

Central Coast Council
**DISABILITY ACCESS &
INCLUSION PLAN**
2026–2030

This plan is available in alternative languages and formats upon request. For further information, please contact the Active and Inclusive Communities Team on 6429 8900.

Regular Feedback

The Central Coast Council actively seeks and encourages regular feedback on the progress of this Plan. Community members wishing to provide input should contact the Council.

Copies of this plan are available at www.centralcoast.tas.gov.au

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Central Coast Council acknowledges the palawa-pakana people as the Traditional Custodians of lutrawita (Tasmania), including the land, community, sea and waters where we live and work.

Our community respectfully acknowledges the Punnilerpanner tribe of the Northern Country of Tasmania, their continuing relationship to this land and their ongoing living culture.

We recognise that we have much to learn from the First Nations Peoples who represent one of the world's oldest continuing cultures, and we pay our respects to elders past and present and to all First Nations Peoples living in and around the Central Coast Community.

Mayor's Foreword

At Central Coast Council, we are committed to nurturing a safe, happy and healthy community through creating opportunities that enhance the liveability of our region. This Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026–2030 is an important part of that commitment.

Accessibility and inclusion are fundamental to a community where everyone feels welcome, valued and able to participate. The way we design our places, deliver our services and communicate has a direct impact on people's everyday lives. By embedding inclusive thinking into everything we do, we create a stronger, more connected community.

This Plan builds on the strong foundations established through our first Disability Access and Inclusion Plan. Over the past four years, we have seen the positive outcomes that come from listening to lived experience, working in partnership, and considering accessibility from the outset, leading to meaningful improvements across our public spaces, facilities, events and communications.

This Plan has been developed through a collaborative co-design process with the Disability Access and Inclusion Working Group, whose insights and lived experience have shaped a practical, outcome-focused plan.

We know that accessibility benefits everyone. By continuing to improve how we plan, design and deliver, we are enhancing the liveability of our region and supporting people to remain connected, independent and engaged.

As a Council, we are committed to continuously improving the delivery of our projects and services with accountability and pride. This Plan sets a clear direction for the next four years and reinforces our commitment to creating a Central Coast where everyone can belong.



Cheryl Fuller
Mayor
Central Coast Council





Introduction

Central Coast Council is committed to creating a Central Coast where barriers are removed, diversity is valued, and everyone can participate fully in community life.

Accessibility and inclusion are fundamental to the liveability, wellbeing and future sustainability of our municipality. People with disability are part of every aspect of the Central Coast community as residents, workers, carers, volunteers, business owners and visitors, and their ability to participate fully depends on how well our places, services, systems and attitudes are designed.

Disability is a common and shared human experience. Most people will experience disability at some point in their lives, whether temporarily or permanently, through ageing, illness, injury or changing circumstances. As a community with an ageing population and a higher-than-average proportion of residents requiring assistance with daily activities, accessibility and inclusion are not optional considerations, they are essential to ensuring people can remain independent, connected and engaged in community life.

This Disability Access and Inclusion Plan builds on the strong foundations established through Council's first *Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (2022–2025)*. It reflects what we have learned through lived experience, community engagement and collaboration, and responds to the changing needs of our community. The Plan aligns with *Our Place – Our Future: The Strategic Plan 2024–2034*, supporting Council's commitment to social equity, safe and welcoming communities, and enabling participation for people of all ages and abilities.

Guided by the social model of disability, this Plan recognises that barriers, not impairments, limit participation. By embedding accessibility and inclusion into planning, service delivery and decision-making, Council can help remove those barriers and create environments that work for everyone. Through this Plan, Central Coast Council commits to moving beyond minimum standards, learning from lived experience, and designing for inclusion from the outset so that all members of our community feel welcome, valued and able to belong.

HOW THE PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

Council's first *Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (2022–2025)* marked an important step in embedding accessibility and inclusion into the way Council plans, designs and delivers services for its community. Developed with direct input from people with lived experience of disability, carers, advocates and community members, the 2022–2025 Plan established a clear framework for inclusive placemaking, fostering an inclusive culture, and improving access to Council events, services and communications.

Over the life of that Plan, meaningful progress has been made. Practical improvements to public spaces, facilities, events and information, alongside stronger partnerships and a sustained Access and Inclusion Working Group, have all demonstrated that when accessibility is considered early and intentionally, our community is better able to grow, connect and thrive. The success of the 2022–2025 Plan reinforced a clear message: inclusive design benefits everyone, not just people with disability.

Building on this strong foundation, the *Access and Inclusion Plan 2026–2030* has been developed as an evolution of the previous plan, rather than a reinvention. The new plan was co-designed in close partnership with the Access and Inclusion Working Group (the Working Group) through a structured and collaborative process.

Members reviewed achievements and ongoing priorities from the previous

plan, identified emerging needs, and helped refine actions to ensure the plan continues to reflect lived experience and community expectations.

