

YouGov Survey 2022

ash wales
cymru
action on smoking and health

To understand public opinion in Wales relating to tobacco control, ASH Wales Cymru conducts an annual opinion poll in conjunction with YouGov ¹. The 2022 survey was undertaken between 16th February and 21st March 2022. The survey questions were asked of a representative sample of 1,100 adults (aged 18+) in Wales and was conducted online.

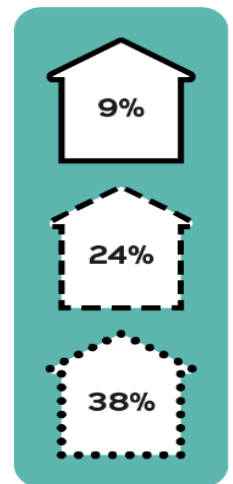
ASH Wales Cymru is recognised as the leading organisation for tobacco control in Wales. Our work brings together experts in population health, behavioural studies, and smoking cessation to secure support for ambitious tobacco control plans for Wales.

Summary of findings

Behaviours and Attitudes

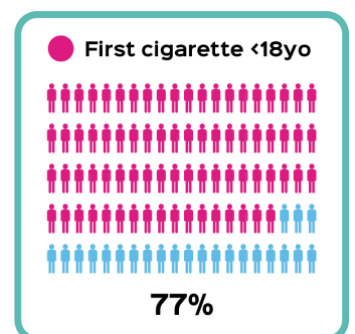
Smoking Prevalence:

- **15%** were current smokers, rising to **25%** amongst 25-34-year-olds.
- **33%** were ex-smokers.
- **52%** had never smoked.
- Only **9%** of homeowners smoked compared to **24%** of private renters, rising to **38%** amongst those who reside in social housing ².
- **11%** of those living in least deprived areas smoke, compared to **31%** of those living in the most deprived.



Smokers:

- **53%** said they would like to give up smoking at some point. Only **7%** said they never wanted to quit.
- Of those that had ever smoked, **77%** said they were under 18 when they tried their first cigarette.
- Only **7%** of ever smokers tried their first cigarette when they were over the age of 21.

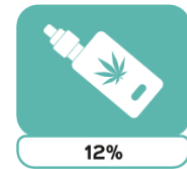
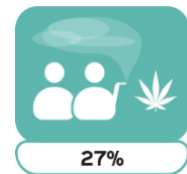


¹ This survey is part of a wider Smokefree GB survey, commissioned by ASH (UK).
ASH Wales Cymru commissions the Welsh dataset.

² Social housing refers to respondents who rent from local authority/a housing association.

Smoking and cannabis use:

- **27%** said they had ever used cannabis, rising to **36%** of 18-24 year olds, and **43%** of 25-34 year olds. **8%** of Welsh adults had used it in the last 12 months, and **3%** used it daily.
- **63%** of adults who have smoked cannabis in the last 12 months, smoked it with tobacco (in a joint or spliff) or in a blunt (cigar).
- **12%** vaped it in liquid form through an e-cigarette or other vaping device.



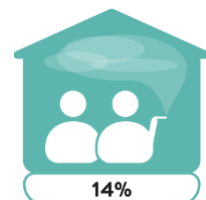
E-cigarettes:

- **8%** of respondents said they currently use an e-cigarette.
- **84%** of those that said they currently use an e-cigarette said they use it with nicotine.
- **33%** of Welsh adults surveyed, including **32%** of smokers, wrongly believe e-cigarettes to be as harmful or more harmful than tobacco cigarettes, a significant increase from 25% in 2018.



Exposure to second-hand smoke:

- **69%** of respondents said that smoking was not allowed at any time in the car they travel in.
- **14%** of all Welsh adults surveyed said that someone smokes most days in the home they live in, rising to **28%** of those who reside in social housing.
- When asked if their tenancy agreement includes a rule that you must not smoke in your home, **40%** of private renters said yes compared to just **9%** of those who reside in social housing.



Attitudes towards smoking:

- **48%** viewed smoking as common, a decrease from 67% in 2016.
- **61%** of 18-24 year-olds still viewed smoking as common.
- When respondents were asked whether people in general approved or disapproved of smoking, **62%** said they thought they disapproved, and **6%** thought they approved.



Policies and Actions

Support for Government action:

- **43%** of those surveyed think the Government are not doing enough to limit smoking, rising to **51%** of 18-24 year-olds. Only **8%** of all those surveyed believe the Government are doing too much.
- The majority (**68%**) would support the setting of an 'Endgame' target date, to reduce smoking in Wales to less than 5% of the population by 2030. **45%** of people surveyed 'strongly' support this action, only **10%** oppose this.



