



*Weddin Shire Council*

**Disability Inclusion**

**Action Plan**

2017/18 – 2020/21

## *Disability Inclusion Action Plan*

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### ***Message from the Mayor***

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Weddin Shire Council has taken a positive approach to embrace the inclusion of people with a disability in all aspects of community life. Council is committed to creating a more inclusive and welcoming community for people with disabilities and it is with pleasure that I present the Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

The Plan demonstrates the Council's deep commitment to improve and enhance the quality of our services, facilities, systems and programs. The Plan was developed through consultation with the community and outlines the actions we will take to provide more inclusive and accessible services and places.

Council's desire is to provide a positive impact for people with a disability in our Shire.

**Mayor, Councillor Mark Liebich**



### ***Message from the General Manager***

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The underlying basis of Disability Inclusion Planning is about supporting the underlying basic right of choice for people with disability in our community. Weddin's desire is to recognize and ensure people with disability have the same right to choose how to live, work and enjoy community life as we all do.

Council's aim to ensure that our services, programs and facilities are inclusive is paramount. The Plan aims to recognize and improve conditions for people with a disability who live, work and visit our Shire.

**General Manager, Glenn Carroll**

## ***1. Background***

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In August 2014 the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 was passed. This Act requires Council to develop a Disability Inclusion Action Plan to help remove barriers and enable people with a disability to participate fully in their communities.

Council's vision is for an inclusive, respectful and diverse community where all residents and visitors enjoy a safe and friendly environment.

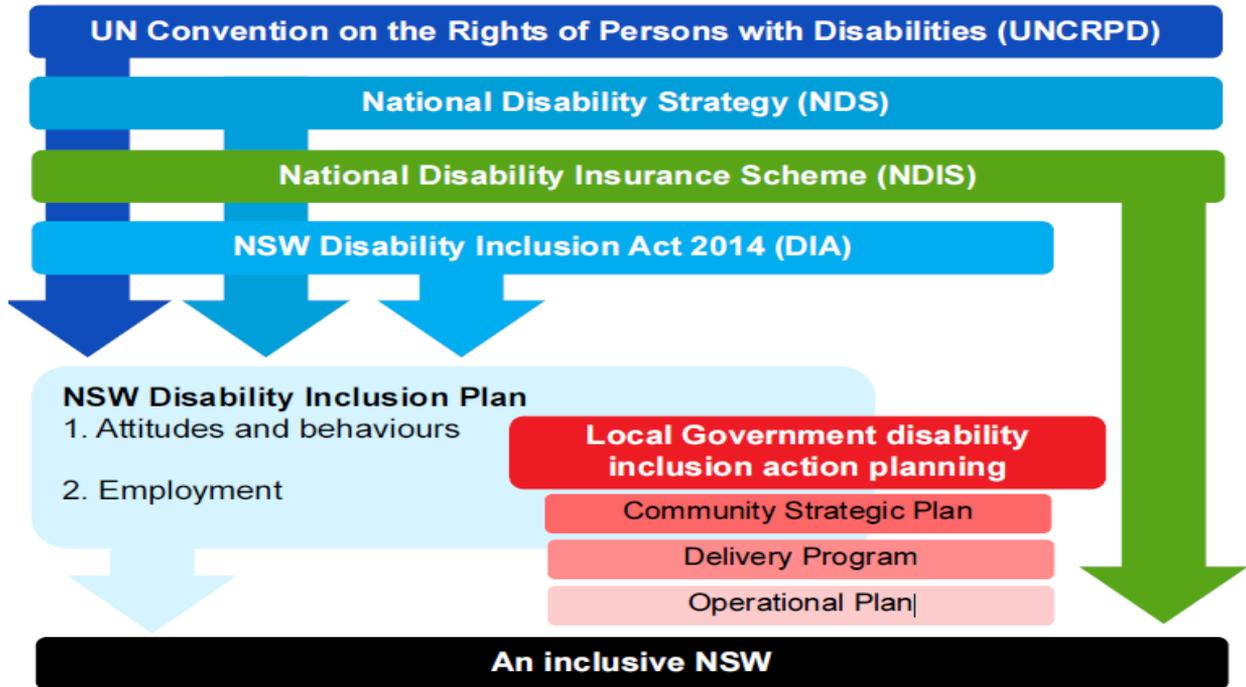
Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan will aim to provide better access to Council information, services and facilities ensuring people with disabilities can fully participate in their community.

