

AKTIVE

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

HOW TO ENCOURAGE
AND EMBRACE DIVERSITY
AND INCLUSION IN YOUR CLUB



OVERVIEW

Insights show that Auckland's population is truly diverse. It is important that sport and recreation organisations reflect the community they are in because by actively fostering diversity and inclusion, your club/code can create a richer environment. Not only does this knit stronger links with your community, it also broadens the awareness and support for your club/code. Building strong relationships with other groups and businesses in your community can go a long way to helping your club/code achieve its desired outcomes. There are many different organisations that play a vital role in growing and supporting sport and recreation at the community level.

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THE PURPOSE

Auckland is a complex multi-cultural environment with many challenges and unparalleled opportunities to increase and sustain participation in sport and recreation. This has led to the establishment of *The Auckland Approach to Community Sport*, a strategic response aiming to create a world-class community sport system in Tāmaki Makaurau, community by community. This toolkit has been developed (and will be updated) by Aktive, with input from delivery partners CLM Community Sport, Harbour Sport, Sport Auckland and Sport Waitākere, based on insights and good practice examples from across Auckland.

The purpose of this generic community engagement toolkit is to provide information, insights and ideas that will assist leaders of clubs/codes to develop and foster a diverse membership. It can be tailored and implemented as each club/code sees relevant.



WHAT IS AN INCLUSIVE ORGANISATION?

Sport and recreation are essential components of everyone's lives – it provides meaning, positive self-esteem, pleasure and health.

All people have a right to participate in sport and recreation of their own choice and for their own individual motivations – no matter their ability, age, ethnicity, gender, nationality, race, sexuality or social status.

It can be challenging for clubs/codes to be fully inclusive but those that are open to all and embrace inclusion often see a range of benefits.

WHAT ARE SOME BENEFITS OF BEING INCLUSIVE?

- Increased membership of your club/code and increased understanding and experience of diversity
- Increase in the number of players, volunteers and administrators, who can help contribute to the success and running of your club/code
- Increased chance of sponsorship from companies with diverse management or consumer base
- Strengthening of the community as a whole by encouraging everyone to contribute to building a stronger society
- Greater awareness and understanding of different cultures, religions, gender, ability and sexuality





Being inclusive is about promoting your club/code, offering different ways for people to engage with your activities and increasing access to your facility. Below are some questions for your club/code to consider:

PHYSICAL ACCESS

- How do people get to your club and get in?
- Is it accessible (ramps, wide doors, accessible changing rooms) to people with a disability?
- What about separate spaces for females/males?
- Is it safe to walk to and from your club (adequate lighting, pathways)?
- Is there accessible parking?
- What about public transport?

■ **Details about providing access to your club and facility** >> 

ATTITUDE

- How do you feel about inclusion?
- Has your club openly discussed the benefits of inclusion at committee level?
- Open minded clubs that are inclusive allow for better decision making, wider pools of participants, extended community links and can potentially generate more income. Is your club ready to welcome people with disability or those from a different cultural background?
- What training can you offer and access for your coaches and volunteers to support inclusion?
- How flexible are your policies? For example, consider your uniform policy


– does it allow for a degree of modesty (for people who wish to keep their bodies covered)?

OPPORTUNITY

- Are fixtures held on a day religiously significant for ethnic groups in your community?
- Do you offer flexible payment terms or a sliding scale?
- What adaptations could you make to equipment, rules or policies to open up choices and increase accessibility?

COMMUNICATION

- Are people able to find out about your club and what it offers?
- Do they have access to the right information in their language or in a format they can understand?
- What about the way you communicate?

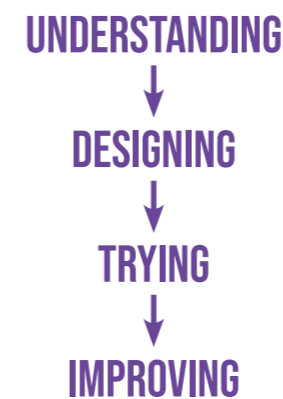
■ **Details about marketing and communication** >> 



ENGAGING WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

When engaging with diverse communities it is important to spend time with them, connect through learning about their language and culture and experience their way of life. Find their community champions and get them on board. Remember that communities can be different; they may have different sporting interests and different approaches to playing the same sports. The way you go about establishing relationships with one community will potentially differ to another community. Some communities may face different barriers to accessing sport. Sport has the potential to reach a wide cross-section of community members and can be used to address social inequities and disadvantage.

