



BELLINGEN
SHIRE COUNCIL

DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN



2022-2026



Acknowledgement of Country

Bellinghen Shire Council acknowledges the Gumbaynggirr people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live, work and learn. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

The Gumbaynggirr Community Vision...

A place where there is genuine respect for the land and the original people of this country. A place where the ancestors' way of holding country is recognised. A place where there is respect for custodial people who carry this tradition today and for Elders and the children of the future. A place where we all walk together, where we can all be here in harmony with the land and all life. The land around here has a great capacity to do that, to heal... in a way that's not separating.

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MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



I am pleased to present the Bellingen Shire Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022–2026. At Council we are striving to make Bellingen Shire inclusive of everyone and provide equal opportunity for people with disability to participate in all aspects of life across our Shire.

An inclusive community is one that promotes and supports diversity and offers choice for everyone. It acknowledges and celebrates diversity and helps reduce the negative impacts associated with discrimination and disadvantage.

Bellingen Shire Council is committed to promoting and supporting access and inclusion by ensuring it is a key consideration in all areas of councils business.

This plan was developed by Council based on consultation with groups and individuals from across the Shire. I would like to thank the many community members who took the time to give their ideas for making our community a better place for people with disability. I look forward to working with them and the rest of the community to implement the objectives outlined in this important plan.

Mayor - Stephen Allan

MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER



I am proud to work with Council's Executive Leadership Team to champion the delivery of our new Disability Inclusion Action Plan. Bellingen Shire Council's ongoing commitment to making Bellingen Shire truly inclusive and welcoming is captured in our Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022–2026.

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan recognises the underlying social responsibility for local governments to work to remove barriers to inclusive participation in our communities, protect the rights of people with disability and promote the value of diversity and inclusion across our community, and create a better future for everyone. It builds on the progress that Council has made so far and provides a pathway for further action.

Over the last four years we have continued to work on priorities identified by our communities. We will continue to work alongside other government agencies, industry leaders and our community to continue to make Bellingen Shire Council a welcoming and inclusive place for all residents and visitors to enjoy. We are committed to continuing our engagement with people with disability to ensure we are getting it right.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who was involved in developing this plan. Your advice, feedback and suggestions are important and valued. We look forward to hearing about the difference we are making in people's lives through the delivery of this plan.

Liz Jeremy - General Manager

INTRODUCTION

Disability is part of being human and nearly everyone at some point in their life will experience some form of disability.¹

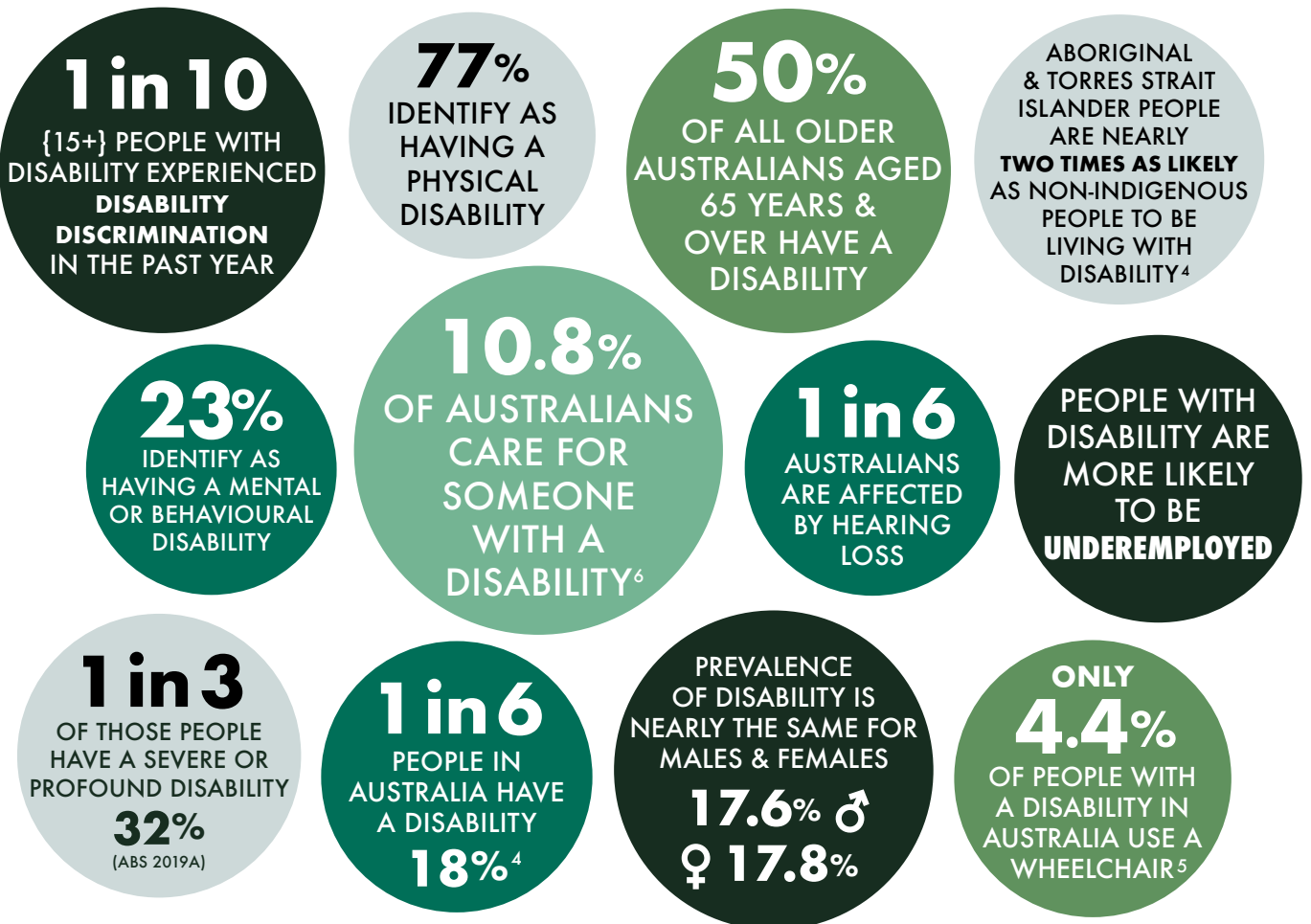
Persons are considered to have a disability if they have a limitation, restriction or impairment, which has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activities. It includes not only people with physical disabilities but also people with less visible disabilities including mental health conditions, sensory, intellectual, physical, psychosocial, head injury, stroke or acquired brain injury.²

