



# 1. Introduction

Councils in New Zealand have new responsibilities to promote the cultural wellbeing of their communities, as defined in the Local Government Act 2002. Cultural wellbeing is focused on cultural identity which is expressed and developed through:

- participation in recreation, creative and cultural activities, and
- the freedom to retain, interpret and express arts, history, heritage and traditions.

The Cultural Well-being Strategy brings together five key areas of focus:

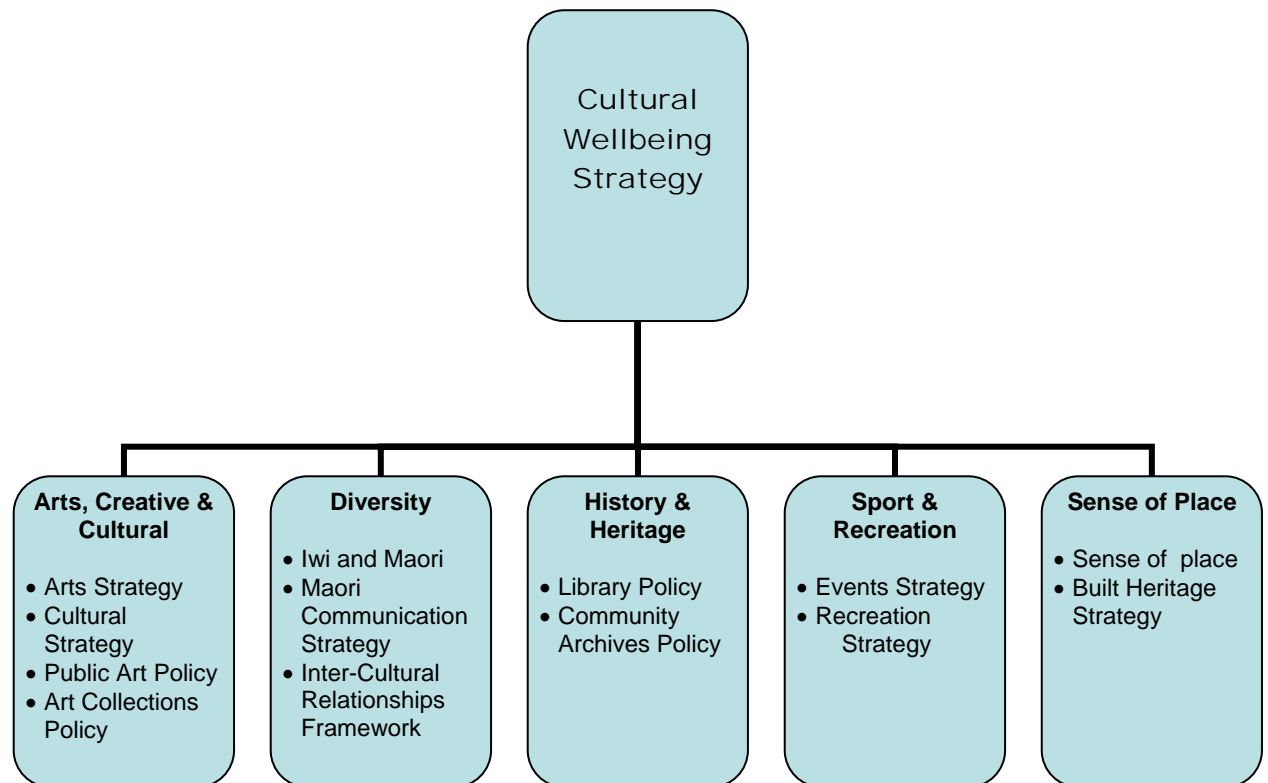
1. Arts, creative and cultural activities
2. Languages and diversity
3. History and heritage
4. Sport and recreation
5. Sense of place

Cultural wellbeing is directly linked with Wellington City Council's vision "Creative Wellington – Innovation Capital". Cultural wellbeing and the vision are both concerned with strengthening Sense of Place and improving Quality of Life. Council is also focused on Collaborative Leadership and this is demonstrated in the cultural wellbeing area with external partnerships with organisations such as museums and arts bodies.

The Cultural Wellbeing strategy looks at the long-term direction for the Council and highlights key areas of focus for the next triennium.

## 2. Context

### Existing Framework



### The context

Wellington has a unique heritage and growing ethnic diversity. The Cultural Wellbeing Strategy is concerned with our cultural identity and how we retain and develop that going forward. Cultural wellbeing encompasses shared or contrasted beliefs, values, customs, behaviours and identities reflected through language, stories, experiences, visual and performing arts, ceremonies and heritage.

