



LACHLAN SHIRE
COUNCIL

Wiradjuri Country

Draft DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

2025 - 2029

Adopted:





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Lachlan Shire Council acknowledges the Wiradjuri people as the Traditional custodians of this land.

We recognise their strength and resilience and pay respect to Elders past, present, and emerging and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are part of the Lachlan Shire community.

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MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR AND GENERAL MANAGER

The General Manager and I are pleased to present
Lachlan Shire Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan
for 2025-2029.

The Lachlan Shire Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) demonstrates our commitment to improving inclusion and access within our community.

This document aligns with Lachlan shire Council's 10-year Community Strategic Plan and our Delivery Program. It outlines disability inclusion actions planned over the next four to ten years.

At Lachlan Shire Council, we believe that disability inclusion is achieved by working together with a shared commitment to improving the lives of people with disability and the broader community. We are dedicated to providing people with disabilities and their carers the same rights as everyone to be involved and contribute to our community.

Lachlan Shire Council's vision is for an inclusive, respectful and diverse community where people of all abilities have the opportunity to live, learn, work and play as they choose and are able to actively participate in decisions that may impact on them.

The Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan's vision aims to:

- promote positive attitudes and behaviours in the community
- provide better access to information, services and facilities

- provide a more liveable and accessible community
- enhance employment opportunities and;
- increase opportunities for people with disability to participate in community life.

Lachlan Shire Council takes a whole of life approach to inclusion. We do this by providing inclusive services to the community; from direct provision of quality early childhood services, youth services, libraries, community halls and other vital infrastructure, through to aged and disability services.

The Lachlan Shire Disability Inclusion Action Plan evolves over time to meet the needs of our community. We appreciate the contribution made by those who were involved in the review of this version. We look forward to working collaboratively in the future as we strive to maintain and improve an inclusive community in the coming years.

Councillor John Medcalf OAM
MAYOR

Greg Tory
GENERAL MANAGER

ORGANISATIONAL VALUES, VISION & MISSION

Lachlan Shire Council has five values that drive our team and our behaviours.



Lachlan Shire Vision:

For the Lachlan Shire to be a resilient community providing economic and social growth, through evolving agricultural, business, and mineral activities.

Lachlan Shire Mission:

To engage the community, providing and delivering progressive services, which are accessible to all, whilst implementing a long-term strategic plan leading to the social and economic benefit of the community.

PLAN VALUES, VISION, PRINCIPLES AND COMMITMENT

Disability Inclusion Action Plan Vision

Lachlan Shire Council's vision is for an inclusive, respectful and diverse community where people of all abilities have the opportunity to live, learn, work and play as they choose and are able to actively participate in decisions that may impact on them. Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan aims to promote positive attitudes and behaviours in the community, to provide better access to information, services and facilities, to provide a more liveable and accessible community, to enhance employment opportunities and to increase opportunities for people with disability to participate.

Guiding Principles

Lachlan Shire Council is committed to working towards creating a shire that provides equal opportunity for people with a disability to participate and enjoy what the shire has to offer.

Access and inclusion are seen as core business of council and, are integrated into the provision of information services, the development of built environments, employment opportunities, and promoting positive community attitudes towards people with a disability.

Overview of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan

The Plan sets out the strategies and actions that Council will deliver to enable people with disability to have greater access to Council information, services and facilities.

This Disability Inclusion Action Plan was developed through a community consultation and research process which included a review of Council documents and Government policy. The consultation process involved talking to regional and local service providers, to people with disability, and carers. A community survey was conducted and outcomes from the Micromex 2023 Community Research also informed the plan.

PLAN VALUES, VISION, PRINCIPLES AND COMMITMENT

Commitments to the Community

Our values align with the Plan and are demonstrated through our commitments made to the community and its residents to:

- Establish a safe, caring, and clean community environment
- Promote, provide and plan for the needs of people of all ages
- Have a positive influence on community attitudes, and
- Apply principle of access and equity with facilities and services to encourage and promote a strong sense of community
- Provide professional, friendly, and innovative service
- Maintain principles of democracy, public participation, and fairness in decision making.



LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK AND STRATEGIC LINKS

Under the Disability Inclusion Act (NSW) 2014, all NSW Councils are required to develop a Disability Inclusion Plan (DIAP) to demonstrate their commitment to improve access, employment, and facilities for people with a disability.

These plans will outline the measures put into place to break down barriers and promote access to services, information, and employment whilst promoting the rights of people with a disability.

Four priority areas have been identified by people with a disability; these areas will guide strategies and actions of the DIAP:

- 1) Developing positive community attitudes towards disability
- 2) Creating liveable communities
- 3) Increasing access to meaningful employment
- 4) Improving access to mainstream services through improved systems and processes

There are several regulations and frameworks that guide disability inclusion planning and ensure the rights of people with disability are exercised and possible barriers are removed.

The Lachlan Shire Disability Inclusion Action Plan relates to international, national, and state legislation, as outlined in the diagram below.



Figure 1: The relationships between the relevant policy and legislative instruments. Source: Department of Communities and Justice - Disability Inclusion Action Planning Guidelines.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Lachlan Shire is made up of 6,094 residents living across the towns of Condobolin, Lake Cargelligo and Tottenham, and the villages of Albert, Burcher, Tullibigeal, Fifield, Derriwong and Murrin Bridge.

Lachlan Shire Council's main industry is agriculture. It is one of the state's largest grain-producing areas and also has strong sheep, wool, and beef industries.

Tourism is an emerging industry as well as the establishment of intensive industries and renewable energy.

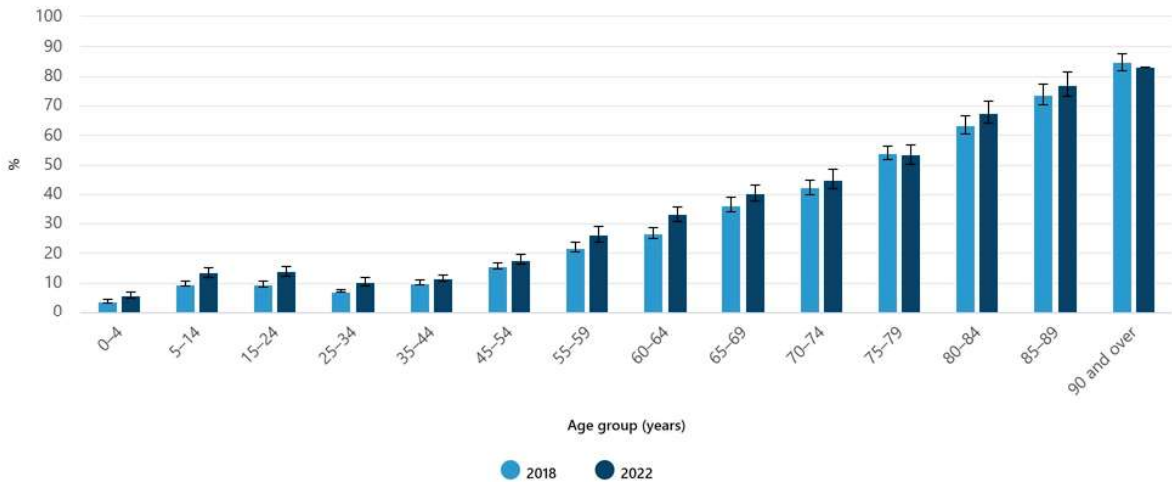
Lachlan Shire has a high percentage of older residents with 21.4% of residents being 65 years plus; considering that the prevalence of disability increases with age, this is an important statistic that is reflected upon in community planning.

According to the 2021 Census, there were 630 of the 4,797 people over the age of 15 providing unpaid care to a person with a disability. This equates to 13% of our population and sits around the national average.

5% of the residents in the Shire identified as requiring assistance with self-care, mobility, and communication because of disability.



