

Launceston City Council Access Action Plan 2012-2015



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FOREWORD

The Launceston City Council Access Action Plan was first developed in 2004 and was one of the first to be adopted by a Local Government Authority in Tasmania. A review of the Plan commenced in late 2010 and identified that much progress has been made in ensuring that the Council's services and facilities are accessible to as many as possible within our community.

This revised Access Action Plan identifies those achievements, as well as the ongoing activities and details of those actions that are still to be addressed, and some new actions that have been identified through input from the Council's Access Advisory Committee.

The Launceston Access Advisory Committee has operated continuously since its inception in 1987. Its primary purpose is to provide advice to the Council on matters relevant to access issues and to promote accessibility within the Municipality.

Operating as a Special Committee of Council as defined in the Local Government Act (Tas) 1993, s.24, membership of the Launceston Access Advisory Committee comprises representatives from a broad range of community organisations, Officers from relevant Council Departments and appointed individuals as community representatives. Input into the Committee also occurs regularly via letters to the committee, discussions with individuals with disabilities and representations to the Committee.

The Launceston City Council Access Action Plan is an ambitious plan and the timing of implementation of actions will be reliant upon the availability of resources. However, these actions are genuinely aimed at making Launceston an accessible place in which to live, work and visit and the Plan provides the Council with a clear direction for achieving the goal of access for all.

Focus Area One

(Relates to: Community Plan PF2.13)

Ensure business and public buildings comply with the access intent requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and requirements of the appropriate standards.

It is recognised that all members of the community are entitled to access to buildings. Whilst Launceston City Council is responsible for providing access to its own facilities, it is also recognised that we have a role to play in promoting universal access and, where appropriate, enforcing relevant regulations.

Actions ongoing:

- Progressively undertake access audits of all Council buildings and facilities in accordance with the transport and premises standards and the relevant Australian Standards (AS) 1428.
- Ensure new Council buildings and facilities are compliant with the National Construction code (NCC).
- Ensure plans of new Council buildings and major upgrades to facilities are compliant with the BCA.
- Assess the need for tactile ground surface indicators at entrances to Town Hall and Annexe Building.
- Provide improved universal access to the Albert Hall from City Park.
- Assess the need and potential for augmented hearing solutions in the Grand Hall, Meeting Rooms and Foyer area of the Albert Hall.
- Assess the need for tactile ground surface indicators at all entrances of Albert Hall.
- Investigate the options for access to the 50 metre pool for people with limited mobility.
- Council audits new developments and building applications against the requirements of the Premises Standard and requests changes a necessary to achieve compliance with the Standard.
- Initiate seminars or workshops between Council departments and real estate agents, developers, architects, buildings, planners and community groups to address access building design and streetscape planning for the future (address access issues to heritage buildings, recycling in CBD, parking, car and pedestrian flow in CBD).

Actions already underway or completed:

- ✓ Continue to promote the Missed Business Booklet to businesses and services.
- ✓ Ensure that key services are accessible, including having accessible parking.
- ✓ Review provisions for Access across statutory authorities and develop consistent requirements - Building Code of Australia is currently being updated to align it more with the Disability and Discrimination Act.
- ✓ Lift installed in Albert Hall.
- ✓ Construction of a new change room next to the Programs Pool at Launceston Aquatic.
- ✓ Audits of all Council buildings.
- ✓ Upgrade/replacement works scheduled as required and within budgetary constraints.

- ✓ Install augmented hearing solutions for Council meeting rooms including Town Hall Committee Room, Reception Room and Customer Service Area.
- ✓

Actions to be addressed in one-two years:

- Support the State Government's Disability Framework for action.
- New access ramp from City Park to Albert Hall to be completed.
- Assess and develop an Access Plan for the Princess Theatre and Earl Arts Centre.
- Review and update the Missed Business Booklet.
- Install tactile markings at entrances to Town Hall.

Actions to be addressed in three-five years:

- Develop and implement training programs for businesses and developers to provide information about access requirements under the Disability and Discrimination Act and the National Construction Code.

Focus Area Two

(Relates to: Community Plan PF2.14)

Ensure that all public toilets are accessible for all users

It is recognised that all members of the community are entitled to access to public toilets.

Actions ongoing:

- Actively seek opportunities and assess the need for additional accessible toilets within the CBD.
- Continue with implementation of directional signage (toilets) strategy.
- Promote the National Toilet Map website (www.toiletmap.gov.au) and provide like to site from Council's web page.

Actions already underway or completed:

- ✓ Improving signage for and promotion of toilet and changing facilities.

Actions to be addressed in one-two years:

- Investigate the provision of changing facilities for adults who have disabilities.

Focus Area Three

(Relates to: Community Plan PF2.15)

Improve access for all around the community

Actions ongoing:

- Progressively review and install or correct tactile ground surface indicators as per Council Policy.
- Undertake street assessment and condition monitoring inspections throughout the Launceston footpath network.
- Develop hierarchy of playgrounds with the aim of providing accessible options.
- Continue to assess public access within Carr Villa Memorial Park.

