

# Wingecarribee Shire Council **DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2022-2026**



**For a vibrant, connected, inclusive community**

*Working with you*

**WSC.NSW.GOV.AU**





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this land and we pay our respects to Elders both past and present.

We would also like to acknowledge our young leaders who are the Elders of today, tomorrow and our future.

The Council thanks all those people who committed their time to provide input and feedback during the development of Wingecarribee Shire Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026.



# Wingecarribee Shire Council

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At Wingecarribee Shire Council we believe that everyone has the basic right to achieve their full potential.

People of all abilities should have access to facilities and services that enable them to fully participate in their local community.

We know that by creating an accessible, equitable and inclusive community we can help promote real and lasting positive change and greater opportunities for people with disability.

This Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 (DIAP) is one of Council's most important documents because it represents our commitment to people with disability and our actions for improving opportunity and accessibility. It outlines our plans, over the course of the next four years, designed to remove barriers and make our Shire an even more inclusive destination and place to live for people with disability.

I thank everyone who contributed to the development of this Plan. Your ongoing input will ensure our Shire's towns, villages and surrounds grow to become an even more welcoming and inclusive community for everyone.

Lisa Miscamble  
General Manager





# WINGECARRIBEE SHIRE COUNCIL STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

This Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2022-2026 addresses the ongoing needs for our local community by:

- ◆ advocating equal rights for all
- ◆ progressing positive community attitudes and behaviours
- ◆ creating liveable communities by providing a range of facilities, services and events that make our Shire a great place for people to live, work and play
- ◆ supporting access to meaningful employment, education and professional development opportunities
- ◆ improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes
- ◆ collaborating with business partners, service providers and community groups
- ◆ strategic planning to meet the changing needs and expectations of its growing community
- ◆ monitoring compliance to legislation

We seek to go beyond compliance to remove barriers and implement inclusive principles, processes, systems and practices.





**Richard Milne, President of Moss Vale Men's Shed**  
Photo Bella Gnechi Ruscone



## WHAT IS A DISABILITY?

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

The relationship between a health condition and a person's experience of disability is often complex.

Disability is a multi-dimensional concept that involves the interaction between a health condition and:

- ◆ environmental factors, such as community attitudes and access to services
- ◆ personal factors, such as a person's age and sex.

These factors interact with a health condition to have positive or negative influences on a person's ability to perform everyday activities and participate in community life. As such, people with similar health conditions can have quite different experiences of disability; and the same health condition may contribute to disability in one person but not in another.

## WHAT IS A DIAP?

A DIAP is a Disability Inclusion Action Plan<sup>1</sup>.

In 2014 the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW) was passed, requiring all NSW Local Government authorities to develop a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) to ensure that people with disability have equity of access and inclusion to functions, facilities, services and information provided by the Council.

Wingecarribee Shire Council's DIAP is a result of extensive consultation with people with disability, service providers, carers, the general community and Council staff.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.lgnsw.org.au/Public/Policy/Disability.aspx>





# DISABILITY IN AUSTRALIA

## Demographics



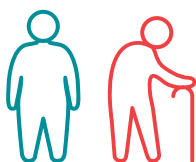
**1 in 5** people in Australia have disability  
(4.4 million people) <sup>1</sup>

The prevalence of disability increases with age <sup>2</sup>



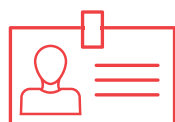
**0-64 years**

**1 in 9** people have disability <sup>2</sup>



**65+**

**1 in 2** people have disability <sup>2</sup>



**2.1 million**

Australians of working age (15-64 years) have disability <sup>3</sup>



**44.5%**

of all Australians with disability (1.9 million) are over age 65 <sup>4</sup>

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

<sup>2, 3, 4</sup> <https://www.and.org.au/resources/disability-statistics/>



## Types of disability



**4.4%**

of people with disability in Australia use a wheelchair <sup>5</sup>



**1 in 6**

Australians are affected by hearing loss <sup>6</sup>



**30,000**

Australians with total hearing loss use Auslan <sup>7</sup>



**357,000**

Australians are blind or have low vision <sup>8</sup>



**45%**

of Australians (16–85 years) experience a mental health condition during their lifetime <sup>9</sup>



