



Greater  
Hume  
Council



Image @ Lea Bic Photography



**Disability  
Inclusion  
Action Plan**  
2021–2025

# Version Control

Version	Date	Action
V 0.1 DRAFT Work in Progress	22 March 2021	Distribution for development of Action Plan
V0.2	26 April 2021	Strategies and Actions completed to DRAFT
V0.3	4 May 2021	Final Draft (Indesign)

## Font and font size

Arial

Font at 12 point is recognised as a well-defined print for readability, which adequately addresses the needs of visually impaired people<sup>1</sup>.

Eliminating discrimination and embracing diversity  
in Greater Hume - affirming that inclusion is core  
business



^ We Go Swing installed at Ten Mile Creek Gardens, June 2021.

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## Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ADA	Anti Discrimination Act
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSP	Community Strategic Plan
DAS	Disability Advisory Service
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DIA	Disability Inclusion Act
DIAP	Disability Inclusion Action Plan
ED&SP	Economic Development and Social Plan
GHC	Greater Hume Council
IAC	Inclusion Advisory Group
LGAs	Local Government Areas
NSW	New South Wales
PwD	People with Disability
SEIFA	Socio-economic indices for areas

## Public Statement of Commitment to Accessibility and Inclusion

Greater Hume Council's vision is for an inclusive and accessible community, where people with disability have equitable opportunities to participate in social and cultural life, in meaningful employment and decision making processes. Council believes an inclusive community is one where people with disability are viewed positively by the wider community and acknowledged and celebrated for their diverse contributions and experiences.

Council affirms that inclusion is core business.

As part of this affirmation Greater Hume Council has developed a second four year Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) to continue the commitment to inclusion and enhancement of all aspects of life in Greater Hume.

Engagement with people with disability, their carers, family and friends as well as Council staff has been undertaken to inform this important plan. Actions from the plan will directly inform Council's Community Strategic Plan ensuring accountability and reporting of the measures that will flow to the Delivery and Operational plans.

**Greater Hume Council acknowledges the Wiradjuri people as the traditional owners of the land and pays respect to Wiradjuri Elders past and present.**



^ Changing Places facility at Ten Mile Creek Gardens, Holbrook

## About this Plan

Greater Hume Council acknowledges that disability impacts on a proportion of the Greater Hume population and strives to provide equitable opportunities for people with disability to participate in social and cultural life, in meaningful employment and decision making processes.

The purpose of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 is to build on the work undertaken in the 2017-2021 Disability Inclusion Action Plan setting out principles, strategies and actions to guide Council's aim to make inclusion care business. The plan will put into action the findings and recommendations identified through the community engagement process, ongoing community engagement and the relevant legislative requirements. These actions will directly inform Council's Community Strategic Plan ensuring accountability and reporting of the measures that will flow to the Delivery and Operational plans.

## Guiding Principles

### Social Model of Disability

Greater Hume Council embraces the social model of disability which sees 'disability' as the result of the interaction between people living with impairments and an environment filled with physical, attitudinal, communication and social barriers. It therefore carries the implication that the physical, attitudinal, communication and social environment must change to enable people living with impairments to participate in society on an equal basis with others.

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The social model seeks to change society in order to accommodate people living with impairment; it does not seek to change persons with impairment to accommodate society. It supports the view that people with disability have a right to be fully participating citizens on an equal basis with others.

The social model of disability is now the internationally recognised way to view and address 'disability'. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) marks the official paradigm shift in attitudes towards people with disability and approaches to disability concerns<sup>2</sup>.

### Principles

1. Council affirms that inclusion is core business
2. Physical, attitudinal, communication and social environment must change to enable people living with disability to participate in society on an equal basis with others
3. People with disability are viewed positively by the wider community and acknowledged and celebrated for their diverse contributions and experiences
4. Council will be accountable to people with disability, their carers and stakeholders

## Focus Areas

Our plan is to achieve the following aims under the four focus areas set by the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan.

### Positive attitudes and behaviours

- We will commit to inclusion as core business
- We will continue to develop a workplace culture in which we think and act inclusively.
- We commit to continuing to develop disability awareness skills in our frontline workers across our range of services to ensure we engage with community members with disability with sensitivity and respect.

### Liveability

- Through our services, we will support and contribute to actions that make our communities physically accessible and socially inclusive.
- We will work with people with disability who are involved with our services to support them to be successful in living safe and rewarding lives in their communities.

### Meaningful employment

We will continue to refine our recruitment methods to ensure that people with disability experience accessible and fair selection processes.

We will continue to develop a workplace culture in which people with disability have equal access to career development opportunities and opportunity to give their best work.

We aim to be an employer of choice for people with disability.

### Better systems and processes

- We commit to ensuring our systems and processes are universally accessible.
- We commit to employing the principles of inclusive or universal design to shape all our systems and processes<sup>3</sup>.

## Consultation

The Greater Hume Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 was developed in consultation with people with disability, carers, service providers, advocacy groups, staff and Councillors.

