



Evaluation of “Only in the Club” 2008 Final Report

Prepared by Louise Kirkwood
for the Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The “Only in the Club” initiative operated in two rugby clubs in the Franklin District during the 2008 season. The primary aims were to reduce alcohol consumption on the sidelines at matches and, as a result, reduce associated alcohol-related harm. The project was developed by Franklin District Council in collaboration with the Franklin District Licensing Agency, the Counties Manukau Rugby Football Union (CMRFU), New Zealand Police and the Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand (ALAC).

ALAC commissioned an evaluation of the project to review project processes and assess project outcomes, with a view to identifying any implications for future such initiatives. The evaluation, based on qualitative evaluation methods, included a documentation review, interviews with key stakeholders and a review of observational data collected during the season.

The project worked to promote a message of “no drinking on the sidelines”, emphasising the negative safety effects and legal implications of drinking on the sidelines at matches and encouraging people to restrict the consumption of alcohol to the club rooms.

Key components for message promotion were:

- Spectator education using brochures distributed by personnel monitoring the games and signage in the grounds and club rooms.
- Message reinforcement via branded merchandise, eg, “Only in the Club” beanies, worn by monitoring personnel.
- Incentives for spectators to meet requirements in terms of drinking behaviour provided using prize draws in club rooms after matches, based on numbers included in the educational brochures.
- Encouragement of required behaviour with respect to drinking through the use of:
 - Security and other personnel monitoring spectators at home games, drawing people’s attention to the requirement to restrict drinking to the club rooms and/or other licensed areas.
 - Event managers supporting the “Only in the Club” message.
 - Active reinforcement of the legal requirement to not drink in changing rooms.

Clubs were selected to include both a hapu-based, rural club and an urban club and to achieve good geographic representation for the region. The initiative involved Waiuku District Rugby Football Club and Te Kohanga Rugby Football Club.

The “Only in the Club” project pilot in these two clubs was designed to test the viability of the approach for potential expansion and to inform further project development.

Project evaluation demonstrated the viability of the project in the following ways:

- There was general consensus that alcohol consumption had markedly reduced on the sidelines and was largely confined to assigned licensed areas in these clubs.
- There were indications of increased numbers of patrons in the club rooms and that club rooms were busier and closing earlier.
- There was consistent feedback on an improved “atmosphere” at games and improved spectator behaviour.
- There was consistent evidence of a shift in spectator attitudes to drinking on the sidelines and recognition that this behaviour was no longer acceptable.
- Clubs came “on board” with the project and were motivated to participate.
- CMRFU strongly backed the project and participated actively.
- Effective working relationships operated between all stakeholders and continued benefits ensue from these relationships. This is seen as a stand-out achievement of the project.
- Those participating in project implementation were universally positive about the project and the positive outcomes from the project.
- The project attracted positive attention from a number of rugby and other sports clubs and from other councils.

These findings do need to be considered alongside low-level concern regarding the effectiveness of the project in changing behaviour and attitudes in young people and the risk that reduced drinking on the sidelines simply meant that drinking had shifted elsewhere or been effectively concealed.

Importantly, the project was equally effective in two clubs that differed markedly: one rural club with predominantly Maori participation and one urban club with predominantly European participation.

When considered alongside similar initiatives, the project is regarded to have had a significant impact, with strong elements of a shift in culture despite a limited budget relative to that typically seen in projects aiming to achieve this type of change.

The evaluation highlighted critical success factors for this type of initiative that point to the following recommendations for strengthening the project and for successfully implementing other projects of this type:

- *Active club involvement:* Involvement in and commitment to the project from senior club members and club reinforcement of the project message position the project as

- having club backing and commitment rather than simply being a directive from a council. This means more robust implementation and a higher likelihood of success.
- *Active rugby union involvement:* Active backing of and involvement in the project by the rugby union contribute to club buy-in and provide a mandate to those working at the matches to promote the project message and make the project work.
 - *Cooperative approach between clubs and liquor licensing:* Positioning the project as a cooperative approach between the clubs, liquor licensing and other arms of the council motivates club involvement. The project can provide the opportunity for clubs and the council to work together, sometimes for the first time, to address collaboratively the issue of drinking on the sidelines.
 - *Reliable and consistent project implementation:* Consistent and reliable input from the personnel monitoring the games is essential for a consistent message and allows a steady “escalation” in enforcement of the message through the season, an approach that was highly effective in “Only in the Club”.
 - *Use of both club and non-club personnel to reinforce the message:* Message delivery by club representatives, operating as event managers, underscores club commitment to the project and highlights to patrons that the project is not simply a council directive. Using non-club personnel, including security staff and council members, for monitoring at matches can assist in averting potential issues with club members needing to address sideline drinking with friends, whanau and family.
 - *A positive approach and stepped message delivery:* A positive, non-confrontational message and a stepped approach to enforcing the message, with simple education at the outset and more overt messages as the season advances, which allows spectators to “warm” to the project and its goals, are more likely to result in spectator support and compliance.
 - *Availability of a licensed area from which the match is visible:* Project success depends on an assigned licensed area where people can drink legitimately while watching matches. In “Only in the Club”, a licensed area was provided at the end of the “number one” field at Waiuku District Rugby Football Club as the club rooms do not look over the fields.
 - *Informal involvement by police:* Informal police involvement is preferable to an active police role as the latter carries the risk of changing the project focus from a cooperative solution to an enforcement exercise.
 - *Effective project set-up and design:* Critical aspects in set-up and design include an effective project driver, adequate set-up timeframe and allocated project funding that allows the project to proceed without the need to “search out” funds for required activities.
 - *A flexible and pragmatic approach to project implementation:* A flexible, pragmatic approach taken by the council facilitates appropriate solutions that ensure project success. For example, pragmatism was applied in a decision to restrict rather than

ban drinking in changing rooms when it was recognised that an outright ban would not be effective against this long-held tradition.

There is potential for resistance from clubs “selected” for involvement, as perceptions regarding problematic behaviour may differ. Helpful measures include clarity as to the basis for club selection and positioning the project as part of the **club’s** efforts to be family oriented. A valuable approach is to review clubs individually to establish their particular needs with respect to the content of the project, involving clubs in the process of identifying their own issues.

1 INTRODUCTION

“Only in the Club” was an initiative that used a portion of funding supplied by the Ministry of Justice to Franklin District Council for the development of an Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy with associated actions to reduce alcohol-related harm in the Franklin District.

The “Only in the Club” project was developed by Franklin District Council in collaboration with the Franklin District Licensing Agency, the Counties Manukau Rugby Football Union (CMRFU), New Zealand Police and the Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand (ALAC).

The objectives of the project were to reduce alcohol consumption on the sidelines at rugby matches and, as a result, reduce associated alcohol-related harm.

The initiative took place in the 2008 season and involved Waiuku District Rugby Football Club (Waiuku RFC) and Te Kohanga Rugby Football Club (Te Kohanga RFC).

Observational data were collated by personnel at the matches as part of the project. The decision was taken to undertake an external project evaluation, focused on qualitative feedback, to supplement the observational findings.

An outcome evaluation of the project was commissioned by ALAC in line with this requirement.

The evaluation was completed by Louise Kirkwood in collaboration with key stakeholders.

This report provides an outline of the methodology and results of the evaluation and discusses project findings and their implications for future such initiatives.

1.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation objectives were to:

- Assess the impacts of the “Only in the Club” project, both positive and negative and intended/unintended, at both individual and wider community levels.
- Identify any critical processes, enablers and obstacles to achieving positive outcomes with this type of initiative.
- Identify any critical enablers and/or obstacles to the implementation and ongoing sustainability of this type of initiative.

2 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation used qualitative methods as discussed below.

The evaluation was overseen by a small project reference group comprising the Senior Policy Analyst, Franklin District Council, a representative of ALAC as evaluation sponsor, and the evaluator. The group provided input to the evaluation design, the evaluation processes and the formulation of recommendations.

