

SHIRE OF KENT



Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP)

1 July 2022 – 30 June 2027

This plan is available in alternative formats such as large print, electronic format (disk or emailed), or audio on request.

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People with disability in the Shire of Kent

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers Summary of Findings (2018) there were 4.4 million Australians with disability, 17.7% of the population. It can therefore be estimated that around 100 people living within the Shire of Kent have a disability. Any influx of retirees will increase this number as according to the ABS survey, 49.6% of older Australians identified as having a disability. The seasonal influx of tourists, including tourists with a disability, must also be considered.

Planning for better access

The Disability Services Act 1993 (the Act) requires all public authorities, including state and local government to develop and implement a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) in accordance with the principles of the Act.

The Act requires agents and contractors of public authorities to conduct their business in a manner consistent with their funder's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan. Agents and contractors are required to report annually on progress they have made against the outcomes of the Shire of Kent's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan. Other legislation underpinning access and inclusion includes:

- *Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (Western Australia)*
- *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1993*
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Progress since 2017

The Shire of Kent is committed to facilitating the inclusion of people with disability through the improvements of access to its facilities and services. Since the implementation of the first DAIP in 2017, a range of facilities and initiatives have been implemented to support equitable and inclusive access and inclusion for people with disability to our services, facilities and information. Some of these are highlighted in Appendix 1.

Access and Inclusion Policy Statement

The Shire of Kent is committed to ensuring that the community is accessible for and inclusive of people with disability, their families and carers.

The Shire of Kent interprets an accessible and inclusive community and one in which all Shire functions, facilities and services (both in-house and contracted) are open, available and accessible to people with disability, providing them with the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities as other people in the community.

The Shire of Kent:

- Recognises that people with disability are valued members of the community who make a variety of contributions to local social, economic and cultural life;
- Believes that a community that recognises its diversity and supports the participation and inclusion of all of its members makes for a richer community life;
- Believes that people with disability, their families and carers should be supported to remain in the community;
- Is committed to consulting with people with disability, their families and carers and disability organisations in addressing barriers to access and inclusion;
- Will ensure its agents and contractors work towards the desired outcomes in the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan;
- Is committed to achieving the seven desired outcomes of its Disability Access and Inclusion Plan. These are:
 1. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, a public authority.
 2. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of a public authority.
 3. People with disability receive information from a public authority in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.
 4. People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of a public authority as other people receive from the staff of that public authority.
 5. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to a public authority.
 6. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by a public authority.
 7. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with a public authority.

Progression of the Disability Access and Inclusion Policy Plan

Responsibility for the planning process

The Manager Corporate has responsibility to oversee the development, implementation, review and evaluation of the DAIP. Council endorses the final DAIP and it is the responsibility of all officers to implement relevant actions.

Community consultation process

The Shire of Kent is required to undertake a review of its Disability Access and Inclusion Plan and consult with key stakeholders to guide further improvements to access and inclusion, every five years. The process includes:

- Examination of the 2017 – 2022 Disability Access and Inclusion Plan
- Examination of other relevant documents and strategies
- Consultation with staff
- Consultation with the community

The Disability Services Act Regulation (2004) set out the minimum consultation requirements for public authorities in relation to Disability Access and Inclusion Plans. Local Governments must call for submissions (either general or specific) by notice in a newspaper circulating in the Local Government area or on any website by or on behalf of the Local Government. Other mechanisms may be used.

The following methods were used by the Shire of Kent:

- A whole of Shire survey was conducted in May 2022 within the Shire of Kent. This survey was made available online, with a link to the survey provided on all forms of communication to the community, and in hard-copy / paper format upon request.
- Advertising by way of both electronic communications and placement of notices on the Shire's website, social media, and in the local newsletter within the Shire of Kent inviting comments and feedback.

Findings of the consultation

The consultation process identified 4 persons as having a disability, with 9 respondents identifying as being a family member, carer or friend of a person with disability.

It was found that 25% of the respondents were aware that the Shire of Kent had a DAIP. 78.6% of respondents rated the level of satisfaction with the Shire's customer services function as either good or very good. 64.28% of respondents believed that they had experienced difficulties or barriers when dealing with Shire employees either infrequently or never. 75% believed that access to Shire buildings and facilities was either good or very good, while 82.15% rated the level of access to the Shire information as either good or very good. 69.23% believed that the Shire of Kent is an inclusive community.