Council plans to engage these groups in the monitoring and reporting of the plan.

## Reporting

In accordance with the Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (DIA), this Plan will be lodged with the NSW Disability Council and the Australian Human Rights Commission. The NSW Disability Inclusion Act requires all councils to report on the progress of implementation of their DIAPs in their annual reports to align with their current reporting processes.

## Thank you

Council would like to thank and acknowledge all members of the community, staff and service providers for their input and involvement in the development of this plan

# Policy and Legislative Context

## Definition

The Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (DIA) 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”.**

This plan is a legislative requirement under the DIA. It provides strategies for positively shaping Council practices over the next four years to ensure greater inclusion of people with disability, their carers and families.

## National and legislative context

In 2008, all levels of Government across Australia committed to implementing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) through the development of the National Disability Strategy (NDS). This strategy sets out a national, unified approach to improving the lives of people with disability, their families and carers. The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (DIA) were introduced in NSW to provide greater individual choice and control for people with disability.

## Relevant Legislation

The relevant legislation, policies and conventions include:

- Disability Inclusion Act 2014
- Disability Inclusion Regulation 2014
- Government Sector Employment Act
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- NSW Anti Discrimination Act 1977
- NSW Disability Inclusion Plan
- National Disability Strategy 2010 - 2020
- National Disability Insurance Scheme Website
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

## NSW Disability Inclusion Act

The NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (DIA) recognises that disability results from barriers in society that prevent or limit inclusion.

The DIA reinforces Greater Hume Council's general obligation to reduce barriers for people with disability. The DIA recognises that people with disabilities have a right to participate as fully as possible in the life of the community. Under the DIA, Council has an obligation to make its facilities and services accessible and inclusive.

## Disability reform impacting inclusion in NSW



# Disability Inclusion Plan 2017 - 2021

## Outcomes

Section 12 (3) of the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 required Greater Hume Council to develop the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021.

The following is a summary of the outcomes from the first four year plan Greater Hume Council implemented 2017 - 2020:

### Building Positive Attitudes

- Greater awareness and understanding of disability inclusion and access through planning, community consultation, more specific focus on agendas such as Access in Greater Hume Health and Wellbeing Alliance meetings.
- Disability Inclusion and Access reference groups established.
- Partnership with Intereach Access @ a Glance with successful audits completed at Culcairn and Henty offices and liaison with businesses regarding program.

### Employment

- Ongoing inclusion of access and inclusion principles in staff training, recruitment and volunteering opportunities, including work experience opportunity within libraries.
- Increased awareness of access and inclusion requirements across customer service teams.

### Creating Liveable Communities

- Council support and advocacy for people with disability for the new trial on Demand Transport service across council.

### Celebration and acknowledgement of International Day of People with Disability

Youth Sports ability Days in partnership with Intereach Ability Links.

### Systems and Processes

- Events planning process implemented ensuring access and inclusion.
- Planning and Engineering departments continue to embed accessibility guidelines into projects – such as footpaths, street scapes, parks and gardens, play grounds, accessible toilets.
- Website content focussing on accessibility standards.
- Renovation of Henty Greater Hume Children Services building including accessible entrances and toilets.



## Governance and Accountability

### Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 proposes principles and strategies to guide Council's continued actions over the next four years and to empower people living with impairments to participate in society on an equal basis with others.

#### Governance

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 will put into action the findings and recommendations identified through the community engagement process, ongoing

community engagement and the relevant legislative requirements. These actions will directly inform Council's Community Strategic Plan ensuring accountability and reporting of the measures that will flow to the Delivery and Operational plans.

#### Accountability

Accountability, ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the Plan be overseen by the proposed Greater Hume Inclusion Advisory Group comprising community, service providers and disability advocacy representatives.

Council will report on progress of the Action Plan as part of the Greater Hume Council Annual Report and will also provide a summary of its achievements to the NSW Disability Council on an annual basis.

A comprehensive review and evaluation of the Plan will be undertaken at the completion of the four year term (2021-2025). The results will be reported to Council, NSW Disability Council and Australian Human Rights Commission as well as the Greater Hume community

## Performance Indicators

Performance Indicators are an important tool in ascertaining the progress in implementing the DIAP as well as maintaining the profile and commitment to disability inclusion within Council.

The challenge for Council is that issues may be important and have a significant impact on people with disability but be outside the direct control of Council. Council will monitor progress against these indicators to measure the wellbeing and inclusion of people with disability in the community.

## Risk Assessment

The DIAP will provide evidence of Council's commitment to continue to improve access for people with disability. As part of the development of the DIAP a risk management approach has been implemented in accordance with Council's Risk Management process. This risk assessment considered risks associated with the development of the draft DIAP, identified potential risks and mitigation strategies in the ongoing implementation of the draft DIAP.

