

Ashburton Performing Arts Theatre Trust



ASHBURTON
event centre



Roger Farr

General Manager

26.01.2025

6 Month Report Jul-Dec 2025.

Dear Mayor and Councillors.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this report for the period July – December 2025.

The first six months of the 2025-2026 financial year have shown a promising return of touring performances to our venue, providing a boost to our Events Calendar. However, a noticeable drop in ticket sales for these events is likely due to the weak economy and strained budgets. This could also explain the decrease in community events, which hasn't been seen in several years.

Venue Occupancy (includes pack-in and pack-out days)

Dated 29.12.2025	6 months Jan – Jun 2025	6 months Jul – Dec 2025	Total Jan – Dec 2025	(Comparison) Jan - Dec 2024
O Reilly Auditorium	93	67	160	120
Bradford Room	55	26	81	101
Green Room	55	12	67	105
Woodham Foyer	58	24	82	27

1. **O'Reilly Auditorium:**

- There were 67 hire days in the reporting period, July to December 2025.
- In the 12 months from January to December 2025, there were 160 Hire Days in the O Reilly Auditorium.
- In the previous year (Jan-Dec 2024), there were 120 Hired Days. This represents a significant increase over the previous year.
- Touring Events increased significantly during the reporting period, bringing them back in line with data from previous periods.

Trend: There has been an increase in enquiries from promoters for Touring Events with a strong booking calendar going forward. Following strong bookings for Community events in the January–June period of 2025, there was a significant drop in the July–December period.

2. **Bradford Room:**

- 26 hire days were held from July to December 2025 compared to 45 in the July-December 2024 period.

- In the 12 months from January to December 2025, there were 81 hire days in the Bradford Function Room.
- In the previous year (Jan – Dec 2024), there were 101 events.

Trend: The Bradford Function Room continues to struggle in a crowded meeting space market, where many venues offer lower venue hire rates.

3. Green Room:

- 12 events took place from July to December 2025.
- In the 12 months from January to December 2025, there were 67 hire days in the Green Room
- In the previous year (Jan – Dec 2024), there were 105 events.

Trend: While the Green Room appears on paper to have had fewer bookings in 2025, the way the Green Room statistics are gathered has changed to better reflect actual invoiced hires.

4. Woodham Foyer:

- 24 events were held from July to December 2025.
- In the 12 months from January to December 2025, there were 82 hire days in the Woodham Foyer.
- In the previous year (Jan – Dec 2024), there were 27 events.

Trend: The Woodham Foyer remains a favourite for Business events and Arts on Tour performances.

Summary:

While bookings in the July to December reporting period are down, the 12 months January to December give confidence that things have turned a corner on the back of stronger bookings for the O Reilly Auditorium.



Event Breakdown (performance/meeting days only)

	Event Breakdown Jul-Dec 2025
Community	77
Conference Meetings	29
National Tour	12
AEC Procured	12

Community Events – While there was a drop in Community events in this reporting period, they remain the largest sector of our venue usage, comprising 58% of occupancy with 77 events held during this reporting period. This marks a decrease from 2024, which saw 100 Community events hosted.

To support local performing arts, we subsidise Community Performing Arts Organisations through the APATT Community Event Rate Card designed for Not-for-Profit entities. This initiative aims to help these organisations produce exceptional events at a more affordable rate.

Notably, Variety Theatre Ashburton, Big Little Theatre Company, and Mid Canterbury Children’s Theatre collectively reserve the venue for around 60 days each year. Additionally, both local and national Highland Dance groups, along with LDA, Danceworx, and the Heartland Bank Music Festival, frequently book multi-day events, providing an opportunity for over 1,000 children to perform on stage. Increasingly, local schools are choosing the O'Reilly Auditorium for their annual productions, with the Christian School enriched by an educational aspect. Here, staff and students work closely with AEC technicians to create stage and lighting plans, gaining valuable hands-on experience in technical operations under expert supervision. It was great to have the Hampsted School and St Joseph School productions held in the O Reilly Auditorium this year.

It's rewarding to witness the community recognising AEC is affordable for their events, offering great support for their productions and training opportunities for their students.

