

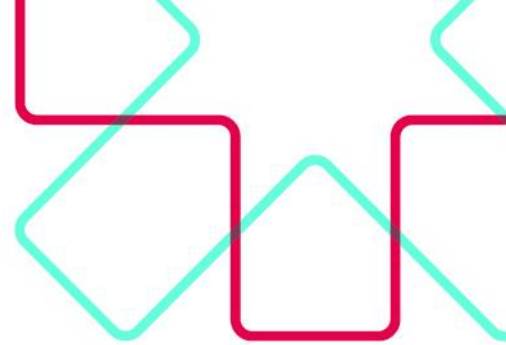
EVALUATION OF THE WELCOMING COMMUNITIES PILOT PROGRAMME

Final Evaluation Report

Findings from the pilot programme evaluation July 2017-June 2019

November 2019





CONTENTS

Executive summary	1
Introduction	2
About Welcoming Communities	2
About the evaluation	3
Methodology	4
Overview of pilot programme outcomes	7
Summary of pilot programme outcomes	7
Pilot Establishment and Development phases	10
Pilot Implementation phase	12
Implementing the Welcoming Communities pilot programme	13
Case study: Māori Cultural Awareness workshop	15
Case study: Palmy Young Ambassadors	18
Pilot programme resourcing and support	19
Resourcing and support provided by Councils	19
Case study: Welcoming Portal	20
Resourcing and support provided by INZ	21
Early pilot programme outcomes	24
Element 1: Inclusive Leadership	24
Element 2: Welcoming Communications	26
Element 3: Equitable Access	28
Case study: Multicultural March	31
Element 4: Connected and Inclusive Communities	32
Element 5: Economic Development, Business and Employment	34
Element 6: Civic Engagement and Participation	36
Case study: Christchurch mosque attacks	38
Element 7: Welcoming Public Spaces	39
Element 8: Culture and Identity	40
Case study: Katikati Festival of Cultures:	43
Suggested activities for future Councils	44



Lessons learned: advice for future Councils	45
Community engagement in the programme	45
Key components of the Welcoming Communities programme	47
Council engagement in the programme	49



PREFACE

This report has been prepared for Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment by Matthew Fanselow from MartinJenkins (Martin, Jenkins & Associates Limited).

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Welcoming Communities – Te Waharoa ki ngā Hapori – has been piloted in New Zealand since July 2017. Welcoming Communities is a settlement programme that supports local government Councils and their communities to create welcoming and inclusive environments for newcomers. The programme involves developing, delivering and participating in welcoming activities, which are intended to help increase social engagement, build social connections, and grow social inclusion.
- The Welcoming Communities programme has been piloted by 10 Councils across five regions. Each Council (or group of Councils) has developed a Welcoming Plan outlining a broad range of activities welcoming activities that they will undertake towards becoming a more welcoming and inclusive community. The development of the Welcoming Plans was led by the Welcoming Communities Coordinator in each region. The Coordinators have overall responsibility for the Welcoming Communities programme of work.
- The Welcoming Plans are aligned with the Welcoming Communities Standard for New Zealand. The Standard is a benchmark for what a successful “Welcoming Community” looks like. The Standard is comprised of eight “elements”, with each element containing a series of sub-outcomes. The activities within the Welcoming Plans are aligned with the elements and sub-outcomes in the Standard, and list the key actions, timeframes and key roles for successfully delivering each activity.
- Over the course of the pilot, the regional programme teams and Immigration New Zealand have achieved considerable progress and success. A stocktake of existing policies, services, programmes and activities led to the successful drafting and adoption of the Welcoming Plans. Local relationships and networks have been strengthened, resulting in a diverse range of locals and newcomers engaging in a range of welcoming activities.
- The pilot Councils and INZ have successfully co-designed the Welcoming Communities accreditation manual. This staged model provides Councils the opportunity to become formally accredited as a “Welcoming Community” and be part of the global welcoming network.
- Each pilot Council has demonstrated considerable progress towards achieving many of the sub-outcomes in the Standard. Newcomers are more confident about engaging with Councils; information on local policies, services, programmes and activities is more readily accessible by the community; Councils are increasingly considering the needs of newcomers in their planning and decision-making, and there are an increasing number of programmes and activities which support and demonstrate diversity in local communities.
- Evidence collected during the evaluation shows that the pilot programme has had a meaningful impact in shifting local communities to becoming more welcoming and inclusive. Newcomers feel more confident to display and be proud of their culture, their religion, and their history in their new homes.



INTRODUCTION

About Welcoming Communities

Welcoming Communities – Te Waharoa ki ngā Hapori – is a settlement programme that supports local government councils (Councils) and their communities to create welcoming and inclusive environments for newcomers – recent migrants, former refugees and international students. It involves local residents in developing, delivering and participating in welcoming activities. This approach creates communities where everyone can belong, participate, contribute and thrive. It helps increase social engagement, build social connections and grow social inclusion. This generates economic, social, civic and cultural benefits for the community. Immigration New Zealand (INZ) is leading the implementation of the programme, with its partner agency the Office of Ethnic Communities.

Welcoming Communities is part of a broader international welcoming network which includes more than 250 local councils and municipalities around the world. INZ works closely with others in the global network, including Welcoming Cities (an initiative of Welcoming Australia), Welcoming America (USA), Welcoming International, Intercultural Cities (Europe) and Cities of Migration (Canada).

The New Zealand Welcoming Communities programme is comprised of several key components. These are:

The Welcoming Communities Standard for New Zealand: the Welcoming Communities Standard is a benchmark for what a successful “Welcoming Community” looks like. The Standard is outcomes-based and is comprised of eight outcome areas that are essential to developing a welcoming and inclusive environment. The Standard helps Councils to benchmark their policies, services, programmes and activities, and to assess their progress and efforts over time towards becoming more welcoming.

Welcoming Plans: a Welcoming Plan presents the comprehensive range of welcoming activities a Council, or group of Councils, intends to undertake. The activities in a Welcoming Plan are designed to make newcomers feel more welcome and are aligned to each of the eight outcome areas in the Standard. A Welcoming Plan identifies the key actions, timeframes, and lead and supporting roles for successfully delivering each welcoming activity.

Accreditation as a Welcoming Community: the New Zealand Welcoming Communities Accreditation model is a staged model by which Councils can become formally accredited as a “Welcoming Community”. Progress towards achieving accreditation is self-paced, and is based on several features including the degree to which the Welcoming Plan has been implemented, promotion of the programme to stakeholders, and progress towards achieving the outcomes and sub-outcomes in the Standard. Accreditation as a Welcoming Community has several benefits, including ongoing promotion of local programme success, financial rewards, and access to the global welcoming network.

Celebrating success: INZ shares and celebrates the successes of the Councils involved in the programme. The INZ website showcases local stories and innovative activities underway in local communities, to inspire all communities in New Zealand to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for newcomers. INZ also showcases local successes to international audiences at conferences and symposiums.



Among the core principles of the New Zealand pilot are the cultural values of *whānaungatanga* – the importance of relationships and a sense of belonging and support, and *manaakitanga* – the value of extending hospitality and caring for others.

Funding for the pilot programme was secured through the Accrued Migrant Levy Revenue and approved in June 2017 by the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Immigration.

About the evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the establishment, development, implementation and early outcomes of the Welcoming Communities pilot programme. The evaluation also summarises the lessons learned during the pilot programme, to help inform the wider roll-out of the programme. The programme was originally established as a two-year pilot running from July 2017 to June 2019.

The evaluation covers the Welcoming Communities pilot programme led by INZ in partnership with 10 Councils across five regions from July 2017 to June 2019. This is the second of two evaluation reports. The first report, the *Interim Evaluation Report*, focused on the Establishment and Development phases of the pilot programme¹. This report, the *Final Evaluation Report*, covers the programme Implementation phase, early outcomes, and lessons learned.

Purpose of this report

The purpose of this report is to provide INZ with insights into the implementation and early outcomes of the pilot programme, including lessons learned during the pilot which may be of benefit to new Councils joining the programme.

In October 2019, the Minister of Immigration announced approval by the New Zealand Government for the post-pilot expansion of the programme. The expansion provides funding for an additional 30 Councils to join the Welcoming Communities programme between 2020-2023, and to its ongoing implementation.

The lessons learned are intended to guide and inform INZ and new Councils who join the post-pilot expansion and ongoing implementation of the programme, given the October 2019 announcement of the programme's expansion².

¹ The *Interim Evaluation Report* is available here: <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/what-we-do/welcoming-communities/resources/welcoming-communities-pilot-evaluation-interim-report-2018.pdf>

² <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/media-centre/news-notifications/expanding-welcoming-communities>



Report structure

This report covers:

- 1 An overview of pilot programme outcomes
- 2 Summary of the pilot Establishment and Development phases
 - Note: the Establishment and Development phases were the focus of the 2018 *Interim Evaluation Report*. This section of the report summarises the key actions undertaken during these phases.
- 3 Pilot Implementation phase
- 4 Pilot programme resourcing and support
- 5 Pilot programme outcomes
- 6 Lessons learned across the pilot programme

Six case studies of welcoming activities are included in this report. These case studies highlight a selection of activities that have taken place across the pilot programme, and demonstrate examples of inclusive and welcoming activities taking place in communities across New Zealand.

Methodology

The evaluation uses a combination of quantitative and qualitative data sources, including Council reporting to INZ. Online surveys have been conducted with a wide range of programme stakeholders and participants using both quantitative and qualitative questions. Evaluation team visits to Councils, face-to-face interviews, and telephone interviews with key stakeholders have provided rich qualitative data to inform the evaluation.

Welcoming Communities stakeholder surveys

Two online surveys were co-designed by INZ and MartinJenkins. The surveys were deployed to a wide range of stakeholders across the pilot programme, identified by the Welcoming Communities Coordinators. Two rounds of surveying were conducted as part of the evaluation, 12 months apart. Table 1 summarises the range of stakeholder perspectives collected through both surveys.

