

1 INTRODUCTION

Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) is committed to supporting events that align with the key principles and objectives of the Events Policy.

The purpose of the Events Policy is to ensure that events in our district bring people together in a way that helps boost the wellbeing of the community and that any investment in events helps achieve and is consistent with the strategic direction of QLDC.

Events are encouraged in our district as they are important to the economic, social, and cultural vitality of the area, and reinforce our community identity, values and a unique sense of place.

The purpose of this Events Policy Guidelines document is to outline how events are managed in our district, who is responsible for what and how QLDC makes decisions. This document will reflect the Events Policy and guide the work of the Council staff when facilitating, delivering, ensuring strategic alignment and providing funding support in relation to events.

An accompanying document, the QLDC Handbook for Event Organisers, will provide practical information to support event organisers in holding events in our district, with useful information and guidance specific to our region.

How the Events Policy sits among other QLDC strategic and operational documents:



Events covered by the Events Policy

The types of events that are covered by the Events Policy are:

- Private events that are not open to the public but are using a QLDC asset
- Public events using a QLDC asset
- Events not held on a QLDC asset but requiring QLDC permissions

Legislative requirements:

There are legislative requirements that Council and event organisers must comply with and cannot alter, which can impact events (see 4. Strategic Alignment section of the Events Policy). This includes complying with other regulatory bodies such as WorkSafe.

2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The QLDC Events Office sits within the Economic Futures team in the Strategy and Policy division of QLDC. The Events Office offers advice and support for event organisers, working closely with other QLDC departments and event organisers.

The key roles of the Events Office are to:

- act as the first point of contact for organisations or individuals wishing to hold an event in the district.
- provide an assessment of incoming events against the objectives of the Events Policy.
- provide cross-organisational liaison and facilitation services for new and existing events when dealing with regulatory processes, consents, permissions and infrastructure.
- manage and administer the Events Fund grant program.
- review, approve and provide advice on Event Permits.

The Events Office does not manage any bookings or give permissions other than the Event Permit.

How Council supports events:

QLDC run events: Council directly undertakes the delivery of New Years Eve celebrations, also a programme of community events run by the Community Services division and supports events that mark significant national commemorations and public holidays, such as Matariki, Waitangi Day and Christmas celebrations.

QLDC co-funded events: Council provides funding to support commercial and community events through the Events Fund and Local Community Support grant programs.

Events using QLDC assets: Publicly owned land and spaces can be booked to host events.

Events requiring permissions from Council: Events that are not held in publicly owned spaces may still require other permissions such as resource consents, alcohol licensing, environmental health, traffic management and use of waterways.

Busking, pop up stalls and charity street collections are not covered by the Events Policy or these Guidelines. Refer to the [Activities in Public Places Bylaw 2023](#).

External roles

Destination Queenstown and Lake Wānaka Tourism are the Regional Tourism Organisations (RTO) responsible for destination marketing, domestically and internationally. These organisations work alongside Destination Southern Lakes to implement the district's destination management plan: [Travel to a Thriving Future](#).

QLDC, Destination Queenstown and Lake Wānaka Tourism are just three of the organisations involved in our local events sector.

Others with key roles in events include:

- Arrowtown Business and Promotion Association - represents the interests of the business owners of Arrowtown and drives visitation to the region through events and promotional activity, whilst protecting and advocating for the heritage and natural character of Arrowtown.
- Kāi Tahu - also known as Ngāi Tahu, is the Mana Whenua Māori iwi of the Queenstown Lakes district.
- New Zealand Events Association – an industry body that advocates and provides resources and professional development opportunities for event organisers.
- New Zealand Major Events - advises government about investing in major events, and partners with the events sector to attract events and leverage event benefits for New Zealand.
- Queenstown Business Chamber of Commerce and Wānaka Business Chamber – provides support for local business through advocacy, resources and connections.
- Sport New Zealand - a Crown entity that promotes and supports quality experiences in play, active recreation and sport to improve levels of physical activity and wellbeing, including funding.
- Tourism New Zealand - responsible for promoting New Zealand in key markets as a visitor destination.

3 PROCESS AND DECISION MAKING

The Events Policy is the overarching document that guides process and decision making for events at QLDC.

All events that approach Council for support will need to show that they align with the objectives of the policy in some capacity.

Please note that events requiring a Resource Consent will have the Resource Management Act 1991 legislation applied, governing this decision making specifically.

Application self-assessment

In the first instance, we encourage event organisers to use the resources available to self-assess their event against our requirements:

- QLDC Handbook for Event Organisers – this sets out permissions and requirements for event organisers specific to the Queenstown Lakes district.
- Venue Guides – these show the information needed to assess which venue may be appropriate for holding the event.
- Reserve Guides – these show some of the information needed to assess which reserve may be appropriate for holding the event.

