

Access for All

Disability Access
and Inclusion Plan
2020-2024



Statement from the Mayor



The Mount Barker District Council is proud to present its Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2020-2024, a plan that demonstrates our commitment to creating an inclusive and accessible community for all. This plan is a reflection of the community's expectation that inclusiveness and accessibility are crucial for a liveable district.

Council will consult with people living with disability, build relationships, establish protocols and policies, and implement meaningful programs and activities for all.

As Mayor of the Mount Barker District Council, I am encouraged on a daily basis to see staff implementing the plan in a respectful and caring manner.

Council has many roles in this space including advocacy, compliance, service delivery, social inclusiveness and education. We do this in an empathetic manner realising that at some stage in our lives we will also need the kindness and support of our fellow citizens.

Mayor David Leach
Mount Barker District Council

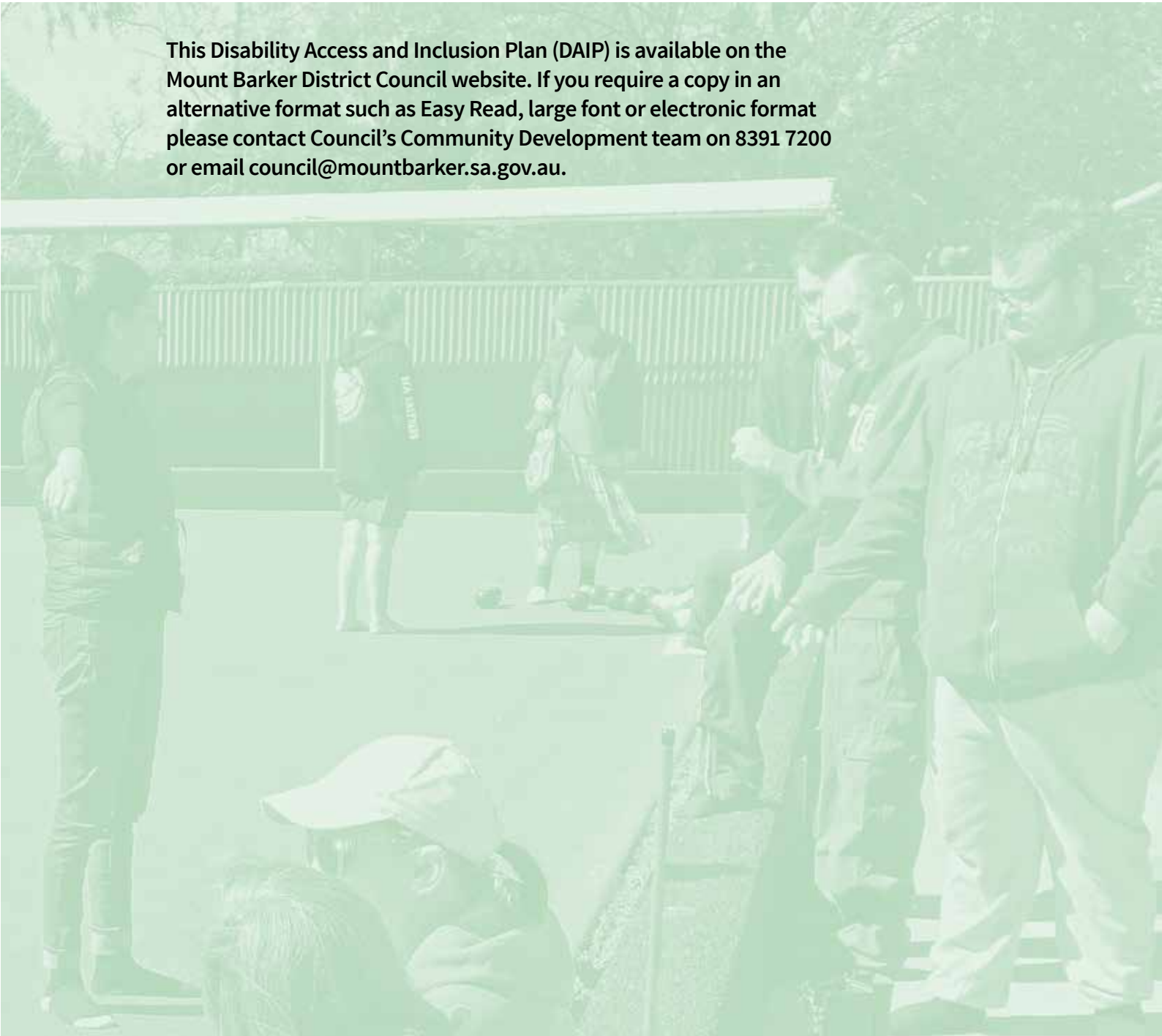
July 2023

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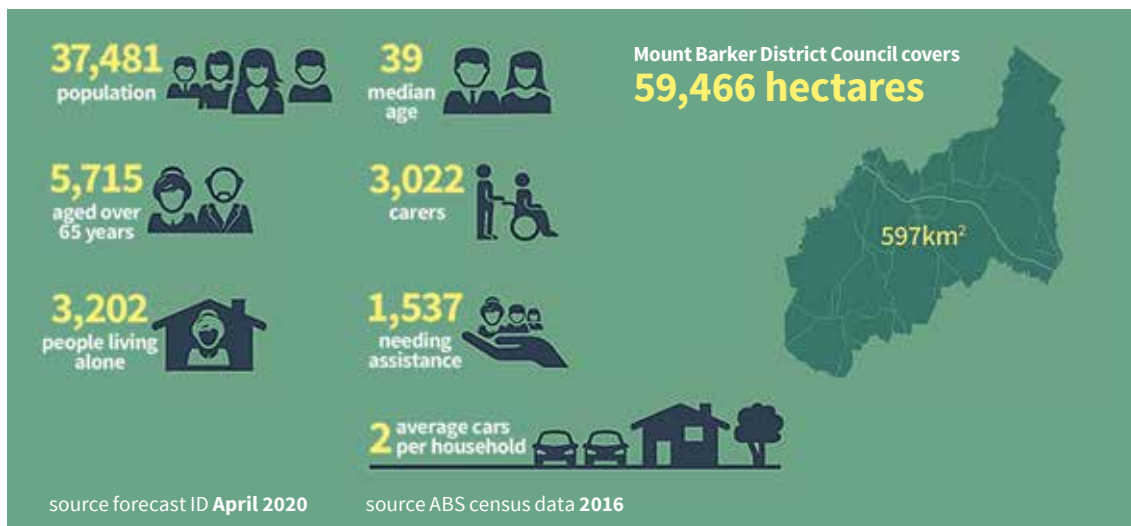
Contact Details

This Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) is available on the Mount Barker District Council website. If you require a copy in an alternative format such as Easy Read, large font or electronic format please contact Council's Community Development team on 8391 7200 or email council@mountbarker.sa.gov.au.



Disability and the Mount Barker District

Snapshot of our community



Mount Barker District Council is a community of 37,481 people spread across approximately 600 square kilometers, including the townships of Mount Barker, Hahndorf, Echunga, Nairne, Littlehampton, Blakiston, Wistow, Flaxley, Macclesfield, Meadows, Callington, Prospect Hill, Brukunga, Harrogate, Kanmantoo and Dawesley.

Forecast high rates of population growth are expected (55,000 people by 2035), especially in the townships of Mount Barker, Nairne and Littlehampton where previously rural parts of the district are expected to become urbanised.

This population growth means the number of people experiencing disability in the district is likely to grow.

“Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol, United Nations.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 data states almost 1 in 5 Australians reported living with disability. For the Mount Barker district, this equates to 7,496 people living with a disability (in 2020). This number is likely to increase to 11,000 by 2035.

Given this expected population growth, it is important that Council proactively plans for a community that is inclusive and accessible for all its members.

Staff Profile

Mount Barker District Council has a total of 175 staff who are employed across a broad range of business units and activities. As of 22 February 2020, one staff member has a declared disability.



Strategic Context and the role of Council

The South Australian Disability Inclusion Act 2018 (the Act) provides a legal framework to support equal access and inclusion for people living with disability in community activities and services including recreation, education, health and public transport. The Act is aligned with the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and with the Australian National Disability Strategy 2010-2020. It also required the creation of the South Australian Disability Inclusion Plan (the Plan) and the first South Australian Plan came into effect on 30 October 2019.

