



City of
KINGSTON

Disability Action Plan

2015 – 2019





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i The implementation of some of the actions in this Plan is supported by financial assistance from the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments.

Council acknowledges the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the land on which the municipality is a part and pays its respects to their Elders past, and present. Council is a member of the Inter Council Aboriginal Consultative Committee (ICACC)



Cr Geoff Gledhill
KINGSTON MAYOR

It is with great pleasure that I present the City of Kingston Disability Action Plan 2015-2019 to the community.

The City of Kingston is committed to improving access and inclusion for all. The 2015-2019 Disability Action Plan has been developed to prioritise actions over the coming four years for the continuous improvement of outcomes for people with a disability.

The implications of disability are far reaching; not only affecting the person with a disability but also their families, carers, support services and the broader community. People with a disability remain one of the most disadvantaged groups of Australians, prompting a commitment from all levels of Government to a national approach towards supporting people with a disability obtaining equal and active participation in community life; employment; and civic processes.

Through the 2009-2013 Disability Action Plan, Council has delivered many improvements to its services, programs, communications, infrastructure, policies and mechanisms for participation in decision-making. Kingston has also advocated for improvements within the community that are outside Council's responsibility.

The 2015-2019 Disability Action Plan will complement; enhance; and build on existing achievements; committing Council to new priorities for action. The Plan is framed by the Victorian Disability Act 2006 and has been informed by the Kingston community and international, federal and state policy and legislation.

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Executive Summary

Kingston City Council has an important role in shaping equity, access and inclusion of people with a disability who live, work and visit the municipality. Council is committed to improving opportunities for people with a disability to participate in the community, civic processes and employment.

Kingston's 2015-2019 Disability Action Plan outlines the priorities of Council over the next four years to improve its services, programs, communication, infrastructure, policy, mechanisms for participation in decision-making and advocacy on behalf of people with a disability.

The priority areas of the Plan have been framed by the requirements set out in the Victorian Disability Act 2006. The actions for each priority area have been developed and informed by research and consultation with the community and Council. The priority areas and a summary of the priority actions are listed in Figure 1.

Kingston's 2015-2019 Disability Action Plan builds upon Council's existing initiatives to improve access, equity and inclusion for people with a disability. The Plan will be implemented by Council in partnership with the community.

Figure 1

PRIORITY	OBJECTIVES
1	ACCESS TO GOODS, SERVICES AND FACILITIES Council will seek to remove barriers faced by people with a disability in accessing goods, services and facilities by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporating access and inclusion considerations in relevant Council policies; • Improving access to Council buildings, information, services, programs and events; • Improving access to public spaces managed by Council; and • Advocating to other government bodies and the private sector to improve access in the community.
2	EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES Council will seek to increase opportunities for people with a disability to obtain and maintain employment by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting training opportunities; • Assisting and encouraging businesses to overcome any challenges they may face in employing people with a disability; and • Improving Council employment services to maximise opportunities for people with a disability to volunteer or become employed with Council.
3	ENCOURAGE INCLUSIVE ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES Council will seek to change attitudes and practices which discriminate against people with a disability by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educating Council and community about access, equity and inclusion; and • Acknowledging the positive contributions of people with a disability
4	PROMOTE INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION Council will promote the inclusion and participation in the community of people with a disability by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeting the promotion of Council's programs, services and events to people with a disability; • Promoting informal networking opportunities for people with a disability; and • Supporting people with a disability, their carers and support services to participate in decision-making.



Disability as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, broadly refers to a person with a physical disability or limited mobility, including blind, low vision, Deaf and hearing impaired; disease or illness; mental health or psychological condition; and learning or intellectual disability. The Act (1992) also stipulates that “a disability includes behaviour that is a symptom or manifestation of the disability.”

1. Introduction

Kingston’s 2015-2019 Disability Action Plan is a strategic plan that documents Council’s commitment to ensuring the Kingston community is more equitable, accessible and inclusive for people with a disability.

The 2015-2019 Disability Action Plan is underpinned by the principles of respect, dignity, individual autonomy, equal rights, equal opportunity and equal access; reflecting the principles of the Victorian State Disability Plan 2013-2016 and the National Disability Strategy 2010-2020.

