

Jan – Jun 2021

ASHBURTON TRUST
event centre

Council Report



Roger Farr

General Manager

26.7.2021



Six Month Report

January – June 2021

Managers' Report

Dear Mayor and Councillors.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Ashburton Performing Arts Theatre Trust (APATT) report for the six-month period from the 1st Jan-30th Jun 2021.

The roller-coaster ride continued into 2021 with the Level 3 lockdown in Auckland and subsequent level 2 lockdown for the rest of New Zealand in March resulting in a number of cancellations, primarily from the conference and meeting sector but also the postponement of the NZSO and New Zealand Ballet production of The Soldier Tale and the Showtime Australia Production of Neil Diamond. Both were rescheduled to later dates however the NZSO production was eventually cancelled due to the conductor falling ill. The Border closures continue to affect the plans for many of our Australian promoters with currently three definite postponements in Kevin Bloody Wilson, Stevie Nicks- Linda Ronstadt Song Book and Fleetwood Mac Experience Running in the Shadows. There are potentially another two performances scheduled for later in the year who are watching with interest the closure time frames. We have also had The World of Musicals postpone for the third time. This production is out of America.

All of this adds additional workload on the ticket office with rescheduling and ticket refunds. Given the current circumstances where events have to postpone or cancel, our decision to go with the Patron-base system where we control all parts of the ticket sale process and hold the ticket revenue in Trust, has given assurance to our audience members and promoters that ticket refunds or rebooking opportunities will be available immediately without the concern of third-party involvement.

The fallout from the collapse of ticketing company Ticket Direct hasn't been easy to work through but thankfully we are coming to the end of those events affected. There were also a number of ticket holding clients affected through being unable to get a refund on their tickets to cancelled events and promoters who didn't receive the revenue from ticket sales held by Ticket Direct. Where we have been able to, we have worked closely with the promoters to ensure the best outcome for them and their ticket holders. This has come at some cost to ATEC but has been gratefully received by the promoters and our customers.

TECHNICAL UPGRADE

A proposed venue upgrade has again been held up with the recent Lockdown causing the postponement of Jesus Christ Superstar. This production, initiated by ATEC and in conjunction with

Variety Theatre Ashburton was to have been a major fundraiser for the upgrade. Delays to the technical upgrade has resulted in a 5% price increase and a further period where the venue is unable to keep up with the technical advances happening across our industry.

FUNDRAISING - JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR, ANZAC Songs and Stories from the Front Line

It was heart breaking to have come so close to opening the season of Jesus Christ Superstar, to then have to inform the one-hundred-plus cast and crew we were having to postpone to 2022. It had been hoped we could reschedule to mid-November 2021, but with so many other events changing dates and the uncertainty of level restrictions going forward, it was decided that it would be better to postpone to March 2022. It is still not guaranteed at this point if we can proceed with this date until we receive approval from the Performance Rightsholder, Origin Theatrical Australia, who must apply to the show owners for the change. Both organisations have been very good to deal with to date and I don't anticipate any problems having already had approval for the proposed dates in November. Financially we are confident we can cover the expenses to date estimated at \$20,000. Most of the bigger expenses are only realised after the season has finished with Royalties being the biggest at 16% of the ticket sales income. An estimated 7000 hours have been given by a cast and crew of 70 people over a period of fourteen weeks getting the show to the point of being show ready, so it was a hard but necessary decision to postpone in the hope that a large portion of the cast will be available to finish what they started, in what was going to be an incredible production full of talent.

ANZAC Songs and Stories from the Front Line, RocknPop 2020

While disappointed with the outcome of JC Superstar to date, I could not be happier with our other Fundraising show, ANZAC Songs and Stories from the Front Line. Compiled and directed by Jenny Beach and Sally Farr, the concert featured wartime songs, but more importantly, letters written by and to local families, from those serving on the front line. These were read out throughout the show causing many tearful moments as a mostly older audience reminisced. RocknPop 2020 was another very successful fundraising performance in late 2020. Approximately \$39,000 has been raised to date from promotional fundraising shows in support of the technical upgrade.

Rebranding Name Change

The Ashburton Trust holds the Naming Rights for the Ashburton Trust Event Centre and has indicated they are changing their name to Braided Rivers Community Trust. A new logo design has been submitted and approved by the APATT board with all costs associated with the name change, met by the Braided Rivers Community Trust.

