



## **Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP)**

### **2021-2025**



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## **Acknowledgements**

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## **Background**

### **The Shire of Dandaragan**

The Shire of Dandaragan is located in the Northern Coastal Wheatbelt and covers an area of 6,716 square kilometres and contains over 288,000 hectares of national parks and reserves, including Nambung, Watheroo and Lesueur National Parks.

The Shire has a unique blend of agricultural and coast environment. Located within 200km north of Perth, the five townsites include Jurien Bay, Cervantes, Dandaragan, Badgingarra and Regans Ford that offer a diverse range of experiences and is home to approximately 3,213 residents. The region has a thriving seasonal coastal tourism industry with other major industries, including beef cattle, sheep, rock lobster, broadacre farming and mining. More recently, the construction of renewable energy projects in the Shire has also provided a considerable economic boost.

The major town, Jurien Bay, is located on the Indian Ocean Drive with a population of approximately 1,761. This increases considerably during the peak tourism periods including long weekends and school holidays. The Shire is experiencing growth due to the movement of retirees and other mature-aged people to the coastal area.

### **Functions, facilities and services (both in-house and contracted) provided by the Shire of Dandaragan**

The Shire of Dandaragan is responsible for a range of functions, facilities and services including:

**Services to property:** construction and maintenance of Shire-owned buildings, roads, footpaths and cycle facilities; land drainage and development; waste collection and disposal; litter control and street cleaning; planting and caring for street trees; street lighting; and bush fire control.

**Services to the community:** provision and maintenance of playing areas, parks, gardens, reserves and facilities for sporting and community groups; management of recreation centres; public library and information services; visitor servicing; libraries; youth services and community events.

**Regulatory services:** planning of road systems, sub-divisions and town planning schemes; building approvals for construction, additions or alterations to buildings; environmental health services and ranger services, including dog control and the development, maintenance and control of parking.

**General administration:** the provision of general information to the public and the lodging of complaints and payment of fees including rates and dog licences.

**Processes of government:** ordinary and special Council and committee meetings; electors' meetings and election of Council Members; advisory group meetings and community consultations.

## **People with disability in the Shire of Dandaragan**

It is estimated that there are over 500 people with disability living within the Shire, based on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare statistic that 1 in 6 people have disability. In addition, according to the 2016 census, 23 people in the Shire provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability during the previous two weeks which is 8% of the local population. Almost one-quarter (23.2%) of all people with disability reported a mental or behavioural disorder as their main condition in the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (2019) (SDAC), and 1 in 10 people with disability experiencing disability discrimination in the last year.

The Shire is committed to moving away from the traditional way of thinking about what classifies as having a disability. According to the SDAC, the definition of 'Disability' is "any limitation, restriction or impairment which restricts everyday activities and has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months".

Given the Shire's relatively high population of older people and retirees (based on the ABS survey that 50% of people aged over 60 identified themselves as having a disability), in addition to seasonal influx of tourists, disability access and inclusion must be considered as a matter of urgency for the Shire if we are to provide equitable access and opportunity for participation and take an asset-based community development approach to working with people with disability within the Shire.

### **Planning for better access**

The Western Australia Disability Services Act requires all Local Governments to develop and implement a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) to ensure that people with disability have equal access to its facilities and services.

Other legislation underpinning access and inclusion includes the Western Australia Equal Opportunity Act (1984) and the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA), both of which make discrimination based on a person's disability unlawful.

### **Progress since 2016**

The Shire of Dandaragan is committed to facilitating the inclusion of people with disability through the improvement of access to its information facilities and services. Towards this goal the Shire adopted its first Disability Service Plan (DSP) in 1996 to address the access barriers within the community. Since the inception of Disability Access and Inclusion Plans (DAIP) in 2004 the DAIP has undergone four reviews since then, including this most recent review in 2021

Since the adoption of the initial DSP, the Shire has implemented many initiatives and made progress towards better access. Some of these are highlighted in the Findings of the Consultation section of this Plan.