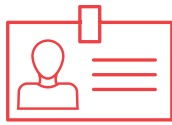
**3 million**

Australians live with depression or anxiety <sup>10</sup>

<sup>5-10</sup> <https://www.and.org.au/resources/disability-statistics/>

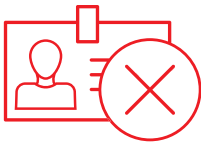


## Employment of people with disability



**53.4%**

**labour force participation** (15-64 years)  
compared with 84.1% of people without disability <sup>11</sup>



**10.3%**

**unemployment rate** (15-64 years)  
compared with 4.6% of people without disability <sup>12</sup>



**7.9%**

**of people with a profound  
or severe disability  
working full time in 2015**

**11.4%**

**of people with a profound  
or severe disability  
working full time in 2018**

This is driven by an increase in women with a profound or severe disability working full time (5.5% in 2015 compared with 9.2% in 2018) <sup>13</sup>



**part-time**

**people with disability are more likely to be employed  
on a part-time basis, than people without disability <sup>14</sup>**

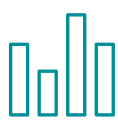


**34%**

**of people with disability are managers & professionals <sup>15</sup>**

<sup>11-15</sup> <https://www.and.org.au/resources/disability-statistics/>



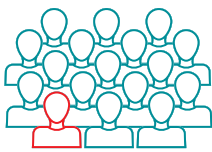


# WINGECARRIBEE STATISTICS



**52,725**

Wingecarribee Shire population 2022 <sup>16</sup>



**5.6%**

of the Wingecarribee Shire population  
need daily support due to disability (2016) <sup>17</sup>



**65-69 years**

Median age in Wingecarribee Shire (2016) <sup>18</sup>



**22,803**

Total jobs (June 2021) <sup>19</sup>



**2,556**

Health care and social assistance jobs (June 2021) <sup>20</sup>



**1,113**

Construction businesses registered (June 2021) <sup>21</sup>

<sup>16</sup> - <sup>21</sup> id.community demographic resource









# DEVELOPING THE PLAN

## with Community engagement & Council

In developing this DIAP, the Community Development team actively engaged with Wingecarribee Shire residents who live with disability. This included but was not limited to:

**15** participants from two community focus groups

**16** surveys completed from informal consultation with local service providers and people living with disabilities

**25** community engagement surveys completed onsite at Corbett Plaza and Creative Space in Bowral

**146** online surveys completed through "Your Say Wingecarribee"

The above engagement focused on 4 key areas:

- ◆ developing positive community attitudes and behaviours
- ◆ supporting access to meaningful employment
- ◆ improving access to services through better systems and processes
- ◆ creating more livable communities

Council is looking to address each area with specific points and build on work already implemented from the DIAP 2017-2021.

*opposite page:*

**Turtle 1 by Michelle Gordon**

**Creating & Thriving** art exhibition

The Atrium, Civic Centre, Moss Vale

December 2021





# POSITIVE ATTITUDES & BEHAVIOURS

**Council supports and encourages positive and inclusive attitudes and behaviours.**


## What Council already does

- ✓ partners with local disability service providers to hold an annual event for International Day of People with Disability (IDPWD)
- ✓ holds 'tool box talks' about inclusive language and communication with Customer Service staff
- ✓ applies social justice principles on access, equity, rights and participation to planning
- ✓ accesses Community Reference Group
- ✓ implements policies and procedures that promote non-discriminatory practices
- ✓ coordinates a calendar of events to promote initiatives acknowledging disability
- ✓ ensures that promotional material includes diverse, positive and inclusive images
- ✓ works with the community to raise awareness of disability and increase accessibility in the Southern Highlands

## Ideas from the Community

- ◆ QR code audio availability at events for sight-impaired
- ◆ have paper and pencil available at events for notetaking
- ◆ provide Council information to providers/ group homes for internal distribution
- ◆ council representative to engage in situ with disability residential group homes for a personal touch
- ◆ investigate use of mobile library as mobile community hub
- ◆ events checklist to include transport options - rail, bus stops, community transport - quiet spaces for people overloaded at events.
- ◆ inclusion awareness for Council staff so young people who participate in these events feel safe.
- ◆ move away from "disability" based events to accessible events
- ◆ provide accessible information on where to go - like Liberty swings, accessible parks, etc.





