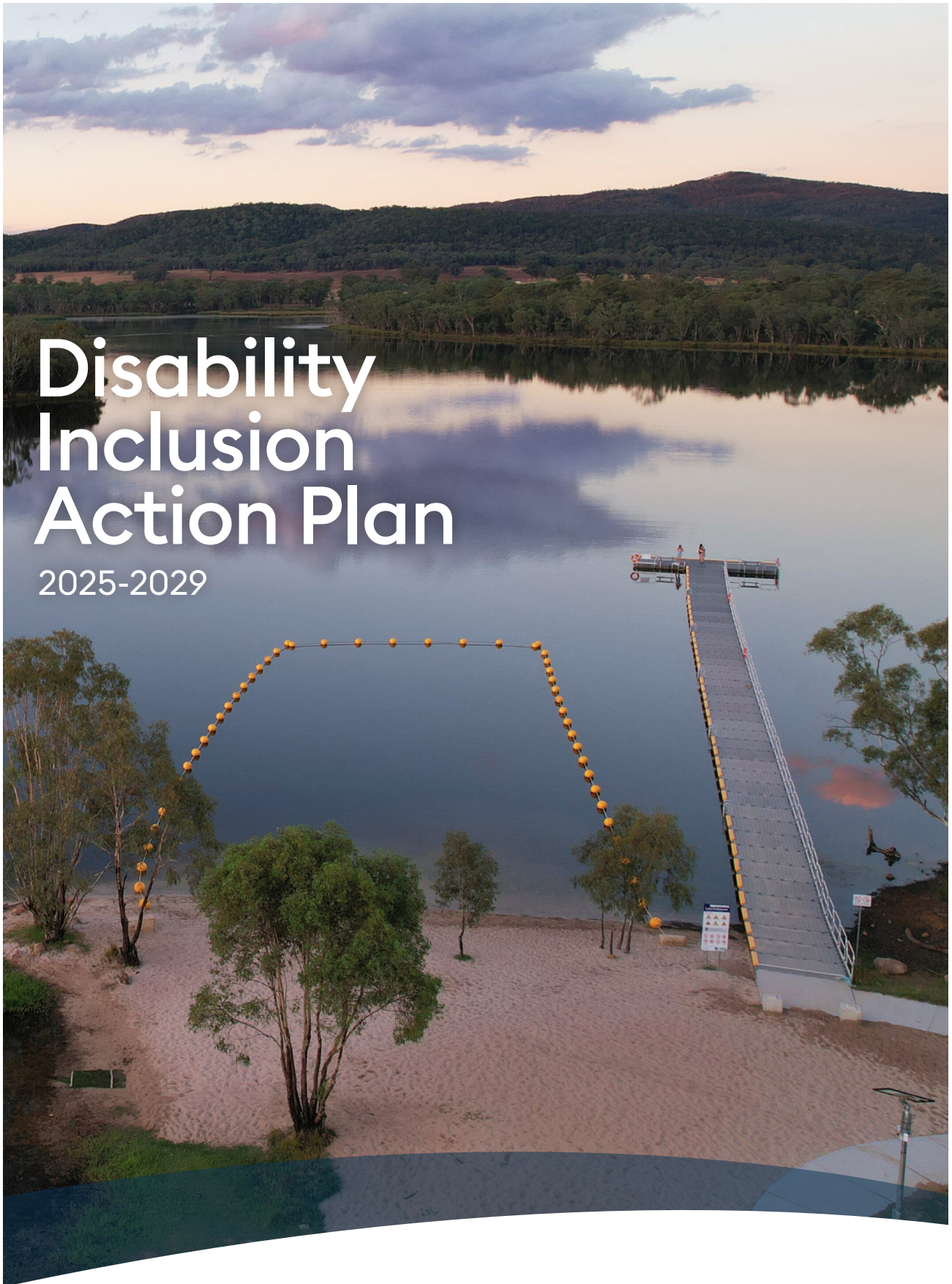


Ordinary Council Meeting
Under Separate Cover Annexures
Tuesday, 18 March 2025



Table of Contents

14.11	Draft Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2025-2029	
	Annexure 1	Draft Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2025-2029..... 4



Disability Inclusion Action Plan

2025-2029

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Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Contents

