

# Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2025 – 2029



When something is accessible, everyone can use it.  
When something is inclusive, everyone can take part.



Access and inclusion for everyone



**BYRON**  
SHIRE  
COUNCIL



## Acknowledgement of Country

Byron Shire Council acknowledges Traditional Aboriginal Custodians and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters and country.

We recognise and respect the Bundjalung of Byron Bay – Arakwal and the Widjabal Wiabal peoples native title rights and interests within the Shire; and to their Elders past and present.

Byron Shire Council also acknowledges the Tweed Byron, Jali and Ngulingah Aboriginal Land Councils under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act NSW 1983.

## Acknowledgements

Byron Shire Council wishes to acknowledge and thank all participants and contributors that have led and supported the development of our co-designed Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2025 – 2029 (DIAP).

In particular, participants from Council's Access Consultative Working Group have provided expertise, local knowledge and lived experience, to ensure our Plan remains relevant and responsive to local needs.

Contributors to this project and the consultation process included people with disability, their carers, friends and families, disability services providers, community organisations and Council staff.

Within Council, this review has been supported by our internal DIAP Working Group, which is made up of staff with specific technical and functional expertise from across the organisation.

Thank you to everyone who participated in this process. Your contribution will ensure Byron Shire Council's DIAP responds in the best possible ways to the needs of people with disability in our communities.

## Abbreviations

- DIAP – Disability Inclusion Access Plan
- ACWG – Access Consultative Working Group
- BSC – Byron Shire Council
- IWG – Internal Working Group
- CSP – Community Strategic Plan

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# 1. A message from the Mayor

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## **Welcome to Byron Shire Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2025 - 2029 (DIAP).**

I'm delighted to share our new DIAP with you – a plan that reflects the heart and soul of our community. This isn't just a document; it's a promise to keep building a Shire where everyone belongs, where everyone is welcomed, and where everyone can thrive. We have a long way to go, but we are heading in the right direction.

This plan was shaped with the generous support and wisdom of our Access Consultative Working Group, alongside community members who shared their time, insights, and lived experiences. To each of you: thank you. Your voices are the foundation of this work – and we're listening.

Our 2025 – 2029 DIAP builds on the strong foundations we've laid since 2017, but it's also a step forward – towards an even more inclusive, connected, and accessible Byron Shire. We believe that inclusion isn't just a nice idea – it's essential. It's how we make sure every person has the opportunity to be part of our vibrant community life.

Because here's the truth:

When something is accessible, everyone can use it.

When something is inclusive, everyone feels they belong.

And when we design with care, courage, and community in mind – we all benefit.

I'm proud of this next chapter and the collaborative, community-driven spirit behind it. Let's keep moving forward – together.

Warmly,

Sarah Ndiaye  
Mayor, Byron Shire Council

## 2. Executive summary

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We want to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in Council's programs, services and the local environment. Access and Inclusion are important principles to achieve this. To understand where barriers may exist and what we need to do to progress access and inclusion we listened to the voice of people with lived experience of disability. Council undertook a process of community engagement and consultation to seek feedback and ask the community about issues that affect people with a disability, their families and communities.

All feedback and evidence collated from this process, was considered and used to inform our Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2025 – 2029, and commitment to having a 'community and evidenced driven' plan which:

- continues to build upon the work of our previous DIAP 2022 – 2025 and guide Council's approach with regards to supporting people with disability in our Shire;
- provides Council with a strategic framework to support people with disability to participate in community life and access Council services and facilities within our Shire; and
- meets our legislative responsibilities as outlined in the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014.

The Community Consultation and Engagement Plan used to underpin this process was co-designed with Council's Access Consultative Working Group (ACWG), a group made up of members of the Byron Shire community with a lived experience of disability, as well as individuals that support people with a lived experience of disability, and Council's Internal Disability Inclusion Action Plan Working Group (IWG).

Our commitment to undertaking meaningful consultation and engagement provided a range of opportunities for our communities to engage via surveys, topic-based workshops, market pop ups, service workshops, focus groups and direct contact with Council officers.

Overall, we have captured over 280 individual pieces of feedback, which have been summarised in this report, using the framework provided to all NSW Local Governments, to ensure that we meet the requirements outlined in the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014.

Key themes and actions have been developed using the framework, and captured using four focus areas required under the Act including:

1. Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours
2. Creating liveable communities
3. Supporting access to meaningful employment
4. Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Our detailed Action Plan can be found on P.34 of this document.

Byron Shire Council has worked within and across Council, in partnership with the ACWG, to integrate these priorities into our Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2025 – 2029. This Plan was adopted by Council at the 23rd October Council meeting.

# 3. Action plan 2025–2029

## Focus area one

### Promoting positive community attitudes and behaviours

Outcomes	Action	What we will do	Target population or audience	Year(s)				Responsibility	Measures
				1	2	3	4		
Improved disability awareness and organisational capability	<b>AB-1</b>	Ensure all staff, including leaders, are trained in prioritising access and inclusion	Council staff	1	2	3	4	People & Culture	# / % of staff and Councillors that have undertaken disability inclusion training
Improved disability awareness and organisational capability	<b>AB-2</b>	Improve staff understanding of invisible disability and how to assist community in navigating Council processes.	Council staff	1	2	3	4	Corporate Services	# of training activities facilitated
Accessible parking spaces are available for people who need them	<b>AB-3</b>	Improve education and enforcement of the rules relating to mobility parking.	Vehicle users in village/town centres and beaches	1	2	3	4	Environmental and Economic Development	# awareness campaigns delivered  # of fines for parking in accessible parking without a permit
Increased awareness of accessibility, inclusion and accessible tourism	<b>AB-4</b>	Encourage and support local businesses to increase access and inclusion, including tourism opportunities.	Local businesses	1	2	3	4	Environmental and Economic Planning	# awareness campaigns/ workshops delivered
Positive community attitudes towards people with disability and mental health conditions	<b>AB-5</b>	Include people with disability in the design of communications and awareness campaigns.	Council staff	1	2	3	4	Media & Communications  (All business units)	# / % increase of digital and print materials produced that include representation of people with disability

Outcomes	Action	Actions: What we will do	Target population or audience	Year(s)				Responsibility	Measures
				1	2	3	4		
Positive community attitudes towards people with disability and mental health conditions	AB-6	Increase the number of public awareness campaigns to celebrate people with both visible and invisible disabilities.	Whole shire	1	2	3	4	Social and Cultural Planning  (People & Culture)	# of campaigns delivered  Range of campaigns delivered  Hidden Sunflower initiative training completed by Lone Goat Gallery staff/ volunteers
Improved disability awareness and organisational capability	AB-7	Advocate for participant(s) from the Access Consultative Working Group to be a member of the local Community Resilience Network	Community representatives	1				Social and Cultural Planning	ACWG member invited to join the Community Resilience Network
Improved disability awareness and organisational capability	AB-8	Work collaboratively with the State Government to plan and deliver a Disability Inclusive Emergency Planning forum, which seeks to better prepare people with disability and 'hard to reach' communities to plan for disasters	State Government  Community representatives	1				Social and Cultural Planning	Disability Inclusive Emergency Planning Forum held  Representation from people with lived experience at the forum
Council events are accessible, inclusive and encourage greater participation of people with disability.	AB-9	Promote Council activities, events and opportunities to encourage participation and inclusiveness	General public	1	2	3	4	Media and Communications	Information about projects and business posted to Council's website, number of updates made, number of monthly website user visits, Facebook engagement, Enews distribution