2.1 PROJECT DOCUMENTATION REVIEW

Key documents were reviewed to determine goals, objectives and planning and implementation processes relevant to the project. These documents were supplied to the evaluator by stakeholders at the outset of the evaluation and included:

- Franklin District Council project initiation documentation.
- Various communications between Franklin District Council and CMRFU and the clubs involved in the project.
- Presentation material and notes used in the initial presentation of the project to Te Kohanga RFC.
- Presentation material and notes used in the presentation of the project at the New Zealand Institute of Liquor Licensing Inspectors (NZILLI) conference in September 2008.

2.2 INTERVIEWS WITH KEY STAKEHOLDER REPRESENTATIVES

Interviews were undertaken with stakeholders selected to represent those groups involved in the set-up and implementation of the project and those on whom the project impacted.

The interviews followed a semi-structured format with questions designed to elicit information about the experiences and perceptions of the project stakeholders with respect to project outcomes and implementation processes.

Each interview was tailored to the role of the interview participant. An example of the interview prompt sheet is provided in Appendix 1.

A written summary of the interview was provided to each participant to allow them to verify the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the content.

Interview results were analysed for key themes, which are summarised in this report.

Interviews with a total of nine stakeholders (refer Appendix 2) were conducted via telephone between 3 December and 18 December 2008.

Stakeholders interviewed had been involved with the project in a variety of ways.

Those who had formal involvement with the project set-up and implementation included the Senior Policy Analyst, the Parks Officer and the Liquor Licensing Officer for Franklin District Council. Other stakeholders with formal roles in the project included the Managing Director of the security organisation providing personnel for monitoring the matches and a representative from CMRFU.

Representatives from both participating clubs were interviewed as were other parties with a specific interest in the project, including a councillor from Franklin District Council with involvement in Waiuku RFC and a representative from New Zealand Police.

2.3 REVIEW OF OBSERVATIONAL DATA

Observational data on the project were collated during the 2008 season and these were reviewed for the purposes of this evaluation.

2.4 REVIEW OF WRITTEN FEEDBACK

Written feedback on the project had been provided as part of the initial review of the project and this was reviewed for the purposes of this evaluation.

2.5 SITE VISITS

The evaluator visited the grounds of the two clubs involved in the initiative to observe the layout of the grounds and the signage in order to provide context for the feedback received.

3 RESULTS: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1 INITIAL DESIGN AND SET-UP

The “Only in the Club” project was developed as part of the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy in Franklin District Council. The opportunity to develop the project arose when funding was identified within the Strategy budget for an “action” to improve or enhance the responsible consumption of liquor.

“Only in the Club” was developed with the aim of addressing alcohol consumption on the sidelines during rugby matches.

A similar initiative had been conceived for the 2006 season by the Parks Officer and the Liquor Licensing Officer for Franklin District Council but had been declined funding. The Parks Officer and the Liquor Licensing Officer worked with the Senior Policy Analyst at Franklin District Council to rework the original project to better meet the requirements of the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy.

The project set out to pilot an initiative to “address alcohol consumption on the sidelines during rugby matches and the associated anti-social behaviour which results in players and match officials feeling intimidated”.

The documented project objectives were:

- To address the anti-social behaviour associated with alcohol consumption at Waiuku RFC and Te Kohanga RFC.
- To restrict alcohol consumption on the sidelines at Waiuku RFC and Te Kohanga RFC.
- To improve the safety of rugby club members and match officials.
- To encourage the safer use and consumption of alcohol within the two rugby clubs.
- To work in partnership with stakeholders to address alcohol-related harm.
- To equip clubs to manage alcohol-associated harm.

So, we think there can be a win/win here. We will get people not to drink on the sidelines. Officials and spectators will enjoy the game more as a result. We think that the clubs will benefit from increased revenue, a chance to get more members and better attendances at after-match functions.¹

¹ Quote from presentation of project to Te Kohanga RFC.

An undocumented “background” goal that was raised in stakeholder feedback was to take advantage of the modelling role that rugby clubs play, particularly in rural communities, and to use this to model acceptable drinking behaviour for young people in the community.

A working party comprising stakeholders guided the project while a small partnership group, including Franklin District Council and CMRFU, was set up to “drive the action”.

The Franklin District Council Project Team comprised:

- Parks Officer.
- Liquor Licensing Officer.
- Senior Policy Analyst.
- Communications Advisor.

The key functions in set-up were:

- Development of relationships with project partners.
- Selection of clubs.
- Creating and providing incentives to clubs for participation.
- Promoting the project to clubs (see visual 3) and equipping clubs to implement the required changes in alcohol consumption.
- Engagement of security services.

Feedback also identified a key role for CMRFU in advising visiting teams about the project and communicating expectations in terms of their behaviour when in clubs participating in the project.

A number of the Franklin District Council Project Team had hands-on involvement in project implementation. In addition to regular communication with involved parties, they were rostered to attend matches weekly or two-weekly throughout the season and were involved in collating information for project evaluation.

3.2 CLUBS AND CLUB SELECTION

Two clubs from within the boundaries of CMRFU were involved in the project.

The aim in club selection was to include both a hapu-based, rural club and an urban club and to achieve good geographic representation for the region. There was input to selection from the Parks Officer and Liquor Licensing Officer from Franklin District Council and from CMRFU.

The selected clubs were Te Kohanga RFC, located on Council land on the Tuakau Bridge-Port Waikato Rd in Te Kohanga, and Waiuku RFC, located on privately owned land in King

St, Waiuku (refer visuals 1 and 2 respectively). The clubs were described as follows in the presentation of the project at the NZILLI conference.

The first club is Waiuku based. The town wears with pride the label of having the highest consumption of liquor per capita in the country. It is a mill town. Many of the residents work at the nearby Glenbrook Steel Mill. It is predominantly white middle class and almost all of the residents have well paid work. The rugby club plays a fairly significant role in the community. This club is in first division and usually competes for the championship. It has a team in every grade.

The second club is based at Te Kohanga. Many of the people live on iwi-owned land around the marae and work for market gardeners in the area. The work is seasonal and poorly paid. Most of the players are drawn from the hapu and this is a source of pride. However it can also be a problem when it comes to discipline. It is very difficult to speak to your cousin and ask him to change his ways.

Clubs were encouraged to participate by highlighting the potential benefits of the project, including increased numbers of people in the club rooms and, thus, increased revenue from food and bar service, an improved atmosphere at games and an improved opportunity for enjoyment of games (refer visual 3).

Visual 1 Te Kohanga RFC



Visual 2 Waiuku RFC



Visual 3 Promotion of project benefits to invited clubs²

WHAT'S IN IT FOR THE CLUB? –

- More people in the clubrooms
- Increased bar takings and food sales,
- Greater family atmosphere
- Better able to enjoy the game without risk of drunken/aggressive sideline behaviour
- We are also offering to arrange and help promote a dinner in the Club with Norm Hewitt as Guest Speaker.



The original initiative conceived for the 2006 season was to include four or five clubs, with the expectation that this level of activity would assist in achieving a robust evaluation of outcomes. However, the club number was reduced to two in the current project in keeping with available budget and manpower. This decision was supported by feedback from several stakeholders, who noted that two clubs was all that was able to be managed with the available implementation resources.

3.3 PROJECT COMPONENTS

The project operated with the key message of “Only in the Club”, emphasising the negative safety effects and legal implications of drinking on the sidelines at matches and encouraging people to restrict the consumption of alcohol to the club rooms.

The message was promoted through:

- Education of spectators and club staff regarding required behaviour with respect to drinking:
 - Brochures distributed by personnel monitoring the games that explained the project and its goals and included numbers for prize draws.
 - Signage in the grounds and club rooms: “Only in the Club. Alcohol free fields” (refer visuals 4 and 5).

² From presentation of project to Te Kohanga RFC.

