



Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Annual Report 2023-2024 Financial Year

2020 – 2025

In accordance with the Disability Inclusion Act 2014, section 13(1), the report must include information on the implementation of Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

Council is striving to make Wollongong an inclusive city that provides equal opportunity for people with disability to participate in all aspects of community life. Our aim is to be a leader in promoting and supporting the social and economic participation of people with disability. Our Disability Inclusion Action Plan (Plan) sets out what we will do to support inclusion of people with disability in our city. It was developed after extensive community engagement to make sure the priorities reflect what is important to our community.

The Plan will assist us to meet requirements for local Government in the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014.

Our Plan has 91 Actions across four focus areas

1. Create liveable communities.
2. Improve access to services through better systems and processes.
3. Promote positive community attitudes and behaviours.
4. Support access to meaningful employment.

Progress to date

Completed	Ongoing	In Progress	Not Started
20	47	21	3



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Highlights for 2023-2024

This report provides a summary of what we did in the 2023-2024 financial year.

Create Liveable Communities

Council delivered a range of projects to improve access to the built environment for people with disability, including:

- Upgraded Hooka Point Footbridge and Jetty and Horsley Pond Jetty.
- Upgraded Bulli Tennis Club (access ramp and handrails) and Ian McLennan Park change rooms and amenities at Kembla Grange.
- Upgraded Scarborough Crematorium/ Cemetery.
- Upgraded seating in the IMB and Bruce Gordon Theatre at IPAC.
- Renewed four carparks including accessible car parking spaces.
- Installed six new footpaths and associated ramps.
- Upgraded 13 footpaths and associated ramps.
- Upgraded footpaths and cycleways in the CBD and Helensburgh Town Centre.
- Installed an All Ages, All Abilities Playground at Stuart Park and renewed the picnic shelter adjacent to the playground.
- Installed three new cycleways/ shared pedestrian paths and upgraded two cycleways/ shared pedestrian paths.
- Installed five new bus shelters.
- Renewed three cabins at Corrimal Tourist Parks installing access ramps.
- Purchased a new beach wheelchair suitable for children and young people.



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Council delivered a range of planning and design projects, including:

- Commenced the development of a footpath network plan, which will include the collation of 'missing links' across the network.
- Completed a condition assessment of footpaths/shared path to refine and update priorities for renewal.

Improve Access to Services through Better Systems and Processes

Council revised policy and planning documents to strengthen and support access and inclusion outcomes, including:

- Commenced the development of an Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Technical Manual.

Council undertook projects to increase access to information, including:

- Updated the map of accessible parking spaces on the website.
- Provided information on accessible features at major events such as Comic Gong, Culture Mix and New Year's Eve including accessible parking, bathrooms, dedicated viewing areas and quiet spaces.
- Improved access to information at libraries. All documents on the library website are being updated to include PDF and DOCX files to enable reading via screen reader. All website copy is being updated as plain English to increase accessibility.
- Promoted Council services at the Illawarra Disability Options Expo.
- Promoted the accessible features at Wollongong City Tourist Parks on the website.
- Developed communication boards across all libraries to increase non-verbal communication access for library customers.
- Updated the Wollongong Art Gallery website to meets access standards.

Council has continued to engage people with disability, including:

- Notified community members registered with the Join the Conversation Register of Interest – Access of community engagement projects. 997 community members are registered.
- Engaged people with disability on Skate Parks, All Ages, All Abilities Playspace, Integrated Transport Strategy, Creative Wollongong, Recreation Space for Young People and Urban Heat Strategy.
- Engaged the Deaf community using Auslan interpreters to improve access to cultural events and activities including Culture Mix and shows at the IPAC.
- Engaged people with disability in the Living Books program, learning and development sessions for staff such as Diversity Awareness Training and Conversations with Managers about Inclusion and in the Disability Inclusion Action Plan Coordination Group.

Promote Positive Community Attitudes and Behaviours

Council delivered a range of projects to promote positive community attitudes and behaviours towards people with disability, including:

- Supported the 'EMBER' program focused on emergency preparedness for people with disability and their carers.
- Partnered with the Disability Trust to deliver an exercise program at Lakeside Leisure Centre during school terms.
- Delivered the 'Water Rats' learn to swim programs weekly at Council's Aquatic facility. Eight students were enrolled per term.
- Supported the Academy of Sport 'Athletes with Disability' program for scholarship holders and coaches at Beaton Park and Lakeside Leisure Centres.
- Continued the monthly 'Visually Impaired Knitters' group at Wollongong City Library in partnership Guide Dogs NSW.
- Delivered a polymer clay session for the Deaf community at Wollongong City Library. 16 people attended.