Disability prevalence by age group 2018, 2022



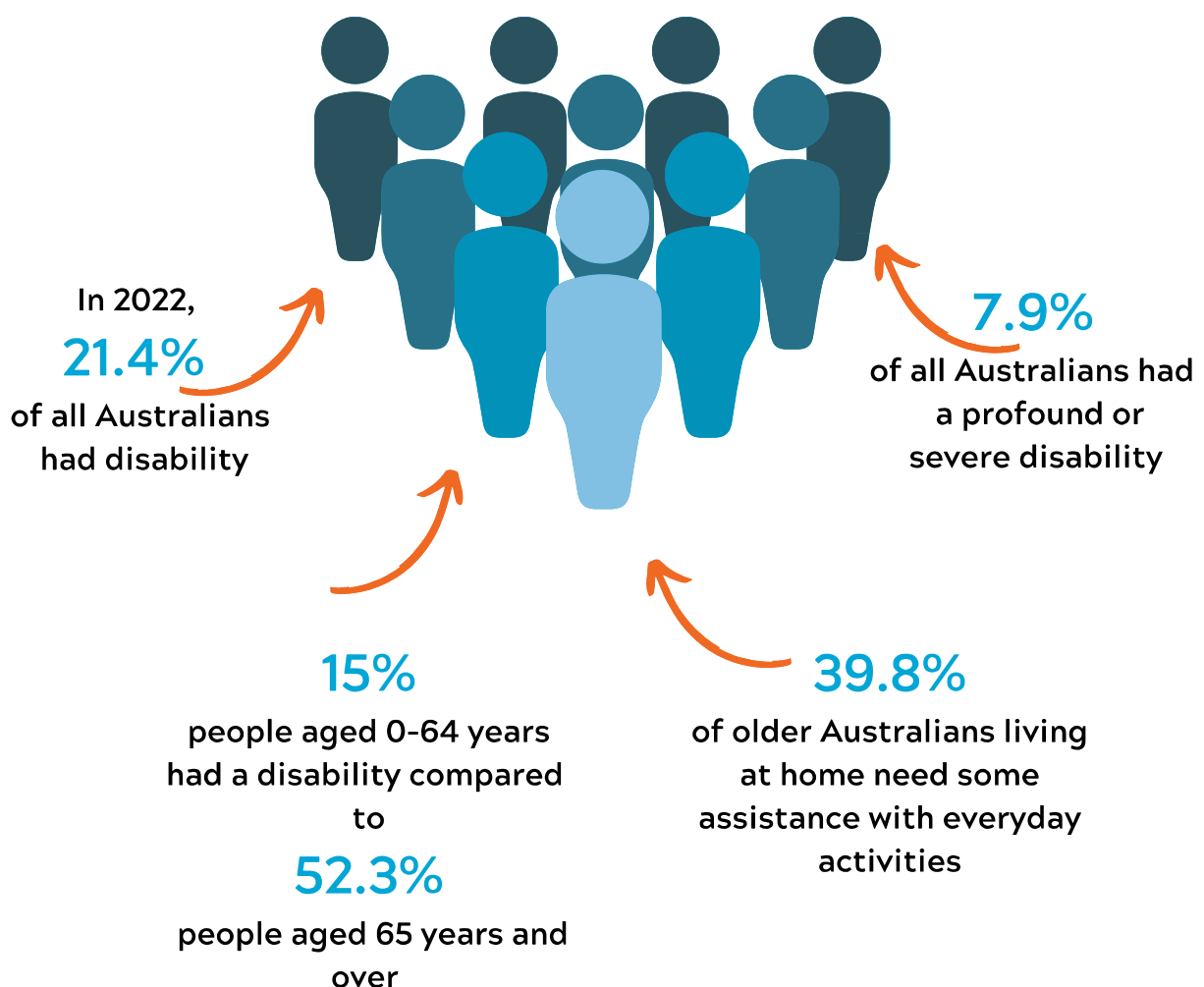
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings 2022

COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Disability Inclusion Act 2014 defines disability as:

'The long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which in interaction with various barriers may hinder the full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.'

In 2022, the Disability, Ageing and Carers Australia survey found that:





KEY OUTCOME AREAS AND STRATEGY



KEY OUTCOME AREAS AND STRATEGY

ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS

Objective: Develop, promote & support positive community attitudes and behaviour.



