

Queenstown Lakes District

Welcoming Communities Impact Story

Year in Review 2025/2026



QLDC is pleased to share this snapshot of achievements from the second year (July 2025–June 2026) of the three-year

📌 Queenstown Lakes District Welcoming Plan 2024–2027.

Through the Welcoming Communities programme, we're working alongside our partners to create a district where newcomers feel welcomed, valued, and connected from the moment they arrive.

Whether someone has moved here from another country, another region of New Zealand, or is arriving to study, work, or raise a family, we want Queenstown Lakes to be a place where everyone feels they belong.

This year has seen us build on the foundations established in year one, with more partnerships, projects, and opportunities helping to bring the Welcoming Plan to life.

While there is still more to do, we are encouraged by the progress made and the collective commitment of our community to creating a district that is welcoming, inclusive, and connected.

Alongside delivering local initiatives, QLDC continued to work with Immigration New Zealand, government agencies, tourism organisations, and other councils to help strengthen Welcoming Communities across Aotearoa New Zealand. These partnerships created opportunities to share local experiences, advocate for the needs of migrant and ethnic communities, and ensure newcomer perspectives were reflected in wider planning and decision-making. This collaboration helps support more welcoming, inclusive, and connected communities both locally and nationally. We extend our sincere thanks to all those who have contributed to this work over the past year.

Community partners

- » Baskets of Blessing
- » Bhartiya Samaj Queenstown
- » Central Lakes Trust
- » Central Otago REAP
- » Citizens Advice Bureau
- » Community Link Upper Clutha
- » Destination Queenstown & Lake Wānaka Tourism
- » Dovetail
- » Emergency Management Otago
- » Grow Wānaka
- » Happiness House
- » Headlight Trust
- » huddl
- » Ikatan Masyarakat Indonesia di Queenstown
- » Immigration New Zealand
- » Japanese Family Society of Queenstown
- » Korean Association of Queenstown
- » Lakes Multicultural Collective
- » Latinos for New Zealand Charitable Trust
- » Mana Tāhuna
- » Mīharo
- » Ministry for Ethnic Communities
- » MyFundAction New Zealand
- » New Zealand Red Cross
- » Queenstown Association of Migrant Pinoys Inc.
- » Queenstown Business Chamber
- » Queenstown Chinese Community Association
- » Queenstown Fijian Community Charitable Trust
- » Queenstown Islamic Centre
- » Queenstown Malaysian Group
- » Queenstown Multicultural Festival Trust
- » Queenstown Nepalese Society Incorporated
- » Queenstown Taiwanese Community
- » Remarkables Primary School
- » Southern Lakes Jewish Community
- » Southern REAP
- » Sri Lankan Association of Queenstown
- » Sport Otago
- » Startup Queenstown Lakes
- » Tangata Tiriti - Treaty People
- » Te Atamira
- » Te Kāhano Aotearoa Trust
- » Te Kura Whakatipu o Kawarau Primary School
- » ThinkPlace New Zealand
- » Three Lakes Cultural Trust
- » Wakatipu High School
- » Wānaka Business Chamber
- » Wānaka Community Hub
- » Wānaka Primary School
- » WAO
- » Wastebusters
- » Whakatipu Reforestation Trust

QLDC internal partners

- » Alpine Aqualand
- » Alpine Health & Fitness
- » Climate Action
- » Communications and Engagement
- » Community Partnerships
- » Corporate Services - Citizenship Ceremonies
- » Democracy Services
- » Economic Futures
- » Environmental Health
- » Libraries
- » Parks and Reserves
- » People & Capability
- » Roding - Property and Infrastructure
- » Sport and Recreation
- » Strategy & Policy
- » Waste Minimisation - Property and Infrastructure

**Thank you
to all our awesome
partners!**

Establishing a Welcoming Community

Two milestones mark the foundation of a Welcoming Community: developing and publishing the [Queenstown Lakes District Welcoming Plan 2024-2027](#) and progressing to the next stage of accreditation based on the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) Welcoming Communities Accreditation Model.

The Welcoming Communities programme is aligned with QLDC's wellbeing outcomes as follows:

» COMMUNITY » Belonging & Identity

Empowering culturally diverse groups to be visible and celebrated. Through cultural performances, kai sharing and culture activities, the programme promotes cultural exchange and understanding, empowering individuals to express their identity and heritage proudly.

» COMMUNITY » Connected Communities

Creating shared spaces for interaction and social cohesion and to build resilience. Multicultural events provide a platform for community members to come together, interact, and build connections, enhancing the sense of belonging and unity within the community.

» COMMUNITY » Participation and Governance

Engaging the community in its planning, organisation and execution, creating a culture of inclusivity and participation. Through volunteerism, cultural contributions and feedback mechanisms, it empowers individuals, instilling a sense of ownership in community initiatives and promoting democratic governance.

» PEOPLE » Healthy & Fulfilled People

Providing, supporting and advocating for equitable access to groups and services, including creative, sport, business, health and social sector, and promoting wellbeing through inclusive celebrations and cultural pride.



How our commitment is recognised

The Welcoming Communities Accreditation Model¹ recognises the progress made by Council and community partners in creating a district where newcomers feel welcomed, included, and able to participate in community life. Accreditation provides an opportunity to celebrate achievements, reflect on what is working well, and identify new ways to strengthen welcoming and inclusive communities.

Queenstown Lakes District currently holds **Established Welcoming Community** accreditation. This accreditation is valid for up to three years, after which Council and community partners can apply to renew their accreditation or progress to the next level.



» What does it take to become an **Advanced Welcoming Community**?

The table below outlines some key differences between an **Established Welcoming Community** (Stage 2) and an **Advanced Welcoming Community** (Stage 3).