Survey round one – 2018

The first round of surveying was conducted in July-August 2018. This survey focused on the Establishment and Development phases of the programme. A total of 52 responses were received from a population of 108 stakeholders (a response rate of 48 percent). The 2018 survey informs the *Pilot Establishment and Development phases* section of this report.

Survey round two – 2019

The second round of surveying was conducted in May-June 2019. This survey focused on programme implementation, resourcing and support, programme outcomes, and lessons learned. A total of 95 responses were received from a population of 170 stakeholders (a response rate of 56 percent). The



2019 survey informs the *Implementation, Resourcing and Support, Outcomes and Lessons learned* sections of this report.

Table 1: Welcoming Communities pilot programme evaluation survey respondents

Role in the Welcoming Communities pilot programme	Number of 2018 responses	Number of 2019 responses
Advisory / governance group member	19	22
Community group member (including cultural, ethnic, arts, business, and religious groups)	5	26
Council staff	12	21
Councillor	6	6
Government organisation	3	6
Iwi representative	1	1
Newcomer	0	1
Non-government organisation	2	5
Other	0	3
Programme Coordinator	4	4

Source: MartinJenkins

Interviews and visits to Councils

Two rounds of interviews and visits to Councils were conducted, 12 months apart. Interviews were conducted with a range of pilot programme stakeholders and with key INZ staff. The interviews explored the topics and themes introduced in the two surveys in greater detail. The first round of interviews and visits was conducted in July-August 2018, and engaged 46 stakeholders. The second round was conducted in July-August 2019, and engaged 71 stakeholders.

Table 2 summarises the range of stakeholder perspectives collected through both rounds of interviews.

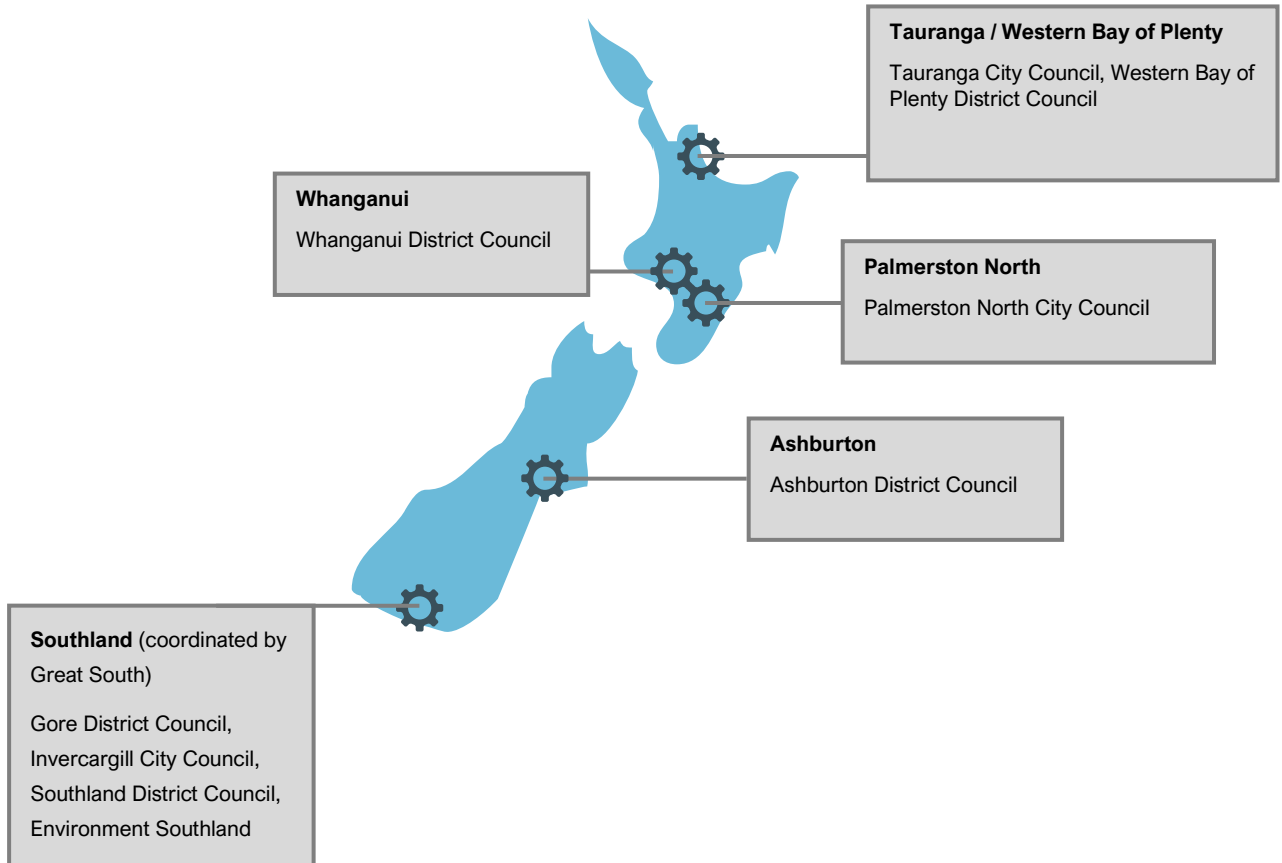
Table 2: Welcoming Communities stakeholder interviews

Role in the Welcoming Communities pilot programme	Number of 2018 interviews	Number of 2019 interviews
Community stakeholders (including cultural groups, education providers, sports representatives, health representatives, and employers)	10	47
Council staff	15	9
Government organisations	7	6
Mayors and Councillors	8	4
Programme Coordinators	6	5

Source: MartinJenkins



Welcoming Communities pilot locations



OVERVIEW OF PILOT PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

The aim of Welcoming Communities is to support interactions and connections between newcomers and members of the receiving community, to create welcoming and inclusive communities. In the context of the Welcoming Communities programme, the term 'newcomers' refers to recent migrants, former refugees and international students. The term 'receiving community' refers to the existing population living within a community – some of whom may be New Zealand-born and some of whom may not.

To achieve this aim the Councils participating in the Welcoming Communities pilot programme developed Welcoming Plans with actions and activities designed to foster a supportive, inclusive and welcoming community. The actions and activities in the Plans are aligned to the eight elements of the Welcoming Communities Standard, which provides Councils with a benchmark for what a successful welcoming community looks like.

This section provides a summary of the outcomes achieved by the pilot programme. These outcomes are covered in greater detail later in this report.

Summary of pilot programme outcomes

Element 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.

Outcomes:

- Overall, Councils are seen as providing strong leadership of the programme.
- Elected officials and Council staff are far more aware of the diversity in their communities.
- Newcomer groups are more confident about engaging with Council.

Element 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.

Outcomes:

- Councils are engaging in deliberate and appropriate communication with newcomers.
- Information on policies, services, programmes and activities is readily accessible to the community.
- Communication with the community is focused and coordinated.
- Welcoming Communities is well promoted to locals and newcomers alike.



Element 3: Equitable Access - opportunities to access services and activities and to participate in the community are available to all, including newcomers.

Outcomes:

- Councils are increasingly considering the needs of newcomers in planning and decision-making.
- Councils are revitalising their services and activities as a result of Welcoming Communities.
- Local information is readily accessible to newcomers.

Element 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.

Outcomes:

- There are more programmes and activities which support and demonstrate cultural diversity.
- Newcomers are increasingly engaging with the community, and vice-versa.
- Relationships between the Council and newcomers have strengthened.
- There is increased coordination between groups providing support to newcomers.

Element 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.

Outcomes:

- Business owners are more aware of the importance of inclusiveness.
- International students are increasingly seen as vital to the community, bringing increased diversity to the community and as prospective employees.

Element 6: Civic Engagement and Participation - newcomers feel welcome to fully participate in the community. Newcomers are active in all forms of civic participation.

Outcomes:

- Newcomers are more confident in engaging with Council.
- Elected members are engaging more effectively and regularly with newcomers.



Element 7: Welcoming Public Spaces - newcomers and receiving communities feel welcome in and comfortable using public spaces.

Outcomes:

- New and enhanced existing events are attracting newcomers to spend time in public spaces.
- Newcomers are increasingly engaging in sports and outdoor activities.

Element 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.

Outcomes:

- Newcomers and locals are more confident to challenge ignorant and bigoted comments.
- There is increased sharing of culture between newcomers and locals
- Newcomer groups are energised and supported to lead their own initiatives.
- Overall, newcomers are made to feel welcome in the community.



PILOT ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PHASES

The Welcoming Communities pilot programme commenced in July 2017. The first phase, the Establishment phase, saw Councils and INZ undertake a considerable volume of work to lay the foundation for the successful development of the Council Welcoming Plans. The second phase, the Development phase, involved several major actions including undertaking a stocktake of existing policies, services, programmes and activities, particularly those related to newcomers, and developing the Welcoming Plans. Although there was some variation across the Councils, these phases ran from July 2017 to June 2018.

This section of the report provides a summary of the key actions undertaken during the Establishment and Development phases. For full findings from these phases refer to the *Interim Evaluation Report*³.

Key actions undertaken during the Establishment phase (July-December 2017)

During the Establishment phase Councils and INZ undertook the following key actions:



Co-designing the Standard

The outcomes-based Welcoming Communities Standard for New Zealand is a benchmark of the attributes which show a community to be welcoming. It serves as the basis for Councils to become accredited as a 'Welcoming Community'. The pilot programme Councils co-designed the Standard with INZ. Following a period of community engagement and public feedback, the Standard was published in December 2017.

Developing the evaluation framework

Pilot programme Councils and central government provided considerable guidance and input into the development of the Welcoming Communities evaluation framework, which was finalised in June 2017.