1. Foreword.....	6
2. Introduction	7
3. Who we are.....	8
3.1. Community Profile	9
4. Definitions.....	11
5. Disability in Australia	13
6. The Parkes Shire Community	14
7. Legislative context.....	16
8. Integrated Planning and Reporting.....	18
9. What is a Disability Inclusion Action Plan.....	19
9.1. Defining Disability.....	20
9.2. What must a Disability Inclusion Action Plan include?	20
10. Our achievements to date	21
10.1. Attitudes and behaviours.....	21
10.2. Liveable communities	21
10.3. Employment	22
10.4. Systems and processes:.....	22
10.5. Case study - Liveable communities.....	23
11. Methodology and consultation.....	23
11.1. Consultation.....	24
12. Our engagement strategy:	24
13. What the community told us	25
13.1. Attitudes and behaviours.....	25
Summary.....	25
What you told us you would like Council to do:.....	25
13.2. Liveable communities	25
Summary.....	26
What you told us you would like Council to do:.....	26
13.3. Employment	26
Summary.....	27
What you told us you would like Council to do:.....	27
13.4. Systems and processes.....	27
Summary.....	27
What you told us you would like Council to do:.....	27
14. Key action areas.....	29
15. Action Plan.....	30
Pillar One (1) ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS.....	31
Outcome 1.1: Celebrate and value people with disability in our community....	31
Outcome 1.2: Foster understanding and connections within our community... 31	
Outcome 1.3: Improve accessibility of Council's building and infrastructure assets	32



15.1. Pillar Two (2) LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES	33
<i>Outcome 2.1: Make it safe and easy to get around</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>Outcome 2.2: Ensure Council's events, open spaces and sporting recreation facilities are accessible and inclusive.....</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>Outcome 2.3: Improve accessibility of Council's buildings and infrastructure assets</i>	<i>34</i>
15.2. Pillar Three (3) EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES.....	35
<i>Outcome 3.1: Ensure Parkes Shire Council is a leader in equal employment...35</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>Outcome 3.2: Support people with disability in finding local employment.....36</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>Outcome 3.3: Foster skills, training and social contribution of people with disability.....</i>	<i>36</i>
Pillar Four (4) SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES	37
<i>Outcome 4.1: Ensure Parkes Shire Council is a leader in equal employment...37</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>Outcome 4.2: Improve access and diversity of information services.....</i>	<i>37</i>
16. Governance, monitoring and review	38

List of Photos

No table of figures entries found.

List of Tables

No table of figures entries found.



Acknowledgement of Country

Parkes Shire is part of the Wiradjuri nation - the largest Aboriginal territory at the time of European settlement. Parkes Shire Council acknowledges the Wiradjuri people who are the Traditional Custodians of the Land and pays respect to the Elders both past and present of the Wiradjuri nation.

The Wiradjuri are the largest group in central New South Wales (NSW) by area and population, with lands stretching from Coonabarabran in the North to the Great Dividing Range and out to Western NSW, encompassing one fifth of NSW and were known as the people of the three rivers: the *Wambuul* (now known as the Macquarie River), the *Galari* (the Lachlan River), and the *Marrambidya* (the Murrumbidgee River).

The Wiradjuri people lived in harmony with the Country, they believed they didn't own the land, but they were responsible for looking after it. The Gugaa (Goanna) is the overarching totem for the Wiradjuri Nation. It is the symbol that connects all people, past and present, of Wiradjuri land.

We recognize and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing connection with the land and rivers and recognise the resilience, strength, and pride of the Wiradjuri community.

Other Acknowledgements

Parkes Shire Council would like to acknowledge everyone who contributed their time and expertise to participate in the development of this plan, including:

- Our survey respondents
- Our community consultation participants, and
- Our staff

Alternative formats

Our Disability Inclusion Action Plan is available in Easy English format, including PDF and Word, with both available on our website. Hard copy formats, in both large and standard print are available upon request.



1. Foreword

It is our pleasure to present Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) for the period of 2025-2029.

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan is a requirement under the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 for all local Government organisations. For Parkes Shire Council, our DIAP is something we see as an essential tool in creating a more equitable community and not simply a legislative requirement.

The DIAP includes several vehicles for driving accountability for disability inclusion in NSW including our roadmap that provides us with strategies towards those outcomes. Focusing on four areas, the roadmap includes developing positive community attitudes, creating liveable communities, supporting access and meaningful employment and improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes.

We want to focus on the opportunities to improve access across our community and to understand the barriers that prevent equal access. We will engage with the community and ask them about our services, education, training and employment, and social activities in our communities.

This plan was developed in consultation with our local community and with our staff, using a combination of community consultation sessions and surveys to seek feedback on what is working and to identify gaps in service.

The plan has been informed by the voices of people with lived experience of disability, and guided by carers, support people, service providers and other interested parties. This helped us gain a broader and deeper understanding of the issues and barriers affecting people with disability across our community.

We are committed to ensuring that the future needs of our community are met, by providing the framework to guide the creation and implementation of policies, processes and infrastructure.

