

Venue Research in Post-earthquake Christchurch

Due to a series of earthquakes centred not far from Christchurch (4/9/2010 and 22/02/2011 in particular) the city was left without most of our favourite event venues – either through them being destroyed, or used for other purposes, either way, they were no longer being available for casual hire. It was therefore necessary to look for a range of new places where we could hold events. While we were accustomed to searching for the ‘right’ venue for a pre-determined event, suddenly we needed to change our approach.

As always, our research began online. We identified likely sites before heading out for an inspection tour where we visited each venue. We noted kitchen facilities, parking, room size and cost etc. before brainstorming to match the new venue to an event type or potential event theme.

In the first instance we looked at venues that were well outside the city centre, on account of those buildings being more likely to be both standing *and* available. As Christchurch undergoes the long term rebuild, we continue to review venues within the city limits. Consequently this article has been reviewed and updated several times. With that in mind, please note the following:

NEW

This indicates a venue added since the last iteration of this document

UPDATE 2016:

Indicates when new information has been added to an existing venue

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Outside Christchurch City

Cust Community Centre

9 Mill Road, Cust

Cust Community Centre boasts three rooms including: a large hall that seats 200, a small room good for A&S displays and a room for plating and prep in addition to a reasonably good kitchen. Building abuts Jack Graham Reserve. Used for 3 Baronial Anniversaries. Cost is per hour and very reasonable.

ISSUES: Generally felt to be too far from the city for whole day events, let alone a feast. Not on a bus route. Although lifts from Rangiora were organised, no one took advantage of them on account of the long bus ride (45-60 mins from CBD) to get that far.

LINKS: www.waimakariri.govt.nz/leisure-and-recreation/facilities/halls-and-meeting-venues/cust-community-centre
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/amberherthe/albums/72157680095532405> (Event photos of BA, 2012)

Fernside Memorial Hall

281 O’Roarkes Road, Fernside

This venue has a big hall (with rimu floor), and wood lined supper room just off the kitchen, which is OK for a feast. All three rooms together have a capacity of 145 people. Very good blank slate but permission to attaching decorations must be sought ahead of event. (Isabel swears the supper room screams nautical, but can’t say why.)

ISSUES: Likely would be considered too far from town.

LINKS: <http://www.waimakariri.govt.nz/leisure-and-recreation/facilities/halls-and-meeting-venues/fernside-memorial-hall>

Mandeville Sports Club

431 Mandeville Road, Swannanoa

The large outdoor space had multiple areas which could be good for an equestrian based event, particularly if pavilions were permitted in place of using the hall.

ISSUES: A quick look showed the hall was smallish and too modern (having a large bar at one end) to really be suitable for an SCA event.

LINKS: <http://www.mandevillesports.co.nz/msc-clubroom-bookings>

St James' Anglican Church Hall
1750 Cust Road, Cust

This lovely but small hall was recently redecorated hall (as of 2012).

ISSUES: Unfortunately it really is too far to drive for the size of event it could host. However, the hall could supplement the Cust Community Centre as if another room was needed, as it is a short journey up the hill.

Trusselot Park
31 Charles Street, Kaiapoi

A lovely grassed area with an historic band rotunda and rose garden. Used for Twelfth Night Heraldic Tournament in 2016.

ISSUES: No onsite lavatories, both sets are a 5 minute walk away (one across a suspension bridge). Some comments that it was too far from town making transport too difficult. (Bus routes timed at between 45 and 60 minutes from CBD).

LINKS: <http://www.waimakariri.govt.nz/leisure-and-recreation/facilities/halls-and-meeting-venues/trusselot-park-band-rotunda>

UPDATE 2017: Half of the grassed area is now a skate park. The ambience is not what it was

West Eyreton Hall
2 Earlys Road, West Eyreton

Christian's favourite venue. The lovely wood lined hall, with pillars, feels like it should be hosting German renaissance feasts. It has a big kitchen and a large, lit car park. Sadly the small outdoor area is not really big enough for tourney. Cost is per hour and very reasonable.

ISSUE: Likely considered too far from town.

LINKS: <http://www.waimakariri.govt.nz/leisure-and-recreation/facilities/halls-and-meeting-venues/west-eyreton-hall>

Inside Christchurch City

Addington Haven

18 haven church square, Addington

Largish hall that seats 80 seat Hall in addition to two smaller rooms, courtyard and a small kitchen. Hall is fairly old style, but plain and has quite a cool feel to it, despite blue carpet. Also has some lovely, big tables and a small, raised platform at one end of the hall. The hall would work really well for Court, or combined with the courtyard for a Middle or Near Eastern event.

ISSUES: Very limited on street parking.

