

# Summary of the Welcoming Communities Stocktake Report

Queenstown Lakes District

AUGUST 2022



# Introduction

As part of the Welcoming Communities Te Waharoa ki ngā Hapori programme, a stocktake assessment has been completed on how Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) and the community are currently meeting the needs of newcomers<sup>1</sup> to the Queenstown Lakes District.

This is a snapshot of the report, summarising what we're currently doing well and opportunities for the future, across the outcomes of the programme. The Welcoming Communities programme represents an outcomes-based Standard which helps benchmark what a welcoming and inclusive community looks like. The Standard consists of eight overarching outcomes and 30 sub-outcomes describing what you would expect to see over time in a community participating in the programme.

The full stocktake report will be considered by our Welcoming Communities Advisory Group when developing the Welcoming Plan 2023-2026. For more detail on the Welcoming Communities programme, head to [www.qldc.govt.nz/welcoming-communities](http://www.qldc.govt.nz/welcoming-communities)

<sup>1</sup> The term 'newcomers' refers to migrants, former refugees, international students and New Zealanders who are new to our community.





**Inclusive  
Leadership**



**Welcoming  
Communications**



**Equitable Access**



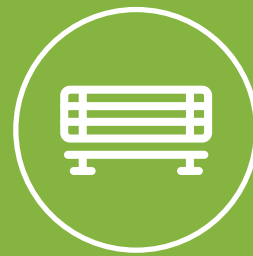
**Connected  
and Inclusive  
Communities**



**Economic  
Development,  
Business and  
Employment**



**Civic Engagement  
and Participation**



**Welcoming  
Public Spaces**



**Culture  
and Identity**



# Inclusive Leadership

## Outcome

**Local government, tangata whenua and other community leaders work together to create, advocate for and continue to foster a welcoming and inclusive community. They lead a shared plan to increase connections between newcomers and existing residents.**

## Sub-outcomes

- \* As the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori – represented by tangata whenua, mana whenua, iwi and hapū and/ or other hāpori Māori – have a prominent role in Welcoming Plan activities.
- \* Leaders – both designated and unofficial – reflect the diversity in the local community, as does the council workforce.
- \* Leaders model the principles of inclusiveness, openness, tolerance, respect and acceptance of all cultures in the community.
- \* There are clear roles, responsibilities and ownership within council and in the wider community for the Welcoming Communities programme.
- \* Council internal and external policies, services, programmes and activities recognise and address cultural diversity.
- \* A range of leadership opportunities in the council and the wider community are available to and taken up by newcomers.

## What we are doing well

- \* Upskilling staff – Since 2018 QLDC has been embedding a greater understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the obligations as local government and providing opportunities for staff to learn the basics of Te Reo Māori and tikaka<sup>2</sup>.
- \* Investing in the Tuia Programme – a Māori rangatahi (young person) from the local community is mentored by the Mayor and supported to develop their leadership skills.
- \* Advocacy – the Mayor, QLDC staff, social sector and the business community have advocated for changes to immigration policy settings enabling migrants to remain in New Zealand and/or to fill skill shortages across the district.

## Opportunities for the future

- \* Formalising the partnership with Kāi Tahu<sup>3</sup> and strengthening the role of local Māori groups through involvement in the Queenstown Lakes District's Welcoming Plan activities at a grass roots level.
- \* Grow the cultural diversity in traditional leadership roles across the region, including QLDC elected members, Wānaka Community Board, board members of community organisations, and in senior leadership roles within QLDC.
- \* Improve representation of cultural diversity in formal meetings, speeches, or event openings, such as greetings in the various languages of people living in the district and signage representing these languages to promote inclusiveness.
- \* Include cultural competency training as part of professional development for QLDC staff and elected representatives.

<sup>2</sup> The term 'tikaka' refers to Māori customary practices or behaviours. We use the term tikaka instead of tikanga to align with the local Kāi Tahu dialect.

<sup>3</sup> The traditional southern dialect for iwi replaces the NG with a K. Therefore we use 'Kāi Tahu' when referring to Ngāi Tahu.



