

Tweed Access and Inclusion Plan 2023–2026

NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan



Access

Means making sure that people with disability can easily take part in everything in the community, like going places, using services, getting information, and joining activities, without facing unnecessary problems or things that stop them.

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.

Is about creating a place where everyone feels like they belong, can participate, and have a say, no matter their abilities.

Acknowledgement of the Bundjalung Aboriginal Nation

Tweed Shire Council acknowledges the Ngandowal and Minyungbal speaking people of the Bundjalung Country, in particular the Goodjinburra, Tul-gi-gin and Moorung – Moobah clans, as being the traditional owners and custodians of the land and waters within the Tweed Shire boundaries. We also acknowledge and respect the Tweed Aboriginal community's right to speak for its Country and to care for its traditional Country in accordance with its lores, customs and traditions.

Cover: Courtney Peate's Connect and Captivate team at Tweed Shire Council's International Day of People with Disability community event, December 2022. Photo credit: Pipi and Palm Photography.

Final version, December 2023

Contents

Council values and statements	4
What we value	4
Vision	4
Mission	4
A message from the Mayor	5
Inclusion is everyone’s business	6
Words matter	6
Diversity makes us human	7
Our Tweed community	8
Our diversity	8
Remaking our plan	10
Guiding principles	10
Legislation and policy context	11
Work we have done so far	12
Community views and experience	13
Action plan	14
1 Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours	14
2 Creating liveable and accessible communities	15
3 Supporting access to meaningful employment	18
4 Improving access to services through better systems and processes	20
Action delivery	22
Monitoring, evaluation and reporting	22
Glossary	33
References	35

Council values and statements

What we value

Living and loving the Tweed.

We look after people and places, explore all opportunities and are proud of our passionate approach.

We care about each other, choose to be here, and are in this together.

We have conversations where everyone can contribute and we are willing to have a go.

We put back in to make a difference, so that our Tweed community is even better tomorrow than it is today.

Vision

The Tweed will be recognised for its desirable lifestyle, strong community, unique character and environment and the opportunities its residents enjoy.

Mission

Working with community and partners, provide leadership in facilitating and delivering services that manage growth sustainably, create opportunity and enhance the value of our civic and natural assets for this and future generations.

A message from the Mayor

I am delighted to present the *Tweed Access and Inclusion Plan 2023–2026* – our third since 2014.

This plan demonstrates our continued commitment to ensuring equal opportunity for people with disability in the Tweed to participate in every aspect of working and community life and have access to Council and community programming, education, events, information and infrastructure.

Council delivers more than 50 services to our residents and visitors and this plan will help us to make sure as many people as possible can access them. Our commitments within this plan focus on making inclusion a core business of Council delivered internally and with partners in community, government, and business.

We aim to build on our previous effort and achievements. We aim to keep listening to our community and staff about their priorities and ideas for making the Tweed more inclusive.

We aim to make lasting improvements and benefit everyone in our diverse community, now and in the future.

I acknowledge and wish to thank everyone involved in providing feedback to develop this plan, particularly those with lived experience of disability.



Chris Cherry
Mayor of Tweed

Inclusion is everyone's business

The *Tweed Access and Inclusion Plan 2023–2026* (the Plan) serves as Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan (or DIAP), as required by the [NSW Disability Inclusion Plan 2021–2025](#) and legislated by *NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014*.

Our DIAP serves as a strategic framework for promoting the inclusion and well-being of people with disability in our community. It identifies and addresses barriers, sets clear goals and actions, a commitment to engaging with the disability community, and complies with relevant legislation.

Ultimately, our aim is to be a leader and collaborator in creating a more inclusive and accessible environment for all residents, regardless of their abilities. We aim to do this through a universal design approach. This means we design and plan for places, facilities, information and communication, and policies with everyone in mind.

This plan builds on the positive and successful work Council has achieved guided by the *Tweed Access and Inclusion Plan 2018–2021*. New actions and opportunities were also identified by our community through consultation and research.

This plan sets out how Council will improve the lives of people with disability across 4 focus areas:

- 1 developing positive community attitudes and behaviours
- 2 creating liveable and accessible communities
- 3 supporting access to meaningful employment
- 4 improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes.

Words matter

We acknowledge that language and words used when talking to, referring to or working with people with disability have an impact on the way they feel and are perceived in society.

This plan follows language conventions that are consistent with the United Nations *Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities* and *People with Disability Australia Language Guide: A guide to language about disability* August 2021 update. This includes adopting a person-first language such as 'people with disability' or 'person of diverse ability', acknowledging the person comes first rather than focusing on the impairment.

We understand that some people with disability prefer identity-first language, such as autistic and/or deaf people, reflecting their identity within a wider cultural group. We respect that individuals may prefer one use of language over the other.

Please refer to glossary for definitions and commonly-used phrases.

Diversity makes us human

During our own lifetime, many of us will experience changes in our health and ability, particularly as we get older. These can be described as impairments and can take many forms, for example:

- a. sensory impairment like blindness and hearing loss
- b. physical, mobility impairment like cerebral palsy, damage from injuries, polio
- c. neurological, cognitive and intellectual conditions like autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and dyslexia
- d. psychosocial limitations to a person's cognitive, emotional or social functioning including depression, bipolar or anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder and schizophrenia.

Some conditions or impairments are complex and multi-dimensional. Some are not visible or do not appear obvious.

Disability is 'the long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment or condition which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder the full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others'.¹ For example, it is not the inability to walk that keeps a person from entering a building by themselves, but the stairs that are inaccessible to them.²

People with diverse abilities and those who support them often face unfair treatment, negative judgments, and bias from different people, like their employer, co-workers, service providers, or even strangers on the street. This can make it hard for them to take part in regular activities, like going to school or work, attending events, or getting medical help. When they feel left out, it can lead to them being alone and not talking to others much. This can make their physical and mental health worse and can make their disability or health problems even harder to handle.