Recruiting the programme Coordinators

The Coordinators have project management responsibility for the pilot and have overall responsibility for the programme of work, supported by other teams within the Councils. This includes facilitating the delivery of many Welcoming Plan activities.

Promoting Welcoming Communities to the local community

During the Establishment phase, Councils and Coordinators began to promote and socialise Welcoming Communities with their local community. This included engaging with tangata whenua and various stakeholder groups, and developing project management and communication plans.

³ Available: <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/what-we-do/welcoming-communities/resources/welcoming-communities-pilot-evaluation-interim-report-2018.pdf>



Key actions undertaken during the Development phase (January-June 2018)

During the Development phase Councils and INZ undertook the following key actions:



Embedding governance and advisory arrangements

Councils and Coordinators successfully appointed members to their advisory groups and governance groups (note: not all Councils have separate governance arrangements). These representatives provided vital support to the Coordinators in delivering the programme.

Conducting the stocktake

During the Development phase the Coordinators led a stocktake of existing Council and community policies, services, programmes and activities, primarily those related to newcomers. The stocktake produced an inventory of work already underway, and successfully identified areas where there were gaps or opportunities to deliver new or better policies, services, programmes and activities.

Drafting the Welcoming Plan

The Coordinators led the drafting of their Council's Welcoming Plans. The Plans were developed using evidence gathered during the stocktake exercise, and contain a comprehensive list of welcoming activities. These activities are mapped against the eight elements of the Welcoming Communities Standard.

Arranging sign-off / endorsement for the Plans

The Coordinators successfully arranged for the Plans to be signed-off or endorsed by their respective Councils.

Implementing and monitoring Plan activities

The Coordinators benchmarked their activities against the Standard's outcomes. As part of this process, the Coordinators are tracking and monitoring the progress of their activities and are reporting back to their advisory groups, Council staff, and INZ.

Engaging and liaising with INZ

During the Development phase the Coordinators regularly engaged with INZ. A key aspect of this engagement was co-designing the accreditation process.



PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

The pilot programme Implementation phase commenced in August 2018, with some variation in timing across the Councils. The Implementation phase builds on the Establishment and Development phases, and puts the work completed during that time into action.

This section of the report covers:

- the milestones achieved by the pilot programme
- the elements which are critical to successfully implementing the programme
- the level of community understanding of the programme
- the range of groups involved in implementing the programme.

This section also includes case studies from the Ashburton District Council and Palmerston North City Council.



Implementing the Welcoming Communities pilot programme

The Implementation phase has seen the programme achieve a wide range of milestones to date. These successes have been achieved both by the Councils and by the INZ Welcoming Communities programme team.



Council and community milestones

- Expanded the Welcoming Communities profile within the community
- Established and strengthened relationships and networks in the community
- Increased involvement of the advisory groups in the development and implementation of the programme
- Finalised and published their Welcoming Plans
- Implemented Welcoming Plan activities
- Strengthened relationships with tangata whenua.

INZ milestones

- Published the *Interim Evaluation Report*
- Fostered knowledge sharing and networking
- Hosted national workshops
- Produced new collateral and resources for Councils
- Fostered links with the international Welcoming network
- Promoted community successes
- Co-designed the accreditation model
- Supported Councils in their on-the-ground delivery role
- Provided funding to support the professional development of the Coordinators
- Achieved the post-pilot expansion of the programme.



Critical factors to the successful implementation of the pilot

Stakeholders were asked about the factors of the programme which were most vital to its successful implementation. These factors were:



The Coordinator

The Welcoming Communities Coordinator is central to the successful implementation of the programme. The Coordinator is the “driving force” behind the on-the-ground delivery of the programme, and is the face of the programme in the community. Feedback from stakeholders has identified the following core competencies for the Coordinator role:

- a dedication to the success of the programme and a concern for the wellbeing of newcomers
- project management skills
- adept at building and maintaining relationships, both within Council and the wider community
- a strategic mindset (focusing on building the long-term viability of the programme, beyond day-to-day activities)
- openness and approachability
- community development experience.



Support from INZ

The support provided to pilot programme Councils by INZ has made the programme possible. INZ has provided funding support to the pilot programme, including \$50,000 per annum in seed funding. In addition, INZ has provided a broad range of non-financial support, including advice, networking support, and resources.



The advisory group

Securing the right combination of people for the advisory group is central to the successful implementation of Welcoming Communities. The advisory group needs to be representative of the community and support the goals of the programme. Members need to draw on their extensive networks and relationships to drive the programme forward. Importantly, the members of the advisory group need to be prepared to “roll their sleeves up” and do the hard work required to ensure the programme is a success.

The stocktake

The comprehensive stocktake of existing policies, services, programmes and activities is fundamental to successfully establishing and implementing Welcoming Communities. The stocktake provided insights into gaps in the services provided for newcomers, which could be filled by new Welcoming Communities activities. The stocktake process is vital in avoiding the duplication of policies, services, programmes and activities already underway in the community. It also identified what was working well in terms of delivering support to newcomers, and what could be improved.



Case study: Māori Cultural Awareness workshop

Ashburton District Council

In October 2018, Volunteering Mid and South Canterbury and the Mid-Canterbury Newcomers' Network, in partnership with Welcoming Communities, delivered a workshop to foster and enhance awareness and understanding of Māori culture. The workshop was designed to educate and upskill volunteers in their ability to engage with Māori in a culturally-appropriate way.

The workshop, hosted at Hakatere Marae in Ashburton, was designed to provide community volunteers with an increased level of understanding of Māoritanga and tikanga Māori, including the protocols involved in being welcomed onto a marae.

“Many volunteers were worried about accidentally offending someone, and so they have not visited the marae before. But the workshop gave them the experience they needed to engage with te ao Māori more confidently”.

The workshop aimed to provide community volunteers with “practical tips to assist volunteers to feel comfortable on a marae, and when interacting with Māori in their home, at school, or workplace”. By providing volunteers with the opportunity to be immersed in te ao Māori, the workshop sought to strengthen the confidence of volunteers to engage with newcomers of different cultural backgrounds.

The workshop attracted around 25 attendees, and was very well-received by the volunteers – “the workshop ran an hour over time, but nobody was concerned – everyone was so immersed in what they were learning”. The practical nature of the workshop – including karakia, waiata, understanding the different areas of a marae, and protocols related to tangihanga – was a fundamental component of the workshop, and provided participants with real skills which they could apply in their daily lives



Inclusive Leadership



Connected and
Inclusive Communities



Civic Engagement
and Participation



Culture and
Identity



The level of regional understanding of Welcoming Communities

Survey respondents were asked how well-understood they felt the Welcoming Communities pilot programme was in their city, district or region. The majority of respondents (n=57/95) agreed that the programme is well-understood. Very few respondents (n=11/95) did not feel that the programme was well-understood in their area. This indicates that Councils have been successful in promoting the Welcoming Communities programme to their local communities.

Iwi engagement has improved during the pilot period

Stakeholders identified specific pockets of the community which they felt did not fully understand the programme or its intentions. One of these groups was iwi. Many iwi have obligations to a wide range of projects and initiatives other than Welcoming Communities, and have not had the capacity to fully engage with the pilot. However, over the two year duration of the pilot programme there have been positive shifts in the level of iwi engagement in Welcoming Communities, with iwi leading and supporting the delivery of Welcoming Plan activities. Engagement conversations with iwi are ongoing across the pilot Councils.

The business community has come to value the programme

The business community were identified early in the *Interim Evaluation Report* as a group that was less likely to understand the Welcoming Communities programme. Stakeholders felt that the business community did not see the programme as relevant to them, viewing it primarily as a social policy and settlement programme rather than having consequences for business. Since that time, stakeholders felt that more of the business community has come to understand the importance of the programme, in terms of mitigating long-term workforce shortages and improving labour force planning.

The range of groups involved in implementing the pilot

The successful development and implementation of Welcoming Communities is heavily dependent on activating and engaging a broad range of groups in the community.

Survey respondents were asked to rate the degree of involvement of various groups in the implementation of the programme. These groups were:

- community and religious organisations
- cultural and sporting groups
- government agencies
- iwi / tangata whenua
- local businesses and business sector organisations
- local Council staff
- local families and individuals
- newcomer families and individuals



