

Griffith City Council

Disability Inclusion Action
Plan
2021-2025





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What is disability?

A disability is any continuing condition that restricts everyday activities. The Disability Services Act (1993) defines 'disability' as meaning a disability:

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

With the assistance of appropriate aids and services, the restrictions experienced by many people with a disability may be overcome.

Source: Disability Services Commission



Wiradjuri Country

Griffith is located in the heart of the Wiradjuri Nation – the largest nation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia.

Griffith City Council recognises Aboriginal people in the history and growth of Griffith and its surrounding villages. As such, Council acknowledges the Wiradjuri people as the traditional owners of the land and pays respect to Wiradjuri Elders past, present and future.

We recognise and respect the Wiradjuri cultural heritage, beliefs and their ongoing relationship with the land for people living today.

Council also acknowledges the contribution made to this community by the many and diverse cultural groups that have greatly contributed to the social and economic wealth of this region.

Message from the Mayor



As Mayor, I am proud to endorse the Griffith City Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP). Disability inclusion planning is about Council supporting the basic human rights of people living with a disability to have access and choice to live, work and enjoy community life in Griffith.

Our revised DIAP 2021 – 2025 sets out Council’s commitment to making our local government area a welcoming and inclusive place for people of all abilities in all aspects of community life. Council listened to the community’s concerns about existing barriers which limit their choices in participation and interactions and Council will work towards improving these conditions.

The DIAP can also be a guide for other businesses, services and agencies to review and amend their business practices to improve access for people living in and visiting our community and I recommend this document to them.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Dal Broi'.

John Dal Broi
Mayor



Message from the General Manager

Council’s aim is to ensure that our services, programs and facilities are accessible and inclusive. The DIAP will guide Council staff to integrate inclusive practices into their day-to-day operations and interactions with people living with a disability.

The Plan demonstrates Council’s commitment to improve the quality of our existing services, built facilities, systems and programs.

The Plan was developed in consultation with the community, non-government and government agencies, people who access their service and Council staff and following the 2021 review, outlines new actions we will take to provide more accessible and inclusive services.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brett Stonestreet'.

Brett Stonestreet
General Manager



Background

Under the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014, councils are required to review their DIAP every four years. Legislation also requires councils to report progress on DIAP implementation in their Annual Report.

Purpose

A Disability Inclusion Action Plan demonstrates local government's commitment to people with a disability on improving access to services, facilities and jobs. It's also designed to change perceptions about people with a disability.

Council's commitment to improving access and inclusion

Council's aim is for an inclusive, respectful and diverse community, where residents and visitors enjoy a safe, friendly and accessible environment.

Council's DIAP identifies strategies we will introduce over time to provide better access to Council information, services and facilities ensuring people living with a disability can fully participate in this community.

Council will achieve this by:

- Making improvements to ensure that Griffith is a liveable community
- Promoting positive community attitudes and behaviours towards people with disabilities
- Supporting access to meaningful employment
- Improving access to services through better systems and processes.

Overview and vision

What is a Disability Inclusion Action Plan?

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) presents an opportunity for Council to work towards meeting the objectives of our Community Strategic Plan, which is aligned with the principles of social justice and sustainability. The goals and strategies of both plans seek to attain achievable outcomes for access, participation and equal rights for everyone.

It is a requirement that all DIAP's cover four key focus areas and this Plan identifies priority areas, strategies and actions for improved access and inclusion of people with a disability. The key areas are:

- **Liveable communities** – this is about continuing to make our community easier to access and get involved in
- **Systems and processes** – this is about continuing to improve the way people with disability access information, provide feedback, and find services and facilities
- **Employment opportunities** – this is about encouraging more employment opportunities for people with disability in our community
- **Attitudes and behaviours** – this is about positive attitudes and behaviours towards people with disability

What will the plan do?

The DIAP identifies what Council needs to do to help people with disability feel and be more included in the community, and be able to access the same services, facilities, activities and opportunities as everybody else.

Who is responsible for the plan?

The Plan involves all areas of Council, with support from members of the Disability Inclusion & Access Committee.

How will Council make the improvements identified in this Plan?

The DIAP covers a four year period and includes short, medium and long term approaches to improving Griffith for people with disability. Some of the actions identified will have cost implications.