The disability population is diverse and encompasses people with varying types and levels of disability across all socioeconomic and demographic groups. Knowing this can improve our understanding of how experiences of people with disability vary.

Carers play a vital role in supporting and assisting individuals with a disability to live their best life. The type of support that carers provide can vary from occasional help to regular care, to emotional and administrative support.³

Disability is not only the diagnosis of a health condition but also extends to the social attitudes that are derived from prejudice or stereotypes, the physical environment or policies and procedures that exclude people with disability. No two people experience their disability in the same way.

DISABILITY IN AUSTRALIA



1 <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/disability/people-with-disability-in-australia/contents/people-with-disability>

2 <https://www.carersnsw.org.au/about-caring/who-are-carers/caring-for-a-person-with-disability>

3 <https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/supporting-people-with-disability/about-people-with-disability-in-australia#:~:text=Inclusive%20and%20accessible%20communities,all%20areas%20of%20Australian%20life>

4 <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/disability/people-with-disability-in-australia/contents/people-with-disability/prevalence-of-disability>

5 <https://www.and.org.au/resources/disability-statistics/> 4.4%

6 <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/disability/disability-ageing-and-carers-australia-summary-findings/latest-release#:~:text=There%20were%202.65%20million%20carers,9.3%25%20of%20all%20males> 10.8

OUR COMMITMENT

Bellingen Shire Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022–2026 is a four year framework that will outline the practical steps that Bellingen Shire Council will take to improve access and inclusion within our LGA. As a Council we have a responsibility to ensure mainstream services are inclusive and accessible to people with disability. Council is committed to engaging with people with disability within our community and our workforce to ensure this happens. We encourage people to provide us with ongoing feedback and suggestions for improvement throughout the four year period so that we can respond to the changing needs of our community. Focusing on accessibility and putting it front and centre is important to us as a Council and as a community.



**If something is
accessible everyone
can use it.**

**If something is inclusive
everyone can take part.**

POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

In 2014 the NSW Government introduced the National Disability Inclusion Act 2014 to demonstrate its commitment to supporting the fundamental right of choice for people with disability. It promotes independence and social and economic inclusion and provides safeguards around delivery of support and services.

The Act requires all Local Councils in NSW to develop a Disability Inclusion Action Plan or DIAP every four years, which shows the work that Council is doing to break down barriers and promote access to services, information and employment and promote the rights of people with disability. It outlines the measures put in place so that people of all abilities can participate equally in community life.

The Act reflects the understanding that disability is part of the human experience and that at some point in a person's life journey they will experience disability either personally or as a carer.

THE NSW DISABILITY INCLUSION ACT 2014 REQUIRES THE PLAN TO HAVE FOUR KEY FOCUS AREAS

- **Developing positive attitudes and behaviours**
Described as the single greatest barrier to full access and inclusion. This is about increasing awareness and changing negative perceptions over time.
- **Creating liveable communities**
This is about ensuring the physical environment supports people with a disability but also includes areas such as housing, access to transport, recreation social engagement and universal design.
- **Supporting access to meaningful employment**
This is about ensuring people with disability feel included and have equal access to career opportunities and development and education.
- **Improving access to systems and processes**
This is about ensuring that everybody has access to the right information and can navigate systems and processes in order to get the support they need.