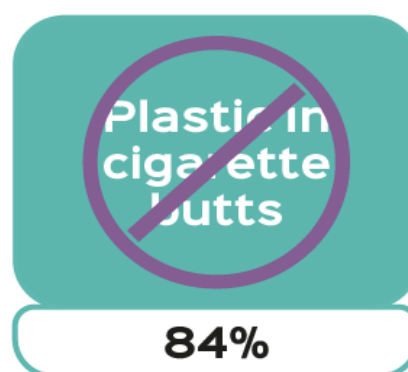
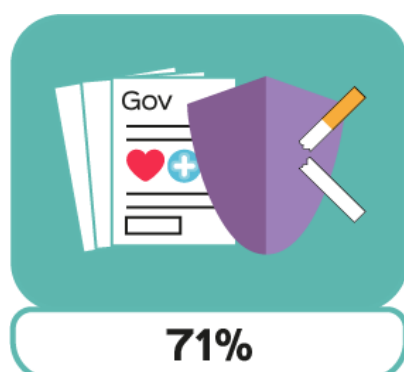
Support for UK Government action:

- **61%** support raising the age of sale from 18 to 21. Only **16%** oppose this move.
- Most respondents (**73%**) support a measure to require tobacco manufacturers to pay a **levy** to Government for measures to help smokers quit and prevent young people from smoking.
- **58%** support a **tax rise** to increase the price of tobacco products. Only **19%** oppose this action.



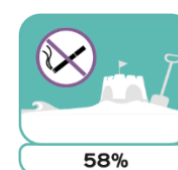
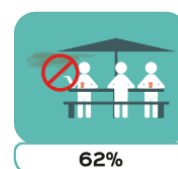
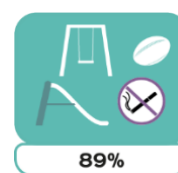
Support for Regulation:

- **83%** support requiring businesses to have a valid licence to sell tobacco, which can be removed if they sell to underage smokers more than once. Only **4%** oppose this.
- **63%** of all Welsh adults surveyed believe penalties for people who sell illegal tobacco should be higher to deter sales.
- The majority of adults (**73%**) support a ban on advertising smoking material and accessories (for example brands of rolling papers).
- **71%** believe that all government health policy should be protected from the influence of the tobacco industry and its representatives.
- The vast majority of respondents (**84%**) support the banning of cigarette butts that contain plastic to protect the environment.



Additional Smoke-free Spaces

- When it comes to protecting children, **89%** of adults were in favour of banning smoking in children’s play areas, including **76%** of smokers.
- The vast majority (**80%**) believe smoking should be banned in outdoor areas where children play sport, with **59%** strongly supporting this action.
- **64%** would support a ban on smoking in all cars.
- **62%** would support banning smoking in outdoor eating areas of all restaurants, pubs and cafes.
- **59%** would support banning smoking in parks.
- **59%** would support banning smoking on university and college campuses.
- **58%** would support banning smoking on beaches.
- **54%** would support banning smoking in town centres.



Support for the following measures. Banning smoking in...	2022	2021	2020	2019
Children’s play areas	89%	-	-	-
Outdoor areas where children play sport	80%	81%	82%	-
All cars	64%	67%	67%	63%
Outdoor seating areas of all restaurants, pubs and cafes	62%	67%	-	63%
University and college campuses	59%	64%	-	-
Beaches	58%	64%	-	-
Parks	59%	62%	-	-
Town centres	54%	62%	-	59%

Cessation and Prevention

- The majority (**67%**) are in favour of increasing government investment in public education campaigns on smoking aimed at adults and children, with only **7%** opposing this action.
- **65%** are in favour of requiring tobacco companies to print health warnings on cigarette sticks to encourage smokers to quit. Only **9%** oppose this action.
- **46%** of all Welsh adults surveyed supported the roll out of the new NICE guidance for the NHS, recommending financial incentives to pregnant women to encourage them to stop smoking.



Analysis of findings

Behaviours and Attitudes

Smoking Prevalence:

15% of all Welsh adults surveyed said they were current smokers. This figure has remained relatively unchanged since 2017 when 14% of all adults surveyed said they were current smokers

25-34 year-olds is the age group which holds the highest smoking prevalence (**25%** are current smokers).

Since 2018, the housing tenure of respondents has been included in the survey. Smoking prevalence amongst respondents that reside in social housing has been consistently higher than those who own their own home or private renters. In 2022, **38%** of social housing tenants said they were current smokers, compared to **24%** of private renters and **9%** of homeowners.

These inequalities are also reflected when comparing the smoking prevalence of those living in different areas of multiple deprivation. Those living in the most deprived areas are almost 3 times as likely to smoke than those living in the least deprived areas (**31% vs 11%**).

Smokers:

The vast majority of those that had ever smoked (**77%**) said they were under the age of 18 when they tried their first cigarette. Only **7%** of ever smokers tried their first cigarette when they were over the age of 21.

Over half of all smokers (**53%**) said they would like to give up smoking at some point. Only **7%** said they never wanted to quit.

Smoking and cannabis use:

The prevalence of daily cannabis use remains low at **3%** of all Welsh adults surveyed, with only **8%** saying they had used cannabis in the last 12 months. However, of those who had used cannabis in the past 12 months, **63%** had smoked it with tobacco (in a joint or spliff) or in a blunt (cigar), and **12%** vaped it in liquid form through an e-cigarette or other vaping device.