Actions with cost implications will be considered as part of Council's regular budget allocation and review process and will progress as resources allow.

Next steps

As part of the review process, the DIAP was presented to the Disability Inclusion & Access Committee in May 2021 and then reported back to Council for endorsement and adoption in November 2021.

The adopted DIAP will be lodged with the Disability Council NSW and made publicly available.

Implementation of the final Disability Inclusion Action Plan will commence across Council following adoption.

Policy and legislative context

Figure 1 The relationships between the relevant policy and legislative instruments



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

- Endorsed by Australia in 2008.
- Acknowledges that people with disability have the same human rights as everyone.
- Supports the social model of disability; which recognises that attitudes, practices and structures are disabling and can create barriers to people with disability from enjoying economic participation, social inclusion and equality.

National Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (NDS)

- Developed in partnership by the Commonwealth, State, Territory and Local Governments.
- Sets out a national plan for improving life for Australians with disability, their families and carers, to support the commitment made to the UNCRPD.

National Disability Insurance Scheme

- A major reform that will deliver a national system of disability support focused on the

individual needs and choices of people with disability.

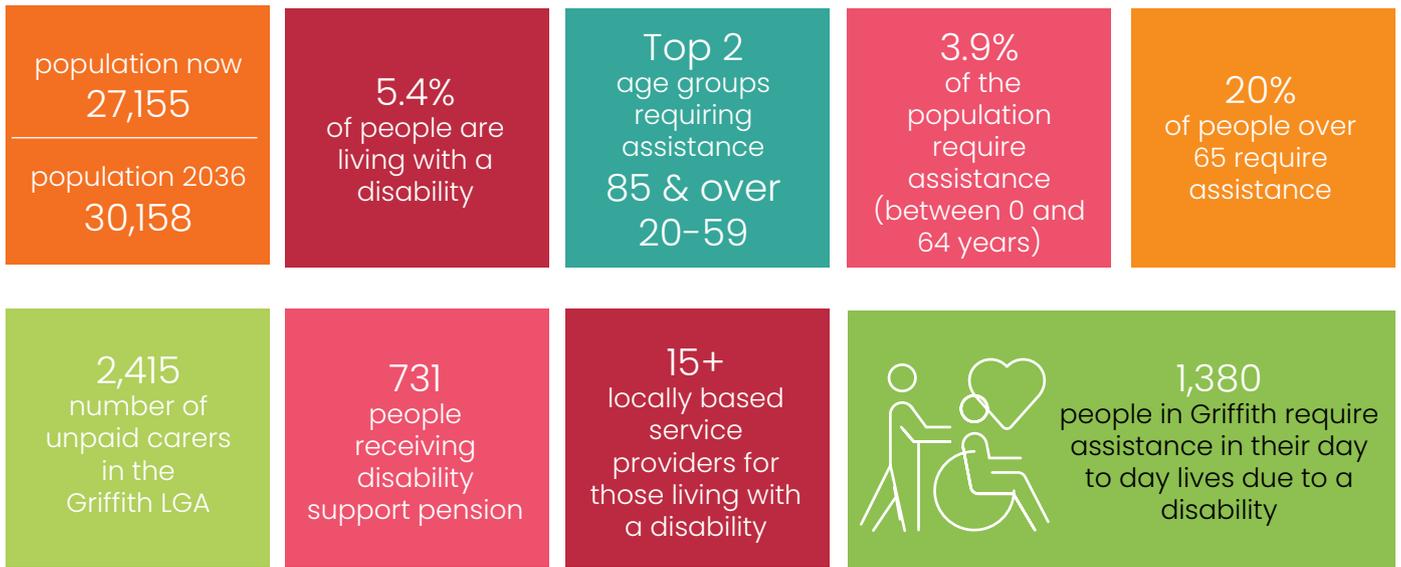
- Gives participants more choice and control over how, when and where supports are provided.

The role of councils in the NDIS will vary depending on their community, their relationship with local disability interests, and role within disability service provision. Disability inclusion action planning is complementary to the NDIS, and will assist councils in breaking down local barriers to full participation by people with disability in the community.

Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW)

- Provides the legislative framework to guide State and Local government disability inclusion and access planning. The Act supports people with disabilities to access:
 - The same human rights as other members of the community
 - Independence and social and economic inclusion within the community; and
 - Choice and control in the pursuit of their goals and the planning and delivery of their supports and services.

Snapshot of disability in Griffith



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2016 (Usual residence data)
Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id, the population experts.



How you told us – consultation

Developing our DIAP

Council adopted the original Griffith DIAP on 27 June 2017.

At the Ordinary Meeting on February, 9 2021 Council resolved to place the existing DIAP on exhibition for an extended period of 42 days to allow consultation to be undertaken.

Community and Staff engagement

To inform the content of this Action Plan, Council undertook community engagement with people with disabilities and carers as well as service providers.

Face-to-face, an online survey and social media were all utilised in this process where we received 110 direct responses from our community. Council also invited all staff to provide input via an emailed survey.

A link to the survey was also emailed to 1,147 contacts, asking for feedback to help review the DIAP. These included all services listed in Council's Community Services Directory. The survey ran throughout February and March 2021.

Email, casual face-to-face discussions and phone consultation was carried out with a number of service providers including Griffith Post School Options, Griffith Aged Care Support Service, Griffith Interagency Network, Kurrajong Waratah and Kalinda School. Hard copies of the survey were also available at the monthly Council Café information booth, Griffith City Library and Council's administration building.

Griffith City Council Disability Inclusion & Access Committee

This group represent a diverse range of people with various disabilities. The primary function of the group is to:

- Provide Council with advice and information on areas of need including the development of the DIAP.
- Provide information on potential partnerships within the broader community and successful initiatives in other areas.

Consultation with Council departments

- Human Resources – Employment opportunities incorporating recruitment procedure and Council policies, e.g. Carers Leave Policy.
- Urban Design – Existing and new developments.
- Development Assessments – systems developed to initiate involvement of the DIAP Committee.
- Communications – accessing Council Information and publication.
- Community Development – forming partnerships to improve the lives of people with a disability.
- Customer Service – communication methods/ tools.
- Infrastructure and Operations – Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy.
- Council facilities– physical access to Council facilities and social inclusion.

What you told us

”

The existing public transport buses do not have enough vehicles to cater for people with disabilities.

For example wheelchair accessible front entry.

”

”

Continue seeking improvements, it is much appreciated.

”

”

It would be great if you could share any information on events or sports.

”

“

The Theatre is good. Pioneer Park is very hard to get around and only 2 of the areas are really accessible which is a pity.

Consult before projects are planned eg. Yambil Street redevelopment.

Listen to what is said rather than just having a token disabled person on a committee.

Toilet blocks which include adult size change tables plus ceiling hoists, where non ambulant high needs people receive personal care instead of travelling all the way home to have their personal needs met.

Inadequate disabled toilet facilities and limited disabled parking access.

“

Footpaths require improvement/maintenance and expansion.

Footpaths, wider doorways, big public toilets with room for wheelchairs.

I believe more disability parking would be extremely beneficial to all Griffith citizens who have a physical disability.

More spacious car parking, when using hoist they come out on the road.

”

”

What we heard

In reviewing Griffith City Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) more than 100 residents took the time to respond to a survey which ran throughout early 2021.

Council asked what can be done to make life easier for people with disabilities in Griffith. The survey was available online, as well as hard copies available at the Library and customer service or by contacting Council. An eNewsletter was sent to 1,147 contacts, asking for feedback to help review the DIAP. Of those who responded, around 13% were people with a disability, 24% were workers in the disability field, 37% were carers, family or friends and 25% other.

The key messages from the consultation summarised:

Footpaths and ramps

The importance of footpaths that are in good condition, level, wide enough for wheelchairs and clear of obstacles, trip hazards and overhanging vegetation was identified as a high priority. Footpaths are needed to provide links from homes to transport, shops and services and for recreational exercise. Kerb ramps need to be available to cross roads and access footpaths. They need to be located appropriately and not be too steep. Garden planter boxes located on or near footpaths were identified as a hazard that Council should monitor.

Accessible parking

The availability of accessible parking was important to people with disability to access services. The size and location of the accessible spaces should be considered due to the increased use of larger wheelchair accessible vehicles and the space required for parking to allow easy and safe access. Additional accessible parking in Banna Avenue was raised.

