



Weddin Shire Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2024-2028





Table of Contents

1. Message from the Mayor	3
2. Introduction & Vision	4
3. Legislative framework and strategic links	6
4. Council and Community Overview	10
5. Guiding principles	13
6. Development of the plan	15
7. Focus areas and key actions	16
8. Monitoring, reviewing and reporting	20
9. How we are engaging	21



1. Message from The Mayor

Weddin Shire Council is committed to supporting the rights of people with a disability to be included within our society and to reach their full potential. This commitment is captured in the Draft Weddin Shire Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2024-2028 and builds upon the work undertaken since the adoption of Council's first Disability Inclusion Action Plan in 2017.

As a rural Council with an aging population, we know that creating an inclusive and accessible community is vital for residents within our Shire. This will also create a more inclusive destination for further residents and visitors to our amazing and unique Shire.

The plan outlines four guiding principles which have been used to develop a range of focus areas to guide Council in improving inclusivity and accessibility within the Shire.

I wish to thank everyone who has contributed to the making of this Plan, and look forward to working together to benefit those with a disability.

We look forward to receiving your feedback on the Draft Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Cr Craig Bembrick
Mayor Weddin Shire Council





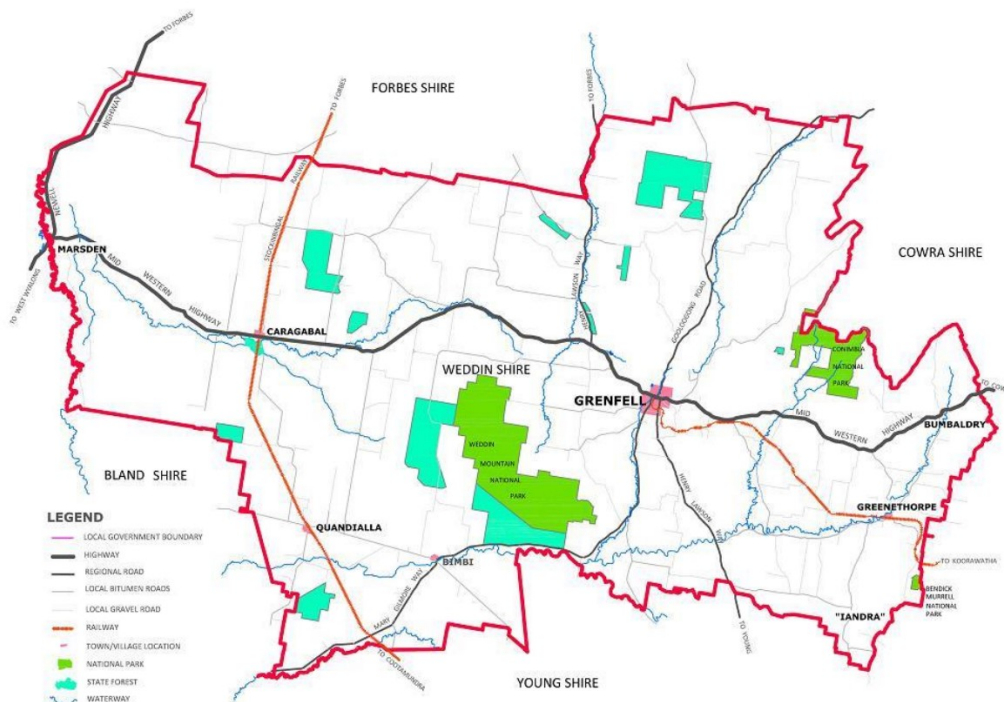
2. Introduction and Vision

Weddin Shire is located in the heart of Central NSW and takes in the township of Grenfell and the surrounding rural villages of Caragabal, Quandialla, Bimbi and Greenethorpe. The region offers up a taste of quintessential country Australia and an abundance of outdoor adventures with a good measure of authentic local hospitality thrown in.

Geographically, the Shire is at the crossroads of the major thoroughfares from Sydney to Adelaide and Brisbane to Melbourne. The Shire covers over 3,400 square km, 94% is devoted to dry-land agriculture, 3% to national parks and 3% to state forests. Based on 2021 Census figures, the local population is steady from 2011 at 3,608.

