

Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2023-2026





Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Wonnarua People as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land within the Maitland Local Government Area.

Council pays respect to all Aboriginal Elders, past, present and future with a spiritual connection to these lands.

Contents

Acknowledgement of Country	2
Message from our Mayor	6
Message from our General Manager	7
Our commitment	8
Introduction	10
Background	12
Our vision and Guiding Principles	14
Developing our plan	18
Legislative Frameworks and Strategic Links	20
Our community profile	26
Australian disability profile	28
Engagement	30
What the community told us	32
Action plan	38
Monitoring and review	54
References	56



East Maitland Library

Message from our Mayor

I am pleased to introduce the Disability and Inclusion Action Plan, a strategic initiative by Maitland City Council to foster a more inclusive community.



Our vision is straightforward. We're seeking to break down barriers and create opportunities so all residents can actively participate in Maitland's social and cultural life, with the recognition that participation includes meaningful employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

At the local level, we recognise the importance of ensuring equitable access to public services, facilities, and spaces. We've designed this Plan to bring about meaningful and long lasting positive change and offer better opportunities for the 6% of our residents with profound or severe disabilities, the 7% who require assistance with core activities, and older adults whose higher rates of disability is representative in our aging population.

With higher incidences of disability than NSW and our largest employment sector by industry being healthcare and social assistance, Maitland already boasts a dedicated and caring community and has the potential to be a leader for access and inclusion.

Our continuous efforts to promote inclusivity within Council and in the broader Maitland community are based on our fundamental commitment to the rights of persons with disability, grounded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability. We're committed to engaging in essential and ongoing dialogue with people with disability, their families and carers to make the enjoyment of those rights a reality. By doing so, our entire community will benefit from the rich diversity of talents and perspectives within our community.

Building an inclusive community is a shared responsibility. Every resident plays a role in fostering acceptance and inclusivity. Our collective efforts towards promoting equitable inclusion through this Plan have a broad reach and impact, with many stakeholders invested in building a more inclusive and accessible community. Together, we'll make Maitland a city where everyone can thrive.

Message from our General Manager



This Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) for 2023-2026 is essential to Council and our community as a strategic framework for us all that underscores our commitment to creating a more inclusive Maitland.

The Plan outlines practical ways for us to cultivate a more inclusive city. Inclusive cities are easy to get around, providing opportunities for people with disability to participate in the diverse aspects of social and cultural life. They allow for dignified access to services and facilities and for people living with a disability to engage in meaningful employment opportunities. An inclusive city benefits everyone – as well as people with disability.

Our new DIAP is our commitment to continue enhancing physical access to facilities and breaking down social barriers rooted in unconscious bias through our attitudes and behaviours.

By focusing on a series of actions, responsibilities, and timeframes, we've designed this Plan to actively address the challenges faced by people living with disability and provide guidance towards improving access and inclusion within the organisation and community. The Plan extends beyond compliance, aspiring to foster social change by promoting positive attitudes and behaviours towards people with disability.

The actions outlined in the Plan strengthen our practices and evolving understanding of disability, guided by the voices of those with lived experience. We sincerely thank the Maitland Access and Inclusion Reference Group, our consultants, Community Disability Alliance Hunter (CDAH), and the many community members, groups and service providers for their valuable contributions through meaningful engagement. Your insights have shaped this Plan, ensuring it reflects our community's diverse voices and experiences.

With this DIAP, our focus remains on continuing to be a community leader by providing equal employment opportunities and supporting access to meaningful employment at Council. We aim to build a workforce that mirrors the diversity in our community, enabling us to meet its evolving needs better.

Maitland deserves a community where acceptance, understanding, respect, and diversity are foundational values. We envision a Maitland where people with disability actively participate in community life and aim to continue to build on this reality through our DIAP.

Our commitment

Council is working towards making Maitland an inclusive city for all by providing opportunities for everyone to collaborate, connect and celebrate together.

We acknowledge that, as a large organisation, we can make a significant and positive difference to the many community members with a lived experience of disability. By focusing on implementing inclusive recruitment practices, improving the employee experience, and providing support to our customers and community members with disability, we have the opportunity to create a significant and positive impact on their ability to access our services, venues and recreational spaces.