## Financial Implications

The DIAP is primarily funded through the existing operational and capital budgets. The strategies and actions in the Plan will be identified within the Community Strategic Plan. Some strategies are unfunded and would require a funding proposal to progress. Unfunded projects, will be considered as part of the preparation of the Delivery Program and annually via the annual planning process. A number of strategies within the Action Plan relate to audits being undertaken as the first step. Such audits would then inform a strategic and holistic approach to improvement. This work will need to be costed and funding allocated when further details are available at the completion of a detailed strategy such as a public toilet strategy.

# Community Profile

## Our Place Our Community



# Community Profile – Our Place Our Community

## Greater Hume is a prosperous rural region

Greater Hume has a population of 10,351 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2017-18) and is located in southern New South Wales, bordering with Victoria and the local government areas of Wagga Wagga, Albury, Federation, Lockhart, and Snowy Valleys Councils. It is roughly rectangular in shape, approximately 110km from east to west and 60km north to south, covering an area of 5,748km<sup>2</sup> with the major towns being Culcairn, Henty, Holbrook, Jindera, and Walla Walla and smaller villages of Brocklesby, Burrumbuttock, Gerogery, Gerogery West, Morven, Walbundrie, and Woomargama.

The five towns and six villages dispersed across the shire play a key role in servicing traffic between regional and metropolitan centres while also servicing surrounding agricultural industries and meeting economic and social needs of local residents.

There are continued opportunities to grow the shire population due to its location. Albury / Wodonga and Wagga Wagga have a major influence on the shire through employment and access to higher level goods and services. There are growing numbers of residents who work in Wagga Wagga or Albury / Wodonga who have chosen an affordable rural and community lifestyle in Greater Hume shire.

Greater Hume Council (ABS 2016)<sup>4</sup>

- Population 10,351 people
- 339 Aboriginal Torres Strait Island people (3.3%) (NSW 2.9%)
- Median age 43yrs
- The SEIFA score 987
- Average personal income \$479/wk
- People in the 70-79 years cohort recorded the largest change in Greater Hume Shire showing a 32.5% increase from 2011

## Disability and ageing in Greater Hume Council

Of the 10,351 people in 2016,

- 2,063 people were over the age of 65 years (21%) (NSW 15%)
- 566 (5.54%) people had need for assistance with core activities
- 1,108 people provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability in the last two weeks before the Census

In December 2020<sup>5</sup>

- 337 people received a Disability Support Pension
- 1,343 people received the Age Pension
- 343 people received a Carer Allowance
- 5 people received a Carer Allowance – (Child Health Care Card only)
- 150 people received a Carer Payment



## Carers

Carers are individuals who provide care and support to those members of our community who have a disability, mental illness, chronic condition, palliative illness, drug or alcohol issues, or are frail aged. These recipients of care are typically, but not always, family members of the carer. Carers are the foundation of community care systems, including aged, disability, and palliative care, making carers an integral part of Australia's overall healthcare system.

Unpaid carers are the main providers of assistance to people with disability in Greater Hume Council.

Caring may include help and support with any of the daily activities of living of the person being cared for. It may include physical and personal care such as dressing, lifting, showering, toileting, feeding or providing transport.

Commonly, carers are responsible for the management of medications, and also provide emotional and social support. Caring may also involve help with organising and attending appointments, banking and dealing with emergencies.

Research has identified that carers and families of people with disability experience serious sleep deprivation, high rates of mental health problems, poorer physical health, employment restrictions, financial hardship and relationship breakdown.<sup>6</sup>

## Summary

Greater Hume's population of people with disability, carers and older people, underpins the importance of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025. These rates are likely to increase due to in large part to the ageing population, and survival into old age is now a reality for many people who have a lifelong disability<sup>7</sup>.

These patterns will require Greater Hume Council to embrace inclusion as core business and work closely with local and regional disability, aged care and advocacy services to ensure the community has the services systems in place to respond to need.

# Community Engagement

## How we engaged the community

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 was developed in consultation with residents, staff, service providers, advocacy groups and Councillors.

## Our community engagement message

Our engagement message asked prospective participants to help create a more inclusive and accessible Greater Hume for people with disability

We asked to hear from people with disability, people with mental health conditions, and people with caring responsibilities about how we can create a more inclusive Greater Hume.

We explained that our vision is for an inclusive and accessible community, where people with disability have equitable opportunities to participate in social and cultural life, in meaningful employment and decision making processes. An inclusive community is one where people with disability are viewed positively by the wider community and acknowledged and celebrated for their diverse contributions and experiences.

## What we did?

We invited the following people to be involved:

- people with disability
- people with caring responsibilities
- people with mental health conditions
- people who work in the disability sector
- interested residents

- Council Staff
- Councillors

Interested participants were given 5 options to engage and provide ideas and feedback.

These included:

1. Four community workshops, one in each of the major towns
2. An online survey
3. Paper based surveys which were available at customer service offices and libraries
4. Service provide ZOOM Workshop
5. Community ZOOM Workshop

## Who participated in the consultation?

A total of 84 individual responses were received. Respondents included: residents, service providers, advocacy groups, staff and Councillors.