- Message reinforcement via branded merchandise, eg, “Only in the Club” beanies, worn by monitoring personnel.
- Education/Training. Documentation refers to plans to “Encourage club to enrol staff for Sale of Liquor Act training and the associated responsibilities”. In practice, Waiuku RFC was already well resourced with trained staff. Two applications were made from Te Kohanga RFC but have not been progressed.
- Incentives for spectators to meet requirements in terms of drinking behaviour:
 - Prize merchandise provided by the Council and CMRFU. This included items branded with the “Only in the Club” logo and other giveaways, including beanies, lanyards, jackets, Steelers shirts and Steelers game tickets. Prize draws, based on the numbers in the educational brochures, were held in the club rooms to encourage people to go into the clubs after matches.
- Encouragement of required behaviour with respect to drinking through the use of security and other personnel at the 13 games during the season (refer table 1):
 - Contract security services (predominantly comprising retired policemen) and staff from various arms of Franklin District Council rostered on to move around the field and monitor spectators at home games, drawing people’s attention to the requirement to restrict drinking to the club rooms and/or other licensed areas.
 - Event managers³ supporting the “Only in the Club” message. CMRFU encouraged these personnel to adopt the new role of promoting the message to reduce drinking on the sidelines.
 - Active reinforcement of the legal requirement to not drink in the changing rooms.⁴ However, in recognition of the longstanding nature of the practice of drinking in the changing rooms and the anticipated difficulty associated with stopping it entirely, those reinforcing this requirement pointed out the regulation and encouraged players to move out of the changing rooms and into the club as quickly as possible.

In addition, clubs were requested to:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for visiting supporters and the project team.
- Openly support the message and the project goal and encourage supporters to do the same. On occasion, one club chose to telephone people who had been drinking on the sidelines, between matches, to highlight that this was not acceptable.

³ Event managers tend to be club representatives who receive rugby union training in event management.

⁴ Club holds liquor licenses and a condition of the licenses defines the area where alcohol can be consumed. This defined area never includes the changing rooms.

Club participation was further promoted at Waiuku RFC through Franklin District Council funding of a speaker (Norm Hewitt) at the end-of-season prize-giving. Equivalent funding was made available to Te Kohanga RFC to use for new goalpost pads and other materials.

Table 1 Games in 2008 Season

		<i>Observational data recorded</i>
12 April 2008	Waiuku	YES
19 April 2008	Te Kohanga	YES
26 April 2008	Waiuku	YES
10 May 2008	Waiuku	YES
10 May 2008	Te Kohanga	YES
24 May 2008	Waiuku	YES
24 May 2008	Te Kohanga	YES
7 June 2008	Waiuku	YES
14 June 2008	Te Kohanga	YES
21 June 2008	Waiuku	NO
28 June 2008	Te Kohanga	YES
5 July 2008	Waiuku	NO
12 July 2008	Te Kohanga	NO

Visual 4 Signage at Te Kohanga RFC



Visual 5 Signage at Waiuku RFC



Regarding the style of message delivery, most stakeholders interviewed who were involved in monitoring at matches highlighted that they focused on keeping the message “light”, encouraging people to comply rather than “enforcing a rule”.

Those monitoring the grounds encouraged spectators to conform by highlighting that:

- It is no longer regarded as acceptable to drink outside licensed areas.
- Continuing to drink outside licensed areas threatens the club licence.
- The desire of the club is to encourage families to the games and they need to be confident there are not issues related to drinking in the grounds.
- The requirement is for spectators to use the licensed premises and not bring and drink their own alcohol.

Stakeholders noted that there was a greater requirement to talk to those bringing alcohol to the grounds than to those taking drinks purchased in the clubs outside the licensed areas.

3.4 PROJECT BUDGET/RESOURCES

Project costs met from Ministry of Justice funding⁵ are shown in table 2 and totalled circa \$2000. However, merchandise supplied by CMRFU was discounted and accounting for its full value of circa \$1000 would bring the total up to circa \$2500.

Other costs were funded through separate budgets; however, these are relevant costs when considering an overall project “budget”.

Costs for contract security personnel monitoring the grounds in the project were covered by separate Ministry of Health funding. Security personnel worked for an estimated 120 hours, which at a standard service rate would have been priced at circa \$10,000.

Labour for the project supplied by Franklin District Council was funded through existing team budgets. The Senior Policy Analyst, Parks Officer, and Liquor Licensing Officer for Franklin District Council contributed time to the project both during office hours and after hours to attend games, etc. As a guideline, the Liquor Licensing Officer estimated a time commitment to the project of circa 60 hours.

Table 2 Project Costs met from Ministry of Justice Funding

Te Kohanga RFC corner flags and pads	425
Merchandise – beanies, jackets	444
CMRFU merchandise – Counties jerseys, balls, etc	500
Airfare and rental car for Waiuku RFC prize-giving speaker	290
Catering contribution to Waiuku RFC prize-giving	170
Signs	150
Total	\$1979

⁵ The project used a portion of funding supplied by the Ministry of Justice to Franklin District Council for the development of an Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy.

4 RESULTS: OUTCOMES OF “ONLY IN THE CLUB”

Feedback received by stakeholders and stakeholder observations consistently indicated a view that the project was very successful.

Positive feedback on the project had been received by stakeholders from spectators, club members, opposition team members and match officials.

Stakeholders' own observations of the project were also generally positive and there was a consensus that the project had achieved its goal of reducing drinking on the sidelines.

There was no negative feedback on the project, except comments regarding some resistance early in the project from clubs where there were concerns as to why the clubs had been selected. These concerns had been addressed by the time of project implementation and a positive relationship was in place, assisted in part by input from CMRFU.

Feedback on project outcomes is summarised below under the following headings:

- Reduced drinking on the sidelines
- Increased patron numbers in club rooms
- Change in atmosphere
- Change in behaviour
- Change in attitudes
- Club and spectator response to the project.

4.1 REDUCED DRINKING ON THE SIDELINES – RESTRICTION OF DRINKING TO LICENSED AREAS

“The project minimised alcohol consumption around the sidelines at home games [at Te Kohanga RFC].”

“Achieved containment of drinking in the licensed areas [at Waiuku RFC].”

“Sideline drinking virtually curbed [at Waiuku RFC] by end of season.”

“Very few bottles on grounds at clean-up after the weekend [at Te Kohanga RFC].”

All stakeholders expressed a view that the project reduced drinking on the sidelines and markedly contributed to restricting drinking to licensed areas.

Several stakeholders noted an ongoing reduction in drinking on the sidelines as the season progressed, with the observation that there was virtually nil drinking on the sidelines at the last games of the season.

This observation was specifically supported by feedback from those monitoring the games, who noted a difference between initial games in the season, when it was necessary to talk constantly to people about where they were drinking, and later games, when there was a need only occasionally to address drinking behaviour with a small number of people.

The change was matched by a perceived shift in attitudes (refer section 5.5), which meant that, as the season progressed, it became easier for those monitoring drinking at the games to raise the issue and get a positive response from people.

“By the end of the season, very few were drinking on the sidelines and we simply had to speak to them to curb their behaviour.”

