



Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Liverpool Plains Shire Council



DISABILITY
matters

2017 to 2021



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the people of the Kamilaroi nation and their Elders, past and present. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of the Liverpool Plains Shire.

The Walthallow Songbirds



MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR AND GENERAL MANAGER

We take pleasure in presenting the Liverpool Plains Shire Council (LPSC) Disability Inclusion Action Plan. This plan has been developed to assist in improving the lives of people with disabilities within the LPSC and aims at providing a fully inclusive society for all within our community.

Local Government is required by the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (DIA) to undertake disability inclusion action planning by 1 July 2017 and the LPSC intends to ensure that it effectively plans for and delivers on the diverse needs of people with disability in the community.

We are fully committed to ensuring that no one is excluded from opportunities which are available to us in the LPSC and to overcome barriers that people with disabilities face. We are seeking to remove obstacles created by society and empower people to achieve their full potential and experience all that life has to offer.

In doing this we will build community awareness of the rights and abilities of people with disability and support the development of positive attitudes and behaviours toward these people. This will also reduce the social isolation that some people with a disability experience.

Our objective is to identify and break down the barriers which prevent those with a disability from enjoying the same opportunities and choices as everyone else and, in doing so, to build a truly inclusive community through comprehensive planning and coordination. Achieving these objectives requires a whole of government and community approach.

There is a need to develop a shared understanding of what it means to make life equitable for people with a disability given that one in three people has or is close to someone with a disability.

At the LPSC we believe that early planning and intervention presents an opportunity for long-term savings to the community, reducing the need for retrospective action such as retrofits. This is a particularly important consideration given that Australia's ageing population is also likely to increase the number of people with disability in the community. Inclusion improves opportunities for participation in the local economy, with the potential to increase economic activity within our area.

The NSW Disability Inclusion Plan supports the NSW Government's commitment to remove systemic and attitudinal barriers so that people with a disability have a better opportunity to live a meaningful life and enjoy the full benefits of membership in the community. Achieving an inclusive society is a long term vision that will require consistent efforts from government and the wider community.

Ultimately, the success of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan will be evident by the impact it has on the lives of people living with a disability.

We take this opportunity to commend to you the Liverpool Plains Shire Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan in our endeavours to ensure that we live and participate in an inclusive society.

Andrew Hope
Mayor

Ron Van Katwyk
General Manager



INTRODUCTION

In August 2014 the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 was passed. The requirements of this Act includes all Council's to develop a Disability Inclusion Action Plan to help remove barriers and enable people with a disability to participate equally in their communities. The legislative and policies included in delivering this Plan include:

- Principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with a Disability
- Australian Government NDIS Act 2013
- Australian Government Aged Care (Living Longer Living Better) Act 2013
- NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977
- NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014

The most recent legislation and amendments reflect a shift towards the view that, while a disability may affect the way that a person interacts with others and their environment, it should not define a person and it should not limit their capacity to become an integral part of the community.

TYPES OF DISABILITIES

Visual Impairment

- This covers persons who are completely or partially blind, have poor eye sight or suffer from colour blindness.

Physical Impairment

- This covers persons who are missing limbs, have reduced control of their limbs or suffer from dexterity problems or epilepsy.