There is a range of International, Federal and State legislation that actively supports access and inclusion for people with disability.

INTERNATIONAL

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2008

NATIONAL - AUSTRALIA

- Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Australian Standard (AS 1428) – Design for Access and Mobility. (Access to Premises Standards Buildings) Standards 2010
- Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002
- Equal Employment Opportunity (Commonwealth Authorities) Act 1987
- National Disability Strategy 2010–2020
- National Disability Insurance Scheme
- Web Accessibility National Transition Strategy 2010

POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

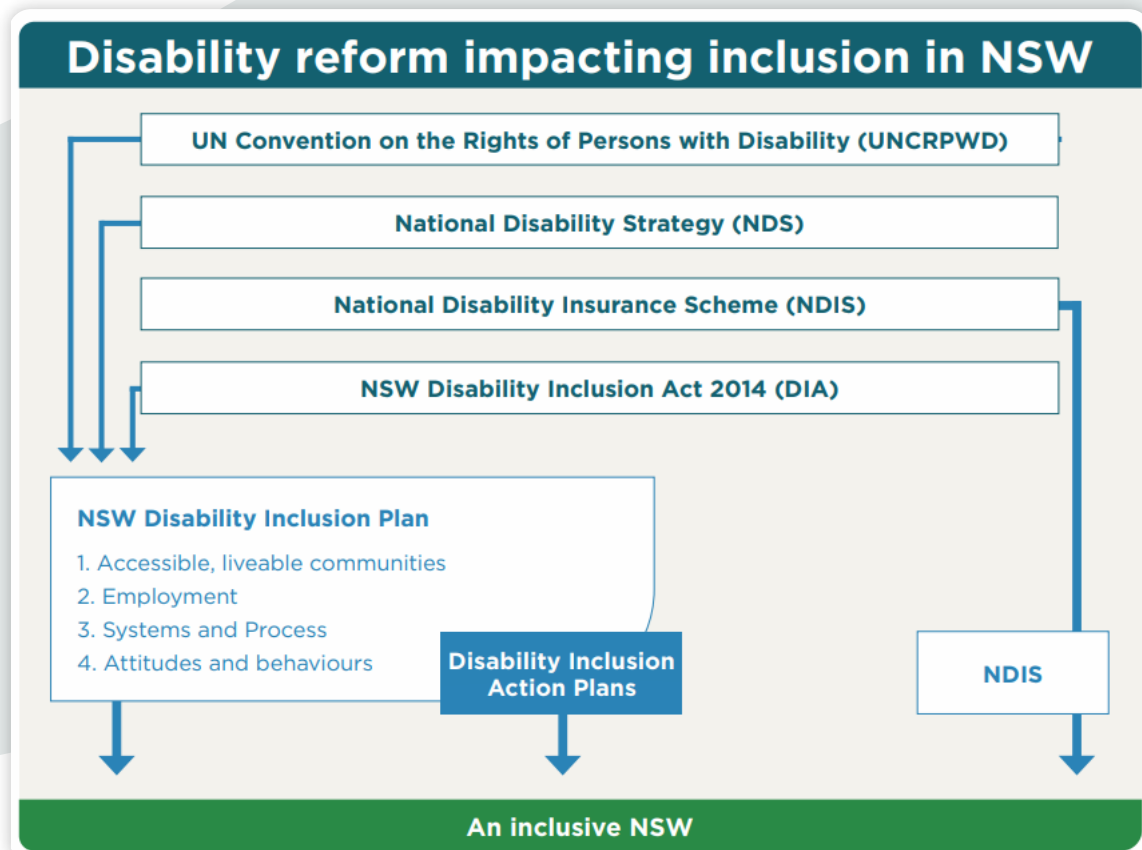
STATE - NEW SOUTH WALES

- Anti-discrimination Act 1977
- Mental Health Act 2007
- Carers (Recognition) Act 2010
- NSW Government Sector Employment Act 2013 (GSE Act)
- Disability Inclusion Act 2014
- NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner Act 2019 (State Government)
- Living Well in Focus 2020–2024: A strategic plan for community recovery, wellbeing and mental health in NSW
- NSW Disability Inclusion Plan

LOCAL GOVERNMENT - BELLINGEN SHIRE COUNCIL

This plan relates to other Council strategic documents as inclusion is embedded into the principles and actions of the following plans:

- Bellingen Shire Community Vision
- Revised Delivery Program 2022–2026
- Operational Plan 2022–2023
- Inclusive Tourism Strategy
- Community Engagement Strategy 2021
- Economic Development & Tourism Plan
- Bellingen Shire Branding Strategy
- P.A.M.P (Pedestrian Access & Mobility Plan)
- Local Housing Strategy 2020–2040
- Asset Management policy
- Development Control Plan (DCP) 2017



