

Submission



Proposed actions to achieve the Smokefree 2025 goal, which will inform the development of the Smokefree Aotearoa 2025 Action Plan.

PREPARED BY: Ashburton District Council
PO Box 94
ASHBURTON 7774

Strategy & Policy Manager
toni.durham@adc.govt.nz

SUBMITTED TO: Ministry of Health
Smokefree 2025 Action Plan
Proposals

smokefree2025@health.govt.nz

ADC **does not** have any commercial interests in tobacco or vaping products.

Introduction

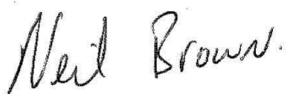
1. Ashburton District Council (Council) welcomes the opportunity to submit on the discussion document released by the Ministry of Health - *Proposed actions to achieve the Smokefree 2025 goal, which will inform the development of the Smokefree Aotearoa 2025 Action Plan*.
2. Located an hour's drive south of Christchurch, more than 35,300¹ residents live in the district, with the main town of Ashburton accounting for over 50% of residents. The rest of our residents live rurally or in smaller towns or villages.
3. Ashburton district has experienced moderate and sustained population increase since the mid-1990's, increasing by 23% between 2006 and 2013 (a 3.3% increase per year). This growth, however, is now slowing, with an average growth of 1.3% per year since 2013. The expansion of irrigation and agricultural diversification on the Canterbury Plains have been major factors in this growth.
4. Despite this sustained population growth, the number of our residents who regularly smoke has dropped from 4,460 in 2006 to 3,825 in 2018². Currently, 14.4% of our residents smoke regularly, higher than the national 13.2%.
5. Council has recognised the importance of leadership at all levels and across all sectors and organisations to achieve a Smokefree Aotearoa by 2025 through protecting children from exposure to tobacco marketing and promotion, reducing the supply of, and demand for tobacco and providing the best possible support for quitting.
6. We first introduced a Smokefree Playground Policy trial in 2007 and now have a [Smokefree Outdoor Areas Policy](#) as we believe that the children and young people of our district have a right to be able to enjoy playground and sport field facilities provided by Council in a smoke-free environment.

¹ Source: Statistics New Zealand Population Estimates 30 June 2020

² Source: Statistics New Zealand Census 2018

Proposals

7. Council supports the overall goal of a Smokefree Aotearoa by 2025. While existing measures have gone some way to promoting cessation and protecting youth uptake, we are supportive of further initiatives and measures to make the Smokefree 2025 a reality.
8. As an early adopter of a smokefree outdoor areas policy, we would be heartened to see all local authorities mandated to designate their outdoor areas smokefree by 2025.
9. In 2015, Councils (including Ashburton District Council) and Local Government New Zealand requested that the government develop and implement legislation to prohibit smoking outside cafes, restaurants and bars. Many jurisdictions in similar countries (Australia, Canada, and the USA) have long had effective laws for various types of smokefree outdoor areas. People trying to quit smoking need places where being smokefree is normal, and international evidence indicates that smokefree outdoor hospitality areas increase quitting attempts and reduce relapses. We would support this legislation being developed as a further measure in the Smokefree Aotearoa Action Plan.
10. Further to this Council would not support designated smoking areas within these hospitality venues as they are not supportive of those trying to quit smoking, do not role model positive behaviours to our young people and create further obstacles to achieve Smokefree 2025.
11. Council supports in principal the concept of a Smokefree Generation, to prevent the next generation from purchasing tobacco.
12. From an environmental perspective, Council recognises the Government's priority to improve New Zealand's waterways, including improving water quality through reducing pollution (most discarded cigarette butts end up in waterways). Cleaner waterways support te Mana o te Wai – the integrated and holistic wellbeing of the water, which is recognised in the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management and reflects obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi to actively protect Māori rights and interests, which include those relating to fresh water.
13. Cigarette butts are believed to be the most pervasive form of plastic pollution on the planet. They are also the most common item of litter in New Zealand, accounting for 78 percent of littered items nationally (Keep New Zealand Beautiful 2018). As such, the shift to a Smokefree Aotearoa will go some way to protecting our waterways for both current and future generations.
14. Council notes that collectively, we all have a role to play in reaching a Smokefree Aotearoa. We thank the MoH for the opportunity to make a submission on the discussion document.



Mayor Neil Brown