# Welcoming Communications

## Outcome

**People of all cultures and backgrounds feel included, listened to and well informed through a range of ways that take into account their different communication needs.**

## Sub-outcomes

- \* The community is well informed about the local benefits of immigration and the Welcoming Communities programme, including success stories.
- \* The council is well informed about newcomers to their region and pro-actively seeks data about newcomers from relevant sources.
- \* The council's engagement with all residents is two-way, culturally appropriate and fit for purpose.
- \* Council communication materials and messages are inclusive and reflect the diversity of the local community. Council encourages other agencies, businesses, and organisations to follow this model.

## What we are doing well

- \* Welcoming Communities information – QLDC website showcases the progress of the Welcoming Communities Te Waharoa ki ngā Hapori programme, such as the role of the Advisory Group, and the development of local resources for example, the Māori, Pasifika and Newcomer Groups Profile Booklet.
- \* Service delivery improvements – the last two years of the COVID-19 pandemic has seen QLDC directly engaged in the delivery, with partner agencies and social services, of a variety of wellbeing and employment programmes to support residents and newcomers living across the district. This has enabled a first-hand understanding of migrant needs and relationship building across the district.
- \* Engagement tools and delivery – the QLDC Communications and Engagement team are focused on improving fit for purpose, two-way and culturally appropriate engagement having embarked on a Diversity in Engagement programme. Guidelines are being developed that look at how to engage with underrepresented groups including young families, young people, older people, newcomer groups and people with accessibility needs.

## Opportunities for the future

- \* Language support such as translations of everyday Council activity into relevant newcomer languages, such as 'how do I register my dog', rubbish collection days to ensure people feel part of the community and able to participate easily in the everyday activity. Provide language assistance to support QLDC front line staff and services interactions with customers where English is not the first language.
- \* Develop a communications plan with a focus on the Welcoming Communities programme across the district. This could incorporate ongoing promotion and dissemination in key locations with key stakeholders (airport, agencies, regional tourism organisations (RTOs), tertiary education providers, Chamber of Commerce) and showcasing success stories of newcomers and migrant business owners.
- \* Collect data on newcomer demographics and native languages to help inform communication needs. Create and maintain a database of cultural organisations willing to distribute communications through their channels.



# Equitable Access

## Outcome

**Opportunities to access services and activities and to participate in the community are available to all, including newcomers.**

## Sub-outcomes

- \* Council partners with local businesses, organisations, and sectors to identify and address barriers for newcomers to accessing services and participating in the community.
- \* Council and other organisations in the community research, design and deliver services that take account of the different circumstances (for example rural/urban) and cultural backgrounds of all service users, including newcomers.
- \* All community members are well informed about the services available in the community. Newcomers are made aware of, and are using these services.

## What we are doing well

- \* English language programmes – small initiatives to learn and improve English language have helped newcomers, in particular temporary visa holders. These have been offered by English service providers at reduced costs and by local organisations and libraries through volunteers at no cost.
- \* Wellbeing Support – Newcomers are now able to access funding schemes provided by Te Hau Toka Southern Lakes Wellbeing Group, who support mental wellbeing and community resilience in the region. The group was formed after several regional agencies saw the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on people's mental health and receives funding from the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment. Also, QLDC Sport and Recreation, Library and Parks Teams help engage and support community access, e.g., The Get Active Community Grant supports not-for-profit organisations and charities to provide gym/pool access to their clients, supporting the mission of encouraging more people, to be more active, more often.
- \* Transport services – Upper Clutha is trialling a community shuttle service connecting Wānaka, Albert Town, Hāwea and Hāwea Flat to support the public transportation needs of locals and visitors. The initiative has been developed by Community Networks/LINK and will be delivered by local transport provider Yello! (Wānaka Transport Group).

