



# Welcoming Communities

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## Welcoming Plan 2018 - 2019

PALMERSTON NORTH

Prepared by the Palmerston North Welcoming Communities Advisory Group **May 2018**



**Rangitāne o Manawatū are the mana whenua for Palmerston North. They have occupied the Manawatū area for over 600 years, and guided early Pākehā settlers to the area where the town of Palmerston North was first established.**

The first Pākehā (European) settlers arrived in the new township in 1866, and were welcomed and supported by Rangitāne leaders. The words of one of the key supportive leaders, Te Peeti Te Awe Awe, reflected the spirit of partnership that the iwi (tribe) hoped would characterise relationships into the future, and these were memorialised on a statue of Te Peeti erected in 1907 that still stands in The Square:

*“Kua kaupapa i au te aroha mā koutou e whakaoti” (“I have laid the foundation of love for you to build upon”)*

In 1878, as a further signifier of the rangatiratanga (authority) and manaakitanga (hospitality, generosity) of the iwi, Rangitāne invited the chiefs of the wider region to assemble and bestow a name on The Square of the new city of Palmerston North. They agreed upon the name Te Marae-o-Hine (which means the Courtyard of the Daughter of Peace), after the home of a Waikato cheftainess who was famous for her hospitality and peace-keeping. The choice of this name reflects the desires of Rangitāne for Palmerston North to be a place where people of all origins and ethnicities can live together in maungārongo (peace) and aroha (love).

This document therefore recognises that the concept of welcoming settlers to Palmerston North long pre-exists this programme and Plan, and seeks to respect and build on these historical foundations. This principle can be seen manifested in the outcomes/goals and the action plan described. Palmerston North City Council, together with the Palmerston North Welcoming Communities Advisory Group, intends to navigate this pilot programme in partnership with Rangitāne, and align with the Treaty relationship Rangitāne has with the Crown.





Kia ora tātou katoa, Welcome,

**As Mayor of Palmerston North, it gives me great pleasure to support the 2018/2019 Welcoming Plan as part of the Welcoming Communities pilot programme.**

Being born and bred in the Manawatū and having raised my family here, the Welcoming Communities pilot resonates with me in the way that it seeks to celebrate existing good practice, whilst also being ambitious in seeking real improvements in how we help new residents make Palmerston North their home.

It is also a way to consider how we, as a true multicultural city, harness opportunities to innovate and grow by diversifying our skills and business mix. As a city, it is important that we connect with new residents to create a shared understanding and appreciation of each other, which makes for a strong, positive community. I encourage everyone to engage with the activities in the Plan throughout the pilot, and continue to make Palmerston North friendlier, safer and more vibrant.

I offer my thanks to the Palmerston North Welcoming Communities Advisory Group for their work to date, and look forward to seeing the progression of this Plan over the next 12 months.

Ngā mihi,

**Grant Smith**  
Mayor of Palmerston North

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Welcoming Communities is a two year pilot programme to support newcomers to have a sense of belonging through social, cultural, economic and civic participation and engagement. Under Welcoming Communities, individual councils and groups of councils participating in the programme take a leadership role in encouraging their communities to be welcoming towards new residents, and in doing so support their region's growth.**

This Welcoming Plan is a key part of the Welcoming Communities programme in Palmerston North. It sets out what the community will do to make our city even more welcoming to all newcomers.

For the purpose of this document, and the wider programme, 'newcomers' is defined as recent migrants (up to five years in New Zealand), former refugees and international students. However, we expect the programme to also have benefits for New Zealanders relocating to the city.

This Plan has been developed by the Palmerston North Welcoming Communities Advisory Group (the Advisory Group), and sets out the goals and areas of focus for the programme locally.

This document is structured to align with the national Welcoming Communities Standard (the standard), which is shaped around eight outcome areas: Inclusive Leadership; Welcoming Communications; Equitable Access; Connected & Inclusive Communities; Economic Development, Business and Employment; Civic Engagement & Participation; Welcoming Public Spaces; Culture & Identity.

The standard provides a benchmark for what a successful welcoming community looks like and has guided decisions on what activities we have included in this Welcoming Plan.

Decisions were also based on a stocktake of what welcoming activities exist in Palmerston North, which was conducted between November 2017 and January 2018. We found that the city currently offers a range of quality welcoming initiatives, events and programmes to both newcomers and local residents. We also identified opportunities to improve our welcoming efforts. This Welcoming Plan focuses on the areas of opportunity identified, such as improving ease of access to information for newcomers, harnessing the economic benefits of diversity, and celebrating existing good practice.

Accordingly, under each of the eight outcome areas below is a list of several actions to be undertaken through the programme<sup>^</sup>.

### **The key to these bullet points is as follows:**

- these points denote actions where PNCC and the community will work together
- ◇ these points denote PNCC - only actions

<sup>^</sup> The Advisory Group has also developed a corresponding implementation plan, which is a live document to be updated throughout the pilot. This document can be accessed on the PNCC website, and provides further detail on specific tasks, participants and measures associated with each of the actions.