Mount Barker District Council recognises that local government plays an important role in enabling equitable access and as such our Disability and Inclusion Plan has been prepared to comply with the

Act and is also recognised in Council's Community Plan 2020-2035 which identifies access and inclusion as a fundamental pillar of building a strong and resilient community. Additionally, Council will proactively consider the risks that relate to priority groups living with a disability, including women, children, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people who are culturally and linguistically diverse.

Council's role in delivering improved outcomes for people with a disability ranges from 'monitor' to 'intervention' and may vary within action areas of the plan.

Levels of intervention

 Monitor	Periodic review to assess how well people with disability can access mainstream supports and services
 Inform	Act as a first point of contact for local residents and businesses for information about disability support and services available
 Advocate	Encourage Government agencies and service providers to address identified issues
 Support	<p>Provide services, facilities and programs such as libraries, open spaces, community buildings, footpaths and parks and gardens</p> <p>Partner with Government agencies, non-government organisations (NGO's) and the private sector to support equitable access to services</p> <p>Provide opportunities for people to participate in making decisions about matters that affect their lives</p> <p>Have inclusive employment policies and practices and strives to be a best-practice employer</p> <p>Provide inclusive volunteer programs</p>
 Intervene	Regulate land use development and building construction compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) through Council Development Plans

On the other hand, local government does not provide formal health services, schools and tertiary education and we do not make the laws.

While Councils facilitate an environment where businesses are able to thrive, we do not have a primary responsibility for general economic security and

employment. In consideration of the role of council, this DAIP sets out the measures that Mount Barker District Council intends to establish to ensure that people with disability can access mainstream supports and services.

Our Vision

Our Plan's vision for disability and inclusion is to build prosperity, community wellbeing and resilience for all members of our community and for a future that will include 20,000 more people by 2035.



Actions

The Mount Barker District Council Disability Access and Inclusion Plan is structured around the themes and priority areas of the Inclusive SA: State Disability Inclusion Plan 2019-2023.



Action 1 Inclusive Communities for all

Social inclusion is a priority for people living with disability as it affects all aspects of their lives. It is our aim that the contributions and rights of people living with disability are valued and understood by all South Australians and that their rights are promoted, upheld and protected.

We also want to ensure that people living with disability are supported to advocate for their own rights.

Priority 1

Involvement in the community

Priority 2

Improving community understanding and awareness

Priority 3

Promoting the rights of people living with a disability

Action	State Plan Priority No	Responsibility	Timeframe Target	Measurable
Review and make recommendations to Council Members on how Council Meetings can become more accessible and inclusive for all community members to participate.	2	Communications Team	July 2021	Recommendation report provided to Council Members.
Mount Barker District Council encourages the delivery of accessible events and programs in the district, by providing information and support to event and program organisers.	1	Community Development Team	December 2020	Council will engage with the Disability and Inclusion Reference Group to better understand, provide and advocate for more inclusive and diverse programming in the community.
		Community Development Team	April 2021	Provide findings to community groups to increase inclusive programming and help identify new program opportunities.

Action 1 Inclusive Communities for all

Action	State Plan Priority No	Responsibility	Timeframe Target	Measurable
		Community Development Team	Ongoing	Actively seek opportunities to provide and promote inclusive programming.
		Events Team	April 2022	Council's event grant application encourages access and inclusion planning to support accessibility improvements.
		Events Team	June 2022	Community training to support access and inclusion for community events is offered.
		Events Team	June 2022	The events team are provided training to better understand how to deliver accessible events.
		Events Team	June 2024	Research accessible event infrastructure that can be purchased and used at events.
Disability Awareness training for all staff	2	People and Culture	June 2021	Data on disability awareness trainings held and the proportion of staff who have attended.

Action 1 Inclusive Communities for all

Action	State Plan Priority No	Responsibility	Timeframe Target	Measurable
Library programs and services are adaptable and responsive to user needs, by having staff with disability awareness, Information Management (IM) systems which are accessible, and partnerships which support inclusive programming.	1 & 2	Library Team	June 2021	% of library employees who have undertaken disability awareness training.
			Ongoing	IM solutions that support users with disability such as a compliant online library catalogue.
			Ongoing	Evidence of partnerships and programs that support people with disability, such as dyslexic-friendly Borrow Box, Over Drive, and the Warm Drinks program.
			Ongoing	Continue to offer home-delivery program.
			June 2024	Research cost and feasibility of installing a hearing loop at the library and have one available to borrow.
Mount Barker District Council supports residents and carers to remain independent, through the provision of programming and supports that work with their strengths and help achieve 'wellbeing and reablement'	1	Community Programs	Ongoing	Scope of programs and supports offered. No. of participants supported. No. of new participants.