An Established Welcoming Community:

- » Has a clear vision and goals for creating a welcoming community.
- » Has a Welcoming Plan in place and has begun implementing activities.
- » Has strong systems in place to support and track Welcoming Communities activities.
- » Works with community partners to promote and deliver Welcoming Communities initiatives.
- » Supports community organisations to contribute to Welcoming Plan activities.

An Advanced Welcoming Community:

- » Continues to review, strengthen, and expand its Welcoming Plan and activities.
- » Has welcoming initiatives well established and explores innovative ways to support newcomers and community participation.
- » Embeds the presence and involvement of tangata whenua in ways determined by tangata whenua.
- » Monitors and measures outcomes to better understand community impact.
- » Has community partners leading and implementing aspects of the Welcoming Plan alongside Council.

¹ Detailed explanation of accreditation: <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/our-strategies-and-programmes/supporting-refugees-and-asylum-seekers/welcoming-communities/getting-accredited-as-a-welcoming-community/>

Highlights – The Numbers

574

people welcomed
as new citizens
of Aotearoa
New Zealand



21

cultural celebrations
held across
the district



34

migrant women
participated in
First Splash: Swim
with confidence
programme



23

Welcoming
Week activities
delivered across
the district



65

migrants and
newcomers
attended emergency
preparedness
sessions



3,000

attendees and

66

volunteers at
the Queenstown
Multicultural Festival



53

business sector
participants attended
intercultural
awareness sessions



123

migrants received
immigration advice
and support through
Community Link



28

migrants
participated in
Te Tiriti o Waitangi
workshops



50

attendees and

24

stallholders at Wānaka
Welcoming Day



208

ESOL teaching
hours across
the district

1,464

views of the
Newcomers Guide
webpage



Celebrating our achievements

The information on the following pages provides snapshots of the achievements, initiatives, and partnerships delivered over the past year by community organisations, volunteers, and QLDC. Together, these initiatives help strengthen belonging, connection, participation, and inclusion across the Queenstown Lakes District. See the Appendix for details on how each initiative contributes to the outcomes and actions of the 📌 [Queenstown Lakes District Welcoming Plan 2024–2027](#).

Affirming diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in the workplace

QLDC champions diversity in all its forms, recognising that it encompasses race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, abilities, religious beliefs, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Leaders are provided with education, policies, tools and resources that enable inclusive leadership practices and help foster psychologically safe and inclusive workplaces. Employees also have access to a growing range of learning opportunities and resources that build awareness, understanding and capability across key DEI and cultural competency areas.

What's the impact?

- » 123 employees completed Unconscious Bias training.
- » 88 employees completed Neurodiversity Awareness training.
- » 40 employees attended Disability Confidence and Inclusion training.
- » 30 employees completed Inclusive Hiring training.
- » 12 employees completed Rainbow Awareness training.
- » QLDC is a member of Pride Pledge and New Zealand Disability Employers' Network.
- » Staff participated in organisation-wide initiatives including Pink Shirt Day, Winter Pride, Diwali, Ramadan, and Matariki, helping foster understanding, connection, and belonging.

Who's involved: QLDC People & Capability

PROUD TO BE QLDC YOU & ME

**At QLDC, we are an organisation
that is committed to fostering
a culture of respect, inclusion,
and diversity in everything we do.**

We believe embracing all backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences within our community is a strength and a fundamental expression of our values. We champion diversity in all its forms, recognising that it encompasses race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, abilities, religious beliefs, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Equity stands as a guiding principle within QLDC, vital for fostering an environment where every voice is valued and everyone has equal opportunity to thrive.

We are committed to a strong and meaningful partnership with iwi Māori and honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

These commitments extend to our employees, residents, visitors, partners, and all those who engage with us. As a safe space for everyone, misinformation, swearing, hate speech, threatening, offensive or defamatory behaviour and attacks on any groups or individuals (including Council employees) will not be tolerated.

You might not always agree but please respect others and their right to have opinions and beliefs that differ from yours.

NAKU TE ROUROU, NAU TE ROUROU. KA ORA AI TE IWI
WITH YOUR FOOD BASKET AND MY FOOD BASKET THE PEOPLE WILL THRIVE



Pillar 1

Inclusive
Leadership

Strengthening local identity and sense of belonging

The 📍 **citizenship ceremonies** mark a formal welcome into the community, enhancing the sense of belonging of the new citizens. It is often a moment of emotional significance symbolising the culmination of a long journey -migration, settlement, and integration.

What's the impact?

- » New citizens to Aotearoa New Zealand gain full rights to vote, stand for office, and take part in democratic processes, helping ensure diverse voices are represented in decision-making.
- » Citizenship ceremonies provide a formal welcome into the community, helping people feel recognised, valued, and connected to their new home.
- » The ceremonies strengthen newcomers' sense of belonging and identity, marking an important milestone in their settlement journey.
- » A total of 574 people were welcomed as new citizens of Aotearoa New Zealand through six citizenship ceremonies held across the district. Four ceremonies were held in Queenstown and two in Wānaka.

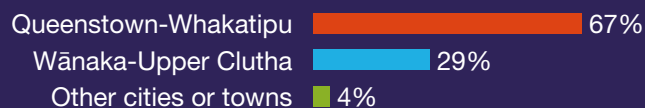
Who's involved: QLDC Corporate Services

Pillar 1

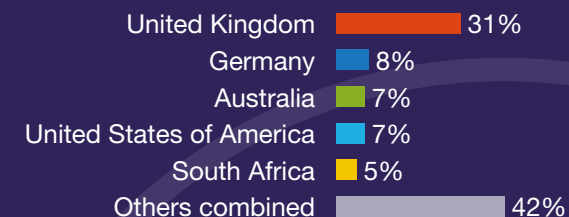
Inclusive
Leadership



Place of residence



Top five nationalities



Developing Māori capability

QLDC is committed to strengthening understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Te Ao Māori across the organisation.

What's the impact?