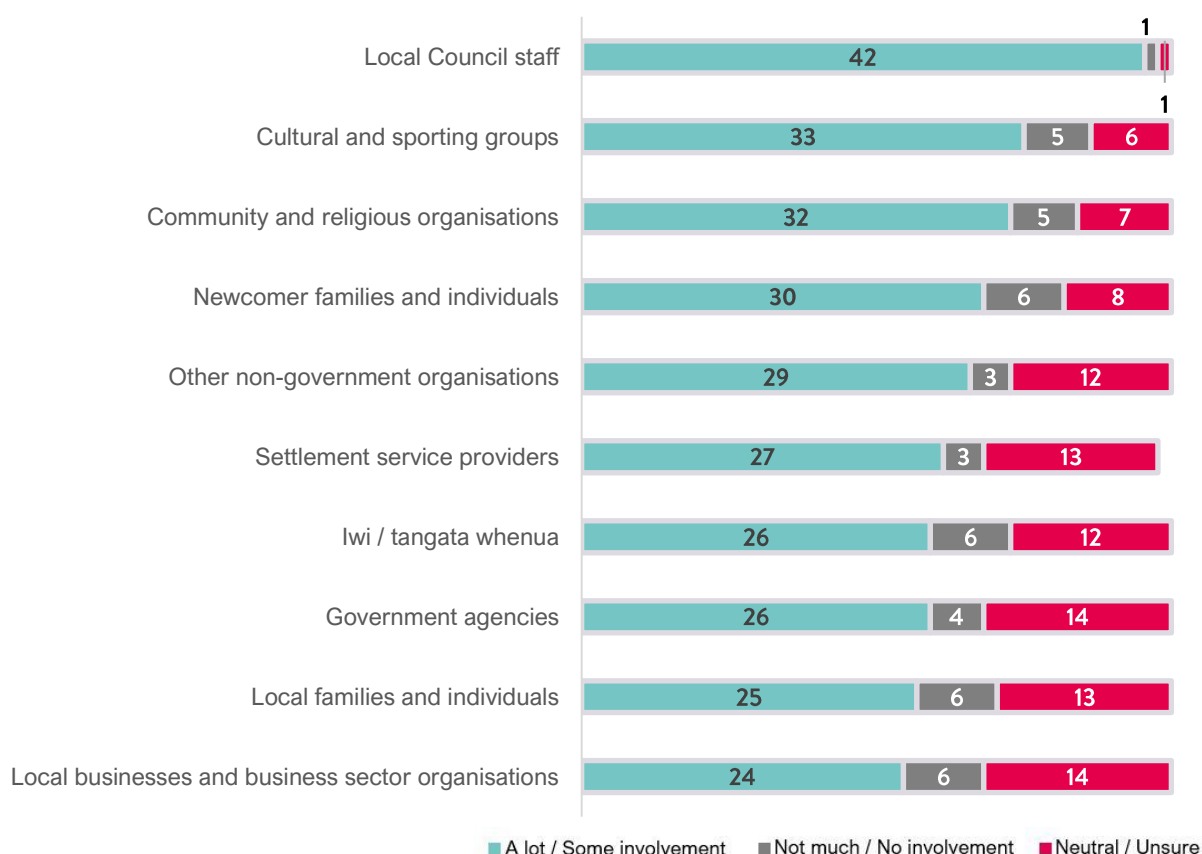
- other non-government organisations
- settlement service providers.

As shown in Figure 1 below, survey respondents had a wide range of perceptions of stakeholder involvement in implementing Welcoming Communities over the period August 2018-June 2019.

Higher levels of involvement were reported for local Council staff, cultural and sporting groups, and community and religious organisations. This is not surprising, as these groups are critical on-the-ground drivers of the programme and are therefore more visible to stakeholders. Lower levels of involvement were reported for iwi / tangata whenua, and local businesses.

Settlement service providers and government agencies received higher levels of neutral or unsure responses. This too is not surprising, as these groups have not been as visible on-the-ground, instead they have been providing financial and non-financial support to drive the programme, liaising with other government agencies to ensure the longevity of the programme, and engaging directly with the Coordinators rather than with the wider community.

Figure 1: Range of stakeholders involved in programme implementation



Source: MartinJenkins' Welcoming Communities survey 2019



Case study: Palmy Young Ambassadors

Palmerston North City Council

The “Palmy Young Ambassadors” programme was launched by the Palmerston North City Council in October 2018. The aim of this programme is to engage young people in multicultural events and international relations, in a formal and deliberate way. The Ambassador programme resulted from Council conversations about student engagement in civic life, and a drive to increase student involvement in the community.

The Ambassadors are domestic and international students aged 18-24. Through the programme Ambassadors gain exposure to a broad range of civic and globally-focused events and activities. The Ambassadors have helped to welcome international dignitaries, provided support for events including the Festival of Cultures, and assisted with City Welcome sessions.

“It’s great that we [Ambassadors] are a mix of international and domestic students. Because domestic students might go overseas, overseas students come here, and they might settle here or they might go back home - this all fosters incredible relationships and makes Palmerston North all the more welcoming”.

The Ambassador programme has three key components: volunteerism, mentorship, and project management. Each Ambassador is mentored by one of three Council community development and engagement staff members. The Ambassadors learn project management skills through event and activity planning, and are given opportunities to demonstrate and develop their leadership skills.



Civic Engagement and Participation



Culture and Identity



Inclusive Leadership



Equitable Access



PILOT PROGRAMME RESOURCING AND SUPPORT

A core component of the Welcoming Communities pilot programme has been resourcing and support provided by central and local government. Implementing the programme has been a partnership effort between central and local government, with both contributing financial and non-financial support.

The survey statistics reported in this section are from the 2019 stakeholder survey⁴.

This section of the report covers:

- the resourcing and support provided by Councils
- the resourcing and support provided by INZ, including financial and non-financial support.

This section also includes a case study from Great South (representing four Southland Councils).

Resourcing and support provided by Councils

Survey respondents were asked questions related to the resourcing and support provided to the pilot programme by Councils. The majority of respondents (n=39/50) agreed that the Councils provided the pilot programme with a good level of resourcing and support. There was strong agreement (n=40/50) that internal Council teams work together to assist with the successful implementation of the pilot. This point was further corroborated by stakeholder interviews, with participants emphasising that teams within Council provided information, guidance, and personnel to assist the Coordinator as needed.

Survey respondents were less-certain as to whether their Council had secured additional programme funding and support, including through sponsorships or partnerships with external sources. Only one-third of respondents (n=16/49) agreed that the Council had secured additional funding and support for the programme post-pilot. During the interview process, the majority of stakeholders noted that funding for the Welcoming Communities programme had been included in their Council's Long-Term Plan, indicating that Councils are making progress towards securing longer-term funding for the programme.

⁴ Survey questions related to resourcing and support of the programme were only asked of programme Coordinators, Councillors, Council staff, and advisory group members.



Case study: Welcoming Portal

Great South

The Southland Murihiku Welcoming Portal (the Portal) is an online platform developed by Great South – the coordinating agency for the Southland Welcoming Communities programme.

The Portal has been developed by Welcoming Communities Southland (a joint venture between Great South, Gore District Council, Invercargill City Council, Southland District Council, and Environment Southland) as a single repository for information related to local communities and the wider Southland region. The Portal provides newcomers with simple and straightforward access to a range of commonly-sought regional information. The Portal functions as a “single source of truth” for information and advice, including a calendar of events and activities.

The Portal contains comprehensive information about the Southland region, divided into the following layers:

- Transportation
- Housing
- Healthcare
- Education
- Employment
- Lifestyle
- English language

A key focus of the Portal is employment. The Portal contains a wide range of resources to help newcomers find work and understand the legal requirements for working in New Zealand, including visa and tax requirements. The Portal also provides in-depth information on different industries for employment in Southland, to showcase the regional economy and attract newcomers to the region. The Portal is integrated with links to other core services for newcomers, including the Southland Multicultural Council, Citizens Advice Bureau and the New Zealand Now website.



Welcoming
Communications



Equitable Access



Connected and
Inclusive
Communities



Economic Development,
Business and
Employment



Resourcing and support provided by INZ

The Welcoming Communities pilot programme has been delivered in partnership between Councils and INZ. INZ has worked closely with Councils to understand and meet their needs, in both a financial and non-financial capacity. The majority of survey respondents (n=18/21)⁵ felt the programme is well-supported by INZ.

Financial support provided by INZ

The most substantial financial input into the pilot has been the \$50,000 seed funding provided annually to each region by INZ. This funding has enabled the Councils to employ the Welcoming Communities Coordinator to lead the development, establishment, and implementation of the programme. The original funding agreement between INZ and the pilot programme Councils provided two years of seed funding; however, in 2019 INZ successfully secured a third year of seed funding for each region. The majority of survey respondents (n=16/19) agreed that the seed funding has been fundamental to the success of the pilot.

In addition to the seed funding, in 2019 the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Immigration agreed that each of the current Councils will be eligible to receive up to a further \$20,000 to support activities that enable interactions and connections between newcomers and members of the receiving community under the Welcoming Communities programme⁶. The Councils will prepare funding proposals for Welcoming Plan activities which align with the funding criteria of the Welcoming Communities Standard outcomes, for approval by INZ.

“There’s no doubt that this programme would not have started without that seed funding”.

Additional financial support for the pilot includes:

- \$1,500 towards professional development for the Coordinators
- \$9,500 for developing and implementing new welcoming activities
- Travel stipends and accommodation for Coordinators to attend Welcoming Cities⁷ symposiums.

⁵ Survey questions related to INZ’s support of the programme were only asked of programme Coordinators and advisory group members – those with the most engagement with INZ

⁶ For the Welcoming Communities Programme the term ‘newcomers’ refers to recent migrants, former refugees and international students. The term ‘receiving community’ refers to the existing population living within a community – some of whom are New Zealand born and some of whom are not. This is sometimes referred to as the ‘host community’

⁷ Welcoming Cities in a programme of Welcoming Australia.



Non-financial support provided by INZ

In addition to financial support INZ has provided extensive non-financial support to the Councils. The majority of survey respondents (n=16/20) agreed that the non-financial support provided by INZ has been fundamental to the success of the pilot.

The non-financial support provided by INZ will continue beyond the conclusion of the pilot programme. Non-financial support provided to the pilot programme to date includes:

- organising and hosting national Welcoming Communities workshops in Wellington
- support for the Councils to monitor and evaluate the programme's impact
- resources tailored to assist Council's in their programme delivery function
- guidance and updates on international welcoming best practice
- support for the programme's accreditation process
- promoting pilot programme successes via the INZ website and on the international stage.

An example of a programme resource is shown below in Figure 2. This [poster](#) is designed to support locals to be more inclusive by giving examples of activities and actions people can take towards welcoming newcomers.

Figure 2: Example of Welcoming Communities collateral



“The support and guidance from the [INZ] team is great – they are always there for us to bounce ideas off or get information”.

The support of the Relationship Managers is highly valued by pilot programme stakeholders

The regions piloting the programme are covered by four INZ Relationship Managers. Relationship Managers provide the Councils, primarily the Coordinator, with on-the-ground engagement and support. The Relationship Managers are able to direct people to sources of information related to visas and immigration - while not a main focus of the Welcoming Communities programme, these topics are often raised with the Coordinators. The attendance of the Relationship Managers at local community events was highlighted by interviewed stakeholders as further demonstrating INZ’s ongoing support of the Welcoming Communities programme.

