

Access and Inclusion Plan

2014 - 2018





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1. Message from the Mayor



I am very pleased to introduce Tweed Shire Council's *Access and Inclusion Plan 2014-2018 (The Plan)*. The Plan outlines a process for assessing and implementing changes that will make our community a place that everyone can enjoy. An accessible community provides everyone with equal and dignified access to all aspects of community life. This includes the ability to engage in social, business, employment, educational and leisure activities. Throughout our lives we all become aware of the need for access. Whether this is as parents pushing a pram, through injury or illness, temporary or permanent impairment, or the process of ageing, we will all want to continue going to places and doing the things that make up our lives.

Access and Inclusion Plans, sometimes called Disability Action Plans, are supported by the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992. Action Plans enable local governments to outline commitments to addressing access barriers that prevent involvement in the community. The natural environment of forest, coast and farmland, historic villages and urban centres makes Tweed Shire a wonderful place to live and to visit. The importance of supporting all residents and visitors to enjoy the open space and built environment by reducing access barriers cannot be overstated. Access is good for social and economic outcomes.

I commend Council's Equal Access Advisory Committee, staff and all those community members who contributed to the development of this document and look forward to reporting on progress implementing both the Access and Inclusion Policy and Plan into the future.

Cr Barry Longland
Mayor of Tweed

access

2. Definitions and Concepts

2.1 What is access and inclusion?

Access and inclusion makes communities liveable for everyone, this means the ability to move around the community and enter buildings in an equal and dignified manner. This includes involvement in business, work, education, social and leisure activities.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities stipulates the importance of interventions to improve access to different domains of the environment including buildings and roads, transportation, information, and communication. These domains are interconnected – people with disabilities will not be able to benefit fully from improvements in one domain if the others remain inaccessible. (World Report p169)

Planning for access and inclusion involves thinking about design, place and people.

2.2 Universal access

Access (sometimes referred to as universal access) means that regardless of ability a person can approach, enter, pass to or from and make use of an area and its facilities without assistance.

An accessible environment, while particularly relevant for people with disabilities, has benefits for a broader range of people. (World Report p 169)

During all our lives, we will experience times when our ability to go places is compromised: we have to carry luggage or shopping; we need to ferry around children; and we experience injuries and/or illnesses that may leave us temporarily or permanently without a full range of motion. Some of us have been born with an impairment that reduces our movement or senses; others will acquire one during their life. As children, we were limited in how we could travel and, as we all continue to age, most of us will experience a loss of hearing, reduced vision, or find our bodies become frailer. But these

experiences do not mean our lives must get worse as a result. If we can retain our dignity and independence, and if we can still get to the places required to achieve the things we want to do, then everyone can lead a meaningful, valuable life. (VCOSS 2011 Creating Accessible Journeys p8)

2.3 Universal design

Universal design is a way of thinking about environments that meet the needs of all members of the community. Universal design also considers changing needs over the life course.

It is a product, environment, building design and construction that aims to accommodate the functional needs of everyone. The word universal is often seen coupled to specific design environments or products such as universal kitchen design or universal bathroom design. (IATA, Unit 1 Access Terminology V3)

It is a process that increases usability, safety, health, and social participation, through design and operation of environments, products, and systems in response to the diversity of people and abilities. Usability, though, is not the only goal of universal design, and “adaption and specialised design” are a part of providing customisation and choice, which may be essential for addressing diversity. Other overlapping terms for the same general concept are “design for all” and “inclusive design”. (World Report p170)

2.4 Social Inclusion

Social inclusion refers to a sense of being included in the social life of the community and being treated with equality and dignity.

Ideally, we want to live in a dignified and simplified society where we have the confidence and self esteem to speak our mind and have the opportunities that everyone has. (Shut Out, 2009)



3. Tweed – The Place

Tweed Shire is a large and diverse geographical area and includes rural areas, national parks, beaches and coastal areas, and growing residential and rural-residential areas. The Tweed's urban areas are concentrated in the northeast corner (Tweed Heads), with an inland urban centre at Murwillumbah, and several smaller towns and villages. The Tweed encompasses a total land area of about 1300 square kilometres. Getting from the north of Tweed Shire to the south can take up to an hour by car.

The area's natural landscape is diverse, including significant areas of coastline, national park, wetland and forest. There are 81 geographically, socially and economically diverse towns and localities in the Tweed. They are home to diverse groups of people, including creative and cultural groups, Aboriginal people, farmers, urban dwellers and surfing communities. People living with disability including many older people live in all these areas, with unique and diverse needs and aspirations, and differing levels of access to facilities, services, employment, transport and programs. Therefore, planning an accessible and inclusive community needs to consider barriers and opportunities based on where people live.



4. Tweed Shire's Population

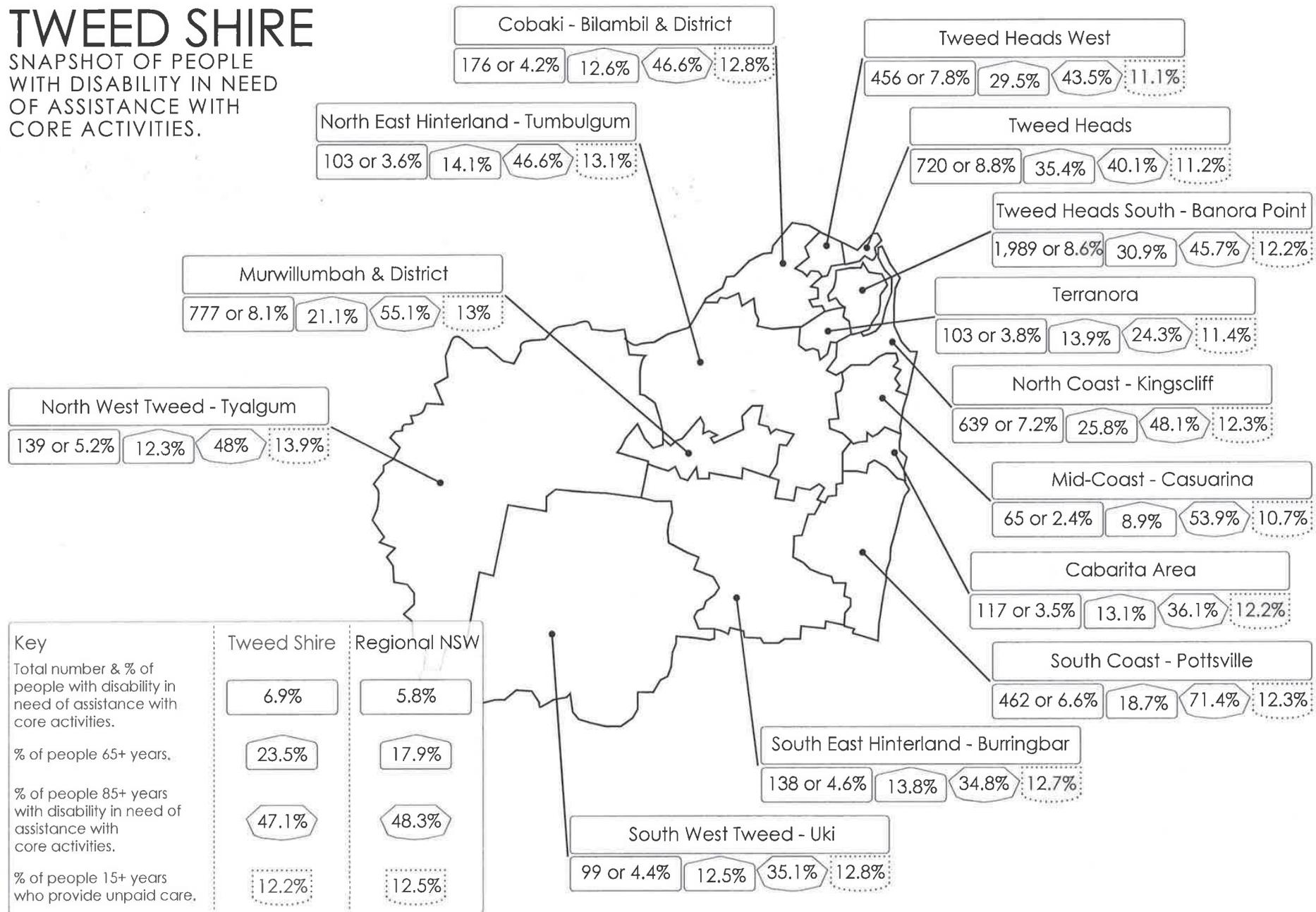
Between 2006 and 2011, the total population of Tweed Shire increased by 5,799 people (or 7.3 per cent), from 79,307 to 85,106 people. The Tweed Shire *Community Profile* (2008) reports figures from the 2006 Census showing 19,066 people in Tweed Shire identified as living with a disability. This was twenty four percent (24%) of the total population at that time (79,321 persons). The figure includes 4,685 requiring assistance with core daily activities, which indicates living with a severe or profound disability. This number increased to 5,865 people in the 2011 Census (an increase of 1,180 people) and 8,549 people indicated they provide assistance to someone with a disability. The 2011 Census also shows a number of small areas where people with a serious disability are concentrated, forming between 20% and 50% of the local population. These concentrations are located around Tweed Hospital, in central parts of Banora Point, in western parts of Murwillumbah, and in north Kingscliff.

