotiated in the context of social relationships, varying with the strength of social ties. This is evident above, in the varying prices associated with sourcing cigarettes from friends and others i.e. ‘we give cigarettes to friends or accept nominal payments vs ‘we demand substantial fees from others’ – and is made explicit by Q8 (F14R), who presents her ‘pricing strategy’ as follows: ‘*Depends who’s asking. If I really didn’t like them it’ll be a pound*’.

Once more, Q8’s (F14R) account is fairly typical. Cigarettes were perceived to be readily available from a range of sources, primarily via proxy cigarette purchases and reciprocal exchanges, with social purchases represented as the preserve of those excluded from these arrangements. While all participants demonstrated an awareness of social markets and approximately half made social sales then, none reported making social purchases, with all citing cost as the primary disincentive. The only compensation for those resorting to social purchases was to make the ‘exclusion’ mutual. As Q23 (M15Ex) observes: ‘*the person normally buys it willnae normally share it with anybody, ‘cos they’re like: “Nah, I’ve paid a pound for it”*’.

Q23 (M15Ex) was one of 4 individuals making regular social sales either for profit or to fund their own smoking. These were distinguishable from other participants

primarily in terms of their explicitly economic as opposed to social orientation in these contexts. While all reported a degree of ‘leniency’ with friends, their price points tended to be non-negotiable. Q3 (M14R), for example, offered 20% discounts to close sales and promote turnover as opposed merely to servicing relationships:

TT: Right...Guys, out of interest, what does the price depend on. If like...you said it can be up to a quid, I mean that’s quite a lot isn’t it...

Q4: Aye it...

TT: Is it...does it depend on who’s selling, does it depend on who’s buying...I mean...

Q3: Everyone...everyone at my school sells them for 50p. I do it for 40 if people haven’t got enough money...

TT: Ok. But you would, you would like... ‘cos you said you sell to like...buy another packet, would you...like if it was your mate or something, would it...would you sell...cheaper to them, than to like some...person that you didn’t know...

Q4: Nah...

Q3: Nah...If they didn’t have enough money I wouldnae...but...if they never had any money I would give them a fag for free...

Before discriminating friends from customers – I wouldn’t give friends a discount, though I would give them a fag for free – Q3 (M14) demonstrates a clear understanding of the rudiments of business, furnishing representations: (i) of the market value of his product; (ii) the competition, and; (iii) furnishing a rudimentary business strategy, albeit one somewhat lacking in ambition: *‘I get three pounds for school, and then I buy fags...and then...sell half of them for 50p each. And then I get my money back and I’ve still got fags to smoke... That’s what I do every day’*. Q3 (M14R) wouldn’t give friends a discount, but he would give them a cigarette. Similar sentiments were expressed by Q23 (M15Ex), who suggested: *‘I would probably leave them a draw, and then if they were like: “Err, nah. I still want to buy one I’d be like: “Well you can pay a pound for it”*. Social sales were represented as discrete from reciprocal arrangements in these contexts.

P13 (M16R) and Q23 (M15Ex) in particular also maintained ‘premium’ lines. P13 (M16R), for example, sold cigarettes for: *‘50p a fag, or a pound for a Superking’*, and Q23 (M15Ex) similarly suggested: *‘Like people cannae get them in the morning,*

they'll be like "Ah. I'll give you 50p", and you're just...like if it's a Superking or something, you just say: "Nah, a pound". Consistent with broader discussion around brand preferences, Q23 (M15Ex) continues to identify Lambert and Butler as a second premium product: *'Somebody'll buy a packet of fags for like 2...3 pounds, and they'll buy Lambert and Butler 'cos they know that they're dear...and you can get away with selling them for a pound like that...then they'll sell them for a pound and make theirself a tenner, they're making like...seven pound profit'.*

Participants making regular social sales then, did not vary prices only with the strength of social ties but also with the 'kudos' invested in the product. Differences between brands will be considered in more detail in Chapter 6 and revisited in the discussion. The salient point is that social vendors were able to leverage the status conferred on certain brands for profit.

5.4.1.2 Illicit and counterfeit tobacco

Participants' knowledge and awareness of the availability of illicit or counterfeit tobacco for sale either from shops or via fag houses varied between communities. In community P, participants almost invariably foregrounded the availability of illicit or counterfeit tobacco for sale via fag houses, in most cases without explicit prompting. In community Q, by contrast, participants were not aware of fag houses, though 2 premises were identified as selling cigarettes to underage customers for a premium, or selling cigarettes individually for 30 pence. The latter premises had subsequently ceased trading. Given this 'variation' in illicit tobacco availability, discussion will be presented separately by community.

Community P

In community P, the availability of illicit or counterfeit tobacco for sale via fag houses was foregrounded in all interviews but one. This interview was problematised by a group of 8 girls presenting together in the first instance and being asked to separate into smaller friendship subgroups. This appeared to result in some internal

tensions, with the ‘excluded’ young people remaining in the corridor to disrupt the process: for example calling out to P7 (F13Ex), who ultimately asked to leave the interview to join her friends. The remaining participants were not regular smokers, and were not prompted to discuss the availability of illicit tobacco, primarily as a consequence of the sustained level of disruption throughout this interview.

This interview aside, however, information pertaining to fag houses was volunteered from the very first interview, in which P1 (M16R) responds to general discussion around the prevalence of smoking in the local area – ‘*Would you say in the general scheme of things smoking’s not that big an issue then?*’ – to suggest:

P1: Everyone’s smoking but nae...like...there’s a load of people round here that sells fake fags for three quid or something but a 20 deck of fags...

TT: Oh right... [Laughs] That...that’s pretty cheap isn’t it...

P1: If ye ken where they are but they’re all horr...I just...I would...rather...at the end of the day I’d rather buy them, I would never go near them...there’s loads of them, there must be about twenty houses in all around [Community P] and [Community P] just...just go to the door and say: ‘Can I get a packet of fags’ and they’ll say: ‘thee pounds’...and just give you them back over...

TT: Oh what so just anyone can go...

P1: Oh aye anyone can go...

P1’s (M16R) account is fairly typical. All participants in community P highlighted the ready availability of illicit or counterfeit tobacco for sale via fag houses – anyone can go – and all described the product in pejorative terms. P3 (F15R), for example, reported sourcing cigarettes from a fag house on a single occasion, suggesting that the product tastes: ‘*like camel shite*’. As such, while most participants had tried what they considered to be illicit or ‘fake’ product on at least one occasion, none sourced illicit tobacco on a regular basis, with all framing the product in negative terms. Aside from ‘horrible’ and tasting like ‘camel shite’, illicit product was represented variously as an ‘embarrassment’; ‘a disgrace’; as ‘rough’, ‘harsh’ and as being disproportionately hazardous to health. Discussion pertaining to illicit or counterfeit product is considered in more detail in Chapter 6.

In terms of cigarette access, P1’s (M16R) representation of the ready availability of tobacco from a number of premises in the local area was corroborated by other

participants. P12 (F16R), for example, suggested: *'everyone seems to find them'*, and P8 and 9 (F15R, F17R) posited an estimate of the number of fag houses in the local area, identifying 'around 10' on nearby streets before revising their estimate downwards:

P8: There was about ten of them down what is it just this...wee two lanes in [Community P]...

P9: See if you get caught wi'em now, see if you get caught with them now you get lifted...

P8: You get lifted...

TT: Oh right, OK...

P9: If you get caught wi'em like...see how you put them in your suitcases...

P8: That's why a few of them down there don't do it anymore...

P9: They...they's...but some people sell that down there...

TT: But how...how did...

P8: Yeah only one...

P9: Two...

While neither P8 (F17R) nor P9 (F15R) claimed to make regular purchases from fag houses, their disagreement over the number remaining is suggestive of a reference to specific premises as opposed merely to an intuitive assessment of number. Both also corroborated P1's (M16R) suggestion that illicit product was available for £3 for a packet of 20 cigarettes, or around half the standard retail cost, along with Ps 2, 3 and 4 (F15R, F15R, F14O), 13 and 14 (M16R, M17R) 16, 17 and 18 (F13O, F12O, F12O) and 21, 22, and 23 (M14R, M13R, M14R). Other participants were less specific, positing iterations of the suggestion that illicit product is simply 'cheaper'. P8 (F17R) also claimed to have sourced cigarettes from 'fag houses' when she was 10: *'because that's where my pal's mum got her fags from... 'cos they were a lot cheaper'*.

Once more, the account is fairly typical. While older and more experienced 'regular' smokers tended to locate discussion around illicit or counterfeit tobacco firmly in the context of their earlier smoking related experiences, a number of younger and experimental smokers reported sourcing illicit tobacco via parents. P29 (F12R), for

example, presented in a triadic interview with her aunt and cousin once removed. While barely afforded an opportunity to speak by her older and more talkative companions, P27 (F12R) was nevertheless able to relate that she had tried what she described as *'Jingalings'*, which came from 'China' – more specifically from her father – helpfully adding that: *'I'm not allowed to smoke. I just tore it'*.

Several participants represented illicit tobacco as being 'popular' with parents, and those interviewed in the vicinity of the 'wee two lanes' to which P8 and 9 (F17R, F15R) refer cited intimate knowledge of 'fag houses' and the individuals involved in selling the product. P25 (M13R) mentioned 'people on the street' selling 'fake' cigarettes, and Ps 21, 22 and 23 (M14R, M13R and M14R) had each bought cigarettes from 'a woman down the road' before giving them away: P21 (M14R) to others at the youth club and P22 (M13R) to his 'nanna'. Consistent with the experiences of others, P21 (M14R) was distinctly unimpressed with the product, suggesting: *'she gets like...fags fra' Egypt and that, and...and what...what they do is like they go about the streets picking up all the rubbish and then...put some...like tobaccie and that in it, so it's basically like ground stuff and tobaccie'*.

For several participants, the 'fag house' terminology became redundant. Rather than fag houses these would refer to individuals by name or relationship status: 'Tracy', for example, or 'my friend's mum'. While participants themselves were deterred by the poor quality or low status associated with the illicit product, sourcing cigarettes from fag houses was not represented as problematic: Ps16 (F13O) and P17 (F12O), for example, claimed to source illicit tobacco for their parents:

TT: Yeah. 'Cos I've heard about the Jin Ling, 'cos apart from like shops and stuff there's also...you know sometimes you can go to people's houses and buy cigarettes can't you...

P18: Aye...

P16: Ken.

P17: Mmm...

P16: Oh aye, because this woman 'Tracy' used to do it and that's where I used to get my mum's fags, but then when she stopped doing it...I got it from the shop...

TT: Right Ok...

P17: Aye, same. My mum...my friend's gran does it...

P16: Like...no' all the time but if my mum was like...bathing my brother or something she'd ask me to run over...

While both were occasional smokers and claimed not to source cigarettes for personal consumption, each suggested cigarettes were readily available for sale to underage young people. Neither reported any difficulty accessing cigarettes for their parents. Given their anxieties around confidentiality and iteration of the 'party line' in insisting they had not sourced cigarettes for personal consumption I would consider their account fairly credible. Their 'secret' is likely to be their purchase of tobacco for personal consumption as opposed to the manufacture of the performance. Certainly all appeared confident in their 'hypothetical' assertion that sourcing illicit tobacco for personal consumption was unlikely to present any difficulties:

TT: Right. Is that...do you think that's something that young people do that aswell, or is it mainly just parents...

P16: Aye, they just go in and say it's for their mum and then they have fags and...

P17: Mmm...

P16: The person that's selling them doesnae care because...What's that...

P18: They've got money...

P16: They've got money...

Only one participant reported accessing illicit tobacco for personal consumption. P13 (M16R) presented in a dyadic interview with P14 (M16R), and was adamant he wouldn't buy from 'fag houses, because: 'I've tried fake ones, I'll tell you what: they give you a sore throat'. Despite this, he made references to sourcing his Golden Virginia for £7.50, or around half the standard retail cost.

Community Q

Discussion around illicit or counterfeit tobacco was foregrounded less frequently by participants in community Q, despite explicit prompting. Participants were asked increasingly direct questions, from probing around the 'different places' where

cigarettes might be available: *'I've heard there's other places you can get cigarettes, like people get them duty free and sell them in pubs or their houses or whatever'*.

However, even the most leading questions failed to stimulate discussion in this context, and it is likely either that illicit tobacco was not widely available or that young people were simply not aware of it. Certainly, given the candidness of participants' responses in other contexts it is unlikely that they were simply reluctant to disclose.

Only two participants reported any awareness of the availability of non-retail product: Q2 (M17R) had a regular supply of Golden Virginia from his father, and Q4 responded to prompting around the availability of 'duty free' tobacco by suggesting: *'Aye, my dad gets about 50 odd' from a local pub. Q2 (M17R) recalled that this supply started: 'When my dad found out I was smoking. Basically: 'Take that, take that' I was like: "Oh! Should o' told him a wee while ago" [Laughs]'*. While priding himself on this virtually limitless supply of 'free' tobacco, however, Q2 (M17R) did not source duty free tobacco himself, preferring to make retail purchasers of Lambert and Butler, a position supported by his apparent lack of clarity around the price and provenance of the latter:

Q2: And I just go a 50 gram pouch o' 'baccie [Laughs]...

TT: 50 grammes. Is that...that's like...err...imported tobacco then is it?

Q2: Erm.

TT: Like cheap tobacco like you get like bulk sort of thing...

Q2: Yeah.

TT: Oh right...

Q3: It's a fiver for them. Something like that eh...

While none of the participants were aware of any 'fag houses' or premises from which illicit or counterfeit product was perceived to be available for sale, several mentioned the availability of 'fake' cigarettes for sale in shops. Q23 (M15Ex), for example, foregrounds the availability of 'fake brands' following prompting around 'fag houses' or 'duty free' tobacco:

TT: Yeah. I've also heard in some places that...people get them like duty-free and then just sell them from home...like for about half price or something. Have you ever come across that?

Q23: Mmm nah..mmm...nah. I like...I've heard, like...come across like shops selling them... 'cos they're like cheaper...like cheap fags...like...they dinnae taste as nice, like they're fake brands...I've heard of them like selling them, I know where you can buy stuff like that...

TT: Have you...have you tried...those yourself...

Q23: Aye, but I dinnae...I dinnae like them. I just thought they were minging...

Q23 (M15Ex) gives the matter due consideration, and the transcript does inadequate justice to the energy invested in deliberation: 'Mmmm, nah. Mmmm, nah'. While these 'fake' cigarettes were foregrounded in several contexts, and participants appeared united in their faith in their ability to discriminate between fake and genuine product, it is clearly difficult to assess whether the product was counterfeit or merely perceived as such. Further discussion pertaining to 'fake' product and the various criteria employed in assessing 'authenticity' are elaborated in chapter 6.

A number of participants identified premises supplying cigarettes to underage young people for a premium, and one supplying individual cigarettes or 'singles' for 25-30 pence. Given the sale of cigarettes in quantities of less than ten is illegal in the UK and that charging a premium implies a deliberate contravention of sales law, both will be considered complicit in the supply of 'illicit' tobacco to children. The former premises were identified by a number of those reporting making retail cigarette purchases as a 'good' shop from which to source cigarettes. Only 4, however, mentioned the availability of cigarettes for sale at a premium to underage customers:

Q19: There's a shop up...there's a shop up there...And people always go there and the guy...gives you it...whatever you ask for...

TT: Oh [Name]'s...

Q17: You have to pay more for it...

TT: Yeah I've been told that...You have to pay more money do you?

Q17: Sometimes. In some cases you have to pay like 20p more, 50p more...

TT: Ah right Ok. Have you got cigarettes there yourself?

Q17: Nah...

TT: So that's like what people say in school then is it?

Q17: Yeah...

While none of the participants reported having made these purchases themselves, their account was corroborated by Q25 (F15Ex), who suggested: *'There's a shop that sells you them at any age, but they charge you an extra 50p'*. Q25 (F15Ex) was also one of two participants mentioning a 'Polish shop' which apparently sold 'Polski fags' for 25 or 30 pence each. Q1 (F15R) claimed to have bought these herself, and suggested that the shop had since ceased trading. Once more, the account followed explicit prompting around 'other' cigarette sources:

TT: *Is it like...what about like...I've been told there's also places you can get...erm...like cheap cigarettes or whatever like...imported cigarettes, or you know some people kind of sell them...*

Q1: *Polish shops.*

TT: *Polish? Ah right Ok. They're cheaper are they?*

Q1: *30p*

TT: *30...hah?*

Q1: *30p [Tiny Laugh]*

TT: *What for one? Ah right, Ok...wheeeere...what kind of cigarettes are they...like...*

Q1: *Polish fags ...*

TT: *Oh right Ok...Thirty p's a lot for one though isn't it if...you and your friends kind of get them for 10p... Right. So people...do people...buy them, or is it...*

Q1: *I used to...But I used to...at the [Youth Club]...Then I was like: 'Oh let's go in for fags'...But now...they...erm...this Polish person...told the police... So they got all their fags all taken off them...*

While the intention is not to interrogate these accounts it is worth observing that both the availability of cigarettes at a premium and the availability of individual cigarettes from Polish shops was only foregrounded in three interviews, and that Q1 (F15R) represents the single participant claiming to have accessed cigarettes from either.

5.4.2 Reciprocal exchanges

While ‘gifted’ cigarettes were routinely mentioned in the context of first-time experiences, subsequent discussion around more regular social sourcing was invariably structured around notions of reciprocity and trust. Croghan et al’s (2003) ‘anticipation of future reciprocation’ will be interpreted as the expectation of repayment in kind for current purposes, and the expectation was encoded variously in the responses of participants. P8 and 9 (F17R and F15R), for example, identify reciprocation as integral to the practice of ‘crashing’ cigarettes:

TT: And so like does everyone have...their own cigarettes then, is that how it works...does it?...

P8: Umm...most people have their own fags but some people...crash them and then they go away and get them after school...

P9: And then give them back to people...

P8: It’s easy to get fags...

TT: Yeah?...

P8: Like so easy...

‘Crashing’ cigarettes from others, clearly, does not represent a viable alternative to purchasing cigarettes oneself. Cigarettes are perceived to be readily available either via shops or proxy purchases – ‘it’s easy to get fags’ – and the expectation of fairly immediate reciprocation is encoded in the act of giving, with P9 echoing the assertion of her friend. Indeed, while the flexibility of reciprocal arrangements varied with the strength of social ties, even P8 (F17R) and P9 (F15R) – close friends since childhood and intimately involved in each other’s social and family lives were fastidious in their reciprocal ‘accountancy’ practices:

P9: She had four fags right...she...we had thirty fags...and she ended up having four by the end of the night...and I had five, she gave me five and went away and left me right...And then...

P8: [Laughs] ‘Cos she was at her pals house and I wasnae sitting wi’ her and this...laddie that I barely even ken...so I went away and met my pal...[Laughs]...

P9: I still had...I still had three fags by the end of the night...Mhmm. And you had four, and you had...how many fifteen...

P8: Err. Excuse me...when...

P9: Fifteen. Twenty. Fifteen. Twenty [Laughs]...

P8: Whose pals from the village tore the fags off me when I was steaming...

P9: Errr. That wouldnae be my pals...

P8: Your pals...[Laughs]...

P9: You better give me a fag later on...I'm gonna steal [unintelligible]...

P8: I've got fags...

P9: So I'm gonna steal their fags just for stealing my fags...

Despite the tone and context here, and that the exchange referred to events at a party the previous week, P9 (F15R) brandishes her balance sheet with the alacrity of a loan shark, albeit with a minor miscalculation: P8 (F17R) would appear to have smoked 21 cigarettes rather than 20. The salient point is that the balance sheet is no idle metaphor. P9 (F15R) is not communicating a vague sense of relative entitlement but rather a calculation of her dues. While P8 (F17R) mounts a minor defence of her culpability in the face of her inebriation and apparent abandonment in favour of a male third party she makes no attempt to query her friend's claims, acknowledging her indebtedness in her submission to her friend's demand. In her own words, and to iterate: if you 'crash' cigarettes you give them back to people. Her response to her friend's ultimatum: *'I've got fags'*.

This ethic was evident in a number of contexts, for example in the actions of Q4 (M15R) who described himself as a 'social smoker' and made purchases at weekends to compensate his friends, or in the account of Q8 (F14R) who was unable to make purchases herself and related a range of informal rules around access. These were related in the context of relationships and trust, with failure to reciprocate implying a breach of trust and a breach of the rules of friendship by extension. In the following account, P12 (F16R), for example, describes a closed reciprocal system in which the expectation of repayment in kind remains unspoken:

P12: Oh! Like in my circle of friends, like...we all share...

TT: Aha, Ok...

P12: *Like, the smokers, like...If I don't have cigarettes...if someone else has them they'll give me one...and then if I have cigarettes I'll give them one and stuff like that...Or whenever we smoke...*

TT: *Aha...Does that tend to be quite even, or is it sometimes like you keep giving cigarettes to a certain person and then they maybe don't give them back, and then...*

P12: *No. It's pretty equal with my circle of friends. With other people I don't really know. I doubt that to be honest. It's just I have a good circle of friends...*

The account is fairly typical. All participants designated friends and family 'legitimate' recipients, and P12 (F16R) draws an emphatic parallel between the reciprocal system operating among her: 'circle of friends' and the positive social relations this reflects and sustains: 'I have a good circle of friends'. While the expectation of reciprocation remains unspoken, failure to reciprocate implies a breach of trust in this context, and other participants highlighted the sanctions applied when the expectation of reciprocation remained unfulfilled. This is evident, for example, in P19 and 20s (F12R and F13R) somewhat unkind representation of 'Megan' following her repeated defaults:

TT: *Aha. Ok...And is it like...Have you ever been in a situation where you've like given people like loads and loads of cigarettes, and then they...won't give you any back...*

P19: *Mhmm...*

P20: *Megan [Anonymised]...*

TT: *You have...*

P19: *Megan [Anonymised] owes her about 20 fags and she's not given her back yet...*

P20: *See the lass out there with the skirt way up her arse...Sort of fat...You cannae miss her...The one that was in here... her auntie. She comes to this club on a Friday... see her on Friday there...she always wears her tracksuit. She's...quite big...*

P19: *She's like a man...*

P20: *She's a big massive thing...*

TT: *I was here on Friday. Yeah I think I remember. What, and she gets other people's cigarettes does she and doesn't give them back...*

P19/20: *Aye...*

TT: Yeah? Right. And does [Laughs]...And how does that go down...

P19: Just annoys you... You ask her every day, she says: 'I've not got them' but she probably has.

TT: Right right right...

P20: Not if you've like not got fags and you ask her for one she'll gi' you it, but when you ask her to gi'...like if she got 20 and you owe her like...like she owes you like 6 or something, if you ask her for the 6 she willnae give you the full 6. She only gives you fags like one if you want one...

Consistent with P12's (F16R) account, P19 and 20's (F12R, F13R) also equate reciprocal practices with the quality of social relationships. Despite reciprocating on occasion – *'she gives you fags if you want one'* - it is 'Megan's' failure to acknowledge the extent of her indebtedness, a mistake avoided by P8 (F17R), that excites the ire of her creditors: *'she willnae give you the full 6'*. These themes of friendship, reciprocity, trust and the importance of contributing to as opposed to simply accessing cigarettes from social sources in order to be acknowledged as a 'proper' smoker is illustrated succinctly in the following quote:

P1: It's like people that...err...you never see with fags but they always ask you for fags eh that really, really annoys me...That really annoys me...or people that I ken have got money...but they ask you for fags every single time they see ye...and that really annoys me...

TT: Right...right, right. But you still do?

P1: No. Never. No I never gi' any of them fags...like my pal Chillli through there he works...err...if he's no' got any fags I buy him fags... 'cos I ken I'll get them back...I ken he'll pay me back...But with them, I ken I'm gonna get the fags back...An'...the thing is I ken he smokes...If he's not got money...it's no' his fault...So I'll gi' him a fag, I'll gi' him a few fags, blah blah blah...

TT: So it's like a 'cos what you're talking about there is like a trust issue aswell isn't it...

P1: Aye it is, it's all to do wi' trust eh, if I...if I trust them enough to... I mean I'm not worried about the money back like i'm not worried about the fags like but... 'cos he smokes like... 'cos I ken he smokes like the same amount as me, I ken how he would feel if he needed a fag... He'd want...and he'd need to go and buy them...but with them, I never see them wi' fags... but they always ask for a fag every time they see me... So...why...they cannae want...I dinnae ken how to say it but it's like...they...It's like for me they dinnae smoke but they only want

to smoke when...they're like they ken you've got fags they just want a fag off you...it just really annoys me...

5.4.3 Gifted cigarettes

Consistent with Croghan et al's (2003) typology of social sources, 'gifting' refers to interpersonal cigarette exchanges in which neither reciprocation in kind nor remuneration is anticipated in the act of giving. All participants represented smoking as ubiquitous, with most mentioning parental smoking and all articulating iterations of a perception that: 'everyone smokes around here' both at school and in the local community. Particular social spaces in which smoking was routinely enacted were identified, and all participants described social contexts in which cigarettes were readily available for the benefit of the uninitiated. First time use in particular was overwhelmingly located in this context: in terms of electing on a particular occasion to accept rather than refuse the offer of cigarettes.

While all participants had been offered cigarettes in social contexts, and all but 2 had accepted such 'gifts' on one or more occasions, participant's representations of these first-time experiences varied by age and smoking status. Younger and experimental smokers tended to frame first time experiences as virtual 'products' of peer pressure, representing their motivation to try smoking as extrinsic. The accounts of Qs 20/22 (M13T, M13Ex) and 24 (F13T) are fairly typical of these:

TT: Aha. But when you...[Laughs] When...when you started, like...did you...Had you tried like a couple of times before you started smoking all the time, or did you one day suddenly decide: 'Right, I'm gonna smoke from now on', or...

Q22: Nah. There was like...people...came down my bit then...Just like peer pressure...basically...

TT: Peer pressure. What do you mean by that?

Q20: They were like: 'Just do it, just do it!'...

TT: And could you tell me a bit about that? Like what...what happened, what...what was the kind of...You were out with a group of people, or you were sitting at home on your own, or...

