

DUNEDIN
DIVERSITY
STRATEGY

2014-2019



DUNEDIN DIVERSITY STRATEGY 2014-2019

To ensure Dunedin is an inclusive and affirming city that celebrates sexuality, sex and gender diversity and supports its queer folk to be themselves, be healthy, and be well.



This publication was made possible by:

OUSA Queer Support, Little Red Pen, the Rule Foundation, the Community Trust of Otago, Public Health South and the Dunedin City Council.

FOREWORD

As Mayor of the Dunedin City Council, I am delighted that the Dunedin community is examining how we can be more inclusive and affirming of diversity. It was a pleasure to see the wide range of community groups at the Dunedin Diversity Hui in 2013 who have been involved in this work.

One of the main objectives of this Strategy is to create a publicly identified network of queer-friendly professionals. Whether we call it networking, partnering or supporting, my experience over the past few years on Council is that the best and indeed the most robust results are achieved when people, organisations, client groups and stakeholders get together and work to a common end.

I am glad that this process has identified sectors in our community who need more support. This is very much in keeping with the principle that the Dunedin City Council included in our Social Well-being Strategy of manaakitanga: caring, giving and supporting. I believe that queer people are most vulnerable in their youth, when they are coming to terms with their identity. This means that the support to our Dunedin communities needs to have a strong focus on our youth. We greatly value our student cohort, but are conscious that so many of them move on upon graduating, and the age cohort that is thinnest in our city is the 20, 30, 40 year-old group. We must, therefore, make our city welcoming to all young people.

My family, like most families, has members who identify as gay. I would be appalled if they were in any way discriminated against or suffered prejudice in Dunedin. This is why I am passionate about the work of those who celebrate diversity and support queer people in our city. Wouldn't it be great if Dunedin had the reputation as being the most queer-friendly city in Aotearoa/New Zealand?

I look forward to seeing this Strategy develop and will be looking at how the Dunedin City Council can help implement aspects of this Strategy to promote diversity, confront discrimination and support especially young queer people in our community.

Dave Cull
- Mayor of Dunedin City



CONTENT

Introduction	7
Purpose and Goals	8
Goals:	10
Goal 1: Challenging heteronormativity	10
Goal 2: Improving education and support for young people	15
Goal 3: Strengthening accessibility of health, safety and support services	20
Goal 4: Building communities that work together for change	23
Goal 5: Putting the strategy in place	27
Action Timelines	30
Conclusion	31
Resources	32
Dunedin Diversity Charter	33

INTRODUCTION

Queer* and questioning people in Dunedin face a complex web of challenges and opportunities. These include, but are not limited to: population size, lack of venues and services, geographic isolation, lack of sexuality education, and a lack of visibility of queer culture and supportive communities. OUSA provides excellent support services, and Family Planning offers high-quality education, but there is a perception that support and education are fractured and not widely available to all demographics.

Recently, the community lost a support service for high-school-aged queer and questioning youth. This has prompted a variety of key people in the community sector to come together and ask some important questions about the current environment for queer and questioning folk in Dunedin. A core group of representatives from OUSA Queer Support, the Southern District Health Board, and another community organisation was formed to organise an inaugural Dunedin Diversity Hui. This was held on 15 November 2013 and was made possible with the financial support of the Dunedin City Council, the Otago University Students' Association, the Otago Community Trust, and the Rule Foundation.

The hui gathered together more than fifty representatives from community organisations, who met at the Municipal Chambers to discuss challenges facing the queer community in Dunedin, to identify the resources needed to overcome those challenges, and to begin thinking through an action plan for implementing change. The hui was greatly enhanced by a keynote presentation from Labour MP Grant Robertson and short presentations from OUSA Queer Support, Family Planning, South Trans NZ, and the Human Rights Commission. Mayor Dave Cull completed the afternoon with some closing remarks and a commitment to make Dunedin the most queer-friendly city in New Zealand.

The hui generated a host of commitments from community organisations and individuals to work together to form a strategy and a working group to implement that strategy. What follows is the direct result of the community consultation that occurred at the Dunedin Diversity Hui. The Strategy has since been edited and reviewed by a range of stakeholders, both folk from local queer communities and allies who are passionate about creating a more inclusive and affirming Dunedin.

The organising committee would like to thank everyone who has been involved in the Dunedin Diversity Hui, those who have spent time working on this Strategy and those who are committed to enacting it.