This co-design approach ensured shared ownership of the plan and reinforced the role of the Working Group as a trusted advisor to Council. Through workshops, collaborative online tools and staged engagement, participants shaped priorities for the next four years while maintaining the core principles, focus areas and values established in the original plan. These actions were then presented to internal stakeholders to ensure that the final list accurately represented not only the desires of the Working Group, but a plan that could be reasonably implemented by the teams that would ultimately be responsible for completing the work.

The result is a practical, community-informed plan that continues Council's commitment to creating an accessible, inclusive and welcoming Central Coast for all.

A NOTE ON LANGUAGE

Both *person-first* and *identity-first* language are used in Australia to refer to people with disability or disabled people. Throughout this document we use *person-first language* (for example, "people with disability") except when referring to autistic people. There has been extensive consultation and research within the autism community indicating a preference for *identity-first language* (for example, "autistic people").

What is Disability?

Council recognises that most people will experience some form of disability in their lifetime. Disability can be related to genetic conditions, chronic illness, accident, ageing, injury or a combination of these factors.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), a person is considered to have a disability if they report a limitation, restriction or impairment that restricts everyday activities and has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months. Disability can affect people's ability to participate fully in everyday life, including mobility, communication, learning, self-care and community involvement.

In 2022, 5.5 million Australians (about 21.4% of the population) had a disability, up from 17.7% in 2018, reflecting both demographic changes and improved awareness and reporting of long-term health conditions and disability. Around 15.0% of people aged under 65 years and 52.3% of people aged 65 years and over had a disability in 2022, highlighting that disability affects people across the life span, with prevalence increasing with age. Additionally, 7.9% of all Australians had a profound or severe disability.

Disabilities are diverse and can be grouped into one or more categories, including:

- Sensory and speech (sight, hearing and speech)
- Learning and understanding (difficulties with learning and comprehension)
- Physical restriction (limitations in movement or physical functioning)
- Psychosocial (mental health conditions affecting daily functioning)
- Head injury, stroke or acquired brain injury
- Other (including a combination of impairments)

People experience different degrees of impairment, activity limitation and participation restrictions within each category, and many people have more than one type of disability. Ageing can also bring on new disability or exacerbate existing conditions.



Disability in Central Coast

Central Coast Council serves a diverse and geographically dispersed municipality of more than 30 separate townships, with a population of approximately 24,000 people.

Understanding how disability intersects with age, caring responsibilities and access to services at a local level is critical to planning a community where everyone can participate fully.



1 in 5 Australians live with disability



1 in 13 Tasmanians have a profound or severe disability



1 in 15 Tasmanians need help with daily activities



1 in 2 people in Central Coast aged 65+ live with disability



1 in 7 people in Central Coast provide unpaid care



By 2050, 1 in 4 Australians will be over 65.

This means demand for accessible environments and services will continue to grow

SNAPSHOT OF DISABILITY AND CARING IN OUR COMMUNITY

The 2021 Australian Census of Population and Housing (released in 2022) measures disability through the concept of need for assistance with core activities. This includes people who require help with self-care, mobility or communication due to a long-term health condition, disability or old age.

Census data shows that the proportion of people requiring assistance with core activities in the Central Coast local government area is higher than national averages, reflecting both the municipality's demographic profile and the level of support needs within the community. In addition, a significant proportion of Central Coast residents provide unpaid care to people with disability, long-term illness or age-related conditions, highlighting the important role carers play in supporting community participation and wellbeing.

While Census data provides valuable local insight, it represents a narrower measure of disability and captures people with higher support needs. National ABS survey data confirms that disability affects a much broader proportion of the population across all age groups, reinforcing the importance of planning for accessibility beyond minimum compliance.

AGEING AND DISABILITY IN CENTRAL COAST

There is a well-established relationship between ageing and disability, with the likelihood of experiencing disability increasing as people age. The 2021 Census shows that Central Coast has a higher proportion of residents aged 65 years and over than both Tasmania and Australia, making accessibility and inclusion particularly important for the municipality.

As people age, changes in mobility, vision, hearing, cognition and health can affect how they access public spaces, information, services and social opportunities. Planning environments that are accessible and inclusive supports people to remain independent, connected and engaged in community life as they age, benefiting not only older residents, but also carers, families, visitors and people experiencing temporary injury or illness.



WHY THIS MATTERS LOCALLY

For Central Coast, accessibility and inclusion are fundamental to community wellbeing, liveability and long-term sustainability. With an ageing population, a higher-than-average proportion of residents requiring assistance with core activities, and a strong reliance on unpaid carers, decisions about how places, services and information are designed have a direct and lasting impact on daily life.

Barriers to access can limit people's ability to participate in community life, reduce independence, and increase isolation. When accessibility is not considered early, barriers often require costly retrofitting or result in reliance on individual support rather than inclusive design. In contrast, planning for access from the outset leads to safer, more efficient and more welcoming environments for everyone.

