

Shire of Bruce Rock

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2017 - 2021



- This DAIP furthers the principles and objectives of the *Western Australian Disability Services Act 1993* and is a document that explains the Shire's commitment to addressing the issues that prevent access to services, facilities and events;
- With this document the shire has provided a timetable to address the issues which are then reported annually to the Disability Services Commission;
- This DAIP Meets the seven Standards in Schedule 2 of the Disability Services Regulations 2004;
- Adopted by the Shire of Bruce Rock on 19 October 2017
- This is also available in electronic format on Council's website;
www.brucerock.wa.gov.au/our_council/publication
- This plan is also available upon request in alternative formats such as in standard or large print, on the Shires website, in Braille and electronically by email and in audio format on CD.

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 The Shire of Bruce Rock

The Shire of Bruce Rock of Bruce Rock is located in the Central East Region of Western Australia. The Shire covers 2772km². Bruce Rock is located 244km east of Perth.

The Shire has a population of 1,100, of which the town population is approximately 780, a rural population of 300 and 20 from the townsites of Ardath, Babakin and Shackleton.

There are 561 Dwellings within Bruce Rock.

Major Industries include steel fabrication, machinery manufacturing, wheat, sheep, pigs and granite (bluestone) quarry mining.

1.2 Functions, facilities and services (both in-house and contracted) provided by the Shire of Bruce Rock

The Shire of Bruce Rock provides:

Services to property: Construction and maintenance of Shire-owned buildings, roads, footpaths, cycle facilities and walk trails; land drainage and development; waste collection and disposal; litter control and street cleaning; planting and caring for street trees; street lighting and bushfire control.

Services to the community including: Provision and maintenance of playing areas and reserves and management of Recreation Centre; library and information services; environmental health services; senior citizen care and health education.

Regulatory services including: Planning of roads and subdivisions of in accordance with Local Planning Scheme; building approvals for construction, additions and alterations, environmental health and ranger services, including enforcement of local laws, dog, litter and parking control.

General Administration: The provision of general information to the public and lodging of complaints and payments of rates.

Processes of government including: Ordinary and Special Council and committee meetings, electors meetings and election of Council members.

1.3 People with disability in the Shire of Bruce Rock

The Australian Bureau of Statistics Survey of Disability Ageing and Carers (2015) estimated that 18.3% of Australians identify themselves as having some form of disability. It is estimated therefore that there are around 165 persons with disability living within the Shire. The influx of retirees will increase this number and seasonal arrival of tourists, including tourists with a disability, must be considered.

1.4 Planning for better access

The Western Australian Disability Services Act requires all Local Governments to develop and implement a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) to ensure that people with disability have equal access to facilities and services.

Other legislation underpinning access and inclusion includes the Western Australia Equal Opportunity Act (1984) and the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA), both of which make discrimination on the basis of a person's disability unlawful.

1.5 Progress since 1995

The Shire of Bruce Rock is committed to facilitating the inclusion of people with disability through the improvement of access to its information and facilities and services. Towards this goal, the Shire has adopted its first Disability Services Plan in 1995 to address the access barriers within the community.

In compiling the Disability Services Plan in 1995, a number of facilities were recognised as already having been put in place by the Shire to assist people with disability who either reside in or visit the Shire. These facilities include major upgrading of Johnson Street to provide disabled access to all shops, new ablution facilities and entries to the Memorial Swimming Pool, improving access to the amphitheatre and the provision of additional concrete footpath surfaces as part of the Townscape Plan.

Since the adoption of the initial Disability Services Plan, the Shire has implemented a number of works Improvements and programs to improve disability access within the Shire of Bruce Rock . The following achievements were made during the 2012-2017 DAIP and These are as follows:

Improvement of existing functions, facilities and services to meet the needs of people with disability

- Talking books positioned in a clearly-designated and easily-accessible section of the library – the library itself has been made more accessible.
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- Building & Planning approval conditions continue to assist in increasing disability access awareness of developers, and the introduction of disabled access to all newly-constructed or altered public buildings.
- Accessible wheelchair entrance and automatic entry doors to the administration Building

