

# ACCESS AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2021-25



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## Acknowledgement of Country

Surf Coast Shire Council Acknowledges the Wadawurrung People, and the Gulidjan and Gadubanud Peoples of the Eastern Maar, their Elders and leaders past, present and emerging as the Traditional Owners of the skies, land, waters and sea country across our municipality.

We acknowledge their care and custodianship for more than 60,000 years, which continues today.

We walk with them as we respectfully care for and tread lightly on these lands.

We also extend that respect to all First Nations people who are part of the community.

### About the Strategic Plan 2014-24 and Bridging Strategic Plan 2025

Surf Coast Shire Council is committed to access and inclusion for all to build healthy, well-connected communities where everyone can participate. The 10 year [Access and Inclusion Strategic Plan 2014-2024](#) (the Strategy) outlines the key strategies and goals Council will work towards to achieve this vision.

The *Accessible and Inclusive Strategic Plan 2014-2024* concluded in December 2024. Council has extended the Strategic Plan by creating a [Bridging Accessible and Inclusive Strategic Plan 2025](#), while the new Surf Coast Shire Council Plan is being defined. The new Access and Inclusion Strategic Plan 2026-2030 will align with the new Council Plan priorities and timelines.

The *Bridging Accessible and Inclusive Strategic Plan 2025* continues to focus on the five key outcomes from the 2014-2024 Plan.

The five key outcomes include:

1. Built and natural environments are well designed and accessible for people of all abilities, and planned to adapt to our community's future accessibility needs
2. Accessible, flexible, people-centric services and information, responsive to the needs of people with a disability, their families and carers
3. People of all abilities actively participate, socialise and have fun in the community and contribute to local decision making
4. Council actively promotes the importance of inclusion for all, addressing discriminatory attitudes and supporting inclusive practices
5. A workforce that embraces diversity and is responsive to the needs and aspirations of people with a disability

### About the Action Plan 2021-25

Under the Victorian Disability Act (2006), all councils are required to have a Disability Action Plan. This *Access and Inclusion Action Plan 2021 - 25* supports the implementation of the Strategic Plan by outlining the concrete actions that Council take to further the outcomes and goals outlined in the Strategy. The actions in this plan follow on from the actions laid out in the two previous Action Plans 2014-2017 and 2017-2021.

The Action Plan was initially created for 2021-2024, but has been extended to 2025 to align with the Bridging Strategic Plan 2025 and new Council Plan timelines.

The actions were developed in response to extensive community engagement with people with disability, carers, and support organisations, including feedback from over 200 stakeholders:

1. Individual and group consultations held across the Shire with 34 community members (June 2021)
2. Analysis of 111 survey responses from the People Place Future project from people with disability and carers (January - March 2021)
3. Survey of over 80% of internal staff leaders (59 staff members) (April - June 2021).

Details of the community engagement process can be found in Appendix 1.

## Access and Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025

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The plan was prepared by the Access and Inclusion Officer, in collaboration with officers from across the organisation from March - September 2021. The Access and Inclusion Officer leads the development, monitoring and of the action plan, and to support officers from across all areas of Council to implement the action plans. The plan will be monitored annually, and a Progress Report will be available to the public via our [website](#).

## Access and Inclusion Action Plan 2021-25

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: Built and natural environments

*Built and natural environments are well designed and accessible for people of all abilities, and planned to adapt to our community's future accessibility needs*

GOAL	OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>1.1</b> Ensure all new Council buildings are compliant with the Building Codes Australian Standard	1.1.1 Improved internal accountability to ensure design and construct are to standard	Action 2021-23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue Manager Project Management Office reporting and attendance at All Abilities Advisory Committee meetings, including highlight reports.</li> <li>Building Compliance to continue to provide advice on DDA standards to Project Management Office as required.</li> <li>Consider making access consultants mandatory on all relevant projects.</li> </ul>	Strategy and Program Delivery (Project Management Office), Community Safety (Building Compliance)
	1.1.2 New aquatic centre meets the needs of community members with disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct community engagement with people with disability, broader than just consulting with the AAAC to understand needs and best solutions.</li> <li>Liaise with other local councils who have implemented accessible pools e.g. Whittlesea and Moreland to understand existing best practice models. Elements may include hoists from changing room to pool, ramp into the pool, pool pods, beach entry, quiet zones / times.</li> </ul>	Strategy and Program Delivery (Project Management Office), Integrated Planning (Social Infrastructure Planning)
	1.1.3 Procurement processes require contractors to deliver Universal Design in all relevant projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore changing wording in procurement processes from 'consider Universal Design' to 'deliver Universal Design'.</li> </ul>	Integrity and Governance (Procurement), Strategy and Program Delivery (Project Management Office), Integrated Planning (Social Infrastructure Planning)