Conference/Meetings – There were fewer conference and meeting events in this reporting period, Jul – Dec 2025. Feedback from Event Organisers points towards a lack of parking for large-scale events as a deterrent. Technical upgrades for the Bradford Room are also required to meet the modern demands of conference and meeting events.

National Touring – AEC hosted 12 National Touring events in the July 2025 – December 2025 period. Again, a variety of performances were hosted, ranging from

The Great Gatsby Show	Queen
Anthony Street Illusionist	Taylor Swift Tribute
Kevin Bloody Wilson	Celtic Christmas
Queen Tribute	Tina: The Ultimate Tribute
Pooh Bear Live	The Greatest Christmas Show
Grumpy Old Men in Lycra	Fleetwood Mac Tribute

AEC Procured – AEC continues to feature performances from Arts on Tour as part of our audience development efforts. These performances aim to attract new audiences to our venue by offering a welcoming atmosphere with smaller audience sizes and a diverse range of high-quality performances across various genres. This approach introduces attendees to our venue who may not have previously visited, fostering a vibrant cultural exchange.

A highlight of this period was the very successful fundraising performance of Cabarnet 3 in August. The profits from the four performances have supported our fundraising campaign, Funding for the Future.

CAPEX/Technical/Venue Upgrade

Steady progress is being made towards securing the funding required for the planned upgrade to the venue, having now reached the ½ way mark in our goal to raise one million dollars.

I would like to thank the Community Trust of Mid-South Canterbury for their recent grant of \$75,000. This now means that funding is in place to complete those items in Priority One and 1A, with the new Line Array sound system scheduled for installation over the January-February period.

The installation of the new Adamson Line Array PA system will begin mid-January and be completed by the end of February. This will complete one of the more significant upgrades under Priority One of the Upgrade.



	Item	Description	Estimated Quote	Explanation
PRIORITY 1				
1	Audio	Line-Array PA + Upgrade	\$ 274,369.94	Adamson FOH PA Speaker System
	As Per Quote			
	TES2001066-2			
		Sub Total	\$ 274,369.94	GST Excl
1	Network			
		Network System	\$ 17,853.20	Basic IT Connectivity between room
		Sub Total	\$ 17,853.20	GST Excl
1		Labour	\$ 34,250.00	
		Contingency	\$ 10,000.00	
		Sub Total	\$ 44,250.00	GST Excl
	Priority One Total		\$ 336,473.14	GST Excl
Priority 1a				
	Stage Thrust	Maintenance/Networking Upgrade	\$ 140,000.00	
	Auditorium House Lights	Replace Lighting with LED	\$ 47,028.05	
	Dimmer System	Replace Dimmer System	\$ 5,000.00	
	Master Q System Install	Quote # TES2001008-4	\$ 171,601.44	
PRIORITY 2			\$ 363,629.49	
2	Paint & Decor			
		Paint interior, exterior	\$ 84,482.00	Estimated Quote
		Sub Total	\$ 84,482.00	GST Excl
2	Furnishing			
		Floor covering	\$ 98,000.00	Estimated Quote
		Wall covering	\$ 20,000.00	Estimated Quote
		Sub Total	\$ 118,000.00	GST Excl
	Priority Two Total		\$ 202,482.00	GST Excl
PRIORITY 3				
3	Lighting	12 x Moving Head LED Profile	\$ 150,000.00	Chauvet Maverick Force S or similar
		18 LED Maverick Wash	\$ 140,000.00	Chauvet Professional or similar
	Lighting	8 x Dimmers/Control	\$ 40,000.00	Replacement lighting control dimmer
		Sub Total	\$ 330,000.00	GST Excl
3	Audio Visual	Large Venue Projector	\$ 40,000.00	Estimated Quote
		Sub Total	\$ 40,000.00	GST Excl
	Priority Three Total		\$ 370,000.00	GST Excl
	Project Total		\$ 1,076,473.14	GST Excl

Rationale behind each of the Priority Upgrades –

Priority 1 & 1A– Essential to the operation of the venue at a level that assures that the itinerant hire and local performing arts groups benefit from a recognised standard of sound reproduction.

