

# **SHIRE OF WYALKATCHEM**

## **DISABILITY ACCESS AND INCLUSION PLAN**

### **2020 – 2025**



This document is available in alternative formats upon request and includes electronic format by email, hard copy format in both large and standard print, in audio or Braille and on the website at [www.wyalkatchem.wa.gov.au](http://www.wyalkatchem.wa.gov.au)

## Council's Vision

That Wyalkatchem is an inclusive, dynamic community where all share in a thriving economy and a sustainable, safe and valued environment.

## Our Purpose

The Council of Wyalkatchem works with the community to protect and enhance the quality of life for current and future generations.

### Strategic Community Plan Statement:

*This Plan will have references across all Strategic Community Plan indicators; in particular, these include:*

- 1.1.3 Promote a collaborative and visionary approach to creating an aged friendly community that supports residents to remain in the community as long as possible;*
- 1.1.4 Develop and implement a community well-being plan;*
- 1.1.5 Support people with complex needs;*
- 1.1.6 Meet the needs of children, young people and families;*
- 5.3.6 Implement best practice people management policies and procedures;*
- 6.2.2 Increase opportunities to access recreational facilities and spaces.*

*This Plan will be incorporated into the Shire's Corporate Business Plan to facilitate planning, budgeting and reporting of relevant initiatives. It will be reviewed annually to monitor and report on the Shire's progress.*

# Contents

Executive Summary .....	4
The Disability Services Act .....	4
Shire of Wyalkatchem overview .....	5
Services to property: .....	5
Recreation services to the community: .....	5
General services to the community: .....	5
Regulatory Services: .....	5
Administration Services: .....	5
Governance: .....	5
People with disability in the Shire of Wyalkatchem .....	6
Development of the Disability Access and inclusion Plans .....	6
Progress to date .....	6
Disability Access and inclusion policy statement .....	7
Seven Outcomes of the Disability Access and inclusion Plan .....	7
Development of the 2020 – 2025 Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) .....	8
Responsibility for the planning process .....	8
Consultation process .....	8
Findings of the consultation Process .....	9
Communicating the plan to staff and people with disabilities .....	9
Responsibility for implementing the DAIP .....	9
Review and evaluation mechanisms .....	10
Review, monitoring and Reporting .....	10
Strategies to improve Access and Inclusion .....	10
Outcome 1: .....	10
Outcome 2: .....	11
Outcome 3: .....	11
Outcome 4: .....	12
Outcome 5: .....	12
Outcome 6: .....	12
Outcome 7: .....	13
Appendix 1: Achievements .....	14

## Executive Summary

The Shire of Wyalkatchem has a legal obligation to complete a disability access and inclusion plan but sees such a plan as an obvious way to meet its own Vision and Purpose and create an inclusive, positive community.

This plan details the background, framework and strategies that have been and will be employed by the Shire of Wyalkatchem to be more accessible and more inclusive.

The commitments outlined in the DAIP plan will be reflected in the Shire's strategies and services.

## The Disability Services Act

The WA Disability Services Act1993 (amended 2004) defines disability as a condition:

- That is attributed to an intellectual, cognitive, neurological, sensory or physical impairment or a combination of those impairments
- That is permanent or likely to be permanent; and
- That may or may not be episodic in nature, and
- That results in a substantially reduced capacity of the person for communication, social interaction learning or mobility and a need for continuing support services

Public authorities in Western Australia, including local governments, are required under the Disability Services Act 1993 (amended 2004) to develop and promote a Disability Services and Inclusion Plan (DAIP). The improvement of services and access will increase independence, opportunity and inclusion in the community and these goals align with the Vision and Purpose of the council of the Shire of Wyalkatchem.

The Act makes the development and implementation of a DAIP mandatory and guides the development, implementation and reporting of the DAIP which applies to staff, agents and contractors.