Here are some wellbeing indications:

- 90% of residents and 81% of New Zealanders consider Wellington to have a culturally rich and diverse arts scene
- Wellington's arts and events capital image is supported by approximately \$12 million annual investment by Council, including funding for museums, galleries, theatres, performing arts and events.
- 77% of residents participate in visual or performing arts either as a spectator or performer
- Wellington has a growing multicultural society. It is estimated that 25% of the local population was born outside New Zealand

Wellington is well positioned to develop current work in this area. Understanding our past while recognising the current changes play an important role in shaping our city and it's peoples identity.

## The challenge

To ensure that all Wellingtonians understand their individual and collective sense of identity and feel they belong to a community and are able to participate in ways that recognise and celebrate this unique city's sense of place, history and heritage, arts, events and culture, social and multicultural diversity.

## The solution

**A cultural wellbeing strategy that celebrates our unique identity and encourages understanding and participation**

Building on our established arts and events capital image, Wellington City is well placed to lead the way in cultural wellbeing through a broader and exciting new focus on identity.

Our identity reflects:

- who we were
- who we are
- who we could be.

Council's role in leading the way and facilitating other organisations and groups to increase their engagement in areas contributing to cultural wellbeing will make our city:

- more distinctive by celebrating and protecting its unique sense of place, history and heritage
- more eventful through greater access to arts, sport and cultural events
- more actively engaged through offering high quality facilities and programmes that increase participation in arts and cultural activities
- more inclusive by celebrating our bicultural heritage and growing ethnic diversity and promoting understanding and tolerance.

The pre-conditions

The successful realisation of this strategy will require:

- Ensuring we continue to deliver excellent services in arts and events area
- Incorporating the focus areas into business as usual activities
- A national climate of tolerance and acceptance

### 3. Long-term direction



## Wellington City Outcomes

Over the next 10 years, we aspire to the following outcomes:

**5.1 Stronger sense of place:** *Wellington will have a strong local identity that celebrates and protects its sense of place, capital-city status, distinctive landform and landmarks, defining features, history, heritage buildings, places and spaces.*

Wellington's success as a city is related closely to its rich sense of place. Wellington has a dramatic setting, is compact, well integrated and offers a variety of urban living experiences. This outcome recognises the legacy of the past through the protection and conservation of its natural and cultural heritage.

Building on Wellington's sense of place will mean:

- enhancing elements of the city's sense of place, including asset design, symbols, signage, images, natural landform, local native local flora and fauna, places & buildings that tell the city's and people's history and stories
- improving statutory protection for our built heritage
- recognising more heritage areas and places in the city and suburbs
- increasing the quality of urban spaces that people are drawn to and enjoy using, such as the stadium, waterfront, parks, squares, town belt and other that collectively make Wellington unique and reflect our urban village dynamic
- maintaining the diverse and vibrant character of the central city while protecting the coastline and significant ridgelines and hilltops
- providing more interpretation of sites of significance for Maori
- developing more high quality public art in the city.

Some of these areas are being addressed in the Urban Development strategy.

**5.2 More eventful:** *Wellington will be recognised as the arts and culture capital, and known for its exciting entertainment scene and full calendar of events, festivals, exhibitions and concerts.*

Wellington is home to many national cultural assets - Te Papa, NZSO, Royal NZ Ballet and the International Festival of the Arts. It is also home to the Lions and Hurricanes rugby teams, Shakers netball and St. Lawrence Saints basketball teams, as well as host to the international Sevens, Beach Volleyball and X\*Air Games. The city supports several professional theatre companies, an opera house, drama school, plus many other cultural bodies and events, such as Jazz and Fringe Festivals. Wellington is also known for its vibrant contemporary music scene, innovative art, architecture, literary, film and design communities. It also known for its excellent facilities for mountain bikers, runners, and windsurfers. Wellington will attract and create new national cultural events, and promote arts and culture as a key part of the economy.

Making Wellington a more eventful city will mean:

- continuing to support high-end cultural activities while, shifting support to the grass-roots level to encourage emerging talent
- continuing to support and attract local, national and international sporting events
- celebrating events that reflect the diversity of the people in the city
- finding new ways to support and promote youth-oriented arts, design and music

- seeking new ways to increase the profile and professionalism of Maori art, craft and culture.

