

WELCOME GROUPS

The Cape Breton Welcome Network is a constellation of local, volunteer-led Welcome Groups spread all around the Island. We call these enthusiastic community volunteers, **Welcomers**. These Welcomers are well-connected and very familiar with their communities – their histories, their great local activities and their hidden gems.

The welcoming activities of each group are different – customized to best suit each community and each newcomer. Common activities might include: meeting for coffee, delivering welcome baskets, or even offering community tours.

THE ROLE OF A WELCOMER

Welcomers are the fundamental roots of the Cape Breton Welcome Network. These volunteers contribute their time to the welcoming activities of their local Welcome Group. With the support and guidance of their Chair or Co-Chairs, Welcomers connect with newcomers and help them to feel at home.

The Cape Breton Welcome Network is about enriching our communities. Learning with and about each other as we live and work together only increases the value and prosperity of Cape Breton – Unama'ki.



Welcomers are:

- Open-minded and respectful of diverse cultural backgrounds
- Passionate and knowledgeable about their communities
- Eager to welcome and include newcomers in the community

The time commitment of a Welcomer will vary with each group and each volunteer. Prior to engaging in welcoming activities with the group, each Welcomer is asked to complete training in cultural competency. This training will be provided by the Network or can be self-guided, with provided resources.

FOR MORE INFORMATION



welcometocapebreton.ca/welcomenetwork



welcomenetwork@capebretonpartnership.com

THE ROLE OF A WELCOME GROUP CHAIR

Each Welcome Group nominates a volunteer Chair. The role of the Welcome Group Chair is to:

- Coordinate Welcome Group Meetings:
 - > Schedule meetings with members
 - > Book a meeting space (or set up an online meeting)
 - > Prepare meeting agendas and share them with members
 - > Chair meetings
 - > Send meeting summary notes out following each meeting
 - > Ensure follow-up on action items
- Maintain a list of current Welcome Group members (including their interests and contact information)
- Act as the first point of contact for newcomers reaching out to the Welcome Group (for example, their name/phone number/email address will be listed on the Welcome Network website)
- Onboard new Welcomers to the group and provide them with resources supplied by the Welcome Network
- Connect Welcome Group members with newcomers who reach out
- Oversee the coordination of any events or activities planned by the Welcome Group
- Twice each year, submit a brief Welcome Group Report to the Cape Breton Partnership, providing updates on the group
- Act as the liaison for their Welcome Group in the Welcome Network
- Adhere to the Cape Breton Welcome Network Communications Template (to be provided)

THE ROLE OF THE WELCOME NETWORK

The role of the Welcome Network is to support Cape Breton communities in their efforts to welcome newcomers. Through staff at the Cape Breton Partnership, the Welcome Network is responsible to:

- Maintain content related to the Cape Breton Welcome Network on www.welcometocapebreton.ca, including:
 - > General information about the Network and how to get involved
 - > A volunteer resource area
 - > Contact information for Welcome Group Chairs and Co-Chairs
- Evaluate the progress of Welcome Groups and the Network as a whole
- Support the establishment of new Welcome Groups
- Encourage connections between Welcome Groups
- Provide training and templates for Welcome Groups to support best practices in communication
- Promote the Welcome Network

The Cape Breton Welcome Network does not:

- Provide funding to Welcome Groups for their events or activities
- Dictate the activities of Welcome Groups



Newcomers are encouraged to reach out to the relevant Welcome Group Chair directly, with the information provided at www.welcometocapebreton.ca/welcomenetwork





SAMPLE WELCOME GROUP ACTIVITIES

Each Welcome Group decides which welcoming initiatives it will organize in its community. These activities could be very modest – connecting volunteers with newcomers for phone calls or cups of coffee at the kitchen table. The activities could also be more complex – large welcoming events, requiring fundraising and event planning teams. Ultimately, the emphasis is on deciding which activities will work best for your group and the newcomers in your community. **It's about helping newcomers to adjust and settle into their new home.** Have fun, be creative, and consider what would make you feel welcome upon arriving in a new community.



Please follow all public health guidelines when engaging in welcoming activities.

Here is a list of a few possible Welcome Group activities:

- Organize a get-to-know-you phone call or kitchen table chat with a newcomer
- Make a basket of goodies and deliver it as a "welcome to the community" gift
- Offer to go along to the grocery store or on other errands
- Invite a newcomer to volunteer with you in the community
- Connect with newcomers on social media and use direct messages to introduce them to others in the community
- Connect newcomers to sources of local information that you think might be interesting or helpful to them
- Offer a tour of the community and introduce newcomers to some 'hidden gems'
- Invite newcomers to join you for a meal at your home or a picnic on the beach

FOR MORE INFORMATION



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