Q24: *With people [Laughs]...*

TT: *Aha. And...what's the story?*

Q24: *[Laughs]...I don't know the story...[Laughs]...*

TT: *Well you must know some of it...*

Q24: *A big sto...[Laughs] No, people just force you into it: 'Just try! Just try!' [Laughs]...*

Both Q 22 (M13Ex) and Q24 (F13T) frame peer pressure as a determining factor in the context of their own initiation, representing the practice of gifting as coercive. Each immediately deflects from the first-person framing of the relevant question to posit iterations of the following assertion: 'I tried smoking because they made me'. Older and more experienced smokers, by contrast, engaged directly with the first person framing of the question, representing their motivation to try smoking as intrinsic and structuring their responses around notions of voluntarism and individual competence. P12 (F16R), for example, rejects the notion of peer pressure as a motivating factor in the context of her own initiation, framing smoking unambiguously as a choice:

TT: *So why do you think you do then? What's the appeal do you think? What...*

P12: *What's the appeal? Erm when I was fourteen I thought I was a little gangster...little G...*

TT: *[Laughs] Aha...*

P12: *Clearly wasn't, and erm...I was hanging around with these girls...and they were like: 'Yeah, you should try smoking and stuff', and I was like: 'Nah, nah nah nah nah'...I used to be quite: 'No, I don't want to do this, I don't want to do that', and then I thought: 'Why not, yeah?'...And I tried my first one didn't...smoke again for a while, and then I thought: 'Why not?'...*

There is a clear distinction, then, between the accounts of those for whom smoking-related experiences may be dismissed as anomalies in the biographical context and those already socialised into the role (Berger and Luckmann, 1967). These differences are reflected in participants' various representations of what the acquisition of cigarettes for free implies. Younger participants and experimental smokers were routinely offered cigarettes for free, generating an impression of ready 'free' cigarette availability. Among more regular smokers, however, the prospect of reciprocation was invariably implied in these transactions, and a failure to

reciprocate resulted in the application of a range of sanctions, including a lack of acknowledgement by others as a proper smoker. To paraphrase P1 (M16R), social sources do not constitute a legitimate ‘usual’ recourse for a proper smoker.

5.5 Summary

Discussion pertaining to retail purchases, proxy purchases and participants’ diverse modes of social tobacco acquisition was foregrounded in all interviews, with most participants having made or attempted to make retail purchases, with most having made or known others to make proxy purchases, and with all having been offered cigarettes by others in diverse social contexts. Participants’ ‘usual’ sources varied by age and smoking status, with rates of retail cigarette purchasing increasing with age and regular smoking. While all participants represented cigarette access as straightforward, only three participants were able to make regular cigarette purchases from shops without either targeting particular retailers identified as amenable to selling cigarettes to underage customers or simply making strategic purchasing attempts. Participants making cigarette purchases from shops were therefore aware of the critical distinction between themselves and others their ability to buy cigarettes implied. Most participants relied primarily on proxy purchases, supplementing these with occasional retail purchases from amenable tobacco retailers and exchanging cigarettes with friends. Participants also learned to characterise individuals amenable to making proxy purchases on behalf of children and young people, describing these as ‘chavs’, ‘neds’, ‘hobos’ and ‘junkies’.

Some occasional smokers, primarily those identifying themselves as ‘social smokers’, relied primarily on social sources of tobacco, for example being given cigarettes by friends at weekends. These instances aside, the prospect of reciprocation was encoded in the act of asking for and giving others cigarettes, and even occasional smokers made correspondingly occasional cigarette purchases to compensate their friends. Regular smokers failing to reciprocate in these contexts were excluded from social cigarette exchanges. ‘Free’ social tobacco acquisition, as such, was represented as the preserve of younger children and experimental smokers.

The accounts of participants therefore communicated a clear sense of progression from making the choice to smoke – and among regular smokers it was almost invariably framed as a choice – to having that choice acknowledged by peers in facilitating access via ‘gifted’ cigarettes, to having the choice acknowledged if not endorsed by parents or other family members by facilitating access or allowing smoking in the home, to having the choice acknowledged by others in the community by facilitating access via proxy purchases, to having the choice acknowledged ultimately by the tobacco retailers themselves.

6 Product and branding

6.1 Introduction

This chapter examines participants' perceptions and representations of cigarette brand image in anticipation of the ban on point-of-sale displays under the Tobacco and Primary Medical Services (Scotland) Act 2010, and in anticipation of the introduction of generic packaging in the UK. This study aimed originally to focus exclusively on young people's smoking and cigarette access behaviours in the context of the increase in the minimum age of sale. During the early stages of fieldwork, however, it became apparent that cigarette access and branding were intimately related in the context of young people's social worlds. In the youth clubs, for example, young people would congregate to smoke outside at regular intervals, and requests for cigarettes were typically followed by discussion around the characteristics of the proffered brands. Inside the youth clubs, cigarettes were rarely left in plain view, with the young people explaining that public displays of cigarette packets invited requests for cigarettes from others: everyone would ask for one. In the more intimate social context of the friendship pairs and triads in which participants presented for interview, however, cigarette packets would frequently be placed on tables, or removed from participants' pockets and displayed during the course of discussion.

The decision to incorporate findings pertaining to cigarette branding in interviews was therefore taken during the initial fieldwork/piloting phase, with participants in pilot interviews elaborating freely and at length on related subject matter during the course of discussion without explicit prompting. Participants' accounts of their cigarette purchases, for example, were almost invariably related with reference to the particular brands they requested from retailers or proxy purchasers, and this would stimulate further discussion – particularly in friendship pairs and triads – concerning the relative merits of participants' individual product choices. Given the regularity with which related subject matter was foregrounded in interviews, and given the semi-structured interview format, direct questions around cigarette branding were not included in the topic guides. Where relevant subject matter was not foregrounded organically during the course of discussion, for example where participants had only

limited experience of smoking, these would rather be asked which cigarettes were ‘popular’ in the course of more general discussion around smoking.

This chapter is divided into sections which reflect key areas of interest in tobacco control, and employs Keller’s (1993) conceptual model of ‘customer based brand equity’ to frame the nature of the relationships between these otherwise diverse foci (See Figure 6). The first section examines participants’ levels of brand awareness, and identifies the brands mentioned most frequently by participants. While an individual’s awareness of a cigarette brand is clearly not synonymous with its ‘attractiveness’, or with the relative attractiveness of smoking by extension, measures of brand awareness have been included in studies investigating the impact of tobacco advertising on adolescent smoking, and participants’ high levels of brand awareness are worth highlighting following the implementation of the Tobacco Advertising and Promotions Act 2002. In the post-advertising era, cigarette packaging represents the tobacco industry’s primary promotional vehicle, and a high level of brand awareness among non-smokers suggests that levels of exposure to cigarette brand imagery at the PoS and in diverse social contexts remain high.

Section 2 focuses on the range of dimensions that collectively constitute ‘brand image’ according to Keller’s (1993) model of customer based brand equity. While this chapter is structured around a theoretical model and its constituent categories, however, the interviews themselves were not. Discussion pertaining to each element of Keller’s theoretical model discussed here was foregrounded spontaneously by participants. As such, Keller’s (1993) model is not discussed in its entirety.

6.2 Keller’s model of customer-based brand equity

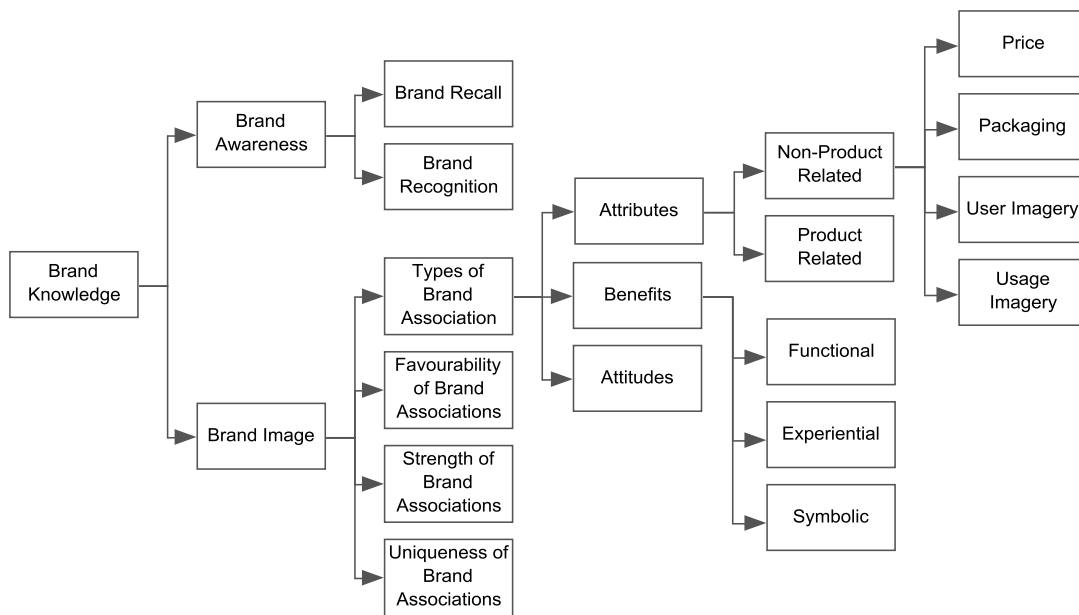
Brand equity may be defined as the excess value of a branded product relative to its generic or hypothetical equivalent (Simon and Sullivan 1990). Keller’s (1993) model of customer based brand equity presents a conceptual model of brand equity from the perspective of the consumer, and is therefore concerned with the extent to which: ‘the consumer is familiar with the brand and holds some favourable, strong, and unique brand associations in the memory’ (Keller, 1993: 2). The strength and

favourability of brand associations are contingent on consumer 'knowledge', encompassing the twin notions of 'brand awareness' and 'brand image'. 'Brand awareness' refers to brand recognition and recall, or the extent to which a brand is retrieved by consumers in response to the identification of a given product category. Brand image refers to the range of perceptions associated with a given brand, and may be considered in terms of: 'attributes', 'benefits' and 'attitudes' (Keller, 1993).

'Attributes' refers to the range of descriptive features characterising a product or service in the mind of the consumer, comprising: (i) product related attributes, or perceptions concerning for example the physical composition of a product; and (ii) non-product related attributes, or perceptions concerning external factors including packaging and pricing information (Keller 1993). 'Benefits' refers to the perceived utility of the identified 'attributes', comprising: (i) 'functional benefits', or the perceived utility of the product for example in terms of meeting physiological needs (ii) 'experiential benefits', or the perceived utility of the product for example in generating sensory pleasure; and (iii) 'symbolic benefits', or the perceived utility of the product in meeting the need for social approval (Keller, 1993).

Functional and experiential benefits correspond primarily with product related attributes, and symbolic benefits correspond with non-product related attributes (Keller, 1993). The functional benefit associated with a high nicotine yield, for example – the relief of nicotine withdrawal – is associated with constituent ingredients, with product-related attributes, while the symbolic benefits accruing through consumption may be satisfied for example via positive user imagery, through non-product related attributes. Keller (1993) suggests non-product related attributes are particularly salient in considering socially visible 'badge' products (Keller 1993). 'Attitudes' refers to the consumer's overall evaluation of a brand, including in terms of perceived product quality and the symbolic benefit associated with the expression of 'self-concept' through consumption.

Figure 7: Dimensions of Brand Knowledge (Keller, 1993)



6.3 Brand awareness

Brand awareness refers to brand recognition and recall, or the extent to which a given brand is recognised and retrieved from memory by an individual in response to the presentation of the relevant product category (Keller 1993). Brand awareness was high among all participants, particularly among more ‘experienced’ regular smokers, with even ‘experimental’ and non-smokers consistently retrieving a range of cigarette brands from memory in discussion around the ubiquity of point of sale (PoS) cigarette displays. Q15 (M13T), for example, was able to discriminate between brands competing at the PoS despite presenting as vehemently ‘anti-tobacco’ in the first instance: reciting the mantra: *‘smoke early, die young’* without a trace of irony and opining: *‘they should’ve done tests or something to see if they gave anyone problems or that...like cancer’* in a similarly humourless vein:

TT: So do you...like if you walk into a shop, do you notice...cigarettes? Do you notice like the...

Q15: Aye, like Lambert and Butler...And erm...Mayfair and all that...

TT: *Right Ok. So like with...with Lambert and Butler for example...do you know what a Lambert and Butler packet looks like?*

Q15: *Aye it's like greyish wi' like...greyish blueish...It's like that [indicates textured wallpaper]but greyish and blueish...And it's got a thingy says Lambert and Butler on it...*

TT: *And what about...err...Mayfair? What are they like?*

Q15: *It's got a blue packet. Blueish like...light blueish...And..it's...got Mayfair written on it...*

Q15 (M15T) retrieves Lambert and Butler and Mayfair from memory when presented with the relevant product category, and is able to elaborate on product packaging information following prompting: *'Do you know what a Lambert and Butler packet looks like?'* The account is fairly typical, with 'experimental' and non-smokers consistently identifying Lambert and Butler, Mayfair and Richmond as 'popular' cigarette brands, the same as those identified by regular smokers, and elaborating on these via references to product appearance and pricing information. Q16 (M14N), for example, identified all three: *'There's Mayfairs, Richmond and Lambert and Butler...and there's tobaccie [at the PoS] aswell'*, before detailing their appearance in some detail and observing in relation to one that: *'ten packs are like £2.55 and the twenty one's five pounds something...so they've put their fags up'*.

While 'experimental' and non-smokers consistently demonstrated a clear awareness of 'popular' cigarette brands, with several able to elaborate on their primary descriptive attributes, few foregrounded these attributes spontaneously, and their accounts were characterised by a lack of a clear affective dimension in this context. Where experimental smokers were prompted to specify a preference for a particular brand, most posited iterations of Q20's (M13T) expression of indifference in this context: *'I dinnae really care eh...they dinnae taste any different'*. Experimental and non-smokers, as such, while clearly aware of a range of cigarette brands, lacked the requisite 'knowledge' to discriminate between them: while Lambert and Butler, Mayfair and, Richmond were identified as popular, non-smokers lacked the vocabulary to explicate their popularity. Q20 (M13T), for example, continues: *'they dinnae taste any different. It's just...you suck in, and then smoke goes in your mouth, and then you just blow out. Or if you want to inhale you just [inhales] breathe in'*.

Regular smokers, by contrast, invariably expressed clear brand preferences and loyalties. While individual preferences varied, the language used to describe them was remarkably consistent, and broadly encompassed the following interrelated dimensions: price, potency, individual appeal and relative asperity. These attributes are considered in more detail in the following section. The salient point here is that regular smokers would spontaneously retrieve a range of brands from memory in elaborating on their individual product preferences. P22 (M13R), for example, expressed a preference for Richmond on the basis of their ‘smoothness’, but claimed to buy Lambert and Butler where these were unavailable and Windsor Blue and Mayfair on occasion. When prompted to elaborate on his preference for Richmond, P22 (M13R) highlighted the relative ‘harshness’ of the Lambert and Butler, and identified Stirling, Regal and Red Respect as: *‘just the worst’* brands.

The account is fairly typical, with regular smokers elaborating on their individual product preferences to specify both an awareness set– a range of brands with which they were familiar – and a consideration set, or a subset of brands receiving serious consideration for purchase (Roberts and Lattin 1991). P13 and P14 (M16R and M17R), for example, illustrate the case as follows:

TT: So what...what is it you smoke then?

P13: Err...John Players... Regal, Mayfair...

P14: Richmond...Richmond, Lambert and Butler...Pall Mall, Marlboro...every...fag you can get...

TT: Ah right. So you’re not particularly fussy...

P14: Any fag you can grab you smoke it [Tiny laugh]...

TT: Ok but you say that, but if you go and get...

P14: Nah but If I actually want fags it’ll have to be Richmond...

TT: Right OK. That’s what you get if you buy them yourselves is it?

P13: Mine’s...mines...

P14: His is John...John Player Specials...

P13: Nah...Mine’s would have to be...Mayfair...Or Lambert and Butler...[Coughs]...or Regal. They three...and if it’s ‘baccy...it’s no’ like the cheap ‘baccie...Has to be like...Drum, or...yeah...

The initial response of both participants is to retrieve brands indiscriminately from memory to specify an awareness set: *'Richmond, Lambert and Butler, Pall Mall, Marlboro...'* Once the question is reframed to focus on their individual preferences, however: *'But if you go and get [cigarettes yourself]?'* each immediately represents himself as more discerning, excluding Marlboro and Pall Mall from consideration. P14 (M16R) favours Richmond, with P13 (M17R) specifying a consideration set including Mayfair, Lambert and Butler and Regal: *'and if it's 'baccy...it's no' like cheap 'baccie...Has to be like...Drum, or...yeah'*.

Consistent with the majority of regular smokers, P14 (M16R) continues to elaborate on his preference for Richmond via juxtaposition: *'Pall Mall and that...they're alright, but...you dinnae get a good draw...When you're gasping...and you get a first draw o' Richmond. Ah, that's brilliant'*. The language employed by participants in describing the characteristics of their favoured brands is examined in detail below in elaborating on their perceptions and representations of cigarette brand image. The salient point here is that all regular smokers retrieved a range of brands from memory in the course of discussion pertaining to their individual product preferences. All nominated a favoured product variant, and all drew a clear distinction between the range of brands of which they were aware and those they would smoke themselves.

Richmond represented the favoured brand among 16 of 28 regular smokers, with 7 expressing a preference for Lambert and Butler and 2 preferring Mayfair. Several participants specified a consideration set including both Richmond and Lambert and Butler, with most preferring Richmond on the basis of relative costs. John Player Specials and Windsor Blue were also a popular second choice among a group of younger participants in community P, while Regal, Marlboro Lights and Windsor received a single nomination each. 'Cheap' brands including Stirling, Pall Mall and Windsor were most frequently the subject of extended negative commentary, along with 'fake' and 'foreign' brands including Jin Ling and Red Respect.

6.4 Brand image

Brand image refers the range of perceptions associated with a brand in the mind of the consumer (Keller, 1993) Where brand identity refers to attributes conferred on a brand for example via advertising, brand image is inferred from its interpretation. This is mediated through a range of social influences over which the marketer has limited control (Grant et al., 2008). All participants reporting regular smoking articulated clear brand preferences and loyalties. While individual preferences varied, the language used to describe them was remarkably consistent, and broadly encompassed the following interrelated dimensions: ‘price’, ‘potency’, ‘visual appeal’ and ‘relative asperity’. Price was represented as a proxy for product ‘quality’, with ‘potency’ referring to the perceived ‘strength’ of the product and the duration of ‘satisfaction’ following use. Visual appeal was conferred by novelty and various elements of product design, with relative asperity referring to the perceived ‘smoothness’ or ‘harshness’ of the smoking experience.

6.4.1 Product related attributes

Discussion pertaining to product related attributes was foregrounded in all interviews in which regular smokers elaborated on their individual product preferences. Product related attributes are those pertaining to the physical composition of the product, and regular smokers almost invariably articulated their preference for a given brand straightforwardly in terms of its superior ‘taste’ in the first instance, positing varying iterations of P20s (F13R) assertion that Lambert and Butler simply: *‘taste better’* than other variants. Where participants were prompted to elaborate on taste characteristics, these were subsequently explicated in terms of the relative ‘strength’ of the product: *‘Lambert and Butler are stronger...it’s like strong...in your throat’*, or the relative ‘smoothness’ or ‘harshness’ of the smoking experience. Q2s, 3 and 4 (M17R, M14R and M15R), for example, illustrate the case as follows:

TT: But why...why Lambert and Butler. What’s...what’s kind of...what’s the thing about Lambert and Butler...

Q2: Best fag...

Q3: Not got a clue... They just are...better...

Q2: It's...I dunno...They all taste different...you can tell...

TT: Oh right Ok...Like different how?

Q3: I don't know it's just...

Q2: Smoother, rougher...

Q4: Aye...harsh an' that...

Q3: Stronger like...

Q2: Some can gi'...leave you...bad taste...But Lambert and Butler are just perfect, it's like...heaven...

Q2 and Q3 (M17R and M14R) express their preference for Lambert and Butler in terms of their being simply better in the first instance: *'they just are...better'*, before elaborating via references to the strength of the product and the relative smoothness or harshness of the smoking experience. The account is consistent with that of other regular smokers, with all emphasising the relative strength or smoothness characteristics of their favoured brand and juxtaposing these with the relative weakness or harshness of alternatives. References to the strength of the product in particular were often expressed in terms of perceived nicotine yield, while references to the relative smoothness or harshness of the smoking experience were explicated in terms of constituent product ingredients or the 'quality' of the tobacco. Q8 (F14R), for example, elaborated on her assertion that Richmond were stronger than other brands by explaining that these had: *'enough nicotine to last you about 2 hours, and that's what you need in school'*, while Stirling: *'have nae nicotine in them at all'*. Qs10, 11 and 12 (F15R, F14R and F13R) elaborated on their preferences in similar terms:

TT: [Laughs] And what...what is it you smoke?

Q12: Richmond...

Q11: Richmond...

TT: Richmond, Richmond, Rich...Right, Ok...

Q10: I had a weird phase...nah wait...I had a weird phase of going for Lambert and Butler but...that's...

Q12: I done that and all...

TT: Why is that a weird phase?

- Q11: *My weird phase was Stirling...and then...*
- Q10: *I hate...*
- Q11: *John Players...*
- Q10: *I just got opposite...*
- Q12: *I'll only get JPlayers...er...JPS if like er...got...not enough money...*
- Q10: *John Players are [unintelligible] ...*
- TT: *So what...what is it that's good about....the Richmond...then?*
- Q11: *They're stronger, and they last longer...*
- Q12: *They're stronger and they last you longer like you get mair satisfaction out o' them...*

Qs 10, 11 and 12 (F15R, F14R and F13R) explicate their preference for Richmond in terms of the relative strength of the product, associating this with perceived experiential benefits or 'satisfaction'. The account, as such, is fairly typical, with participants foregrounding the relative strength of their favoured brands elaborating on this either in terms of experiential benefits or the kind of functional benefits foregrounded by Q8 (F14R). Others elaborated on these perceived benefits through juxtaposition, with P1 (M16R), for example, elaborating on his preference for Mayfair to observe that: *'If I smoke another fag I dinnae...see I just feel...like lightheaded and that. I dinnae like it'*, or elaborating on the experiential benefits associated with their favoured brands in more prosaic terms. Q2 (M17R), for example, illustrates the case as follows: *'Some can gi'...leave you...bad taste...But Lambert and Butler are just perfect. It's like...Heaven...'*.

6.4.2 Non-product related attributes

6.4.2.1 Price

Price was represented as a factor influencing cigarette brand preferences in a number of contexts. Experimental and non-smokers suggested ostensibly underage young people would ordinarily ask for the 'cheapest' brand. Regular smokers, by contrast, represented themselves as more 'discerning' in this context, with only Q7 (M17R) expressing a preference for Windsor explicitly on the basis that: *'It's cheaper than*

the other ones'. Most scrupulously avoided 'discount' brands, expressing their aversion variously in terms of the identified 'dimensions'. Q23 (M15Ex), for example, describes Windsor Blue – a discount brand – as follows:

Q23: I've tried a...lots of fags. Like Winster Blue...Windsor Blue they are the worst fags, they feel like...you're breathing in like tiny wee pins or something 'cos it pure rips your throat... There again, people started smoking with they fags, and like...they dinnae like the fags...but like the dearer the fags, the less...crap they've got in them...Well that's what I've got told anyway...

TT: Aha. So what...what are the good ones then do you think, the sort of...

Q23: I'd say like Lambert and Butler, Regal...Lucky Strike like and no...none of my pals smoke Lucky Strike but my cousin smokes them, and like...She used to like give me some and all of that...And then...Like they're dear, and they're nice fags, but like...Winster Blues and Stirling...like I couldnae smoke Stirling...they were like horrible...

Consistent with the majority of more 'experienced' regular smokers, Q23 (M15Ex) moves beyond the approximation of 'better' and 'worse' brands to articulate his aversion to Windsor Blue in terms of their relative asperity in the first instance:

'they're the worst fags...feel like you're breathing in like tiny wee pins or something', before locating these on a 'quality' continuum according to which: 'the dearer the fags, the less crap they've got in them'. Participants foregrounding this terminology invariably favoured 'dear' over 'cheap' brands, with P12 (F16R), for example, opining that: 'Nobody buys Stirling because that's 'hobo-fied'...No one brings out their Stirling or their Pall Mall, no one'.

'Discount' brands were located at the 'cheap' end of the continuum, with illicit or counterfeit product – available in community P for around a half the standard retail cost – located at its negative extreme. This was also communicated variously in terms of the identified 'dimensions', with participants positing varying iterations of P3 and 21's (F15R and M14R) assessment that illicit product: *'tastes like camel shite'*. The ostensible 'benefit' of the cost saving associated with illicit product, as such, is clearly outweighed by the associated stigma. As P1 (M16R) observes, aside from his objections to the taste, which he described as a 'disgrace': *'it's embarrassing too: "I just got a twenty deck for three quid" or whatever: "So what're you telling me for?"'*

Where the distinction in ‘quality’ between ‘cheap’ and ‘dear’ brands was framed in terms of constituent ‘ingredients’, for example in terms of the relative ‘potency’ or nicotine yield of a given brand, illicit or counterfeit product was represented as straightforwardly ‘adulterated’. Q15 (M13T) opined it: *‘might have smack and crack in it’*, and P13 and 14 (M16R and M17R) suggested purveyors of illicit product: *‘spike it... ‘cos that’s what they’re like around here’*. Ps 21, 22 and 23 (M14R, M13R and M14R) similarly opined: *‘they go about the streets picking up all the rubbish, and then put some like tobaccie and that in it, so it’s basically ground stuff and tobaccie’*.

