

2017-2021

WENTWORTH SHIRE COUNCIL

DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN



**Wentworth**  
Shire Council

Wentworth Shire Council

Draft V4 last updated 30/06/2017 1:26 PM – Ratified 28/06/2017

Disclaimers and credits

## **MESSAGE FROM OUR MAYOR**

It is with pleasure that I present to you Wentworth Shire Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021.

This Plan clearly outlines Council's intended actions to ensure access and participation to all of our public buildings, spaces and events are able to be enjoyed by all residents, regardless of disability.

Wentworth Shire Council's vision of having a vibrant, growing and thriving community is based around growth in tourism, employment and strengthening of the community.

We encourage a supportive, inclusive and diverse community where residents and visitors alike can feel welcomed and enjoy all that the community has to offer.

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan was developed through a community consultation and research process. A review of council documents and government policy took place together with a staff survey. Community consultation involved talking with people from across the community and from a variety of stakeholder groups and members of the Shire including a pop-up information stand at our Australia Day celebration and the active encouragement of resident input at Community Engagement sessions held across the Shire.

We've been proactive in the area of service delivery for the disability inclusion action plan, as Wentworth Shire Council this year invested in the installation of ramps at the swimming pool located in Wentworth, to ensure that people with disability, frail and aged and their carers were able to access the Shire's swimming facility.

In developing this Plan, Wentworth Shire Council recognises the value in maintaining our community and believes that through the implementation of the actions and strategies listed within, that we will create an inclusive and welcoming local government area.

**CR MELISA HEDERICS**

Mayor, Wentworth Shire Council

## INTRODUCTION

In August 2014 the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 was passed. This Act requires Local Government Areas (LGAs) across New South Wales (NSW) to develop a Disability Inclusion Plan which, when implemented, will make changes which will assist persons with a disability to participate fully in our communities.

The NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 provides guidance to Local Government organisations to plan the most efficient way to ensure public access for all.



Local Government Integrated Planning and Review Cycle  
NSW Disability Inclusion Action Planning Guidelines Local Government

## THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities protects the rights of all people with a disability around the world. Australia was one of the first countries to sign the Convention when it was ratified in 2008. The convention acknowledges that people with a disability have the same human rights as those without a disability. This commits participating governments to ensure these rights can be exercised and that barriers to entry are removed.

The United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities supports the social model of disability. This recognises that attitudes, practices and structures are disabling and can create barriers to people with a disability from enjoying social inclusion, economic participation and equality which should never be viewed as an inevitable outcome of their disability.

The Convention is guided by the following principles:

- *Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices and independence of persons;*
- *Non-discrimination;*
- *Full and effective participation and inclusion in society;*
- *Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity;*
- *Equality of opportunity;*
- *Accessibility;*
- *Equality between men and women;*
- *Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities.*

## NATIONAL

### National Disability Strategy 2017-2021

The National Disability Strategy was developed in partnership with the Commonwealth, State, Territory and Local Governments and sets out a nation plan for improving life for Australians with a disability, their families and carers and to support the commitment made to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability.

Actions in the implementation plan that involved local government organisations includes improving web content accessibility, access to infrastructure, recreation, employment and community participation.

### National Disability Insurance Scheme

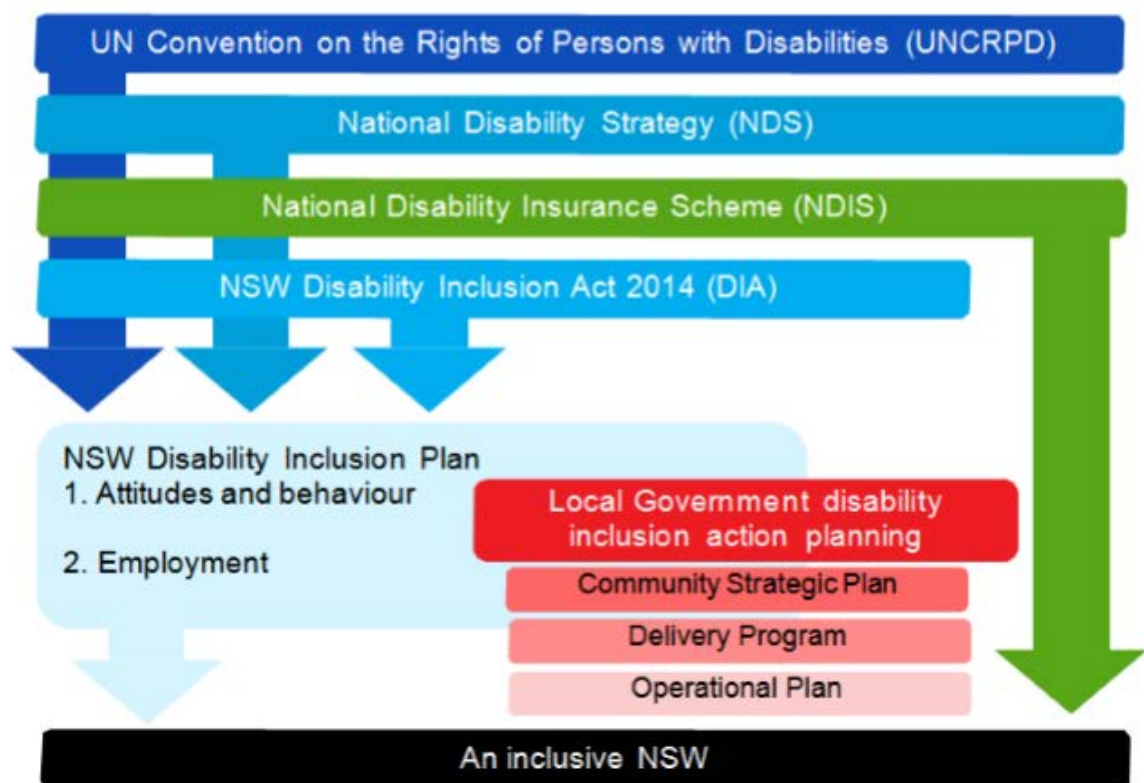
The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is a major reform that will deliver a national system of disability support focussed on the individual needs and choices of people with a disability. The NDIS gives participants more choice and control however how,