GOAL	OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
<p><b>1.2</b> Continue to improve the accessibility of existing council buildings and infrastructure where feasible</p>	<p>1.2.1 There are sufficient accessible car parks and car parks are upgraded to meet current standards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete carpark audit with funds from 2021-22 budget of all 145 Council owned accessible carparks within the Shire.</li> <li>• Apply for annual allocation of at least \$20,000 in 2022-23 and 2023-24 budgets for ongoing accessible carpark upgrades.</li> <li>• Consider increasing the number of accessible car parks at high demand locations such as popular beaches and shopping precincts.</li> </ul>	<p>Assets and Engineering (Design and Traffic), Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion), Strategy and Program Delivery (Project Management Office)</p>
	<p>1.2.2 Waste disposal sites are accessible for people with disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore options for improving accessibility at waste disposal sites.</li> <li>• Explore tactile bin lids.</li> </ul>	<p>Environment and Sustainability (Waste Management)</p>
	<p>1.2.3 Existing Council buildings continue to be upgraded to meet current standards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use DDA building audit 2020 to prioritise upgrade works for 2021-24 and spend allocated DDA Compliance Project budget.</li> <li>• Ensure all building and infrastructure renewal works are compliant with current standards.</li> </ul>	<p>Strategy and Program Delivery (Project Management Office), Integrated Planning (Social Infrastructure Planning), Assets and Engineering (Asset Management)</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council to upgrade facilities to include hearing loops Stribling Reserve.</li> </ul>	<p>Technology and Information</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed access and inclusion outcomes into the decision making framework for social infrastructure projects.</li> </ul>	<p>Integrated planning (Social Infrastructure Planning)</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with relevant teams to find solution to this issue.</li> </ul>	<p>Strategy and Program Delivery (Project Management Office), Integrated Planning (Social Infrastructure Planning), Assets and Engineering (Asset Management)</p>

GOAL	OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop process for ensuring all community funded projects are DDA compliant.</li> </ul>	Assets and Engineering (Asset Management), Integrated Planning (Social Infrastructure Planning & Community Project Development)
	1.2.4 Footpath accessibility continues to be upgraded across the Shire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalise Pathway Strategy Review</li> <li>Build new priority footpaths based on findings of the Pathway Strategy Review 2021.</li> <li>Respond to safety concerns identified by community via CRMs or community engagement.</li> <li>Ensure all footpath renewal works are compliant with current standards.</li> </ul>	Assets and Engineering (Design and Traffic), Integrated Planning (Social Infrastructure Planning)
	1.2.5 Council information regarding accessibility of Council buildings is comprehensive and accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with traders to ensure understanding of and compliance with regulations around footpath accessibility.</li> <li>Explore developing access keys for major venues to help users understand what to expect, help determine the suitability of the venue, help to alleviate anxiety about visiting new places, and support independence. Can include information on navigation, parking, layout, access in and around the venue, toilets, staff, and services.</li> <li>Develop Access Maps for major Council facilities.</li> </ul>	Economic Development, Arts and Tourism (Economic Development), Community Safety (Ranger Services)
			Access and Inclusion (Community Strengthening), Community Projects and Partnerships (Facilities), Integrated Planning (Social Infrastructure Planning), Technology and Information (Information Technology)

GOAL	OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
<p><b>1.3</b> Improve the safety and accessibility of the outdoor environment including walking and cycling paths, playgrounds and sporting facilities</p>	<p>1.3.1 Improved accessibility of major beaches along the Surf Coast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work in partnership with GORCAPA and other groups to explore best location for accessible ramp in Anglesea, explore link to Changing Places and beach wheelchairs.</li> <li>• Support owners of beach wheelchairs to hire out to the public including Anglesea and Jan Juc Surf Lifesaving Clubs.</li> <li>• Find suitable hiring location and approach for Council's children's beach wheelchair.</li> <li>• Continue to support GRAW Torquay in hiring out the Sandcruiser wheelchair.</li> </ul>	<p>Integrated Planning (Social Infrastructure Planning), Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion)</p>
	<p>1.3.2 Improved accessibility of nature trails across the Shire</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trial volunteer Sherpa program for Trailrider in partnership with Parks Victoria and GORCAPA (similar to Grampians Shire).</li> <li>• Explore project to identify which additional trails are accessible for power wheelchairs and/or Trailrider.</li> <li>• Work with GORCAPA and Parks Victoria to ensure maintenance of existing accessible trails.</li> </ul>	<p>Integrated Planning (Social Infrastructure Planning), Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion), Facilities Management (Trailrider)</p>
	<p>1.3.3 Increased accessibility of playgrounds for children with various disabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For new playgrounds and renewals, explore additional universal design elements for a range of disabilities such as quiet spaces, sensory experiences such as herb gardens.</li> </ul>	<p>Integrated Planning (Social Infrastructure Planning)</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore creating a fenced playground in the Shire, ensuring this is still accessible for people in wheelchairs.</li> </ul>	<p>Integrated Planning (Social Infrastructure Planning)</p>
	<p>1.3.4 Improved Council information and promotion of beach matting, wheelchairs, TrailRider</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual communications campaign to promote beach wheelchairs, matting and TrailRider. Include information sharing with health and social service providers such as community health and hospital, aged care facilities, Surf Coast Disability Network etc.</li> </ul>	<p>Community Support (Communications and Community Engagement)</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate existing information on accessible nature trails into Council's maps and tourism information.</li> </ul>	<p>Economic Development, Arts and Tourism (Tourism)</p>