This Disability Inclusion Action Plan was developed through a community consultation and research process. A review of Council documents and Government policy also took place.

The plan was endorsed at Council's May 2017 meeting and placed on public exhibition. The Plan was formally adopted at Council's June 2017 meeting.

## 2. Legislation and Policy

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Source: Disability Inclusion Action Planning Guidelines Local Government

### ***International***

#### **The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities protects the rights of all people with a disability around the world. Australia was one of the first countries to sign the Convention when it was ratified in 2008. The convention acknowledges that people with disability have the same human rights as those without disability. This commits participating governments to ensure these rights can be exercised and that barriers are removed. The United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities supports the social model of disability. This recognises that attitudes, practices and structures are disabling and can create barriers to

people with disability from enjoying economic participation, social inclusion and equality which are not an inevitable outcome of their disability.

The Convention is guided by the following principles:

- respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices and independence of persons;
- non-discrimination;
- full and effective participation and inclusion in society;
- respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity;
- equality of opportunity;
- Accessibility;
- equality between men and women;
- respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities.

## ***National***

### **National Disability Strategy 2010-2020**

The National Disability Strategy 2010-2020, developed in partnership by the Commonwealth, State, Territory and Local Governments, sets out a national plan for improving life for Australians with disability, their families and carers, to support the commitment made to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Actions in the Implementation Plan that involve councils include improving Web Content accessibility, access to infrastructure, recreation, employment and community participation.

### **National Disability Insurance Scheme**

The National Disability Insurance Scheme is a major reform that will deliver a national system of disability support focused on the individual needs and choices of people with disability. The National Disability Insurance Scheme gives participants more choice and control over how, when and where supports are provided.

## **State**

### **Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW)**

The Disability Inclusion Act (2014) acknowledges human rights; promoting the independence and social and economic inclusion of people with disability.

The Act requires NSW government departments, local councils and some other public authorities to develop and implement a Disability Inclusion Action Plan. The plan must be consistent with the State Disability Inclusion Plan and include strategies to increase access and participation.

## **Local**

Weddin Shire Council Community Strategic Plan 2026 was created by the community and provides a long term vision for our Shire. The Community Strategic Plan informs Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan, which set out Council's role in achieving the community's vision.

Development of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan is supported by the Weddin Shire Community Strategic Plan goals as follows:

NO.	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	KEY THEMES <i>Quadruple bottom line component addressed</i>
1	<b>Collaborative wealth building (strong, diverse and resilient local economy).</b>	<b>Economic</b>
2	<b>Innovation in service delivery (healthy, safe, and educated community).</b>	<b>Social</b>
3	<b>Democratic and engaged community supported by efficient internal systems.</b>	<b>Civic Leadership</b>
4	<b>Culturally rich, vibrant and inclusive community.</b>	<b>Social</b>
5	<b>Sustainable natural, agricultural and built environments.</b>	<b>Environment</b>

Other legislation and standards informing Council's work:

- Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Commonwealth Disability (Access to Premises-Buildings) Standards 2010
- NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977
- Carers Recognition Act 2012
- Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulation 2005

### ***3. Disability snapshot in Weddin Shire***

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The Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (DIA) defines disability as:

"The long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which in interaction with various barriers may hinder the full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."

Information about disability in Weddin Shire is based on Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census data.

- 24.3% of the population, or 901 people with a disability living in Weddin Shire.
- In Weddin Shire there were 488 carers providing unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, long term illness or old age in 2011.
- According to the ABS, 80 people were receiving a Carer Payment benefit in 2014, an increase of 21 people from 2011. This payment is made to people who personally provide constant care, in the home, to someone with a severe disability, medical condition, or who is frail aged.
- 222 people were receiving a Disability Support Pension in 2014. The Disability Support Pension is provided to people who have a physical, intellectual or psychiatric condition that stops them from working or people who are permanently blind.