Audio:

Liner-Array PA System

- The current PA (sound system), when installed in 2008, was second-hand, meaning it could be as much as twenty years old.

- A failure in any part of the PA system would leave the venue with inadequate capabilities to operate at its current level.
- Sound systems have improved immensely over the life of the current system, where Liner-Array systems are now an industry standard and are being installed in most modern venues.
- There is an expectation that AEC should meet the current industry standards for sound production.
- Sound production is a critical component in any event where sound reinforcement is required and usually the first criticism received when it is not of standard.
- House Lights and Dimmer Upgrade to LED lighting.
- Master Q System

Summary

The proposed audio package will ensure the AEC has an audio system equal to that of recently built, similar-sized venues and capable of delivering high-quality, long-lasting performance. The Adamson Liner-Array system is recognised for its excellent quality. It has been installed in the Piano in Christchurch and a similar performing arts venue in Tauranga, both of similar size and capacity to the AEC.

Priority 2 – Essential to the aesthetics of the venue at a level that assures the audience of a functional, comfortable, well-maintained venue that encourages them to meet at a social level to be entertained or a corporate level for education and networking.

Refurbishment:

Paint and Décor: Interior & Exterior

- A refresh of the interior paint is required to keep the public areas and workspaces relevant to modern décor trends.
- Public areas are subjected to high traffic flows and the installation of trade display booths, etc., causing superficial wear and tear.

Furnishing and Wall Covering

- Sound-absorbing fabric wall covering located in the Bradford Room, Variety Foyer and Woodham Foyer has faded and needs replacing.
- Carpets across the venue have worn or become faded due to exposure to the sun and high foot traffic.

Summary

Décor is essential to creating a welcoming vibe in our venue, where our audience or corporate delegates can relax in comfort. Our promoters recognise our venue as being one that provides attractive surroundings and support for their audience members, and the Corporate Event organiser recognises our venue as having a professional level of service and capability.

Priority 3 – A need to continue the development of our technical capabilities and provide sustainability through eco-friendly LED Lighting practices.

Theatre Lighting

- Upgrade current lighting fixtures to LED, reducing our energy consumption and maintenance.
- Upgrade our current lighting fixtures to intelligent lighting capable of performing more than one task and limiting energy consumption.
- Upgrade the theatre lighting rig to meet modern-day practices that benefit local and itinerant hirers.

Audio Visual

- Upgrade the current Audio-Visual projector to an LED projector.

Summary

AEC believes it has a responsibility to limit its environmental footprint by using sustainable operating methods. To provide up-to-date equipment that meets best practice standards and offers the ability for staff to become educated in the use of modern-day equipment and practices.

Repairs and Maintenance

Ongoing general maintenance has been carried out. Issues with the Stage Thrust are still being worked through. While there are still questions about the cost, our insurance company has confirmed that they will cover the repairs to the damaged screw jack.

Building WOF – While delayed due to the Stage Thrust, sign-off has now been received.

Service Level Agreement

SLA 2025-26

Service Level Agreement	Community Events	Conference Meetings	National Touring	AEC Procured
Jul – Dec 2025	77	29	12	12
Jan – Jun 2026				
Total				
ADC Service Level Agreement	130	55	16	10

Financial Report July-December 2025

A strong trading period in October – December has lifted our Trading Income by 26% against budget for the reporting period. Operating Expenses were also up 9%. This provides a strong financial position as we head into the quieter period of January, February.

Highlights Income

Venue Hire (against budget)

Auditorium Hire up 3%
Bradford Room Hire up 11%
Bar Sales up 14%
Catering sales up 4.5%
Confectionery sales up 3.5%
Outside Equip Hire up 50%
Outside Labour Hire up 20%
Variable Charges up 16%
Advertising Recovered 183%

Ticket Sales

Event Revenue - derived from Ticket sales through the box office and online sales.
Up 36%.