Tweed also has an increasing proportion of people aged 60 years and over, 29.7 per cent of the total population in 2011. The number of people with disabilities increases with age. Seventy per cent (70%) of people with disabilities in Tweed Shire are aged over 55 years of age. In Tweed Shire more than twenty two percent (22%) of the population is over 65 years of age which is twice the NSW rate. This number is predicted to increase in coming years.

The 2011 Census shows concentrations of people who are 65 years and over in many parts of Tweed's urban areas. These concentrations, which form between 50% and 90% of population in these localised areas, are strongest in a band of suburban areas stretching from West Tweed through South Tweed and Banora Point to Chinderah and West Kingscliff. Murwillumbah has a smaller concentration in its western suburbs. These concentrations often include the locations of aged care homes, independent living villages, manufactured home estates and permanent residential caravan parks. For more information, the Tweed Shire Issues Paper and Profile of People with a Disability can be found at <http://www.tweed.nsw.gov.au/Item/2241>.

TWEED SHIRE

SNAPSHOT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE WITH CORE ACTIVITIES.

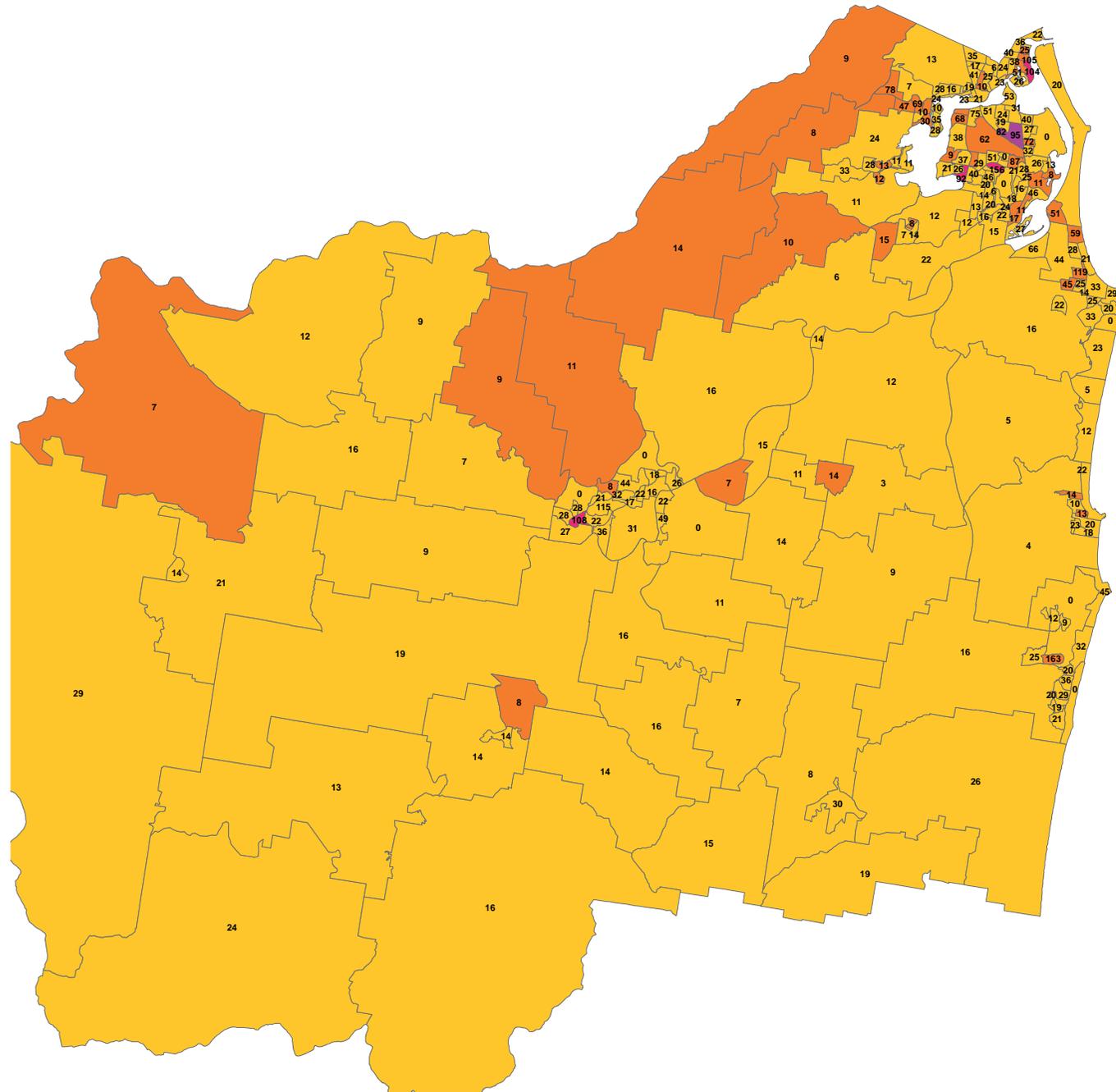


Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing 2011, Compiled and presented in profile.id (usual residence)