when and where supports are provided and the ability to choose from a selection of providers within their communities.

## STATE

### Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW)

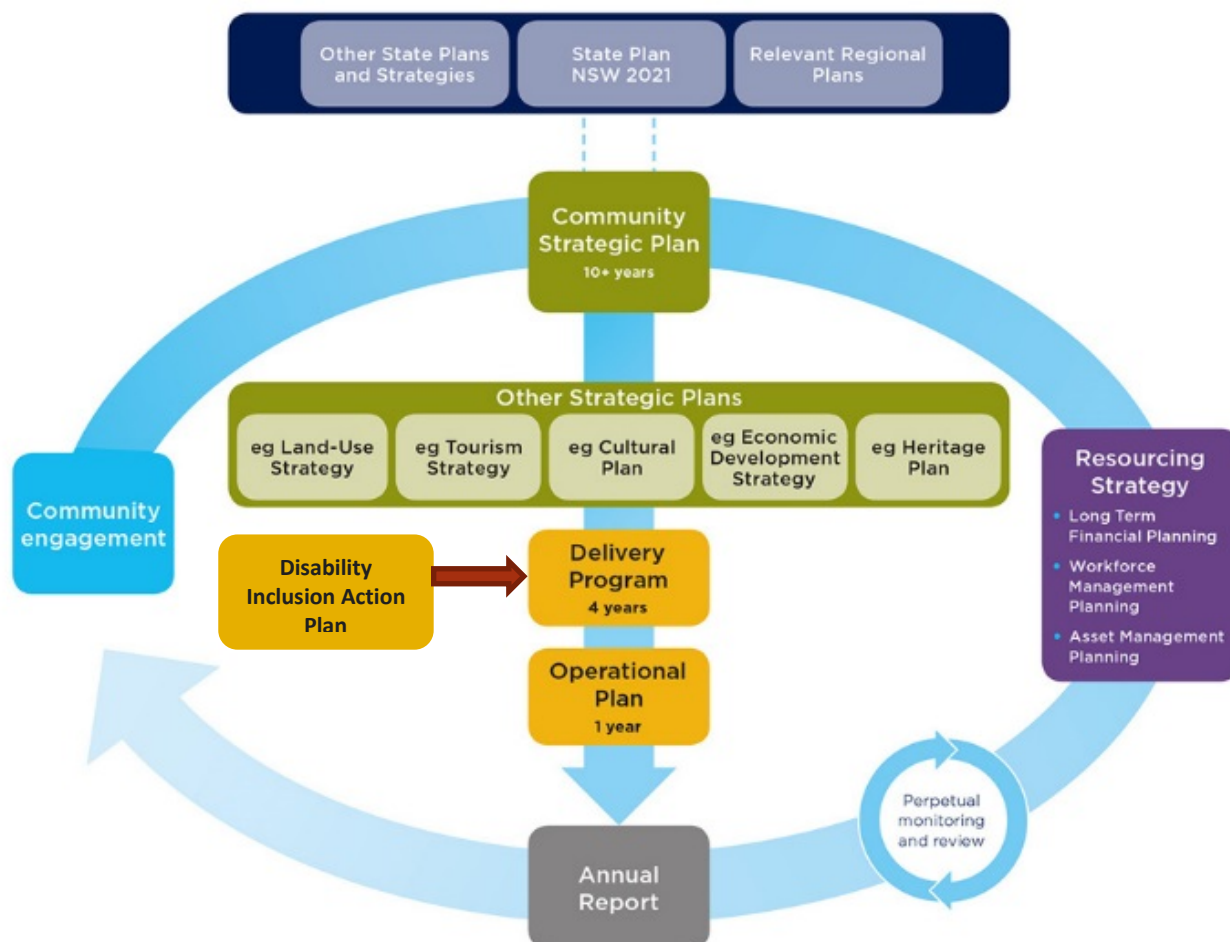
The Disability Inclusion Act (2014) acknowledges human rights; promoting the independence and social and economic inclusion of people with a disability. The Act requires NSW government departments, local council and other public authorities to develop and implement a Disability Inclusion Action Plan. The plan must be consistent with the State Disability Inclusion Plan and include strategies to increase access and participation.