Advisory group members emphasised the value of having a dedicated INZ team member on the ground as part of their programme - someone who is readily accessible, who attends advisory group meetings and who helps “ensure that the programme is on track”.

“Our Relationship Manager has been extremely supportive. [They] have been very supportive of the Coordinator and keeps regularly in communication with the Coordinator and advisory group. Having [them] at our meetings has been helpful”.

Overall, the support and guidance of INZ is greatly appreciated by pilot programme stakeholders

Stakeholders emphasised the support and guidance of INZ as a critical element of the programme. Advisory group members and Coordinators value the information and knowledge shared by INZ, including “timely updates, links to valuable material, papers from experts in the area of ‘welcoming’, and organising hui in Wellington where we can gather to talk about key milestones”.

The availability and approachability of the INZ team was repeatedly raised as a benefit by stakeholders.



EARLY PILOT PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

The Welcoming Communities Standard for New Zealand (the Standard) is organised around eight “elements” central to building a welcoming and inclusive community. Within each element is an overarching outcome statement, and a set of sub-outcomes related to each element.

This section of the report covers:

- an introduction to each element in the Standard
- the outcomes achieved through the programme’s implementation grouped thematically under the elements in the Standard
- a list of suggested welcoming activities for Councils new to the programme to consider delivering.

This section also includes case studies from the Whanganui District Council and the Western Bay of Plenty District Council, and a case study on the Christchurch mosque attacks.

Element 1: Inclusive Leadership



The overarching outcome of this element is:

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.

Inclusive Leadership has six sub-outcomes. These are:

- i 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.
- ii Leaders – both designated and unofficial – reflect the diversity in the local community, as does the council workforce.
- iii Leaders model the principles of inclusiveness, openness, tolerance, respect and acceptance of all cultures in the community.
- iv There are clear roles, responsibilities and ownership within council and in the wider community for the Welcoming Communities programme.
- v Council internal and external policies, services, programmes and activities recognise and address cultural diversity.
- vi A range of leadership opportunities in the council and the wider community are available to and taken up by newcomers.



Examples of early Inclusive Leadership outcomes

Overall, Councils are seen as providing strong leadership of the programme

Survey respondents were asked if they agree that their Council was providing strong leadership for Welcoming Communities. The majority of respondents (n=73/95) agreed with the statement. Very few respondents (n=5/95) disagreed.

Figure 3: Council leadership of Welcoming Communities is strong



Source: MartinJenkins' Welcoming Communities survey 2019

Elected officials and Council staff are far more aware of the diversity in their communities

Stakeholders have reported that Councillors and Council staff have become more acutely aware of the diversity within their community. This has partly been fostered by Welcoming Communities encouraging and requiring Council to engage with diverse community groups, and partly as a result of the programme bolstering the confidence of newcomer groups to engage with Council. Some stakeholders expressed genuine surprise at the diverse composition of their communities – recent migrants, refugees, international students, and the cultural and language diversity they bring.

“Councillors and staff are now actively talking about the need to look at new policies ‘through a community and diversity lens’ – this didn’t happen before [Welcoming Communities]”.

Newcomer groups are more confident about engaging with Council

There has been a distinct increase in the number of cultural and religious groups engaging with the Council. Stakeholders have reported that these groups are feeling more confident in asserting their needs and sharing their perspectives with the Council, which is attributable to the work of Welcoming



Communities. This includes a more diverse range of candidates running for local body elections, and an increasingly diverse range of stakeholders joining the programme advisory groups.

“We have seen an increasingly diverse group around the advisory group table – it is helping to reduce silos both within Council and between community groups”.

Element 2: Welcoming Communications



The overarching outcome of this element is:

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.

Welcoming Communications has four sub-outcomes. These are:

- i The community is well informed about the local benefits of immigration and the Welcoming Communities programme, including success stories.
- ii The council is well informed about newcomers to their region and pro-actively seeks data about newcomers from relevant sources.
- iii The council’s engagement with all residents is two-way, culturally appropriate and fit for purpose.
- iv 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.

Examples of early Welcoming Communications outcomes

Councils are engaging in deliberate and appropriate communication with newcomers

Stakeholders emphasised that Councils are making a more concerted effort to tailor their communications to different segments of the community. An example of this is translating Council and Welcoming Communities material into languages other than English, immediately increasing its accessibility. Councils have also been given credit for identifying key contacts within different community and cultural groups, to help ensure that information is distributed as widely as possible.



Information on policies, services, programmes and activities is more readily accessible by the community

Stakeholders applauded Council for making more information available on their websites, as well as promoting important content via social media. It has become easier for groups who work with newcomers to direct them to the necessary information about the region, including cultural events, activities, information evenings, and town hall meetings. Councils are increasingly reflecting diversity in their information releases, for example incorporating photographs of people of multiple ethnicities engaging in the community and participating in local events as part of their promotional material.

“Before the programme we hardly knew what was happening in the community, we found it difficult to get information from the Council. Now it is much more accessible”.

Communication with the community is focused and coordinated

Councils, businesses, and community groups have been working together to engage and communicate with newcomers in a coordinated manner, with stakeholders attributing this to the work of the Coordinators. The importance of the three sectors being aligned was reinforced by a number of stakeholders: Council provides access to local information and civic engagement, businesses provide employment, and community groups provide activities and connections for newcomers. Working together, they “help to make newcomers feel welcomed, supported, and able to integrate into the community smoothly”.

Welcoming Communities is well-promoted to locals and newcomers alike

Survey respondents were asked whether they agreed that their Welcoming Plan was visible to the community. The majority of respondents (n=73/95) agreed that the Welcoming Plan was visible. Very few respondents (10/95) disagreed with the statement.

Figure 4: Welcoming Plans are visible in the community



Source: MartinJenkins' Welcoming Communities survey 2019



Stakeholders emphasised the work being done by the Coordinators to promote Welcoming Communities, with the promotion and communication of the programme identified as a critical component to newcomers and locals being able to access the information they need:

“Before the programme it wasn’t easy to find out what was going on in the community, or where to go for help with settlement. Now all players are aware of the resources and services available”.

Element 3: Equitable Access



The overarching outcome of this element is:

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

Equitable Access has three sub-outcomes. These are:

- i Council partners with local businesses, organisations and sectors to identify and address barriers for newcomers to accessing services and participating in the community.
- ii 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.
- iii All community members are well informed about the services available in the community. Newcomers are made aware of, and are using these services.

Examples of early Equitable Access outcomes

Councils are increasingly considering the needs of newcomers in planning and decision-making

Councils have been working to make access to information about activities and services more equitable for newcomers. Prior to Welcoming Communities many Councils and community groups felt that newcomers would simply “know where to go” for information, such as to the Council or community service groups like the Citizens Advice Bureau. Through Welcoming Communities, Councils have realised that the diverse backgrounds of newcomers mean that many did not know where to go for information, and in some instances were distrustful of local officials. For example, some newcomers believed they had to pay a fee to use public parks and playgrounds.

Through increased interactions with diverse communities, Councils have become much better at identifying the needs of newcomers and the barriers which prevent them from fully engaging with the community. This includes running workshops and seminars specifically designed to help newcomers understand some of the less well-known aspects of moving to New Zealand:

“We have been able to run sessions that give advice directly to newcomers. We can explain what an IRD number is, explaining how tax works in New Zealand and that you cannot work for cash, helping them to know their rights if an employer is behaving inappropriately”.

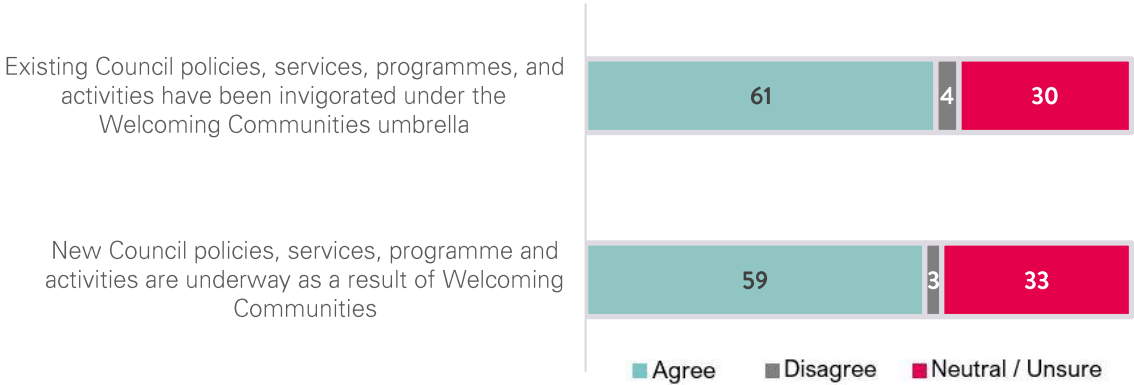


Councils are revitalising their services and activities as a result of Welcoming Communities

Survey respondents were asked whether they felt current Council policies, services, programmes and activities had been invigorated under Welcoming Communities. Respondents were also asked whether new policies, services, programmes and activities had been established as a result of Welcoming Communities.

The majority of respondents (n=61/95) agreed that existing Council work had been invigorated as a result of the programme, and that new policies were underway as a result of Welcoming Communities (n=59/95). Very few respondents disagreed with these statements; however, a high proportion of respondents were neutral or unsure.

Figure 5: Councils are changing their policies, services, programmes and activities because of Welcoming Communities



Source: MartinJenkins' Welcoming Communities survey 2019

“Welcoming Communities is now woven through so many of our [Council] strategies – there is increased training for staff on engaging with diverse groups and newcomers”.