## **Access and Inclusion Policy Statement**

The Shire of Dandaragan is committed to ensuring that the community is accessible for and inclusive of people with disability, their families and carers.

The Shire of Dandaragan interprets an accessible and inclusive community as one in which all Council functions, facilities, and services (both in-house and contracted) are open, available and accessible to people with disability, providing them with the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities as other people in the community.

The Shire of Dandaragan:

- recognises that people with disability are valued members of the community who make a variety of contributions to local social, economic and cultural life
- believes that a community that recognises its diversity and supports the participation and inclusion of all members makes for a richer community life
- believes that people with disability, their families and carers should be supported to remain in the community
- is committed to consulting with people with disability, their families and carers and disability organisations in addressing barriers to access and inclusion
- will ensure its agents and contractors work towards the desired outcomes in the DAIP
- is committed to supporting local community groups and businesses to provide access and inclusion of people with disability
- is committed to achieving the seven desired outcomes of its DAIP.

These are:

1. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the Shire of Dandaragan.
2. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the Shire of Dandaragan.
3. People with disability receive information from the Shire of Dandaragan 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 employees of the Shire of Dandaragan, and its contractors.
5. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Shire of Dandaragan.
6. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the Shire of Dandaragan (and any external consultants).
7. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with the Shire of Dandaragan.

## **Development of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan**

### **Responsibility for the planning process**

The Community Services team, in consultation with our Environmental Health team, has responsibility to oversee the development, implementation, review and evaluation of the plan. The final plan is endorsed by Council and it is the responsibility of all officers to implement the relevant actions.

### **Community consultation process**

In 2021, the Shire undertook to review its Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP), consult with key stakeholders and draft a new DAIP to guide further improvements to access and inclusion.

The process included:

- examination of the initial DAIP and subsequent progress reports to see what has been achieved and what still needs work;
- consultation with Shire staff and Councillors; and
- consultation with the community.

The Disability Services Act Regulations (2004) set out the minimum consultation requirements for public authorities in relation to Disability Access and Inclusion Plans (DAIPs). Local Governments must call for submissions (either general or specific) by notice in a newspaper circulating in the Local Government area and on any website maintained by or on behalf of the Local Government. Other mechanisms may also be used.

The following consultation methods were used:

- In April 2021 the community was informed through the local newspaper and Shire website that the Shire was reviewing the current DAIP to address barriers to access for people with disabilities and their families. They were invited to provide input via a survey, either in writing, by telephone or in person. Fourteen surveys were received and no calls were received.
- A hard copy of the survey was made available at libraries, community centres, the Shire Administration Centre, Jurien Bay Health Centre, on Facebook and the Shire website.
- Surveys were emailed to the Shire email news list, including individuals who had recently contacted the Shire regarding disability access, and relevant organisations. This invited people to identify any barriers under each of the seven desired outcomes for a DAIP.
- An internal survey was made available to all Shire staff and councillors inviting them to identify barriers to providing access and inclusion from a staff/elected member perspective, and identify strategies to address those barriers. 28 completed surveys were received.

## **Findings of the consultation**

The review and consultation found that some initial objectives in the DAIP had been achieved, however the Shire will continue to work on improvements in relation to matters of access and inclusion and on removing barriers for people with disability. A new plan was required to continue addressing access barriers. It should also reflect legislative and regulatory changes such as striving for inclusion and access beyond the minimum compliance of the standards.

The consultation also identified a variety of remaining barriers to access and inclusion, to be addressed in the DAIP Action Plan.