1 *Disability Inclusion Act 2014* No 41 – NSW Legislation – <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/act-2014-041>

2 Social model of disability – People with Disability Australia (pwd.org.au) – <https://pwd.org.au/resources/models-of-disability/>



Our Tweed community

Tweed Shire covers a large area of about 1,300 square kilometres and adjoins the NSW shires of Byron, Lismore and Kyogle, with the NSW/Queensland border to its north where it divides the twin towns of Tweed Heads and Coolangatta. Our natural landscape includes coastline, national park, wetland and forest.

The Tweed is one of the most desirable places to live in Australia and has the fastest growing population in the region. The Bundjalung people lived in the Tweed more than 40,000 years prior to the arrival of European cedar getters who established settlements here in the 1840s.

In 2021, over 97,300 people were estimated to live in the Tweed³. The population is estimated to reach more than 128,000 by 2031. Our diverse population is geographically spread between urban communities, coastal and rural towns and more than fifteen villages.

Our diversity

1/6

More than one in 6 Australians have a disability⁴. Based on this ratio, we estimate more than 17,200 people live with diverse abilities in the Tweed.



Over 7,200 people need help with activities due to their disability, health condition or due to old age⁵.



There are over 10,800 carers in the Tweed who give their time to help a family member, friend or persons with disability⁶.

34%

Over 33,000 people living in the Tweed are over 60 years old – about 34 per cent. Older people are more likely to have a disability or experience a limitation, condition or impairment due to ageing⁷.



In 2021, the 3 most common long-term health conditions in Tweed were arthritis, mental health or behavioural disorder and asthma⁸.



Over 500 people in need of assistance contribute to the Tweed's labour force and are mostly employed in part-time work⁹.

3 Tweed Shire Council Community profile ABS Census 2021 data compiled and presented in [economy.id](#) by.id

4 Australian Government Department of Social Services, Disability and Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031

5 Tweed Shire Council Community profile ABS Census 2021 data compiled and presented in [economy.id](#) by.id

6 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2021, Disability and Carers Census released 26 June 2022

7 Tweed Shire Council Community profile ABS Census 2021 data compiled and presented in [economy.id](#) by.id

8 Tweed Shire Council Community profile ABS Census 2021 data compiled and presented in [economy.id](#) by.id

9 Tweed Shire Council Community profile ABS Census 2021 data compiled and presented in [economy.id](#) by.id

41%

Over 41% of people reporting a need for assistance are in the lowest household income quartile, meaning they have relatively low income-earning capabilities compared to people who do not need assistance in their daily lives¹⁰.



There were nearly 2485 active *National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)* participants living in the Tweed, between April and June 2023. Those aged 7 to 14 years form the highest percentage at 25 per cent¹¹.

8.8%

In the Tweed, there are 219 NDIS active participants who identify as indigenous, between April and June 2023. This accounts for 8.8 per cent¹².



Thirty-eight per cent of active NDIS participants living in the Tweed have Autism as their primary disability. Thirteen per cent live with an intellectual disability and 13 per cent live with a psychosocial disability. Over 1,700 people live in the Tweed, with disability that may not be visible or appear obvious to others¹³.



“There were 3,100 active NDIS providers operating in the Tweed Shire, between January and March 2023. This number grew to 3,245 active providers between April and June 2023. An active provider is an approved person or provider of supports who have received National Disability Insurance Agency or Plan Managed payments¹⁴.

Acknowledgment: We recognise this data is limited and presents only a partial view of the provider landscape. We acknowledge the contribution of non-NDIS registered disability support organisations, groups and individuals that cater to the needs of residents in the Tweed area.

10 Tweed Shire Council Community profile ABS Census 2021 data compiled and presented in economy.id by.id

11 The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIS) Participant Data. Q4 Financial Year 2022/23, Explore Data, data.ndis.gov.au/explore-data. Accessed November 2023

12 The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIS) Participant Data. Q4 Financial Year 2022/23, Explore Data, data.ndis.gov.au/explore-data. Accessed November 2023

13 The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIS) Participant Data. Q4 Financial Year 2022/23, Explore Data, data.ndis.gov.au/explore-data. Accessed November 2023

14 The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIS) Provider Data. Q3 and Q4 Financial Year 2022/23, Explore Data, data.ndis.gov.au/explore-data. Accessed November 2023

Remaking our plan

Tweed Shire Council is the largest Council of the north coast of New South Wales.

Council delivers more than 50 services to its residents and visitors. They include planning and development, water and wastewater, major and minor works, waste management, natural resource management, community and cultural development, art galleries, recreational facilities, parks and reserves, cemeteries, aquatic facilities and much more.

We have made this plan because:

- We want to build on the positive and successful work we have achieved of the previous *Tweed Access and Inclusion Plan 2018–2021*.
- We want to work on new actions and opportunities identified by our community through consultation and research.
- We have a role in supporting our community to be inclusive and care for each other to create stronger community bonds and support for those in need.
- We are responsible under international, national, and state law to protect the rights and interests of people with disability in the Tweed.

Guiding principles

Our universal design approach is guided by principles that align to our Council values and those of NSW and Australian law.

Respect: Accept and present in our actions the inherent right of people with disability to be regarded for their worth and dignity as individuals.

Equity: Treat all individuals fairly and address specific needs to ensure equal opportunities.

Participation: Involve people with disability in decision-making processes that impact them.

Access: Remove physical, communication, and attitudinal barriers to services, facilities, and information.