We want to work together to make Parkes Shire an accessible place to live, work and play. We would like to thank members of the community for their assistance in helping us to create a more inclusive Parkes Shire area. We are keen to continue collaborating with our community around this area of work, so that we can identify the community's changing needs to further improve the liveability and accessibility of the area over time.

Cr Neil Westcott
Mayor

Kent Boyd PSM
General Manager



2. Introduction

Parkes Shire Council is committed to creating a more inclusive community for all people who live in, work in, and visit our area. This means ensuring all people with disability and diverse needs have every opportunity to fully participate in and enjoy the social, business and community life of Parkes Shire.

One in five Australians has a disability – a substantial proportion of our society. Most people will experience some type of disability in their lifetime and many of us are also carers who support friends or family members with disability. Therefore, we need to ensure that our attitudes are inclusive, our environments accessible, our workforces diverse and our processes are user friendly.

At Parkes Shire Council, we believe that everyone has the right to participate, engage and contribute. Throughout Australia, there are still barriers to ensuring equitable access to social, civic or employment opportunities for people with disability. Working to remove these barriers is not only good for people with disability but makes things better for our economy and all types of our diverse community groups, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, women and children with disability and LGBTIQ+ people with disability.

Parkes Shire Council is committed and passionate about advocating for access and inclusion of all community members through a range of current strategies and action plans. These strategies and action plans are connected through our mission of providing equitable access for the whole community to enjoy all that the Parkes Shire area has to offer.

The NSW Government has identified four focus areas where significant barriers to access and inclusion should be addressed. These are the pillars under which our DIAP has been developed and framed:

1. **Attitudes and Behaviours** - towards people with disability which may result in limiting access to employment and/or opportunities to contribute to social, economic and cultural life.
2. **Liveable Communities** - encompasses the built environment, access to transport, community recreation and social engagement.
3. **Employment** - supporting pathways to employment and increasing employment rates of people with disability at Council and in the wider Parkes Shire community.
4. **Systems and Processes** - improving the systems and processes that enable people to access the services and supports they need in the community.

Within these four key areas, a range of actions has been developed which Council will deliver over the next four years, enabling people with disability to have greater access to Council information, services and facilities.



3. Who we are

The Parkes Shire sits at the heart of Central West NSW, strategically located on the Newell Highway – Australia’s major inland touring route – and within five hours of Sydney and three hours of Canberra ACT.

Covering an area of 5,919 square kilometres and taking in some of the richest and most productive farming and grazing land in NSW, Parkes Shire is renowned for our stunning natural beauty and friendly and welcoming community.

Just over 14,453 people call Parkes Shire home, with more than two thirds of our population living in the town of Parkes, which services as the administrative, commercial and services hub of the local government area. Villages are located at Peak Hill, Trundle, Tullamore, Alectown, Bogan Gate and Cookamidgera.

Just over 13 per cent of the Parkes Shire’s population identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, significantly higher than the respective state and national averages of 3.4% and 3.2%. Parkes Shire is part of the Wiradjuri nation – the largest Aboriginal territory at the time of European settlement – and continues to be the home of many Wiradjuri people, as well as those from other nations.

Parkes Shire also supports the surrounding region with health and education services through Lachlan Health Service, Western TAFE and Country Universities Centre including various public and private schools, preschools and family day care services. Parkes Shire has modern health services, with a recently redeveloped hospital and strong network of local General Practitioners and is located within an hour’s drive of other major hospital and health service providers at Dubbo and Orange. Parkes Shire boasts a strong, diverse economy, with a Gross Regional Product (GRP) of \$858 million in 2023.

Our economy is underpinned by the agriculture and mining industries and strengthened by the transport and logistics industries. Parkes Shire also boasts strong retail and public administration sectors. Just over 1,400 local businesses operate in Parkes Shire, with 6,526* residents – around 57 per cent of our population – in the workforce.

The development of the Parkes Special Activation Precinct (SAP) the first SAP in regional NSW will support continued business development and employment growth in the Central West. Taking advantage of Parkes’ location on the Inland Rail and the Main Rail line, the Parkes SAP presents opportunities for industries in the agricultural technology sector.