Some of the achievements included:

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Task Achieved</b>
Monitor Shire services to ensure appropriate access and inclusion occurs	Induct new employees in disability access and inclusion issues including the policy, plan and implementation of strategies.
Encourage events, provided or funded by the Shire, are accessible to people with disability.	Inform event organisers about accessibility issues and encourage them to plan events using accessible events strategies.
Continue to ensure library services are accessible and inclusive.	Provide a range of large print books. Advertise a range of large print books.
Ensure that recreational areas are accessible.	Purchase of beach accessible wheelchair. Ensure at least one access is available at beach locations in Jurien Bay.
Ensure that Shire building and facilities meet the standards for access.	Ensure that building standards for commercial developments are met before building approval is granted. Improve access to the Jurien Bay jetty.
Provide information in formats that are accessible.	Assess the Shire of Dandaragan website against Disability Services Commission tools to ensure it is accessible. Provide a summarised version of the DAIP.
Ensure that people with disabilities are consulted about the DAIP and other significant planning processes.	Consult people with disability using a range of different consultation mediums.
Ensure that people with disabilities are aware of and can access other established consultation processes.	Ensure documents that require community consultation are available in alternative formats upon request. Ensure documents are published on the Shire's website.
Use inclusive recruitment practices	Make sure that job advertisements are in an accessible format (12 or 14 pt, Arial). Include Equal Employment Opportunity statement. Ensure the interview is held in an accessible venue.
Ensure accessibility standards are met for new and existing infrastructure	Ensure access is provided from holiday accommodation, developments and RSL

	retirement village to link to existing pathways.
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## **Access Barriers**

The access barriers identified in the consultation process were:

- Processes of the Shire may not be as accessible as possible.
- Staff may be uninformed or lacking in confidence to adequately provide the same level of service to people with disability.
- Recreational areas may not be appropriately accessible, including during periods of infrastructure development.
- People with disability may not be aware of consultation opportunities with the Shire.

These barriers informed the development of strategies in the DAIP. The barriers have been prioritised in order of importance, which assists in setting timeframes for the completion of strategies to overcome those access barriers. However, the strategies listed in the Action Plan are considered ongoing and long term, beyond the date range of this document.

## **Implementation Plan for 2021-2025**

The Implementation Plan details the task and responsibilities for each strategy to be implemented during 2021-2025 to improve access to the Shire's services, buildings and information. It is intended that the following Implementation Plan will be updated annually to progress the achievement of all the strategies over the duration of the four-year plan. The Shire of Dandaragan acknowledges that improvements to accessibility for people with disability is an ongoing process and the tasks contained in the Action Plan are the key focus for implementation.

## **Responsibility for implementing the DAIP**

Implementation of the DAIP is the responsibility of all areas of the Shire. The Disability Services Act (1993) requires all public authorities to take all practical measures to ensure that the DAIP is implemented by its officers, employees, agents and contractors.

## **Communicating the plan to staff and people with disability**

Copies of the draft DAIP will be sent to all those who contributed to the planning process. The community will be informed through the local media (newspaper) that copies of the plan are available upon request in an electronic format; in hard copy format in both standard and large print; in an audio format on cassette or compact disc; by email; and on the Shire's website. As plans are amended Shire staff and the community will be advised of the availability of updated plans, using the above methods after consultation processes are carried out.

## **Review and evaluation mechanisms**

The Disability Services Act requires that DAIPs be reviewed at least every five years. Whenever the DAIP is amended, a copy of the amended plan must be lodged with the Disability Services Commission. The Implementation Plan will be updated annually.

### **Monitoring and Reviewing**

The employee with responsibility for the DAIP will analyse progress in implementing the DAIP and provide a report to management and Council on progress and recommended changes to the implementation plan annually.

The Shire's DAIP will be reviewed and submitted to the Disability Services Commission in 2022. The report will outline what has been achieved under the Shire's DAIP 2016-2020.

### **Evaluation**

An evaluation will occur as part of the five-yearly review of the DAIP. The community, staff and Elected Members will be consulted as per the endorsed consultation strategies, as part of any evaluation.

### **Reporting on the DAIP**

The Disability Services Act requires the Shire to report on the implementation of its DAIP in its annual report outlining:

- progress towards the desired outcomes of its DAIP
- progress of its agents and contractors towards meeting the seven desired outcomes
- the strategies used to inform agents and contractors of its DAIP.

The Shire is also required to report on progress in the prescribed format to the Disability Services Commission by July 4 each year.