To paraphrase Q23 (M15Ex), then, the representation of price as a proxy for product quality was ‘extended’ in discussion around illicit tobacco to encompass not only the ‘level’ but also the ‘nature’ of the ‘crap’ in the cigarettes. Vendors of illicit tobacco were frequently described as ‘junkies’, with Ps13 and 14 (M16R and M17R) articulating their mistrust of people: *‘around here’* explicitly on that basis, and the inevitable conclusion of this creative specification of ostensible alternative constituent ingredients was the association of the notion of ‘quality’ with relative harm, which Ps21, 22 and 23 (M14R, M13R and M14R) supply in elaborating on their own avoidance of illicit product:

P23: *There’s a woman down...the one that he was talking about is like...she sells them like 20...for 3 quid...they’re normally like 10 for three quid...*

P22: *But they’re...really bad...*

P23: *Like...very bad...*

P22: *They’ll gi’ you cancer and that wi’ one draw [Laughs] ...*

P21: *One draw mate [Laughs] ...One draw and then bang...cancer, and that’s [unintelligible] ...*

P22: *Bang. You’re dead [Laughs] ...*

Illicit cigarettes: *‘give you cancer in one draw’* because they’re: *‘really bad’*, and are really bad because their vendors reclaim: *‘ground tobaccie’* to inflate their profits. References to ‘cheap’ or ‘fake’ cigarettes consistently communicated inferior status in terms of both of the ‘taste’ of the product and its constituent ‘ingredients’, with P13 and 14 (M16R and M17R), for example, explicating their aversion to ‘cheap’

product in terms of the fact: *'the tobaccie that's in it is stinking'*, and with P20 (F13R) describing 'fake' product straightforwardly as: *'Eurgh. Just weird...you wouldnae even think you were smoking a fag'*. While this 'negative' end of the 'continuum' was invariably populated by 'fake' and 'discount' brands, however, 'quality' was by no means synonymous with 'premium' in this context.

Indeed, only P12 (F16R) articulated her cigarette brand preferences explicitly in terms of 'elevated' costs, suggesting: *'I have a habit of going for things that are semi-expensive or just expensive'* and describing her predilection for Marlboro Gold and Vogue as: *'a bit of an indulgence'*. Most participants located Lambert and Butler at the 'dear' extreme of the continuum, and avoided buying more expensive brands. Marlboro in particular was subject to extensive criticism elsewhere, with Ps13 and 14 (M16R and M17R), for example, describing them as 'weird' and 'foreign', and with P27 and 28 (F13R and F16R) opining: *'they're disgusting'*. P12's (F16R) position therefore merits brief elaboration.

P12 (F16R) had recently started a three month trial at a private school, and had moved to an area she described as: *'semi-posh'*. While: *'everyone'* smoked in her previous school, almost no-one did at her current one, a difference she attributed to socioeconomic factors: describing her previous school as 'deprived' and her current one as 'cultured'. She was acutely aware of the shift in her social environment this had precipitated, and continued to associate primarily with friends from her old school. The anti-smoking stance of peers in her new environment remained a source of conflict: *'Like...you get like some people like this girl, Susannah. She's like very against smoking. Like if she ever sees us smoking, she's like...with the big evils...Just wanna smack her in the face sometimes'*.

P12's (F16R) predilection for semi-expensive or expensive things may therefore be framed in terms of her attempting to straddle these respective social worlds, in terms of her attempting both to communicate her newly acquired 'cultured' status for the benefit of peers, while distancing herself from the association between smoking and 'deprivation' prevailing in her new social environment to facilitate her eventual assimilation. She suggested that she preferred her new school, and hoped to be given a permanent place once her trial expired.

Rather than equating ‘quality’ with ‘premium’, however, most participants reporting regular smoking rather interpolated the range of identified ‘dimensions’ in discussion to express the ‘value’ of their chosen brand. This was particularly evident in discussion involving both regular and ‘experimental’ or non-smokers, in which the former challenged any ‘naïve’ representations of their cigarette brand preferences as mere ‘products’, in turn, of price. Q27 (M13R), for example, refuted Q26’s (M12N) suggestion he would buy: ‘*whatever’s cheapest*’ to assert: ‘*Nah. Whatever they’ve got on offer, eh*’, foregrounding his discernment of ‘value’ over his sensitivity to cost, and Q8 (F14R) interpolates the notion of ‘quality’ in the following to counter an equivalent assertion by Q9 (F13T):

TT: Nah...So what what what is it that makes you...it’s Rich...Richmond Superkings was it, and...Lambert and Butler?

Q8: Well, Richmond Superkings are blue...

Q9: They’re big and they’re cheap...

Q8: Aye they’re like...apart fra’ Stirlings they’re like the cheapest ones, but they’re much better in quality than Stirling... ‘Cos Stirling are disgusting...

TT: Oh right. You’ve tried the Stirling have you...?

Q8: Aye. They’re like so weak. They’re disgusting...aye... Like they’ve nae nicotine in them at all...

The notion of ‘quality’ elevates Richmond over ‘cheap’ cigarettes here and is expressed in terms of the ‘potency’ of the product in the first instance. Stirling are disgusting because they’re ‘weak’, the ‘weakness’ explicated in terms of a relative paucity of nicotine, in terms of constituent ‘ingredients’. Lambert and Butler are subsequently identified as even ‘stronger’, but: ‘*too expensive, so I just get Richmond*’. While acknowledging the ‘correlation’ between price and product quality, then, locating more and less expensive brands along the virtual ‘quality continuum’, Q8’s (F14R) framing of ‘quality’ as synonymous with ‘potency’ serves two additional functions.

The first is to dissolve the dichotomous distinction between ‘cheap’ and ‘dear’ cigarettes to express the ‘value’ of her chosen brand. The interpolation of this subjective dimension enables her to frame the difference in price between Richmond and Lambert and Butler as greater than the difference in strength or product ‘quality’,

while the difference between Richmond and Stirling is less: *'apart fra' Stirlings they're like the cheapest ones, but they're much better in quality than Stirling'*. As such, she refutes Q9's (F13T) suggestion she buys Richmond because: *'they're big and they're cheap'*, representing herself as a 'discriminating' smoker, while simultaneously emphasising the naivety of her companion, who lacks the requisite competencies to sustain her challenge.

6.4.2.2 Packaging

Cigarettes are socially visible badge products, associating users with the cigarette brand imagery, and regular smokers would often communicate their individual product preferences non-verbally via cigarette pack displays in the first instance. Q2 (M14R), for example, entered the room in advance of the interview tucking a cigarette behind his ear, providing an immediate opening: *'What's that behind your ear?'* P22 (M14R) placed his cigarette pack on a table, affording a similar opportunity: *'Is that...Ah Richmond! Ok...That's popular I gather?'* His two companions did the same: *'Aye...that's what I smoke too. Richmond fags'*. Others displayed their packs during the course of interviews. Ps1 and 9 (M16R and F15R), for example, scrutinised theirs in discussion around the introduction of PoS display bans, and P26 (M13R) recovered his from a pocket while his friend was speaking, interjecting to present it with the following assertion: *'That... is all I smoke'*.

In total, 10 of 28 regular smokers performed similar displays in the course of interviews, using the pack either to communicate or to underscore their cigarette brand preference(s). When prompted to elaborate on packaging during the course of discussion, however, few participants acknowledged its role in influencing their cigarette brand choices. Q25 (F15Ex) liked Lambert and Butler: *'cos it's got a nice packet...I like the colour...it's like blueish silver, and my favourite colour's blue...and it's bright, and I like bright blue'*, and P9 (F15R) similarly elaborated on her preference for Lambert and Butler in terms of their being: *'silver'*, objecting to the prospect of a ban on the sale of cigarettes in quantities of less than 20 on the basis this would force her to *'go halfers'* with her cigarette purchases, potentially

depriving her of the opportunity to display her 'silver packet': *'I'll have to go halfers with someone and then like...Oh my god! What's the point in that? Where am I gonna put my fag packet?'*, and objecting to the prospect of generic packaging on the same basis, reciting the phrase: *'I'm keeping my silver packet'* like a mantra during the course of the relevant discussion. P12 (F16R) also suggested she liked her cigarette packet because: *'I like things that are pretty'*.

Only P1 (M16R), however, suggested that he had been motivated to make a purchase specifically on the basis of cigarette pack design. P1 (M16R) smoked Mayfair, but: *'when I walk in the shop I still have a good look about the fags, I dinnae know why, I ken what fag I'm gonna get, I've already asked for the fags but I still like to have a wee look about...see what new fags are out, what the new packets are'*. Once more, Lambert and Butler was the subject of particular attention:

P1: But the thing is...the thing that's catching my eyes is the new Lambert and Butler packets which I quite like...that you push it oot and it slides oot...I bought one packet just for the...packet...I didnae smoke any of the fags, I gave them to my pal...

TT: [Laughs] ...Oh right...

P1: But I just...I put my...I put my Mayfair in them...but I just...I like the packet, you just...it's like...it's the exact same packet but you push the sides in...the fags come out sideways...

TT: Yeah, yeah...

P1: ... and you just pick one out it's awesome...

TT/P1: [Laugh]

P1: I just...I just... I'm just a big kid, I just love things that just amuse me...Just gives me so much amusement...I mean, like on Friday and I came up here...and I could honestly say I just sat in a room, with my iPod on...All night just sitting there...playing with this packet

More often, however, rather than foregrounding packaging as a factor in terms of their cigarette brand preferences or purchasing decisions, participants would highlight the stigma associated with discount or illicit brands. P12 (F16R), for example, insisted that: *'No-one brings out their Stirling or Pall Mall...No-one...'* in social situations, because: *'No-one wants a cigarette from you'*, and the social display of illicit product was similarly ill advised. Q2 (M17R), for example, had a

virtually limitless supply of illicit tobacco from his father, and as a consequence, as Q4 (M15R) reminds him: *'Sometimes you [Q2] get slagged for having a big pouch of 'baccie and that eh'*, while acknowledging that: *'when they run out, they're all like: "Gissa rollie, gissa rollie"'*. The stigma associated with possession of illicit product is illustrated succinctly in the following, in which P1 (M16R) highlights the importance of cigarette packaging in terms of presentation:

TT: Why, why's it embarrassing?

P1: No it's like...it's different if you're like... you're younger 'cos you havenae got that much money, but because I'm getting paid now I'd wouldnae...I wouldnae embarrass myself to go and get three pound fags for a twenty deck if they were fake...I just wouldnae, I wouldnae walk up the street with fake fags..If somebody asked me for a fag and I pulled out a fake fag they'd be like: 'What you doing?' I'm not wanting one of them...

TT: [Laughs]

P1: They'd just be like: 'alright, nae bother...cheers'

The primary importance of cigarette packaging for participants, then, appeared to be this presentational element i.e its role in communicating appropriate tastes to others. While few participants elaborated on their cigarette brand preferences explicitly in terms of packaging, several elaborated on their avoidance of illicit product in related terms. Jin Ling, for example, a popular brand of blackmarket cigarettes, was reported to be widely available in community P. Although participants did not elaborate on the product explicitly in terms of product packaging information, this was clearly a factor in influencing their perceptions. The pack design, for example, resembles that of Camel cigarettes, which may explain a widespread perception among participants that these cigarettes came: *'fra Egypt'*, and taste: *'like camel shite'*.

Participants were also clearly sceptical of other 'foreign' brands, including 'China fags', presumably also Jin Ling, Russian fags, Polish fags, and on one occasion English fags:

P13: I ken. What's up with this Marlboro?

TT: How's...how's Marlboro weird. It's quite normal isn't it...

P14: Dunno. They're just like...fags we've never heard of and we've got them in our country...We want them out our country [Little laugh] ... they're

made in like England or something, we don't want England fags...And Superkings...they're just...the fags are called Superkings, made in England. Oh they're disgusting! They're fake...

P13: Are they?

TT: They're just called Superkings?

P14: [Indicates negative] That's the name of them, but they're...they're Superkings...King Size...

TT: You've tried...fags you think are fake have you?

P22: [Unintelligible]. Might be...

P23: Aye...

Others similarly foregrounded their ability to discriminate fake brands from others through ostensible anomalies in cigarette pack design. While 'foreign' brands were ordinarily equated with fake or counterfeit product, small variations in pack design were also met with scepticism by participants. Qs 2 and 3 (M17R, M14R), for example, suggested they were able to identify illicit or counterfeit product: 'cos the writing's different', with Q2 (M17R) recalling an occasion on which he had seen Lambert and Butler sold in non-standard packaging and: 'I was going to the shops aye: "Here, they're fake". "Nonono they're not fake, we get them from the UK". "Aye, well the ones in the UK have Lambert and Butler wider"', with Q3 (M14R) concurring, broadly: 'Aye, the writing's like either bigger or something...and like the fil...the orangey bits...bigger or something...Fuck knows...?'.

The salient point is that while participants did not ordinarily identify packaging as a factor influencing their cigarette brand preferences this visual dimension was nevertheless important in terms of presentation, given the visibility of cigarette packaging in a number of social contexts, and in terms of familiarity, with 'foreign' brands or anomalies in pack design associated with fake or illicit product. This represents another of the key areas in which the accounts of participants diverged clearly by gender, with girls acknowledging more explicitly the role of cigarette packaging in terms of communicating a 'feminine' identity, for example via references to aesthetic appeal or a favourite and favourable colour.

6.4.2.3 User and usage imagery

User and usage imagery refers to the range of characteristics associated with a typical user of a given brand, and the primary contexts with which use of the brand is associated. One of the issues frequently cited in relation to the depiction of smoking related imagery in film, for example, is the identification of a cigarette brand or the act of smoking generically with individuals or contexts which may be appealing to young people. While participants were not explicitly prompted to discuss user and usage related imagery, typical user characteristics were foregrounded primarily in two contexts: in relation to the use of cheap or discount product, and in discussion pertaining to the use of illicit or counterfeit tobacco.

As highlighted in the previous sections, younger children and less experienced ‘experimental’ smokers were aware of a range of cigarette brands, but lacked the requisite smoking related knowledge to discriminate between them. Cheap brands, as such, were represented as the preserve of ‘children’, who lacked the requisite cultural knowledge to frame themselves as more ‘discerning’ smokers, for whom there were no apparent benefits to offset any additional costs, and of ‘junkies’, presumably as a consequence of their inability to express appropriate ‘tastes’ in this context. Illicit and counterfeit product in particular was represented as the exclusive preserve of ‘junkies’. The extent to which this reflects participants location of illicit product at the negative extreme of the price and product quality continuum, or simply reflects the relative popularity of illicit or counterfeit tobacco among the individuals commonly targeted by participants for proxy purchases is difficult to assess. The salient point, however, as demonstrated in a range of contexts, is that different ‘types’ of cigarette were associated with different ‘types’ of user.

While typical user imagery was primarily framed in negative terms, with participants explicating their individual product preferences by juxtaposing their favoured brands with others and highlighting the negative connotations those other brands implied, including in relation to user imagery, several participants also cited the particular value of their favoured brands in communicating appropriate tastes and signalling membership in the context of their social networks. It was apparent, for example, that participants presenting in the same interviews or drawn from the same youth clubs or

services tended to identify similar preferences, and several participants made the social negotiation of what constitutes appropriate tastes explicit. Q1 (F15R), for example, had previously smoked Stirling, before her friends told her: *'Oh! Don't buy Stirling, they're minging'*. So she started buying Mayfairs: *'Cos they all smoke Mayfairs, and got me into Mayfairs'*. Others similarly highlighted the range of cigarettes popular among their friends or people 'uptown'.

6.5 Summary

Discussion pertaining to cigarette branding was foregrounded in all interviews. All participants demonstrated high levels of brand awareness, retrieving a range of brands from memory in the course of relevant discussion, with even experimental and non-smokers able to identify at least two or three cigarette brands. While experimental and non-smokers ordinarily perceived brands to be broadly equivalent, however, aside from variation in terms of price and packaging information, regular smokers invariably articulated clear brand preferences and loyalties, expressing these preferences in terms of a range of identified dimensions or perceived brand characteristics including: price, potency, visual appeal and relative asperity. Favoured brands were represented as strong and smooth, for example, while other variants were described as weak and harsh. Price was represented as a proxy for product quality, including in relation to constituent 'ingredients', with different brands featuring variously on a quality continuum with 'cheap' and illicit product at its negative extreme and participants' favoured brands representing 'value', or the optimal compromise between price and product quality.

Participants' representations of cigarette brands, as such, varied by smoking status. While experimental and non-smokers were often able to elaborate on differences between brands in terms of pricing and packaging information, their accounts lacked a clear affective dimension. In the accounts of regular smokers, by contrast, the range of identified dimensions through which participants explicated their individual product preferences corresponded with a range of product and non-product related attributes, corresponding in turn with a range of perceived functional, experiential

and symbolic benefits. Participants elaborated on the relative strength of their favoured brands, for example, in terms of nicotine yield i.e. in terms of functional benefits, or in terms of the satisfaction associated with smoking their favoured brands relative to others i.e. in terms of experiential benefits. Cigarette brands were also associated with user imagery and perceived symbolic benefits to the extent that brands acknowledged to represent an acceptable compromise between cost and product quality were implicated in participants' representations of themselves and others as more or less 'discerning' smokers, while 'cheap' brands and illicit product was represented as the preserve of younger children who lacked the requisite cultural competencies to discriminate appropriately between brands, and 'junkies'.

7 Participant's views on regulation

This chapter examines participants' views and perspectives on the increase in the minimum age of sale and other policies introduced under the tobacco and Primary Medical Services (Scotland Act) 2010. The first section focusses on the perceived impact of the increase in the age of sale, and participants diverse views on regulation in this context. The second focusses on Police powers to confiscate cigarettes and other tobacco products from under 18 year olds, while the third considers participants' views and perspectives on the ban on PoS cigarette displays.

7.1 The increase in the minimum age of sale

Discussion pertaining to the increase in the minimum age of sale was foregrounded in all interviews. Participants consistently identified 18 years as the prevailing age of sale, and most were aware that it had previously been 16. While some experimental smokers volunteered an opinion it might be 21 in the first instance, these were swiftly disillusioned by their peers. Given that the increase in the age of sale was discussed during familiarisation visits by the researcher, and that the display of statutory notices at the PoS has been mandated since the early 1990s, this is clearly unremarkable. As discussed in Chapter 5, most participants had also experienced repeat age verification requests and sales refusals, rendering their awareness of the legislation somewhat less surprising still.

Despite the very high reported frequency of sales refusals, however, cigarette access was not represented as problematic. Participants reportedly had recourse to a range of alternative sources of tobacco where retail access was problematised, and employed a range of access strategies in circumventing sales restrictions. Indeed, even the never smokers in the cohort elaborated on sales laws primarily in terms of their straightforward circumvention. Qs 18, 19, 21 and 26 (M13N, M12N, M13N and M12N), for example, mentioned a retailer selling cigarettes to underage customers for a premium, and Q16 (M14N) identified another consistently supplying 'underagers'. P11 (F16N) made retail purchases herself, and aligns herself with the regular smokers in the cohort in representing herself as 'looking older':

TT: Right...And what do you guys think, about this... 'cos you know how old you have to be to buy cigarettes...

P11: Eighteen...

TT: Yeah. And do you know how old it used to be?

P11: No...

TT: Err...well up to 2007 it was sixteen...so you could buy cigarettes at sixteen...

P11: Oh aye that's right because...in 2007 my auntie was ill and she'd send me to the shops, and I was only 13...

TT: Right...

P11: I looked so much older and she was ill and she couldn't move 'cos she was pregnant and stuff. She was like: 'Can you go down the road and just try', 'cos like they all know my family. So I went in and they knew my dad, and then I just went in and asked for them, and they were like: 'What age are you?' I was like: 'Sixteen' and they were like: 'Ok'. And then they gave me them, so...Aye, that sounds about right, and then that year that's when they changed the law...

P11 (F16R) claims to have bought cigarettes for her aunt from the age of 13, and continued to buy cigarettes for friends, despite having: *'never even tried a draw'* herself. This claim was corroborated by P10 (F16O), who also credited her friend with dissuading her from smoking at the 'Hawthorns' during lunch: *'I used to...like before I mucked around with [P11] I used to go down and stand with everybody else or whatever, 'cos that's... 'cos my best friend obviously smoked. But since I've been with [P11]...no, we don't go down'*. The salient point is that questions pertaining to the perceived impact of the legislation were effectively pre-empted during the course of interviews: even the never-smokers in the cohort, while disassociating themselves from their pro-smoking peers, represented access as straightforward.

The impact of the increase in the age of sale was therefore perceived to be minimal. Where relevant questions were explicitly posed: *'Do you think it's difficult to get hold of cigarettes?'* *'Do you think raising the age has made a difference?'* participants responded in the negative, positing iterations of P28's (F16R) perception that: *'it's easy to get fags'* and explicating the assertion via references to the range of alternative sources identified in Chapter 5, including: (i) sourcing cigarettes from friends and family; (ii) making purchases through intermediaries, and; (iii) targeting

individuals and premises identified as amenable to supplying ‘underagers’. In the following account, P1 (M16R) provides a particularly prosaic illustration both of the tendency to elaborate in terms of a range of ostensible alternatives to retail purchases and the perceived futility of regulation in this context:

P1: They’ll always try and get people under the age of eighteen to stop smoking but it’ll never happen...It’ll never...whatever they do they’ll never...’cos...there’s always a way...of them getting fags...like walking out their house and seeing a packet of fags, their mums: ‘I’ll take one like that’...They’re always gonna find a way to get fags, so whatever they do...

TT: Yeah...no that’s very...Could I just ask what ways you found?

P1: Ask...Just walk down the street...You always got a house to go to...you can go to anyone: ‘what’s the best way of getting fags?’ They’ll always tell you a good shop to get...There’s always good...there’s good and bad shops...Like [Community P] Mall and the [Mace?] are bad shops...well, nah: [Community P] Mall is the worst shop but any other shop’s quite good ‘cos you...that’s where...like the main people go in for you...you just...we just ask people...: ‘How is it I’m best getting fags’...err...: ‘If you go up the road...to that shop up there there’s a load of people at that’ll go in for you’...: ‘Ah. Nae bother. Cheers mate’...

TT: Right rightrightright...

P1: Just walk down the street... ‘Ken anywhere I can get cheap fags?’...: ‘Aye. Eh..That house, round the corner, up the street and blah blah blah’... ‘They sell fags...just go to the door...say you ken me blah blah blah just ask for fags they’ll sell you blah blah blah’

P1 (M16R) highlights the ready availability of cigarettes from parents, ‘good shops’, via ‘fag houses’ and proxy purchases to suggest: *‘They’ll always try and get people under the age of 18 to stop smoking, but it’ll never happen’*. The account is fairly typical, with participants consistently associating the increase in the age of sale straightforwardly with governmental efforts to curtail youth smoking while problematising the presenting rationale: *‘It’ll never happen, ‘cos there’s always a way of them getting fags’*. This pattern was repeated in each of the 26 interviews (including pilots), with participants either interjecting the range of identified alternatives in the course of discussion: *‘Steal them off your ma!’ ‘Get people to go in for you!’*, or furnishing more prosaic accounts consistent with P1’s (M16R). Only Q2 (M17R) sounded a cautious note of optimism in this context, suggesting that the

legislation may have impacted on smoking initiation because: *'if I was coming up to sixteen years old and it was still legal I would want to do it...I would want to buy a packet of fags and come in the [Public House] and go: "Wahaaaay wankers!"'*

More frequently, however, participants suggested the reverse: that the increase in the minimum age of sale may rather have exacerbated youth smoking. Q17 (M13T), for example, opined that: *'making it 18 like makes people want to do it 'cos it's more like "rebel"'*, and Q5 (M15T) concurred with this assessment, drawing an analogy with the use of mobile telephones in school: *'it's like...if you're no' allowed to use your 'phone in school...people are just mair likely to do it'*. P10 and 11 (F16O and F16N) similarly suggested that: *'when there's a rule, and a law, people are never going to go by it'*, and drew a comparable analogy: *'It's the same with school [...] Like Miss [Name], she tried to lay the law down, and she got that put right back in her face...and then Mr [Name] came... it quiet down. Now he's trying to reinforce them and he's gonna get the same thing done to him and all'*.

The impression of straightforward cigarette availability these accounts engender, however, may be misleading. While most participants presented a range of alternatives to retail purchases in the course of discussion pertaining to the increase in the age of sale, few identified these as a 'legitimate' alternative recourse in elaborating on their 'usual' sources of tobacco. Cigarettes reported to be available for sale in schools, for example, were considered prohibitively expensive, and those available for sale in 'fag houses' were considered to be 'fake' or inferior product and were scrupulously avoided. While most participants shared cigarettes with friends, the expectation of reciprocation was encoded in the act of giving, and only 'experimental' smokers were able to rely on these as a primary source of cigarettes.

The salient point, then, is that most participants sourced cigarettes from shops. Regular smokers, for example, almost invariably made regular retail cigarette purchases, with the single exception of Q2 (M17R) who claimed to have a regular supply of illicit Hand Rolling Tobacco (HRT) from his father. Despite this, however, only three participants claimed to be able to make these without either recruiting intermediaries or 'targeting' particular premises. Most participants were ultimately deterred from attempting 'indiscriminate' retail purchases by the embarrassment

associated with sales refusals, or simply avoided attempting them on the basis of an expectation they would be refused a sale. Further, while most regular smokers claimed to make ‘targeted’ retail purchases on occasion, only two identified these as a ‘usual’ source of cigarettes. To be explicit: most participants either chose or were compelled to make proxy cigarette purchases through intermediaries.

There is a clear discrepancy, then, between the impression engendered by participants’ representations of their ‘ease of cigarette access’ in the context of discussion around the increase in the age of sale, and that inferred from discussion pertaining to their ‘usual’ cigarette sources. Despite the identification of a broad range of ‘alternatives’ to retail purchases, participants were clearly both overwhelmingly ‘reliant’ on these and overwhelmingly compelled to invest significant efforts in making them. While neither ‘targeting’ retailers nor recruiting intermediaries was represented as problematic, the level of investment and uncertainty associated with each is clearly greater than that associated with a straightforward cigarette purchase. An ‘amenable’ retailer may not be conveniently located, for example, or a prospective proxy purchaser may refuse to make a purchase.