ABS 2011 Census Data

People with need for assistance
with core activities based
based on SA1 boundaries

Numerals represent actual
number of individuals



Legend

% people needing assistance

- 0% - 14.99%
- 15% - 34.99%
- 35% - 49.99%
- 50% - 74.99%

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Datum - GDA 94

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1:147,311
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Date Printed: 13 March, 2014
Author: S.Scott - Information Systems
Filepath: Z:\GIS_Jobs\00068001 - 00069000\00068402\ABS SA1 Data.mxd

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5. About the Access and Inclusion Plan

5.1 The Legislative and Policy Framework

The contemporary understanding and response to accessibility is based on a range of international, national and state policies, guidelines and legislation. These include:

- United Nations *World Report on Disability* 2011
- *Disability (Access to Premises - Buildings) Standards* 2010
- United Nations *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* 2007
- *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)*
- *NSW Disability Services Act 1993*
- *NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1997*
- *NSW Disability Inclusion Bill 2014* The intention of this new legislation is to support contemporary state and federal policy changes and the transition of state disability services to the National Disability Insurance Agency to administer the National Disability Insurance Scheme in 2018. The Bill requires local councils to develop, implement and periodically review Disability Action Plans.

5.1.1 The Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992

Formal planning for access and inclusion by all levels of government in Australia is a response to the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.

The objects of the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992* include:

- Eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against persons on the ground of disability.
- Ensure, as far as practicable, that persons with disabilities have the same rights to equality before the law as the rest of the community; and
- Promote recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle that persons with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community.

Part 3 of the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992* includes the provision of Disability Action Plans and states that:

- The action planner (Council) may prepare and implement an action plan.
- The action plan must include provisions relating to:
 - (a) the devising of policies and programs to achieve the objects of this Act; and
 - (b) the communication of these policies and programs to persons within the action planner; and
 - (c) the review of practices within the action planner with a view to the identification of any discriminatory practices; and
 - (d) the setting of goals and targets, where these may reasonably be determined against which the success of the plan in achieving the objects of the Act may be assessed; and
 - (e) the means, other than those referred to in paragraph (d), of evaluating the policies and programs referred to in paragraph (a); and
 - (f) the appointment of persons within the action planner to implement the provisions referred to in paragraphs (a) to (e) (inclusive).

The action plan may include additional provisions that are not inconsistent with the objects of this Act. This means that organisations can decide to implement plans that go beyond minimum guidelines and follow best practice.

5.1.2 Disability (Access to Premises — Buildings) Standards 2010

In 2010 the amendment to the DDA - the *Disability (Access to Premises — Buildings) Standards* was enacted.

The objects of the *Access to Premises Standards* 2010 are:

- Ensure that dignified, equitable, cost-effective and reasonably achievable access to buildings, and facilities and services within buildings, is provided for people with a disability; and
- Give certainty to building certifiers, building developers and building managers that, if access to buildings is provided in accordance with these Standards, the provision of that access, to the extent covered by these Standards, will not be unlawful under the Act.

5.2 How the Access and Inclusion Plan fits into Council's strategic planning

5.2.1 Community Strategic Plan (2013-2023)

The Community Strategic Plan 2013-2023 is the community's 10-year vision for the Tweed, to protect the qualities that make Tweed Shire a great place to live and to create communities which are strong and well connected. This plan creates a framework to implement Council's four-year Delivery Program and annual Operational Plan, which will align the community's aspirations with the necessary strategy development, planning and resourcing required to achieve the long-term vision and deliver the outcomes.

5.2.2 Access and Inclusion Policy Statement

The Access and Inclusion Policy was adopted by Council in February 2014.

The Policy outlines Council's commitment to the principles of universal access and social inclusion. The Policy ensures that planning and decision making follows appropriate standards and guidelines and that Council fulfils responsibilities under state and federal legislation.

Local government is responsible for the provision of services, facilities, programs, planning and regulatory processes. Council has a responsibility to meet commitments under state and federal legislation, and to follow standards and guidelines for universal access and social inclusion.

Tweed Shire Council is committed to:

- The principle of universal access with a broader commitment to access and inclusion for all people who live, work in and visit Tweed Shire
- The development of policy and planning processes that incorporate the principles of universal design
- Promoting access and inclusion in the community through leadership by example and through the provision of information and advice

- Planning, building and maintaining an accessible, inclusive community within the scope of its role and functions
- Providing accessible and inclusive services
- Providing information and communications in accessible formats
- Maintaining workplaces that are accessible and inclusive for staff, trainees, volunteers and students
- Achieving these commitments through the implementation of the Access and Inclusion Plan

5.2.3 Access and Inclusion Plan (2014-2018)

The Tweed *Access and Inclusion Plan 2014-2018 (The Plan)* is Council's four-year integrated strategic plan designed to integrate with Tweed's long-term Community Strategic Plan 2013-2023. The Plan addresses the many detailed issues affecting access and inclusion now and that need to be addressed over time. The Plan identifies shared solutions and strategic priorities that will help Council to deliver its vision that the Tweed will be recognised for its desirable lifestyle, strong community, unique character and environment and the opportunities its residents enjoy.

The Plan is linked to Council's Community Strategic Plan, the four-year Delivery Program, annual Operational Plan and associated Budget which is reviewed annually and placed on public exhibition for community to address the key themes of:

- Civic Leadership
- Supporting Community Life
- Strengthening the Economy
- Caring for the Environment

As the first Plan on access and inclusion developed by Council, the plan will also inform other key strategies and plans developed across Council.

5.2.4 Community Engagement Strategy

The Community Engagement Strategy outlines the process for involving the Tweed community in Council's strategic planning and decision-making processes. Council supports the right of citizens to participate in decision making that affects their future through the development of Council's 10-year Community Strategic Plan and day-to-day activities. It ensures all stakeholders have opportunities to participate and no sector of the community is disadvantaged. It includes measures to involve groups that are at risk of exclusion from public debate, such as the elderly, Aboriginal, people with a disability, low socio-economic groups and people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

5.3 How The Plan was developed

The Plan was developed through consultation with the community, Council Management and staff, Councillors and through research. The purpose of the consultation was to provide the community with the opportunity to make access and inclusion issues known to Council. Between November 2011 and March 2012 over 260 people across Tweed Shire participated in community consultation on access and inclusion issues and needs.

Sixty six percent of all matters relating to access barriers raised by community members were clustered in four areas. These were:

- access on footpaths, curb ramps and crossings
- accessible car parking spaces
- access to businesses
- accessible toilet facilities

The remainder (24%) involved accessible transport, parks and beaches, furniture and fittings, leisure and cultural activities, and (10%) related to information, affordable housing, employment, discrimination and mobility scooters.

Several locations in Tweed Shire were highlighted as having significant access issues. Murwillumbah was mentioned most frequently in relation to lack of

access to businesses. Footpaths, car parking and toilets were also identified as problems in Murwillumbah. The coastal towns from Kingscliff south to Pottsville were mentioned a number of times with concerns about access on footpaths and lack of accessible car parking. The more populated centres of Tweed Heads, Banora Point and Tweed Heads South were criticised for inadequate and unsafe road crossings, lack of accessible car parking and problems with transport.