Electricity

With electricity being a significant cost in operating ATEC, the recent expiry of our current contract allowed us to go to market seeking quotes for the next three-year period. Three supply companies were approached with Trustpower again providing the best pricing option.

Venue Occupancy (includes pack in and pack out days)

Again, a Level two Lockdown in February 2021 resulted in further disruption to our events calendar. There were three cancelled and two postponed events resulting from the Lockdown.

Days of Use	Jan-Jun 2019	Jan-Jun 2020	Jan-Jun2021
Auditorium	66	10	50
Bradford	85	20	52
Green	14	12	11
Foyer	22	6	23

O-Reilly Auditorium -

Given the uncertainty and constant changes in alert levels between 14th February and 17th March, we were able to host a reasonable number of bookings during this period when compared to pre-covid levels. This was greatly assisted by the Variety Theatre Production of It's Only RocknRoll Baby and the South Island Dairy Conference.

Bradford Room – The Bradford Room has also had a reasonably good number of bookings over the period again boosted by the Dairy Conference and our weekly bookings.

Green Room – Back to pre-covid levels with the addition of a new weekly booking.

Woodham Foyer – Remains popular for corporate groups hosting client events requiring bar and catering facilities.

Event Breakdown (performance/meeting days only)

Community Events – The value of having community events afford the use of the event centre stands out with 65% of our bookings classed as community events. These events can range from local productions, fundraising events, meetings, choirs and church services. Every effort is made to support community organisations ensuring their event is of a high standard.

Conference/Meetings – Conference and meetings while slow to return following the lockdown period improved over the six months, January to June. This included the successful SIDE Dairy conference attended by four hundred delegates in June.

National Touring – Neil Diamond, Celtica, NZ String Quartet, Grooves,

Cancelled Events – NZSO, Roger Hall.

Postponed Events – Venice, World of Musicals, Kevin Bloody Wilson

Covid 19 and the resulting restrictions continue to impact the entertainment industry. Touring performances can't financially afford to perform at anything above Level One due to the restrictions on gatherings.

ATEC Procured – Is where ATEC contracts performances that may not otherwise come to our venue or are through a reputable touring company like Arts on Tour. ATEC continues to support Arts on Tour with its diverse range of high-quality performances and their relatively low costs. These performances are used for audience development where we offer our Open Hat payment scheme. Anyone can attend a performance and pay what they believe the performance was worth to them after the performance. We generally host six AOT performances a year.

Off Site Events – The number of off-site events we are doing continues to grow. These range from weddings and funerals, Zonta Breakfast, Bite Night, ADC Movie Night, ADC Light the Christmas Tree,

Waitangi on East St, Pathways at EA Network Centre and a growing number of corporate events at various venues within the district.

ATEC Service Level Agreement

Due to the circumstances, we failed to reach the KPIs of our Service Level Agreement for Touring and ATEC Procured events. Had events not cancelled or postponed to a later date, we would have reached our targets.

2020	Community Events	Conference Meetings	National Touring	ATEC Procured
Jul - Dec				
Sub Total	75	54	6	4
2021				
Jan - Jun				
Sub Total	65	29	4	1
Total	140	83	10	5
ADC Service Level Agreement	130	55	20	10

ATEC Operations

Repairs and Maintenance

Maintenance that had been deferred during the lockdown period has now been carried out. This included roof and gutter cleaning and the replacement of the lighting in the foyer areas with LED lighting.

Health and Safety

Health and Safety continue to be a major focus for all staff and contractors using ATEC.

ATEC follows the recommended practises provided by EVANZ in its handling of the Covid Compliance required by the Government. This was a more detailed statement of intent by venues to ensure the safety of those entering our venues across New Zealand.

There were no medical events or injuries recorded in this period.

Financial. (Jan-Jun 2021) includes Draft EOFY Report

Please find the Draft Financial report for the 2020-21 year. This has been forwarded for auditing purposes.

It has been another challenging year financially, but with the Government wage subsidy, support from the Lion Foundation and two very successful fundraising events, RocknPop and ANZAC, Stories and Songs from the Front Line, the financial year has ended in a relatively strong position.