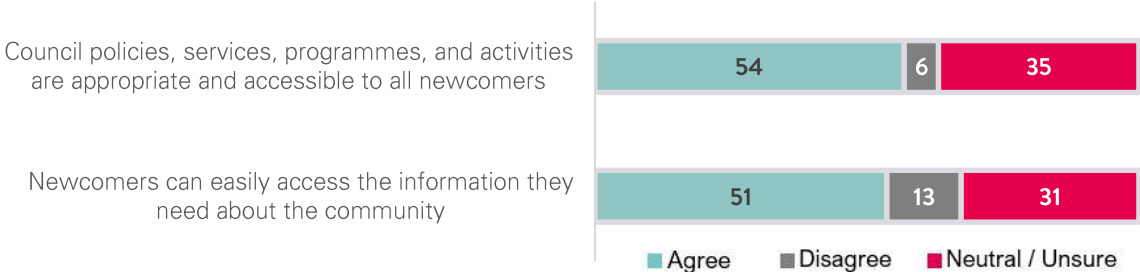


Local information is readily accessible to newcomers

Survey respondents were asked about the accessibility of information by newcomers, both Council-specific information as well as information related to the community more generally.

The majority of respondents agreed that Council policies, services, programmes and activities are accessible to newcomers (n=54/95), and that newcomers can easily access information about the community (n=51/95). However a high proportion of respondents were unsure.

Figure 6: Information is accessible to newcomers



Source: MartinJenkins' Welcoming Communities survey 2019



Case study: Multicultural March

Whanganui District Council

Multicultural March was a series of events held in Whanganui in March 2019, organised by the Whanganui Multicultural Council with support from Whanganui District Council through Welcoming Communities.

Multicultural March consisted of a range of cultural events designed to promote connections and relationships and to foster inclusion. The events included a Welcome Tour of Whanganui - highlighting the services, landmarks and recreation facilities available to newcomers; documentary screenings; and Race Unity Day.

“The focus of Race Unity Day was on conversations. Speaking openly and freely about the challenges facing newcomers, including racism, and how we as a community can better support and promote inclusivity”.

The Race Unity Day was held on the day following the Christchurch mosque attacks. Organisers chose to keep the event on this date, to provide a space for inclusivity and support in the aftermath of tragedy. Many attendees, who spoke languages other than English, were invited to the microphone to speak without translation. This was done to demonstrate the diversity of languages in Whanganui, and to highlight the status of these languages as taonga.

More than 400 people attended Race Unity Day, with guest speakers including the Mayor and local students discussing the importance of inclusion, generosity, being welcoming, and the need to stand against bigotry and racism.



Inclusive Leadership



Connected and Inclusive Communities



Welcoming Public Spaces



Culture and Identity



Element 4: Connected and Inclusive Communities



The overarching outcome of this element is:

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.

Connected and Inclusive Communities has four sub-outcomes. These are:

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

Examples of early Connected and Inclusive Communities outcomes

There are more programmes and activities which support and demonstrate cultural diversity

As a result of Welcoming Communities, community events and activities have increasingly expanded to include cultural and ethnic events. Stakeholders felt that the deliberate focus on events which promoted diversity and newcomer cultures had resulted in significant improvements in social inclusion.

The diversity within communities is being promoted and celebrated by:

- newcomers and locals experiencing Māori culture via visits to local marae
- deliberate inclusion of ethnic communities in Council processes and decisions
- a concerted focus on being “welcoming, not just friendly”
- providing a combination of pastoral care and activities – “pastoral care is vital to supporting newcomers, but events and activities bring ‘life’ to the community”
- opportunities for local residents to share their cultural practices and regional history with newcomers.



“There is a lot more affinity for migrants and ethnic minorities in our community”.

Newcomers are increasingly engaging with the community, and vice-versa

Stakeholders emphasised that local and newcomer groups are increasingly socialising with one another. This is primarily being facilitated by community events and activities which encourage residents to engage and introduce themselves. Stakeholders shared feedback they had received from the community, with locals and newcomers alike expressing that they were “knowing their community better and better”, and that the diversity within the community was increasingly being celebrated.

“There really is a lot more “getting out of your own circle” now thanks to Welcoming Communities”.

Relationships between the Council and newcomers have strengthened

Councils are increasingly placing greater importance on the need to engage with newcomers, and to reflect their cultural and ethnic diversity. Stakeholders shared examples of subtle changes taking place, for example:

“We have changed the way we talk. We don’t say “this is a Chinese event”, or “this is a Filipino event”. We say “this is a community event”.

More broadly, Councils are working to change the language they use in a genuine effort to promote inclusion and ensure that migrant voices are visible in the work Council does. The attendance of Council staff at Welcoming Communities events provides opportunities for newcomers to speak directly with Council staff, who can offer guidance and advice, and also provide an opportunity to connect with someone new.

“Thanks to the increased relationships and connections with the Council, there has been a huge increase in cultural groups applying to the Council for funding”.



There is increased coordination between groups providing support to newcomers

Councils, community organisations, and cultural groups are increasingly working together to deliver activities and provide support for newcomers. Stakeholders lauded the “increasing synergies happening within the community” and attributed these successes to Welcoming Communities. The integrated approach to providing support was helping to minimise the duplication of effort, and maximise positive outcomes for newcomers and local residents.

Element 5: Economic Development, Business and Employment



The overarching outcome of this element is:

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.

Economic Development, Business and Employment has five sub-outcomes. These are:

- i Newcomers, including international students, are supported to access local employment information, services and networks.
- ii 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.
- iii 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.
- iv Local employers and workforces develop their intercultural competency.
- v Mutually beneficial connections and initiatives are set up with migrant business people by local business community and professional networks.

Examples of early Economic Development, Business and Employment outcomes

Business owners are aware of the importance of inclusiveness

The business community was identified in the *Interim Evaluation Report* as being less-engaged in Welcoming Communities than other areas of the community. However members of the business community are increasingly acknowledging the importance of diversity and inclusiveness, and the economic risks of newcomers feeling unwelcome. Employers have been hosting a range of diversity and cultural days in their offices, and promoting events which celebrate culture and diversity.



In addition, businesses across the pilot regions have been working to increase local employers' understanding of the needs of different workers (for example, the need to afford Muslim employees time for prayer).

International students are increasingly seen as vital to the community, bringing increased diversity to the community and as prospective employees

Councils are increasingly seeking to engage international students in the community. Interviewed stakeholders shared that there has been a significant increase in the number of international students engaging in volunteering and community activities, and that an increasing number of students want to extend their time in New Zealand or remain here after they have finished their education. Stakeholders attributed these shifts to international students feeling more welcome in their local communities, as a result of Welcoming Communities. Local businesses are also increasing their engagement with education providers and international students, realising that international students are a significant potential economic resource.

Survey respondents were asked whether businesses recognised the benefits brought by newcomers, and whether they provided support to welcoming initiatives as a result. Overall, 48 of 95 respondents agreed with the statement. Very few respondents disagreed (n=9/95) disagreed.

Figure 7: Businesses acknowledge the benefits brought by newcomers



Source: MartinJenkins' Welcoming Communities survey 2019

Stakeholders agreed that businesses are increasingly engaging with and supporting Welcoming Communities. Many participants felt that businesses acknowledged the economic risk of valued and skilled employees returning home or moving elsewhere due to being unable to settle or feel welcomed in New Zealand.



Element 6: Civic Engagement and Participation



The overarching outcome of this element is:

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

Civic Engagement and Participation has three sub-outcomes. These are:

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

Examples of early Civic Engagement and Participation outcomes

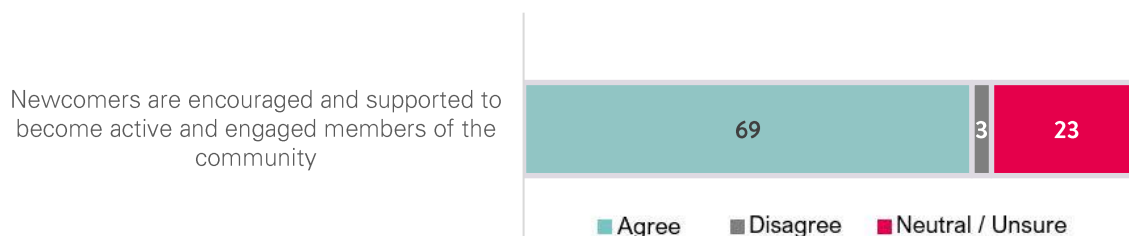
Newcomers are more confident in engaging with Council

As a result of targeted and deliberate engagement with newcomers by Councils, newcomer community groups have become more confident at engaging with Councils. Interviewed stakeholders reported a sharp increase in the number of community groups approaching the Council for information, support, and guidance:

"There has been an increase in confidence [in approaching Council], which is great to see. The local Sikh community approached Council and said 'we would value a temple in the community', and now they are working with the Council to make that happen".

Survey respondents were asked whether newcomers are encouraged and supported to become actively involved in the community. The majority of respondents (n=69/95) agreed that they are. Very few respondents disagreed (n=3/95) disagreed.

Figure 8: Newcomers are supported to engage in the community



Source: MartinJenkins' Welcoming Communities survey 2019



Elected members are engaging more regularly and effectively with newcomers

Stakeholders from newcomer communities are appreciative of the efforts made by their Councils to communicate and engage with newcomers. Councils have been “actively seeking opportunities to engage with communities”, with stakeholders noting that their communities felt an increased confidence to engage with Councils as well as an appreciation and respect that Councils deliberately engage with them.

“The Mayor is certainly more engaged in this space. [They] are seeking out newcomer voices and perspectives on different policies and proposed community changes”.



Case study: Christchurch mosque attacks

On 15 March 2019, terrorist attacks in Christchurch claimed the lives of 51 Muslim worshippers as they were gathered for prayer. A further 49 people were injured.