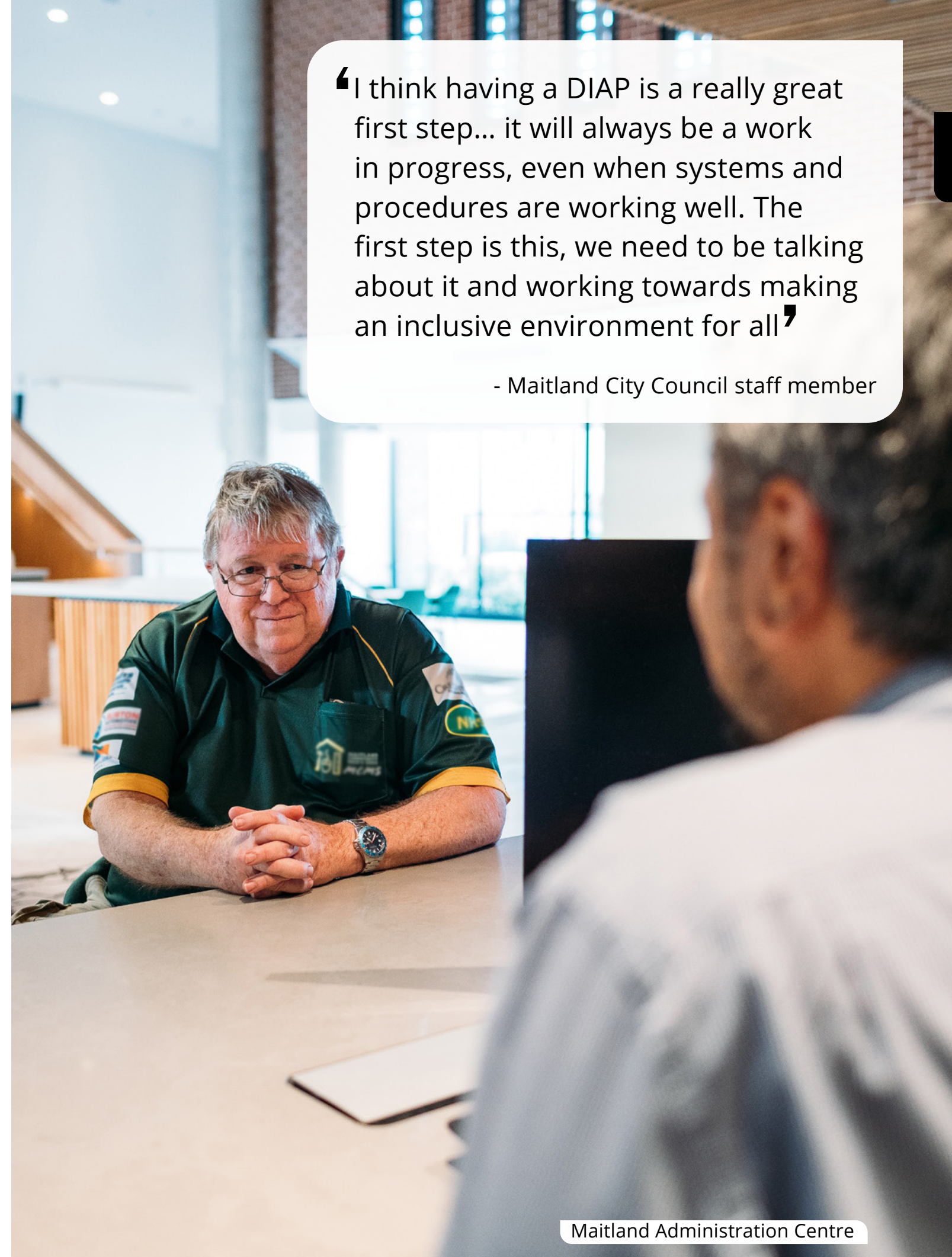
In creating this plan, we sought to capture the lived experience of people with disability through collaborating with Community Disability Alliance Hunter (CDAH), a Disabled People's Organisation and the Maitland Access and Inclusion Reference Group to amplify the voices of those living with disability and facing exclusionary practices within our city, acknowledge them, and actively integrate feedback into our action plan.

This plan sets forward Council's commitment to improve access to services, facilities and employment opportunities, create more liveable places and inclusive communities, recognise the rights and contributions of people with disability, and champion diversity in our community.

Together, we make Maitland.

“I think having a DIAP is a really great first step... it will always be a work in progress, even when systems and procedures are working well. The first step is this, we need to be talking about it and working towards making an inclusive environment for all”

- Maitland City Council staff member



Maitland Administration Centre

Introduction

Maitland City Council is committed to ensuring that local services, facilities and programs provided by Council are inclusive to all community members. Council supports the rights of people with disability to have equal access to opportunities, services and facilities, and choice over how to live their lives as all residents do.

The purpose of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) is to identify actions that deliver on the diverse needs of people with disability in our community.

The Plan identifies the actions required to actively address the physical, social and systematic barriers faced by people with disability. By implementing this Plan, we ensure people with disability experience greater independence, dignity, and equitable opportunities for social and economic inclusion.

This action plan will focus on four key areas:



Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours



Creating livable communities



Supporting access to meaningful employment



Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes



Maitland Regional Art Gallery

Background

The NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 requires NSW Government agencies and local councils to develop a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) to ensure that people with disability have equity of access and inclusion to facilities, services and information provided by the Council.

The previous Maitland City Council DIAP was endorsed in 2017 for the period 2017-2021 and extended for 12 months when Local Governments were granted an extension due to COVID-19. The new DIAP 2023-2026 will support the objectives of Council by providing practical ways that will enable us to further enhance accessibility and inclusivity within our city.

‘Disability is a long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment, which in interaction with various barriers, may hinder full and effective participation in society’

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006.

Access means making sure that people with disability can easily take part in everything in the community, such as going places, using services, getting information, and joining activities, without facing unnecessary problems or things that stop them. Access is about treating everyone fairly and making things work for everyone.

Inclusion means making sure that people of diverse abilities are welcome and involved in all parts of society. Inclusion is about creating a place where everyone feels like they belong, can participate, and have a say, no matter their abilities, gender, cultural background, sexuality or age.



East Maitland Library

Our vision and Guiding Principles

The vision of this Plan is to work towards a Maitland that is accessible and inclusive to people of all abilities. Council and the community will focus on individuals’ strengths and abilities and be prepared to look at unconscious bias and the removal of unintentional barriers to ensure Maitland continues to be a welcoming community for all.

The DIAP aligns with the Maitland +10, our 10 year Community Strategic Plan 2022, which identifies key community priorities, including the need for improved equality in access of, and to, services and facilities in the area. In responding to our community vision for our future, this Plan supports the four overarching themes of the Maitland +10, identifying what our community would like for our city over the next 10 years and how we will get there.