Outcomes	Action	What we will do	Target population or audience	Year(s)				Responsibility	Measures
				1	2	3	4		
Improved disability awareness and organisational capability	AB-10	Ensure that 'accessibility and inclusion' is incorporated into relevant Council Grant Program Guidelines and that funding applications are assessed in accordance with this requirement	Community organisations	1				Social and Cultural Planning	Grant Guidelines updated
Increased awareness and understanding of disability and inclusion in arts/culture community	AB-11	Continue to support new work by artists with a disability by engaging appropriate external curators, liaising with artists and support workers and providing inclusive and accessible exhibition opportunities.	Shire wide	1	2	3	4	Social and Cultural Planning	#/type of accessible programs delivered
Improved disability awareness and organisational capability	AB-12	Investigate complementary customer service improvements (phone/website), which improve the 'accessibility' and navigation of Council services.	General Public	1				Corporate Services	Systems investigated and implemented (where relevant)
Increased awareness of accessibility, inclusion and accessible tourism	AB-13	Consider improved 'accessible and inclusion' opportunities as part of developing Council's Vibrant Economic Strategy	Shire wide	1	2	3	4	Environmental and Economic Planning	Information provided on accessible opportunities in the Vibrant Economic Strategy  Delivery of small business month activity (subject to funding)

## Focus area two

### Creating Liveable Communities

Outcomes	Action	What we will do	Target population or audience	Year(s)				Responsibility	Measures
				1	2	3	4		
<b>Footpaths and open spaces are accessible to everyone</b>	<b>LC-1</b>	Deliver access ramp and footpath upgrade and renewal program shire wide.	Whole shire	1	2	3	4	Works	2025/26  Lawson Street upgrade completed– 129m of upgraded path  Mullumbimby recreational ground completed– 79m accessible path  Fern Street, Mullumbimby completed – 196m accessible path  # of connections improved inc:  Lawson St – 2 x connections across (upgraded kerb ramps and gutter bridges)  Fern Street - Connection improved between Mullumbimby town centre and child care centre.
<b>Improved beach access</b>	<b>LC-2</b>	In line with Council's Notice of Motion, undertake a feasibility study to improve beach accessibility for a range of mobility needs.	Whole shire	1	2	3	4	Open Spaces and Facilities	2025/26  Feasibility study undertaken  Progress report to Council
<b>Improved beach access</b>	<b>LC-3</b>	Subject to outcomes of the feasibility assessment, prepare and implement a beach accessibility implementation plan which identifies priority locations for accessibility improvements (implementation subject to funding)	Whole Shire	1				Open Spaces and Facilities	Implementation Plan completed  # of beaches accessible  # of ocean viewing sites accessible

Outcomes	Action	What we will do	Target population or audience	Year(s)				Responsibility	Measures
				1	2	3	4		
<b>Improved accessible transport options</b>	<b>LC-4</b>	Increase accessible parking to ensure appropriate and safe loading space, and increase drop-and-ride locations	Whole shire	1	2	3	4	Works	2025/26 # of accessible parking spaces inc: Byron Bay Primary School - 2 x accessible spaces Mullumbimby Recreation Ground - 2 x accessible spaces and 1 drop and ride location Brunswick Heads Library – Upgrade to existing accessible space # of drop and ride locations
<b>Improved accessible transport options</b>	<b>LC-5</b>	Continue to advocate for funds (internal/ external) which will enable Council to upgrade the remaining shire wide bus shelters	Whole shire	1	2	3	4	Works	Evidence of advocacy undertaken No and type of funding secured
<b>Business in the Shire are more inclusive and accessible to people with disability, parents with prams, and older people as well as friends and families.</b>	<b>LC-6</b>	Encourage the business community to improve access, in particular, to essential services such as medical practices and banking services, but also to increase tourism opportunities.	Business community	1	2	3	4	Environmental and Economic Planning	# of awareness activities
<b>Events are accessible, inclusive and encourage greater participation of people with disability</b>	<b>LC-7</b>	Encourage community to consider and accommodate a range of visible and invisible disabilities during public events, including physical access, low energy, hearing and vision related considerations.	Event organisers, general community	1	2	3	4	Environmental and Economic Planning Environmental and Economic Planning	# of awareness activities Accessibility considerations included in Council's event processes and Event Guide

Outcomes	Action	What we will do	Target population or audience	Year(s)				Responsibility	Measures
				1	2	3	4		
<b>Open spaces are accessible. The design, maintenance and management of facilities enables people with disability to fully participate in community life</b>	<b>LC-8</b>	Increase and improve accessible parks, playgrounds and recreation facilities, including adequate seating and accessible play equipment.	Whole shire	1	2	3	4	Open Spaces  (Major Projects)	# of accessible parks # of accessible play equipment # of accessible seating # completion of upgrades # ongoing maintenance provided
<b>Council facilities are accessible and support inclusive participation</b>	<b>LC-9</b>	Improve access to Council-owned buildings and public facilities and amenities.	General Public  Council staff	1	2	3	4	Open Spaces  Works	# of accessible council owned buildings # of accessible public facilities and amenities 2025/26 Upgrade works including improved accessibility to lower Mullumbimby Scouts Hall completed (subject to funding) Detailed design of upgraded public amenities and change rooms at Byron Pool completed Funding options investigated to support construction of the Byron Pool Detailed design and renewal of the Apex Park Public toilets, relocating to the Byron Surf Club Building (Subject to funding)

Outcomes	Action	What we will do	Target population or audience	Year(s)				Responsibility	Measures
				1	2	3	4		
<b>Council facilities are accessible and support inclusive participation</b>	<b>LC-10</b>	Increase accessible holiday cabins (Council owned)	Holiday Park users	1	2	3	4	Open Spaces and Facilities	# and locations of accessible cabins upgraded
<b>Council facilities are accessible and support inclusive participation</b>	<b>LC-11</b>	In collaboration with key partners, improve and advocate for disability access and planning at our Evacuation & Recovery Centres (not all Evacuation Centres are Council owned)	State Government  Community representatives	1	2	3	4	Social and Cultural Planning	Evidence of improved disability access and advocacy at Evacuation and Recovery Centres
<b>Increased awareness of accessibility, inclusion and accessible tourism</b>	<b>LC-12</b>	Development of a Night Time Economy Action Plan which considers the needs of people with disabilities and promotes community inclusion	Shire wide	1	2	3	4	Environmental and Economic Planning	Evidence of inclusion considerations
<b>Open spaces are accessible. The design, maintenance and management of facilities enables people with disability to fully participate in community life</b>	<b>LC-13</b>	Ensure that reviews of existing Place Plans and Masterplans, consider how they support the outcomes of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan.	Mullumbimby and Bangalow residents	1	2			Environmental and Economic Planning	Evidence that the Bangalow and Mullumbimby Place Plans have considered the outcomes of the DIAP.
<b>Improved disability awareness and organisational capability</b>	<b>LC-14</b>	Undertake a review of the Byron Development Control Plan 2014 and consider amendment(s) which improve access and mobility (Chapter B13)	Shire wide			3	4	Environmental and Economic Planning	Consultation held with Access Consultative Working Group  Byron Development Control Plan reviewed
<b>Improved physical, social and cultural wellbeing of Aboriginal people</b>	<b>LC-15</b>	In line with Council's Aboriginal Housing on Country resolution, continue to develop strong and productive relationships that empower Aboriginal community	Shire wide	1	2	3	4	Social and Cultural Planning	Continue working with Traditional owners on land management matters  Implementation of Aboriginal Engagement Framework
<b>Improved Accessible Transport Options</b>	<b>LC-16</b>	Council to advocate for expanded transport services, including on-demand buses, improved timetables, and broader service coverage.	Shire wide	1	2	3	4	Sustainable Development	Evidence of advocacy undertaken