GOAL	OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
<p><b>1.4</b> Increase the ability of staff to understand and apply current access standards and universal design principles to Council's infrastructure planning</p>	<p>1.4.1 Universal Design is well understood and applied by relevant staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold updated internal Universal Design training for staff, with a focus on planners, social infrastructure, asset renewal, Engineering, FOSO, and Project Management Office staff.</li> </ul>	<p>Community Projects and Partnerships, Assets and Engineering, Integrated Planning, Planning and Compliance, Strategy and Program Delivery (Project Management Office)</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wayfinding strategy to include best practice in universal design and accessibility.</li> </ul>	<p>Integrated Planning (Social Infrastructure Planning)</p>
<p><b>1.5</b> Increase the capacity of planning applicants to incorporate universal design and improved accessibility in their design</p>	<p>1.5.1 Council Planners ensure all new developments and strategic planning deliver universal design</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statutory / Strategic Planners to attend updated Universal Design training.</li> <li>• Access and Inclusion Officer to attend Planning team meeting to discuss Universal Design.</li> </ul>	<p>Planning and Compliance</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan new areas with accessibility to activity centres, facilities and services as a priority (this is a current objective) (Karen Hose Strategic Land Use Planning).</li> </ul>	<p>Integrated Planning</p>

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: Services and information

*Accessible, flexible, people-centric services and information, responsive to the needs of people with a disability, their families and carers*

GOAL	DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>2.1</b> Improve the ability of staff to respond to current and emerging needs of people with a disability, their families and carers as well as people with other access and inclusion needs	2.1.1 Council staff have increased understanding of the needs and strengths of people with disability and improved skills in acting in accessible and inclusive ways	Commence program of regular disability awareness training for key staff, including lived experience of people with disability, human rights, disability inclusion, and universal design (see 1.4).	Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion), Community Support (Customer Experience)
	2.1.2 Council's direct services continue to enhance access and inclusion for clients and participants with disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Assessment Service (RAS) to continue providing support and advocacy for people with disability over 65 years to access services and supports.</li> </ul>	Community Strengthening (Age Friendly and RAS)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MCH to continue working with groups who provide early intervention for families with children with a disability.</li> </ul>	Community Strengthening (Child and Family Health)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family Day Care to create Strategic Inclusion Plan with KU inclusion services.</li> <li>Early Years to continue working with the Pre School Field Officer, and Kindergarten Inclusion Support programs to improve access and inclusion in Kindergartens.</li> <li>Early Years to continue to upgrade kindergarten buildings to improve physical access in Kindergartens.</li> </ul>	Community Strengthening (Early Years)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth space and programs to involve a therapy dog to increase access and inclusion for young people with mental health issues and neurodiversity.</li> </ul>	Community Strengthening (Youth)

GOAL	DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
	2.1.3 Council's community-wide programs improve their systems and processes to increase disability inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold targeted community education sessions targeting people with disability and their support organisations.</li> <li>• Emergency management staff complete CFA <a href="#">Preparing Vulnerable People e-learning modules</a>.</li> <li>• Continue to improve emergency management processes to support people with disability e.g. learn from findings from <a href="#">VCOSS project in Gippsland</a>.</li> </ul>	Community Safety (Community Emergency Management)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Including in budget project or recurrent bid forms how we can consider access and inclusion.</li> </ul>	Finance (Management Accounting)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to support community members with enquiries regarding new online disabled parking permit system, and provide support to people who need assistance in the application process.</li> </ul>	Community Safety (Ranger Services), Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 seater Council owned community buses available for hire now have disabled parking permits.</li> </ul>	Community Projects and Partnerships
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with people with disability on new customer interface project in 2021-2022.</li> </ul>	Technology and Information (Digital Transformation)
2.2 Apply best practice communication and information approaches to enable easy access to information by people with a disability	2.2.1 People with disability know where to go for information and can easily access it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comms plans to ensure use of community based promotion avenues e.g. aged care facilities, school newsletters, community health services, and supermarket noticeboards.</li> <li>• Continue to use print media sources such as local newspapers, and consider other printed media such as Groundswell.</li> </ul>	Community Support (Communications and Community Engagement), Community Strengthening (Age Friendly)