The Parkes Regional Airport is a major gateway to the Central West region, transporting 35,000 passengers annually through daily flights to Sydney. The development of the Parkes Airport Business Park provides potential for growth to support our strong, diverse economy through leveraging Parkes’ well-established national transport hub



3.1. Community Profile

The Community and Economic Profile, a snapshot of the Parkes Shire community:

Geographics		
Geographical area: 5,919 SQ KMS		
Population: total Shire 14,256		
Population: Bogan Gate 269		
Population: Tullamore 369		
Population: Trundle 568		
Population: Peak Hill 1,162		
Parkes including Cookamidgera, Alectown and Tichborne 11,162		

Diversity:		
Indigenous population: 10%	Born overseas: 5.4%	Non-English-speaking background: 5.7%

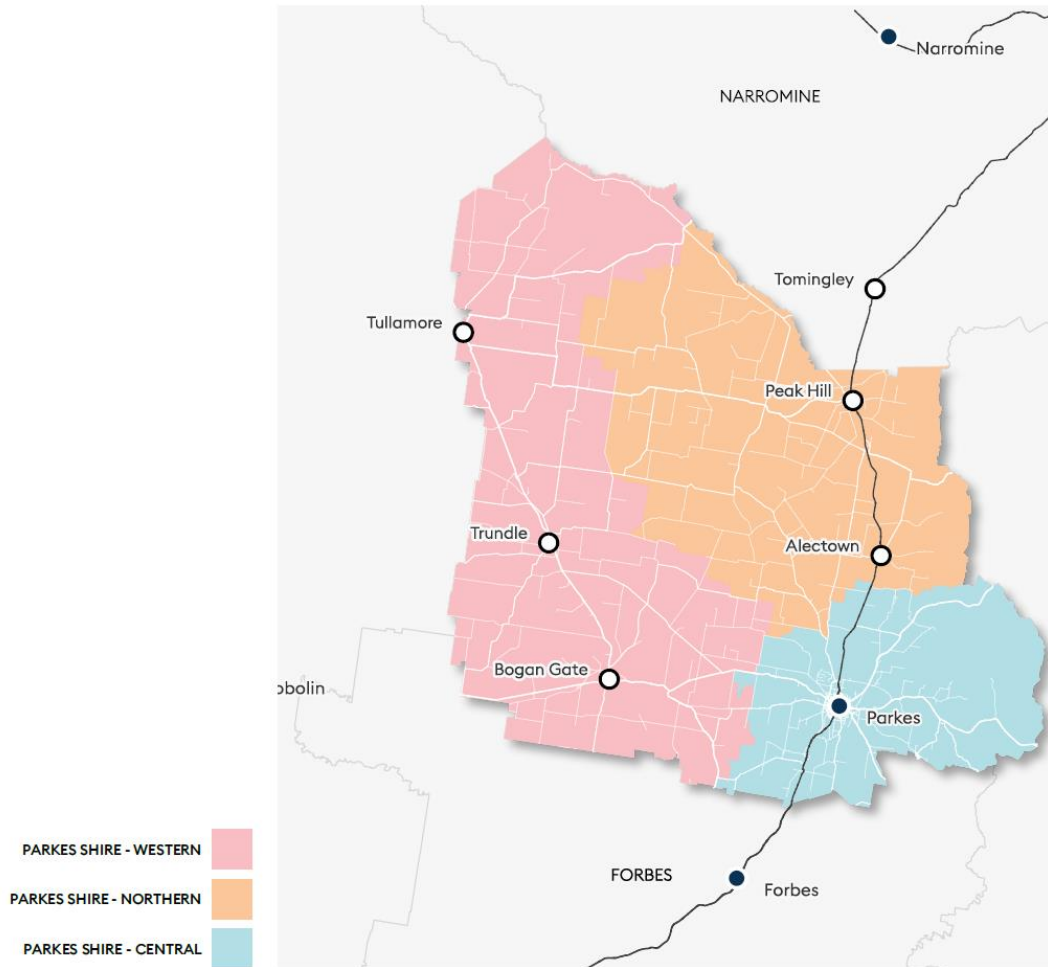
Gender	
Male: 49.2%	Female: 50.8%

Age		
Pre-school children (0-4 years) 6.4%	Primary school (5-11 years) 9.9%	Secondary schoolers (12-17 years) 8.1%
Tertiary education/Independence (18-24 years) 8.2%	Young workforce (25-34 years) 10.5%	Parents/homebuilder (25-49 years) 16.9%
Older works/pre-retirees (50-59 years) 13.6%	Empty nester and retirees (60-69 years) 12.1%	Seniors (70+ years) 14.2%

Projected trends		
Projected Shire population in 2036: 14,800	Projected dwellings in 2036: 7,500	Projected households in 2036: 6,500

Overview		
Shire population 14,608	Median Age 41	Couples with children 39.7%
Dwellings in the Shire 6,750		Households in the Shire 5,837

Employment (In 2016 % of population has the following occupation)		
Managers 17.4%	Professionals 14.7%	Technicians and trade work 24.3%
Unemployed 7.4%	Average income p/w \$1,088	Undertake voluntary work 24.3%