## Focus area three

### Supporting access to Meaningful Employment

Outcomes	Action	What we will do	Target population or audience	Year(s)				Responsibility	Measures
				1	2	3	4		
Improved disability awareness and organisational capability	ME-1	As per the Workforce Management Strategy, continue to attract and retain a diverse workforce including people with disabilities, Women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse individuals, LGBTQI+ individuals, young people and mature age persons	People from diverse backgrounds	1	2	3	4	People and Culture	Workforce Management Strategy reflects commitment to recruit people from diverse backgrounds  Targeted recruitment which promotes Council as an employer of choice and increased opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds  Implementation of diversity and inclusion initiatives which promote employee retention
Improved disability awareness and organisational capability	ME-2	Redesign onboarding and induction programs to reflect culture, safety, diversity and inclusion	New Council staff	1	2	3	4	People and Culture	Onboarding and induction program reviewed and updated
Encourage local businesses to increase employment opportunities for people with disability, including accessible recruitment processes for both visible and invisible disability.	ME-3	Share information and support training opportunities where grant funding is available.	Business community	1	2	3	4	Environmental and Economic Planning	# of awareness activities # of training activities supported (subject to grant funding)
Improved disability awareness and organisational capability	ME-4	Increase training around both visible and invisible disability in the workplace.	Council staff	1				People & Culture	# of training activities facilitated
Improved disability awareness and organisational capability	ME-5	Support an inclusive and accessible workplace by aligning workforce programs with the Disability and Inclusion Action Plan)	Council staff	1	2	3	4	People and Culture	Evidence that workforce program aligns with DIAP

Outcomes	Action	What we will do	Target population or audience	Year(s)				Responsibility	Measures
				1	2	3	4		
Improved disability awareness and organisational capability	ME-6	Provide more guidance and training on inclusive language.	Council staff	1	2	3	4	People & Culture (Media/ Communications)	# of resources shared
Improved disability awareness and organisational capability	ME-7	Integrate systemic diversity and inclusion training for all employees, including people leaders, to improve disability awareness and promote inclusive behaviours.	Council staff	1	2	3	4	People & Culture	# and type of Diversity training facilitated
People with disability are informed, consulted and actively participate in Council decision-making processes.	ME-8	Engage staff with disability lived experience to inform workplace adjustments and policy enhancements.	Council staff	1	2	3	4	People and Culture	Staff with disability consulted on workplace adjustments and policy enhancements
Increased awareness and understanding of disability and inclusion in business community	ME-9	Investigate partnership opportunities with the Department of Education's annual School-based apprenticeship and traineeship event.	State government	1				Environmental and Economic Planning	Evidence of partnership opportunities explored
Improved disability awareness and organisational capability	ME-10	Develop staff training initiatives to increase Aboriginal Cultural Awareness	Council staff	1				People and Culture	Research, design and develop employee Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training, specific to the Byron Shire, for new and existing Council employees

## Focus area four

### Improving access to services through better Systems and Processes

Outcomes	Action	What we will do	Target population or audience	Year(s)				Responsibility	Measures
				1	2	3	4		
People with disability are informed, consulted and actively participate in Council decision-making processes	SP-1	Implement a new Council meeting and reporting software system that meets the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines standards and improves the accessibility of Council meetings, including live captioning.	Whole shire	1				Corporate Services	New software system implemented
People with disability are informed, consulted and actively participate in Council decision-making processes	SP-2	Ensure diversity of representation on the ACWG and across other consultation processes such as Place Planning Collectives.	Council staff	1				Social and Cultural Plannin  (Environmental and Economic Planning)	# of opportunities for representation
People with disability have an equal opportunity to participate in Council decision-making processes	SP-3	Continue to offer sitting fees/compensation for lived experience advisory groups.	Community representatives	1	2	3	4	Social and Cultural Planning	Annual budget allocation
People with disability are informed, consulted and actively participate in Council decision-making processes.	SP-4	Ensure a diversity of communication strategies that consider and accommodate a range of visible and invisible disability.	Council staff	1	2	3	4	Media & Communications	# of communication strategies
Improved disability awareness and organisational capability	SP-5	Improve staff understanding of invisible disability and how to assist community in navigating Council processes.	Council staff	1	2	3	4	(All business units)	# of training activities facilitated

Outcomes	Action	What we will do	Target population or audience	Year(s)				Responsibility	Measures
				1	2	3	4		
Council information is accessible to people with disability.	SP-6	Continue to improve accessibility of online information and systems, including effective search function.	General public	1	2	3	4	Media & Communications  (All business units)	# of accessibility improvements  Range of accessibility improvements
People with disability are informed, consulted and actively participate in Council decision-making processes.	SP-7	Investigate opportunities to provide feedback into the Byron/ Tweed Emergency Management Plan which seeks to improve the outcomes for people with disability.	Local Emergency Management Committee	1				Social and Cultural Planning	Advocacy representation made to the Local Emergency Management Committee  Submission provided by the Access Consultative Working Group
People with disability are informed, consulted and actively participate in Council decision-making processes.	SP-8	Support Person-Centred Emergency Planning programs/ projects that increase community knowledge and understanding of person-centred emergency planning	Shire wide	1	2	3	4	Social and Cultural Planning	# of residents that have a person-centred emergency plan  # and type of projects/ programs delivered
Improved disability awareness and organisational capability	SP-9	Advocate and continue to secure external grants which support the implementation of our DIAP	Shire wide	1	2	3	4	Social and Cultural Planning	Funding sources investigated  # and type of funding confirmed
Council information is accessible to people with disability.	SP-10	Ensure information can be read and understood by our community regardless of their level of education, language spoken, lived experience of disability	Shire wide	1	2	3	4	Media and Communications	Updates published and reviewed for readability and accessibility.  #/% of pages at desired readability level of Grade 10 to 12 or below.  # of staff trained in web accessibility principles, editing and OpenForms creation.
People with disability are informed, consulted and actively participate in Council decision-making processes.	SP-11	In line with our 2024 – 2028 Community Engagement Strategy, continue to involve people with lived experience of disability in decision making that may impact them.	People with lived experience	1	2	3	4	Media & Communications  (All business units)	# and type of consultations held with people with lived experience  Communications and Engagement Plan completed for relevant projects that require decision making