The Plan was developed with regard to legislative and policy positions and in consultation with the community, including people with a disability, carers, service providers and Council staff. The development, implementation, revision and evaluation of the Plan will be led by Council and overseen by Council’s Access and Equity Advisory Committee.

The 2015-2019 Disability Action Plan will be reviewed and evaluated annually with a summary of the outcomes published on Council’s website and in Council’s Annual Report. In the final year of the Plan, a more comprehensive evaluation will be undertaken to assess the effectiveness of the plan.

Kingston Council's One Vision: Council Plan 2013-2017 & Living Kingston 2035 outlines the strategic direction of Council and guides work with the community to protect and enhance the quality of life for current and future generations.

COUNCIL'S VISION:

'A diverse, dynamic community where we all share a sustainable, safe, attractive environment and a thriving economy.'

The 2015-2019 Disability Action Plan contributes to the Council Plan's action 'to promote access and equity principles to build inclusive communities'. This action meets the objective of 'a diverse and inclusive community' and contributes to the achievement of the goal of a 'healthy, strong and connected community.'

This Plan also complements a range of other Council strategic plans, highlighted in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Related Council Strategic Plans





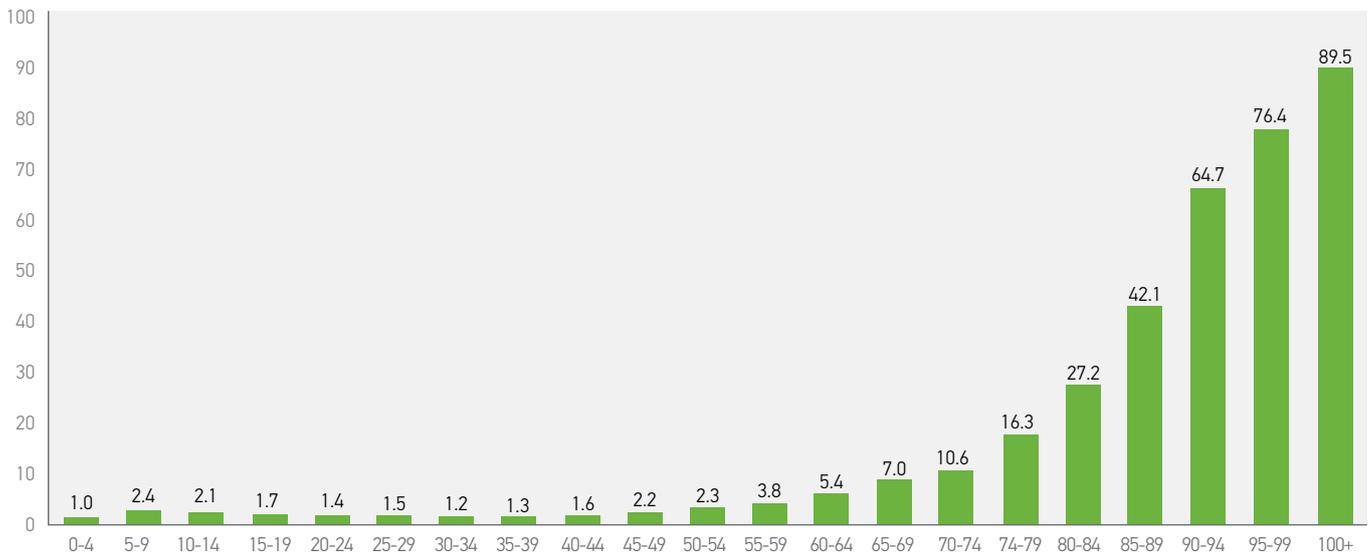
2. Demographic Data

Kingston is home to an estimated 147,915 people across an area of 91 square kilometres, boasting beautiful beaches; world-class golf courses; bushy reserves; tranquil wetlands; safe bicycle and walking paths; and top retail outlets that we want to be accessible for all locals and visitors to enjoy.

Kingston is a diverse community, with a wide range of ages, household types and cultures. The City of Kingston has residents from over 150 countries of origin, speaking 120 languages and following over 28 faiths. A total of 31.7% of Kingston's residents were born overseas, a figure which increases to up to 67% in Clayton South, and 56% in Clarinda.

Our community is also ever-changing; and it is important that Council plans for services which meet these changing needs. Council uses population demographic data to inform the development and delivery of services to ensure they are relevant and responsive to the community.