4. Definitions

<p>Inclusion</p>	<p>Inclusion is the process in which every person (irrespective of age, disability, gender, religion, sexual preference or ethnicity) can access and participate fully in all aspects of an activity or service in the same way as any other member of the community.</p> <p>According to the research report "Towards new indicators of disadvantage: Deprivation and social exclusion in Australia" published by UNSW's Social Policy Research Centre, dimensions of inclusion include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being heard and valued • meaningful participation • connection and belonging • opportunity to access supports • choice and control in your life. <p>Inclusion is not about helping others to access the society, it's about changing the society; Inclusion is about making society mean everyone.²</p>
<p>Disability</p>	<p>The definition of disability applied in this document includes both definitions provided by the Disability Inclusion Act (NSW) 2014 and the Disability Discrimination Act (Commonwealth) 1992.</p> <p>The Disability Inclusion Act (NSW) 2014 defines disability as including a long-term physical, psychiatric, intellectual or sensory impairment that, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder the person's full and effective participation in the community on an equal basis with others.</p> <p>The Disability Discrimination Act (Commonwealth) 1992 defines disability as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The total or partial loss of the person's body or mental functions • The total or partial loss of a part of the body • The presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness • The malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; and • A disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction.³
<p>Carers</p>	<p>The NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010 describes a carer as any individual who provides care and support to a family member or friend who has a disability, mental illness, drug or alcohol dependency, chronic condition, terminal illness or who is frail due to age.⁴</p>



	<p>Many carers don't use the word 'carer' to describe themselves and they come from all walks of life, cultural backgrounds and age groups. Across NSW, there are approximately 3.0 million carers, representing 11% of all Australians living in households.⁵</p>
Intersectionality	<p>We understand that the barriers people with disability experience can compound and layer when an individual is part of more than one underrepresented group. Recognising that people's lives are multi-dimensional and complex, we aim to take an intersectional approach in our thinking around accessibility, which means focusing on the points of intersection that multiple identities create.</p> <p>Intersectionality recognises the diversity of experiences within marginalised groups and provides a framework for recognising and addressing the needs of individuals who are most disadvantaged, setting a pathway for a more just and equitable world.</p> <p>We are mindful of these intersections and aim to provide good access for people with disability from all backgrounds and lived experiences. This includes First Nations people, CALD people, women and non-binary people, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, people from regional and remote areas, older people, children and young people and people from low socio-economic backgrounds.⁶</p>

² Saunders P, Naidoo Y, Griffiths M (2007), *Towards new indicators of Disadvantage: Deprivation and social exclusion in Australia*.

³ Carers NSW (2018), *About Carers*.

⁴ Reynolds V (2010), *Intersectionality*.

⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2022), *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings*.

⁶ Judicial Commission of New South Wales (2022), *Equality before the Law Bench Book – Section 5 – People with disabilities*.



5. Disability in Australia

Parkes Shire Council follows the social model of disability that distinctively signals the difference between a person's individual condition or impairment, and the barriers they experience which are created by the environment and society around them. Instead of the condition, it is the 'barriers' which are disabling, as these limit opportunity, autonomy and self-expression and instead create disadvantage.

Disability can be both permanent or temporary and invisible or visible. We include mental health within our definition of disability, as well as members of the d/Deaf community (who may not choose to identify as people with disability, but instead as part of a cultural and linguistic minority, with their first language being Auslan). We recognise that not everyone who faces these barriers chooses to identify as a person with disability and we understand that identity and disclosure in the context of disability is complex and very personal. We also understand the principles of universal design, in that one size does not fit all and that the complexities of intersectionality exist within disability.

Disability impacts us all. It is a broad diversity group and is commonly experienced by those in our community – with people either directly identifying themselves as a person with disability, being a carer for someone else or having a family member or close friend with disability.

⁷ Australian Human Rights Commission (2000),
Disability and People from Non-English Speaking Background Communities.

⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016),
National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2014-15.

⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016),
Disability Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings.

¹⁰ Price Waterhouse Coopers, (2011),
Disability expectations - Investing in a better life, a stronger Australia.

¹¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2008),
National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing: Summary of Results, 2007.

¹² Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing (2020),
Chronic conditions and multimorbidity

¹³ Access Economics (2006),
The Economic Impact and Cost of Hearing Loss in Australia.

¹⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2020),
Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2018-19.



6. The Parkes Shire Community

People with disability are diverse, and disability can be very different from person to person. Disability affects many people, directly and indirectly, in large and small ways.

Disability can be physical, intellectual, sensory and/or psychosocial (example arising from a person's lived experience). It can be temporary or permanent and can occur from birth or during a person's lifetime. Some disabilities are visible, such as people using a mobility aid, whereas others are invisible, such as a person who is hearing impaired or is on the Autism spectrum (ASD). Disability impacts people across all socioeconomic and demographic groups.