* 'Queer' is a term used to describe the many variations of sexual attraction and sex/gender identity, including intersex, transgender, transsexual, genderqueer, asexual, fa'afafine, takatapui, lesbian, bisexual and gay. Although it may not be the preferred term for everyone, it is used to challenge binary representations of sexuality, sex, and gender.

PURPOSE AND GOALS

The purpose of the Dunedin Diversity Strategy is to ensure Dunedin is an inclusive and affirming city that celebrates sexuality, sex and gender diversity and supports its queer folk to be themselves, be healthy, and be well.

The Strategy is built around five areas:

- Challenging heteronormativity
- Improving education and support for young people
- Strengthening accessibility of health, safety, and support services
- Building communities that work together for change
- Putting the Strategy in place

The table below shows the goals for each area.

Area	Goals
 Challenging heteronormativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● To establish a Dunedin Diversity Charter● To develop community-wide education resources, training, and initiatives that raise awareness of queer issues and identities● To attain queer representation in all public decision-making processes
 Improving education and support for young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● To support schools in Dunedin to use the Dunedin Diversity Charter as a foundation for becoming more queer-friendly, and to resource more professional development on queer issues for teachers● To support schools to develop and deliver LGBT/queer-awareness education, especially within puberty and sex education● To support schools to develop robust anti-bullying strategies and programmes
 Strengthening accessibility of health, safety, and support services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● To use the Charter as a tool to identify and link queer-friendly health and support services in Dunedin and to improve the uptake of professional development and training about queer issues among health and support professionals● To ensure access to comprehensive and sustainable support agencies that meet the needs of queer people in Dunedin● To identify and respond to incidents of intolerance

Area

Goals

Building communities that work together for change

- To support and develop events that celebrate the queer community in Dunedin
- To provide spaces for queer people to connect, network, and work together
- To help foster communities of support for all demographics
- To work towards queering public spaces in Dunedin

Putting the Strategy in place

- To establish and sustain a Working Group to implement and develop this Strategy
- To create and fund a paid position to support the work of this strategy
- To consult the wider queer community throughout the development and implementation of this Strategy
- To monitor our progress and provide accountability to the queer communities throughout the development and implementation of this Strategy

Each section of the Strategy has a table of actions, with space for tasks, people, and timeframes to be added. One of the first tasks of the Working Group and the Queer Coordinator would be to complete these tables and develop a timeframe for implementation of the Strategy.

CHALLENGING HETERONORMATIVITY

Goals

- To establish a Dunedin Diversity Charter
- To develop community-wide education resources, training, and initiatives that raise awareness of queer issues and identities
- To attain queer representation in all public decision-making processes

Context

Over the last thirty years, New Zealand society has undergone a seismic shift in understanding and accepting people of diverse sexualities, sex, and gender identities. This has been reflected in changes to legislation, including the Homosexual Law Reform Act (1986), The Human Rights Commission Amendment Act (1993), the Civil Union Act (2004), and the Marriage Amendment Bill (2013). Unfortunately this shift has not been universal, and many sectors of society continue to misunderstand and mistreat queer people.

There is also a sense that despite these legislative changes, New Zealand society is predominantly heteronormative. This term refers to the pervasive societal assumption that heterosexual relationships are 'normal' and of greater value than homosexual relationships. This assumption is evident in discussions around family and adoption, but is also seen in media, marketing, children's books and programmes, music, and the way in which we celebrate special occasions such as Valentine's Day.

Society is also not uniform, and queer people often have to read and navigate complex social terrain: people interact with family, friends, colleagues, sports clubs, officials, faith groups, and strangers in the street. This varied social terrain means that questions about safety, disclosure, and understanding are constantly emerging for queer people as they interact with new people and places. For queer people, everyday encounters and new relationships with friends or colleagues often carry added tension and risk.

Coming out is an ongoing process made up of frequent events: when the perceived norm is to be straight and cisgender¹, queer people shoulder the burden of naming their sexuality or gender if they want to bring their whole selves to groups, friendships, and relationships. Sometimes the barriers to accurately naming or identifying oneself are more mundane, if no less frustrating. For every awkward conversation where someone assumes that your partner is the opposite sex, there is a swathe of forms that only offer boxes for male and female genders.

Coming out can also be dangerous – one might be risking one's job, one's relationships with family and friends, or acceptance in clubs and religious organisations. Violence and hate crimes are very real threats for queer people, mental and physical health can be at risk, and recognising and naming one's identity can at times be isolating or difficult. The risks are increased for those

¹ Where one's biological sex aligns with one's gender identity. An example would be someone who was assigned male at birth and identifies as a man. Cisgender could be seen as the opposite of transgender.



who don't need to come out as their appearance makes it obvious that they are different, that they don't fit within sexual or gender norms. For them, public harassment is often a daily challenge they face.