Decision making by QLDC staff:

On submission of an event request QLDC will undertake the following (casual bookings¹ only when required):

1. Policy assessment - how we assess if an event aligns with our policy objectives.

Non-negotiable event delivery objectives that all events must meet are:

- Respect QLDC's statement of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.
- Ensure the safety of event participants, workers, residents and audiences.
- Minimise the adverse impacts of events on the district, including the environment.

See Section 4: Policy Objectives.

Moderate and significant impact events will be assessed against the community building policy objectives and Events Office staff will work with events organisers to increase alignment to objectives if required.

2. Asset suitability assessment - how we assess the suitability of the requested asset (venue/park/reserve) for the event.

Bookings for these spaces will reflect Event Policy Principle 4.2.3: *Consider the impact on community access and alignment to Policy objectives when deciding whether to accept or decline proposed event bookings*, with specific requirements informed by:

- Allocation Guides for sports fields and indoor courts
- Reserve Management Plans and the Reserves Act
- Requirements for road closures under the Local Government Act
- Hire / Permit terms & conditions
- Health and Safety minimum requirements as per WorkSafe NZ

Event impact classification

QLDC will also assign an impact classification to events. This will determine the complexity of cross-Council involvement, risk mitigation and post event requirements.

¹ **Casual bookings:** Booking reservation for a QLDC community facility, waterways or reserve only. Event will be self-contained within the facility. No impact on public spaces, traffic management, public transport or local community. No event permit required. No resource consent required.

Events Policy Guidelines

Event impact classification falls into four categories: casual booking, minor, moderate and significant.

Appendix 1: Event Impact Classification

Monitoring events

There is currently provision for the following:

- Resource Consents (Resource Management Act 1991) - the level of on-site monitoring is dependent on the nature and scale of events
- Alcohol licenses (Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act)
- Food safety requirements (the Food Act 2014)
- Traffic Management Plans (TMP), able to be monitored under the Land Transport Act
- Arrowtown Community Centre and Lake Hayes Pavilion, for noise levels and timing of events, and Lake Wānaka Centre for noise levels.

Post event requirements

After an event has taken place, it is useful for Council to understand the impact of the event on the asset, community and economy.

Events may be required to provide information such as:

- Metrics on the satisfaction of those attending and the local community
- Attendance and demographic data to show the type of audience attracted to events in our region
- The financial impact on the local economy.

4 OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

Event delivery objectives:

- 1) Respect QLDC's statement of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion statement ensures we are a place where all staff, residents, visitors, and partners feel valued, respected, and have equal opportunities for growth and success:

<https://www.qldc.govt.nz/your-council/careers/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-statement/>

Fully aligned	Not aligned
Event organisers observe or actively promote the event as a safe space for all and content does not discriminate against community members.	Content of event discriminates against community members.

- 2) Ensure the safety of event participants, workers, residents and audiences.

Events in the Queenstown Lakes district are operated safely with appropriate health and safety management procedures in place, ensuring the wellbeing of attendees, staff and volunteers.

Fully aligned	Not aligned
A health & safety plan in place that relates to the scale and complexity of the event.	No health & safety plan in place.

Events Policy Guidelines

- 3) Minimise the adverse impacts of events on the district, including the environment.

Events are run in an environmentally friendly manner with consideration given to minimising impacts on the community such as noise, congestion and disruption. See Section 7. Sustainable Events.

Fully aligned	Not aligned
Minimised noise, disruption and environmental impact. A waste management and carbon reduction plan in place.	The event will produce loud noise, disruptive traffic and restricts community access. No waste management or carbon reduction efforts.

Community-building objectives:

- 4) Maximise the local economic benefit that events bring by attracting visitors to events and using local suppliers where possible.

Events can provide an economic benefit to the district not only by using local suppliers but by the spend of visitors who come from other places to attend the event.

Fully aligned	Not aligned
Only local suppliers contracted and employed, event organiser is local. Visitors from out of town attend the event.	No local suppliers contacted or employed. No visitors from other places attending.

- 5) Bring people together in ways that help create a positive sense of community.

Communities and networks are cohesive and provide opportunities for positive social interaction and support. District events can contribute to an enhanced sense of community with attendees feeling that they belong, with the chance to interact with other community members provided.

Fully aligned	Not aligned
The event provides an opportunity for social and community interaction, including post event, to build a sense of community and shared experience.	No opportunities to connect or experience interaction at the event. No sense of a shared experience or community building.

- 6) Create opportunities for residents and visitors to participate in and attend events.

