

Nillumbik Shire Council

Disability Action Plan

2020-2024





Exclusion hurts, inclusion hurts no one

The exhibition, 'Better Together', was named after artwork commissioned by Council for International Day of People with Disability, created by a group of 30 artists from St John of God Accord, Greensborough Campus.

If you require the 2020-2024 Disability Action Plan in Easy English or an alternative format, email inclusion@nillumbik.vic.gov.au or phone 9433 3111. If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment, please contact us through the National Relay Service on 13 36 77.

Acknowledgement

Nillumbik Shire Council recognises and appreciates the time and effort that community members, community organisations, disability specific organisations and various committees have taken to contribute to the development of this Action Plan. Nillumbik Shire Council will continue to work with and for the community while striving to continuously improve our services, removing barriers and creating positive change.

Acknowledgement of traditional owners

Nillumbik Shire Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri people who are the Traditional Custodians of Land known today as Nillumbik. We pay respect to the Elders both past and present and extend that respect to other Indigenous Australians.

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Steve enjoying market day at St John of God Accord Greensborough Campus

1. Council's Commitment to the Disability Action Plan (DAP)

The Disability Action Plan 2020-2024 is an important tool for Council to demonstrate leadership at a local level, measure our success and drive the change we aim to see.

It reflects the need for all areas of Council to collectively work together in a coordinated manner to improve access and promote inclusion.

It's critical for all levels of government and each one of us to play a role in not only breaking down barriers but to be welcoming and inclusive in all that we do. As a society, we are beginning to see a shift in the way people with disability are supported.

This is demonstrated through the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), the National Disability Strategy and the Victorian State Disability Plan, yet we still have a way to go to ensure people with disability can live with dignity and autonomy.

Whether it be access to premises, services, programs, information, employment processes or systems relating to Council, we want to ensure everyone, regardless of ability can participate in our community.

2. Why prepare a DAP?

A DAP helps reduce discrimination and create more opportunities for people with disability to participate in all aspects of community life.

Other community members who may have difficulty using services might also benefit from a DAP, whether you're an older person, a carer or a parent with a pram, or have a short-term injury or health condition.

People with disability can be treated unfairly based on other aspects of their identity, not just their disability. For instance, discrimination also affects young people, older people, indigenous people, people from culturally diverse backgrounds (including those from refugee backgrounds) and the LGBTI community.

According to the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers Australia: Summary of Findings, 2018, 1 in 5 people (or 11,494 people) in Nillumbik are estimated to have disability. This number is forecast to rise significantly given Nillumbik's population is ageing. By 2026, the number of residents over 65 will be 12,171 – a 67% increase from 2016.

Common barriers to participation that a DAP addresses:

- Physical access to buildings
- Attitudinal barriers
- Access to information
- Access to community support services and programs
- Access to employment.

Currently one in two (49.6%) people aged 65 years and over have a disability (Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2018, updated 24 October 2019)

The Eltham Parkinson's Support Group, facilitated by healthAbility



Related policy frameworks

The implementation of this DAP meets our obligation under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA), the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 and supports the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006.

In addition, we have a positive duty under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 to have policies and procedures in place that remove barriers to employment and reduce discrimination.

The definition of “disability” in the DDA includes:

- Physical
- Intellectual
- Psychiatric
- Neurological
- Cognitive or sensory (a hearing or vision impairment)
- Learning difficulties
- Physical disfigurement
- Immunological (disease-causing organisms etc.).

This broad definition means that everyone with a disability is protected. The DDA supports the principle that people with disability have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community. In addition to broad policy frameworks, the DAP enables us to create local response to local needs. We’re also working together and leveraging off other Council plans such as the overarching Council Plan, Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan, Ageing Well in Nillumbik Action Plan, Nillumbik Arts and Culture Plan and Council’s Access, Equity and Inclusion Statement and Gender Equity Statement.

By aligning actions across these plans, we are able to further strengthen our commitment and ability to embed inclusion in every aspect of Council activity.

Mary and Barbara enjoying the Art Market at St John of Accord



Graffiti artist Diego creates a mural at the Banyule Nillumbik Tech School as part of a Council grant sponsored event to celebrate International Day of People with Disability

3. Setting the scene for DAP consultation in Nillumbik

Nillumbik Shire Council is an interface municipality in the outer north east of Melbourne.

The Shire of Nillumbik covers an area of 432 square kilometres with major urban areas in the south at Eltham, Diamond Creek and Hurstbridge. The northern end of the municipality is described as rural and includes the Kinglake National Park.