Council's vision is one of a progressive rural locality with a vibrant and welcoming community, rich in both heritage and the natural environment, with a diverse and resilient economy that supports local employment and business.

All Australians should enjoy participating in ordinary life, regardless of the level of ability. As Council is the level of government closest to the community, it plays a key role in working towards an inclusive society. Council's position within the Weddin community enables it to work with residents and organisations to identify barriers to inclusion for people with a disability and develop and implement more inclusive policies and practices which reflect the community's priorities and expectations. Council provides key infrastructure, facilities and services to local residents and are integral to building a strong, resilient and connected community.



What is a disability?

Both the UN Convention and the Disability Inclusion Act 2014 describe 'disability', in relation to a person, as including a long-term physical, psychiatric, intellectual or sensory impairment that, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder the person's full and effective participation in the community on an equal basis with others.

The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, provides the following definition:

disability, in relation to a person, means:

- (a) total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; or
- (b) total or partial loss of a part of the body; or
- (c) the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or
- (d) the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or
- (e) the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; or
- (f) a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or
- (g) a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour;

and includes a disability that:

- (h) presently exists; or
- (i) previously existed but no longer exists; or
- (j) may exist in the future (including because of a genetic predisposition to that disability);
or
- (k) is imputed to a person.

To avoid doubt, a disability that is otherwise covered by this definition includes behaviour that is a symptom or manifestation of the disability.

Case for inclusion

Without an inclusive society and the opportunities that an inclusive community provides, diversity is not promoted, choice is limited and a positive life for people with disability may not occur.

The case for an inclusive society and community is strong:

- as a community, we are poorer without a diverse range of viewpoints and individual perspectives.
- exclusion leads to disadvantage and discrimination, which have far-reaching negative impacts.
- there is a strong economic imperative for increasing the inclusiveness of our society which can have a large economic impact.





3. Legislative framework and strategic links

Disability Inclusion Act 2014

The *Disability Inclusion Act 2014* (DIA) is the key piece of legislation guiding local government disability inclusion and access planning.

The objects of the DIA include :

- (a) to acknowledge that people with disability have the same human rights as other members of the community and that the State and the community have a responsibility to facilitate the exercise of those rights,
- (b) to promote the independence and social and economic inclusion of people with disability,
- (c) to enable people with disability to exercise choice and control in the pursuit of their goals and the planning and delivery of their supports and services,
- (d) to provide safeguards in relation to the delivery of supports and services for people with disability,
- (e) to support, to the extent reasonably practicable, the purposes and principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,
- (f) to provide for responsibilities of the State during and following the transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

The DIA required all NSW government agencies and local Councils to develop Disability Inclusion Action Plans (DIAP) in consultation with people with a disability, to review these plans every four (4) years and to report progress on DIAP implementation in their Annual Report.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan

A Disability Inclusion Action Plan demonstrates local government's commitment to people with a disability on improving access to services, facilities and jobs. It's also designed to change perceptions about people with a disability.

A disability inclusion action plan must:

- (a) specify how the public authority proposes to have regard to the disability principles in its dealings with matters relating to people with disability, and
- (b) include strategies to support people with disability, including, for example, strategies about the following:
 - (i) providing access to buildings, events and facilities,



- (ii) providing access to information,
 - (iii) accommodating the specific needs of people with disability,
 - iv) supporting employment of people with disability,
 - (v) encouraging and creating opportunities for people with disability to access the full range of services and activities available in the community, and
- (c) include details of the authority’s consultation about the plan with people with disability, and
- (d) explain how the plan supports the goals of the State Disability Inclusion Plan, and
- (e) include any other matters prescribed by the regulations.