DIAP No	Description	Target Audience	Timeframe	Responsibility	Performance Measure	Delivery Program Action Number
1.1	<p>Council consults and actively seeks representation of people with a lived experience of disability on committee and consultation groups.</p> <p>Council supports services that assist families and carers.</p>	Wider community	Across Delivery Plan	Director Corporate & Community Services	<p>Number individuals with experience of a disability within Council committees, consultation groups.</p> <p>Number individuals with experience of disability providing feedback.</p> <p>Engagement opportunities between Council and support groups</p>	4.1.1 4.2.4 4.3.2
1.2	Celebrate diversity and inclusion through council imagery, publications and promotions.	Wider community	Across Delivery Plan	Communications and Community Engagement Coordinator	<p>Number of publications including images of people with a disability.</p> <p>Celebrate "International Day of People with a Disability" on 3rd of December.</p>	4.1.3 4.1.4 4.3.3
1.3	Promote a culture of responsive customer service by facilitating training for council staff in working with and for people of all abilities	Council staff	Across Delivery Plan	<p>Manager Human Resources</p> <p>Manager Information Services</p>	<p>Number of awareness training sessions run.</p> <p>Number of staff trained.</p> <p>Implement a process within council record management system that captures data on feedback that relates to accessibility and inclusion.</p>	4.2.8

LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

Objective: Encourage and support local groups, agencies and organisations to provide more opportunities for people with disability to participate.



DIAP No	Description	Target Audience	Timeframe	Responsibility	Performance Measure	Delivery Program Action Number
2.1	Improve accessible paths of travel and infrastructure to key destinations like services, recreation and community facilities across the shire.	Wider community	Across Delivery Plan	Director of Infrastructure Services & Director of Environment & Planning	Number of improvements made to councils built environment and infrastructure. Complete items identified Active Transport Plan.	3.2.1 6.1.1
2.3	Refurbish the kitchenette and toilet inside Condobolin Library to include disability access.	Wider community and Young People	Across Delivery Plan	Librarian Director of Environment & Planning	Improvements made to Condobolin internal Kitchenette and toilet.	
2.3	Expand large print collection within Lachlan Shire libraries and purchase page magnifiers.	Wider community and Young People	Across Delivery Plan	Librarian	Number of large print resources purchased. Number of people using resources	1.5.4
2.4	Council provides inclusive and accessible events for everyone.	Wider Community and Young people	Across Delivery Plan	Events Youth Services HACC Coordinator	Number of attendees with a disability at community events. Event planning forms include consideration of access and inclusion Consider creation of disability specific event for youths	1.8.3 3.2.1 Lachlan Shire Youth Strategy (2021 - 2030)
2.5	Advocate for improved access to healthcare across shire	Wider Community	Across Delivery Plan	Director Corporate & Community Services	Advocacy provided.	1.6.1 1.6.2 1.6.3

EMPLOYMENT

Objective: Create opportunities for people with disability to be actively engaged in community decision making.



DIAP No	Description	Target Audience	Timeframe	Responsibility	Performance Measure	Delivery Program Action Number
3.2	Promote opportunities for the disabled community to engage in training and upskilling.	Wider community	Across Delivery Plan	Communications and Community Engagement Coordinator	Facilitate through the sharing of information.	1.3.4
3.3	Support diversity and inclusion through the Workforce Plan.	Council Staff	Across Delivery Plan	Manager Human Resources	Development of a Workforce Plan which incorporates inclusion actions.	1.3.1 4.2.8

SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

Objective: Adoption of systems and process that increase opportunities for people with disability to actively participate in the community.



DIAP No	Description	Target Audience	Timeframe	Responsibility	Performance Measure	Delivery Program Action Number
4.1	Maintain the accessibility of Council's website to allow for the use of adaptive technology by service users.	Wider community	Across Delivery Plan	Manager Information Services	Installation of communication supports. Increase number of accessible council documents available online.	4.3.1
4.2	Increase the range of formats used that provides information to support different needs and capabilities.	Wider community	Across Delivery Plan	Communications & Community Engagement Coordinator Manager Information Services	Number of formats used to communicate to community.	4.3.1
4.3	Provide training on formatting of accessible documents across relevant Council services.	Council Staff	Across delivery plan	Manager Information Services	Provision of training.	4.3.1

MONITORING, REVIEWING & REPORTING

Executive Level Sponsor

Director Corporate and Community Services

Disability Inclusion Action Project Leader

Corporate & Community Services Project Officer

Working Party

Multi-disciplinary consultation was undertaken to provide representation from operational and strategic areas of Council.