 Let's connect with each other <p>We love our city and our neighbourhoods, from our heritage areas to our new areas, and want everyone to feel welcome. We take opportunities to connect and relax with each other and make sure everyone feels included, in areas such as sports, culture and arts, and health and wellbeing. We want to be active, yet feel safe. We want access to all the essential services a growing community needs and to move quickly and easily about the city, no matter how we choose to travel.</p>	 Let's create opportunities <p>We want our new suburbs to have everything in place, and to complement existing suburbs and villages. We want all kinds of homes, for all types of families. We want to show off our city and its iconic sites and events. Shopping and working locally is vital, as is helping us to prepare for future industries and jobs.</p>
 Let's live sustainably <p>We love our green spaces, from parks to bushland, rivers to floodplains. We worry about our environment and want to work together to reduce our impact, including what we buy, use and throw away. We know we need to be more resilient to the impacts of climate changes.</p>	 Let's lead together <p>We want diverse leaders to listen and represent us in government, as well as in industry and community forums. We want to have our say in important decisions, including making sure our city is well planned, and knowing what will go where and when and how we are doing. We want innovative access to services and better use of technology.</p>

We've designed our DIAP 2023-2026 to enact the Principles of the New South Wales (NSW) Disability Inclusion Act 2014, which states that people who live with disability have the right to:

- be respected for their worth and dignity as individuals
- participate in and contribute to social and economic life, and be supported to develop and enhance their skills and experience
- realise their full potential in all areas of life
- make decisions about their lives, and have support in carrying out these decisions if they want or need it
- privacy and confidentiality
- live free from neglect, abuse, and/or exploitation
- access information in a way that is appropriate for their disability and cultural background, and which enables them to make informed choices and pursue complaints with the same ease as other members of the community.




Our Plan aligns with our Guiding Principles and demonstrates the commitment to building an inclusive community where everyone is valued and respected. We will work to break the barriers faced by people with disability so they can have increased opportunity to live full and meaningful lives.




Make things easy
Do the hard work to make things intuitive for me.




Be welcoming
Care for me as a person, not a task or a number.



Be open minded
Listen to me and work with me to find solutions.



Keep our promises
Follow through on your commitments to me.

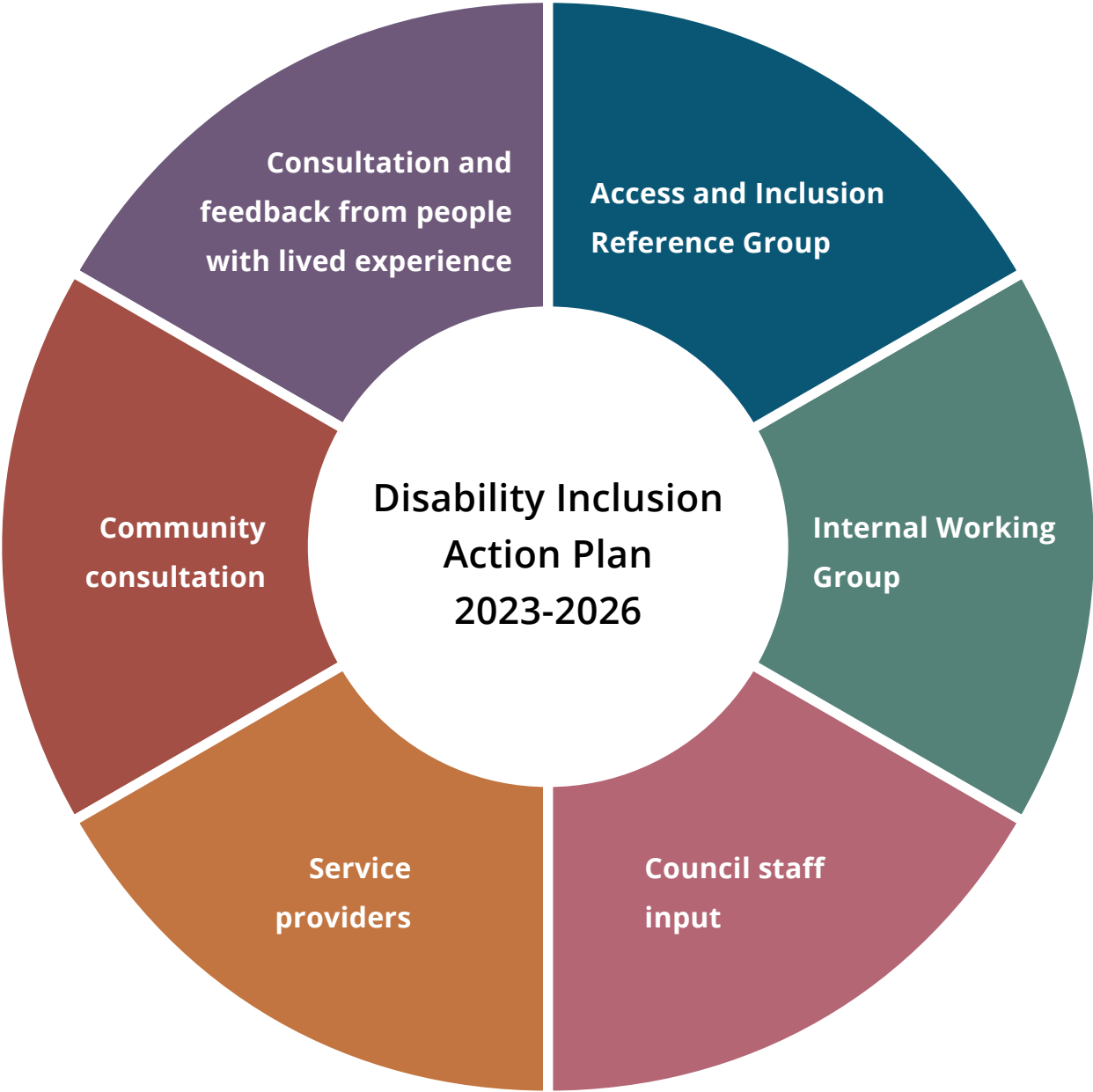


Look out for you
Thoughtfully anticipate what will make my days go smoother.