Accessibility and inclusion also support Central Coast residents to age in place, remain socially connected, and continue contributing to their community. Features such as well-designed footpaths, accessible buildings, clear and inclusive communication, and thoughtfully planned events benefit not only people with disability, but also older people, families with young children, visitors, carers and people experiencing temporary injury or illness.

Inclusive communities are more resilient communities. Designing places and services that are usable by a wide range of people strengthens participation, supports volunteering and economic activity, and helps ensure that public investments deliver maximum benefit. For Central Coast, embedding accessibility and inclusion into everyday decision-making is both a practical response to local demographic trends and a reflection of Council's commitment to fairness, dignity and belonging for all.

There is also a strong economic and strategic case for inclusion. Accessible places and services attract more people, support local business, and enhance the visitor experience. They reduce long-term costs associated with retrofitting and service delivery, and help ensure that infrastructure investments remain relevant and usable over time.

Accessible public spaces also support mental health, social connection and wellbeing by enabling people to safely participate in community life and enjoy the natural environments that are central to the Central Coast lifestyle.

By embedding accessibility into planning, design and decision-making, Central Coast is better positioned to respond to future challenges, support a diverse and growing community, and deliver outcomes that are equitable, sustainable and enduring.

WHAT THIS PLAN COVERS

The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) applies across the full range of Council functions and responsibilities that shape daily life in Central Coast. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Public spaces and infrastructure, such as footpaths, crossings, kerb ramps, car parks, public toilets, beach access points and community buildings
- Council services and customer interactions, including how information is provided and how residents access Council support
- Council-run events, programs and activities, ensuring they are planned and delivered in accessible and inclusive ways
- Facilities and venues owned or managed by Council that are used by the community

While this Plan does not replace specialist disability services delivered by other levels of government, it focuses on the areas where Council has direct influence and responsibility. Council also provides some services specifically aimed at supporting access for people with disability, including enforcement of accessible parking permits, sharps disposal support, practical assistance for residents unable to manage bins due to disability/health needs, and access features within facilities.

Through this Plan, Council commits to embedding accessibility and inclusion into planning, service delivery and decision-making, supporting a Central Coast community where people of all abilities can live, visit, contribute and belong.





Disability Access and Inclusion Working Group

The Access and Inclusion Working Group (the Working Group) was established in 2023 as a direct outcome of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022–2025. The creation of the Group reflected Council's commitment to embedding lived experience into decision-making and ensuring access and inclusion are considered across all areas of Council's work.

Since its establishment, the Working Group has continued to meet at least four times each year, providing advice and insight to help shape access and inclusion outcomes for key Council projects, programs and policies across the municipality. Members bring a diverse range of lived and professional experience, enabling Council to better understand barriers, test ideas early, and identify practical, community-informed solutions.

The Working Group plays an important role in moving Council beyond compliance toward best practice. By drawing on lived experience, the Group helps ensure decisions are grounded in real-world use, leading to safer, more accessible and more inclusive places, services and experiences for everyone in Central Coast.

DISABILITY ROUNDTABLE



In June 2024, the Working Group hosted a Disability and Inclusion Roundtable, bringing together members of the Working Group, Councillors, Council staff and 16 community members with lived experience of disability, caring, business and community volunteering. The Roundtable created a safe and open forum for participants to share real-world experiences of accessibility and inclusion across the municipality, grounded in everyday use of streets, shops, services, transport, parks and community facilities.

Participants shared firsthand accounts highlighting physical barriers such as uneven or obstructed footpaths, inaccessible shop entrances, limited beach access, and a lack of accessible toilets and change facilities. Just as importantly, discussions also emphasised less visible barriers, including sensory challenges in retail environments, social exclusion, lack of awareness

around service dogs, and the cumulative impact of small barriers on participation and wellbeing.

The Roundtable reinforced the principle of “nothing about us, without us” and provided Council with clear, practical insights to inform future actions. Key themes included inclusive placemaking (particularly parks, playgrounds and toilets), safer and more navigable pedestrian environments, improved community and business awareness, and better access to information. Feedback from the Roundtable has directly informed the development of this Plan and strengthened Council’s commitment to embedding lived experience into access and inclusion decision-making.

ANNUAL WORKSHOPS WITH THE DEVONPORT CITY COUNCIL

The Disability Access and Inclusion Working Group plays an active role in strengthening regional collaboration by participating in annual joint workshops with Devonport City Council’s Access and Inclusion Working Group. These shared sessions create a consistent forum for councils to learn from one another, align approaches where appropriate, and address shared challenges across the North West region.

In 2024, Central Coast Council hosted the inaugural joint workshop, bringing together members from both Working Groups and welcoming guest

speakers from the Anti-Discrimination Office Tasmania and ParaQuad Tasmania. The session enabled open discussion, peer networking and the sharing of practical insights drawn from lived experience, helping both councils to refine their approaches to access and inclusion.