- Wheelchair friendly counter installed at the administration building
- Doorway widened to CEO/ Senior Management Office area at the administration building
- Accessible toilet, improved walkways for accessibility, and doors widened at the Shire Depot.
- Improved footpath network throughout the town
- Accessible entrance to new sporting facilities
- Installation of electronic chair to access the hydrotherapy pool
- Completion of accessible short-term accommodation chalet at the caravan park

Improved access to community buildings and facilities

- Provision of a heated therapy spa pool.
- Construction of a disabled ablution facility at the cemetery.
- Improved disabled access to the Library
- Encouraged local businesses to improve disabled access to shops.
- New facilities and access to the Recreation Centre.
- Provision of temporary access facilities to community events including the Vietnam Veterans week;
- Installation of electronic chair to access the hydrotherapy pool
- Townscape grants provided to business to improve accessibility at the local CRC and pharmacy

Opportunities provided for people with disability to participate in public consultations, grievance mechanisms and decision-making processes are provided

- Council services, functions and facilities are available on request in large print, audio cassette and computer disc alternative formats.
- Council ensured that voting for municipal elections takes place in accessible buildings and that alternative voting arrangement is available where required.

2.0 ACCESS AND INCLUSION POLICY STATEMENT

The Shire of Bruce Rock is committed to ensuring that the community is accessible for people with disability, their families and

carers; via Council's;

1. Progressive modification of all existing Public Building Facilities and Services under its control, to cater for the needs of the disabled;
2. Ensuring that all future Public Buildings, Facilities and Services, constructed or provided within the Shire are designed to cater for the needs of the disabled;
3. Regular review of the provision of services to ensure that all services are provided to all groups of the community with an overall beneficial and honest approach to resolution and addressing those challenges, concerns and matters presented.

The Shire of Bruce Rock believes that people with disability, their families and carers who live in country areas, should be supported to remain in the community of their choice; recognising that people with disability are valued members of the community and contribute socially, economically, and culturally, making for a more diverse and richer community.

The Shire is committed to consulting with people with disability, their families and carers and, where required, disability organisations, to ensure that barriers to access are addressed appropriately.

The Shire of Bruce Rock is committed to achieving the seven standards of its Disability Access and Inclusion Plan, which are as follows:

- Provide a means of ensuring that people with disability have the same opportunities as others to access the services of, and any event organised by, the Shire of Bruce Rock.
- Provide a means of ensuring that people with disability have the same opportunities as others to access buildings and other facilities of the Shire of Bruce Rock.
- Provide a means of ensuring that people with disability receive information from the Shire in a format that will enable them to access information as readily as others are able to.
- Provide a means of ensuring that people with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of the Shire of Bruce Rock.
- Provide a means of ensuring that people with disability have the same opportunities as others to make complaints to the Shire of Bruce Rock.
- Provide a means of ensuring that people with disability have the same opportunities as others to participate in any public consultation with the Shire of Bruce Rock.

A disability access and inclusion plan must provide a means of reducing barriers to people with disability obtaining and maintaining

- employment.

3.0 STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE ACCESS AND INCLUSION

The Shire of Bruce Rock is committed to achieving the following outcomes.

Outcome 1: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, a public authority.

- Council will endeavour to be adaptable in responding to the barriers experienced by people with various disability, including people with physical, sensory, cognitive and psychiatric disability.
- Council will ensure that all policies and practices that govern the operation of Council facilities, functions and services are consistent with Council Policy regarding access.

Outcome 2: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access buildings and other facilities of a public authority.

- Council will undertake to incorporate the priorities regarding access for people with disability, identified during the consultations, into its submission for its capital works improvement program. Modifications will commence as funds are made available.
- Council will undertake to liaise with developers to increase their awareness of the access requirements of people with disability.

Outcome 3: People with disability receive information from a public authority in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.

- Council will produce all of its information on Council facilities, functions and services using clear and concise language.

- Council will advise the community that, upon request, information about Council functions, facilities and services can be made available in alternative formats, such as large print and audio cassettes.

Outcome 4: People with disability receive the same level of service from the employees of a public authority as other people receive from the employees of that public authority.

- Council will undertake to ensure that staff are aware of the key access needs of residents with disability and people with disability who visit the local government area in relation to the provisions of all services.
- Where required, Council will seek expert advice from the disability field on how to meet the access needs of people with disability.

Outcome 5: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to a public authority.