Collaboration: Engage with stakeholders, community organisations, and experts to create a comprehensive and sustainable plan.

Integrity of service: Demonstrate our ethics and values through our work and conduct to earn the trust of our community to act in their best interest.

Legislation and policy context

This plan acknowledges and considers the hierarchy of legislation and policy at the international scale and at all levels of Australian government, which provide for and qualify disability as a human rights issue.

- *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).*

Federal Government:

- *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031*
- *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- *Disability Services Act 1986*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*

NSW Government:

- *NSW Disability Inclusion Plan 2021–2025 (DIP)*
- *NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (DIA)*
- *Government Sector Employee Act 2013*
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977*
- *NSW Public Sector Capability Framework*

Tweed Shire Council:

- *Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2018–2021*
- *Community Strategic Plan 2022–2032*
- *Tweed Access and Inclusion Policy 2014*
- *Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan*
- *Community Engagement and Participation Plan*

Figure 1 (overleaf) shows where this plan fits within the state, national and international context.



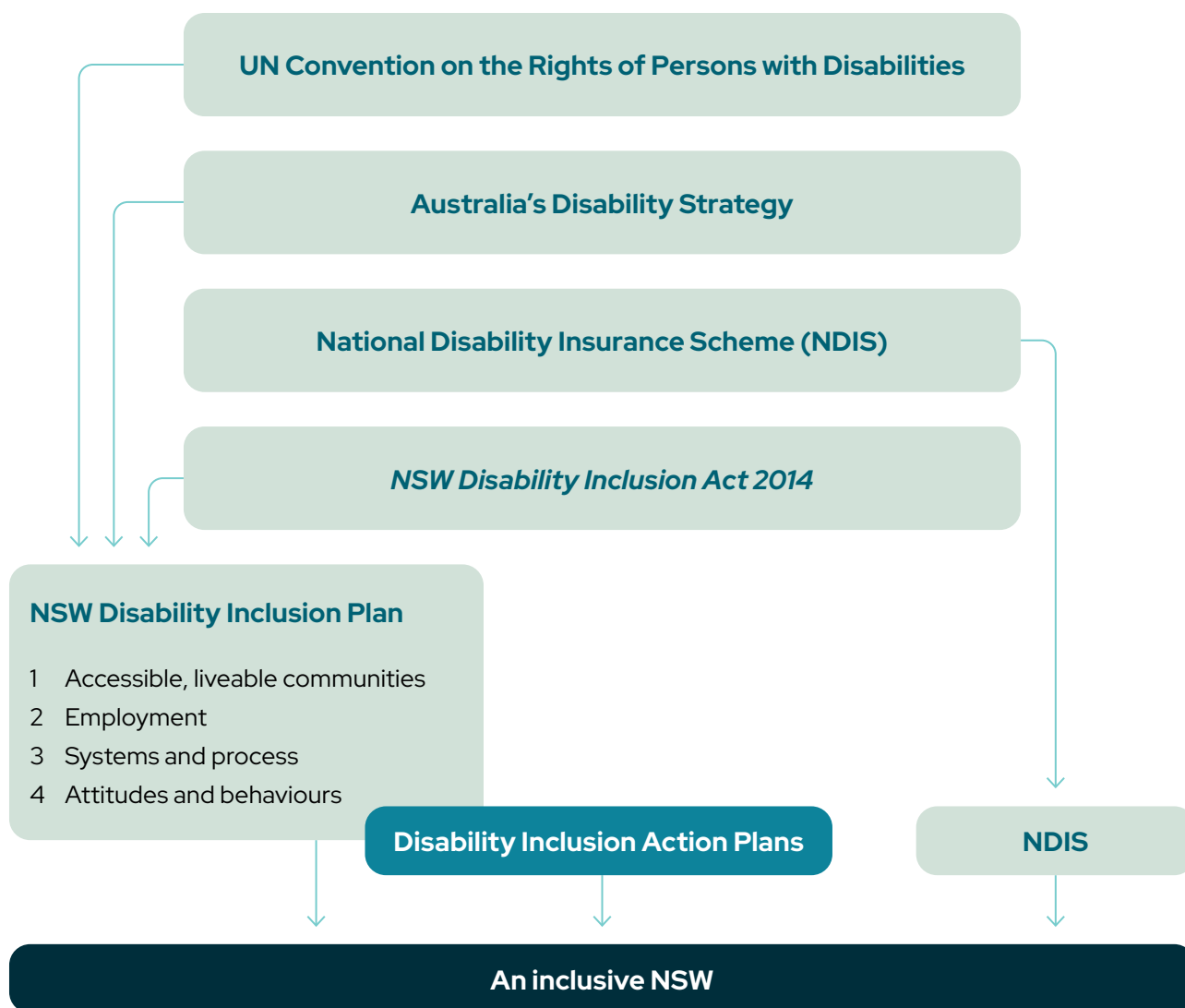


Figure 1: Legislative framework for Disability Inclusion Action Plans

Work we have done so far

Council has worked hard to deliver the actions of the *Tweed Access and Inclusion Plan 2018–2021* and embed these in our business practices. The COVID-19 pandemic and the flood event in 2022 impacted the delivery of some actions. Here are some projects we are proud of.

We worked together with local groups and the Tweed Equal Access Advisory Committee to understand and bring attention to issues with Council staff and the Tweed community.

During the 2020–2021 COVID-19 lock-downs we launched the “Untold Stories” online exhibition with the Tweed Regional Museum and in 2021 we released 3 videos to celebrate International Day of People with Disability.

We designed and constructed a new inclusive children’s playspace at Livvi’s Place at Goorimahbah – Place of Stories at Jack Evans Boat Harbour, Tweed Heads, where people of all ages and abilities can play and learn.