O-Reilly Auditorium Hire was down 25% against budget but both Bradford Room, Green Room and Woodham Foyer spaces were slightly up on budget. Catering was up 20% due to the SIDE Dairy conference. Income for the year finished 3.0% ahead of budget thanks mainly to the number of

grants received. Likewise, Expenses have remained relatively contained up 0.4% against budget. This was helped by deferring Repairs and Maintenance which will be made up for in the new financial year.

Funding.

ATEC acknowledges the following organisations for their continued support.

Lion Foundation – Operational expenses.

Ashburton District Council – Operational Grant

Business Partners – Heartland Bank, EA Network and Gary McCormick Transport

Apprenticeship Boost – Government Funding for year two apprentice

Creative Community – Funding for Rail Lands production held in the Plains Railway Church

Acknowledgement – 15.9.2021

The Community Trust Mid South Canterbury – Grant for Guarantee Against Loss for Jesus Christ Superstar.

Staff and Volunteers

Recognition of the work our volunteers do is again necessary. The many hours they contribute to successfully running the various operations, helps keep the costs down for community groups and ensures the venue is operated in a professional manner for touring events and conferences.

Recognition of the many cast members and crew who have given of their time and talent for productions aimed at raising funds for ATEC must also be given. These events would not happen without their enthusiasm and support. Nearly \$30,000 has been raised from these promotional shows.

Staff have again received praise from the various organisations and private individuals who use our venue and also from the many events we provide technical support for off-site now. Their willingness to go the extra mile to ensure each event exceeds the client's expectation is to be commended and I thank them for their efforts in achieving the standard of service we deliver.