Other indicators of reduced drinking on the sidelines included:

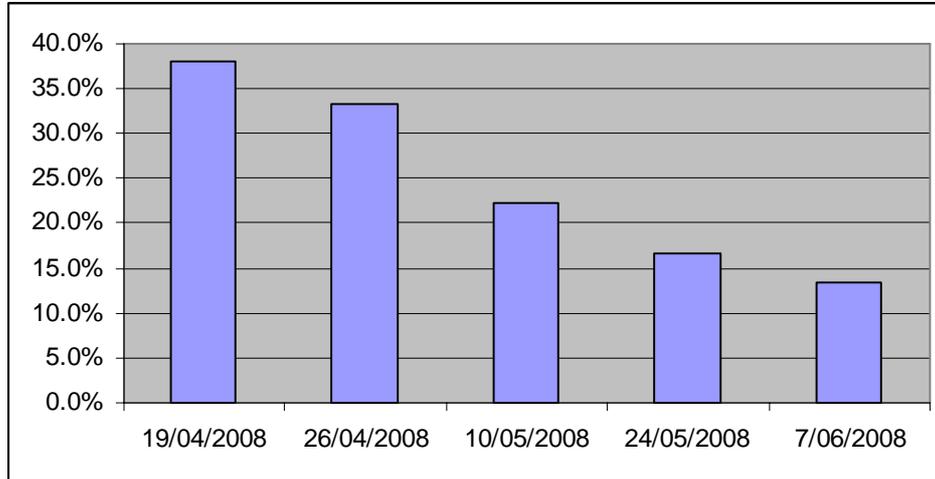
- Observations of an obvious shift in location of drinking to licensed areas – an assigned licensed area in the Waiuku RFC grounds, from which games are visible,⁶ and the deck area at the front of the Te Kohanga RFC clubhouse where games are visible.
- Fewer bottles to be cleaned up from the grounds after games at Te Kohanga RFC.
- Increased numbers of patrons in club rooms (refer section 5.2).

Observational data were collected at most home matches throughout the season at Te Kohanga RFC and Waiuku RFC (refer table 1). These data were less conclusive than stakeholder feedback regarding the effects of the project on numbers of spectators drinking on the sidelines.

According to observational data, the percentage of spectators drinking alcohol in the grounds at Te Kohanga RFC steadily decreased from 38.1% to 13.3% throughout the five games of the season for which data were collated (refer figure 1). While the reduction is in keeping with stakeholder feedback, the estimate of circa 13% drinking on the sidelines at the last games of the season conflicts directly with feedback from several stakeholders that there was virtually nil drinking on the sidelines at the last games of the season.

⁶ This licensed area was established as part of the project set-up for Waiuku RFC to allow spectators to have an area where they could see matches and legitimately consume alcohol.

Figure 1 Estimated percentage of spectators drinking alcohol in the grounds at Te Kohanga RFC over five games during the 2008 season (based on observational data)



Observational data for Waiuku RFC did not show a recognisable trend in the percentage of spectators drinking alcohol in the grounds through the five games of the season for either Under 21s and Reserves games (refer figure 2) or Premier games (refer figure 3).

As with the data for Te Kohanga RFC, the observational data for Waiuku conflicted with feedback from stakeholders that there were virtually no spectators drinking on the sidelines at the games at the end of the season.

Figure 2 Estimated percentage of spectators drinking alcohol in the grounds at Under 21s and Reserves games at Waiuku RFU over five games during the 2008 season (based on observational data)

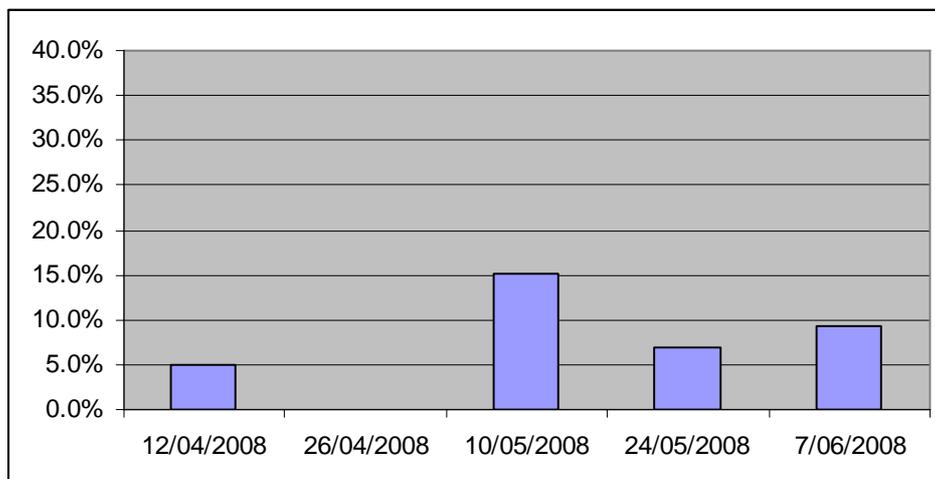
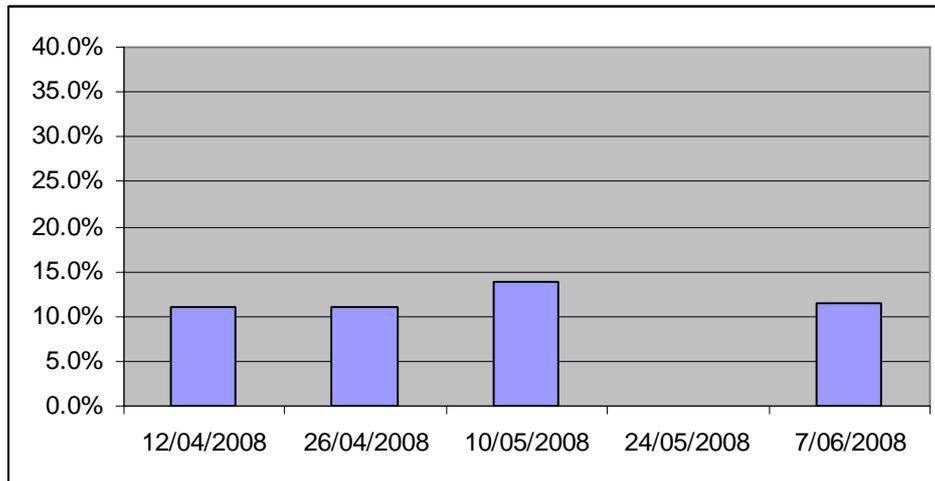


Figure 3 Estimated percentage of spectators drinking alcohol in the grounds at Premier games at Waiuku RFU over five games during the 2008 season (based on observational data)



Concerns regarding apparent reductions in drinking on the sidelines

Two areas of concern were raised during interviews regarding the observed reduction in drinking on the sidelines.

One stakeholder expressed a view that reduced drinking on the sidelines in Te Kohanga RFC only resulted from spectators shifting from the grounds to cars outside the grounds where matches are still visible (refer section 6.2.4 for further details). This concern was not expressed by other people monitoring the grounds at Te Kohanga RFC.

One stakeholder noted that reduced drinking seen on the sidelines may have been, in part, because people had become better at concealing drinking. There were no other references to this possibility in stakeholder interviews, although concealed drinking was noted in the observational data for one of the matches at Te Kohanga RFC.

Alcohol consumption overall

There were mixed views on whether there was a change in alcohol consumption overall and less than one-half of stakeholders felt able to comment on this.

One stakeholder expressed a view that alcohol consumption overall had definitely reduced at one club and possibly reduced at another club. The balance of stakeholders either did not comment on the overall amount of alcohol consumed or noted they felt unable to comment on the overall amount of alcohol consumed. One stakeholder highlighted that a goal from a club

perspective was to **increase** overall consumption of alcohol purchased from the club rooms, not to reduce the amount of drinking overall.

4.2 INCREASED PATRON NUMBERS IN CLUB ROOMS

While it was highlighted that it is difficult to judge, most stakeholders believed that numbers of people in the club rooms increased at both clubs and there was more alcohol purchased at the club room bars.

Getting people into the club rooms was seen as a positive effect of the project. Feedback indicated that there had been issues with clubs allowing non-members in and staying open late into the night, although games had finished in the afternoon, in order to achieve adequate revenues.⁷ It was noted that, over the course of the project, clubs were busier with club members after the match and were then closing around 10pm.

“Increased numbers in the club rooms meant the clubs were closing at an earlier time, having had ‘a good night’s business’.”

The project was seen to provide an incentive for match-goers to go into the clubs by offering prizes and by providing a better, more family-oriented atmosphere in the clubs because patrons had not already been drinking on the sidelines. The prize draws were seen as particularly effective in drawing increased numbers into the club rooms in Te Kohanga RFC. There were mixed views on the effectiveness of prize draws at Waiuku RFC, but most stakeholders saw them as something of a draw card.

