

**Nillumbik Shire Council
Draft Disability Action Plan**

2020-2024

Table of Contents

- Acknowledgement**..... 4
- 1 Council’s Commitment to the Disability Action Plan (DAP)**..... 4
- 2 Why prepare a DAP?**..... 5
- 3 Setting the scene for DAP consultation in Nillumbik**..... 8
 - 3.1 Key DAP Priorities emerging from Phase 1 consultation:**..... 10
 - 3.2 Phase 2 of the consultation concluded with:**..... 12
- 4 Council’s priorities for action** 13
- 5 DAP Actions** 15
 - 5.1 Reducing barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities**..... 15
 - 5.2 Reducing barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment**..... 19
 - 5.3 Promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability** 21
 - 5.4 Achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices that discriminate against persons with a disability**..... 23

DRAFT



The exhibition, 'Better Together', was named after a picture 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.

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.

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

The 2020-2024 DAP 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 indeed, each and every one of us to play a role in not only breaking down barriers but to be welcoming and inclusive in all that we do, every day.

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, communication, employment processes or systems relating to Council, we want to ensure everyone, regardless of ability can participate in our community.

Exclusion hurts, inclusion hurts no one...



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

2 Why prepare a DAP?

A DAP helps reduce discrimination and increase access for people with disability to everyday services. 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 growing older. By 2026, the number of residents over 65 will be 12,171 – a 67 per cent increase from 2016.



The Eltham Parkinson's Support Group, facilitated by healthAbility

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)

Common barriers to participation that a DAP addresses:

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

Other 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 means we can create a 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, 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.



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. It is a large area (435 sq. km) 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. Inadequate 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.

Phase 1 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 were invited to drop in and fill in a DAP feedback postcard, and 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.



Inclusion is everyone's business – Eltham residents Celine and Ye Ling fill out DAP feedback postcards at the Eltham Festival Sensory Friendly Chill Out Zone.

Phase 1 of consultation concluded with:

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

3.1 Key DAP Priorities emerging from Phase 1 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
 - More footpaths, and improvement to existing, 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 and 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.

3.2 Phase 2 of the consultation concluded with:

- 25 people with disability, disability support workers, NDIS Local Area Coordinators and the Nillumbik Inclusion Advisory gave 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.

Breakdown of respondents:

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

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



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

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 and
- Achieving tangible changes in attitude and practices that discriminate against people with disability

Unless identified as ongoing, 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

5 DAP Actions

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

	Responsibility	Action	Timeline
5.1.1	Strategic Planning, Community Inclusion	<p>Advocate for more supported/independent accommodation for people with disability, including those not eligible for NDIS.</p> <p>Advocate for smaller, accessible housing so older people and people with disability can downsize and stay in Nillumbik near social and support networks.</p>	ST to MT
5.1.2	Strategic Planning, Infrastructure	Develop a policy that incentivises developers to provide affordable and accessible housing.	MT
5.1.3	Aged and Disability Services, Community Inclusion	Advocate for more public transport options and more community transport for people with disability.	ST to MT
5.1.4	Aged and Disability Services, Community Transport	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.	MT
5.1.5	Community Safety, Infrastructure	Continue to maintain and advocate to increase designated accessible parking across the Shire.	Ongoing
5.1.6	Community Safety	Ensure ongoing patrols address illegal use of these designated accessible parking bays.	Ongoing
5.1.7	Community Inclusion, Communications, Youth and Community Partnerships	Ensure representation of Nillumbik's diverse community (e.g. people with disability, cultural diversity) in communications imagery.	ST to MT
5.1.8	Infrastructure Community Inclusion	Implement Council's Disability Access Works Plan. Considerations in allocating priorities to include relevant disability legislation and building codes, occupational health and safety risk, level of community and public use and the impact of other related projects or works.	MT to LT

