

Ngā Hui a te Rōpū Kaitohutohu Take
Hapori Iwi Takatāpui /
Rainbow Communities Advisory Panel

**END OF TERM REPORT FOR THE
2017 – 2019 TERM**

INTRODUCTION

Since it was established in 2016, the Ngā Hui a te Rōpū Kaitohutohu Take Hapori Iwi Takatāpui / Rainbow Communities Advisory Panel has been effective in providing strategic advice to the Governing Body and also working with Council staff on incorporating Rainbow issues into key strategies and policies and supporting them to engage with Rainbow communities and work programmes to improve some of the challenges faced by Aucklanders who identify as LGBTTIQ+.

Why have a Rainbow panel?

Auckland is a place where many key Rainbow communities and organisations thrive. For many seeking a place to belong, because of being Rainbow, it is their first contact with Rainbow society. Many Rainbow people living in more conservative areas of New Zealand move to Auckland.

While it is extremely hard to find any disaggregated statistics for Rainbow people, it is the commonly held view that, nationally, gay and lesbians are 10% of the population, transgender 1.2% and intersex people 2%. As Auckland is such a

magnet for so many Rainbow people, the local statistics could be much higher.

It is therefore essential that a Rainbow lens is placed over key decisions made by and advice given to the Auckland Council. There is, at the time of writing, one elected openly gay councillor. They cannot be expected to hold the sole lens even with the support of a number of salaried staff who identify with various Rainbow communities.

The graphics used in this report were created by Sam Orchard, a queer and trans illustrator, comic creator and designer. <https://www.thesamorchart.com/>

The current panel are:

- Julie Radford-Poupard (Co-Chair)
- John Kingi (Co-Chair)
- Aram Wu (relocated mid-term)
- Moira Clunie
- Mark Fisher
- Lexie Matheson ONZM
- Julie Watson
- Diana Rands
- Bruce Kilmister MNZM
- Audrey Hutcheson
- Dave Hati
- Councillor Richard Hills (Liaison Councillor)
- Councillor Cathy Casey (Chief Liaison Councillor)

Lead Officer(s): James Hassall and Judith Webster

Deputy Lead Officer: Liz Ennor

Principal Advisor Panels: Austin Kim and Carol Hayward

Democracy Advisors: Duncan Glasgow, Sandra Gordon, Michelle Judge, Sonja Tomovska, Luka Grbavac and Kalinda Gopal.

We are so grateful for the superb support, encouragement and guidance we were given over the term and previous partial term from Mike George and Catherine.

Having Councillors Richard Hills and Cathy Casey on our team meant we were able to achieve so much more than we might have been.

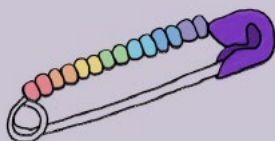
ACHIEVEMENTS

Auckland Rainbow Communities told us that safety, housing, transport, visibility and promotion of Auckland and activation of spaces, events and venues were key themes for what they dream for Auckland Rainbow Communities. The panel used these themes to help frame our work programme and priorities over the three-year term. Meetings with Auckland Council's Governing Body and Executive Leadership Team focused on transport and housing issues.

We commissioned some engagement research on Rainbow communities' priorities for Auckland and **3 Questions** and the full results can be found [here](#).*

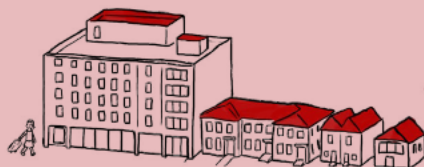
The panel had three focuses and priority areas for the term.

①



a safer Auckland for Rainbow Communities'

②



affordable and secure housing

③



rainbow-friendly spaces, events and venues

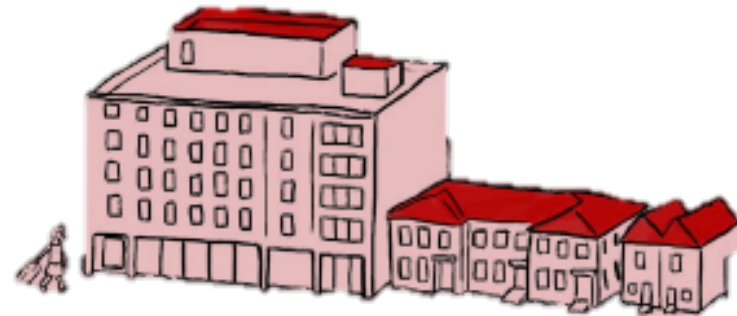
*<http://www.knowledgeauckland.org.nz/assets/publications/3Questions-Auckland-rainbow-communities-advisory-panel-Aug-2018.pdf>

AFFORDABLE AND SECURE HOUSING

In the housing space the panel engaged with staff regarding the Homelessness Count. After meeting with the group managing this project (alongside other groups), they included questions in the survey which led them to finding Rainbow people were overrepresented among those living without shelter. This also resulted in RIMU undertaking a literature review on Rainbow homelessness relevant to Auckland.