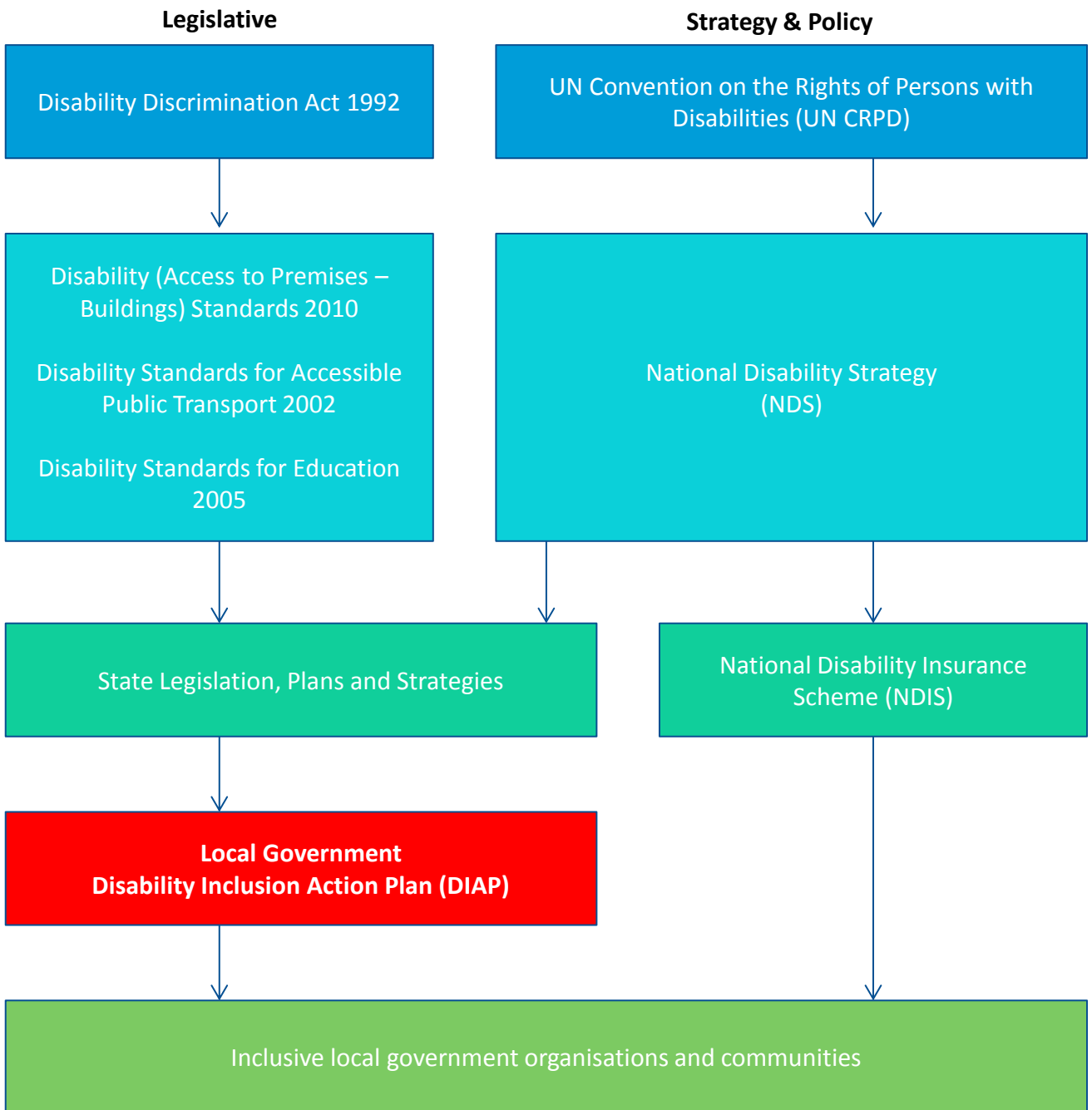
Hearing Impairment

- This covers persons who are completely or partially deaf.

