



Media Release

4 October 2022

And they all started grooving

More than 100 people with and without disability danced the afternoon away recently at an 80s themed EVERYBODY disco, an initiative from a local council's access and inclusion plan.

The event was held by Mt Barker Council to help remove the stigma for people who can be isolated or excluded from social gatherings because they live with a disability.

Acting General Manager Planning and Community, Alison Hancock said we have known for a long time that people with a disability can be socially isolated.

"There is not a lot of opportunity for them, especially group activities so the idea was to reduce that isolation and hold some community events for everyone, Ms Hancock said.

"This was the second event of its type that we have put on this year and was held again at the Barker Hotel due to the high demand from participants wanting to experience a real nightclub in an inclusive environment."

The council is half-way through its 4-year plan for improving access and inclusion for people with a disability.

Fifty of the eighty-three actions in Mt Barker Council's *Access for All, Disability Access and Inclusion Plan* have been completed with the remainder on track to be finished in the time-frames set out in the plan.

The council's Team Leader Community Development, Yelaina Eaton said the plan demonstrates Council's commitment to working with organisations and the community to improve access to programs, services, facilities, and events for everyone.

"Community Living Australia, HCO Disability Services and Our Voice SA have been working alongside Council to increase exposure to people living with a disability, identify gaps in service provision and increase access to events like the disco," Ms Eaton said.

Along with the discos, other initiatives coming out of the plan have been an inclusive playgroup set up at the Mount Barker Community Library, the formation of a disability

engagement group, and support for other accessible recreational activities such as walking football and pickleball,

“There have been some fantastic programs coming out of the plan and we’ve built some strong relationships with community members and organisations over the last 2 years, Ms Eaton said.

“It’s important for Council to continue to build these relationships, not only to see through the completion of the current disability access and inclusion plan, but in preparation for and to improve the next plan which will begin in 2025.”

Contacts for interview:

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Sam can also be contacted regarding clients who were involved in the organisation of the disco who might be interested in sharing their experiences as well.

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