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Carer Payment	59	65	72	80
Disability Support Pension	245	243	240	222

#### **4. Community Consultation**

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The Weddin Shire Disability Inclusion Action Plan is based on the input provided by people with disability, their families, supporters and general community. Consultation strategies for the Disability Inclusion Action Plan included:

- On-line and paper based survey
- Internal (Council) consultations
- Formal exhibition of the DIAP

Throughout the next four years that this Plan is being implemented, Council will engage and involve people with disability to help us monitor the progress. Council will review performance annually as well as provide input on strategies for the next Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 – 25.

Under each Focus Area the Weddin Shire Council Disability Action Plan names the community outcomes that the Plan seeks to achieve. In general, these outcomes are summarized below:

1. People with disability experience positive attitudes and respectful behavior from Council staff and express the view that Council encourages these positive attitudes and behaviours within the broader community.
2. People with disability and their families and supporters have greater access to community places, buildings and events.
3. People with disability can more easily and efficiently access Council services and engage in the decision making of Council.
4. People with disability have greater access to employment opportunities with Council.

The Weddin Shire Disability Inclusion Plan 2017-21 will set the framework and priorities to implement best practice in relation to access and inclusion for people with disability. Diverse participation and contributions made by the whole community will strengthen the vision of Weddin Shire 2026. Community Strategic Plan.

### **What people told us-**

Key community responses highlighted the importance of being involved in the local community and having access to appropriate services and recreational and social opportunities.

The majority of challenges identified by participants related to mobility (in terms of navigating the built environment).

People with a disability told us what would make a difference to their community participation. We also heard from carers and family and friends of people with a disability together with community service and health workers.

### **1. Positive attitudes and behaviour**

Stereotypes and negative attitudes about disability cause barriers to full access and inclusion. Many people make assumptions based on what they think people with a disability can and cannot do, should or should not do.

Attitudes to people with a disability should not be determined by fear or ignorance and Council can play a role in promoting positive community behaviour.

Common themes and suggestions for change include:

- Increase visibility of people with a disability in Council and community publications.
- More education for the community about the broad range of disabilities.
- Higher awareness among businesses about the value of employing people with a disability.

## **2. Liveable communities**

It is important that all people can move about easily to access facilities and services and participate in community life. Pedestrian access featured highly with calls for more footpaths that are better maintained. Suggestions were also made for safety education for pedestrians and mobility aid users.

Lack of access into shops for mobility aid users was also raised.

Common themes and suggestions for change include:

- Make sure Council facilities are physically accessible.
- Playgrounds include accessible equipment.
- Footpaths are level and in good order.
- More accessible and well maintained public toilets.
- Easier access to community events.

### **3. Employment**

Meaningful employment contributes to independence and feelings of self-worth. Opportunities to work in paid and volunteer roles are important. Local employment, especially for school leavers, is important to the long term future of the community.

Common themes and suggestions for change include:

- Educate employers on the value of employing people with a disability.
- Provide more opportunities for meaningful employment for people with a disability.
- Provide accessible work places and volunteer opportunities.
- Ensure accessible recruitment practices - simple forms and language.

### **4. Service systems and processes**

Some Council information is difficult to access and is only available in print format. Service information and processes don't allow for people with a range of disabilities.

Common themes and suggestions for change included:

- Keep information simple.
- Ensure information is provided in a variety of formats.
- Provide information about the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

## 5. Action Plan - what Council will do

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### 1. - Positive attitudes and behavior

Strategic Goal	Action	Measurement	Responsibility-Business Unit	Timeframe	Community Strategic Plan Objectives
Promote positive attitudes and behaviour	Audit website to ensure that images include people with disabilities and that language is appropriate.	Website includes appropriate images and language.	Director Corporate Services (DCS)	December 2018	2, 4, 5
	Develop and facilitate Disability Awareness Training for staff (other than induction training).	Staff training completed.	All Directors	Develop July 2018 Facilitate annually	
	Utilise International Day of People with Disabilities to promote inclusion to the general community.	Positive media coverage after community event.	Director Environmental Services (DES)	Annually	