The semi-rural nature of the municipality means that some Nillumbik residents face challenges in relation to lack of community infrastructure, limited employment and restricted access to services.

Limited public transport in the rural fringe also inhibits those unable to use private cars from accessing services and participating in activities.

As part of the DAP development, Council’s Inclusion Unit were mindful of the above mentioned barriers and therefore created a varied and thorough outreach program throughout 2019 to maximise opportunities for participation in the consultation process.

3.1. Phase one of consultation

Phase one of consultation incorporated a travelling art exhibition, 'Better Together', named after a piece of artwork created by local artists with disability.

'Better Together' travelled across eight locations in Nillumbik, including local libraries, community centres, leisure centres and businesses, with a community launch event at each venue. The community was invited to attend and fill in a DAP feedback postcard with the opportunity to talk to a member of the Inclusion Unit.

Pop-up consultation sessions were also held across the Shire at disability service providers, community hubs, local libraries, leisure centres, festivals and events.

Phase one of consultation concluded:

- An estimated 32,000 people viewing the Better Together exhibitions
- 223 community members and 15 local service providers giving feedback via postcards or more in depth surveys and interviews.



Cara taking a break in the garden at St John of God Accord in Greensborough



3.2. Key DAP Priorities emerging from phase one consultation:

- **Community Inclusion** - Promote disability awareness and support for social groups, peer support groups and inclusive social activities.
- **Accessible Communication** - Promote inclusion and accessibility across all printed and digital media, including wayfinding signage and communication boards.
- **Physical Access**
 - More designated accessible parking, and improvements to existing access.
 - More footpaths, and improvements to existing infrastructure, particularly around bus stops and public transport hubs.
 - Advocacy for more public transport options including improved access to Council's Community Transport Program for people with disability.
 - Advocacy for better access to shops, cafes, businesses and to local festivals and events for people with reduced mobility.
 - More accessible trails and play spaces.
 - Improved access to leisure and recreation facilities.
 - Consider sensory audits as well as physical access.
- **Participation**
 - Promote opportunities for meaningful training, work and volunteer roles for people with disability.
 - Review recruitment processes at Council to ensure they are equitable.
- **NDIS and Disability Services**
 - Advocate for more carer support.
 - Support the development of a community registry for community groups and services.
 - Advocate for more outreach services for people with disability across the Shire.
- **Housing**
 - Advocacy for smaller, accessible housing so older people and people with disability can downsize and stay in Nillumbik near social and support networks.
 - Advocacy for more supported/ independent accommodation for people with disability, including those not eligible for the NDIS.

The Inclusion Unit created an **Easy English survey** around these key themes to ensure the process was inclusive of people with cognitive or intellectual disability. The survey was made available to the community on the Participate Nillumbik website, as well as in hard copy, and distributed to local disability and community health service providers. Seven 'Coffee and Chat' drop in sessions were held at community hubs and recreation centres across the Shire to refine DAP actions, based on the priorities identified in the first round of consultation.

In addition to the drop in sessions, a workshop was held at Melbourne Polytechnic Greensborough Campus, where participants with disability, staff from Araluen Primed and members of the Nillumbik Inclusion Advisory Committee gave extended feedback on the key themes and proposed actions for the DAP.

3.3. Phase two of consultation concluded with:

- 25 people with disability, disability support workers, NDIS Local Area Coordinators and the Nillumbik Inclusion Advisory members giving in depth feedback around the key themes at a Melbourne Polytechnic DAP workshop.
- The Participate Nillumbik online survey generating 1059 page views and 386 contributions from 78 community members.

A total of 336 community members provided feedback and suggested actions for the Disability Action Plan 2020-2024.

Breakdown of respondents:

- 50% people with disability
- 30% carers
- 48% aged 26-54
- 11% aged 55-64
- 4% aged under 25
- 32% aged over 65

Shayla and her mum, Cheryl, enjoying a bike ride on the Diamond Creek Trail where Victoria's first storage facility for adaptive bikes has been built



Chris heading out on the Diamond Creek Trail

4. Council's priorities for action

The key priorities to emerge from the consultation process are grouped under the four key goal areas, defined as part of our responsibility under the *Victorian Disability Act 2006*:

- Reducing barriers to people with disability accessing Council goods, services and facilities.
- Reducing barriers to people with disability obtaining and maintaining employment.
- Promoting inclusion and participation in the community.
- Achieving tangible changes in attitude and practices that discriminate against people with disability.

