

Takatāpui & Rainbow Advisory Council



2022-23 Annual Report



GUIDING WHAKATAUKĪ

E koekoe te tūi, e ketekete te kākā, e kūkū te kererū.

The tūi squawks, the kākā chatters, the kererū coos - it takes all kinds of people.

INTRODUCTION & A SHORT HISTORY

Tēnā koutou katoa

Though TRAC has now completed the second year of its current formation, our history of advocacy is deep rooted in Wellington's Takatāpui and LGBTQIA+ communities. As the capital city, Wellington has been a natural place for us to congregate and campaign to ensure equal rights and protections are afforded to all kiwis, no matter their gender, orientation, identity, race, background, or origin.

The following is an extract from the minutes of a Wellington City Council Housing and Community Development meeting of 30 November 1994. On that day, what was then known as the Lesbian and Gay Advisory Group, won a victory for the cause of equality with the adoption of a Lesbian and Gay Policy. We see now, almost 30 years later, that Takatāpui and LGBTQIA+ communities are still not fully equal and our work to advise and advocate is still an essential part of progressing rights for all people and recognizing the intersectionality of communities across Wellington.

In May 1993, when submissions were being heard for the Draft Annual Plan, a local gay ratepayer presented a submission to Council. In the submission he pointed out that Council's delivery of service was exclusive of the Lesbian and Gay Communities. As a result of this submission, committee requested that a policy on Lesbian and Gay Communities be developed as part of the 95/96 Business Plan.

In particular, he identified cultural and recreational activities, such as the Summer City programme, as rarely considering lesbian and gay communities. In addition he cited that there was minimal marketing of programmes and events to these communities. One of his suggestions was the establishment of a Lesbian and Gay Advisory Group to Council. On August 4 1993 the Advisory Group was formed and recognised officially by Council in November 1993.

This group has acted in an advisory and advocacy capacity and has met regularly with representatives from Council divisions.

In the production of this policy, staff have also been approached by members of the bisexual community who do not feel that this policy acknowledges their community appropriately. It may be desirable at a later date to address this concern.

To date, Wellington City Council has assisted the lesbian and gay communities by providing small amounts of funding, staff resourcing for developing the Lesbian and Gay Advisory Group; a small amount of administrative support; the provision of a venue for the Advisory Group to have its annual report-back to their communities; assisted with the Devotion, Love Parade and International Lesbian Day events; and assisted with the production of a lesbian and gay venue guide for Wellington City.

The City Gallery programme has this year provided events covering lesbian film-makers, writers and architects and in 1995 will be holding a lesbian and gay film festival.

The minutes go on to discuss issues of discrimination for users of Council Services and informally reported discrimination of Council Staff. While there has been progress over time, sadly, much of what is discussed is still prevalent in our Rainbow communities today. Over the past year, TRAC has continued the work of our predecessors advising Wellington City Council on ways to make Wellington a great place for all people to live, work, and recreate.

We would not be able to promote this vision without the considerable efforts and participation of our support system, including Councilor sponsors Iona Pannett and Teri O'Neill who are our links to the Council at a governance level, council officers (many of whom are also members of the Rainbow Communities we serve), Karepa Wall, our leadership sponsor who brought well considered guidance and experience to our meetings, and of special note this past year was Leteicha Lowry who felt more like a member of the group, than our Democracy Advisor.

Noho ora mai

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tyler Dunkel'.

Tyler Dunkel, Co-Chair



THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Over the past period, TRAC continued to build a foundation that would enable longevity in our work. With a multi-generational focus to advocacy for improving the lives of those to come, the group focused on strengthening how we approach topics of our communities strategically. In this period, TRAC began to shift how we engage with officers and projects, moving into a space where we are now more often able to advise on projects from the outset and follow then through their various stages.

An excellent example of this has been the Te Awe Māpara, the Community Facilities Plan. We commend the work of Kristine Ford who has returned many times to update and consult the group with a true effort to understand and incorporate Rainbow communities into the fabric of this plan. Other advice given included projects such as re-imagining Toi Pōneke, Tupiki Ora, Make Visible Wellington, and the Cultural Heritage Strategy.

Challenges in this period continued to include the limited amount of compensated time (2-hours monthly) that the advisory committee meets. Including additional uncompensated time, the advisory committee is limited on what can be accomplished. Additionally, the group feels that presentations are often give as a tick-box exercise rather than a true engagement for our advice and guidance. We are disappointed that the Mayor has not yet been able to engage with us directly and hope that she will look at our group as a resource she can access more deeply. In the meantime, we will endeavour to rely on Council to manage how to expand on the guidance we shall provide strictly within the means of our Terms of Reference

Noting our significantly challenging start to the year due to visibly increased transphobia and transmisogyny, our advice in this period has focused deeply on safety with one of our focus causes being access to and safety in community facilities. Focus this year has included advocacy for the provision of multi-gender toilet facilities, understanding the intersectionality of diverse communities, and ways to create safety in the city centre. In addition to the general business and updates, the following table shows the topics covered in each meeting:

Date	Meeting Topics
20/07/2022	Understanding LGOIMA Introduction to WCC – Leteicha
17/08/2022	Community Facilities Review – Kristine Ford
21/09/2022	Sexual Violence Prevention Island Bay Town Centre Upgrade
19/10/2022	Tupiki Ora Make Visible Wellington
16/11/2022	Strategy Session, including Pride and gender-neutral bathrooms topics
07/12/2022	Cultural Heritage Strategy
JAN 2023	Uncompensated session reflecting on the past 6 months.
15/02/2023	Community Facilities Plan – update and next steps Leadership election for 2023
15/03/2023	Reimagining Toi Pōneke Pōneke Promise – Queer safety in the CBD Teambuilding session Letter to Councilors regarding Kellie-Jay Keen-Mishull (21/03/2023)
19/04/2023	Workshop to prepare for the 2023/24 year and workplan
17/05/2023	Update from Kristine (Community Facilities)
21/06/2023	Development of the four pou for 23/24: <i>Visibility, Safety, Community & Intersectionality</i>

GROUP COMPOSITION

TRAC members have been selected to provide a range and depth of experience concerning the diverse rainbow communities of Wellington City. We do not purport to represent all rainbow and takatāpui people in the city. However, the selection of members has considered the diversity amongst people of minority sexualities, genders, and diverse sex characteristics. This selection also considers the intersectional experiences of members.

Council Officers

Democracy Advisor: Leteicha Lowry (then Steph James)
Executive Leadership Team (ELT) member: Karepa Wall

Councillors

Iona Pannett
Teri O'Neill

Membership

Moko Mataa (Co-chair)
Tyler Dunkel (Co-chair)
Rākau Buchannan
Sam Low
Mani Mitchell
Maggie Shippam
Vinod Bal
Carew Paki
Alex Sawyer

Louis Crawford (newly appointed)
Miniruwani Samarakoon (newly appointed)

**Absolutely Positively
Wellington City Council**

Me Heke Ki Pōneke



Takatāpui and Rainbow Advisory Council (TRAC)

Annual Workplan 2023-2024

Introduction

The Purpose of the Rainbow and Takatāpui Communities Advisory Group is to assist and advise Wellington City Council on how to help grow a city where communities thrive. As a group we bring knowledge and insight to the Council at a governance level with a specific focus on Rainbow communities. Members come from a diverse range of backgrounds and share their expertise and individual lived experience in this advisory capacity.

Though we do not individually represent every faction of our communities, we endeavour to ensure that all people who choose to work, live, and recreate in Wellington are included. We are guided by our wakataukī and have developed four pou which will guide our workplan for the coming year.

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Our four Pou

Safety –	Our primary concern is to create a safer Wellington for all. This includes improved community facilities, city streets, and social interactions that our Rainbow residents can engage with without fear of harassment or harm. Safety to us is not just physical but also mental and emotional safety.
Community –	We will work with projects that specifically have a community focus which deliberately includes the diverse demographics of the Rainbow community in Pōneke. The goal is to foster a supported and engaged community that contributes to a more resilient city overall.
Visibility –	We will focus on initiatives and projects that de-stigmatise and make Rainbow communities visible in positive ways. This is a wide spectrum from spaces and places through to arts, education, and tolerance initiatives which can serve as educational opportunities for promoting understanding and acceptance.
Intersectionality –	In recognising the reality of marginalised communities being disproportionately affected by multiple forms of discrimination, disadvantageous and even environmental issues, we prioritise work which has high intersectionality within our own Rainbow communities and the communities of our sister advisory groups.

Work planned for the 2023-2024 period:

Engagement and Advice on planned council work including:

- The Long Term Plan to insure Rainbow inclusion and resources
- The Youth Hub and its programming
- The Homelessness Action Plan, and Housing Action Plan
- The Accessibility Action Plan
- Te Matapihi, Central Library Project

Topics which are important to us:

- Community places and spaces
 - Including ones that are intersectional and accessible.
 - Rainbow specific spaces such as a room, venue, or community centre.
 - Spaces which are intentionally inclusive of our BBPOC (black, brown, indigenous and other people-of-colour) community.
- Multi-Gender toilets and public facilities
 - Toilets, locker rooms and other public spaces.
 - Policy changes for high impact, long lasting changes.
 - Support for adoption of standards which are up to date and fit for purpose, especially for existing facilities.
- Prevention of violence
 - Specifically sexual violence and abuses.
 - Hate crimes and targeted violence against those visible in our communities.
 - Homelessness and housing concerns.
 - Violence affecting our elders such as discrimination in care.
- Wellington City Council as a business at the operational level
 - Ensuring WCC demonstrates from within our vision of an inclusive city.
 - Ensuring members of our communities working with WCC are supported.
 - Ensuring rainbow councillors, council employees and officers who are public facing are supported to work in mana enhancing ways with members of the public.