Source: NSW Disability Inclusion Action Planning Guidelines Local Government

## LOCAL

Whilst the Disability Inclusion Action Plan is required to be developed as a stand-alone document, the initiatives and actions are integrated into, and therefore monitored through, the four year Delivery Program of Council.



Source: The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. Image by the NSW Office of Local Government.

### Normative references and standards for forming the Disability Inclusion Plan:

- Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Commonwealth Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010
- NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977
- Carers Recognition Act 2012
- Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulation 2005

## DISABILITY SNAPSHOT – WENTWORTH SHIRE COUNCIL

The Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (DIA) defines disability as:

*“The long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which in interaction with various barriers may hinder the full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”*

Information about disability in Wentworth Shire is based on Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census data. The Census records information on people who identify as needing help with mobility, self-care or communication due to disability or long-term health conditions.

- In 2011, 332 or 4.86% were on a disability pension
- In 2011, 87 or 1.37% were on a carer’s payment
- In 2011, 1452 or 21.55% lived with a disability

## COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Wentworth Shire Council is made up of the following towns and irrigation areas; Wentworth, Dareton, Coomealla, Pomona, Mourquong, Monak, Trentham Cliffs, Pooncarie, Buronga, Gol Gol, Menindee, Ellerslie and Curlwaa. Some of these towns are classified as villages, and the population of approximately 8,000 people spread across the 26,000 square kilometres makes for one of the most sparsely populated rural council areas.

Community engagement events were held to raise awareness Council’s Plan:

- Community engagement Australia Day at Wentworth Shire Council Civic Centre 2017
- Community engagement with Senior Citizens Representatives, Midway Centre, Buronga/Gol Gol, April 2017
- Community engagement Senior Citizens Club Dareton, February 2017

A Disability Inclusion Action Plan Survey was circulated at these Community Engagement events as well as left at Council’s libraries.

The questions on the survey included information on the type of disability, feedback on community attitudes and behaviours; their opinion on Council’s attempts to overcome barriers to entry and how to create livable communities, and how best to support employees with a disability and their carers. Additionally, improvements on existing systems and processes and what they believe are priority areas was also asked.



**GOAL 1: POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOUR**

**To promote positive community attitudes and behaviours towards people with disability both internally and externally, and deliver an organisation culture which fosters fairness and equity in the provision of its works and services**

<b>STRATEGY</b>		<b>ACTION</b>		<b>TIMEFRAME</b>
<b>Strategy 1.1</b>	Ensure that public consultation is undertaken and that residents know that their opinion, input and feedback is important to the Plan	<b>Action 1</b>	<b>Consultation:</b> to actively consult with disability groups and support services to ensure best service delivery	<b>Ongoing for continuous improvement</b>
		<b>Action 2</b>	<b>Surveys and feedback:</b> to ensure that there is information available on the Wentworth Shire Council website for people to give their feedback on areas needing improvement or with ideas to ensure inclusivity within our local government region	<b>Ongoing for continuous improvement</b>
<b>Strategy 1.2</b>	To encourage all businesses within the local government area to become aware and invested in the need to support and promote disability access.	<b>Action 1</b>	<b>Business Partnerships:</b> to engage local business and encourage them to promote themselves as a disability friendly environment, including accommodation houses	<b>Ongoing for continuous improvement</b>
<b>Strategy 1.3</b>	To ensure that people with a disability and their carers are included in service delivery	<b>Action 1</b>	<b>Support:</b> to provide a method of support for carers living in our community through referral to existing services and to examine the need for future services	<b>Ongoing for continuous improvement</b>
<b>Strategy 1.4</b>	Community Event	<b>Action 1</b>	<b>IDP:</b> add the annual celebration for the International Day for People with a Disability to the shire calendar and celebrate with an appropriate day of inclusive celebrations for all ability in December	<b>Ongoing commencing December 2017</b>