Language is one of the fields in which the challenges of being queer play out. 'Queer' is a controversial term; some embrace it wholeheartedly, others struggle to use it, others reject it outright. The language of coming out and identifying oneself shifts with time, context, age and culture, and the terms that make sense to some will be alien or confronting for others. Non-inclusive or heteronormative language can also offend or frustrate queer people. Assumptions about what it means to be a woman or a man and how desire and sexuality might be expressed are revealed in the way we talk, even if we are not aware that we are making those assumptions. And critiquing non-inclusive language takes courage and stamina; we have to decide which discussions will be productive, safe, or necessary.

The use of derogatory language – which includes such words as 'dyke', 'faggot', 'tranny' – continues to do harm. These words have the power to cause great discomfort and pain to queer people, especially those who are still 'in the closet'². The use of the phrase 'that's so gay' is a growing issue. This phrase is used widely, especially by young people, as a slur towards something that is weird, different, or lacking value. Queer people hearing this often feel that the flipside is that gay people are being insulted as weird, different, or lacking value.

The challenges of being queer in a heteronormative society exist for people of all ages and cultures. While each person's story is unique, the connections and parallels between our experiences are many – both within and between generations. This is why this Strategy takes a multigenerational approach to culture shifts, with a special emphasis on support for youth and the elderly.

² 'In the closet' can be used to describe someone who has not yet publicly disclosed their sex, sexuality, or gender identity.



Meeting our goals

In striving to fulfil our purpose to create an inclusive and affirming Dunedin, we identify and seek to build upon the gradual and long-term shifts taking place in society, organisations, groups, and individuals.

Establishing a Dunedin Diversity Charter:

We propose that we develop a city-wide Diversity Charter. The Charter would include guidelines on how to support organisations to become queer-friendly and a set of accountability measures. Our aim is for the Charter to be meaningful, relevant and demonstrable. A draft Charter can be found at the end of this Strategy.

One of the aims of the Charter would be to help people and organisations build their understanding of and competency in queer issues. A committee could be established to develop accreditation, auditing, and review processes for the Charter, but as a starting point, it could simply work as a framework for organisations to seek education, develop policies and processes, and assess how diverse and queer friendly they are.

We would like the Charter to be adopted by organisations throughout the city: schools, higher education institutions, legal, financial, and other professional service firms, businesses, religious communities, hospitals and other health-care facilities, community groups, and industrial companies. Training and support would be offered to help these organisations reach the obligations of committing to the Charter.

To promote the Charter, we would offer awards of excellence to companies and organisations that support and celebrate diversity. We would provide regular updates on who is adopting the Charter, how organisations are implementing it, innovative ways that people are celebrating diversity in the workplace, and so on. We could provide these updates through a regular status report, newsletters and events.

Developing community-wide education resources, training, and initiatives that raise awareness of queer issues and identities:

We seek to help build a community that embraces the fact that while we are all different, we have a shared humanity with equal rights and responsibilities. Our aim is to see this recognition reflected in organisational structures and policies, in people's language, attitudes and behaviour, and in public media.

We would like to offer corporate, academic, and community organisations in Dunedin education about queer issues and identities. We would offer this training at all levels of the organisation, from management to entry-level workers. Organisations that had taken up the training could then receive a rainbow endorsement that publicly shows their commitment to affirming and celebrating diversity. In addition, organisations that sign up to the Charter would receive specific training to help them reach the competencies articulated in the Charter.

We would also like to offer public education on queer issues, through forums, workshops, and public awareness campaigns. This education will improve the general public's knowledge of queer



identities, making people more aware of the issues faced by queer communities and helping them learn about how they can be a better support and ally to queer and questioning people.

Another form of public education would be an advertising campaign demonstrating and promoting acceptance and celebration of queer people. This campaign could include TV ads and billboards of queer advocates.

We aim to expand the Dunedin Pride Festival into a week of events, including a queer pride parade, food stalls, parties, film nights, and motivational speakers. The Pride Festival is an opportunity for the whole community to show their love and support for our queer friends and family, as well as show how far we have collectively come in affirming and celebrating diversity. Throughout the year, we would like to hold family-friendly activities for all communities. This may include sports days, as well as more passive recreational activities.

