

DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN



1. VISION

The Forbes Shire is a safe, connected and welcoming community. We aspire to create job opportunities, improve our infrastructure and support a diverse and thriving economy.

2. MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR, CR GRAEME MILLER



I am pleased to be able to provide this message. The inclusion of people with a disability is essentially an issue of social justice.

This plan is about the right of our disabled residents to fully participate in the Forbes community and that's why it is so important. Forbes Shire Council is committed to a process of continuous improvement to our facilities, infrastructure and systems and processes.

This plan will be regularly reviewed and built upon, with the aim of breaking down the barriers facing our disabled residents and building an inclusive and equitable Forbes Shire. We encourage all Forbes residents to join us on this journey.

3. MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER, DANNY GREEN



This plan has been developed in consultation with a wide cross section of the community and has been developed as a result of a community engagement process conducted in November 2016.

We have developed a series of actions that will result in more choice, better access and improved facilities for our disabled residents.

As a Council we commit to this plan to create a more inclusive, disability friendly Forbes Shire.

4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Forbes Shire Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of our land, the Wiradjuri People, and pays respects to Elders past and present.

5. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Forbes Shire Council recognises that residents living with a disability have a right to participate as full members of our society. The Disability Inclusion Action Plan demonstrates Forbes Shire Council's commitment to constant improvement in the services, facilities and access disabled residents need to participate fully in the life of the community. More

importantly the Disability Inclusion Action Plan will play a part in changing community attitudes and perceptions of people with a disability.

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan outlines specific actions Council will take to facilitate access to community services and facilities for people with disability and link more actions to assessment and monitoring.

Under the Disability Inclusion Action Act of 2014, Councils are required to develop a Disability Inclusion Action Plan by July 2017. There are a number of State, National and International policies and legislation that provide the framework for the development of Forbes Shire Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