## DAIP Implementation Plan

### Outcome 1: ACCESS TO SERVICES

**People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by the Shire of Dandaragan.**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Develop partnerships with key agencies to maximise access to services.	Provide information to assist tourism operators to improve accessibility.	Economic Development Manager Manager Customer and Community Services
	Ensure visitor centre staff are aware of accessible services and facilities in the Shire of Dandaragan.	Tourism Customer Service Officer Manager Customer and Community Services
	Assist sporting clubs and community groups have access to information about accessibility.	Economic Development Manager Community Development Officer
Ensure Shire services consider and plan for access and inclusion.	Review position descriptions to ensure roles with decision-making or influence in DAIP outcomes include direction on accessibility tasks and role.	Coordinator of Governance and Human Resources All Managers
	Ensure customer service staff identify DAIP-related requests across the Shire of Dandaragan and direct enquiries to staff/management who are aware and	Receptionist Administration staff Community Development Officer Manager Customer and Community Services

	capable of managing access and inclusion-related enquiries.	Coordinator Infrastructure Services Principal Environmental Health Officer
Encourage and ensure events – funded or coordinated by the Shire - are accessible to people with disabilities.	Update event application form to include questions related to accessibility considerations including parking, toilets, etc.  Encourage all event organisers to use the “creating accessible events” document developed by the Disability Services Commission.	Community Development Officer
Ensure library services are accessible and inclusive.	Provide a range of large print books and alternative resources at each Shire library  Advertise the collection of alternative print books and resources.	Community Services Officer (Library) Librarians Manager Customer and Community Services
Monitor Shire’s commitment to access and inclusion.	Review Disability Access and Inclusion Plan every 4 years and submit to Department of Communities.  Include DAIP outcomes in Shire of Dandaragan annual report and submit to Department of Communities.	Manager Customer and Community Services Principal Environmental Health Officer  Manager Customer and Community Services Chief Executive Officer

## Outcome 2: BUILT INFRASTRUCTURE

**People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the Shire of Dandaragan.**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Ensure accessibility standards are met for new and redeveloped infrastructure.	Continue to advocate for MRWA to reconstruct sections of Bashford Street to facilitate a centre pedestrian island.	Executive Manager Infrastructure
	Ensure new masterplans for public spaces include consideration for movement of people with disability, including in the development, construction and completion phase.	Executive Manager Infrastructure Executive Manager Development Services Economic Development Manager Manager Customer and Community Services Planning Officer
Ensure that recreational areas are accessible.	Rectify any non-compliant ACROD bays.	Executive Manager Infrastructure
	Evaluate and respond appropriately to reasonable requests for improvements to public footpaths that enable continuous accessible pathways for people with disability.	
	Ensure where ACROD parking bays are provided, that some element of the public facility and/or open space is also accessible.  <i>Note: This is not a guarantee that every element of each public facility and/or public space will be accessible.</i>	Coordinator Infrastructure Services

	Seek guidance from Disability Services Commission about the potential for beach access points in Cervantes.	Manager Customer and Community Services
	Identify seating areas for replacement on principle shared pathways in CBD areas using the Australian Standards: Design for Access and Mobility (AS 1428.2-1992) and the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design's recommendation of a range of distances between places to rest of 50-150m depending on user groups.	Executive Manager Infrastructure
	Investigate feasibility of inclusion of a disability-focused, sensory, fully-fenced playground in Jurien Bay in conjunction with the Shire's playground replacement strategy and broader asset management obligations.	Manager Customer and Community Services Executive Manager Infrastructure Principal Environmental Health Officer Planning Officer
Ensure that Shire buildings and facilities meet the standards for access.	Ensure Cervantes Recreation Precinct Masterplan and future recreation masterplans include consideration for movement of people with disability, including in the development, construction and completion phase.	Economic Development Manager Manager Customer and Community Services
	Review public toilets across the Shire to develop a plan for achieving disability standards for ambulant facilities for ongoing planning and budgeting.	Executive Manager Development Services
	Ensure that building standards for commercial developments are met before building approval is granted.	Executive Manager Development Services