- » Delivery of Te Tiriti o Waitangi workshops.
- » Ongoing support and leadership from the Manu Taki Group, helping build cultural capability and confidence across the organisation.
- » Access to online Te Ao Māori learning resources available to all employees.
- » Support QLDC Waiata rōpu.
- » Hold mihi whakatau at all staff inductions.
- » Implementation of te reo Māori in all council communications, policies and papers.
- » Coordination and participation in celebrations throughout the year.

Pillar 1

Inclusive
Leadership

Working with Iwi

Working in partnership with mana whenua (Kāi Tahu), creates positive outcomes for QLDC that align with both statutory responsibilities and wider community goals.

QLDC is committed to meaningful partnership with mana whenua and ensures decision-making reflects Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles.

What's the impact?

- » Providing input on long term strategies.
- » Iwi representation on various work programmes and projects.
- » Mana to mana meetings between elected members and Iwi leaders.
- » Participation of mana whenua at openings of projects and events.
- » Shared delivery on Māori events.

Pillar 1

Inclusive
Leadership

Embedding Welcoming Communities in Wānaka-Upper Clutha

Community Link Upper Clutha, based at the Wānaka Community Hub, plays an important role in helping make Wānaka-Upper Clutha a welcoming and inclusive place for both permanent and temporary residents. The organisation supports the settlement of newcomers and migrants by coordinating immigration clinics and helping them feel connected, informed, and confident in accessing local services and opportunities.

What's the impact?

- » Wānaka Welcoming Day saw around 50 participants and 24 stallholders providing useful and interactive information to newcomers and long-established residents, helping create a welcoming and inclusive environment.
- » 123 immigration support queries were responded to, highlighting the ongoing need for accessible, locally based immigration information and referral support.
- » 74 of 298 clients who identified as migrants received wellbeing services support, helping them access the assistance they need to settle and thrive in the community.

Who's involved: 📍 **Community Link Upper Clutha** (supported by Central Lakes Trust)

"It was a really great event and a good turnout on a cold rainy day! Thank you for organising Welcoming Day and I look forward to seeing where this goes in the future."

Stallholder at Wānaka Welcoming Day



Pillar 1

Inclusive Leadership

Pillar 4

Connected and inclusive communities



Celebrating community voices

Four storytelling videos were developed featuring migrants and community members from diverse backgrounds, sharing their personal journeys, experiences, and contributions to the Queenstown Lakes District.

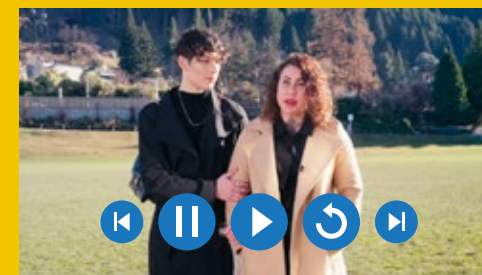
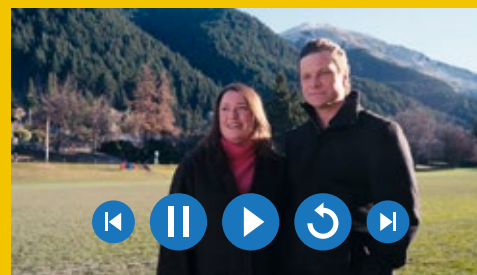
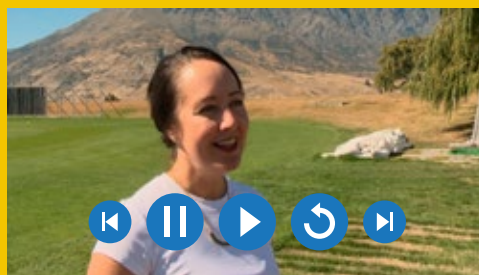
What's the impact?

- » Helps build understanding, empathy, and a greater sense of connection across our diverse community.
- » Gives visibility to the experiences and contributions of migrants, helping newcomers feel seen, valued, and welcomed.

Who's involved? QLDC Communications and Engagement

Pillar 2

Welcoming
Communications



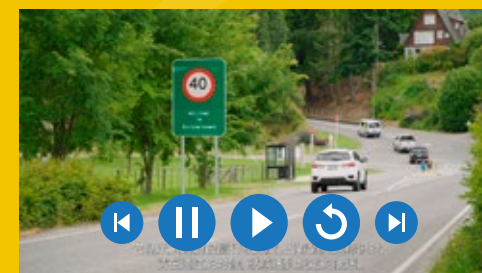
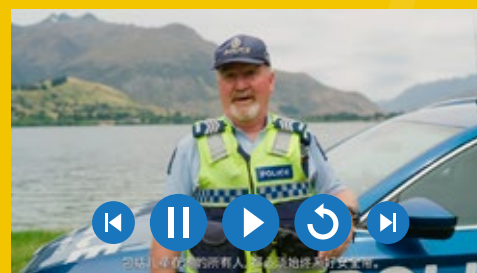
Promoting and educating about road safety in our district

Two Chinese-language videos were developed to promote road safety, focusing on open road driving tips and understanding New Zealand road signs. While initially created to support Chinese New Year visitors, the videos also provide useful information for newcomers settling in the district. Designed for social media, the videos offer practical, easy-to-understand guidance for driving safely on local roads.

What's the impact:

- » Newcomers can better understand the risks and challenges of driving in our district before getting behind the wheel.
- » Provides accessible information to help people learn New Zealand road rules and road signs, with a focus on driving safely in a mountainous environment.

Who's involved: NZ Police and QLDC Road Safety



Pillar 2

Welcoming
Communications

Addressing cultural and practical barriers

🔥 **First Splash: Swim with Confidence** is a swimming programme for migrant women that supports equitable access to recreation while improving water safety and confidence. The programme helps reduce cultural and practical barriers to accessing aquatic facilities and recreational opportunities in Aotearoa New Zealand.

What's the impact?