THE CASE FOR INCLUSION

- Community inclusion isn't just important for wellbeing, it is a human right.
- Everyone with different backgrounds, abilities, and interests all bring something unique and can contribute to the richness of society.
- Increasing employment opportunities and outcomes unlocks improved economic security, independence and well-being for people with disability and their families.
- As a community, we are richer with a diverse range of viewpoints and individual perspectives. Society is enhanced and enriched by the diversity of the people.
- Exclusion leads to disadvantage and discrimination, which have far reaching negative impacts across all aspects of life, including health, welfare, education and employment. These impacts are felt beyond the individual, with families and the broader community being negatively impacted by a non-inclusive community.
- Employment can provide independence, reduce reliance on benefits and improve the living standards of people with disability. This can have positive health impacts and contribute to a greater sense of self-worth.
- There is a strong economic case to support inclusion in our community. Access to businesses benefits people with disability, older people, parents or carers with prams and business owners by expanding their business reach.
- Without an inclusive society, diversity is not promoted and control over choice is limited.



OUR COMMUNITY

The Bellingen Shire is currently home to 13,141 people (2020 ABS ERP) who come from many different countries and are involved in diverse occupational, cultural, and social activities. It has a thriving tourism industry with an additional 210,000 visitors coming to our Shire each year.

OUR COMMUNITY VISION STATES THAT WE ARE:

CONNECTED

We are a community that is inclusive, connected to each other in our shire, and with connections beyond-regionally, nationally, and globally.

SUSTAINABLE

We strive to live sustainably to ensure that we have enough for all, forever.

CREATIVE

We are a community that is creatively and culturally dynamic.
We are ingenious and inventive in finding innovative solutions to problems and challenges.

Bellingen Shire is located on the Mid North Coast of New South Wales, about 550 kilometres north of Sydney and 400 kilometres south of Brisbane. Bellingen Shire is bound by Coffs Harbour City in the north, the Coral Sea in the east, Nambucca Shire in the south, and the Armidale Regional Council area and the Clarence Valley Council area in the west.

The shire has three distinct geographical areas – ocean, river, and mountains. Each is a vibrant and rich community with its own characteristics. The Local Government Area is made up of many beachside and inland localities, villages, towns and suburbs. These are Urunga, Raleigh, Repton, Mylestom, Fernmount, Bellingen, Gleniffer, Kalang, Darkwood, Orama, Brinerville, Thora, Bostobrick, North Dorrigo, Dorrigo, Cascade, Megan, Brierfield, and Deervale.⁵

⁵ <https://profile.id.com.au/bellingen/about>

DISABILITY IN BELLINGEN

Bellingen Shire's disability statistics relate directly to need for assistance due to a severe or profound disability. While the statistics assist in helping to understand the numbers of people who need support in the community, it is acknowledged that this number does not include all people living with and caring for people with a disability in the Bellingen Shire community.