Sexual identity information was provided by 49 survey participants. When asked to describe their sexual identity, 86% (42 people) identified as heterosexual/straight and 12% (seven people) with a rainbow sexual identity (gay, bisexual and Takatāpui). Questions about sexual orientation were considered but not included in the 2018 Census (Statistics New Zealand, 2018b). However, comparing the data we do have (New Zealand Attitudes and Values Study), people living without shelter are twice as likely to identify with a rainbow sexual identity and were over-represented living without shelter. Auckland Council (2018) Ira Mata, Ira Tangata: Auckland's Homeless Count report Point in Time Count, p.27.

Rainbow people face social stigma, discrimination and often rejection by their families, which adds to the physical and mental strains/challenges that all homeless persons must struggle with (Keuroghlian, Shtasel & Bassuk, 2014; Cochran, Stewart, Ginzler & Cauce, 2002). Additionally, rainbow people experience barriers to accessing homeless and health services which are safe, inclusive and responsive to their needs (Grant, et al. 2011; Morton, Samuels, Dworsky & Patel, 2018). (P27)



RAINBOW-FRIENDLY SPACES, EVENTS AND VENUES

We were represented in some way at each **Big Gay Out**, promoting the panel, the 3 questions and engaging with our communities.

The panel supported **Auckland Pride** in 2017 by facilitating funding meetings with council organisations and departments to enable the wider Auckland community to celebrate what had become an important annual event. Early in 2019 the panel worked with a range of interested parties including council's own rainbow staff network with a view to finding a way through the challenges faced by the LGBTQI community in relation to the **Pride Parade**.

A representative from the Rainbow Panel made a successful application for a grant from lotteries to undertake a business case for a **Rainbow Hub/Pride centre**

We engaged with Council staff to provide advice on providing more **Rainbow Public Art**

We held a public hui to support Rainbow community members to stand for **governance roles** within Auckland Council, including local body elections.

The panel invited several **Rainbow sports teams** to engage with Auckland Council Investing in Sports policy discussion.



MAKING AUCKLAND SAFER FOR RAINBOW COMMUNITIES

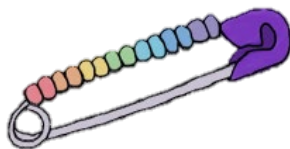
Getting all **gender signage** on some Council bathrooms and changing facilities, and an intention to prioritise this for new builds (we're pushing for an official policy on this). There is also a scoping project now in place for public amenities.

Working with the Mayor to advocate to central government e.g. on the need **for changes to the Human Rights Act to recognise gender identity and expression**. This has involved letters to successive Ministers of Justice and a successful meeting with the Hon Andrew Little facilitated by Cr Richard Hills. The Advisory Panel remains active in this space.

The panel was influential in engaging with Mayor Goff, encouraging him to

make a public statement about the **internment and execution of LGBTQI people in Chechnya**. Mayor Goff issued the statement and it was picked up by the media.

We engaged with Auckland Transport to share the safety issues our communities face using **public transport**.



OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

Making sure **Rainbow demographic questions** are used in Council research including homelessness (see above example of city-wide homelessness survey) and encouraging council to include gender diverse as a sex category (now in many Auckland Council consultation documents). We have asked Council to think about how they collect data over a range of areas. Ideally there would be provision in every data collecting activity. Working with Council to establish a set of **engagement guidelines** that will enable departments to better connect with Rainbow Communities and to embed the idea that, whatever they do, we should be consulted.

We connected with the **Rainbow Staff network of Auckland Council**.

Rainbow community members met with the Mayor at a community hui to contribute to **the Auckland Plan 2050 and 10 year budget**.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations from the Outgoing Panel

- Recommend the implementation of Rainbow education for customer-facing council staff, for example, create “Rainbow Communities are welcome here” signage with Rainbow cultural competency training and checklist for all council facilities and ‘customer facing’ staff i.e. an online 101 module like health and safety.
- Implement a policy for all existing and new council builds to have all gender single stall toilet and changing facilities.
- Implement a policy for collecting demographics of Rainbow Communities as a standard across all of Council.

General panel improvement recommendations

- Ensure the Rainbow panel continues and encourage all areas of the Council to engage them early on in any piece of work to assist with providing a rainbow lens
- Provide a feedback loop for any advice given to Council to discuss outcomes or the need for ongoing work.
- Make the panel as representative as possible – missing from this panel were intersex people, Pacific Rainbow people and unemployed people. We suggest holding places for secondments if necessary.
- Maintain the co-chair model, it has worked well.