- » Participants build essential safety skills and confidence around water.
- » Women are better equipped to support their children's water safety and participate in family recreation activities around pools, beaches, lakes, and recreation centres, reducing barriers to community participation.
- » The programme creates opportunities to build friendships, practise English, and strengthen social connections within the local community.
- » 34 women participated across the programme with the majority aged 25-39 years.

Who's involved: QLDC Alpine Aqualand (supported by Central Lakes Trust)

"I feel much more confident about swimming now; I am not afraid to swim now."

Participant First Splash: Swim with Confidence

"I will use my swimming ability to feel safer and more confident in the water."

Participant First Splash: Swim with Confidence



Pillar 3

Equitable Access

Building mental health awareness and capability

Mental Health First Aid training was offered to 15 Pacific and ethnic community members through both in-person sessions or as an online learning course. Participants became certified Mental Health First Aiders, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to recognise, respond to, and support people experiencing mental health challenges.

What's the impact?

- » Community members gain practical skills and confidence to recognise signs of mental distress, provide initial support, and respond appropriately in crisis situations.
- » Greater awareness of mental health challenges helps reduce stigma and encourages people to seek support when needed.

Who's involved: Japanese Family Society of Queenstown and 🔥 **Hato Hone St John** (supported by Central Lakes Trust and Ethnic Communities Development Fund)

"Made me understand things from the other person's side. Just listening and offering support, rather than trying to resolve the problem, makes a huge impact."

Participant Mental Health First Aid training

Pillar 3

Equitable Access

Reducing barriers to learning and improving English

English language sessions were provided to newcomers and long-established migrants across Queenstown, Frankton and Wānaka, free or at low cost. Community organisations and QLDC Libraries partnered with experienced paid tutors to develop practical, everyday English programmes that support participants to build language skills, confidence and social connections in a welcoming environment.

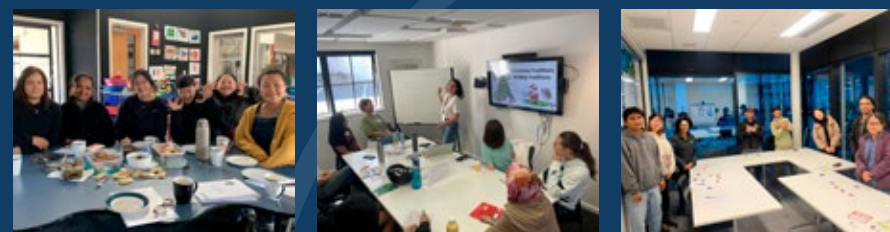
What's the impact?

- » Newcomers and long-established migrants gain confidence using English in everyday situations, including at work, school, appointments, shops, and community activities.
- » Migrant parents are better equipped to communicate with schools, early childhood centres, health providers, and community organisations, supporting positive outcomes for their whānau.
- » English classes create opportunities to build friendships, reduce social isolation, and strengthen connections between newcomers and the wider community.
- » Across Queenstown and Frankton:
 - 196 participants (including repeat participants)
 - 142 ESOL teaching hours
- » In Wānaka:
 - 283 participants (including repeat participants)
 - 66 ESOL teaching hours

Who's involved: Queenstown Lakes Libraries and 📍 **Central Otago REAP** (supported by Central Lakes Trust), 📍 **Southern REAP**, 📍 **English Language Partners (ELP)**, Te Kura Whakatipu o Kawarau School, Te Kura o Take Kārara School



Pillar 3
Equitable
Access



"Thank you for this opportunity to improve English for free."
Participant at Wānaka Library

"Learning the right pronunciation helps me at work and make friends."
Participant at Queenstown Library

"I am getting better with my English. Also, at work I felt more comfortable to talk with my general manager. I wish to improve more in the future so I can get a good position at work."
Participant at English Language Partners of NZ

"I am so grateful for this programme. Lisa is a very good teacher and because of her, my English has gotten much better and I feel more confident speaking to teachers and neighbours."
Participant at Central Otago REAP

Socialising the Newcomers Guide

The **Newcomers Guide** was promoted and distributed as a trusted source of information for people settling in the district. Printed and digital versions were shared through QLDC facilities, community organisations, medical clinics, schools, early childhood education centres, recruitment agencies, accommodation and wider business sector.

What's the impact?

- » Newcomers have access to reliable information and local services, helping them settle into the district with confidence.
- » Community organisations, employers, and service providers are better equipped to support and welcome newcomers.
- » The Newcomers Guide promotes a coordinated, district-wide approach to helping people connect, participate, and feel a sense of belonging.
 - 1,300 printed copies distributed
 - 1,464 Newcomers Guide webpage views

Who's involved: QLDC Community Partnerships and community partners

"We will look at getting the online version on to our website and in our induction pack for families, that is a great idea."

Principal Te Kura Whakatipu o Kowarau School

"The guide is exceptional!"

Lakes District Hospital

Pillar 4

Connected and
Inclusive
Communities



Supporting orientation and settlement of newcomers

Community organisations delivered a range of orientation and settlement services for newcomers across the district, both in-person and online. Topics included immigration visa changes and pathways to residency, recognition of overseas qualifications, navigating New Zealand's health system, and accessing immigration, employment and settlement support services.

What's the impact:

- » Newcomers can access practical settlement information in English and in their native language helping to reduce language and cultural barriers.
- » Newcomers are better equipped to navigate local systems and know where to go for trusted advice, information, and support.
- » Community organisations and service providers work together to strengthen referral pathways and create a more coordinated settlement support network.