Action 1 Inclusive Communities for all

Action	State Plan Priority No	Responsibility	Timeframe Target	Measurable
Mount Barker District Council's volunteer program supports people with disability to engage in a variety of volunteering roles within the district, by having volunteer supervisors with disability awareness and processes and systems which are accessible	1	Volunteer Coordinator	June 2023 June 2024	Volunteer supervisors trained in disability awareness Volunteer application system audited.
Mount Barker District Council to promote International Day of People with Disability celebrations each year	1, 2 & 3	Events Team and Communications Team	Ongoing	Calendar of community activities listed on the Community Noticeboard. Events team provide in-kind support to community events celebrating International Day of People with Disability upon request from community.

Action 2 Leadership and Collaboration

People living with disability want to have a greater role in leading and contributing to government and community decision making. It is our aim that the perspectives of people living with disability are actively sought and that they are supported to participate meaningfully in government and community consultation and engagement activities.

Priority 4

Participation in decision making

Priority 5

Leadership and raising profile

Priority 6

Engagement and consultation

Action	State Plan Priority No	Responsibility	Timeframe Target	Measurable Target
Mount Barker District Council ensures that our community engagement opportunities are provided online and person to person (verbally), and that online research and consultation activities are accessible	6	Community Engagement Team	July 2021 July 2021 July 2024	Bang the Table meets WCAG 2.0 Level AAA. Contact person nominated for all engagements. Survey standard investigated.
Mount Barker District Council continues to support the facilitation of the Disability and Inclusion Reference Group and promotes their role across the district	4, 5 & 6	Community Development Team	Ongoing	Membership attendance at meetings. Minimum bi-annual meetings held.

Action 2 Leadership and Collaboration

Action	State Plan Priority No	Responsibility	Timeframe Target	Measurable
Mount Barker District Council investigates opportunities to support leadership development for people with disability in the community	5	Community Development Team	July 2022	Evidence of investigation and delivery of solutions.
Maintain an Access and Inclusion stakeholder contact list to assist in identifying people with lived experience for committees and advisory groups	4 & 6	Community Development Team	Ongoing	Access and Inclusion Stakeholder register established and maintained.
People with disability have the skills and confidence to participate and contribute to the community and protect their rights.	4, 5 & 6	Community Development Team	July 2021	People with disability contribute to the decisions and are involved with the project as advisors.
			July 2021	Mentoring and support is provided to build their understanding of local government, capacity as advocates and active citizens.
			July 2021	Feedback from people with disability regarding their experience as project advisors.
			June 2022	People with disability are more actively engaged with Local Government in the region.

Action 2 Leadership and Collaboration

Action	State Plan Priority No	Responsibility	Timeframe Target	Measurable
People with disability are connected and have the information they need to make decisions and choices.	4 & 6	People & Culture Team	June 2021	Council staff trained in disability awareness and access in public places.
		Community Development Team	June 2023	Feedback from customers living with disability regarding access improvements.
		Community Development Team	June 2024	Council improves accessibility of settings for social connection in the community.
		Customer Service Team	June 2021	Council will have available a list of Auslan interpreters.

Action 3 Accessible communities

The accessibility of the built environment, quality services and information is key to ensuring people living with disability are included and have the opportunity to equally participate in all aspects of community life. It is our aim to increase accessibility to public and community infrastructure, transport, services, information, sport and recreation and the greater community.

Priority 7
Universal Design across South Australia

Priority 8
Accessible and available information

Priority 9
Access to services

Action	State Plan Priority No	Responsibility	Timeframe Target	Measurable
Universal design principles are consistently applied	7	Strategic Projects and Planning Policy Team	July 2021 Ongoing	Staff trained. No. of strategic plans where universal design principles are applied.
		Infrastructure Planning Team	December 2021	Capital works delivery process is reviewed to ensure universal design principles are applied, embedded and assessed.
Mount Barker District Council regularly reviews our provision of on-street and off-street accessible car parking to ensure it continues to balance the needs of a range of users including drivers, carers and modified vehicles (including rear loading)	9	Public Health & Safety Team	June 2022	Accessible Parking Audit completed.
			September 2022	Audit outcomes reported to Council Members.
			December 2022	An online map identifying accessible parking spaces is developed and available on Council's website.
			Ongoing	Number of designated accessible parking spaces (on and off street).