Three issues papers report on the results of the community consultation and can be found at: <http://www.tweed.nsw.gov.au/Item/2241>.





6. Strategic Outcomes and Actions

Council has a leadership role in initiating, preparing and maintaining the Plan on behalf of the Tweed community.

The Plan will be delivered in an integrated way across all its operational Units. Council is committed to work in partnership with all levels of government, non-government agencies, the community, local business and most importantly, people with disabilities, their families and carers.

The objective of the Policy and Plan is to create a community that is accessible and inclusive for all who live, work and visit the Tweed.

Developed by Council in partnership with the community, the Plan's success will depend on:

- Council's good governance and strong leadership
- The participation and actions of residents, business, service providers and community members
- Effective resourcing to achieve outcomes associated with the Plan's objectives and actions

The principles of social justice, economic resilience and sustainability are central to this Plan.

For the Tweed community, this means ensuring:

- Fairer distribution of economic opportunities, resources and access to essential services to meet basic needs and to improve quality of life
- Rights to access and inclusion are recognised and promoted by Council and the community
- Opportunities for genuine participation and consultation in decision making are accessible and inclusive
- All views are valued and listened to in Council deliberations
- Balanced decision making in Council, based on social, economic and environmental goals

The following tables detail each Strategic Outcome and associated actions to address issues identified during the consultation. Each table has the following headings:

Strategic Outcome - a definition of the outcome and why it is important

Strategic Actions - actions identified to achieve the outcome

Leader - the section/s of Council responsible for initiating the action

Partners - the section/s of Council, government, community organisations and community members identified to assist the leader

Funding - impact of Strategic Actions on Council's budget

Linkage to other Plans and Strategies

Links - Council Plans
CES - Community Engagement Strategy
CP - Cultural Plan (2001-2007)
EDS - Economic Development Strategy
EEOMP - Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan (2012-2016)
ES - Events Strategy (2011-2016)
TRMSP - Tweed Regional Museum Strategic Plan (2014-2017)
TRGSP - The Tweed Regional Gallery and Margaret Olley Art Centre Strategic Plan 2013-2015

6.1 Funding the Plan

Resources identified in the Strategic Action Tables are drawn from the Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) which provides the budget for the Community Strategic Plan 2013/2023 (CSP) including Access and Inclusion Plan Funding and funding for Ageing and Disability Community Development. External funding, to be sought via grant applications as available, is another potential source of funding. Further detail is provided below:

6.1.1 Community Strategic Plan 2013-2023 (CSP)

The Community Strategic Plan (CSP) is the community's 10-year vision for the Tweed, to protect the qualities that make Tweed Shire a great place to live and to create communities which are strong and well connected. This plan creates a framework to implement Council's four-year Delivery Program and annual Operational Plan, which will align the community's aspirations with the necessary strategy development, planning and resourcing required to achieve the long-term vision and deliver the outcomes.

6.1.2 Access and Inclusion Plan Funding

The Long Term Financial Plan allocates \$19,500 per annum plus cpi for the next 10 years to the Access and Inclusion Plan. This funding carries over from the 7 Year Plan which was built around priorities identified through the Community Perceptions Survey. Key project areas identified in the consultations included facilities supporting community life.

6.1.3 Ageing and Disability Community Development

The Long Term Financial Plan allocates an ongoing annual salary for the Community Development Officer - Ageing and Disability (CDO-AD) as the key point of contact between Council, the disability services sector, service providers and government agencies to initiate, coordinate and facilitate project development. The CDO-AD is responsible for the implementation of the Strategy across Council.

6.1.4 Access Reserve

Council has a number of internally restricted cash reserves that are tied to specific Council projects that can only be accessed by way of Council resolution and are generally not available to fund day-to-day operations. The Access Reserve is one such reserve designated to improve access and promote social inclusion across the Shire.





Strategic Outcome 1

Organisational Culture Demonstrates Understanding and Commitment to the Principles of Universal Access and Social Inclusion

The Role of Tweed Shire Council

As an organisation with a leadership role in the community, it is essential that all Tweed Shire Council employees demonstrate understanding of, and commitment to the principles of universal access and social inclusion. This commitment is shown through the actions and behaviour of staff as well as through the infrastructure and services provided. Thinking about planning for an accessible environment and inclusive service provision is a responsibility of all areas of Council linked to the broad range of roles and functions of local government organisations.

Access to Information

The *World Report on Disability, 2011* produced by the World Health Organisation, makes the point that accessible communication and information is essential for social inclusion. Lack of access to communication and information affects the life of many people. Individuals with hearing, vision or speech impairments, are at a significant social disadvantage if information in accessible formats is not available. This disadvantage is particularly experienced in sectors where effective communication is critical – such as those of health care, education, local government, and justice. Council is the provider of a wide range of information on essential services, social and community matters and has a responsibility to ensure that everyone has access in appropriate formats.

An Accessible Workplace

There are many ways that Council can develop and maintain a work place culture that supports access and inclusion. Reviewing and updating current policies and protocols to reflect this commitment provides a framework upon which good practice is built. The ability to perform the duties of a work role also requires an accessible physical environment and appropriate technology in the workplace. Dignified and equal access to employment is not just about physical access it is also reflected in the attitudes of colleagues, staff and managers. Policies and protocols need to develop, support and maintain a workplace culture that is accessible and inclusive. This includes support and flexible work arrangements for carers. With these measures in place, increased opportunities for employment, traineeships and student placements should follow.

STRATEGIC OUTCOME 1: Organisational Culture Demonstrates Understanding and Commitment to the Principles of Universal Access and Social Inclusion

Action		Leader/Linkage to other Plans and Strategies		Partners	Resources	Implementation Year			
						2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018
1	Develop training modules on access and inclusion for staff induction	Community and Cultural Services Unit		Human Resources Unit	Human Resources and WHS (CSP)	Ongoing			
2	Provide accredited training to identified specialist staff	Community and Cultural Services Unit		Human Resources Unit Access Audits Australia	Access Reserve (CSP) Divisional Training (CSP) External - to be sourced	✓			
3	Public information provided by Council will be accessible by design or with adaptive technologies	Communication and Customer Services Unit	CES	Community and Cultural Services Unit	Communication and Customer Services (CSP)	Ongoing			
4	Recognises and supports the diverse needs of prospective employees by ensuring that interview areas and the interview process is accessible	Human Resources Unit	EEOMP	Whole of Council	N/A	Ongoing			
5	Make reasonable adjustments to the workplace or work practices to support people with a disability	Whole of Council	EEOMP	Whole of Council	Whole of Council (CSP) External - to be sourced	Ongoing			
6	Work with government departments and local service providers to increase paid and unpaid employment options for older people and people with disabilities	Human Resources Unit	EEOMP	Community and Cultural Services Unit NSW Department Education & Communities Disability Employment Services	Whole of Council (CSP)	Ongoing			