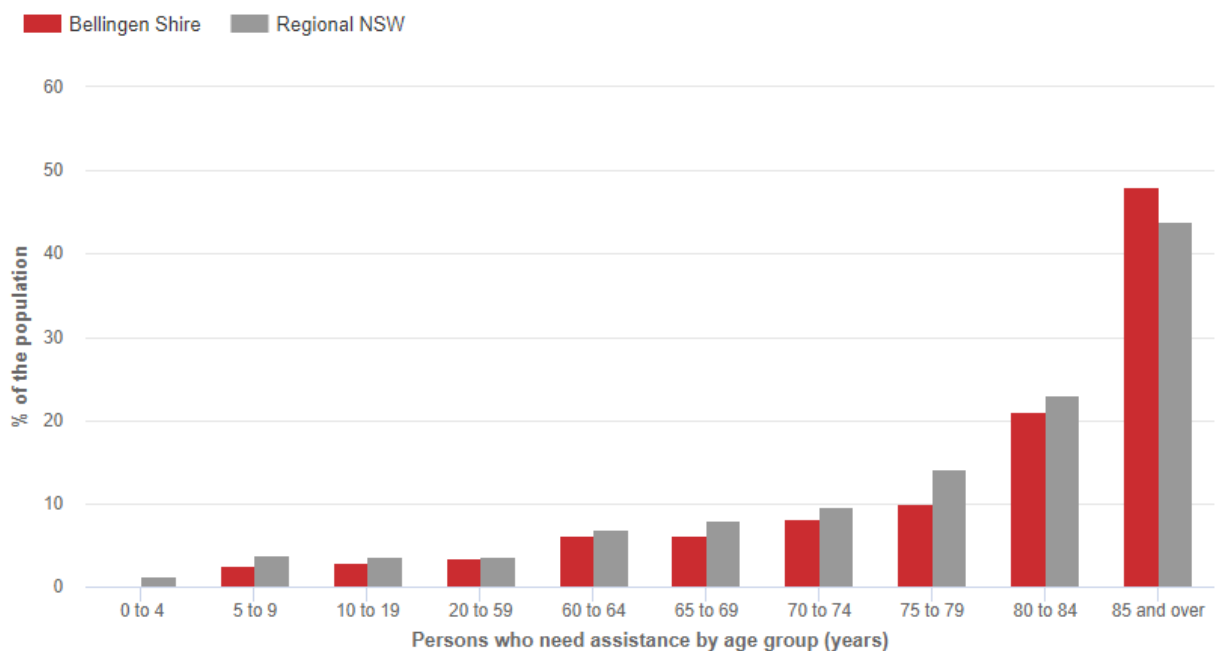
5.9%

REPORT NEEDING
HELP IN THEIR
DAILY LIVES DUE TO
DISABILITY

BELLINGEN
SHIRE HAS A
LARGER PROPORTION
OF PEOPLE OVER
85 YEARS
COMPARED TO
REGIONAL
NSW

32.4%

OF ITS POPULATION
IS AGED 60 YEARS
& OVER



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS FROM THE DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2017–2021

There are a number of achievements and success stories that can be shared from the DIAP 2017–2021. The delivery of some of the actions from this Plan were impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Many of these achievements have contributed to our community vision in creating a connected, sustainable and creative community.

ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS

- Organised and hosted an Activate Inclusion Sports Day event at Bellingen High.
- Promoted the Ian J. Cooper Awards which acknowledges and celebrates individuals and businesses that have championed disability action.
- Promoted numerous awareness raising campaigns including the Missed Business brochure, RUOK Day and Mental Health Month.
- Updated the Bellingen Shire Mobility Map.
- Became actively involved in the Suicide Prevention Action Network.
- Became members of Sport NSW which promotes inclusive sport opportunities.
- Delivered awareness training for staff on: Disability, Dignity and Respect in the workplace, Grievance Handling, Anti Bullying and Mental Health First Aid.
- Developed an Inclusive Tourism Guide outlining key accessible places to visit.

CASE STUDY: ACTIVATE INCLUSION SPORTS DAY EVENT AT BELLINGEN HIGH SCHOOL 2021

In May 2021 Bellingen Shire Council in conjunction with Sport NSW hosted an inclusive sports event day at Bellingen High School for students with sensory, physical or intellectual disability aged between 5-18 years. Participants experienced a variety of modified sporting activities on the day which were delivered by specialised coaches. This event gave participating kids the opportunity to try sports they might otherwise miss out on as well as an opportunity to have a go in a fun and inclusive environment.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS FROM THE DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2017–2021

LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

- Completed the Dorrigo roundabout project which included installing tactile ground surface indicators and new pedestrian crossings.
- Tactile ground surface indicators and new pedestrian crossings were installed in Bellingen town.
- Footpath renewals in Dorrigo, Urunga and Bellingen including Lavenders Bridge.
- All access play equipment, new footpath and accessible amenities, parking space, tables and BBQs installed at Coronation Park, Dorrigo.
- New viewing platform and accessible parking space at Dangar Falls, Dorrigo.
- Council buildings were audited to determine compliance with Australian standards.
- New ramp access and accessible amenities were constructed at Raleigh Hall.
- Accessible amenities block constructed at Burdett Park, Fernmount.
- Tether points for dogs were installed at various locations to reduce trip hazards.
- An accessible footpath and an additional parking space were constructed in Mylestom.
- Handrails to the tidal pool at Mylestom were installed as well as modifications made to the ocean viewing platform.
- Plastic decking was installed at the beach in Urunga to improve access.
- Hearing loops were installed at both the Council Chambers and at Urunga Library.
- An accessible outdoor toilet and adjustable circulation desk were installed at Urunga Library making access easier.
- Adjustments were made to the height of sinks, toilet paper and soap dispensers in accessible toilets as well as taps replaced.

CASE STUDY: URUNGA LIBRARY ACCESSIBLE FEATURES

In 2019 Urunga Library received funding to upgrade its infrastructure. As part of this upgrade a new accessible public toilet was installed adjacent to the library, a hearing loop for hearing impairment was installed in the meeting room as well as a height adjustable circulation desk. These improvements made it easier for everyone to access the library facility and the range of services it offers.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS FROM THE DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2017–2021

EMPLOYMENT

- Accessible improvements were made to the Council Chambers Building and Raleigh Depot including an additional accessible meeting room, wider paths, additional ramp access to offices, new layout at both sites allowing wheelchair circulation and access and more open space.
- Bellingen Shire Council continues to be an Equal Opportunity Employer and supports diversity in the workplace.
- Council offers Mental Health support and provided training in Mental Health First Aid to all staff.

CASE STUDY: OFFICE RE-ARRANGEMENT TO SUIT FLEXIBILITY AND PHYSICAL NEEDS

In 2019 a review of the seating arrangements at both the Council Chambers and the Raleigh depot took place. A number of changes were made which included an additional meeting room with ramp access and two additional accessible office spaces. The new layout also allows for circulation paths for wheelchair users. The new layout has made these offices more accessible for all staff and visitors to these buildings.



