

Draft Community Events Implementation Plan 2025–29

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Introduction

Our Community Events Implementation Plan 2025 supports the Events Policy Framework by outlining key goals and strategic actions for community events in Ōtautahi Christchurch and Te Pātaka o Rākaihautū Banks Peninsula. The overarching vision is to foster a vibrant city through meaningful, inclusive events.

Community events play a vital role in shaping the cultural and social fabric of Ōtautahi by bringing people together, fostering a sense of belonging, and creating shared experiences. These events contribute to the city's identity, economic growth, and overall wellbeing by providing opportunities for local businesses, artists, and performers to showcase their talents while ensuring accessibility and inclusion for all residents.

Ōtautahi Christchurch has a rich history of hosting successful events that reflect and celebrate diversity and heritage, and promote innovation. As the city evolves, so too must our approach to event planning and delivery. This

plan builds on previous successes and addresses emerging challenges such as sustainability, climate resilience, digital engagement, and shifting community expectations.

The implementation plan serves as a framework for ensuring that events align with the city's long-term goals, leverage strategic partnerships, and have meaningful and lasting positive effects for the community. We want to foster an ecosystem of collaboration with industry stakeholders and the wider community to enable Ōtautahi to build on its reputation as a premier destination for a wide range of high-quality, inclusive, and dynamic events.



Our objectives

- Cultivate a dynamic and diverse events calendar that reflects the cultural and social fabric of Ōtautahi.
- Strengthen partnerships that enable community-driven and industry-supported events.
- Advocate for best practices in event management, sustainability, and accessibility.
- Enhance the visibility of Ōtautahi as an event-friendly city with streamlined processes.
- Encourage a balanced mix of events that cater to different demographics, interests, and take advantage of seasonal opportunities.
- Ensure event planning incorporates environmental sustainability measures and actively reduces waste and carbon footprints.

Development

The plan has been informed by:

- A review of the Community Events Implementation Plan (2019-2023).
- Community and industry feedback from surveys and consultations.
- Alignment with our Community Outcomes:
 - A collaborative, confident city
 - A green, liveable city
 - A cultural powerhouse city
 - A thriving, prosperous city



The following have been identified as key priority areas:

- 1. Event diversity** – Ensure a broad mix of events that cater to different interests and age groups by expanding music-focused events, food festivals, and community-driven experiences.
- 2. Seasonal balance** – Distribute events more evenly throughout the year to maintain engagement across all seasons and avoid event clustering in peak months.
- 3. Community representation** – Increase partnerships with local cultural and community groups to ensure the events calendar authentically reflects the diverse communities of Ōtautahi.
- 4. Signature events** – Maintain and improve highly popular events and introduce complementary new experiences that enhance the city's event portfolio.
- 5. Accessibility and affordability** – Address barriers to event attendance.
- 6. Innovation** – Implement a biennial rotation for select events to introduce fresh and innovative experiences while maintaining consistency in core offerings.
- 7. Sustainability** – Strengthen the integration of sustainable event practices, including waste reduction, alternative transport options, and environmentally responsible programming.
- 8. Funding and sponsorship opportunities** – Develop new funding models and sponsorship strategies to ensure long-term sustainability and growth of community events.

These focus areas will guide the planning, funding, and delivery of events over the next five years, ensuring that the events we support and produce remain engaging, inclusive, and aligned with community expectations.





Our goals

The implementation plan outlines a five-year programme of work structured around three core goals, each with targeted actions to ensure Christchurch continues to thrive as an events powerhouse.

- 1 Deliver a dynamic events portfolio that can evolve alongside community and industry needs.
- 2 Enable partnerships that empower the industry to deliver uniquely Ōtautahi community events.
- 3 Position Ōtautahi as an events powerhouse by promoting best practice and boldly champion and advocate for the industry and our environment.

Actions to achieve these goals have been developed, with key tasks and timing noted.



