

Napier City Council refreshes their liquor licensing approach at Art Deco

Napier City Council

What issue did you act on?

The Art Deco event in Napier is a large event that people travel to from all over New Zealand and internationally (travel permitting). A liquor ban exists year-round in the Central Business District and on the foreshore in Napier. Traditionally the ban was lifted over the weekend that the Art Deco event takes place however this was not generally promoted to the public. Three years ago, notice of the liquor ban lifting over Art Deco weekend was put onto social media by Napier City Council; the outcome was not good for the town.



How did you act?

Following the event, Napier City Council immediately sat down with the Trust that ran the event and discussed the importance of reducing alcohol-related harm given the number of people attending this event. The Council is a major funder of the Art Deco event so we felt that we should have more say in how the licensing was run at the event, while also maintaining the liquor ban in the city during the event. We focused our recommendations on how the Trust could strengthen their host responsibility role under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012 and worked with them to look at setting up licensed areas during the event that could be managed appropriately. The Trust strongly supported the approach and set up marquees with bars and managers to run the licensed areas. We also worked with Police to increase the Police presence at the event. Napier City Council provided alcohol-free resources to support the event and so there could be some areas that were family friendly.



What worked well?

- Conducting a dual conversation during the planning stage with the Trust that ran the Art Deco event and Police to ensure that our recommendations and actions were aligned.
- Having alcohol-free resources available to support the event.
- Being flexible in our approach and lifting the liquor ban for the Sunday lunchtime Art Deco picnic. We have found that we get more buy-in if we have some leeway in our approach.

What did not work well?

- It was a big transition, but people are getting used to it now.

Top tips for others we learnt from this experience

- For big events like this, start discussions early combined with a review of the previous event.
- Include key stakeholders such as the Police as partners in the discussion.
- Develop a communications plan so the public can learn about any changes in advance of the event.