CASE STUDY:

In 2021 Bellingen Shire Council launched a new website which meets international standards for web accessibility. This means that our website has been designed and developed with tools, and technologies so that people with disabilities can use them.



SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

- My Community Directory platform was launched listing all community organizations and services in one place making access simpler and easier.
- Missed Business Brochure was promoted to businesses for how they could be more user friendly to people of all abilities.
- Microphones were made available at all council events.
- Council launched a new website platform which meets web content AA+ standard in accordance with Australian Government accessibility policy.
- Live streaming of Council meetings were made available to the community.
- Connect and Go offered ipads for loan with support from the libraries to assist Seniors with technology.

DEVELOPING THE PLAN

This Plan seeks to build upon Council's previous Disability Inclusion Action Plans (2014–2017) and (2017–2021) and the achievements that have come out of them. It provides information on how we are going to make Bellingen Shire a more inclusive and accessible place to live.

This new plan includes some new actions which address emerging issues identified by the community, whereas others are existing actions from the previous plan which have been updated and carried forward to reflect the next stage in implementation.

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan is a living document that will have further actions added to it during its four year life. This will ensure that Council continues to recognise and respond to the rights, needs and values of people with a disability.

CONSULTATION

Development of this Plan was informed by research, a community wide survey, staff survey and many conversations with people with disability, their families and carers, disability service providers, advocacy organisations, community groups, employment services and Council staff. It has focused on increased engagement at all stages of planning with those who have a lived experience of disability.

The majority of respondents were female aged between 55-65. Many of those we heard from pointed out that there was still a lack of awareness and understanding of less visible disabilities including: people living with mental health conditions, people on the Autism spectrum and people with an intellectual disability.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION (August 2021 – February 2022)

- Disability Reference Group was formed
- Informal community conversations: 10
- Community feedback received via email: 6
- Community Survey: 60 people responded to our community survey
 - 46 online
 - 14 hardcopy
- Staff Survey online: 38 responses
- 3 Community Forums held in each township: 8 people attended community forums held in Bellingen, Dorrigo and Urunga
- 2 online Teams meeting with the Disability Reference Group
- Internal Consultation with: Customer & Business Services, Economic and Business Development, Operations, People & Culture, Organisational Strategy and Communications, Sustainable Environment and Waste

HERE'S A SUMMARY OF WHAT YOU TOLD US

WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT FOR CHANGING ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS TOWARDS PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY?

- Training for Council staff on disability awareness and inclusion.
- Sharing stories that showcase inclusion of all abilities.
- Making disability in all age groups more visible.
- Greater community awareness about disability including the language used.

WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT FOR CREATING LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES?

- Providing accessible footpaths that link key places.
- Visible signs that indicate where accessible amenities are located.
- Providing toilets that are accessible and have accessible features.
- Providing adequate parking spaces.
- Ensuring gardens and pathways are maintained and cleared of debris.
- Enabling access to the water's edge.
- Awareness of accessible features and places.
- Adequate seating to allow people to rest.

WHAT IS IMPORTANT FOR IMPROVING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY?

- Providing staff training and awareness about disability.
- Making workplaces accessible.
- Creating opportunities for employment.
- Having inclusive and flexible work arrangements.

WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO MAKING ACCESS TO INFORMATION EASIER AND IMPROVING SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES?

- Communicating through a range of mediums including print, online, radio, word of mouth and with a variety of community services.
- Providing documents and information in simple/easy read/ plain language.
- Ensuring disability issues are included in the maintenance schedule.
- Informing the community about achievements and improvements that have been made around access and inclusion.

ACTIONS 2022–2026

The following Actions outline what Bellingen Shire Council is committed to achieving over the next four years across the four key focus areas. These actions are ones that Bellingen Shire Council has control or influence over and which are achievable with available resources and within the timeframe 2022–2026. (See Appendix 1 for timeframes and how success will be measured)

1. PROMOTING POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS

Improve disability awareness for Council staff

- Source and deliver disability awareness training for all staff and incorporate a module on the Disability Inclusion Action Plan.
- Provide staff development opportunities that focus on inclusion and diversity.

Promote inclusion and positive attitudes towards people with disability

- Promote the Ian J. Cooper Awards for Access and Inclusion every two years.
- Co-ordinate an event to showcase nominees and winners of the Ian J. Cooper Awards every two years.
- Continue to support the implementation and celebration of International Day of People with Disability every two years.
- Continue to support programs for youth of all abilities in partnership with the Youth Hub and other community groups.
- Deliver event/s that decrease stigma and increase knowledge about a range of disability issues including mental health.

Make disability more visible

- Increase visibility of disability in Council's communication including newsletters, social media and marketing material, publications and on digital platforms.
- Publicise and promote everyday stories of people of all abilities and share stories that showcase inclusion in our community in a range of formats.

Increase awareness of the importance of inclusion and diversity in our community.