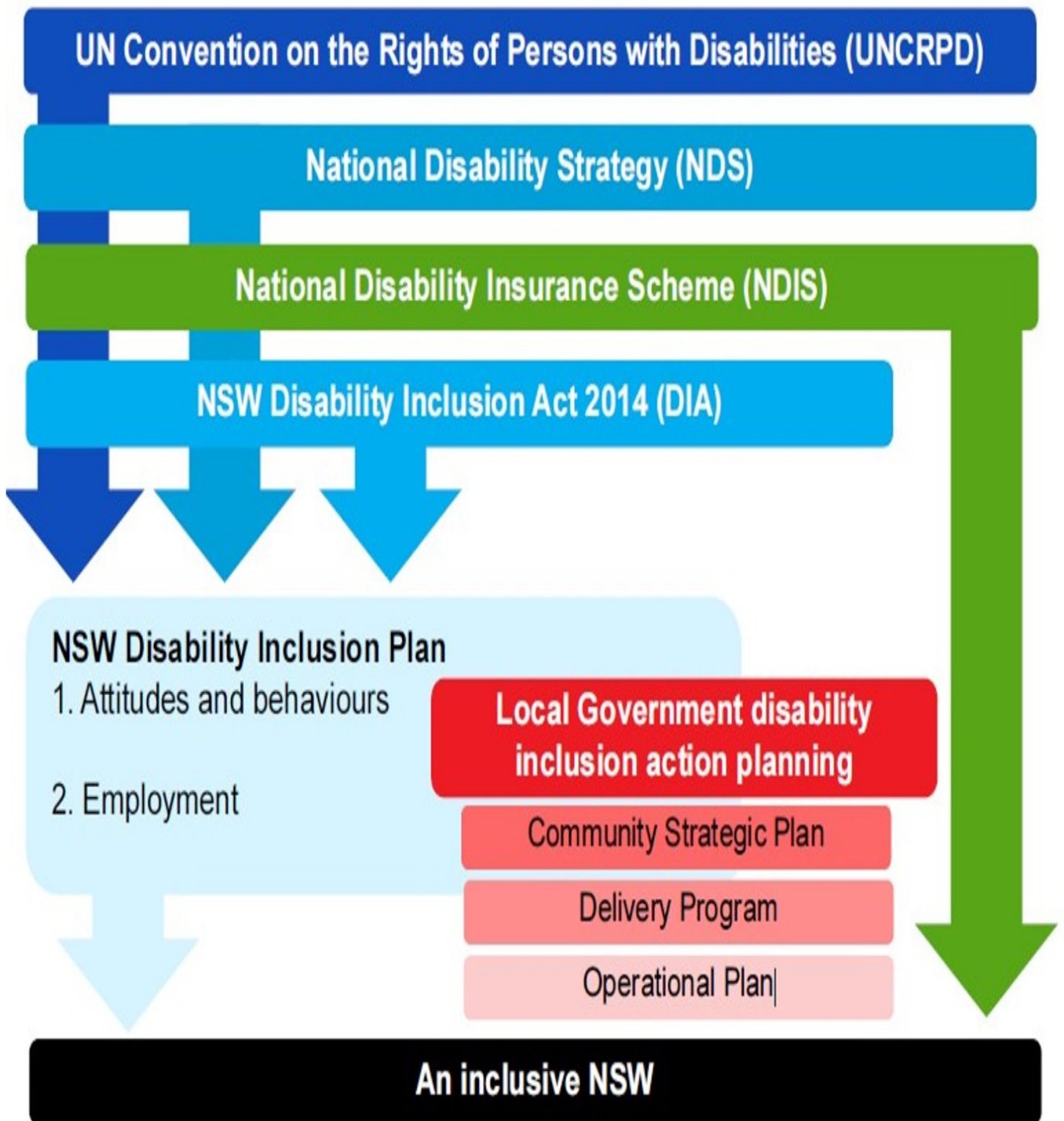
NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025

The NSW Disability Inclusion Plan 2021-2025 provides a whole of government strategy. The plan outlines the following four (4) focus areas that sets out how the NSW Government will improve the lives of people with disability -

1. Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours
2. Creating liveable communities
3. Supporting access to meaningful employment
4. Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes.

The International, National and State legislations and standards outline below focus on and provide guidance to disability inclusion action planning.