	Investigate feasibility of improvements to library access in Cervantes and Badgingarra to increase space and access for people with wheelchairs / walkers.	Manager Customer and Community Services Economic Development Manager
Improve access to local businesses around the Shire.	Investigate providing a service to local businesses for them to register for a 'disability access audit'.	Economic Development Manager
	Encourage local businesses to improve accessibility for residents and visitors through awareness-building and provision of information about disability training opportunities.	Economic Development Manager
	Develop a disability-friendly Shire brochure	Community Development Officer Tourism Customer Service Officer Economic Development Manager

## Outcome 3: COMMUNICATIONS

**People with disability receive information from the Shire of Dandaragan in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Provide information in formats that are accessible.	Ensure the Shire of Dandaragan and Turquoise Coast Visitor Centre website comply with Disability Services Commission Information Checklist to ensure it is accessible.	Manager Customer and Community Services
	Provide tourist information in alternative formats when requested, when reasonably practicable.	Tourism Customer Service Officer Community Development Officer Economic Development Officer
	Provide a summarised version of the DAIP	Manager Customer and Community Services Principal Environmental Health Officer
	Ensure all Shire of Dandaragan documents are written using "Guidelines for Accessible Printed Information" as produced by the Disability Services Commission or VisAbility.	All staff
	Improve awareness within the community that documents are available in alternative formats, as per Disability Services Information Checklist.	Community Development Officer
	Improve awareness of employees that information is available in alternative formats and how they can provide it.	Council Secretary Development Services Admin Officer

		Coordinator Governance and Human Resources
Provide support to people with disability to complete Shire forms and documents.	Increase awareness to the public that appointments are available with any member of staff to assist them to fill out Shire paperwork. This would be particularly targeted at people with sight or literacy issues.	Community Development Officer All staff

## **Outcome 4: QUALITY OF SERVICE**

**People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the employees of the Shire of Dandaragan as other people.**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Raise staff awareness of disability access and inclusion matters.	Provide annual disability awareness activities for staff.	Coordinator Governance and Human Resources Manager Customer and Community Services
Raise Councillor awareness of disability access and inclusion matters.	Provide biennial disability awareness activities for Councillors	Chief Executive Officer

## **Outcome 5: COMMENTS**

**People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Shire of Dandaragan.**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Ensure all members of the community have the ability to provide feedback to the Shire.	Ensure that grievance mechanisms and feedback forms are reviewed annually for effectiveness.	Manager Customer and Community Services
	Ensure that feedback mechanisms are well advertised on a regular basis.	Community Development Officer Coordinator Infrastructure Services

## Outcome 6: CONSULTATION

**People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the Shire of Dandaragan**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Ensure that people with disability are consulted about the DAIP and other significant planning processes.	<p>Consult people with disability using a range of different consultation mediums.</p> <p>Develop a register of interested people to provide comment on access and inclusion.</p> <p>Create a Disability Access and Inclusion Reference Group that meets twice per year with one meeting prior to annual budget consideration.</p>	Community Development Officer Principal Environmental Health Officer Manager Customer and Community Services
Ensure that people with disability are aware of and can access other established consultation processes.	Ensure documents that require community consultation are available in alternative formats for people with disability, such as one-to-one phone interviews and meetings.	
Ensure that consultation meetings or forums have appropriate equipment to ensure that discussions are clear, visible and audible to all in attendance.	Investigate IT and Audio/Visual features to improve consultation meetings, including microphones, speakers and screens.	Executive Manager Corporate and Community Services. Community Development Officer

## **Outcome 7: EMPLOYMENT**

**People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with the Shire of Dandaragan.**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Use inclusive recruitment practices	<p>Ensure job advertisements are in an accessible format (12 or 14 pt, Arial), and include the Equal Employment Opportunity statement.</p> <p>Ensure the interview is held in an accessible venue.</p> <p>Investigate and identify opportunities where suitable positions can be registered with disability employment service providers within the region to assist people with disability into the workforce.</p>	Coordinator Governance and Human Resources