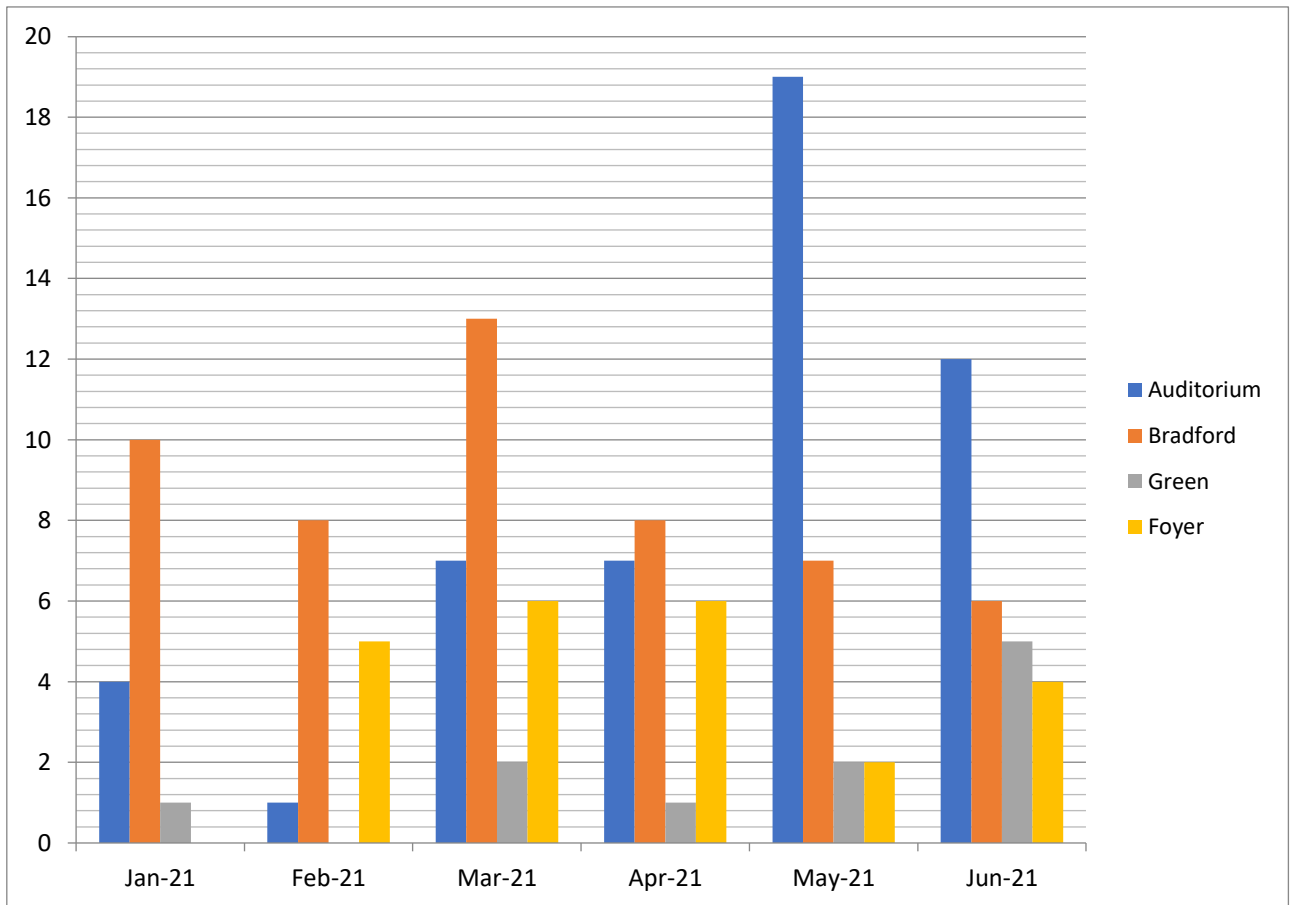
Summary

In the current climate of uncertainty within the industry, it is great to see the continued commitment from promoters and industry leaders who are looking for opportunities to tour. Industry representatives continue to update the government on the struggles venues and the hospitality/events industry are experiencing and are requesting further support. A significant amount of funding was targeted towards Creative New Zealand last year in support of the artists and performance companies, in the hope that there would be a trickle-down effect to the venues from the resulting touring performances. With the continuing Lockdowns and Level changes, this is yet to be recognised.

ATEC is somewhat insulated from this by way of the number of community events we host, but without the major touring events, we would struggle going forward. Like every business, all we can ask for is some long term certainty around what restrictions/capacities will be placed on venues. The events industry has a very long lead-in time for events and the uncertainty surrounding Level restrictions makes it difficult to commit and plan ahead.