International	National	State	Other Legislation and Standards
UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	National Disability Strategy	<i>NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977</i>	Australian Standard 1428—Design for Access and Mobility
	National Disability Insurance Scheme	<i>Ageing and Disability Commissioner Act 2019</i>	Australian Standard 1428.2—Design for access and mobility — Enhanced and additional requirements — Buildings and facilities
	<i>Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i>	<i>Local Government Act 1993</i>	Australian Standard 1428.4—Design for access and mobility — Tactile ground surface indicators for the orientation of people with vision impairment
	<i>Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986</i>	Local Government (General) Regulation 2021	Australian Standard 2890.6—Off-street parking for people with disabilities
	Disability (Access to Premises—Buildings) Standards 2010	<i>Government Sector Employment Act 2013</i>	
	National Construction Code	<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>	



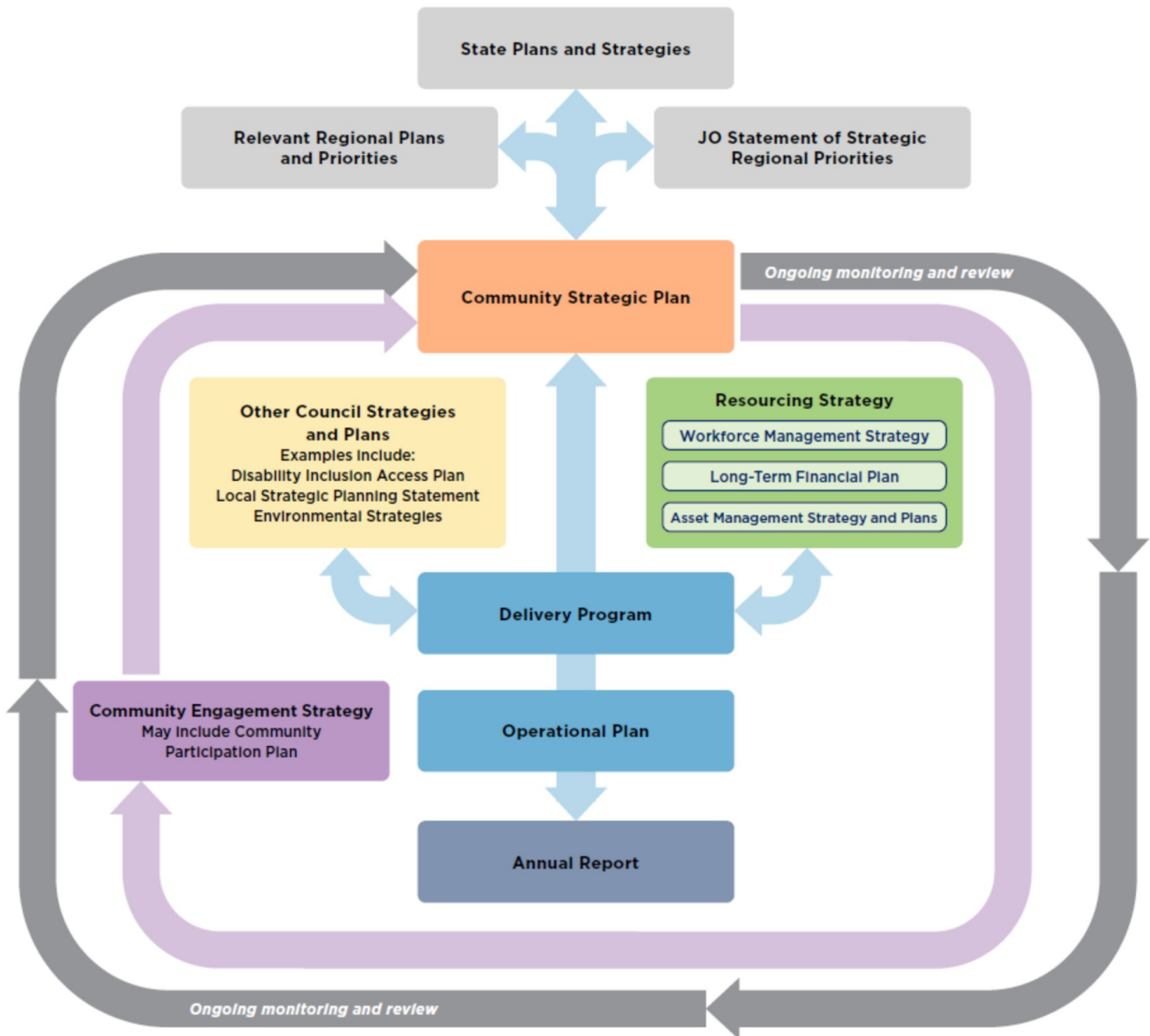


Strategic Links

This Disability Inclusion Action Plan is strategically linked to Councils Integrated Planning and Reporting documents. The Plan provides valuable input when developing Councils Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

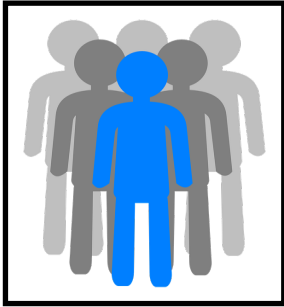
The NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 also requires Council to report on the progress of implementation of this Disability Inclusion Action Plan in its annual reports.