	Responsibility	Action	Timeline
5.1.9	Community Inclusion, Infrastructure Business Transformation and Performance	Further advocate for a Community Infrastructure Framework and outreach services to respond to community needs proactively and flexibly – taking into account evolving demographic profiles, consumer preferences, technologies and service delivery models.	MT to LT
5.1.10	Community Inclusion, Project Owners, Major Projects	Engage appropriately experienced access consultants when planning and developing all major projects. 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.	Ongoing
5.1.11	Infrastructure Community Inclusion	Advocate to ensure accessibility is considered as part of development, redevelopment and maintenance, including but not limited to footpaths, overhanging branches, vegetation, wayfinding, lighting, parking, seating, crossings and continuous accessible paths of travel.	Ongoing
5.1.12	Infrastructure Community Inclusion	Engage appropriately experienced access consultants to conduct audits of transport hubs, major shopping precincts, tourism and recreation areas and other community facilities to ensure continuous accessible paths of travel.	LT
5.1.13	Communications	Ensure all Communications and Marketing material meets accessibility requirements for people with disability.	ST to MT
5.1.14	Communications	Ensure key staff involved in creating document templates, email templates and creative assets complete formal training to develop their knowledge of accessibility. Specific focus areas to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing and text structure, images, video and audio, colour contrast, and providing captions and text transcripts for video and audio. • Accessible documents for PDF (forms and any relevant reports to ensure they are tagged) and Word. 	ST to MT
5.1.15	Communications	Undertake usability testing with people with disability using various adaptive strategies to assess accessibility of the Council website.	MT

	Responsibility	Action	Timeline
5.1.16	Communications	Implement Vision Australia's Access Implementation Plan to improve accessibility of existing and new digital products and services.	ST to LT
5.1.17	Communications, Community Inclusion, All	Review and update the Communication Style Guide and or any other writing guides for staff to ensure it is accessible and inclusive.	ST to MT
5.1.18	All, Community Inclusion	Facilitate the provision of information in alternative formats, upon request. Examples include Braille, Easy English and large print	Ongoing
5.1.19	Manager Communities	Work with YPRL in Nillumbik to ensure the provision of information in alternative formats upon request, including Braille and Easy English	ST
5.1.20	Leisure, Major Projects Community Inclusion	Investigate options to make playgrounds more accessible, including community engagement with people with disability as part of community consultation. Note: wherever possible, access assessments are to be undertaken by an independent 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.	ST to MT
5.1.21	Emergency Management, Community Services Community Inclusion and Volunteer Development	Work with disability support services and community and volunteer groups to promote accessible emergency preparedness resources to people with disability, carers and families.	MT

	Responsibility	Action	Timeline
5.1.22	Customer Experience	As part of implementation of the Customer First Strategy 2019-2022, ensure the Council customer experience review, customer engagement surveys and journey mapping will include all customer types, age groupings, and people with a range of disabilities.	ST to MT
5.1.23	Business Transformation and Performance, Community Inclusion	As part of the Nillumbik Housing Strategy, advocate for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing diversity requirements • Housing requirements for people with disability • Housing requirements for older people • Affordable Housing Needs Assessment • Consideration of different growth scenarios • Review of planning approvals. 	ST
5.1.24	HR, Community Inclusion, Internal Access, Equity and Inclusion Internal Reference Group	Implement the Access, Equity and Inclusion Statement as a means to work together better across the organisation to respect human rights and celebrate diversity and profile the importance of inclusion.	ST
5.1.25	Community Inclusion and Volunteer Development	Review the Volunteer Induction program to ensure all material, processes and procedures are as inclusive and accessible as possible.	ST

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

	Responsibility	Action	Timeline
5.2.1	HR, Community Inclusion	Review Council employment policies, practices and procedures to ensure they are accessible and inclusive	ST
5.2.2	HR, Community Inclusion	Promote Nillumbik Shire Council as an employer of choice for people with disability	ST to MT
5.2.3	HR, Community Inclusion	Develop a work experience program for adults with disability	ST to MT
5.2.4	All, Community Inclusion	Provide disability awareness training for Council staff around inclusive recruitment and employment practices.	ST
5.2.5	Community Inclusion	Support Council's internal Volunteer Program Managers to create a Community of Practice for inclusive volunteer management.	ST
5.2.6	All, Community Inclusion	Work across Council to increase opportunities for people with disability to participate as volunteers in Council activities.	ST to MT
5.2.7	Community Inclusion	Ensure that volunteers with disability and inclusive volunteering programs are recognised at the annual Volunteer Appreciation Event.	ST
5.2.8	Community Inclusion, Living and Learning Nillumbik	Partner with the Brotherhood of St Laurence (National Disability Insurance Scheme) Local Area Coordination team to support Living and Learning Nillumbik to expand skill development, learning and social opportunities for people with disability.	ST to MT
5.2.9	All, Procurement	Promote social enterprises and organisations which support employment of people with disability, in accordance with Council's commitment to Social Procurement as outlined in Council's Procurement Policy.	ST to MT