Building on the success of this initiative, Devonport City Council hosted the follow-up workshop in August 2025, where members heard from Kinetic on accessible public transport services and Migrant Resource Centre Tasmania on cultural inclusion and translating services.

Feedback from both Working Groups confirmed the value of this regional, collaborative approach, and the councils have committed to continuing the annual joint workshop on an alternating basis each August, strengthening consistency, knowledge-sharing and leadership in access and inclusion across the region.

OPEN DOORS AWARD

Launched in 2025, the Open Doors Award was developed following discussions at the 2024 joint workshop between Central Coast Council's Disability Access and Inclusion Working Group and Devonport City Council's Access and Inclusion Working Group. The idea emerged from shared conversations about the need to positively recognise businesses that are actively improving accessibility and inclusion, rather than focusing solely on compliance or barriers.

The Award recognises local businesses that demonstrate a genuine commitment to creating welcoming, accessible and inclusive environments. It highlights practical, achievable actions that improve access to goods, services and employment opportunities for people with disability.

Through the Open Doors Award, Council has strengthened partnerships with the business community, raised awareness of inclusive design and customer service, and encouraged continuous improvement. Importantly, the Award shifts the focus from minimum standards to lived experience — celebrating businesses that “open doors” through attitude, awareness and action. In doing so, it reinforces the role of access and inclusion as a shared responsibility and a key contributor to vibrant, inclusive town centres.





Vision for an Accessible Future

“A Central Coast where barriers are removed, diversity is valued, and everyone can participate fully in community life.”

Central Coast Council’s vision for an accessible future is a community where everyone can participate fully, independently and with dignity, regardless of age, ability or circumstance. This Plan is guided by the social model of disability, which recognises that disability is created by barriers within the built environment, services, systems and attitudes, rather than by individual impairment. By focusing on removing these barriers, Council can help create a community that is inclusive by design, rather than one that requires people to continually adapt or ask for accommodation.

We recognise and value the diversity of our community. People with disability bring lived experience, skills and perspectives that enrich Central Coast socially, culturally and economically. Creating accessible and inclusive places, services and experiences benefits everyone, including older people, carers, families with young children, visitors and those experiencing temporary injury or illness.

Learning from lived experience is central to this vision. By listening to people with disability, carers and advocates, and involving them early in planning and decision-making, Council can design solutions that reflect real-world use, avoid unintended barriers, and strengthen trust and outcomes.

Council is committed to applying universal design principles wherever possible, moving beyond minimum compliance to create environments, services and communications that are usable by the widest range of people. Through this Plan, Central Coast Council commits to continuous improvement, embedding accessibility and inclusion into everyday decision-making and working in partnership with the community to create a future where everyone feels welcome, valued and able to belong.



2026-2030 Commitments

The goals and priority actions for the 2026–2030 Disability Access and Inclusion Plan were developed through a series of co-design workshops with the Disability Access and Inclusion Working Group. Community consultation on the draft Plan reinforced the importance of practical accessibility improvements within public spaces, services and everyday community experiences.

Drawing on lived experience, community insight and an understanding of Council's role, the Group identified where continued focus is needed and where new priorities have emerged.

The commitments within this Plan reflect a balance of building on what has worked under the 2022–2025 Plan, while responding to changing community needs, emerging challenges and new opportunities. They include actions that require sustained effort over time, as well as new initiatives intended to drive further progress across Council's places, services, programs and culture.

Together, these commitments provide a practical framework to guide decision-making, support continuous improvement, and embed accessibility and inclusion into everyday practice, ensuring progress continues across the full term of the Plan.

The actions outlined in this Plan are deliberate and prioritised, but they are not intended to be exhaustive. Accessibility and inclusion are ongoing considerations that cut across Council's work, and additional actions may be identified and progressed over the life of the Plan as projects, policies and opportunities arise. While Council plans play a critical role in decision-making, actual delivery may be influenced by funding availability and other factors



Pillar 1 Inclusive Placemaking



Inclusive placemaking is essential to creating a community where people can move through spaces safely, confidently and independently. The way streets, buildings, parks and beaches are planned and designed directly affects who can participate in community life. Inclusive placemaking also considers the ongoing usability and maintenance of public spaces, recognising that small barriers can significantly impact safety and participation. When accessibility is considered early and meaningfully, public spaces become more welcoming and functional for everyone.

This commitment recognises that placemaking goes beyond meeting minimum standards. Inclusive environments consider how people actually use spaces, including mobility, sensory needs, visibility, safety and comfort. Designing with lived experience in mind helps ensure Council-owned and managed spaces support participation across all ages and abilities while reducing the need for costly retrofitting over time.

Inclusive placemaking directly supports Council's Strategic Plan priorities of creating a Safe, Vibrant and Welcoming Community and Growing Sustainably. By embedding accessibility and inclusion into the design and renewal of public spaces, Council helps strengthen liveability, support ageing in place, and ensure public investment delivers long-term value for the community.