Outcomes	Action	What we will do	Target population or audience	Year(s)				Responsibility	Measures
				1	2	3	4		
Improved disability awareness and organisational capability	SP-12	Undertake a Gallery accessibility audit, and continue to deliver accessible and inclusive programming at the Lone Goat gallery.	Lone Goat Gallery attendees	1	2	3	4	Social and Cultural Planning	Audit undertaken (2025/26) # and type of inclusive programming undertaken
Improved disability awareness and organisational capability	SP-13	Ensure that the DIAP is referenced and informs Council's Projects Delivery Procedure (Construction Projects)	Council staff and contractors	1				Major Projects	Projects Delivery Procedure updated
People with disability are informed, consulted and actively participate in Council decision-making processes	SP-14	Ensure that the Access Consultative Working Group is consulted and engaged on relevant key plans/ designs that inform the Byron Bay Master Plan implementation	Access Consultative Working Group	1	2	3	4	Byron Bay Place Manager	# and type of consultations held with the Access Consultative Working Group
Council events are accessible, inclusive and encourage greater participation of people with disability.	SP-15	Promote the delivery of more accessible and inclusive community events as part of the Events Action Plan	Whole Shire	1	2	3	4	Environmental and Economic Planning	'Accessibility' requirements incorporated into relevant event applications and checklists
Council events are accessible, inclusive and encourage greater participation of people with disability.	SP-16	Consider and accommodate visible and invisible disability access requirements for Council events and processes such as community engagement.	Council staff and contractors	1	2	3	4	All (relevant) Business Units	# of accessibility improvements
Improved disability awareness and organisational capability	SP-17	In line with the findings of the Bostock Report, advocate for more rigorous and accurate quantitative national, regional and local Aboriginal disability data	State and Federal Governments	1				Social and Cultural Planning	Advocacy letter to the State and Federal Governments

## 4. Guiding principles

### Inclusion is everyone's responsibility

Byron Shire Council is committed to building an inclusive and accessible community that meets the needs of all its residents. The NSW State Government requires that each Council in NSW, develop its own Community Strategic Plan (CSP), in accordance with its social justice strategy.

This Plan sits above all other Council plans and policies in the organisational planning hierarchy. The CSP identifies the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future, to promote a positive lifestyle and improve the quality of living for our residents and visitors.

The Community Strategic Plan 2035 guides Council's activities over the next ten years and is based on social justice principles determined by the NSW Government:

**Equity** – there should be fairness in decision making and prioritising and allocation of resources, particularly for those in need.

**Access** – All people should have fair access to services, resources and opportunities to meet their basic needs and improve their quality of life.

**Participation** – Everyone should have the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions which affect their lives.

**Rights** – Equal rights should be established and promoted, with opportunities provided for people from diverse linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds to participate in community life. In addition, Council is committed to accessibility and inclusion promoting equal rights for all members of the community.

These social justice principles are entrenched in the actions of the DIAP and in Council's other planning documents. Our DIAP will guide the actions that Council and others will need to take to improve access and inclusion in our community



## 5. What is disability

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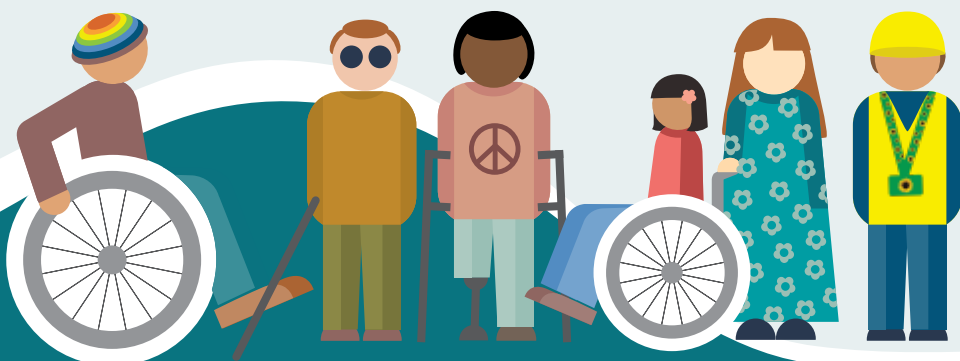
According to the NSW Public Service Commission, disability includes long-term physical, mental health, intellectual, neurological or sensory differences which, in interaction with various attitudinal and environmental barriers, may hinder full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

People with disability are a very diverse group. There are many types and there can be wide variations of impact on daily living. Many disabilities are not visible, such as anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, diabetes or dyslexia.

Disability is a natural part of human diversity, and everybody is likely to experience disability at some point in life. Disability may be present from birth, acquired due to illness or accident, or come about with time as a result of age.

The Federal Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) defines the medical model of disability in relation to a person as:

- total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions;
- total or partial loss of a part of the body;
- the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness;
- the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness;
- the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body;
- a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; and
- a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour and includes a disability that :
  - o Presently exists
  - o Previously existed but no longer exists
  - o May exist in the future (including because of a genetic predisposition to that disability); or is imputed to a person



## The social model of disability

The social model of disability is now the internationally recognised way to view and address 'disability'. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) marks the official paradigm shift in attitudes towards people with disability and approaches to disability concerns. Australia is a signatory to the United Nations CRPD and defines disability according to the social model of disability

People with Disability Australia explain that disability is the result of the interaction between people living with impairments and an environment filled with physical, attitudinal, communication and social barriers. It therefore carries the implication that the physical, attitudinal, communication and social environment must change to enable people living with impairments to participate in society on an equal basis with others.

In practice the social model means that Council will identify and remove barriers to enable people with disability to participate on an equal basis with other. Byron Council supports the view that people with disability have a right to be fully participating citizens on an equal basis with others.

In this context:

- **Impairment** is a medical condition that leads to disability.
- **Disability** is the result of the interaction between people living with impairments and barriers in the physical, attitudinal, communication and social environment.

## Inclusion is intersectional

Within the DIAP, Council is taking an intersectional approach and considering how race, gender, sexuality and ability shape and inform a person's life experiences.

"Intersectionality is a metaphor for understanding the ways that multiple forms of inequality or disadvantage sometimes compound themselves and create obstacles that often are not understood among conventional ways of thinking." (Crenshaw, 2022)

Different aspects of people's identity intersect. This can expose people with disability to overlapping forms of discrimination, marginalisation, and exclusion. Compounding disadvantage can increase risk for people with disability who have additional identities or circumstances which are marginalised in their communities.

Intersectionality should not be an after-thought. An intersectional disability lens should be built into contemporary practices from the outset to ensure barriers to safety, health and wellbeing are addressed.

## 6. Who are we – Byron community

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### Population characteristics

The Byron Shire community is a diverse and colourful mix of people. Our Shire is located on the far North Coast of NSW, and we share our boundaries with the Tweed, Lismore and Ballina Local Government Areas. Each of the towns and rural villages has its own distinctiveness with a mix of cultural values, embracing both traditional and alternative lifestyles and philosophies. Our population of Byron Shire was 37,126 (ABS, Estimated Resident Population 2023, profile ID); this factors in an estimate of those missed in the Census and those who were overseas on Census night.

We're diverse. 18% of our population is overseas born – higher than the regional average. We're farmers, professionals, technicians and families, offering a unique mixture of traditional values and those committed to alternative lifestyles and philosophies. We have changed from a conservative agricultural area to a region that attracts innovators, entrepreneurs and big-city escapes.

We're a magnet for domestic and international tourists with more than two million visitors per year. We're growing with our population which is increasing by between 1-2% every year; higher than other regional centres.

With growth comes pressure on housing. We're living longer. Our average age of 44 years, and the largest age group of 55-59 years reflects national trends. But we remain young at heart. We're a caring community. In 2016, 2,946 carers in our community reported providing unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, long term illness, or to the elderly. We're dedicated volunteers. 1 in 4 residents reported doing some kind of voluntary work in 2016 – higher than the regional average. And we know that people do much more than they report.