UPDATE 2018: New information suggests no hiring to private alcoholic events

LINKS: <https://www.facebook.com/TheAddingtonHaven?ref=hl>
<http://www.perfectvenue.co.nz/venue.php?id=485>

Arts Centre

2 Worcester Street, Christchurch

Great Hall

The Great Hall is an elaborate Neo-gothic hall, with kitchen (possibly still under construction – may need additional oven). This venue is probably best suited to High end feasts or Balls etc.

Classics

Gorgeous, wood panelled room with working fireplace and attached kitchenette. Seats 20 and ideal for a high end banquet or games revel (of the kind previously held in the Phyllis Zeff room). Can be hired for day (9-5) or evening (5-10).

ISSUES: Both venues are very expensive by our standards

UPDATE 2018: Both venues require a large heritage bond

LINKS: <https://www.artscentre.org.nz/hire/hire-the-great-hall/>
<https://www.artscentre.org.nz/hire/classics/>

Bromley Community Centre

45 Bromley Road, Bromley

Hall appears to be created from two WWII era prefab buildings joined together. Has a capacity of 126 with 12 tables and 120 chairs onsite. Large kitchen with 2 ovens, fridge/freezer and dishwasher.

ISSUES: Previously had problems with security of cars left in carpark.

LINKS: <http://www.cinch.org.nz/categories/a-z/s/3376/entries/1178>
<http://www.perfectvenue.co.nz/venue.php?id=23>

Burnside Bowling Club

330 Avonhead Road, Avonhead

Site is expensive but the people are very helpful. Good kitchen but need to avoid cooking food that will leave strong smells behind. Two separate rooms available for hire; downstairs is very suitable to our needs but the upstairs room has a large, obtrusive bar.

ISSUES: Lower room has greater availability in summer, as it is used for indoor bowls in the colder months.

LINKS: <http://www.burnsidebowlingclub.com/roomHire.html>

Chapel Street Centre / Christchurch North Methodist Parish Church Centre

Cnr Harewood Road and Chapel Street, Papanui

Two very different spaces, attached to Methodist church. First space is a gym (badminton lines on floor) with servery from big catering kitchen. The other is a smaller meeting room that has a kitchenette, fenced outdoor space for kids and additional room that can be opened up. The latter appears ideal for a hafla. Lovely, helpful people.

ISSUES: Main kitchen may need to be shared with another group, but has two of everything to assist that

LINKS: http://www.methodist.org.nz/find_us/central_south_island/parish_information/christchurch_north_methodist_parish

Chapman Hall Castle

223 Cossars Road, Tai Tapu

NEW

The castle appears to be a rather exclusive venue. Although there are wonderful pictures online (mostly weddings) suggesting it is an amazing venue, it does not appear to have a website with hiring information.

LINKS: <http://www.snapweddingphotography.co.nz/chapman-castle-wedding-photos/>

Halswell Community Hall

450 Halswell Road, Halswell

This is a good, plain, serviceable Hall. No comment on supper room or kitchen as we were unable to view them; however the photos indicate it is very usable. Good, onsite parking but no meaningful outdoor space for a tourney or similar. This venue would work for a standard feast. (NOTE: Must speak to Mistresses Taddea and Antonia for more information.)

LINKS: <https://www.facebook.com/Halswell-Community-Hall-1529307563954285/>
<http://www.cinch.org.nz/categories/a-z/h/527/entries/4683>

Harvard Community Lounge

31 Corsair Drive, Wigram,

The outside is very mid-century, but the smallish carpeted hall has a small kitchen, a comparatively discreet bar and is a relatively blank canvas. Could be dressed up but might need a lot of work to do so. Might be suitable for a tavern style of event.

LINKS: <https://www.ccc.govt.nz/culture-and-community/venues-for-hire/harvard-community-lounge>
<https://www.hallshire.com/halls/view/2155/harvard-community-lounge>

Hohepa Hall

23 Barrington Street, Cashmere

A private venue, this large hall has a low rostrum at one end and a stage at the other. Decent kitchen has 2 zips, fridge-freezer and oven (not commercial) as well as bench space and a tea trolley. Due to hallway running around outside of hall, can move items and food from one side to the other without having to cross the hall itself! Hall has wood panelling on the lower section and faux columns on top. Very limited off street parking, MUST leave ambulance access. Venue is extensively used by dance groups. Looks more Regency era, but could work for ball or masque with decent support.

LINKS: <https://canterburyhistoricaldance.weebly.com/past-events.html> (2017 Assembly at Meryton event)

Irish Society Hall

29 Domain Place, Spreydon

This is the ultimate hunting lodge. It is fully wood lined, with staircase and has a bar. Despite being somewhat 1970s, it would significantly enhance the right event. Has a large carpark but shares it with the Baha'I Centre. Foyer looks out on to park, which could be used for tourney. Max capacity of 199 people, with chairs and tables supplied. Kitchen is small but usable.