Cognitive Impairment

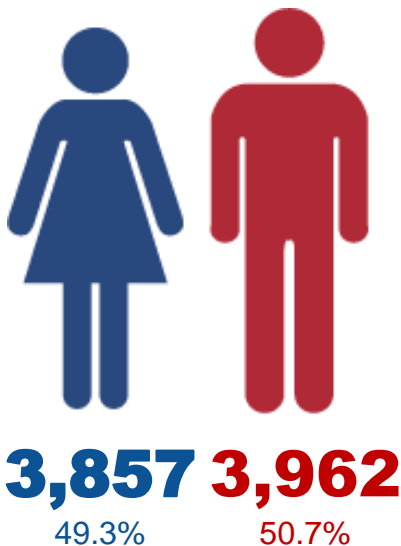
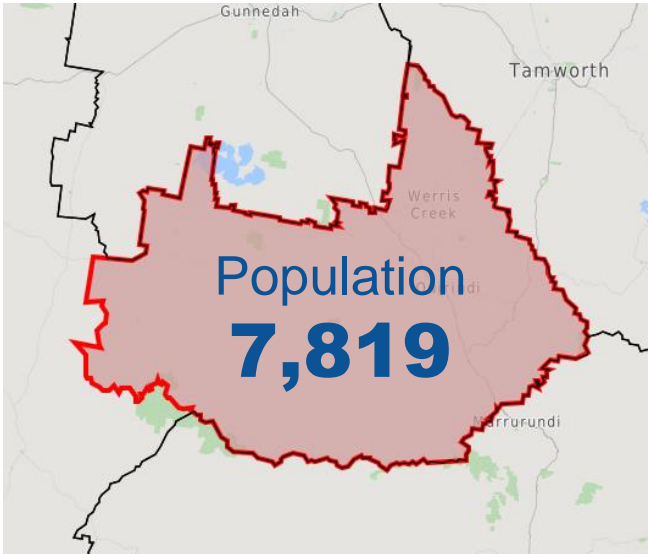
- This covers persons who have difficulties in learning, speech and intellectual constraints. It also includes persons who have mental issues including depression, anxiety, autism, ADHD as well as psychological or psychiatric conditions.

WHERE DOES THE PLAN FIT?

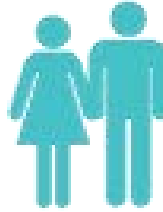


THE SHIRE'S DEMOGRAPHICS

The Liverpool Plains Shire Council comprises of 5,086 square kilometres and is located on the north west slopes and plains region of New South Wales. The predominant industry is Agriculture, with emerging tourism, mining and support industries developing throughout the area. The main urban areas of the Shire include Currabubula, Quirindi, Spring Ridge, Wallabadah, Werris Creek and Willow Tree which contain over 80% of the total shire population.



PEOPLE



At Working Age	60%
Living with Disability	25.8%
Born Overseas	10.8%
Aboriginal	10.9%
Median Age	44.5

HOUSEHOLDS



Average income	\$35,291
Households:	2,949
Average Size:	2.4

ECONOMY



Employment	3,082
Unemployment	6.1%
Volunteers	26.3%

COMMUNITY & EDUCATION



Post School Education	43.4%
Mobility Parking Spaces	441

Source: ABS



PURPOSE

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan is to set out the strategies and actions that Council will deliver over the next 4 years to enable people with a disability to have greater access to Council information, facilities and services. The Plan includes actions across all areas of Council and will guide us in making our services more inclusive. Implementation of the actions in this Plan will be a benefit to the entire community, including people with a temporary injury, older people and parents with young children.

As our population ages and people live longer, the number of people who have severe disabilities and a requirement for help with core activities such as mobility, self care or communication will increase.



18% of all Australians were people with disability



1 in 3 people with disability have a profound or severe disability which impacts their mobility, ability to communicate or self-care



Almost **90%** of disabilities are 'invisible' disabilities such as chronic pain disorders, diabetes or depression



People with disability are more likely to be underemployed with nearly **one-third** of people with disability working part-time wanting to work more hours

People with disability have a lower labour force participation rate



53% People with disability are employed or seeking employment



compared to **83%** of people without disability

65+



51% of Australians aged 65 and over live with disability



35% of women and **28%** of men aged 15 years and over with disability have avoided situations because of their disability



THE PROCESS

Our Commitment

- Liverpool Plains Shire Council committed to developing a Disability Inclusion Action Plan for delivery from July 2017. This plan will help us meet our obligations under the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014.
- As local government, we are the voice of the people at the organic level that advocates on behalf of its population to protect, promote and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom for all. We will work with all levels of government to promote awareness and understanding of the rights of people with disability that enable them to participate fully in the economic, civic and social life our Shire and the wider community.