Knowing how many people in an area are living with disabilities, as well as their characteristics, can improve our understanding of their varying experiences. This information helps to foster inclusivity for all by informing planning and provision of the supports, services and communities that enable people with disabilities to participate fully in everyday life.

In 2018 the number of persons living with a disability in Parkes Shire was 22.7% and in 2021 15.9% of the population were unpaid carer/assistance to a person with a disability. As our population ages, the number of people needing assistance in their day-to-day lives is likely to increase. The increased prevalence of disability as people age will have implications for Council, service providers and the general community.

The Australian statistics shared below demonstrate how widespread disability is:
One in five Australians are people with disability (17.7% or 4.4 million people). ⁷
Of the 7.80 million residents of NSW, 1.37 million (18.34%) have disability. ⁸
People with disability from non-English speaking backgrounds face multiple layers of disadvantage and make lower than average use of disability services because they may not be aware what is available, and the services may be culturally inappropriate. ⁹
Just under half (45.1%) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 15 years and over, experience disability. ¹⁰
People with disability are twice as likely to be in the bottom 20% of gross household incomes. ¹¹
Of those with disability in Australia, 45% are living either near or below the poverty line, more than double the OECD average of 22%. ¹²
45% of the population will experience a mental health condition at some point in their lives. ¹³
Almost half of Australians (47% or more than 11 million people) have one or more chronic conditions. ¹⁴
Vision Australia estimates there are currently 357,000 people in Australia who are blind or partially sighted.



Selected disability and carers characteristics - persons living in households	2018
Persons with disability	22.7%
Persons who are carers	15.9%
Persons who provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability	12.5%
Persons with disability who need assistance or have difficulty with personal/health care	12%
Persons with moderate or mild core activity limitation	11.2%
Persons who are non-primary carers	9.7%
Persons with disability aged 15 years and over who need assistance or have difficulty with household chores, meal preparation or property maintenance (accommodation support)	9.4%
Persons with profound or severe core activity limitation	7.1%
Persons with disability aged 16 years and over who need assistance or have difficulty with private transport	5.8%
Persons aged 15 years and over who are primary carers (%)	5.1%
Persons with disability aged 0-64 years whose need for assistance with core activities is fully met	3.3%
Persons with disability aged 0-64 years whose need for assistance with core activities is partly met or not met at all	1.2%

(Source: Australian Bureau of statistics)



7. Legislative context

International	<p>Internationally, Australia is a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2008). This Convention recognises that disability is “an evolving concept and that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”.</p>
National	<p>At a federal level, Australia has had a Disability Discrimination Act for 30 years (released in 1992). Various Australian Standards and Frameworks support this Act, including the Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards (2010), Building Code of Australia (BCA), Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport (2002) and Disability Standards for Education (2005).</p> <p>Since 2014, Australia has implemented the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) to provide Australians with permanent and significant disability with the reasonable and necessary supports they need to live an ordinary life. Residents of the Parkes Shire LGA have access to NDIS.</p> <p>In 2019, Australia launched a three-year Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability. This inquiry provided 222 recommendations across 12 volumes to government on how to prevent and better protect people with disability from all forms of violence and abuse, neglect and exploitation.</p> <p>Australia has also recently released its new National Disability Strategy (NDS) 2021-2031. The vision sets out practical changes required to fulfill its vision for an inclusive Australian society that ensures people with disability can fulfil their potential, as equal members of the community. It helps protect, promote and realise the human rights of people with disability through national leadership, guiding public policy activities, influencing mainstream services and systems and engages the whole community in achieving a more inclusive society.</p>
NSW	<p>At a state level, NSW Parliament passed the Disability Inclusion Act in 2014 and amended by the Disability Inclusion Amendment Act 2022 which supports people with disability to access. This Act ensures people with disability have the same human rights in the community and provides the legislative framework to guide state and local government disability inclusion and access planning.</p> <p>This Act ensures that people with a disability have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The same human rights as other members of the community and that governments and communities have a responsibility to facilitate the exercise of those rights • Independent, social and economic inclusion within the community; and



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choice and control in the pursuit of their goals, the planning and delivery of their supports and services. <p>After extensive consultation by the New South Wales Government with people with disability, their families and carers throughout the State, it was decided that all NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plans would focus on four key areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours 2. Creating liveable communities 3. Supporting access to meaningful employment 4. Improving access to services through better systems and processes.
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(Source: Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities)

The below diagram illustrates how International, National and State policy interact to inform the development of Disability Inclusion Action Plans.