Developing our plan

People with a lived experience of disability need to be involved in all stages of the development, implementation and monitoring of a DIAP. We developed this Plan with expert guidance from Community Disability Alliance Hunter (CDAH), a peer support organisation run for and by people with disability. It was also developed with the support of the Maitland City Council Access and Inclusion Reference Group, made up of members with lived experience of disability, councillors, and Council staff.

Before being delivered to Council for adoption, we presented the developed actions to people with lived experience who were interested in the project for their feedback. We received input from Council staff, including members of the Internal Access and Inclusion Working Group and Council departments, who also provided actions for inclusion in this Plan.



“We need to listen to people with disability and their needs... co-design is essential”

- Community member



Maitland Regional Art Gallery

Legislative Frameworks and Strategic Links

The Disability Inclusion Act 2014 is the legislative foundation for Local Government disability inclusion and access planning. The Act supports the Government’s commitment to improving the lives of people with disability and reaffirms NSW’s direction on building an inclusive community.

While the Maitland Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2023-2026 focuses on access in the Maitland region, it is a requirement for the Plan to align with relevant state, federal and international plans, legislation and policies.

The DIAP 2023-2026 is related to the following international, national and state legislations.

International

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

National

National Disability Strategy (NDS)
National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)

Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986

Disability (Access to Premises -

Buildings) Standards 2010

State

NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (ADA)

Ageing and Disability Commissioner Act 2019

Local Government Act 1993

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005

Government Sector Employment Act 2013

Other

Australian Standard (AS 1428) Design for Access and Mobility

Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002



Alignment with United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide the foundational promise to ‘leave no one behind’.

Maitland City Council has committed to supporting the Sustainable Development Goals. Consideration has been given to these goals when developing this plan. The following goals align with the Plan:



Goal 1 – End poverty in all its forms



Goal 10 – Reduced inequalities



Goal 3 – Good health and wellbeing



Goal 11 – Sustainable cities and communities



Goal 4 – Quality education



Goal 16 – Peaceful, justice and strong institutions



Goal 5 – Gender equality



Goal 17 – Partnerships for the goals



Goal 8 – Decent work and economic growth

The diverse value that people of all abilities bring to our region is recognised and respected.