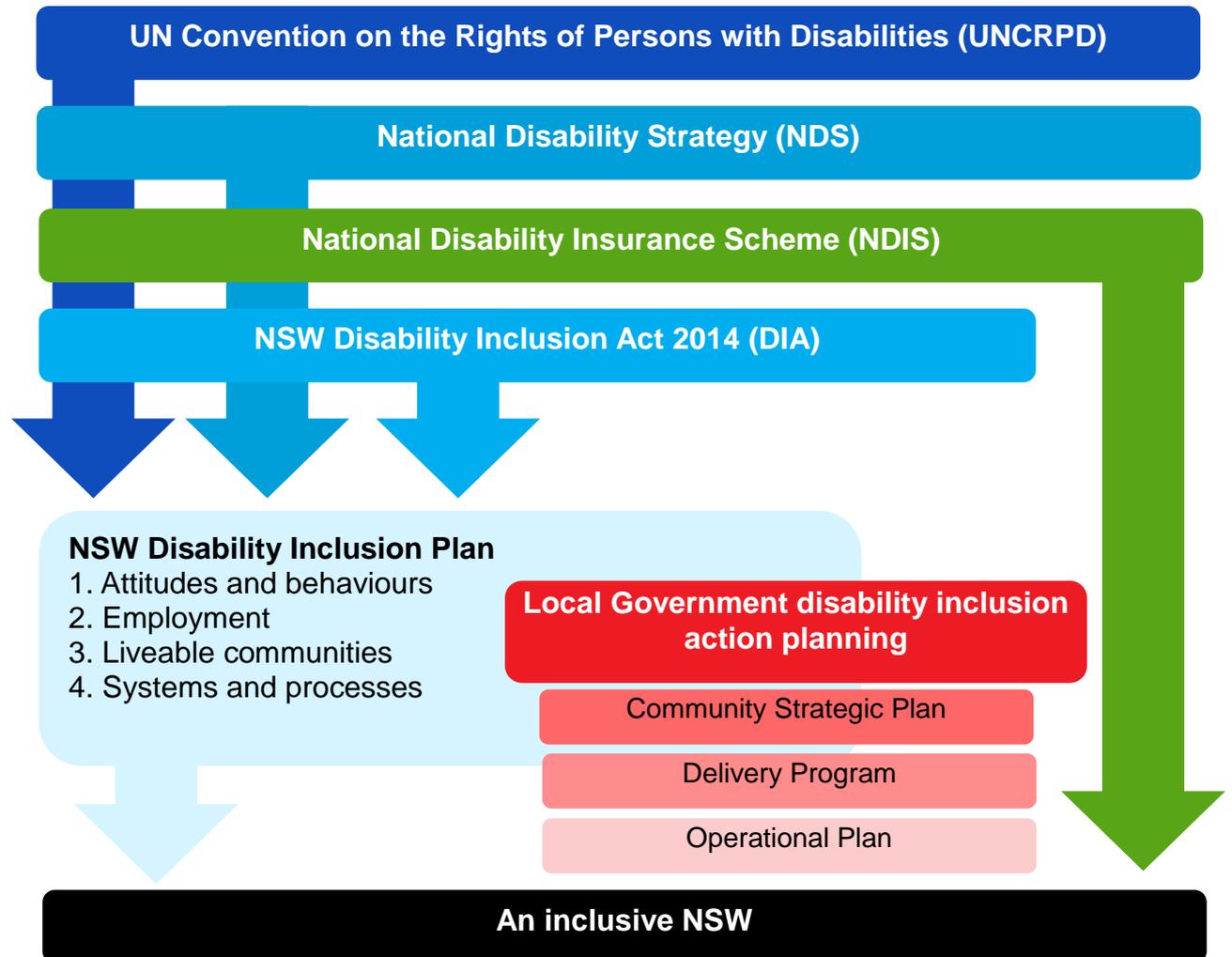


Image source: NSW Local Government Disability Inclusion Action Planning Guidelines.

6. WHAT IS DISABILITY?

Under the Disability Inclusion Act of 2014, disability is defined as: “The long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which in interaction with various barriers may hinder the full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”

This definition reinforces the importance of viewing disability as the result of interaction between people living with a range of impairments and their physical and social

environment. Disability is not just about impairment. The onus is on the whole community to break down barriers.

7. DISABILITY IN THE FORBES SHIRE

From the 2011 census Forbes estimated resident population was 9170 comprising 4548 males and 4622 females. The 0-14 age group represented 21 per cent of the population. Residents between 15 and 24 years of age made up 11.7 percent of the population, those aged between 25 and 44 made up 21.2 percent of the population, between 45 and 64 comprised 26.2 percent of the population and those aged 65 and over comprised 19.44 percent. Since 2011 Forbes population has been steadily rising with an estimated 9,754 residents in 2015. This represents an increase of approximately 3% in the 5 years since 2011 and is comparable with the growth rate of regional NSW which was 3.4% for the same time period.

The biggest employer was the agricultural, forestry and fishing industry employing 19.2% of the working population, followed by retail (10.9%) and healthcare and social services (10.9%). The unemployment rate was 5.4% but has been fluctuating between a high of 7.8% to a low of 5.8% since 2011.

Data from the 2011 Census indicated that 543 people had a core need for assistance in the Forbes Shire. The core activity need for assistance has been developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as a measure of the number of people with a profound or severe disability. People with a profound or severe disability are those defined as needing assistance in one or more of the three core activity areas of self-care, mobility or communication because of a disability, long-term health condition or old age.

Therefore, 543 people from a resident population of 9,172 can be classed as having a disability. This equates to 5.92% of the Shire's population.

Require assistance with core activities at 2011 Census	
Age group	Persons
0-4	6
5-14	59
15-19	13
20-24	6
25-34	21
35-44	21
45-54	45
55-64	74
65-74	82
75-84	113
85 and over	203
Total	543

There is also a substantial proportion of the Forbes population aged 15 years and over who are providing unpaid care to a person with a disability. According to the 2011 Census, 856 of the 7,239 people aged over 15 are providing unpaid care to a person with a disability. This equates to 11.82% of the Shire's population.

