Welcoming Communities Hui

Summary of Feedback – Whakatipu

JUNE 2022

QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL

Welcoming Communities
TE WAHAROA KI NGĀ HAPORI

A COMMITTED WELCOMING COMMUNITY

Welcoming Communities Hui engagement and insights

In June 2022, Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) hosted a Welcoming Communities Hui at the Queenstown Events Centre. There was fantastic turnout with over 130 people attending including iwi, newcomer group representatives, key stakeholder managers and leaders, along with elected members and QLDC staff. The group came together to listen, learn and share ways to support newcomers feel welcome and able to participate in the economic, civic, cultural and social life of the district.

As an icebreaker exercise the whole group was asked the question "What has made you feel welcome in this community?"
A snapshot of some of the comments that were shared are displayed on page 7.

The group was split into sub-groups of around 6 people and given two questions to discuss.
The questions were based around the eight outcome areas of the Welcoming Communities programme which include:

* Inclusive Leadership
* Welcoming Communications
* Equitable Access
* Connected and Inclusive Communities
* Economic Development, Business and Employment
* Civic Engagement and Participation
* Welcoming Public Spaces
* Culture and Identity

We share a summary of the key ideas collated from each question on pages 3-5, and top themes to emerge from the workshop discussion on page 6.

Inclusive Leadership

Workshop question

How can community leaders help to improve inclusiveness, respect and acceptance?

Key ideas

* Offer different language speakers at agencies and Council to link to their community.

* Introduce programmes on inclusiveness, respect and diversity into local schools that are student led.

* Training programmes to upskill and apply knowledge e.g., how to lead effectively.

* Wider understanding of local iwi, tangata whenua and Te Tiriti o Waitangi responsibilities.

* Work alongside group leaders to understand the culture and where the needs are e.g., employment, health, advocacy, student support, accommodation.

* Provide opportunities for role modelling and mentoring.

* Wide range networking to connect other community groups between regions and districts to learn and share.

* To give a voice and greater visibility to marginalised 'invisible' workers to make them feel valued e.g., cleaners that have low-skills and/or low-pay.

Welcoming Communications

Workshop question

What would help newcomers access information to connect them with the community?

Key ideas

* Support with social media e.g., Facebook, Queenstown Trading, Queenstown App, Tik Tok.

* Sharing information on free local Media & Digital channels e.g., Lakes Weekly Bulletin, Mountain Scene.

* Create Information Hubs e.g., at airport and library that offer community info tailored to newcomers and migrant groups.

* Database/directory of services e.g., health, employment, free advice, community groups, wellbeing programmes, consulates, etc.

* Online calendar – A central place that provides notifications on cultural/sporting activities and events (large and small scale) each month that's free to access and promote.

* Offer translation services in different languages e.g., Welcome signage displayed in a variety of languages, Info signage QR coded.

* Digital tools and programmes e.g., provided once a visa is confirmed, newcomer guides and profile booklets, Welcoming Communities podcast.

* Welcome Hub facility that is visible and accessible e.g., has physical presence, child friendly and colourful, diverse staff/volunteers giving information such as public transport maps, how to join library etc.

Equitable Access

Workshop question

How can we improve how newcomers access services and activities?

Key ideas

✱ Share information that clearly communicates what is available and involved in the activity or programme e.g., clubs, sports, volunteering.

✱ Toolkits to be made available in multiple languages – these could be provided once Visa approved.

✱ Welcome platform/hub where newcomers can register and access group contacts, database etc.

✱ Common pōwhiri to welcome newcomers followed by info sessions.

✱ International EXPO at schools with community group presence.

✱ Community clinics supporting more needy non-eligible persons.

✱ Advertise how/where to access services or activities through different mediums - social media, newspapers, community noticeboards, pamphlet drops at places they frequent like medical centres, hostels etc.

✱ Introduce services to help settle and connect. Give assistance if struggling in an area e.g., refer to relevant agency/groups'.

Connected and Inclusive Communities

Workshop question

How can we support newcomers to feel part of the community?

Key ideas

✱ Create Buddy Programme 'I am here to help' for newcomers led by local volunteers across district for first 6 months. Regular check in to make sure they are okay.

✱ How do we identify 'Newcomers'? Registration programmes within the community for newcomers e.g., use schools to distribute information to newly arrived families.

✱ Create welcoming communities support group with nominated Ambassadors from each migrant group.

✱ Celebrate and promote International Days such as "Day of Random Kindness" and "Race Relations Day" as a way to connect.

✱ Returnees through to newcomers– connecting to create circular relationships, e.g., returnee Kiwi teaching English to migrants.

✱ Challenge 'locals' to learn key phrases in other languages – even just 'Hello'.

✱ Ability to bring interpreters to key meetings, e.g., bank, medical clinic, school.

✱ Opportunities to connect and share e.g., sporting and cultural events, get to know you evenings, information available on groups and agencies at libraries, churches, airport etc.

Economic Development, Business & Employment

Workshop question

How can we better support newcomer business owners and migrant workers?

Key ideas

* Business Hub with various relevant agencies, e.g., Heartland Services, business start-up coordinators & resources.

* Employer incentives for employees to engage in civic events/duties and volunteering opportunities to upskill in workplace.

* Improve accessibility of information by migrant small to medium enterprises (SMEs), e.g., free business courses.

* Mentoring Programme to support with developing business plans and other, e.g., COVID resilience, business word of mouth.

* Ask Queenstown to clear their garage of unused bikes to donate to newcomers that have little access to transport to commute to work.

* More funding for mental health support for employers & employees e.g., a remote workers support group.

* Company consolidation and encouraging businesses to work together e.g., Create co-op model of shared admin staff for SMEs.