GOAL	DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore Surf Coast Shire Welcome Pack for new residents moving to the area explaining where to find information and key avenues of support.</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carry out a promotion campaign for the Access and Inclusion Newsletter.</li> </ul>	Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure new community directory on Council’s website includes information about disability inclusive programs, and accessibility information for all programs.</li> </ul>	Community Support (Community Health and Development)
	2.2.2 Council information is accessible and inclusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake training and develop policy/ guidelines for all staff to ensure all written materials and images are accessible including font size, colours used, plain language, simple design.</li> </ul>	Community Support (Communications and Community Engagement)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve training for Communications staff and web authors and implementation of policy to reduce PDFs or provide a text alternative.</li> </ul>	Community Support (Communications and Community Engagement)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop Easy English documents for key publications and information such as the Council Plan.</li> </ul>	Council Plan Project, Community Support (Communications and Community Engagement)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve accessibility of Council’s waste calendar including font size, contrast colours, large print options.</li> </ul>	Environment and Sustainability (Waste)

GOAL	DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure Council budget provides an accessible text alternative (word document or html).</li> <li>• Ensure large print and hard copy versions of the Budget are advertised and available.</li> <li>• Explore developing a plain language version Annual Budget.</li> </ul>	Finance
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Council agendas for accessibility.</li> </ul>	Integrity and Governance(Governance)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer Services team to continue to help customers with disability fill in forms and find their way around the website.</li> </ul>	Customer Support (Customer Experience)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trial Auslan interpreting for selected Council meetings, events, and videos.</li> </ul>	Community Support (Comms and Community Engagement; Internal Events), Integrity and Governance (Governance)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement live captioning for Council meetings.</li> </ul>	Technology and Information (Digital Transformation), Integrity and Governance (Governance)
	2.2.3 Council provides accessible maps that detail pathways and accessible amenities in key township locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore converting access maps to a digital format for ease of use by locals and tourists.</li> <li>• Consider Council's 'near me' software, or Alpaca maps used by Economic Development and Arts (different to accessible trails project above see <a href="#">website</a>).</li> </ul>	Community Strengthening (Age and Access), Information Management (GIS), Economic Development, Arts and Tourism (Tourism)

GOAL	DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
<p><b>2.3</b> Plan and deliver council events and activities that are inclusive and celebrate community diversity</p>	<p>2.3.1 Ensure Council activities for people with disability involve people with lived experience in planning and facilitation where possible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritise people with disability when recruiting consultants and facilitators wherever possible in programs that involve people with disability.</li> </ul>	<p>Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion)</p>
	<p>2.3.2 Council events and activities are fully inclusive of people with disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore developing access keys for major Council events and activities to help users understand what to expect, help determine the suitability of the venue, help to alleviate anxiety about visiting new places, and support independence. Can include information on navigation, parking, layout, access in and around the venue, toilets, staff, and services.</li> <li>• Explore developing social stories for major Council events and activities to help children with disability understand what to expect.</li> <li>• Explore options for quiet zones at all Council activities and events, particularly those targeting children and families.</li> </ul>	<p>Community Support (Internal Events), Community Strengthening (Early Years and Child and Family Health), Community Strengthening (Youth)</p>
		<p>Develop Inclusive Events Checklist and Guidelines and promote internally.</p>	<p>Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion)</p>
		<p>Australian National Surfing Museum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase noise cancelling headphones,</li> <li>• Create access keys/ sensory map</li> <li>• Create social stories.</li> </ul>	<p>Eco Dev, Arts and Tourism (Arts Creative and Economy)</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include disability accessibility considerations from the Accessible Events Checklist in the Event Brief form which is required for all events.</li> </ul>	<p>Community Support (Internal Events)</p>

GOAL	DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop new art programs aimed at engaging people with disability e.g. VALID short story awards, Writers Victoria storytelling projects, Karingal Gallery collaboration with Anglesea Art Space.</li> </ul>	Eco Dev, Arts and Tourism (Arts Creative and Economy)
<p><b>2.4</b> Support service providers to develop and deliver services to meet local accessibility needs</p>	<p>2.4.1 Sufficient local health and support services to meet the needs of people with disability and carers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with/ advocate to health and support services to increase local provision of services.</li> </ul>	Community Support (Community Health and Development)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council to continue to support Barwon Health support group for carers of children with disability.</li> </ul>	Community Strengthening (Early Years and Child and Family Health), Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Network with services in Geelong to see if they can extend to Surf Coast region e.g. Kardinia Park Sensory Zone, Leisure Networks, Gateways (Early Years).</li> </ul>	Community Strengthening (Early Years and Child and Family Health)
	<p>2.4.2 Improved mental health for people with disability and carers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide specific grants for community programs that support mental health.</li> <li>Support primary schools to develop sensory rooms for children with anxiety and sensory sensitivities (e.g. ASD).</li> <li>Social media campaign to promote mental health strategies and supports.</li> </ul>	Community Support (Community Health and Development)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council to provide ongoing mental health programs for young people including mental health first aid and transition program for Grade 6's.</li> </ul>	Community Strengthening (Youth)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pathways for Carers program to be trialled on Surf Coast.</li> </ul>	Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion)