- Promote and develop brochures that inform the broader community about accessibility including for example: assistance dogs, disability parking spaces and MLAK toilets so that they have a better understanding of why they exist.
- Promote awareness raising campaigns that focus on inclusion and education on a range of disability issues for example: RUOK, Mental Health Month, International Day of People with Disability, Seniors Week, autism and dementia awareness.

Incorporate inclusion into Council's Communication and engagement strategies.

- Communicate what has been done to improve accessibility in the Shire via social media, newsletters and other media to inform the community.
- Communicate and meet with other Councils to discuss their strategies on disability.
- Update and promote an accessible events checklist for Council staff involved in the planning and delivery of events.

2. CREATING LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

Continue to improve accessible toilets

- Investigate the installation of bins in men's toilets: bins4blokes.
- Continue to identify opportunities to undertake accessible amenity upgrades in the various townships.
- Ensure gardens are maintained and vegetation cleared to ensure clear access to amenities and incorporate this into the works schedule.
- Review, update and maintain information about toilets on the National Public Toilet Map.

Improve footpaths that link key locations

- Install tactile ground surfaces at any new crossings.
- Incorporate access as a key feature of our infrastructure projects.
- Review and progressively document accessibility of footpaths with available technology.
- Investigate the possibility of new crossings that link key destinations in the Shire.

Improve signage that indicates accessible features in the Shire

- Investigate replacing current signs with larger signage using universal symbols.
- Ensure signs to accessible features are kept clean and clear of debris to ensure visibility and incorporate into the works schedule.
- Undertake an audit of street signage indicating accessible features and services.

Increase awareness of accessible features and services

- Continue to update and review mobility map as features and changes occur.
- Continue to promote accessible tourism featuring places and spaces that are accessible for example: Griffiths Lookout, Dangar Falls, Urunga wetlands.
- Promote the availability of accessible features in our Shire, for example: MLAK toilets, beach wheelchair, pool hoist, hearing loops, Daisy Player, Sensory Friendly kits.
- Investigate challenges for people with disability during disaster events.
- Promote and support community transport services delivered to our community.
- Advocate to State and Federal Agencies around support for affordable and diverse housing options.

Improve access to Council facilities as well as the natural environment

- Conduct an accessibility audit on key Council facilities.
- Use universally accessible street furniture in open spaces and consider accessibility when designing.
- Ensure disability is incorporated and considered in any works and maintenance schedules.
- Investigate beach access mat at North Beach, Mylestom and advocate for accessibility improvements at Urunga Lido.
- Continue to monitor adequacy of disability parking spaces.
- Improve accessibility and inclusion refurbishment works and maintenance of nominated halls and reserves as funding becomes available.

ACTIONS 2022–2026

3. SUPPORTING ACCESS TO MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT

Create an environment where everyone belongs

- Work with staff to identify employment opportunities and pathways.
- Support social enterprises that provide employment for people with disability.
- Develop a policy statement of commitment from Council to include in the DIAP and other documents.
- Ensure Council workplaces are accessible or able to be modified in case there is a need for adjustment.
- Provide staff training on inclusive language and merit selection.

Attract and recruit people with disability

- Promote employment and development opportunities to people with disability.
- Review research to better understand barriers to employment.
- Strengthen relationships with organisations such as NDIS employment agencies.
- Investigate traineeship and volunteer opportunities for people with disability.
- Employ a diverse range of people in the organisation and review Council's Equity & Diversity Plan.
- Build relationships with disability networks and link with other Councils to share experiences, learnings and opportunities.



ACTIONS 2022–2026

4. IMPROVE ACCESS TO SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

Improve accessibility of Council information and services

- Identify and develop key Council documents in accessible format. Use simple/easy read/plain language versions of documents.
- Monitor and update Council's web content for compliance with AA+ in the W3C's web content accessibility guidelines.

Improve access to information about supporting those with disability

- Report key DIAP outcomes in Council newsletters.
- Provide information on disability and how to access services through a range of formats including promotional material and signage.
- Consult with peak bodies to learn how Council can better provide services.