E-cigarettes:

8% of respondents said they currently use a e-cigarette in 2022.

84% of those that said they currently use an e-cigarette said that they use it with nicotine.

Worryingly, **33%** of Welsh adults surveyed, including **32%** of smokers, wrongly believe e-cigarettes to be as harmful or more harmful than tobacco cigarettes. This is a significant increase from **14%** in 2017.

Exposure to second-hand smoke:

When asked about smoking in the car that they travel in most days, the vast majority of respondents (**69%**) said that smoking was not allowed at any time.

14% of all Welsh adults surveyed said that someone smokes most days in the home they live in, rising to **19%** of private renters and **28%** of all those who reside in social housing.

When asked if their tenancy agreement includes a rule that you must not smoke in your home, **40%** of private renters said yes compared to just **9%** of those residing in social housing.

Attitudes towards Smoking:

Encouragingly, the number of Welsh adults who view smoking as 'common' continues to fall, from **67%** in 2016, to **52%** in 2021, and **48%** in 2022. Worryingly, **61%** of 18-24 year-olds surveyed still viewed smoking as 'common'.

In the 2022 survey, the majority of surveyed adults (**62%**) think people in general disapprove of smoking, with only **6%** thinking people in general approve of smoking.

Over half of all current smokers (**53%**) said they would like to give up smoking at some point. Only **7%** said they never wanted to quit.

Policies and Actions

Support for Welsh Government action

When asked about the Government's actions to limit smoking, **43%** of Welsh adults surveyed, including **20%** of smokers, still feel the Government are not doing enough to limit smoking. Only **8%** of adults think the Government is doing too much, compared to **13%** in 2016.

There is strong public support (**68%**) which includes **35%** of smokers surveyed, for Wales to set an 'Endgame' date of 2030: a date by which smoking rates are less than 5%. Only **10%** oppose the setting of an 'Endgame' target.

Support for UK Government action

The majority of adults (**61%**) surveyed support measures to raise the age of sale of tobacco from 18 to 21, including **44%** of smokers. This is an increase from **58%** in 2016. Only **16%** of adults oppose this move.

There is strong support for a tobacco levy, with **73%** of all adults surveyed in favour of making tobacco manufacturers pay a levy to Government for services to help smokers quit,

and to prevent young people from taking up smoking. Only **7%** of adults were not in favour of a levy.

58% of adults supported a tax rise to increase the price of tobacco products (at 5% above the rate of inflation each year). **19%** of respondents opposed this move.

Support for Regulation

There is clear majority support for robust tobacco regulation, which includes: monitoring of tobacco sale licensing, tobacco advertising bans, and scrutiny of tobacco companies lobbying work (in regards to health policy).

The vast majority of those surveyed (**83%**) including **69%** of smokers, are in favour of requiring businesses to have a valid licence to sell tobacco, which can be removed if they sell to underage smokers more than once. **4%** of adults oppose this.

The majority of adults surveyed (**73%**) support a ban on advertising smoking material and accessories (for example brands of rolling papers).

There is also a high level of public interest in the lobbying power of tobacco companies, with **71%** supporting the idea that all government health policy should be protected from the influence of the tobacco industry and its representatives. Only **3%** oppose this.

The vast majority of respondents (**84%**) support the banning of cigarette butts that contain plastic to protect the environment.

Additional Smoke-free Spaces

There is majority support for additional smokefree spaces, with the impact of smoking on children appearing to be a key concern.

The majority of adults surveyed (**80%**) were in favour of banning smoking in outdoor areas where children play sport, including **58%** of smokers. **7%** of adults oppose this ban.

58% of adults are in favour of banning smoking on all beaches and **59%** think smoking should be banned in all parks.

89% of adults were in favour of banning smoking in children's play areas, including **76%** of smokers.

64% of all adults surveyed would support a ban on smoking in all cars, with **35%** of smokers supporting this move. **16%** of adults do not support this ban.

62% of all adults and **13%** of smokers support banning smoking in the outdoor seating areas of all restaurants, pubs and cafes. **22%** of adults do not support this.

59% would support banning smoking on university and college campuses.

Of the Welsh adults surveyed **54%** support banning smoking in all town centres, with **36%** 'strongly' in favour of this move. **24%** of adults do not support banning smoking in town centres.

Cessation and Prevention

There is majority support from Welsh adults for measures to help and encourage smokers to quit, with **67%** of adults and **48%** of smokers in favour of increasing government investment in public education campaigns on smoking aimed at adults and children. Only **7%** of adults oppose this move.

There is also majority interest in using cigarettes and packaging to promote health advice to smokers, with **67%** in favour of a requirement for cigarette packs to include inserts with government information about quitting. **65%** of adults were in favour of health warnings printed on cigarette sticks to encourage smokers to quit.

New NICE guidance for the NHS, recommending financial incentives to pregnant women to encourage them to stop smoking, sees **46%** of adults and **51%** of smokers in favour of this action.