

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2024-2029

Plain-text version

This publication is available in alternate formats on request such as: electronic format, by email, on the City of Melville's website, hard copy in large and standard print, braille, easy to read 'easy English' and audio format.

Acknowledgements

The City acknowledges the Bibbulmun people as the Traditional Owners of the land on which the City stands today and pays its respects to the Whadjuk people, and Elders both past and present.

The City also gives thanks to the Better Together Melville Reference Group, the individuals and groups in the community who have provided input and feedback which has been invaluable in the preparation of this Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

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Message from the Mayor

There is much to celebrate about living in the City, our natural spaces, community facilities, and our connected and welcoming community.

Our City is a wonderful place to live, and everything we do is working toward achieving our vision of a vibrant, sustainable, inclusive Melville.

The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2024 – 2029 is an important document assisting us to achieve our vision by ensuring those who live with a disability and those who share their lives are supported to participate in our community equally and fairly and in ways they choose.

This DAIP includes previous successful programs such as Activelink vouchers that support participation in the community; staff training to ensure inclusion underpins community service; improvements and upgrades to physical access; improvements in communications and technology, as some examples.

Importantly our DAIP also meets the legislative requirements of the Disability Services Act (1993). It is also aligned with the State Disability Strategy 2020 – 2030 which outlines how we can all help make life better for people who live with disabilities and the people in their lives.

Lastly many community members have contributed to this DAIP and I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to all of you who took the time to engage with the City and ensure that this DAIP delivers the best outcomes for those in our community living with all forms of disabilities, including those that are invisible.

I would also like to thank the Elected Members and staff for their work in bringing the DAIP to completion. Work has already begun implementing actions as outlined in the DAIP.

Mayor Katy Mair

Executive Summary

This Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2024 – 2029 replaces and expands on the City's prior Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2017 – 2022. The DAIP describes how the City will contribute to improvements to access and inclusion for our whole community.

The WA Disability Services Act (1993) requires all local government authorities to develop and implement a plan that outlines the ways in which the authority will ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to its facilities and services. This DAIP 2024 – 2029 goes further than the previous DAIP via recognition that ensuring equal access for people with disability both indirectly and directly promotes positive benefit for all community members, particularly those that also experience barriers to participation in community life for reasons other than disability.

The DAIP 2024 – 2029 was developed through three key stages of engagement with internal and external stakeholders from October 2022 through to August 2023. The DAIP also captures actions outlined in plans across the organisation aligned with the Strategic Community Plan 2020 – 2030, and specific feedback from community obtained through the "Our Future Melville" engagement process supporting the 2023 review of the Strategic Community Plan.

Community feedback throughout highlighted that people living with a disability should remain an important focus of the plan and that this should also include those living with an invisible disability. Acknowledgement re: the shared and unique experiences of diverse groups in the community that improvements within the DAIP will address were also highlighted.

Demographic overview

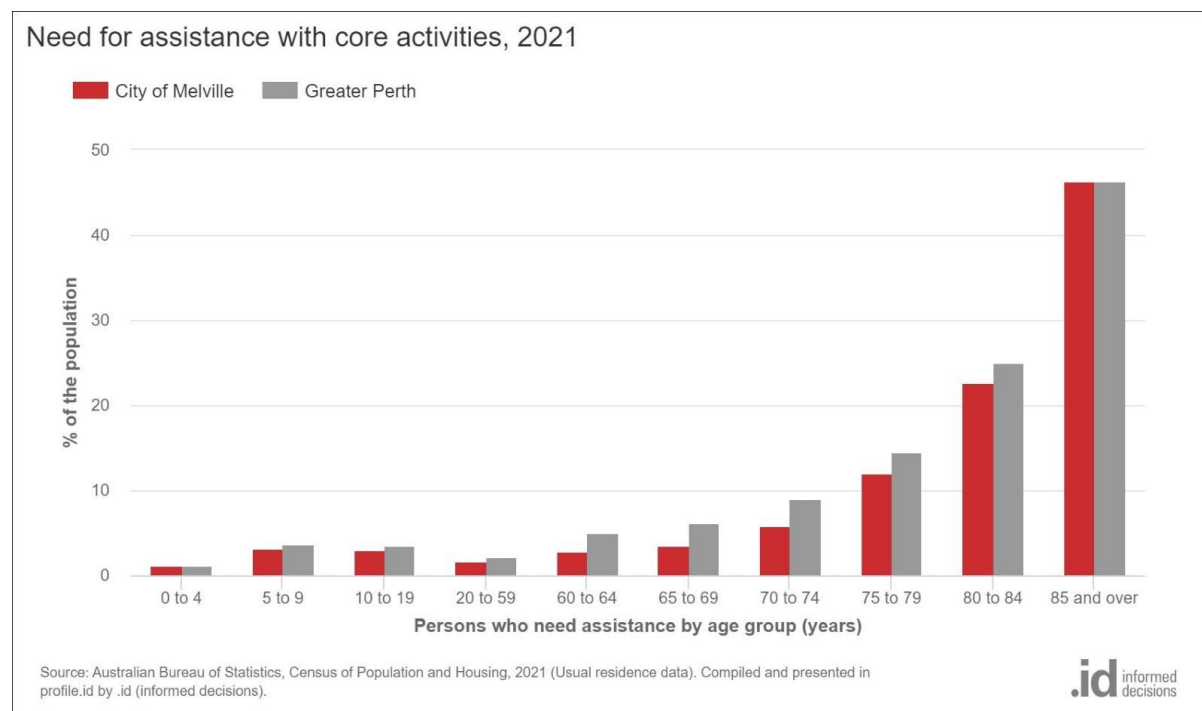
In 2022, 5.5. million (21.4%) Australians had disability, an increase from 4.4. million (17.7%) in 2018 (ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers).

