

Small bars beginning to break through red tape

The addition of more small bars to Perth's limited entertainment options has long been dogged by red tape or blocked by people resistant to change.

It is good news, therefore, that 30 bars have been granted licences and another five are awaiting approval. This shows that, despite an arduous, expensive and prolonged application process, it is possible for approval to be reached.

Small bars are an important part of a vibrant city. Not only are they an attractive alternative for those who prefer to drink in a quiet venue but they reduce the city's reliance on the so-called "beer barns" which attract big crowds of predominantly young drinkers and where there have been regrettable incidents of binge-drinking and violence.

If Perth is to be taken seriously as a modern, lively city, it must have a broader range of entertainment choices.

Hopefully, the surge in small-bar licences, while belated, indicates that the perennial naysayers who have inhibited attempts at cultural change are becoming less active.