

CHRISTCHURCH HERITAGE FESTIVAL 2025 - EVENT SUMMARY



Thank you

Thank you to all those involved in the Christchurch Heritage Festival 2025. The 2025 festival was the 30th anniversary of the event, marking three decades of Christchurch City Council, heritage organisations and community event providers working together and sharing events with our district. While the festival has evolved over the years, its kaupapa remains unchanged: sharing the stories of the past helps strengthen our relationships and connects us to this place.

The Heritage Festival is a collaborative event, with the Christchurch City Council, heritage and community organisations and individuals working together, to produce a festival that celebrates the rich and diverse heritage of our district and beyond. The festival sits as part of the Christchurch City Council's *Our Heritage, Our Taonga Heritage Strategy 2019–2029 He tātai muka, He tātai tangata – Weave together the strands, Weave together the people*. Christchurch Heritage Festival events are run by independent community event providers. The Christchurch City Council facilitates the festival through coordinating the planning for and marketing of the festival.



The 2025 Heritage Festival programme ran over 17 days, including three weekends, from 11 - 27 October. Heritage Festival events ran across Christchurch, Banks Peninsula, and the Selwyn District. There were 75 events listed in the What's On online programme, with at least 10,000 people engaging with heritage festival events.

Theme: Building Place – evolving communities

The theme for 2025 was Building Place – evolving communities. The theme this year was based around anniversaries connected with the foundation of the city of Ōtautahi-Christchurch and the Waitaha-Canterbury region, the physical construction of the city and anniversaries relating to how our communities have changed and developed over time.

A number of event providers in the community programme used this theme to shape the content of their events, resulting in a variety of events sharing how the place we live in continues to change and how, through sharing our stories, we better understand our environment, the landscape, the people and the place.

Heritage Festival Events

The success of the Heritage Festival programme relied on the work of around 53 organisations, community groups and individuals who conceived, planned and ran over 70 unique events. Multiple occurrences of many events created well over 100 opportunities to attend a festival event. There was a wide range of activities available to attendees including talks, exhibitions, tours/open days, walks, performances and family activities.

Events ran across Christchurch and Banks Peninsula, and the Selwyn District once again contributed to the festival with several events running across the district. Selwyn Libraries held four events receiving very positive feedback from attendees:

- *This was amazing! I've lived in Canterbury my whole life and yet never been here. So thanks! (Walking into History – Rakaia Huts)*
- *Extraordinary experience! The personal stories and the vivid, rugged history I had never considered completely blew me away. I loved every moment. (South Malvern Cemetery Tour)*

Some larger event providers such as Te Matatiki Toi Ora The Arts Centre, Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga, Christchurch City and Selwyn Libraries, held multiple events in the programme. Among the larger events people enjoyed were the Orton Bradley Park Spring Fair, the Avebury House Open Day and Ferrymead Heritage Park's 'Ferrymead Alive' event.



Walking into History: Rakaia Huts –
Selwyn Libraries



Photo: Mike Dickison
Ōhinehou Lyttelton Wikipedia
Editathon - Christchurch Archaeology
Project



Christchurch Photo Hunt -
Fendalton Library

Community Event Provider Feedback

Of the 53 Event Providers who participated in the programme, 64% completed the Post Festival Event Provider Survey. Feedback received revealed that most participants appreciated the opportunity to be involved in the festival:

- *This is an important event on the city calendar. All comments on the day were most positive.*
- *It has been great being part of the Festival for several years running. Even though our event has evolved, it's nice to have a physical presence on the street to engage with the people in the city.*
- *Congratulations on 30 years of the Festival! We really appreciate being able to participate.*
- *Selwyn Libraries is very happy to be involved in the Festival ... as it broadened our audiences who enjoyed discovering the heritage in our district.*
- *It was an excellent well-run event and we were delighted with the participation from so many visitors.*

Overall attendance at festival events was good with 92% of the event providers who completed the survey either very satisfied (54%) or satisfied (38%) with the number of attendees at their events.

Christchurch City Council Marketing

As in previous years the marketing included print and digital channels. The printed calendar provided a summary overview of the events with the Council's What's On Christchurch website providing the full event details as well as communicating updates to individual events. We continued to increase the emphasis on the digital component of the marketing, including a reduction in the number of printed guides produced.