Unpaid assistance to a person with a disability at the 2011 census (aged over 15 years)	
Age	Persons
15-19	27
20-24	27
25-34	86
35-44	145
45-54	211
55-64	205
65-74	116
75-84	39
85 and over	0
Total	856

8. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Consultations for the Disability Inclusion Action Plan were held in conjunction with community engagement efforts for Council's Community Strategic Plan. Council engaged consultants to facilitate the process with 19 workshops held across the Shire in November 2016. These sessions encompassed key areas including the Forbes Interagency Network, health service providers, seniors groups, youth, Aboriginal organisations, aged care services and disability organisations.

Consultation also took place at the International Day of People with Disability activities and informal consultations have been held with a variety of disability service providers and selected disabled members of the community.

9. 2016/2017 COUNCIL ACTIVITY

Forbes Shire Council has already made significant achievements towards including disabled people in the life of the Shire. In September 2016 Forbes Shire Council and disability service provider, House with No Steps, installed a new hoist at the Forbes Olympic Pool. This allows disabled members of the community to enjoy the recreational and health benefits of swimming.



A number of public toilets in the Shire have been upgraded to better cater for disabled members of the community. Public toilets in Stephan Field have been upgraded to include a unisex ambulant toilet that is open 24 hours per day. Toilets at the Forbes Cemetery have also been upgraded and now include a separate disabled toilet. These facilities are accessible by using a Master Locksmiths Access Key.



There is an ongoing program of footpath renovations throughout the town of Forbes and this includes the installation of accessibility ramps and parking spaces which are located through consultation with the Infrastructure Committee Access Working Party and the Local Area Traffic Committee.

10. STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The strategies follow those prescribed by the Disability Inclusion Action Act of 2014 four focus areas.

- 1 - Positive attitudes and behaviours
- 2 - Liveable communities
- 3 - Employment

- 4 - Service systems and processes

1 - Positive attitudes and behaviours

Council encourages positive and inclusive staff behaviours and a whole of community attitude to people with a disability that embraces respect, diversity and differences.

Strategy	Action	Measure of success	Responsible officer	Link to Community Strategic Plan
1.1 - Promote positive attitudes toward people with a disability.	1.1.1 - Run a program of events and activities that foster positive community attitudes toward people with a disability.	Number of events held and number of people attending these events.	Community Relations Officer	2.1.2 Facilitate, promote and deliver a diverse range of activities such as Youth Week, Seniors Week and International Day of People with a Disability.
	1.1.2 - Support the efforts of community groups and social service providers to run community awareness activities and events.	Number of groups assisted.	Community Relations Officer	2.1 – Provide a range of community entertainment activities including activities for youth, seniors and people with disabilities.
1.2 – Demonstrate leadership in public programs	1.2.1 – Include disability inclusion in all events and activities organised by Council	Increase in participation of people with a disability	Manager of Community Development	16.3.1 – Develop our community participation and feedback framework
1.3 – Establish partnerships to address barriers to access and inclusion	1.3.1 – Continue to work with key community organisations and advocacy groups	Maintain the level of staff participation in community organisations	General Manager	18.5 - Build strong, effective and productive alliances and partnerships with community organisations, state and federal governments
1.4 - Improve staff awareness of disability issues	1.4.1 – Implement frontline customer service procedures to improve service delivery and complaints handling for people with a disability	Reduction in complaints	Director of Corporate Services	17.3 – Develop our people
1.5 – Celebrate inclusive partnerships and access outcomes	1.5.1 – Promote Council projects that improve access to public places through various communication channels	Increase in articles in the news about Council’s access outcomes	Communications Officer	18.4 – Ensure a coordinated and multi-faceted approach to all of Council communications within the community

2 - Liveable communities

Council advocates for and encourages a liveable and welcoming Forbes Shire where communities and places promote health and wellbeing, including recreational and social inclusiveness.