Of the respondents:

- 77% were female and 33% male
- 40% had a disability
- 33% had a carer
- 65% had a friend or a family member with a disability
- 50% were aged between 56yrs and 65 yrs
- 60% lived in a town, 40% lived on a rural property

Workshop participants shared their lived experiences providing valuable insight into changes that can be made to eliminate discrimination and embrace diversity in Greater Hume.

## Who participated in the Feedback?

Participants will be provided with access to a draft copy of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 for feedback.

Recommended changes will be made and the final draft will be placed on Public Exhibition prior to going to Council for approval.

## Summary

The engagement resulted in important information about how people living with disability and their carers could participate in Greater Hume on an equal basis with others.



## What the community told us about attitudes and behaviours

### Attitudes and behaviours

Most participants felt the attitudes and behaviours towards people with disability were positive. Improvement had been noticed since the implementation of Greater Hume Council's 2017-2021 Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

Nevertheless, there was more to do to eliminate discrimination and enable people living with disability and their carers to participate in Greater Hume on an equal basis with others as follows:

- Facilitate access to information, education or resources that improve inclusion readiness
- Demonstrate leadership that challenges non-inclusive practices across all sections of Council
- Work with disability service providers and advocacy groups to
  - Mitigate discrimination and demonstrate inclusive practices across all sectors eg Council, Education, Business, Community/ Sporting Groups and Services
  - Improve understanding of what discrimination means and the impact of discrimination on people with disability and their carers/families
  - Provide training for customer service staff engaging and consult with people with disability and advocacy services to understand the lived experience

- Review printed and verbal information and resources to ensure it is inclusive
- Endorse and promote inclusive attitudes and behaviours
- Present case studies of examples of both positive and negative inclusive attitudes and behaviours
- Support staff to understand that discriminatory comments are not tolerated
- Build the capacity of managers to better understand the needs of staff with disability



## What the community told us about liveability in Greater Hume

Most participants commented on the improved number of disability car parks, all abilities access to preschools, new paths and better access in some of the towns, however there is more to do:

- Engage and work with people with disability and advocacy services in the planning and design phase of community structures, (the public exhibition stage is often seen as too late)
  - Work with local business to improve external and internal access including:
    - automated doors - wide enough for a mobility aid
    - replace heavy doors - with doors that are easily opened
    - street level access
    - safe placement of street signage
    - improve internal access - decrease clutter in the isles and turning points
    - improve signage
    - install ramps that are compliant with regulations
  - *“Sitting outside (businesses) on mobility devices and waiting for store person assistance or even being noticed outside as needing assistance or having to wait for someone from the public to help can be frustrating and shouldn’t still be occurring in 2021”*
  - *“I avoid shopping locally as I cannot get around in or around the stores, I want to maintain my independence and sense of dignity”*
- Work with Regional bus service to:
    - Install disability access
    - Review routes where fatigue may be a barrier to usage
    - Improve awareness of the service
    - Identify gaps eg TAFE/Work for non-drivers
    - Identify and respond to gaps resulting from the closure of Kirinari and Aspire services
  - Holbrook Meals on Wheels to work with UPA to address issues with an ageing bus
  - Local and regional aged and disability service providers to work together and;
    - establish carer support groups across Council communities and advocate for the needs older people, people with disability and carers
    - establish social support groups in the towns where people are feeling isolated and in need of such a group (eg Culcairn)
    - Respond to the demand for respite particularly in Henty



# What the community told us about improving employment opportunities for people with disability in Greater Hume

Greater Hume Council was acknowledged for recently employing a young person with disability in library services. Workplace adjustments and flexible work arrangements have been put in place and the person has commenced a traineeship.

## Council workplace

- Design role specifications and advertisements to avoid knowledge or capability requirements that are not essential for satisfactory performance in the role.
  - Design recruitment assessment methods to optimize the opportunities given to all applicants to demonstrate their merits against the job requirements.
  - Review position descriptions and recruitment processes to ensure staff with disability are not excluded from applying; I was overlooked for a position due to their disability.
  - Integrate training on disability access and inclusion into all staff induction/orientation practices.
  - Increase awareness of workplace adjustments that can be offered to staff.
  - Develop specific training for front line and service delivery staff to demonstrate competency in inclusive practice and service provision.
  - Monitor complaints for discrimination
  - Promote zero tolerance of discriminatory comments/behaviours. *“There is a lack of understanding when it comes to the less obvious disabilities and I have on occasion overheard staff making inappropriate comments about members of the public that may have unseen mental disability or illness. Particularly when this condition leads to hygiene issues or inappropriate social behaviours or hoarding. Thankfully this has not been a regular occurrence and I have on occasion gently reminded that these things can be the result of mental illness and is not something to be joked about. I also understand that making jokes about distressing situations can help people deal with their own processing but such jokes and comments need to be kept away from the workplace”.*
- Improve understanding and awareness of carer needs, the NSW Carer Act and NSW Carer Charter.
  - Review and monitor workplace surfaces including floors, benches and workshops
  - Install lower benches in all customer service offices and libraries.
  - Allow working from home and flexible work hours particularly for carers and parents of young children. *“Design all work as flexibly as possible, with a focus on achieving the desired outcomes rather than starting from required work methods, location, hours and so on”<sup>8</sup>* Review design and access to lunchrooms to improve access and inclusion.
  - Provide information about access to local allied health services – physiotherapy, occupational therapy, social work
  - Managers and team leaders to undertake conflict awareness and management programs. *“Management are not aware of potential tensions within the workplace and don’t take action to anticipate or address them. HR is supportive”.*
  - Ensure information is accessible and workplace adjustments are made for staff with hearing impairment. *“I cannot always hear instructions, requires workplace adjustment”.*
  - Acknowledge carers - Carer role not acknowledged
  - Review staff complaints and grievance response, approach and procedure.