Here is a guide for how you could engage with diverse communities.



UNDERSTANDING – Before you start to develop your programme, take the time to really understand your target community’s needs. Look at insights, build relationships with your community and ask questions to help you understand what people want. Focus on building relationships first, not designing or delivering programmes. It takes

time to connect before you can move into development mode. Accept that existing models might not be suitable and may need to be adapted considerably depending on the community’s needs.

DESIGNING – Once your community values your contribution and you have developed trust with your community, involve others in the design of programmes. Developing and delivering in partnership with the community will increase the chances of a successful programme. It also increases ownership amongst your target community.

Think about:

- Who will deliver the programme
- What time the programme will be delivered
- What equipment you will need
- Where you will hold it
- How long it will run for
- What you will do to promote it
- Will there be a cost

Also consider translating information on facility doors, signs in facilities and any promotional brochures.

TRYING – After you have come up with some ideas you will need to test the strongest one. Working in partnership will allow you to adapt/tailor existing delivery models to ensure these unique needs are taken into account.

IMPROVING – Reflect on what you have tried and gather feedback from multiple sources to help you refine your programme.

THE POWER OF LANGUAGE

WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO CONNECT WITH OTHERS?

Engage with them - people can tell you what they are after, what prevents them from being involved and what needs to be changed.

Language is the most powerful tool we have. We can sometimes choose our words or actions without thought or use speech that emotionally upsets others. We can talk more than we need to, which makes it difficult for others to comprehend us. We can fail to pay attention to the subtle meanings conveyed by facial expressions, body gestures and the tone and cadence of our voice. Consider that for many English may not be their first language, a person may have difficulty processing information quickly, or a hearing impairment may be present.

PEOPLE DON'T CARE HOW MUCH YOU KNOW UNTIL THEY KNOW HOW MUCH YOU CARE.

A good starting point is to understand other people's viewpoints which allows us to tailor our conversations to their uniqueness. Doing this well will help us connect individual people together and form social bonds.

Here are some key points to remember:

- Pronunciation of words – particularly personal names and places is important. Take time to learn how to pronounce names correctly and do not assume it can be shortened
- Be mindful to provide personal discussion opportunities in group settings and meetings. Allow for introductions before agenda items; knowing who you are and where you're from is important, especially in building relationships
- Face-to-face engagement is generally preferred, and efforts should be made to meet and work in person where possible
- Take the time to consider the best venue for an event/meeting depending on formality required
- Understand who you are talking with and manage their expectations around protocols accordingly
- Consider appropriateness for the whole family when designing programmes; Intergenerational is important
- Support the use of other languages and cultural practices as often as possible in as many domains as possible
- Consider appropriate food arrangements for meetings and other events
- Promote accessibility options on your website (facilities, changing spaces, parking)



HOW TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION FROM DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED THE DIVERSITY (OR LACK) OF YOUR CLUB/CODE COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP?

Ensuring your governance and leadership structure reflects your community is a first goal to conclusion. Getting your club's policy on diversity and inclusion right is something that will have you moving towards a more inclusive organisation. This will provide clear direction and guidelines for everyone involved and will help to set realistic and consistent goals and objectives for everyone.

Some ideas to assist:

- Ensure promotional material clearly states that membership is open to all people regardless of age, race, gender and ability and perhaps offer materials in a variety of languages. Make sure your website and social media mirror

this too, using simple language and avoiding stereotypes

- Make volunteer roles within your club available to all club members and encourages those of varying ethnicities, ages and genders to engage
- Work with other organisations to actively engage people from different ethnic groups and people with disability in your club/code
- Offer flexible activities and competitions which can be adapted or modified to suit diverse needs adapting for the use of modified uniforms, equipment and rules
- Provide cross-cultural/disability awareness training to your committee and members to ensure appropriate cultural and gender issues are addressed when developing programmes and policies