5. DAP Actions

The DAP actions have been categorised as:

Ongoing: Embedded as business as usual

ST: Short term – (Year 1 to 2)

MT: Medium term – (Year 2 to 3)

LT: Long term – (Year 3 to 4 plus)

In assigning priorities for action, the following have been considered:

- The frequency with which the issue has been raised through the consultation process.
- Key priorities identified in existing Nillumbik planning documents and policies.
- The relationship and relevance to other outcome areas (e.g. infrastructure) that may influence one or more particular actions.
- The existence of current or future plans for a service area, program or facility that are compatible with the action.

Leigh and David making great coffee and learning skills for future employment at Araluen's Chancez Café, Greensborough



5.1. Reducing barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities

	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
5.1.1	Advocate for more supported/independent accommodation for people with disability, including those not eligible for NDIS.	Strategic Planning, Community Inclusion, Community Support Services	ST - MT
5.1.2	Identify Council's role in supporting affordable and accessible housing in the Shire as part of the Nillumbik Housing Strategy, with reference to national and state government housing policy frameworks. Ensure consideration of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing diversity • Housing requirements for people with disability (including possible rezoning of suitable areas for development) • Housing requirements for older people. 	Strategic Planning, Community Inclusion	ST
5.1.4	Provide ongoing disability awareness training for Infrastructure and Recreation and Leisure staff to assist their understanding of the general responsibilities, principles and issues relating to accessible and inclusive environments, facilities and services.	Infrastructure Recreation and Leisure	Ongoing
5.1.5	Advocate for more public and community transport options for people with disability.	Community Support Services, Community Inclusion	ST - MT
5.1.6	Advocate to extend the social activity programs currently offered to older residents in Nillumbik as part of the Community Transport and Social Connections programs to include people with disability.	Community Support Services, Community Transport	MT
5.1.7	Continue to maintain and, where appropriate, advocate to increase designated accessible parking across the Shire.	Infrastructure, Community Safety, Community Inclusion, Community Support Services	Ongoing
5.1.8	Ensure ongoing patrols address illegal use of designated accessible parking bays.	Community Safety	Ongoing
5.1.9	Ensure ongoing patrols address barriers around shopping precincts to enable the maintenance of a continuous accessible path of travel along shopfronts to assist ease of movement for people with disability, particularly people with vision impairment.	Community Safety	Ongoing

	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
5.1.10	Continue to maintain and where appropriate upgrade disability access to Council owned facilities across the Shire.	Infrastructure, Community Inclusion	Ongoing
5.1.11	Advocate to further develop a Community Infrastructure Framework to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish agreed social, economic, and geographical guidelines to determine infrastructure, service levels and service priorities across the Shire. Ensure a universal access lens is applied to all areas of council activity working towards the elimination of barriers to equitable access. 	Community Support Services, Infrastructure, Community Inclusion	MT - LT
5.1.12	Engage appropriately experienced and accredited access consultants when planning and developing all major projects and implement Universal Design principles to increase equitable access and inclusion for all users. Access assessments will be undertaken by an independent access consultant to provide written advice at each key project review point including concept design, draft documentation, final documentation and post construction.	Community Inclusion, Project Owners, Major Projects	Ongoing
5.1.13	Advocate to ensure accessibility is considered as part of development, redevelopment and maintenance, including but not limited to footpaths, playgrounds, open spaces, trails, overhanging branches, vegetation, wayfinding, lighting, parking, seating, crossings and continuous accessible paths of travel.	Infrastructure, Community Inclusion, Environment Services	Ongoing
5.1.14	Ensure key staff involved in creating document templates, email templates and creative assets complete formal training to develop their knowledge of accessibility.	Communications and Engagement	ST - MT
5.1.15	Ensure all communications and marketing material meets accessibility requirements for people with disability.	Communications and Engagement	ST - MT
5.1.16	As part of implementation of the Customer First Strategy 2019-2022, ensure customer services are accessible (phone, email and website - including online service requests) and undertake usability testing with people with disability using various adaptive strategies.	Customer Experience	MT