- Review and adjust funding agreements and contracts to specify delivery of accessible and inclusive services and programs by third parties or contractors.

## Community

- Disability services and advocacy groups to work with local employers to:
  - Understand that people with disability have the right to work in an open, inclusive and accessible workplace.
  - Ensure application processes are non-discriminatory.
  - Understand the possible accessible options eg, alterations to job roles (allowing for fatigue), flexible work hours, workplace adjustments.
  - Provide career pathways and opportunities for people with disabilities at all levels.
  - Develop specific roles which accommodate the skills and capabilities of people with disability
- Understand the Carer Act and NSW Carer Charter.
- Analyse vacancies for potential positions for people with disability.
- Champion stories of successful workplaces where relevant adjustments have been made enabling people with disability to be employed.
- Seek out volunteer opportunities for people with disability to share their skills.
- Establish a Holbrook community development/business committee with inclusive terms of reference.
- Local and regional aged and disability service providers to work together and;
  - establish carer support groups across Council communities and advocate for the needs of carers in the workplace
  - establish social support groups in the towns where people are feeling isolated and in need of such a group (eg. Culcairn)



Image Kathryn Mitsch

# What the community told us about Greater Hume's systems and processes

## Consultation - community engagement

- Establish a Disability and Inclusion Advisory Group representative of disability service providers, advocacy groups, residents with disability, carers and older people. The purpose of this Advisory Group is to promote the social model of disability within Council and the wider community and assist Council in the development of policy and planning about issues of access and inclusion.
- The specific role of the group is to:
  - represent the interests of people with access issues (including physical, social and cultural) to Council and the broader community.
  - provide input to Council on development issues and Council projects.
  - provide a consumer perspective into Council's continuous improvement processes concerning access and inclusion.
  - assist Council in the identification of emerging issues and trends relative to the needs of persons experiencing disability in the region.
  - provide assistance with specific projects (identified by Council and/or the advisory committee).
  - assist Council in disseminating appropriate material to facilitate community dialogue in regard to access (including physical, social and cultural) matters.
  - mitigate discrimination and increase the understanding and implementation of the social model of disability.

- Engage groups such as Culcairn community development community in the design and planning stage of local projects seeking feedback on plans and activities during the planning phase.
- Engage disability services and advocacy services to support development applications for groups such as the men's shed projects.
- Use existing community networks and events to seek broader feedback and consultation about major projects.

## Council information

- Establish an inclusive Style Guide compliant with accessibility guidelines, apply to Council newsletters, notices, minutes, general rates notices, water rates notices, website. *"Council information is in small font and often are not in a good colour contrast. Orange is a bad colour for visual impairment, too busy, too much information"* Action: review the style guide with the proposed Inclusion Advisory Group to improve inclusiveness.
- Council Website content to comply with W3C's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines to be more accessible. *"Website is difficult to navigate, confusing, not able to find information, could not find the DIAP survey, add information about aged care and disability services, cannot find information about events and what is happening in the Council area"*. It is essential that the site be accessible in order to provide equal access and equal opportunity to people with diverse abilities. 93% of survey respondents had used the website, 40% said the website was not easy to use and they were not able to find the information they required.
- Review and promote the Council newsletter, have it available on line in a format that the print can be enlarged and made clearer. Council's newsletter is not widely known and not received by all residents.

- Establish photo boards of the Councillors outside each of the Council offices so people know who they are.
- Replace the paper back Business Directory with an online Directory.
- Dedicate a Web page to services and activities for older people and people with disability, include information about relevant regional service and advocacy groups.
- Seek feedback about Council information from visually impaired residents and people with low literacy.
- Ensure customer service staff are familiar with and have information about Council services and services for people with disability and older people.
- Improve consultation about council plans - physical copies and larger versions available at offices and improve information about their availability using the website and Council notices.