This Plan demonstrates Weddin Shire Councils commitment to people with a disability on improving access to services, facilities and jobs. It's also designed to change perceptions about people with a disability.

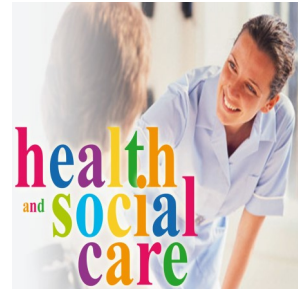


4. Council and Community Overview

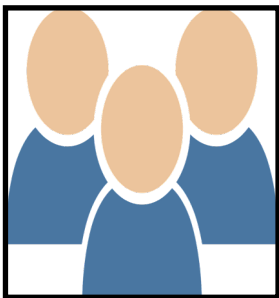
Australian Statistics



1 in 6
(18%) of people in Australia have a disability



40%
Of people with a disability need assistance from formal providers

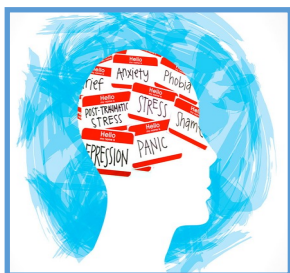


1 in 3
(30%) of people with a disability have a severe or

profound disability
(1.4 Million)

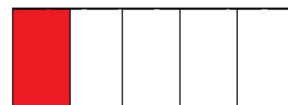


77%
of employer responses were positive about employing people with disability in 2022



1 in 4
(23%) of people with Disability, the main form

of disability is mental or behavioural



One-fifth
People born in 2018 can expect to live about 1/5 of their lives with some level of disability



1 in 10
People 15+ with disability experienced



50%
Of people aged 65 and over have a disability

* Statistics based on 2021 census data



Weddin Shire statistics



3,608

Population of Weddin Shire

(2021 census)



52

Median age of

Weddin Shire

population

(NSW Median is 39)



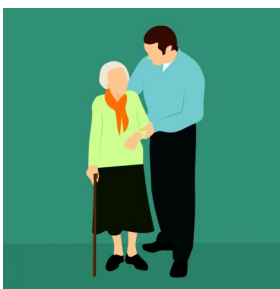
50.4%

Of Weddin population reported not suffering from any long term health condition



10.2%

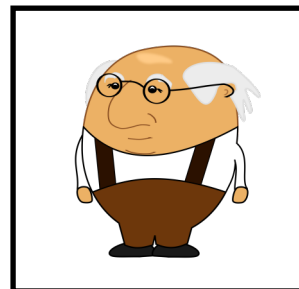
of Weddin population reported suffering from a mental health condition



37.9%

Of Weddin population are aged over 60.