Encouragement of players from the changing rooms and into the club rooms was also seen to attract people into the clubs who wanted to see the players and interact with them. Feedback indicated that Waiuku RFC actively limited the time players drank in changing rooms, with players allowed to have one drink but then encouraged to move to the club rooms. Feedback was that drinking was banned in changing rooms at Te Kohanga RFC; it was noted that players had had some difficulty adapting to this but it had been achieved.

The increased patronage is likely to have been reflected in club bar revenue, although no information on this was available.

⁷ Clubs are licensed to sell only to members, guests accompanied by members and those with reciprocal rights.

4.3 CHANGE IN ATMOSPHERE

“By reducing sideline consumption of alcohol and having a defined licensed area we believe that the grounds were a much safer and controlled environment.”

“One key, very vocal and more aggressive group calmed down a lot and this is expected to have affected the sense of safety.”

Stakeholders regularly referred to a “changed atmosphere” at the clubs involved in the project.

“Waiuku ‘felt’ better – there was a better mood and [I] felt better received as the season wore on.” [Individual monitoring sideline drinking]

“Te Kohanga definitely had a ‘better vibe’.”

The feedback on improved club atmosphere included:

- Observations by stakeholders of an improved atmosphere: more comfortable; more of a family atmosphere; people attending games with children.
- Feedback to stakeholders from visitors to clubs: comments that they felt the project had “achieved something” and that they did not feel intimidated.
- Spectator comments to stakeholders that it was much more pleasant to be at the matches.
- Feedback to stakeholders from linesmen at Te Kohanga RFC that the atmosphere was better.⁸
- Observations of reduced threats, swearing and verbal abuse of referees, players and opposition.
- Reports of an increased sense of safety.
- Officials reporting to stakeholders that behaviour was better in both clubs.
- Observations that people going into club rooms were able to choose when to leave rather than feeling forced to leave by having to mix with people who were “front loaded” from drinking at the game.

The changes in atmosphere directly link to the behaviour changes discussed below.

⁸ Limited to Te Kohanga RFC. There are no linesmen at Waiuku RFC – referees are wired with earpieces and radio.

4.4 CHANGE IN BEHAVIOUR

There were mixed views on changes in behaviour. Stakeholders tended to either perceive a reduction in anti-social behaviour associated with drinking, which they attributed to the project, or express doubt that there was an issue with anti-social behaviour associated with alcohol consumption on the sidelines at the outset of the project.

Feedback on improved behaviour included the following:

- Four stakeholders highlighted reduced abuse of match officials.
- Two stakeholders specifically noted a marked improvement in the behaviour of groups on the sidelines.
- One stakeholder noted a direct correlation between reduced drinking on sidelines and reduced levels of verbal abuse.
- One stakeholder noted that intoxication in the first weeks that had progressed to increased use of bad language, etc, almost stopped completely over the season. This stakeholder also noted reduced use of bad language compared with the previous season.
- One stakeholder noted a perceived improvement in people looking after the area they were occupying at the Te Kohanga RFC grounds, removing rubbish, etc.

Observations of improved behaviour were backed by feedback that match officials had reported improved behaviour at both clubs. Additionally, the two clubs involved did not trouble the judiciary of the rugby union over the whole season, whereas formerly there would have been a number of complaints regarding fights on the sideline, sideline abuse to officials invading the pitch, intoxication, etc. Similarly, there were no reports of anti-social behaviour to the Council during the season for either club, although typically there may only be one report per season.

One stakeholder highlighted that these indicators of positive behaviour occurred despite record crowd numbers at home games and the fact that bigger crowds have often been associated with increased problems.

“People were definitely drinking less on the sidelines. Behaviour improved. Intoxication in the first weeks that had progressed to increased use of foul language, etc, almost stopped completely.”

Those who doubted there was an issue with anti-social behaviour prior to the project included one stakeholder who highlighted that a lack of significant behaviour issues at the outset made measuring a change in behaviour difficult. Another highlighted that perceived issues and problems with “rowdy groups” that had led to referee complaints in one club had already improved over the three seasons before “Only in the Club” was implemented.

“People were generally in good humour and not so intoxicated that it was creating this sort of behaviour issue.”

4.5 CHANGE IN ATTITUDES

“Achieved an attitude change on part of club members.”

“It is difficult to change attitudes but the project did make a positive impact.”

“A change in culture was achieved – people are drinking more responsibly.”

“Speaking with a long-time supporter of Te Kohanga rugby, he felt that there was an improved attitude amongst the crowd to drinking.”

“The message of not drinking in car parks and sidelines did get across; this was a gradual process.”

Six stakeholders specifically noted a view that the project had successfully changed spectator attitudes, with a shift to recognition that drinking on the sidelines was not acceptable. One of the six highlighted a marked shift in attitudes in younger people.

However, this view conflicted with that of one stakeholder who expressed a view that the project had limited impact on young people.

In one stakeholder’s view, the shift in attitudes was evidenced in the fact that, over the course of the season, there had been no major conflict with club members when implementing the project.

“At Te Kohanga, even those people who continued to drink in cars, etc, were aware and at times seemed a little embarrassed that they were still drinking when approached.”

One stakeholder highlighted a spin-off effect of the project in that “good behaviour” was being modelled to young people by parents and supporters.

4.6 CLUB AND SPECTATOR RESPONSE TO THE PROJECT

Feedback from club representatives has been that the project went well and a desire to continue the programme has been expressed by both clubs.

Interest in the project has also been expressed by other councils and a cricket club and a soccer club, which have approached the Liquor Licensing Officer for Franklin District Council to request assistance to set up such a project.

A presentation of initial project findings at the NZILLI conference in September 2008 generated positive feedback and queries as to when other clubs can “do it”.

Stakeholders received positive feedback from community and club members, expressing an interest in the project continuing, and from visitors, typically commenting that they would like a similar approach taken in their own rugby clubs.

Five stakeholders commented on spectator response to the project, all referring to a generally positive reaction.

Four highlighted that there was initial resistance to the project from spectators but that this was typically “light” in nature and lessened quickly as the season began. One stakeholder referred to a slightly “heavier feel” at Waiuku RFC.

One stakeholder noted particular resistance from younger members who wanted to drink on the sidelines after their own matches.

Resistance was typically more of an issue with visiting teams. However, there were indications that the message filtered through to the other clubs during the course of the season and that they were responsive to the project. This finding was supported by a number of other teams noting their interest in taking up the project.

Generally, spectators adapted to the idea over the first weeks and accepted that this was to be standard practice. It was also observed that, through the season, there was a shift towards spectators recognising that the project was achieving its goal.

“People who initially thought they would simply ignore the rule got used to the idea that the intention was serious and that drinking on sidelines was not acceptable.”

“People who were generally hostile and critical of the project (not taking brochures) shifted to commenting that the project had actually achieved something.”

Feedback indicated that the message and its delivery were used effectively to address initial resistance. For the first two to three weeks the message was “softer”, highlighting that there was “a programme” rather than specifically requesting that people not bring alcohol. Those

monitoring drinking at the games were able to be more overt with their message as the season advanced. Generally, confrontational exchanges were avoided.

“The message was delivered in stage-by-stage process with end result well received by supporters – gradually educated sideline supporters.”

“We never made people tip out their drinks; we just asked them to make this the last one.”

One stakeholder noted that a more forceful approach could have been used in an effort to eliminate rather than reduce drinking on the sidelines, but this view was not expressed by other monitoring personnel.

4.7 OTHER FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO PROJECT OUTCOMES

Six of nine stakeholders believed that the outcomes described were entirely project related. The balance all regarded that the project played a key role in producing the outcomes seen, but that there may also have been some influence from:

- A “big stick” approach being used by Manukau City Council to stop drinking on the sidelines and in changing rooms. It was noted that this influence may have been passed on via the rugby union to club representatives in the Franklin clubs.
- The effect of clubs more effectively playing their role in managing events, eg, increasing numbers of event managers.
- Stronger club administration in Waiuku RFC, including changes in the committee and improved processes, discipline, governance, etc.