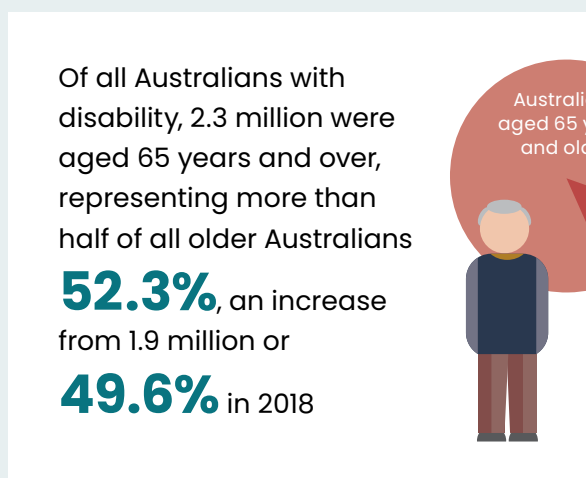
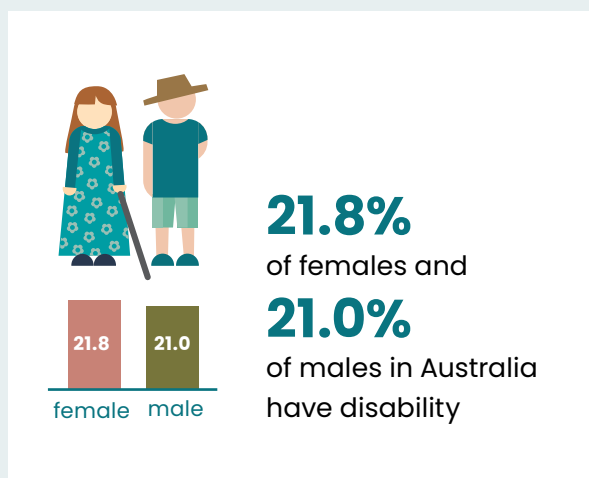
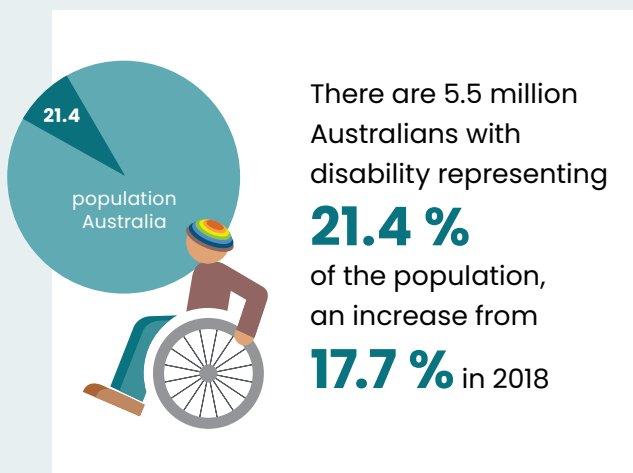
## Disability profile

Whilst the process of developing Council' DIAP has involved consultation with our local community, we have also considered the Australian context.

Demographics in 2022 – compiled from the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC) released in July 2024.

### Demographics

#### In Australia:



## Types of disability

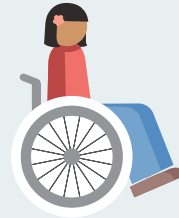
The likelihood of living with disability generally increases with age for males and females. Half the population

**52.3 %** aged 65 years and over have disability.



**4.4%**

of people with a disability in Australia use a wheelchair.



3.6 million Australians

**1 in 6 people**

have some level of hearing loss.



In 2022, of the 5.5 million Australians with disability,

over three-quarters **75.3 %** reported a physical disorder as their main condition (the condition causing them the most problems), a decrease

since 2018 **76.8 %**.



**16,000** Australians use Auslan. That number includes people for whom Auslan is their primary or only language, and also people who use Auslan at home to communicate with native Auslan users, such as children of Deaf adults.



Of all people with disability, **24.7 %** have a mental or behavioural disorder as their main condition, up from **22.6%** in 2018.

Vision Australia estimates there are

currently **453,000** people in Australia who are blind or have low vision. They project that the number of Australians who are blind or have low vision will grow to 564,000 by 2030.



Around **45%** of Australians aged between 16 and 85 will experience a mental illness at some point in their life, while one in five Australian adults will experience a mental illness in any given year.

## Labour force and income

In 2022, the labour force participation rate for people aged 15–64 years with disability (living in households), was **60.5%**, up from **53.4%** in 2018.

The participation rate for people without disability was **84.9%** in 2022, compared with **84.1%** in 2018.



In 2022, the most common main sources of income for people with disability were:

- wages or salary **48.9%**, an increase from **37.6%** in 2018. [1]
- government pensions or allowances **28.5%**, down from **37%** in 2018.

## Employment

In 2022, 2.7 million people with disability living in households were of working age (15–64 years). Over half **56.1%** were employed, compared with **82.3%** of people without disability.



## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability


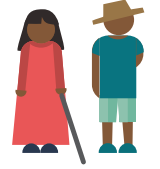
There are many challenges with the quality of data sources that represent the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability at a national, state, regional and local level. It is vital to acknowledge the ongoing efforts of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to improve data quality and to work, alongside partners, towards data sovereignty.

Disclosing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status and/or disability is an enabler of quality data. Decisions about disclosure can be influenced by factors including:

- current and historical discrimination, such as racism and/or ableism, generating risk in disclosing Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status in addition to disability;
- the cultural conceptualisation of disability within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as an accepted part of community life, so it is not viewed as a deficit in a way that disability can be viewed in other contexts; and
- barriers to obtaining disability diagnoses can mean that some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may not use 'sector' language about disability and its impacts. This issue may be elevated for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability in outer regional and remote communities.

According to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples with *Disability National Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2022*:

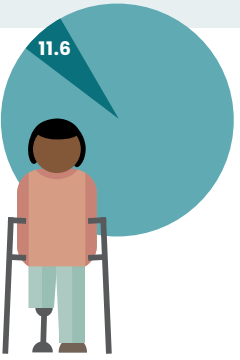
One-quarter **25.3%** or 183,700 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had disability, similar to **24.0%** in 2018 and **23.9%** in 2015.

Disability prevalence was similar for males **24.8%** and females **25.9%**.

Gender	Prevalence (%)
female	25.9
male	24.8

**11.6%** of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had a profound or severe limitation.



Seven in ten **70.7%** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, aged 5 years and over, had a schooling or employment restriction.

According to the 2021 Census, **19.6%** of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (15 years or older) in Byron Bay provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, health condition or due to old age (during two weeks before Census Night).

At 31 December 2022, 42,679 Indigenous Australians were participating in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), which represented **7.4%** of all participants. This is an increase from 36,050 in December 2021. The most common primary disabilities for Indigenous NDIS participants at 30 June 2019, were an intellectual disability **30%** and autism **28%**.

The 2007 Inquiry into Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage (Bostock Report) stated that 'by any measure, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability remain the most disenfranchised members of the Australian community'. The Council of Australian Governments Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision has recently concluded that the proportion of the Indigenous population 15 years and over, reporting a disability or long-term health condition was 37 per cent (102,900 people).