## Opportunities for the future

- \* Involve newcomers in the co-design of services, programmes and activities that will enhance accessibility and use of these initiatives.
- \* Explore information channels for supporting newcomers such as providing options for translation of written information and access to interpreting services, along with offering ways to access training opportunities, i.e., Governance and funding training.
- \* Expand English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) service provision to include temporary visa holders and promote new delivery ways such as online learning and via ESOL trained volunteers.





# Connected and Inclusive Communities

## Outcome

**People feel safe in their identity and that they are connected with and belong in the community. There are high levels of trust and understanding between members of the receiving community and newcomers.**

## Sub-outcomes

- \* Coordinated, comprehensive and appropriate initial welcoming support services are available from council, other agencies and community organisations.
- \* The receiving community is well equipped and supported to welcome and interact with newcomers.
- \* Members of the receiving community and newcomers build relationships and are at ease with connecting and learning about and from each other.
- \* Different cultures are celebrated and people are supported to express their cultural beliefs and customs, including language and religious practices.

## What we are doing well

- \* Support services – Queenstown Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) is one of 30 CABs around New Zealand funded by Immigration NZ to provide a free information service for the community including newcomers to the Migrant Connect programme. Community Networks undertake a similar role in Wānaka, in lieu of a CAB site. Volunteers are trained to support and deliver information on a wide range of needs to newcomers. They also have a small pool of volunteers who can speak another language other than English which enhances the level of support to newcomers.
- \* Relationship building – QLDC is in regular contact with a range of community leaders that represent newcomer groups, and the Welcoming Communities Coordinator continues to foster these relationships, alongside establishing a robust stakeholder group for newcomers. The WCC provides support to newcomer groups on how to access funds and navigate processes including QLDC funding schemes.
- \* Newcomer destination – Our receiving community acknowledges and relies upon international tourists and migrants living in and visiting the district. Cultural events, faith-based communities, schools, social services agencies, sport clubs, libraries and volunteering opportunities currently provide a supportive environment to build relationships across cultures.

## Opportunities for the future

- \* Create a new platform to support dissemination and accessibility of information for newcomers or leverage the Migrant Connect programme (funded by INZ) to be 'the platform' for connecting newcomers and providing key information and services from community organisations on a coordinated and regular basis.
- \* Establish a central community hub of information or one-stop location for newcomers to explore offerings. Developing 'Welcome Packs' could encourage newcomers to use council-run facilities and services, meet other members of the community and understand that these services and facilities are there for them to use.
- \* Introduce Welcoming Week, as part of the wider MBIE Welcoming Communities programme as an opportunity to gather and establish long-term friendships. This would be part of an annual campaign to showcase and celebrate how communities across Aotearoa New Zealand and the globe are striving to be more welcoming places for all, including newcomers.



# Economic Development, Business & Employment

## Outcome

Communities maximise and harness the economic development opportunities that newcomers can offer. Councils work with business associations to promote the contribution that newcomer business owners and skilled migrants make to the region's economy.

## Sub-outcomes

- \* Newcomers, including international students, are supported to access local employment information, services and networks.
- \* Newcomers, including international students, are supported with the local knowledge and skills to ensure they can operate successfully in the New Zealand work environment, either as a business owner or an employee.
- \* The receiving community recognises the value of diversity in the workplace, of newcomers' contribution to the region's growth and of the resulting wider economic benefits.
- \* Local employers and workforces develop their intercultural competency.
- \* Mutually beneficial connections and initiatives are set up with migrant business people by the local business community and professional networks.

## What we are doing well

- \* Chamber of Commerce Employment Hub – is currently being established to impact positivity on the newcomer experience. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between QLDC and the Queenstown Chamber of Commerce specifically aligns with the Welcoming Communities programme with a KPI around Employer understanding of settlement, diversity and inclusion initiatives. This hub will deliver district-wide workforce initiatives with the primary goal to coordinate workforce attraction, retention and development efforts across the district.
- \* Our local Work and Income office has trained staff to support newcomers and the wider community with career, training and employment pathways through the Connected programme [www.connected.govt.nz](http://www.connected.govt.nz).
- \* Tourism business support – Queenstown Lakes District is one of five communities that have received the Tourism Business Grants, provided by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE). The grants offered via the Tourism Kick-start Fund enable tourism businesses or suppliers of tourism businesses to receive expert advice and support, implement business advice and help tourism operators scale back up for the return of international visitors. To date more than 1,200 businesses in the Queenstown Lakes area have used this funding and support since it became available in September 2021.