Public toilets

Access and availability of public toilets including the addition of a centrally located

adult change facility with ceiling hoist was considered important. Issues around, signage and cubicle size to accommodate wheelchairs and mobility scooters were also noted.

Public transport

Accessible public transport was identified as a major barrier for people with a disability in Griffith.

Signage

Using appropriate and recognised signage for identification of accessible entries to buildings, accessible toilet facilities and other accessible features would make it easier for people with disability to be aware of this information.

Events

Access at events was seen as a barrier to participation and inclusion. Throughout the consultation period the need for more inclusive Council and community events was raised. The accessibility of events should be advertised and promoted with information provided on the event location, transport options, parking and accessible toilet facilities. Barriers to access should also be advertised to allow people with disability to make their own decision on the suitability of the event or activity.

Education and awareness

The need to raise awareness and educate the community about what is available for people with disability was also highlighted during the consultation process.

General comments

Access to local shops and businesses can be difficult with steps preventing entry and no access to a ramp, doorways too narrow, and limited space to move around between displays. A safe pedestrian crossing between the two major shopping centres, Griffin Plaza and Griffith Central, was identified as a high priority. More work needs to be done in places such as Scenic Hill Look Out/Hermits Cave and Pioneer Park Museum so that the ageing population can enjoy these attractions.

What has been done?

Location	Action
Griffith Regional Sports Precinct <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Griffith Regional Aquatic & Leisure Centre Westend Oval 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New 50m pool with accessible ramp Upgrade slip resistant surfaces Adult change facility with hoist included in new public toilet Swimming lesson sight cards
Public Toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade of public toilets for people living with a disability. Located Memorial Gardens and City Park All disabled toilets are now open in line with all other public toilets
Griffith Regional Theatre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgraded accessible toilets on both levels of the building and one of the backstage dressing rooms, as well as a new parents' room Noise cancelling earplugs available for those who find loud noises difficult Ability to remove seats in back row to allow access for wheelchairs Handrails installed in back five rows of the auditorium
Griffith Art Gallery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ramp installed at the front entrance
Griffith City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Live-streaming of Council meetings with closed caption option for Live broadcasts
Griffith City Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liberty Swing relocated from CWA Park
Olympic Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New accessible parking spaces
Enticknap Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large precinct park that is inclusive including accessible playground equipment
Henderson Oval Play Space, Yoogali	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessible play equipment
Shopping Centre Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The no parking zone in front of Griffith Central allows for people with mobility parking permits to drop-off and pick-up, as well as taxis. There are also disabled parking spaces in the underground car park out of the elements.

Location	Action
Memorial Park Griffith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled toilet facility • Accessible community event stage • Accessible drinking fountain
Griffith City Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ramp access and automatic doors • Monthly sensory movies
Skate Park Upgrade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redeveloped to include disabled friendly ramps and access
Yambil Street Redevelopment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled parking spaces installed
Hanwood Footpath Installation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.5m wide shared path along the eastern side of Hanwood Road between the children's crossing and School Street • 1.2m wide footpath along the northern side of School Street between Hanwood Rd and the children's crossing
Yoogali Footpath Installation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.0m wide Shared Path along the western side of Hebden Street between Post School Options and Edon Street • 2.0m wide Shared Path along the northern side of Edon Street between Hebden Street and East Street • 1.2m wide footpath along the eastern side of Gorton Street between Henderson Oval and Edon Street • 1.2m wide footpath along the western side of East Street between Edon Street and Moura Street • 2.0m wide shared path along the northern side of Moura Street between East Street and Hebden Street • 2.0m wide shared path along the western side of Hebden Street between Griffith Post School Options and Moura Street
Griffith Footpath Installation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.0m wide shared path on the western side of Noorebah Ave from Warrambool Street to Kooba Street • 1.2m wide footpath on the southern side of Railway Street from Tranter Place to existing footpath • 1.2m wide footpath along the eastern side of Warrambool Street
Burley Griffin Community Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible community event stage