We re-designed Council websites to be fully accessible and we worked with the Centre for Accessibility Australia and the Tweed Equal Access Advisory Committee to test how the websites worked for people of different abilities and those using assistive technologies.

Community views and experience

The actions in this plan are informed by research and feedback from our staff and community including the local disability support sector and people with disability, their families and carers.

We sought feedback in several different ways including:

- community survey which we prepared with the Council for Intellectual Disability and was made available in 'easy read', online and hard copy formats
- regular meetings with the Tweed Equal Access Advisory Committee
- meeting with the Tweed Aboriginal Advisory Committee
- meeting with the Blind Citizens Australia Tweed chapter
- presentation to the Tweed Heads Chamber of Commerce
- regular meetings with the Tweed Disability Network and Tweed Community Care Forum
- meetings with Council staff to align actions with operational and delivery plans.

Community views are summarised for each focus area in the action plan.



Action plan

1 Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours

Feeling welcome and a part of community is very important to a person's health and wellbeing. It can give a person confidence to access information and ask questions, to learn, look for and find work, take part in social activities and meet new people. Negative attitudes towards or perceptions of people with disability are often based on an assumption of what a person cannot do or cannot be, which can lead to discrimination. These perceptions often stem from a lack of understanding, knowledge or interaction with different and diverse people in community.

Community experiences and views

Some people with disability feel they are treated differently or left out because other people think they can't do things or can't be involved.

Our community suggested 3 ways we might improve attitudes and behaviours:

- 1 Promote better understanding and attitudes among community and staff on the complex and often invisible nature of disability and the rights of people with disability.
- 2 Support community connections and projects for people with disability that reflect and promote the range of diverse abilities in the Tweed.
- 3 Listen to people with disability through networks and stakeholder groups.

Our actions

Aim: To increase public and staff awareness of the rights and capabilities of people with disability and support positive attitudes towards diversity.

- 1 Work together with people of diverse abilities, their families, carers and supporters to identify and address key issues that affect them.
- 2 Deliver public awareness campaigns to leverage specific events in the year and foster a more inclusive and understanding community.
- 3 Share empowering stories of people with disability that challenge stereotypes – through our cultural programs and communications streams.
- 4 Build an image library that reflects and represents our diverse community and includes people with disability for use in Council communications.
- 5 Offer disability awareness training for council staff and committees, community and business groups, and service providers.
- 6 Connect community groups and organisations that deliver inclusive cultural, sport and recreation, conservation and disaster resilience and preparedness events and programs with people of diverse ability, their families, carers and supporters.
- 7 Celebrate outstanding efforts and good practices that make it easier for everyone to join in, making inclusivity a regular part of our community.
- 8 Promote awareness and recognise achievement toward inclusion and diversity through the Tweed Access and Inclusion Awards or similar event.

2 Creating liveable and accessible communities

Council designs, builds and maintains natural areas, parks, pathways, toilets, buildings, events, signage and facilities so that they are safe, healthy and can bring people together. It is important that everyone can use and enjoy them.

Universal design means that all elements of our built environment, events, outdoor spaces and information are designed so that everyone can use and enjoy them. This means:

- Using ramps and pathway and surface treatments that offer safe and continuous pathways of travel from street entrances, parking areas and public transport shelters to buildings, events and facilities.
- Providing accessible toilets and changing facilities, charging points for power chairs and scooters, and quiet spaces for people with sensory processing disorders.
- Using inclusive wayfinding, signage and lighting to help people with different abilities know where they are and how to get to where they need to go.
- Making accessible information on access features and barriers in the built environment available so that residents, workers and visitors can make informed decisions about their journey based on their own needs.



Community experiences and views

Our community shared 3 priorities for Council to improve access and inclusion in our outdoor and public spaces, facilities, buildings, information and services:

- 1 Disability access is as important as health and safety in the planning and budgeting of new and upgrading of projects.
- 2 Keep upgrading access to public places and facilities with a focus on ramps, tactile indicators and accessible parking.
- 3 Support business and community groups to remove barriers and improve access, particularly recreation and tourism ventures and community events.

Our actions

Aim: To increase participation of people with disability in all aspects of community life, by addressing barriers in our built environment, open spaces, events, information and facilities.

Accessible infrastructure, public spaces and facilities

- 1 Conduct access audits to identify and remove barriers to access in public open spaces, Council buildings, infrastructure, and facilities.
- 2 Upgrade and expand the Council pathway network to overcome barriers to active transport by resolving missing pathway links, crossing points and pedestrian facilities.
- 3 Continue to make parks and play spaces more accessible and inclusive.
- 4 Deliver accessible design, layout and service counters as part of the new Murwillumbah Visitor Information Centre.
- 5 Complete Murwillumbah Railway Station accessibility improvements including installing an access ramp and accessible toilet.
- 6 Draft and review Council's *Signage and Painting Manual* to incorporate inclusive wayfinding strategies and accessible signage requirements, so that people with diverse abilities can find and make their way around easily and safely.



Implement the universal design approach

- 7 Offer universal design and access standards training to Council staff responsible for capital works and renewal projects.
- 8 Create and pilot an asset auditing and improvement program to identify, build and promote access improvements at well-served locations for people with disabilities, making sure all improvements work together for a barrier-free experience.
- 9 Develop and pilot an Access Protocol that provides staff and contractors guidance on access risks and standards and best practice for different public buildings and open spaces, facilities and development types, to ensure that no user is excluded from accessing the benefits.
- 10 Amend the Tweed Development Control Plan to implement universal design principles in the planning and development of infrastructure, the public domain, facilities and buildings, so that access features are identified at concept design stage and managed through the development assessment and construction process.
- 11 Advocate to State and Federal Government to ensure social and private housing, public transport and moving around the community is more accessible for people with disability.
- 12 Develop and publish an access map and information on Council’s website and made available at Visitor Information Centres.