As this Strategy is implemented, we will create significant social and structural change in our communities. This in turn will create a city which will be attractive to queer people as a place to live, work and play. As such, we will work with the Dunedin City Council to market our city as a queer-friendly destination for both tourists and people wanting to relocate here.

Attaining queer representation in all public decision-making processes:

We aspire to have queer-identifying folk on all public decision-making committees and bodies. We will support and empower queer people to stand for elected positions such as the City and Regional Councils, District Health Boards, and Community Boards.

We also want to have queer people engaging in the public decision-making process, writing submissions and working for change within their communities. We would like the Dunedin City Council to liaise more closely with the queer community through a designated staff member. Furthermore, we want to see civic leaders actively promoting and affirming queer communities by attending queer events and making positive public statements.



Actions and tasks

ACTION	TASKS	PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME
City-wide Diversity Charter			
Training for corporate, academic, and community organisations			
Public education on queer issues			
Advertising campaign			
Pride Festival week			
Marketing Dunedin as a queer-friendly destination			
Queer people standing for elected positions			
Greater engagement between civic leaders and bodies and the queer community			

IMPROVING EDUCATION AND SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Goals

- To support schools in Dunedin to use the Dunedin Diversity Charter as a foundation for becoming more queer-friendly, and to resource more professional development on queer issues for teachers
- To support schools to develop and deliver LGBT/queer-awareness education, especially within puberty and sex education
- To support schools to develop robust anti-bullying strategies and programmes

Context


To achieve the best results possible for all students, inclusiveness must be embedded in the culture of educational institutions (schools, university, polytechnic, community education providers) so that they support and celebrate diversity.

Young people are more likely to learn effectively if they feel accepted and confident in their own selves and able to explore and nurture their identity as it develops. Yet, many schools in Dunedin are not as inclusive as they could be. Queer identity is often not acknowledged, included, and accepted, some school cultures work against diversity principles, and school traditions and rituals often explicitly or tacitly privilege straight, cisgender identity. Tolerance is not enough to support healthy development; acceptance and celebration of diverse identities provides a stronger base for growth.

Acceptance and celebration are signalled in a range of ways. It is rare for young people to see positive depictions of queer people and issues within school resources, which tend to be binary and heteronormative. Creating, finding, and using more diverse resources would foster stronger cultures of acceptance and celebration in schools, and would also help young queer people to feel safe and supported in their school environments.

Most teachers are not trained or equipped to support queer students well, and if teachers are not comfortable with queer issues, then even with the best intentions they can limit what happens in the classroom and the wider school environment. Likewise, guidance counsellors may need training on queer issues.

Those with structural or personal power in schools and other education institutions do not always think about being inclusive and translate that into action or reflect in the ways they talk and behave. Particularly in high schools, the culture of a school is often shaped by principals and Boards of Trustees. Those who support and develop diversity in their speeches, policies, and



practices give the young people in their schools room to grow and learn; those who do not risk furthering marginalising some of their students.

Schools should expect diversity among the parents and caregivers of their students. There will be rainbow families and families with queer children; there will also be homophobic families and families that don't know much about queer issues. One of the roles of a school is to help build community out of this diversity, to educate, work with, and support the whole school whanau.

The *Youth07 Report* found that students who were attracted to people of the same sex were three times more likely to be bullied at school. This research was backed up by the findings of *How Safe?*, a report into the safety of Otago secondary schools for queer youth. This research found that two thirds of the respondents had witnessed harassment of queer students due to their identity. This shows that schools need to develop an effective and comprehensive strategy to deal with violence and bullying towards queer students.



Meeting our goals

The broad aim of the goals in this section is to create school and community environments where young queer people feel safe and supported as they develop their identity.

Supporting schools in Dunedin to use the Dunedin Diversity Charter as a foundation for becoming more queer-friendly, and to resource more professional development on queer issues for teachers:

A key step to making schools in Dunedin queer friendly is encourage schools to adopt a schools' version of the Diversity Charter. We would provide workshops, forums, and hui for schools to discuss and strengthen their responses to the Charter.

Staff development is needed to equip teachers and other staff to create an inclusive school environment, and queer education should be embedded in teacher training. We will encourage and support schools to take up professional development about queer issues for their staff so that they can obtain competencies in the elements of the Dunedin Diversity Charter. We will also work with the University of Otago College of Education to develop the training offered to students on LGBT and queer issues.