Over the course of the interviews for this stage of the evaluation, many people reflected on the impact the attacks had on their personal lives, their local communities, and how the Welcoming Communities programme had helped them to navigate the aftermath of the tragedy.

Many people felt that their communities were well-placed to react and respond to the attacks because Welcoming Communities had contributed to developing strong relationships across the community – “the programme has brought people from different backgrounds together, and through this friendships have formed”. The relationships built through Welcoming Communities have bolstered the resilience of the community to persevere through adversity and to continue to develop a welcoming and inclusive community that embraces difference and challenges bigotry. These relationships meant that people across the community reached out to one another, including their to Muslim friends, with offers of support. Across the pilot programme the Coordinators, Council staff, and community leaders were able to immediately reach out to the local imam to extended condolences and offers of support.

Those interviewed described the Christchurch attacks as a watershed moment: a turning-point in our history, with the attacks “shedding light on the problem of racism in New Zealand and bringing it to everyone’s attention”. Many people viewed the attacks as an opportunity to begin new conversations about diversity, inclusion and tolerance – “the attacks have brought many key issues and challenges to the surface that need to be addressed”. Welcoming Communities has helped locals to gain a deeper understanding of the many cultures in their communities, and the challenges they face in building relationships, feeling included, and freely displaying their cultures and religions.



Photo credit: Melonbob [CC BY-SA 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>)]



Element 7: Welcoming Public Spaces



The overarching outcome of this element is:

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

Welcoming Public Spaces has three sub-outcomes. These are:

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

Examples of early Welcoming Public Spaces outcomes

New and enhanced existing events are attracting newcomers to spend time in public spaces

A key way in which Councils are endeavouring to make public spaces more welcoming is through events. Councils have been increasing the number of culturally-centric events held in their communities, which also helps to make newcomers feel more welcome and promote public areas to newcomers and locals alike.

“We have a new ‘Discover our Parks’ promotion, which encourages families to explore our local outdoor areas and park resources”.

Newcomers are increasingly engaging in sports and outdoor activities

The promotion of local sports competitions has been another means of promoting outdoor areas and public spaces to newcomers, both to participate in activities and to connect with locals. Stakeholders noted that many newcomers have come from cultures in which sport is not a strong focus. Councils and local sporting organisations have been actively promoting engagement in sports (through local schools, and advisory group members who represent the sporting community) to encourage newcomer children to socialise. This has also had the effect of exposing newcomers to parks and recreation facilities. Interviewed stakeholders stated that they are seeing increasing diversity in school sports teams and social leagues, which is supporting increased interaction and engagement between newcomer families and members of receiving communities - for example, the introduction of women-only swimming pool sessions in Ashburton.



Element 8: Culture and Identity



The overarching outcome of this element is:

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.

Culture and Identity has two sub-outcomes. These are:

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

Examples of early Culture and Identity outcomes

Newcomers and locals are more confident to challenge ignorant and bigoted comments

Stakeholders shared that people in their communities are increasingly confident to challenge their friends and family members who made ignorant or bigoted comments. As one stakeholder noted:

“Welcoming Communities is helping to counter ignorance. Ignorance breeds fear, and we are working to overcome that”.

People were being challenged for making remarks about a person's physical appearance, their language skills, or their religious affiliations. This development – challenging bigotry and ignorance – was emphasised by stakeholders as having increased significantly following the terrorist attacks in Christchurch in March 2019.

“People are calling out their friends for making ignorant or racist comments – that is really hard to measure, but it is really important”.

There is increased sharing of culture between newcomers and locals

Stakeholders highlighted their local communities are becoming more proactive in engaging with different cultures and taking steps to reduce biases towards newcomers. Council staff have been participating in “unconscious bias” training, and offering these courses to others in the community. Locals and newcomers alike were increasingly engaging with te ao Māori, taking advantage of marae visits to explore tikanga and learn about the history of the area. Local Muslim communities are increasingly opening the doors of their mosques to the community, hosting open days to encourage local residents to explore the Muslim faith and help to combat stigma – for example, the “Turban Up” event held in Tauranga.



Stakeholders across the pilot programme emphasised that sharing cultures wasn't a matter of "typical Kiwis" learning about other cultures, but rather a blend of all cultures in the area coming together and wanting to learn about each other.

"There is a real genuine pride in our city about being a welcoming place for migrants, refugees and others coming to our city".

Newcomer groups are energised and supported to lead their own initiatives

Across the pilot, newcomer groups have increasingly been engaging with the Council to get support and advice to lead their own initiatives. Stakeholders attribute this increase in confidence to the efforts of the Welcoming Communities Coordinators in building the capability of community groups and "helping to demystify the Council – people who are new to New Zealand now have a much better understanding of what the Council does".

Newcomer groups have approached Councils with a range of requests and proposals, from seeking advice on establishing an incorporated society for the local Indian community, to help with funding applications for the local Tongan church band. This may indicate that Welcoming Communities has made these groups feel more confident and encouraged them to be proud of their culture, their religion, and their history in a new country.

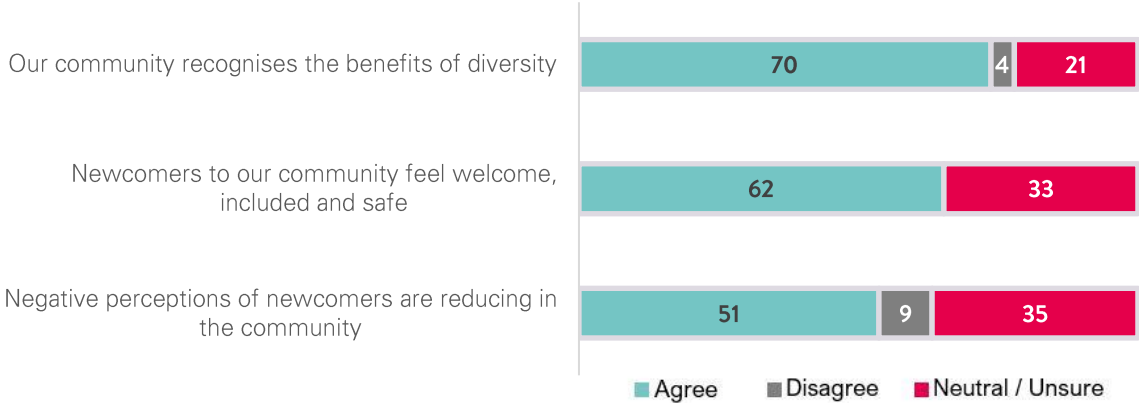
Overall, newcomers are being made to feel welcome in the community

Survey respondents were asked a series of questions regarding the perceptions of their community towards newcomers. The feedback was strongly positive, with respondents agreeing that newcomers are made to feel welcome, and that their community recognised the benefit of diversity:

- 70 out of 95 respondents agreed that their community recognises the benefits of diversity.
- 62 out of 95 respondents agreed that newcomers are made to feel welcome, included and safe. No respondents disagreed with this statement, however there were a large number of neutral and unsure responses.
- 51 out of 95 respondents agreed that negative perceptions of newcomers were decreasing. Very few respondents (n=9/95) disagreed with this statement, however there were a large number of neutral and unsure responses.



Figure 9: Newcomers and diversity are welcome in communities



Source: MartinJenkins' Welcoming Communities survey 2019



Case study: Katikati Festival of Cultures:

Western Bay of Plenty District Council

In June 2019 the inaugural Festival of Cultures was held in Katikati. The Festival was an opportunity for the community to learn about and celebrate the many cultures living in Katikati.

Approximately one-third of the 4,700 residents of Katikati were not born in New Zealand. The Festival was celebrated as being the first truly multicultural event held in the area, giving residents the chance to engage with the huge variety of cultures and languages present in Katikati.

Katikati is a popular destination for Recognised Seasonal Employees – people who come to Katikati, primarily from Pacific Island nations, to work in the fruit-picking industry. The Festival gave these workers the opportunity to showcase their culture to the people of Katikati, while also having the chance to experience other cultures. Representatives from the local marae gave a formal welcome at the Festival – many attendees expressed that this was their first time experiencing a waiata, as well as their first experience of a wero.

“The community has really got behind this event. They wanted an opportunity to come out and learn about and celebrate the different cultures that live in Katikati”.

More than 30 cultures were represented at the Festival. In support of the event local businesses put up window displays on the topic of diversity, and local schools produced cultural art displays. The Festival organising committee expressed their gratitude for the chance to work with a range of different community and cultural groups, to demonstrate the immense diversity of the area.



Inclusive Leadership



Economic Development, Business and Employment



Welcoming Public Spaces



Culture and Identity



Suggested activities for future Councils

Stakeholders were asked to provide ideas for policies, services, programmes and activities which Councils new to the programme could consider for their Welcoming Plans.

Stakeholders gave the following suggestions:

- establish a community garden at which people can volunteer
- hold community sporting events
- host events to showcase different cultures (such as Festival of Cultures)
- hold classes to educate newcomers about Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- highlight organisations and businesses that are role-modelling welcoming behaviour
- work with schools to engage youth in welcoming activities
- hold street-food events to showcase culture and cuisine
- hold language-based events to showcase different languages
- create and promote a single point of contact for resources and information (such as the local library)
- hold classes to teach newcomers about local history
- develop “welcome to town” packs with local information and guidance
- hold sessions to introduce newcomers to Māori culture
- develop material on local information, activities and support services and place them at communal locations around town
- provide ongoing communication targeted at newcomers, to keep them informed of what is happening in the community.



LESSONS LEARNED: ADVICE FOR FUTURE COUNCILS

The pilot programme has produced a range of lessons for future Councils joining the welcoming network. Welcoming Communities pilot programme stakeholders were asked for lessons they had learned to date regarding the establishment, development, and implementation of the programme. The intention of these lessons is to support and guide prospective new Councils joining the programme, to make their experience as streamlined as possible.