Roger Farr
General Manager

ATEC Venue Occupancy
Jan - Jun 2021
Includes Pack-in/Pack-out Days

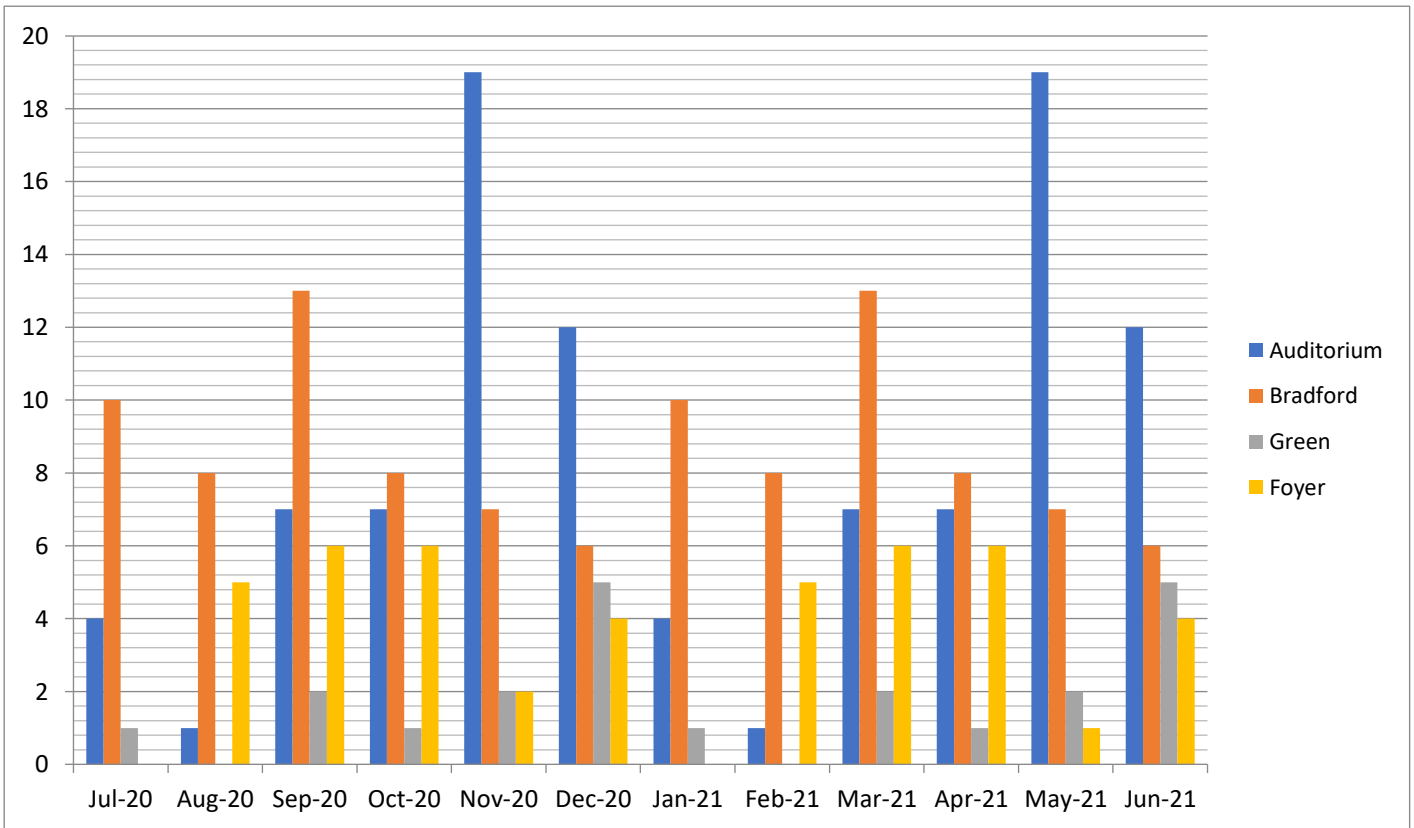


	Auditorium	Bradford	Green	Foyer
Jan-21	4	10	1	0
Feb-21	1	8	0	5
Mar-21	7	13	2	6
Apr-21	7	8	1	6
May-21	19	7	2	2
Jun-21	12	6	5	4
Total	50	52	11	23
Average Per Mth	8	9	2	4