Goal 1

Deliver a dynamic events portfolio that can evolve alongside community and industry needs.

ACTION	KEY TASK	TIMING	KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES
1.1 Celebrate creativity by providing platforms that showcase talent, fostering pathways to a vibrant community	1.1a Strengthen relationships with national and regional creative networks to support local artists.	Ongoing throughout the year	Increased engagement with creative networks and participation of local artists.
	1.1b Review event programming to expand opportunities for local artists.	Annually	Number of new opportunities created for local artists.
	1.1c Establish and maintain a talent database to connect emerging performers with event opportunities.	April 2025–ugust 2025	Database established and actively used.
	1.1d Identify existing external events that would benefit from a partnership model.	Planning from April 2025	Event delivery is consistent throughout the year with new opportunities created.
	1.1e Collaborate with Toi Ōtautahi and Venues Ōtautahi to create new platforms that support local talent.	Throughout the year	Growth in content focused on locals, increased activity and opportunities in local venues.
1.2 Build stronger partnerships	1.2a Develop a plan for each event we produce, identifying its purpose and beneficial partnerships.	Planning and development for 2025	Current partnerships are understood and fostered.
	1.2b Create a targeted sponsorship plan matching events to potential organisations.	Implementation for 2026 and reviewed annually	New stakeholders are engaged.
	1.2c Create a timeline for sponsorship presentations aligned to financial planning.	Ongoing and annually updated	Increase sponsorship revenue and diversity of sponsors.
	1.2d Identify and cultivate strategic partnerships with key organisations to support event delivery and industry collaboration.	Ongoing	Growth in collaborative event initiatives and formalised partnership agreements.
1.3 Maintain a dynamic event calendar	1.3a Review event calendar and identify events for a biennial rotation.	May 2025	Representative survey results are analysed and feedback gathered.
	1.3b Seek feedback on conceptualising new events to complement the five-year calendar.	A staggered approach through to 2029	Identified stakeholders consulted, new opportunities developed.
	1.3c Review event concepts with surveys to assess satisfaction and effectiveness.	September 2026–April 2029	Report presented to Council Committee; new events introduced.
	1.3d Refine the event portfolio to ensure a balance of accessible events across the years.	Annual review	A rotating portfolio of inclusive events is maintained and improved. Event accessibility plans developed and shared as a resource for funded and permitted events.
	1.3e Introduce year-round activation through cost-neutral events and partnerships.	By June 2025 and reviewed after three years	New events are delivered within budget.

Goal 1 continued

ACTION	KEY TASK	TIMING	KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES
1.4 Ensure the events we produce are sustainable	1.4a Review sustainability practices and align with Sustainable Events Canterbury initiative.	July–September 2025	75% waste diversion from landfill across Council-produced events.
	1.4b Identify internal areas for sustainability action plans in event management.	Staged approach from July 2025–2028	Implementation of sustainability action plans.
	1.4c Collaborate with internal teams to promote sustainable event practices.	From 2025 onwards	Increased awareness and collaboration on sustainability initiatives.
1.5 Review events produced by our Events Production Team to ensure a diverse programme with a wide demographic reach.	1.5a Review events currently produced, the target demographic and how they complement activity in the city and locations.	Reviewed and targeted annually	Level of Service target: meet 80% satisfaction with demographic benchmark and data specific feedback.
	1.5b Review feedback from target demographics to refine delivery model and increase participation.	Annually	Events reviewed twice a year, and enhancements identified and costed.
	1.5c Identify new opportunities that expand demographic reach.	Ongoing reviews and refinements	Continually improve using data from LOS reporting.
1.6 Review the partnership model for Tirama Mai	1.6a Reconfirm current advisory model to set the event direction.	September each year	Advisors re-engaged annually.
	1.6b Identify and confirm partners and sponsors to support delivery of Tirama Mai annually alongside a citywide programme of activity.	August–January annually	Partners confirmed and engaged annually.
	1.6c Identify appropriate date, resource and budget required to produce the event.	November annually	Included in developed plan. Site and creative programming confirmed, artists identified as part of overall delivery plan.
	1.6d Investigate financially viable options to grow Tirama Mai by increasing partnerships and exploring options for alternative delivery such as biennial presentation with alternative celebrations each year.	August 2025	Report developed and presented to RSE Steering Group and ELT for decision.
	1.6e Implement recommended approach and review.	June 2026	Report presented back to RSE Steering Group following implementation.