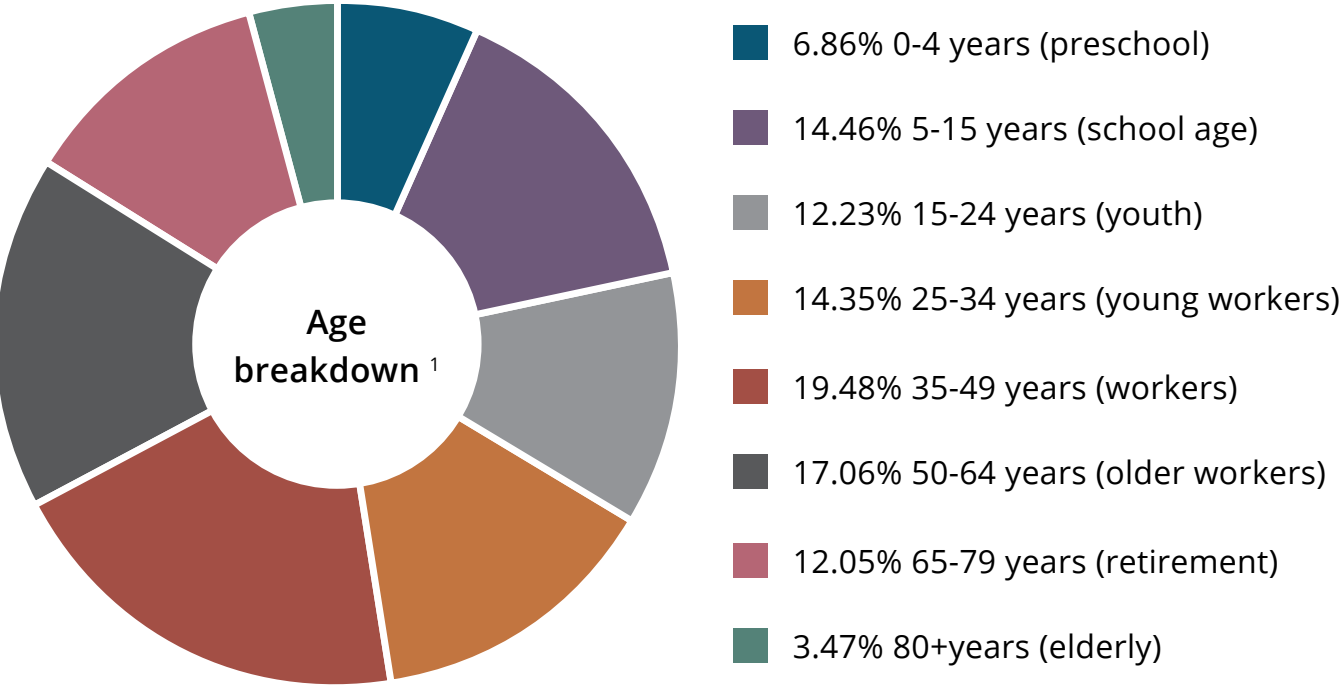


Maitland Regional Art Gallery

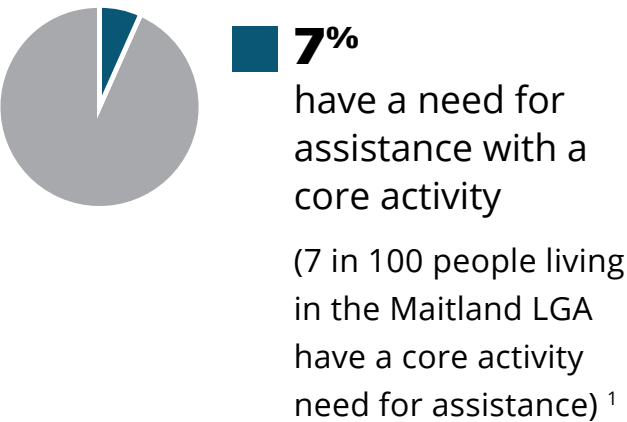
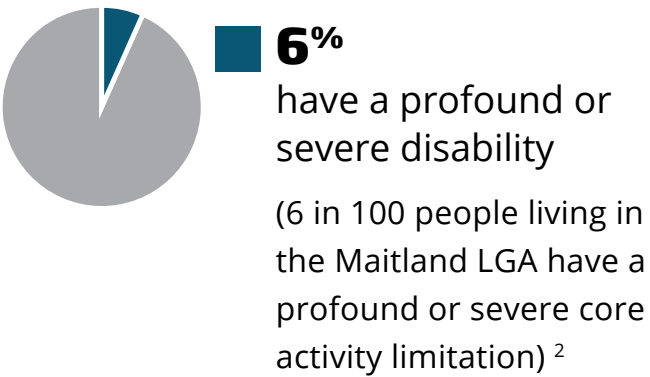
Our community profile

 **90,226**
population ¹

 **25,244**
families ¹




Living with a disability





 **83 people**
use Auslan ¹

 **79 people**
identify as non-verbal ¹


 **13.2%** of the Maitland population have a long term mental health condition
(which is higher than the NSW average of 8%) ¹


NDIS support

 In 2023, during July 1 and September 30, there were 3,817 active participants with NDIS plan and 1,818 NDIA active providers in the Maitland LGA ³

 In 2023, during July 1 and September 30, there was \$112.8 million in NDIS plan budgets for the Maitland LGA ³

Carers


 **9,316 people (13.1%)** provide unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, health condition or due to old age ¹

 **60%** women are more likely to be a carer in the Maitland LGA than men ¹

 **12 in every 100 women** provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, health condition or old age in 2018 ²

 **8 in every 100 men** provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, health condition or old age in 2018 ²


Children requiring assistance

 **7.5%** of children have a special needs status ⁴


23.6% (an increase of 4% from 2018) of children have been identified by teachers as needing further assessment ⁴

Employment

People in the Maitland LGA with a core activity need are three times less likely to be employed ¹

 In the Maitland LGA people who perform unpaid assistance roles typically earn 6% less than those who don't ¹

Culturally and linguistically diverse community

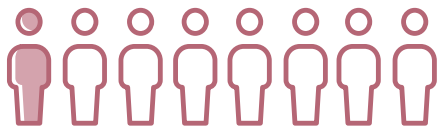
 The greatest proportion of our community who have a core need for assistance are also not proficient in speaking English (almost 1 in 3) ¹

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2021 Census
² Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2018 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers
³ NDIS 2023 data from NSIS Market Monitoring
⁴ Department of Education 2021 Australian Early Development Census

Australian disability profile



1 in 6 people (18%)
in Australia have a disability
– approximately 4.4 million
people ⁵



Around 1 in 8 people
aged under 65 have some level
of disability, rising to 1 in 2 for
those aged 65 and over ⁵

The prevalence of disability increases
with age.

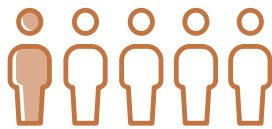


90%
of people born with hearing
impairment are born into
hearing families.

Projections for 2050 indicate that
1 in every 4 Australians will have
hearing loss. ⁸



1 in 3 (3.2%)
people with disability have severe or
profound disability – approximately
1.4 million ⁵



Almost 1 in 5 (18.9%)
of people with disability aged
15-24 years experienced
discrimination ⁵



17.1%
of people with disability use
mobility aids ²

Types of disability



4.4%
of people with disability in
Australia use a wheelchair ²



1 in 6
Australians are affected by hearing loss ⁶



30,000
Australians with total hearing
loss use Auslan ⁶



357,000
Australians are blind or have
low vision ⁷

45%
of Australians (16-85 years) experience
a mental health condition during their
lifetime ⁸



3 million
Australians live with
depression or anxiety ⁸

Employment



53%
of people (15-64 years) with
disability are participating in
the labour force ²

People with disability have a lower
employment rate 48 per cent compared
to 80 per cent of those without disability ²

Households

Approximately 40 per cent of Australia's
8.9 million households includes a person
with a disability ⁵



96%
of people with disability live in
private dwellings ⁵



41%
of social housing households
include at least one person
with disability ⁵

Discrimination



1 in 10 people (15 years+)
with disability experienced disability
discrimination ⁵

⁵ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2022 People with disability in Australia

⁶ Listen Hear! The economic impact and cost of hearing loss in Australia 2006

⁷ Vision Australia estimate based on ABS population data and ABS Survey of Disability Ageing and Carers

⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2008 National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing: Summary of Results

Engagement

We developed the Maitland City Council DIAP 2023-2026 with expert guidance from Community Disability Alliance Hunter (CDAH), a Disabled People’s Organisation run for and by people with disability. Council officers also engaged with Council’s Access and Inclusion Reference Group, composed of those with lived experience of disability, to provide advice and guidance on actions. Council staff, including Internal Access and Inclusion Working Group members, provided input.