Section 29B of the Act states:

*...‘a public authority that has a disability access and inclusion plan must take all practicable measures to ensure that the plan is implemented by the public authority and its officer, employees, agents or contractors.’*

## Shire of Wyalkatchem overview

The Shire of Wyalkatchem is located 192km from Perth in Western Australia and covers an area of 1,743 square kilometres. The townsite of Wyalkatchem is located along Goomalling-Merredin Road.

The predominant industry is agriculture, such as wheat, wool and livestock as well as gypsum mining with seasonal tourism occurring during the wild flower season. An airfield has been upgraded to provide excellent opportunities for people seeking the excitement of aviation activities.

The Shire of Wyalkatchem provides a range of functions, facilities and services including:

**Services to property:** construction and maintenance of roads and footpaths; storm water drainage; domestic waste collection and disposal, including the recycling of certain domestic waste, waste motor oil collection, 'Drum Muster' collection services, litter control and street cleaning; street tree and roadside tree pruning; bushfire control; animal control; care and maintenance of parks and gardens.

**Recreation services to the community:** provision and maintenance of outdoor playing areas for football, cricket, hockey, basketball, tennis; public swimming pool facility; children's playgrounds; the Pioneer Park war memorial and rose garden; the provision and maintenance of the Wyalkatchem Recreations Centre sporting complex with its social lounge/bar facilities and a magnificent Town Hall which caters for civic events such as stage shows.

**General services to the community:** providing asset support (housing, professional premises and motor vehicle) for the engagement of general practitioner service; public library and visitor services; community open space and built facilities, including the premises for the Community Resource Centre; provision of public services including the community bus and cemetery.

**Regulatory services:** land use and planning advice and regulation; building approvals; environmental health; public health and ranger's animal control; parking control.

**Administration services:** provision of general information to the public, lodging and resolution of complaints, collection of rates, vehicle licensing, firearms licensing, and dog registrations.

**Governance:** administration of the local government, including: Council and committee meetings; community meetings and consultation; provision of the election of Council members.

## People with disability in the Shire of Wyalkatchem

In the 2016 Census, there were 516 people in Shire of Wyalkatchem. Of these 53.2% were male and 46.8% were female. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people made up 1.6% of the population.

The 2016 ABS Census also recorded 60 persons in Wyalkatchem as having delivered unpaid assistance to persons with a disability. This was 13.8% of people aged 15 years and over – greater than the state average of 9.8% and greater than the national average of 11.3%.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (2018) estimated that 17.7% of all Australians had disability, down from 18.3% in 2015 and 18.5% in 2012. As the Shire population has 516 people, it is estimated that up to 95 people are living in the Shire with a physical disability. The proportion of people living with a disability increases with age. Given that the shire has a demographic profile with 37% of all persons aged 60 years or greater, there will be many among us living with age related limitations such as restricted movement, loss of sensory perception or loss of understanding.

## Development of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

It is a requirement of the Disability Services Act 1993 (amended 2004) that all local and state government authorities develop and implement a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) that outlines the ways in which the authority will ensure that people with disability have equal access to its facilities and services.

Other legislation underpinning the planning of access and inclusion includes:

- WA Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (amended 1988);
- Commonwealth Disability Discrimination (DDA) Act 1992;
- The Building code of Australia (BCA) that provides a set of minimum requirements for new buildings and renovations.
- The Access to Premises Standard under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) that became effective for any buildings or major developments

## Progress to date

The Shire of Wyalkatchem made significant progress since 2008: The Shire is committed to facilitating the inclusion of people with disability through the improvement of access to its facilities and services.

Since adopting the plan, the Shire of Wyalkatchem has implemented a number of initiatives, some of which are highlighted at Appendix 1: The main area of progress has been in age related disability with significant investment in infrastructure and increased levels of engagement.

## Disability Access and Inclusion Policy Statement

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

The Shire of Wyalkatchem also interprets an accessible and inclusive community as one in which all Council functions, facilities, and services (both in-house and contracted) are inclusive and accessible for all persons, including those who live with disability and support others who live with a disability.

The Shire will endeavour to the best of the Shire's capacity to meet the needs of persons with disability.