Action 3 Accessible communities

Action	State Plan Priority No	Responsibility	Timeframe Target	Measurable
Mount Barker District Council regularly reviews business compliance with outdoor dining guidelines to ensure streets with outdoor dining are accessible.	9	Public Health & Safety Team	June 2023 June 2024	Outdoor dining inspection schedule created No. of outdoor dining inspections undertaken.
Benchmark communications (website, social media, print) against best practice standards for inclusive communication and make recommendations on how council's communications can be more inclusive and accessible.	8	Communications Team	September 2023 August 2024	Recommendation report provided to Council Members. Funding sought to implement recommendations.
Mount Barker District Council provides support to the Adelaide Hills Recreation Centre, Mount Barker Community Centre, community halls, institutes and recreation grounds to become accessible community facilities	9	Building and Recreation Manager	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	No. of management agreements that include accessibility and inclusion KPIs. No. of inclusive programs and activities. No. of people with a disability accessing the services. Funding proactively sought to improve accessibility in community facilities.

Action 3 Accessible communities

Action	State Plan Priority No	Responsibility	Timeframe Target	Measurable Target
Mount Barker District Council plans for and provides accessible community facilities	9	Infrastructure Planning Team	July 2022	Identify priority community facilities, including public toilets, to be audited for DDA compliance.
		Infrastructure Planning Team	July 2023	Undertake an audit of priority community facilities for DDA compliance.
		Community Development Team	June 2022	Develop and maintain an e-map of facilities in the district that would help those with a disability and make it available to community members.
Mount Barker District Council considers how the 'Touched by Olivia Inclusive Play space Guidelines' and the Department of Human Services (SA) Inclusive Play – Guidelines for accessible play spaces can be applied for new and renewed play spaces	9	Strategic Projects & Planning Policy Team	Ongoing	Application of the guidelines are considered for new and renewed play spaces.
Township plans prioritise accessibility	7	Strategic Projects & Planning Policy Team	Ongoing	Township plans developed prioritise accessibility.
			Ongoing	Investigate opportunities to provide Changing Places facilities within townships.

Action 3 Accessible communities

Action	State Plan Priority No	Responsibility	Timeframe Target	Measurable
Bus stops in the Mount Barker district are DDA compliant.	9	Infrastructure Planning Team	December 2022	<p>Bus stop upgrade plan is developed.</p> <p>Renewal plan and budget established.</p> <p>Bus stops are renewed and upgraded to be accessible.</p>
Customer services are adaptable and responsive to customer needs, by having staff with disability awareness training and opportunities to access services person to person and face to face in a suitable environment.	8 & 9	Customer Service Team	<p>June 2021</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>June 2024</p>	<p>No. customer service staff trained.</p> <p>Person to person and face to face services are retained and prioritised.</p> <p>Customer service centre is reviewed for DDA compliance.</p>
People with disability are connected and have the information they need to make decisions and choices.	8	<p>Communications Team</p> <p>Community Development Team</p>	<p>June 2021</p> <p>June 2022</p> <p>June 2022</p> <p>June 2023</p>	<p>Council staff and volunteers are trained in disability awareness and communications access.</p> <p>Council implements action plans to improve communications access.</p> <p>Councils provide information in accessible formats.</p> <p>Feedback from customers living with disability regarding information access improvements.</p>

Action 3 Accessible communities

Action	State Plan Priority No	Responsibility	Timeframe Target	Measurable
People with disability use and benefit from the same mainstream services as everyone else.	9	Communications Team	June 2021	Council staff and volunteers trained in disability awareness and communications access relevant to services and programs.
		Community Development Team	June 2023	Feedback from customers living with disability regarding inclusion in Council – provided services.
		Community Development Team	June 2021	Promotion of council services and programs as accessible for people with a disability.
		Community Development Team	June 2022	Increase in people with a disability participating in council services and programs.
People with a disability participate and benefit from the same community activities as everyone else	7	People & Culture Team	June 2021	Council staff trained in disability awareness and universal design relevant to built environment.
		Strategic Projects & Planning Policy Team	Ongoing	Council processes change to incorporate disability access and universal design as standard for public realm upgrades, beyond minimum compliance with DDA.