STRATEGIC OUTCOME 1: Organisational Culture Demonstrates Understanding and Commitment to the Principles of Universal Access and Social Inclusion

Action	Leader/Linkage to other Plans and Strategies	Partners	Resources	Implementation Year					
				2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018		
7	Relevant Council policies and protocols, standards and templates will be reviewed and/or developed to include principles of access and inclusion and universal design (Annexure A)	Whole of Council	Community and Cultural Services Unit	N/A	Ongoing				
8	Facilitate Tweed Shire Equal Access Advisory Committee	Community and Cultural Services Unit	EAAC Members	Access and Inclusion Plan Funding (CSP)	Ongoing				
9	Undertake an access review of current information platforms and make recommendations for changes that increase accessibility for people with vision impairment	Communication and Customer Services Unit	CES	Community and Cultural Services Unit	Communication and Customer Services (CSP) Unit		✓		

Strategic Outcome 2

Physical Infrastructure and Essential Services are Provided and Maintained in Line with the Principles of Universal Access and Social Inclusion

Accessible Buildings

The *Disability (Access to Premises - Buildings) Standards 2010* ensure that all new public buildings and renovations to designated buildings under the Act meet Australian Standards for accessibility.

“These changes will improve the opportunities for people with disability to participate in and contribute to the economic, cultural, social and political life of our community as equal citizens. They will also help in creating a more sustainable built environment capable of responding to our changing circumstances and our family and community needs. All of us will benefit from these changes as our individual capacity changes over time.” (Graeme Innes AM, Disability Discrimination Commissioner)

There is no mandatory compliance requirement for buildings accessed by the public that predate the Premises Standards. It is up to government, non government organisations and businesses to make a commitment to improve access to older buildings for which they are responsible. Council has a responsibility to improve access to Council building assets that predate the Premises Standards. This requires a commitment in planning and resources. An access audit of all Council owned buildings will identify the extent of the works needed. The access audit will include recommendations assisting Council make decisions on priority, timing and resources to retrofit these buildings to access standards.

All Access Playgrounds and Parks

The principle of universal design that provides access for everyone in a community regardless of ability or age extends to the outdoor environment. This is demonstrated in a worldwide movement promoting the importance of creating access in parks, gardens, recreational spaces and wilderness areas. Building accessibility into park construction in Tweed Shire is already occurring and will be included into the design of all parks in the future. Social inclusion and acceptance of diversity is a positive outcome of informal social mixing that occurs in outdoor environments.

“When Children play together, parents invariably talk together and new community alliances are forged. Inclusive play spaces can be seedbeds from which sustainable and inclusive communities grow.” (Developing Accessible Play Space: A Good Practice Guide 2003 in Hand et al, 2007:5)

Accessible Public Toilets

Council has responsibility for the design, construction and maintenance of many public toilet facilities throughout the Shire. Toilet facilities are an essential component of equal and dignified access in the community. Accessible toilet facilities mean firstly, that all people are able to go about the business of their lives without restrictions or unnecessary planning around getting to the toilet. Secondly there are economic benefits for businesses in providing accessible toilet facilities because people with disabilities, their friends, families and carers will patronise businesses that provide accessible toilet facilities so that everyone can be included in social outings and events.

Strategic Outcome 2

Physical Infrastructure and Essential Services are Provided and Maintained in Line with the Principles of Universal Access and Social Inclusion

Accessible continuous paths of travel throughout Tweed Shire

By definition, a continuous accessible path of travel is an uninterrupted path of travel to or within a building, or environment, which provides access to all required facilities. A continuous accessible path of travel for people with disabilities and older people allows them to move within their homes and live with safety and convenience, to use community facilities with independence and dignity, to perform their work duties and or leisure activities, and return home safely. Builders, Designers, Engineers, Architects and Access Consultants use standards and regulations to create an accessible path within the public domain, and an increasing number of people rely on the additional use of assistive technologies to be able to use that path. (Slattery, S. and Evernden, J., 2009)

"I like to be as independent as possible but many of these points of transition from footpath to road have very steep gradients ...capable of throwing my [wheel] chair backwards and onto the ground so I am restricted to where I can go. In some instances I have to actually access the road dodging traffic."
(Comment from *yoursaytweed* website)

Accessible foreshores and waterways for the purposes of social, leisure and sporting activities

"It is important to feel included. Being an outdoors beach person has made this difficult. The beach was always a social contact point but this is limited. South Beach at Kingscliff needs an accessible observation deck which would serve many purposes to the community and environment not just my own. This could be duplicated at Salt, Casuarina and all down the Tweed Coast." (Online forum 2012, person with acquired disability)

Tweed Shire has a long coastal boundary and many waterways as well as a warm climate. Accessing the water for viewing, swimming, fishing and other leisure activities is an important part of life for many people in the region. This is, in fact, a quality of life issue. Physical and mental health is enhanced by access to the coast and waterways. Planning and building for accessible foreshore and waterways make these locations and activities available to everyone.



STRATEGIC OUTCOME 2: Physical Infrastructure and Essential Services are Provided and Maintained in Line with the Principles of Universal Access and Social Inclusion

Strategic Action		Leader/Linkage to other Plans and Strategies		Partners	Resources	Implementation Year			
						2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018
1	Engage consultant to undertake access audit of all Council owned and/or managed buildings accessed by the public	Community and Cultural Services Unit		Executive Recreation Services Unit	Access Reserve (CSP)	✓			
2	Implement recommendations from access audit of Council owned buildings as prioritised by Council	Whole of Council		Whole of Council	Whole of Council (CSP) External - to be sourced		✓	✓	✓
3	Undertake access audit of identified Council parks and recreation areas	Community and Cultural Services Unit		Recreation Services Unit	CDO-AD (CSP)	✓			
4	Implement recommendations from access audit of Council parks and recreation areas as prioritised by Council	Recreation Services Unit		Design Unit Works Unit	Active and Passive Recreation (CSP) External - to be sourced		✓	✓	✓
5	Facilitate community working group to guide All Access Playground project	Community and Cultural Services Unit		Recreation Services Unit All Access Playground Working Group	CDO-AD (CSP)	Ongoing			
6	Develop and confirm concept design of All Access Playground	Recreation Services Unit		Community and Cultural Unit	Recreation Services Management (CSP)	✓			
7	Seek grant funding to construct an All Access Playground	Community and Cultural Services Unit		Recreation Services Unit All Access Playground Working Group On Track Community	Passive Recreation (CSP) External - to be sourced		✓	✓	✓

STRATEGIC OUTCOME 2: Physical Infrastructure and Essential Services are Provided and Maintained in Line with the Principles of Universal Access and Social Inclusion