Highlights Expenses (against budget)

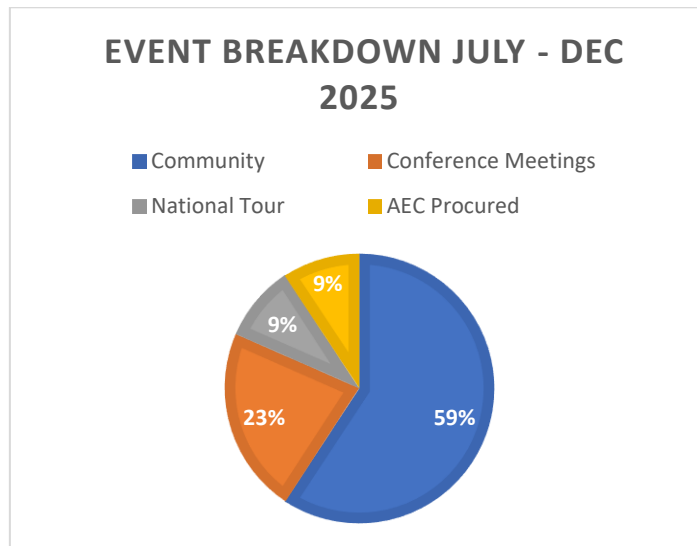
Advertising and Marketing is up 23%
Variable Costs up 24%
Wage and salary remain on budget.
Repairs and Maintenance up 6%
Rent and Rates up 5.5%

Overall, it has been a satisfactory trading period. Very Good progress has been made in raising funds for the Priority One venue upgrade. I take this opportunity to thank those involved in our fundraising performances, public donors, and our supportive Funding Partners, Lotto NZ, The Lion Foundation and the Community Trust Mid-South Canterbury. Other fundraising performances are currently in the planning stages, with further news on these once details have been confirmed.

