

Kia
Ora

Welcoming Communities Rangitīkei

2023 Welcome Plan



Welcoming Communities Rangitikei

This is Rangitikei District Council's commitment to lead collaborative efforts to develop and implement a Welcome Plan. This Plan is intended to be community-owned. It will follow the Welcoming Communities Standard and ensure that our district is more open and accepting, building on existing efforts to embrace cultural diversity and inclusion.

The Welcoming Communities programme is coordinated by Immigration New Zealand, in collaboration with the Ministry for Ethnic Communities, and the Human Rights Commission. The programme is delivered at a local level, as local councils and community groups have the best understanding of the complexity of their communities and can implement solutions that best reflect the local context. The initiative is aimed at supporting positive outcomes for recent migrants, former refugees and international students, as well as the local communities they join. In Rangitikei we have also included New Zealand residents who have recently moved to the district as newcomers.

The programme was piloted between 2017-2019 in five regions across Aotearoa New Zealand. In September 2020 INZ opened for Expressions of Interest from other Councils, and in 2020 Rangitikei District Council (RDC) applied to join. This application was successful, and the RDC Welcoming Communities Officer began work in November 2021.

Latest statistics show that Rangitikei is a diverse place, with more than 40 different ethnicities identified. According to the 2018 Census, roughly 12% of the population of Rangitikei was born

outside of New Zealand, while 16.6 % of Rangitikei residents had moved to the district the previous year either from overseas or from another part of New Zealand. This is a significant number of people who have been newcomers to Rangitikei at some stage in their life.

Rangitikei is a growing district, and newcomers fill important roles as employees, business owners, and community members. Attracting and retaining new residents contributes to improving social, cultural, and economic outcomes for the whole community. While different parts of the district may have differing resources and the newcomers to each may have different needs, the goal of this programme is to ensure that all of Rangitikei feels like home for anyone who chooses to live here.

Welcoming Communities Rangitikei has already set up an Advisory Group, conducted a stocktake of existing community and Council activities, and consulted with partners and stakeholders to develop this Welcome Plan. As this is the first version of the Welcome Plan, it will continue to grow and develop. If your organisation would like to contribute, please contact the Welcoming Communities Officer at **welcomingcommunities@rangitikei.govt.nz**.

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A Word from the Mayor

Welcome, as Mayor, it gives me great pleasure to support the Rangitikei Welcome Plan 2023 as part of the Welcoming Communities programme.

Anyone lucky enough to already live in the Rangitikei know what makes this place special – the land, the people, the way of life. We enjoy sharing these things with our friends and family. We know that new residents, both from other parts of the country and from around the world, choose to settle here because they share an appreciation for what the Rangitikei has to offer.

We have many reasons to be optimistic, including the significant growth in our district over the last few years. New residents are starting businesses, working for local organisations, attending local schools, and volunteering their time in the community, all of which contribute to the vibrancy of the Rangitikei. As a district, it is important that we connect with our new residents to create a shared understanding and appreciation of each other, allowing us to build strong and positive communities.

This is the first Welcome Plan for the Rangitikei. It highlights some of the great work that is already happening and outlines our next steps for making the experiences of newcomers - and the communities they move into - even better. These next steps may be small or big, short-term or long-term, practical or aspirational, but all of them contribute to making Rangitikei an even more appealing place for people to live, work, volunteer, and play. As the first Welcome Plan, it will be regularly reviewed and refreshed to reflect the programme's growth and changing needs within the community.

