



**2023-2027**

# **Disability Access and Inclusion Plan**



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## Shire of Bruce Rock

### *Disability Access and Inclusion Plan*

- 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 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023**
- This is also available in electronic format on Council's website:  

[www.brucerock.wa.gov.au/documents/council-publications](http://www.brucerock.wa.gov.au/documents/council-publications)
- This plan is also available upon request in alternative formats such as in standard or large print, on the Shire's website, in Braille and electronically by email and in audio format on CD.



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## Background

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### The Shire of Bruce Rock

The Shire of Bruce Rock is situated in the Central Eastern Region of Western Australia approximately 244km from Perth and covers 2772 square kilometres.

The Shire of Bruce Rock has a population of 979 with 561 Dwellings within the Bruce Rock townsite.

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

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 people with disability living within the Shire. The influx of retirees will increase this number and the seasonal arrival of tourists, including tourists with a disability, must be considered.

### Our Vision

The Bruce Rock Shire 'Leads the Way'. We aim to embody our vision in our approach to disability access and inclusion by creating an inclusive community that promotes inclusion, equity, and equality for all its residents and visitors.

### Our Values

We will conduct our business with:

#### *Respect*

- Value people and places and the contribution they make to the Shire
- Develop an environment of respect for different cultures
- Be appreciative of the aspirations of the community and what it does for itself

#### *Inclusiveness*

- Be receptive, proactive and responsive as an organisation

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- Foster the community that has the ability to capacity build
- Demonstrate leadership by promoting Council and community teamwork

#### *Fairness and equity*

- Maintain a 'whole of Shire' outlook while acknowledging that each community is unique and likely to have variations on their needs.
- Provide services for a variety of ages and needs.
- Respond to the community in a fair and equal way depending on need.

#### *Communication*

- Create opportunities for consultation with the broad community.
- Ensure appropriate, accessible information will be made available to the community

### **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 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, 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.

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### **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.

### **History**

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 adopted its first Disability Services Plan in 1995 to address the access barriers within the community.

Since the adoption of the initial Disability Services Plan, the Shire has implemented a number of works, improvements, and programs to improve accessibility within the Shire of Bruce Rock. Below are some of the achievements which have been made in improvement to access:

#### **Improvement of existing functions, facilities and services to allow accessibility for all community members**

- The Shire's library facilities have been adjusted to allow accessibility
- 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 entrance and automatic entry doors to the administration Building
- Wheelchair friendly counter installed at the administration building

#### **Improved access to community buildings and facilities**

- Provision of a heated therapy spa pool.
- Construction of accessible ablution facilities at the Cemetery.
- Improved accessibility to the Library.
- Encouraged and provided funding to local businesses to improve accessibility.
- Improved access to the Recreation Centre.

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- Provision of temporary access facilities to community events including the Vietnam Veterans week;
- Installation of powered chair lift to access the hydrotherapy pool
- Townscape grants provided to business to improve accessibility at the local CRC and pharmacy and main street businesses.

#### **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 arrange of inclusive formats
- Council ensured that voting for municipal elections takes place in accessible buildings and that alternative voting arrangements are available where required.

# 1. Access and inclusion policy statement

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The Shire of Bruce Rock is committed to ensuring that the community is accessible for all residents and visitors to our Shire via Council's:

1. Progressive modification of all existing Public Building Facilities and Services under its control, to ensure accessibility for all residents and visitors to the Shire of Bruce Rock.
2. Ensuring that all future Public Buildings, Facilities and Services, constructed or provided within the Shire are fully accessible.
3. Regular review of the provision of services to ensure accountability and progress towards accessibility for all.

The Shire of Bruce Rock is committed to ongoing consultation with the community 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 equity for community members with disability in all areas
- Provide a means of ensuring accessibility to Shire buildings, facilities and organisations
- Provide a means of ensuring any documentation or advertising produced by the Shire of Bruce Rock is available in a range of accessible formats to accommodate the needs of all community members
- 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 channels for feedback and complaints are readily available to all members of the community
- Provide a means of ensuring that equal opportunities are provided to all community members to participate in any public consultation with the Shire of Bruce Rock.
- Provides a means of reducing barriers to people with disability obtaining and maintaining employment.



## 2. Strategies to improve access and inclusion

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

**Outcome 1:** People with disability have equal opportunities to access the services of, and any events organised by, a public authority.

- Council will endeavour to be adaptable in rectifying any barriers experienced by people with various disabilities, including physical, sensory, cognitive etc.
- 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 equal opportunities to access buildings and other facilities of a public authority.

- Council will work towards incorporating the priorities regarding access for people with disability, which are identified during the consultations, into its submission for its capital works improvement program, with modifications commencing following the provision of adequate funds.
- Council will liaise with developers to increase awareness of the access requirements for 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, concise language that utilises the use of inclusive language.
- Council will advise the community that, upon request, information about Council functions, facilities and services can be made available in alternative formats.

**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.

- Where required, Council will seek expert advice on how to meet the access requirements of people with disability.

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**Outcome 5:** People with disability have equal opportunities to make complaints to a public authority.

- Council will ensure that all grievance mechanisms are accessible for people with disability and are addressed accordingly

**Outcome 6:** People with disability have equal opportunities to participate in any public consultation by a public authority.