## WELCOMING COMMUNITIES BACKGROUND

In January 2017, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) confirmed Palmerston North City Council (PNCC) was selected as one of five regions, made up of nine councils, to be a pilot site for the Welcoming Communities programme. In developing the national programme, MBIE has partnered with the Office of Ethnic Communities and the Human Rights Commission.

Welcoming Communities brings together councils and community leaders to make communities even more welcoming to newcomers, by engaging local residents in shaping and delivering welcoming activities. The Welcoming Communities programme recognises communities are healthier, happier and more productive when newcomers are welcomed and can participate fully in society and in the local economy.

The point of difference for this programme is that, whereas previous settlement initiatives have focused solely on supporting newcomers, Welcoming Communities extends further and actively seeks to involve members of the receiving communities (i.e. those already living where the newcomers is settling) in welcoming activities. This new approach promotes building strong connections between local residents and newcomers.

This programme is part of a global movement which aims to engage local communities to be purposefully and proactively welcoming to migrants. Other programmes around the world include the Canadian Cities of Migration, Welcoming America in the United States and Australia's Welcoming Cities.



## THE LOCAL CONTEXT

Tangata whenua participation in the programme is a fundamental principle and Rangitāne o Manawatū has an important role in terms of leadership and as a collaborative partner. They will also provide guidance as to how to apply two of the key Māori principles underlying Welcoming Communities: Whanaungatanga (the importance of strong relationships), and Manaakitanga (extending hospitality and caring for others).

Palmerston North is one of the most culturally diverse provincial cities in New Zealand, and the ethnic mix of our city continues to grow. New Zealand European people make up approximately 75% of the city's population, followed by Māori at around 15%, more than 9% who identify as Asian, and approximately 5% of Pasifika origin. These last two groups are projected to increase in numbers significantly in the next ten years.

Since 2004, when the city became a resettlement location, Palmerston North has also become home to a number of groups of former refugees from around the world, including families from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Myanmar, Bhutan and Syria. As at July 2017, Palmerston North had received more than 1000 resettlement quota refugees in total, the third highest number of the resettlement regions in New Zealand, only after Auckland and Wellington.

Palmerston North also has a uniquely diverse community due to having a prominent defence workforce, and large numbers of young and transient tertiary students. The city has a significant export education sector, with four tertiary institutes which accept international students, including Massey University, the Institute of the Pacific United New Zealand (IPU), the Universal College of Learning (UCOL) and the English Teaching College.

Other migrants to the city include new workers and their families, who come from a range of ethnic backgrounds, and, in line with national trends, tend to be employed in the healthcare, agribusiness, science, education and retail sectors.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**The Palmerston North Welcoming Communities Advisory Group includes representatives from:**

- Central Economic Development Agency
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Department of Internal Affairs
- English Language Partners
- Manawatū Chamber of Commerce
- Manawatū Multicultural Council (including Manawatū Newcomers Network)
- Ministry of Social Development
- Red Cross
- Immigration New Zealand (MBIE)
- Network of Skilled Migrants Manawatū

Our appreciation also goes to the individuals in the community who have contributed to the development of the Welcoming Plan thus far, and to the staff within PNCC who have provided their expertise.

# WELCOMING PLAN



## 1. Inclusive Leadership

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

To achieve this outcome, we will:

- Work with Rangitāne and hapori Māori throughout the programme to align aspirations, and represent these in the development and implementation of welcoming activities.
- Investigate an approach to achieve greater diversity on local boards and governance groups.
- Continue to support initiatives which provide opportunities for newcomers to experience leadership, such as PNCC's Young Ambassadors Programme.
- Engage with, and continue to support and build groups who are providing leadership opportunities for newcomers (such as tertiary student leadership bodies, Manawatū Refugee Voices and the Red Cross youth group).
- Explore opportunities to foster diversity in leadership across the spectrum, such as within the arts and in local sports.
- Develop a 'key messages' handout to distribute to community leaders, so that they can gain awareness of and promote the ideas of the programme in their day-to-day work.
- ◇ Explore the development of an overarching policy to embed and ensure the application of the Welcoming Communities concepts Council-wide. This may include developing a diversity/cultural intelligence framework to underpin the policy.





## 2. Welcoming Communications

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

To achieve this outcome, we will:

- Develop and implement a more comprehensive approach to provide timely and useful information to newcomers, which may include welcome packs or brochures, an online platform, and community-based champions. This will also include working with a range of newcomer ‘touch points’ such as schools, health organisations, accommodation providers, businesses and religious organisations.
- Better utilise existing platforms to communicate welcome messages to newcomers (such as the airport, screens and signage within the city).
- Conduct an informative communications campaign to promote the ideas of the programme to local residents, with a focus on sharing the benefits of diversity and migration for our city.
- Look at ways to reduce communication barriers when newcomers access local services. This could include developing a local interpretation assistance ‘pool’.
- Establish regular positive profiles in local media to highlight individuals, organisations and initiatives, new and existing, which reflect the Welcoming Communities ideals.
- ◊ Explore introducing a cultural intelligence training component as standard, starting with all customer-facing PNCC staff.
- ◊ Conduct a review of PNCC-produced materials, and related policies, to ensure the language and imagery reflect the diversity of the city and the concepts of Welcoming Communities.