The Australian Disability Network's *Tell it Like it is Report* (2004/05) captures the consultation findings from 32 communities in north, western, central and south coast New South Wales (NSW). Approximately 300 Aboriginal people with disability attended these consultations, in addition 100 Aboriginal people with disability were interviewed. The report noted the following key findings:

- An Aboriginal person with disability is less likely to be able to access employment and education, which are fundamental to enabling an Aboriginal person with disability to access the necessary advancements to escape a life of poverty;
- (Some) Aboriginal people with disability cannot simply leave their own homes because they are confined by poor egress from their own homes or do not have the necessary aids and appliances to leave their own homes and access the wider community;
- Aboriginal people are frequently discriminated against because of their race. Therefore, unwillingness to self-identify another potentially discriminatory aspect of one's life has led to the under reporting of disability in Aboriginal communities.
- In some Aboriginal communities, there is a focus on physical or visible types of disability at the expense of recognition of mental illness as a type of disability. This can result in a serious under reporting of disability in some communities;
- The traditional labels of disability be they physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, acquired brain injury or other forms of disability descriptors are problematic when discussing disability in Aboriginal communities.



## Byron Shire

The Byron Shire is home to an estimated 5,732 people with disability, which is 16.8% of the local population. In addition, 9.7% of the community care for someone with a disability, which equates to an estimated 3,367 carers. Given that 1 in 5 people in Australia live with disability (increasing to 2 in 5 over the age of 65 years), it is important to consider that the number of people impacted by access and inclusion issues in our Shire is significant.

We know that significant numbers of people are impacted by disability and their disability may be visible or non-visible. The prevalence of disability increases with age, but anyone can acquire disability at any time. or could become a carer for a person with disability. That is why 'it is important that Council works to ensure that people with disability can participate equally in our community. When something is accessible, everyone can use it. When something is inclusive, everyone can take part.'

# 7. Policy and legislative context

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## International

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), ratified by Australia in 2008, acknowledges that people with disability have the same human rights as those without disability. This commits participating governments to ensure these rights can be exercised and that barriers are removed. It requires mainstream services to be provided in a way that does not directly or indirectly prevent people with disability fully participating.

## Federal

In line with Australia's commitments under the UN CRPD, Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031 (ADS) is Australia's national disability policy framework. It sets out a plan for continuing to improve the lives of people with disability in Australia over the next ten years. The Strategy builds on the significant work of the National Disability Strategy 2010–2020 to establish a national approach to improving the lives of people with disability.

In addition to the UNCRPD and the ADS, there are additional pieces of legislation that provide a framework and basis for disability inclusion action planning. These include the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA), which recognises the rights of people with disability to equality before the law and makes discrimination based on disability unlawful, and the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (ADA), which relates to discrimination in places of work, the public education system, delivery and goods and services.

## Other Federal Acts

- National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013
- Federal Equal Opportunity Act 1987
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 – recognises the rights of people with a disability to equality before the law and makes discrimination based on 'disability' unlawful

## State

### NSW Disability Inclusion Plan

The NSW Disability Inclusion Plan 2021 - 2025 (The Plan) strengthens the state's accessibility framework and outlines work underway to improve outcomes for people with disability.

This four-year plan builds on the work the NSW Government has undertaken to create more accessible and inclusive communities and provides the blueprint for increasing the social and economic participation of people with disability across NSW.



## Disability Inclusion Act 2014

In addition to our social and ethical responsibility to ensure access and inclusion, in 2014 the NSW Government introduced the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (The Act). The introduction of this Act mandates all NSW Councils to have a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) that demonstrates what we are doing to ensure the equitable participation of people with disability in their communities across NSW. The Act focuses on the accessibility of mainstream services and facilities. It promotes community inclusion for people with disability'.

The Act requires our DIAP to have four focus areas:

### **Attitudes and Behaviours**

- Promoting positive community Attitudes and Behaviours.
- Lead by example to help improve attitudes in behaviours in the broader community.
- Encourage and support local businesses to improve access and inclusion, including to encourage tourism opportunities.

### **Creating Liveable Communities**

- Continue to improve accessibility of the Shire, including footpaths and appropriate kerb ramps, safe accessible parking options and access to beaches.
- Consider and accommodate a range of visible and invisible disabilities during public events and in the provision of parks, playgrounds and recreation facilities

### **Supporting access to Meaningful Employment**

- Continue to provide training to our staff on both visible and invisible disability.
- Encourage local businesses to increase employment opportunities for people with disability, including accessible recruitment processes for both visible and invisible disability.

### **Improving access to services through better Systems and Processes**

- Continue to improve the accessibility of Council information, meetings and engagement activities.
- Continue to engage with and diverse lived experience advisory groups, including those with visible and invisible disability, across Council activities

## Other state acts

- NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977
- NSW Government Sector Employment Act 2023

## Our Journey

Byron Shire Council endorsed its first DIAP in 2017 for the period 2017–2021 and an interim DIAP was put in place (due to disruptions to Council terms) for the period 2021–2022. Following this, an updated DIAP was also prepared for the 2022 – 2026 period.

An essential element in preparing a DIAP is community consultation and engagement. This ensures the plan is focused on the needs of community members, service users and staff. The Community Engagement Findings Report 2025 describes the process and results of community consultation that was undertaken by Council, to help inform the 2025 – 2029 DIAP.

We recognise the importance of co-design and collaboration with people with lived experience, staff and communities, in the development of an effective DIAP. Throughout August 2024, in consultation with Council’s Access Consultative Working Group (ACWG), officers developed a Communication and Engagement Plan to guide the engagement approach (ACWG), used to underpin the development of the new Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2025 – 2029 (DIAP).

The ACWG is made up of a group made up of members of the Byron Shire community, with a lived experience of disability, as well as individuals that support people with a lived experience of disability. The primary purpose of the communication and engagement process was to gather community views on what it is like living with disability in the Byron Shire, what challenges people experience and what actions Council might be able to do to address some of the challenges.

The information obtained throughout this consultation has been used to inform Council’s Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2025 – 2029 (DIAP). It:

- builds upon the work of our previous DIAP 2022 – 2025 and guide Council’s approach with regards supporting to people with disability in our Shire;
- provides Council with a strategic framework to further support people with disability to participate in community life and access Council services and facilities within our Shire; and
- meets our legislative responsibilities as outlined in the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014.



# Our strategic context

## Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) forms part of Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework. The IP&R Framework guides the way Council plans, documents and reports on its activities. Central to IP&R are the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program, and Operational Plan.



## Byron Shire Community Strategic Plan 2035

The Byron Community Strategic Plan reflects the visions, aspirations and needs of the community, and guides Council's work and priorities.

The Byron Shire Community Strategic Plan 2035 (CSP) was developed through community engagement in 2023 - 2024 and endorsed by Council in May 2025.

The Community Strategic Plan 2035 outlines the 'vision' of the community over the next 10 years:

Byron Shire is a Meeting Place, where people can come together to connect, share, grow, inspire and create positive changes.

The CSP 2035 is centred on the five community objectives:

- **Effective Leadership** – We have effective decision making and community leadership that is open and informed
- **Inclusive Community** – We have an inclusive and proactive community where diversity is embraced and everyone is valued
- **Nurtured Environment** – We nurture and enhance the natural environment
- **Ethical Growth** – We will responsibly and resiliently navigate growth and change
- **Connected Infrastructure** – We have connected infrastructure, transport, and facilities that are safe, accessible, and reliable.