This section provides a summary of the lessons shared by pilot programme stakeholders (in no preferential order). Lessons have been grouped under three broad headings:

- Lessons related to community engagement in the programme
- Lessons related to key components of the Welcoming Communities programme
- Lessons related to Council engagement in the programme

“This programme needs a combination of top-down and bottom-up to succeed – Council and community both need to do their part”.

Community engagement in the programme

Community groups and networks are essential to the success of the programme

Many communities have existing networks that are supporting the development of welcoming and inclusive communities. It is beneficial for the programme to engage with these networks and leverage the knowledge and expertise they have in this space. Local Settlement Networks (LSNs), for example, operate in many regions across New Zealand. LSNs have been set up by and/or supported by INZ’s Relationship Managers.

LSNs are an umbrella under which agencies and organisations can collaborate, interact on issues, share information, and develop solutions to strengthen migrant settlement. Organisations that operate within LSNs include settlement services, migrant organisations, local employers, government services, and local authorities.

The stocktake process helps Councils to identify the existing groups in the community, that are working towards the same goals as Welcoming Communities. Once these community groups and networks have been identified, it is essential to draw on these connections for the benefit of the



programme: rather than duplicating their efforts, Welcoming Communities needs to build and maintain relationships with these groups and leverage the existing good works being done in the community.



“It has been important to forge meaningful relationships across the community, and seek ways to work together to create something new and exciting that wouldn’t have happened otherwise”.

The programme needs to maximise engagement with all areas of the community

The need to maximise engagement with newcomer communities is a key lesson for new Councils. Stakeholders acknowledged that despite their best efforts to reach different groups within the community, they had not always been successful.

One example is that there may be multiple “communities” within one community. For instance, there may not be a single point of contact for the “Indian community” but rather several key contacts – Councils need to take care to ensure they have engaged with the entire community and not one component of a wider community.

The need to explore different ways of engaging different groups was highlighted as a key lesson – for example, going into churches to discuss and promote the programme may increase engagement from the Pasifika community. LSNs, for example, will be well-placed to facilitate introductions to newcomer groups and to promote the Welcoming Communities programme to their members.

A component of this engagement is emphasising that Welcoming Communities is targeted towards a broad range of groups. Some stakeholders reported that a number of migrant communities felt “left out” of the programme because they had been in New Zealand for several years and did not consider themselves as “newcomers”. It is important that programme representatives promote the programme to a wide range of groups and encourage participation from everyone in the community - regardless of how long they have lived in New Zealand.

In addition to encouraging newcomers and migrants to engage in the programme, it is important for the programme team to continually promote Welcoming Communities to local residents and encourage them to contribute to the programme. Events such as a Festival of Cultures and Multicultural March are examples of ways in which locals can engage in the programme and contribute to an inclusive and welcoming community.



Key components of the Welcoming Communities programme



The role of the Welcoming Communities Coordinator is essential to the programme

The Coordinators are essential to the success of the programme. Stakeholders emphasised the importance of having a full-time, dedicated person filling the role of Coordinator: this provides community groups and newcomers with a single point of contact with whom to engage, while also functioning as the key conduit from Council to the community and newcomers.

“Without the Coordinator, nothing would get done. The Coordinator and the Council need to get things to 75% before community groups can deliver the other 25%”.

It is important for the success of the programme that the programme, led by the Coordinator, is viewed through a long-term and strategic lens: ensuring that funding and resourcing is secured, that the Coordinator has both the necessary operational and strategic skills, and that there is a long-term vision for the programme.

Viewing Welcoming Communities through a strategic lens is necessary to ensure that the overarching programme outcomes are achieved. Stakeholders emphasised that, while the programme can demonstrate progress towards certain outcomes in the short-term, the “degree of societal change we are working towards will take longer than a three- or five-year plan”. Developing and maintaining a strategic, long-term approach to Welcoming Communities will maximise the success of the programme for new Councils.

Events are a vital component of the programme

Community events have proven to be the most successful means of promoting Welcoming Communities and maximising interactions and connections between newcomers and the receiving community. Stakeholders singled-out community events as the ideal vehicle to showcase the multitude of different cultures within communities and encourage newcomers and local residents to be proud of and display their cultures.

“Putting on events and activities encourages people to get out in the community, to engage, and to make the most of public spaces”.



As the programme evolves, it is important for the Coordinator and Council to help communities to undertake their own activities and events. Feedback from stakeholders shows that community groups have been nervous or reluctant to approach the Council directly, due to uncertainty about who to speak with or distrust of local authorities. As the Welcoming Communities programme has become more established and newcomers are increasingly socialising with locals and the Council, their community groups have become more confident in approaching the Council directly for support to run their own events. This is an important step in the life of the programme and demonstrates the confidence of newcomers to engage with Council and to proudly showcase their culture and identity to their local community.



Get the right combination of people on the advisory group

The advisory group plays a central role in the programme. They help to socialise the programme, as well as “doing the doing” and supporting the Coordinator.

Advisory group members need to have mana and established networks and relationships in the community. Advisory group members need to activate their networks and encourage the community to support and engage with Welcoming Communities. To that end it is important to have a diverse range of stakeholders represented on the advisory group – newcomers, cultural and ethnic groups, LSNs, support groups, iwi, Council, sports organisations, business groups – each of which brings a unique perspective and facilitates engagement with different parts of the community.

It is also important to emphasise that the advisory groups are not governance-focused or ‘hands-off’. The advisory groups need to function as working groups, supporting the Coordinator and ‘rolling up their sleeves’ to establish, develop and implement the programme, and take actions towards achieving the intended outcomes of the programme – it is not for the Coordinator to do all of the work.

Stakeholders also emphasised the importance of proactively engaging with iwi. The Councils have experienced varying degrees of success in engaging iwi at the beginning of the pilot due to iwi organisations having limited capacity to undertake additional work. However over time, as the programme has become more embedded in the community, iwi have begun to take a stronger role in the programme and helped to lead and deliver Welcoming Plan activities across the regions.

The stocktake process is essential to the success of the programme

The stocktake is a comprehensive assessment of “current policies, services, programmes and activities⁸,” primarily those which relate to newcomer settlement and cultural diversity. This process is fundamental to developing the Welcoming Plan. Stakeholders all expressed surprise at the number of activities and cultural groups already present in their community, many of which the Council did not know existed. It is important that Councils do not undervalue the importance of a comprehensive stocktake and invest the necessary time and resources to make it a success. Of particular importance is avoiding duplicating work already being undertaken in the community, by clearly identifying the existing roles and responsibilities of different groups within the community. The stocktake also

⁸ Putting out the Welcome Mat, p.5



provides an excellent opportunity to recognise and acknowledge those policies, services, programmes and activities which are working well.

“It is really important to get a robust understanding of what work is already underway in the community, and make sure we utilise existing networks and relationships”.

Council engagement in the programme

Identify key programme “champions”

Stakeholders agree that having dedicated and supportive “programme champions” among Councillors and community leaders is essential to the success of Welcoming Communities. Identifying Councillors and community leaders with a passion for supporting newcomers, with the requisite strategic and people skills to bring others along on the journey, helps to build the credibility of the programme both within Council and the wider community.

Securing champions on the Council can also help the programme to withstand political change. Stakeholders emphasised the risk that an election can pose to the programme – the risk that, despite a legacy of good work, the programme may be deprioritised due to internal Council politics. Strong foundations need to be established to ensure that elected officials understand the importance of the programme, and they in turn can explain this to their communities.

“The momentum of this programme can build, but then there is an election and it gets put on the backburner. We need to be careful of that”.

Securing the support of the Mayor is critical for the longevity of the programme: Mayors need to weigh-up competing priorities for Council spending and make decisions about which programmes to support. To generate support for the long-term funding of the programme, Mayor’s need to communicate the benefits of the programme to ratepayers.

In addition to identifying specific champions of the programme, the programme team needs to engender real support and commitment from both elected members and Council officials. INZ needs to have robust conversations with prospective new Councils in advance of a Council agreeing to participate in the programme. Both elected members and staff need to understand the responsibilities and obligations of participating in the Welcoming Communities programme, including “the need to provide real material resources and support to ensure the success of the programme”.



“Change doesn’t happen overnight. We won’t have miracles. For the programme to last we need full support from the Council”.



Stakeholders stated that securing this degree of support from the Council will expedite the approval of their Welcoming Plans. Some participants expressed concern at the way in which some members of their Council viewed the plan: “some view it as a fluffy, ‘community’ project – but it needs to have the status and importance of every other Plan the Council develops”. The buy-in of senior leadership members was highlighted as important in this regard, as it is their responsibility to present the Welcoming Plan to Council for their approval.

Within the context of securing Council support is the question of ‘where should the programme be housed’? Stakeholders emphasised the importance of finding the correct ‘home’ for the programme within Council – ideally a Community Development Team, or similar. If a Council does not have a comparable team they need to identify the best place for the programme to sit - somewhere with ample support for the Coordinator, and access to additional community knowledge and information.

Conversations about resourcing and funding need to start early

A key lesson for prospective Councils is to take a long-term view regarding programme funding. The seed funding provided over three years by INZ is intended to help Councils to establish and develop their programmes; however, Councils need to take responsibility for the longer-term funding and resourcing of the programme. Stakeholders highlighted the risk to the programme of taking a year-by-year approach to funding – this results in a lack of programme stability and the surety of the Coordinator position. Stakeholders emphasised that the timing of funding requests is important - “it is much easier to get a project in at the start of the Long-Term Plan process than trying to get funding through subsequent Annual Plans”. In starting conversations with prospective Councils as early as possible, it is more likely that Welcoming Communities will be listed in the Long-Term Plan and reduce the uncertainty of ongoing programme funding.

“This programme is full of, and generates, great ideas for events and activities to connect the community. But if the funding isn’t secure, it becomes very difficult”.