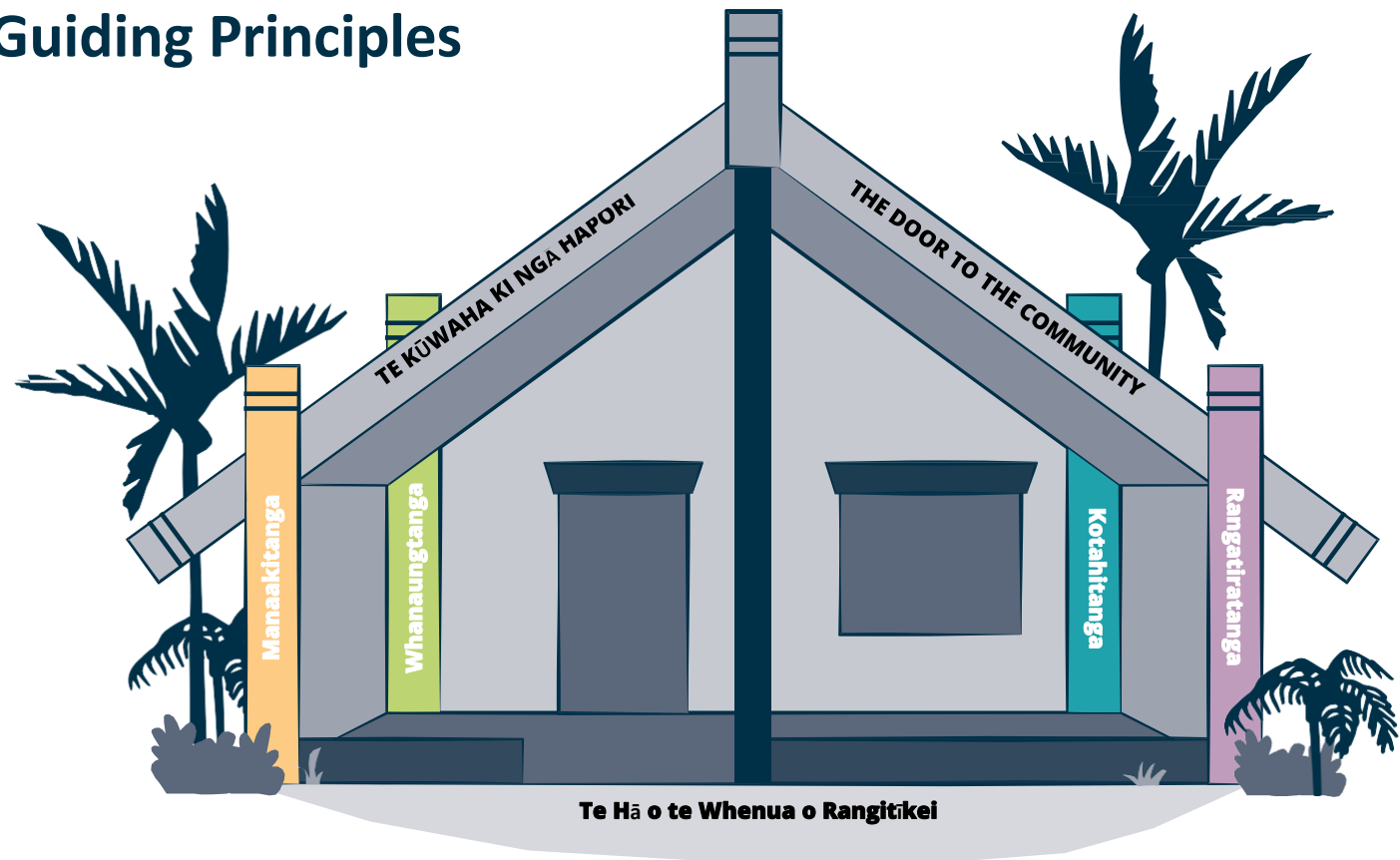
We believe that everybody deserves to live in a place that feels like home. I am excited to see how the foundations laid in the Welcome Plan 2023 will allow new residents and the existing community to build that home together.

Ngā mihi, Andy Watson - Mayor of Rangitikei.



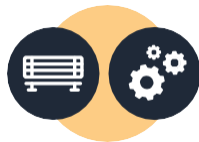
A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Andy Watson'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Our Guiding Principles



- Manaakitanga
Hospitality and Support
- Whanaungatanga
Kinship and Connection
- Kotahitanga
Unity and Collaboration
- Rangatiratanga
Leadership and Development

He Pou Manaakitanga



Pillar of Hospitality and Support
Civic Engagement & Participation
Welcoming Public Spaces

He Pou Whanaungatanga



Pillar of Kinship and Connection
Welcoming Communications
Culture & Identity

He Pou Kotahitanga



Pillar of Unity and Collaboration
Equitable Access
Connected & Inclusive Communities