2022-2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

REIBEY STREET ZEBRA CROSSING

Installed in 2023, the Reibey Street zebra crossing improves pedestrian safety and accessibility, providing a clear and safe crossing point that better connects both sides of the CBD.

SENSORY GARDEN

Developed in 2024 at Tobruk Park following consultation with the Access and Inclusion Working Group, the sensory garden supports inclusive play through features designed to engage all five senses.

CHAT BOARD INSTALLED AT PENGUIN PLAYGROUND

The upgraded Penguin Main Road playground includes a chat board, supporting communication and social interaction by enabling children of all abilities, including non-verbal users, to express themselves and connect.

Smart Goal 1.1

Inclusive Design Practice Guideline to support project teams and integrate with existing design processes.

Time frame: by December 2027

What this looks like in practice:

- An internal policy and workflow to guide staff in identifying when a project should involve the Disability Access and Inclusion Working Group.
- Clear guidance on where to find relevant accessibility standards, legislation and design considerations.
- Accessibility is embedded within existing project management frameworks, templates and approval processes.
- Practical tools (e.g. checklists, prompts and design principles) support staff to apply inclusive design at each project stage.
- Project teams consider accessibility from concept through to delivery, not as a retrofit.
- Increased consistency in how accessibility is addressed across Council projects.

Smart Goal 1.2

Accessible Toilet Upgrades (in line with the Asset Management Plan)

Time frame: Ongoing

What this looks like in practice:

- Public toilet facilities are upgraded to be DDA compliant as they reach end of life.
- Improved usability, safety and dignity for users.
- Accessibility embedded in all new builds and upgrades.

Smart Goal 1.3

Footpath Accessibility Audit and Upgrade Program

Time frame: Ongoing

What this looks like in practice:

- Auditing condition, width, gradients, crossings and physical obstructions.
- Footpaths and kerb crossovers are upgraded according to the annual asset renewal plan.
- Priority given to high-risk or high-traffic areas.
- Improved experience for both locals and visitors.

Smart Goal 1.4

Municipal Beach Access Improvement Plan

Time frame: by June 2027

What this looks like in practice:

- Priority beaches identified with clear upgrade pathways.
- Safer, more usable access points and connections to facilities.
- Improved experience for both locals and visitors.

FOUR-YEAR FOCUS

By June 2030, Central Coast will have a clearly mapped network of safe, accessible routes across Ulverstone and Penguin, connecting key destinations including accessible toilets, parking, waterfronts and civic facilities, supported by consistent signage, inclusive design standards and improved public amenities.

Smart Goal 1.5

Toilet Cleanliness Standards Program

Time frame: by June 2027

What this looks like in practice:

- Consistent and reliable cleaning standards across facilities.
- Cleaning aligned with usage patterns and peak times.
- Improved user confidence and perception of safety.
- Reduction in cleanliness-related complaints.

Smart Goal 1.6

Accessible Pedestrian Routes Network Plan

Time frame: by June 2028

What this looks like in practice:

- Identifying key destinations such as town centres, waterfronts and facilities.
- Mapping priority accessible routes.
- Identifying gaps and barriers.
- Using the network to guide capital works.

Smart Goal 1.7

Accessible Parking Supply Review

Time frame: by December 2028

What this looks like in practice:

- Reviewing location, quantity and compliance of accessible parking.
- Identifying gaps in key areas.
- Considering future demand.

Smart Goal 1.8

Deliver a DDA Compliant Beach Access in Ulverstone

Time frame: by December 2029

What this looks like in practice:

- Improved usability for a wider range of users
- Integration with parking, paths and surrounding infrastructure.
- Demonstrates best practice for coastal access.

Smart Goal 1.9

Sound Shell & Stage Access

Time frame: by June 2029

What this looks like in practice:

- Step-free access to stages and performance areas where possible.
- Accessible viewing areas and pathways for audiences.
- Infrastructure supports inclusive events as standard.

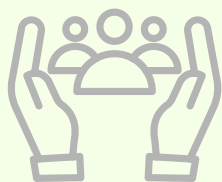
Smart Goal 1.10

Additional Changing Places Facilities in Penguin and Ulverstone

Time frame: by June 2030

What this looks like in practice:

- Greater ability for users and carers to participate in community life.
- Key locations become more inclusive destinations.
- Reliable, well-maintained facilities meeting recognised standards.



Pillar 2 An Inclusive Culture



An inclusive community starts with an inclusive organisation. Council's culture, which includes the values, behaviours and decisions that guide how work is done, plays a critical role in shaping access and inclusion outcomes. An inclusive culture ensures accessibility is not treated as an afterthought or compliance task, but as a shared responsibility embedded across Council's leadership, workforce and partnerships.

This commitment recognises the importance of awareness, learning and lived experience in building an organisation that is responsive to the needs of people with disability. By fostering understanding, listening to diverse perspectives and encouraging collaboration, Council can make more informed decisions and create policies, programs and projects that reflect real-world experience.