Strategy	Action	Measure of success	Responsible officer	Link to Community Strategic Plan
2.1 - Provide safe and accessible facilities for the Forbes community.	2.1.1 - Council ensures all developments comply with Australian Standards including Design for Access and Mobility – General Requirements for Access to Buildings and Design for Access and Mobility- Means to Assist the Orientation of People with Vision Impairment- Tactile Ground Surface Indicators.	All developments comply with Australian Standards.	Director of Environment and Planning	14.1 – Conduct principal certifying authority functions in the Shire
	2.1.2 - Complete Disabled Access Fishing Project at Cottons Weir to provide access to provide recreational access to the Lachlan River	Completion of development	Director of Engineering and Technical Services	2.1 – Provide a range of community entertainment activities including activities for youth, seniors and people with disabilities.
	2.1.3 - Continue annual rental subsidy to Home and Community Care in order to enhance service provision to disabled members of the community.	Annual subsidy is continued and number of service providers maintained.	Manager of Community Development	3.3 - Influence the maintenance of existing levels of health and wellbeing services in Forbes.
2.2 – Improve infrastructure for better mobility access	2.2.1 - Undertake public transport needs assessment and lobby for improved services.	Number of new services implemented.	Manager of Community Development	1.2 – Enhance public transport options throughout the Shire.
	2.2.2 - Influence the provision of a wheel chair accessible taxi to the disabled members of the community.	Number of grant funding opportunities identified and applied for.	Grants Officer	1.2 – Enhance public transport options throughout the Shire.
	2.2.3 - Participate in	Full and active	Visitor	19.3 – Improve

	MLAK scheme and National Public Toilet Map to ensure access to disabled toilets is available 24 hours a day seven days per week.	participation in both initiatives.	Services Officer	accessibility of streets and buildings for the mobility impaired
	2.2.4 – Continue to provide subsidy to the Forbes Medical Centre to ensure access to medical services	Subsidy is continued and doctors retained.	Manager of Community Development	3.3 - Influence the maintenance of existing levels of health and wellbeing services in Forbes.
	2.2.5 - Upgrade existing public toilet amenities.	All new public toilet facilities to include facilities for disabled residents.	Director of Technical Services and Engineering.	19.3 – Improve accessibility of streets and buildings for the mobility impaired
	2.2.6 - Improve footpath and pedestrian facilities through the implementation of the Forbes Pedestrian and Cycling Strategy.	Priority upgrades completed on time and on budget.	Director of Technical Services and Engineering.	19.3 – Improve accessibility of streets and buildings for the mobility impaired
	2.2.7- Engage people with a disability in the design and planning phases of new infrastructure.	People with a disability are consulted in the design and development of new infrastructure.	Director of Technical Services and Engineering.	19.3- Improve accessibility of streets and buildings for mobility impaired.
	2.2.8- New facilities are designed to cater for the needs of disabled people.	New facilities are adhere to principles of disability friendly.	Director of Technical Services and Engineering.	19.3- Improve accessibility of streets and buildings for mobility impaired.
	2.2.9- Conduct audits of Council owned buildings to ensure disability friendly facilities.	All Council owned facilities are audited and disability infrastructure needs are identified.	Facilities Maintenance Supervisor.	19.3- Improve accessibility of streets and buildings for mobility impaired.
	2.2.10- Install disability friendly change tables in strategic locations at Council run facilities.	Number of change tables installed.	Facilities Maintenance Supervisor.	19.3- Improve accessibility of streets and buildings for mobility impaired.
	2.2.11- Continue the upgrade of disabled parking facilities throughout the Forbes Shire.	Number of disabled car parking spaces built.	Director of Technical Services and Engineering.	19.3- Improve accessibility of streets and buildings for mobility impaired.
	2.2.12- Design outdoor furniture and facilities with the needs of	Number of new or upgraded facilities that caters for the	Director of Technical Services and	19.3- Improve accessibility of streets and