Budget Vse Actuals Update July – Dec 2025

		2025-26				
ITEM	Explanation	Budget Report YTD to 30.6.2025 (Actual)	Percentage Increase Decrease	Draft Budget 2025-26	P&L Report YTD to 31/12/2025 (Actuals)	Budget Report YTD to 30.6.2026 (Actuals)
		D	A	B	C	D
Trading Income						
Advertising Recovery	Revenue from the sale of marketing packages	\$ 7,407.94	20%	\$ 8,889.53	\$ 12,618.66	
AEC Membership	Memnbership Subs				\$ 478.26	
AEC Procured Shows (Excl Fund Raising)	Revenue from AEC Procured Performances	\$ 2,583.06		\$ 2,583.06	\$ 2,620.87	
Bar Sales	All Bar related income	\$ 48,781.48	20%	\$ 58,537.78	\$ 43,495.06	
Catering Sales	All Catering related Income	\$ 64,984.72	20%	\$ 77,981.66	\$ 43,782.23	
Confectionary Sales	All Confectionary related income	\$ 23,474.20		\$ 23,474.20	\$ 15,446.19	
Electricity Recovery	Revenue from Electricity oncharged	\$ 22,219.84	20%	\$ 26,663.81	\$ 11,880.37	
Event Revenue (Booking Fee, CC, Insider)	Revenue from Booking Fees, CC Charges, Insider Fee	\$ 56,449.11		\$ 56,449.11	\$ 38,632.78	
Hire - Auditorium	Hire - Auditorium	\$ 88,953.98	10%	\$ 97,849.38	\$ 50,423.15	
Hire - Bradford Room	Hire - Bradford Room	\$ 13,664.98	5%	\$ 14,348.23	\$ 8,003.00	
Hire - Green Room	Hire - Green Room	\$ 4,641.73	5%	\$ 4,873.82	\$ 1,200.00	
Hire - Woodham Foyer	Hire - Woodham Foyer	\$ 4,894.17	5%	\$ 5,138.88	\$ 1,939.78	
Regent Cinema Lease	Regent Cinema Car Park Lease	\$ 10,298.66		\$ 10,298.66	\$ 5,199.96	
Outside Hire - Light/Sound/AV	Revenue from tech equipment hired to Outside Events	\$ 1,647.10	25%	\$ 2,058.88	\$ 12,669.72	
Outside Hire - Labour	Revenue from Labour charges to Outside Events	\$ 4,571.00	25%	\$ 5,713.75	\$ 8,827.00	
Variable Charges	Revenue from Tech Equip & Labour hired to In-House Events	\$ 180,160.43	2%	\$ 183,763.64	\$ 106,990.55	
				\$ -		
Other Income				\$ -		
Donations	Donations received Via On-Line portal	\$ 14,706.61		\$ 14,706.61	\$ 10,975.00	
Interest Received	Bank Interest Received	\$ 5,323.40		\$ 5,323.40	\$ 3,527.81	
Naming Rights	Naming Rights paid annually	\$ 5,000.00		\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	
ADC Grant		\$ 338,090.00		\$ 346,245.00	\$ 173,123.00	\$ 173,123.00
TOTAL		\$ 897,852.41		\$ 949,899.38	\$ 556,833.39	
Expenses						
ACC Levies	ACC Levies	\$ 1,466.34	4.3%	\$ 1,529.39	\$ 1,835.62	
AEC Promo Shows					\$ 6,846.74	
Bank Charges & Merchant Fees	Bank Charges & Merchant Fees	\$ 1,508.08	2.0%	\$ 1,538.24	\$ 3,420.62	
Bar Purchases	All beverage purchases sold over a bar	\$ 16,290.34	5.0%	\$ 17,104.86	\$ 19,443.01	
Catering Purchases	All catering purchases	\$ 37,749.73	2.5%	\$ 38,693.47	\$ 23,616.41	
Confectionary Purchases	All confectionary purchases	\$ 14,935.40	2.5%	\$ 15,308.79	\$ 7,176.54	
Cleaning & Laundry	Cleaning Product, Bathroom related product, Cleaning Company	\$ 25,165.00	2.5%	\$ 25,794.13	\$ 13,742.29	
Compliance Fees	Building WOF, Compliance Costs, Lifts, Air Con, Fire Monitoring	\$ 17,220.63	2.5%	\$ 17,651.15	\$ 5,007.58	
Computer & Xero Expenses	Computer related apps, Xero Licence	\$ 3,070.34	2.5%	\$ 3,147.10	\$ 2,224.79	
Kiwisaver Employer Contribution	Kiwisaver Employer Contribution	\$ 4,569.58	0.0%	\$ 4,569.58	\$ 5,392.56	
Licences and Registration	Patronbase, Food Lic, Bar Lic, Bar Manager Lic, Online based apps	\$ 1,260.00	2.5%	\$ 1,291.50	\$ 372.31	
Office Expenses	Stationery, Ticketing, Xero, Dynamic Computer Solutions for File Back	\$ 12,900.11	2.5%	\$ 13,222.61	\$ 4,921.91	
Advertising and Promotion	Advertising and Promotion, Mail Chimp, Foyer TVs Rental	\$ 36,751.41	2.5%	\$ 37,670.20	\$ 21,781.69	
Bar and Catering R&M	Bar and Catering R&M	\$ 451.69	300.0%	\$ 1,806.76		
Freight and Courier (Not Tech Related)	Freight and Courier (Not Tech Equipment Related)	\$ 150.00	0.0%	\$ 150.00		
Insurance	All Insurance premiums.	\$ 60,189.69	0.0%	\$ 60,189.69	\$ 29,583.18	
Rates	ADC Rent Lease Rent Reviewed 1.12.2025. Next review 2027	\$ 44,000.00	10.0%	\$ 48,400.00	\$ 18,333.35	\$ 48,400.00
Rent	ADC Rates	\$ 13,495.00	0.0%	\$ 13,495.00	\$ 10,708.55	
Repairs and Maintenance	Repairs and Maintenance	\$ 41,065.66	2.5%	\$ 42,092.30	\$ 23,296.92	
Electricity Light, Power, Heating	Electricity Light, Power, Heating	\$ 64,633.08	4.0%	\$ 67,218.40	\$ 28,041.46	
Accounting/Audit/ Legal	Accounting/Audit/Legal	\$ 10,794.44	2.5%	\$ 11,064.30	\$ 4,945.00	
Phone and Internet	Phone and Internet, Dynamic Computer Solutions for backup, Sean, C	\$ 5,289.87	2.5%	\$ 5,422.12	\$ 1,964.75	
Plant and Equipment Hire	Photocopier, EFPoS Terminals, POS,	\$ 6,823.78	2.5%	\$ 6,994.37	\$ 8,062.65	
Security & Alarm	All Security Costs, Fire Monitoring, FFP	\$ 2,207.40	2.5%	\$ 2,262.59	\$ 1,317.85	
Staff Expenses	Uniforms, PPS	\$ 3,898.04	2.5%	\$ 3,995.49	\$ 1,765.66	
Staff Training	First Aid, Fire/Usher Training, Conference/Seminar attendance,	\$ 2,103.70	0.0%	\$ 2,103.70	\$ 196.52	
Subscriptions/Membership	EVANZ, ETNZ,	\$ 19,975.35	2.5%	\$ 20,474.73	\$ 10,119.24	
Variable Costs	All costs associated with achieving the Variable Income	\$ 92,647.75	0.0%	\$ 92,647.75	\$ 56,975.10	
Vehicle Expenses/Fuel	Van WOF, Maintenance, Vehicle & Firepump Fuel. Fuel Reimburseme	\$ 589.22	0.0%	\$ 589.22	\$ 1,154.08	
Volunteer Expenses	Uniforms, PPS, all volunteer-related costs	\$ 2,366.26	2.5%	\$ 2,425.42	\$ 740.22	
Wage and Salary - Bar and Catering	Wage and Salary - Bar and Catering	\$ 19,056.00	0.0%	\$ 19,056.00	\$ 15,740.11	
Wage and Salary - Operational	Wage and Salary - Operational	\$ 370,992.00	0.0%	\$ 370,992.00	\$ 168,268.60	
				\$ -		
Capital Expenditure				\$ -		
Computers Windows 11 x3	Replacing 2 desk top and 1 Laptop Computer with Windows 11			\$ 10,000.00		
LED Auditorium Lighting Upgrade	Replacement of House Lights and Control System			\$ 35,000.00		
Stage Thrust	Repairs to Stage Thrust			\$ 75,000.00		
TOTAL		\$ 933,615.89		\$ 1,068,900.85	\$ 496,995.31	
		-\$ 35,763.48		-\$ 119,001.47	\$ 59,838.08	