Events, culture and activities

- 13 Provide information and guidance to the business community about Council’s policy on pathway sharing and trading practices, to reduce barriers that affect people with vision and mobility impairment.
- 14 Offer inclusive awareness campaigns or skills workshops in the program of activities for Succeed in Tweed – October Business Month, to support community groups, businesses, event and market organisers to learn about ways people with disability can access their spaces, products and services.



3 Supporting access to meaningful employment

Council is the largest employer in the Tweed and we want to improve the diversity of our workforce. We recognise this is a key requirement of the NSW *Government Sector Employment Act 2013* (GSE Act). We also want to make sure that everyone in the Tweed has access to work and learning which can mean they can earn an income and be independent in their life, enjoy a feeling of self-worth and improve their mental and physical health. However, people with disability can experience many barriers to finding and keeping work.

Community experiences and views

Our community shared their experiences and aspirations for work through the community survey:

- two-thirds were in work, both in paid and unpaid/volunteering roles
- 41% were interested in obtaining more work and training
- 45% were not, reflecting those in or approaching retirement.

People with disability living and working in the Tweed have jobs and skills across a variety of fields including the creative arts, information technology, legal, health care and education sectors and many have qualifications and training certification.

Our community's ideas for Council might support people with disability to access employment:

- look at different and creative ways for people with disability to work or volunteer with Council
- review recruitment and onboarding processes and support staff supervising new recruits with different abilities.

Our actions

Aim: To increase the number of people with disability in meaningful employment and enable people with disability to plan for their future, exercise choice and control and increase their economic security.

- 1 Provide training for Council staff about how to create an inclusive work environment.
- 2 Appoint a Volunteers Coordinator to develop and trial a structured and supported volunteer placement program.
- 3 Review Council’s recruitment processes, with the view to develop guidance for position description authors and audit position descriptions to remove non-essential criteria that may present barriers to people with disability.
- 4 Collect non-mandatory data on the disability status of employees to establish a baseline for further progress on increasing the rates of employees with disability.
- 5 Review performance on employment of people with disability through equal employment opportunity reporting.
- 6 Review workplace software and hardware platforms to ensure they meet accessibility standards and are compatible with assistive technologies.
- 7 Develop a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy to promote inclusive recruitment, retention and career progression opportunities and build Council’s workforce diversity.
- 8 Collaborate with researchers and local business advocates to encourage the hiring of people with disabilities, such as holding careers/post school options day for people with disability.



4 Improving access to services through better systems and processes

It is important that people with diverse abilities can navigate the systems and processes required to access the services and supports they need in the community.

Council has come a long way in improving how we communicate and engage with our community. We acknowledge that there are still opportunities for improvement so that everyone can find information about events, activities, programs and decisions that are being made that affect their lives, and they are able to contribute their own perspectives.

Community experiences and views

Through our community survey and networks, we have learned that people with diverse abilities access information and services and use Council's systems and processes in different ways. For example:

- people with a vision impairment who use screen reader assistive technology like to read Tweed Link online, access Council's social media and electronic newsletters and listen to videos
- people who are deaf/hard of hearing prefer audio visual information like videos with captions and AUSLAN language interpreters
- people with different cognitive ability and literacy skills like information in similar formats as above, and also prefer 'easy read' format
- people with different digital skills or computer and internet access prefer hard copy newsletters and direct conversations with Council's Contact Centre and other staff
- a range of people use Council's website to access information in a variety of formats.

Our actions

Aim: To enable people with diverse ability to access information and services easily and efficiently so they may make informed choices and have equal opportunity to participate and engage in civic and community matters and decision-making.

Information access and communications

- 1 Provide alternative customer touchpoints including service counters, online and telephone.
- 2 Keep delivering accessible digital platforms, implementing the W3C's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, and ensuring plain language content in a variety of formats.
- 3 Deliver accessible webforms for online Council services ensuring accessible forms from any device at any time.
- 4 Include accessible information formats or inclusive features in electronic direct marketing initiatives.
- 5 Explore IT system requirements for customer communication requests and access barrier reports, so all staff and asset managers can gain access to this information.

Inclusive services and programs

- 6 Monitor the *Tweed Access and Inclusion Policy 2014* to ensure universal design principles and best practice is considered in policies and corporate practices.
- 7 Review Council's grants programs to identify and remove any barriers to people with disability applying for funding or sponsorship opportunities.
- 8 Deliver an Access and Inclusion Toolkit to guide Council staff with reliable information to help them improve access and inclusion in their Council services and programs.
- 9 Update Council's current plans, policies or protocols to establish access and inclusion requirements. For example:
 - a. procurement – adjusting funding agreements and contracts for services and programs delivered by third parties or contractors
 - b. disaster risk reduction and emergency response and preparedness
 - c. Council-run or sponsored events and markets
 - d. assistance animals in Council-managed places.



Action delivery

Table 1: Action delivery plan identifies the following information for each action:

- **ID** – identification number
- **Action** – what we are going to do
- **Responsible** – which Tweed Shire Council team(s) are responsible for leading delivery of the action
- **Timeframe:** When delivery will start: Year 1 means Financial Year 2023/24, Year 2 means Financial Year 2024/25, Year 3 means Financial Year 2025/26
- **Frequency** – how often we will complete the action
- **Performance indicators** – how we will track progress and measure outcomes.

Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Council staff will work together with people with disabilities, the community, government and business partners through discussions, meetings, and surveys to carry out the actions in this plan.