Strategic Action		Leader/Linkage to other Plans and Strategies		Partners	Resources	Implementation Year			
						2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018
8	Review number, location, and standard of Council owned public toilets in Tweed designated as accessible. Conduct access audit of designated accessible toilets and recommend upgrade in accordance with AS 1428.1 2009 where appropriate or decommission where upgrade not feasible. Include recommendation on providing adult change facility.	Community and Cultural Services Unit		Recreation Services Unit	CDO-AD (CSP)	✓			
9	Seek grant funding to upgrade existing designated accessible facilities to comply with Australian Standard 1428.1 2009 that are to be retained as prioritised by Council	Community and Cultural Services Unit		Design Unit Recreation Services Unit	Public Facilities (CSP) External - to be sourced		✓	✓	✓
10	Implement recommendations from Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan as prioritised by Council	Planning and Infrastructure Section		Community and Cultural Services Unit Design Unit Works Unit	Streetscape and Furniture (CSP) External - to be sourced	Ongoing			
11	Develop a protocol for the installation of Tactile Ground Surface Indicators in the pedestrian environment (road reserve) with reference to AS/NZS 1428.4.1:2009.	Planning and Infrastructure Section		Design Unit Works Unit	Streetscape and Furniture (CSP) External - to be sourced			✓	
12	Following the adoption of the TGSI protocol review existing TGSI installations and remove those that do not comply.	Planning and Infrastructure Section		Works Unit	Streetscape and Furniture (CSP)			✓	✓
13	Identify and assess all Council designated accessible parking bays for compliance with current Australian Standards 2890.5 by location	Planning and Infrastructure Section		Community and Cultural Services Unit	CDO-AD (CSP)	✓	✓		
14	Progressively upgrade non-compliant car parking bays where appropriate, remove currently designated bays that cannot be upgraded to Australian Standard 2890.5 and construct new bays in recommended locations prioritised by Council	Planning and Infrastructure Section		Community and Cultural Services Unit Design Unit Works Unit	Traffic and Streetlighting (CSP) External - to be sourced		✓	✓	✓

STRATEGIC OUTCOME 2: Physical Infrastructure and Essential Services are Provided and Maintained in Line with the Principles of Universal Access and Social Inclusion

Strategic Action	Leader/Linkage to other Plans and Strategies	Partners	Resources	Implementation Year				
				2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	
15 Review and report on current access to coastal foreshores and waterways for viewing, pedestrian access, fishing, water sports and swimming	Community and Cultural Services Unit		Natural Resources Management Section Disabled Surfers Australia Fishing Clubs	CDO-AD (CSP)	✓			
16 Based on recommendations from the coastal foreshores and waterways access review, plan and undertake a process to upgrade access to coastal foreshores and waterways following the principles of universal design guided by Australian Standard 1428.1 2009 as prioritised by Council	Natural Resources Management Section		Community and Cultural Services Unit	Coastal Management (CSP) Waterways Management (CSP) External - to be sourced		✓	✓	✓
17 Ensure all internal Council infrastructure works comply with the Disability (Access to Premises - Buildings) Standards 2010 through Australian Standard 1428.1 2009 and follow Guidelines on universal design principles where appropriate	Engineering Division Recreation Services Unit		Community and Cultural Services Unit	Whole of Council Infrastructure Program	Ongoing			
18 Ensure all Council infrastructure works delivered by external contractors comply with the Disability (Access to Premises - Buildings) Standards 2010 through Australian Standard 1428.1 2009 and follow Guidelines on universal design principles where appropriate	Contracts Unit Works Unit		Community and Cultural Services Unit	Whole of Council Infrastructure Program	Ongoing			
19 Undertake review of current transport infrastructure for which Council is responsible such as bus stops and recommend progressive upgrade to meet accessible Transport Standards with appropriate links to the draft Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP)	Planning and Infrastructure Section	Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan	Community and Cultural Services Unit	Whole of Council Infrastructure Program		✓		

STRATEGIC OUTCOME 2: Physical Infrastructure and Essential Services are Provided and Maintained in Line with the Principles of Universal Access and Social Inclusion

Strategic Action		Leader/Linkage to other Plans and Strategies		Partners	Resources	Implementation Year			
						2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018
20	Undertake a staged installation of permanent hearing loops in Murwillumbah and Tweed Auditoria and mobile hearing loops for all customer service counters including Murwillumbah and Tweed Customer Service Centres, Tweed, Kingscliff and Murwillumbah Libraries and aquatic centres, Murwillumbah Community Centre, Pottsville Beach Neighbourhood Centre and in the Banora Point Seniors Information Hub	Community and Cultural Services Unit		Information Systems and Technology Unit	Access Reserve		✓	✓	



Strategic Outcome 3

Regulatory Functions and Responsibilities Follow Protocols and Procedures that Include the Principles of Universal Access and Social Inclusion

Planning for Access

Incorporating provisions for accessibility into formal planning and assessment processes is an essential part of changing thinking and outcomes in the built environment. The *Premises Standards* provide minimum compliance requirements for access in new buildings and renovations to buildings accessed by the public. However a full understanding of the meaning of access and inclusion requires a shift in thinking that goes beyond adherence to minimum standards. Universal access considers people, place and design throughout the life course. Legislation and building regulations have changed over the past few decades to provide accessible and inclusive environments. There is no doubt that these requirements will continue to change taking into consideration the needs of an ageing population. A commitment to universal access and design is a commitment to a future that provides for the needs of the whole community.

Footpath Trading

Obstacles placed on the footpath - for example, tables and chairs, clothes stands and signs - can pose a serious threat to people who are blind or have impaired vision. It can be extremely frustrating and dangerous to collide with these obstructions continuously. An accessible path of travel makes moving around much easier and safer.

“Although I like to sit outside on a nice day and eat my lunch, I also like to be able to walk past the shops without taking most of their tables with me on my way. There is nothing more frustrating than not to be able to just walk without killing yourself, or ripping your shins off on some shop’s glass tables and chairs as you walk by.” (yoursaytweed website)

Guide Dogs and Assistance Animals

People who rely on guide dogs and assistance animals need to be able to move around safely in their community. Socialising with other dogs including companion animals (pets) is an important part of the process as well as having access to parks and off-leash dog areas in their neighbourhoods and on public transport routes.

“Councils should apply a strategic approach that considers access on a comprehensive municipal wide basis rather than on a piecemeal park by park basis. The latter is reactive and problem-oriented. It fails to adequately address needs.” (Blackshaw and Marriot 1995:5)

*“The most fundamental need for dogs in relation to the public realm is that they be taken out with their owner as much as possible. This enables them to experience the full range of benefits - exercise, training, socialisation, relief of pent-up energy as well as time and fun with their owner and other dogs. [The emphasis should be on maximising the number and range of opportunities available *both on and off leash.*]”* (Blackshaw and Marriot 1995:18)

Strategic Outcome 3: Regulatory Functions and Responsibilities Follow Protocols and Procedures that Include the Principles of Universal Access and Social Inclusion									
Strategic Action		Leader/Linkage to other Plans and Strategies		Partners	Resources	Implementation Year			
						2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018
1	Review development approvals process for the appropriate and timely inclusion of access requirements	Development Assessment Unit		Community and Cultural Services Unit	Development Assessment (CSP)	✓			
2	Provide training on access and inclusion to private Building Certifiers who operate in Tweed Shire	Community and Cultural Services Unit	EDS	Access Audits Australia	Access Reserve (CSP)	✓			
3	Engage consultant to undertake a research project to develop a strategy that supports a dog culture to improve the health and safety of guide dogs and assistance animals and their owners. The terms of reference for the consultant's tender will be recommended by the Equal Access Advisory Committee.	Community and Cultural Services Unit		Regulatory Services Section Guide Dogs NSW/ACT Vision Australia Southern Cross University	Access Reserve (CSP)				✓
4	Engage consultant to provide a workshop for Councillors, Executive and key business leaders on the benefits of accessible footpath trading and to advise on an appropriate process for implementation	Community and Cultural Services Unit		Planning Reforms Section Regulatory Services Section	Access Reserve (CSP)	✓			
5	In partnership with key stakeholders develop and implement an accessible footpath strategy in retail and commercial districts as prioritised by Council	Planning Reforms Section Regulatory Services Section		Community and Cultural Services Unit	Planning Reforms (CSP) Regulatory Services (CSP)		✓		