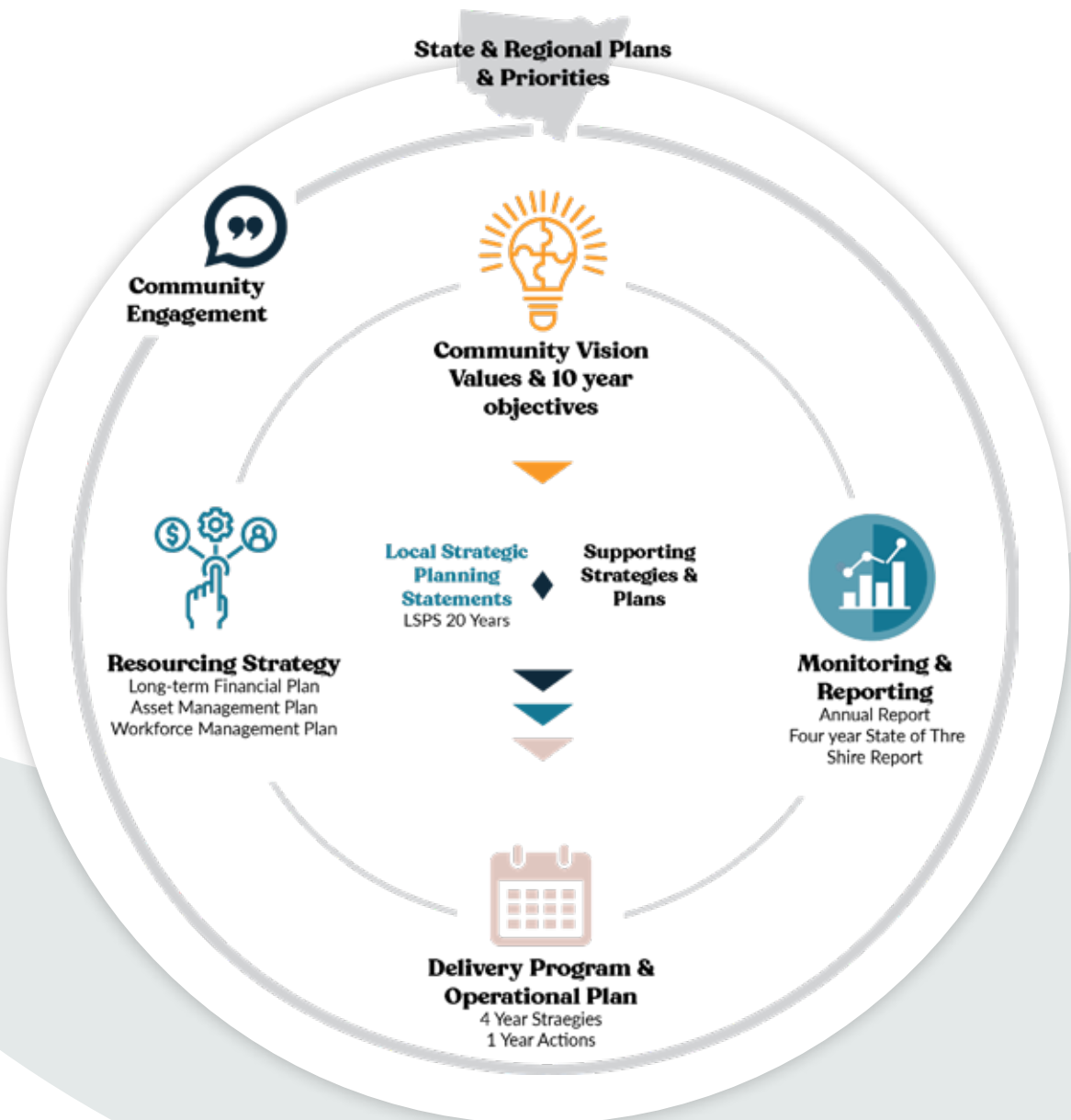
DELIVERING THE PLAN

Council must prepare a number of plans, which provide details on how we intend to deliver works and services in the short and long term, based on priorities that have been identified through community consultation and engagement.

The actions in this Plan will be integrated into Council’s four year Delivery Program and one year Operational Plan and will be aligned with the Community Strategic Plan.

Disability Inclusion Action Planning will be positioned as a part of the organisation’s core business through its embedding within Council’s four year Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) cycle. This positioning of the Plan will ensure that elected members and Council staff, at every level, consider inclusion of people with disability in their daily delivery of services.

Bellingen Shire Council’s Disability Inclusion Action Plan contributes to the delivery of the Strategic Plan and 2027 Vision as a connected, sustainable and creative place to live.



DELIVERING THE PLAN

GOVERNANCE

The implementation of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022–2026 will be overseen by the General Manager and Executive Leadership Team. The Senior Management Team will sponsor and promote the Plan. Relevant departments will be required to report on progress of implementing actions as part of their regular business reporting. This will inform reports to the Executive team and annual progress reports.

MONITORING

We will regularly review and monitor the progress of the Plan using a range of indicators including surveys, Council data and feedback on customer satisfaction. Ongoing engagement with the community and the Disability Reference Group will occur as required. An implementation Plan will be developed which will indicate priority actions over the four year period. In the fourth year of the Plan Council will measure community satisfaction through a community survey and through consultation with community.

REPORTING

We will regularly measure and report against the actions in this plan. Progress and outcomes will be reported annually as part of Councils Annual Report. A copy will be provided to the NSW Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services as required under the NSW Disability Inclusion Act, 2014.

FUNDING THE PLAN

Some of the actions in this plan are about continuing what we do and some are about implementing new ideas. Some actions won't cost anything, while others will require additional funding. The money to do this will be allocated through the annual budget where possible. However, sometimes it will be necessary to apply for external funding to assist in achieving the desired outcome.





BELLINGEN
SHIRE COUNCIL

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