



# Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup **Disability Access and Inclusion Plan**

July 2017 – June 2022 (amended June 2017)

This document is available in alternative formats on request including in standard and large print, in electronic format by email, in audio format on CD and on the Shires website.

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## Acknowledgements

The following persons and documents are acknowledged as contributing to the preparation of this document:

- Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup Disability Access and Inclusion Planning Committee
- *Disability Services Commission Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2011-2016*, Disability Services Commission (Mar 2017) available from [www.disability.wa.gov.au](http://www.disability.wa.gov.au)

## Definitions

**Access:** refers to the physical ability to get to, into, and around facilities. This access is created by removing structural barriers and including mechanisms to enable structural access

**Facilities:** any infrastructure that is owned or managed by the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup, such as Town halls, public toilets, accessible parking, footpaths, Recreation Centres

**Council / Shire:** Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup

**DAIP:** Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

**Inclusion:** refers to the ability to participate as fully as possible in programs and services provided by organisations in an integrated and holistic manner that does not ostracise, embarrass or humiliate

**Information:** any information provided by the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup, regardless of format, such as written (print, electronic) and verbal (face-to face, telephone)

**Services:** any services provided by the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup, such as administrative, community development, recreation

## 1. Introduction

It is recognised in the community that improving access and inclusion for all people is a common goal. Through having accessible and inclusive services and facilities, people are enabled to lead lives of greater independence and participate in community life.

The Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup has made good progress towards improving access and inclusion of its services, facilities and information through the ongoing development and implementation of its Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP). It is a requirement that DAIP's are reviewed a minimum of every five years, with the purpose

of the review to assess how well strategies of identified outcome areas are achieving access and inclusion of people with disability.

The Shire adopted their first DAIP in 1996 and have been systematically reviewing and updating it. The 2017-2022 Shire DAIP integrates results from the review of the previous DAIP (being 2012-2017), along with significant new initiatives towards achieving identified outcomes. It also focuses on a new direction in terms of progressing the DAIP to reflect the current aspirations of both the Council and local community.

The 2017-2022 DAIP comprises the following elements:

- Guiding legislation referred to when formulating the DAIP;
- Information on the Shire's vision for the future and role in providing facilities and services to the community;
- Details of past DAIP accomplishments;
- Development of the new DAIP including details of the review and consultation process and its findings and recommendations;
- The outcome areas and strategies of the DAIP;
- How the DAIP will be implemented, including the accompanying DAIP Implementation Plan which details specific tasks, timelines and responsibilities;
- Information on how the DAIP is communicated; and
- A strategy for review and reporting.

## 2. Legislation

The Australian Commonwealth, State and Territory governments have developed the National Disability Strategy in partnership under the auspices of the Council of Australian Governments. The Australian Local Government Association has also assisted in the development of the Strategy and there is a strong role for local governments in its implementation. The shared vision is for **an inclusive Australian society that enables people with disability to fulfil their potential as equal citizens.**

The relevant roles and responsibilities on disability access and inclusion are governed by several statutes. These include:

- *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1993;*
- *Disability Services Act 1993 (amended 2004);*
- *Western Australian Equal Opportunity Act 1984;*
- *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.*

It is a requirement of the *Disability Services Act 1993* that public authorities, including local governments, develop and implement a DAIP so that people with disability have

the same opportunities as other people to access services, facilities and information in the community.

### **3. Shire Vision**

“To grow our proud, motivated and engaged community that values and maintains its rural lifestyle, cultural heritage and natural environment”.

The Shire believes that people with diverse needs who live in regional and rural areas should be supported to remain in the community of their choice. To identify the support most appropriate to offer, the Shire has committed to continue to review barriers to access and inclusion within the towns and settlements of the district, with the objective being to systematically implement strategies to remove and minimise as many of them as possible. The Shire acknowledges that for each of the communities within the district there are different and varied access and inclusion challenges and are committed to continue to consult with the community to ensure that local needs are met.

### **4. Facilities and Services**

Local government in Western Australia is empowered through the *Local Government Act 1995*. The primary role of local government is to provide good governance to constituents within its municipality. This broadness gives Councils the scope to perform a number of functions and to respond to local issues.

The Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup is responsible for a range of facilities and services in the district, including:

#### **Infrastructure & Facilities**

- Construction and maintenance of Council owned infrastructure
  - Shire administration office and works depots
  - Donnybrook and Balingup recreation centres
  - Donnybrook and Balingup community libraries
  - Donnybrook Community Resource Centre
  - Donnybrook Visitor Centre
  - Town halls
  - Donnybrook Medical Centre and Donnybrook Dental Surgery
  - Tuia Lodge Aged Care Facility
  - Donnybrook Community Health Centre
- Parks, gardens and reserves
- Playgrounds including the Apple Fun Park
- Roads, footpaths and parking bays
- Public toilets and street lights
- Drains, culverts, bridges
- Donnybrook Waste Management Facility and Balingup Waste Transfer Station

- Donnybrook and Balingup transit parks
- Cemeteries
- Skate parks
- Volunteer bushfire brigade and emergency services buildings
- Information bays