<b>GOAL 2: CREATING LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES</b>				
<b>Work to continuously improve accessibility, inclusivity and livability within Wentworth Shire Council</b>				
<b>STRATEGY</b>		<b>ACTION</b>		<b>TIMEFRAME</b>
<b>Strategy 2.1</b>	Identify and remove barriers to entry to ensure inclusion within our community by all residents is achievable	<b>Action 1</b>	<b>Aids:</b> to install where necessary and able to be done; grab rails, ramps and wider doorways to public spaces and buildings	<b>2017-2018</b>
		<b>Action 2</b>	<b>Convenience:</b> to ensure that there are sufficient public conveniences with disabled access	<b>2017-2018</b>
		<b>Action 3</b>	<b>Transport:</b> to examine current public transport options for residents and to actively survey and seek funding to ensure that the public transport servicing our locality has adequate disabled access	<b>2018-2019</b>
		<b>Action 4</b>	<b>Companion Card:</b> Wentworth Shire Council to undertakes steps to become an affiliate of the National Companion Card Program	<b>2018-2019</b>
<b>Strategy 2.2</b>	Provide accessible information about our community and Wentworth Shire Council services in a format appropriate for all	<b>Action 1</b>	<b>Information:</b> to provide a map of our local government area showing all towns and stops where there disability friendly facilities such as toilets, parks, public buildings and disabled parking places are located	<b>2018-2019</b>
<b>Strategy 2.3</b>	Wentworth Shire Council will ensure that all public buildings and spaces are able to be accessed by all	<b>Action 1</b>	<b>Safety:</b> to ensure that there are adequate pedestrian crossings and that footpaths and safety islands are well maintained and safe for use by all	<b>2019-2020</b>
		<b>Action 2</b>	<b>Parks:</b> to explore the viability of creating a park for children with all abilities	<b>2019-2020</b>
		<b>Action 3</b>	<b>Libraries:</b> ensure that all public libraries have large-print and audio books available for borrowers	<b>2018-2019</b>

<b>GOAL 3: SUPPORTING ACCESS TO MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT</b>				
<b>Creating meaningful opportunities for people with disability to obtain and maintain employment with Wentworth Shire Council and to support employment opportunities for people within the broader community</b>				
<b>STRATEGY</b>		<b>ACTION</b>		<b>TIMEFRAME</b>
<b>Strategy 3.1</b>	To ensure that Wentworth Shire Council provides assistance with access to meaningful employment	<b>Action 1</b>	<b>Students:</b> Contact Coomealla High School and talk with careers advisors and discuss possible work experience and volunteer programs for students with a disability	<b>2018-2019</b>
		<b>Action 2</b>	<b>Work ready:</b> Promote to businesses in our local government area the benefits of hiring a person with a disability	<b>2018-2019</b>
		<b>Action 3</b>	<b>ADE:</b> Explore avenues of availability for the establishment of an Australian Disability Enterprise (ADE)	<b>2018-2019</b>

**GOAL 4: BETTER SYSTEMS & PROCESSES**

Provide a person centred approach to feedback and complaint handling across our service areas

STRATEGY		ACTION		TIMEFRAME
<b>Strategy 4.1</b>	Wentworth Shire Council will ensure that it continues to be a proactive organisation in the delivery of services which cater for all residents in our community	<b>Action 1</b>	<b>Data Capture:</b> to undertake an audit of all public spaces under the control of Wentworth Shire Council to determine the accessibility of these spaces and to create a maintenance/infrastructure project to improve them	<b>2019-2020</b>
		<b>Action 2</b>	<b>Technology:</b> to ensure that information regarding Wentworth Shire Council's Disability Inclusion Plan is available to the public via the website	<b>2019-2020</b>
<b>Strategy 4.2</b>	Wentworth Shire Council will ensure that there is a clear complaints process available for people with a disability	<b>Action 3</b>	<b>Advocacy:</b> to ensure that there is an avenue for advocacy for people with a disability	<b>2019-2020</b>
<b>Strategy 4.3</b>	Wentworth Shire Council will ensure that it able to communicate effectively to the public	<b>Action 1</b>	<b>Communication:</b> Review current communications to ensure to include a variety of formats – TTY/Easy English etc	<b>2018-2019</b>

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan includes timelines to guide the completion of the Actions. The process will be monitored and evaluated through the Integrated Planning and Reporting cycle.

Outcomes and achievements will be reported to Council and placed on the website against performance measures, so that the community can track our progress.

The Plan will be reviewed annually in line with the integrated Planning and Reporting cycle. An audit, evaluation and review of the Plan will be conducted at the end of Council's term.

Wentworth Shire Council would like to thank the many community members and businesses who provided their views and input into this draft plan.