To an extent, this ‘discrepancy’ results from the reframing of what are described in Chapter 5 as targeted and proxy purchases as ostensible alternatives to retail purchases as opposed to a necessary recourse in an environment in which most tobacco retailers refused to sell cigarettes to most participants most of the time. This reframing, in turn, results in part from the overlap between discussion pertaining to the perceived ease of cigarette access and the ostensible impact of the legislation in interviews: ‘*Do you think it’s difficult to get hold of cigarettes?*’ ‘*Do you think raising the age of sale has made a difference?*’ Further, only P13 and 14 (M16R and M17R) claimed to have made purchases both before and after the enactment of the legislation, with most participants extrapolating the ‘impact’ of the legislation from their representations of the perceived ease of cigarette access. This lack of first-hand experience was anticipated in the selection of the relevant age group.

While the clear majority of participants suggested that the increase in the age of sale was unlikely to impact on cigarette access and therefore unlikely to curtail youth

smoking, individual attitudes toward the legislation varied by age and smoking status. Experimental and non-smokers, for example, were broadly in favour of regulating youth access to tobacco, positing iterations of Q16's (M14N) expression of support for governmental intervention on the basis: *'lots of people are dying 'cos of the fags'*. This was either made explicit or encoded in the more ambivalent assertion smoking is straightforwardly *'bad'* or *'wrong'*. Qs 20, 21 and 22 (M13T, M13N, M12Ex), for example, illustrate the case as follows:

TT: What do you think...about the...the kind of smoking age being put up to 18, is that...

Q20: Well, it should be put up to 21 and like...naeone under 18, no matter any circumstances, shouldn't...be sold it...

TT: [Laughs] Right that sounds very...

Q20: It's a bad thing...

TT: Right. So you think it's more serious than drinking then, is that what you're saying?

Q22: Yep.

Q20: Yep. Sure is.

The account is fairly typical, with experimental and non-smokers often elaborating on their support for regulation via references to the perceived health impacts of smoking. Q17 (M13T), for example, opined tobacco use is: *'wrecking lives'*, and had never been tempted to progress beyond occasional experimentation because of: *'the damage it can do to you [...] just knowing the health effects'*. Q19 (M12N) concurred, referring to cigarettes as: *'stick[s] of death'* and suggesting the minimum age of sale should be increased to 20, or to: *'like seventy...nine, eighty... 'cos they're gonna die anyday'*. Q15 (M13T) was similarly emphatic in this context, equating smoking with *'self-harm'* and insisting cigarettes should never have been made available for sale in the first place, with P24 (M16T) similarly opining: *'I dinnae think anybody should get fags. I think all the fags should just get ripped up in the world so naebody can have them to be truthful. Nae drugs... nothing... just pure'*.

The notion of purity in particular is suggestive of a moral discourse in this context, and P24 (M16T) was among the minority of experimental and never-smokers expressing support for regulation on the basis smoking is straightforwardly *'bad'* or

'wrong'. The impression is compounded by the number of experimental and non-smokers referring to the act of smoking as: *'disgusting'*, for example, and Q18 (M13N) in particular employed overtly pejorative terminology in associating the actor with the act of smoking, opining that: *'people smoke, and they end up turning junkies'*. Participants were therefore prompted to clarify: *'Why is smoking bad?'* *How is it disgusting?'* This merely elicited elaboration in terms of the perceived health impact of smoking, however, other than from Q20 (M13T), who maintained that 'underage' smoking is 'bad' because: *'it's underage...you shouldnae be doing it... 'cos it's underage'*.

While Q20 (M13T) represents the only participant to make this circular reasoning explicit, others failed to address the tension between their expressions of support for regulation on the one hand and their evident scepticism in terms of its utility on the other. While the positions are not irreconcilable, the elaboration on health impacts is rendered incidental in these contexts: participants did not express support for regulation on the basis that increasing the age of sale may prevent young people: *'wrecking their lives'* and ultimately: *'dying 'cos of the fags'*, but rather on the basis of variations of the ethic derived from Q20's (M13T) circular logic, according to which regulation is good because smoking is bad and vice versa. It is also likely that the stance adopted by experimental and non-smokers was influenced by a motivation to furnish the 'requisite' responses in these contexts.

All participants had been made aware of the purpose of the research, for example, and several appeared to have misunderstood the role of the researcher. P28 (F16R), for example, insisted: *'you need to get them to change the law so you can buy fags when you're 16'*, and P14 (M17R) whispered to his friend that the minimum age of sale had been increased: *'because of him'*. The recruitment of participants from health services will also presumably have affected proceedings to an extent, and one youth club convenor in particular persisted in discussing what she described as a *'smoking sensation'* consultation with participants. This may have contributed to the sense of contrition in the accounts of some experimental smokers describing their first-time smoking related experiences. Q13 (M13T), for example, had been: *'out wi'*

...teenagers, and then...like we were just mucking about...and then one o' them offered me a draw...and I'm stupid enough to take it'.

This does not suggest that experimental and non-smokers were necessarily more complaisant than their regular smoking peers, but presumably rather less heavily invested in the discussion, and more able to exercise flexibility in relation to their position without compromising their beliefs. As Q17, 18 and 19 (M13T, M13N and M12N) observe, youth smoking and preventive policy is of limited interest to the non-smoker: *'It's a thing you don't think about basically' / 'If you don't care about it you won't think about it' / 'It's like it doesnae bother you'*. Participants' expressions of support for regulation in this context, then, may equally be framed as expressions of relative indifference, with Qs 20, 21 and 22 (M13T, M13N, M12Ex), for example, illustrating the case as follows: *'you can have tobacco, but we like a drink'*:

TT: Right. So you think it's more serious than drinking then, is that what you're saying?

Q22: Yep.

Q20: Yep. Sure is.

TT: But if people get drunk they can get quite silly can't they. Put themselves at risk...[Laughs] A little grin of recognition there I think... So what's worse about smoking?

Q20: It's just bad for your health. I ken alcohol is, but...Alcohol's nice...

Regular smokers, by contrast, were overwhelmingly strongly opposed to regulation, positing iterations of P8's assertion: *'I think it's terrible they've put the age up'* and explicating their position through assertions of their right to self-determination. P1 (M16R), for example, insisted: *'it's up to me if I want to smoke [...] If wee laddies are wanting to smoke it's up to them'*. Smoking was represented as an individual choice in these contexts, with the increase in the age of sale representing unwelcome governmental interference. Qs 10 11 and 12 (F15R, F14R and F13R), for example, illustrate the case as follows:

TT: What about though, 'cos the...Guys! The thing I'm...I'm looking at is...is this...increase in the age of sale. 'Cos it was 16 wasn't it...that you had to be to buy cigarettes. Now it's 18...

Q12: I'm getting really annoyed 'cos...

- Q10: *And it's really not affecting us...*
- Q12: *By the time you're 18 it'll be like 40 it'll be like...*
- Q10: *I don't understand how you're allowed to go to war, and then...you're allowed to...kill yourself...fair enough, not kill yourself but...put your life at risk for absolutely nowt...*
- Q10: *But for...at the age o' 16 but you cannae buy fags and you cannae vote...*
- Q11: *Tell you something [unintelligible] you only live life once, so what's why we just like do whatever we want...*
- Q12: *Why can you not just fuck it up?*
- Q11: *Exactly...[unintelligible] I...life turned out...*
- Q12: *I'd rather fuck my life up than have it perfect and then die...*

Girls in particular also elaborated on their opposition to regulation in terms of relative risks. Ps8-11 (F15R, F17R, F16O and F16N), for example, like Qs 10- 12 (F15R, F14R and F13R) foregrounded a sense of discrepancy between the minimum age of sale of tobacco and the legal age of consent for sexual and other activities, and P10 and 11 (F16O and F16N) present a compelling case as follows:

- P11: *Sixteen...Tell you what else I think is really stupid right...Cigarettes and alcohol, right...You're not legally allowed to buy both...either of them, 'till you're eighteen, right...*
- P10: *But you're allowed to drink at sixteen...*
- P11: *No no no no, nothing to do with that...Do you...don't you think that those...both of those things are less life changing, than having a child or getting married at the age of sixteen...*
- P10: *Exactly. Marriage is a lot more...*
- P11: *The both of them...they should all be switched around. Alcohol and fags at sixteen...*
- P10: *Sixteen...*
- P11: *Marriage and kids at eighteen...I think that's what they should do...*
- TT: *Yeah you're right...marriage and stuff and having children is a lot...*
- P10: *'Cos marriage and a bairn is more of a commitment...*
- P11: *That's much worse...*

P10: *And is more life changing, than having a drink on a weekend, or having a fag...*

P10: *I think that's stupid right...*

P11: *I think that's really stupid...*

P10: *'Cos at sixteen you're legally allowed...*

P11: *You can get married and then you have to wait [for/three/two] years to have a toast for it...*

P10: *Exactly...*

7.2 Police and confiscation

Discussion pertaining to the increase in the minimum age of sale also frequently stimulated discussion around the discretionary power of the police to seize tobacco products from under 18 year olds. While younger participants would often report avoiding smoking in front of the police, positing iterations of P27's (F13R) strategy: 'when I see a police I chuck my fag away or hide it', most participants reporting regular smoking smoked openly in public spaces, and around a half reported having been challenged by the police as a result. Q1 (F15R), for example, mentioned having been stopped and searched by the police while truanting from school, and P8 and P9 (F17R and F15R) were strongly opposed to the increase in the minimum age of sale, despite experiencing little difficulty sourcing cigarettes from shops themselves, specifically on the following basis:

TT: *If you can...if you can still get hold of cigarettes though, why...why does it matter...what age it is...*

P8: *'Cos...the policemen...like policemen in the street...they're like...some of them can be really fussy about it...*

P9: *They say...And like...they snap your fags and stuff...but other ones are like...they'll go...*

TT: *Really?*

P8: *Aye. You get some of the ones that come over and say: 'What age are you', you're like: 'Seventeen', and they're like: 'You shouldn't be smoking, it's 18' Snap. It's like: 'What're you doing, I paid for that' [Laughs]...*

P9: *Like the other week yeah, I had just...and we were at my friend's house...we were at her friend's house 'cos...like stuff had happened in his*

house and stuff...and then all the police started coming round and then they checked my bag, and they were like: 'Have you got swag' I was like: 'Have I got whaaat'...

TT/P8: [Laugh]

P9: [Laughs] And then...they like...I had juice...and then they started sniffing my juice and I was like: 'I don't drink'... I was like: 'I don't drink' and then they were like: 'Right', and then looked at my fag packet, and I was like: 'What?' [Laughs]...And nobody said anything to me, I was like...

P8: Ah we do have the picky police officers who go: 'What age are you'. If you say like you're under 16 or you're under 18 or something they go: 'You shouldn't be smoking' [Laughs]...but they've been told off...we've been...

P9: Like if I was a Policeman, if I was a policeman I'd let the underagers drink and smoke...

P8: No you wouldnae, you woudnae be [Laughs]...We've been told by a few policemen that it's sixteen to smoke but eighteen to buy them...

The account is fairly typical, with older and more regular smokers in particular drawing attention to what they perceived to be a discrepancy between what was almost invariably represented as the 'legal' smoking age at 16 years and the minimum age of sale: *'We've been told that it's 16 to smoke and 18 to buy them'*. P1 (M16R), for example, expressed clear frustration in this context, suggesting: *'I think it's a joke, it's sick. I can walk down the street now, Police could search me, wouldnae take my fags off me 'cos I'm sixteen, but I couldnae walk into a shop and buy fags, I'm not 18! Shouldnae be able to buy them, shouldnae be allowed to smoke them, that's my opinion, and that's coming from a smoker'*. On occasion, these frustrations manifested themselves in overt displays of aggression.

P8 (F17R), for example, claimed to have been: *'put in the cells for it, for trying to attack the policeman for taking my fags'*, and Mr [Name] at school A, who had implemented a policy of asking the police to attend the 'Hawthorns' during break and lunch to confiscate tobacco from pupils had clearly caused some resentment among participants. P10 and P11 (F16O and F16N), for example, were both adamant that he would have the policy: *'put right back in his face'*, despite neither being personally affected, and P28 (F16R) in particular had acquired something of a reputation among her peers after her cigarettes were confiscated: *'in the hawthorns one day right. I just bought 20 fags, I went raging allright...she snapped my*

fags...she actually went in my bag'. Her ire was also recounted by P22 (M14R) in an earlier interview, who recalled that: *'She was going mental. She was going to batter the police guy and everything. She was mental'*.

P22 (P13R) presented in a triadic interview with P22 (P14R) and P23 (P14R), and was one of a handful of participants to foreground the discretionary nature of police powers of confiscation. P21 (M14R), for example, recalled that: *'I was in a stair, and this police guy came to chuck me out...just like...I was smoking right in front of him, he never said a thing. Went: "As long as you put that somewhere that's no' lying on the ground when you're finished wi' it I'm no bothered. It's your own life". I was like: "Cool". Smoked it'*. P22 (M13R) similarly mentioned an incident in which they had been talking with the police: *'And all of us were smoking. Never said nothing to us'*. Participants representations of their experiences with the Police were clearly also more favourable in these contexts, with P21, P22 and P23 (M14R, M123R and M14R), for example, acknowledging that: *'some of them're alright'* while suggesting the majority are: *'just a bunch of pricks'*.

7.3 Point of Sale cigarette displays

Discussion pertaining to generic packaging and the prospective ban on PoS displays was foregrounded in all interviews. Experimental and non-smokers were broadly in favour of regulation, positing iterations of a perception that limiting advertising would impact on smoking initiation and cessation rates. Q16 (M14N), for example, expressed support for the PoS display ban on the basis: *'it'll make [people] stop smoking'*, with Q9 (F13T) suggesting the removal of displays would also impact on initiation because: *'that's what like...attracts people to the packets'*. While most participants concurred with this assessment, associating advertising straightforwardly with enhanced product 'attractiveness', regular smokers were more sceptical in terms of the potential for PoS and cigarette-pack advertising to influence their own smoking behaviour. P12 (F16R), for example, illustrates the case as follows:

TT: Er...basically what they're gonna do is take all the colour the packet...they'll leave the horrible warning things on it...and then just plain

writing, 'cos...*The thinking is that...you know these different kind of colours and brands and logos and things...*

P12: *What the fuck...that's pointless...*

TT: *Why...why do you say that?*

P12: *Because...All...It's not gonna make a difference on what people are gonna...whether people are gonna buy cigarettes or not, because...People who smoke, and they're into their brands, yeah...they're already into their brands...Children who're gonna start smoking, yeah...they don't know brands. Well they...they've heard of brands, they know brands, they think...they have a brand, but they don't...right. They're gonna buy whatever's cheapest...*

P12 (F16R) summarises the sentiments of a contingent of regular smokers here. Her expletive is not gratuitous, but rather expressive of a collective outrage at the prospect of plain packaging, particularly among girls. Q12 (F14R), for example, refused even to countenance the introduction of 'under the counter' sales, insisting: *'Nah, that won't even be happening...I'll just be demanding them up on the bloody...thing'*, and P9 (F15R) was similarly resistant to the prospect of the introduction of generic packaging, exclaiming: *'Oh no! The packets are gonna be boring!'* and reciting the mantra: *'I'm keeping my silver packet'* six times in the course of the ensuing discussion. The appeal of non-product related attributes is elaborated in Chapter 6.

More often, however, regular smokers would posit less assertive incarnations of P12's (F16R) evident scepticism in terms of the perceived utility of regulation in this context. P20 (F13R), for example, suggested neither generic packaging nor a ban on PoS advertising would affect her own smoking, because: *'I get them for the fags, not the packet'*, and P22 (M13R) was similarly adamant that: *'you're not wanting the packet, you're wanting what's inside the packet...come on!'*. While regular smokers were often dismissive of the potential for generic packaging or the PoS display ban to influence their smoking, however, expressing a sense of personal 'immunity' from tobacco industry marketing communications, inferring any variation by smoking status on that basis would be disingenuous.

The accounts of regular and 'experimental' smokers were generated in different contexts. Regular smokers generally foregrounded their individual cigarette brand

preferences unprompted, and questions designed to elicit participants' views and perspectives on the PoS display ban and generic packaging were interpolated in this context. P9's (F15R) response to the prospect of generic packaging, for example, followed her identification of: *'my silver packet'* as integral to the subjective appeal of Lambert and Butler, investing the relevant discussion with a degree of personal salience. Experimental and non-smokers, by contrast, did not foreground relevant subject matter spontaneously, rendering their accounts 'co-productions', with the ubiquity of PoS advertising, for example, ordinarily highlighted by the interviewer to facilitate discussion.

Further, most participants associated advertising straightforwardly with enhanced product attractiveness, and several regular smokers also positioned themselves in favour of regulation on that basis. Ps 13 and 14 (M16R and M17R), for example, favoured a total ban on tobacco sales, and P23 (M13R) implicitly concurred with experimental and non-smokers in associating generic packaging with increased cessation rates, or at least reduced consumption: *'Hardly anybody would probably buy them...Nae advertising'*. Rather than focussing on variation by smoking status, then, it is more interesting, recalling P12's (F15R) distinction between 'people' and 'children' in this context, to focus on differences by levels of 'experience'.

The sense of personal 'immunity' from advertising expressed by regular smokers, for example, was not extended to encompass the generalised 'other'. While younger smokers tended to be more persistent in maintaining their scepticism of the potential for regulation to impact on behaviour, P12 (F15R) was not alone among more 'experienced' regular smokers in framing others as more vulnerable to the effects of advertising than herself. P1 (M16R), for example, was sceptical in terms of the PoS display ban impacting on his own smoking: *'cos I ken what I smoke...I ken what fags are...I ken what kind of fags I want'*, but acknowledged that: *'If I was younger...Aye, it would really annoy me'*, because proxy purchases would be problematised by the lack of pricing information and: *'you couldnae just say on the street: "Can you get me the cheapest fags out the shop?"'*

Others suspended their cynicism for the benefit of following generations. Qs 5, 6 and 7 (M15T, M16O and M17R), for example, opined that the display ban would impact:

'no' our generation like, the next generation' and Q8 (F14R) was prepared to engage with the presenting rationale once the first person framing of the question was dissolved. Having ridiculed the pro-regulatory stance of her 'inexperienced' friend: *'you really think it's gonna stop us smoking...Aye!'*, she subsequently acknowledged that a display ban may impact on 'children': *'cos you would...you would only ken it existed if like you'd seem people smoking, or you'd seen like family smoking, and your pals smoking and that. But if you werenae around people that smoked, then you wouldnae ken at all what they were. You would just see them and go...sweeties'*.

Most participants, then, associated cigarette pack advertising with enhanced product 'attractiveness', either spontaneously or following prompting around the prominence of PoS cigarette displays, and 'experimental' and non-smokers in particular expressed support both for the introduction and anticipated efficacy of the legislation in terms of reducing smoking initiation and increasing cessation rates. Regular smokers, by contrast, expressed clear opposition to the introduction of PoS display bans and generic packaging, and were more dismissive in terms of the anticipated efficacy of regulating in this context. Their opposition was not universal, however, and their accounts were rife with contradictions.

The more vociferous expressions of opposition to the legislation, for example, may equally be framed as implied endorsements of its likely efficacy, and even the more credible assertions of personal 'immunity' from advertising were characterised by inconsistencies. P12 (F16R), for example, while dismissing generic packaging as 'pointless', suggesting that: *'it's not gonna change smoking habits'*, continued to acknowledge that: *'it would be like bad for the brands, 'cos it wouldn't have an individuality...it would all just be about the cigarette and the more upper end brand...brands...will sort of lose business'*. P1 (M16R) similarly represents himself as impervious to the PoS display ban in the first instance: *'cos I ken what I smoke, I ken what fags are...I ken what fags I want'*, before both posing and answering the presenting question in the following:

P1: Aye...I dinnae see what...why no'...why have them hidden...I dinnae see the real point in it to be honest wi' you...

TT: No?

P1: Nah...

TT: There was...well what you were just describing was...err...a kind of scene where like...errr...a load of people were looking...at these...

P1: Aye, but...I mean it's...That's got to do with younger kids but it's no' fair on older people that want to go in and...get fags, 'cos...

TT: Fair point, yeah...fair point. So is it you...

P1: I mean if people have been smoking for years...are going in...they're like they cannae...'cos I mean when I walk in the shop I still have a good look about the fags, I dinnae know why, I ken what fag I'm gonna get...I've already asked for the fags but I still like to have a wee look about see what new fags are out...what the new packets are...blah blah blah...dunno why...if I see a...If I see a new packet I'll buy it...If I like the look of a packet I'll buy it...but I willnae smoke them all I'll just keep the packet...

TT: Right, why, why is that then? What is the thing with the packet...what...is it just...

P1: It just amuses me 'cos Im a big...I'm a big kid...

7.4 Summary

Discussion pertaining to the increase in the minimum age of sale, the ban on PoS displays and the prospect of the introduction of generic cigarette packaging was foregrounded in all interviews. Participants' levels of awareness of the minimum age of sale were very high, and most participants were aware that it had previously been 16. However, among the clear majority of participants, securing access to tobacco was not perceived to be problematic. Most participants identified a range of alternative cigarette sources in the course of discussion pertaining to the increase in the minimum age of sale to highlight the perceived futility of regulation in this context. Some also suggested that increasing the minimum age of sale may rather have encouraged youth smoking. The impression of ready cigarette availability participants' accounts engendered in this context, however, may be misleading. None of the ostensible alternatives to retail purchases highlighted by participants in the context of discussion pertaining to the increase in the minimum age of sale were represented as legitimate or practical alternatives to retail or proxy cigarette purchases in discussion pertaining to participants' usual cigarette sources.

Participants' attitudes towards the legislation varied primarily by smoking status. Experimental and non-smokers were broadly in favour of limiting youth access to tobacco, highlighting the deleterious health impact of smoking or foregrounding a quasi-moral discourse according to which regulation is good because smoking is bad and vice versa. Regular smokers, by contrast, were overwhelmingly opposed to regulation, framing smoking as a choice, and foregrounding their right to self-determination. Similar differences were identified in participants' views and perspectives on the ban on PoS displays and in discussion pertaining to generic packaging. Experimental and non-smokers were ordinarily in favour, highlighting the role of cigarette advertising in promoting youth smoking initiation, while regular smokers tended to frame themselves as immune to the effects of PoS or cigarette pack advertising, while acknowledging the potential for advertising restrictions to exert a protective effect on younger children and 'experimental' smokers.

8 Discussion

8.1 Introduction

This thesis has generated insights into the ‘usual’ cigarette access patterns of a small purposively selected sample of young people drawn from two disadvantaged communities in Edinburgh, and considered participants’ representations of their favoured cigarette brands. Chapter 4 explores the way in which the conventional ‘regular’, ‘occasional’ and ‘ever’ youth smoking categories employed in the SDD and SALSUS inadequately reflect the complexities and nuance of the understandings of their smoking behaviour communicated by participants in this study. While participants identifying themselves as smokers smoked at least one cigarette a day, these individuals distinguished themselves from others not merely in terms of their elevated levels of consumption, but rather in terms of a range of smoking related competencies and knowledge. These smoking related competencies, and in particular those pertaining to: (i) the diverse modes of tobacco acquisition identified by participants and; (ii) their individual product preferences, represent the primary focus of this discussion chapter.

Section 8.2 locates participants ‘usual’ cigarette sources in the context of the impressions of young people’s ‘usual’ cigarette sources engendered by the SDD and SALSUS surveys (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012) to consider similarities and differences between the diverse modes of tobacco acquisition identified by participants in this study and the population survey data on youth cigarette access. Similarities and differences between the range of cigarette access strategies identified in this study and those described in other qualitative work on youth cigarette access are also considered in this section. While the range of usual cigarette sources identified by participants were broadly congruent with those employed in the SDD and SALSUS, and the range of cigarette access strategies described by participants in this study have been described in other qualitative work on youth cigarette access, participants definitions of their usual cigarette sources and the clear lack of equivalence between the diverse cigarette sources identified by participants, in particular in terms of volumes, has implications for the interpretation of the ‘usual’ cigarette sources included in the SDD and SALSUS.

Section 8.3 moves beyond the identification of participants' usual cigarette sources to consider how and why these sources were perceived to be important or subjectively meaningful for participants. Berger and Luckman's (1967) theory of social constructionism is used to frame the clear lack of equivalence between the range of usual sources identified by participants in terms of a typology of 'knowers' and 'unknowers' used by participants to frame themselves and others as more or less 'autonomous' smokers. Rather than straightforwardly reflecting participants' relative ease of retail cigarette access, negotiating retail access to tobacco was rather implicated in their presentation of self through the act of smoking.

Section 8.4 explores the social currencies involved in negotiating access to tobacco. While almost all regular smokers relied primarily on retail cigarette sources, almost all were ultimately compelled to mobilise their social capital resources in securing retail cigarette access. This section therefore highlights the false dichotomy between social and retail cigarette sources in the youth access literature.

Section 8.5 locates participants' individual brand preferences in the context of relevant literature on cigarette branding, focussing in particular on the range of dimensions of cigarette brand image incorporated in Keller's (1993) model of customer based brand equity. The very high levels of brand awareness among both smokers and non-smokers in this study is highlighted, and the distinction between brand awareness and brand knowledge is considered in more detail to frame the particular contribution of participants' identification of the perceived characteristics of their favoured brands to research on PoS displays and generic packaging.

Section 8.6 locates the meaning and subjective significance of the diverse range of cigarette sources available to participants in the context of the youth access literature to consider implications for the interpretation of studies reporting on youth smoking and cigarette access following the increase in the minimum age of sale. This section also considers the implications of participants' representations of cigarette brand image in terms of legislative efforts to impact on the perceived 'attractiveness' of cigarettes and other tobacco products for children and young people.

Section 8.7 provides a summary of this discussion chapter, considers the extent to which the aims and objectives of this research have been met, and highlights implications for tobacco control policy, research and practice.