Goal 2

Enable partnerships that empower the industry to deliver uniquely Ōtautahi community events.

ACTION	KEY TASK	TIMING	KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES
2.1 Strengthen industry collaboration for event delivery	2.1a Conduct a full review of event funding processes and rather industry feedback.	March 2025	Events industry survey conducted, feedback is captured and analysed.
	2.1b Using the event organiser feedback, undertake a review of existing event funding avenues to ensure they are fit for purpose and are aligning with industry and Council needs.	April 2025–October 2025 annually reviewed.	Comparison of CCC events funds against other cities/local government funds. Best practice against needs of industry and community identified. Revised guidelines introduced. Continuous monitoring and refinement funding round to ensure the new criteria meets the needs of the community.
	2.1c Assess timing of funding rounds to optimise access for event organisers.	April 2025–October 2025	Adjustments made based on industry input.
	2.1d Introduce flexible funding models tailored to event scale and purpose.	April 2025–October 2025	Increased efficiency and accessibility of funding.
2.2 Identify events that have the potential to be developed through City Identity Fund	2.2a Conduct a detailed analysis to understand events that the community value with potential to be further developed into large scale community events.	April 2025–October 2025	Review completed and survey results analysed with actionable insights incorporated into the plan.
	2.2b Use findings to identify popular events and new opportunities for events that Council can proactively target to support through City Identity.	October 2025 ongoing	Findings shared with stakeholders – Council teams, ChristchurchNZ and VŌ so the eco system is considered and complimentary.
2.3 Enhance accessibility and transparency in event funding	2.3a Define and publish clear event funding criteria and evaluation metrics.	June 2026	Criteria published on Council's website.
	2.3b Streamline event funding applications across all funding platforms.	June 2026	Event applications integrated into SmartyGrants.
	2.3c Conduct workshops/webinars on event funding processes for organisers.	Annually from June 2026	Increased applicant understanding and engagement.

Goal 2 continued

ACTION	KEY TASK	TIMING	KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES
2.4 Foster cross-departmental collaboration to align event funding with council-wide funding strategies	2.4a Collaboration with other Council departments to ensure good alignment across all funds.	June 2025–ongoing	Regular communication with the Community Funding Team maintained. Applicable updates are consistent across all CCC funds.
2.5 Review Community Board funded events	2.5a Review events currently produced or partnered by Community Recreation Advisors.	June 2026	Undertake a review of CRA led events and delivery model.
	2.5b Identify events that may benefit from a partnership or alternative ownership model along with a transition plan.	June 2026	Report produced identifying recommended direction.



Goal 3

Position Ōtautahi as an events powerhouse by promoting best practice and boldly champion and advocate for the industry and our environment.