## 2 - Liveable communities

Strategic Goal	Action	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe	Community Strategic Plan Objectives
Safe and accessible community facilities	Develop / support shared pathways education campaign to reduce conflict between pedestrians, bicycles and scooters.	Decrease in pedestrian complaints.	Director Engineering	July 2019	1, 2
	Continue to provide opportunities for community connection by facilitating and promoting International Day of People with Disabilities event.	Community celebration and participant feedback.	Director Environmental Services	Annually.	4.
	Promote universal design practices to home owners, house designers, and builders.	Information provided to all applicants.	Director Environmental Services	December 2019	
	Audit activities and events run by Council for accessibility,	Accessibility issues identified and addressed.	Economic Development Officer	July 2019	
	Progress actions in Council's Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan.	Priority actions completed to timeframe and	Engineering Services	December 2019	2,5
	Review seating provision in Grenfell main street.	Seating provision reviewed by Council. Outcomes communicated to community.	Director Engineering	December 2018	
	Source funding for additional accessible unisex public toilets	Increased provision of accessible toilets	Director Engineering	December 2019	2, 4, 5
	Source funding for <i>all abilities</i> play equipment to improve playgrounds throughout the Shire.	Installation of accessible play equipment throughout	Director Engineering	December 2019	
	Develop and maintain a NDIS page on the Council Website.	NDIS Website established and maintained.	Director Corporate Services	July 2018	2
	Audit Council buildings and facilities to ensure accessibility compliance.	Audit complete with recommendations for action.	Director Environmental Services	December 2019	2, 5
	Audit Council library equipment and resources in terms of height and reach accessibility,	Library equipment and resources meet accessibility standards.	Director Corporate Services	December 2019	
	Audit Shire signage at key venues. Investigate tactile signage.	Audit completed with recommendations.	Director Engineering	December 2019	2, 5

### 3 – Employment

Strategic Goal	Action	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe	Community Strategic Plan Objectives
Enhance employment of people with a disability within Council.	Develop Councils Workforce Management Strategy to include best practice guidelines for inclusion,	Gaps in Workforce Management Strategy identified and addressed.	General Manager	December 2019	2, 3, 5
	Review recruitment processes, forms and language for accessibility.	Recruitment process, forms and language targeted and simplified.	General Manager	December 2018	
	Provide information and training for Council supervisors/ managers in order to increase their knowledge and skill.	Increased level of knowledge and skill displayed by supervisors/managers.	All Directors	July 2019	
	Continue to work with disability employment organisations and schools to identify opportunities for employment and work experience.	Number of placements filled and sustained.	All Directors	December 2019	

### 4 - Service systems and processes

Strategic Goal	Action	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe	Community Strategic Plan Objectives
	Review current communications mechanisms to ensure compliance with accessibility standards.	Councils communication mechanisms comply with accessibility standards.	Director Corporate Services	December 2019	2, 3
	Review key Council documents to develop Easy English versions	Key documents are identified and a process for producing Easy English versions implemented.	All Directors	July 2019	
	Develop plan for Website content compliance with disability standards.	Website content meets accessibility standards	Director Corporate Services	December 2019	
	Investigate Portable Counter Hearing Loops	Hearing Loops available for Council meetings and customer service areas.	Director Corporate Services	July 2019	2, 3, 5
Consult with people with a disability regarding their needs.	Review the current community consultation procedure to include a checklist on inclusive consultation.	Community Consultation includes people with disabilities.	All Directors	July 2019	

## ***6. Monitoring and Evaluation***

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### **MONITORING**

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan includes timelines to guide the completion of the actions. The process will be monitored and evaluated through the Integrated Planning and Reporting cycle.

Implementation of the Plan will be undertaken by the responsible Business Units. Each action will be monitored and reported against for the periods 1 July — 31 December and 1 January— 30 June of each year.

The Director of Environmental Services will monitor the overall implementation of the Plan and the integration of its actions into Council's new Delivery Program and annual Operational Plan.

### **REPORTING**

Outcomes and achievements will be reported in Council's Annual Report

### **REVIEW**

The Plan will be reviewed annually in line with the Integrated Planning and Reporting cycle.

An evaluation and review of the Plan will be conducted at the end of its term.

## ***7. Acknowledgement***

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Council would like to thank the many community members who provided their views and ideas for positive change.