Figure 3 Percent of persons with a disability, by age: Kingston



PREVALENCE OF DISABILITY

Approximately one in five Australians has a disability. People with a disability make up 18.4 percent of the Victorian population, or about one million people. Approximately one-third of people with a disability, or six percent of the total Victorian population (338,200 people), have a profound or severe disability.

Census data on the level of disability in Kingston is not available. However, given that 20 percent of all Australians and 18.4 percent of Victorians have a disability, it is estimated that approximately 29,500 people in Kingston have a disability.

The number of people with a disability is increasing and is expected to continue to grow due to population growth, ageing and increased life expectancy.

Ageing has a significant impact on rates of disability. After the age of 65 the proportion of the population with a disability increases significantly (Refer to Figure 3).

Disability not only affects the individual, but also carers, families and the broader community. In 2011, 4.7% of Kingston’s population reported needing help in their day to day lives due to a profound or severe disability.

DISADVANTAGE

According to the Department of Human Services, ‘people with a disability currently experience more disadvantage than other Victorians.

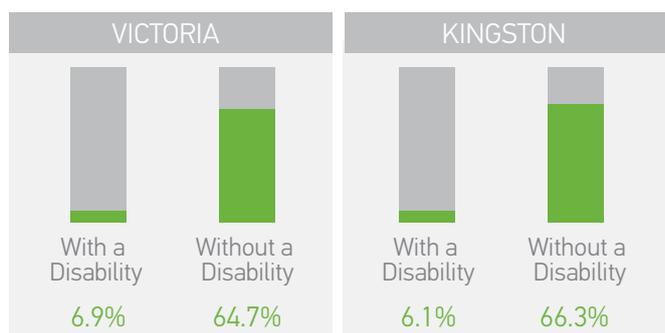
Research has found:

- In Victoria, 26 percent of people with a disability do not study beyond year 10, compared to 18 percent of people without a disability;
- People with a disability are almost five times more likely to live in state-supported rental accommodation than people without a disability;
- The average weekly income of Victorians with a disability is 48 percent less than the population without a disability;
- In 2009, the labour force participation rate for Victorians with a disability of working age was 52 percent, compared to 83 percent for Victorians without a disability; and
- People with a severe or profound disability experience even greater disadvantage, with a labour force participation rate of only 32 percent.’

Unemployment can cause social isolation, contribute to poor mental and physical health and reduce feelings of being valued and having a sense of purpose. For people with a disability, this disadvantage is compounded by additional living costs related to managing a disability.

Disadvantage faced by people with a disability is compounded for residents from a multicultural background who may also face language, literacy and cultural barriers.

Figure 4 Percent Employed





3. Legislative and Policy Context

Kingston's 2015-2019 Disability Action Plan is responsive to other government policies and legislation. The following is an outline of the relevant policy and legislation that has implications for the Plan.

INTERNATIONAL

The international rights of persons with disabilities are grounded in a broad framework based on the United Nations Charter; the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the International Convention on Human Rights; and other human rights instruments.

In 2006 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) 'to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.' The CRPD was ratified by the Australian Government in August 2008. All Australian governments are now bound by the CRPD.

Another international initiative is the International Day of People with Disability (IDPWD). This is a United Nations sanctioned day held annually on December 3rd that aims to promote an understanding of people with disability and encourage support for their dignity, rights and well-being.

AUSTRALIA

To fulfil the Australian Governments obligations as a signatory to international declarations on the rights of people with disabilities, the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) was adopted. The DDA aims to eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against persons on the grounds of disability in the areas of:

- Work, accommodation, education, access to premises, clubs and sport;
- The provision of goods, facilities, services and land;
- Existing laws;
- The administration of Commonwealth laws and programs;
- To ensure, as far as practicable, that persons with disabilities have the same rights to equality before the law as the rest of the community; and
- To promote recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle that persons with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community.

Other legislative instruments developed under the DDA include:

- Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010; and
- Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002.

The Council of Australian Governments developed the National Disability Strategy 2010-2020 to establish a ten year national policy framework for improving life for Australians with a disability, their families and carers. The National Disability Strategy has a strong focus on making the mainstream system more responsive to people with a disability; their families; and carers. It has six priority areas for action as follows:

1. Inclusive and accessible communities—the physical environment including public transport; parks, buildings and housing; digital information and communications technologies; civic life including social, sporting, recreational and cultural life.