### **Services & Regulatory Functions**

- Finance and Administration
- Waste management
- Emergency management including bush fire control
- Community development including events, programs and grants
- Citizenship ceremonies
- Construction and maintenance of local roads, stormwater drainage
- Provision of general information to the public
- Payment of fees including rates, dog and cat registrations, permits for burning and motor vehicle licensing
- Library services
- Ranger services
- Land rating and numbering
- Town Planning including development and implementation of the Town Planning Scheme, planning strategies and development approvals
- Building services including approvals for construction, additions and alterations
- Environmental health services including food monitoring and compliance, caravan parks and camping grounds inspections, noise pollution, effluent disposal, health hazards, water quality sampling
- Events assessment
- Street cleaning, street trees and gardening/landscaping

### **Processes of local government:**

- Ordinary and special Council and committee meetings
- Electors meetings and election of Council members
- Management of the Shire budget
- Community consultation

## **5. Past Accomplishments**

The Shire is committed to facilitating the inclusion of people with disability through the improvement of access to its information, services and facilities. The Shire's initial DAIP was adopted in 1996 with reviews undertaken every five years in line with statutory requirements. Throughout this period the Shire has identified barriers to access and inclusion and subsequently outlined strategies to overcome them.

Below are examples of some of the past accomplishments made by the Shire:

- Portable pool hoist available at the Donnybrook Recreation Centre swimming pool
- Wheelchair accessible footbridge across the Preston River in the Donnybrook central business district
- Comprehensive Shire facilities audit undertaken
- Renovation of toilet facilities to meet access standards at the Donnybrook and Balingup Town Halls and Balingup Oval
- Installation of automated opening doors at the Donnybrook Community Library
- Audit and improvement of ACROD parking bays in the Shire
- Electronic readers available at the Donnybrook Library
- Accessible Events Checklist provided to organisers of all events in the Shire
- Installation of accessible drink fountain at the Apple Fun Park
- Shire forms, applications, documents and lodging of complaints available in electronic format
- Accessible ramp installed at the entrance of the Balingup Library and Town Hall
- Corresponded with retail businesses situated in Balingup, Kirup and Donnybrook of the benefits flowing from the provision of accessible facilities and services

## **6. Development of the DAIP 2017-2022**

### **Review Process**

In first half of 2017, the Shire undertook to review its DAIP 2012-2017 and draft a new five year DAIP to guide further improvements to access and inclusion. The review process included the following:

- examination of the 2012-2017 DAIP and DAIP Implementation Plan by Shire staff and the Councils Disability Access and Inclusion Planning Committee
- analysis of the findings and recommendations from the community consultation undertaken as part of the review
- consideration of good practice in other local governments and the Disability Services Commission

### **Community Consultation**

To ensure individuality of the DAIP outcomes for the Shire, consultation with community members, Shire staff and other stakeholders was an integral element of the review. The consultation aspect of the DAIP review included the seeking of feedback and suggestions on areas where the Shire could improve access and inclusion. This involved:

- Community survey available online and from the Shire Administration centre and libraries
- Consultation with the Shire's administration staff and staff at the Shire's libraries, Donnybrook Recreation Centre and the Tuia Lodge

The consultation was communicated by:

- A notice regarding the review including a link to the online survey on the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup website
- Notices placed in the local commercial newspapers including the Donnybrook-Bridgetown Mail and the South Western Times
- Notice placed on various community noticeboards in the Shire
- Email / memo to employees of the Shire

### **Findings and Recommendations**

In reviewing the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup DAIP 2012-2017, it is apparent that the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup continues to make progress in meeting its eight DAIP outcomes and ensuring its facilities and services are accessible and inclusive for people with disability.

The review did identify barriers to equitable access and inclusion. The barriers include:

- Some physically inaccessible pedestrian environments
- Several Shire owned buildings that are difficult to access
- Many businesses within the Shire are physically inaccessible
- Events and activities may not facilitate the full participation of people with disability
- Suitable parking for people with disability may not be meeting the needs of this growing demographic
- Elements of the Shire's communication and information processes can be improved to make them more accessible and inclusive for people with disability
- People with disability may not be aware of consultation, complaint and employment opportunities offered by the Shire

Based on the findings of the review, new strategies within the outcome areas of the DAIP have been identified where there is potential for the Shire to improve access and inclusion.

## **7. DAIP Outcome Areas**

The Disability Services Commission of Western Australia has identified seven key access and inclusion outcome areas that provide a framework for DAIPs. The Shire has structured its previous DAIPs around these outcomes. The 2017-2012 DAIP also encompasses these outcome areas, however the Shire continues to include a voluntary additional outcome area which has been identified to meet local needs.

The eight Outcome Areas of the 2017-2022 DAIP are as follows:

- 1. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup.**
- 2. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup.**
- 3. People with disability receive information from the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.**
- 4. People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup as other people receive from the staff of the Shire.**
- 5. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup.**
- 6. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup.**
- 7. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup.**
- 8. The Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup will encourage community engagement practices and effective advocacy by creating partnerships with external stakeholders.**

## 8. DAIP Strategies

The following strategies have been developed through research and consultation by the Shire with the local community and other stakeholders to achieve the specified eight outcome areas. It is acknowledged that they are subject to being incorporated in the Councils financial year budgets, however the DAIP is intended to provide a responsive and coordinated approach to planning, funding and implementing strategies. It also aims to proactively communicate what the Shire is accomplishing and what it intends to accomplish in the future.