Work with queer and questioning youth in schools and other alternative education providers should be more coordinated and collaborative. Agencies and community educators need better access to schools and a more coordinated approach between schools. Networking with, in, and between schools will be key to making schools safer and more affirming for queer students, and networking events should include Ministry of Education representatives, teachers, principals, and counsellors.

Boards of Trustees should be involved in work to make schools more queer friendly, and Boards could identify champions and ambassadors for diversity work. All schools should also have a staff member responsible for supporting queer staff and students and liaising with agencies, community educators and other schools.

We would like to establish a queer youth group that is accessible to students from all schools in Dunedin. This group could provide pastoral care, resources, and safe social space for queer and questioning students. This group should be overseen and supported by an established community organisation and could be aided by volunteers from OUSA Queer Support.

Supporting schools to develop and deliver LGBT/queer-awareness education, especially within puberty and sex education:

We would like relationship, puberty and sex education to be taught well in schools and to encompass diversity issues. We would like to work with the university, the polytechnic, and other educational institutions to provide education and to develop guidelines on best practice for teaching diversity issues.

We would also support schools to offer education to parents, caregivers and their wider school communities about queer issues. It is important that schools can confidently explain why it is important to teach diversity education.



Supporting schools to develop robust anti-bullying strategies and programmes:

All schools should have strong and effective strategies and programmes to combat queer-specific bullying. We would like to work with schools to help them develop these strategies and programmes, providing them with resources, models, research, and examples of sound work in this area.

This work builds on Otago schools' commitments to The Coastal Otago Safer Schools Safer Communities Charter and will be informed by the recommendations in the report, *How Safe and Inclusive are Otago Secondary Schools?*



Actions and tasks

ACTION	TASKS	PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME
Schools Diversity Charter			
Professional development for staff			
Education on queer issues for teacher trainees			
Board of Trustees diversity ambassadors and champions			
School queer support staff			
Queer youth support group			
Diversity, communication, and sex education			
Anti-bullying strategies and programmes			

STRENGTHENING ACCESSIBILITY OF HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Goals

- To use the Charter as a tool to identify and link queer-friendly health and support services in Dunedin and to improve the uptake of professional development and training about queer issues among health and support professionals
- To ensure access to comprehensive and sustainable support agencies that meet the needs of queer people in Dunedin
- To identify and respond to incidents of intolerance

Context

All queer people should be able to access queer-friendly, understanding health professionals easily. Trans folk, in particular, often find it hard to identify whom to talk to about health issues and to access competent, supportive, and understanding health professionals.

Often health professionals do not clearly understand the full spectrums of sex, sexuality, and gender identities, and are not able to effectively support and care for clients and patients wherever they sit on these spectrums. Health professionals need to be confident and competent in providing services to queer people, and training programmes and professional development should be widely offered to support this aim.

It is worth noting that many health forms offer only male and female as gender options; this binarism can be alienating or uncomfortable for transsexual, transgender, non-gendered, or indeterminately gendered patients. Thought should be given to other ways of asking about gender, or whether it is always necessary to collect gender information.

Queer survivors of sexual violence and abuse also need high-quality care and support. Specific services and support are needed for people of all genders and sexual orientations.

There is an understanding that rest-home staff have little access to LGBT awareness training. This often means that aged-care facilities operate on heteronormative assumptions and perpetuate traditional views of gender and sexuality. There is an understanding that this results in some of our elderly being forced back in the closet and being unwilling to disclose their identity to staff. This is another area where the Diversity Charter and accompanying accreditation programme would be useful.



Meeting our goals

Together, these goals are designed to make health and support services in Dunedin accessible, appropriate, and safe for queer people.

Using the Charter as a tool to identify and link queer-friendly health and support services in Dunedin and to improve the uptake of professional development and training about queer issues among health and support professionals:

Using the Charter accreditation system, we would like to create a contact list of queer- and trans-friendly services and health professionals who have proven their knowledge and commitment to the queer community. We would promote and disseminate this list through community networks, health services, and support agencies. We would also like to provide information about queer support networks and services in health service waiting rooms, clinics, resource centres, and so on.

We plan to foster relationships with key training institutes for health professionals, placing greater emphasis on LGBT issues in health professional training and practice. This would include working closely with medical schools and the DHB to ensure that all health practitioners are trained to be queer-friendly.

Ensuring access to comprehensive and sustainable support agencies that meet the needs of queer people in Dunedin:

We would like to support the development of accessible, consistent, and transparent processes and services for people transitioning gender. People who provide health care to trans folk should be appropriately educated, or should be able to refer their clients to specialist professionals.