The Shire of Wyalkatchem:

- Recognises that people with disability are valued members of the community who make a variety of contributions to local, social, economic, and cultural life;
- Believes that a community that recognises its diversity and supports the participation and inclusion of all its members makes for a richer community life;
- Believes that people with disability, their families and carers should be supported to remain living and participating in the community;
- Is committed to consulting with people with disability, their families and carers, and the community in general, to ensure that barriers to access and inclusion are appropriately addressed;
- Is committed to supporting local community groups and other relevant organisations to facilitate the inclusion of people with disability through access to information, services, and facilities in the community.
- Will ensure all members of the organisation (councillors, staff, agents and contractors) take all practicable measures in ensuring desired outcomes are achieved.

## Seven Outcomes of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

The Shire of Wyalkatchem is also dedicated to achieving the seven desired outcomes through its DAIP. They are:

- 1) People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the Shire of Wyalkatchem;
- 2) People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access buildings and other facilities of the Shire of Wyalkatchem;

- 3) People with disability receive the same level and quality of information from the Shire of Wyalkatchem in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it;
- 4) People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from councillors, staff, contractors and agents of the Shire of Wyalkatchem as other people receive from councillors, staff, contractors and agents of the Shire of Wyalkatchem;
- 5) People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Shire of Wyalkatchem;
- 6) People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation process with the Shire of Wyalkatchem; and,
- 7) People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with the Shire of Wyalkatchem.

## Development of the 2020 – 2025 Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP)

### Responsibility for the planning process

It is a requirement of the Disability Services Act 1993 (amended 2004) that all local government authorities develop and implement a DAIP which identifies barriers to access and inclusion and propose solutions to ensure that people with a disability have equality of access to the organisations facilities and services. The Shire of Wyalkatchem DAIP 2020 – 2025 intends to meet the requirements of the Act.

All councillors and staff have a responsibility to contribute to the process of developing an appropriate plan that reflects the commitment, Vision, Purpose and Values of the Shire of Wyalkatchem to the improved quality of life of all persons in the local government.

### Consultation Process

A review of the DAIP 2017–2019 was undertaken between November 2019 and March 2020. The process included both internal and external consultations. The consultation process will be asking for areas of access and inclusion people felt needed to be addressed and/or improved to help develop the Shire's new DAIP or to provide advice on aspects that should be included in the DAIP.

The process began with an internal review via:

- internal analysis of the Shire's DAIP 2017–2019;

- analysis of relevant Department documents, strategies and policies.

A new DAIP 2020 -2025 draft was developed.

The internal review will follow by external consultation, where feedback will be sought via:

- an advertisement in local community newspaper;
- the Shire's website inviting readers to 'have your say';
- consultation with Department of Communities and other expertise in the area of disability.

## Findings of the consultation Process

- TBA

## Communicating the plan to staff and people with disability

- On completion, a copy of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan is to be distributed to other members of the Shire administration staff for comment;
- Council advertised the DAIP in its local newsletter advising that copies can be obtained from the Shire administration office, and to seek public comment on the DAIP;
- Copies of the DAIP will be made available via the Shire's website, as well as in alternative formats on request;
- As DAIPs are amended, Shire council, staff and community will be advised of the availability of updated plans.

## Responsibility for implementing the DAIP

It is a requirement of the Disability Services Act 1993 (amended 2004) that public authorities must take all practical measures to ensure that the DAIP is implemented by its officers, employees, agents, and contractors. Implementation of the DAIP is the responsibility of all areas of the Shire of Wyalkatchem. Implementation actions, timelines and accountabilities will be identified included in the Corporate Business Plan and this will be approved by Council and overseen by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

A clause will be included in all contract and tender documents advising Contractors of their obligation to implement the Shire of Wyalkatchem's DAIP wherever practicable and report annually on their compliance with the plan. Shire tender documents will include reference to the Shire of Wyalkatchem DAIP and the requirement for contractors to be aware of and work towards its desired outcomes. Contractors will receive a copy of the DAIP and a copy of the contractor reporting form to complete and return to the Shire at the completion of their contract (or annually, whichever occurs first).