The Council's marketing programme included:

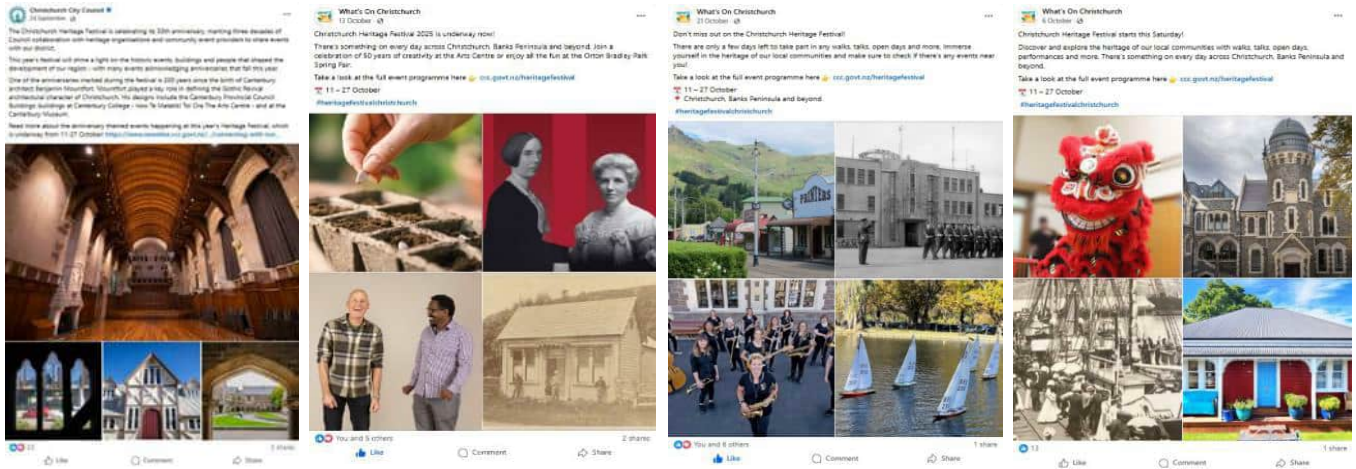
- 7,000 printed guides distributed through Event Providers, Christchurch City Libraries/Service Centres and Central City sites.
- Council's news channel - Newline stories: [24 September 2025](#), [1 October 2025](#)
- Christchurch City Council website/Facebook and What's On Christchurch website/Facebook
- E-newsletters to Christchurch Heritage Festival mailing list
- Bright Signs (Te Hononga Civic Offices, Christchurch City Libraries/Service Centres, Recreation & Sport Centres)
- Google Performance Max adverts
- Meta Facebook/Instagram adverts
- The Press, The Star, The Star Communities, Akaroa Mail, Selwyn Times adverts
- Outdoor street posters - central city and suburbs

Print samples - posters and newspapers

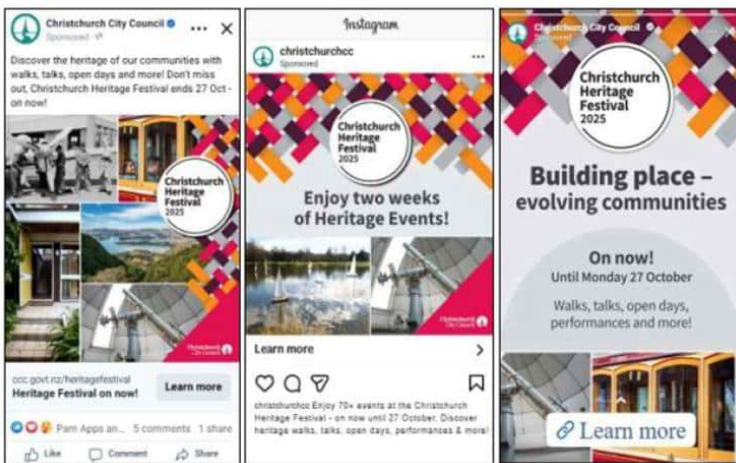


Digital material samples

Social media posts



Google Performance Max and Meta Facebook and Instagram



Google and Meta - paid digital advertising, were the strongest drivers to attract people to the What's On website which recorded a significant increase in online traffic from previous years.

Council Newsline articles

Connecting with our region's heritage



History & Heritage Things to do | 24 Sep 2025
Share this story

Find out more about the heritage of our district during the Christchurch Heritage Festival 2025.

The Christchurch Heritage Festival is celebrating its 30th anniversary, marking three decades of Council collaborations with heritage organisations and community event providers to share events with our district.