An inclusive culture aligns strongly with Council's Strategic Plan themes of Empowered Community and Social Equity, as well as Council's organisational values. By investing in inclusive practices, leadership and partnerships, Council strengthens trust, improves decision-making and reinforces its commitment to fairness, respect and participation for all members of the community.



2022-2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

ADOPTION OF AN ACCESS AND INCLUSION WORKPLACE POLICY

Council has adopted an Access and Inclusion Workplace Policy, providing clear guidance to staff and embedding inclusive practices across recruitment, workplace culture, service delivery and day-to-day decision-making.

INCREASED CONSULTATION WITH ACCESS & INCLUSION WORKING GROUP

Consultation with the Disability Access and Inclusion Working Group has become standard practice for strategic projects and major events, ensuring lived experience informs planning and design. This approach has shaped outcomes such as the Tobruk Park sensory garden and the Reibey Street upgrade, embedding accessibility from the outset.

Smart Goal 2.1

Integrate disability awareness and inclusive culture principles into organisational practices, communications and leadership approaches

Time frame: Ongoing

What this looks like in practice:

- Staff demonstrate confidence and capability in inclusive communication and service delivery.
- Disability awareness is embedded in induction, training and leadership development programs.
- Communications are consistently accessible, using plain English and inclusive formats.
- Lived experience is valued and informs decision-making, planning and service design.
- Leaders model inclusive behaviours and set clear expectations across teams.
- A workplace culture where inclusion is understood as everyone's responsibility, not a specialist function.

Smart Goal 2.2

Coordinate awareness initiatives through existing communication channels

Time frame: Ongoing

What this looks like in practice:

- Regular, visible campaigns through existing.
- Council channels Increased understanding of accessibility and inclusion in the community.
- Consistent messaging across platforms.
- Measurable engagement and awareness over time.

Smart Goal 2.3

Inclusive Business Recognition Program (Open Doors Award or similar)

Time frame: Ongoing

What this looks like in practice:

- Ongoing recognition of businesses demonstrating inclusive practices.
- Increased participation and awareness over time.
- Positive reinforcement rather than compliance focus.
- Stronger relationships between Council and local businesses.
- Increased confidence among businesses to make improvements.

FOUR-YEAR FOCUS

By June 2030, disability will be more visible, understood and respected across the Central Coast, with increased community awareness, confident businesses, informed decision-makers and Council staff equipped to support inclusive participation in everyday life.

Smart Goal 2.4

Accessibility Content Developed for Staff and Councillor Inductions

Time frame: by December 2026

What this looks like in practice:

- Accessibility included as standard in staff and Councillor onboarding.
- Consistent baseline understanding across all staff.
- Clear expectations around inclusive practice.
- Accessibility embedded from day one.

Smart Goal 2.5

Immersive CBD Walk for Councillors

Time frame: by March 2027

What this looks like in practice:

- Councillors gain direct insight into lived experience of disability.
- Improved understanding in decision-making processes.
- Greater confidence discussing accessibility issues.
- Stronger leadership on inclusion across Council.

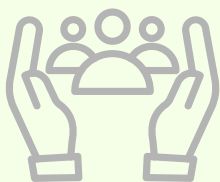
Smart Goal 2.6

Explore Council Obtaining Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Accreditation

Time frame: by June 2028

What this looks like in practice:

- Clear understanding of feasibility and benefits for Council
- Consideration of how the program could work locally
- Informed recommendation on whether to proceed
- Alignment with existing services and facilities
- Alternative pathways for recognising and supporting hidden disabilities identified and explored.



Pillar 3

Inclusive Events, Services & Communications



Access to information, services and community activities is fundamental to participation. Even where physical access exists, people can still be excluded by complex information, inaccessible formats, sensory barriers or assumptions about how people engage. Inclusive events, services and communication ensure that people can access what Council offers in ways that work for them.

This commitment acknowledges that designing for accessibility often leads to better outcomes for everyone. Clearer communication, inclusive event planning and flexible service delivery benefit not only people with disability, but also older residents, carers, families, visitors and people experiencing temporary barriers. When services and information are easy to access and understand, participation increases and frustration decreases.

Inclusive events, services and communication directly support Council's Strategic Plan priorities of Safe, Vibrant and Welcoming Community, Empowered Community and Social Equity. By embedding accessibility into how information is shared and services are delivered, Council helps ensure that everyone has the opportunity to be informed, involved and connected to community life.



2022-2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

WEBSITE UPDATES

Council's website has been refreshed with a modern design and updated content, improving navigation, readability and access to information for a wider range of users.

ANTENNO APP

The Antenno app delivers timely, location-based updates about Council services, events and disruptions, providing a simple and accessible way for residents to stay informed.

CAPTIONS ON ALL COUNCIL VIDEOS

Captions are now included on all Council social media videos, improving accessibility for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing and those watching without sound.

