



Shire of Coolgardie

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2007 -2011

This plan is available in alternative formats such as large print, electronic format (disk or emailed) on request.

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Background

The Shire of Coolgardie

The Shire of Coolgardie is located approximately 550 kilometres east of Perth and is responsible for the towns of Coolgardie, Kambalda (East and West), Bullabulling, Kurrawang and Widgiemooltha. In total the Shire covers an area of 30, 400 km² with approximately 6,200 people living within these boundaries.

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

The Shire of Coolgardie 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 sporting and community groups; management of recreation centre and pool; public library and information services; 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.

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

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

People with disabilities in the Shire of Coolgardie

People with disabilities represent a significant section of the community. According to information obtained from the Disability Services Commission Website, 2006, the number of people living within the Shire of Coolgardie who have a disability is 29.3% of the total population. This represents less than one in four people.

As with the above figures, the most common form of disability suffered in Western Australia is physical which relates to conditions of the nervous and respiratory systems, congenital malformations and some chromosomal abnormalities. Other forms of disabilities which are present both in our State and community are Sensory – e.g. Persons who are vision or hearing impaired, Acquired Brain Injury e.g. A person who has suffered from stroke, a head injury, brain disease/disorders, Intellectual – People suffering with intellectual and developmental disorders e.g. a person with Down Syndrome and Psychological – e.g. someone who suffers from depression and/or mood affective disorders. Many people may be affected by more than one disability and experience additional access challenges, for example if their first language is that other than English

As a majority of people with a disability or numerous disabilities live within the community with their families, friends and carers, it is important that they are given the same opportunities and choices as other people so they are able to participate in community life.

Due to the broad range of services provided to their communities, Local Government plays a vital role in the lives of people with disabilities, their carers and families.

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 disabilities 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 on the basis of a person's disability unlawful.

Progress since 1995

The Shire of Coolgardie is committed to facilitating the inclusion of people with disabilities 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 of the 1995 DSP.

Access and Inclusion Policy Statement

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

The Shire of Coolgardie believes that people with disabilities, their families and carers who live in country areas should be supported to remain in the community of their choice.

The Shire of Coolgardie is committed to consulting with people with disabilities, their families and carers and where required, disability organisations to ensure that barriers to access are addressed appropriately.

The Shire of Coolgardie 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 disabilities, providing them with the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities as other people in the community.

The Shire of Coolgardie:

- recognises that people with disabilities 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 of its members makes for a richer community life;
- believes that people with disabilities, their families and carers should be supported to remain in the community;
- is committed to consulting with people with disabilities, 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 disabilities; and
- is committed to achieving the six desired outcomes of its DAIP.

The six desired outcomes of the Shire of Coolgardie Disability Access and inclusion plan are as follows:

1. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the relevant public authority.
2. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the relevant public authority.
3. People with disabilities 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 disabilities receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of the relevant public authority.
5. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the relevant public authority.
6. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the relevant public authority.

Development of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

Responsibility for the planning process

The Manager for Community Services 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 2006, the Shire undertook to review its Disability Service Plan (DSP) consult with key stakeholders and draft a new DAIP 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) 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 or on any website maintained by or on behalf of the Local Government. Other mechanisms may also be used.

During the development of the Shire of Coolgardie DAIP the following consultation methods were used:

- In February 2007 the community was informed through the local newspaper, local noticeboards, and Shire's website that the Shire was developing a DAIP to address barriers to access for people with disabilities and their families. They were invited to provide input either in writing, by telephone or in person.

- A questionnaire was made available at Shire of Coolgardie offices, shopping centres, recreation centre, and included in the local Coolgardie Community News, Kambalda Red Hill Rambler and on the Shire's website in March 2006.
(The questionnaire invited people to identify any barriers under each of the six desired outcomes for a DAIP).
- Public meetings were held in April and May; all interested community members were invited to attend, including people with disabilities, their families and representatives of disability organisations, to discuss barriers to access and potential solutions to overcoming barriers and enhancing inclusion in the community.
- Shire of Coolgardie staff were encouraged to provide input as to their experiences with assisting persons with special needs whilst providing council services.
- All interested persons were invited to join an ongoing DAIP reference group. (to date only one person has expressed an interest in being involved in a reference group).

Findings of the consultation

Key stakeholders and community members were invited to review the existing Disability Service Plan. Flyers were posted around the communities; information was put into the local papers and there was a letter drop to all householders.

The outcome was that only two key stakeholders (Disability Service Commission and Shire of Coolgardie) attended both community meetings with one apology from the Kambalda community. (Six questionnaires were returned).

A review of the July, 2005 Disability Service Plan and its objective was completed by the manager for Community Services, the Shire of Coolgardie Youth Worker, Builder and Office staff.

Many of the bigger objectives in the initial plan are ongoing projects which are still being undertaken. The smaller more achievable objectives have already been achieved.