City of Melville 2023 population: 110,426 – a 5.5% increase since 2013*

In 2021 there were 4,868 people (or 4.7% of the population) living in Melville who reported needing help in their day to day lives due to disability.

* Estimated enumerated population is based on the results of the Census of Population and Housing, adjusted for net undercount and Australian usual residents temporarily overseas on census night.

As the following table suggests, approx. 65% of this group are 65 years and older. 27.4% of people with a need for assistance[†] are in low-income households in the City compared to the Greater Perth average of 25.6%.



[Image description: A bar chart that shows the need for assistance with core activities, 2021; the x-axis label is persons who need assistance by age group, and the y-axis label is the percentage of the population; the bars show that need increases with age, in the City of Melville, roughly comparable to the increases in age in the greater Perth region, with large increase from age 80 and above]

10,697 carers provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, long term illness or old age within Melville in 2021. This represents 12.5% of the population aged 15+. There are more carers providing unpaid assistance in the City than the Greater Perth area (an increase of 1.6%).

[†] Need for assistance with either “self-care”, “body movement” or “communication” activities (very young children who require this assistance due to age are filtered out of the data).

How We Created the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2024 – 2029

The Better Together Melville engagement project guided three key stages between October 2022 and August 2023. The process explored and provided support to the idea of broadening the City's approach to access and inclusion planning. It also delivered on the legislative requirements under the Disability Services Act 1993 that requires local authorities to review and renew their DAIP every five years.

The engagement process and creation of the DAIP 2024 - 2029 has been guided through consultation and feedback by the members of the Better Together Melville Reference Group. Recruited from across the community and made up of individuals who were as representative as possible of the diversity across our community, this time-limited Reference Group met between February - September 2023.

Draft versions of this finalised DAIP were presented to the Better Together Melville Reference Group, the Access Advisory Panel and made available for public comment from the 7th of August until the 20th of August 2023 on the Better Together Melville engagement platform through Melville Talks. Complete Engagement Reports are available on the Melville Talks on-line engagement platform.

(<https://www.melvillecity.com.au/our-city/connect-with-us/melville-talks>)

All feedback gathered through engagement has contributed to the development of this final Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2024 – 2029.

Three key themes emerging from community engagement activities provide focus to the plan, including:

- Facility and infrastructure improvements to enable participation in services, events and employment.
- Enhanced community awareness, understanding and tolerance towards outcomes of belonging.
- Enhanced use of diverse formats for communication and engagement to ensure equitable access to information.

Our Vision for the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2024 - 2029

Our vision is an inclusive and connected community.

Through cultivation of respect and celebration of our diversity, our aim is for everyone to experience a sense of value and belonging, contributing towards a great life.

Strategic Alignment

The DAIP development process was aligned with the City's Strategic Community Plan 2020 – 2030 outlining the communities' visions and aspirations through engaging with our diverse community to achieve an inclusive, vibrant, and sustainable future.