- Schedule sessions, classes, activities and competitions on the premises of ethnic community organisations to encourage those too shy to approach recreation centres and sport clubs. The timing of training sessions and competition days can be set through a consultative process to address religious, cultural and work needs. Are you aware of the timing of religious celebrations that may impact on the ability of some members to attend training sessions and matches?
 - Encourage the whole family to participate, e.g. helping with volunteering, catering, umpiring, equipment maintenance and most importantly attending games as spectators
 - Speak with service providers who work with new migrants such as migrant resource centres and provide them with information about your club and what you offer to form links with them to encourage new members
 - Hold regular club open days and coaching sessions to encourage local people to visit the club and become familiar with the facilities and members
 - Be aware that people who speak English as their first language tend to speak quickly, which may be difficult for a person learning English to comprehend. Try to speak clearly and avoid slang, but don't speak with a false accent, shout, or talk slowly
 - Take time to develop relationships and be open and honest. Don't be afraid to ask questions. It is okay to ask a person questions about where they have come from, what sports they like playing and how to include them in your club/code
- **There are more ideas on increasing membership in our participation and membership toolkit >>**
 - **There guidelines in the policy and procedures toolkit >>** 



MODIFYING SPORT AND RECREATION TO BE INCLUSIVE

USING THE STEP INCLUSION MODEL

The STEP inclusion model outlines what changes - Space, Task, Equipment and/or People - can be made to sport and recreation activities so that all participants can be included. Use this model for disability, beginner/older participants, injured players for example.

A SCENARIO...

YOU TURN UP TO THE CLUB TO COACH A SCHOOL GROUP AND WITHIN THE GROUP THERE ARE 3 FEMALES AND 4 MALES: 2 ARE LEFT-HANDED, 1 USES A WHEELCHAIR, 1 IS PHYSICALLY BIGGER THAN THEIR PEERS AND 1 HAS NO INTEREST IN YOUR SPORT/ACTIVITY.



To accommodate these different types of athletic abilities you could...

SPACE Change the area available to make the game more or less difficult. Have two or three different areas with different space options to cater for differing skill levels.

TASK Change the demands of the task in response to skill levels. Modify the rules – be flexible. Different people can have different tasks within a game. Change direction, time and other components.

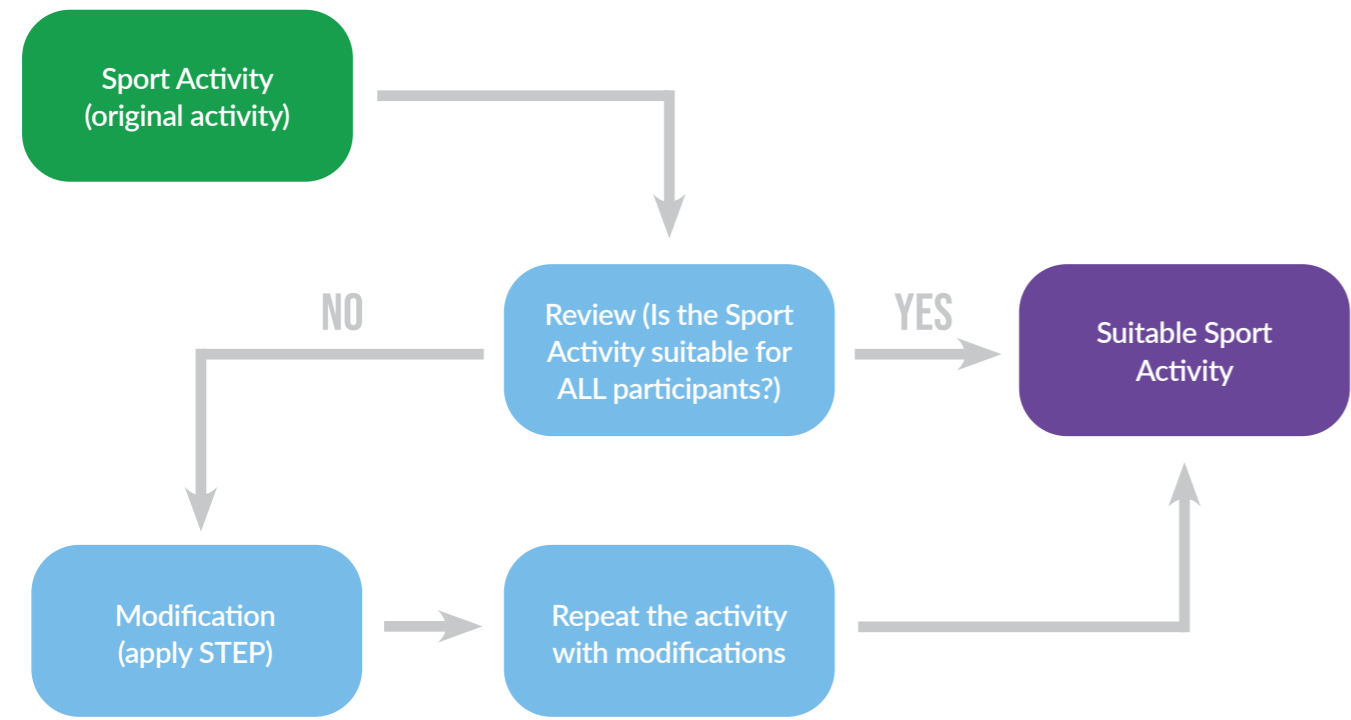
EQUIPMENT Modify the size, shape, weight, colour or arrangement of equipment to meet skill levels or inclusion level of the game.