ACTION	KEY TASK	TIMING	KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES
3.1 Reduce waste and promote sustainable practices.	3.1a Promote sustainable food packaging and alternative transport options at events.	January 2025–ongoing	Reduction in event waste and increased public transport use.
3.2 Streamline event permit process	3.2a Survey event organisers to identify areas for permit process improvement.	March 2025–every year	Improved event permit experience based on feedback.
	3.2b Enhance communication materials for event organisers.	Ongoing	Reduction in queries and increased satisfaction rates.
	3.2c Identify internal barriers and implement streamlined solutions.	Annually from December 2024	Measurable reductions in process delays.
3.3 Secure high impact events for the city	3.3a Develop a process to identify national sports organisations to gather information on event opportunities for the city.	November 2024–July 2025	Increased pipeline of events opportunities.
	3.3b Evaluate potential bids against criteria to determine events that should be prioritised for support/actively pursued to secure for the city.	Jan 2025–Jan 2026	Development of a bidding plan approved.
	3.3c Strengthen partnerships with ChristchurchNZ and Venues Ōtautahi for major event acquisition.	Ongoing	Increased success for securing events that align with city narrative and brand opportunities.
3.4 Up-skill the sector by coordinating regular workshops	3.4a Deliver Kia Rite Hōea workshops.	As and when required	Workshops delivered on an as needs basis.
3.5	3.5a Deliver Event Permit Masterclass as required.	As and when required	Number of workshops adjusted to demand.
	3.5b Deliver Event Funding Masterclass as required.	As and when required	Number of workshops adjusted to demand.
	3.5c Deliver Event Health and Safety Masterclass.	As and when required during off-season	Number of workshops adjusted to demand.
	3.5d Actively promote What's On Chch as an avenue to free event promotion.	Ongoing	Continue 'always on' marketing promotions.

Goal 3 continued

ACTION	KEY TASK	TIMING	KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES
3.6 Promote Waitaha events and activities through awareness of events website	3.6a Manage information provided to the What's On Chch website to ensure it is accurate.	Ongoing	Work internally towards streamlining approval process for listings to the What's On website to reduce wait times. Listings on the website managed in a timely manner.
	3.6b Work with key city stakeholders to share promotion of event activity in the city as agreed.	February 2025–ongoing	Information is shared through regular meetings with ChristchurchNZ and Venues Ōtautahi.
3.7 Reignite the volunteer sector in Ōtautahi	3.7a Retain and develop volunteer engagement following Special Olympics National Summer Games.	November 2025–June 2026	A form is created in collaboration with Special Olympics NZ that allows volunteers to indicate whether they would like to continue volunteering in the future. Best practise for retention of volunteers is considered and identified. Community is connected with their local CRA for support.
	3.7b Work with key city stakeholders to develop a volunteer database that can be utilised for event activity in the city.		Plan created between the three agencies created.
	3.7c Identify appropriate channels/a one stop shop for volunteer recruitment, the promotion of opportunities and resources to upskill volunteers.	February 2025–ongoing	Most suitable channel for volunteering opportunities identified. Resource requirements to upskill volunteers identified. Opportunities for volunteers made available through Council events.
	3.7d Continue to maintain and develop useful online resources for community event organisers.	Continue to review annually	Guides are continually updated and promoted.

Goal 3 continued

ACTION	KEY TASK	TIMING	KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES
3.8 Collaborate with internal Council units to conduct a review of event spaces available to event organisers and how they are utilised	3.8a Review regular events in popular outdoor spaces to assess if the venue is the right fit.	After each event	Event spaces are utilised by complementary activity for the space by carefully curating the annual event calendar.
	3.8b Develop a process for reviewing and prioritising events in outdoor venues with an understanding of alternative spaces around the city that can be utilised.	After each event	Booking process is robust, information about event spaces easy to find for events choosing appropriate venue for activity.
	3.8c Trial new spaces that have the potential to be developed into event spaces that are fit for purpose to cater to industry needs.	After each event	New spaces trialled as alternative to popular venues through peak season.
	3.8d Review regular events in popular outdoor spaces and assess how each organiser conducts their event within the guidelines of their issued event permit.	After each event	Process established to ensure regulatory requirements are adhered to and popular event spaces are managed effectively.





Looking ahead

Christchurch City Council is committed to fostering a strong, sustainable, and inclusive events sector. This plan ensures our city remains a hub of creativity, culture, and celebration. By continuing to collaborate with the community, event organisers, and industry stakeholders, we will shape a diverse and thriving events landscape that strengthens our city's identity and brings people together.

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