

Recreation and Sport Policy

Vision

Recreation and sport contribute to the mental and physical health, active lifestyles and social wellbeing of all.

Values and Principles

Decisions relating to recreation and sport must uphold the following values and principles:

- *Honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi*: For Māori, sports and the art of playing and recreation have been core parts of Māori society for over a thousand years so tākarō Māori should be recognised and supported.
- *Ecological Wisdom*: Communities need access to the natural environment and public open space for a range of recreational opportunities, whilst ensuring sensitive ecological habitats are protected.
- *Social Responsibility*: Recreational and sporting activities should be accessible to all, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or disability, and should be equitably resourced.
- *Appropriate Decision-Making*: Community-led recreation and sport should be prioritised.
- *Non-Violence*: Recreation and sport should be provided and supported in a way that supports wellbeing and avoids harm.
- *Regulation*: Public policy should operate to reduce the harm caused by gambling and to protect our communities and public services from gambling harm. The most harmful forms of gambling should be regulated.

Summary

The Green Party will ensure equitable access to recreational and sporting facilities and, through public funding, ensure that cost is not a barrier to participation in recreation and sport in our communities. We will regulate harmful forms of recreation and sport, including gambling.

Strategic Priorities

The Green Party's strategic goals include:

"We strive to create a more connected, compassionate and equal Aotearoa (where) decision-making about resource use will provide for community participation."

Actions in this policy that will help achieve this include:

- Support ecologically and socially robust decisions on recreational and sporting facilities and activities being made by local communities. (1.1)
- Provide facilities that are sufficient to meet the diverse needs of local communities now and into the future (...). (2.2.1)

- Remove all barriers that discourage and prevent Rainbow people, especially those who are trans, non-binary and intersex, from participating and competing in sports. (2.10)
- Amend all gambling legislation to ensure the primary focus is the elimination of gambling harm. (3.1)

Connected Policies

Through the environmental impact of recreation and sport and its dependence on the natural world, this policy is connected to our [Conservation](#), [Environmental Protection](#) and [Tourism](#) Policies. Gambling is connected to [Animal Welfare](#) and, through funding of community organisations from gambling proceeds, to our [Community and the Economy](#) Policy.

Policy Positions

1. Governance and legislation

- 1.1. Support ecologically and socially robust decisions on recreational and sporting facilities and activities being made by local communities.
- 1.2. Encourage Councils and the Department of Conservation to protect land for recreation and sporting purposes, including the preparation of management plans to ensure reserves are appropriately maintained and used.
- 1.3. Give the Minister of Sport and Recreation responsibility for ensuring:
 - 1.3.1. Adequate funding for local and regional councils, schools, community trusts, Māori organisations and other groups providing recreational and sporting facilities and activities.
 - 1.3.2. Increased participation in recreation and sport, as well as providing pathways for people with potential to perform nationally or internationally.
 - 1.3.3. Education providers are able to make sufficient courses and programmes available to those seeking a career in the recreation or sporting sector, or wishing to develop their skills as coaches, officials and administrators.
 - 1.3.4. Legislation requiring commercial providers of recreational and sporting activities to take all necessary steps to ensure reasonable safety precautions are taken or adhered to.
- 1.4. Collect statistics on participation in a broader range of recreational and sporting activities.
- 1.5. Support the promotion and profiling of a range of recreational and sporting activities to encourage participation, healthy lifestyles, and a highly ethical approach to sporting behaviour.

2. Equitable Access to Recreation and Sport

Issues

Not all communities, or groups within communities, have equal access to recreational and sporting opportunities as part of a healthy lifestyle. This is an issue at all levels, from inequitable support for men's and women's professional sports to inequitable facilities outside of main urban centres.

Actions

A. Facilities and Activities

- 2.1. Increase funding to support the development and maintenance of recreational and sporting facilities and infrastructure.
- 2.2. Provide facilities that are:
 - 2.2.1. sufficient to meet the diverse needs of local communities now and into the future;
 - 2.2.2. a focal point for communities and offer a wide range of activities;
 - 2.2.3. accessible for all users, including disabled people;
 - 2.2.4. easily accessible using active modes (walking and cycling) and public transport (see our [Transport](#) policy);
 - 2.2.5. provided in a way that maximises use of the venue and minimises the costs for individual and group activities; and
 - 2.2.6. developed using 'green' building design and products (see our [Housing and Sustainable Communities](#) policy).
- 2.3. Develop safe walking and cycling options throughout Aotearoa New Zealand for recreation and to access recreational facilities (see our [Transport](#) Policy).
- 2.4. Provide off-road tracks for a range of outdoor recreational activities that also give access to parks and waterways or connect communities and are designed to minimise conflicting needs (e.g. cyclists, walkers, horse riders) and avoid harm to sensitive ecological and environmental habitats.
- 2.5. Provide a range of watersports and water-based activities that minimise conflicting use (e.g. swimming, yachting, kitesurfers) and avoid harm to aquatic life or habitats.
- 2.6. Promote the key role played by regional and national parks, beaches and rivers, and local parks and reserves in the provision of recreational activities.
- 2.7. Support the provision of activities that:
 - 2.7.1. Reflect the age and cultural diversity of the community;
 - 2.7.2. Cater for a range of abilities from beginners to the highly skilled;
 - 2.7.3. Are provided at different times during the day and evening throughout the week;
 - 2.7.4. Promote safety and reduce risk in recreational and sporting activities (e.g. 'learn to swim' and water safety); and
 - 2.7.5. Enable the participation of marginalised groups specifically, including women and disabled people.
- 2.8. Promote the contribution workplaces can make in supporting recreational and sporting activities amongst their employees (see our [Workforce](#) Policy).
- 2.9. Support the provision of services that make community recreation and sports centres accessible to young families, such as crèche, after school and holiday programmes.
- 2.10. Remove all barriers that discourage and prevent Rainbow people, especially those who are trans, non-binary and intersex, from participating and competing in sports.