The Strategic Community Plan includes community priorities that inform all plans and strategies across the organisation. Many actions embedded in plans across the organisation are the direct result of previous Disability Access and Inclusion Plans and the growing awareness of barriers affecting community. Some actions are ongoing and will be included in the DAIP 2024 – 2029 Implementation Plan for further progress monitoring and reporting against the City's Council Plan for the Future 2024-2034.

Some of the strategies and plans that have informed the DAIP include (but are not limited to):

- Corporate Business Plan (2020-2024)
- Disability Action and Inclusion Plan (2017- 2022)
- Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (2017-2021)
- Creative Melville Cultural Plan (2018-2022)
- Safer Melville Plan (2023-2027)
- Directions from Young People Strategy (2022-2025)
- Car Parking Strategy (2020)
- Active Reserves Infrastructure Strategy (2011-2030)
- Building Asset Management Plan (2011-2030)
- Riseley Street Activity Structure Plan
- Local Housing Strategy (2018)
- Age Friendly Melville Plan (2022-2026)

Other internal policies and procedures including the Customer First Approach and the We Belong Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Plan.

The Plan

The DAIP 2024 – 2029 outlines how the City plans to respond to community feedback and deliver on the seven outcome areas which are aligned with the legislated requirements under the WA Disability Services Act (1993)

1. Equitable access to services, programs, and events
2. Equitable access to buildings and facilities

3. Equitable access to information
4. Equitable access to quality customer service
5. Equitable access to community engagement
6. Equitable access to employment and traineeship, and
7. Improved community awareness of access and inclusion

Key Achievements over the past seven years

The previous DAIP (2017-2022) detailed seventy-one separate actions, across twenty-eight strategies, towards impactful outcomes for people living with a disability, their families, and carers.

Key achievements and highlights have been showcased in the City's Annual Reports and in annual reporting direct to the Department of Communities as per legislative requirement over the last five years.

These include:

- Through the **ActiveLink** program, we continued to provide subsidised opportunities for people experiencing barriers to participate in community activities. Eligible residents access up to \$300 each year for activities that help them stay active and connected in their community.
- The **Access Advisory Panel** made up of residents with lived experience and or service organisation representatives, continued to meet four times per year and provided feedback on 44 projects, ranging from concept plans for City facility upgrades including Shirley Strickland Reserve and Clubrooms, the LeisureFit Booragoon redevelopment, strategy developments and an app developed by a university.
- An investment of approximately \$4 million in a **building upgrade program** contributing to access upgrades at important community and cultural assets such as the Museum at Yagan Mia Wireless Hill, Bull Creek and Willagee Community Centres and Tivoli Theatre, Kardinya and Leeming Heights Community Halls amongst others.
- **Training and education programs** were offered over the years to both the community and staff, examples include **Writing for the Web** introduction on how to with a focus on the importance of useability and accessibility, images, videos, and PDF requirements and how to search; **Disability Awareness** and **Engaging**.
- **Young People with Disability** co-designed by a team of young people that provided participants with the background knowledge to confidently support the involvement of people with disabilities, **Dementia and Acquired Brain Injury awareness**, **Mental Health**

awareness, Mental Health First Aid and Suicide Prevention, Helping Children with Autism amongst others.

- **Accessibility at City events** has been a focus through partnering with Perth Festival in delivering Highway to Hell in 2020, providing best practice accessibility using Auslan interpreters, viewing platforms, provision of ACROD parking and development of an app to help people navigate the event. Our Summer Music event series was independently audited by the Youth Disability Advocacy Network (YDAN) in 2023. The group assessed cultural, practical, and organisational accessibility. The overall assessment was very positive with learnings about how to attract a greater number of people with disabilities now being considered by the Events team in their planning framework.
- Construction of a **Changing Places facility** at Deep Water Point.
- Ongoing facilitation of the monthly **Memory Café** in partnership with Westfield Booragoon and local business Birue Café. Recognised as the first Memory Café in WA and initiated by residents living locally who lived with dementia, Memory Café has been running for seven years strong.

Whilst the City has consistently demonstrated positive progress in their implementation of DAIPs, there is always opportunity to improve. Outlined as follows are the objectives, strategies and actions that state how the City will deliver on the outcomes captured from feedback through the Better Together Melville community engagement activities, outstanding and ongoing actions from the 2017-2022 plan, and feedback obtained as part of the City's review of its Strategic Community Plan 2020 – 2030 in 2023.