PEOPLE Change the number of players involved. Utilise different groupings based on skill levels. Not all of the group needs to have the same number of players involved.

Although we can modify sports and activities in a number of ways, we should always focus on maintaining the integrity of the game or activity being delivered, while maximising our participants' potential.

The following flowchart illustrates how inclusion is a process that constantly needs to be reviewed and helps us determine how much adaptation is needed for a particular activity to maintain a balance.

DO WE NEED TO MODIFY OUR SPORT/ACTIVITY TO ENABLE INCLUSION?



HANDLING SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

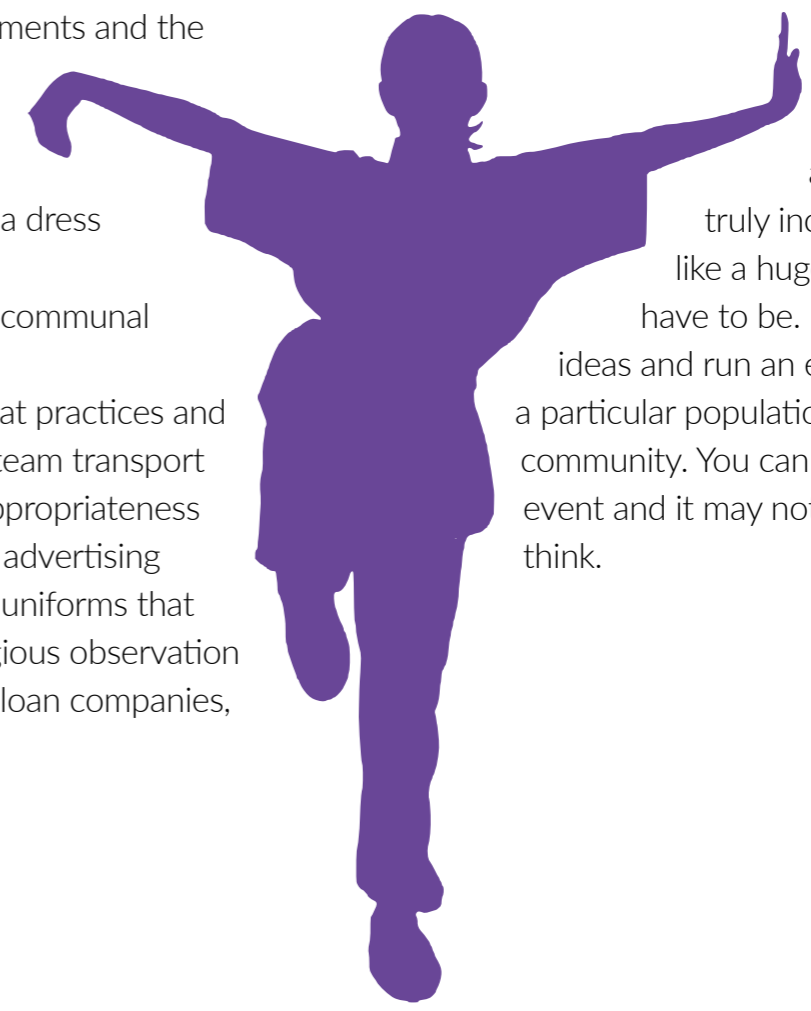
Just as we can adapt sport practices for people with different abilities, younger people, older people, and gender differences, sports should also consider cultural and social beliefs in the administration of their programmes.