5 RESULTS: PERCEPTIONS OF PROJECT STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

5.1 WHAT WORKED WELL

A number of themes emerged from stakeholder feedback with respect to what worked well in the project; they are outlined as follows.

5.1.1 Partnership approach

Effective partnerships were cited by several interviewees as critical to the project. The project was generally seen as a cooperative approach to address an issue rather than a directive from the Council.

The term “partnership” was used to describe the relationships between several sets of project stakeholders, those cited including:

- Clubs and the Council, incorporating Parks, Liquor Licensing and Policy personnel.
- Clubs and contracted security personnel.
- CMRFU and “the project”.

5.1.2 Accommodating approach by Council

An accommodating approach by the various arms of the Council involved in the project was cited by several stakeholders.

*“The Council was very accommodating - willing to work **with** clubs.”*

The Council was broadly cited as operating in a cooperative and flexible manner to ensure that the project was effective.

Specific actions that were highlighted were:

- Working with Waiuku RFC to get an area quickly licensed at the end of the “number one” field where people were able to watch matches. The efforts of liquor licensing personnel to make this happen were recognised. This action was seen to make the project feasible; it was suggested that without the assigned area it would have been very difficult to make the project work for Waiuku RFC.
- Providing benches for the licensed area in Waiuku RFC.
- Providing prizes for draws.
- Funding Norm Hewitt as speaker for the Waiuku RFC prize-giving. This was seen as an effective encouragement for people to be more actively involved with their club.

- Allocating funding to address an issue with beetles on fields at Waiuku RFC.

It was highlighted that the Council routinely followed through on what “they said they would do” and were “good to work with”. The relationship between the Council and clubs is seen to have continued to work well.

5.1.3 Cooperative approach from liquor licensing personnel

The project was specifically seen as an opportunity for liquor licensing to build a relationship with club committee members and to work collaboratively rather than simply through use of authority.

“The cooperative approach between clubs and [liquor licensing] worked well. This runs contrary to some history of clubs having a less effective relationship with liquor licensing.”

“The rugby clubs detected a change in attitude and were able to get into a conversation with licensing.”

The emphasis by liquor licensing on working cooperatively to reduce drinking on the sidelines was seen as very positive. It was noted that a more dictatorial approach would have seen the clubs lose faith in the project.

Several stakeholders considered that the project provided an opportunity for a new way for the clubs to work with liquor licensing. There was initial reticence from some club committee members about the involvement of liquor licensing in the project, but the general consensus after the project was that liquor licensing contributed a positive member of the team and the project assisted to shift some negative perceptions.

The approach taken on the sidelines was also seen as positive, with an emphasis on educating spectators rather than “potting them”.

5.1.4 Involvement of clubs and CMRFU

Stakeholders regularly referred to the positive impact of clubs and CMRFU “coming to the party” with respect to the project.

The project benefited from the involvement of key people in each club who were both very responsible and worked actively in implementing the project and reinforcing the project message.

The involvement of club representatives in the project in their role as event managers was seen as critical. These individuals were encouraged by CMRFU to adopt the new role in discouraging drinking on the sidelines and, as a result, the event managers were well versed in the project and fully on board with it.

The clubs also acted further to promote the message of “no drinking on the sidelines”. For example, Waiuku RFC included a statement regarding this requirement on the match programme. This was seen as effective backup to the message delivered by Council staff and security personnel.

The involvement of CMRFU and the active approach taken by the CMRFU representative were cited as critical to achieving club buy-in. CMRFU involvement also mandated those working at the matches to promote the project message and make the project work.

The prizes provided by CMRFU provided visible endorsement of the project.

The CMRFU representative worked actively in the project, attending all weekly meetings and promoting the project approach. This positive involvement contributed to those in other clubs wanting to have the initiative in their clubs.

5.1.5 The right message in the right package

Feedback indicated that both the message and its delivery were effective.

The project message was seen to be successfully exposed through signage, the incentive of prizes and giveaways and the personnel monitoring the grounds at matches.

Signage was cited by some stakeholders as effective, although some cited requirements for more and bigger signs.

Clubs differed with respect to how effective the prize draws were and which prizes were more valued. On balance, however, the draws were seen as a valuable part of the project.

“For Waiuku, rugby union-branded kit was more sought after as playing for union seen as the ‘ultimate’. The opposite applied at Te Kohanga where jackets and beanies were better appreciated.”

The critical aspect in message delivery was the step-by-step approach to delivering the “Only in the Club” message, where a “softer” tone was used early in the season and more overt

messages as the season advanced (refer section 5.6). This approach gradually educated sideline supporters while keeping them “on side” with the project.

The focus on education and the avoidance of confrontation were highlighted as important.

5.1.6 Use of external personnel to monitor spectators at the games

The use of personnel external to the club (ie, Council and security staff) to monitor spectators at the games was regarded to be important to the project’s success. Non-club members were able to assist in promoting the “no drinking on the sidelines” message in some situations where it was awkward for club members to do so. This was particularly applicable at Te Kohanga RFC, which is a close-knit club with extended whanau membership.

There was feedback indicating that the use of security staff was seen by some as “bringing in heavies” but, typically, the use of these personnel was well accepted and seen to be beneficial.

5.2 WHAT WORKED “LESS WELL”

Stakeholders universally raised fewer points when asked about aspects of the project that did not work well compared with feedback on effective aspects of the project.

Three of nine stakeholders noted that they saw no negative points.

The balance referred to the following points.

5.2.1 Operating where there are different standards across clubs

It was noted that clubs operate with different standards and it would be easier to implement such a project if clubs implemented similar standards. It was suggested that putting in place similar standards with respect to drinking outside licensed areas for all Counties Manukau clubs would facilitate the implementation of this type of project.

5.2.2 Requirement for significant numbers of personnel in monitoring

Several stakeholders commented that the project was “hard work”. A number of people were involved and significant effort was needed to make the project work. Much of the time given to the project for monitoring was given voluntarily.

That said, those monitoring the project were seen to be consistent and dedicated in their approach.

However, it was noted that a larger-scale project or a repeat project would require that adequate numbers of people be assigned based on the club coverage required and that all those involved be formally recognised in the monitoring role, ie, monitoring was not based on their use of personal time.

5.2.3 Lack of active police involvement

A number of stakeholders expressed a preference for more police involvement in the project. However, there were mixed views on this, with most stakeholders preferring the informal approach that was used (further detail is included in section 6.3.1).

5.2.4 Patrons shifting drinking location

As noted in section 5.1, one stakeholder highlighted a concern that drinking at Te Kohanga RFC was simply shifted away from the sidelines to outside the grounds. The layout at Te Kohanga RFC, where the grounds are visible from the road and surrounding area, allows people to watch matches from their cars or other locations outside the grounds.

This stakeholder also emphasised a view that the project had had little impact on groups of younger people (under 19s' or under 21s' supporters) and that this was the group that shifted its drinking location to cars. It was noted that addressing drinking in these locations would have required police intervention, eg, in relation to drink-driving, but that this would be out of keeping with the style of the project.

NB: a longer-term approach has been planned involving planting trees and hedges so it is necessary to be in the grounds to see games.

5.2.5 Potential for enhanced project components

Two stakeholders commented on signage, claiming it needed to be bigger and that more signs were required.

Prizes were of more limited appeal at one club and thus were not seen to offer a significant incentive for club members (as per section 5.2). However, it was noted that there was more enthusiasm for the prizes towards the end of the season.

5.3 SUGGESTED PROJECT CHANGES

Stakeholders were generally positive about the current form of the project and had no requirement for significant changes to the approach used.

The following changes were suggested:

5.3.1 Possible increase in police involvement

As per section 6.2.3, there were mixed views on the value of police involvement in the project.

Police were not formally involved in project implementation, although the local constable and a more junior staff member at Waiuku chose to attend some matches at Waiuku RFC and to talk to spectators.