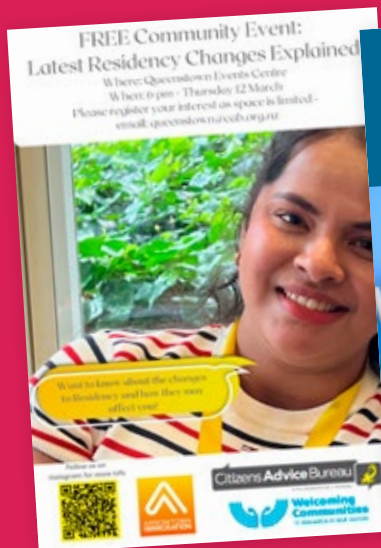
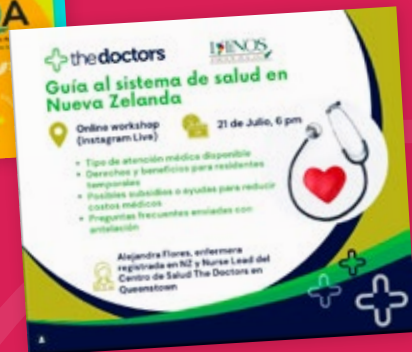
Who's involved: 📍 Citizens Advice Bureau, 📍 Lakes Multicultural Collective, 📍 Community Link Upper Clutha, 📍 Central Otago REAP, Latinos for New Zealand Charitable Trust

Pillar 4

Connected and Inclusive Communities

Pillar 5

Economic Development, Business and Employment



Building stronger communities together – Te Wiki o Manaaki Aotearoa

Te Wiki o Manaaki Aotearoa | 🇳🇿 **Welcoming Week New Zealand** is an annual campaign supported by Immigration New Zealand. It celebrates the district's welcoming values through local events and initiatives that foster connection, mutual understanding, and a sense of belonging among newcomers and long-time residents alike.

What's the impact?

- » Creates opportunities for newcomers and existing residents to connect, build relationships, and strengthen community belonging.
- » Celebrates the value of diversity and helps foster understanding and appreciation of different cultures and experiences.
- » 23 activities were delivered across Queenstown and Wānaka by 20 community partners, including QLDC.
- » Queenstown Primary School won the inaugural Welcoming Week National School Competition.

Who's involved: Community partners and QLDC Community Services (supported by Central Lakes Trust)

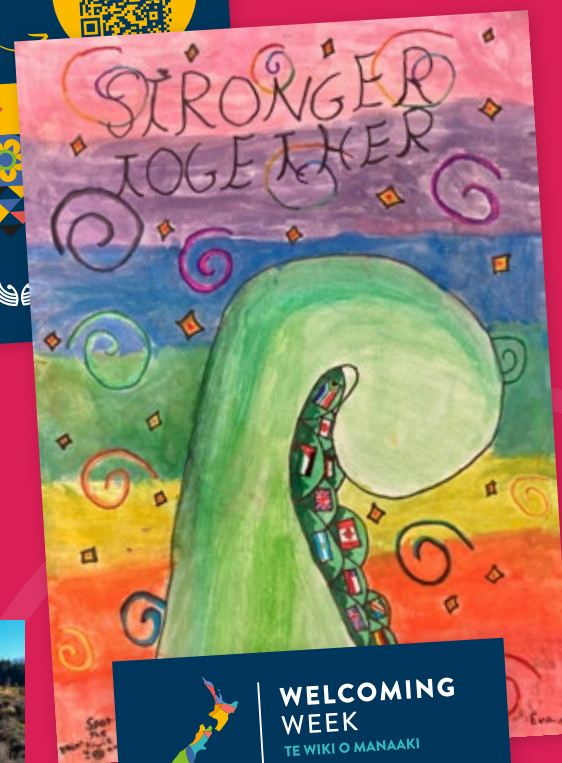


Pillar 4

Connected and Inclusive Communities

Calendar of Events Queenstown	
Date and Time	Event
Friday 5 September 10.15 - 11.00am	
Friday 5 September 12.30pm - 1.30pm	
Saturday 6 September 9.00am - 12.00pm	
Saturday 6 September 12.00pm - 1.00pm	
Monday 8 September 10.00am - 11.00am	
Monday 8 September 11.00am - 12.00pm	
Monday 8 September 12.30 - 2.30pm	
Tuesday 9 September 10.00am - 11.00am	
Tuesday 9 September 12.30 - 2.30pm	
Wednesday 10 September 9.30 - 10.30am	
Thursday 11 September 9.30 - 10.30am	
Saturday 13 September 10.00am - 12.00pm	
Saturday 13 September 12.30 - 3.30pm	
Saturday 13 September 5.00 - 7.00pm	

Calendar of Events Wānaka	
Date and Time	Event
Sunday 7 September 11.00am - 1.00pm	Sports come and have a go! Wānaka Recreation Centre, 411 Sir Te Whiro Drive, Wānaka
Monday 8 September 11.00am - 12.00pm	Morning tea from around the world Wānaka Street, Wānaka
Monday 8 September 12.30 - 2.30pm	Keeping children safe and community playdate Playnet Wānaka, 12 Ardmore Street, Wānaka
Monday 8 September 10.00am - 11.00am	Find your perfect volunteer match Wānaka and Lakes District Council, Wānaka Community Hub, 34 McDougall Street, Wānaka
Tuesday 9 September 12.30 - 2.30pm	Citizenship ceremony Lake Wānaka Centre, 89 Anderson Street, Wānaka
Tuesday 9 September 1.00 - 4.00pm	Te Kaitiaki oiahi session Te Kaitiaki oiahi session, Wānaka
Tuesday 9 September 8.30 - 10.30am	Introduction to working in New Zealand EAG NZ and Community Hub, Wānaka
Wednesday 10 September 1.00 - 4.00pm	Te Kaitiaki oiahi session Te Kaitiaki oiahi session, Wānaka
Saturday 13 September 10.00am - 12.00pm	Community garden working bee and morning tea Te Kaitiaki oiahi session, Wānaka
Saturday 13 September 12.30 - 3.30pm	Wānaka community playdate Te Kaitiaki oiahi session, Wānaka
Saturday 13 September 5.00 - 7.00pm	Wānaka community playdate Te Kaitiaki oiahi session, Wānaka



Fostering cultural exchange

Pacific and migrant community groups share and celebrate their traditional customs and cultural practices with the wider community through food, music, dance, art, and storytelling. It's their way of fostering inclusion, understanding, and unity among people from various backgrounds.