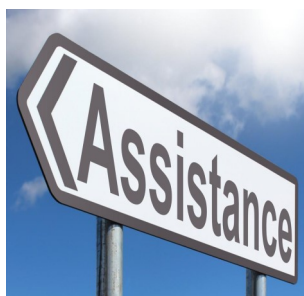
Compared to 23.5% of the NSW population.



70-74 Yrs.

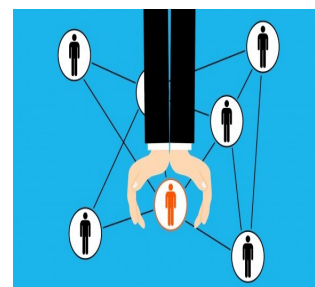
Highest reported age group in Weddin Shire.

8.3% of population



281

People within the Weddin Shire reported that they need assistance with core activities



438

No. of people that reported providing unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, health condition or old age

* Statistics based on 2021 census data

Weddin Shire Community Satisfaction Survey

In preparing the draft DIAP, we also considered Council's recent Community Satisfaction Survey which included targeted phone calls and an open online survey. Information to assist in the formation of the DIAP included:

11% (16% in open survey) of respondents identified as living with a disability

62% of residents who identified as living with a disability felt that Council has performed well in improving disability access to Council facilities. Six percent felt that it was not well/not well at all.

As a result, Council has enacted a number of actions to assist in improving the community's level of satisfaction on disability inclusion.



5. Guiding principles

Guiding Principles outline the specific approach to inclusion given the unique demographics of the Weddin Shire. The following guiding principles are consistent with the guiding principles of the NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan and have been used to identify focus areas for this Plan.

Positive
community
attitudes and
behaviors

Creating
Liveable
communities

Supporting
Access to
Meaningful
Employment

Improving access
to mainstream
services through
Systems and
processes





Focus areas

Positive community attitudes & behaviours

- Increase the public's awareness of disability inclusion
- Promote inclusive opportunities within the Weddin Shire
- Support International Day of People with a Disability
- Increase visibility of people with a disability in Council publications, communications, website and social media
- Implement disability awareness training for staff
- Liaise with known disability service providers on matters which are likely to have a significant impact on people with a disability.

Creating liveable communities

- Develop and support shared pathway campaign to reduce conflict between pedestrians and scooters
- Consider accessibility when organising Council activities and events within the Shire
- Improve inclusion and access to recreational areas
- Ensure new and upgraded Council facilities are accessible where required.
- Provide NDIS information on Council's website
- Identify important pathway upgrades to ensure they are accessible
- Monitor funding opportunities to improve inclusion and liveability within the Shire for people with a disability

Supporting access to meaningful employment

- Ensure Council's workforce plan includes best practice guidelines for inclusion
- Ensure recruitment process includes appropriate inclusive language
- Work with disability employment organisations and schools to promote opportunities for employment and work experience within the Shire
- Support any employees with a disability to return to work where possible.

Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

- Ensure Council website and communications are undertaken in accordance with inclusive best practice
- Council advocate for all venues used for voting to be accessible
- Advocate for increased access to services for people with a disability within the Shire
- Ensure workplace wellbeing program for staff is maintained
- Information on accessibility and disability support provided on Council website.



6. Development of the plan

Weddin Shire Council first adopted a Disability Inclusion Action Plan in 2017. The plan was development based on input provided by people with a disability, their families, supporters and the general public. Consultation was undertaken via on-line and paper based survey, internal (Council) consultation and formal exhibition of the Plan.

This current Disability Inclusion Action Plan builds upon the base which was established in the original plan. The process of developing the plan involved:

1. Review of original plan and outcomes
2. Review of feedback received on the original plan
3. Development of a new draft Plan taking into account latest data and trends, the requirements of the *Disability Inclusion Act 2014* and applicable guidelines, along with the identified guiding principles and focus areas
4. Presentation of the draft Plan to Council for placement on public exhibition
5. Placing the plan on public exhibition including advertising in the Grenfell Record and on Councils social media and website seeking feedback from members of the public.
6. Formal referral of the draft Plan to the Weddin Interagency seeking feedback.
7. Review of the draft Plan taking into account comments and feedback received as a result of the public exhibition
8. Presentation of a final Plan to Council for formal adoption
9. Providing a copy of the final plan to the Disability Council making the Plan publicly available, including for people with disability.