- Council will ensure that all grievance mechanisms are accessible for people with disability and are acted upon.

Outcome 6: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by a public authority.

- Council will ensure that information is available in a clear and concise language on how residents can participate in decision-making processes, public consultation and grievance mechanisms.
- Council will undertake to support people with disability to attend Council Meetings.

Outcome 7: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with the Shire of Bruce Rock.

- Council will use inclusive recruitment practices.
- Council will undertake to improve methods of attracting, recruiting and retaining people with disability.
- Include disability friendly considerations in all workplace projects.

4.0 DEVELOPMENT OF THE DISABILITY ACCESS AND INCLUSION PLAN

4.1 Community consultation process

The Shire of Bruce Rock reviewed its Disability Services Plan in 2006/07 and 2012. The process included:

- Examination of the initial DSP and subsequent review of reports to determine what has been achieved and outstanding works.
- Examination of other Shire documents and strategies.
- Investigation of contemporary trends and good practice in access and inclusion.
- Consultation with staff.
- Consultation with the community.

The same process has been used for the 2017 review.

The Disability Services Act Regulations (2004) set out minimum consultation requirements for public authorities in relation to DAIP. Local governments must call for submissions (either general or specific) by notice in newspapers circulating in the Local Government area and on any website maintained by, or on behalf of, the Local Government. Other mechanisms may also be used. The following consultation methods were used:

- In July 2017, the community was informed through the local newspaper and Shire website, that the Shire was developing a DAIP to address access barriers for people with disability and their families. The community was invited to provide comment on the DAIP.
- Meeting with elected members of Council and Shire employees to discuss barriers that people with disability experience when accessing Shire information, services and facilities and determine how to address these barriers.
- Contacted key groups and support agencies within the Shire that are associated with people with disability and their families to discuss barriers and potential solutions and enhancing community inclusion.

4.1 Findings of the consultation

The review and consultation found that most of the initial objectives in the DAIP had been achieved and that a new plan was

required to address ongoing access barriers, ensuring currency and relevance. The new plan should also reflect the legislative and regulatory changes, accommodating contemporary values and practices, whilst striving for inclusion and access beyond the minimum compliance of standards.

Many of the tasks allocated are classified as ongoing as a result of staff changes, legislation amendments, work practice improvements, new Councillors and other impacts on the local government operation. Websites and contact information is constantly reviewed and updated. Existing buildings are for all practical purposes compliant for access and inclusion and the review role is becoming one of “care and maintenance” as construction resources are finite.

During the 2017 public advertising period there were no public submissions received.

4.2 Responsibility for implementing the DAIP

Implementation of the DAIP is the responsibility of all areas of the Shire of Bruce Rock. The Disability Services Act (1993) requires all public authorities to take all practical measures to ensure that the DAIP is implemented by its officers, employees, agents and contractors.

4.3 Communication of plan to staff and people with disability

In June 2017, copies of the Draft DAIP were sent to all those who contributed to the planning process including the Shire employees, Disability Services Commission. A copy was placed on the webpage and made available to people with disability, their families, carers, disability organisations and relevant community groups for feedback. Formal endorsement by Council is anticipated for October 2017.

The community has been advised through the local media (newspaper and radio) that copies of the plan are available to the community upon request and in alternative formats if required.

As plans are amended, Shire employees and the community will be advised of the availability of updated plans, using the above methods.

4.4 Review and evaluation mechanisms

The Disability Service Act requires that DAIPs be reviewed at least every five years. The DAIP Implementation Plan can be amended more frequently to reflect advancements of access and inclusion issues. Whenever the DAIP is amended, a copy of the amended plan must be lodged with the Disability Services Commission.

Monitoring and reviewing: The DAIP will be reviewed annually for progress and implementation with all progress and recommended changes reported to Council.

Evaluation: An evaluation will occur as part of a five-yearly review of the DAIP. Community, staff and elected members will be consulted as part of the evaluation and Implementation Plans will be amended based on the feedback received. Copies of the amended Implementation Plan, once endorsed by Council, will be available to the community in alternative formats.

4.5 Reporting of DAIP

The Disability Services Act requires the Shire to report on the implementation of its DAIP in its Annual Report outlining:

- Progress towards the desired outcomes of its DAIP.
- Progress of its agents and contractors towards meeting the seven desired outcomes.
- The strategies used to inform agents and contractors of its DAIP through providing a link to DAIP on the website.