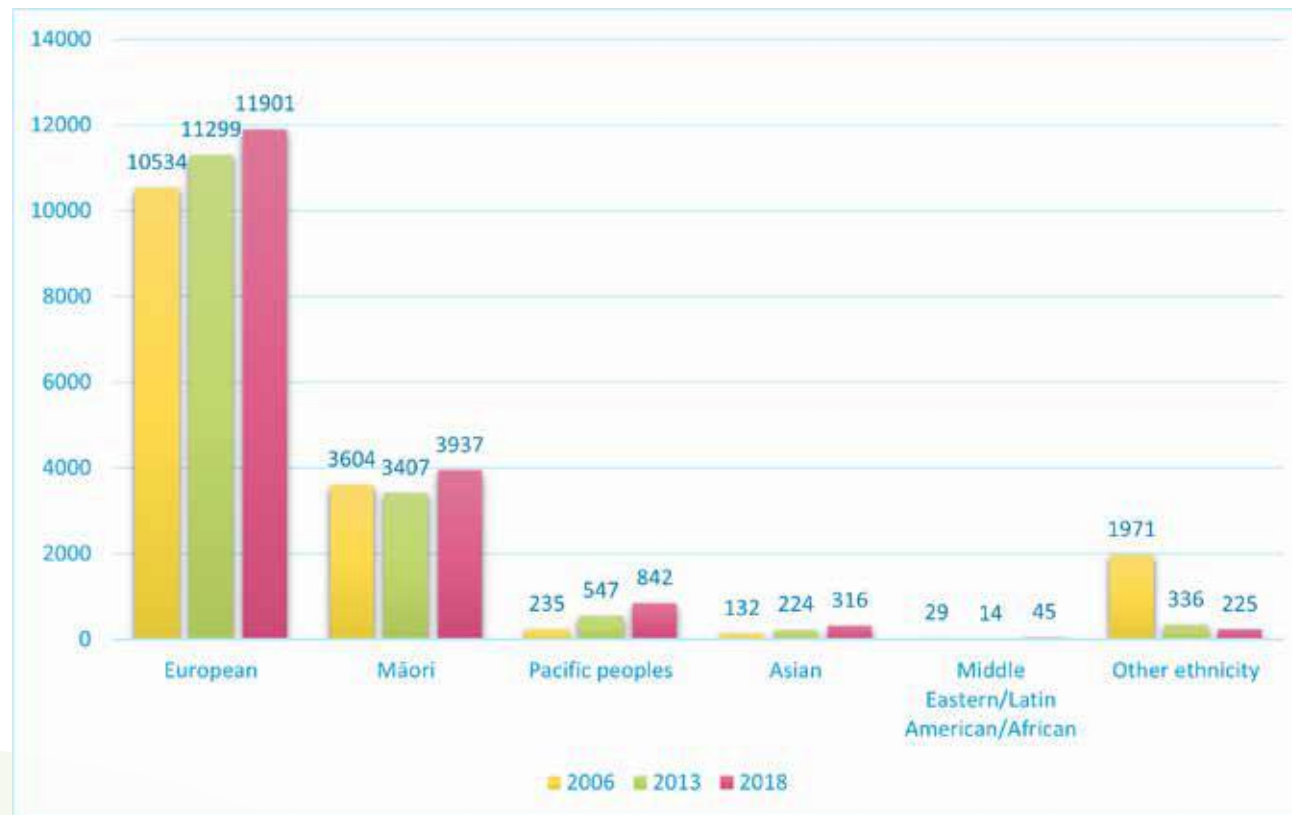
He Pou Rangatiratanga



Pillar of Leadership and Development
Inclusive Leadership Economic
Development, Business & Employment

Our People

According to the 2018 Census, Rangitīkei has over 40 ethnicities represented, with 12.3 % of residents born overseas. Over the previous 5 years our ethnic population increased:



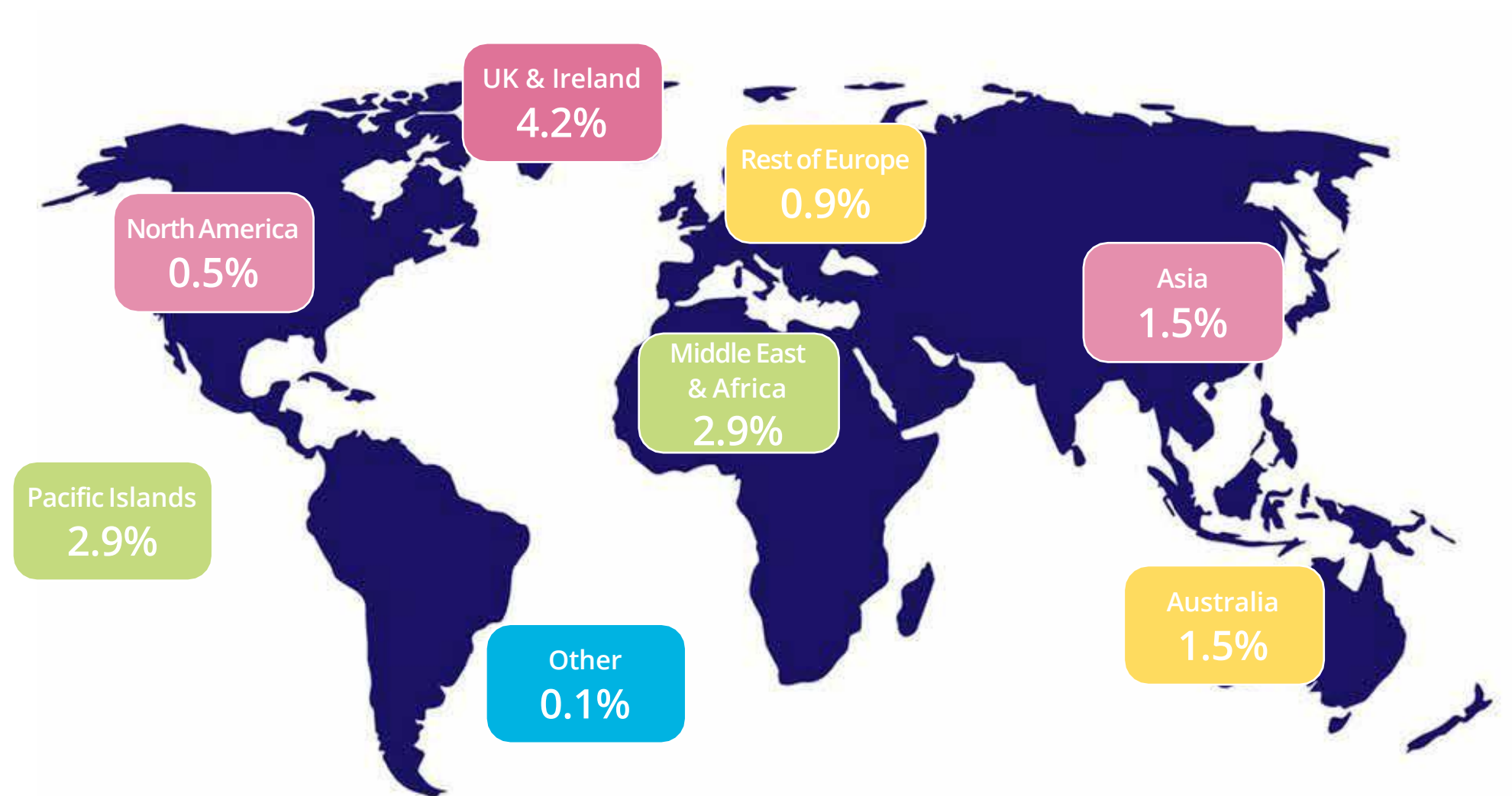
Total Population

2006: 14,712
2013: 14,019
2018: 15,027

Based on current projections, New Zealand will continue to become more ethnically diverse as the population grows.

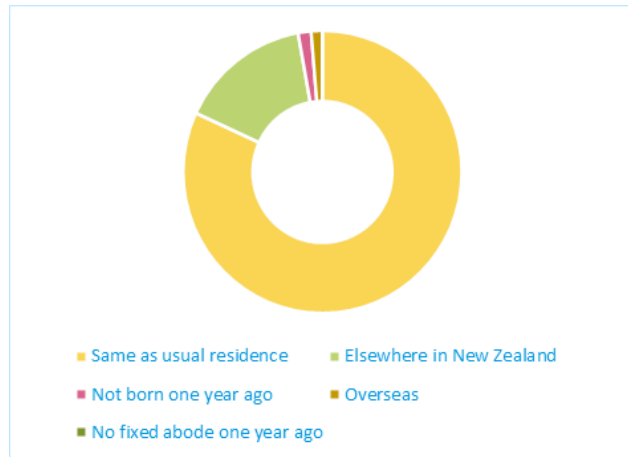
Birthplace for people in Rangitikei District and New Zealand (2018 Census)

12.3 % of us were born overseas in these places:

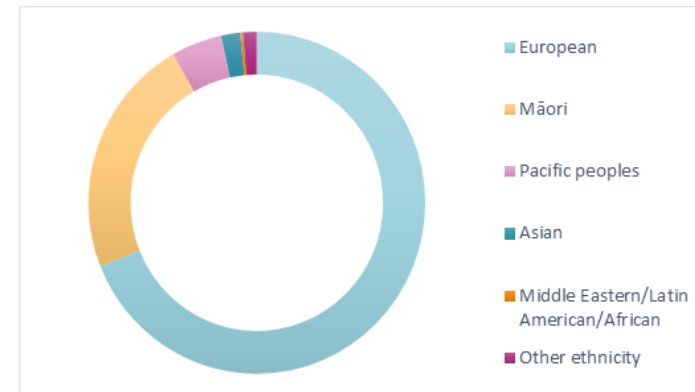


Usual Residence One Year Ago (2018 Census)

16.6 % of people in Rangitīkei moved here in the previous year.

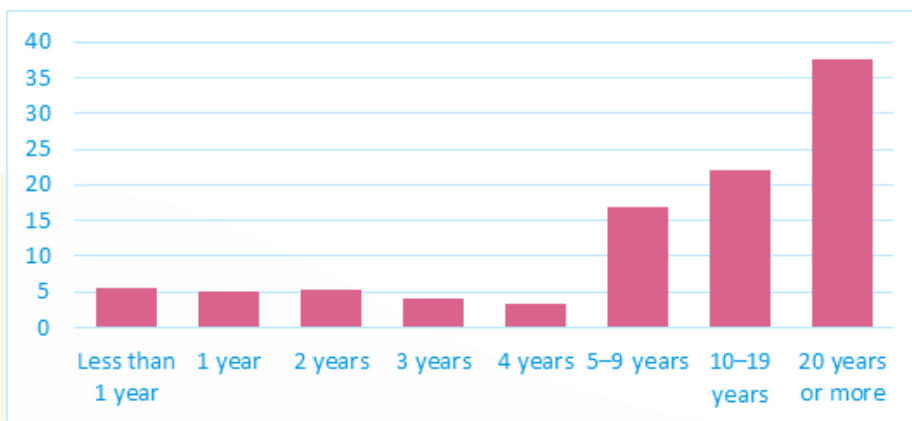


Ethnic Groups in Rangitīkei



Years since arrival in New Zealand for people in Rangitīkei (2018 census)

For those of us who were born overseas, this is how long we have been in New Zealand:



Commonly Spoken Languages

97 % of Rangitikei residents are English speakers, but we also speak these other languages:

	Rangitikei District (%)	New Zealand (%)
Māori	5.8	4.0
Samoan	3.0	2.2
Northern Chinese	0.1	2.0
Hindi	0.2	1.5
French	0.8	1.2
Yue	0.2	1.1
Sinitic not further defined	0	1.1
Tagalog	0.3	0.9
German	0.5	0.9
Spanish	0.4	0.8
Afrikaans	0.3	0.8
Tongan	0.1	0.8
Panjabi	0	0.7
New Zealand Sign Language	0.6	0.5
Other	1.7	7.4
None (eg too young to talk)	1.9	2.2



The Welcoming Communities Standard

The Welcoming Communities programme in New Zealand is connected to similar programmes in other countries, forming an international network. It supports councils to share knowledge and to develop and carry out Welcome Plans.

The Welcoming Communities Standard forms the heart of the programme, providing a benchmark for what a successful welcoming community could look like.

The eight elements of the standard are:

1. Inclusive Leadership



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.

2. Welcoming Communications



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.

3. Equitable Access



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

4. Connected and Inclusive Communities



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.

5. Economic Development, Business and Employment



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.

6. Civic Engagement and Participation



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

7. Welcoming Public Spaces



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

8. Culture and Identity



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.

Developing the Welcome Plan

Process

Information gathering was undertaken in a variety of ways throughout 2022, including:

- Interviews with employers of newcomers
- Interviews with newcomer community leaders & service providers
- Surveys of newcomers or former newcomers
- Surveys of schools
- Community engagement events both in person and online
- Independent research
- Workshops with high school students
- Workshops with stakeholder representatives

Feedback themes

While a broad range of information and ideas were gathered, five broad themes were identified:

1. Identifying Newcomers

It can be difficult to identify newcomers. This impacts how easy it is to connect them to support and to the broader community.

2. Information Sharing

It can be difficult to know where to get useful information when settling in the district. This applies to new residents from around New Zealand and those from overseas.

3. Community Connections

Many newcomers connect personally with their neighbours when they arrive and go to them for advice. It would be great to expand these types of connections.