Action 3 Accessible communities

Action	State Plan Priority No	Responsibility	Timeframe Target	Measurable
		Community Development Team	June 2023	Feedback from residents and visitors living with disability regarding access in Council-provided public places and destinations.
		Strategic Projects and Planning Policy Team	Ongoing	Council continues to actively seek funding support to build a Regional Aquatic Centre and Hydrotherapy Pool from State / Federal Government and where practical, the private sector.
		Infrastructure Planning Team	Ongoing	Council will actively seek funding options to deliver the footpaths program detailed in the Strategic Asset Management Plan 2020.

Action 4 Learning and Employment

Workforce participation is fundamental to social inclusion. It provides economic independence and choice, social connections and friendships, value, identity and belonging. It is our aim that people living with disability have access to inclusive places of study and that education and training provides pathways to meaningful and inclusive employment and volunteering opportunities.

Priority 10

Better supports within educational and training settings

Priority 11

Skill development through volunteering and support in navigating the pathway between learning and earning

Priority 12

Improved access to employment opportunities and better support within workplaces

Action	State Plan Priority No	Responsibility	Timeframe Target	Measurable
Maintain partnership with the Harold Mitchell Centre of Mount Barker High School	10 & 11	Community Development Team and Library Team	Ongoing	No. of opportunities provided for young people living with a disability to participate and gain skills in the community.
Mount Barker District Council employees and volunteers are offered disability awareness training	12	People & Culture Team	June 2021 Ongoing	Data on disability awareness trainings held and the proportion of staff and volunteers who have attended. All employees and volunteers offered refresher training every 3 years.

Action 4 Learning and Employment

Action	State Plan Priority No	Responsibility	Timeframe Target	Measurable Target
Mount Barker District Council reviews processes and systems regarding job design, recruitment and selection, on-boarding, resources and tools; to ensure barriers to inclusion are removed	12	People & Culture Team	June 2024	Evidence of investigation. Plan developed to deliver improvements.
Mount Barker District Council facilitates and promotes flexible working arrangements	12	People & Culture Team	Ongoing	No. staff who have flexible working arrangements.
Increase employment, volunteering and work experience opportunities for people living with a disability	11 & 12	People & Culture Team	Ongoing	No. people living with a disability who are employed, volunteer or undertake work experience.

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan Development

1 Consultation Process

Mount Barker District Council worked with Mission Australia to undertake much of the community engagement as they have strong relationships and connection with people, organisations and communities who have lived experience of disability.

Stage one - preliminary staff workshop on 7 November 2017 to initiate the development of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

Stage two – establishment of a Disability and Inclusion Reference Group (DIRG) through a public Expression of Interest process between 3 June - 27 July 2019. People were notified of the opportunity through Mission Australia’s email contact lists. A total of 10 people nominated to be part of the DIRG and all were accepted.

On 26 August 2019 the DIRG members participated in an initial stakeholder workshop to help understand the key issues and opportunities for people living with a disability in our community and the group participated in the development of a community Disability and Inclusion Survey.

Stage three - Disability Network meeting held on 14 October 2019 at the Mount Barker Community Centre for organisations who work with people who have a disability in our community.

Organisations were notified of the meeting by direct invitation and the meeting was attended by 24 people representing organisations including state and federal government, education, home services, employment providers, community programs and recreation and leisure groups. Qualitative feedback was collated relating to their experiences of providing support and services to community members with a disability.

Stage four – community-wide Disability and Inclusion Survey between 6 January - 28 February 2020 to gain individual perspectives about access and inclusion in our community. The community was notified via Mission Australia’s email contact lists, Council’s Facebook page and copies of the survey were available in prominent locations at Council’s Civic Centre and Library and Mission Australia’s Mount Barker office. A total of 67 responses were received from community members living in the district. Both online and paper versions were received.

Stage five - online staff survey about diversity within Council. All Council staff were notified of the survey via email. Thirty-two staff members completed the survey and provided Council a better understanding of the diverse nature of our workforce.

Stage six – A period of consultation on the draft DAIP was conducted between 8 June - 5 July 2020 to seek community feedback prior to Council committing to the implementation of the actions in the draft Plan.