## Planning and Infrastructure

- Apply the principles of universal design in the planning of new infrastructure and buildings.
- Street seating provided especially along streets with long shopping precincts such as Holbrook.
- Engage people with disability in the design and planning phases of new major infrastructure and buildings.
- Conduct audits of buildings owned or leased to assess compliance with Australian standards for access and mobility (AS1428 parts 1 to 5).

## Events

- Plan Council events in consultation with people with disability, their carers and older people to ensure accessibility and inclusion.
- Improve information (Website etc) about Council events adopting inclusive

language and approach.

- Establish short term drop off and bus parking points for carer.

## Tourist information and Tourism Services

- Improve accessibility of tourist information and services for visitors.
- Identify and promote accessible walks for visitors and residents.

## Services

- Review children services programs to improve inclusion.
- Work with local and regional disability and advocacy services to improve inclusion across all Council services and the implementation of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan.
- Promote libraries as facilities where services can co-locate/meet and plan community activities/services/education/communication.
- Improve accessibility for specialist services and telehealth – children services and aged care housing.

## Social Housing

- Undertake a feasibility study into housing.

needs projecting future demand and need

## Council facilities

### Offices

- Improve external and internal signage from the street signage to be inclusive of people with impaired vision and low literacy.
- Install hearing loops in all Council offices
- Install rails and ramps.
- Install waiting areas in customer service areas.

### Footpaths

- Monitor footpaths to reduce injury and improve access *“Uneven footpaths - these imperfections make the use of a blind cane, at times, unsafe as it can/does catch in divots/cracks and then possibly causing a fall. Lack of footpaths force walking on streets and these too’ share the inconsistency of surface issues”*.
  - Engage local community networks and the proposed Disability Advisory Group in planning and designing footpaths.
  - Review footpath access to parks and playgrounds for prams and mobility aids.
- Locations
- Review footpath plans for villages eg Woomargama - no footpaths in Woomargama *“We had to move to Holbrook”*.
  - Review footpath access to Kala Court
  - Assess Walla Walla footpaths - *“uneven surfaces, gutters too high - not able to step up...wheelie walkers add to difficulty”*.
  - Consider accessibility when designing kerbs and gutters.

### Toilets

- Review access to toilets in Council parks *“wheelchair access to some toilets/parks were difficult due to grass being thick - no footpaths”*.
- Review after-hours access to disabled toilets in many of the towns.

### Waste Facilities

- Review accessibility and information to improve access for people with visual impairment and mobility aids.

### Halls

Install access ramps in Holbrook and Burrumbuttock Halls.

### Other

- Improve bathroom access in Frampton Court – engage OT in design.
- Remove the need for a drivers licence to get a wood permit.
- Work with Transport for NSW to install a pedestrian crossing at the Olympic Highway Crossing at Henty.
- Develop messages and campaigns that highlight the case for disability inclusion



# Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021–2025



Image @Lea\_Bic Photography

Image @Lea\_Bic Photography

## Focus Area 1: Attitudes and behaviours

### Aim

- We are continuing to develop disability awareness skills in our community and frontline workers across our range of services to ensure we engage with community members with disability with sensitivity and respect
- We continue to develop a workplace culture in which we think and act inclusively

### Strategy

### Actions

Establish an Inclusion Advisory Committee (IAC) and Terms of Reference

Establish an IAC representing people with disability, carers, service providers and advocacy groups to work with Council to: respond to equity and inclusion issues raised by the community, improve access to Council facilities and services and, with Council's support, to raise awareness of issues facing people with disability and to advocate for people with disability living in Greater Hume. (Refer to Focus Area 4)

Demonstrate leadership that challenges non-inclusive practices across all sections of Council

Support staff to understand that discriminatory comments are not tolerated

Build the capacity of managers to better understand the needs of staff with disability

Facilitate access to information, education or resources that improve inclusion readiness

Present case studies of examples of both positive and negative inclusive attitudes and behaviours

Provide training for customer service staff engaging and consult with people with disability and advocacy services to understand the lived experience

Develop partnerships with service providers and advocacy groups to improve awareness of inclusive attitudes and behaviours

Work with local and regional services to improve access to services and programs for people with disability, carers and older people living in Greater Hume.

Promote the services and programs available to people with disability and carers in Greater Hume

Promote the use of Council facilities for inclusive programs and services

Work with disability/aged care service providers to

- establish carer support groups across Council communities and advocate for the needs of older people, people with disability and carers, and
- establish social support groups in the towns where people are feeling isolated and in need of such a group (eg Culcairn)
- respond to the demand for respite particularly in Henty

## Focus Area 2: Liveability

### Aim

- Through our services, we will support and contribute to actions that make our communities physically accessible and socially inclusive
- We will work with people with disability who are involved with our services to support them to be successful in living safe and rewarding lives in their communities

### Strategy

### Actions

Increase and improve access to Council places, services and facilities

Engage and work with the IAC and local people with disability and advocacy services in the planning and design phase of community facilities and places

Identify and prioritise community and recreational facilities that require access audits in accordance with AS1428.1 (Access to Premises)