**5.3 More inclusive:** *Wellington will celebrate its bicultural heritage and growing ethnic, religious and social diversity, and be tolerant, welcoming and inclusive of people's differences to create a sense of belonging, shared understanding and identity.*

It is estimated that 25 percent of the local population were born outside New Zealand, and an estimated 20 percent of people are bilingual. Approximately 10.8 percent of Wellington city's population are Asian, 7.6% are of Maori descent and 5.3% are Pacific Peoples, according to the 2001 Census. Wellington will embrace its multicultural society through a wide range of measures. It will ensure that the cultural values, needs and creative expression of the city's minority ethnic, religious and social groups are catered for and celebrated.

Making Wellington a more inclusive city will mean:

- developing closer partnerships with ethnic, religious and social communities, supporting their events, festivals, and visual & performing arts that reflect their traditions and diversity
- encouraging greater tolerance and acceptance of difference and diversity
- recording the history of the city and community groups and sharing their stories
- providing Wellingtonians with the opportunity to experience local Maori culture as an intrinsic part of the city and ensuring the arts of mana whenua and nga iwi o nga hau e wha are valued, promoted and enhanced.

**5.4 More actively engaged:** *Wellington will encourage greater engagement and participation by offering an exceptional range of arts and cultural amenities that cater to all tastes as well as a high quality environment that fosters a vibrant city life.*

Maintaining an excellent standard of infrastructure and facilities – from city beaches to libraries, town belt and museums – for Wellington residents to enjoy and engage in a range of recreation, creative and cultural activities such as exhibitions, festivals, sports and cultural events and celebrations. The city's well-designed public spaces will become more important as venues for recreation and public gatherings.

Making the city more actively engaged will mean:

- creating opportunities to increase participation in arts, recreation, sport and cultural activities
- providing access to historical and heritage information
- investing in and maintaining a range of high quality cultural & cultural tourism facilities
- seeking new forms of cultural tourism, eg. Maori arts
- investing in the city's public environment, including the waterfront, walkways and city parks.

## How we will measure our progress towards these outcomes

To assess whether Wellingtonians are developing a stronger **sense of place**, we will survey residents to find out what percentage think the city's local identity is appropriately managed and protected.

To assess whether the city is becoming **more eventful**, we will measure:

- The number of events attended by more than 300 people at the following venues: Westpac Stadium, Westpac St James Theatre, Opera House, Wellington Convention Centre, City Gallery, Queen's Wharf Events Centre, Te Papa and Capital E
- The number of weekends on which at least one "cornerstone" cultural or arts event is held in the city
- The percentage of Wellingtonians and New Zealanders who say that Wellington is the events capital of New Zealand
- The percentage of Wellingtonians and New Zealanders who say that Wellington is the arts capital of New Zealand, and
- The number of national arts organisations, professional and amateur theatre groups in the city.

To assess whether the city is becoming **more inclusive**, we will survey residents to find out what percentage thinks the city has a diverse arts scene.

To assess whether Wellingtonians are becoming **more actively engaged** in arts and culture, we will survey residents to find out what percentage has attended an arts or cultural event over the previous 12 months (this information will be analysed by age and demographic group). We will also monitor the number of businesses and employees engaged in the arts and cultural sector.

## 4. Three-year strategic priorities

For the period 2006/09, we've identified the following priorities for our contribution to the city's cultural wellbeing:

- We will take a more pro-active role in protecting and enhancing local sense of place
- We will strengthen our partnerships with arts organisations, festival groups and institutions
- We will engage more effectively with the community on the benefits and relevance of a diverse city
- We will engage more effectively with grassroots community and youth-orientated arts and cultural activities (including music made by youth).

### How we plan to achieve these priorities

We already support Wellington's cultural wellbeing in many ways – for example, by providing and supporting events and venues, through partnerships with arts and heritage organisations, by celebrating the city's heritage and enhancing its sense of place by integrating murals and other public artworks into our urban design projects, and by funding the city's museums, art gallery, the archives and other culture and heritage organisations.

Over the next three years, we are planning several new initiatives to enhance Wellington's cultural wellbeing. These include expanding Te Ara O Nga Tupuna (the Maori Heritage Trail) by adding additional sites of cultural and historical significance, revitalising and expanding the city's Waitangi Day celebrations, supporting a project to establish a permanent home for the New Zealand Portrait Gallery, and taking steps to increase the presence and profile of public artworks in the city. We also plan to consider the future governance arrangements for the Wellington Arts Centre and review our approach to public artworks to ensure they continue to support our strategic priorities.

## 5. Strategy Tree