How we engaged the community?

The DIAP was developed by listening to and engaging with residents, external stakeholders and staff over three month periods during August, September and October 2023. More than 350 Council staff and community members across Maitland provided feedback by filling in a questionnaire, participating in semi structured qualitative interviews, submitting ideas on an online vision board, or attending a pop up stall or focus group to provide input into the development of the Plan.



Thornton Street Eats, Wirraway Park, Thornton



149 community responses via an online survey, vision board and face to face consultations at community pop up engagements



152 Staff questionnaires completed



21 online consultations with service providers



27 people with lived experience of disability attending one on one interviews



3,406 engagements on Facebook posts (reactions, shares and clicks)

Of the 107 community members who completed the community survey:



44.86% of respondents identified that they were a person with disability



48.60% of respondents identified that they were family members or friends of a person with disability



23.36% of respondents identified that they were a carer (paid or unpaid) of a person with disability



22.43% of respondents identified that they were employed in the disability support sector



29.91% of respondents identified that they were an interested community member

What the community told us

To make our community truly liveable, Council needs to:

- improve the accessibility of current public facilities and areas
- include people with disability in planning processes
- maintain and repair roads and footpaths to increase safety
- create a more diverse workforce and encourage employment of people with a disability.

For people who identified as having a disability the top three areas for Council to focus on are:

- improved access of Council facilities and services
- advocating for employment opportunities
- co-designing with people with lived experience of disability.



East Maitland Library



34%
feel the Maitland community is welcoming and supportive of people with disability

For people with a disability the top three Council services they found they could access easily were:



Libraries (37 people)



Maitland Regional Art Gallery (32 people)



Maitland Aquatic Centre (31 people)

For people with a disability the top three Council assets they found they could access but not easily were:



Public toilets (61 people)



Footpaths and kerb ramps (61 people)



Accessible parking (59 people)

Source: DIAP Community Survey 2023

Key findings and recommendations identified through the community engagement process

Attitudes and behaviours

One third of respondents surveyed felt that the Maitland community is welcoming and supportive of people with disability. The survey also identified a general lack of understanding around the term ‘disability,’ and the diversity and types of disability that exist. Participants noted the need to educate the community about less visible disabilities, including mental illness, and to challenge negative stereotypes.

“Accessibility is not just about physical disability.”

“Disability is not ‘just’ people in wheelchairs or those with an intellectual disability.”

Liveable communities

Many community members expressed concerns about their safety on roads and footpaths around the Maitland area. The identified greater promotion and provision of inclusive and accessible Council programs, services and facilities as key drivers to enhancing liveability within the community.



Employment

Meaningful employment plays a vital role in enhancing an individual’s self worth, providing avenues for social interaction, and promoting independence. Community members highlighted the importance of integrating accessibility requirements into the employment processes, expressing concerns about the persisting assumptions made regarding the capabilities of individuals with disabilities to fulfil work duties.

Community consultation, outcomes recommend seeking additional partnerships with businesses to offer training and support to enhance employment and volunteer opportunities for people with a disability.

“I believe we could set up more inclusive programs that employ people with disabilities to feel enriched and build their life skills.”

“Improve the visibility of people with a disability by employing more Council staff with a lived experience of disability.”

Systems and processes

Consultations identified the need to improve the accessibility and provision of Council information and news, including targeted communication to people with disability. This includes greater diversity of information provision such as increased language translations, providing easy read formats, larger print, resources interpreted in braille and recorded audio formats.

Accessible Information - The need to provide greater access to information to enable people with disability to participate in Council programs, events and services.

Maitland City Council staff questionnaire

The staff questionnaire was completed by 152 staff members.



11.84%
of respondents identified that they were a person with a disability



32.24%
identified that they were a family member or carer of a person with a disability

To make Maitland a great place to work for people with disability, the staff questionnaire identified that Council needs to:

- incorporate continued education and awareness around living with disability or caring for someone living with disability
- ensure accommodation of disabilities whether in the physical environment, online, or in communication
- review the hiring and onboarding process
- provide mental health support and recreational activities services that benefit all staff.



Maitland Administration Centre

Action plan



Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours

Council encourages and supports positive and inclusive behaviour among staff, as well as fostering a community wide attitude that is accepting and inclusive towards people with disability. We strongly advocate for behaviour that respects and celebrates the diversity of our community.

Indicators:

Maitland Community is welcoming and supportive of people with disability (community survey).

Maitland City Council is accessible and inclusive for people with disability (staff questionnaire).