One stakeholder suggested that this informal involvement could have been programmed into the project, so police were seen to be part of the collaborative group behind the initiative.

A few stakeholders highlighted that it would have been valuable to have more formal police involvement. However, others expressed the view that active use of police would not be appropriate and would change the “flavour” of the project and its appeal to clubs and spectators.

5.3.2 Extended timeframe for rollout

Some stakeholders noted that the short lead-up to project implementation meant very rapid set-up and that a longer lead time would have been an advantage. Specifically, this would have assisted the project implementers to get better “buy-in” upfront from required personnel and may have allowed them to avoid some initial concerns from clubs about their selection for inclusion in the project.

5.3.3 Other changes

One stakeholder commented that it would have been good to see the project in place three years earlier.

One stakeholder suggested increased visibility of project personnel, possibly achieved with fluorescent jackets. Other feedback contrasted with this and suggested that the more subtle dress used, eg, “Only in the Club” beanies, was appropriate and fitted with the “tone” of the project.

6 RESULTS: LIMITATIONS

There are three limitations that must be accounted for when considering the results of this evaluation.

The first is the small size of the pilot. While observational data and feedback from these two clubs provide valuable information, a larger sample would have provided a more robust indication as to the potential consistency of results across different locations.

The second factor to consider is that the evaluation is largely based on qualitative feedback provided nearly six months after project completion. There is a possibility that the delay impacted on effective recollection. However, the evaluator observed that all interviewees had good recall of the project, indicating that the delay between project completion and interview may have had little impact.

The absence of robust quantitative data to consider alongside the qualitative feedback is the third limitation for consideration. Observational data collated during and after the season were used but the limited data set size (two clubs over five games) restricted the ability to establish any statistically significant quantitative results.

7 DISCUSSION

A discussion of key findings from the evaluation of the “Only in the Club” project is provided in this section.

7.1 PROJECT OUTCOMES

“One of the best promotions we have done – the most successful.”

“Was a gutsy good project – very worthwhile.”

The “Only in the Club” project was designed as a pilot in two clubs to test the viability of the approach for potential expansion and to inform further project development.

The evaluation results have demonstrated the viability of the project in the following ways:

- There was general consensus that alcohol consumption had markedly reduced on the sidelines and was largely confined to assigned licensed areas in these clubs.
- There were indications that there were increased numbers of patrons in the club rooms and that club rooms were busier and closing earlier.
- There was consistent feedback on an improved “atmosphere” at games and improved spectator behaviour.
- There was consistent evidence of a shift in spectator attitudes to drinking on the sidelines and recognition that this behaviour was no longer acceptable.
- Clubs came “on board” with the project and were motivated to participate.
- CMRFU strongly backed the project and participated actively.
- Effective working relationships operated between all stakeholders and continued benefits ensue from these relationships. This is seen as a stand-out achievement of the project.
- Those participating in project implementation were universally positive about the project and the positive outcomes from the project.
- The project attracted positive attention from a number of rugby and other sports clubs and from other councils.

These findings do need to be considered alongside low-level concern regarding the effectiveness of the project in changing behaviour and attitudes in young people and the risk that reduced drinking on the sidelines simply meant that drinking had shifted elsewhere or been effectively concealed.

Importantly, the project was equally effective in two clubs that differed markedly: one rural club with predominantly Maori participation and one urban club with predominantly European

participation. Additionally, the project was effective in clubs that were both on Council land (Te Kohanga RFC) and on privately owned land (Waiuku RFC). Arguably, it may be easier to implement such an initiative in places where the club is on council land and the council has the jurisdiction over land use, but the success of the campaign in Waiuku RFC showed that this is not essential.

When considered alongside similar initiatives, the project is regarded to have had a significant impact, with strong elements of a shift in culture despite a limited budget relative to that typically seen in projects aiming to achieve this type of change.⁹

The following sections consider project outcomes in terms of the stated project aims:

Address anti-social behaviour associated with alcohol consumption at participating clubs

Assessing the achievement of this goal is complicated by varying views as to whether there was an issue with anti-social behaviour associated with drinking at the outset of the project.

However, those who perceived that there were issues consistently noted an improvement in behaviour over the season.

Critically, the absence of reports of anti-social behaviour or issues to the Council or the judiciary of the Rugby Union during the season indicates that any anti-social issues have been effectively addressed by the project and/or through other club initiatives prior to the season starting.

Restrict alcohol consumption on the sidelines at participating clubs

The project was universally seen to have achieved the goal of reducing drinking on the sidelines, with indications that there was **no** drinking on the sidelines in the last few matches of the season.

The achievement of this goal was further supported by an obvious shift in drinking location to licensed areas.

⁹ Personal communication, Andrew Galloway, Project Manager Drinking Environments, ALAC.

Additionally, the level of responsiveness of other clubs has led to some expectation that the effect of reduced drinking on the sidelines may have filtered into other clubs.

Improve the safety of rugby club members and match officials

Consistent reports of an improved “atmosphere”, an increased attendance of families with children and the absence of complaints or reports to the Council or the rugby union are strong indicators of an environment that was safer and that “felt” safer. This was backed by reports from match officials of improved behaviour in both clubs.

The absence of people who were “front loaded” from drinking at the game may also have contributed to a sense of safety for other patrons in the club rooms.

Encourage the safer use and consumption of alcohol within the two participating clubs

Licensed areas with staff trained in host responsibility and where food is made available are regarded to offer a much safer and more controlled drinking environment. The effective restriction of drinking to licensed areas in “Only in the Club” is, thus, expected to have contributed to the goal of encouraging the safer use and consumption of alcohol.

Adhering to license restrictions, such as no drinking in changing rooms, and clubs closing earlier after a good night’s business are also seen as indications of the safer use and consumption of alcohol.

Work in partnership with stakeholders to address alcohol-related harm

Relationships between stakeholders have clearly been enhanced by their involvement in “Only in the Club”. In particular, there has been a positive impact on the ongoing relationship between the Council and the clubs.

This finding was supported unanimously by those interviewed and is a key achievement of the project. The project prompted and promoted a cooperative approach between various project partners, including the various arms of the Council, the clubs’ committee members and CMRFU. In particular, clubs and liquor licensing experienced working together effectively to achieve a desired goal.

The strong partnership approach is also evidenced in the project set-up and implementation. The project operated with Ministry of Justice project funding and public health-funded

security. Implementation was led by the Council with strong support from the clubs and CMRFU.

Equip clubs to manage alcohol-associated harm

There were consistent indications that the clubs involved had been provided with valuable methodologies and tools to continue to manage drinking on the sidelines at their clubs. Representatives of both clubs noted an intention to maintain the approach and that they felt equipped to do so.

However, there were mixed views as to the feasibility of the clubs continuing effectively in future seasons without input from the Council and other external personnel.

External personnel can be of particular value in family- and whanau-based clubs where it is more difficult for club personnel to approach patrons about their drinking behaviour.

Additionally, having external personnel involved provides club officials with an effective mandate to present the same message.

On balance, it is proposed that clubs will need some external organisation support while the approach remains relatively new. Over time, for example over four or five seasons, as the required culture change becomes more firmly embedded, it is anticipated that external input would be less likely to be necessary. The maintenance of culture change, however, depends to some extent on consistency in club personnel. The message may dilute as members in clubs change. The impact of changeovers of committee members also needs to be considered.

As a relatively new project, a driver is essential and the Council is generally seen to be a good choice in that role.

Arguably, equipping clubs in this way positions clubs to model acceptable drinking behaviour, in particular for young people, which is of particular interest where clubs have an important modelling function in rural communities.

8 CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION

The evaluation has pointed to critical success factors for such an initiative. These factors point to the following recommendations for strengthening the project and for successfully implementing this type of project.

1. *Ensure active club and rugby union involvement*

Active club and club committee involvement is central to project effectiveness.

There is a need for:

- Involvement in and commitment to the project from senior club members.
- Club reinforcement of the project message, eg, in match programmes and by event managers.