Actions already underway or completed:

- ✓ Minimise footpath hazards such as overhanging trees - programme in place, including acting on customer requests.
- ✓ Continue to upgrade access ramps and pedestrian islands - programme in place including acting on customer requests.
- ✓ Continue the implementation of the On-Street Trading Policy - currently operating.
- ✓ Access ramp at the main entrance of the Crematorium Chapel.
- ✓ Hand rails at the Crematorium Chapel.
- ✓ Tactile indicator pads installed at Claygrove.
- ✓ Access ramp installed for Claygrove.
- ✓ Wheelchair accessible design at Kooyong Garden.
- ✓ Stainless steel wheelchair ramp on site to assist for accessing the Lawn cemetery from the kerb & channel road site(s).
- ✓ Kerbing around the top pond at Barakee Waters.
- ✓ Access ramp for Barakee Waters.
- ✓ Removal of the "Stepping Stones" across the Pool of Eternal Memories.
- ✓ One accessible toilet near the crematorium.
- ✓ Access ramps to be built (planning stage) at Woodlawn section.
- ✓ Continuously upgrading the roadwork at Carr Villa.
- ✓ Accessible seating options included in the new Northern Stand at Aurora Stadium.
- ✓ Awareness of accessible seating options that are provided Aurora Stadium .
- ✓ Pedestrian Strategy Project underway.

Actions to be addressed in three-five years:

- Explore the potential to expand the Goods on Streets policy to other shopping precincts within the Launceston municipality (ie Kings Meadows, Mowbray).
- Investigate the possibility of re-paving Quadrant Mall and Civic Square to improve access for all users.

Focus Area Four

(Relates to: Community Plan PF2.16)

Raise community awareness of access issues

Actions ongoing

- As part of Council's Corporate Induction, staff are made aware of Council's responsibility to the Community.
- Council makes publicly available hard copies of the Plan and puts the plan on the Council website.
- Council reports progress against the agreed strategies and timeframes according to their reporting cycle.
- Council, in collaboration with the Launceston Access Advisory Committee, reviews the Plan in 2015 and the Plan strategies for the period 2015-2020.
- Ensure new information products and Council's general matters are effectively communicated and checked against the standards before printing and distribution.
- Review Council's regular correspondence to residents (rates, dog registration forms) against the standards and for Council to consider option of inviting residents to register their requests for information to be provided in alternative formats.
- Continue to maintain practice of placing all Council meeting agendas and minutes on the Council website in alternative formats.
- Continue to place all community consultation information and public notices on the Council website (including captioned photos).
- Establish guidelines for holding accessible meetings.
- Promote and encourage universal access to all Council sponsored meetings, community consultation and events.
- Complete a survey of Council owned halls/meeting rooms to identify usage and list most accessible venue.
- Review printed materials to ensure that suitable provision is made for people with disabilities giving priority Rates Notices (in other formats) and other Council notices ie use Plain English.
- Continue to support the National Relay Service and publicise the service on Council's website.

Actions already underway or completed:

- ✓ Information on Council's works, public notices and matters are conveyed to the community in both print and audio format.
- ✓ Review Council's regular correspondence to residents (rates, water, dog registration forms) against the standards and for Council to consider option of inviting residents to register their requests for information to be provided in alternative formats.
- ✓ Complete an audit and assessment of venues used for community consultations and public meetings to ensure that only those which provide non-discriminatory access are utilised.
- ✓ Information on catering for people with disabilities who may want to attend public meetings to be added to "Check List for Arranging Public Meetings" information sheet (05-Rf-010).

Actions to be addressed in one-two years:

- Increase community awareness of access issues through the media and other community information channels.
- Promote the role of the Launceston Access Advisory Committee
- Identify and reward accessible businesses through an awards program
- Update and promote the Access Map.
- Council provides at least annual updates on progress with the implementation of the Action Plan through the Community Newsletter and on the Council website.
- Develop a reference database of services for, and information on, people with disabilities as a resource for customer service.
- Continue to foster business and community awareness of access issues or improvements through Access Awards, media coverage and the Launceston Access Advisory Committee.
- Review, update and redistribute the Missed Business Information Booklet to Launceston Businesses.

Actions to be addressed in three-five years:

- Council, in collaboration with the Launceston Access Advisory Committee, reviews the Plan in 2015 and the Plan strategies for the period 2015-2020.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Australian Disability Discrimination Act 1992

The Federal *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (D.D.A.) provides protection for everyone in Australia against discrimination based on disability. It encourages everyone to be involved in implementing the Act and to share in the overall benefits to the community and the economy that flow from participation by the widest range of people.

Disability

Is defined by the Australian Disability Discrimination Act 1992 as:

Disability, in relation to a person, means:

- (a) total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; or
- (b) total or partial loss of a part of the body; or
- (c) the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or
- (d) the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or
- (e) the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; or
- (f) a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or
- (g) a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour;

and includes a disability that:

- (h) presently exists; or
- (i) previously existed but no longer exists; or
- (j) may exist in the future (including because of a genetic predisposition to that disability); or
- (k) is imputed to a person.

To avoid doubt, a **disability** that is otherwise covered by this definition includes behaviour that is a symptom or manifestation of the disability.

Disability Discrimination

Disability discrimination happens when people with a disability are treated less fairly than people without a disability. Disability discrimination also occurs when people are treated less fairly because they are relatives, friends, carers, co-workers or associates of a person with a disability.

Discrimination also exists where there is a condition or requirement imposed, which may be the same for everyone but which unfairly excludes or disadvantages people with a disability (for example in employment, education, or access to goods or services). Different treatment of people with a disability is not unlawful discrimination where it is reasonably intended to ensure that they have equal opportunities or to meet their special needs (DDA 1992).

Access

Is defined in terms of the ability of the residents and visitors to use the service or facility provided. Consequently, a service is accessible when:

- it is easy to find out about and to get to
- it is easily understood and used
- people who use it feel they are welcome
- people know that they will get the right assistance when they need it
- people are confident that every reasonable effort will be made to address the customer's requirements.

Tactile Ground Surface Indicators

Provide a tactile surface on public pathways and access routes that can be felt underfoot and recognised as a warning of impending pedestrian hazard, particularly to the vision impaired, but also as an added safety precaution to all pedestrians.