Outcome 1 – Equitable access to services, programs, and events

Objective

People with disability have the same opportunities to access the services of, and any events and programs, organised by the City.

Strategies

- Enhance opportunities for increased participation of services, programs, and events.
- Support external groups to incorporate access and inclusion into services and events.
- Promote and provide accessible information on services and events.

Actions

- Continue to develop and deliver increasingly accessible programming, services, and events.
- Enhance access to City facilities for programming and events.
- Ensure community are aware of accessible communications relevant to services, programs, and events, providing information about services, programs, and events in alternate formats where helpful.
- Provide opportunities for enhanced social connection.
- Support external groups to be more inclusive through partnerships and information sharing.
- Strengthen online service delivery and respond to the digital divide.
- Promote significant awareness days to increase accessibility and inclusion for people living with disability.

Examples

- Continue online access to Melville's unique museum and local history collections.
- Provide information on services, programs, and events in different formats such as different languages, AUSLAN, audio loop, large print, braille, and closed captions.
- Review four public events each year regarding access and inclusion requirements.
- Customer Service staff are trained and supported in promoting and using interpreters and the National Relay Service.
- Ensure City community facilities have up to date, accessible equipment, and technology.

Outcome 2 – Equitable access to buildings and facilities

Objective

People with disability have the same opportunities to access the buildings and other facilities of the City.

Strategies

- Continue to upgrade City buildings, reserves, playground, and associated facilities for increased accessibility.

Actions

- Eliminate barriers to using City facilities and accessing events.
- Regularly inspect City sites/buildings/outdoor spaces for access and inclusion issues and identify opportunities to improve.
- Ensure changing facility infrastructure is accessible to diverse user need.

Examples

- Involve people with lived experience in the design process.
- Provide and/or advocate for better public transport, cycling and walking infrastructure and responsive traffic management.
- Develop and implement a staged funding plan for changing facility infrastructure including unisex, gender neutral and accessible facilities where possible.
- Use symbols in signage for greater inclusivity.
- Continue to deliver and annually review a Building Asset Management Plan which includes a dedicated budget for the Access and Inclusion Program to ensure compliance with the DAIP.

Outcome 3 – Equitable access to information

Objective

People with disability receive information from the City in a format that will enable them easy access.

Strategies

- Provide up to date information in a variety of formats.
- Provide staff training in alternative communication strategies.

Actions

- Promote access upgrades and developments through accessible communication channels.
- Provide support or information for health and wellbeing in the City that people can access easily.
- Continue to develop and implement strategies to ensure accessible communications methods are utilised.
- Strengthen online service delivery and improve web accessibility.

Examples

- Update access improvements on the website, in eNews, on Melville Talks and other accessible communication channels on an annual basis.
- Continue to develop work instructions, information sheets, internal communications, informing customer service training, style guide review and staff training.
- Continue to improve web accessibility according to the latest Web Accessibility Guidelines (currently WCAG 2.2).
- Utilise relevant and accessible channels to support young people to access information regarding health and wellbeing.

Outcome 4 – Equitable access to quality customer service

Objective

People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of the City and have the same opportunities to make complaints.

Strategies

- Empower staff with access and inclusion training, information, and resources.
- Provide accessible opportunities for all community members to provide feedback on City services, products, and processes.

Actions

- Investigate and implement accessible technology options to improve feedback from people experiencing barriers.
- Continuously review, expand, and improve Access and Inclusion training.

- Review and improve the handling of feedback received through complaints and compliments.
- Increase knowledge and skills of staff to involve people with lived experience in their work.

Examples

- User testing with groups requiring reasonable adjustment to processes for accessibility.
- Establish a Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) with one view of the customer.
- Progress the City toward a Child Safe accreditation through the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Outcome 5 – Equitable access to community engagement

Objective

People with disability have the same opportunities to participate in any public consultation by the City.

Strategies

- Engage with local expertise and people with lived experience to gain feedback on access and inclusion matters.
- Expand methods and techniques for engaging with people experiencing a diverse range of disabilities.

Actions

- Continue and enhance opportunities for people to be meaningfully involved in City planning and decision making.
- Increase co-design approaches that engage stakeholders in upfront designs and support issue resolution activities.

Examples

- Provide opportunities for young people with lived experience of disability to contribute to the design and implementation of youth projects, events, and facilities.