Smart Goal 3.1

Integrate accessibility considerations into event planning, service delivery and communications processes across Council

Time frame: Ongoing

What this looks like in practice:

- Accessibility is considered from the outset in event planning, service design and communications.
- Standard checklists and guidelines are used to ensure consistent, inclusive delivery.
- Events and services include accessible features such as step-free access, seating, clear signage and sensory considerations.
- Communications are provided in accessible formats, including captions, alt text and plain English.
- Staff and event organisers understand their role in delivering inclusive experiences.
- Feedback from people with disability is actively sought and used to improve future delivery.

Smart Goal 3.2

Event Accessibility Guidelines developed for Council and community-run events

Time frame: by June 2027

What this looks like in practice:

- Clear, practical guidance embedded into event planning processes.
- Consistent delivery of accessible Council events.
- Staff understand expectations and how to apply them.
- Accessibility considered early, not retrospectively.
- Continuous improvement through post-event feedback and learnings.

Smart Goal 3.3

Accessible Event Toolkit developed for community-run events

Time frame: by June 2027

What this looks like in practice:

- Practical, easy-to-use toolkit available for event organisers.
- Downloadable resources such as signage, checklists and templates to support accessible event delivery.
- Clear guidance on how to plan accessible and inclusive events.
- Consistent approach to accessibility across Council and community events.
- Increased confidence and capability among organisers.
- Greater participation from people with disability at community events.

FOUR-YEAR FOCUS

By June 2030, Council-run and Council-supported events, services and communications will be consistently planned and delivered with accessibility in mind, supported by clear standards, accessible information and confident organisers.

Smart Goal 3.4

Public toilet mapping and signage improvements

Time frame: by June 2028

What this looks like in practice:

- Accessible toilets clearly mapped and easy to locate.
- Signage improves awareness and navigation on-site.
- Information integrated into digital and tourism platforms.
- Reduced confusion and increased confidence for users.

Smart Goal 3.5

Accessible wayfinding signage improvements

Time frame: by June 2028

What this looks like in practice:

- Developing consistent signage approaches
- Piloting improvements in key areas
- Using user feedback to refine

A detailed Actions Table for all three pillars, including priority and responsible departments, can be found in Appendix 1.



Governance & Implementation

The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026–2030 will be implemented through a shared responsibility model that embeds accessibility and inclusion into Council's everyday planning, decision-making and service delivery.

The Working Group and people with lived experience will continue to play an ongoing advisory role in the implementation of this Plan. The Group will review progress annually to assess whether actions are being achieved, identify emerging issues, and provide advice on priorities for the year ahead. This review process ensures the Plan remains responsive to lived experience and changing community needs.

Responsibility for delivering actions sits across Council, with relevant teams accountable for progressing actions within their areas of responsibility (refer to the Actions Table in Appendix 1). Accessibility and inclusion will be considered as part of project planning, policy development and service review processes, rather than as a stand-alone activity.

Implementation of this Plan will be supported through integration with Council's Strategic Plan, Term Plans, Annual Plans and budgets. Where appropriate, actions will be reflected in annual planning and resource allocation to support delivery over the life of the Plan.

Progress will be monitored through internal reporting and engagement with the Working Group, ensuring transparency and continuous improvement. Outcomes and learnings from implementation will inform future planning and decision-making.

Accessibility and inclusion are ongoing commitments. While this Plan sets out priority actions for the 2026–2030 period, it is not intended to limit Council's ability to respond to new opportunities, emerging needs or legislative change. Additional actions may be identified and progressed during the life of the Plan where they align with its intent and priorities.

A comprehensive review of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan will be undertaken prior to June 2030 to assess its impact, effectiveness and lessons learned. This review will inform the development of the next Plan.

Glossary

Accessibility: Making sure places, services, and information can be used by as many people as possible, including people with disability.

Accessible design: Designing spaces, buildings, and information so people of all abilities can use them safely and easily.

Barriers: Things that make it harder for people to participate. These can be physical (like stairs), social (like attitudes), or informational (like complex language).

Carer: A person who provides unpaid support to someone with disability, illness, or age-related needs.

Community participation: Being able to take part in everyday life, such as work, events, services, and social activities.

Disability: A long-term condition that can affect how a person moves, communicates, learns, or participates in daily life.

Inclusion: Making sure everyone feels welcome, valued, and able to take part in community life.

Inclusive placemaking: Designing public spaces so they are safe, welcoming, and usable for people of all ages and abilities.

Lived experience: Knowledge and understanding gained from personal experience of disability, caring, or accessing services.

Participation restriction: When a person is unable to fully take part in everyday activities due to barriers.

Psychosocial disability: A disability that relates to mental health conditions that affect how a person functions in daily life.

Social model of disability: The idea that people are disabled by barriers in society, not just by their condition.

Universal design: Designing places, services, and products so they can be used by as many people as possible without needing changes or special features.