Table 1: Relationship between the various Disability Inclusion Action Plans





8. Integrated Planning and Reporting

This Disability Inclusion Action Plan forms part of Parkes Shire Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework, which brings together a suite of integrated strategic plans that set out our vision for Parkes Shire and the goals, strategies and actions to achieve that vision.

The development of this Disability Inclusion Action Plan has occurred using the principles identified in the IP&R Guidelines for Local Government in NSW and accompanying IP&R Handbook for Local Government in NSW published and prescribed by the Office of Local Government, and the priorities identified in the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014. This Disability Inclusion Action Plan seeks to integrate with other strategies, including our Community Strategic Plan, to ensure the principles of inclusion and access are embedded in all our planning frameworks.

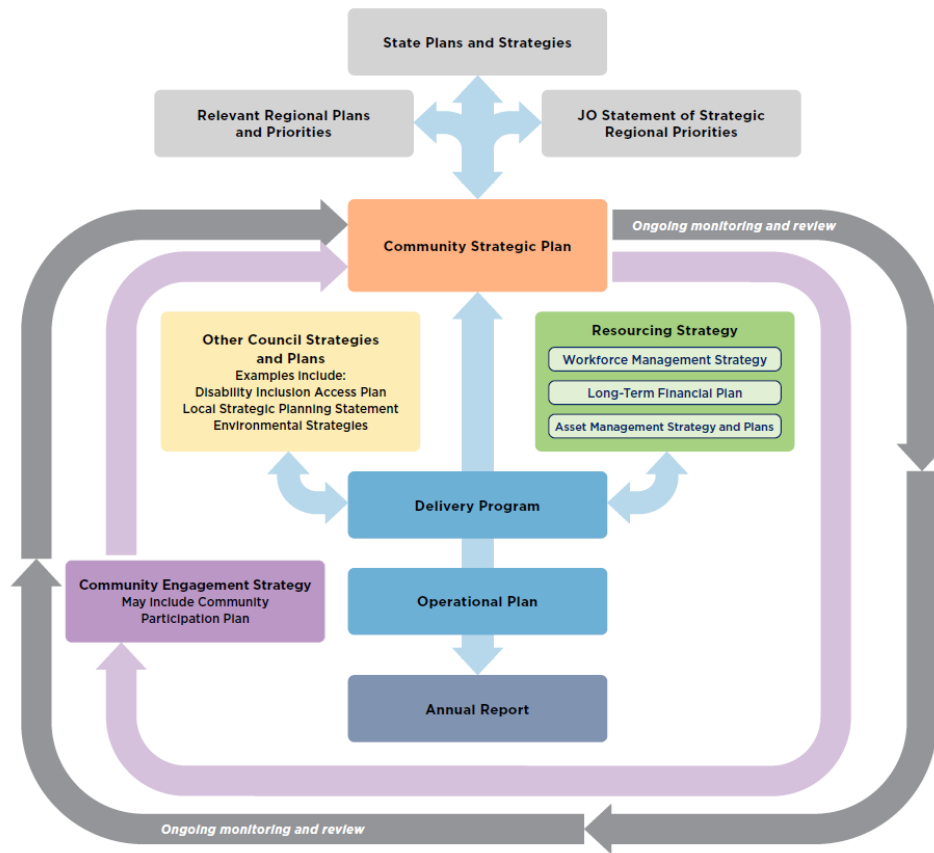
Individual actions contained in this Disability Inclusion Action Plan will be resourced for delivery in our annual Operational Plans over the coming four-year period. Reporting is a key element of the IP&R framework, and we report on our progress in implementing our Operational Plans and Annual Reports.

We also submit our Disability Inclusion Action Plan to the NSW Disability Council and, as required under section 13 of the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014, report to the Minister for Disability Services on our progress in achieving our Disability Inclusion Action Plan on an annual basis. The Minister for Disability Services tables annual report in Parliament about the implementation of all Disability Inclusion Action Plans by public authorities, including local councils.

The following diagram illustrates how the IP&R framework ensures that local strategic planning and reporting is informed, relevant and responsive to community needs:



Figure 1: Integrated Planning and Reporting - State Plans and Strategies



9. What is a Disability Inclusion Action Plan

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan is one way that Governments, public authorities and all organisations can reduce and remove barriers for people with disability and foster a more accessible and inclusive community. Disability Inclusion Planning is about making a plan that outlines the intention and actions that public authorities will take to remove barriers in access to their information, services, facilities, and employment as well as to foster the promotion of the rights of people with disability.

The NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014, amended by the Disability Inclusion Amendment Act 2022 requires all public authorities, including Parkes Shire Council as a Local Government organisation - to develop and adopt a Disability Inclusion Action Plan spanning a four-year period, setting out the measures they will put in place to support people with disability to better access support and services available in the community, and participate fully in community life.