Location	Action
Yenda Footpath Installation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.2m wide footpath along the northern side of West Avenue between Yenda Place and Cyrill Morris Rest Area. • 1.2m wide footpath along the western side of Park Street between West Avenue and entrance to the retirement village. • 1.2m wide footpath through War Memorial Park in Yenda linking to the amenities block • 1.2m wide footpath along the northern side of East Ave between Yenda Place and Burley Griffin Way • 1.2m wide footpath along the northern side of Short Street between South Avenue and Bingar Street
Public Transport Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Griffith Buslines operates wheelchair accessible route services in Griffith and surrounds www.griffithbuslines.com.au • Griffith Taxis has five (5) wheelchair accessible vehicles and at least one (1) wheelchair accessible vehicle available 24/7. There are government subsidies available for eligible passengers.

Future projects

Community Centre

- Accessible toilets
- Food bank
- Counselling services
- Information resources, IT and printing facilities
- Change rooms for people with disabilities
- Automated change facility, wash facility and automatic sliding door

Griffith Pioneer Park Museum

- Improve access around the Museum, Pioneer Park Museum Committee to undertake review.

Griffith City Library

- Wheelchair accessible toilet included in future capital budget for Library upgrade

Griffith Regional Theatre

- Investigate wheelchair accessible specific tickets and accessibility on to the stage

Yambil Street

- Redevelopment future stages- New footpath level, additional pedestrian crossings, seating and proposed disabled parking spaces in Stage 2 Kooyoo Street redevelopment

Parking

- Railway Street carpark
- New accessible parking spaces near CBD

Other

- Pedestrian Bridge over canal - Merrigal St between Noorla St and Kywong St
- Additional parking and a shared pathway around Westend Oval as part of the Sports Precinct development
- Digital QR Codes throughout Pioneer Park for videos with captions
- Council's new Child Safe Policy to align with DIAP

Key focus areas and actions

The DIAP covers four key focus areas:

1. Liveable communities
2. Systems and processes
3. Employment opportunities
4. Attitudes and behaviours

These are the planned actions and strategies to be undertaken over the next 4 years, which align with the aims in Council's Community Strategic Plan.



Creating a liveable City

Griffith City Council acknowledges the importance of creating a liveable community for all residents to live, learn, work and play as they wish.

Action	Measure	Responsibility	Timeframe	guiding griffith 2040
Improve access into Council facilities where possible e.g. appropriate entrance to Council services	Increase positive feedback (Individual Facility Survey) on access in Council facilities and services	Sustainable Development	Ongoing	AIM 4: Ensure Griffith is a great place to live.
Upgrade and maintain Council facilities e.g. public toilets	- Percentage of facilities accessible - Decrease in resident complaints	Infrastructure & Operations	Ongoing	4.2. A shared responsibility for the safety of individuals and the community.
Hard-copies of maps that identify Council's toilet facilities User-friendly/ interactive friendly online link on Council's website	- Copies of toilet maps in Council's facilities. E.g. Griffith Information Centre. - Map link on Council's website - Toilet app	Sustainable Development	Updated annually	4.4. Provide and promote accessibility to services and facilities.
Review and maintain Priority Actions in Council's Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan (PAMP)	- Number of accessible pathways or footpaths to Council facilities - Number of priority actions completed - Feedback from DIAP survey submitted	Infrastructure & Operations	Annually	4.6. Encourage a socially inclusive community that cares for all age groups and genders, people of different abilities, disadvantaged or minority groups.
Review placement and construction of communal resources in all public areas	- Increase in access satisfaction rate in facility satisfaction surveys - Decrease in resident complaints	Sustainable Development	Annually	AIM 8: Provide and manage assets, services and facilities.
Ensure significant development applications (DAs) are reviewed by Disability Inclusion Access Committee	Number of developments reviewed	Council's 355- DIAP Committee	Ongoing	8.1. Provide, renew and maintain a range of quality infrastructure, assets, services and facilities delivered in a cost effective and sustainable manner.
Council will comply with the National Construction Code (NCC) with new DAs	DAs comply with the NCC	Sustainable Development	At time of DA	

Improving systems & processes

Council acknowledges how important it is for people to access the services and support they need. Council is committed to improving ways to deliver and promote information, events, and services and interact with residents and stakeholders.