What's the impact?

- » Pacific and migrant communities are supported to express their cultural identity, traditions and heritage with pride.
- » Wider community has opportunities to experience different cultures, helping foster understanding, respect, and stronger social connections.
- » 21 cultural celebrations and events were held across the district, providing opportunities for cultural exchange and community participation.

Who's involved: Pacific and migrant community groups and community partners

Festivals and events hosted district-wide:

- Teej Festival | 16 August 2025
- India Independence Day | 18 August 2025
- Indonesia Independence Day | 22 August 2025
- Chile Independence Day (Fiestas patrias) | 18 September 2025
- Chile Independence Day (Fiestas patrias) | 19 September 2025 in Wānaka
- Samoa Teuila Festival | 27 September 2025
- Diwali Festival | 11 October 2025
- Fiji National Day | 18 October 2025
- Central Lakes Polyfest | 22 & 23 October 2025
- Korean Day | 1 November 2025
- Day of the Deads (Dia de Muertos) | 1 November 2025 in Wānaka
- Bailemos! Bringing community together | 6 December 2025 in Makarora
- International Migrants Day Potluck | 17 December 2025
- Maha Shivratri – Queenstown Indian community | 16 February 2026
- Chinese Lantern Celebration | 8 March 2026
- Queenstown Multicultural Festival | 21 March 2026
- Sri Lankan New Year | 26 April 2026
- Vesak Day - Sri Lankan celebration | 14 June 2026
- Philippine Independence Day | 20 June 2026
- Shaheedi Samagam - Gurdwara Sahib Guru Nanak Darbar | 21 June 2026
- Football, Culture and Community | 28 June 2026 in Wānaka



Pillar 4

Connected and
Inclusive
Communities

Pillar 8

Culture and
Identity



Building pathways for migrant entrepreneurs

A pilot programme was developed to support aspiring and emerging migrant entrepreneurs from the local Latin community. Delivered in English and Spanish, the programme included an information session on the district's economic environment and entrepreneurial pathways, followed by workshops on developing business ideas and establishing a business in New Zealand. The workshops were facilitated in Spanish by former Startup Queenstown Lakes participants.

What's the impact:

- » Aspiring migrant entrepreneurs gain a better understanding of the local business environment and where to access advice, support, and business development opportunities.
- » Participants build confidence, connections, and knowledge to progress business ideas and navigate New Zealand's entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- » Our local entrepreneurial ecosystem gains a better understanding of the opportunities, needs, and challenges experienced by migrant entrepreneurs.
- » 25 Spanish-speaking participants attended the pilot information session.

Who's involved:  **Startup Queenstown Lakes** and QLDC Community Partnerships and Economic Futures

"It helped me understand the right steps I should take for my business. I heard about the mentors and that sounds like a great idea."

Programme participant

"I appreciated being able to get in touch with new people in the same situation, share ideas and find out more about the resources and people we can turn to."

Programme participant



Pillar 5

Economic Development, Business and Employment

Building culturally confident workplaces

Three intercultural competency awareness sessions were delivered for the visitor economy business sector, including business owners, managers, team leaders, and staff working with diverse teams and customers. The sessions explored how to navigate increasingly diverse workforces, cultures, generations, communication styles, and workplace expectations.

What's the impact:

- » Businesses gain greater awareness of cultural differences and practical tools to communicate more effectively across diverse teams and customer groups.
- » Employers develop a better understanding of how workplace culture, communication, and inclusion can influence staff wellbeing, engagement, performance and retention.
- » 37 participants attended the Queenstown session, and 26 participants attended the Wānaka session.

Who's involved: 📍 **Wānaka Business Chamber**,
📍 **Destination Queenstown & 📍 Lake Wānaka Tourism**,
📍 **Queenstown Business Chamber** and
QLDC Community Partnerships

“Queenstown Lakes has one of New Zealand's most diverse workforces, which brings a huge strength to our region. Improving communication within teams benefits everyone.”

Destination Queenstown

“By building stronger cross-cultural understanding, businesses can improve team cohesion, staff retention, workplace culture, and customer experiences.”

Lake Wānaka Tourism



Pillar 5

Economic
Development,
Business and
Employment



Understanding local democracy

Community organisations created an opportunity for newcomers and long-established migrants to learn about local democracy, voting eligibility and the role of local government. Participants had the opportunity to hear directly from an elected member and ask questions about how local decision-making works.

What's the impact:

- » Newcomers and long-established migrants gain a better understanding of local government, voting rights, and democratic processes.
- » Greater civic knowledge helps people feel more confident participating in community life and decisions that affect their local area.

Who's involved: Happiness House, Catalyst Trust, Citizens Advice Bureau and QLDC Libraries, with the support of the **Electoral Commission**



Pillar 6

Civic Engagement and Participation

Connecting community leaders with decision-makers

Pacific and ethnic community leaders met with Hon Mark Mitchell, Minister for **Ethnic Communities**. It was an opportunity to introduce their respective communities and learn about the government's priorities for ethnic communities.

What's the impact?

- » Community leaders gain a clearer understanding of government priorities for ethnic communities and how these may connect with local initiatives.
- » Ethnic communities have a platform to share their experiences, needs, and aspirations, helping ensure local voices are heard and considered.

Who's involved: Office of Joseph Mooney, MP for Southland, Office of Hon Mark Mitchell, Minister for Ethnic Communities, and QLDC Community Partnerships



Pillar 6

Civic Engagement and Participation

Building community resilience

New Zealand Red Cross delivered Good and Ready emergency preparedness sessions for the wider community, with a particular focus on migrants and newcomers. The sessions provided practical information on how to prepare for emergencies and disasters, helping people understand local risks and the steps they can take to stay safe.