These cultural considerations may include, but are not limited to:

- training or playing days that conflict with religious observation
- consider providing a place or appropriate environment for observation of prayer
- consider fasting, hydration and other dietary requirements and the perceived effects on performance
- conforming to a dress code
- providing only communal change rooms
- gender mixing at practices and games and or team transport
- tolerance or appropriateness of sponsors or advertising logos on team uniforms that contradict religious observation (e.g. gambling, loan companies, alcohol)

Here are some of the practical things your club/code could do:

- set aside a quiet, demarcated space that can be used as a prayer area or religious observation area if required
- be aware of and allow players to take breaks during practice for religious observation
- create set time for single gender practices or “closed to public” matches
- offer the opportunity for input from a range of members to accommodate dress codes in team uniforms



Modifying policies, practices, processes and activities to become truly inclusive may seem like a huge task but it doesn't have to be. Talk about it, gather ideas and run an event that targets a particular population group in your community. You can learn a lot from one event and it may not be as hard as you think.



BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS


You don't need to tackle inclusion on your own as there are other organisations in your community who share your goals and will work collaboratively with your club/code to achieve a common objective. Sharing resources, experience, data and information will benefit everyone. Sport can contribute to community identity, as a focal point for personal interaction and community engagement through a collaborative approach.

Here are some examples of where this has happened:

- **Hockey New Zealand**, with a contribution from Aktive and Auckland Council, increased delivery of the wider-Auckland regional hockey participation programme, including Small Sticks and a pilot to deliver hockey to the Sikh community
- **Auckland Cricket Association** ran skills sessions at the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre, during a six-week programme to integrate new refugees into New Zealand, with a view for the participants to join clubs

- **The Halberg Disability Sports Foundation** collaborates with established sports organisations and clubs on disability sport events and programmes in clubs, schools and in communities, to increase participation and to provide club support with modifying sport to include disabled athletes

There are also organisations and programmes targeting specific population groups that work collaboratively with clubs such as He Oranga Poutama ki Tāmaki Makaurau (HOP), ActivAsian, Sports Pasifik and Auckland Indian Sports Club. Specific toolkits and additional support resources for Maori, Pasifika, Asian, Indian and Disability are being developed to enable people to be more aware of simple protocols and cultural practices that will support respectful engagement in sport and recreation.

- [Information about these programmes and resources >>](#) 

IMPROVING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Measuring the impact of what your club/code offers, and delivers is an important step in sport and diversity programming. Here are some tips to help you improve how well your club/code engages with your community:

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Networking with community groups and other sports, recreation providers, migrant services, disability providers. Get to know the organisations in your area
- Research your community demographic profile through council, health board and **Sport NZ insights data >>**
- Attend community group activities on offer with an intent to engage with others different from yourself and promote what you do and can offer

REGISTRATION FORMS

- Try and maintain attendance records, including contact details, age, gender, ethnicity and accessibility needs if possible
- Acknowledge that some people will not want to reveal some of these details – so include an opt out option for this field

- Try to use an online form where possible – this means drop-down lists and tick boxes can be used to make it easier to collect and collate the information