## Opportunities for the future

- \* Explore how to target local knowledge and skills programmes to the diverse groups of newcomers in the district including employers. As an example, as part of diversifying our district's economy, there is a demand to grow the Tech sector, as well as support career and employment pathways in that sector and others.
- \* Develop and implement a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategy to help support and champion tertiary education providers, ESOL providers and the business sector and its workforce.
- \* Research migrant SME's (Small and Medium Enterprises) and their needs including how they participate in local business and professional networks. There is also an opportunity to create business awards, and awards in general across the district to include specific categories that focus on the contribution of migrant/newcomer employers or employees.





# Civic Engagement and Participation

## Outcome

**Newcomers feel welcome to fully participate in the community. Newcomers are active in all forms of civic participation.**

## Sub-outcomes

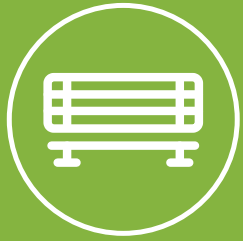
- \* The council's elected members and staff effectively communicate with newcomers to promote their engagement in local government processes.
- \* Newcomers are encouraged and enabled to get involved in local government and civil society.
- \* Newcomers' efforts and achievements in civic participation and community life are acknowledged and celebrated.

## What we are doing well

- \* Election campaign – for the 2022 Local Government elections QLDC is running a “Local Legends” election campaign, with the specific goal of encouraging people who may not have previously thought about standing for election to consider it. The imagery and plain English used in the campaign intentionally highlight the migrant communities living within the district.
- \* Volunteering – since COVID-19 migrant volunteers have come together to help members of their own community and establish new community groups. Migrant volunteer champions have occasionally been showcased in local media celebrating their dedication and achievements in helping their own community members navigate New Zealand systems and processes, by mainly acting as ad hoc interpreters and support persons.
- \* Celebrating new citizens – QLDC acknowledges new citizens to Aotearoa New Zealand by organising citizenship ceremonies where approximately 300-400 new citizens receive their certificate of citizenship. These official ceremonies were halted for two years due to the pandemic settings however in their place was the development of Welcome Forests, an initiative started in 2020, to celebrate and invite new citizens to tree planting events.

## Opportunities for the future

- \* Put specific engagement mechanisms in place that monitor and support newcomer participation in Council processes, particularly for those newcomers where English is not their first language.
- \* Support volunteering amongst newcomers by developing a local framework of the benefits of volunteering for newcomers, such as upskilling and increasing connections and networks for better employment opportunities and a successful integration.
- \* Offer targeted information sessions on civic society matters and hosted tours of council offices to newcomers. This will encourage them to attend civic activities to help build knowledge of their new community and develop local networks.



# Welcoming Public Spaces

## Outcome

**Newcomers and receiving communities feel welcome in and comfortable using public spaces.**

## Sub-outcomes

- \* The design and operation of public spaces and facilities are culturally appropriate and reflect the diversity of the community.
- \* Welcoming public spaces provide opportunities to build trust and relationships between newcomers and members of the receiving community.
- \* Public spaces and buildings create a sense of community ownership and inclusion for all, including newcomers.