Research

- Background research, a demographic analysis and review of Council's access improvements has been undertaken. This research showed areas of improvement were required for access to public amenities such as parks and reserves, ablutions and other council buildings.

Consultation

- LPSC has undertaken 3 individual surveys which included Council staff, local service providers as well as the overall community. From these surveys, the listed actions were identified as being important aspects of disability inclusion for the community.

Our Actions

- Draft strategies and actions were developed by staff across Council based on what the community advised us was important.

Endorsement

- The draft Plan was placed on public exhibition and the community provided their feedback prior to the Plan being adopted by Council.

Lodgement

- The adopted Plan will be lodged with the Disability Council of NSW as required.

WHAT THE COMMUNITY TOLD US – SURVEY RESULTS

What you told us we did welll:

“The library staff have all been wonderful when I take my autistic almost 4 year old in” – Community member, Quirindi

“As a disabled member of the community myself, I know first hand what I personally struggle with in the community and I would love to help the Council understand the impact of certain things on the disabled community” – Community member, Quirindi

“I feel that disabled people in our district are always welcomed and treated in an amazing way” – Community member, Werris Creek

“Council publications are easily accessed at your libraries”- Community member, Werris Creek

“The Community and Business houses have been marvellous with support of all kinds to the QCWA with the activities provided at all times.” – Quirindi Country Women’s Association

“I find the library very open and inclusive to all particularly for people with mental health issues and the elderly who can connect with the community through this service. The theatre is a treasure that continues to punch above its weight for our community. The hearing link / circle is very inclusive. The big screen is the best way some of our sight impaired residents can access movies.” – Quirindi Public School

“ think there is a lovely level of friendliness in the district, for people in general (including the elderly and those with disabilities)” – Healthy Balance Chiropractic

What is important to our community:

- Disabled access public toilets need attention and upgrading across the district
- Footpaths along Quirindi's main street requires major upgrades
- Werris Creek pool facility requires some disabled access to the amenity blocks and showers
- Shopfront ramps at all towns needs to be assessed
- Automatic doors to businesses should be a requirement when fitting out new shops or upgrading buildings
- Public transport with disabled access
- Local activities and sporting events to be inclusive of children and adults with a disability
- Playgrounds require assessment for disabled play equipment
- Better access to public venues and marketing of venue access points with all functions and halls across the Shire
- ATM heights in the main street
- Increased community transport to and from outlying towns
- Increase opportunities for students with disabilities to gain work experience (transition to work) and gain the necessary skills to become employable

CONSULTATION

What the Community Told Us

This Plan has been developed in conjunction with our local community and the feedback which has been provided through online and paper surveys, face to face and group conversations together with feedback from families, carers and Council staff.

Areas of improvement:

- Collaborative relationships between Council all levels of government in policy development, services delivery and infrastructure to address the gaps in regional Australia for people with a disability.
- Assist the community in achieving the objects and principals of the NSW *Disability Inclusion Act 2014*.

Council's infrastructure, as reasonable practical, is accessible by people of all abilities.

- Council's libraries have access, equipment, resources, programs and services for people of all abilities.
- Collaborative relationships between Council and educational institutes for a variety of mediums for people of all abilities to learn, grow and develop.
- Major parks are accessible with amenities, play spaces, sports and recreational facilities for people with all abilities.
- Collaborative relationships between Council, local community and sporting clubs enhance opportunities for people with a disability in sport, cultural and recreational activities.



CREATING AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY AND STRONG ECONOMY

What are Council's aim in improving access to our community services and facilities:

- Council's infrastructure, as reasonably practical, is accessible by people of all abilities. These will be reviewed and upgraded as part of the Asset Management Planning process when funding allows.
- Investigate opportunities and where possible Council's libraries have access, equipment, resources, programs and services for people of all abilities.
- Foster collaborative relationships between Council and educational institutes for a variety of mediums for people of all abilities to learn, grow and develop.
- Progressively upgrade major parks and reserves and to improve access with amenities, play spaces, sports and recreational facilities for people with all abilities.
- Develop collaborative relationships between Council, local community and sporting clubs enhance opportunities for people with a disability in sport, cultural and recreational activities.