Support Council's access and inclusion objectives through the planning, procurement and tendering process applying universal/accessible design principles and the relevant Australian Building and Construction Codes

Develop masterplans for each of the towns in consultation with people with disability and service providers. Include an access audit of Council facilities and public spaces and the development of a pedestrian access and mobility plan

Continuously upgrade recreational facilities (playgrounds, sports fields, golf courses, amenities, parks, etc) to incorporate access and inclusion provisions and to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and the relevant Australian Building and Construction Codes

Provide access to toilets in Holbrook and Culcairn that are open 24 hours a day. Ensure the National Public Toilet Map register is regularly updated

Review and adjust funding agreements and contracts to specify delivery of accessible and inclusive services and programs by third parties or contractors

Work with local business to improve access

Encourage businesses to adopt inclusive practices and improved access:

- installation of automated doors that are wide enough for a mobility aids
- establish street level access
- ensure safe placement of street signage
- improve internal access - decrease clutter in the isles and turning points
- improve signage
- installation of ramps that are compliant with regulations

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**Focus Area 2: Liveability**

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**Aim**

- Through our services, we will support and contribute to actions that make our communities physically accessible and socially inclusive
- We will work with people with disability who are involved with our services to support them to be successful in living safe and rewarding lives in their communities

**Strategy****Actions**

Improve transport access

Work with Regional bus service to:

- Install disability access
  - Review routes where fatigue may be a barrier to usage
  - Improve awareness of the service
  - Identify gaps eg TAFE/Work for non-drivers
  - Identify and respond to gaps resulting from changes to community transport services
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### Focus Area 3: Meaningful employment

#### Aim

- We will continue to refine our recruitment methods to ensure that people with disability experience accessible and fair selection processes.
- We will continue to develop a workplace culture in which people with disability have equal access to career development opportunities and opportunity to give their best work
- We aim to be an employer of choice for people with disability

#### Strategy

#### Actions

Develop a diverse workforce plan that improves the capacity and capability of GHC to have a diverse workforce

Develop/update the Workforce Plan to include diversity

Adopt inclusive Human Resource Management policies, procedures and processes

Design role specifications and advertisements to avoid knowledge or capability requirements that are not essential for satisfactory performance in the role

Review position descriptions, recruitment processes and onboarding to ensure people with disability including staff are not excluded from applying

Improve awareness of workplace adjustments that can be offered to staff

Integrate training on disability access and inclusion into all staff induction/orientation practices

Provide inclusion training to Councillors, managers and customer service staff to demonstrate competency in inclusive decision making, practice and service provision

Improve understanding and awareness of carer needs, the NSW Carer Act and NSW Carer Charter and acknowledge current staff who are carers and their needs

Ensure information is accessible and workplace adjustments are made for staff with hearing impairment

Managers and team leaders to undertake conflict awareness and management programs

Review staff complaints and grievance response, approach and procedure to exclude discrimination

Improve accessibility and inclusion in the workplace and allow flexibility

Review and monitor workplace surfaces including floors, benches and workshops

Install lower benches in all customer service offices and libraries

Consider working from home and flexible work hours particularly for carers and parents of young children

Review design and access to lunchrooms to improve access and inclusion

Provide staff with information about access to local allied health services – physiotherapy, occupational therapy, social work

### Focus Area 3: Meaningful employment

#### Aim

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- We will continue to develop a workplace culture in which people with disability have equal access to career development opportunities and opportunity to give their best work
- We aim to be an employer of choice for people with disability

#### Strategy

#### Actions

Improve accessibility and inclusion in the workplace and allow flexibility

Provide staff with information about access to local allied health services – physiotherapy, occupational therapy, social work

Encourage local business to improve diversity in the workplace and support people with disability to gain local employment

Work with employment agencies, disability service providers and advocacy groups to work with local businesses to:

- Understand that people with disability have the right to work in an open, inclusive and accessible workplace
- Ensure application processes are non-discriminatory
- Understand the possible accessible options eg, alterations to job roles (allowing for fatigue), flexible work hours, workplace adjustments
- Provide career pathways and opportunities for people with disabilities at all levels
- Develop specific roles which accommodate the skills and capabilities of people with disability
- Understand the Carer act and NSW Carer Charter and advocate for carers in the workplace
- Analyse vacancies for potential positions for people with disability
- Champion stories of successful workplaces where relevant adjustments have been made enabling people with disability to be employed

Provide volunteering and work placement opportunities for people for all abilities

Review the opportunities for volunteering and work placement for people with all abilities across all areas of Council

Champion existing success stories

## Focus Area 4: Systems and processes

### Aim

- We commit to ensuring our systems and processes are universally accessible
- We commit to employing the principles of inclusive or universal design to shape all our systems and processes<sup>9</sup>

### Strategy

### Actions

#### Community Engagement

Establish an Inclusion Advisory Committee (IAC) representative of disability service providers, advocacy groups, residents with disability, carers and older people