4. Programmes & Events

Events are a great way to share and celebrate cultures in the community. Many members of the receiving community enjoy experiencing diverse cultural activities.

5. Rural Benefits and Challenges

Many newcomers love the community and pace of rural living. For some, important services such as medical care, cultural events, and English language instruction can only be accessed by travelling to larger centres such as Whanganui or Palmerston North.

Future evaluation

This Welcome Plan will be re-evaluated and refreshed at least every 3 years. This will involve repeating the 2022 Newcomer Survey to compare responses, as well as repeating the information gathering process throughout the community. Progress will also be assessed by the Welcoming Activities Advisory Group and the Welcoming Communities Officer.

What success looks like

1. There is an increase in positive responses regarding access to information and community connection on the Newcomer Survey.
2. Cultural diversity is more prominently showcased throughout the district.
3. Employers report higher rates of attraction and retention of employees who move into the district.
4. Current community members report feeling connected to newcomers, and vice versa.

When reading this plan, you will find:

IN YELLOW

A broad outcome area of the New Zealand Welcoming Communities Standard.

IN BLUE

A sub-outcome or more specific goal found in the Welcoming Communities Standard.

Under each one we have listed:

IN GREEN

Things that are already happening in the Rangitīkei that support Welcoming Communities outcomes

IN BLACK

New or ongoing welcoming activities, actions, or initiatives

Our Welcome Plan

1. Inclusive Leadership

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.

1.1. As the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori – represented by tangata whenua, mana whenua, iwi and hapū and/or other hapori Māori – have a prominent role in Welcoming Plan activities.

- a. Welcoming Communities reports to Te Roopu Ahi Kaa (TRAK).
- b. Four TRAK representatives have signed the Welcoming Communities Statement of Commitment.
- c. Consult and partner with interested tangata whenua to develop and implement welcoming initiatives.
- d. Welcoming Communities Officer to continue to work closely with Kaitakawaenga - Māori Liaison to improve relevance and engagement of the Welcoming Communities programme with tangata whenua.
- e. Review the role of tangata whenua in citizenship ceremonies and investigate opportunities to improve how they reflect treaty partnerships.
- f. Welcoming Communities Advisory Group will continue to promote more representation from both newcomer communities and tangata whenua.

- g. Investigate opportunities for newcomers to be invited to a marae and supported to learn tikanga.

1.2. Leaders – both designated and unofficial – reflect the diversity in the local community, as does the council workforce.

- a. Council has established Māori wards within the district in 2022.
- b. Ensure information about opportunities are shared and facilitate engagement of migrant communities in existing leadership opportunities.
- c. Encourage youth leaders to act as champions for newcomers and the Welcoming Communities programme.
- d. Encourage ethnic communities to appoint leaders from amongst themselves who can support welcoming new members of their community into the district.

1.3. Leaders model the principles of inclusiveness, openness, tolerance, respect and acceptance of all cultures in the community.

- a. Mayor and Councillors support and promote diversity in the district and have signed the Welcoming Communities Statement of Commitment.
- b. Council offers Māori cultural competency opportunities and guidance regarding tikanga and Te Reo Māori to staff.
- c. Invite and encourage council staff and elected members to attend key community cultural events.
- d. Support migrant and community groups in sourcing funding for initiatives that support newcomers.



1.4. There are clear roles, responsibilities and ownership within council and in the wider community for the Welcoming Communities programme.

- a. The Welcoming Communities Advisory Group have provided guidance on the development of the plan.
- b. A Welcoming Communities Officer within the Community Development team is coordinating the programme at Council.
- c. Council will continue to partner and collaborate with communities and other organisations to define the roles and responsibilities of each on specific actions within the Welcome Plan.

1.5. Council internal and external policies, services, programmes and activities recognise and address cultural diversity.

- a. Council values and pou guide all Council staff to embrace diversity & be inclusive.
- b. Council employs a Kaitakawaenga - Māori Liaison.
- c. Cultural competency training and resources supported by the Council Kaitakawaenga - Māori Liaison.
- d. Council will explore options for expanded cultural competency training that reflects the cultural diversity of the district.

1.6. A range of leadership opportunities in the council and the wider community are available to and taken up by newcomers.

- a. Any citizen is eligible to run for local office.
- b. Ensure information about opportunities are shared and facilitate engagement of migrant communities in existing leadership opportunities (see 1.2).

2. Welcoming Communications

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.

2.1. The community is well informed about the local benefits of immigration and the Welcoming Communities programme, including success stories.