## 3. Equitable Access

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

To achieve this outcome, we will:

- Develop and trial a regular welcoming seminar, or similar, as a method of better informing newcomers of local services, programmes and activities.
- Investigate barriers for newcomers accessing transport, including driver licensing, and explore ways to reduce these barriers.
- Continue to support and promote local programmes which have a focus on equitable access. See lists of examples in implementation plan.



#### 4. Connected & Inclusive Communities

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

To achieve this outcome, we will:

- Conduct an informative communications campaign to promote the objectives of Welcoming Communities to local residents, with a focus on sharing the benefits of diversity and migration for our city.
- Support further research into ways to make our community more connected and inclusive, to determine where and how we can do better.
- Encourage and promote professional and community collaborations that increase connections between local resident groups and newcomer groups.
- Promote and support the many existing events and initiatives that celebrate diversity. See list of examples in implementation plan.



#### 5. Economic Development, Business and Employment

**Overarching outcome: Communities maximize 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.**

To achieve this outcome, we will:

- Work together with existing local groups, such as the Network of Skilled Migrants and the Manawatū Chamber of Commerce, to find ways to better connect newcomers and employers.
- Propose introducing a new category at the local business awards to formally recognise organisations and workplaces which are welcoming and inclusive.
- Establish regular positive profiles in local media to highlight individuals, organisations and initiatives (new and existing) that reflect the Welcoming Communities ideals.
- Work with local tertiary education providers and business organisations to increase the number of internship and/or work experience opportunities for newcomers, particularly international students.
- Explore the feasibility of an expo for newcomers, with a view to increasing connections between newcomers and local businesses. If feasible, work in partnership with the local business community to run a pilot expo in 2019.
- Look at ways to facilitate more cultural competency training opportunities for local employers and their workforces.



## 6. Civic Engagement & Participation

**Overarching outcome: Newcomers feel welcome to fully participate in the community. Newcomers are active in all forms of civil participation.**

To achieve this outcome, we will:

- Increase opportunities for newcomers to interact with PNCC, with a view to making PNCC processes and spaces feel more welcoming and open. This may include the introduction of more regular welcome/civic events for newcomers.
- Support further research into fostering civic and engagement at the local level, to determine where and how we can do better.
- Propose including new categories and/or accolades to acknowledge positive welcoming and diversity practice in more local awards events (such as business awards, sports awards, volunteering awards). Also review whether such awards include categories to celebrate newcomers, and, where missing, propose the introduction of these.
- Continue to promote and provide support around civic events, such as the census, elections, referendums, consultations, to improve newcomer engagement.



## 7. Welcoming Public Spaces

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

To achieve this outcome, we will:

- Make public spaces more visually welcoming through better use of existing platforms for communicating messages to newcomers (such as the airport, and screens and signage within the city).
- Explore and implement ways to make official spaces encountered by newcomers more welcoming (for example, the inclusion of Welcoming Communities messaging in the reception areas of public service offices).
- Display more public artwork and imagery that reflects the diversity of the city.
- ◇ Work with PNCC staff operating in this area to ensure the Welcoming Communities outcomes are considered in new projects.



## 8. Culture & Identity

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

To achieve this outcome, we will:

- Continue to promote and support the many existing events and initiatives in the city that celebrate diversity. See list of examples in implementation plan.
- Work with the diverse ethnic and cultural groups of Palmerston North, in alignment with their goals and ideas, to increase awareness and understanding of the various cultures that exist in the city.



## GET INVOLVED

If you've got an idea for making Palmerston North more welcoming, or you want to get involved in one of the local welcoming activities, please contact PNCC's Welcoming Communities Coordinator, Stephanie Velvin.

Email: [stephanie.velvin@pncc.govt.nz](mailto:stephanie.velvin@pncc.govt.nz)

Find updates about the Palmerston North pilot here: [pncc.govt.nz/welcome](https://pncc.govt.nz/welcome)

Find more information about the national Welcoming Communities programme here:

[immigration.govt.nz/about-us/what-we-do/welcoming-communities](https://immigration.govt.nz/about-us/what-we-do/welcoming-communities)

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## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

To support this Welcoming Plan, the Advisory Group has also developed a corresponding implementation plan, which provides further detail on specific tasks, participants and measures associated with each of the actions indicated above, and will be regularly updated on the PNCC website here: [pncc.govt.nz/welcome](https://pncc.govt.nz/welcome)





**Palmerston North City Council**

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**Welcoming  
Communities**  
TE WAHAROA KI NGĀ HĀPORI

Welcoming Communities New Zealand is a government initiative led by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, in partnership with the Department of Internal Affairs (including the Office of Ethnic Communities) and the New Zealand Human Rights Commission.

New Zealand Government