## What we are doing well

- \* Inclusive spaces – the district’s public spaces have been highlighted as clean and safe; playgrounds, parks and trails are free to access. Spaces where people could sit and not be moved on, notably libraries and park benches, are considered as being open, inclusive, accessible, and welcoming for all.
- \* The Queenstown Lakes District’s Libraries – reflect New Zealand’s biculturalism by having all signs in Te Reo Māori and English as well as having staff from diverse countries reflecting on the multicultural mosaic of NZ. There is an intentionality about the spaces within the library being welcoming to all including a living room space that accommodates the district’s residents who for some are living in shared accommodation and don’t have the space to relax at home. Libraries cater to newcomers through provision of social English conversation, access and support to computers and Internet. The Frankton Library is currently developing a pilot project to provide free space for the newcomer groups interested in keeping or exchanging books in their own language.
- \* Te Atamira, a multi-purpose community arts and cultural space – Te Atamira, which means platform or stage in Te Reo Māori, is a place for everyone to participate in and be inspired by the arts. One of the first exhibitions was a community art project, in partnership with libraries, titled Milk Bottle People<sup>3</sup>, undertaken by newcomers and where bottles became art depicting messages of identity, life and kinship. The project explores personal stories of migration as key threads in the social fabric of our families and the wider community.

## Opportunities for the future

- \* Offer permanent facilities where newcomers can worship, other than Christian religious buildings, and provide community rooms for meetings and social congregation to ensure the social connection for the diverse groups in our district.
- \* Include imagery and artworks in/on public spaces and facilities that better reflect the cultural diversity of the district. For example, the current Queenstown Town Centre Street upgrade project (to transform the town centre into an inviting, family friendly and accessible space for everyone to enjoy) will include wayfinding designs that weave in local cultural storytelling.
- \* Explore and leverage how Libraries across the district could become welcome centres which work alongside other partner organisations and groups to offer settlement support services.

<sup>3</sup> [www.teatamira.nz/events/milk-bottle-people-messages-of-identity-life-and-kinship](http://www.teatamira.nz/events/milk-bottle-people-messages-of-identity-life-and-kinship). MILK stands for Messages of identity, life, and kinship.



# Culture and Identity

## Outcome

**There is a shared sense of pride in being part of a culturally rich and vibrant community. People feel their culture is respected and valued by other members of the community. There are opportunities to learn about each other's cultures.**

## Sub-outcomes

- \* Receiving communities and newcomers share and celebrate their cultures with each other, facilitated by the council and others in the community.
- \* Newcomers and the receiving community understand what values they each hold dear.

## What we are doing well

- \* Supporting annual celebrations – Council has been coordinating Waitangi Day celebrations and supporting annual events organised by newcomer groups such as the Summer Festival organised by the Japanese community, the Filipino's sports tournaments, Diwali organised by the Hindu community, and others. Chinese New Year has also been celebrated annually, supporting the attraction of many Chinese tourists to the district. Central Lakes Polyfest has been hosted twice in Queenstown prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, where young people participate in Kapa Haka and Pasifika cultural performances.
- \* Ambassador Programme – the Queenstown Resort College has facilitated this 3-hour course for many years in Queenstown and Wānaka, often attended by newcomers working in the tourism and hospitality sector. It explores what makes this Southern Lakes region and the visitor experience to the Whakatipu and Upper Clutha such a unique and genuine one. The programme explores the history of the district and has input from Kāi Tahu.
- \* Māori, Pasifika and Newcomer Profiles Booklet – this Council resource provides background to how each group was established and operates, its values and membership, and the events and activities it's involved in. Prior to the release of the booklet, there was no mechanism or tool to showcase and understand the different newcomer groups that live in the district. This is an important milestone to highlight the culture of each group.

## Opportunities for the future

- \* Support and provide newcomer groups with opportunities to share and celebrate their cultures, e.g., festivals, events, workshops, and presentations to share their culture with the wider community.
- \* Provide an opportunity for newcomers to better understand tikaka Māori protocols and values as well as Kiwi culture. 'Kiwiana' is often described as all the weird and wonderful quirky things from years gone by that contribute to the sense of nationhood — the Kiwi identity. These could be items, objects, images and people that immediately remind Kiwis of who they are.
- \* Develop and promote a community-wide Welcoming Communities calendar of events to celebrate and showcase cultural diversity including nationally celebrated language weeks, i.e., Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori, Pasifika Language Weeks and others.