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

**Outcome 7:** People with disability have equal opportunities to obtain and maintain employment with the Shire of Bruce Rock.

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

## **3. Development of the disability access and inclusion plan**

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### **Community consultation process**

The Shire of Bruce Rock reviewed its Disability Services Plan in 2017-2022. 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.

The Disability Services Regulations (2004) set out minimum consultation requirements for public authorities in relation to their 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 Shire consulted with its community by means of the *Public Health and Wellbeing Survey* and through the local newspaper, Facebook and the Shire's website. The *Public Health and Wellbeing Survey* was promoted and circulated to community members between June and August 2022 and contained questions relating to both health and access to Shire facilities and services. It also asked what changes could be made to the above that would improve access to and take-up of Shire services. Results from this survey and consultation with interested parties have informed the direction of the 2023-2027 DAIP.

### **Findings of the review and consultation**

The review and consultation process found that most of the initial objectives outlined in the 2017-2022 DAIP had been achieved and that a new plan was required to address ongoing access barriers, ensuring currency and relevance. The new plan will also reflect the legislative and regulatory requirements, accommodating contemporary values and practices, whilst striving for inclusion and access beyond the minimum compliance of standards.

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Many of the tasks allocated are classified as ongoing as a result of staff changes, legislative amendments, work practice improvements, new Councillors and other impacts on the local government operation. Websites and contact information are 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.

### **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.

### **Communication of plan to staff and people with disability**

In 2023, copies of the Draft DAIP were sent to all those who contributed to the planning process including the Shire employees and local stakeholders. A copy was uploaded on the Shire webpage and made available and accessible to residents and visitors to the Shire. Formal endorsement by Council is anticipated for March 2023.

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.

### **Review and evaluation mechanisms**

The Disability Service Act requires that DAIPs be reviewed at least every five years. The DAIP Implementation Plan may be amended 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 process. The Plan will be amended based on the feedback received. Copies of the amended

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Implementation Plan, once endorsed by Council, will be available to the community in a range of inclusive formats.

#### **Review and evaluation mechanisms**

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

## **4. Implementation plan**

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The Implementation Plan details the task, timelines, and responsibilities for each strategy to be implemented in 2023. 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 equal opportunities to access the services of, and any events organised by, the Shire of Bruce Rock

<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Ensure that people with disability are consulted on their need for services and the accessibility of current services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a feedback mechanism for use of all disabled services by the Shire.</li> </ul>	Review annually	Chief Executive Officer (CEO) & Environmental Health Officer (EHO).
Monitor Shire services to ensure equitable access and inclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct systematic reviews of accessibility of services</li> <li>Rectify identified barriers.</li> </ul>	Review annually	Manager of Works (MOW) & Environmental Health Officer
Ensure that events, whether provided or funded, are inclusive and accessible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure all events are planned using the Accessible Events Checklist.</li> </ul>	Review annually and each application	Manager Governance and Community Services (MGCS) & Environmental Health Officer

**Outcome 2:**

People with disability have equal opportunities to access buildings and other facilities within the Shire of Bruce Rock.

Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that any new buildings or facilities meet the Australian Standards for access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure new building construction acts within accordance of the inclusive and accessibility considerations outlined within this document</li> </ul>	Ongoing	EHO MGCS
Ensure that all redevelopment works provide accessibility where practicable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure additions to Council offices and Chambers comply with the Australian Standards for access.</li> <li>• Ensure no building application is signed off without meeting the legal requirements for accessibility.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	EHO
Ensure that ACROD parking meets the requirements of people/persons with disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit existing Shire disabled parking bays and upgrade as necessary.</li> <li>• Install additional disabled parking bays if needed</li> </ul>	Ongoing	MGCS
Ensure disabled facilities and services are clearly indicated and accessible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upgrade signage to disabled facilities and services, including toilets and parking.</li> <li>• Ongoing upgrade of footpaths and ramps leading to facilities and service.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	MGCS

<p>Encourage local business and venues provide accessibility to their services and advocate for the benefits of providing disabled access.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide readily available information on the legal requirements and needs of people with disability.</li> <li>• Promote the benefits of providing access to people with disability.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>EHO</p>
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**Outcome 3:**

People with disability have equal opportunities to make complaints to the Shire of Bruce Rock

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



**Outcome 4:**

People with disability receive equal access to quality service.

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Ensure that Council Members and employees are aware of access requirements and can provide appropriate services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide disability awareness training that are recent and relevant to designated Council members. The training provided should be within accordance with The Disability Services Commission outlines and appropriate organisations should be consulted on the training provision.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	CEO

**Outcome 5:**

People with disability have equal opportunities to make complaints to the Shire of Bruce Rock

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

**Outcome 6:**

People with disability have equal opportunities 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"> <li>Consult with people with disability using a range of different mediums, for example, survey, interview, focus group.</li> </ul>	Periodically and via contact	Councillors, CEO, MGCS, MOW & EHO
Ensure that people with disability are aware of, and can access, other established consultative processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure all documents that require community consultation are available in alternative formats.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	MGCS

**Outcome 7:**

People with disability have equal opportunities to obtain and maintain employment with the Shire of Bruce Rock.

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