ATEC Venue Occupancy

July - June 2021

Includes Pack-in/Pack-out Days

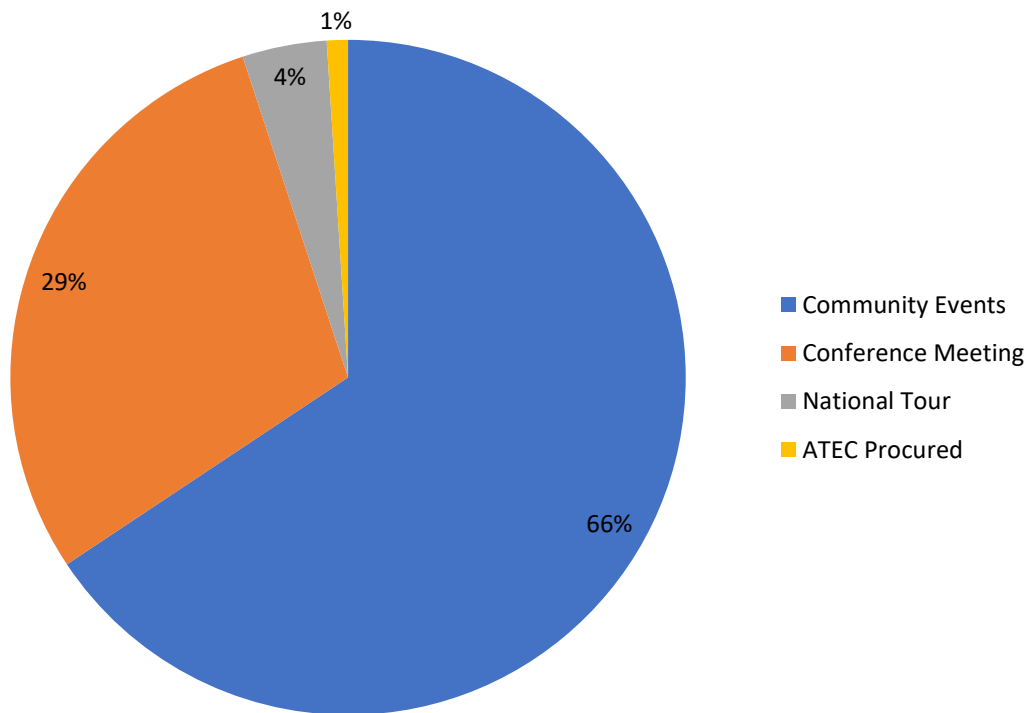


	Auditorium	Bradford	Green	Foyer
Jul-20	4	15	1	3
Aug-20	2	10	1	3
Sep-20	6	10	0	4
Oct-20	6	24	0	5
Nov-20	9	8	1	1
Dec-20	8	5	1	2
Jan-21	4	10	1	0
Feb-21	1	8	0	5
Mar-21	7	13	2	6
Apr-21	7	8	1	6
May-21	19	7	2	2
Jun-21	12	6	5	4
Total	85	124	15	40
Average Per Mth	6	9	2	4

ATEC Event Breakdown

Totals Jan-Jun 2021

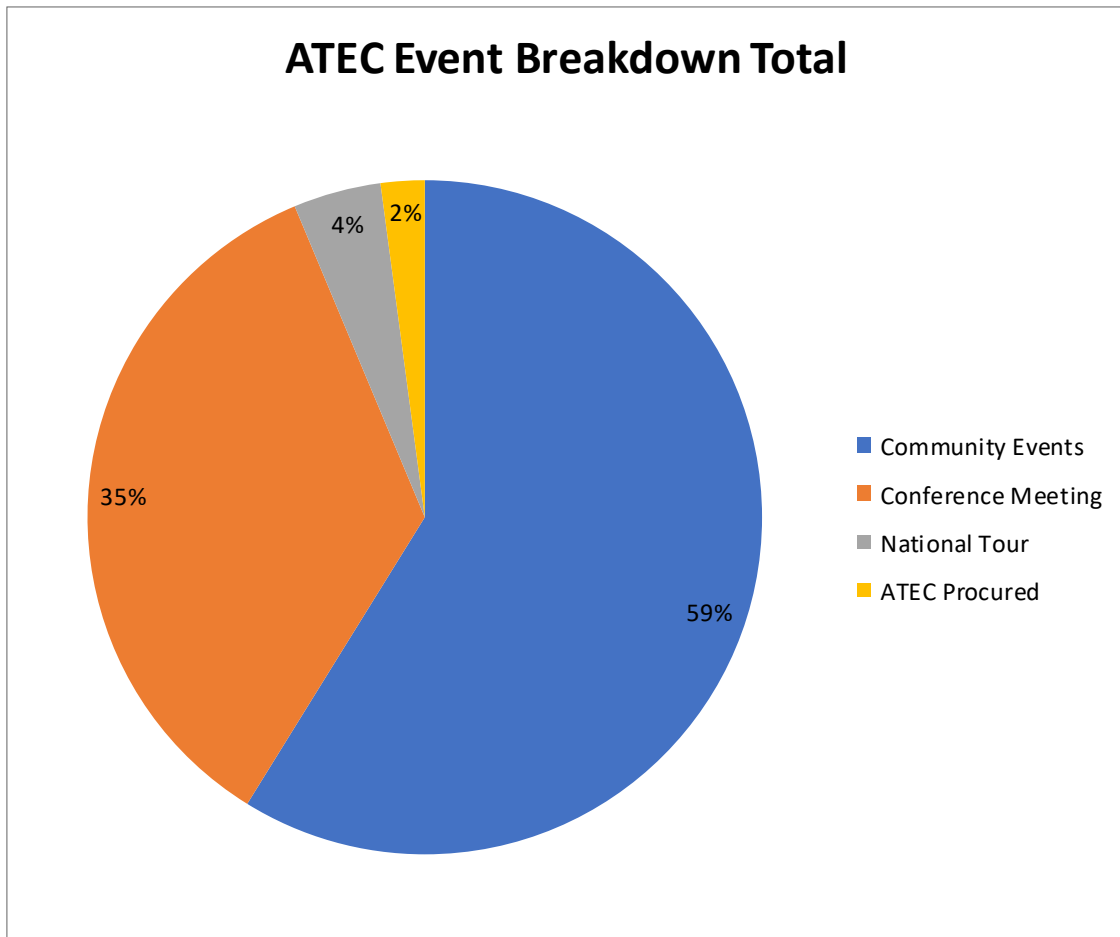
ATEC Event Breakdown Total



	Event Breakdown Jan - Jun 2021
Community Events	65
Conference Meeting	29
National Tour	4
ATEC Procured	1

