

# SMOKEFREE OUTDOOR AREAS IN NEW ZEALAND: HOW FAR HAVE WE COME?

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## 1 Introduction

- There has been significant support shown for Smokefree Outdoor Areas (SFOA) by councils in NZ.
- In 2008, 32% of councils in New Zealand (NZ) had a SFOA policy, mostly smokefree playground.
- With the growth in councils adopting SFOA policies and the goal of a Smokefree NZ by 2025, there is a need to assess these policies nationally.

## 2. Objectives

This research examined:

1. the extent and nature of SFOA policies in NZ
2. the process of developing, implementing and promoting compliance with a SFOA policy.

## 3. Methods

- Online survey with 43 of the 67 councils
- Assessed whether the council had a smokefree policy
- Asked what areas the policy covered, the process of developing, implementing and promoting compliance with a smokefree policy, the challenges faced, and plans for future policies.
- SFOA policies were also obtained from 16 of the 24 of the non-responding councils.

## 4. Results

### *Areas covered by SFOA policies*

- 72% (n=31) of councils had a SFOA policy
- 8 had considered extending their SFOA policy
- 16 non-responding councils had a SFOA policy

### *Factors influencing development of SFOA policy:*

- Letters from health advocacy groups
- Funding for development of policy
- Public profile for the council
- Councillor or council staff member

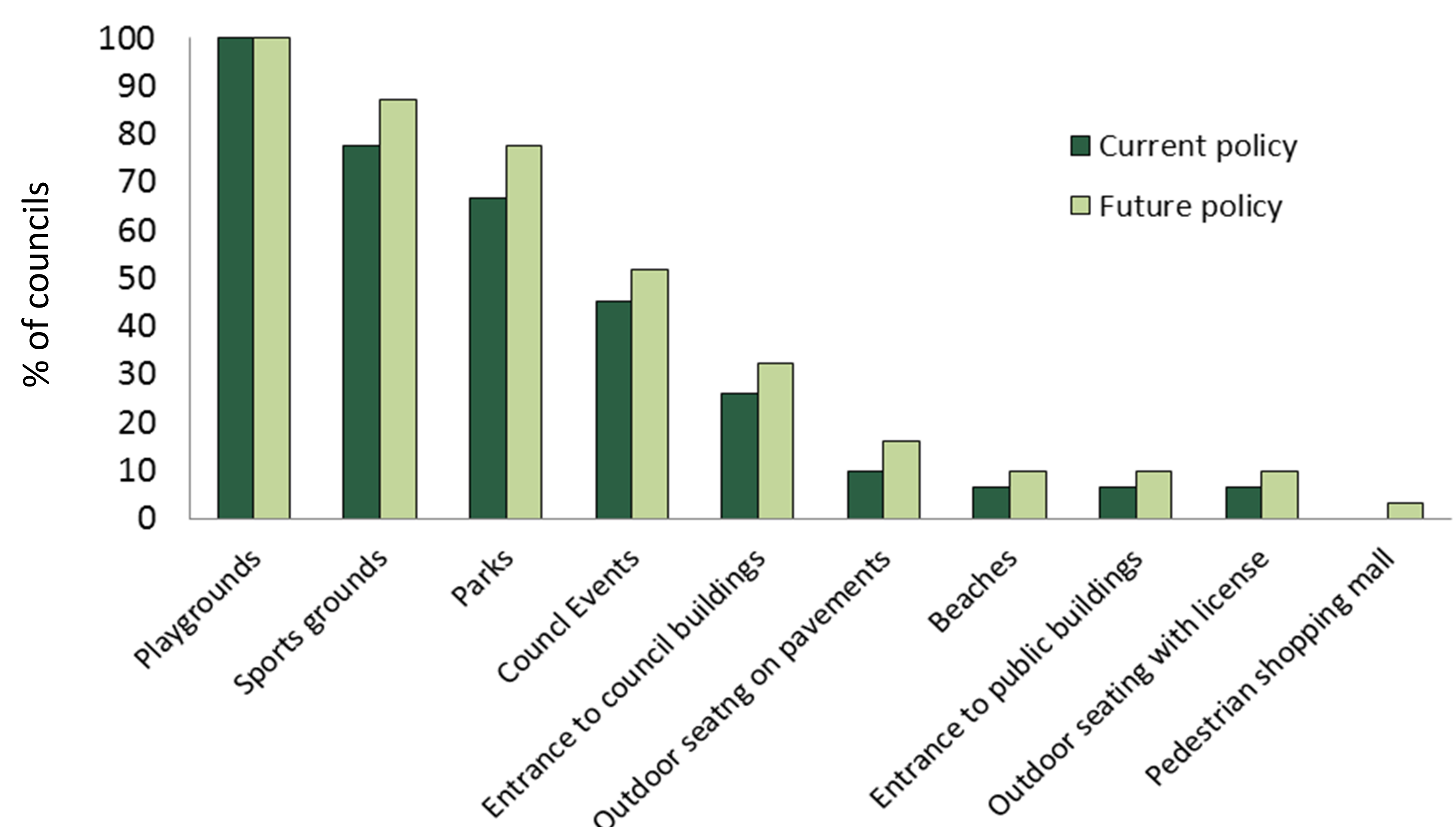
### *Policy Implementation*

- Voluntary compliance was used to ensure compliance with the policies; no councils used active enforcement.
- SFOA policy implementation:
  - Signage
  - Media releases
  - Local newspapers
  - Website
  - Removal of cigarette receptacles
- **Barriers to implementation:**
  - Staff time and resource commitment
  - Financial cost and lack of funding
  - Perception that enforcement is needed
  - Difficulty of monitoring effectiveness of policy

### *Policy Compliance and Evaluation*

- Few (26%) councils have evaluated their policy, but most (88%) felt that it had been successful
- One-third (35.5%) of councils have a review date for policy

## Smokefree outdoor areas covered by current and future council policies



### *Future policy*

- **Main reasons for not extending SFOA policy:**
  - Know initial successful before extending policy
  - SFOA not on the current political agenda
  - Difficulties with compliance
  - Resource issues
- **Half of councils encountered barriers extending SFOA:**
  - Resistance or lack of support from community or council or staff
  - Funding and resourcing
  - Erecting the signage

## 5. Discussion

- The number of councils with a SFOA policy has doubled since 2008.
- In developing policies that go beyond the greenspace, there needs to be engagement of new stakeholders and sectors of the community.
- National legislation may be required to ensure a consistent approach to SFOA throughout NZ.
- Need for policy evaluation.

## 6. Conclusion

There is public support for wider adoption of SFOA. However, whilst this research shows 70% of councils now have a SFOA policy, it also indicates the apparent reticence of councils to move their SFOA policies into other public places. This apparent disparity between public acceptability and council reluctance could impact on NZ's ability to be smokefree by 2025.