What's the impact?

- » Migrant communities gain practical knowledge to prepare for emergencies including creating household emergency plans, preparing grab bags, understanding local hazards, and knowing where to access reliable information and support.
- » Good and Ready ambassadors who are community representatives are equipped to share preparedness messages with their own networks, helping strengthen resilience and support across culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- » 65 long-established migrants and newcomers participated in emergency preparedness information sessions.

Who's involved: 🇳🇿 **New Zealand Red Cross**, 🇳🇿 **Lakes Multicultural Collective**, with the support of 🇳🇿 **Emergency Management Otago** and QLDC Community Partnerships



Pillar 6

Civic Engagement and Participation

Promoting welcoming and inclusive environments

Community organisations created welcoming spaces between newcomers and members of the receiving community (long-established residents) to connect through classes, events and community activities, creating opportunities to build trust and foster relationships.

What's the impact?

- » Newcomers feel recognised, valued and more connected to their community when they can express their culture, language, faith, food, music or traditions in public spaces.
- » People from different backgrounds learn from each other's experiences, customs and perspectives, encouraging two-way learning.
- » Community groups can share resources, ideas and networks, leading to stronger partnerships and more sustainable initiatives.
- » 25 'Cook Around the World' sessions were delivered in collaboration with the diverse ethnic communities.
- » 50 participants attended Wānaka Welcoming Day.

Who's involved: 🇳🇿 **Happiness House**, 🇳🇿 **Lakes Multicultural Collective**, 🇳🇿 **Community Link Upper Clutha** and the diverse ethnic communities



Pillar 7

Welcoming Public Spaces

Building understanding between migrants and newcomers and tangata whenua

Tangata Tiriti – The Treaty People facilitated Te Tiriti o Waitangi | Treaty of Waitangi educational workshops aimed at migrants and newcomers. The workshops explored the history and significance of Te Tiriti, helping participants better understand Aotearoa New Zealand's bicultural foundations and their role as tangata tiriti.

What's the impact?

- » Participants gain a foundational understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Te Ao Māori, and the historical and contemporary context of Aotearoa New Zealand.
- » Participants understand what it means to live in Aotearoa New Zealand as tangata tiriti, strengthening their sense of belonging.
- » Participants are encouraged to further their learning through te reo Māori, Māori history, local tikanga, and community-led kaupapa Māori initiatives.
- » 28 participants attended the workshops delivered in Wānaka and Queenstown.

Who's involved: 🍌 **Tangata Tiriti – Treaty People** and QLDC Community Partnerships (funded by Central Lakes Trust)

“Outstanding workshop overall. I not only learned more about the history of Aotearoa and Te Tiriti o Waitangi, but I felt I was given a Māori experience of learning, where the focus is on the collective and not the individual. I enjoyed the group activities, karakia and kai.”

Participant Wānaka

“The workshop was amazing, very well presented. There was never a dull moment. It was so easy to understand and follow along.”

Participant Queenstown

“I want to learn te reo Māori.”

Participant Wānaka

Pillar 8

Culture and Identity



Celebrating cultural diversity and promoting inclusion

The Queenstown Multicultural Festival Trust delivered the annual district-wide Multicultural Festival on 21 March 2026 to coincide with Race Relations Day. For its fourth edition, the festival welcomed Race Relations Commissioner, Dr Melissa Derby, as a keynote speaker. The festival created a vibrant and inclusive space where Pacific and ethnic communities could share their cultural identity with pride through food, performance, storytelling, language, arts and traditions.

What's the impact?

- » Pacific and ethnic communities are provided with a highly visible platform to celebrate and share their culture, helping strengthen pride, belonging, and identity.
- » Residents and visitors have opportunities to experience and appreciate the diversity of cultures that contribute to life in the district.
- » The festival brings people together across cultures, generations, and communities, helping strengthen social connection and inclusion.
- » 3,000 attendees + 66 volunteers.
- » 24 food stalls + 12 cultural booths.
- » 25 performances.
- » Festival waste reduced to 119 kg, a 49.1% decrease from 2025. A total of 4,526 reusable serve ware items were diverted from landfill, a 29.5% increase on 2025.

Who's involved: 🌟 Queenstown Multicultural Festival Trust, Pacific and migrant community groups, community partners, central government and regional funders, and QLDC Community Partnerships

"The multicultural event was a beautiful reminder of how powerful diversity is. The blend of people, cultures, and flavours created such a stunning and unforgettable experience."

Cultural stall vendor

"Seeing the community come together. It was such lovely atmosphere."

Volunteer

"I felt such a part of the community while dancing with the crowd in front of the stage with the drummers. To look around me and see my friends and strangers connecting and sharing joy together was really special."

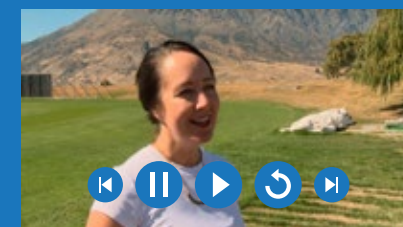
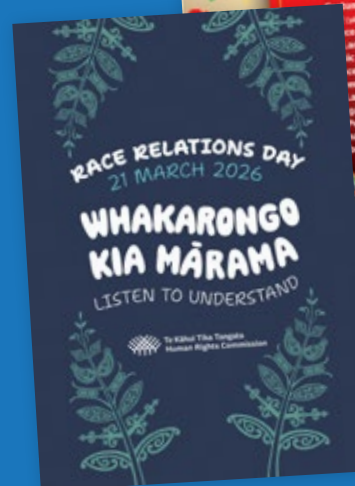
Member of the public

"Had a wonderful experience at the QT Multicultural Festival! It was a fantastic opportunity for our community to proudly showcase and share our beautiful culture, stunning art, and diverse talents with others. The atmosphere was vibrant, welcoming, and full of joy as people from so many backgrounds came together to celebrate."

