

Shire of Lake Grace



Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

(DAIP) 2014—2019



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Background

The Shire of Lake Grace

The Shire of Lake Grace is located 354km south east of Perth in Western Australia's Southern Wheatbelt and covers an area of 10,747 square kilometres.

Major industries are agriculture, including wheat, sheep, beef cattle and tourism.

The Shire of Lake Grace has a population of approximately 1455 people. In the past this has increased considerably with the influx of tourists during the wild flower season but statistics show that tourism is now all year round.

The town was established in the late 19th century and has retained some heritage-listed public buildings from this period.

Functions, facilities and services (both in-house and contracted) provided by the Shire of Lake Grace

The Shire of Lake Grace 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; numbering of buildings and lots; street lighting; and bush fire control.

Services to the community: provision and maintenance of playing areas, parks, gardens, reserves and facilities for residents, sporting and community groups; management of recreation centers, pools, public libraries, Visitor Centre/information services, community events, attendance at Development and Progress Association, Recreation Council and community group meetings.

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

General administration: the provision of general information to the public and the lodging of complaints and payment of fees including rates and dog/cat licenses.

Processes of government: Ordinary and special Meetings of Council and its Committees, Electors' Meetings and election of Council Members; community consultations; compliance and public advertising.

People with disability in the Shire of Lake Grace

It is estimated that there are approximately 27 (2.0%) people with disability living within the Shire (the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (2011) The influx of retirees will increase this number as according to the ABS survey, 50% of people aged over 60 identified themselves as having a disability. The influx of tourists, including tourists with a disability, must also be considered.

Planning for better access

The Western Australia Disability Services Act (1993) 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 include the Western Australia Equal Opportunity Act (1984) and the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA), both of which make discrimination on the basis of a person's disability unlawful.

Progress since 1995

The Shire of Lake Grace 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 1995 to address the access barriers within the community.

Since the adoption of the initial DSP, the Shire has implemented many initiatives and made significant progress towards better access. Some of these are highlighted in Appendix 1 under the relevant key outcome headings.

Access and Inclusion Policy Statement

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

The Shire of Lake Grace 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 Lake Grace:

- 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 its 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 who have 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; and
- Is committed to achieving the seventh 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 relevant public authority.
2. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the relevant public authority.
3. People with disability receive information from the relevant public authority 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 relevant public authority.
5. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the relevant public authority.
6. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the relevant public authority.
7. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with a public authority.

Development of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

Responsibility for the planning process

The Chief Executive Officer has responsibility to oversee the development, implementation, review and evaluation of the plan. Council endorses the final plan and it is the responsibility of all officers to implement the relevant actions.

Community consultation process

In 2006, 2010 and 2014 the Shire undertook a review of its Disability Service Plan (DSP) to guide further improvements to access and inclusion.

The process included:

- Examination of the initial DSP and subsequent progress reports to see what has been achieved and what still needs work;
- Consultation with key staff; and
- Consultation with the community.

The Disability Services Act Regulations (2004) sets 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 or on any website maintained by or on behalf of the Local Government. Other mechanisms may also be used.

Access Barriers

The access barriers identified in the consultation process were:

- Processes of the Shire may not be as accessible as possible.
- Suitable parking for people with disability may not be meeting the needs of this diverse demographic.
- Elements of the Shire's website require improvement to best meet the needs of people with disability.
- Ongoing staff training is required to adequately provide the same level of service to people with disability.
- People with disability may not be aware of all consultation opportunities with the Council.

Responsibility for implementing the DAIP

Implementation of the DAIP is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer. 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.

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 can be updated more frequently if desired.

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 2014.

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; and
- 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 31 each year.

Strategies to improve access and inclusion

The following overarching strategies have been developed to address each of the seven desired outcome areas of the Disability Services Act from feedback gained in the consultation process. These will form the basis of the Implementation Plan.

Outcome 1: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by a public authority.

Strategy	Timeline
Monitor Shire services to ensure equitable access and inclusion.	Ongoing 2014-2019
Monitor access to the information in all Shire libraries.	Ongoing 2014-2019
Develop the links between the DAIP and other Shire plans and strategies.	Ongoing 2014-2019
Ensure that events, whether organised or funded, are accessible to people with disability.	Ongoing 2014-2019

Outcome 2: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of a public authority.

Strategy	Timeline
Ensure that all buildings and facilities meet the standards for access and any demonstrated additional need.	Ongoing 2014-2019
Ensure that all new or redevelopment works provide access to people with disability, where practicable.	Ongoing 2014-2019
Ensure that ACROD parking meets the needs of people with disability in terms of quantity and location.	Ongoing 2014-2019
Advocate to local businesses and tourist venues the requirements for and benefits flowing from the provision of accessible venues.	Ongoing 2014-2019
Ensure that all recreational areas are accessible.	Ongoing 2014-2019

Outcome 3: People with disability receive information from a public authority in a format that will enable them to access the information, as readily as other people are able to access it.