We would also support the establishment of a trans advocate in the hospital system. We would promote this advocate through links and networks in the health system and community, provide updates as required, and encourage as much continuity in the system as possible.

We would also like to support specialist support services for both genders, including rape and sexual abuse support services. These services should be appropriate for people of all sexualities, and should be available to all those who identify as a particular gender, regardless of birth sex.

We would like to encourage health providers and support services to collect data in ways that is appropriate, respectful and sensitive. For example, we would suggest ways to avoid binary data collection. We would also like to consider options for creating a standardised format and process for data collection. We call on coroners and the Police to collect more specific gender and sexuality information when investigating suicides and attempted suicides.

Identifying and responding to incidents of intolerance:

We would like to encourage health promotion and education services to continue delivering information about safety, tolerance, and bullying through resources and education.

We would like the Police, Victim Support, and social workers to liaise about instances of hate crimes and discrimination towards queer communities to ensure that instances are identified and reported, and an action plan put in place to ensure that they are not repeated.



Actions and tasks

ACTION	TASKS	PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME
Information and a contact list of queer support networks and queer-friendly services and health professionals			
Public health and education programmes for health professionals and their services			
LGBT issues in health professional training and practice			
Accessible, consistent, and transparent processes and services for people transitioning gender			
Support services that are accessible for all genders			
Non-binary data collection			
Education and resources about safety, tolerance, and bullying			

BUILDING COMMUNITIES THAT WORK TOGETHER FOR CHANGE

Goals

- To support and develop events that celebrate the queer community in Dunedin
- To provide spaces for queer people to connect, network, and work together
- To help foster communities of support for all demographics
- To work towards queering public spaces in Dunedin

Context

Dunedin has some events that celebrate our queer community, but there is a hunger for more. Participants at the hui put forward a range of ideas for events, activities and festivals. We have selected some of those ideas to pursue in this Strategy, but also hope that as momentum and energy grow, the number and quality of events will rise.

One of the key ways to create a more inclusive and affirming Dunedin is to provide spaces and times for queer people to connect, network and work together. Participants highly valued the time the hui provided to work together, and both during the hui and in the feedback received, they expressed a desire for more sharing, networking, and talking.

Within the queer community, there is a large range of worldviews and cultures. Time to work, connect, and learn from each other across cultural and generational boundaries will help to strengthen the queer community in Dunedin, giving a stronger base from which to create change.

Levels of knowledge and awareness of support networks vary widely, particularly amongst young people. It can be difficult for young people to find the queer communities that are right for them, or the support and services they need. The transient population in Dunedin and the consequent loss of institutional knowledge as people move out of town also make it harder to sustain support and community networks than might be the case in more stable cities.



Meeting our goals

These goals seek to build on what is working well for the queer community in Dunedin. We seek to strengthen the networks that already exist, and to draw the whole city into celebrations of diversity.

Supporting and developing events that celebrate the queer community in Dunedin:

We plan to expand the Pride Festival into a major event that includes a Pride Parade, food, and motivational speakers. We would like the festival to run over a week, and to be a major drawcard for locals and bring in people from our surrounding districts.

Throughout the year, we would like to hold family-friendly activities for all communities. We could also hold summer and winter sports days promoting fun and community participation. We would encourage sports stars to come out and support these events.

To make Dunedin fully inclusive and affirming, we would like to engage the support and mindfulness of the straight, cisgender community. Perhaps the hardest work for this community is learning to dismantle heteronormativity, both internally and in the constructs we build as a society. When we stop assuming that every person is born heterosexual and cisgender, then we will begin to shift to a society where being homosexual or transgender is no longer seen as abnormal or aberrant. This cultural shift will ultimately lead to the end of marginalisation for queer communities in Dunedin.

Providing spaces for queer people to connect, network, and work together:

We would like to rent on a long-term basis a community building or set of rooms where queer people can meet, hang out, work, chat, and spend time together. The space could have youth-only time, and groups could also book a room on a regular or one-off basis.

We would like to create a website that lists support services and contacts for the queer community in Dunedin. This could also work as way of promoting Dunedin as a queer-friendly tourist destination, listing accommodation and businesses that have committed to the Dunedin Diversity Charter.

We aim to build an ally network of queer support and social groups, and the hui provided a good starting point. We will encourage queer groups to share ideas and resources – we have a wealth of experience and knowledge in the community and seek to break down barriers to sharing that wealth. One of the tasks for the ally network would be to work together towards specific events, such as candlelight memorials, the Trans Day of Remembrance, World AIDS Day, and the Dunedin Pride Festival. Youth-related organisations could also work more closely to support queer youth.