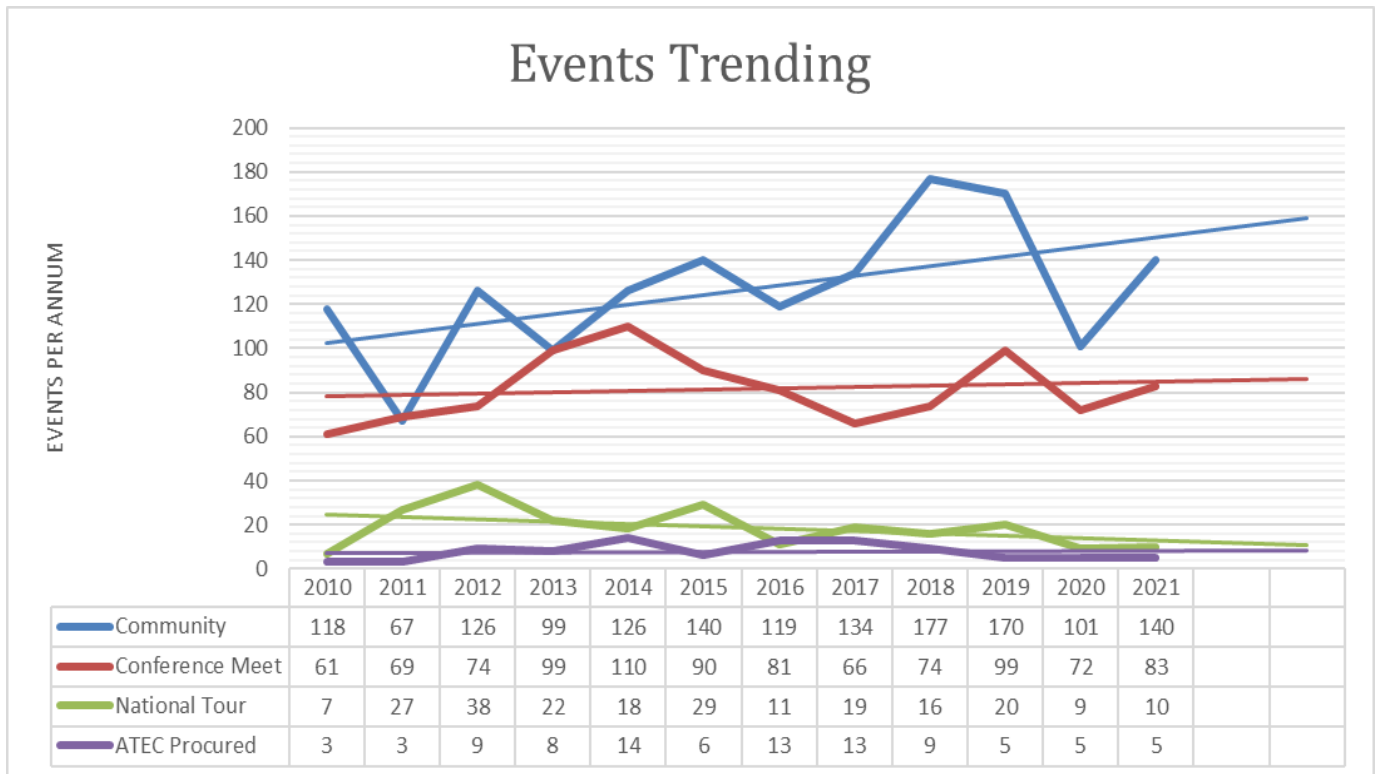
ATEC Event Breakdown

Totals Jul 2020 - Jun 2021



	Event Breakdown Jul - Jun 2021
Community Events	140
Conference Meeting	83
National Tour	10
ATEC Procured	5

Event Forecast Trending





Variety Theatre Ashburton - It's Only RocknRoll Baby



ANZAC Stories and Songs from the Front Line



New Zealand Army Band

Off-Site Zoom Meeting