Strategy	Timeline
Ensure that the community is aware that Shire information is available in alternative formats upon request.	Ongoing 2014-2019
Improve staff awareness of accessible information needs and how to provide information in other formats.	Ongoing 2014-2019
Ensure that the Shire's website meets contemporary good practice.	Ongoing 2014-2019

Outcome 4: People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the employees of a public authority as other people receive from the employees of that public authority.

Strategy	Timeline
Ensure that all employees, existing and new, and Elected Members are aware of disability and access issues and have the skills to provide appropriate services.	Ongoing 2014-2019
Improve community awareness about disability and access issues.	Ongoing 2014-2019

Outcome 5: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to a public authority.

Strategy	Timeline
Council will ensure that information is available in clear and concise language on how residents can participate in decision making processes, public consultation and grievance mechanisms.	Ongoing 2014-2019
Council will advise the community that this information can be made available in alternative formats upon request.	Ongoing 2014-2019
Council will also undertake to support people with disability to attend meetings of Council.	Ongoing 2014-2019

Outcome 6: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by a public authority.

Strategy	Timeline
Council will ensure public consultation is available to all people	Ongoing 2014-2019
Council will ensure the information available for public consultation is clear and concise so all people can be involved in the consultation.	Ongoing 2014-2019

Outcome 7: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with a public authority.

Strategy	Timeline
Council to use inclusive recruitment practices. Make sure job advertisements are in an accessible format (12 or 14pt, Arial).	Ongoing 2014-2019
Council will include an Equal Employment Opportunity statement in advertisements for staff – “Promotes a workplace that actively seeks to include, welcome and value unique contributions of all people. Encourages people with disability, Aboriginal Australians, young people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to apply for this job”.	Ongoing 2014-2019
Council will ensure that the interview is held in an accessible venue. (HR to check this when inviting people to attend for an interview by asking if the candidate requires any assistance.	Ongoing 2014-2019

Appendix 1

Progress since 1995 under the Disability Service Plan

1. Existing functions, facilities and services are adapted to meet the needs of people with disability.

- Talking books were relocated to one specific, clearly signed location in each of Council's five (5) public libraries.
- Provision of Shire information through alternative formats; website, large print, audio cassette upon request.

2. Access to buildings and facilities has been improved.

- Council's recently renovated Administration Centre is 'accessible friendly' with the upgrade including convenient street parking adjacent to the entrance at one level, self opening entrance doors, wheelchair friendly counter, wide doorways for ease of movement within the building and a separate accessible toilet and shower.
- Lake Grace Visitor Centre (located in a restored heritage building) has renovated its toilet to meet the standards for access and the Management Committee has worked to establish a customer service procedure which will ensure wheelchair visitors have access to the same materials and resources as other people.
- Bankwest has installed an access ramp.
- Lake Grace and Newdegate have built new school/community library buildings all of which are accessible.
- Unisex accessible public toilets are available in Lake Grace, Newdegate, Lake King and Varley and are available 24hrs, 7 days per week.
- Footpaths in the main streets of Lake Grace and Newdegate have been upgraded and kerb ramps installed.
- Lake Grace Shire Hall entrances were raised to footpath level.
- A hydraulic lifting ramp was installed at the Lake Grace Swimming Pool. Renovations to the toilets and change rooms include accessibility and the parking area was upgraded to allow wheelchairs and those with walking frames ease of access.
- The Lake Grace Medical Centre was opened in 2000 and provides facilities and services for people with disability.
- The Newdegate Medical Centre was opened in 2013 and provides access for people with disability.
- Three over 55's Independent Living Units were opened in Lake Grace in 2014 and provides access for people with disability.
- IGA installed disability access bay at the entrance of the facility.
- Lake King improved parking access to public toilets.

3. Information about functions, facilities and services is provided in formats, which meet the communication needs of people with disability.

- Information is made available in alternative formats on request.
- The availability of alternative format information was promoted via local newspaper and Health Services.

4. Employee awareness of the needs of people with disability and skills in delivering services is improved.

- Key Shire employees received disability awareness training.

5. Opportunities are provided for people with disability to participate in public consultations, grievance mechanisms and decision making processes.

- Information on consultations was simplified and made available in alternative formats upon request.
- Municipal election voting was held in accessible buildings and some voting booths were modified to suit people using wheelchairs.

Shire of Lake Grace
Disability Access and Inclusion Plan
Implementation Plan 2014-2019

The Implementation Plan details the task, timelines and responsibilities for each broad strategy to be implemented in 2014-2019 to progress the strategies of the DAIP.

It is intended that the Implementation Plan will be updated annually to progress the achievement of all the strategies over the duration of the five-year plan.

