

O-Week initiative promotes sensible drinking

WITH the aim of promoting responsible consumption of alcohol in the community, eye-catching flags sporting the slogan 'Just One Less' will festoon the town's Mall this week.

Pub staff and RSA Marshals are throwing their support behind the cause by donning Tee-shirts featuring the same cool graphics.

Arts organisation Beyond Empathy is the force behind the campaign, which is sponsored by Community Mutual Group and was conceived with the support of Armidale Dumaresq Council and local members of the Australian Hotels Association and Armidale Liquor Accord, along with health professionals, high schools and University of New England colleges.

"The idea is to start a community-wide conversation about the way we drink and related

risk-taking behaviour," Beyond Empathy's executive director Kim McConville, said.

'Just One Less' is an initiative of the non-profit organisation's arts intervention project currently underway in Armidale, titled '5 in a Row' (a definition of binge drinking).

High school students are working with local and visiting filmmakers to produce multimedia artworks exploring their perceptions of alcohol use and misuse.

These works will be showcased to the public at the end of June this year, and made available to the whole community as an educational resource.

"The Council is proud to be involved in this project and campaign," Mayor Peter Ducat said.

"It's an opportunity to perhaps make people think twice about

having that extra drink that might lead to dangerous behaviour.

"As a community, we want people to go out and have a good time but not lose control."

Beyond Empathy is an Armidale-based national non-profit community arts organisation, established in 2004 to use the arts as an individual and community development tool.

Beyond Empathy is founded on a belief in the capacity of the arts and arts practice to improve lives and facilitate social change.



ABOVE: Back row: Paul Harmer (chair, alcohol sub committee of the Community Safety Committee, Armidale Dumaresq Council), Jonathan Larsen, Susie Spencer, Trish Stephen, Fiona White, Maureen Chapman (regional coordinator, Regional Coordination Division, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet), Andrea Gledhill (head of UNE's Earle Page and Austin Colleges), Patrick Gurr (vice-president, Australian Hotels' Association), Kim McConville, Pia McBean, Kevin Dupe (CEO of Community Mutual Group), Nicola Speden, Mayor Peter Ducat, Narelle Jarry, Isaac Miller.

Front row: Adam Hayes (manager UNE's 'stro), Jarra Hicks (community investment officer, Community Mutual Group), Sean Wetherall.

Armidale Greyhound Racing Club

Armidale Cup Carnival