The purpose of this Disability Inclusion Action Plan is to support disability inclusion in the Parkes Shire community. While the Disability Inclusion Action Plan focuses on supporting people with disability, our actions support our wider goal for inclusion.



Making it easier for people to get around and access information is beneficial to all members of our community.

9.1. Defining Disability

The NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 defines disability as: ‘The long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which an interaction with various barriers may hinder the full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.’

The World Health Organisation (WHO) shifts the understanding of disability from a focus on impairment of individuals to improving barriers to access. WHO identifies not just physical or mental conditions but rather defines disability as being interconnected with features of the society in which he or she lives.

“Overcoming the difficulties faced by people with disabilities requires interventions to remove environmental and social barriers” Council acknowledges all forms of disability, both visible and invisible, when identifying the importance of accessibility and inclusion for all. For the purpose of this Disability Inclusion Action Plan, we will define disability to include, but not be limited to, the following types of disability:

Intellectual	Physical	Auditory
Cognitive	Significant mental health issues	Visual
Sensory		Psychosocial

9.2. What must a Disability Inclusion Action Plan include?

Under Section 12(3) of the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014, this Disability Inclusion Action Plan must:

1. Specify how Council regards disability principles
2. Include strategies to support people with disability, including strategies about the following:
 - a) Providing access to buildings, events and facilities
 - b) Providing access to information
 - c) Accommodating the specific needs of people with disability
 - d) Supporting employment of people with disability
 - e) Encouraging and creating opportunities for people with disability to access the full range of services and activities available in the community
3. Include details of Council’s consultation about the Disability Inclusion Action Plan with people with disability
4. Explain how the Disability Inclusion Action Plan supports the goals of the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan



10. Our Achievements to Date

Parkes Shire Council has been working to improve its programs and services for people with disability since 2016, with this DIAP building on existing achievements and actions which are now embedded within Council's daily practices and culture.

A snapshot of key highlights over the life of the previous DIAP (2017-2021/2021 and 2022-2026-) have been included below:

10.1. Attitudes and behaviours

- Delivered a range of inclusive events and programs with, by and for people with disability for example Parkes Shire Libraries Auslan Group, cultural exhibitions in the Coventry Room and inclusive activities in the Marramarra Makerspace Studio for all ages and diverse groups.
- Council's Early Learning Centres worked with children with disability, their families and allied health professionals alongside other enrolled children and families to build acceptance and embrace diversity.

10.2. Liveable communities

- Completed a detailed footpath audit on our 177km footpath network. This audit captured Council's compliant and non-compliant kerb cut outs. The audit identified trip hazards. Civil works funding has been allocated for disability specific projects.
- Supported accessible projects funded through Council's grants programs.
- Provided mobility maps and parking spaces in key areas around the LGA.
- Provided extensive free resources available for the community, including accessibility and inclusion resources and information at Parkes Shire Libraries.
- Completed accessibility audits and associated works on some of Council's most regularly used community centres, outlining recommendations to meet relevant accessibility codes and standards.
- Designed all-inclusive playgrounds to provide play and learning areas for children of all abilities, providing access and opportunity for children to interact with the equipment.
- Delivered accessible arts and cultural events.
- Hearing loop installed in Admin Building, in the Council Chambers and at the Parkes Regional Airport Terminal
- Developed a Wayfinding Strategy for town centres.
- Purchased electronic change tables, listening posts, weighted blankets and other sensory equipment in Council's Early Learning Centres to support children with diverse abilities



10.3. Employment

- Implemented a recurrent Disability Awareness – Train-the-Trainer program, which has been delivered to managers, coordinators and key customer-facing staff across Council.
- Worked in partnership with stakeholders as well as a local high school support unit to offer work experience placements across the organisation, including the Environmental, Infrastructure, Corporate and Planning functions.
- Continued to support the community and staff on Mental Health programs including mental Health First Aid training for managers. This has had positive outcomes and feedback from the participants.

10.4. Systems and processes:

- The Community, Liveability and Access Advisory Committee has continued to meet on a quarterly basis.
- Council' teams such as the Events and Outdoor Spaces have been undertaking accessibility assessments for events, in line with the Council commitments towards increasing event accessibility for performers and audiences.
- Key Council documents have started to be translated into Easy English and made available on Council's website.
- Council is using the tool ReadSpeaker to assist with content accessibility, and regularly monitor the accessibility and quality assurance of Council's website and improve usability and customer experience. ReadSpeaker assists with readability
- Live captioning and Auslan interpretations continue to be provided at major meetings and via online platforms