8.2 Participants' usual cigarette sources

One of the primary aims of this study was to describe the usual cigarette sources of 13 and 15 year old young people drawn from two disadvantaged communities in Edinburgh following the increase in the minimum age of sale, and to identify similarities and differences in participants' usual cigarette sources by age, gender, smoking status, and between communities with ostensibly similar socioeconomic profiles. The primary modes of tobacco acquisition identified by participants in this study are detailed in Chapter 5, encompassing retail purchases, proxy purchases and diverse modes of social tobacco acquisition. These modes of acquisition correspond closely with the range of 'usual' cigarette sources included in the SDD and SALSUS (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012). The qualitative methodology employed in this study, however, facilitates a more nuanced examination of these diverse cigarette sources.

Retail cigarette purchases were described by participants in terms of a clear progression from more to less 'targeted' purchasing strategies, with younger participants, and older and more experienced regular smokers recalling earlier, experimental purchasing efforts, either targeting particular retailers identified as amenable to supplying underage customers or elaborating on the range of creative efforts made to identify these retailers, including coercive strategies, dressing 'older' and the imaginative use of props. Older participants and more regular smokers, by contrast, claimed already to have identified retailers from which they were able to make regular cigarette purchases, and some 16 and 17 year old participants suggested they were able to buy cigarettes indiscriminately from retailers throughout the city, while avoiding supermarkets and larger retailers on the basis these were considered more likely to request ID.

Proxy purchases represented the predominating mode of tobacco acquisition among the clear majority of participants, and were described in terms of an inverse progression from less to more ‘targeted’ third party recruitment strategies. Younger participants and individuals recalling earlier ‘experimental’ proxy purchasing efforts described congregating outside shops asking passers-by to make proxy purchases on their behalf. These indiscriminate third party recruitment strategies were associated with very high rates of refusals, with most passers-by either ignoring or refusing the requests. Over time, more experienced regular smokers therefore learned to target particular types of individuals for proxy purchases, describing these variously as ‘chavs’, ‘hobos’, ‘neds’ and most commonly ‘junkies’, often preceded by the diminutive ‘wee’. In these instances, proxy purchasing attempts were almost invariably represented as successful. Some older participants also claimed to have friends or other adults making regular proxy purchases on their behalf, effectively obviating the need for third party recruitment in this context, and resorted to approaching ‘junkies’ only in instances where these ‘amenable others’ were unavailable.

Cigarettes were also perceived to be readily available in diverse social contexts. Participants attending each of the secondary schools in the study communities identified particular social spaces in which young people would congregate to smoke before, during and after school hours, and cigarettes were reported to be readily available for sale in each, with prices ordinarily ranging from 50 pence to £1.50. Social purchases were not popular, however, due in part to what were considered the prohibitive associated costs, and participants therefore more commonly engaged in reciprocal cigarette exchanges, given cigarettes by friends when they were unable to access these by other means and reciprocating when their friends faced similar challenges: where an ‘amenable other’ was unavailable for proxy purchases, for example, or an amenable retailer was indisposed. Participants in Community P also highlighted the ready availability of illicit or counterfeit product via ‘fag houses’, while participants in community Q identified retailers selling cigarettes to underage customers for a premium.

Consistent with the impressions engendered by the surveys, then, participants most commonly sourced cigarettes from shops, either directly or through intermediaries, with most also given cigarettes by friends and with several sourcing cigarettes from family or other people (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012). Variation by age and smoking status was also found to be consistent with that reported in the SDD and SALSUS. Younger participants and less experienced ‘experimental’ or ‘occasional’ smokers – defined in this study as those having tried smoking and smoking less than daily – relied primarily on social sources of tobacco, with some occasional smokers making occasional cigarette purchases for personal consumption or to compensate their friends. Older participants and more habituated ‘regular’ smokers – defined in this study as smoking a cigarette a day or more – relied primarily on commercial cigarette sources, with most making regular cigarette purchases, either directly or through intermediaries, to sustain their higher levels of consumption.

Differences by sex were also congruent with those reported in the SDD and SALSUS (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012). Girls were more likely than boys, for example, to engage in the range of sharing practices described in Chapter 5, including ‘twoosing and threesing’ and ‘going halfers’, consistent with the higher proportion of girls reporting ‘usually’ being given cigarettes in the surveys (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012). Girls were also more likely than boys to make ad hoc requests for cigarettes from ‘random’ individuals or passers-by; from those presumably identified as ‘others’ in the surveys. Differences between communities are not reported in the SDD and SALSUS, and were limited, in terms of usual cigarette sources, to the identification of the availability of illicit or counterfeit product for sale via fag houses in community P but not in community Q.

Findings also resonate with those from other qualitative work on youth cigarette access. The range of purchasing strategies identified by participants, for example, have been described elsewhere, both in the context of the increasingly restrictive retail sales environment precipitated by the increase in the minimum age of sale in the UK (Borland and Amos, 2009, Robinson and Amos, 2010, Donaghy et al., 2013) and following the Synar amendment in the US, which required all states to establish and enforce minimum age laws (DiFranza and Coleman, 2001). DiFranza’s (2001)

study on youth access in communities with strong youth access laws in the US, in particular, identifies a range of purchasing strategies employed by young people in circumventing sales laws remarkably consistent with those identified here, including coercive strategies, dressing older and the imaginative use of props (DiFranza and Coleman, 2001). UK studies report similar findings, with young people investing significant efforts in developing relationships with tobacco retailers, and avoiding supermarkets and larger retailers on the basis of a perception these are more likely to request ID (Donaghy et al., 2013, Robinson and Amos, 2010).

A recurring theme in these studies is the central role of complicit or otherwise amenable tobacco retailers in facilitating youth cigarette access following increased restrictions on retail sales, and the range of strategies employed by young people in identifying these. The utility of developing relationships with retailers in particular is most clearly illustrated in Klonoff et al's (2003) work on test purchases, in which purchase attempts by 15-17 year olds were found to be 5.5 times more likely to be successful following a series of 'familiarisation' visits to tobacco retailers, during which young people made non-tobacco purchases and engaged the retailers in conversation (Landrine and Klonoff, 2003). This study suggests the range of strategies employed by young people in securing retail access to tobacco may have changed relatively little over time. The meaning or particular salience of these cigarette access strategies, however, has not been considered previously

The importance of proxy purchases in facilitating youth cigarette access has also been explored elsewhere (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012, DiFranza and Coleman, 2001, Klonoff et al., 2001, McGee et al., 2002). UK based studies in particular have identified proxy purchases as representing a primary means of negotiating access to tobacco following the increase in the age of sale (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012, Borland and Amos, 2009, Donaghy et al., 2013, Robinson and Amos, 2010). Borland and Amos (2009) found most of the 16 and 17 year olds in their qualitative study in Lothian continued to source cigarettes from shops in 2008 immediately following the increase in the minimum age of sale in 2007, with those experiencing difficulties making 'first hand' purchases recruiting other people to make proxy purchases on their behalf (Borland and Amos, 2009). Robinson and Amos (2010) identified similar

patterns of tobacco acquisition among 12-15 year olds in Birmingham a year later, with regular smokers requiring both a greater number of cigarettes and more regular access to cigarettes than social sources alone could supply (Robinson and Amos, 2010). Robinson and Amos (2010) also highlight a range of strategies employed by young people in recruiting third parties for proxy purchases broadly consistent with those identified in this study, including the avoidance of 'smartly dressed' and 'older' people (Robinson and Amos, 2010).

Donaghy et al (2013) also found that young people targeted 'junkies' or 'jakeys' for proxy purchases. This represents the only other instance in which individuals with substance misuse issues have been identified as being considered particularly amenable to making proxy purchases on behalf of underage young people, including in return for payment (Donaghy et al., 2013). Donaghy et al's (2013) study was undertaken following the ban on proxy purchases under the Tobacco Act 2010, and found that these continued to represent the predominating mode of tobacco acquisition among young people in several other disadvantaged communities in Scotland despite their recent prohibition (Donaghy et al., 2013). While the progression from less to more targeted proxy purchases identified in this study is not explicitly discussed elsewhere, it is implied in the diverse criteria by which young people learn to discriminate between more or less amenable prospective proxy purchasers (Donaghy et al., 2013, Robinson and Amos, 2010, DiFranza and Coleman, 2001): in the learning curve implied in the distinction between 'indiscriminate' proxy purchases and the range of more sophisticated strategies employed by young people in making these including targeting particular individuals and recruiting others to make more regular proxy purchases on their behalf (Robinson and Amos, 2010, Donaghy et al., 2013).

The social sources identified by participants in this study, equally, reflect the 'usual' social sources identified in other qualitative work. Croghan and colleagues' (2003) typology of social sources in particular frames the broad distinction drawn in this study between cigarettes acquired for money, for free, or in anticipation of future reciprocation (Croghan et al., 2003). The availability of cigarettes for sale in schools has been well documented, both in the UK (Turner et al., 2004, Croghan et al., 2003,

Robinson and Amos, 2010, Donaghy et al., 2013), and elsewhere (Forster et al., 2003, Wong et al., 2007), with prices comparable with those reported here (Croghan et al., 2003). Reciprocal cigarette exchanges have also been explored extensively both in terms of their role in facilitating youth cigarette access (Donaghy et al., 2013, Croghan et al., 2003, Turner et al., 2004, Borland and Amos, 2009), and in functioning as an informal social currency in the context of young people's social worlds (Cullen, 2010, Haines et al., 2009, Walsh and Tzelepis, 2007). Cullen's (2010) study on interpersonal cigarette exchanges among girls in particular identifies a range of sharing practices remarkably consistent with those identified here, including the practice of 'twoosing' and 'threesing' cigarettes and going 'halfers' (Cullen, 2010).

In contrast with previous qualitative work on cigarette access, then, which has highlighted for example the availability of cigarettes from ice cream or burger vans (Turner et al., 2004) or via proxy purchases (Borland and Amos, 2009, Robinson and Amos, 2010), contributing incrementally to the development of the range of 'usual' cigarette sources included in the SDD and SALSUS (Black et al., 2009, Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012), the 'usual' cigarette sources identified by participants in this study are remarkable primarily in terms of their consistency. Almost all regular smokers reported 'usually' sourcing cigarettes from shops, either directly or through intermediaries, with almost all experimental and occasional smokers sourcing cigarettes from friends and other people. The diverse 'types' of purchasing identified by participants have also been described elsewhere, with several studies highlighting the range of strategies employed by young people in identifying and targeting amenable tobacco retailers for cigarette purchases, and particular types of individuals for proxy purchases (DiFranza and Coleman, 2001, Robinson and Amos, 2010, Borland and Amos, 2009, Donaghy et al., 2013, Klonoff and Landrine, 2003). Despite these clear consistencies with the existing literature on youth cigarette access, however, there are some key points of divergence that merit further elaboration.

The first concerns participants' definitions of their usual cigarette sources. Chapter 5, for example, highlights that while proxy purchases were consistently identified as the

predominating mode of tobacco acquisition for the clear majority of participants, most regular smokers responded to direct questions around cigarette access with variations of the ostensibly credible assertion: 'I get cigarettes from shops' in the first instance. Even where the distinction between retail and proxy cigarette purchases was made explicit by the interviewer, participants frequently reverted to describing proxy purchases without reference to intermediaries during the course of interviews, suggesting: 'I bought', for example, in place of: 'I asked someone to buy', thereby effectively obfuscating any third party involvement in the process. Participants' understanding of the notion of 'usually' buying cigarettes from shops, as such, appeared to encompass the practice of having others act as agents. Indeed, in most interviews, the notion of proxy purchases constituting a discrete 'mode' of tobacco acquisition was interpolated, often repeatedly, by the interviewer.

This highlights a need to exercise caution in interpreting the impressions of young people's 'usual' cigarette access patterns engendered by the range of usual cigarette sources included in the SDD and SALSUS (Black et al., 2012, Fuller, 2012), in particular following the increase in the minimum age of sale. Young people in Scotland, for example, are likely to have sourced cigarettes from ice cream or burger vans before these were included as a discrete response option in the SALSUS, and the extent to which respondents may have previously interpreted these transactions as representing purchases made from 'sweet shops', 'other people' or from 'other types of shop' is difficult to determine. If the 20% of 13 year olds reporting usually sourcing cigarettes from vans in 2008 (Black et al., 2009), for example, would otherwise have identified these as purchases made from 'sweet shops' or from 'other types of shop', the overall proportion of 13 year olds reporting usually buying cigarettes from shops would effectively have increased following the increase in the minimum age of sale.

This applies equally to the inclusion of a discrete response option for proxy purchases in the SALSUS in 2010. Not only is it impossible to assess the extent to which proxy purchases were effectively conflated with retail purchases before the introduction of the relevant response option, it is also impossible, given the lack of mutual exclusivity between response options in the surveys, to assess the extent to

which those reporting usually making retail cigarette purchases are also reporting usually making proxy purchases. Although it is clearly problematic to make any confident claims in this context on the strength of a small, purposively selected sample, the tendency of participants in this study to conflate retail and proxy purchases suggests the overlap between these two cigarette access categories may be high. If it is negligible, all regular smokers in Scotland sourced cigarettes from shops in 2010, either directly or through intermediaries (Black et al., 2012). If around a half of those reporting usually making proxy purchases in 2010 would have reported usually buying cigarettes from shops in the absence of an alternative response option, rates of retail cigarette would have been comparable to those reported in 2006. If more than a half would otherwise have reported making retail purchases, rates of retail cigarette access among school age children would have increased following the increase in the minimum age of sale (Black et al., 2012, Maxwell et al., 2007).

Participants' understanding of the notion of 'usually' buying cigarettes from shops as encompassing the practice of having others act as agents may also represent a useful means of framing the inverse relationship between age and perceived ease of cigarette access reported in the SDD in 2008 (Fuller, 2009). The proportion of young people experiencing difficulties making retail cigarette purchases has consistently been higher among younger respondents (Fuller, 2012). In 2008, however, immediately following the increase in the minimum age of sale in 2007, the proportion of 15 year olds experiencing difficulties making retail cigarette purchases more than doubled from 18% in 2006 to 39%, while the proportion of 11-13 year olds reporting difficulties declined somewhat to 34% (Fuller, 2009). If the 'difficulties' encountered by young people in attempting retail cigarette purchases include not only sales refusals but also those associated with recruiting third parties for proxy purchases, as implied by DiFranza's (2005) supply side hypothesis, this is clearly more plausible: the overall investment required to buy cigarettes from shops would be likely to increase for those who were previously able to make such purchases directly, but not for those already compelled to make cigarette purchases through third-parties.

The somewhat artificial and arbitrary nature of the usual cigarette sources included in the SDD and SALSUS was highlighted consistently during the course of interviews. Rather than utilise one source or another, participants would rather draw on their extended social networks to access cigarettes. Retail purchases, which would subsequently transpire to be proxy purchases, were often made by friends, parents or older siblings. While transactions involving ‘others’, most commonly ‘junkies’, involved the relatively straightforward exchange of money for tobacco, transactions involving friends and family were more fluid. Regular proxy purchases made by friends or family members, for example, might equally be described as buying cigarettes from shops, as getting ‘someone else’ to buy cigarettes, as buying cigarettes from friends or relatives or being given cigarettes by friends. These transactions were complex, and the transfer of monies did not necessarily correspond immediately with the transfer of tobacco. The social currencies involved in negotiating regular retail cigarette access are discussed in Section 8.4.

The second point worth highlighting in this context is the clear lack of equivalence between the diverse cigarette sources identified by participants, in particular in terms of volumes. Almost all participants reporting regular smoking reported making daily cigarette purchases from shops, either directly or through intermediaries. None relied primarily on social sources of tobacco. While asking friends for cigarettes was represented as a legitimate recourse where participants were unable to access cigarettes by other means, social sources were not represented as a viable alternative to retail or proxy cigarette purchases. Consistent with findings from Robinson and Amos’ (2010) study, regular smokers required both a greater number of cigarettes and more regular access to cigarettes than social sources alone could supply. Cigarettes were offered freely to experimental and non-smokers: these instances aside, the prospect of imminent reciprocation was implied both in the act of asking for and giving others cigarettes, and those who failed to meet their mutual obligations in this context were swiftly excluded from reciprocal arrangements. This has further implications in terms of the interpretation of the range of usual cigarette sources included in the surveys.

Neither the SDD nor SALSUS address the volume of cigarettes acquired from each 'usual' source of cigarettes. In Scotland in 2010, for example, just over a half (55%) of all 15 year old regular smokers reported 'usually' making proxy purchases, just over a half (54%) reported 'usually' making retail purchases and just under a half (47%) reported 'usually' being given cigarettes by friends (Black et al., 2012). As such, there a clear overlap between these cigarette access categories, and assuming that the prospect of fairly immediate reciprocation is encoded in the act of giving it is likely that most if not all those reporting 'usually' being given cigarettes by friends are also buying cigarettes from shops to meet their mutual obligations. If an individual is reliant on a fellow pupil making purchases on their behalf, they may source cigarettes from friends on the way to school, walk to the shops to make proxy purchases during lunch and give cigarettes to their friends on the way home. As such, both friends and proxy purchases would represent a usual source of cigarettes, with the latter mode of acquisition accounting for 100% of their overall consumption.

Cigarettes acquired from social sources are also likely to be offered individually, while cigarettes are ordinarily purchased in quantities of 20 cigarettes (Fuller, 2012). A regular smoker given cigarettes by friends on a daily basis during school and buying a packet of twenty cigarettes every second week could therefore accurately describe their friends as a 'usual' source of cigarettes, while their cigarette purchases would account for at least two thirds of their overall consumption.

While neither the SDD or SALSUS report on the availability of illicit or counterfeit tobacco, surveys and other qualitative work undertaken in the north of England suggest illicit and counterfeit tobacco is both readily available and commonly accessed by underage young people (Crossfield et al., 2010, Lewis and Russell, 2013, Hughes et al., 2011). Despite Wiltshire et al's (2001) identification of very positive perceptions of illicit tobacco among adults in Edinburgh, findings from this study resonate more clearly with Robinson and Amos (2010) and Donaghy et al's (2013) work on cigarette access among young people in Birmingham and Scotland. Both studies found that while illicit tobacco was perceived to be readily available from 'fag houses' in several communities, these sources were not routinely accessed by young people (Robinson and Amos, 2010, Donaghy et al., 2013). The reasons

why these were avoided, however, have not been considered previously, beyond allusions to possible concerns in relation to the presentation of self (Donaghy et al., 2013).

This study, as such, generates a more nuanced understanding of the range of cigarette sources identified by young people in the SDD and SALSUS and explored in more detail in a range of qualitative work on youth cigarette access. The clear overlap between the diverse range of sources routinely accessed by young people is made explicit here, and the lack of equivalence between these sources is highlighted, in particular in terms of the volume of cigarettes acquired from each. While Robinson and Amos (2010) in particular also highlight the more limited availability of cigarettes from social sources among regular smokers, this study discriminates more explicitly between the range of ‘available’ sources and those routinely accessed by participants. This is discussed in more detail in section 8.3.

The point merits elaboration specifically in terms of a tendency in the literature to present social sources of tobacco as ostensible alternatives to retail purchases. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 2 in summarising key points from commentary on the effectiveness of youth access interventions in the US. Debate surrounded the extent to which evidence for an increasing reliance on social sources of tobacco among young people in jurisdictions where retail cigarette access was curtailed represented evidence for or against the utility of youth access interventions. On the one hand, commentators framed social sources as straightforward alternatives to retail purchases, citing evidence for increased social market activity in areas where retail access was curtailed to assert that youth access interventions do not impact on youth smoking (Glantz, 2002, Ling et al., 2002). Others argued that a relative increase in social tobacco acquisition is inevitable where youth access programmes have curtailed retail cigarette availability (DiFranza, 2003), highlighting the interrelationship between social and commercial sources of tobacco, between retail cigarette access and social market supply.

The clear lack of any perceived equivalence between the diverse sources identified by participants in this study is illustrated most succinctly in terms of the distinction between the range of sources identified and those routinely accessed by participants.

As discussed in Chapter 7, participants reporting regular smoking routinely interpolated a range of ostensible alternative sources in the course of discussion pertaining to the increase in the minimum age of sale to highlight the perceived futility of legislating in this context. However, while taking cigarettes from parents, for example, was routinely identified as an ostensible alternative to cigarette purchases in the course of these discussions, none of those identifying themselves as regular smokers ‘took’ cigarettes from their parents: ‘taking’ cigarettes without the acknowledgement implied by being given them by family members was considered the exclusive preserve of younger or inexperienced smokers. Consistent with Berger and Luckman’s (1969) thesis on informal rules set for role performers, this knowledge was universally applied. Self-identification with the role of the autonomous smoker effectively obviated cigarettes taken from parents as an ostensible ‘alternative’ to retail purchases.

This applies equally in the case of illicit or counterfeit tobacco. While the majority of participants in this study highlighted the ready availability of illicit or counterfeit tobacco either via ‘fag houses’ in Community P or newsagents in Community Q, consistent with a number of recent studies highlighting the availability of illicit tobacco in localities in the north of England (Lewis and Russell, 2013, Crossfield et al., 2010, Hughes et al., 2011), none of the participants in this study acquired cigarettes from these. The salient issue is not simply ‘availability’, as such, but rather credibility: firstly, because the acknowledged ease of access to illicit or counterfeit tobacco renders counterfeit product the preserve of younger and inexperienced smokers lacking the requisite social and cultural capital resources to secure regular access to tobacco through legitimate means, and secondly because acquiring the language to discriminate between brands and developing appropriate ‘tastes’ was a prerequisite for the embodiment of the role of the ‘discriminating’ smoker. This will be considered in more detail in Section 8.5.

The salient point is that these clear qualitative differences between the diverse cigarette sources available to young people are encoded throughout the literature, but seldom made explicit. Differences in the usual cigarette access patterns of regular and occasional smokers, for example, are consistently identified in surveys, but

infrequently explored beyond allusions to corresponding differences in the perceived ease of cigarette access by smoking status, the inference being that young smokers become more practiced and resourceful at negotiating access to tobacco over time, and establish access through a greater number of potential cigarette sources. Even qualitative work on cigarette access tends to frame young people's choices as virtual products of structural constraints. An alternative framing of young people's usual cigarette access behaviours is considered in the following section.

8.3 Developing competence and an autonomous smoker identity

In addition to describing participants' 'usual' cigarette sources, this study also aimed to consider how and why these sources were important or subjectively meaningful for participants. Chapter 5, for example, draws a clear distinction between the range of cigarette sources to which participants reportedly had recourse and those routinely accessed by participants. While participants in community P suggested cigarettes were readily available for sale via 'fag houses', for example, and while most participants reported varying degrees of difficulty sourcing cigarettes from shops, none routinely acquired cigarettes from fag houses, and those who had done so, or had been given cigarettes from these, almost invariably described the product in disparaging terms. Participants' representations of their individual product preferences, including in relation to illicit or counterfeit tobacco available for sale via 'fag houses', will be discussed in Section 8.5. The salient point is that the range of sources routinely identified by participants were not represented as equivalent.

The progression from more to less targeted retail purchases described in Section 8.2, for example, was represented in terms of participants' parallel acquisition of a range of smoking related knowledge and competencies. Younger and less experienced smokers, and participants who had never smoked, were aware, for example, that other young people were readily able to secure access to tobacco through particular retailers, but lacked more detailed knowledge for example of the location of these retailers, or the particular cigarette access strategies most likely to prove effective in these contexts. Older participants and more experienced regular smokers, by contrast,

had either acquired this knowledge through their social networks or simply developed it through experience, through attempting various purchasing strategies in a range of contexts, for example. This knowledge was clearly valuable, and participants who had identified amenable retailers were correspondingly reluctant to expose their sources as described in Chapter 5. Older participants reporting regular smoking, in particular, would also elaborate more explicitly on the evolution of their usual cigarette access strategies, drawing a clear biographical distinction between their former deficiencies and latterly acquired competencies in this context.

Proxy cigarette purchases were similarly represented in terms of participants' acquisition of a range of smoking related competencies. Once more, experimental and non-smokers were aware of proxy purchases, and able to describe, for example, the practice of congregating outside shops with other young people recruiting passers-by to make them, but lacked sufficiently detailed knowledge to discriminate for example between different types of retail outlets or different types of prospective proxy purchaser. Older participants and more experienced regular smokers, by contrast, had either acquired this knowledge through their extended social networks or developed it through trial and error: for example by learning to 'characterise' individuals amenable to making proxy purchases on their behalf as described in Section 8.2. Older participants reporting regular smoking would also elaborate on the evolution of their proxy purchasing strategies by juxtaposing their former deficiencies with their latterly acquired competencies, and frequently highlighted the 'endorsement' of their smoking that regular proxy purchases made by older friends and family members implied.

Social sources were similarly represented in terms of participants' increasing apprehension of a range of informal 'rules' around cigarette access. Younger participants and experimental smokers who lacked the requisite cultural competencies to secure retail cigarette access were effectively 'permitted' to sustain their smoking by relying primarily on social sources of tobacco. Older participants and more experienced regular smokers, by contrast, had already acquired these competencies, and were therefore denied 'free' social access, with interpersonal cigarette exchanges taking place either for money, or, more commonly, in

anticipation of reciprocation. Indeed, as highlighted in Section 8.2, even occasional smokers would sometimes make occasional cigarette purchases to compensate their friends, and regular smokers failing to meet their mutual obligations were ultimately excluded from reciprocal arrangements. The progression from experimental to more regular smoking, as such, was represented by participants in this study in terms of a parallel progression from opportunistic, social tobacco acquisition towards more regular, targeted retail purchasing patterns, a progression facilitated by the acquisition of a range of smoking related competencies and knowledge, including those associated with securing regular retail access to tobacco.