Objective	Action	Measure	Timeframe	Stakeholders	Responsibility
1. Continue to develop partnerships which promote and raise awareness of inclusive practices.	1.1 Review and convene the Maitland Access and Inclusion Reference Group (AIRG) and promote awareness among staff and community members.	Number of strategies, policies and projects presented to AIRG for guidance and advice. Development of internal and external communication materials about the AIRG.	Convene bi-monthly Review 2024-25 financial year Q2	Council wide Vibrant City	Culture, Community & Recreation
	1.2 Continue to work with key community organisations, advocacy groups and government agencies to deliver initiatives to promote access and inclusion and investigate the establishment of an Access and Inclusion Interagency.	Strengthening knowledge sharing, communication and collaboration between service providers in the LGA.	2024-25 financial year	External disability service providers, agencies, and Hunter Councils.	Culture, Community & Recreation
	1.3 Review Council's procurement policies and processes to identify opportunities for engagement with credible organisations and service providers that respect, value, and employ people with disabilities.	Raise awareness of contributions of people with disability.	2023-24 financial year Q1	Council wide	Strategy, Performance & Business Systems
	1.4 Work with local businesses and the broader business community to promote the benefits of disability inclusion.	Businesses consider access and inclusion requirements.	Ongoing	Culture, Community & Recreation Planning & Environment	Vibrant City

Objective	Action	Measure	Timeframe	Stakeholders	Responsibility
2. Demonstrate leadership in inclusive and accessible communication and publications.	2.1 Incorporate visual representations of people with disabilities in content, promoting participation in all aspects of life.	Increase images used that include people with disabilities to reflect our diverse community and promote participation. Year on year increase.	Ongoing	Council wide	Vibrant City
	2.2 Review style guide to improve usability, readability and accessibility of internal and external documents and web content.	Improved accessibility of print and digital materials.	2024-25 financial year Q1	Digital Transformation	Vibrant City
3. Increase the overall customer experience and participation at Council events, activities, and other opportunities to socially connect.	3.1 Improve accessibility at all Council events, activities, and other opportunities to socially connect.	Increased attendance through the provision of access requirements, such as accessible parking, drop off areas, signage, ramps, captioning, hearing loops etc.	Ongoing	Culture, Community & Recreation Planning & Environment Infrastructure & Works	Vibrant City
	3.2 Facilitate the 'Including You' sensory service at Council Flagship Events to support inclusion of all ages including providing dignified supports for adults.	Number of events and number of attendees using Including You sensory service. Adults using service in addition to children.	Ongoing	Culture, Community & Recreation	Vibrant City

Objective	Action	Measure	Timeframe	Stakeholders	Responsibility
4. Improve capacity of Council staff to identify, understand and deliver inclusive practices.	4.1 Deliver and promote staff opportunities for disability awareness training and specialist skills development training related to disability inclusion on an annual basis.	Staff understand and role model inclusive and accessible attitudes and behaviours. Number and percentage of staff undertaking disability awareness and specialist training by department per annum. Variety of training provided.	Ongoing	Council wide	Workplace Culture & Safety
	4.2 Enhance disability awareness and inclusion component within staff induction process.	Staff awareness of Council's commitment for access and inclusion.	2023-24 financial year	Culture, Community & Recreation	Workplace Culture & Safety
	4.3 Incorporate disability awareness and inclusion training into the Councillor Induction and Training Program for elected representatives.	Councillors' awareness of Council's commitment for access and inclusion.	2024-25 financial year Q1	Workplace Culture & Safety	Strategy, Performance & Business Systems
	4.4 Convene an Access and Inclusion Working Group within Council made up of employees across departments to oversee the DIAP implementation.	Delivery of actions progressed by responsible departments to improve access and inclusion within Council and the Maitland LGA.	Bi-monthly	Council wide	Culture, Community & Recreation



Creating Liveable Communities

Council actively work towards and advocates for a Maitland that is welcoming and liveable, where community spaces, neighbourhoods and facilities positively contribute to health, happiness and wellbeing and foster social connections.

Indicators:

The number of community facilities and open spaces that are inclusive to all.

If Maitland's community spaces, neighbourhoods and facilities are welcoming to all.

Objective	Action	Measure	Timeframe	Stakeholders	Responsibility
5. Create and contribute to liveable and accessible public places.	5.1 Continue to improve the accessibility in public spaces via renewal programs and new capital projects.	Improved access and inclusion in public spaces, parks, community and recreation infrastructure. Access and inclusion deliverables considered at concept development and preliminary design. Projects tabled at Access and Inclusion Reference Group for comment.	Ongoing	Planning & Environment Culture, Community & Recreation Vibrant City	Infrastructure & Works
	5.2 Identify and deliver improvements to the pedestrian network to facilitate continuous accessible pathways of travel (CAPT).	Continuous accessible pathways of travel (CAPT) identified and delivered to easily get to where we want to go.	Ongoing	Planning & Environment	Infrastructure & Works
	5.2.2 Incorporate CAPT improvements within Delivery, Operational, and Asset Renewal Plans.				
	5.3 Review and update requirements for Universal Design as part of the Development Control Plan (DCP).	Consideration of access and inclusion as part of initial planning and development.	2024-25 financial year	Infrastructure & Works Culture, Community & Recreation	Planning & Environment
	5.4 Incorporate provisions for accessibility of public space and centres in land use strategies.	Increased accessibility in public spaces.	Ongoing	Infrastructure & Works	Planning & Environment
	5.5 Advocate for accessible public transport and infrastructure.	Increased accessibility and use of public transport.	Ongoing	Planning & Environment	Infrastructure & Works

Objective	Action	Measure	Timeframe	Stakeholders	Responsibility
6. Enhance Council assets and facilities to improve access and inclusion outcomes.	6.1 Determine and prioritise asset and building accessibility upgrades as part of asset management, service level planning, and strategic infrastructure provision.	Number of audits conducted. Improved accessibility with building upgrades designed and delivered based on asset condition annual inspection results.	Ongoing	Planning & Environment Culture, Community & Recreation	Infrastructure & Works
	6.2 Include access and inclusion considerations when developing Council's strategic plans.	Access and inclusion to be considered in all Council strategic plans including consultation with people with disability.	Ongoing		Council wide
	6.3 Conduct audits to improve access to aquatic facilities, services and programs.	Improved access to aquatic facilities, services and programs for people with disability.	Ongoing	Infrastructure & Works	Culture, Community & Recreation
	6.4 Review planning controls and procedures (including approval delegations) to remove barriers and incentivise housing opportunities in appropriate locations for people with a disability.	Improved housing opportunities for people with a disability.	2023-24 financial year Q3	Culture, Community & Recreation	Planning & Environment



Maitland Administration Centre



Supporting access to meaningful employment

Council remains committed to equal employment and workplace opportunities and the ongoing commitment to removing barriers for current and future employees to succeed and thrive in the workplace.