2. Rights protection, justice and legislation—statutory protections such as anti-discrimination measures, complaints mechanisms, advocacy, the electoral and justice systems.
3. Economic security—jobs, business opportunities, financial independence, adequate income support for those not able to work, and housing.
4. Personal and community support—inclusion and participation in the community, person-centred care and support provided by specialist disability services and mainstream services, informal care and support.
5. Learning and skills—early childhood education and care, schools, further education, vocational education, transitions from education to employment, life-long learning.
6. Health and wellbeing—health services, health promotion and the interaction between health and disability systems, wellbeing and enjoyment of life.

In July 2013 the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) commenced and is being managed through the establishment of DisabilityCare Australia. The NDIS aims to provide community links and individualised support for people with permanent and significant disability, their families and carers.

VICTORIA

Victoria has a number of laws which legislate against the discrimination of persons with a disability.

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 sets out the basic rights, freedoms and responsibilities of all people in Victoria.

The Victorian Carers Recognition Act 2012 aims to raise the profile of people in care relationships in the community and ensure that carers can be appropriately involved in the treatment of and planning for, the people for whom they care.

The Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010 aims to eliminate, so far as is possible, all forms of discrimination.

The reform of the Mental Health Act 1986 aims to modernise legislation regarding the treatment of people with mental illness; deliver a patient-centered, rights based, least restrictive and recovery focused approach to treatment for people with mental illness; establish supported decision making to ensure patients have greater opportunity; support to participate in treatment decisions; and minimise the use and reduce the duration of compulsory treatment.

The Disability Act 2006, the Disability Regulations 2007 and the Disability Amendment Act 2012 provide:

- A stronger whole-of-government, whole-of-community response to the rights and needs of people with a disability; and
- A framework for the provision of high quality services and supports for people with a disability.

The Disability Act 2006 specifies that public sector bodies (defined as government departments, prescribed statutory authorities and prescribed statutory corporations) must develop Disability Action Plans for the purpose of:

- Removing barriers faced by people with a disability in accessing goods, services and facilities;
- Removing barriers faced by people with a disability in obtaining and maintaining employment;
- Promoting the inclusion and participation in the community of people with a disability; and
- Achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against people with a disability.

A public sector body is required to report on the implementation of its 2015-2019 Disability Action Plan in its annual report.

The Disability Act 2006 also prescribes the establishment of the Victorian Disability Advisory Council (VDAC) to advise the Minister for Community Services on policies and strategies to increase the participation of people with a disability in the Victorian community. VDAC also works with other community and government advisory groups to create opportunities for all Victorians.

The Victorian Government has developed the following policies complementing state legislative requirements:

- Victorian State Disability Plan 2013-2016

To put the national disability strategy into practice, the Victorian State Disability Plan 2013-2016 was developed with an accompanying implementation plan and companion document that provides the context for the plan. The plan will be implemented by various Victorian Government departments and has four strategic goals:

1. A strong foundation in life;
 2. Upholding rights and promoting participation;
 3. Accessing information, transport, buildings and places; and
 4. A contemporary approach through disability system reform.
- The Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2013-2018 commits to monitor the proportion of Aboriginal people with a disability receiving disability services.
 - Victoria's Action Plan to Address Violence Against Women and Children recognises women with disabilities as one of the most vulnerable groups and aims to prevent violence happening; hold perpetrators to account for their actions; and provide support to women and children who experience violence.
 - The Elder Abuse Prevention and Response Guidelines for Action 2012-2014 focuses on protecting the health and wellbeing of older Victorians.



4. Development, Monitoring & Implementation

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The Plan was developed in consideration of other local government Disability Action Plans; relevant international, national and state policy and legislation; and investigation into potential solutions to issues that arose from the consultation.
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Public and staff consultations were held during October and November 2013.

The consultation involved:

- A series of meetings with groups of people with a disability, their carers and service providers;
- A community survey available online and in hard copies at many locations throughout Kingston; and
- Consultations with Council's advisory committees.