- Ensure consultation documents available on the City website are in accessible formats and reviewed annually, making these available in alternative formats on request.
- Continue to seek feedback from community members regarding access upgrades to buildings, new or redeveloped facilities, equipment or programs using a variety of methods.

Outcome 6 – Equitable access to employment and traineeship

Objective

People with disability have the same opportunities to obtain and maintain employment within the City.

Strategies

- Advocate for local business and organisations to diversify their workforce in the community to include people with disability.
- Maintain City workforce diversity to reflect community representation.

Actions

- Enhance opportunities for people to build skills and create networks that lead to improved employment prospects.
- Ensure relevant adjustment provisions are made to enable all staff to work effectively.

Examples

- Provide a safe and inclusive workplace for all members of the community.
- Continue to deliver opportunities for work experience and employment of people with disability at the City.

Outcome 7 – Improved community awareness

Objective

The community are informed and educated about access and inclusion, social justice, and equal opportunity especially for people with disability.

Strategies

- Encourage community groups, businesses, and clubs to contribute to our community being more accessible.
- Raise awareness of access and inclusion including invisible disabilities.
- Partner with advocacy groups to increase awareness and education about disability access and inclusion.

Actions

- Promote examples of good practice by businesses, clubs, schools, and community groups.
- Develop initiatives and facilitate opportunities that build understanding, awareness, capacity, and tolerance to improve people's sense of belonging.
- Advocate for greater provision of good quality, appropriate and accessible community support and health services.
- Advocate for accessible, innovative, and integrated transportation options to meet a wide range of community needs.

Examples

- Advocate for accessible, innovative, and integrated transportation options to meet a wide range of community needs.
- Identify and promote significant disability access and inclusion awareness days and campaigns such as the International Day of People with Disability.
- Share good news stories via City run channels and publications.

Next Steps

The DAIP 2024 - 2029 Implementation Plan is an internal working document that accompanies the plan capturing the deliverable steps to accomplish the outcomes as outlined in the plan. It is underpinned by Council Policy CP-084 – Disability Access and Inclusion, with delivery commencing from July 2024.

Achievements of the plan will be reported annually to the Department of Communities and via the City's Annual Report as per requirement of the Act.

Definitions

Access

Access is about ensuring all people can access information, services, and facilities.

Inclusion

Inclusion occurs when a diversity of people feels valued and respected, have access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute their perspectives and talents with the broader community.

Disability

A disability results from the interaction between individuals with a continuing health condition with personal and environmental factors. Disability restricts everyday activities and can affect a person's capacity to get about independently, to communicate, interact with others and learn. It is usually permanent but may be episodic and some are not always visible.

(<https://www.who.int/health-topics/disability>, World Health Organisation, July 2013)

Invisible disability

Invisible disability, or hidden disabilities, are disabilities that are not obvious. Some examples of invisible disability are people who live with chronic pain, chronic fatigue, mental illness, diabetes, and chronic dizziness.

Diversity

Diversity refers to the differences in individuals including but not limited to sex, gender, age, language, ethnicity, cultural background, disability, and sexual orientation.

Equality

Equality means everyone is treated the same way, regardless of need or any other individual difference.

Equity

Equity means everyone is provided with what they need to succeed. It is sometimes necessary to treat people differently to achieve equality.

Barriers

Barriers are factors in a person's environment that, through their absence or presence, limit functioning and create disability.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality refers to the ways in which different aspects of a person's identity can expose them to overlapping forms of discrimination and marginalisation (Diversity Council Australia, Diversity & Inclusion Definition, Sydney, Diversity Council Australia, 2017).

Lived and Living Experience

Lived experience refers to the unique and personal knowledge, perspectives, and insights gained by individuals who have directly encountered and navigated various barriers and challenges arising from their disability, ethnicity, culturally diverse background, mental health, gender diversity, age, or sexual orientation. It encompasses the first-hand encounters, emotions, and learnings that individuals accumulate through their own lived realities, providing them with a distinct understanding of the systemic, social, and personal implications of these barriers. Lived experience is a valuable source of expertise that contributes to shaping inclusive policies, programs, and services as it offers authentic insights into needs, aspirations, and strengths of marginalised communities, fostering empathy, understanding and positive change (Principles and practices for Lived Experience partnerships, West Australian Council of Social Services, 2020).