* Language and cultural support such as Free Language Coffee Club, Paid time off work to take English language classes, time off to attend cultural celebrations e.g., Eid, Diwali.

Civic Engagement and Participation

Workshop question

How can we support newcomers to take part in democratic processes and community projects?

Key ideas

* Council Open Day, Meet & Greet with elected members and the Mayor, regular meetings with community and Council. Greater visibility of elected members at events, making speeches.

* Find new ways to engage with the community, e.g., Council-led 'BBQ in the Park', free events.

* Community groups actively coordinating with the council for upcoming activities to inform the newcomers about them.

* Media campaigns showing/encouraging ALL people to participate including newcomers e.g., communicate the benefit for the individual and how they can influence decisions. Raise awareness on the importance of providing feedback to reflect diversity and wider needs of district.

* Offer incentives to participate in surveys and provide feedback using the "right channels" e.g., key community influencers through ethnic groups in your directory.

* Info sessions on how to vote and how to stand for Councillor/Mayor.

* Improved engagement platform, e.g., adapt online submission system to be more inclusive and easy to use, provide a video booth at Events Centre where people can drop in and talk about what their issues are/what they think of a project etc.

* Wider representation in local Councils and central government agencies to include different ethnicities, youth etc.

Welcoming Public Spaces

Workshop question

How can our shared spaces better reflect diversity and create a sense of community?

Key ideas

✽ Create accessible 'living spaces' to enjoy with food/fruit trees and plants, community gardens etc.

✽ Provide more facilities to support community needs such as community kitchen, breastfeeding areas, toilet facility for gender free/family friendly and BBQ spots.

✽ Share information about public spaces available e.g., organise free tours/ roam around town for newcomers.

✽ Creating a culture of openness, acceptance and inclusivity- no tolerance culture for discrimination/hate – community stands up for one another.

✽ Better bus system and transfer zones to reach outlying areas along with facilities e.g., well lit, good pathways and shelter, on active travel route, space on bus for sports equipment.

✽ Art installations and LED signs that change to communicate in different languages.

✽ Support community safety such as places for young people or those without children to gather, Māori wardens and guardians on street at night.

✽ Multicultural spaces and venues that support inclusivity and are free for community group use.

Culture and Identity

Workshop question

What can our community do to increase understanding and appreciation of different cultures?

Key ideas

✽ Celebrate culture and identity at schools. Educate about newcomers and different cultures e.g., Pasifika Culture Day.

✽ Funding to art organisations to support the provision of free workshops, classes and art exhibitions, public art galleries.

✽ Cultural training in the workplace to be more common and not just learning pepeha. Inclusive of different cultures. Not tick box training.

✽ Multi-ethnic musical shows and festivals where we can involve different songs, prayers, cultural instruments, food, fashion to bring all communities together as one.

✽ Newcomers join 'unexpected' groups, e.g., Sikh community and QMBC (Queenstown Mountain Bike Club).

✽ Opportunities to gather and socialise e.g., Cross-cultural speed dating nights, community quiz nights, sporting activites.

✽ Ethnic cultures to be more visible so the wider community knows different cultures e.g., language weeks, cultural nights, religious gathering places, local news stories.

✽ Buddy Programme for culture, e.g., food, writing, language.

Summary of key themes

Inclusive Leadership

Greater awareness and guidance on how diversity, equity and inclusion of minority groups can be part of everyday practices e.g., at home, workplace and schools.

A greater understanding of and more access to Te Reo Māori with classes and tikanga (customs and values) training so traditions can be respected and woven into community life, activities and events e.g., pōwhiri (Māori welcoming ceremony) and karakia (Māori prayer).

Welcoming Communications

Provide easy to access information using social media and digital channels to connect communities and help promote activities e.g., Communication hubs with links to local website/Facebook sites, publications and online events calendar.

Equitable Access

More opportunities to support language e.g., affordable English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes, access to translation and interpreting services, and signage.

Connected and Inclusive Communities

Host information sessions and training programmes that help newcomers settle in the district and provides advocacy support.

Economic Development, Business and Employment

Support migrant business owners and employers with incentive schemes and mentoring opportunities that benefit both the employer and employee.

Civic Engagement and Participation

Improved access and engagement with Council and elected members to support understanding of roles, civic participation and relationship building.

Welcoming Public Spaces

Create safe, accessible, welcoming public spaces with a focus on cultural inclusivity e.g., venue spaces, community gardens and transport transfer zones.

Culture and Identity

A strong desire to showcase our diverse cultures through multicultural celebrations, international food festivals and sporting events.

Greater support and funding for the arts to help bring communities together through shared experiences by showcasing different cultures such as music gigs, storytelling, community art projects, workshops and exhibitions.

What has made you feel welcome in this community?

Hearing Kia ora and Mōrena as first greetings

Connecting with Super Rugby Team Moana Pasifika

Taking part in LUMA festival

Joining Parkrun

Local encouragement and a friendly smile

Mums' walking group

Jumping in the lake with people for Whakatipu Wake up winter

Meeting like-minded people of same age and interests

Good conversations with strangers over a few drinks

The feeling that I could sit by the lake and look at the view for hours

I was invited to a birthday party

People saying hello on the streets

The Library

Attending community events and fairs

English lessons offered by a retired Kiwi for free

Retail staff and bartenders were friendly and welcoming

Work colleagues helped me know more about the diversity of the community living here Being able to buy food from my country of origin

Sports clubs and shared love of the outdoors and adventure

The lack of connection was the catalyst to start a group to welcome future newcomers

Church and faith-based groups

Mayor Jim Boult's welcome speech at my citizenship ceremony

Being in a multicultural destination with wide acceptances of cultures

Seeing people from my own culture and ethnicity

People being patient with English as second language speakers

Thanks for joining us!