**"I never thought  
in the 16 years  
I've been working  
at Braemar, that I  
would be my true, out,  
loud and proud self! "**

**– Cecilia**

**Cecilia Rucker**  
**Disability Services Australia**  
Photo Bella Gniecchi Ruscone



**"I like working  
on my own.  
I get a lot  
more done."**

**– Kevin**



Kevin works at  
**Disability Services Australia**  
Photo Bella Gnecci Ruscone





## POSITIVE ATTITUDES & BEHAVIOURS continued...

KEY POSITIVE ATTITUDES & BEHAVIOURS THEMES	INITIATIVES & PROJECTS	TIMING	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
<b>1.1 Community events</b>	Continue to support initiatives that celebrate diversity such as Creating & Thriving art exhibition and International Day of People with Disability	Ongoing	Annual events celebrated
<b>1.2 Visual representation</b>	Improve Council's visual representation of people with disability, promoting abilities and participation in all aspects of life	Ongoing	Number of publications and reports that contain photos of people with disability
<b>1.3 Continually improve Council events to be more inclusive and accessible</b>	Include QR codes on all Council events information/ published material	early 2023	Council Checklist created, QR codes on published material
	Council events checklist created with access and inclusion considerations		Event checklist published
	Engage with young people with disability to ensure Council youth programs/events more accessible and inclusive		Number of young people with a disability engaged in planning, promoting and implementing Council youth programs and events
<b>1.4 Equip staff with knowledge and skills to demonstrate appropriate attitudes and behaviours</b>	Include disability awareness training as part of Council's new employee's induction program	2026	40% existing 80% new
	Facilitate disability awareness training for all frontline customer-focused staff	2024	Knowledge and skills are enhanced, improving the customer experience
	Advocate for local disability awareness training for local businesses		





# EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

**Council is committed to equal employment and workplace opportunities for current and future employees.**

## Ideas from the Community

- ◆ flexibility in work arrangements
- ◆ do not 'Identify' positions - all positions at Council should be open to people with disability
- ◆ include wording that assistance is available for online application process
- ◆ Council can provide leadership to employers in the Shire about employing people with disabilities
- ◆ opportunity for work experience for students, or cadetship programs within Council
- ◆ Disability Employment Service, School Leavers Employment Service to work with Council to find employment opportunities

KEY EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES THEMES	INITIATIVES & PROJECTS	TIMING	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
<b>2.1 Council provide leadership in the community and effectively attract, retain and support a diverse workforce</b>	Promote Council as an inclusive workplace and encourage people with disability to apply for positions within Council	June 2026	Increase the number of people who identify through screening.
	Review current recruitment, support and retention policies related to inclusive employment	Late 2024	Recruitment / onboarding, measures reviewed.
	Strengthen relationships with local disability employment services	Late 2024	Initiatives supported and partnerships formed.
	Partner with disability service provider that focuses on employment pathways for people with a disability	2024	Initiatives supported and partnerships formed.



**"The statistics relating to workforce participation of people with disability are sobering... Australia has one of the lowest employment rates for people with disability in the OECD."** <sup>16</sup>

**– Chair Ronald Sackville AO QC**  
*Public hearing 9*

<sup>16</sup> <https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/news-and-media>



Rosemary, Daniel and Donna at  
Disability Services Australia  
Photo Bella Gneccchi Ruscone