Experimental smokers, as such, effectively both relied on and were characterised by their reliance on diverse social cigarette sources. Regular smokers, conversely, both routinely made and were characterised by their ability to make regular retail cigarette purchases. The meaning or subjective significance of the range of usual sources identified by participants, as such, reflects their apprehension and increasingly sophisticated representation of a clear typology of smokers corresponding with a hierarchy of modes of tobacco acquisition. The act of smoking was normalised in both communities, with participants' definitions of a 'proper' smoker, or levels of identification with the role of the 'autonomous' smoker, contingent not merely on their overall levels of consumption, but on their embodiment of the range of smoking related competencies both necessary to secure and routinely demonstrated through securing regular retail access to tobacco. Where experimental smokers were fundamentally constrained in this regard, effectively ceding control of their smoking related behaviour to others, regular smokers were characterised by being able to smoke what they wanted, with whom they wanted when they chose, with any surplus cigarettes accruing from their regular retail cigarette purchases generating currency for reciprocal cigarette exchanges, and opportunities to influence the smoking behaviour of others through the practice of 'gifting' cigarettes to less experienced 'experimental' smokers.

To an extent, this framing of the relative importance of participants' diverse cigarette sources represents a straightforward consequence of the particular focus of this study and the qualitative methodology employed herein. Berger and Luckmann (1967), for

example, observe that ‘uncles’ in a given context may be socially defined as embodying a particular type of knowledge, and may therefore be considered to embody that knowledge by virtue of their being uncles (Berger and Luckmann, 1967). The same applies here. The proportion of young people making retail cigarette purchases has consistently been shown to increase with age and regular smoking status (Black et al., 2012), the inference being that older young people experience fewer barriers to making retail cigarette purchases, while regular smokers develop strategies to overcome these barriers. The focus on ‘meanings’ in this study, however, necessitates this alternate framing: regular smoking is correlated with retail cigarette purchasing not merely because regular smokers require more regular access to tobacco, or because regular smokers strive to make them: regular smokers are rather defined by their retail cigarette purchasing; the knowledge base these evidence defines their smoking related ‘status’.

Participants’ failure to discriminate explicitly between retail and proxy purchases may also be framed in these terms. The importance of projecting an ‘autonomous’ smoking identity in interviews, for example, and the framing of this autonomous identity in the context of the aforementioned hierarchy of cigarette sources, may explain the tendency among participants to maintain a collective front that foregrounds their smoking related competencies in interviews – for example their claims to know of retailers willing to sell them cigarettes – while maintaining a firm party line in discussion pertaining to factors that compromise or otherwise contradict these representations: for example instances in which their ability to exercise agency has been constrained. Participants reporting usually making targeted retail purchases, for example, almost invariably foregrounded their embodiment of the range of competencies associated with identifying and targeting particular retailers over any difficulties they may otherwise have experienced in making indiscriminate retail purchases, while participants making proxy purchases often framed these as a ‘preferred’ option; highlighting both their freedom to ‘choose’ and the position of relative power implied in their recruitment of ‘junkies’ as agents over any difficulties they may otherwise have experienced making targeted retail purchases or identifying other amenable third parties for proxy purchases. As with the association between retail cigarette purchases and regular smoking, it is therefore likely that proxy

purchasers acquired their status as ‘junkies’ by virtue of their making proxy purchases rather than vice versa.

The tendency of participants to foreground their smoking related competencies to project an ‘autonomous’ smoking identity resonates clearly with findings from other qualitative work. Nichter et al (1997), for example, identify the establishment of the ‘autonomous self’ as a key imperative of adolescence, and a range of studies have explored the particular salience of smoking in terms projecting a desirable social identity (Denscombe, 2001, Haines et al., 2009, Cullen, 2010, Nichter et al., 2006) and negotiating peer group hierarchies (Michell and Amos, 1997, Walsh and Tzelepis, 2007). The focus in this study, however, is not on the distinction between smokers and non-smokers, but rather on participants’ identification of differences between different ‘types’ of smokers in terms of a hierarchy of cigarette sources. While the particularities of context are arguably incidental, with young people likely to assert their smoking related competencies in the context of the topic of discussion with which they are presented, Berg et al (2010) highlight the particular salience of cigarette access in this context: aside from cigarette consumption and length of time since smoking initiation, purchasing cigarettes as opposed to acquiring these from social sources was represented as the primary characteristic distinguishing smokers from ‘social smokers’ among college age students in the US (Berg et al., 2010).

Participants’ apprehension of their usual cigarette sources in these terms has further implications in terms of the interpretation of the literature on youth cigarette access. Following the failure of the Synar amendment to impact meaningfully on youth smoking prevalence in the US, for example, commentators cited the relative increase in social cigarette acquisition among school age children as evidence for the failure of youth access interventions to impact meaningfully on cigarette availability, and therefore on youth smoking (Craig and Boris, 2007, Etter, 2006, Ling et al., 2002, Glantz, 2002). Aside from Robinson and Amos’ (2010) study, which highlights the more limited availability of cigarettes from social sources (Robinson and Amos, 2010), the lack of equivalence between young people’s social and commercial cigarette sources is not made explicit in the literature. Findings from this study suggest that young people’s ‘usual’ cigarette sources are likely to vary not only with

the ‘availability’ of cigarettes from these sources, or indeed straightforwardly with the volume of cigarettes available from each, but also with what accessing these sources communicates to others, specifically in terms of participants’ varying levels of self-identification with the role of the autonomous smoker.

Croghan et al’s (2003) study on the importance of social cigarette sources for school children, for example, found that while cigarettes were reported to be readily available for sale in schools during interviews, none of the regular smokers in the sample reported usually buying cigarettes from social sources in the surveys that were undertaken concurrently (Croghan et al., 2003). Rather than address this ostensible discrepancy, for example by elaborating on the varying impressions of social cigarette access generated via interviews and questionnaires, or elaborating on the perception among some participants that social vendors were perceived to be profit driven and exploitative, the authors conclude that social markets were routinely accessed by young people and likely to expand to compensate for any eventual restrictions placed on retail sales. Findings from this study, by contrast, suggest that young people’s avoidance of social purchases, like the avoidance of illicit cigarettes reported in Donaghy et al’s (2013) study, reflect broader concerns in relation to the presentation of self.

8.4 Cigarette access and symbolic capital

In addition to describing participants’ usual cigarette sources and examining how these sources were subjectively meaningful for participants in terms of the range of smoking related competencies explored in the previous section, this study aimed to examine the rituals and currencies associated with accessing cigarettes from the range of social and commercial cigarette sources identified in Chapter 5. The ‘rituals’ associated with cigarette access are effectively constituted by the range of smoking related competencies discussed in Section 8.3: in terms of the reciprocal typification of habitualised actions by particular types of actors (Berger and Luckmann, 1967). The identification of a social hierarchy of smokers corresponding with a hierarchy of ‘modes’ of tobacco acquisition reflects participants’ apprehension of smoking as an

arena of conduct subject to social control, and represents a useful means by which to frame participants' tendency to project an 'autonomous' smoking identity in this context. In discussing 'currencies', however, an alternate framing is required to address the broader social 'value' of these competencies: as highlighted in Section 8.2, participants mobilised their social capital resources in negotiating access to tobacco.

While retail cigarette purchases represented the predominating mode of tobacco acquisition among the clear majority of participants, only three participants were able to make these without either identifying and targeting particular retailers or recruiting intermediaries to make proxy purchases on their behalf. This underscores both the social and practical 'value' of the range of strategies developed by young people in negotiating access to tobacco, and highlights the limitations of investigating 'usual' cigarette sources in this context: almost all participants reporting regular smoking relied primarily on retail cigarette sources, almost all acquired cigarettes through social as opposed to straightforwardly economic transactions. Older participants, for example, targeted retailers with whom they had existing relationships: a friend or a friend of the family. Others invested time in developing relationships with retailers, engaging staff in conversation, thereby effectively developing their social capital resources. Younger participants recruited older young people to make purchases on their behalf, with older participants framing their willingness to supply younger children with cigarettes in the context of their social ties. All these transactions are inherently social, transcending the straightforward exchange of money for cigarettes.

The utility of Bourdieu's concept of capital in this context lies in its explicitly transactional focus (Bourdieu, 1986). A cigarette purchase entails the transmutation of economic into cultural capital: in terms of the acquisition of the cigarette as cultural object or objectified cultural capital, and in terms of the embodied cultural capital accruing from participants' apprehension of these purchases as evidencing their embodiment of an 'autonomous' smoking identity. For current purposes, and indeed elsewhere in the literature, the notion of embodied cultural capital or 'smoker's capital' (Haines et al., 2009) is effectively synonymous with the more ambiguous notion of elevated social status. The cigarette as cultural object, in turn,

may be transmuted into social capital through the practice of ‘gifting’ cigarettes to others, or into economic capital through social sales, with the likelihood of monies being implicated in the transaction varying with the strength of social ties (Bourdieu, 1977). The salient point is that participants were almost invariably compelled to mobilise their social capital resources in negotiating access to tobacco, recruiting friends, family and others within the local community to facilitate their cigarette purchases. Retail purchases, as such, were meaningful for participants not merely in terms of facilitating regular access to tobacco and demonstrating their embodiment of a range of smoking related competencies framed as embodied cultural capital in this context, but in terms of negotiating their overall position within the social field of adolescence, including via gendered performances.

As described in Chapter 5, for example, all participants articulated iterations of a perception ‘everybody smokes around here’ in representing the study communities, and all reported having been exposed to smoking in a range of social contexts. Several participants highlighted the ubiquity of smoking in schools, for example, to suggest that many non-smokers congregated with smokers outside the school grounds during break and lunch to avoid social isolation. They would join their ‘smoking’ friends, and were offered cigarettes on the strength of these social ties in the first instance. None of the participants in this study reported being offered cigarettes by others with whom they were not already acquainted. The extent to which participants were able to sustain this mode of tobacco acquisition varied with the size and extent of the resources available within their social networks. Those with a greater number of friends who smoked, or with older friends who had established a more regular supply of cigarettes were more likely to be able to sustain their smoking by relying on these ‘gifted’ cigarettes. Over time, however, participants were compelled to reciprocate in order to sustain more regular smoking, both through the necessity arising from the finite nature of the group’s resources and the informal rules around cigarette access: experimental smokers, to iterate, both relied on and were characterised by their reliance on these ‘gifted’ cigarettes, and lacked the requisite cultural capital resources to exercise autonomy in relation to their smoking.

This is also made explicit in the accounts of older participants discussing their willingness or otherwise to supply cigarettes to younger children. While individual accounts varied, all ‘older’ participants reporting regular smoking described their willingness to give cigarettes to others or indeed to make proxy purchases on behalf of younger children in terms of the social and cultural capital resources of the prospective beneficiary. Younger children who did not rely exclusively on social sources, for example, were deemed legitimate recipients on the strength of their demonstration, albeit intermittently, of the range of smoking related competencies associated with the autonomous smoking identity framed as embodied cultural capital in this context. Those who lacked the requisite resources, however, were denied access. In the particularly apposite words of P1 (M16R), those with the requisite cultural capital resources were acknowledged, in effect, to experience a legitimate ‘need’ for a cigarette, while others: *‘just see you smoking and they want a fag. For me it’s like they dinnae smoke at all’*.

The intention is not explicitly to theorise participants’ usual cigarette sources but rather, as detailed in the methodology, to generate a more nuanced representation of how young people access tobacco in a particular community context. Retail cigarette purchases, negotiated through participants’ social and family networks, were represented not merely in terms of facilitating a regular supply of cigarettes, or in terms of presenting an autonomous smoking identity, but in terms of their particular social value in negotiating the social field of adolescence. Of the three participants identified as making regular retail purchases, one had never smoked, but nevertheless invested significant efforts in developing relationships with retailers. This was not to secure access to cigarettes (she didn’t smoke herself), nor to exercise autonomy in relation to her never-smoking practices, but to generate social capital through her investment in relationships with others, and cultural capital through supplying others with cigarettes. She thereby demonstrated her embodiment of the primary social objective to which the range of smoking related competencies identified by participants collectively aspire: the ability to present, and to be acknowledged by others to be presenting, as a credible ‘adult’, as an autonomous social agent, and as a discerning consumer. The distinction conferred through making retail purchases is made explicit in the distance created between self and other in the accounts of

regular smokers, and will be revisited in Section 8.5 in considering participants' representations of their cigarette brand preferences.

The lack of studies investigating the informal currencies associated with youth cigarette access is surprising given the frequency with which these transactions are implied in relevant research. Studies have shown, for example, that while rates of retail cigarette access increase with age and regular smoking, any corresponding decline in social cigarette acquisition is relative not absolute. Longitudinal studies have shown that the range of social and commercial cigarette sources accessed by young people increase over time, as their social networks expand to facilitate and sustain their smoking (Robinson et al., 2006, Widome et al., 2007). The likelihood of young people experiencing 'difficulties' sourcing cigarettes have also been found to decline over time (Doubeni et al., 2009), presumably as a direct consequence of this increase in alternative options rather than straightforwardly as a consequence of increasing age. Forster et al's (2003) study, for example, undertaken following the Synar amendment in the US, found that while 90% of 13 and 16 year olds reporting past month smoking had obtained at least one cigarette from a social source, 75% had also supplied others with cigarettes, with daily smokers more likely both to access and supply a greater number of recipients more often than others (Forster et al., 2003). Despite clear evidence to the contrary, however, the literature continues to be characterised by an implied dichotomy between retail and social cigarette sources that both ignores their clear and well evidenced interdependence and the value accruing from making retail cigarette purchases in order to generate currency for reciprocal cigarette exchanges.

Qualitative work, for example, has tended to focus exclusively on social sources of tobacco, illuminating the important social function of interpersonal cigarette exchanges while avoiding explicit elaboration on the diverse social currencies that mediate these. Findings from Cullen's (2010) study on the role of reciprocal cigarette exchanges in underpinning friendships and mobilising power within young women's social networks, for example, resonate clearly with findings from this study, framing reciprocal cigarette exchanges as an informal currency in the context of a broader web of exchanges and counter exchanges or 'gift giving practices' (Cullen, 2010).

While Cullen's (2010) study focusses on the role of interpersonal cigarette exchanges in facilitating young women's negotiation of 'gendered identities', her work simultaneously underscores the importance of participants' social capital resources in negotiating access to tobacco, highlighting an enduring need among participants to cultivate 'popularity' to ensure a regular supply of cigarettes, and the particular salience of young people's cultural capital resources in this context, with less 'powerful' group members compelled to give cigarettes to those more powerful than themselves. This framing is not made explicit, however, and the particular value of retail cigarette purchases in this context, i.e the generation of available currency for reciprocal cigarette exchanges, is not addressed.

Findings also resonate with Haines et al's (2009) work on the cultural capital of youth smoking initiation and addiction, which frames smoking as a key resource used by young people to make distinctions and acquire status in the context of the adolescent social world (Haines et al., 2009). Haines et al (2009) describe 'smoker's capital' in terms of the acquisition of a range of smoking related skills or competencies serving as markers of distinction (Bourdieu, 1986). While their work is more theoretically driven, the implication is the same: the social practices underlying young people's substance use are not incidental, but rather crucial to developing a fuller understanding of the social and cultural benefits that young people derive from smoking (Haines et al., 2009). The notion of distinction will be considered in more detail in discussing participants' cigarette brand preferences in Section 8.5. The salient point here is that Bourdieu's theory of symbolic capital also facilitates a more nuanced consideration of the 'value' accruing from and communicated through participants' diverse modes of tobacco acquisition.

8.5 Perspectives on cigarette branding

The decision to incorporate tobacco branding as a focus for analysis in this study was taken during the initial pilot interviews, in which participants spontaneously foregrounded relevant subject matter without explicit prompting from the interviewer. All participants reporting regular smoking articulated clear brand

preferences and loyalties. While participants' individual preferences varied, the language used to describe them was remarkably consistent, encompassing the following interrelated dimensions: price, potency, visual appeal and relative asperity. Price was represented as a proxy for product quality, with young people juxtaposing price with a range of other perceived brand attributes to express the 'value' of their favoured brands. Potency refers to the relative strength of the product and perceived duration of satisfaction following use, with visual appeal encompassing the reassurance communicated by familiar brand names and descriptors, and the novelty conferred by various facets of pack design and colour. Relative asperity refers to the perceived 'smoothness' or 'harshness' of the smoking experience, and was foregrounded to generate distance between competing products: participants' favoured brands, for example, were represented as 'strong', 'smooth' and 'satisfying', while others were described as 'weak' and 'harsh'.

The language used by participants to articulate their individual product preferences may also be framed in terms of the range of smoking related competencies discussed in previous sections. Tobacco products are functionally equivalent, and participants' preferences are therefore likely to influence their perceptions of the characteristics of their favoured brands rather than vice versa. As such, rather than learning to identify characteristics inherent in a given brand, participants effectively acquired more or less fluency in a language constitutive of a common body of knowledge through which to communicate and assert their smoking related competencies and knowledge (Berger and Luckmann, 1967). In much the same way as that in which participants' 'usual' cigarette sources were implicated in the projection of an 'autonomous' smoking identity, the language used by participants to frame their individual product preferences represented a means by which to identify themselves and others as more or less 'discriminating' smokers. Participants' individual product preferences, as such, or their ability to elaborate on these in terms of the requisite linguistically circumscribed knowledge, reflects not only their smoking status, with older and more experienced regular smokers acknowledged to be more 'discerning' in terms of their product selection, but also, presumably as a consequence, their 'status' as a smoker.

As with the currencies of exchange involved in participants' usual cigarette sources, the smoking related status associated with participants' individual product preferences may be framed in terms of Bourdieu's (1986) concept of cultural capital. Participants reporting regular smoking, for example, invested significant efforts in generating a sense of distance between themselves and others, juxtaposing their own more 'cultivated' tastes and dispositions with a visceral intolerance of the less discerning tastes of others. Older and more discerning regular smokers, for example, consistently represented brands including Winston and Pall Mall as the preserve of younger children and experimental smokers who had not yet developed the requisite cultural competencies to distinguish appropriately between brands. The elevation of form over function, according to Bourdieu's (1984) thesis, is expressed in every arena: 'and nothing is more distinctive, more distinguished, than the capacity to confer aesthetic status on objects that are banal or even "common", [or] apply the principles of a "pure" aesthetic to the most everyday choices of everyday life (Bourdieu, 1984: 5).

The cultural capital accruing from participants' expressions of appropriate tastes in this context acquired a clear transactional value. The embodied cultural capital accruing from the range of smoking related competencies associated with participant's status as more or less 'discerning' smokers is consistent with that accruing from their status as more or less 'autonomous' smokers: older participants reporting regular smoking were more likely to make regular cigarette purchases, and were therefore also more likely to influence the acquired 'tastes' of others through their own product selections: through making regular cigarette purchases and asserting the social legitimacy of their favoured brands by disseminating knowledge of the brand and its ascribed characteristics through their social networks via 'gifting' and reciprocal cigarette exchanges. The transactional value of the objectified capital invested in the cigarette as cultural object is also evidenced by the premium associated with the social sale of 'favoured' brands as discussed in Chapter 5. The 100% premium associated with the sale of Lambert and Butler, for example, may be framed in terms of its excess 'capital' value, as implied by the vendor in demanding a premium and the purchaser in supplying it. The transaction implies the simultaneous transmutation of economic into cultural capital and vice versa.

While an examination of the meaning or subjective significance of participants' diverse modes of tobacco acquisition is largely absent from the youth access literature, findings pertaining to participants' favoured cigarette brands resonate clearly with studies highlighting the social function of smoking in terms of presentation. In framing smoking as part of the reflexive construction of the self, for example, Denscombe (2001) highlights the particular salience of consumption in terms of identity construction in the late modern era. Although Denscombe (2001) does not refer explicitly to cigarette branding or brand image, the framing of smoking as a means of communicating identity through consumption implies that how young people position themselves as more or less discerning consumers is likely to communicate as much or more than the decision to smoke or otherwise. Nichter et al (1997) also highlight a range of findings consistent with those reported here in examining factors associated with smoking initiation and experimentation among adolescent girls, including differences in the perceived characteristics of individuals smoking different brands, for example the representation of 'cheap' brands as the preserve of 'scummier' individuals, and a tendency among participants to conflate cost with product quality, including in relation to constituent product ingredients (Nichter et al., 1997). Although neither of these studies elaborates on young people's cigarette brand preferences explicitly in terms of young people's negotiation of peer group hierarchies, both suggest that young people's individual product preferences represent an important facet of the presentation of self through the act of smoking.

This is also implied in the number of studies examining the particular salience of cigarette brand image in this context. While cigarette brand image is defined variously in the literature, the notion is invoked primarily to represent the point at which tobacco industry marketing communications and individual agency intersect. Marketing communications are concerned with the construction of desirable brand identities, while brand image refers to the range of perceptions associated with a given brand among consumers (Eadie et al., 1999; Grant et al., 2006). Branding has acquired increasing significance following the implementation of legislation prohibiting other forms of tobacco advertising and promotion (Eadie et al., 1999; Moodie and Hastings 2010), and tobacco industry marketing efforts are increasingly invested in influencing the perceptions of consumers through cigarette packaging and

point-of-sale displays (Wakefield et al., 2002; Moodie and Hastings, 2010). While brand image is not always discussed explicitly in relevant research, the range of perceptions associated with a brand in the mind of the consumer clearly encompass those most commonly investigated in studies examining the anticipated impact of plain packaging and PoS display bans, including for example various measures of subjective appeal, and perceptions of relative product strength and harm (Moodie et al., 2012; Moodie et al., 2013).

As discussed in Chapter 6, Keller's (1993) model of customer based brand equity integrates these otherwise disparate research foci into an integrative model of brand knowledge comprising brand awareness and brand image, the latter constituted by a range of perceived brand attributes and benefits (Keller 1993; Grant et al., 2008). Perceptions of product strength and harm, for example, constitute product related attributes, corresponding with a range of perceived functional and experiential benefits, while the measures of subjective appeal most commonly employed in relevant research – for example packaging information and user imagery – are framed as non-product related attributes, corresponding with symbolic benefits, which Keller (1993) describes as those meeting the consumer's underlying need for social approval. This framing of brand image resonates clearly with findings from this study, with participants' expressions of taste communicated through a vocabulary encompassing a range of perceived attributes that confer social status or approval in the context of participants' social worlds. Participants' representations of product related attributes, for example perceived product strength, corresponded with a range of functional or experiential benefits, for example the perceived duration of satisfaction following use. The negative user imagery through which their visceral intolerance of the tastes of others was expressed, by contrast, reflects the symbolic benefits accruing from their generating distance between self and 'other'. Keller's (1993) model of customer based brand equity also makes explicit the socially constructed nature of brand attributes, with marketing communications mediated through young people's social networks (Keller 1993).

In terms of brand awareness, this study generates further evidence of the high residual levels of brand awareness among young people following the

implementation of the Tobacco Advertising and Promotions Act in 2002. Despite the prohibition of most forms of tobacco advertising, young people continue to be exposed to cigarette brand imagery through tobacco packaging and at the point of sale (Moodie et al., 2012; Moodie et al., 2013). While experimental and non-smokers in this study were able to retrieve a range of brands from memory, with some elaborating further in terms of product appearance and pricing information, the subjective salience of these facets of cigarette brand image appeared to be limited, consistent with Keller's (1993) model which acknowledges that while consumers often have an association in memory from the brand to the package colour, which may facilitate brand recognition, not all brand associations influence purchase or consumption decisions. Indeed, the primary distinction between the accounts of regular and non-regular smokers in this context was the lack of a clear affective dimension in the narratives of those participants lacking the requisite cultural competencies to express appropriate 'tastes' in distinguishing between brands. In the accounts of non-regular smokers, the identification of brand attributes did not correspond with the identification of perceived benefits.

In the accounts of regular smokers, by contrast, the identification of brand attributes almost invariably corresponded with the identification of perceived benefits, both in terms of the taste of the product, its constituent ingredients and relative risk, as evidenced for example in discussion pertaining to illicit tobacco as described in Chapter 6, and in terms of the distinction conferred through demonstrating the cultural knowledge implicated in participants' self-identification with the role of the 'discerning' smoker. In contrast with findings from previous studies, however, and presumably as a consequence of the focus on young people's views and perspectives as opposed to the impact of particular marketing practices in this study, the perceived product attributes and corresponding benefits identified by participants did not vary between brands. Participants elaborating on their preference for Lambert and Butler, for example, did so in the same terms, employing the same language and referencing the same attributes and benefits as those articulating their preference for Mayfair or Richmond. As such, and to iterate, participants' perceptions and representations of their favoured brands were framed in the context of a language divorced, at least to

an extent, from the framing of brand attributes as marketing variables subject to manipulation.

Both tobacco industry documents and studies examining young people's perceptions of packaging information, for example, have shown that light grey and blue cigarette packs are ordinarily associated with a lighter, milder cigarette (Wakefield et al., 2002; Moodie et al., 2012). In this study, however, Lambert and Butler, Richmond and Mayfair, the brands most commonly favoured by participants and consistently identified as being 'stronger' and more 'satisfying', are characterised by grey and blue packaging. Conversely, while red packaging has been used to denote a 'full flavoured' cigarette by the tobacco industry (Wakefield et al., 2002), the majority of brands represented as 'weak' in this study are associated with red packaging, albeit also a range of other colours in their various incarnations. In terms of pricing, the views of participants also diverged from the differences implied through market segmentation. While brands associated with value based packaging (Moodie and Hastings, 2011) including Sterling and Superkings, were commonly disparaged, others, for example, Windsor Blue, were represented in more favourable terms, in particular by younger smokers. Richmond, for example, ostensibly an economy brand, represented the favoured brand among the clear majority of regular smokers, and was represented as a premium product, though the branding was updated in the mid-2000s to communicate a more 'modern' brand identity (Moodie and Hastings 2011).

As such, while the diverse range of attributes communicated via cigarette packaging and point of sale displays clearly influence young people's perceptions of cigarette brand image (Moodie et al., 2012; Moodie et al., 2013), these perceptions are also influenced by a range of external factors including exposure to cigarette brand imagery in film and on the internet (Davis et al., 2008). More importantly, however, these are also subject to a process of continual social negotiation within young people's social networks. While the Tobacco Advertising and Promotions Act 2002 has ensured young people no longer smoke the most heavily advertised brands, findings from this study resonate clearly with Barnard and Forsyth's (1996) work on cigarette brand preferences among similarly aged young people in Glasgow. The

social status associated with a given brand represents the product of a social consensus, with young people's identification of preferred brands representing: 'one of a number of ways in which adolescents [seek] to achieve acceptance, kudos and integration within their peer group' (Barnard and Forsyth, 1996: 179).