## **Review and evaluation mechanisms**

The Disability Services Act 1993 (amended 2004) sets out the minimum review requirements for public authorities in relation to DAIPs. The Shire of Wyalkatchem current DAIP will be formally reviewed at least every five years, in accordance with the Act.

The DAIP Implementation Plan is an internal document that assists the Shire to implement progress of the DAIP and will be amended annually to reflect budget considerations, progress and any access and inclusion issues or initiatives which may arise. Whenever the Shire's DAIP is amended, a copy of the amended plan will be lodged with the Department of Communities.

The Shire will also developed an evaluation form for local groups and organisations that receive funding from the Shire to capture how many people with disability attend community facilitated, Shire funded events and activities.

## **Review, monitoring and Reporting**

The Environmental Health Officer will continue to liaise with the CEO and relevant managers to review progress on the implementation of strategies identified in the DAIP.

All strategies and actions will be included in the shire's corporate planning and subject to corporate key performance indicators and reporting.

The Disability Services Act 1993 (amended 2004) sets out the minimum reporting requirements for public authorities in relation to their DAIPs. The Shire will report on the implementation of the DAIP through its Annual Report and by completing the Department of Communities prescribed progress report template by 30 June each year.

## **Strategies to improve Access and Inclusion**

The seven desired outcomes provide a framework for strategies aimed at improving access and inclusion for people with disabilities. The following strategies will be reflected in Council's 2020-2025 implementation plan, subsequent budgets and Corporate Business Plans.

### **Outcome 1:**

**People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the Shire of Wyalkatchem:**

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
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Consult people with disability on services and accessibility requirements	Immediate and Ongoing
Actively survey and monitor Shire facilities and services to ensure equitable access and inclusion	Ongoing
Promote the inclusion of the DAIP values and goals into other Shire plans and strategies	Immediate and Ongoing
Provide events that are accessible and inclusive to people with disability	Immediate and Ongoing
Engage with appropriate entities to implement and broadcast the Shire's access and inclusion initiatives	Immediate and Ongoing

## Outcome 2:

**People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access buildings and other facilities of the Shire of Wyalkatchem:**

Strategies	Timeline
Identify required public building upgrades to incorporate standards for access and inclusion	Immediate and Ongoing
Deliver building works to implement mobility and disability wherever practicable	Immediate and Ongoing
Review and improve signage for colour, contrast and lettering	Immediate and Ongoing
New building works to have mobility disability access as appropriate, where required and where practicable	Immediate and Ongoing
Advocate to local businesses the benefits of accessible venues and the importance of identifying the requirements for disabled access	Immediate and Ongoing
Engage with appropriate entities to implement and broadcast the Shire's access and inclusion initiatives	Immediate and Ongoing

## Outcome 3:

**People with disability receive the same level and quality of information from the Shire of Wyalkatchem in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it:**

Strategies	Timeline
Identify opportunities to improve information access and introduce these wherever practicable	Immediate and Ongoing
Review and upgrade functionality of website; meet W3C standard; implement technology where practicable to improve access and inclusion	When delivery is practicable, make available (TBA).

On request, make Council and Shire information available in alternate formats to assist visually and hearing impaired persons to easily understand published information	When delivery is practicable, make available (TBA)
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#### Outcome 4:

**People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from councillors, staff, contractors and agents of the Shire of Wyalkatchem as other people receive from councillors, staff, contractors and agents of the Shire of Wyalkatchem:**

Strategies	Timeline
Develop the capacity and capability of the organisation to deliver high standards of service.	Immediate and Ongoing
Make DAIP information widely available and increase disability awareness	Immediate and Ongoing
Encourage the identification of opportunities to improve the quality of service to people with disability.	Immediate and Ongoing

#### Outcome 5:

**People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Shire of Wyalkatchem:**

Strategies	Timeline
Develop the capacity and capability of the organisation to deliver high standards of service.	Immediate and Ongoing
Identify opportunities to make alternate channels of complaint available.	Immediate and Ongoing
When practicable, make alternate channels of complaint available.	When delivery is practicable, make available (TBA).