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- Provided access provisions at 'Comic Gong' including a viewing area for Cosplay competition, social stories, pre-tours for high school students, 'The Quiet Space' and accessible signage and information on the website.
- Provided access provisions at 'Culture Mix' including a social story, 'The Quiet Space' and a program of activities with access to Auslan interpreters. Physical access inclusions across the festival were provided, including continuous accessible paths of travel, accessible drop off zone, accessible toilets, accessible viewing area and access map, as well as community transport and seating for participating seniors.
- Delivered an Autism Awareness talk by a person with lived experience at Corrimal Library.
- Delivered 'Art & Dementia Tour' program for people with dementia to have meaningful engagement with Wollongong Art Gallery exhibitions and collections, this is supported by the 'Care for the Carer Program' where carers are invited to participate in art therapy as respite.
- Delivered interactive 'Access2Express Art' tours for primary and high school students with disability to experience Wollongong Art Gallery's major exhibitions.
- Welcomed an artist with disability to the Creative Wollongong Studios for a 12-month residency.
- Delivered tours and talks at Wollongong Art Gallery for the Deaf community and championed the work of artists with disability.
- Partnered with Bus Stop Films and commissioned a film for the Creative Wollongong Short Film festival.
- Delivered 'Belong Workshops' to support units and groups to assist transition to programs and post school.
- Delivered live music and events as part of youth week that included soft/quiet starts to the event.
- Delivered 'Lego Build and Connect' program designed for young people who are neurodivergent.

- Delivered a quiet sensory space for young people at Wollongong Youth Centre.
- As part of International Day of People with Disability Council:
 - Developed and promoted a calendar of events with Shellharbour Council.
 - Hosted a Gingerbread House workshop which by an Auslan Interpreter and Guide Dogs Australia.
 - Delivered an Adult Storytime in partnership with the Disability Trust at Dapto library.

Support Access to Meaningful Employment

Council has provided opportunities for people with disability to gain employment and participate in work experience, including:

- Employed Cadet Trainee and School Based Trainees with 15% identifying as people with disability.
- Provided a 12-week temporary appointment in Regulation + Enforcement as part of the 'IncludeAbility' project. This placement has now been extended for nine months. Also created a second designated role for a person with intellectual disability.
- Provided work experience for nine students with disability.
- Continued to support employment opportunities for people with disability as part of our commitment to social enterprises. This included procuring services through social enterprises that employ people with disability, continuing the contract with a social enterprise to provide the café in the Administration building and industry tours of agencies supporting employment for people with disability.
- Engaged external expertise to support the development of new resources such as Easy Read Position Descriptions.
- Developed a Workforce Support Plan which is being implemented with employees.

Council has delivered a range of learning and development opportunities for Council officers to promote and support their understanding of disability, including:

- Participated in the 'Inclusion Works Project' facilitated by Council for Intellectual Disability where staff participated in training and are provided ongoing coaching and access to resources. This resulted in being nominated by the Disability Trust for the Prime Super Employee Award through Disability Employment Australia.
- Delivered eight Diversity Training sessions and two Autism awareness sessions for Council Officers.
- Organised for library staff to attend four training sessions including the Hidden Disability program, Sensory Processing Support Workshop, Communication Access and Awareness and Autism: A conversation with Carly-Denesh Jones.
- Organised accessible events training for staff delivered by Accessible Arts.
- Delivered a mental health awareness training program for employees and supervisors.
- Trained staff as Mental Health First Aid Officers.
- Continued the People with Disability and Carers Peer Collective which meets regularly, provides feedback on policy, procedures and guidelines and hosts events such as a morning tea to recognise International Day of People with Disability.
- Delivered a program of events including highlighting days of significance for people with disability via the General Managers message and internal hub posts.
- Hosted the Conversations with Managers about Inclusion.
- Maintained membership to the Diversity Council Australia and promoted the available resources to staff via the Diversity Hub.