The purpose of the IAC is to promote the social model of disability within Council and the wider community and assist Council in the development of policy and planning about issues of access and inclusion

The specific role of the group is to:

- represent the interests of people with access issues (including physical, social and cultural) to Council and the broader community
- provide input to Council on development issues and Council projects
- provide a consumer perspective into Council's continuous improvement processes concerning access and inclusion
- assist Council in the identification of emerging issues and trends relative to the needs of persons experiencing disability in the region
- provide assistance with specific projects (identified by Council and/or the advisory committee)
- assist Council in disseminating appropriate material to facilitate community dialogue in regard to access (including physical, social and cultural) matters
- mitigate discrimination and increase the understanding and implementation of the social model of disability

Encourage inclusion in existing Council Committees and Community Development Committees/ Reference groups

Review TOR to include inclusive purpose and inclusiveness

Establish a similar group in Holbrook

Engage these groups in planning major projects and seeking broader feedback about access and inclusion

Include inclusion in Council's community engagement activities

Review Council's Community Engagement Strategy to include specific needs of people with disability

Improve consultation about council plans - physical copies and larger versions available at offices and improve information about their availability using the website and Council notices

## Focus Area 4: Systems and processes

### Aim

- We commit to ensuring our systems and processes are universally accessible
- We commit to employing the principles of inclusive or universal design to shape all our systems and processes<sup>9</sup>

### Strategy

### Actions

#### Council Information

Increase access to Council information and services

Maintain an inclusive Style Guide compliant with accessibility guidelines,

Council Website content to comply with W3C's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines to be more accessible

Promote the Council newsletter- have it available on line in a format that the print can be enlarged and made clearer. Council's newsletter is not widely known and not received by all residents

Establish photo boards of the Councillors outside each of the Council offices so people know who they are

Dedicate a Web page to services and activities for older people and people with disability, include information about relevant regional service and advocacy groups

Seek feedback about Council information from visually impaired residents and people with low literacy

Ensure customer service staff are familiar with and have information about Council services and services for people with disability and older people

#### Planning and infrastructure

Improve community engagement and include access and inclusion when planning or updating Council facilities and public spaces

Apply the principles of universal design in the planning of new infrastructure and buildings

Engage people with disability in the design and planning phases of new major infrastructure and buildings

Conduct audits of buildings owned or leased to assess compliance with Australian standards for access and mobility (AS1428 parts 1 to 5)

## Focus Area 4: Systems and processes

### Aim

- We commit to ensuring our systems and processes are universally accessible
- We commit to employing the principles of inclusive or universal design to shape all our systems and processes<sup>9</sup>

### Strategy

### Actions

#### Events

Improve access to Council events

Plan Council events in consultation with people with disability, their carers and older people to ensure accessibility and inclusion

Improve information (Website etc) about Council events adopting inclusive language and approach

Establish short term drop off and bus parking points for carers

#### Tourist information and tourism services

Review access and inclusiveness of tourist information and services for visitors

Improve accessibility of tourist information and services for visitors

Identify and promote accessible walks for visitors and residents

#### Services

Improve access and inclusiveness in Council Services

Review children services programs to improve inclusion

Work with local and regional disability and advocacy services to improve inclusion across all Council services and the implementation of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Promote libraries as facilities where services can co-locate/ meet and plan community activities/services/education/ communication

Improve accessibility for specialist services and telehealth – children services and aged care housing

#### Aged/Community Housing

Undertake a feasibility study into housing needs projecting future demand and need

Review 2021 Census and other data to undertake a feasibility study to address and prevent further housing stress in Greater Hume

#### Offices

Improve access to Council offices

Improve external and internal signage from the street signage to be inclusive of people with impaired vision and low literacy

Review and monitor the ergonomics of the workplace

Audit floor surfaces to ensure they are safe

Install hearing loops in all Council offices

Install a low bench in the customer service area of the Holbrook office

Install rails and ramps

## Focus Area 4: Systems and processes

### Aim

- We commit to ensuring our systems and processes are universally accessible
- We commit to employing the principles of inclusive or universal design to shape all our systems and processes<sup>9</sup>

### Strategy

### Actions

#### Offices

Improve access to Council offices

Install waiting areas in customer service areas

#### Footpaths

Develop a Pedestrian Access and Mobility plan

Monitor footpaths to reduce injury and improve access;

Engage local community networks and the proposed Including and Inclusion Advisory Committee in planning and designing footpaths

Review footpath access to parks and playgrounds for prams and mobility aids

#### Toilets

Undertake an audit of Council Toilets and develop and implement a plan to increase access

Review after hours access to disability toilets in many of the towns

Review access to toilets in Council parks

#### Halls

Improve access to Halls

Install access ramps in Holbrook and Burrumbuttock Halls

#### Other

Improve bathroom access in Frampton Court – engage OT in design

Remove the need for a driver's licence to get a wood permit

Develop messages and campaigns that highlight the case for disability inclusion

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4	ABS 2016 Census Quick Stats
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