Our Community Development Officer Inclusion and the Tweed Equal Access Advisory Committee will work with Council staff to help them:

- understand their responsibilities to allocate resources and implement the actions in this plan
- review progress and adjust strategies, based on feedback, changing circumstances and new developments. This includes ensuring the plan aligns with relevant legislation and guidelines.
- report and communicate the progress and implementation of actions.

The success of our plan relies on Council staff making gradual, measurable changes to how we do our work. We will track our progress every 3 months and provide regular updates and reporting of the plan's implementation and outcomes to community through Council's Annual Report.

In the final year of this plan, we will review our progress and consult with our community, particularly from people with disabilities, to review the plan's effectiveness and relevance, and future actions. This allows us to consider and reflect the changing needs in our community.

Table 1: Action delivery plan

Focus area 1: Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours			
Responsible	Timeframe	Frequency	Performance indicator
ID: 1.1 Action: Work together with people of diverse abilities, their families, carers and supporters to identify and address key issues that affect them.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive & Creative Communities 	Year 1	Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of meetings hosted and updates distributed to Tweed Disability Network, Tweed Community Care Forum, and Equal Access Advisory Committee Number of members engaged in Tweed Disability Network, Tweed Community Care Forum, and Equal Access Advisory Committee
ID: 1.2 Action: Deliver public awareness campaigns to leverage specific events in the year and foster a more inclusive and understanding community.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive & Creative Communities Destination, Communication & Customer Experience 	Year 1	Bi-yearly/ annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of campaigns delivered Number of participants/audience Number and percentage attendees reporting increased knowledge
ID: 1.3 Action: Share empowering stories of people with disability that challenge stereotypes – through our cultural programs and communications streams.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive & Creative Communities Destination, Communication & Customer Experience 	Year 1	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of positive stories of inclusion Number of people with disability involved Number of participants/audience
ID: 1.4 Action: Build an image library that reflects and represents our diverse community and includes people with disability for use in Council communications..			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive & Creative Communities Destination, Communication & Customer Experience 	Year 1	Once	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of images Variety of disability types in images Number and percentage of communications in which images are shown
ID: 1.5 Action: Offer disability awareness training for council staff and committees, community and business groups, and service providers.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive & Creative Communities People & Culture 	Year 1	Annual/once	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of training sessions delivered Number of participants Number and percentage of participants reporting increased awareness

Focus area 1: Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours

Responsible	Timeframe	Frequency	Performance indicator
ID: 1.6 Action: Connect community groups and organisations that deliver inclusive cultural, sport and recreation, conservation and disaster resilience and preparedness events and programs with people of diverse ability, their families, carers and supporters.			
Inclusive & Creative Communities and units involved in facilitating community groups and networks	Year 2	Bi-annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of activities delivered • Number of community groups and participants engaged • Number and percentage of participants reporting increased inclusion awareness • Number of programs adapted with inclusion measures
ID: 1.7 Action: Celebrate outstanding efforts and good practices that make it easier for everyone to join in, making inclusivity a regular part of our community.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive & Creative Communities • Destination, Communication & Customer Experience 	Year 1	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity delivered or supported • Number of people with disability involved • Number of participants/audience
ID: 1.8 Action: Promote awareness and recognise achievement toward inclusion and diversity through the Tweed Access and Inclusion Awards or similar event.			
Inclusive & Creative Communities	Year 1	At time of review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review completed • Recommendations implemented

Focus area 2: Liveable and accessible communities

Responsible	Timeframe	Frequency	Performance indicator
Accessible infrastructure, public spaces and facilities			
ID: 2.1 Action: Conduct access audits to identify and remove barriers to access in public open spaces, Council buildings, infrastructure and facilities.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks & Active Communities • Roads & Stormwater • Infrastructure Delivery • Inclusive & Creative Communities 	Year 1	Quarterly, Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of accessibility audits conducted per type of infrastructure, building and facility • Number and type of access improvements identified for upgrade or installation
ID: 2.2 Action: Upgrade and expand the Council pathway network to overcome barriers to active transport by resolving missing pathway links, crossing points and pedestrian facilities.			
Roads & Stormwater	Year 1	Quarterly, Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metres of pathways upgraded and installed • Number and type of access improvements implemented for example, bus shelters, accessible parking bays, rest stops and road crossings upgraded and installed
ID: 2.3 Action: Continue to make parks and play spaces more accessible and inclusive.			
Parks & Active Communities	Year 1	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of parks and places designed and delivered • Number and type of access and inclusion features implemented • Number of people with disability consulted with
ID: 2.4 Action: Deliver accessible design, layout and service counters as part of the new Murwillumbah Visitor Information Centre.			
Destination, Communication & Customer Experience	Year 1	Once	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and type of access and inclusion features implemented • Number of people with disability consulted with
ID: 2.5 Action: Complete Murwillumbah Railway Station accessibility improvements including installing an access ramp and accessible toilet.			