Regulatory and legislative changes meant that a new updated plan needs to be developed to meet and reflect the new standards such as striving for inclusion and access beyond the minimum compliance of the standards.

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

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 disabilities

- In May 2007 copies of the draft DAIP were sent to all those who contributed to the planning process. In July 2007 the plan will be presented to council for approval.
- The community was informed through the local media (newspaper and radio) that copies of the plan were available upon request and in alternative formats if required, including hard copy in standard and large print, electronic format, audio format on cassette or CD, 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.

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 2011. The report will outline what has been achieved under the Shire's DAIP 2007 -2011.

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 six 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 six 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 disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, a public authority.

Strategies
Ensure people with disabilities are provided with an opportunity to comment on access to service.
Monitor Shire services to ensure equitable access and inclusion.
Council will ensure that all policies and procedures that govern the operation of Council facilities, functions and services are consistent with Council Policy regarding access.
Council will ensure that any events are organised so that they are accessible to people with disabilities.

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

Strategies
Continue to work towards the goal of all buildings and facilities meeting the standards for access and any demonstrated additional need.
Ensure that all new or redevelopment works provide access to people with disabilities, where practicable.
Ensure that ACROD parking meets the needs of people with disabilities in terms of quantity and location.
Advocate to local businesses and tourist venues the requirements for and benefits flowing from the provision of accessible venues.
Ensure that all recreational areas are accessible.
Ensure that persons with mobility problems are aware of the kerbside collection service.

Outcome 3: People with disabilities 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.

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

Outcome 4: People with disabilities 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.

Strategies
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.
Improve community awareness about disability and access issues.
Council will continually network with the DSC to ensure a Best Practice Service for persons with disabilities as guided by the Disability Service Commission.

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

Strategies
Council will insure that grievance mechanisms are accessible for people with disabilities and are acted upon.

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

Strategies
Ensure that people with disabilities are actively consulted about the DAIP and any other significant planning processes.
Ensure that people with disabilities are aware of and can access other established consultative processes.

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 disabilities.**
 - New buildings are being designed to meet current regulatory standards.
 - Existing buildings and services are being evaluated and are being modified to meet the required standards. (ongoing)
 - Community groups receive regular updates from council on inclusion techniques.
(Once circulated by the Department of Sport and Recreation).
 - The Kambalda Youth House partners with the Kambalda Individual Disability Support & Carers Respite House to offer joint recreational activities for the inclusion of Disabled youth.
 - Equal a consultancy agency hired by the Shire of Coolgardie is currently developing a feasibility study into the possibility of combining these two services into one venue.
 - Both Shire Libraries have large font and audio books available. Shelving is arranged in an accessible format.
 - Council has lobbied the Government for the provision of more services after hours. (Limited success has been achieved)
 - New directional signage has been put into place in the Shire of Coolgardie communities.
 - New playgrounds in Coolgardie have perimeter fencing.
 - Council are proposing soft fall surfaces to allow wheel chairs greater access to parks - this will be included in the new budget.
 - Disabled toilets in Coolgardie have both been fitted with baby change facilities.
 - Kambalda East Square redevelopment is being designed with more shade and seating.

- Priority bin service: Information has been posted on the SOC website and community directories, advising persons with mobility problems that they can obtain alternative arrangements for the collection of their rubbish bins. This service is available to them upon request.
- 2. Access to buildings and facilities has been improved.**
- All new buildings and services are being designed to suit persons with disabilities and to meet required standards.
 - Handrails have been fitted in toilets at both public swimming pools
 - All new paths have ramps.
 - A footpath plan has been developed.
 - New street furniture is being installed as part of the streetscape in both towns.
 - The newly purchased community bus has a wheel chair lift.
- 3. Information about functions, facilities and services is provided in formats which meet the communication needs of people with disabilities.**
- Information has been made available in alternative formats.
(Upon request)
 - The availability of alternative format information was promoted via local newspapers, and to disability groups.
 - All posters made are being done in large font.
 - The shire of Coolgardie Website has been redesigned and is now advertised on all corporate material as well as on community directories. (Disability access and information is being implemented on this site eg: Disability friendly toilet locations).
 - Email is used wherever possible to alert people of events.

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

- (Ongoing) - All staff have participated in an accredited Customer service training course. (Aussie Host)
- Recreation staff have received basic training on how to coach persons with disabilities.

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

- Council holds multiple community forums to give all community members an opportunity to provide feedback.
- Feedback forms are sent out with rates notices.
- Opportunities for all persons to provide feedback is offered via email.
- Public notices and questionnaires were sent out and displayed inviting all interested persons to join a Community Disability working committee. (One person registered their interest).