#### Outcome 6:

**People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation process with the Shire of Wyalkatchem:**

Strategies	Timeline
Identify opportunities for improved consultation	Immediate and Ongoing.
Public consultation is facilitated to maximise the inclusion of persons with disability	Immediate and Ongoing

When practicable, technology and other tools is utilised to maximise the participation of persons with disability in public consultation	When delivery is practicable, make available (TBA).
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## Outcome 7:

**People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with the Shire of Wyalkatchem:**

Strategies	Timeline
Incorporate a statement on each position description and job advertisement that the Shire is an equal opportunity employer.	Immediate and Ongoing.
Identify opportunities for employment, training or volunteering of persons living with a disability and engage persons living with a disability when suitable candidates present.	Immediate and Ongoing.
Identify barriers to persons living with a disability serving as an elected member; identify requirements to removing barriers where practicable; and engage with the community to encourage the participation of persons with a disability to serve as an elected member.	When delivery is practicable, make available (TBA).
Undertake the monitoring of personal need associated with disability, address those needs wherever practicable and maximise opportunities to maintain employment.	Immediate and Ongoing

## Appendix 1: Achievements

Progress under the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan(s):

### Outcome 1:

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the Shire of Wyalkatchem:

- Increased number of audio books (talking books) and large print books held at the library, rotated regularly through the WA LISA rotation program. These books are located at easily accessible levels and are well signed;
- Increased level of capital works for the provision of disabled access toilets for the community (public, recreation centre, community building and aerodrome);
- Standardised font and size of print on shire website; uploading of increased level of public documents to shire website; standardised size and font on all shire documents for readability;
- Positive inter-government relationships, local government and other entities to facilitate collaboration;
- Included access and inclusion in all public plans and documents;
- Surveyed level of disability and need;
- Improved strategic planning to address access and inclusion;
- Improved access to events – for example, spacing of stalls, siting of events to access disabled toilets;
- Relocated services to community building (library and licensing) to improve access.

### Outcome 2:

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access buildings and other facilities of the Shire of Wyalkatchem:

- Access ramps from footpaths to road surface have been provided in expanded number of areas;
- Auto door to main entrance to Shire office;

- Disabled access ramps to the Shire office and Town Hall with rails;
- Widened and increased meterage of paths;
- Mobility features in new Independent Living Units;
- Fitted automatic door, medical centre;
- Built community building with accessible features – automated door, disabled toilets, function rooms for engagement and social cohesion.

**Outcome 3:**

People with disability receive the same level and quality of information from the Shire of Wyalkatchem in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it:

- The Shire advertised through the local Council newsletter that Council information is available in alternative formats upon request;
- Font type and size standardised.

**Outcome 4:**

People with disability receive the same level and quality of information from councillors, staff, contractors and agents of the Shire of Wyalkatchem as other people receive from councillors, staff, contractors and agents of the Shire of Wyalkatchem:

- Council staff deliver a high standard of customer service and work to identify opportunities to continually improve quality and accessibility of information;
- Community Survey was made available in print, electronic and where required verbally assisted formats.

**Outcome 5:**

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Shire of Wyalkatchem:

- The Shire has expanded the level and amount of information through public documents, public notice and advertisements;
- On election days the Shire ensures that buildings are accessible and that modified polling booths are available;
- The Shire staff have proven themselves to be most understanding and very giving in assistance towards people with disabilities.

**Outcome 6:**

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation process with the Shire of Wyalkatchem:

- Shire staff and officers have assisted people with disabilities to access and be included in all Council discussions and functions on request;
- Staff provide and explain the purpose of the Council function or meetings in a professional manner;
- Additional disability related criteria included in Community Survey.

**Outcome 7:**

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with the Shire of Wyalkatchem:

- Equal Opportunity Statements included in job advertisements;
- Opportunities for volunteering presented to persons with disability;
- Applications accepted from persons with disability and two persons with identified disability interviewed;
- Staff training in the employment of person with disability.