It is important to note that the DAIP provides broad outcome areas and strategies. Specific tasks to achieve these strategies, along with timelines so that they are measurable are detailed in the accompanying DAIP Implementation Plan.

<b>OUTCOME 1: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup</b>	
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Ensure that all Council staff, agents and contractors are aware of and comply with the Shire's Disability Access & Inclusion Plan	Ongoing
Incorporate an inclusive culture and 'all abilities' approach which supports equitable access to Shire services, programs and activities	Ongoing
Ensure that, where reasonably practicable, all public events, functions and meetings organised by the Shire are accessible to people with disability	Ongoing
Provide support to event organisers to ensure that, where reasonably practicable, all community events held with the Shire are accessible to people with disability	Ongoing
Progress the accessibility of the library collection and technology	Ongoing

<b>OUTCOME 2: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup</b>	
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Improve the accessibility of existing Shire buildings and facilities	Ongoing
Ensure new Shire buildings and facilities, including redevelopments comply with accessibility standards	Ongoing
Ensure there are adequate ACROD parking bays to meet demand in terms of quantity and location and that these bays are properly constructed, signed and marked	Ongoing
Ensure that where reasonably practical, all people can easily access public toilets located in the Shire	Ongoing

<b>OUTCOME 3 People with disability receive information from the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it</b>	
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Ensure Council staff are aware of accessible information needs and how to provide information in alternative formats	Ongoing
Ensure Shire information is written in an appropriate format using clear, concise language	Ongoing
Improve community awareness that Shire information is available in alternative formats, where reasonably practical, upon request	Ongoing

<b>OUTCOME 4 People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup as other people receive from the staff of the Shire</b>	
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Ensure Shire staff have the knowledge and skills to provide quality services for people with disability	Ongoing

<b>OUTCOME 5</b> <b>People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup</b>	
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Ensure Shire staff in customer service roles have the knowledge and skills to facilitate the receipt of complaints from people with disability, including providing assistance where appropriate	Ongoing
Ensure the Shire webpage adequately facilitates the receipt of complaints from people with disability	December 2017

<b>OUTCOME 6</b> <b>People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup</b>	
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Ensure that consultation with the public are held in an accessible manner	Ongoing
Ensure information detailing the nature of consultation is available in accessible formats	Ongoing

<b>OUTCOME 7:</b> <b>People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup</b>	
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Ensure recruitment activities are inclusive and accessible to people with disability	Ongoing
Make contact with a Disability Employment Service to register any employment opportunities	Ongoing

<b>OUTCOME 8:</b> <b>The Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup will encourage community engagement practices and effective advocacy by creating partnerships with external stakeholders</b>	
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Improve community awareness on the Shire's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan and its achievements	Ongoing

Strategy	Timeline
Advocate to local businesses, organisations and community groups the requirements for, and benefits flowing from, the provision of accessible facilities and services	Ongoing
Collaborate where possible with local community groups, businesses and external service providers to create recreational, social, employment and volunteering opportunities for people with disability	Ongoing

## 9. Implementation Plan

Implementation of the DAIP is the responsibility of all Shire employees, Councillors, agents and contractors. It is only by itemising future requirements that the Shire can create realistic budgets and timeframes to complete the identified strategies and tasks to achieve outcomes.

The DAIP provides the broad outcome areas, strategies and background information that informs the Council of the reasons why change is required to a facility, service or information provided by the Shire. The accompanying DAIP Implementation Plan details the specific tasks to achieve the identified strategies and also includes the required timeline and whose area of responsibility it is for completion. In this sense, the DAIP Implementation Plan provides transparency and accountability to the Shire and community in regards to improving access and inclusion.

## 10. Communication

The Shire's 2017-2022 DAIP will be communicated via:

- Adopted formally through the Shire's Disability Access & Inclusion Planning Committee and Council
- Lodged with the Disability Services Commission
- Updates included in the Shire Annual Report
- Notice and link on Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup website home-page
- Notices placed in the local commercial newspaper (eg. South Western Times) and local community newspaper (eg. Preston Press)
- Notices placed on various community noticeboards in the Shire
- Email / memo to all existing employees of the Shire and included in the induction pack for new employees
- Provided to / referenced in relevant contracts, quote requests, tenders and specifications documents

Copies of the DAIP and Implementation Plan will be available in alternative formats on request.

## **11. Review and Reporting**

Through the Shire's Disability Access and Inclusion Planning Committee, the Shire will monitor and review progress against the outcomes of the DAIP and undertake to develop a new DAIP every five years.

On an annual basis, the Shire will also undertake the following:

- Review progress in implementing the strategies and tasks of the DAIP Implementation Plan
- Include progress of the DAIP in the Shire's Annual Report
- Report to the Disability Services Commission by the required date each year (can vary) on the progress of implementing the DAIP.