Indeed, while customer based brand equity refers to the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to particular marketing practices (Keller 1993), and while the language employed by participants in elaborating on their individual product preferences appeared to be influenced, at least in part, by marketing language, the focus on the views and perspectives of young people in this study and the lack of explicit discussion around participants' receptivity or responses to specific marketing practices renders the excess value invested in a given brand through association effectively synonymous with the notion of cultural capital. Participants' representations of the negative user imagery through which their visceral intolerance of the tastes of others was expressed, for example, reflects the symbolic benefit accruing from their generating distance between self and 'other'. Marketing communications are interpreted reflexively by actors (Keller, 1993, Hastings and MacFadyen, 1998). As such, and in contrast with Scheffels' (2008) study on the meaning of cigarette brands, which highlighted a clear synergy between marketing communications and young people's representations of brand image, in particular in terms of user and usage related imagery, findings from this study suggest the specificities of marketing communications may rather be incidental. Cigarette packaging and the diverse marketing communications competing at the point of sale may be located, rather, in the context of Bourdieu's (1984) thesis on 'distinction', with differences in font, colour and cigarette pack design serving primarily to generate an artificial distance between competing brands, investing a social value or salience in participants' varying levels of identification with ostensible variants of otherwise indistinguishable products.

8.6 Young people's perspectives on tobacco control policy

Participants' views and perspectives on the perceived impact of the increase in the minimum age of sale and the prospective ban on point of sale and cigarette pack advertising are examined in detail in Chapter 7. Participants consistently identified 18 years as the prevailing minimum age of sale, and most were aware that it had previously been 16. As discussed in Chapter 7, individual attitudes towards the legislation varied primarily by smoking status. Experimental and non-smokers, for example, appeared to be broadly in favour of regulation, highlighting the negative health impacts of smoking in the course of relevant discussion to foreground a quasi-moral discourse according to which regulation is good because smoking is bad and vice versa. These accounts may be located in the context of what Denscombe (2001) refers to as the deficit model of youth smoking, with young people framed as in need of protection from a range of external pro-smoking influences, or in terms of the social denormalisation of smoking following recent developments in tobacco control (Graham 2012). It is likely, however, that experimental and non-smokers were also simply less invested in the relevant discussion, and therefore more likely to furnish what they considered to be the requisite responses in these contexts, as suggested for example by the participant who asserted that smoking is worse than drinking straightforwardly because drinking is 'nice'.

Regular smokers, by contrast, were almost invariably strongly opposed to regulation, framing smoking as a choice, enthusiastically asserting their right to self-determination and effectively pre-empting discussion pertaining to the perceived impact of the increase in the minimum age of sale by elaborating on a range of ostensible alternatives to retail purchases in the course of relevant discussion to highlight the perceived futility of regulation in this context. These findings reflect those from other studies examining the range of alternative sources routinely accessed by young people in circumventing sales laws (Borland and Amos, 2009, Robinson and Amos, 2010, Donaghy et al., 2013). As described in Chapter 7, however, the range of alternative sources identified by participants in discussion pertaining to the impact of the increase in the age of sale were not represented as a legitimate alternative recourse in discussion pertaining to their usual cigarette

sources. Participants' usual sources were not equivalent, but rather presented in terms of a clear hierarchy of modes of tobacco acquisition corresponding with a social hierarchy of smokers. As such, while a range of alternatives to retail purchases were perceived to be readily available, these were not routinely accessed by participants, for whom self-identification with the role of the 'autonomous' and 'discerning' smoker was contingent for example on the negotiation of regular retail cigarette access and the avoidance of inferior or 'fake' product from fag houses.

The perceived ease of cigarette access communicated by regular smokers in this study may therefore be framed in terms of the presentation of a collective front through which to maintain and manage the range of impressions associated with their embodiment and co-construction of the role of the autonomous smoker (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, Goffman, 1969). While regular smokers consistently highlighted their relative ease of cigarette access, framing the proxy purchases to which they resorted as a preferred option as opposed to a necessary recourse, all experienced sales refusals, and all but three were compelled to mobilise their social capital resources in negotiating access to tobacco. While both the SDD and SALSUS have shown a clear decline in the proportion of 11-15 year old young people reporting 'usually' sourcing cigarettes from shops following the increase in the minimum age of sale (Fuller, 2012, Black et al., 2012), the equivalent impressions engendered by the accounts of participants in this study are unequivocal: despite the definition of 'regular' smokers as those smoking a cigarette a day or more, none of the 11-15 year olds in this study reporting 'regular' daily smoking reported 'usually' buying cigarettes from shops – other than through proxy purchases – despite the majority having attempted direct cigarette purchases on multiple occasions, and several cited sales refusals as the primary factor motivating their decision to access cigarettes via other means.

This assessment, however, is clearly problematised by the divergent definitions of retail cigarette access employed by participants in this study, highlighting the range of problems inherent in attempting to associate legislative and other measures to curtail youth access to tobacco straightforwardly with youth smoking prevalence. As highlighted in Chapter 2, children under the prevailing minimum age of sale in the

UK have experienced very little difficulty sourcing cigarettes from shops historically (Fuller, 2007, Maxwell et al., 2007, Croghan et al., 2005), and there is a consensus in the youth access literature that minimum age laws are unlikely to impact meaningfully on youth smoking and cigarette access without robust sales laws and robust sales law enforcement (DiFranza, 2011). While there is evidence that enforcement programmes of the type undertaken by local authority trading standards officers in the UK may disrupt the supply of cigarettes to underage young people (DiFranza, 2011, Stead and Lancaster, 2005), the levels of enforcement activity undertaken in both England and Scotland following the increase in the minimum age of sale is very low compared with that undertaken in jurisdictions in which the supply of tobacco has been successfully disrupted (Stead and Lancaster, 2005). While Tutt et al's (2009) work on youth access in Australia provides some evidence that lower levels of enforcement may also increase sales law compliance among tobacco retailers, the measures used to assess the disruption of supply in this context are acknowledged to be problematic.

Retailer sales rates, for example, are unlikely either to reflect young people's 'real world' ease of cigarette access (Klonoff and Landrine, 2003, Croghan et al., 2005), or to impact on perceived availability: a 10% sales rate in a given community may imply that all tobacco retailers sell cigarettes to underage young people 10% of the time, in which case retail cigarette access is likely to be experienced as 'difficult', or that 10% of tobacco retailers sell cigarettes to underage customers all of the time, in which case demand is likely simply to concentrate on non-compliant retailers and access is likely to be experienced as 'easy' (DiFranza 2005). Attempts to quantify the impact of youth access interventions through measures of perceived availability are problematised further by young people's lack of historical perspective on the ease of cigarette access, and a failure to discriminate between social and commercial cigarette sources in relevant studies (DiFranza 2005). Young people whose friends and family smoke, for example, those who frequent areas in which other young people smoke during school hours and congregate in shops in which cigarettes are prominently displayed at the point-of-sale, are self-evidently more likely to perceive cigarettes to be readily available. What this study adds is that this perceived 'readiness' of cigarette availability may be illusory: the range of alternative sources

identified by participants in discussion pertaining to the increase in the minimum age of sale were not routinely accessed by participants, or represented as constituting a legitimate alternative recourse.

The primary contribution of this study, however, is to make explicit the lack of equivalence between the diverse modes of tobacco acquisition identified by participants. DiFranza's (2005) supply side hypothesis foregrounds the particular salience of measures of retailer sales rates and perceived availability in this context by proposing that young people are less likely to smoke if their ability to access cigarettes is curtailed by supply side interventions either to the extent that these prevent young people making retail cigarette purchases or increase the 'hassle factor' associated with making retail cigarette purchases: increasing the perceived costs associated with smoking by compelling young people to travel further afield to find retailers willing to sell them cigarettes, for example, or invest time in recruiting third parties to make proxy purchases on their behalf (DiFranza 2005). The subjective benefits of a given mode of cigarette acquisition, however, are not addressed in this decision making model. If the benefits associated with sourcing cigarettes from shops outweigh the increased costs precipitated by supply side interventions, these are unlikely to curtail cigarette access and therefore unlikely to impact meaningfully on youth smoking. This may represent an issue in particular in urban areas, where retailer densities are likely to be higher (Lipton et al., 2008, Nelson et al., 2011).

This position, certainly, is reflected in the narratives of participants in this study, who rejected the proposition that increasing the minimum age of sale and enforcing the legislation may have impacted on their ability to source tobacco. Cigarettes were perceived to be readily available from a range of social and commercial sources, with most participants responding to suggestions that the increase in the minimum age of sale may have impacted on retail cigarette availability by positing a range of alternative sources in the course of discussion. Where the focus in interviews was maintained explicitly on retail sources, and while most participants had experienced sales refusals on occasion, relatively few participants acknowledged these to represent their primary motivation for sourcing cigarettes through alternative means. Most identified at least one retailer from which they claimed to be regularly able to

buy tobacco, but ordinarily made proxy purchases instead on the basis these were not considered problematic. Seeking out amenable retailers and recruiting third parties for proxy purchases, as such, were not considered to represent excess ‘hassle’ but rather necessary concessions or adaptations in light of an increasingly restrictive policy environment, with any excess ‘hassle’ offset by the benefits associated with securing and maintaining regular retail cigarette access.

Participants’ views on generic cigarette packaging and the impending ban on PoS displays were related in similarly ambivalent terms, and diverged along similar lines. Experimental and non-smokers, once more, were broadly in favour of regulation, with several highlighting an association between advertising exposure and youth smoking initiation to foreground Denscombe’s (2001) deficit model of youth smoking, framing smoking as the product of an aggregation of external influences and young people as in need of ‘protection’. As discussed in Chapter 7, however, experimental and non-smokers did not ordinarily foreground relevant subject matter spontaneously during the course of interviews, and the rationale behind the legislation was therefore interpolated by the interviewer to facilitate discussion. These accounts are therefore rendered co-productions as described in Chapter 7. Regular smokers, by contrast, foregrounded relevant subject matter spontaneously in elaborating on their individual product preferences, and were overwhelmingly opposed to regulation, expressing their ire at the PoS display ban and generic cigarette packaging variously, including through the use of expletives.

Where participants’ scepticism in terms of the potential for the increase in the minimum age of sale to impact on youth cigarette access was framed in the context of the range of ostensible alternative sources available through their social networks, their scepticism in relation to the potential for generic packaging and the PoS display ban to impact on young people’s smoking related behaviours was framed in terms of their representation of themselves and others as more or less ‘discerning’ smokers as discussed in Section 8. This, clearly, presented an immediate problem. While participants’ interpolation of a range of alternative sources in discussion pertaining to the increase in the minimum age of sale did not immediately compromise or otherwise problematise their representations of themselves and others as more or less

‘autonomous’ smokers, given the broad range of ostensible alternatives to retail purchases and the varying extents to which more or less autonomous smokers were effectively constrained by an increasingly restrictive retail sales environment, their views and perspectives on the perceived impact of the PoS display ban and generic packaging were necessarily structured around a binary proposition: young people either are or are not influenced by cigarette pack advertising.

As described in Section 8.5, regular smokers elaborated on their individual product preferences through a range of dimensions or perceived brand characteristics, juxtaposing their own more cultivated tastes and dispositions with a visceral intolerance of the less discerning tastes of others. This brand knowledge was not objectively available, but rather acquired through acculturation. As such, while foregrounding a sense of personal invulnerability to advertising on the strength of their ability to discriminate between brands in terms of the aforementioned perceived brand characteristics, most regular smokers ultimately conceded that for younger children and less experienced experimental smokers, those lacking the requisite cultural competencies to discriminate appropriately between brands, and compelled, as a consequence, to discriminate between brands on the basis of objectively available criteria i.e packaging and pricing information, the PoS ban and generic packaging would be likely to exert an effect on smoking primarily by removing the pricing information on the basis of which ‘children’ make their purchasing decision from the PoS, or simply reducing the ‘appeal’ of cigarette packaging.

The extent to which participants’ recourse to first person retail purchases represents a presentational device to support their claims to an ‘autonomous’ smoking identity has already been discussed. The salient point is that none of the regular smokers in the sample, irrespective of age, reported any difficulties securing regular retail access to tobacco, either buying cigarettes themselves or more commonly mobilising their social networks to make proxy purchases on their behalf. Similarly, the extent to which the sense of personal immunity to PoS and cigarette pack advertising foregrounded by regular smokers represents a presentational device to support their claims to a ‘discerning’ smoking identity is also difficult to assess. While the cultural competencies demonstrated by regular smokers in elaborating on their individual

product preferences rarely referenced cigarette packaging explicitly, participants' embodiment of these competencies is ultimately expressed through consumption.

This thesis, as such, has provided insights into young people's usual cigarette access strategies in particular community contexts, attempting to move beyond the identification of participants' usual cigarette sources to consider how and why these sources are important. Young people's cigarette sources were not represented merely as a product of opportunity and cost, but rather as an expression of the range of smoking related competencies representing, collectively, the extent of participants' socialisation into an arena of institutionalised conduct (Berger and Luckmann 1966). To paraphrase Berger and Luckmann (1966): standards are set for role performers, these are known, and it is known that they are known. Securing regular access to tobacco from commercial sources was represented not merely as requisite in terms of the embodiment of the role of the autonomous smoker, in terms of the endorsement from others this mode of cigarette acquisition implies, but in order to generate currency for reciprocal exchanges and express ones smoking related knowledge through consumption: selecting particular brands to position oneself as a discriminating smoker.

8.7 Conclusions

This study aimed to explore young people's smoking and cigarette access behaviours following the increase in the minimum age of sale of tobacco from 16 to 18 years in October 2007, and participants' perceptions and representations of cigarette brand image in the context of the impending ban on PoS cigarette displays, and in anticipation of the introduction of generic cigarette packaging in the UK. This thesis has generated insights into the meaning and subjective significance of the range of cigarette sources routinely accessed by young people in two disadvantaged communities in Edinburgh, and located participants perceptions and representations of cigarette brand image in the context of recent legislative efforts to reduce the attractiveness of cigarettes and other tobacco products for children and young people. This final section considers the extent to which the findings and discussion presented

in Chapters 3 to 8 have addressed the research aims and objectives of this study, and considers the primary implications of findings from this research for tobacco control policy, research and practice.

One of the primary objectives of this study was to describe participants' usual cigarette sources following the increase in the minimum age of sale. The youth access literature is primarily US based (DiFranza, 2011), and raises as many questions as it answers in terms of the consequences associated with enacting and enforcing laws to reduce tobacco sales to minors (Scottish Executive, 2006, Richardson et al., 2009). When the aims and objectives of this study were being formulated, only Borland and Amos (2009) had reported on young peoples' access to tobacco following the enactment of the legislation. In the interim, however, a number of other studies have reported on youth access to tobacco in England and Scotland (Robinson and Amos, 2010, Donaghy et al., 2013, Millett et al., 2011, Fidler and West, 2010). These have shown that young people are readily able to secure access to tobacco despite the increase in the minimum age of sale, primarily through proxy purchases. To an extent then, this study adds little to the literature in terms of the range of sources routinely accessed by young people. The range of 'usual' cigarette sources most commonly accessed by participants in this study broadly reflect those reported in the SDD and SALSUS, allowing for the relative size and composition of the sample, and the range of access strategies identified by participants have been described in other qualitative work on youth cigarette access.

However, the relative importance to young people of the diverse cigarette sources accessed by them has not been considered previously, and it is in exploring the meaning and subjective significance of the diverse cigarette sources routinely accessed by participants that this study makes a novel contribution to research. While a number of studies have highlighted the range of smoking behaviours encompassed by 'regular' weekly smoking, for example, and several have examined the significance of reciprocal cigarette exchanges in the context of young people's social worlds, none have considered the diverse range of cigarette access behaviours encompassed by young people's 'usual' cigarette sources. There are clear qualitative differences in terms of what it means to be a 'smoker' between being given a

cigarette a week by friends and making daily cigarette purchases to sustain a more regular smoking. There are clear qualitative differences, equally, in terms of what it means to ‘usually’ buy cigarettes from shops between making regular cigarette purchases from a range of tobacco retailers and congregating outside shops making hopeful and indiscriminate proxy-purchasing requests of passers-by.

Despite this, qualitative research on youth cigarette access has tended to maintain a focus on the discrete modes of acquisition implied by the relevant cigarette access categories in the SDD and SALSUS. While Robinson and Amos’ (2010) study has highlighted differences in the volume of cigarettes available from social and commercial cigarette sources, and while Donaghy et al (2013) have suggested young people’s avoidance of illicit or counterfeit tobacco may reflect concerns in relation to the presentation of self, none have examined in detail the relative extent of cigarette availability through social and commercial cigarette sources or considered explicitly what these concerns in relation to the presentation of self might be. The framing of young peoples’ usual cigarette sources in the context of Berger and Luckmann’s (1967) social constructionism in this study has afforded an opportunity to explore the social processes underlying young people’s diverse modes of tobacco acquisition in more detail. In addition, framing the social transactions mediating young people’s access to tobacco in the context of Bourdieu’s theory of symbolic capital has afforded an opportunity to dissolve the implied dichotomy between young people’s diverse modes of social and commercial tobacco acquisition.

The primary contribution of this research in this context, as such, is in facilitating a more nuanced understanding of youth access to tobacco to make explicit the social construction of young people’s cigarette access behaviours. The ‘availability’ of cigarettes and other tobacco products among children and young people is contingent not merely on the enactment and enforcement of minimum age laws, but on the willingness of tobacco retailers to sell cigarettes to underage customers, on the willingness of others within local communities to facilitate access via proxy purchases, and on the meaning and subjective significance of the diverse cigarette sources accessed by young people in the context of their social worlds. These meanings are also likely to vary between settings. Findings from both this and

Donaghy et al's (2013) study, for example, suggest that young people avoid illicit and counterfeit product on the basis of concerns in relation to the presentation of self. Findings from the North of England, by contrast, and the focus on illicit tobacco in the Scottish smoking prevention strategy (Scottish Government, 2013), suggests illicit sources remain a clear concern in working towards the eventual curtailment of youth cigarette access. Young people's usual cigarette sources are contextually relative, and population surveys are likely to aggregate considerable variation both within and between communities. The particularities of the communities in which young people's 'usual' cigarette access behaviours are routinely enacted therefore need to be more fully explored.

Findings from this study have shown that young people mobilise their social capital resources in negotiating access to tobacco. The extent to which young people's social networks and resources are likely to facilitate or restrict cigarette availability is also likely to vary between settings. This study examined young people's smoking and cigarette access behaviours in two disadvantaged communities in Edinburgh to avoid locating any differences between the communities arbitrarily in the context of health inequalities. Millett et al (2011) have shown, however, that the increase in perceived 'difficulty' associated with buying cigarettes from shops in the SDD following the increase in the minimum age of sale may be limited to children from more affluent backgrounds. Qualitative studies have similarly found that young people in disadvantaged communities report very little difficulty sourcing cigarettes, simply recruiting others to make proxy purchases on their behalf where retail cigarette access is experienced to be 'difficult'. While proxy purchases are prohibited under the Tobacco and Primary Medical Services (Scotland) Act 2010, findings from this study suggest that proxy purchases were already widely perceived to be illegal before the enactment of the legislation. This highlights the need for further research to explore the differential impact of the legislation in communities with contrasting socioeconomic profiles in order to inform the development of community level interventions to address prevailing norms. If proxy purchase were already widely perceived to be illegal before their prohibition under the Tobacco and Primary Medical Services (Scotland) Act 2010, the willingness of individuals within these

communities to make cigarette purchases on behalf of underage young people is unlikely to be substantially altered.

The importance of proxy cigarette purchases in facilitating youth access to tobacco is highlighted explicitly in *Creating a Tobacco free Generation: a Tobacco Control Strategy for Scotland*. However, specific actions to reduce the availability of cigarettes and other tobacco products for children and young people are addressed primarily in the context of trading standards sales law enforcement activities under the Enhanced Tobacco Sales Enforcement Programme (ETSEP). This is problematic for two reasons. Firstly, because there is limited evidence to suggest enforcement activity is impacting on illegal sales to children. In 2013, only 3 reports of tobacco sales-related offences were referred to the procurator fiscal, in part due to the introduction of fixed penalty notices for sales offences (SCOTSS, 2014). If fixed penalty notices were deterring retailers from making sales to underage young people, this would clearly not represent an issue. However, failure rates during test purchases were higher on retest than during the initial enforcement visits in 2012/2013, with around a third of retailers already subject to enforcement action making illegal sales to children. Given the very low rates of enforcement activity undertaken by trading standards in the UK, and both the high failure rates on retest and the low levels of referral to the procurator fiscal reported by trading standards in Scotland, the ETSEP is unlikely, in isolation, to impact meaningfully on youth cigarette access.

Further, Renfrewshire Trading Standards has piloted a series of innovative test 'proxy' purchases to assess the extent of proxy sales in the local authority. Officers were accompanied by a 17 year old volunteer who attempted to make a cigarette purchase from four retailers. Where the retailer refused a sale, officers attempted to make a purchase on the volunteer's behalf. Each of the four retailers tested refused the underage volunteer a sale. Three of the four, however, sold cigarettes to the proxy purchaser, with the fourth retailer explaining that he would have been prepared to make a sale once the young person had left the premises (SCOTSS, 2014). It is very apparent, as such, both that enforcement action to address proxy sales should be incorporated more explicitly into the ETSEP, and that the focus on enforcement in the Scottish smoking prevention strategy should be expanded to encompass ASSETS

based approaches to integrate efforts to impact on ‘availability’ more closely with educational and other approaches to engage young people in the policy process. The consistency with which participants in this study were able to mobilise their social capital resources in circumventing sales laws, to iterate, suggests the increase in the minimum age of sale and local authority enforcement activities are unlikely to impact meaningfully on youth cigarette access and therefore to curtail youth smoking in the absence of community level interventions to address prevailing norms.

This study also aimed to explore participants’ perceptions and representations of cigarette brand image and locate these representations in the context of the impending ban on PoS advertising and the eventual introduction of generic packaging in the UK. Chapter 6 frames participants’ individual product preferences in the context of Keller’s (1993) model of customer based brand equity to locate the language and perceived characteristics through which participants expressed their individual product preferences in the context of the range of dimensions or brand ‘attributes’ most commonly examined in relevant research. These attributes are further located in the context of Bourdieu’s (1984) thesis on ‘distinction’ in this Chapter to highlight their particular salience in the context of participants’ social worlds. Participants’ apprehension of a language through which to express appropriate tastes and dispositions in this context was thereby implicated in the development of their smoking identities, with the more discerning tastes of regular smokers juxtaposed with their visceral intolerance of the more rudimentary tastes of others, including via user and usage related imagery.

The very high levels of brand awareness demonstrated by participants in this study, including experimental smokers and those who had never smoked, provides support for the likely efficacy of the ban on PoS cigarette displays. Not only were experimental and non-smokers able to recall brand names, but also packaging and pricing information, with pricing information in particular associated with exposure at the point of sale. While the relationship between minimum age laws and ‘availability’ is complex, the impact of the ban on PoS displays, once this is fully implemented in 2015, is likely to be fairly immediate. Removing cigarettes from the PoS will impact directly on young people’s levels of exposure to tobacco related

imagery. While exposure, clearly, does not equate straightforwardly with ‘attractiveness’ in this context, the ban on PoS displays is likely to reduce the potential for tobacco companies to communicate with underage customers through product design innovations, and the vociferous opposition to the legislation expressed by regular smokers in this study suggests the ban on PoS displays is also likely to be subjectively meaningful for young smokers, for example by limiting the broader social relevance of their product related knowledge.

This study also suggests some further avenues through which to explore the relationship between generic cigarette packaging and the perceived ‘attractiveness’ of smoking. While all participants demonstrated high levels of brand awareness, regular smokers distinguished themselves from others primarily in terms of their knowledge of a range of non-product related attributes corresponding with a range of perceived functional, experiential and symbolic benefits. These perceived brand attributes and benefits, communicated through a language describing a range of perceived brand characteristics and constitutive of a body of knowledge through which to express distinction, were intimately implicated in participants’ understandings of what it means to be a smoker. Indeed, such was the importance placed on the distinction between more or less ‘discerning’ smokers in this context that those who lacked the requisite cultural competencies to adequately explicate their individual product preferences were not acknowledged to be proper smokers, but rather dismissed as ‘children’ who ought not to be smoking at all. This clearly has implications for proposals to introduce generic packaging in the UK.

The introduction of plain or generic cigarette packaging features prominently in *Creating a Tobacco free Generation: a Tobacco Control Strategy for Scotland*. Following legal challenges by the tobacco industry and public consultation, draft regulations for the plain packaging of tobacco products were published in July 2014. This follows the publication of the Chantler (2014) review on the standardised packaging of tobacco products, which concluded unambiguously that while the relationships between the intermediate outcomes most commonly employed in relevant studies are not unproblematic, there is clear and consistent evidence to suggest that the introduction of plain or generic cigarette packaging is likely to

contribute to a small but meaningful reduction in youth smoking over time. This thesis also makes a small but novel contribution to research in this area. By shifting the focus from young people's perceptions of a range of brand attributes following exposure to both branded and plain or incrementally plainer cigarette packaging to the 'meanings' young people invest in their individual product choices, this thesis investigates young people's perceptions and representations of cigarette brand image explicitly, rather than investigating the diverse ways in which marketing communication intersect with and inform these brand related perceptions.