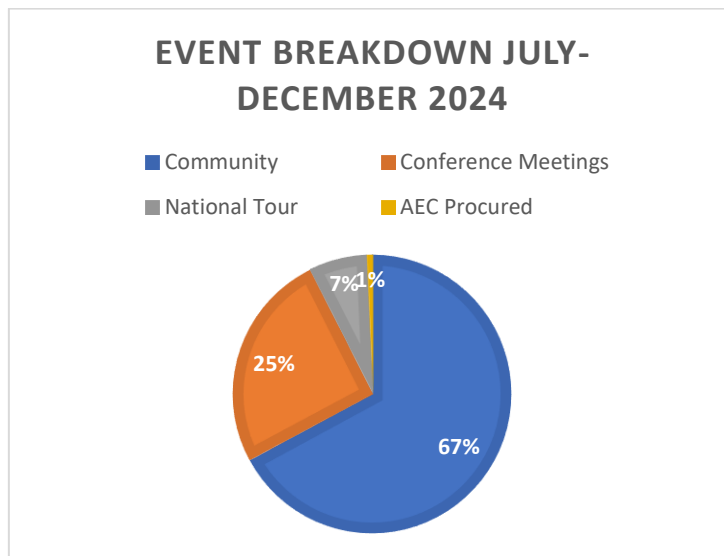
Event Days of Use Breakdown Jul-Dec 2025



	Event Breakdown Jul-Dec 2025
Community	77
Conference Meetings	29
National Tour	12
AEC Procured	12