Key issues identified include:

- Inaccessible infrastructure such as public toilets, car parking, footpaths, ramps, crossings, Council buildings, businesses and train stations;
- The availability, cost and appropriateness of leisure, cooking, sports, arts, cultural and informal social activities;
- A lack of volunteer, training and employment opportunities for people with a disability;
- Difficulties using public transport and a lack of transport options;
- Difficulty accessing support services for people with a disability and their carers;
- Lack of awareness about Council programs, services and events; and
- Lack of skills by some staff in communicating with people with a disability, and awareness of what supports are available.

The Disability Action Plan Consultation Report is available on Council's website kingston.vic.gov.au

The Disability Action Plan 2015-2019 will be implemented by Council in partnership with the community. The Plan's implementation will be overseen by Council's Access and Equity Advisory Committee.

The achievements of the Plan will be reported in Council's Annual Report and a summary will be provided on the City of Kingston website. The 2015-2019 Disability Action Plan will be registered with the Australian Human Rights Commission.



5. Conclusion

Kingston's 2015-2019 Disability Action Plan outlines the priorities of Council over the next four years to improve access, equity and inclusion for people with disability.

The Plan was developed with regard to legislative and policy contexts and in consultation with the community including: people with a disability; carers; service providers; the broader community; and Council staff. The development, implementation, revision and evaluation of the Plan will be led by Council and overseen by the Access and Equity Advisory Committee.

Each year the achievements of the Plan will be reported in Council's Annual Report and a summary will be provided on the City of Kingston website. In the final year of the Plan, a more comprehensive evaluation will be undertaken to assess the effectiveness of the plan.

6. Action Plan 2015-2016



Goal: To improve access to goods, services and facilities for people with a disability.

- 1.1 Ensure Council's Integrated Transport Strategy has regard to the access requirements of people with a disability.
- 1.2 Continue to audit and improve pedestrian and road access for all.
- 1.3 Ensure Council's Affordable Housing Strategy has regard to Universal Design concepts.
- 1.4 Promote access and inclusion in consultations for new and renovated Council buildings and public spaces.
- 1.5 Continue to improve the accessibility of Council buildings with regard to the priorities identified in the access audit that seeks to have all buildings compliant by 2035.
- 1.6 Investigate opportunities to have adult change table and hoist facilities installed in appropriately located public toilets in Kingston.
- 1.7 Continue to advocate with key stakeholders for services and facilities to better meet the needs of people with disability; including transport, housing, retail and open space.
- 1.8 Council departments will plan and budget for their communications, services, events and programs to be accessible for all.
- 1.9 Continue to improve the accessibility of Council's communications and information infrastructure and publication materials.
- 1.10 Improve access to Kingston's beaches with the development of maps identifying accessible infrastructure.
- 1.11 Explore the potential to establish measurable targets for disability access.



PRIORITY AREA 2
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Goal: To increase opportunities for people with a disability to obtain and maintain employment.

- 2.1 Continue to promote training opportunities to assist people with a disability to obtain paid employment and progress their professional development.
- 2.2 Continue to support and encourage local businesses to become more inclusive employers.
- 2.3 Continue to improve and promote volunteer opportunities for people with a disability.
- 2.4 Continue to improve access to employment at Council for people with a disability by reviewing Council's employment services.



PRIORITY AREA 3
ENCOURAGE INCLUSIVE ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES

Goal: To promote inclusive attitudes and practices to reduce discrimination against people with a disability.

- 3.1 Continue to provide access and inclusion education for Council staff and the Kingston community.
- 3.2 Promote the positive contributions people with a disability make to the Kingston community.
- 3.3 Recognise and acknowledge people with a disability as part of the Kingston community via events such as the International Day of People with Disabilities.



PRIORITY AREA 4
**PROMOTE
INCLUSION AND
PARTICIPATION**

Goal: To promote the inclusion and participation in the community of people with a disability.

- 4.1 Actively promote Council's services, programs and events to people with a disability.
- 4.2 Promote accessible social networking places and spaces in Kingston.
- 4.3 Continue to support people with a disability, carers and disability services to participate in Council's Advisory Committees.
- 4.4 Continue to strengthen and promote opportunities for people with a disability to engage in arts, culture, recreation and leisure programs.

APPENDIX 1 REFERENCES

Australian Human Rights Commission

humanrights.gov.au/disability-rights-homepage
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City of Greater Dandenong

greaterdandenong.com/document/42/social-statistics
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Department of Human Services

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