As highlighted in Section 8.5, and while participants identified a range of perceived brand attributes in elaborating on their individual product preferences, these attributes were divorced, to an extent, from their framing as marketing variables subject to manipulation. While participants foregrounded a range of perceived brand attributes and benefits in elaborating on their individual product preferences, they foregrounded their individual product preferences to express distinctions between themselves and others. As such, while the majority of studies examining the anticipated impact of generic cigarette packaging on youth smoking highlight the particular utility of removing specific branding elements to reduce the perceived 'attractiveness' of cigarettes and other tobacco products for children and young people, findings from this study suggest standardisation may be equally important irrespective of the 'plainness' of the packaging, removing the product differentiation through which young people express distinctions in the context of their social networks, and limiting the social salience of cigarette branding as an 'identity tool'.

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Appendix A: Topic guide

Introduction:

Hi. I'm Thomas and I'm a student at the University of Edinburgh. I'm doing a study on smoking and young people for my course, and I'm very interested to hear what you have to say about smoking and smoking related stuff. I'll be asking you some questions, but really I'm just interested in what you have to tell me, so there are no right or wrong answers: the more time you spend talking and the less I do the better.

1. Engagement

...before we start it'd be good to find out a little more about you. As you can probably tell I'm not from here and I've not been [here/ to organisation/place] before...

1.1 How do you guys know each other? Do you [all] know each other through [organisation]/ or meet through [place]?

- do most of your [other] friends attend [organisation/place] or do you know them through school/clubs (ie boxing)/other/all of the above?

1.2. Can you tell me a little bit about... (the time you spend at) [organisation/place]?

- how long/often have you been coming to [organisation/place] What do you think of [organisation/place]?
- what sorts of things do you do here? What activities do you generally take part in in your free time?

1.3 And what about [local area]? What sort of place is it to live? What sort of things are there for young people to do? (Check which area is referred to)

- ie where do you go and when? With whom? What do you do ie in/out of schools, evenings/weekends etc. Smoking, drinking, age range of friendship group etc?

2. Smoking

... you mentioned smoking/I'm hoping to learn a little bit about smoking. Do you think smoking is quite common...

2.1 Do you or your friends smoke?

- where, when and with whom. Patterns of use. Particular days and times of day? Typical day? Are these real friends? Info re group composition + managing interactions. Group, weekends, times.
- can you remember the first time you tried a cigarette yourself? + where, when, with whom?

2.2 And what do you think about smoking?

- which young people smoke + own smoking. Attitudes re image, social context, cessation etc.

2.3 Do people know about your smoking?

- ie home/school/peers/other? Do you smoke at school/home? Do[es] parent[s/responsible other] smoke? What do they think about your smoking? Do you smoke together? Are there rules about smoking in the home? What are these? What about school?
- Do you smoke in your friend's or someone else's home? Do others smoke in yours? What do parents/others think about it?

3. Sources and Access

...if young people smoke, would you say it was easy or difficult to get hold of cigarettes...OR...is it difficult to find cigarettes?

3.1 How?

- buy them or get them from friends or family/other? Which shops/friends/family? Particular vendors/places? Under the counter? Can you give me an example? Are particular places avoided? *Where do you get the money from?*

3.2 Do people usually get all their cigarettes in one go?

- ie regular suppliers? do you/your friends carry cigarettes around? Who/which? Sometimes/always? How many? Brands? Do you/they sell cigarettes? Costs + costs at school etc vs shops/illegals?

3.3 Do you have cigarettes with you now?

- where did they come from? Do you share cigarettes with friends/others? Which, where and when? Are there people you can ask for a cigarette if you want one? Are these the same people?

3.4 What would you do if someone who wasn't a friend or you didn't know asked you for a cigarette?

- what decides whether someone gives you a cigarette/ whether you give one to someone? Is it important where and who cigarettes come from? Why? Is money involved?

3.5 I've heard you can also get cheap cigarettes from other places? Are there other places you can buy i.e not in shops? Other Adults?

- Do you? Ice-cream vans/chippies/builders/black market/duty-free/counterfeit? What about friends or other people you know? Stories?

4. Legislation and Policy

...I'm looking at what's happening now with all the new laws being brought in. Do you know anything about the new laws? For example: you have to be 18 now to buy cigarettes; it used to be only 16...

4.1 Do you think this has made it more difficult to buy or get hold of cigarettes?

- Have the places you get cigarettes changed as you get older? Is this because of the law? Do you think the law has affected you in any way at all? How?

4.2 Do you think making it more difficult to get cigarettes will make people stop, or smoke less?

- Is it ever difficult to get cigarettes? are there any other places you would try if you couldn't get them where you usually do?

4.3 What about other laws like banning people buying cigarettes for under 18s,

- is it common for people to ask adults to buy cigarettes for them? which adults? Process? Do you think (these) adults would stop buying cigarettes for kids if it was illegal?

4.4 ...or letting the police confiscate them?

- how do you think people would react if the police took their cigarettes? How would you feel? What would you do?

4.4 What about things like banning cigarette displays from shops? Would this help?

- Have you heard about this legislation? What do you think of it?

5 Plenary

...thank you very much. It's been really interesting talking to you. Is there anything else that you can think of that seems important, or just something you want to say?...OK. In that case, I just want to ask you a final question. I want you to think about what we've been talking about, and tell me what you think on balance. What do you think is the really important thing...

5.1 Should young people be allowed to smoke if they want or is it right that the Government should try to stop them?

- Prompts: what do you think the government should or shouldn't do to stop people smoking, or to stop them starting?
- Would you like to stop smoking [ensure cessation info. available]?

6. Final opportunity for participants to raise any points for discussion

7. Close and thanks for participation

Appendix B: Information and consent forms for participating organisations

	
<h3>'Talking about cigarettes and smoking': Information for participating organisations</h3>	
	
<p>Dear Team. I'm Thomas, and I'm doing a PhD on smoking and cigarette access among young people following the increase in the age of cigarette purchase in October 2007.</p> <p>I am hoping some of the young people attending your organisation may want to participate...</p>	<p>Thomas Tjelta</p>  <p>t.a.tjelta@sms.ed.ac.uk 0131 650 30 34</p>

Why smoking and young people?

The legal minimum age of cigarette purchase was raised from 16 to 18 years in October 2007 as part of a range of measures to reduce the 'availability, affordability and attractiveness' of cigarettes for young people. The Smoking Prevention Action Plan introduced additional preventive measures including ring-fenced funding for local authority trading standards teams to increase test purchasing and retailer education initiatives.

However: there is good evidence that children and young people experience little difficulty buying cigarettes from shops. Young people may also access cigarettes from friends and a number of other non-commercial sources: particularly younger children and those experiencing difficulties accessing cigarettes commercially.

About this study?

This study is funded by the UK Centre for Tobacco Control Studies and aims to engage young people aged 13 and 15 in discussion around smoking, cigarette access and related

topics. Findings will be disseminated in reports and will inform an eventual PhD thesis. A summary report will be made available to individual participants and to participating organisations by request.

About me?

I have worked with children and young people in various capacities and in varying contexts for a number of years, including in residential care and in local authority Children and Families duty teams. I also have enhanced disclosure from Disclosure Scotland.

I have enjoyed engaging with children and young people in my previous line of work, and would welcome any opportunity to do so again as a public health researcher: I would be particularly keen, for example, to take part in organised activities, or to volunteer my time in some other capacity to establish rapport with eventual study participants.

What will participation entail?

Young people will be given an option to participate in individual interviews or to attend with one or two friends. Interviews will be recorded and transcribed (with participant's consent), and will ideally take place within your organisation. Should young people state a particular preference for meeting elsewhere, or should a suitable space be unavailable, interviews can be scheduled to take place in a café or similar public venue.

Participants will be free to withdraw consent at any time, and topics for discussion will include:

- Young people's views and perspectives on smoking
- the social context of smoking
- cigarette access and interpersonal exchange

Confidentiality?

The study will adhere to University of Edinburgh confidentiality and confidential waste disposal guidelines. Transcripts will be anonymised, and recordings, transcripts and eventual fieldnotes will be destroyed following the completion of the thesis.

I look forward to meeting with you and discussing the project in a little more detail. Do feel free to contact me with any presenting concerns or queries in the meanwhile. If you prefer to speak with someone less directly involved in the study you can also contact either:

Amanda Amos, Head of Public Health Sciences, University of Edinburgh:
Amanda.Amos@ed.ac.uk

or

Deborah Ritchie, Head of Nursing Studies, University of Edinburgh:
Deborah.Ritchie@ed.ac.uk

Best regards and with thanks,

Thomas Tjelta

Consent Form: Youth Organisations

We consent to the student recruiting young people to the 'talking about cigarettes and smoking' study through our organisation. We understand participation is entirely voluntary, that consent will be sought from individual study participants and that opt-out consent forms will be provided for the benefit of parents and carers.

We understand that ethical approval has been granted by the School for Health in Social Science at the University of Edinburgh, and that the student holds certification of Enhanced Disclosure from Disclosure Scotland.

Signature:.....

For and on behalf of:.....

Appendix C: Information and consent forms for study participants

	
<h3>'Talking about cigarettes and smoking'</h3>	
	
<p>Hi there! I'm Thomas and I'm studying at the University of Edinburgh. I'm looking at smoking and finding out what young people have to say about it.</p> <p>Why not talk to me and tell me what you think...</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Thomas Tjelta</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">t.a.tjelta@sms.ed.ac.uk 0131 650 30 34</p>

Talk to me about what?

If you want to take part, you can choose to talk with me on your own or with a friend, or with several friends if you prefer. We can meet at the Youth Club, at a Café or somewhere else nearby. I will be interested in finding out things like:

- What you think about cigarettes and smoking
- The different places where young people smoke
- Where young people get their cigarettes from

I will look forward to meeting with you and hearing what you have to say.

What's it for?

The first reason for doing this study is that it's important for people to understand what young people think about the issues facing them. The second reason is that I'm a student, and I have chosen to do this study to pass my course.

I am therefore hoping you will tell me your opinions and about your experiences of smoking so I can learn more about where, when, why and with whom young people smoke and where they get their cigarettes. I can then share this information with other people who are interested in young people and smoking.

Which other people?

Anything you tell me will be confidential: no one else will find out what you said except my supervisors at the university, and they won't know who you are. Obviously I would have to tell someone if I found out something very serious, but it would have to be something very, very serious concerning your wellbeing and this is unlikely to happen.

I would also like to record our conversation if that's ok with you. I will take the recording and write it up so I can learn from what you've told me. I would change your name and follow lots of other guidelines to make sure everything remains confidential.

Later on I'll be writing up what I have written in a report and I'll be more than happy to share a summary with you if you ask me to. If you see your own words in this report only you will ever know you spoke them.

Do I have to take part?

No-one has to take part and it will not make any difference to anyone but you and me if you do or don't. I'm asking for your help because I am interested in what you have to say, and I think it's important to know what different young people have to say about things like smoking. If you decide to take part then change your mind just let me know and I'll remove anything you've said from my report.

Do I want to take part?

I hope so. If you do, give your parents or carers the information leaflet and give me the consent form at the end of this letter. It just tells me you're happy to take part. If you change your mind, that won't be a problem. If you have any other questions you would like to ask you can contact me at the university, or just ask me when you see me.

You can call me on 0131 650 30 34 or send me an e-mail: t.a.tjelta@sms.ed.ac.uk.

So where do we meet?

.....

And when?

.....

Consent Form

My name is:(I only need your first name)

I would like to participate in the 'talking about cigarettes and smoking' study. I understand the information I have been provided with and that I can withdraw from the study at any time.

My postcode is:

OR

I don't know my postcode, but my street is called.....

Signature:.....Date:.....

Please give this form to me when you see me, or give it to

Thank you for agreeing to take part. I look forward to speaking with you soon. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me or write to me using the contact details provided on the information sheet.

If you would like to speak with someone else who is not directly involved in the project but knows about this type of study, or if you wish to make a complaint, please contact Sarah at the University. You can find her details below:

Professor Sarah Cunningham-Burley
Public Health Sciences
University of Edinburgh

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Appendix D: Information and consent forms for parents

	
<h3>'Talking about cigarettes and smoking': Information for parents and carers</h3>	
<p>My name is Thomas Tjelta and I am a PhD student at the University of Edinburgh.</p> <p>I am doing a study looking at young people's smoking and cigarette access behaviours. Your child has expressed an interest in taking part in the study. This is an opt-out consent form. If you have any questions or reservations about your child taking part please feel free to contact me.</p>	 <p>Thomas Tjelta, PhD Student (0131) 650 30 34 t.a.tjelta@sms.ed.ac.uk</p>

What will I be talking to your child about?

If your child wants to, and it's OK with you, I am asking your child and other young people of a similar age to talk to me for around 30-45 minutes about their views and experiences of cigarettes and smoking, including where young people smoke and how they get their cigarettes.

Why is this important?

I'm sure you'll agree it's important for young people to have an opportunity to express their views and opinions on matters concerning them.

When and where will discussions be held?

Discussions will take place in
or another public place on

Who will know what my child has said?

No one other than me will have access to any information. Interview data will be included in my PhD thesis and reports, but these will not include your child's name or any other personal details and strict confidentiality guidelines will be adhered to.

If it's OK with the young people I will record the interviews. These recordings will be transcribed and written records will be kept in locked

filing cabinets in the University. Both recordings and transcripts will be destroyed following completion of the thesis.

Does my child have to do this?

None of the young people are expected to take part. Participation is entirely voluntary, and if you would rather they didn't get involved this will not make any difference to the youth workers. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Your child will be free to choose not to participate at any time.

What will happen afterwards?

All the young people taking part will be provided with a summary report by request. Participants will also be provided with a voucher to thank them for their contribution.

What will happen now?

If you are happy for your child to take part I will ask them to sign a consent form. If you would rather your child did NOT take part please letor me know as soon possible. If you would like to discuss the matter further please contact me on 0131 650 30 34 or e-mail: t.a.tjelta@sms.ed.ac.uk, or leave a message for me to contact you.

With many thanks in advance for your time,

Thomas Tjelta

If you do NOT want your child to take part in the study,
please let
or me know within 3 days of initial receipt of this letter.

Appendix E: Research Ethics Checklist

Thomas Tjelta

5.11.09

Research ethics checklist

This code applies to all research carried out in the CHSS, whether by staff or students. The checklist should be completed by the Principal Investigator, leader of the research group, or supervisor of the student(s) involved. Those completing the checklist should ensure, wherever possible, that appropriate training and induction in research skills and ethics has been given to researchers involved prior to completion of the checklist, including reading the College's Code of Research Ethics <http://www.hss.ed.ac.uk/Research/documents/finaethicsframeworkMar08.pdf>
This is particularly important in the case of student research projects.

If the answer to any of the questions below is 'yes', please give details of how this issue is being/will be addressed to ensure that ethical standards are maintained.

1 THE RESEARCHERS	
Your name and position	Thomas Tjelta, PhD Student
Proposed title of research	Exploring consequences associated with the increase in the age of cigarette purchase
Funding body	ESRC
Time scale for research	2008-2011
List those who will be involved in conducting the research, including names and positions (e.g. 'PhD student')	Thomas Tjelta, PhD Student
2 RISKS TO, AND SAFETY OF, RESEARCHERS	
Those named above need appropriate training to enable them to conduct the proposed research safely and in accordance with the ethical principles set out by the College	No Student has accessed relevant training and is familiar with the principles outlined in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences handbook. Student is also a qualified social worker and has several years experience working with children and young people in various settings/contexts.
Researchers are likely to be sent or go to any areas where their safety may be compromised	No Student will be spending time in the study communities and University of Edinburgh personal safety guidelines will be adhered to at all times. Student has also developed personal safety training for the benefit of Age Concern Bristol volunteers and attended Lampleugh Trust personal safety training.
Could researchers have any conflicts of interest?	No

3 RISKS TO, AND SAFETY OF, PARTICIPANTS	
Could the research induce any psychological stress or discomfort?	No Cigarette sources may potentially represent a sensitive issue or discussion point. This will be addressed by assuring confidentiality, securing participant consent and emphasising the voluntary nature of both participation and eventual disclosure. Participants will not be prompted to disclose specific cigarette sources. Those requiring cessation support will be referred to the NHS helpline.
Does the research involve any physically invasive or potentially physically harmful procedures?	No
Could this research adversely affect participants in any other way?	No
4 DATA PROTECTION	
Will any part of the research involve audio, film or video recording of individuals?	Yes: interviews and focus/discussion groups will be recorded where appropriate and with written consent.
Will the research require collection of personal information from any persons without their direct consent?	No
How will the confidentiality of data, including the identity of participants (whether specifically recruited for the research or not) be ensured?	Identifying participant information will be kept separate from focus group and interview transcripts. Identifying codes will be used to anonymise transcripts and no identifying information will be presented in reports or papers. Young people will not be asked to reveal any specific identifying information, people or retail outlets involved in under-age sales. If they do, any identifying information will be removed from transcripts and will not be shared with other stakeholders.
Who will be entitled to have access to the raw data?	Thomas Tjelta, PhD Student Professor Amanda Amos, Supervisor Deborah Ritchie, Supervisor
How and where will the data be stored, in what format, and for how long?	Softcopies will be stored on a personal computer. Transcribed hardcopies will be kept in a secure filing-cabinet. All data will ultimately be deleted following completion of

	a PhD thesis.
What steps have been taken to ensure that only entitled persons will have access to the data?	The relevant PC is password protected and filing-cabinets will be locked.
How will the data be disposed of?	Through University of Edinburgh confidential waste disposal procedures.
How will the results of the research be used?	To generate a PhD thesis. Attempts will also be made to disseminate findings through papers and conference presentations.
What feedback of findings will be given to participants?	Resulting report/s will be made available to participants.
Is any information likely to be passed on to external companies or organisations in the course of the research?	No
Will the project involve the transfer of personal data to countries outside the European Economic Area?	No
5 RESEARCH DESIGN	
The research involves living human subjects specifically recruited for this research project <i>If 'no', go to section 6</i>	Yes
How many participants will be involved in the study?	It is anticipated 12 individual or paired interviews will be undertaken will be undertaken with young people aged 13 and 15 in each of the two identified communities. A further 12 face-to-face interviews will be undertaken with shopkeepers, trading standards officers and other relevant stakeholders.
What criteria will be used in deciding on inclusion/exclusion of participants?	Young people will be recruited on the basis of age, of living in one of two identified disadvantaged areas and of having regular contact with, knowledge of or involvement in tobacco and smoking. Trading standards officers and shopkeepers will be selected on the basis of knowledge and understanding of issues pertaining to smoking and underage cigarette access in the study communities.
How will the sample be recruited?	Young people will be purposively recruited via detached youthworkers and youth groups. Trading standards officers will be recruited from the Edinburgh Enhanced Tobacco Sales

	Enforcement Team, and local shopkeepers and other relevant stakeholders will be recruited purposively.
Will the study involve groups or individuals who are in custody or care, such as students at school, self help groups or residents of nursing homes?	Yes- youth workers will have a duty of care towards young people under their immediate supervision. Young people will be recruited from informal settings, however, and it is anticipated none will be subject to a care order.
Will there be a control group?	No
What information will be provided to participants prior to their consent? (e.g. information leaflet, briefing session)	An introductory letter and relevant information will be provided through identified youth organisations. Eventual participants will be given an information/consent form and an information/opt-out slip for parents/other responsible adult(s). Trading standards officers will be provided with information via e-mail.
Participants have a right to withdraw from the study at any time. Please tick to confirm that participants will be advised of their rights.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and consent? (e.g. covert observation of people in non-public places)	No
Where consent is obtained, what steps will be taken to ensure that a written record is maintained?	Young people will be asked to sign a consent form at the start of interviews/focus groups. Trading standards officers will be asked to provide consent via e-mail.
In the case of participants whose first language is not English, what arrangements are being made to ensure informed consent?	NA
Will participants receive any financial or other benefit from their participation?	Yes- young people will be given a £10-15 voucher.
Are any of the participants likely to be particularly vulnerable, such as elderly or disabled people, adults with incapacity, your own students, members of ethnic minorities, or in a professional or client relationship with the researcher?	No
Will any of the participants be under 16 years of age?	Yes

Do the researchers named above need to be cleared through the Disclosure/Enhanced Disclosure procedures?	Yes- Certification of Enhanced Disclosure issued by <i>Disclosure Scotland</i> .
Will any of the participants be interviewed in situations which will compromise their ability to give informed consent, such as in prison, residential care, or the care of the local authority?	No
6 EXTERNAL PROFESSIONAL BODIES	
Is the research proposal subject to scrutiny by any external body concerned with ethical approval?	No
If so, which body?	
Date approval sought	
Outcome, if known <i>or</i>	
Date outcome expected	
7 ISSUES ARISING FROM THE PROPOSAL	
<p>This request has been reviewed by two members of the School of health in Social Science Ethics Research Committee. There are a number of issues which require further clarification or should be addressed before ethics approval can be given:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is unclear from the proposal whether young people will be interviewed individually or as part of a focus group. There is also mention of paired interviews, although it is unclear what these might be. The information sheet suggests young people can choose how to meet with the researcher. It should provide more information about the procedures by which this decision will be made. This point requires clarification and the information included in the information sheet. There is potentially a considerable difference in what young people are agreeing to, and the type of data generated by the three methods will be different. For example, in paired or focus group interviews it is reasonable to expect young people to give their views on access to tobacco, and perhaps general information about how young people get or provide access. However, disclosure of personal behaviour should not be an expected part of these interviews, and it cannot be expected that such information offered in these situations will be accurate. <i>Young people will be given a choice of method (See 3.2 para. 5). Paired interviews represent a middle-ground between individual interviews and focus-groups (See 3.2 para. 3), and have proven particularly appropriate in informal settings (See 3.2 para. 5). Familiarisation visits will take place prior to recruitment and individual preferences (ie interview, group discussion) will be agreed with prospective participants. The study is not concerned primarily with the accuracy of information provided but rather with</i> 	

exploring young people's views and perspectives/construction of social reality etc. Topic guides will be adapted/modified accordingly following pilot interviews (See 3.3 para 2).

2. Information about place of interview is not provided. Will young people have a choice of venue? How is decision made? *YP will have a choice of venue where one is available (See 3.3 para. 3)*
3. The issue of right to consent by young people is addressed, but it is unclear where and when the interviews/focus groups will take place and if they take place in, for example, Youth Centres, how consent is obtained from these organisations. Do they have a responsibility to let parents know that the organisation has agreed to be part of the research? *Consent will be obtained from youth and other relevant organisations during the process of negotiating access. Opt-out forms will be provided for the benefit of parents/carers (See 5.0 para. 6).*
4. Mention is made of pilot interviews, but it is unclear who these are with. If they are not part of the 12 young people to be recruited, this requires clarification. *They are not (See 3.4 para 3).*
5. We are unclear why young people are asked to give their name and full address. A postal code is sufficient to place people on the SIMD. It would be appropriate to let young people know how to contact the researcher should they wish to see the report, rather than giving him their name. *It is anticipated that not all young people will know their home postcode. Recruitment will also involve familiarisation visits to relevant settings, and it is anticipated young people's names will already be known to the student. The information sought on the consent form is identical to that employed in a recent PhD study at the university of Edinburgh which received ethical approval from SHSS (Participants will only be asked to supply address if postcode is unknown - see Information Sheet YP).*
6. There is little possibility for potential participants to make contact with the researcher to get more information, and then make the decision about whether or not to participate. In view of the potential sensitive nature of the research, this measure would improve the nature of informed consent. It may also prevent attrition, because young people know exactly what they are agreeing to. *Recruitment will involve familiarisation visits to relevant organisations/venues during which time the study and the nature of eventual involvement will be discussed with participants. The information sheet also includes contact details for the student and an independent third party (See Information Sheet YP)*
7. The information sheet should also let participants know that they can withdraw at any time (or prior to submission of the thesis in X) and that their information can be removed from the study. The sheet should also include a contact other than the researcher in case of complaint. *Young people's right to withdraw from the study is made explicit on the consent form and has been included in the Information Sheet (See information Sheet YP). Contact details for an independent third party contact have also been incorporated.*
8. The information sheet glosses over some sensitive issues, emphasising that it is

young people's general smoking behaviour that is of interest. The proposal emphasises access and trade of tobacco by young people. This needs to be clarified in the proposal and reflected accurately in the information sheet to facilitate informed consent. *Issues around cigarette access have been highlighted in the information sheet (See Information Sheet YP – bullet 3 + What's it for...). Young people will not be prompted to disclose specific cigarette sources or discuss illegal activity (See 5.0 para. 3).*

9. In the information sheet to Retailers, no mention is given that the interview is to be recorded and transcribed. Where are these interviews to take place? Will the possibility of disclosure of illegal sales to under-age customers come up under discussions, and how will this be handled? *Information sheet has been amended to include the following: 'Interviews will be recorded and transcribed with your permission only' (See Information Sheet Retailers). Interviews with retailers will take place in shops (See 3.3 para 3). Retailers will not be prompted to discuss illegal sales. There is anecdotal evidence that some have experienced aggression and coercion from young people attempting to buy cigarettes, however, and interviews will provide an opportunity for retailers to discuss these issues if they choose to do so. It is recognised that this and similar discussion may foreground sensitive issues, and both the names/location of shops and the names of individual retailers will be anonymised (See 5.0 para 2). 'Sensitising' discussions, however, suggest retailers are primarily concerned with the measures proposed in the Tobacco Bill, and with proxy purchases (by adults on behalf of YP which are not currently illegal).*
10. There is no information letter to Stakeholders and in the guide they are being asked to disclose information about potentially illegal activity. Is this information to be used in the analysis? If not, why is it being asked? *Stakeholders will be asked to contribute views and perspectives on potentially illegal activity rather than to disclose specific information. Knowledge of such activities will clearly vary between, for example, trading standards officers and youth club workers. Youth club workers are unlikely to be aware of specifics but may contribute their perceptions of young people's ease of access to illicit cigarette sources. Trading Standards officers will not and will not be asked to disclose specific information.*

These points need to be addressed and returned to the Committee Chair, who will consult with the second reviewer.

December 10th 2009, Guro Huby, Chair, SHSS Research Ethics Committee

8 Ethical consideration by School

The following section should be completed by the Head of School once the proposal has been considered by the School's research group.

I confirm that the proposal detailed above has received ethical approval from the School [* subject to approval by the external body named in section 6].

Signature

Date