Strategic Outcome 4

Partnerships and Collaborative Projects Support and Promote the Principles of Universal Access and Social Inclusion

"I used to be able to go in and choose my own DVDs but now I can't get into the shop because the new place has a step. I have to wait outside until they come out and then I have to tell them what I want. I'd rather browse and choose my own DVDs." (Teenager who uses a wheelchair, interview)

The Importance of Partnerships

Tweed Shire Council has an important role in improving access and inclusion. However this cannot be achieved alone. Partnering with other levels of government, non-government organisations and in research projects is essential in achieving universal access and social inclusion for the whole community. Showing leadership in actions and in the provision of advice to the business community is also an important component. There are a number of strategies outlined below that work together to achieve this outcome.

Changes to legislation, policies, guidelines, strategies and research on universal access and social inclusion are continually changing. Emerging needs of population groups within communities contribute to these changes. Local governments have a key role and responsibility to remain informed and involved in these developments. Promoting social inclusion through community development strategies is an accepted function of Council.



Strategic Outcome 4 - Partnerships and Collaborative Projects Support and Promote the Principles of Universal Access and Social Inclusion

Action	Leader/Linkage to other Plans and Strategies	Partners	Resources	Implementation Year			
				2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018
1	Work with business councils/chambers of commerce and industry to raise awareness about the importance of providing accessible facilities and inclusive service	Community and Cultural Services Unit	EDS	Equal Access Advisory Committee	CDO-AD (CSP)	Ongoing	
2	Provide advice and develop and disseminate information for businesses on improving access	Community and Cultural Services Unit	EDS	Communication and Customer Services Equal Access Advisory Committee	CDO-AD (CSP)	Ongoing	
3	Collaborate in research and community development projects that support the Tweed community to adapt to changes in State and Commonwealth funding for disability	Community and Cultural Services Unit		Family and Community Services Tweed Disability Interagency Northern Rivers Social Development Council Southern Cross University	CDO-AD (CSP)	Ongoing	
4	Facilitate the Tweed Disability Interagency	Community and Cultural Services Unit		Tweed Disability Interagency	CDO-AD (CSP)	Ongoing	
5	Support biannual regional Equal Access Advisory Committee forums and regional projects	Community and Cultural Services Unit		Equal Access Advisory Committee Staff and Committee members from Northern Rivers LGAs	Access and Inclusion Plan Funding (CSP)	Ongoing	
6	Support Tweed Byron Ballina Community Transport provide services to vulnerable members of the community by continuing to service and garage two buses at the Murwillumbah Depot	Works Unit		Community and Cultural Services Unit	Community Development (CSP)	Ongoing	

Strategic Outcome 4 - Partnerships and Collaborative Projects Support and Promote the Principles of Universal Access and Social Inclusion

Action		Leader/Linkage to other Plans and Strategies		Partners	Resources	Implementation Year			
						2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018
7	Review Emergency Management Plan and information provided to the public and make recommendations where necessary to improve access and inclusion for people with disability	Building and Environmental Health Unit		Community and Cultural Services Unit SES Police	Environmental Health (CSP)	✓			

Strategic Outcome 5

The Principles of Universal Access and Social Inclusion are Promoted Across the Community

Community Awareness

A person's environment has a huge impact on the experience and extent of disability. Inaccessible environments create disability by creating barriers to participation and inclusion. (World Report p4)

A consequence of improving access in the physical environment is the greater contact between people of all abilities. The NSW Government changes to disability funding under the *Living Life My Way* strategy and the National Disability Insurance Scheme will enable more people with disabilities to fulfil their hopes and goals in life. Many people with disabilities say that attitudes of people in the community are the biggest barriers to access and inclusion. As the tier of government closest to the people Council has a very important responsibility to support in words and actions the full inclusion of all people in the community.

Information on Access and Inclusion

Residents and visitors in Tweed Shire need up to date information on accessible infrastructure, facilities and services in order to plan business, social and leisure activities. This information needs to be provided in accessible formats both electronic and print. The responsibility for holding and maintaining this information is a key responsibility of Council. The Tweed Shire Council website is the most likely first location for this information.

Festivals and Events

Tweed Shire has many local and regional festivals and events throughout the year. The ability to participate in festivals and events in your local community in a dignified and equal manner is an important part of social inclusion and requires accessible venues and facilities. Council has a role in advising events managers about access requirements and this can be included in the approval process. Information on providing accessible festivals and events is available.

Accessible and Inclusive Tourism

Tweed Shire is already a popular tourist destination. This economic development opportunity can be increased by improving access. In fact good access is good for business. Many people with disabilities, families with young children and older people holiday with family members, friends and carers. People will travel to and return to destinations that provide accessible facilities, activities and events.

Arts and Culture

Tweed Shire has vibrant creative arts and cultural activities and opportunities. Enabling access and inclusion in arts and cultural activities is an important collaborative role for Tweed Shire Council through its Community and Cultural Services, Communications and Customer Services Section and Recreation Services Unit.

Strategic Outcome 5: The Principles of Universal Access and Social Inclusion are Promoted Across the Community									
Strategic Action		Leader/Linkage to other Plans and Strategies		Partners	Resources	Implementation Year			
						2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018
1	Present positive messages about universal access and social inclusion	Community and Cultural Services Unit		Communication and Customer Services Unit	Access and Inclusion Plan Funding (CSP)	Ongoing			
2	Celebrate International Day of People with Disability annually through Tweed Shire Access and Inclusion Awards and other appropriate events	Community and Cultural Services Unit	EDS	Communications and Customer Services IDPWD Planning Group Equal Access Advisory Committee Tweed Disability Interagency	Access and Inclusion Plan Funding (CSP)	Ongoing			
3	Maintain accurate mobility maps of key locations in Tweed Shire	Community and Cultural Services Unit	EDS	Information Systems and Technology Unit Planning and Infrastructure Section	Access and Inclusion Plan Funding (CSP)	Ongoing			
4	Maintain information on accessible parks and recreation areas in accessible formats	Recreation Services Unit		Community and Cultural Services Unit Information Systems and Technology Unit	CDO-AD (CSP)	Ongoing			
5	Continue management of Tweed Shire's three beach wheelchairs at Kingscliff, Cabarita and Pottsville through current MOUs	Community and Cultural Services Unit		Equal Access Advisory Committee Kingscliff Tourist Park Cabarita Beach Surf Life Saving Club Pottsville South Tourist Park	CDO-AD (CSP)	Ongoing			