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Appendix: Actions Table

These actions will be delivered progressively and integrated with existing planning, asset management, communications plans, and capital works and infrastructure programs, recognising available resourcing and prioritising opportunities for alignment.

Pillar 1: Inclusive Placemaking

No.	Action	Priority	Department	Due Date	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
1.1	Inclusive Design Practice Guideline to support project teams and integrate with existing design processes. Measures: Guideline endorsed; Embedded in project management framework; Accessibility checklist developed and used; Evidence of application across relevant projects.	Foundational	Liveability and Growth: Active and Inclusive Communities / DAIWG	December 2027				
1.2	Accessible Toilet Upgrades (in line with the Asset Management Plan) Measures: % of facilities compliant; facilities upgrades as they reach end of life.	High	Infrastructure Services: Property Services	Ongoing				
1.3	Footpath Accessibility Audit and Upgrade Program Measures: Audit completed and mapped; Priority defects list created; Integrated into capital works program; % of hazards addressed annually; Reduction in complaints; Compliance with standards.	High	Infrastructure Services: Design & Delivery / Public Safety	Ongoing				
1.4	Municipal Beach Access Improvement Plan Measures: Plan adopted; Priority sites identified for funding.	High	Infrastructure Services: Property Services	June 2027				
1.5	Toilet Cleanliness Standards Program Measures: Cleaning schedule revised to align with usage patterns; User satisfaction improvements	High	Infrastructure Services: Property Services	June 2027				

No.	Action	Priority	Department	Due Date	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
1.6	Accessible Pedestrian Routes Network Plan Measures: Priority network identified; Endorsed by Council; Used to guide capital works	High	Infrastructures Services: Design & Delivery	June 2028				
1.7	Accessible Parking Supply Review Measures: Gap analysis completed; Recommendations endorsed	High	Infrastructures Services: Principal Engineer	December 2027				
1.8	Deliver a DDA Compliant Beach Access in Ulverstone Measures: Location identified; Design and funding secured; Project delivered	Medium	Infrastructure Services: Property Services	December 2029				
1.9	Sound Shell & Stage Access Measures: Design completed; Construction underway	Medium	Infrastructure Services: Property Services	June 2029				
1.10	Additional Changing Places Facilities in Penguin and Ulverstone Measures: Funding sought; Facilities designed and constructed; Facilities operational	Medium	Infrastructure Services: Property Services	June 2030				

Pillar 2: Inclusive Culture

No.	Action	Priority	Department	Due Date	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
2.1	Integrate disability awareness and inclusive culture principles into organisational practices, communications and leadership approaches Measures: Inclusion principles referenced across programs; Alignment with DAIP reporting; Cross-team collaboration	Foundational	Executive Team / DAIWG	Ongoing				
2.2	Coordinate awareness initiatives through existing communication channels Measures: Campaign materials developed; Campaign delivered annually through existing communications channels and opportunities.	High	Liveability and Growth: Active and Inclusive / Organisational Services: Communication and Engagement	Ongoing				
2.3	Inclusive Business Recognition Program (Open Doors Award or similar) Measures: Program reviewed and updated; Awards delivered annually; Participation increased	High	Liveability and Growth: Economic Development	Ongoing				
2.4	Accessibility Content Developed for Staff and Councillor Inductions Measures: Content developed; Included in induction materials; Delivered consistently	High	Organisational Services: People and Culture	December 2026				
2.5	Immersive CBD Walk for Councillors Measures: Sessions delivered; Participation rates; Feedback collected	High	Office of the CEO	March 2027				
2.6	Explore Council Obtaining Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Accreditation Measures: Feasibility assessed; Recommendation developed	Medium	Liveability and Growth: Active and Inclusive	June 2028				

Pillar 3: Inclusive Events, Services & Communications

No.	Action	Priority	Department	Due Date	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
3.1	Integrate accessibility considerations into event planning, service delivery and communications processes across Council Measures: Accessibility considerations referenced in event planning processes; Alignment with event accessibility standard; Integration with communications and service delivery practices; Cross-team collaboration	Foundational	Liveability and Growth: Active and Inclusive	Ongoing				
3.2	Event Accessibility Guidelines developed for Council and community-run events Measures: Accessibility standard developed; Embedded into event planning processes; Applied to Council events; Staff awareness of standard	High	Liveability and Growth: Active and Inclusive	June 2027				
3.3	Accessible Event Toolkit developed for community-run events Measures: Toolkit developed; Available online; Used by organisers	High	Liveability and Growth: Active and Inclusive	June 2027				
3.4	Public toilet mapping and signage improvements Measures: Map published online; Integrated into tourism materials	High	Infrastructure Services: Property Services	June 2028				
3.5	Accessible wayfinding signage improvements Measures: Signage plan developed; Pilot area implemented; User feedback improvements	High	Infrastructures Services: Design & Delivery	June 2028				

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