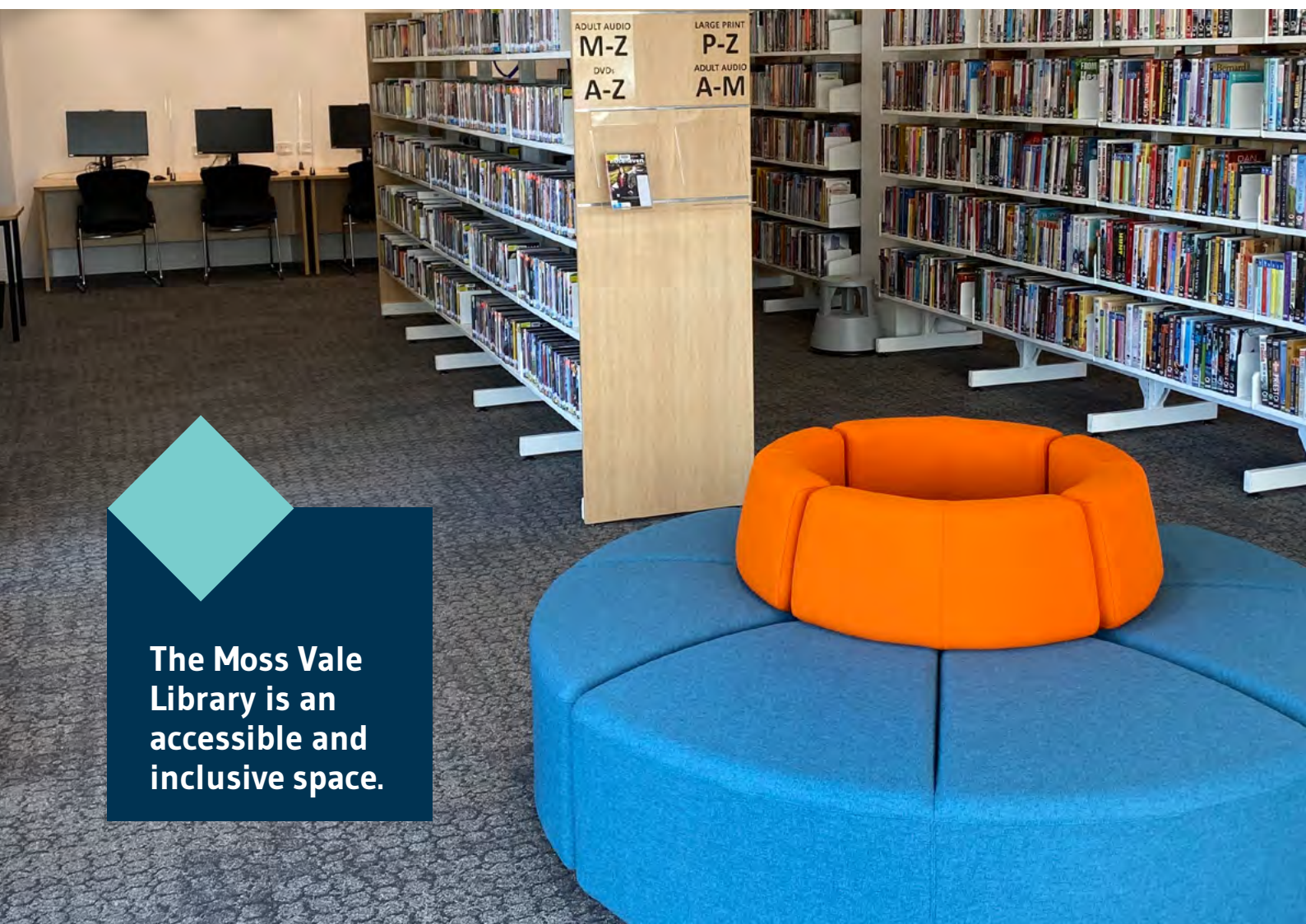


## SYSTEMS & PROCESSES

**Improving Council's systems and practices that are easy to use and information is accessible.**

### **What Council already does**

- ✓ Council's webpages on Disability Services were updated to ensure that accurate information continued to be provided to the community.
- ✓ Following a review and update, Council's Community Engagement Strategy was adopted on 11 December 2019. This references Social Justice Principles and the DIAP and includes the objective 'Manage a proactive program of community engagement, ensuring all sectors of the community are included'.
- ✓ Council's Libraries offer free computer and wireless access as well as Tech Time, a program providing help with technology problems to build confidence and skills in using computers and mobile devices.