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

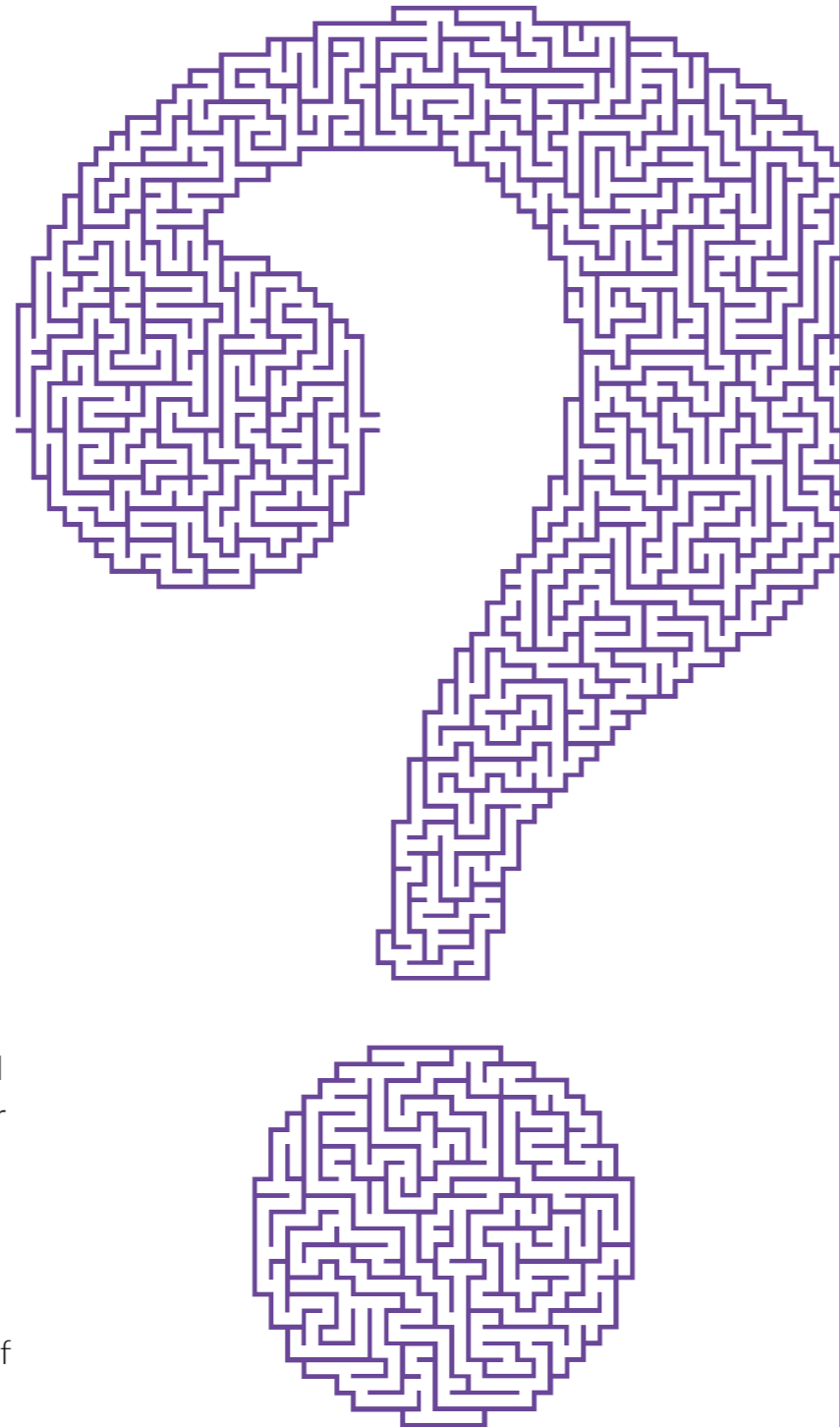
- Make it easy for participants to provide feedback – ask questions face to face at the time of the programme
- If using feedback forms make these as simple as possible. Use simple language and provide multi-choice questions
- Follow up with those who drop out of the programme. This will allow you to identify how you could improve your offering



STARTING QUESTIONS

We've provided some questions to prompt some thinking and discussion around where your club/code could start to improve your diversity and inclusion practices:

- Does your club/code have an inclusion or diversity policy?
- Do you record the ethnicities of your members at registration?
- Are your club officials and members regularly made aware of your policies, statements and strategies that support inclusion and diversity?
- Are your club/code signs and promotional material clear, easy to read and understand, and in languages other than English? Do they show positive images featuring sports people from diverse backgrounds?
- Do your management, volunteers and members reflect the diverse make up of your community?
- Do you know the local migrant and refugee community organisations in your area?
- Do your activity times clash with significant religious celebrations, observances or practices?
- Do you participate in community events, festivals and cultural celebrations?
- Do you run joint initiatives with local community organisations?



- Do you ensure food and drink caters to differing religious dietary requirements?
- Does your club/code have a flexible uniform policy including supporting women who may wear a headscarf or observe a dress code?
- Does your catering reflect different cultural or religious and gender requirements?

LOOKING FOR FURTHER INFORMATION?

There is a range of resources available to assist with the running of your club/code.

HERE TO HELP

Your Regional Sports Trust/Organisations are also here to help – please don't hesitate to contact us if you would like to talk through any of this material and/or assistance for your club and/or code.

MORE INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT THE FOLLOWING:

[aktive.org.nz](https://www.aktive.org.nz) >>

[clmnz.co.nz/clm-community-sport](https://www.clmnz.co.nz/clm-community-sport) >>

[harboursport.co.nz](https://www.harboursport.co.nz) >>

[sportauckland.co.nz](https://www.sportauckland.co.nz) >>

[sportwaitakere.co.nz](https://www.sportwaitakere.co.nz)>> 

Information in this toolkit is for guidance only and does not constitute formal professional advice. Where specific issues arise in your club/code, advice should be sought from the relevant expert(s) as necessary.

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