A skills mix across community consultation, strategic and operational planning, measurement, communications, and organisational development was utilised.

Peer Review

This document was peer reviewed by the Manager, Disability Inclusion Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice and relevant feedback incorporated.

Monitoring, Reviewing and Reporting

Resources such as council staff, volunteers, training providers, community stakeholders, websites and venues will be used to achieve these outcomes.

Progress of the DIAP actions will be reviewed regularly to reflect achievements, opportunities and challenges.

Reporting on the Plan will take place through the Lachlan Shire Council Annual Report which is made publicly available via an online and paper version.

Annual reporting on outcomes of the plan will be provided to the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services as required.

This plan will be reviewed and amended accordingly in 2029.

The draft plan was adopted at Council's (insert date) meeting.

APPENDICES

Community Consultation Summary

Community engagement and feedback were provided by people living with a disability, their families and carers as well as staff working in the disability sector.

This consisted of a community survey advertised on Council's website and Facebook page as well as informal consultation carried out with: staff, disability, and broader service providers and individuals with disabilities in the community. These consultations were held in conjunction with community engagement efforts for Council's Community Strategic Plan. Community consultations were undertaken across the shire in the towns of Condobolin, Lake Cargelligo, Tottenham, and Tullibigeal.

The four key themes that were used to focus the community engagement were: developing positive community attitudes and behaviours, creating liveable communities, supporting access to employment, and the establishment of accessible systems and processes.

In 2023, Micromex carried out a research survey of members within our community. 15% of respondents identified as having a disability.

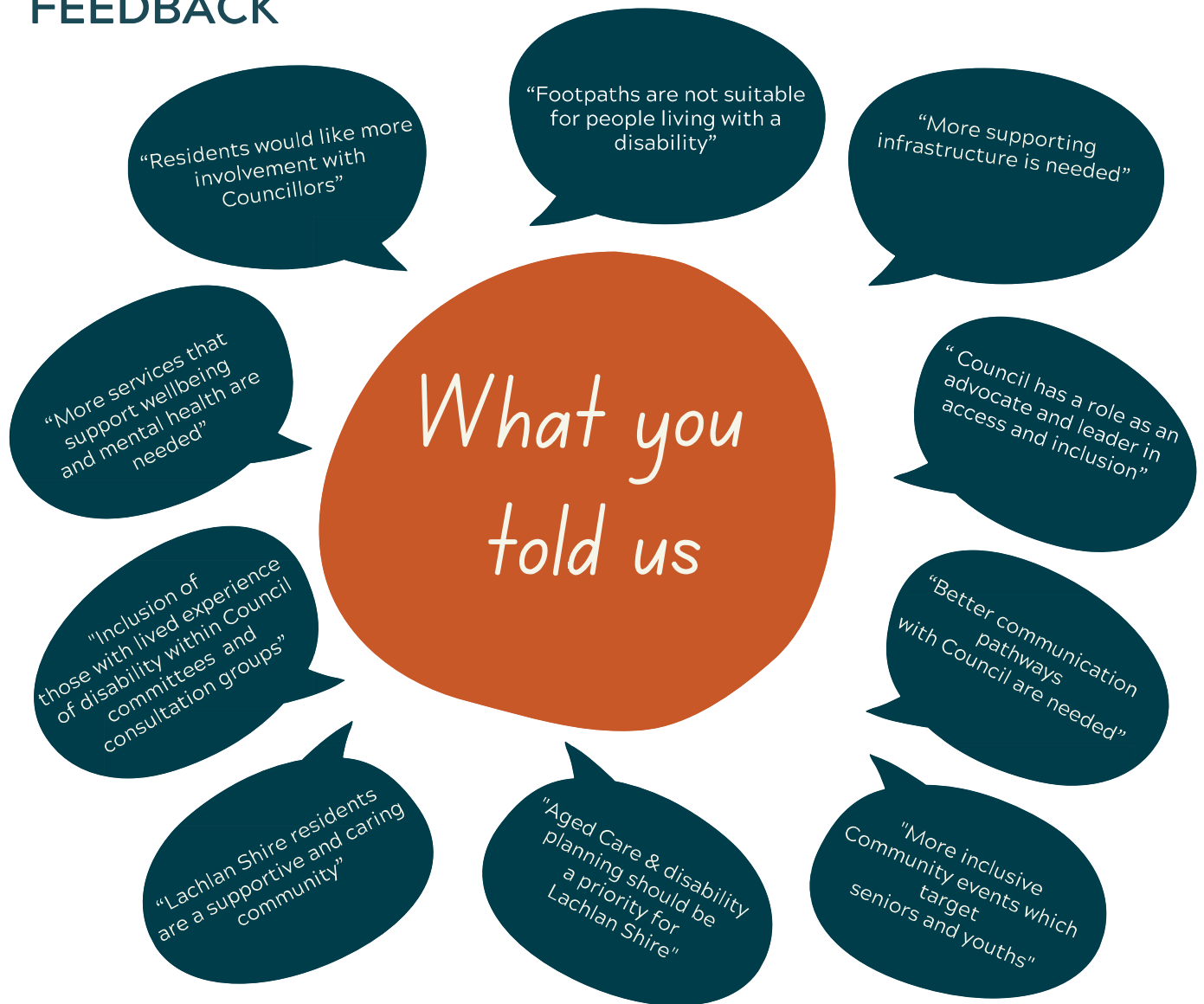
When asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the statement