Shire of Coolgardie

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan Implementation Plan 2007 – 2008

Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan details the task, timelines and responsibilities for each broad strategy to be implemented in 2007-2008 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 disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised, by the Shire of Coolgardie.			
Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that people with disabilities are consulted on their need for services and the accessibility of current services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a feedback mechanism for use by all services, provided or funded by the Shire. • Develop consultation guidelines for all future reviews of services. 	December 2007	Executive secretary
Monitor Shire services to ensure equitable access and inclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct systematic reviews of the accessibility of services. • Rectify identified barriers and provide feedback to consumers. 	Ongoing Ongoing	Manager Community Services
Council will ensure that all policies and procedures that govern the operation of Council facilities, functions and services are consistent with Council policy regarding access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that policies and procedures regarding equitable access/service are available to all Shire of Coolgardie employees. (Post to website and save to F drive). 	June 2008	All managers
Council will ensure that any events are organised so that they are accessible to people with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all events are planned using the Accessible Events checklist. • Ensure all staff are aware of the checklist. 	June 2008	All managers All staff

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

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
<p>Continue to work towards the goal of all buildings and facilities meeting the standards for access and any demonstrated additional need.</p> <p>Improve awareness of Disability Services provided within the SOC.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify access barriers to buildings and facilities. • Prioritise and make a submission to Council to commence work on rectifying identified barriers. • Advise private owners of the need to provide access in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act when undertaking health compliance checks. • Enforce BCA standards for access to premises being constructed or renovated • Include Disability Services information in the SOC welcome to Kambalda / Coolgardie promotional packages. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Manager Technical Services</p> <p>Manager Development Services</p> <p>Shire of Coolgardie</p> <p>Executive Secretary</p>
<p>Ensure that all new or redevelopment works provide access to people with disabilities, where practicable.</p>	<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. 	<p>January 2008</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Manager, Development Services</p> <p>Manager, Development Services</p> <p>All Managers</p>

Ensure that ACROD parking meets the needs of people with disabilities in terms of quantity and location.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake an audit of ACROD bays and implement a program to rectify any non compliance. • Consider the need for additional bays at some locations. 	September 2008	Manager, Development Services
		December 2008	Manager Technical Services

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
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 disabilities and of legal requirements and best practice. • Promote access to business. • Make access information available on the Shire's website. 	January 2008 Ongoing	Manager, Community Services
Ensure that all recreational areas are accessible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct audit of Shire pool, Community Hall and playground. • Develop and implement a program of progressive upgrade. 	December 2007 December 2007	Manager, Technical Services
Ensure that persons with mobility problems are aware of the kerbside collection service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertise this information in the local Coolgardie News, Red Hill Rambler. Include in letter drops, local community directories and Shire of Coolgardie website. 	Ongoing	Shire of Coolgardie staff.

Outcome 3: People with disabilities receive information from the Shire of Coolgardie 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"> • Ensure that all documents carry a notation that information is available in alternative formats, (Upon request). • Publicise the availability of other formats in the local newspaper, on the website and in community directories. 	Ongoing December 2007	All managers Executive secretary
Improve staff 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 F drive system. • Conduct accessible information training and include in part of the induction package / orientation for new staff. 	June 2008 June 2008 Ongoing	Manager Corporate Services
Ensure that the Shire's website meets contemporary good practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redevelop website to ensure it complies with the W3C web content guidelines. 	December 2007	Manager Corporate Services Executive Secretary

Outcome 4: People with disabilities receive the same level and quality of service from the employees of the Shire of Coolgardie 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine training needs of employees and conduct training as required 	March 2008	All managers
Improve community awareness of disability and access issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strategies for inclusion in the 2008 Implementation Plan. 	December 2007	Manager, Community Services
Council will continually network with the DSC to ensure a Best Practice Service for persons with disabilities as guided by the Disability Service Commission.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council will continually liaise with the Disability Service Commission on disability issues to ensure that a Best Practice Service is continually delivered. 	Ongoing	All managers

Outcome 5: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Shire of Coolgardie.			
Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Council will ensure that grievance mechanisms are accessible for people with disabilities and are acted upon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current grievance mechanisms and implement any recommendations. • Develop other methods of making complaints, such as web-based forms. • Promote accessible complaints mechanisms to the community. 	November 2007 November 2007 November 2007 Ongoing	Manager, Corporate Services Manager Corporate Services

Outcome 6: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the Shire of Coolgardie.			
Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that people with disabilities are actively consulted about the DAIP and any other significant planning processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult people with disabilities in a range of different consultation mediums, eg focus group, interviews, surveys. • Develop a register of people to provide comment on access and inclusion issues. 	<p>March 2007</p> <p>March 2007</p>	Manager, Community Services.
Ensure that people with disabilities are aware of and can access other established consultative processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure agendas, minutes and other documents are available on request in alternative formats and are published on the Shire's website. • consider Installing an audio loop in Council Chambers. 	<p>December 2007</p> <p>Discuss at next council meeting.</p>	Manager, Corporate Services