	disabled people in mind.	needs of disabled people.	Engineering.	buildings for mobility impaired.
	2.2.13- Town Hall, as the central facility in the cultural life of the shire, is maintained as a disability friendly facility.	Town Hall remains accessible to people with a disability and caters for all members of the community.	Director of Technical Services and Engineering.	19.3- Improve accessibility of streets and buildings for mobility impaired.
	2.2.14- Parks, footpaths and open spaces are maintained in a way that caters for the needs of people with a disability.	Audit parks, gardens and open spaces to identify barriers for disabled people. Maintain parks, gardens and footpaths in a way that caters for the needs of people with a disability.	Director of Technical Services and Engineering.	19.3- Improve accessibility of streets and buildings for mobility impaired.
	2.2.15- Identify gaps in services for disabled people and advocate for increased government services.	Maintain participation in the Forbes Interagency and advocate for increased disability services.	Director of Community Development.	3.3 - Influence the maintenance of existing levels of health and wellbeing services in Forbes.

3 - Employment

Council maintains a commitment to equal employment opportunities and to reducing barriers for current and future employees to remain and thrive in the workplace.

Strategy	Action	Measure of Success	Responsible officer	Link to Community Strategic Plan
3.1 - Reduce barriers to disabled people participating in the labour market.	3.1.1 - Council to implement Equal Employment Opportunities and Temporary Placement of Long-Term Unemployed Disabled Individuals Policy.	Number of people with a disability employed or participating in work placement with Council.	Manager of Organisational Development	3.8 – Provide support for employment opportunities for people with disabilities
	3.1.2 - Facilitate an awareness raising campaign for business around employing people with a disability.	Completion of awareness campaign	Manager of Organisational Development	3.8 – Provide support for employment opportunities for people with disabilities
	3.1.3 - Support the work of Disability Employment organisations through the Forbes Interagency.	Forbes Interagency meets monthly	Manager of Community Development	3.8 – Provide support for employment opportunities for people with disabilities
3.2 – Identify opportunities to procure goods and services from local businesses who employ people with a disability	3.2.1 – Develop a list of Forbes LGA based businesses who provide meaningful employment to people with a disability	List is kept up-to-date on Council's community website pages	Manager of Community Development	1.6 – Build a culture of respect for diversity and differences
	3.2.2 – Review procurement procedures to identify options to procure goods and services from identified businesses.	Procedure reviewed and list developed and used within Council	Director of Corporate Services	15.2.1 – Implement an approved procurement framework

4 - Service systems and processes

Council improves its capacity to assist our community to gain access to information and Council services in order to reach their full potential and engage with the community to actively participate with Council for improved decision-making and delivery of services.

Strategic goal	Action	Measure of success	Responsible Officer	Link to Community Strategic Plan
4.1 – Facilities and services are provided in a way that caters for the needs of disabled members of the community.	4.1.1 - Upgrade access at the Forbes Youth and Community Centre to ensure the facilities and services provided cater for the needs of disabled residents	Upgrades complete on time and on budget	Manager of Community Services	19.3 – Improve accessibility of streets and buildings for the mobility impaired
	4.1.2 - Complete accessibility audit on all Council run events and activities	Audits completed and accessibility issues addressed	Community Relations Officer	2.1 – Provide a range of community entertainment activities including activities for youth, seniors and people with disabilities.
	4.1.3 - Investigate training for frontline service delivery staff	Training located and conducted	Manager of Organisational Development.	18.4.4 – Provide effective, efficient and courteous customer service in accordance with Council values
4.2 – Information is provided in a way that caters for the needs of disabled members of the community	4.2.1 - Ensure website conforms to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines conformance level AA	Website to conform to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines	Communications Officer	18.4.1 - Implement and validate an external communications plan

11. MONITORING

The Forbes Shire Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan will be regularly reviewed to reflect achievements and any new challenges that may arise.

An annual review into the implementation of Forbes Shire Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan will be conducted and the results will be reported in Forbes Council's Annual Report. The Minister for Local Government will table a report of disability inclusion action planning and implementation on an annual basis.

12. RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

Disability Inclusion Act of 2014

National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013

National Disability Strategy 2010-2020

Forbes Shire Our Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027