Helping to foster communities of support for all demographics:

We are keenly aware that the needs of young and older queer people may not always be fully met by programmes and events designed for and by those in their middle years. Likewise, we are mindful of the intersections between gender, sexuality, culture, sex, ethnicity and class. We would like to foster communities of support for all our queer folk, through seed funding, resourcing, and networking.



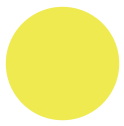
We wish to make sure that those running queer events in Dunedin consider opportunities for intergenerational interaction and that the events are also culturally inclusive.

We would also like to ensure that family, friends and partners of queer people have access to support services, resources and advice. Groups such as PFLAG are a good starting point for this support.

Working towards queering public spaces in Dunedin:

We would like to be part of a committed drive to make public spaces more queer-affirming than they currently are. We would like to work with the Dunedin Public Art Gallery, the Dunedin Public Library, Keep Dunedin Beautiful and the Dunedin City Council to increase the visibility and status of queer art, literature, performances and spectacle.

We would like to encourage greater support for local queer artists and writers; we would also like to encourage visits and exhibitions by queer artists and writers from other places.



Actions and tasks

ACTION	TASKS	PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME
Pride Festival Week			
Family-friendly activities			
Sports days			
Community building or rooms			
Website			
Ally network			
Communities of support for all demographics and support for family, friends, and partners of queer folk			
Queer public spaces			
Queer artists and writers			

PUTTING THE STRATEGY IN PLACE

Goals

- To establish and sustain a Working Group to implement and develop this Strategy
- To create and fund a paid position to support the work of this Strategy
- To consult the wider queer community throughout the development and implementation of this Strategy
- To monitor our progress and provide accountability to the queer communities throughout the development and implementation of this Strategy

Context

As discussed in the Introduction, this Strategy grew out of concern about the environment for queer and questioning people in Dunedin. The hui generated energy and commitment, and this Strategy seeks to harness that energy and commitment to develop and implement a sustainable and focused plan for making Dunedin more inclusive and affirming for our queer folk.

Our dream is that Dunedin could become known as the most queer-friendly city in New Zealand. This Strategy gives that dream some ground from which to grow.



Meeting our goals

The goals in this section address the work needed to develop and implement this Strategy. Underpinning this work is a deep commitment to drawing inspiration from, consulting, and working with the wider queer community.

Establishing and sustaining a Working Group to implement and develop this Strategy:

As a first step, we would like to establish a Working Group to implement and develop the Strategy. The Working Group would be made up of people who signed up for that role at the hui, and they would have the capacity to co-opt other members as necessary. We would like the Working Group to encompass the health, education, business, professional, community, and social service sectors. We would also like to include older and young queer people.

Creating and funding a paid position to support the work of this Strategy:

We would like to create and fund a full-time, paid position for a Dunedin Queer Coordinator to support the queer community and oversee the implementation of this Strategy. We would like the Coordinator to be based within the Dunedin City Council, and to be supported by the Working Group.

We anticipate that much of the work in the Strategy could be done by people in the community, but a paid position is needed to retain a focus on the broader aims of the Strategy and coordinate the various strands of work. One of the key roles of the Coordinator would be to pinpoint key people to do particular roles, such as advocacy, education and training, policy, and support.

Consulting the wider queer community throughout the development and implementation of this Strategy:

We expect the Working Group to consult and work with the wider queer (and ally) communities as they develop and implement the Strategy. Most of the members will be representatives who can link to and from their own communities. The Working Group will need to build mechanisms for ensuring the flow of information between the group and the wider community.

We would like the Working Group to have a dedicated page on the website discussed in the previous section. This webpage would explain the role of the Working Group and the Dunedin Queer Coordinator. The webpage would also be a good place to post updates on the implementation of the Strategy, newsletters, and so on.

Monitoring our progress and providing accountability to the queer communities throughout the development and implementation of this Strategy:

In addition to the website, we would like to send out regular updates in email or hard copy. We would like to create an e-list of people who would like to receive these updates. We could also set up a Facebook group for this community to network online.

The Diversity Hui should be held annually to review the work of the Queer Coordinator and the Working Group. These hui would be an opportunity to monitor the progress of the Strategy, provide accountability to the wider community, network, and gather energy and ideas from each other.