7. Focus areas and key actions

Positive community attitudes & behaviours

Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Accountability
Increase the public's awareness of disability inclusion	Public awareness of disability inclusion increased	Ongoing	Director Environmental Services
Promote inclusive opportunities within the Weddin Shire	Promotion completed	Ongoing	Director Corporate Services
Support International Day of People with a disability	Promotion and support completed	12 months	Director Environmental Services
Increase visibility of people with a disability in Council publications, communications, website and social media	Visibility in Council communications increased	12 months	Director Corporate Services
Implement disability awareness training for staff	Awareness training completed by staff	2 years	Human Resources
Liaise with known local disability service agencies on matters which are likely to have a significant impact on people with a disability.	Local service agencies liaised in an appropriate manner to bring to their attention matters which may impact on people with a disability.	Ongoing	All staff



Creating liveable communities

Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Accountability
Develop and support shared pathway campaign to reduce conflict between pedestrians and scooters	Decrease in pedestrian complaints and incidents	2 years	Director Infrastructure Services
Consider accessibility when organising Council activities and events within the Shire	Events organised to provide accessibility where possible	Ongoing	All staff
Improve inclusion and access to recreational areas	Accessible park created New recreational areas made accessible	Ongoing	Director Environmental Services Director Infrastructure Services
Ensure new and upgraded Council facilities are accessible where required	Accessible buildings and facilities provided	Ongoing	Director Environmental Services
Provide NDIS information on Councils website	Information included on Councils website	12 months	Director Corporate Services
Identify important pathway upgrades to ensure they are accessible	Pathways identified and plan for upgrade works developed subject to funding	Ongoing	Director Infrastructure Services
Monitor funding opportunities to improve inclusion and liveability within the Shire for people with a disability	Grant applications identified and applied for	Ongoing	All staff



Supporting access to meaningful employment

Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Accountability
Ensure Council's workforce plan includes best practice guidelines for inclusion	Best practice inclusion guidelines included in workforce plan	Ongoing	General Manager
Ensure recruitment process includes appropriate inclusive language	All recruitment advertising to include appropriate language which encourages applicants with a disability where the vacancy is appropriate.	Ongoing	Human Resources
Work with disability employment organisations and schools to promote opportunities for employment and work experience within the Shire	Workplace opportunities and work experience opportunities for people with a disability promoted to disability employment organisations and schools	Ongoing	Human Resources
Support any employees with a disability to continue and/or return to work where possible.	Appropriate actions undertaken to support employees with a disability.	Ongoing	Human Resources



Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Accountability
Ensure Council website and communications are undertaken in accordance with inclusive best practice	Communications developed to take into account inclusivity	Ongoing	General Manager
Council advocate for all venues used for voting to be accessible	Advocacy undertaken	Ongoing	General Manager
Advocate for increased access to services for people with a disability within the Shire	Advocacy undertaken with appropriate government departments and Ministers	Ongoing	General Manager
Ensure workplace wellbeing program for staff is maintained	Wellbeing program maintained in consultation with staff	Ongoing	Human Resources
Information on accessibility and disability support provided on Council website.	Information included on Council's website	12 months	Director Environmental Services

8. Monitoring, reviewing and reporting

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan is aligned with Councils Integrated Planning and Reporting framework including the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program, Operational Plan and Annual Report.

A copy of the Plan will be provided to the NSW Disability Council as required by Disability Inclusion Act 2014.

Progress on the Plan will be included in Councils Annual report which will be made publically available. A copy of the part of the Annual Report which relates to implementation of this Plan will be provided to the Minister for Families and Communities and Minister for Disability Inclusion as required by the Disability Inclusion Act 2014.

As required by the Act, Council will review this Plan within 4 years of its adoption. Within 12 months after the completion of the review, and having taken into account the recommendations made in the review, Council will remake the Plan with or without variations.