GOAL	DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
	2.4.3 Increased opportunities for physical activity for people with disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to support sporting associations to host all abilities sporting events.</li> </ul>	Sports and Facilities Operations
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure all disability inclusive opportunities are advertised on the <a href="#">AAA play website</a>.</li> </ul>	Sports and Facilities Operations
	2.4.4 Increased collaboration and networking between community groups and services who work with people with disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to facilitate the Surf Coast Disability Network including bi-monthly meetings.</li> <li>Promote Surf Coast Disability Network to mainstream health and mental health services.</li> </ul>	Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore possible intersections between health providers network, and Surf Coast Disability Network.</li> </ul>	Community Support (Community Health and Development), Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion)

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: Social and civic participation

*People of all abilities actively participate, socialise and have fun in the community and contribute to local decision making*

GOAL	DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>3.1</b> Involve people of all abilities in Council's decision-making (includes AAAC Goal 4.4)	3.1.1 Community engagement activities are inclusive and actively involve people with disability across the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Engagement Officers to share all relevant engagement opportunities with the Access and inclusion Officer.</li> </ul>	Community Support (Communications and Community Engagement), Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add accessibility as a requirement for future engagement plan audits (twice per annum).</li> </ul>	Community Support (Communications and Community Engagement)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Engagement and Access and Inclusion Officers to undertake external training on community engagement with people with disability and promote best-practice approaches and methods across the organisation.</li> </ul>	Community Support (Communications and Community Engagement)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create guidelines for disability accessible Council community engagement.</li> </ul>	Community Support (Communications and Community Engagement), Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore opportunities to engage with young people with disability e.g. student voice activities with schools, student representatives presenting to the AAAC.</li> </ul>	Community Strengthening (Youth)

GOAL	DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
	3.1.2 Council convenes and supports a community committee to advise council on the provision of accessible and inclusive services, programs and infrastructure (was Goal 4.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing facilitation of the AAAC including regular meetings.</li> <li>• Continue to recruit new members to the AAAC as required, with a particular focus on people with disability from across the Shire.</li> <li>• Relevant projects to be brought to AAAC for lived experience expertise and feedback (e.g. draft budget, major social infrastructure projects).</li> </ul>	Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion)
<b>3.2</b> Support community organisations to attract and cater for people with a disability as participants and volunteers	3.2.1 People with disability have opportunities for meaningful work in the Surf Coast Shire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the opportunity for the National Disability Recruitment Coordinator (NDRC) to run an information session with tourism and trader networks.</li> </ul>	Economic Development, Arts and Tourism (Economic Development)
	3.2.2 Local volunteer opportunities are accessible and meaningful for people with disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with external provider to provide disability awareness training to support local community organisations and sporting clubs to attract and support people with disability who want to volunteer.</li> </ul>	Community Support (Community Health and Development)
	3.2.3 Enhanced disability inclusion in local community groups and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve inclusion of people with disability in Community Action Networks (Covid recovery groups).</li> <li>• Support community groups and organisations (such as community houses and men’s sheds) to upskill in disability inclusion e.g. providing grant funding to undertake disability awareness training, sharing resources and guidelines around inclusive practices.</li> <li>• Support community groups to promote services and activities to people with disability.</li> <li>• Explore linking some grants provided to Community Houses to access and inclusion outcomes.</li> </ul>	Community Support (Community Health and Development)

GOAL	DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
<p><b>3.3</b> Support community arts, festivals and events to be inclusive of all abilities and reflective of community diversity</p>	<p>3.3.1 Increased access and inclusion for people with disability at festivals and events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support event and festival organisers to upskill in disability inclusion e.g. undertaking disability awareness training, sharing resources and guidelines around inclusive practices.</li> <li>• Enhance accessibility information on Surf Coast Events website.</li> <li>• Develop access keys for major festivals and events to help users understand what to expect, help determine the suitability of the venue, help to alleviate anxiety about visiting new places, and support independence. Can include information on navigation, parking, layout, access in and around the venue, toilets, staff, and services.</li> </ul>	<p>Economic Development, Arts and Tourism (Events), Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion)</p>

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: Addressing discrimination and supporting inclusion

*Council actively promotes the importance of inclusion for all, addressing discriminatory attitudes and supporting inclusive practices*

GOAL	DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>4.1</b> Build and recognise community and business knowledge, skills and initiative around local access and inclusion needs	4.1.1 Increased disability awareness among community groups, sporting clubs and businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote disability awareness training to community and sporting groups e.g. Don't Stare Be Aware free training from Encompass, AMAZE training on neurodiversity.</li> </ul>	Community Support (Community Health and Development), Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase understanding of what businesses need and what areas Council should focus on to improve accessibility.</li> <li>Publish and promote 'good access is good business' information to local businesses, potentially including case examples.</li> <li>Promote messaging around improving accessibility and inclusion for customers and employees in communication with businesses e.g. newsletter and Traders' Association webinars.</li> <li>Promote disability awareness training to local businesses e.g. Don't Stare Be Aware free training from Encompass, AMAZE training on neurodiversity.</li> </ul>	Economic Development, Arts and Tourism (Economic Development), Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>International Day of People with Disability celebration to focus on Early Years.</li> <li>Council facilitated playgroups to incorporate key word signs.</li> </ul>	Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion), Community Strengthening (Early Years)