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 Lake Grace.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that people with disability are consulted on their need for services and the accessibility of current services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor consultative process to ensure correct process includes people with disability. 	Ongoing 2014-2019	Community Services Officer
Monitor Shire services to ensure equitable access and inclusion.	Conduct reviews of the accessibility of services. Rectify identified barriers and provide feedback to consumers.	Ongoing 2014-2019	Executive
Develop links between the DAIP and other Shire plans and strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate the objectives and strategies of the DAIP into the Shire's existing planning processes. 	Ongoing 2014-2019	Executive
Ensure that events, whether provided or funded, are accessible to people with disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all events are planned ensuring accessibility. 	Ongoing 2014-2019	All staff
Improve access to the information in the library.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of large print books for relevant community members 	Ongoing 2014-2019	Executive

Outcome 2: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the Shire of Lake Grace.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that all buildings and facilities meet the standards for access and any demonstrated additional need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify access barriers to buildings and facilities. • Prioritise and make submissions to Council for works on rectifying identified barriers as a part of the budgetary process. 	Ongoing 2014-2019	Executive
Ensure that all new or redevelopment works provide access to people with disability, where practicable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the legal requirements for access are met in all plans for new or redeveloped buildings and facilities. • Ensure that no development application is signed off without a declaration that it meets the legal requirements. • Ensure that key staff are trained and kept up to date with the legal requirements. 	Ongoing 2014-2019	Building Surveyor, Town Planning Consultant
Ensure that ACROD parking meets the needs of people with disability in terms of quantity and location.	<p>Undertake an audit of ACROD bays and implement a program to rectify any non-compliance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the need for additional bays at some locations. 	Ongoing 2014-2019	Works Supervisor
Advocate to local businesses and tourist venues the requirements for and benefits flowing from the provision of accessible venues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information (available on the DSC website), on the needs of people with disability and of legal requirements and best practice. • Promote access to business • Make access information available on the Shire's website 	Ongoing 2014-2019	Executive
Ensure that all recreational areas are accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor all facilities as they are upgraded. 	Ongoing 2014-2019	Executive

Outcome 3: People with disability receive information from the Shire of Lake Grace in a format that will enable them to access the information, as readily as other people are able to access it.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that the community is aware that Shire information is available in alternative formats upon request.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise the availability of other formats in the local newspaper. 	Ongoing 2014-2019	Executive Assistant
Improve employee awareness of accessible information needs and how to provide information in other formats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make State Government Access Guidelines for Information, Services and Facilities guidelines available on the Shire employee shared network. • Train employees in providing accessible information. 	Ongoing 2014-2019	HR
Ensure that the Shire's website meets contemporary good practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure website complies with the contemporary good practice guidelines. 	Ongoing 2013-2019	Executive

Outcome 4: People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the employees of the Shire of Lake Grace as other people receive.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that Elected Members and employees are aware of access needs and can provide appropriate services.	* Determine training needs of employees and conduct training as required	Ongoing 2014-2019	HR
Improve community awareness of disability and access issues.	* Promote on the Shire of Lake Grace web page, face book page and community news.	Ongoing 2014-2019	Executive

Outcome 5: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Shire of Lake Grace.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Council will ensure that information is available in clear and concise language on how residents can participate in decision making processes, public consultation and grievance mechanisms.	•Review current decision making processes, public consultation and grievance mechanisms and implement any recommendations.	Ongoing 2014-2019	Executive
Council will advise the community that this information can be made available in alternative formats upon request.	•Promote accessible complaints mechanisms to the community and their availability in alternative formats.	Ongoing 2014-2019	Executive
Council will also undertake to support people with disability to attend meetings of council.	•Ensure all Council meeting venues are compliant for access.	Ongoing 2014-2019	Executive

Outcome 6: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the Shire of Lake Grace.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Council will ensure public consultation is available to all people.	•Promote public consultation information to the community and their availability in alternative formats.	Ongoing 2014-2019	Community Services
Council will ensure the information available for public consultation is clear and concise so all people can be involved in the consultation.	•Ensure agendas, minutes and other documents are available on request in alternative formats and are published on the Shire’s website.	Ongoing 2014-2019	Executive Assistant

Outcome 7: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with a public authority.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Council to use inclusive Recruitment practices.	Job Advertisements to be in an accessible format (12 or 14 point).	Ongoing 2014-2019	HR
Council will include an Equal Employment Opportunity statement In advertisements for Staff.	To include in employment packs “Promotes a workplace that actively seeks to include, welcome and value unique contributions of all people. Encourages People with disability, Aboriginal Australians, young people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to apply for this job”.	Ongoing 2014-2019	HR
Council will ensure that the interview is held in an accessible venue..	HR to check this when inviting people to attend for an interview	Ongoing	HR