These actions position the project as having club backing and commitment rather than simply being a directive from a council, and mean more robust implementation and a higher likelihood of success.

Active backing of and involvement in the project by the rugby union also contributes to club buy-in and project success. Rugby union involvement provides a mandate to those working at the matches to promote the project message and make the project work.

There is potential for resistance from clubs “selected” for involvement, as perceptions regarding problematic behaviour may differ. Clarity as to the basis for club selection and positioning the project as part of any club’s efforts to be family oriented may be helpful. Additionally, clubs can be encouraged to see themselves as “leaders’ in the initiative rather than as “targets” because of poor track records.

Reviewing clubs individually will establish their particular needs with respect to the content of the project, and it is important that clubs participate in the process of identifying their own issues. The layout of grounds can contribute to potential problems, eg, parking inside the grounds can mean spectators can easily bring in concealed alcohol in car boots, or can contribute to solutions, eg, gated entrances on foot makes it easy to police the alcohol being brought in.

Club members will have different and valuable views on how to manage alcohol consumption in their grounds and this insight can be used accordingly to tailor projects for each club.

Simple solutions like the provision of signage requesting “no glass” and/or “no alcohol” may be a suitable start or an adequate approach in themselves for some clubs.

2. Encourage a cooperative approach between clubs and liquor licensing

Positioning the project as a cooperative approach between the clubs, liquor licensing and other arms of the council is essential for motivating club involvement and achieving positive project outcomes. The project can provide the opportunity for clubs and the council to work together, sometimes for the first time, to address collaboratively the issue of drinking on the sidelines.

3. Ensure reliable and consistent project implementation

Consistent and reliable input from the personnel monitoring the games is essential to a consistent message and also allows these personnel to achieve the escalation in enforcement of the message through the season that was seen to be effective in “Only in the Club” (refer point 9 below).

It may be necessary to formalise the monitoring role for all personnel involved, both council and security staff, in recognition of the personal time commitment people need to make to be involved in the monitoring of games. Further, wider implementation of the initiative is likely to require a stepwise introduction into a small number of clubs at a time to allow effective management of the increased administrative load.

4. Use both club and non-club personnel to reinforce the message

The combination of both club and non-club personnel to monitor the grounds and reinforce the “no drinking on the sidelines” message is important to project outcomes.

There is benefit in involving club representatives operating as event managers in reinforcing the “no drinking on the sidelines” message. This underscores the club commitment to the project and reinforces that the club no longer sees drinking on the sidelines as acceptable. It also highlights to patrons that the project is not simply a council directive.

Equally, the use of non-club personnel, including security staff and council members, for monitoring at matches can assist in averting potential issues with club members needing to address sideline drinking with friends, whanau and family.

It is anticipated that both club and non-club personnel will be needed to reinforce a “no drinking on the sidelines” message until the required culture change is fully embedded.

5. *Employ a positive approach and stepped message delivery*

A positive, non-confrontational approach to delivering the project message by those monitoring the grounds, and clarity from the outset that the project is not aiming to “pot” people, are effective in gaining support from clubs and spectators.

A stepped approach to enforcing the message, with simple education at the outset and more overt messages as the season advances, allows spectators to “warm” to the project and its goals and is more likely to result in their support and compliance.

While incentives such as prizes did assist in reinforcing the message, the need for highly appealing incentives was not essential for project success, as was seen in Waiuku RFC. Good signage is, however, critical for supporting the “no drinking on the sidelines” message.

6. *Ensure there is a licensed area from which matches are visible*

If club rooms do not look over the field(s), it is essential to have an assigned licensed area where people can drink while watching matches. Providing a licensed area at the end of the “number one” field was highlighted as essential to the project’s success at Waiuku RFC.

7. *Maintain informal involvement by police*

Benefits can ensue from police being seen to be working in collaboration with the council and clubs on this type of initiative. Police involvement in the project also reflects the joint role that police, agencies and public health have in liquor enforcement.

However, it appears that a more informal police involvement is preferable to an active police role as the latter carries the risk of changing the project focus from a cooperative solution to an enforcement exercise.

8. *Employ effective project set-up and design*

The following are recognised as critical aspects in set-up and design:

- An effective project driver.
- An adequate set-up timeframe and process to ensure “buy-in” to the project from key stakeholders, especially from clubs. Clubs that have been involved in the initiative may be useful to assist the council in promoting the project to other clubs.
- Project design that allows the council to be flexible, cooperative and pragmatic in its approach to project implementation (refer next point).
- Allocated project funding that allows the project to proceed without the need to “search out” funds for required activities.
- A design and implementation approach that encourages open and effective communication across stakeholder groups.

9. *Adopt a flexible and pragmatic approach to project implementation*

A flexible, pragmatic approach taken by the council in project implementation allows appropriate solutions to be applied to ensure project success. In the case of the “Only in the Club” pilot, providing a suitable licensed area for viewing matches at one club was an example of a council extending the club’s licence to make the project viable. Pragmatism was applied in the decision to restrict rather than ban drinking in changing rooms when it was recognised that an outright ban would not be effective against this long-held tradition.

This approach is critical for gaining club support.

APPENDIX 1: EXAMPLE OF KEY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW PROMPT SHEET

“Only in the Club” 2008 Project evaluation Stakeholder questions

1. Would you describe your involvement, if any, in the “Only in the Club” project?
2. What feedback have you had on project outcomes/sense do you have of project outcomes – positive and negative?
3. From your perspective, what has worked well in the project?
4. From your perspective, what has worked “less well” in the project?
5. The project overall goal was to reduce alcohol consumption on the sidelines at rugby matches and, thus, reduce associated alcohol-related harm:

*“To address alcohol consumption on the sidelines during rugby matches and the associated anti-social behaviour which results in players and match officials feeling intimidated. Alcohol induced violent behaviour often occurs within the club grounds and flows out onto the surrounding amenities”.*¹⁰

To what extent do you think the project has achieved its aims as follows? What factors indicate this (prompt for key indicators/measures and how used in practice)?

- To address the anti-social behaviour associated with alcohol consumption at Waiuku and Te Kohanga Rugby Clubs
- To restrict alcohol consumption on the sidelines at Waiuku and Te Kohanga Rugby Clubs

¹⁰ Franklin District Council. Project Initiation Document. Undated.

- To improve the safety of rugby club members and match officials
- To encourage the safer use and consumption of alcohol within the two rugby clubs
- To work in partnership with stakeholders to address alcohol related harm
- To equip clubs to manage alcohol associated harm.

6. In your view could anything else have contributed to these outcomes?

7. Are there any specific criteria you expect to see being used in the “Only in the Club” project evaluation?

8. What do you think is a successful outcome for the “Only in the Club” project, from an individual club perspective/across the project as a whole?

9. What do you think have been the critical success factors in the “Only in the Club” project?

10. Overall, what, if any changes would you like to see made to the project?

Any other comments:

APPENDIX 2: STAKEHOLDERS

<i>Contact</i>	<i>Role</i>
Interviewees	
Diane Pentz	Senior Policy Analyst, Franklin District Council
Andrew Moor	Parks Officer, Franklin District Council
Dan Lynch	Councillor, Franklin District Council
Terry Long	Liquor Licensing Officer, Franklin District
Annette Smith	Club Liaison Officer Draws & Results Junior Management Board Registrar Counties Manukau Rugby Football Union
Buck Minhinnick	Representative, Te Kohanga Rugby Football Club
Gary Howarth	Managing Director, Target Investigations & Security Limited
Richard Sheehan	Past President Waiuku District Rugby Football Club
Dave Yandall	Sergeant Waiuku Police Station
Written feedback	
Debra Olsen Secretary	Waiuku District Rugby Football Club Inc.
Tuhi Kihi	Club Secretary, Te Kohanga Rugby Football Club
Annette Smith	Club Liaison Officer Draws & Results Junior Management Board Registrar Counties Manukau Rugby Football Union