## Plan on a page

# Byron Shire Community Strategic Plan 2035

### *Inclusive Community*

We have an inclusive and proactive community where diversity is embraced and everyone is valued



Foster opportunities to express, celebrate and participate in arts and cultural activity

Enhance safety and contribute to the physical, mental, and spiritual health and wellbeing of the community

Work with Aboriginal communities to support self-determination and shared decision making while promoting broader understanding

Enrich opportunities, education and support services to help young people thrive in place

Create social impact initiatives to address adversity and support an inclusive society

### *Ethical Growth*

We will responsibly and resiliently navigate growth and change



Manage responsible development through effective place and space planning

Enable housing diversity and create collaborative initiatives to meet housing needs

Support sustainable local business development, visitation and events

Support a resilient community that can adapt and respond to changes

### *Effective Leadership*

We have effective decision making and community leadership that is open and informed



Enhance trust and accountability through open and transparent leadership

Engage, inform, and involve community in decision making

Ethical and efficient management of resources

Enhance organisation capability through innovative practices and regional partnerships

Empower community leadership through collaboration, capacity building, & cultivating community driven initiatives

### *Nurtured Environment*

We nurture and enhance the natural environment



Partner to nurture and enhance biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology

Deliver initiatives and education programs to encourage protection of the environment

Protect the health of coastline, estuaries, waterways, and catchments

Support and empower the community to adapt to, and mitigate the impact on climate change

Minimise waste and encourage recycling and resource recovery practices

### *Connected Infrastructure*

We have connected infrastructure, transport, and facilities that are safe, accessible, and reliable.



Provide a safe, reliable, and accessible transport network

Connect towns and villages through integrated, active, and public transport services

Ensure infrastructure meets future needs and invest in emerging technologies

Provide accessible community facilities and open spaces

Provide continuous and sustainable water and sewerage management



## Delivery Program 2025 – 2029

The Delivery Program translates the Community Strategic Plan goals into actions. It is Council’s commitment to the community, outlining what it intends to do toward achieving the goals of the Community Strategic Plan during its term of office. The Delivery Program is the single point of reference for all principal activities undertaken by Council. All plans, projects, activities, and funding allocations must be directly linked to the four-year delivery program.

The DIAP is captured in the 2025 – 2029 Delivery Program through Priority 2.5.1 “Access and Inclusion – Improve access and inclusion for all community members, including people with disability.”

## Operational Plan

The Operational Plan details the individual actions Council will undertake during the next financial year to achieve the strategies of the Delivery Program. Strategies in the Delivery Program and the actions outlined in the Operational Plan will be guided by consultation with community representatives, stakeholders and the wider community.

The 2025 – 2029 DIAP Action Plan activities will be included in each corresponding annual Operational Plan. DIAP activities are identifiable within the Operational Plan as belonging to one of the four focus areas set out under the Disability Inclusion Act 2014.

## 8. What has been achieved so far?

Council continues to deliver on its commitment to improve the lives of people with disability by completing actions in the 2022 – 2026 DIAP. Activities that were planned to be delivered in 2025 and 2026 from that plan will be automatically ‘rolled over’ into the new 2025 – 2029 DIAP and form part of the delivery of Year 1 actions.

The following key initiatives in our 2022 – 2026 DIAP have been achieved:

### Developing Positive Community Attitudes and Behaviours

- Delivered disability awareness training to 20 Council staff as a part of the mandatory induction for all new employees;
- Organised an Active Inclusion Sports Day event in collaboration with Sport NSW encouraging young people with disability to participate in regular community sport and active recreation;
- 72 Council staff completed Disability Awareness training;
- Developed the Event Strategy featuring access and inclusion in event planning;
- Partnered with Access Consultative Working Group (ACWG) members to produce an educational video about lived experience of disability and Council’s commitments within the DIAP;
- Hosted the ‘Recognise’ exhibition at Lone Goat Gallery in collaboration with local access and inclusion networks featuring local artists with lived experience of disability; and
- Introduced accessible support options for customers in Council’s foyer area including accessible seating, standing desk, and new glass partitions to increase sound carry.

### Increasing meaningful employment opportunities

- Reviewed position descriptions that became vacant to remove unintended barriers and focus only on essential competencies and core requirements;
- Designed job advertisements using inclusive language and communication options;
- Continued our partnership with Australian Disability Network to support us deliver better outcomes for people with disability;
- 170 Council staff attended a one-day Health and Wellbeing Exhibition supported by 21 local stakeholders to promote awareness of mental health and psychosocial disabilities;
- Council has encouraged opportunities for people with disability to obtain meaningful employment within the Byron Shire; and
- Work adjustments continue to be made available to all Council staff.

## Creating Liveable Communities

- Installed accessible equipment at Byron Recreation Grounds play area including seating for parents and carers and a wheelchair-accessible carousel;
- Installed new access ramp at Brunswick Memorial Hall;
- Completed accessible Council Chamber upgrade including new access ramp, and hearing loop;
- Increased parking patrols to ensure appropriate usage of accessible parking spaces throughout the Shire;
- Hosted NSW's first Regional Disability Expo at the Cavanbah Centre providing support to carers and people with disability to find information, products, services to improve their quality of life;
- Completed construction of accessible changerooms and canteen for Suffolk Park Football grounds in Linda Vidler Park;
- Completed design of Marvell Hall accessibility improvements including accessible ramp, entry, pathways and accessible kitchen facilities;
- Improved accessibility at Suffolk Beachfront Holiday Park and First Sun Holiday Park including accessible cabins and increased accessibility to amenities;
- Construction of Byron Bay Community Hub including an accessible onsite car space, 2 accessible street car spaces, accessible toilet, ramps and entrances as well as signage and brail requirements; and
- Provided business community with information on improving disability awareness including accessible shop fronts and signage and tips for creating inclusive experiences.

## Improving systems and processes

- 28 Council staff completed training in Writing Engaging and Accessible Content for the web;
- 3,581 website updates published and reviewed to meet accessibility compliance standards;
- Access Consultative Working Group (ACWG) continues to inform and improve Council decision making on a range of key inclusion priorities including flood recovery, beach accessibility and infrastructure;
- Adoption of the Hidden Disability Sunflower initiative at Council's Customer Service, Cavanbah Centre and Lone Goat Gallery;
- Readspeaker on our website was accessed 10,326 times; and
- 4,341 web pages published, each reviewed for accuracy and WCAG 2.1 Level AA accessibility compliance.
- Included a new award category in our annual Community Award program the "Access and Inclusion Award" to recognise individuals and organisations that champion equity, diversity, access and inclusion in the community



## 9. Community engagement

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Council provided a range of accessible and inclusive opportunities for community members to engage in sharing experiences of living with disability, professionals working in the sector, and supporting friends/family with disability.

Our Community Engagement Plan created an awareness and understanding of how to conduct accessible and inclusive community engagement opportunities (all ages and abilities, partnered with local community organisation, Auslan interpreting service, various face-to-face engagement, online or email).



The following engagement tools were used:

Consultation type	Details	No of participants
Community survey	Disability Access and Inclusion Survey inviting people with a disability (visible and hidden), mental health condition(s), people that care for or live with someone with disability and organisations that provide services and advocacy.	57 responses
Staff employee survey	Online survey inviting all Byron Council employees to share their views and provide feedback on the internal and external environments.	66 responses
Visits to local farmers markets	4 x market stalls with noticeboards for community members to contribute post-it note responses)	230 participants # not all participants provided written feedback
Disability Service sector workshop	Facilitated workshops held with professional community organisation	8 x services/ community groups – 9 participants
Accessible beaches workshop	An accessible beaches workshop was held on 20th November 2024	10 services/ community groups – 22 participants
1:1 Drop in service	Every Thursday in Council foyer, 4 weeks	1 survey completed 4 x interviews conducted with local residents
Hard copies of (easy read) community survey available at customer service	4 x Community Surveys (hard copy) made available at Council's Customer Service area	4 surveys provided
Consultation with children and young people	Sandhills Childcare Centre Byron Bay High School (SRC) Byron Bay Primary School	25 children 7 students 15 children
Focus group with Queer Family participants	Workshop held with LGBTQIA+ community members	12 participants

## 10. Key findings – what you told us

Listed below are the key themes and findings that you have told us are important. These have been summarised into four focus areas, and following the Framework provided to all NSW Local Governments, introduced as part of the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014.