	Responsibility	Action	Timeline
5.2.10	All, Procurement	Support the use of social procurement and social enterprises wherever possible across Council as part of Council's Corporate Social Responsibility as outlined in Council's Procurement Policy.	Ongoing
5.2.11	HR, Community Inclusion	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.	ST

DRAFT

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

	Responsibility	Action	Timeline
5.3.1	Events, Community Inclusion Youth and Community Partnerships	Ensure Council events are as accessible and inclusive as possible for all to participate and enjoy.	ST to MT
5.3.2	Events, Community Inclusion	Develop the A-Z Event Planning Guide to support staff and community, while outlining access and inclusion requirements.	ST
5.3.3	Youth and Community Partnerships, Community Inclusion Positive Ageing, Community Services	Support the development of a community registry for community groups and services.	ST
5.3.4	All, Community Inclusion, Community Inclusion Advisory Committee	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.	Ongoing
5.3.5	Community Inclusion Advisory Committee Community Inclusion Major Projects Governance, Communications and Engagement	Identify new opportunities for people with disability, carers and families to engage with Council, provide feedback and express ideas, needs and opportunities.	MT
5.3.6	Youth and Community Partnerships Community Inclusion	Develop access and inclusion criteria as part of Council's grant application process and provide support as required to applicants.	ST
5.3.7	Community Inclusion	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.	Ongoing

	Responsibility	Action	Timeline
5.3.8	Community Inclusion	Actively aim to increase membership of the Nillumbik Inclusion Network and the reach of the “Better Together” Inclusion Newsletter.	ST to MT
5.3.9	Community Inclusion, Living and Learning Nillumbik	Advocate and partner with local organisations to provide more inclusive social events for people with disability, including anxiety and mental health issues, to address loneliness and isolation.	Ongoing
5.3.10	Community and Planning, Community Inclusion	Work with Council’s Positive Ageing Officer to promote carer support groups in Nillumbik and partner on projects that promote inclusion.	ST to MT
5.3.11	Arts and Cultural Development, Community Inclusion,	Provide opportunities for local artists and performers with disability to celebrate diversity and inclusion through participation in community arts.	Ongoing
5.3.12	Community Inclusion	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.	Ongoing
5.3.13	Customer Experience, Community Inclusion	Maintain Council’s Communication Access Symbol re-accreditation by providing training for frontline staff to support people with communication difficulties to access Council information or services.	ST
5.3.14	Youth and Community Partnerships, Community Inclusion, Health and Wellbeing Internal Working Group	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 to live, work, volunteer or play in Nillumbik.	MT to LT

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

	Responsibility	Action	Timeline
5.4.1	Community Inclusion, HR	Create training opportunities and resources to raise disability awareness and support staff to be more inclusive of people with disability.	ST to MT
5.4.2	Recreation and Leisure, Community Inclusion	Ensure the Major Leisure Facilities Contract (with the view to having one contractor manage and operate these services on behalf of Council) requires the successful contractor to develop 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).	ST
5.4.3	Community Inclusion, Economic Development and Tourism	Promote the 'Accessible Tourism - It's your business' Toolkit developed by Business Victoria and the Department of Health and Human Services Office for Disability. This will support new and existing local businesses to understand the business model behind welcoming people with disability, and that sometimes simple changes can make their businesses disability friendly.	ST
5.4.4	Community Inclusion HR, Access, Equity and Inclusion Internal Reference group	Deliver Unconscious Bias Workshops for all staff in order to increase awareness and knowledge of unconscious bias, identify attitudes, processes and procedures and actions to embed inclusion within day to day work.	ST
5.4.5	Community Services, Community Inclusion	Run annual Women with Disabilities Preventing Violence Against Women Workshops to support local prevention initiatives.	ST to MT

DRAFT