Actions and tasks

ACTION	TASKS	PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME
Working Group			
Dunedin Queer Coordinator			
Consultation			
Webpage			
Updates			
Facebook Group			
Diversity Hui			

ACTION TIMELINE

TIMEFRAME	TASK	ACTION	PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE
Short-term			
Medium-term			
Long-term			

CONCLUSION

Dunedin is a beautiful city with a rich and diverse heritage. It is a creative hub for start-up enterprises and has access to a wealth of knowledge, innovation and intellectual progress through the University of Otago, the Otago Polytechnic and other educational institutions. Dunedin's cultural diversity is expressed through many well-supported initiatives and performances. The city has diverse built and natural environments, especially on the Otago Peninsula.

Dunedin's creativity, diversity, intellectual output and economic development give it a strong foundation for developing cultures of inclusion and celebrating difference. The Dunedin Diversity Hui highlighted many of the challenges faced by queer communities in Dunedin, but also revealed great optimism for change and progress. Dunedin really could become the most queer-friendly city in the country, a status we should be working towards and one we could be proud of.

To better understand the issues that are being grappled with, our community needs to recognise privilege, power imbalance and normative values, and be willing to participate in changing these cultures. It is only through meaningful cultural change that we will be able to form a community that doesn't assume someone's sexuality, sex or gender identity and that is truly welcoming to all.

The Dunedin Diversity Charter is a tool for creating this cultural change, giving us simple targets that will create safer spaces throughout our city. If organisations, schools, institutions, businesses and the Dunedin City Council commit to the Charter, we will see a significant increase in training and thinking about what it means to be truly queer-friendly. Groups that undertake the process of accreditation will provide safer spaces and will be able to promote their accredited status to the public.

The challenge now is to ensure that this Strategy remains a living document which is adopted, developed and implemented. The Working Group is charged with analysing the Strategy, identifying funding sources and resources, networking across the community, prioritising the tasks required for change, and setting a timeline for achieving these tasks.

The Strategy is built around five areas:

- Challenging heteronormativity
- Improving education and support for young people
- Strengthening accessibility of health, safety, and support services
- Building communities that work together for change
- Putting the Strategy in place

These areas target the most important challenges faced by queer and questioning people in Dunedin and give the Working Group tangible goals to achieve. To make progress, the Working Group will need support from across the community, as well as from national services and local and central government.

The Dunedin Diversity Hui has shown us that there is already wide support for this Strategy, for the Working Group, and for meaningful cultural change. Nathaniel Branden once said that "The first step toward change is awareness. The second step is acceptance." We believe that this Strategy can achieve both.

RESOURCES

CATEGORY	RESOURCES
City culture and attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queer-friendly and queer-embracing churches • A small, workable city with strong networks • Interesting student culture
Legal, Human Rights and Government context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) • Homosexual Law Reform Act (1986) • Human Rights Commission Amendment Act (1993) • Civil Union Act (2004) • Marriage Amendment Bill (2013) • Human Rights Commission (est. 1977) • Gender Reassignment Health Services for Trans People in New Zealand: http://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/publications/gender-reassignment-health-services-for-trans-people-nz-2012-v2.pdf • Yogyakarta Principles: http://www.yogyakartaprinciples.org/
Professional and support services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queer-friendly professionals • Queer support services at the University of Otago • Sexuality education • Queer-friendly teachers • Education and support for health professionals • Queer-friendly medical staff and health professionals
Groups and networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community College Youth Service • Lemon Briefcase • Otago Youth Wellness Trust • Over 45s Tea Group • PFLAG • Purple Passions • Rape Crisis Dunedin • South Trans NZ • Youthline • Online applications and social networking • Various active community groups
Publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Express • GayNZ: www.gaynz.com

DUNEDIN DIVERSITY CHARTER

Vision

To to ensure Dunedin is an inclusive and affirming city that celebrates sexuality, sex and gender diversity and supports its queer folk to be themselves, be healthy, and be well.

As an organisation, institution, school or business, we commit to:

- 1) Have an equal-opportunity policy that specifically acknowledges sex, sexuality and gender identities
- 2) Provide a safe working environment for queer staff, contractors, clients and customers
- 3) Provide diversity training to all staff, developing their understanding of queer identities and how to create safe environments
- 4) Ensure that non-inclusive language and attitudes within the work environment are not tolerated and are responded to adequately
- 5) Ensure that gender-neutral bathrooms and similar facilities are conveniently available for staff, contractors, clients and customers
- 6) Allow access to Dunedin Diversity Charter representatives to evaluate and accredit this commitment