The four focus areas are:

- promoting positive community **Attitudes and Behaviours**;
- creating **Liveable Communities**;
- supporting access to **Meaningful Employment**; and
- improving access to services through better **Systems and Processes**.

### Attitudes and behaviours

Theme	What you told us
Community awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with community to promote awareness and understanding of diversity of disability and needs – ‘nothing about us, without us’</li> <li>• More opportunities to promote and ‘showcase’ achievements of people with disabilities</li> <li>• There is increased awareness of ‘hidden’ disabilities, particularly for Council staff</li> </ul>
Community education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of education creates a social stigma around disability</li> <li>• Using more ‘inclusive language’ in our ‘business as usual’ activities</li> </ul>
Organisational capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for further disability, mental health and LGBTIQ+ awareness training (trauma informed) for Council staff including inclusive practices, and accessible communications</li> <li>• Training needs to become ‘business as usual’ within Council programs</li> <li>• More accessible communications and documents</li> </ul>
Intersectionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People with low to moderate disabilities feel invisible and often ineligible for NDIS</li> <li>• Lack of tailored support programs, which is also known as ‘minority stress’</li> <li>• Prioritise LGBTIQ+-inclusive policies which focus on disability awareness and gender diversity</li> </ul>

## Liveable communities

Theme	What you told us
Beach accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance of prioritising beach accessibility including greater access to beach amenities (Council Resolution (24-192) - 16th May 2024) for investigative action</li> <li>• Improved amenities including installation of a changing places facilities, support equipment, accessible and safe location to access beach wheelchairs, access to water, clear signage and wayfinding</li> <li>• Creating a plan and consulting with people with disability and key external stakeholders to establish priority locations including the planning, and design of potential works</li> </ul>
Community events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for an improved and consistent approach to more accessible and inclusive community events</li> <li>• Ensure that people with disability are engaged and consulted ahead of event planning</li> <li>• More inclusive community events including for those with sensory or mobility challenges</li> </ul>
Local business and economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration with local businesses and tourism groups, to educate and advocate access and inclusion benefits</li> <li>• More accessible local business that accommodate for wheelchairs</li> <li>• Incentives for businesses to be more aware and inclusive of 'trauma affected' customers</li> </ul>
Connectivity and accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear communication regarding what facilities, venues and locations are accessible including where to find this information</li> <li>• Improved infrastructure planning which takes into consideration how people with disability move around precincts (movement equity)</li> <li>• Maintenance of footpaths, streets and public infrastructure including safer crosswalks (grip paint), ensuring accessibility and completed connectivity</li> <li>• Opportunities for amenity improvements including improved pathways, footpaths, bike paths and exercise areas</li> </ul>
Car Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that new car parking considers how people with disability access local amenity and allow for clear path of travel</li> <li>• More parking for people with disability</li> </ul>
Planning within the Shire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritising the incorporation of Universal Design Principles in Shire planning.</li> <li>• More sensory-friendly spaces (quieter spaces, with shade and rest areas)</li> <li>• Mandating 'accessibility' requirements in Development applications</li> <li>• Undertake an audit of accessible public places</li> </ul>

## Liveable communities

Theme	What you told us
Accessible transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide and/or advocate for increased accessible public transport options</li> <li>• More bus stops, clearer timetables and better seating</li> </ul>
Open space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved park accessibility and 'line of travel' connectivity</li> </ul>
Public amenity including Council owned facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for improved accessible workplaces</li> <li>• Improved wayfinding and signage throughout Council buildings</li> <li>• Provision of neurodivergent (low stimulation) rooms for in public spaces</li> <li>• More public bathrooms and accessible change rooms</li> </ul>
Social engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More tailored social engagement activities for people with disabilities within local communities</li> <li>• Prioritise 'community driven' initiatives that promote safety and inclusivity via grants and advocacy</li> </ul>

## Meaningful employment

Theme	What you told us
Inclusive recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusive recruitment practices led by Council – promotion of people with disability working at Council, promotion of inclusive and safe work culture</li> <li>• Ensure new Council employees are 'inducted' to build understanding (or capability) in relation to inclusive and accessible customer service practices.</li> </ul>
Local businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration with local businesses and tourism groups, to educate and advocate for access and inclusion benefits</li> <li>• Opportunities for local business to employ more people with disabilities in the workplace</li> <li>• Incentivize businesses to participate in an 'educational program' to better understand the needs of people with hidden disabilities – must be 'trauma informed'</li> </ul>
Employment opportunities	<p>Provide opportunities within Council for increased employment (job share, flexible, part time) for people with hidden and visible disabilities within frontline roles</p>

## Systems and processes

Theme	What you told us
Consultation and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that people with disabilities are considered and invited to consult on key initiatives which impact their lives</li> <li>• Communicating and closing the loop on items that have been previously raised</li> </ul>
Impacting decision making	Further consideration as to new opportunities for people with disabilities to inform Council decisions
Accessible information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further training to support Council staff to confidently prepare 'accessible' information</li> <li>• Complexity in navigating Council services</li> <li>• Lack of clear access to information about available resources</li> <li>• Provision of information in 'accessible' forms</li> <li>• More information on Council website including accessible community amenity</li> <li>• Easy to read hard copies of Council documents</li> </ul>
Disaster preparedness	Improved equitable access for people with disabilities to support disaster management planning
Grant funding and advocacy	Lobbying other tiers of government to access funding to deliver on key priorities

For more information about the DIAP community consultation outcomes, please refer to our Community Consultation Findings Report on our website [Resources for People with Disabilities - Byron Shire Council](#)

# 11. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Our DIAP outlines Council's commitment to access and inclusion in our Shire. The Action Plan provides a statement of priority focus areas for 2025-2029. This forms the basis of ensuring we deliver on the actions within our annual Operational Plan.

As part of this annual process, resource allocations and responsible staff members will be allocated to each action. These actions will then be reported on each month, with quarterly reports made public.

All actions will be reported in Council's Annual Report, which is endorsed by Council and published on Council's website.

Together, Council will work collaboratively with community, government and our Access Consultative Working Group to ensure that they continue to play an important role and support this Plan's progress and reporting.

Council's typical four-year strategic planning cycle was temporarily impacted in 2021 due to the COVID response, which resulted in a delay with Council elections and a shorter term of Council.

The review of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 - 2026 has been conducted throughout 2025/26 and therefore the full four-year implementation of the DIAP has not yet been concluded. In order to ensure compliance, transparency and reporting, all actions already committed within year four of the 2022 - 2026 DIAP, will automatically be rolled over to year one of the updated 2025 - 2029 DIAP.

A four-year Action Plan has been created to support the DIAP's implementation over the period 2025 - 2029. Each year, the annual Action Plan will be reviewed and updated, alongside our Operational Plan, to ensure that it remains relevant and that appropriate resourcing can be allocated from the annual budget.





## For more information

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