**The Moss Vale Library is an accessible and inclusive space.**





## Ideas from the Community

- ◆ Alternative text is required to describe photos and pictures on websites for sight-impaired participants.

KEY SYSTEMS & PROCESSES THEMES	INITIATIVES & PROJECTS	TIMING	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
<b>3.1 Council information accessibility</b>	Updated Seniors Directory will be loaded onto WSC www - accessible PDF	July 2022	Seniors Directory available in accessible formats
	Systems training for staff to ensure Council documents include accessibility features where relevant	late 2022 Ongoing	
	Promote images of people with disability in Council publications, materials and social media when available	July 2022	
	Maintain current Council web to WCAG2.1 AA standard and follow accessibility guidelines for AAA rating	Ongoing	Progress made towards AAA compliance
	Ensure access and inclusion are considerations when introducing new technology – externally and internally.		
<b>3.2 Community Engagement and internal processes are accessible</b>	Develop an Accessibility document check list/ style guide	Nov 2022	Accessibility check list/style guide implemented
	Investigate use of closed captions on all Council videos	July 2022	Recommendation identified and implemented
	Work with our local service providers to increase our photo stock library of inclusive and accessible friendly photos	Ongoing	Build on photo library stock
	Set a target for one media promotion each quarter to support access and inclusion	1/quarter	Monitor media exposure
	Investigate audio embedded systems to be accessible on "Your Say"	Ongoing	





**Upgraded play  
space and  
amenities at  
Seymour Park  
Moss Vale.**





# LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

**Council supports the community to promote access and inclusion for everyone and reduce barriers to liveability factors such as transport, recreation and social inclusiveness. Our aim is to create a Shire where everyone has equal opportunities to live, work and play.**

## What Council already does

- ✓ additional accessible parking space at the Moss Vale War Memorial Aquatic Centre and accessible parking spaces at the conclusion of the Kirkham Road reconstruction project in Bowral.
- ✓ upgrades to several of the Shire's community facilities and open spaces, improving access and inclusion, such as:
  - ◇ an access ramp was constructed, and the internal toilet converted to meet accessibility standards at Wingello Mechanics Institute
  - ◇ elevator installed at the Bowral Rugby Clubhouse in Burradoo as part of the upgrade works, to ensure accessible access to the first floor
  - ◇ improved access to toilets at Burrawang Oval, Winifred West Park in Mittagong and Leighton Gardens was provided as part of renewal works.
- ✓ Council was awarded a \$200,000 grant by the NSW Government under the *Everyone Can Play* grant program to upgrade the play space and amenities at Seymour Park, Moss Vale. The upgrade includes an accessible playground, two accessible parking spaces and accessible toilets within the new amenities building
- ✓ all abilities play spaces built and completed at Market Place, Berrima and Seymour Park, Moss Vale with Lake Alexandra, Mittagong in the initial stages of upgrading to an all abilities play space
- ✓ Moss Vale library introduced the Tovertafel 2 (Magic Table 2) a specialised multi media projector with games designed for people with disability. This unit will also aid and increase motor and cognitive function in small children.
- ✓ accessibility upgrades at the newly built Moss Vale library incorporated modifications to lighting, mobility access, counter heights, power points/data point access and hearing loops
- ✓ provided new accessible carparking spaces at the Bowral Branch Library's underground carpark
- ✓ the Paws N Tales program continued to be implemented at Bowral Branch Library to encourage children with learning and reading difficulties to enjoy books whilst having support from volunteers with specially trained dogs
- ✓ accessibility upgrades at the newly built Moss Vale library incorporated modifications to lighting, mobility access, counter heights, power points/data point access and hearing loops





## LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES continued...

- ✓ Council launched 6 December 2021 a community engagement survey working towards developing the new 2022-2026 DIAP to ensure Council continue to meet the needs of everyone in our community
- ✓ upgrade of council building including full accessibility requirements at the Civic Centre and current work in progress at the Bowral Memorial Hall and Mittagong Playhouse
- ✓ the Master Locksmith Access Key (MLAK) process was revised, including updates made to the application form in August 2019, to ensure that the key is easier to obtain for residents with disability to gain 24 hours a day, seven days a week access to a network of public facilities including wheelchair accessible toilets
- ✓ Council's webpages on Disability Services were updated to ensure that accurate information continued to be provided to the community
- ✓ the Bowral Library undertook an accessibility project at Bowral Library by removing and redistributing books so that the bottom shelf of the Adult Fiction collection is not in use, thereby making books easier to access

### Ideas from the Community

- ◆ footpaths in all areas need to be accessible to all residents
- ◆ gutter ramps at street lights need to be accessible
- ◆ disability parking spaces need to be disability compliant and enforced
- ◆ bus stop spaces need to be accessible
- ◆ transport and bus shelters need to be accessible
- ◆ provide an accessible 7 day transport timetable
- ◆ establish a 'wayfinder' pathway between food markets, services and amenities
- ◆ appropriate lighting of public spaces
- ◆ sensory play spaces
- ◆ training for staff in using Pool Chair at Moss Vale Pool
- ◆ promote National Toilet Map App
- ◆ sensory needs - lighting, echo in the space, noise, being in enclosed spaces can cause anxiety





"I know how  
to make a  
good stir-fry  
and other  
recipes"

– Kayla

Kayla participates in the  
Disability Services Australia  
cooking class  
Photo Bella Gnecci Ruscone





## LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES continued...

KEY LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES THEMES	INITIATIVES & PROJECTS	TIMING	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
<b>4.1 Create and contribute to liveable and accessible public places</b>	Prepare and implement Integrated Transport Strategy for the whole Shire which will identify and prioritise active transport network upgrades	July 2022 ongoing	A prioritised list of infrastructure upgrades to support and improve active transport
	Promote Over 55's developments which are required as part of the SEPP (State Environmental Planning Policy) to install footpaths and have footpaths accessible to nearby bus shelters to comply with access requirements (gradients less than 1:14)	Ongoing	The quality of infrastructure provided as part of new development, supports and enhances active transport and mobility for the whole community
	Continue to actively seek grant funding to implement connections identified in the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMPS)	Ongoing	Apply for \$200,000 pa
	Update Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMPS)	June 2025	PAMPS updated
	Investigate inclusion of Social Impact Assessment in the DA process/DA checklist/Development Control Plan		
	Develop and implement an annual program of accessible parking upgrades across the three town centres	Ongoing	Annual
	Continue to rollout a Place Based Planning System that will identify the allocation of strategic infrastructure at a local level		Robertson completed





KEY LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES THEMES	INITIATIVES & PROJECTS	TIMING	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
<b>4.2 Enhance Council's recreation and outdoor amenities to improve access and inclusion</b>	Identify key Council destination and recreational areas to install QR codes (Investigate capacity to integrate online story telling and reporting tool – Eg. Storymap)	April 2022 - June 2023	Bong Bong Walking Track (Moss Vale). Koala Project Mansfield Reserve (Bowral). River Bend Reserve (Berrima), Lake Alexandra Turtle (Tour Mittagong)
	Plan and improve access to local swimming pools Install a specialist chair at Moss Vale pool and investigate installation of an adult change facility		Aqua steps installed in Bundanoon Pool, disability hoist installed at Bowral Pool, adult change facility installed at Moss Vale Pool
	Upgrade of Casburn Park Wingello to include accessible playground, installation of pump track and accessible toilets		Casburn Park upgrade completed
	Upgrade of Bong Bong Common. Stage 1 – carpark with accessible parking Stage 2 – fully accessible pathway	Jul 2022  Mar 2023	Open to public  Open to public
	New Animal Shelter to be built/fully accessible	Oct 2023	
	Investigate options for the Liberty Swing at Lake Alexandra	Ongoing	





## LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES continued...

KEY LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES THEMES	INITIATIVES & PROJECTS	TIMING	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
<b>4.3 Continue to improve the access and inclusion of our libraries</b>	Investigate magnifier technology options to improve customer accessibility to the many collections located at each library branch	2025-2026	Magnifier technology installed/available at each library branch
	Investigate options which will allow greater access to the Mobile Librarians Service for customers with disabilities	31 Dec 2022	Investigate Mobile Library Ramp Access costs and install if budget allows
	Investigate, select and install a new integrated library management system (ILMS) which will allow greater accessibility to information and recreational material	30 Jun 2024	New ILMS installed and ready to use by community and staff
	Investigate the current lighting at the Bowral Library to see if it meets lighting standards for the visually impaired	30 Nov 2023	Report including recommendations for lighting solutions/ upgrade completed
	Sensory Space – trial children’s tepees specifically designed to reduce sensory over stimulation at each of the library branch	23 Sep 2022	A tepee installed at each branch library with review after 3 months trial
	Purchase/obtain sound cancelling children’s earmuffs/ear plugs for each branch library to help reduce sensory over stimulation for children	2022	Earmuffs/ear buds located at customer service desks
	Install a reading booth at the Moss Vale Library that can be used as a place for self-reflection and to reduce sensory over stimulation	2022	A two-person reading booth installed at the Moss Vale Branch Library
<b>4.4 Upgrade of Toilets</b>	Implement 2017 WSC Public Toilet Strategy for the renewal of public toilet facilities	Ongoing	Projects identified within the renewal plan of the 2017 WSC Public Toilet Strategy are included within Capital Programs
<b>4.5 Accessible tourism</b>	Review events and implement strategies to improve access. Include information about access in marketing and promotional material of all events	Ongoing	Number of events reviewed Access information included in promotional material
	Develop a communication tool, such as an App, that promotes the accessibility of businesses and attractions in our area	Ongoing	Webpage/App developed and launched





## LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES continued...

KEY LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES THEMES	INITIATIVES & PROJECTS	TIMING	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
<b>4.6 Enhance Council facilities to improve access and inclusion</b>	Develop and implement an annual program of upgrade and renewal of bus shelters in accordance with disability access standards	July 2022 ongoing	
	Investigate an audio loop to be available in Council's public meeting rooms	2022	Audio loop installed in specific public meeting rooms
	Include asset and accessibility upgrades with refurbishment projects of Council buildings to ensure DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliant	Ongoing	Opportunities taken as refurbishment projects are delivered
	An audit of all Council owned buildings against the Building Code of Australia (BCA) will be conducted which will create an action plan for future works to support accessibility on Council owned buildings	2022-2026	
	Upgrade of Bowral Memorial Hall to be fully accessible	Feb 2023	Completion of works and hall reopened
	Upgrade of Mittagong Memorial Hall (Playhouse) to be fully accessible	Feb 2023 – funding dependent	Completion of works and hall reopened



Karen Walden at the International Day of People Living with Disability at Moss Vale Pool

Photo supplied by Interchange





## WHAT CAN I DO?

You can help create an accessible, equitable and inclusive community in the Wingecaribbee Shire, with greater opportunities for people with disability.

### Individuals

- ◆ participate in and support Council events
- ◆ share your knowledge and offer suggestions
- ◆ participate in community engagement activities.

### Businesses and organisations

- ◆ look at ways to improve access and inclusion in your business activities
- ◆ investigate the Companion Card for your business
- ◆ partner with Council to improve accessibility in and around Wingecaribbee Shire
- ◆ look at ways to achieve inclusive employment in your business or workplace.

Whether you have a disability, care for someone with a disability or have no disability, it is up to all of us to work together to create a community that is vibrant, connected and inclusive.





## Lake Alexandra Mittagong



The Wingecaribee Shire Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 - 2026 has been developed in consultation with community.

For more information, contact  
Council on 4868 0888  
or [mail@wsc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@wsc.nsw.gov.au)

*Working with you*

**WSC.NSW.GOV.AU**