Indicator:

Increase employment of people with a disability (staff questionnaire).

Objective	Action	Measure	Timeframe	Stakeholders	Responsibility
7. Lead by example and effectively attract, retain, and support a diverse workforce that includes people with disabilities.	7.1 Collaborate with Disability Employment Providers to explore opportunities within the DIAP to improve employment prospects for people with disability.	Partnerships established with providers.	Ongoing	Council wide	Workplace Culture & Safety
	7.2 Increase employment of people with a disability and possible identified positions to increase the representation of employees with disabilities across the organisation, including in leadership positions.	Trending increase in percentage of staff identifying with disability to reflect the diversity of our communities.	Ongoing	Council wide	Workplace Culture & Safety
	7.3 Establish Disability Employment Support Plans (DESP) to assist leaders to support staff with disability.	Disability confident leaders. Supportive organisational culture for staff with a disability.	2024-25 financial year	Council wide	Workplace Culture & Safety
	7.4 Promote flexible work arrangements, carer's leave, workplace adjustments, wellness program/s and other options to help staff manage work/life balance.	Supportive organisational culture for staff with a disability and carers.	2024-25 financial year	Council wide (leaders)	Workplace Culture & Safety
	7.5 Enhance data collection process of numbers of staff with disabilities.	Process for storing information is reliable, confidential, and informative.	2024-25 financial year		Workplace Culture & Safety

Objective	Action	Measure	Timeframe	Stakeholders	Responsibility
8. Improve organisational capacity to support a diverse workforce.	8.1 Perform regular reviews of Council's HR, recruitment (including pre-employment medical), and workplace procedures to identify obstacles that may affect people with disability and devise effective strategies to overcome them. Use communication avenues, such as the staff survey, to collect feedback.	Council workforce reflects the diversity of our communities to better understand and meet their needs.	Ongoing	Council wide	Workplace Culture & Safety





Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Council promotes a culture of continuous improvement, committed to improving our decision making, service delivery and access to Council information, services and facilities.

Indicator:

To measure how easy it is to access Council information, services and facilities (community survey).

Objective	Action	Measure	Timeframe	Stakeholders	Responsibility
9. Increase access to Council information and services.	9.1 Provide accessible information in various formats (print and digital) including progress made towards Web Content Accessibility Guidelines AA compliance.	Improved customer experience and access to Council information.	Ongoing	Digital Transformation Culture, Community & Recreation Infrastructure & Works	Vibrant City
	9.2 Include access and inclusion related information on the corporate website including a DIAP section and information about Council's accessibility services at facilities.	Improved customer experience and access to Council information.	2024-25 financial year	Digital Transformation Culture, Community & Recreation Infrastructure & Works	Vibrant City
10. Improve staff processes to support access and inclusion initiatives.	10.1 Incorporate actions within Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.	Actions embedded in future strategic plans.	Ongoing	Workplace Culture & Safety	Strategy, Performance & Business Systems

Monitoring and review

Council will submit our DIAP to the Minister for Disability Inclusion. The Disability Council NSW assists the Minister in reviewing the Plans and advises on their success.

Council's Access and Inclusion Working Group, consisting of representatives across all departments, will monitor the progress of the actions listed in the Plan as a standard agenda item.

The DIAP sits as an informing strategy within Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. As per legislation, progress of the DIAP action items will be reported via our Annual Report. The report will be available in a range of formats through Council's website and the Maitland Administration Centre.

Council will be required to prepare a revised DIAP for July 2026 to June 2030, returning to a four year cycle.

“We need to include people with disability more regularly. We need to support families with a disability... all people contribute value to the community and have a right to participate”

- Community member



East Maitland Library

References

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021, Maitland 2021 Census All Persons Quick Stats, ABS, viewed 6 October 2023.

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2019, Disability, Ageing and Carers Australia: Summary of findings, ABS, viewed 17 October 2023.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2022, People with disability in Australia 2022. Australian Government, online, viewed 10 October 2023.

Australian Network on Disability 2021, Disability statistics, online, viewed 12 October 2023.

Department of Communities and Justice 2021, NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025, Australian Government, viewed 17 October 2023.

Department of Social Services 2021, Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031, Australian Government, viewed 24 October 2023.

Disability & Career Advice Survey, Australian Government Department of Social Services & Year 13, January 2021, viewed 6 October 2023.

'Listen Hear! The economic impact and cost of hearing loss in Australia' 2006, Access Economics, viewed 15 October 2023.

REMPAN 2021, Maitland, viewed 10 October 2023.

United Nations 2006, United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, online, viewed 15 October 2023.



East Maitland Library



maitland
city council

263 High Street
Maitland NSW 2320

t 02 4934 9700

info@maitland.nsw.gov.au
maitland.nsw.gov.au