	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
5.1.17	Implement Vision Australia's Access Implementation Plan to improve accessibility of existing and new digital products and services.	Communications and Engagement	ST - LT
5.1.18	Review and update the Communication Style Guide for staff to ensure it is accessible and inclusive and contains clear guidance for the creation of accessible digital and print communications.	Communications and Engagement, Community Inclusion	ST - MT
5.1.19	Ensure representation of Nillumbik's diverse community (e.g. people with disability, cultural diversity) in communications imagery.	All, Communications and Engagement	Ongoing
5.1.20	Review the Volunteer Induction resources to ensure all communications, forms, processes and procedures are as inclusive and accessible as possible.	Community Inclusion and Volunteer Development	ST
5.1.21	Promote the provision of information in alternative formats upon request at Council facilities and at Yarra Plenty Regional Libraries in Nillumbik. Examples include Braille, Easy English and large print.	All, Customer Experience, Community Services	Ongoing
5.1.22	Investigate options to make all Council assets, including playgrounds and trails more accessible, ensuring community engagement with people with disability as part of community consultation. Note: Wherever possible, access assessments are to be undertaken by independent accredited access consultant, with experience in designing inclusive public facilities and play spaces. Written advice to Council is to be provided at each key project review point; including concept design, draft documentation, final documentation and post construction.	Recreation and Leisure, Major Projects, Community Inclusion	ST - MT
5.1.23	Work with disability support services and community and volunteer groups to promote accessible emergency preparedness resources to people with disability, carers and families.	Emergency Management, Community Inclusion and Volunteer Development, Community Support Services	MT
5.1.24	Explore opportunities to provide a portable Marveloo (toilet facilities including ceiling hoist and an adult-sized change table) so people with severe disabilities can participate in community events.	Community Inclusion, Events	ST - MT

5.2. Reducing barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment

	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
5.2.1	Review Council employment policies, practices and procedures to ensure they are accessible and inclusive.	Human Resources, Community Inclusion	ST
5.2.2	Promote Nillumbik Shire Council as an employer of choice for people with disability.	Human Resources, Community Inclusion	ST - MT
5.2.3	Work with local businesses and Disability Employment Services to support initiatives that promote employment for people with disability.	Community Inclusion, Economic Development and Tourism	MT
5.2.4	Design and pilot a new inclusive work experience program in partnership with local high schools, to provide a structured and positive work experience opportunity for young people with disability.	Human Resources, Community Inclusion	ST
5.2.5	Develop a work experience program for adults with disability.	Human Resources, Community Inclusion	ST - MT
5.2.6	Provide disability awareness training for Council staff around inclusive recruitment and employment practices.	All, Human Resources, Community Inclusion	ST
5.2.7	Support Council's internal Volunteer Program Managers to create a Community of Practice for inclusive volunteer management.	Community Inclusion and Volunteer Development	MT
5.2.8	Work across Council to increase opportunities for people with disability to participate as volunteers in Council activities.	All, Community Inclusion and Volunteer Development	ST - MT
5.2.9	Ensure that volunteers with disability and inclusive volunteering programs are recognised at the annual Volunteer Appreciation Event.	Community Inclusion and Volunteer Development	ST
5.2.10	Partner with the Brotherhood of St Laurence Local Area Coordination team for the National Disability Insurance Scheme to support Living and Learning Nillumbik to expand skill development, learning and social opportunities for people with disability.	Community Inclusion, Living and Learning Nillumbik	ST - MT
5.2.11	Promote the use of social procurement and social enterprises which support employment and training for people with disability, as part of Council's Corporate Social Responsibility as outlined in Council's Procurement Policy.	All, Procurement, Economic Development and Tourism	Ongoing

5.3. Promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability

	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
5.3.1	Promote Nillumbik's commitment to the Disability Action Plan by registering it with the Australian Human Rights Commission.	Community Inclusion	ST
5.3.2	Ensure Council events are as accessible and inclusive as possible for all to participate and enjoy.	Events, All	Ongoing
5.3.3	Develop the A-Z Event Planning Guide to support staff and community, while outlining access and inclusion requirements including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated space for people using mobility aids Unisex accessible toilet facilities Microphones and assistive listening services to assist people with hearing impairment Presentation materials, including PowerPoint presentations, that are readily readable and accessible for all attendees. 	Events, Community Inclusion, Youth and Community Partnerships, Community Support Services	ST - MT
5.3.4	Support the development of a Nillumbik Community Registry for community groups and services.	Community Support Services	ST
5.3.5	Partner with the local community to promote and deliver annual International Day of People with Disability grants. Create opportunities for Council to support local groups and services, and invite the wider community to be aware of the great work and achievements of local disability groups and people with disability.	Community Services	Ongoing
5.3.6	Identify new opportunities for people with disability, carers and families to engage with Council and provide suggestions and feedback.	Community Inclusion, Major Projects, Governance, Communications and Engagement	MT
5.3.7	Develop access and inclusion criteria as part of Council's grant application process and provide support as required to applicants.	Youth and Community Partnerships Community Inclusion	ST
5.3.8	Profile and promote local events, programs and opportunities of interest and benefit to people with disability, their carers and disability services providers via an Inclusion newsletter (currently 250+ members) as part of the Nillumbik Inclusion Network.	Community Inclusion	Ongoing