The consultation found a common community call for more accessible doors, more handrails in certain ramped areas, better signage, and more wheelchair accessible footpaths.

Future projects relevant to community feedback

The Shire of Kent has committed to installing an automatic door and wheelchair accessible service desk at the Administration Office as part of its 2022-23 upgrade. Council has also nominated a works schedule for Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program (LRCIP) Phase 3 and submitted to the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications the following projects in the 2022-23 period:

- Pingrup Pavilion – Upgrade Ladies Ablutions; reconfigure/design ramps, steps and concrete areas including installation of balustrade where required.
- Pingrup Caravan Park - Renovations to camp kitchen, including new oven and stand along TV room; realign caravan bays to 45 degree angles and concrete; upgrade to lighting, water and new power domes; concrete pathways; installation fire pit.
- Back Lane behind the commercial businesses in Nyabing - Drainage and reseal.
- Pingrup Silo Trail – Capital works including redevelopment; signage and furniture.
- Nyabing and Pingrup Footpath Upgrade

The Shire of Kent is committed to ensuring that the community is accessible for and inclusive of people with disability, their families and carers.

Responsibility for implementing the DAIP

Implementation of the DAIP is the responsibility of all areas of the Shire. The Disability Services Act (1993) requires all public authorities to take all practical measure to ensure that its officers, employees, agents and contractors implement the DAIP.

Communicating the plan to staff and people with disability

- The community will be informed by way of both electronic communications and placement of notices on the Shire's website, social media, and in the local newsletter that the finalised DAIP is available upon request and in alternative formats, if required, including hard copy in standard and large print, electronic format by email.
- As DAIPs are amended, Shire staff and the community will be advised of the availability of the updated Plans, using the above methods.

Review and evaluation mechanisms

The Disability Services Act (1993) requires that the DAIPs are reviewed at least every five years. Whenever the DAIP is amended, a copy of the amended DAIP is lodged with the Department of Communities. The Implementation Plan can be updated more frequently.

Monitoring and reviewing

The employee with the responsibility for the DAIP will analyse progress in implementing the DAIP and provide a report to management and Council on progress and recommended changes to the implementation plan annually.

- The Shire's DAIP will next be reviewed and submitted to the Department of Communities in 2027. The report will outline what has been achieved under the Shire's DAIP in the period 2022 – 2027.

Evaluation

- An evaluation will occur as part of the five yearly review of the DAIP.
- The community, staff and Elected Members will be consulted as per the endorsed consultation strategies, as part of any evaluation.

Reporting on the DAIP

The Disability Services Act (1993) requires the Shire to report on the implementation of its DAIP in its annual report, outlining:

- Progress towards the desired outcomes of its DAIP;
- Progress of its agents and contractors towards meeting the seven desired outcomes; and
- The strategies used to inform agents and contractors of its DAIP.

The Shire is also required to report on progress, in the prescribed format, to the Department of Communities by July 31 each year.

Strategies to improve access and inclusion

The following overarching strategies have been developed to address each of the seven desired outcome areas of the Disability Services Act 1993 from feedback gained in the consultation process. These will form the basis of the Implementation Plan.

Outcome 1:

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, a public authority.

Strategy	Timeline
Ensure that people with disability are consulted on their needs for services and the accessibility of current services.	Ongoing
Monitor Shire services to ensure equitable access and inclusion.	Ongoing
Improve access to the information in the library.	Ongoing
Develop the links between the DAIP and other Shire plans and strategies.	Ongoing
Ensure that events, whether organised or funded, are accessible to people with disability.	Ongoing

Outcome 2:

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of a public authority.

Strategy	Timeline
Ensure that all buildings and facilities meet the standards for access and any demonstrated additional need.	Ongoing Program
Ensure that all new or redevelopment works provide access to people with disability, where practicable.	Ongoing Program
Ensure that ACROD parking meets the needs of people with disability in terms of quantity and location.	Ongoing
Advocate to local businesses and tourist venues the requirements for and benefits flowing from the provision of accessible venues.	Ongoing
Ensure that all recreational areas are accessible.	Ongoing

Outcome 3:

People with disability receive information from a public authority in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.