LINKS: <http://christchurchirishsociety.co.nz/contact/hall-hire/>

UPDATE 2017: New information suggests this venue can now only be hired by members.

Landsdown Community Centre

8 Landsdown Terrace, Cashmere

Although quite a small hall, with a small kitchen, the venue has a big car park and is on the edge of a lovely park with trees and a water feature. This venue would be ideal for an event with a feast and outdoor quest.

ISSUES: We will need to communicate with neighbours if using outdoors after dark.

LINKS: <http://www.cinch.org.nz/categories/421/474/entries/3195>

North New Brighton Community Centre 88 Marine Parade, North New Brighton

Majority of venue is upstairs. A large hall with big stage and a small but reasonably modern kitchen, this hall also has a balcony overlooking the sea. Overall the venue is quite modern, and with sufficient fabric, can be divided into separate areas. The lavatories are downstairs, away from the main event.

ISSUES: The mesh stairs are a significant privacy concern (although you can use the lift).

LINKS: <https://www.ccc.govt.nz/culture-and-community/venues-for-hire/north-new-brighton-community-centre/>

Opawa Community Church Cnr Opawa and Aynsley Terrace, Opawa

A Large complex, it contains a newly (and sympathetically) renovated Methodist church and a large, modern hall attached via a neutral foyer. Hall is somewhat bland, which is an ideal backdrop. Facilities are modern and include a kitchen, small room and outdoor deck. Looks like a great site for a big, high end feast.

LINKS: http://www.methodist.org.nz/find_us/central_south_island/parish_information/opawa

St Mary's / Heathcote Valley Village Hall 2 Martindales Road, Heathcote valley

Located alongside the Church of St Mary's, this newly- renovated historic building is gorgeous and would be great for a feast. The building has a medium sized hall, a small room and a very small kitchen (with a bench on wheels) and an outdoor terrace. Lavatories are between the two main spaces. Hall seats 120 and has some dance mirrors on one end. It is fairly basic but lovely. We would need to hire whole complex for a feast. The Church and bell tower make it a particularly beautiful setting. There is limited on street parking, but bus stop right outside (30-40 minutes from CBD).

NOTE: Any venue hire must be approved by the Vestry of the Parish, so allow extra time for booking confirmation.

LINK: <http://www.heathcote-mtpleasant.org.nz/Facilities/facilities.html>

St Michael and All Angels Hall
95-99 Oxford Terrace, Christchurch Central

NEW

A rather lovely nineteenth century hall, this wood-floored venue has a maximum capacity of around 200. It has access to cooking facilities and is booked through the school office.

The hall has been picked up and rotated through 90 degrees since the last time it was used for an SCA event.

LINK: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/amberherthe/3161500299/in/album-72157611943730377/>

Venues that initially sounded suitable

Avebury House

9 Eveleyn Couzins Avenue, Richmond

Avebury House is beautiful, but not really suitable for a medieval or renaissance style event. (It would be better suited for Steampunk/Victorian or possibly Regency era events). House has several rooms, and a large, modern catering kitchen. Adjacent grounds are not managed by the same people and must be booked through the Christchurch City Council at additional expense.

LINKS: <http://www.aveburyhouse.co.nz/rooms.html>
<https://www.ccc.govt.nz/parks-and-gardens/gardens-and-heritage-parks/avebury-park>

Forfar Courts Community Hall

95 Forfar Street, St Albans

A blue rounded rectangular button with the word "NEW" in white capital letters.

This community centre is a very small space that appears to be part of a rest home complex. Not really suited to our needs.

LINKS: <https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/venue/forfar-courts-community-hall-christchurch-city>

Fendalton Community Centre

10 Clyde Road, Fendalton

Comprised of a large gym like hall, seminar room and kitchen, this complex is well used by the community. Ok but not attractive, it has a capacity of 200. 11 tables and 39 four-seat forms are available. It would take a lot of work, and probably expense, to create an environment suited to a high end event.

LINKS: <https://www.ccc.govt.nz/culture-and-community/venues-for-hire/fendalton-community-centre>
<https://www.hallshire.com/halls/view/2154/fendalton-community-centre>

Woolston Community Center

Ferry Road, Woolston

Cool, old hall on Ferry Road demolished after quakes. It is now an unsuitable small prefab building on the edge of a park and adjacent to Te Waka Unua primary school. There are plans in the works to replace this venue with something larger and possibly more useful to our needs.

LINKS: <http://ccc.govt.nz/assets/Documents/The-Council/HYS/2017/February/Woolston-Facility-updated-2017-02-20.PDF>