

## **Submission on Wellington City Council's Alcohol Management Strategy**

**Mt Cook Mobilised • 19 April 2013**

1. The central-Wellington liquor ban must continue. It is a good tool for reducing the adverse effects of drinking in public and in cars, especially in a quiet suburban setting of Mt Cook. We support retaining the existing liquor ban area boundaries through and including Berhampore.
2. Penalties for infringement of the liquor ban should be strengthened, perhaps adding instant fines or short-duration 'move-on notices' or 'anti-social behavioural orders' to the current policing measures.
3. The liquor ban provisions (coverage, requirements, penalties) should be promoted more, with consideration given to increasing the amount of signage indicating the liquor ban area.
4. Mt Cook is an area with very few on-licence premises, but has more off-licence premises in the form of dairies (soon potentially to be joined by a supermarket). While the dairies do not in the main sell large quantities of alcohol, the supermarkets do. Limiting sales from supermarkets could include minimum pricing, and less-prominent positioning and promotion. Reducing hours of sale (no sales, say, from 10pm to 6am) would also cut down the suburban harm from excessive drinking, but this would also need to be applied to dairies.
5. Dairies and off-licences that infringe their licence provisions by selling to under-age or intoxicated people should face increased penalties, such as mandatory short-duration closures or instant fines. Enforcement needs to be continuous and effective.
6. We support risk-based licence fee structures for liquor outlets, as well as greater cost recovery. That would enable territorial authorities to exercise greater control as the licensing authority. Licence fees could vary based on the volume of sales (eg by retrospective adjustment each year when licences are renewed), or possibly by location, who the typical purchaser is, time of sales, etc. Some of these might be hard to administer, but I think we should support the general concept of licence fees varying with the potential harm caused.
7. Another factor strongly affecting Mt Cook is the pre-loading by people living in or just south of the suburb, who then move into town. The effects of this behaviour are seen mostly in groups of people staggering along the streets, urinating, vomiting, acting anti-socially, including vandalising property or doing graffiti, discarding drink containers and fast food wrappers en route – including smashing bottles. Measures need to be implemented to curb

this, including some of the above – but mostly a change in attitude and culture is required.

8. Another harm which follows liquor sales is the amount of broken glass on pavements and streets. The contents of the product can cause harm, but so too can the packaging. Broken glass on our pavements does not go away with the next rain shower (as do piles of vomit), but it causes a decided hazard to pedestrians (particularly children) and residents. This would reduce if glass bottles for beer were gradually phased out, in favour of cans. An alternative would be installing highly-visible recycling bins or additional rubbish bins along the main walking routes into town – Adelaide Road, Tasman St, Wallace St, Webb St.

9. Another way to change the drinking culture is to focus on the intensity of drinking in late-night Courtenay Place/Cuba Mall. Earlier closing hours for all licensed premises there would assist, but the time or scheduling of closing would need to be determined in conjunction with the NZ Police (allowing staggered closing times and one-way door policies) to avoid a flood of drunks being tipped into the streets all at once. A one-way door policy from midnight is not unreasonable, and bar closures starting no later than 3am.

10. The notion of Host Responsibility should be extended from on-licence holders to off-licence holders. Bottle-store owners should also need to demonstrate that they are good corporate citizens with a stake in the communities to which they profit by selling alcohol. The sell-and-forget notion should become unacceptable.

11. WCC should adopt policy on 'density of licenses', allowing a maximum number to be defined for each community, perhaps with a sinking lid if too many are perceived to be in place already. Such a policy should be established in conjunction with each community.

12. Better public transport home from Courtenay Place at these hours would enable the safe journeying of people who are at risk of assault or harm, and would minimise any potential trouble they may cause while walking home.

13. Greater support or assistance to neighbourhood support groups, community patrols, Maori Wardens, Local Hosts and police efforts would make for safer communities.

14. All parties should work towards increasing the responsibility placed on the individual drinker. Whereas licence-holders can be convicted for supplying alcohol in contravention of their licence, individual drinkers are not held accountable until they start acting anti-socially or criminally (such as by driving). An expectation of personal responsibility should be on their shoulders throughout their period of drinking.

**Mt Cook Mobilised  
Spokesperson Peter Cooke**