All our residents have the opportunity to participate in and attend events, and barriers to attend are removed. People of all backgrounds feel a sense of belonging.

Fully aligned	Not aligned
Open, accessible event with opportunities for all the community to participate.	Public excluded, prohibitive ticketing and not accessible to all community members.

Events Policy Guidelines

7) Respect and celebrate Mātauraka Kāi Tahu.²

See Section 6. Mātauraka Kāi Tahu. We want our community events to reflect we are in Aotearoa by honoring Mātauraka Kāi Tahu knowledge, culture and traditions.

Fully aligned	Not aligned
Kāi Tahu are consulted and participate in the event, including opportunities for partnership and codelivery of event. Tikanga adhered to. Takata whenua talents showcased.	Kāi tahu not acknowledged or consulted, mātauraka Māori not visible or considered.

8) Protect and celebrate the unique identity of this place.

Events contribute to the Queenstown Lakes identity and unique attributes and local talents are celebrated by residents. Tangible and intangible heritage is protected and promoted. Understanding and awareness of mana whenua, local culture, stories and heritage.

Fully aligned	Not aligned
Protect and promote the heritage of the district. Showcase local talents and industries.	No local performers or platforms to celebrate local achievement, no involvement of local industries.

5 FUNDING

All requests to QLDC for financial support to deliver events must be applied for through a funding application process. There are two QLDC funding programs that can support events in our district:

QLDC Events Fund

Applications to the QLDC Events Fund are made through an online grant application platform, [SmartyGrants](#).

One funding round is held annually, open for applications requesting funding over \$5,000.

A funding panel consisting of four QLDC Councillors review applications made to the QLDC Events Fund and approve requests under \$30,000. Full Council approve the panel recommendations of \$30,000 and over.

All successful applicants must provide a post event report to QLDC.

Funding criteria is based on the objectives of the Events Policy. All applications will be scored on the criteria, with environmental sustainability weighted to reflect the priority of this objective.

See Event Funding Guidelines: <https://www.qldc.govt.nz/media/cxfd5xe0/qldc-events-fund-guidelines-april-2025.pdf>

Local Community Support

Funding is available to support local events, fundraising and community projects that sustain community health and wellbeing in our district through the QLDC [Local Community Support](#) programme.

This support is provided in the form of “in kind” contributions of QLDC services or resources:

- Venue or equipment hire
- Sport and Recreation vouchers to use for community fundraising activities

² knowledge, wisdom, understanding, skill. Use of ‘k’ instead of ‘ng’ is in line with linguistic differences between standard Māori and Southern Kāi Tahu dialect.

Events Policy Guidelines

- Sustainability items
- Regulatory, permitting or consent fees.

All approved costs are paid directly by QLDC rather than a cash grant to the applicant. This programme is open year-round.

6 MĀTAURAKA KĀI TAHU

An important objective of the QLDC Events Policy is to respect and celebrate mātauraka Kāi Tahu (Events Policy: 5.1.6). Kāi Tahu is the Mana Whenua Māori iwi of the Queenstown Lakes district.

The objective reflects the vision of Ngāi Tahu 2025, Tō Tātou Ngāi Tahutanga culture and identity output “ongoing events and celebrations enhance Ngāi Tahu culture and identity.”

It is expected that events that are supported or funded by QLDC will adhere to the below foundational assumptions:

- Te reo Māori is an official language of New Zealand.
- Event organisers must protect the environment, in particular waterways, flora and fauna.
- Mana / Tangata whenua artistic talents are fostered and successful.

Significant events are encouraged to engage with Kā Papatipu Runaka o Kāi Tahu, particularly if the event takes place on a lake, is a Māori celebration, or is on land that is significant to Kā Papatipu Runaka o Kāi Tahu.

7 SUSTAINABLE EVENTS

To protect and enhance our beautiful district, Council welcomes events that ‘tread lightly’ on our environment. This includes activities that respect Kāi Tahu values, minimise the use of natural resources, avoid the creation of waste, have a low carbon footprint and restore natural ecosystems.

Council’s 2018 Waste Minimisation and Management Plan (WMMP) laid out a vision of ‘towards zero waste and a sustainable district’ and provided a comprehensive action plan to identify how Council would address the key waste issues facing the district. Following Council’s declaration of a climate and ecological emergency in 2019, QLDC has also adopted a Climate & Biodiversity Plan (CBP). The CBP adopted in 2022 had three goals for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, adapting to climate change, and restoring our biodiversity. QLDC has committed to embedding climate and biodiversity considerations into Council decision making and shows a commitment to a major organisational behaviour shift in this direction.