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Implementation Plan details the task, timelines and responsibilities for each strategy to be implemented in 2017-2021 to progress the strategies of the DAIP. It is intended that the Implementation Plan will be updated annually to progress the achievements of all the strategies over the duration of the five year plan.

Outcome 1:

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the Shire of Bruce Rock

Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that people with disability are consulted on their need for services and the accessibility of current services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a feedback mechanism for use of all disabled services by the Shire. 	Review annually	Chief Executive Officer & Environmental Health Officer.
Monitor Shire services to ensure equitable access and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct systematic review of accessibility of 	Review annually	Works Supervisor & Environmental Health Officer

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inclusion.	<p>services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rectify identified barriers. 		
Ensure that events, whether provided or funded, are accessible to people with disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all events are planned using the Accessible Events Checklist. 	–Review annually and each application	Deputy Chief Executive Officer & Environmental Health Officer

Outcome 2:

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access buildings and other facilities of the Shire of Bruce Rock.

Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that new buildings and facilities meet the Australian Standards for access and any demonstrated additional needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure new building activities include accessibility considerations 	Ongoing	Environmental Health Officer Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Ensure that all redevelopment works provide access to people with disability, where practicable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure additions to Council offices and Chambers comply with the Australian Standards for access. • Ensure no building application is signed off without meeting the legal requirements for disabled access. 	Ongoing	Environmental Health Officer
Ensure that ACROD parking meets the needs of people with disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit existing Shire disabled parking bays and upgrade as necessary. • Install additional disabled parking bays if needed 	Ongoing	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Ensure disabled facilities and services are clearly indicated and accessible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade signage to disabled facilities and services, including toilets and parking. • Ongoing upgrade of footpaths and ramps leading to disabled facilities and service. 	Ongoing	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Encourage local business and venues of the requirements and benefits of providing disabled access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide readily available information on the legal requirements and needs of people with disability. • Promote the benefits of providing access to people with disability. 	Ongoing	Environmental Health Officer

Outcome 3:

People with disability receive information from the Shire of Bruce Rock in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it

Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that the community is aware that information is available in alternative formats on request.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertise the availability of alternative formats in the local paper and radio. Ensure all documents that require community consultation carry a notation that the document is available in alternative formats. 	Ongoing	Chief Executive Officer/Environmental Health Officer
Improve employee awareness of information available in alternative formats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train employees in providing accessible information and notation requirements. 	Ongoing	Senior Management Group

Outcome 4:

People with disability receive the same level of service from the employees of a public authority as other people receive from the employees of the Shire of Bruce Rock

Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that Council Members and employees are aware of access needs and can provide appropriate services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key Council officers to have disability awareness training. The Disability Services Commission and relevant disability organisations to be contacted for assistance in the development of training. 	Ongoing	Chief Executive Officer

Outcome 5:

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Shire of Bruce Rock

Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that grievance mechanisms are accessible for people with disability and are acted upon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide alternative methods of making complaints, for example web-based forms. 	Ongoing – review annually	Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Outcome 6:

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the Shire of Bruce Rock

Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that people with disability are actively consulted about the DAIP and any other relevant planning processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with people with disability using a range of different mediums, for example, survey, interview, focus group. 	Periodically and via contact	Councillors, Chief Executive Officer, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Works Manager & Environmental Health Officer
Ensure that people with disability are aware of, and can access, other established consultative processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all documents that require community consultation are available in alternative formats. 	Ongoing	Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Outcome 7:

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with the Shire of Bruce Rock.

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Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
Use inclusive recruitment practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure job advertisements are in an acceptable format. • Include Equal Employment Opportunity statement in the advert. • Make sure the interview is held in an accessible venue. 	Ongoing	Chief Executive Officer , Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Community Development Officer
Improve methods of attracting, recruiting and retaining people with disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine current methods of recruitment. • Assess current percentage of employees with disability 	Ongoing	Chief Executive Officer , Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Community Development Officer
Remove barriers to employ people with disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include disability friendly considerations in all workplace projects. • Where feasible undertake projects to remove identified barriers to employing people with a disability. 	Ongoing	Chief Executive Officer , Deputy Chief Executive Officer