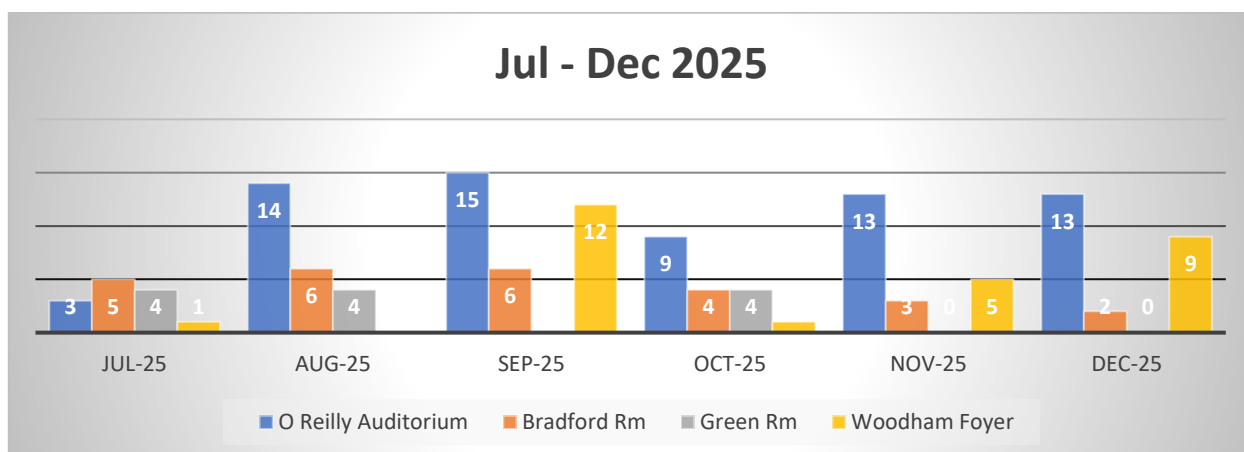
By Comparison

Event Days of Use Breakdown Jul-Dec 2024

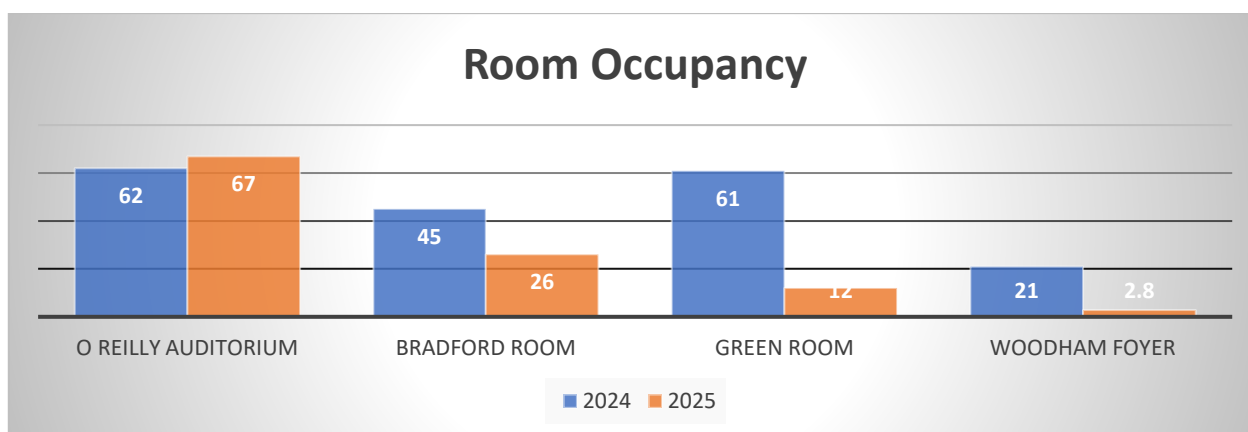


	Event Breakdown
Community	100
Conference Meetings	38
National Tour	10
AEC Procured	1

Days of Use (Includes Pack in and Pack out days)



Room Occupancy Comparison 2024-2025



Staff and Volunteers

Staff and Volunteers continue to function well as a team, providing exceptional service to our clients and patrons. I take this opportunity to thank my team for their incredible support and expertise in our events.

Our incredible team of 38 volunteers provided 1047 hours of service as ushers and stage technicians in the last financial year. The Ashburton Performing Arts Theatre Trust recognises the value of the service they offer and thanks them for their continued support.

Summary

There are promising signs of recovery, with two periods of growth being recorded. While ticket sales remain a concern, I feel it is only a matter of time before they begin to improve. The increase in enquiries from promoters and event organisers bodes well for a successful year.

Cabarnet III



Conference