Promoting our local economy and how Council can help:

- Educate retailers, restaurants, accommodation and businesses to become accessible and obliging to people with a range of abilities by raising disability awareness through marketing campaigns.
- Collaborative relationships between Council and educational institutes for a variety of educational mediums for employer/employees of all abilities to learn grow and develop.
- Collaborative relationships between Council all levels of government and telecommunication providers for improved communication services.
- Collaborative relationships between Council and local disability employment services providers to enhance opportunities for employment of people with disability.
- Tourist attractions and facilities, major events and festivals are accessible and actively promote disability access via promotional material.
- Visitors and tourists have access to information to assist in planning their trip to our community.

CREATING LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

What Will Council Do In Our Community:

- Improve access to public amenities
 - Implement a program to improve our accessible public toilets
 - Install signs to report cleaning concerns
 - Promote our public accessible toilets as not for general use
 - Increase the number of accessible parking spaces
 - Develop a priority list to improve and increase the number of spaces
 - Promote the location of spaces on our website
 - Monitor and enforce non-compliance use
 - Develop and implement a campaign to target illegal use
 - Increase access to our buildings
 - Undertake access appraisals of our buildings and facilities
 - Prioritise access outcomes when renewing and building facilities
 - Increase maintenance for footpaths and guttering in the Quirindi main street in accordance with budget allocations and maintenance works.
- Increase access to our recreation services and facilities
- Including accessible play elements when renewing and installing playgrounds
 - Include access to parking and seating when upgrading sports grounds and facilities
 - Increase access at parks and reserves
 - Continue to upgrade access to our community pools
 - Upgrade Werris Creek pool amenities to enable disabled access
 - Undertake access appraisals of tourist parks and Freedom Camping grounds across the shire and promote access features
- Increase access to library, community, youth and cultural services
- Promote and support inclusion in all activities at the library, community halls, royal theatre
 - Schedule programs for people with disabilities at libraries, halls and royal theatre
 - Continue to promote and support access to youth services activities
 - Provide community transport and social support services in line with funding agreements

IMPROVING SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

How Can Council Help in Improving Access to our Systems and Processes:

Increase access to information including:

- Implement guidelines for making our publications accessible
- Educate our staff about the use of communication supports
- Monitor and update our website to meet access standards
- Incorporate captioning for video content on our website

Increase participation in our community engagement activities

Talk to people with disability and include their ideas in plans for council services, facilities and activities

Increase awareness about our services to support access

- Include information about access in our promotional material and signage
- Promote access upgrades to services and facilities in our newsletter and advertisements
- Keep our website up to date with information about access

Increase our capacity to provide accessible services and facilities

- Use checklists that assess access to our services and facilities and identify ways to improve

Improve our systems and processes to deliver better access outcomes

- Make disability access a key criteria in our Capital Works program
- Develop an online map that shows the most important things for us to fix to improve access within our communities
- Assess access for people with disability when collecting information and data about our assets

FUNDING THE PLAN

Some actions in this Plan are about continuing to do what we are doing well and others are about improving the way we do things. Many actions will not cost Council additional money but require us to do things differently. However, some actions in the Plan will require additional funds to build something or upgrade an existing facility or service. The money to do this work will be allocated through the annual budget process where possible. At times, Council may apply for funding from external sources to help achieve the actions in this Plan.

MANAGING OUR RISKS

Council understands that it has a legal responsibility, in providing services, not to discriminate against another person on the grounds of that person's disability. Council will continue to increase access to information, upgrade facilities and improve how it delivers services to remove barriers to access and meet this obligation. The actions in this Plan demonstrate our commitment to continue these improvement and have been prioritised with consideration to Council's overall processes and procedures.



For more information:

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Council would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the development of this Plan.