While the festival has evolved over the years, its purpose remains unchanged: sharing the stories of the past helps strengthen our relationships and connects us to this place.

The 2025 programme will run from 11-27 October at various locations across Christchurch, Banks Peninsula and Selwyn. This year's theme is Building Place - evolving communities.

24 September 2025
Page views: 1,025

Snapshots from Canterbury's past



History & Heritage Libraries Things to do | 1 Oct 2025
Share this story

Calling all photo buffs! It's time for the annual Christchurch City Libraries Photo Hunt.

Since 2003, people from across the district have shared thousands of images during the month-long competition, which runs throughout October.

"We love that people are contributing their images to help build a rich photographic history of life here in Christchurch. We're hoping there will be some exciting new treasures uncovered this year and encourage everyone to forage for old photos in their attics and garages, as well as their digital phones and cameras," says Arlene Teed, Librarian and Information Hostess.

1 October 2025
Page views: 1,302

Marketing overview

The marketing channels employed were successful in raising awareness of the festival. The printed guide was popular and the digital marketing performed well.

The Christchurch Heritage Festival 2025 What's On online programme attracted 56,747 page views by 20,830 unique users. This number has continued to increase from previous years – with 22,908 page views by 13,939 unique users in 2024.

A social campaign on Facebook and Instagram achieved over 750,000 impressions and reached 143,281 unique users, delivering 11,510 link clicks. The Google Performance Max campaign attracted 532,827 impressions generating over 12,000 link clicks. This showed the target audiences engaging with the festival online promotional material, driving significant online interest leading up to and during the festival.

The printed guide was well received – 97% of event providers who responded to the survey found it useful in the promotion of their event, and comments included:

- *We couldn't keep the guides on the shelf for long!*
- *The Library copies kept disappearing!*
- *I think a printed guide is crucial to success. It is an excellent size that people can pop into a bag and the demographic which is most likely to support the festival is comfortable with this kind of advertising.*

The Council marketing was supplemented by the individual event providers who marketed their own events through a variety of channels and methods. The Council's marketing raises awareness of the programme as a whole, while individual event providers are able to target their local audiences more directly and so remain a vital part of the overall marketing campaign. Most event providers reported that they promoted their events through social media, their own websites or email, with other channels noted including posters or flyers, newsletters and word of mouth.

The Christchurch Heritage Festival 2025 was made possible due to the contribution of the following organisations, groups and individuals:

- Addington Neighbourhood Association
- Air Force Museum of New Zealand
- Akaroa Coronation Library
- Arthur's Pass Residents' Association
- Avebury House Community Trust
- Biketober
- Canterbury Genealogy Society
- Canterbury Horticultural Society
- Canterbury Workers' Educational Association (CWEA)
- Christ Church Cathedral Reinstatement Ltd
- Christchurch Archaeology Project
- Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū
- Christchurch City Council Parks Unit
- Christchurch City Libraries Ngā Kete Wānanga-o-Ōtautahi
- Christchurch Model Yacht Club
- Christchurch Tram
- Cracroft Community Centre Inc
- Curators House Restaurant
- Disarmament and Security Centre
- Family History Society of New Zealand
- Ferrymead Heritage Park
- Friends of the Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū
- Glentunnel Museum
- Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga
- Humans of Christchurch Ōtautahi
- Janet Abbott
- Lincoln & Districts Historical Society Inc.
- Mairehau Neighbourhood Garden*
- New Zealand Chinese Association Canterbury Branch
- Ngaio Marsh House
- NO Productions Theatre
- Orton Bradley Park
- Packe Street Park & Community Garden
- Punting on the Avon
- Rewa Rendall
- Riccarton House & Bush
- Rivingholme Learning
- Robinsons Bay Community Heritage Trust
- St David's Anglican Church
- St Mary's Anglican Church, Addington
- St Paul's Anglican Church, Papanui
- Selwyn Libraries
- Simone Rewa Pearson
- Stoddart Cottage
- Summit Road Society
- Sutton Heritage House and Garden Trust
- Te Matatiki Toi Ora The Arts Centre
- Te Ūaka The Lyttelton Museum
- The Christchurch Club
- The Nurses' Memorial Chapel
- The Rose Historic Chapel Trust
- Underground Overground Archaeology
- Whakaraupō-Lyttelton Harbour Information Centre

**Event cancelled due to weather event. Other events on 23 October postponed or cancelled individual instance of event sequence.*