GOAL	DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
	4.1.2 Recognition of community groups, sporting clubs and businesses who successfully deliver access and inclusion outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore developing Disability Inclusion Awards for the Surf Coast Shire, or inclusion of disability categories in existing recognition opportunities.</li> <li>• Explore accessibility accreditation for businesses, perhaps using a logo indicating the business is disability friendly.</li> <li>• Target people with disability for Local Legends nominations for 2023-24.</li> </ul>	Economic Development, Arts and Tourism (Economic Development), Economic Development, Arts and Tourism (Tourism), Community Strengthening (Community Health and Development)
4.2 Work in partnership with government, business and the community to improve access and Inclusion for people with a disability	4.2.1 Improved physical accessibility of local businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider how to best promote Universal Design to businesses who may be building or upgrading their premises.</li> <li>• Explore opportunities to develop grant funding for businesses to improve accessibility of their premises (similar to Mornington Peninsula Shire).</li> </ul>	Economic Development, Arts and Tourism (Economic Development)
	4.2.2 Accessible tourism on the Surf Coast is well promoted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism to improve accessibility information on their website (currently just links to Council's Access and Inclusion webpages).</li> </ul>	Economic Development, Arts and Tourism (Economic Development)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide GIS data for Accessible Australia web app.</li> </ul>	Technology and Information (Information Technology)
4.2.3 All Council grant funding gives priority to applicants that can demonstrate disability inclusion outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small grant assessment criteria to refer specifically to access and inclusion outcomes when community grant guidelines are next reviewed.</li> <li>• Ensure all other Council grants refer specifically to delivering disability inclusion outcomes including: Event Grants, Arts Development Seed Fund</li> </ul>	Community Support (Community Health and Development), Economic Development, Arts and Tourism (Events), Economic Development, Arts and Tourism (Arts)	

GOAL	DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
<p><b>4.3</b> Advocate to create systemic change and choice for people with a disability</p>	<p>4.3.1 Advocate for improved public transport across the Shire</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to advocate on behalf of the community in relation to improved public transport across the Shire e.g. the new CORA development, potential Moriac railway station reopening, Parliamentary enquiry into the use of school buses as public transport, duplication of the Waurm Ponds railway line.</li> </ul>	<p>Assets and Engineering, Integrated Planning (Strategic initiatives), Community Support (Advocacy)</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider accessibility of bus stops in Road Safety Strategy Review 2021-26.</li> </ul>	<p>Assets and Engineering</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure new community transport project for residents aged 55+ years is inclusive of people with disability.</li> </ul>	<p>Community Strengthening (Age Friendly)</p>
	<p>4.3.2 Council responses to the climate emergency and environmental sustainability involve people with disability and address their needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand how people with disabilities may be affected by the impacts of climate change and develop relevant actions as part of the Climate Emergency response.</li> <li>Work with people with disability to educate them on climate change impacts and solutions (from Corporate Climate Emergency Long Term Plan for Community Strengthening).</li> </ul>	<p>Environment and Sustainability (Climate Action)</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage participation in tree planting and clean-up Australia days by promoting through the Surf Coast Disability Network, Access and Inclusion newsletter, and AAAC.</li> <li>Improve access to nature reserves managed by Council - e.g. works on improved pathway access within Grasstree Park (due within 2021/22 financial year).</li> </ul>	<p>Environment and Sustainability (Environment)</p>

GOAL	DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
	4.3.3 Council actions and partnerships to prevent violence against women address the needs of women with disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on women with disability in International Women’s Day celebrations 2022.</li> <li>• Gender and Equity Impact Assessments to include intersectionality with disability.</li> <li>• MCH service to continue to use the MARAM framework to support women with disability experiencing family violence.</li> </ul>	Community Support (Community Health and Development), Community Strengthening (Child and Family Health)
	4.3.4 Council actions to respond to social housing crisis addresses needs of people with disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support development of Specialist Disability Accommodation robust developments.</li> <li>• Include people with disability and carers in community engagement processes for two Council affordable housing projects in Aireys Inlet and Anglesea.</li> <li>• Work with Registered Housing Agency with expertise in inclusive and accessible housing in Council’s affordable housing projects.</li> </ul>	Integrated Planning (Strategic initiatives)

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5: Council Workforce Inclusion and Diversity

*A workforce that embraces diversity and is responsive to the needs and aspirations of people with a disability*