- a. Welcoming Communities programme has an online social media presence and promotes events of interest to newcomers and by newcomers.
- b. Council to set up a comprehensive Welcoming Communities online hub with settlement information for newcomers and links to local services, clubs (including social, religious, sport, etc.), recreation, employment and volunteer information.

2.2. The council is well informed about newcomers to their region and pro-actively seeks data about newcomers from relevant sources.

- a. Council uses census and other data sources to get information on newcomers.
- b. Investigate more demographic and community data sources, including the Ministry of Ethnic Communities, Immigration New Zealand, electoral roll, and StatsNZ. This information will be shared with the wider community.

2.3. The council's engagement with all residents is two-way, culturally appropriate and fit for purpose.

- a. Council employs a Kaitakawaenga - Māori Liaison who provides cultural advice and guidance when working with and engaging with Māori.
- b. Council engages with Te Roopu Ahi Kaa in its decision-making process.
- c. Council will develop a Writing Style Guide to ensure that written communications are respectful, appropriate inclusive, direct, and relatable. This means using plain English and considering who the writing is for, including those for whom English is not their first language.

2.4. 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.

- a. Council policy specifically requires all social media posts to be respectful of individuals, ethnicities, races, religions and cultures.
- b. Council will research what translation services are available for all public communications.
- c. Connect local businesses and organisations with cultural competency training.

3. Equitable Access

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

3.1. Council partners with local businesses, organisations and sectors to identify and address barriers for newcomers to accessing services and participating in the community.

- a. Investigate opportunities to improve access to and uptake of funding for groups who wish to organise activities that support newcomers.

3.2. 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.

- a. Explore ways of making council services (eg. libraries, civil defence, etc.) more culturally accessible.
- b. Consider how people will travel to events when planning, especially for rural areas.
- c. Promote free WiFi and other services at Council libraries.

3.3. All community members are well informed about the services available in the community. Newcomers are made aware of, and are using these services

- a. Council is developing a dedicated Newcomers Portal on its website, with information and links to services for newcomers.

4. Connected and Inclusive Communities

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.

4.1. Coordinated, comprehensive and appropriate initial welcoming support services are available from council, other agencies and community organisations.

- a. Many newcomers as RSE workers receive pastoral care and support from their employers.
- b. Support connecting newcomers with existing community orientation opportunities. Examples might include: local tours, marae visits, club open days, etc.
- c. See 3.3.

4.2. The receiving community is well equipped and supported to welcome and interact with newcomers.

- a. Actively encourage newcomers to attend and contribute to local events and groups.
- b. Support local groups to organise welcoming events with and for newcomers.
- c. Identify and partner with “touch-point organisations” in the community where newcomers get services (eg. supermarkets, medical centres, schools, libraries, real-estate agents etc.) to identify newcomers and ensure faster access to welcoming information.
- d. Collaborate with schools to support newcomer students where needed.

4.3. Members of the receiving community and newcomers build relationships and are at ease with connecting and learning about and from each other.

- a. Support groups that encourage cultural diversity and representation at public events.
- b. Develop a newcomer “matching” or “buddy” programme to pair newcomers with existing residents for support and advice.

4.4. Different cultures are celebrated and people are supported to express their cultural beliefs and customs, including language and religious practices.

- a. Multicultural Council of Rangitikei/Whanganui host a multicultural Feast & Fest in Bulls.
- b. Samoan Independence Day is celebrated annually in Marton.
- c. Council to identify and promote events that align with the Welcoming Communities programme.
- d. Support ethnic communities to hold “open days” to educate the receiving community about their cultures.

5. Economic Development, Business and Employment

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.

5.1. Newcomers, including international students, are supported to access local employment information, services and networks.

- a. Employment & business information will be included in the Welcoming Communities website information.

5.2. 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.

- a. Include a list of English language instruction providers on the Welcoming Communities website.
- b. See 5.1
- c. Encourage community education courses to teach English language, including local sayings and phrases for newcomers.

5.3. 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.

- a. Agricultural RSE workers are supported by a variety of employers across the district.
- b. Investigate opportunities to highlight migrant business owners or volunteers across the district.

5.4. Local employers and workforces develop their intercultural competency.

- a. Council offers cultural competency training for tikanga Māori to Council staff.
- b. Find resources and organisations for supporting wider cross-cultural training for Council and interested businesses.

5.5. Mutually beneficial connections and initiatives are set up with migrant businesspeople by local business community and professional networks.