B. Funding and Pricing

- 2.11. Ensure that public funding for recreation and sports:
 - 2.11.1. Minimises cost as a barrier to participation where possible;
 - 2.11.2. Provides sufficient resources for councils, schools, community trusts, Māori organisations and other groups to meet the recreational and sporting needs of their community;
 - 2.11.3. Does not fund elite and premier grade activities and facilities to the detriment of community activities and infrastructure, recognising that success in elite sport starts with access to great community facilities and activities; and
 - 2.11.4. Enables the participation of marginalised groups, including women and disabled people.
- 2.12. Phase out sports sponsorship by alcohol brands and increase government funding for sponsorship to fill the gap (see our [Drug Law Reform](#) Policy).
- 2.13. Encourage options such as flexible pricing during the day to increase usage in off-peak times, for facilities such as swimming pools and recreation, and sports centres.

C. Volunteers and Coaches

- 2.14. Recognise and support the important contribution of volunteers, coaches, officials and administrators to recreational and sporting activities (see our [Community and the Economy](#) Policy).
- 2.15. Ensure that training and support for coaches, volunteers, officials and administrators are available, accessible and funded.

3. Gambling

Issues

Machine-based or remote interactive gambling, which is conducted for profit, is highly risky, and known to cause significant harm to individuals, whanau and communities, as well as animals. The harms include physical and mental ill-health, crime and addiction; as well as major financial, employment and relationship problems for the problem gambler, with a further ripple effect of negative impacts out to their wider families, friends and workplaces. Much of the research is outdated, but has consistently shown that Māori and Pasifika are more likely to gamble, and are particularly vulnerable to these harms. In Aotearoa New Zealand the abuse of race horses and greyhounds are also believed to be widespread. Using gambling proceeds to fund community and sports groups currently provides a 'moral' justification for gambling harm, and creates a pro-gambling constituency of community organisations that are dependent on grants funding. Unfortunately, those communities that most need that funding are the ones who are most exploited by the proliferation of pokie machines.

Actions

A. Governance and Oversight

- 3.1. Amend all gambling legislation to ensure the primary focus is the elimination of gambling harm.
- 3.2. Require Parliament, as the regulator of gambling, to:

- 3.2.1. Ensure gambling policy decisions are based on robust evidence;
 - 3.2.2. Enable communities to make decisions about gambling;
 - 3.2.3. Continue to allow forms of gambling that research shows cause little harm;
 - 3.2.4. Prevent new forms of gambling that are associated with harm; and
 - 3.2.5. Regulate all existing forms of gambling to prevent or minimise harm.
- 3.3. Disestablish the role of Minister of Racing and place responsibility for all forms of gambling with the Minister of Internal Affairs.
 - 3.4. Ensure that gambling representatives and bodies that rely on funding from gambling cannot unduly influence decisions about regulation of gambling harm.

B. Research and Informed Decision-making

- 3.5. Conduct a full social, economic and environmental impact study on the outcomes of gambling in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 3.6. Conduct ongoing research to monitor the social, economic and environmental impacts of gambling in Aotearoa New Zealand and evaluate harm elimination strategies and progress, with particular emphasis on Māori and Pasifika.
- 3.7. Before the introduction of substantially new forms of gambling into Aotearoa New Zealand, or significant amendments to existing forms of gambling:
 - 3.7.1. Ensure the potential impacts are comprehensively researched and understood; and
 - 3.7.2. Require a legislated amendment to the Gambling Act.
- 3.8. Facilitate the speedy adoption of gambling harm minimisation measures, with an emphasis on pre-harm prevention and public health approaches, including proactively implementing strategies to raise awareness in vulnerable communities about the risks of gambling harm.
- 3.9. Require all gambling forms that use animals to make publicly available the numbers of animals bred, raced, injured, euthanised and re-homed or retired.

C. Harm from Casino and High-risk Gambling

- 3.10. Support the moratorium on issuing any new casino venue licences in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 3.11. When existing casino venue licences come up for renewal, support the right of the local community to vote in a binding referendum on the future of the casino.
- 3.12. Phase out licensing of non-casino gambling machines.

D. Gambling Proceeds

- 3.13. Before prohibiting non-casino gambling machines, ensure community and voluntary sector organisations currently funded by their proceeds are able to access equivalent funding from elsewhere (see our [Community and the Economy](#) Policy).
- 3.14. Prohibit political parties from benefiting from the profits of the most addictive forms of gambling, including gambling machines and casinos.

- 3.15. Require casinos and, until phased out, other gambling machine venues to distribute a percentage of their profits to the wider community through transparent and publicly accountable funding distribution processes.
- 3.16. Place limits on the amount of non-casino gambling machine proceeds that can go to racing purposes, and replace racing stakes with racing infrastructure as a legitimate purpose.

E. Advertising and Promotion

- 3.17. Review gambling advertising standards, particularly in terms of their impact on children, and establish a fund from the gambling levy to match all gambling advertising with gambling harm prevention public health messages.
- 3.18. Prohibit the advertising and promotion of harmful forms of gambling and gambling products.