GOAL	DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>5.1</b> Provide staff with the knowledge, support and systems to enable Council to provide equitable and accessible services, programs and activities	5.1.1 Staff receive adequate internal support to continually improve disability inclusive practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share information across the organisation to support inclusive and accessible Council operations.</li> <li>• Advocate on behalf of people with disability and carers to internal departments.</li> <li>• Support staff to implement the Access and Inclusion Action Plan by providing information, resources, best-practice examples.</li> <li>• Advocate for increased funding for Access and Inclusion area</li> <li>• See Goal 2.1 re: staff disability awareness training.</li> </ul>	Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate inductions to include brief introduction to social equity portfolios at Council – disability, older people, youth, child safety, First Nations, gender.</li> <li>• Review all staff disability awareness training in Litmos to ensure it covers universal design, human rights, and ableism. Consider if other online training might be more effective e.g. DARU, AND.</li> <li>• Explore training for supervisors on supporting staff with disability to increase their effectiveness in managing employees with disability.</li> <li>• Explore in-person training in disability awareness and Universal Design for key staff members (see goals 1.4 and 2.1).</li> </ul>	People and Culture (Human Resources)
<b>5.2</b> Continue to build workforce diversity regarding employment of people with a disability	5.2.1 Increased opportunities for people with disability to work for Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore work experience opportunities for people with disability by identifying entry level positions, talking to teams about potential positions, and partnering with external provider such as GForce to source people with disability to participate.</li> </ul>	People and Culture (Human Resources)

GOAL	DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
	<p>5.2.2 Volunteers with disability are well supported and encouraged to thrive in the organisation, and recruitment processes are more inclusive to attract more people with disability to volunteer for the organisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the inclusiveness of Council’s volunteer management procedures to better support people with disability who want to volunteer with Council (e.g. identify any personal adjustments that need to be made at the first point of contact, PD agreed with each individual).</li> <li>• Provide disability awareness training to staff members who supervise volunteers.</li> <li>• Advertise Council volunteer opportunities to the whole community, and use flexible recruitment methods to attract more people with disability to apply for Council volunteer opportunities (e.g. help desk for EOIs, 1-1 recorded online interviews, trial of task rather than interview, provide interview questions in advance).</li> </ul>	<p>Community Support (Community Health and Development)</p>
	<p>5.2.3 Employees with disability are well supported and encouraged to thrive in the organisation,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review induction procedure to ensure staff leaders ask new staff about modifications required. Provide education for supervisors to ensure they are clear on this process.</li> <li>• Consider conducting a staff survey to understand the needs of employees who identify as being a person with disability, or explore if this data is captured in other surveys e.g. People Matters.</li> <li>• Create a workplace adjustment policy along with recruitment policy review (FY 2024/25).</li> </ul>	<p>People and Culture (Human Resources, Worker Health &amp; Safety)</p>

## Access and Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025

GOAL	DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
	5.2.4 Recruitment processes are more inclusive to attract more people with disability to work for the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete Australian Network on Disability's <a href="#">Quick 10</a> to provide initial insight into Council's access and inclusion practices, and consider if any of this information can be included in the review of recruitment processes occurring with the implementation of ELMO.</li> <li>• Consider applying to participate in either AND's <a href="#">Access and Inclusion Index</a> OR Job Access <a href="#">NDRC program</a> to gain individualised support to improve Council's recruitment and support of people with disability.</li> <li>• Incorporate disability inclusion as part of the review of recruitment policy in late 2024.</li> </ul>	People and Culture (Human Resources)
<b>5.3</b> Evaluate Council's Access and Inclusion Plan annually	5.3.1 Council's Access and Inclusion Action Plan is effectively implemented to deliver disability inclusion outcomes for our community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor progress and update actions annually with staff from across the organisation.</li> <li>• Provide annual reports to the All Abilities Advisory Committee (AAAC), Council staff, Councillors, and community on progress towards actions.</li> </ul>	Community Strengthening (Access and Inclusion)

## Appendix 1: Research and Community Engagement

Community engagement for this project involved feedback from over 200 stakeholders during 2021, outlined below.

### 1. Individual and group consultations

*Individual and group consultations held across the Shire with 34 community members (June 2021)*

Council engaged independent consultants to facilitate the consultations to enhance the impartiality of community feedback. The consultants, Linda Blaik and Jen Engels from Engels Floyd and Associates, both have lived experience of disability, as well as extensive experience working in the disability sector. The primary method of consultation was focus groups held across the Shire, however individual interviews and surveys were also used for interested individuals who couldn't attend the focus groups.

#### Consultation details

Consultations were held with the following groups:

1. Torquay community (face-to-face focus group)
2. Lorne community (face-to-face focus group, interview and survey)
3. Anglesea community (face-to-face focus group)
4. All Abilities Advisory Committee (face-to-face focus group) <sup>1</sup>
5. Support Organisations (online focus group)<sup>2</sup>
6. Hinterland community (survey and feedback from AAAC members)<sup>3</sup>

Stakeholder type	Total
People with disability	10
Carers of people with disability	8
Workers from support organisations	10
All Abilities Advisory Committee members	6

#### Questions

Feedback was sought about what made the Surf Coast Shire inclusive, and what the key barriers were for people with disability, under the five key outcomes outlined in the Strategic Plan. Questions included:

1. *What makes Surf Coast Shire accessible and inclusive for people with disability?*
2. *What are the biggest barriers to the Surf Coast Shire being accessible and inclusive for people with disability?*

<sup>1</sup> Council's All Abilities Advisory Committee (AAAC) is made up of community members, representatives from service organisations, Council officers and a Councillor Representative. The AAAC advises Council on how to improve access and inclusion for people of all abilities in the Surf Coast Shire community.