Strategy	Timeline
Ensure that the community is aware that Shire information is available in alternative formats upon request.	Ongoing
Improve staff awareness of accessible information needs and how to provide information in other formats.	Ongoing
Budget for and provide interpreters to significant events on request.	Ongoing
Ensure that the Shire's website meets contemporary good practice.	Ongoing

Outcome 4:

People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of a public authority as other people receive from the staff of that public authority.

Strategy	Timeline
Ensure that all employees, existing and new, and Elected Members are aware of disability and access issues and have the skills to provide appropriate services.	Ongoing including staff training
Improve community awareness about disability and access issues.	Ongoing

Outcome 5:

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to a public authority.

Strategy	Timeline
Ensure that grievance mechanisms are accessible for people with disability and are acted upon.	Ongoing

Outcome 6:

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by a public authority.

Strategy	Timeline
Ensure that people with disability are actively consulted about the DAIP and any other significant planning processes.	Ongoing
Ensure that people with disability are aware of and can access other established consultative processes.	Ongoing

Outcome 7 :

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with a public authority.

Strategy	Timeline
Use inclusive recruitment practices.	Ongoing
Improve methods of attracting, recruiting and retaining people with disability.	Ongoing
Work with key disability employment support provider(s) to employ a person with a disability.	No timeline – as and when

Appendix 1

Progress since 2017 under the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan:

Since the review and implementation of our DAIP in 2017, a range of facilities and initiatives have been implemented to support equitable and inclusive access and inclusion for people with disability to our services, facilities and information, including:

- 2016-2017 Unisex disabled toilets in both Nyabing and Pingrup parks
- 2017/2018 Administration office toilet refurbishment to suit wheelchair access
- 2017-2018 2 x well aged community housing built to specification to accommodate wheelchair access
- 2019/2020 Jury Street Footpath
- 2019/2020 Nyabing Caravan Park new ablution block with disabled access toilets and facilities
- 2021/2022 Accessibility Ramp Upgrade to the Nyabing Pavilion
- As part of the Economic and Social objectives to support growth in business opportunities, increased tourism, building a safe and healthy community, work continued in 2020/2021 to complete a project to upgrade the facilities at the Nyabing Recreation Complex to cater for short term campers and visitors to our town by converting a disused building into a Campers Kitchen. The project included the addition of a separate ablution block that also has universal access shower/toilet facilities. An outdoor patio area off the camper's kitchen has been completed and both buildings have been covered to provide shelter from the elements. Pathways, widened doorways, paving and some landscaping have been included to provide universal access to this new facility to all people. A number of staged projects that includes partially enclosing the outdoor patio area to enable all year round universal use of the facilities.

Shire of Kent

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

Implementation Plan 2022 – 2027

Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan details the task, timelines and responsibilities for each broad strategy to maintain and/or progress the strategies of the DAIP. Whilst all strategies have been actioned, they are ongoing and open to improvement where possible.

The Implementation Plan will be updated annually to progress and record the strategies over the duration of the five-year plan.

Outcome 1: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, a public authority.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that people with disability are consulted on their needs for services and the accessibility of current services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a feedback mechanism for use by all services, provided or funded. ▪ Develop consultation guidelines for all future reviews of services. 	Ongoing	All Managers
Monitor Shire services to ensure equitable access and inclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct systematic reviews of the accessibility of services. ▪ Rectify identified barriers and provide feedback to consumers. 	Ongoing	Council, Community and Staff
Improve access to the information in the library.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Incorporate the objectives and strategies of the DAIP into the Shire's existing planning processes, particularly the Strategic Plan. 	Ongoing	All Managers
Develop the links between the DAIP and other Shire plans and strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure all events are planned using the Accessible Events checklist. 	Ongoing	All Managers
Ensure that events, whether organised or funded, are accessible to people with disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide large print and audio books for relevant community members. 	Ongoing	Administration Officers

Outcome 2: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of a public authority.

Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that all buildings and facilities meet the standards for access and any demonstrated additional need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify access barriers to buildings and facilities. ▪ Prioritise and make a submission to Council to commence work on rectifying identified barriers. 	Ongoing Program	All Managers, Building Maintenance
Ensure that all new or redevelopment works provide access to people with disability, where practicable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that the legal requirements for access are met in all plans for new or redeveloped buildings and facilities. ▪ Ensure that no development application is signed off without a declaration that it meets the legal requirements. ▪ Ensure that key staff are trained and kept up to date with the legal requirements. 	Ongoing Program	All Managers, Building Maintenance
Ensure that ACROD parking meets the needs of people with disability in terms of quantity and location.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake an audit of ACROD bays and implement a program to rectify any non-compliance. • Consider the need for additional bays at some locations. 	Ongoing	All Managers
Advocate to local businesses and tourist venues the requirements for and benefits flowing from the provision of accessible venues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information (available on the DSC website), on the needs of people with disability and of legal requirements and best practice. 	Ongoing	All Managers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote access to business. Make access information available on the Shire's website. 		
Ensure that all recreational areas are accessible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct audit of halls and pavilions and playgrounds. Develop and implement a program of progressive upgrade 	Ongoing	All Managers

Outcome 3: People with disability receive information from a public authority in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.			
Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that the community is aware that Shire information is available in alternative formats upon request.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all documents carry a notation that it is available in alternative formats. Publicise the availability of other formats in the local newspaper. 	Ongoing	All Managers
Improve staff awareness of accessible information needs and how to provide information in other formats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make State Government Access Guidelines for Information, Services and Facilities guidelines available on the Shire employee intranet site. Train employees in providing accessible information. 	Ongoing	All Managers

Ensure that the Shire's website meets contemporary good practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain website to W3C web content guidelines. • Budget for and provide interpreters to significant events upon request. • Make budget provision for interpreters and advertise the availability of the service. 	Ongoing	All Managers
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Outcome 4: People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of a public authority as other people receive from the staff of that public authority.			
Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that all employees, existing and new, and Elected Members are aware of disability and access issues and have the skills to provide appropriate services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine training needs of Elected Members and employees and conduct training as required. 	Ongoing including staff training	CEO and MC
Improve community awareness about disability and access issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All public documents state that they are available in different formats. 	Ongoing	CEO and MC

Outcome 5: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to a public authority.

Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that grievance mechanisms are accessible for people with disability and are acted upon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review current grievance mechanisms and implement any recommendations.• Develop other methods of making complaints, such as web-based forms.• Promote accessible complaints mechanisms to the community.	Ongoing	CEO and MC

Outcome 6: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by a public authority.

Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that people with disability are actively consulted about the DAIP and any other significant planning processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult people with disability in a range of different consultation mediums, eg focus group, interviews, surveys. • Develop a register of people to provide comment on access and inclusion issues. 	Ongoing	CEO and MC
Ensure that people with disability are aware of and can access other established consultative processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure agendas, minutes and other documents are available on request in alternative formats and are published on the Shire's website. 	Ongoing	CEO and MC

Outcome 7: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with a public authority.

Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
<p>Use inclusive recruitment practices and improve methods of attracting, recruiting and retaining with disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that job advertisements are in an accessible format. • Include Equal Opportunity Employment statement, eg. “promotes a workplace that actively seeks to include, welcome and value unique contributions of all people and encourages people with disability, Aboriginal Australians, young people and people from culturally diverse backgrounds to apply for this job.” • Ensure that interviews are held in an accessible place. • Consider job flexibility with regards to location and work hours. • Monitor Diversity Questionnaire feedback for disability requirements / changing needs. • Consult with Disability Employment Services (free service for employers) for advice, when applicable. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>CEO and MC</p> <p>CEO and MC</p>
<p>Ensure policies and procedures are regularly reviewed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupational Health and Safety • Workplace accessibility • Procedures manual. 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>All Managers</p>

Review and Monitoring

Review and Monitoring

The Governance Officer will monitor and review progress towards achieving stated outcomes in the DAIP. A progress report will be submitted to the Department of Communities by the first week of July each year. Information on the implementation of the DAIP is included in the Shire of Kent Annual Report.

Communicating the DAIP

The Shire will advise via the local media and its own publications that copies of the DAIP are available. Shire staff, relevant government departments, local health centres, disability service providers and the local Community Resource Centres will be provided with a copy of the DAIP.

The DAIP is also available to the public via the Shire's website: www.kent.wa.gov.au