"Council's services and programs are accessible and easy to use for everyone, including those with a disability"

Responses varied with 40% agreeing, 49% neither agreed nor disagreed and 11% strongly disagreed.

Common suggestions for improvements Council can make to assist those with a disability within the community include; improving footpaths, kerb and guttering, more ramps and wheelchair access, more designated parking spots, drop off and pick up areas, supporting infrastructure eg signage, lighting, pedestrian crossings and seating and more consultation with those identifying with a disability and their families.

FEEDBACK



What we talked about:

- What is your experience of disability in the Lachlan Shire
- What do you find are barriers to inclusion
- What strategies do you have to address these barriers
- The disability friendliness of Lachlan Shire Council facilities

What you told us was important:

- Improved footpaths, walkways, kerb and guttering;
- More supporting infrastructure, parking, drop off areas, signage & seating;
- Better health, medical and aged care services;
- Community Transport;
- Council events are inclusive of people with a lived experience of disability;
- Council creates spaces and places that are accessible to the whole community;
- Access to support through employment, health, and disability services;
- Communication with Council.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS FROM DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2022-2025

Attitudes and Behaviours

- Staff members providing inclusive customer service.
- Provision of disability awareness training to staff as identified on their training plans.
- Council continues to ensure brochures and website content are accessible and include images of people with disability.

Liveable communities

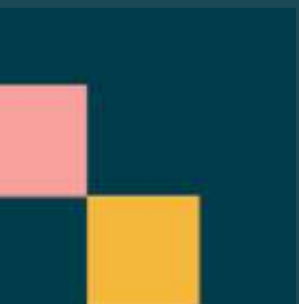
- Creation of sensory play area within Condobolin Library.
- Continued community transport service provision in Condobolin and Tottenham.
- Sustainable age care services across all 3 centres, Condobolin Lake Cargelligo & Tottenham
- Playgrounds in Condobolin Memorial Park, Bill Hurley Park, Tottenham Memorial Park, and Gum Bend Lake were upgraded to incorporate activities for children and young people of all abilities.
- The youth area at Condobolin Library was updated with new furniture and smart TV.
- Constructed shared pathways around recreational facilities at sites identified in the Active Travel Plan including Gum Bend Lake, the balance of the Lake Cargelligo walkway stages and the Condobolin Riverwalk .
- Installed pedestrian lay-backs in key areas around the schools in Lake Cargelligo and Condobolin

Employment

- Review of Human Resources employee forms and procedures to help identify employees with disability.
- Council's Employee Assistance Program which offers a confidential 24/7 counselling service for all employees.

Systems and Processes

- Review of Councils recruitment and induction procedure to identify individuals with a disability or support needs.
- Accessible website upgrades completed.
- A Disability Access Audit of Council buildings was completed resulting in the development of a 10-year maintenance and upgrade schedule.
- Website protocol requires all uploaded documents to be checked for accessibility.



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