<sup>2</sup> The support organisation focus group was primarily made up of members of the Surf Coast Disability Network (SCDN) with some additional attendees. The SCDN is made up of disability support services, community services, and schools working together to improve access and inclusion for people with disability in Surf Coast Shire.

<sup>3</sup> A focus group was scheduled for Winchelsea however had to be cancelled due to low RSVPs. However views from Winchelsea and the hinterland were available through consultation with Council's All Abilities Advisory Committee and surveys.

3. What are the possible solutions to these barriers?

## 2. People Place Future community survey

Analysis of 111 survey responses from people with disability and carers from the People Place Future Project (January - March 2021)

The [People Place Future project](#) aimed to inform a long term community vision for the Shire, plus a new four year Council Plan and Health and Wellbeing Plan. A community survey was distributed to understand community values, neighbourhood liveability and investment priorities. Council received 1,193 survey responses between January and March 2021.

### Responses from people with disability and carers

A significant number of these survey responses were from people with disability and carers, including 52 people with disability (4% of total responses), and 59 carers of people with disability (5% of total responses). These response numbers are unlikely to be representative of all people with disability and carers in the Shire, as they are much lower than the estimated 20% of Australians with disability and 10% who are carers (ABS 2018). However the responses provided a rich data source to understand community priorities and values for these groups.

### Demographics of survey respondents

Demographics	Respondents with disability	Respondents identifying as carers
<b>Gender</b>	Twice as many female respondents with disability vs. males (67% female, 31% male, 2% prefer not to say)	85% of respondents were female vs. 15% male
<b>Age</b>	Majority of respondents were 45-64 years (50%).  Overall spread reflected the age spread of the Shire, although people 45-64 years were over-represented, and 0-24 years were under-represented (ABS 2016)	Majority of respondents were 34-54 years (64%).  Limited responses from young carers, with 0 respondents under 24 years and only 3% who were 25-34 years.  No respondents were aged 75+.
<b>Location</b>	Torquay/ Jan Juc (65%), followed by Anglesea (12%) and Aireys Inlet (8%), Winchelsea (8%), Moriac (4%), and Lorne (4%). No responses from Deans Marsh.  Compared with the proportion of people with disability from the 2016 Census, response numbers represented an overrepresentation from: Torquay and Jan Juc (65% vs. 24%); and a significant underrepresentation from Lorne (4% vs. 12%); Deans Marsh (0% vs. 9%); and Winchelsea (8% vs. 24%).	Torquay/ Jan Juc (54%), followed by Anglesea (10%), Moriac (10%), Lorne (10%), Winchelsea (8%), Deans Marsh (5%). No respondents from Aireys Inlet.
<b>Cultural diversity</b>	2 respondents with disability speak a language other than English at home.  Equal to SCS average of 4% (ABS 2016)	7 respondents (12%) speak a language other than English at home

		Higher than the overall SCS average of 4% (ABS 2016).
<b>LGBTQI+</b>	3 respondents with disability identify as LGBTQI+	3 respondents identify as LGBTQI+
<b>Volunteering</b>	31% were volunteers through an organisation or group, slightly higher than the SCS average of 28% (ABS 2016).	32% were volunteers through an organisation or group, slightly higher than the SCS average of 28% (ABS 2016).

### 3. Staff leadership survey

Survey of 59 internal staff leaders (April - June 2021)

An online survey was distributed across the organisation and completed by 82% of staff in leadership positions including team leaders, coordinators, managers and general managers. Survey responses were received from all areas of the organisation<sup>4</sup> including:

Department	Area
<b>Culture and Community</b>	Community Relations
	Community Strengthening
	Facilities and Open Space Operations
	People and Culture
	Social Infrastructure Planning
<b>Environment and Development</b>	Business Improvement, Ranger Services, Building Compliance
	Eco Dev and Tourism
	Environment and Community Safety
	Planning and Development
	Project Management Office
<b>Governance and Infrastructure</b>	Digital Transformation
	Engineering Services
	Finance
	Governance and Risk
	Information Management
	Strategic Asset

#### Questions

Feedback was sought in relation to the following areas:

1. Self-assessment in relation to experience in access and inclusion issues in working at Council;
2. Current or planned actions (2021-2024) to increase access and inclusion for people with disability in Surf Coast Shire;

<sup>4</sup> Restructure in 2021 means some department names and structure have changed since the creation of this plan.

3. Ideas for new actions (2021-2024) to increase access and inclusion for people with disability in Surf Coast Shire;
4. Supports required to improve performance in the area of access and inclusion

## References

Australian Bureau of Statistics: *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings*. 2019.

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<https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/Community/Over-55s/Age-Friendly-Communities>. 2020.

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