- a. Explore opportunities for business networking for migrant business people.
- b. Explore ways to formally recognise businesses that are more culturally diverse and inclusive.

6. Civic Engagement and Participation

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

6.1. The council's elected members and staff effectively communicate with newcomers to promote their engagement in local government processes.

- a. Facilitate opportunities for the local community and newcomers to meet local government leaders and staff. This could include regular morning tea meetings between council staff, elected members, and newcomers; or a regular newsletter via social media, newspapers and community notice boards.
- b. Council will review its communication strategies regarding local government engagement with the intention of ensuring it is understandable for all community members, including new migrants.

6.2. Newcomers are encouraged and enabled to get involved in local government and civil society.

- a. Encourage participation by newcomers in central and local body elections, voting processes, consultation and the national census.
- b. Council will share volunteering opportunities with newcomer networks. This could include creating a registry of volunteer opportunities to share with newcomer networks and the wider community.

6.3. Newcomers' efforts and achievements in civic participation and community life are acknowledged and celebrated.

- a. Explore opportunities to add newcomer or migrant categories to existing business or volunteer award programmes.

7. Welcoming Public Spaces

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

7.1. The design and operation of public spaces and facilities are culturally appropriate and reflect the diversity of the community.

- a. Welcoming Communities Advisory Group will investigate ways to reflect the diversity of the district in more public spaces.
- b. Libraries will engage with multicultural representatives and staff to ensure they are engaging appropriately with all community members.

7.2. Welcoming public spaces provide opportunities to build trust and relationships between newcomers and members of the receiving community.

- a. Libraries will be used as community hubs where newcomers and the broader community can interact.
- b. Welcoming Communities will support positive interactions between newcomers and public officials at community events.

7.3. Public spaces and buildings create a sense of community ownership and inclusion for all, including newcomers.

- a. Research whether public sport facilities are being used by newcomers, and ways to improve access if needed.
- b. Welcoming Communities will provide information to newcomer groups on suitable venues for sport or cultural events.



8. Culture and Identity

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.

8.1. Receiving communities and newcomers share and celebrate their cultures with each other, facilitated by the council and others in the community.

- a. Samoan Independence Day is regularly celebrated in Marton in June.
- b. The Multicultural Council of Rangitīkei/Whanganui held the first "Multicultural Feast & Fest" in Bulls in August 2022, with roughly 300 attendees.
- c. Welcoming Communities Officer to create and share a calendar of important international and local cultural and community events.
- d. Identify opportunities for sharing migrant & long-term resident stories in media.

8.2. Newcomers and the receiving community understand what values they each hold dear.

- a. Identify opportunities to partner with or support Māori to provide newcomers with education on tangata whenua concerns, Māori worldview, and Te Tiriti.
- b. Encourage and support local cultural groups to organise events.
- c. Encourage events organised by the receiving community to incorporate aspects of cultural representation where appropriate.

Definitions

Civil society:	Civil society is that part of society that consists of organisations and institutions that help and look after people, their health, and their rights. It does not include the government or the family. Civil society in action includes activities like serving on the local school board of trustees or volunteering in the community
Community:	Refers to everyone living and working in a community. It encompasses: the local government council, Māori organisations, the business sector (for example, individual businesses, the economic development agency, the chamber of commerce and business and industry sector organisations) cultural and sporting sectors, community and religious organisations, settlement service providers, non-government organisations, families and individuals.
Council:	Refers to the Rangitikei District Council
Culture:	Culture can be viewed as the customs, arts and social interactions of a nation, people or social group. It may be expressed through language, symbols, beliefs and customs, knowledge, practices and may be celebrated or expressed through art, literature, music, drama, religion and social gatherings for example.
Cultural groups:	For the purposes of this Plan, this is a group of people that share factors such as common ethnicity, ancestry, religion, language, society, and culture.
Receiving community:	Refers to the existing population living within a community, some of whom are New Zealand-born and some of whom are not.
Mana whenua:	Whanau, hapū and iwi with ancestry and occupation sourced in whakapapa.
Newcomers:	For the purposes of this Plan, newcomers refer to recent migrants (up to 5 years in New Zealand), former refugees and international students. It also encapsulates New Zealanders returning from overseas and regional migration.
Tangata whenua:	The indigenous Māori people of Aotearoa New Zealand, including iwi (tribes), hapū (subtribes) and other hāpori Māori (Māori communities).

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