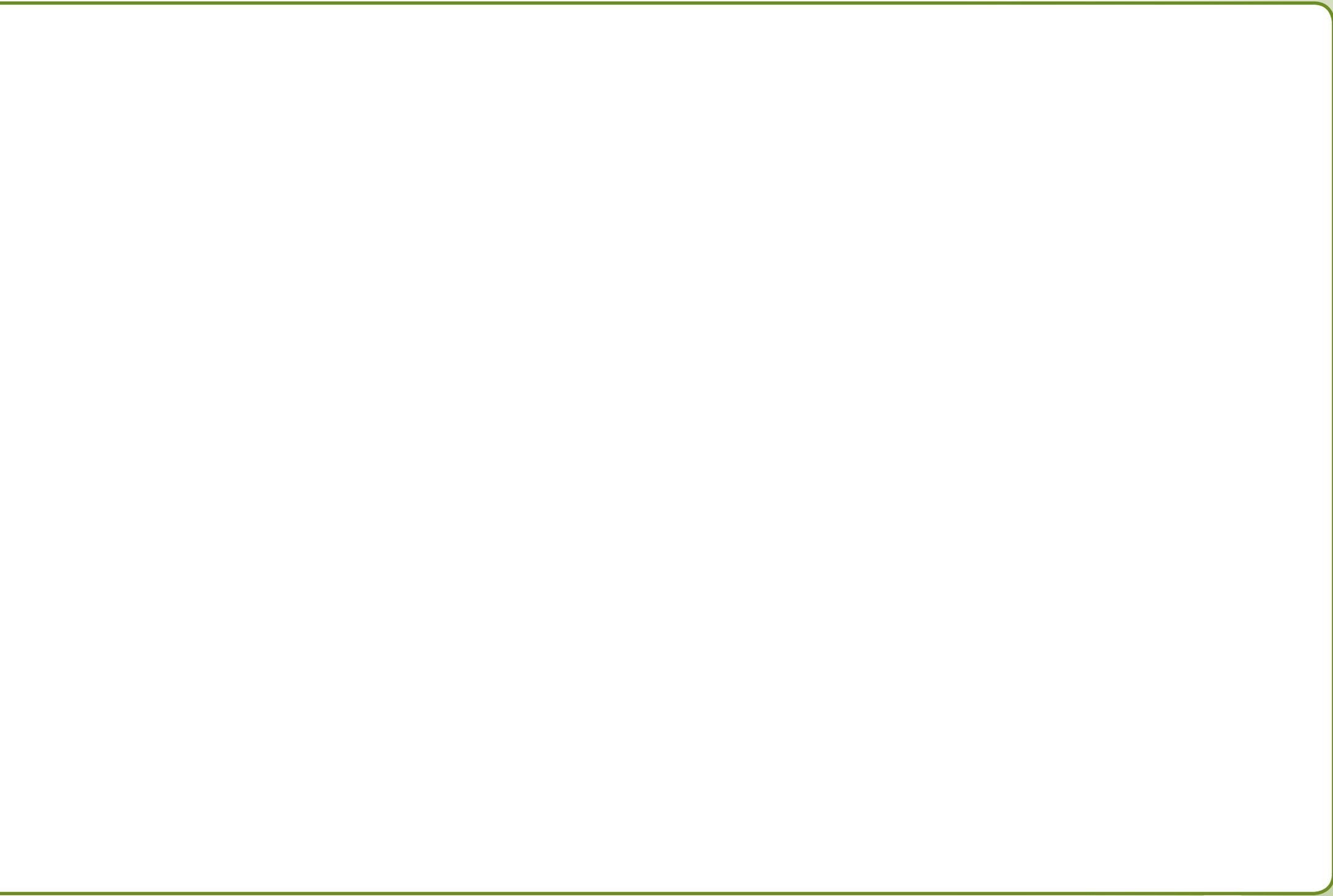
Strategic Outcome 5: The Principles of Universal Access and Social Inclusion are Promoted Across the Community

Strategic Action		Leader/Linkage to other Plans and Strategies		Partners	Resources	Implementation Year			
						2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018
6	Manage hire and use of fourth beach wheelchair based at Coolamon Centre, Murwillumbah	Community and Cultural Services Unit		Equal Access Advisory Committee	CDO-AD (CSP)	Ongoing			
7	Promote and support accessible and inclusive festivals and events in Tweed Shire	Community and Cultural Services Unit	ES	Business and Economic Development Equal Access Advisory Committee Destination Tweed	CDO-AD (CSP)	Ongoing			
8	Develop and disseminate information on how to run accessible events	Business and Economic Development	ES	Community and Cultural Services Unit Recreation Services Unit	Business and Economic Management (CSP)	Ongoing			
9	Promote and support the development of accessible tourist facilities and activities	Business and Economic Development	EDS	Community and Cultural Services Unit Destination Tweed	Business and Economic Management (CSP)	Ongoing			
10	Promote and support access and inclusion in arts and cultural activities and projects with a focus on accessible programs at Tweed Regional Museum, Tweed Regional Gallery and Margaret Olley Art Centre	Community and Cultural Services Unit	CP TRMSP TRAGSP	Accessible Arts Arts Northern Rivers	CDO-AD (CSP)	Ongoing			
11	Develop and facilitate Untold Stories of people with disabilities in the Tweed project	Community and Cultural Services Unit	TRMSP	Equal Access Advisory Committee Community stakeholders	Access and Inclusion Plan Funding (CSP) External - to be		✓		

Annexure A: Relevant Policies, Protocols, Standards or Templates

Responsibility	Unit/Section of Council	Adopted Policy or Plan
General Manager	Business and Economic Development	Festival and Events Policy
Corporate Services	Corporate Governance	Code of Meeting Practice
	Communication & Customer Services	Community Engagement Strategy
	Communication & Customer Services	Customer Service Charter
	Communication & Customer Services	Tweed Link Policy
	Communication & Customer Services	Visual Standards Manual
	Human Resources	Equal Employment Opportunity Protocol
	Human Resources	Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan Protocol
	Financial Services	Strategic Asset and Service Management Program Policy
Community and Natural Resources	Community & Cultural Services	Cultural Policy
	Community & Cultural Services	Place Making and Public Art Policy
	Recreation Services	Sports Fields and Reserves Policy
	Recreation Services	Open Space Infrastructure Policy
Planning and Regulation	Regulatory Services	Companion Animals Management Plan
	Building and Health	Footpath Trading Policy
	Building and Health	Vending of Food on Public Reserves
Engineering	Contracts Unit	Tender Document
	Design Unit	Driveway - Access to Property
	Design Unit	Driveway - Access to Property Design
	Design Unit	Driveway - Access to Property Construction Specification
	Design Unit	Road Works Standards
	Planning & Infrastructure Section	DCP Section A2 - Site Access and Parking Code
	Planning & Infrastructure Section	DCP Section A5 - Subdivision Manual
	Planning & Infrastructure Section	DCP Section A5 - design and construction specifications
	Design Unit	Landscaping Standards
	Design Unit	Waterway Standards

inclusion





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