	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
5.3.9	Actively aim to increase membership of the Nillumbik Inclusion Network and the reach of the 'Better Together' Inclusion Newsletter.	Community Inclusion	ST - MT
5.3.10	Advocate and partner with local organisations to provide more opportunities for activities and social connection for people with disability, including people with anxiety and mental health issues, to address loneliness and isolation.	Community Inclusion, Living and Learning Nillumbik, Youth and Community Partnerships, Community Support Services	Ongoing
5.3.11	Work with Council's Positive Ageing Officer to promote carer support groups in Nillumbik and partner on projects that promote inclusion.	Community Support Services, Community Inclusion	Ongoing
5.3.12	Provide opportunities for local artists and performers with disability to celebrate diversity and inclusion through participation in community arts.	Arts and Cultural Development, Community Inclusion	Ongoing
5.3.13	Continue to support people with disability to access mainstream activities and reduce barriers to community participation. E.g. Work with local businesses to provide an accessible power point so people who use electric wheelchairs and scooters can recharge their battery while out and about.	Community Inclusion, Community Support Services	Ongoing
5.3.14	Maintain Council's Communication Access Symbol accreditation by providing training for frontline staff to support people with communication difficulties to access Council information or services.	Customer Experience, Community Inclusion	ST
5.3.15	Ensure the four key DAP goal areas (required under the Victorian Disability Act 2006) inform the 2021-2025 Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan monitoring and evaluation framework.	Community Inclusion, Social Planning and Policy	ST
5.3.16	Create opportunities through the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan to ensure anyone who lives, works or plays in Nillumbik can live a healthier life regardless of ethnicity, disability, age, gender or income.	Community Support Services, Health and Wellbeing Internal Working Group, Recreation and Leisure	Ongoing
5.3.17	Create opportunities through the Lifetime Play Strategy and Recreation Strategy to improve access and inclusion for people with disability.	Recreation and Leisure	Ongoing
5.3.18	Create sensory friendly activities such as the Sensory Friendly Tours at Edendale Community Farm.	Edendale Community Farm, Community Inclusion	Ongoing

5.4. Achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices that discriminate against persons with a disability

	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
5.4.1	Create training opportunities and resources to raise disability awareness and support staff to be more inclusive of people with disability.	Community Inclusion, Human Resources	ST - MT
5.4.2	Ensure the Major Leisure Facilities Contract requires the successful contractor to develop and continually implement a Disability Action Plan so its service is responsive to the needs of people with disability across all five sites (Eltham Leisure Centre, Community Bank Stadium, Diamond Creek Outdoor Pool, Diamond Creek Community Centre, and Diamond Valley Sports and Fitness Centre).	Recreation and Leisure, Community Inclusion	ST
5.4.3	Promote the 'Accessible Tourism - It's your business' Toolkit developed by Business Victoria and the Department of Health and Human Services Office for Disability on the Council website and at Council supported business related events. This will support local businesses to understand the business model behind welcoming people with disability, and that sometimes simple changes can make their businesses disability friendly.	Community Inclusion, Economic Development and Tourism	ST
5.4.4	Deliver Unconscious Bias Workshops for all staff in order to increase awareness and knowledge of unconscious bias and to identify actions and procedures to embed inclusion within day to day work.	Community Inclusion, Human Resources, Access, Equity and Inclusion Internal Reference group	ST
5.4.5	Provide staff training to implement the Access, Equity and Inclusion Statement, promoting human rights and equality and outlining our responsibility to eliminate discrimination and sexual harassment under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010.	Human Resources	Ongoing
5.4.6	Run annual Women with Disabilities Preventing Violence Against Women Workshops to support local prevention initiatives.	Community Support Services, Community Inclusion	ST - MT

**Disability Action Plan 2020-2024 was endorsed by
Council on Tuesday 12 May 2020.**

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