Programme and logistics staff member

Pillar 8

Culture and Identity



Appendix

This appendix shows how the initiatives and achievements highlighted in this report contribute to the outcomes and actions of the 📍 **Queenstown Lakes District Welcoming Plan 2024–2027.**

#	PILLAR 1: INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP
1.2	Leaders – both designated and unofficial – reflect the diversity in the local community, as does the Council workforce. » Promote and maintain ongoing commitment to the organisation-wide Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) policy, ensuring it is delivered using appropriate measures and targets.
1.3	Leaders model the principles of inclusiveness, openness, tolerance, respect and acceptance of all cultures in the community. » Continue to upskill leaders to better understand Te Ao Māori. » Continue to train staff and elected members to ensure understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
1.4	There are clear roles, responsibilities and ownership within Council and in the wider community for the Welcoming Communities programme. » Investigate options to further support the implementation of Welcoming Communities initiatives in the Wānaka-Upper Clutha and the district's smaller communities.
1.5	Council internal and external policies, services, programmes and activities recognise and address cultural diversity. » Promote ongoing awareness and understanding of Council's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Policy. » Develop a DEI lens to test new or update Council policies, processes, services, programmes and activities. » Deliver citizenship ceremonies in both Upper Clutha and Whakatipu areas.
↩	Refer to page 18 of the Welcoming Plan 2024-2027

#	PILLAR 2: WELCOMING COMMUNICATIONS
2.1	The community is well informed about the local benefits of immigration and the Welcoming Communities programme, including success stories. » Showcase success stories on long-established migrants and newcomers' positive contributions towards achieving community wellbeing and economic development outcomes for the district. » Explore ways to increase awareness of Welcoming Communities via Council-led initiatives and programmes.
2.3	The Council's engagement with all residents is two-way, culturally appropriate and fit for purpose. » Provide translated information and access to interpreting services to culturally and linguistically diverse communities, as required.
↩	Refer to page 22 of the Welcoming Plan 2024-2027

#	PILLAR 3: EQUITABLE ACCESS
3.1	Council partners with local businesses, organisations, and sectors to identify and address barriers for newcomers to accessing services and participating in the community. » Work with language schools, business sector and tertiary education providers to support the delivery of ESOL classes (English for Speakers of Other Languages) for newcomers. » Explore ways to reduce barriers to opportunities, resources and services for newcomers to ensure equitable access.
3.3	All community members are well informed about the services available in the community. Newcomers are made aware of and are using these services. » Provide information and support to newcomers on Council venues, hire policies and community funding schemes to ensure awareness and confidence in accessing these services.
↩	Refer to page 26 of the Welcoming Plan 2024-2027

#	PILLAR 4: CONNECTED AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES
4.1	Coordinated, comprehensive and appropriate initial welcoming support services are available from Council, other agencies and community organisations. » Create a new edition of the district’s Newcomers Guide, and a distribution plan to ensure employers and “welcome network” partners consistently use and promote the resource to newcomers locally.
4.2	The receiving community is well-equipped and supported to welcome and interact with newcomers. » Coordinate and promote the annual Welcoming Week with key support services and business sector organisations, in collaboration with Pacific and ethnic communities.
4.4	Different cultures are celebrated and people are supported to express their cultural beliefs and customs, including language and religious practices. » Identify Pacific and ethnic community groups and faith-based organisations, and facilitate collaboration amongst these groups and with local organisations so they can share and preserve their culture and traditions.
↩	Refer to page 30 of the 📌 Welcoming Plan 2024-2027

#	PILLAR 5: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT
5.1	Newcomers, including international students, are supported to access local employment information, services and networks. » Expand existing local resources to help newcomers settle into their new workplace and consider how this aligns with the “welcoming network”.
5.2	Newcomers, including international students, are supported with the local knowledge and skills to ensure they can operate successfully in the New Zealand work environment, either as a business owner or an employee. » Provide newcomers with information and upskilling opportunities to access training, career opportunities and entrepreneurial pathways in a diverse range of industries. » Support aspiring migrant entrepreneurs and innovators to access information, expert advice and business coaching to start a business.
5.4	Local employers and workforces develop their intercultural competency. » Advocate, educate and support diversity, equity and inclusion competencies across the business sector, professional networks and support services.
↩	Refer to page 34 of the 📌 Welcoming Plan 2024-2027

#	PILLAR 6: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION
6.1	The Council's elected members and staff effectively communicate with newcomers to promote their engagement in local government processes. » Provide ongoing civic education to wider community, including youth and culturally and linguistically diverse communities, to increase civic participation in local and central government elections, in collaboration with the Electoral Commission.
6.2	Newcomers are encouraged and enabled to get involved in local government and civil society. » Build community resilience across culturally and linguistically diverse communities to ensure their welfare can be effectively supported during emergency events or periods of prolonged community stress.
↩	Refer to page 38 of the Welcoming Plan 2024-2027

#	PILLAR 7: WELCOMING PUBLIC SPACES
7.2	Welcoming public spaces provide opportunities to build trust and relationships between newcomers and members of the receiving community. » Identify accessible 'Welcome Hubs' for newcomers as part of the development of a "welcome network", including community facilities (e.g. libraries, sport and recreation) and other community services and spaces.
↩	Refer to page 42 of the Welcoming Plan 2024-2027

#	PILLAR 8: CULTURE AND IDENTITY
8.1	Receiving communities and newcomers share and celebrate their cultures with each other, facilitated by the Council and others in the community. » Provide opportunities for newcomers to learn about Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Te Ao Māori through Kāi Tahu context. » Support and promote an annual district-wide Multicultural Festival linked to Race Relations Day (held annually in March). » Support Pacific and ethnic communities to share and celebrate their traditions and culture with the wider community.
↩	Refer to page 46 of the Welcoming Plan 2024-2027