Focus area 2: Liveable and accessible communities

Responsible	Timeframe	Frequency	Performance indicator
Destination, Communication & Customer Experience with Parks & Active Communities	Year 1	Once	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refurbishment completed Number and type of access and inclusion features implemented Number of people with disability consulted with
<p>ID: 2.6 Action: Draft and review Council’s Signage and Painting Manual to incorporate inclusive wayfinding strategies and accessible signage requirements, so that people with diverse abilities can find and make their way around easily and safely.</p>			
Destination, Communication & Customer Experience with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parks & Active Communities Inclusive & Creative Communities 	Year 2	Once	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signage and Painting Manual drafted, exhibited and adopted Number and type of access and inclusion features identified and implemented Number of people with disability consulted with

Implement the universal design approach

<p>ID: 2.7 Action: Offer universal design and access standards training to Council staff responsible for capital works and renewal projects.</p>			
People & Culture in partnership with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure Delivery Roads & Stormwater Parks & Active Communities Strategic Planning & Urban Design Inclusive & Creative Communities 	Year 1	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage % staff trained Percentage % staff reporting increased confidence following training
<p>ID: 2.8 Action: Create and pilot an asset auditing and improvement program to identify, build and promote access improvements at well-serviced locations for people with disabilities, making sure all improvements work together for a barrier-free experience.</p>			
Inclusive & Creative Communities in partnership with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure Delivery Roads & Stormwater Parks & Active Communities Strategic Planning & Urban Design Building & Environmental Health Information Technology 	Year 1	Once, ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program and systems developed and piloted Number of access audits conducted through the program Number of access improvements identified and implemented through program Number of people with disability consulted with

ID: 2.9 Action: Develop and pilot an Access Protocol that provides staff and contractors guidance on access risks and standards and best practice for different public buildings and open spaces, facilities and development types, to ensure that no user is excluded from accessing the benefits.

Focus area 2: Liveable and accessible communities

Responsible	Timeframe	Frequency	Performance indicator
Inclusive & Creative Communities in partnership with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure Delivery • Roads & Stormwater • Parks & Active Communities • Strategic Planning & Urban Design • Building & Environmental Health 	Year 2	Pending output of 2.8a and 2.10.a/b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access Protocol drafted and trialed and adopted • Number and type of access and inclusion features identified and implemented per development type • Number of people with disability consulted with • Number and percentage of projects where access features have been delivered
ID: 2.10 Action: Amend the Tweed Development Control Plan to implement universal design principles in the planning and development of infrastructure, the public domain, facilities and buildings, so that access features are identified at concept design stage and managed through the development assessment and construction process.			
Strategic Planning & Urban Design in partnership with all other teams responsible for design, planning, development and management of built environment	Year 1	Once	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DCP Part drafted, exhibited and adopted • Number and type of access and inclusion features identified and implemented • Number of people with disability consulted with
ID: 2.11 Action: Advocate to State and Federal Government to ensure social and private housing, public transport and moving around the community is more accessible for people with disability.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Planning & Urban Design • All other teams responsible for design, planning, development and management of built environment 	Year 1	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of policy or programs advocated • Number and type of advocacy activities engaged with (submissions made, consultation forums) • Number of initiatives taken up or incorporated by Government and Council.
ID: 2.12 Action: Develop and publish an access map and information on Council's website and made available at Visitor Information Centres.			
Inclusive & Creative Communities with Destination, Communication & Customer Experience	Year 3, subject to 2.8	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access map developed and published • Number of user downloads, copies of access maps published

Focus area 2: Liveable and accessible communities

Responsible	Timeframe	Frequency	Performance indicator
Events, culture and activities			
<p>ID: 2.13 Action: Provide information and guidance to the business community about Council’s policy on pathway sharing and trading practices, to reduce barriers that affect people with vision and mobility impairment.</p>			
Strategic Planning & Urban Design in partnership with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building & Environmental Health • Roads & Stormwater • Inclusive & Creative Communities 	Year 1	Once	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and guidance developed and distributed • Number of businesses engaged with/reach • Percentage business groups reporting increased awareness of Council’s policy • Number of physical access reports by people with disability
<p>ID: 2.14 Action: Offer inclusive awareness campaigns or skills workshops in the program of activities for Success in Tweed – October Business Month, to support community groups, businesses, event and market organisers to learn about ways people with disability can access their spaces, products and services.</p>			
Destination, Communication & Customer Experience	Year 1	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaign developed • Number of workshops delivered • Number of participants/audience • Number and percentage attendees reporting increased knowledge

Focus area 3: Supporting access to meaningful employment

Responsible	Timeframe	Frequency	Performance indicator
ID: 3.1 Action: Provide training for Council staff about how to create an inclusive work environment			
People & Culture in partnership with Inclusive & Creative Communities	Year 1	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of training sessions delivered • Number of participants • Number and percentage of participants reporting increased awareness, knowledge
ID: 3.2 Action: Appoint a Volunteers Coordinator to develop and trial a structured and supported volunteer placement program			
Inclusive & Creative Communities	Year 1	Once	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer placement program developed • Number of diverse volunteers directly involved • Number of barriers and solutions identified • Number and types of volunteering activities funded/held • Number of units/staff involved
ID: 3.3 Action: Review Council's recruitment processes, with the view to develop guidance for position description authors and audit position descriptions to remove non-essential criteria that may present barriers to people with disability.			
People & Culture	Year 2	Once	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance developed • Number of staff with disability involved in planning, design, delivery and evaluation of project • Number of authors engaged • Number of barriers and solutions identified • Audit conducted • Number of position descriptions updated • Number of non-essential criteria removed or amended
ID: 3.4 Action: Collect non-mandatory data on the disability status of employees to establish a baseline for further progress on increasing the rates of employees with disability.			
People & Culture	Year 1	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey program developed • Base line/Number of staff and type of disability identified