The consultation was considered to be successful with good levels of awareness and participation including:

- a) 150 brochures on the draft plan were sent to key disability service providers, the library and Mount Barker Community Centre.
- b) Through Council's YourSay project page, there were 26 visitors and 8 contributors / responders.
- c) Facebook posts were scheduled on 8 and 15 June with a reach of 3,600 and 2,200 respectively, and:
 - 1. 207 and 73 people clicked on the post, and
 - 2. 52 and 24 reacted, commented or shared the post.
- d) A consultation drop-in session was held on 17 June between 9am-12pm at the Mount Barker Community Centre and 5 community members attended.
- e) A consultation session with the Disability and Inclusion Reference Group was held via Zoom on 1 July and six members attended the session.

- f) A total of 15 submissions and surveys were received by resident associations and individuals in the community.

All themes received support, with accessible community infrastructure (particularly a hydrotherapy pool) and inclusive community programming highlighted as priority areas for action.

The outcomes of these consultations were collated and analysed to draw out key issues and opportunities for Council and to inform the DAIP.

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan Development

2 Relationship to other policies, strategies, frameworks

Council’s DAIP links with a number of existing policies, procedures and plans. Specifically:

- The Mount Barker Community Plan 2020-2035
- Community Facilities Study and Delivery Strategy (2017)
- Regional Public Health Plan for the Southern and Hills LGA (2015)
- Workforce Development Strategy 2020-2022
- Strategic Asset Management Plan 2020

A review of Council’s key strategic documents was undertaken to assess how well the Disability Access and Inclusion action areas have been considered against the Act’s four action areas. The table below shows that Council’s key linked strategies, policies and plans demonstrate good will around caring for community and provide the opportunity to extend the commitment demonstrated to access and inclusion planning. Actions incorporated in the DAIP will also support higher aims of the Community Plan 2020-2035 and the Public Health Action Plan.

Strategic Document Review

Action Area	Community Plan 2020-2035	Community Facilities Study and Delivery Strategy	Regional Public Health Plan for the Southern and Hills LGA	Workforce Development Strategy 2020-2022	Strategic Asset Management Plan 2020
Action 1 Inclusive Communities for all	XX	X	XX		
Action 2 Leadership and Collaboration	XX				
Action 3 Accessible communities		X	X		X
Action 4 Learning and Employment				X	

X=mention XX=consideration XXX=comprehensive consideration

Examples of Previous Achievements

Council's previous Access Actions Plan (2005) has increased the responsibility that Mount Barker District Council has taken for removing barriers to participation. This has included:

- Establishment of a Disability and Inclusion Reference group (2019)
- Establishment of Disability and Inclusion Network meetings (2019)
- Community Facilities Study to provide information to facilitate improved access and inclusion in Council's community facilities (2017)
- Main street planning to improve accessibility such as the Hahndorf Main street plan (2019)
- Development of community service and work experience opportunities for students with a disability at Mount Barker High School (2018).

Implementation Process

Mount Barker District Council has a responsibility for implementing the DAIP. The actions of the DAIP will be integrated into the ongoing business planning of Council, including annual planning and budget processes.

The progress of the DAIP will be monitored by an internal group made up of staff with action responsibility, who meet quarterly, chaired by the Manager Community Wellbeing (or delegate). This process will not only focus on the actions within the DAIP, but also identify emerging opportunities which may require a refocus of attention and resources. An annual report including the DAIP audit will be presented to Elected Members.

The Disability and Inclusion Reference Group (DIRG) will be the primary resource for ongoing engagement with people experiencing disability. The DIRG is established to assist Council in achieving the outcomes of the DAIP by providing strategic, expert and impartial advice on the development, implementation, monitoring and review of Council policies, strategies, plans and projects to advance the inclusion of people experiencing disability.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the groups and individuals who have assisted in the development of Mount Barker District Council's DAIP, specifically:

- Donna Whitburn of Mission Australia
- Members of the Disability and Inclusion Working Group
- Community members who took time to complete the Access and Inclusion Survey and provide submissions
- The organisations who attended the Disability Network Meeting
- Council staff who have provided input and feedback



This road bridge
built circa 1850
reopened as a
pedestrian bridge
by Dudley Atford
in the presence of the
Macclesfield Community
on Sunday 4th May 2003