Events of all shapes and sizes offer a range of economic, cultural and social benefits for the district, but without careful planning can also have negative environmental impacts, including generation of waste and GHG emissions. Council has prioritised the development and support of events’ sustainability measures, to help mitigate negative environmental impacts that events may cause. This reflects the Events Policy objective 4.1.3 Minimise the adverse impacts of events on the district, including the environment.

All applicants to the Events Fund and those requesting Event Permits are required to provide both an Event Waste Minimisation and Management Plan and a GHG Emissions Reduction plan to demonstrate a commitment to environmental sustainability in our district. These plans will be reviewed by the Maintenance & Operations and Resilience & Climate Action teams.

QLDC has provided guidance and resources for event managers looking to reduce their waste and GHG emissions, including an [Event Waste and Emissions Reduction Guide and Toolkit](#) offering practical tips, templates, checklists and supporting information which will help events to:

- set waste and emissions reduction objectives
- develop action plans
- improve communication with suppliers and attendees
- measure and report on waste and emissions reduction goals.

8 ACCESSIBLE EVENTS

QLDC's Disability Policy sets goals and measurable actions for creating an inclusive and enabling society, by removing barriers to participation for disabled people living in and visiting our community. As part of this, QLDC is committed to ensuring the delivery or funding of events that are inclusive of disabled people, see Disability Policy Goal 4.

Disability Policy Goal 4 actions:

- Any events funded by QLDC must confirm that they will make all efforts to ensure the event is accessible to disabled people as either a participant, spectator or employee. QLDC will consider this information during the assessment of funding applications.
- Any events delivered by QLDC as the event organiser must be accessible to disabled people as either a participant, spectator or employee.

9 PERMITS AND REGULATORY

It is a legal requirement that events have all relevant statutory and regulatory permissions required to stage events in the Queenstown Lakes district. Some permissions are regulated and managed by QLDC and are listed below. Other permissions are managed by national or regional bodies. The Events Office can assist event organisers to navigate these processes, though the QLDC Handbook for Events Organisers resource and one on one advice.

Item	QLDC Department	Relevant links
Alcohol license	Alcohol Licensing	https://www.qldc.govt.nz/services/alcohol-licensing/
Amusement Devices	Regulatory Support	www.qldc.govt.nz/services/permits/
Camping exemption	Regulatory Support	https://www.qldc.govt.nz/recreation/responsible-camping-in-the-queenstown-lakes-district/
Event Permit	Events Office	https://www.qldc.govt.nz/community/event-planning-and-venues/event-planning/
Event Water Safety	Waterways Regulatory Services Manager	https://www.qldc.govt.nz/recreation/lakes-and-boating/
Film Permit	Film Office	https://www.qldc.govt.nz/community/event-planning-and-venues/useful-event-resources/film-permits
Helicopter landing	Regulatory Support	Email either rcmonitoring@qldc.govt.nz or rcmonitoringsupport@qldc.govt.nz
Licence to Occupy	Planning & Development, Parks	https://www.qldc.govt.nz/services/permits/
Marquees and stages – discretionary exemption	Building Services	https://www.qldc.govt.nz/community/event-planning-and-venues/useful-event-resources/tents-marquees-and-similar-lightweight-structures/
Pyrotechnics & fireworks over the water	Dependent on location (Waterways, Property or Parks)	https://www.qldc.govt.nz/community/event-planning-and-venues/useful-event-resources/#other-links
Reserve Permit	Property, Parks and Venues teams	https://www.qldc.govt.nz/services/permits/
Resource Consent	Resource Consents	https://www.qldc.govt.nz/services/resource-consents/

Events Policy Guidelines

	team	
Temporary Parking permits	Customer Services	https://www.qldc.govt.nz/services/transport-and-parking/parking/
Temporary Road Closures	Planning & Development	https://sportrec.qldc.govt.nz/community/event-planning-and-venues/useful-event-resources/temporary-road-closures-for-events/
Traffic Management Plan / Corridor Access Request (CAR)	Resource Management Engineering	https://sportrec.qldc.govt.nz/services/transport-and-parking/corridor-access-requests/
Venue Hire Agreement	Community Venues	https://www.qldc.govt.nz/community/event-planning-and-venues/venues/

10 EVALUATION

We need to understand whether QLDC's approach to events is making a difference to our district. We will use annual reviews and surveys to engage with the community to evaluate the impact of events held in our district.

- Regulatory and compliance reporting
- Financial reporting related to QLDC venue bookings and other event related income and expenses
- Event organiser reports from events that have received QLDC funding
- Debrief reports from QLDC run events
- Relevant Quality of Life survey results
- Event participant feedback surveys

Events Policy evaluation framework:

The below logic model shows the mapping of the objectives of the Policy.