Focus area 3: Supporting access to meaningful employment

Responsible	Timeframe	Frequency	Performance indicator
ID: 3.5 Action: Review performance on employment of people with disability through Equal Employment Opportunity Reporting.			
People & Culture in partnership with Equal Employment Opportunity Committee	Year 1	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EEO Reporting performance criteria identified Performance review conducted and evaluated Number of diverse staff involved in developing project
ID: 3.6 Action: Review workplace software and hardware platforms to ensure they meet accessibility standards and are compatible with assistive technologies.			
Information Technology	Year 1	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review criteria defined Review conducted and evaluated Number of staff/people with diverse ability involved Number of barriers and solutions identified Actions taken as needed to improve accessibility
ID: 3.7 Action: Develop a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy to promote inclusive recruitment, retention and career progression opportunities and build Council’s workforce diversity.			
People & Culture in partnership with Inclusive & Creative Communities	Year 2	Once	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy scope defined and developed Discussions held with potential partners to define the scope, investigate and evaluate feasibility Number of staff/people with diverse ability involved Number of barriers and solutions identified
ID: 3.8 Action: Collaborate with researchers and local business advocates to encourage the hiring of people with disabilities, such as holding careers/post school options day for people with disability.			
Inclusive & Creative Communities	Year 2	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions held with potential partners Opportunities identified and actioned

Focus area 4: Improving access to services through better systems and processes

Responsible	Timeframe	Frequency	Performance indicator
Information access and communications			
ID: 4.1 Action: Provide alternative customer touchpoints including service counters, online, and telephone.			
Destination, Communication & Customer Experience	Year 1	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of and type of alternative touchpoints offered Number of customers accessing alternative services
ID: 4.2 Action: Keep delivering accessible digital platforms, implementing the W3C's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, and ensuring plain language content in a variety of formats.			
Destination, Communication & Customer Experience	Year 1	as needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of Council websites WCAG compliant Number of people with disability involved in user testing Number of and type of alternative accessible information formats published per department
ID: 4.3 Action: Deliver accessible webforms for online Council services ensuring accessible forms from any device at any time.			
Destination, Communication & Customer Experience	Year 2	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessible webforms developed Number of people with disability involved in user testing Number of webforms delivered for online services
ID: 4.4 Action: Include accessible information formats or inclusive features in Electronic Direct Marketing initiatives.			
Destination, Communication & Customer Experience	Year 1	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of and type of accessible formats or inclusive features included in EDM
ID: 4.5 Action: Explore IT system requirements for customer communication requests and access barrier reports, so all staff and asset managers can gain access to this information.			
Information Technology	Year 1	Once	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions held with potential partners to define the scope, investigate and evaluate feasibility. User requirements and technical specifications defined.

Focus area 4: Improving access to services through better systems and processes

Responsible	Timeframe	Frequency	Performance indicator
Inclusive services and programs			
ID: 4.6 Action: Monitor the <i>Tweed Access and Inclusion Policy 2014</i> to ensure universal design principles and best practice is considered in policies and corporate practices.			
Inclusive & Creative Communities in partnership with Corporate Governance	Year 2	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of new and amended policies with universal design principles and requirements specified Number of staff/people with diverse ability involved/consulted with
ID: 4.7 Action: Review Council’s grants programs to identify and remove any barriers to people with disability applying for funding or sponsorship opportunities.			
Inclusive & Creative Communities in partnership with Corporate Governance	Year 2	Once	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review conducted Number and type of access and inclusion requirements identified Number of staff/people with diverse ability involved/consulted with
ID: 4.8 Action: Deliver an Access and Inclusion Toolkit to guide Council staff with reliable information to help them improve access and inclusion in their Council services and programs.			
Destination, Communication & Customer Experience	Year 2	Once	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toolkit developed Access and Inclusion principles and requirements developed Number of staff/people with diverse ability involved/consulted with
ID: 4.9 Action: Update Council’s current plans, policies or protocols to establish access and inclusion requirements. For example:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. procurement – funding agreements and contracts for services and programs delivered by third parties or contractors b. disaster risk reduction and emergency response and preparedness 			
Corporate Governance	Year 1	Once	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy/protocol developed Access requirements developed Number of staff/people with diverse ability involved/consulted with
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Council-run or sponsored events and markets wayfinding and signage, and customer service 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Destination, Communication & Customer Experience Building & Environmental Health Inclusive & Creative Communities 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. assistance animals in Council-managed places. 			
Inclusive & Creative Communities			

Glossary

Accessibility: Everyone can use, view and contribute to facilities, products, services, information, training and career opportunities.

Communication: Includes languages; display of text; Braille; tactile communication; large print; accessible multimedia; written, audio, plain-language, human-reader and augmentative and alternative modes; means and formats of communication including accessible information and communication technology.

Disability: In relation to a person, this may include a long-term physical, psychiatric, intellectual or sensory impairment that may hinder the person’s full and effective participation in the community on an equal basis with others in interaction with various barriers.

Discrimination on the basis of disability: Treating someone unfairly or differently because they have a disability. It’s when people are not given the same opportunities, rights, or respect as others just because they have a disability. Discrimination based on disability is not fair and is often against the law because it goes against the idea that everyone should be treated equally, no matter if they have a disability or not.

The Australian Human Rights Commission describes disability discrimination as *‘when a person with a disability is treated less favourably than a person without the disability in the same or similar circumstances’*.

For example, it would be ‘direct disability discrimination’ if a nightclub or restaurant refused a person entry because they are blind and have a guide dog.

It is also disability discrimination when there is a rule or policy that is the same for everyone but has an unfair effect on people with a particular disability. This is called ‘indirect discrimination’.

Impairment: A medical condition that leads to disability.

Language: This includes spoken and signed languages and other forms of non-spoken languages.

Reasonable accommodation: Necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Supports: Assistance provided to a person with disability to do one or more of the following:

- a. to help the person undertake his or her day to day activities
- b. to increase the person’s independence
- c. to facilitate the person’s social and economic inclusion in the community.

Universal design: A way of building in accessibility in the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people regardless of age, disability or other factors, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. ‘Universal design’ shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed.



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