Action	Measure	Responsibility	Timeframe	guiding griffith 2040
Review key Council documents to develop "easy English version"	Revised and easy-readable documents	Customer Service Communications	Ongoing	AIM 1: Develop an engaged and connected community 1.1. Provide clear and transparent communication to the community. 1.2. Be well informed, proactive and responsive to current issues that impact our community.
Review Council Website to ensure its compliant	Website is user friendly	Communications	Ongoing	
Review employment and recruitment processes and procedures for accessibility	Wording on application forms and job description simplified	Workforce Planning	Updated annually	
Produce significant Council documents in a range of formats for the public	Number of available & accessible Council documents in different format e.g. audio and video	Communications	Ongoing	
Promote and advertise key events, consultation and information in a number of formats	Number of promoted events	Communications	Ongoing	
Develop a database of local qualified interpreters	Number of key contacts and Auslan/ Signed English Interpreters at formal events	Customer Service	Annually	
Investigate ways to make Council meetings more accessible e.g. Live Streaming on Facebook	Streaming of Council Meetings Audio available on Council's website	Sustainable Development Governance	Ongoing	
Community Service Directory updated on a regular basis (as needed)	Increase in the number of registered organisations and community groups	Community Development Communications	Ongoing	
Promote and advertise accommodation which provides disability access	Number of accommodation venues stating accessibility	Marketing & Promotions	Ongoing	





Access to meaningful employment

Council understands the important role employment plays, providing people with a sense of independence and security.

Council is an Equal Opportunity Employer and welcomes diversity in the workplace. Council encourages all people regardless of their individual differences to apply for any advertised positions. Council commits to providing its staff with the appropriate support and resources required to assist their individual needs.

Action	Measure	Responsibility	Timeframe	guiding griffith 2040
Promote inclusive workplace practices	Number of people employed with a disability	Human Resources	Ongoing	AIM 7: Encourage a skilled workforce with employment opportunities. 7.1. Increase the range of opportunities to work locally. 7.2. Develop partnership to build on quality education and training opportunities. 7.3. Advocate for safe work practices and employment standards.
Review Council's Workforce Management Plan	Gaps identified and addressed	Human Resources, Workforce Planning & Senior Management Team	Ongoing	
Review employment and recruitment processes and procedures for accessibility	Wording on application forms and job description are simplified	Human Resources	Updated annually	
Actively continue to conduct and respond to disability inclusion survey including staff	Survey conducted. Update DIAP with results	Human Resources, Workforce Planning	Ongoing	
Promote an inclusive workplace culture through induction training	Number of training days held	Human Resources, Workforce Planning	Ongoing	
Review Council's Carers Leave Policy	Number of recommendations endorsed	Human Resources, Workforce Planning	2021	

Attitudes & behaviours

Council recognises the importance of promoting positive attitudes and behaviour towards people with a disability. Council demonstrates their commitment through the development and implementation of this Plan and by working closely with members of the Disability Inclusion Access Committee to continue to improve.

Action	Measure	Responsibility	Timeframe	Guiding Griffith 2040
Develop or introduce more detailed training for front-line/customer service staff on access	Percentage of staff completed accredited service provision	Workforce Planning	Ongoing	AIM 4: Ensure Griffith is a great place to live.
Investigate or introduce new methods or mediums for communication, distribution and provision of Council information and resource	Implement National Relay Service, Telephone Interpreter Service (TIS) and other	Communications	Ongoing	4.3. Promote and celebrate our social and cultural diversity 4.6. Encourage a socially inclusive community that cares for all age's groups and genders, people of different abilities, disadvantaged or minority groups.
Audit Council's Website to ensure it includes pictures of people with disabilities and that layout, language and design is appropriate	Website include appropriate images and language	Communications	Updated annually	
Celebrate and participate in key events or special days that promote and celebrate people with disability	Celebrating International disability Day e.g. Carers Day etc. Positive media coverage after event	Community Development, Council facilities Communications	Ongoing	
Promote inclusive community based groups to help educate residents	Number of times promoted by Community Development Officer at Interagency level	Community Development	Ongoing	
Provide training for Council staff to recognise and incorporate different types of needs	Number of programs offered	Urban Design, Community Development, Communications and Planning	Ongoing	





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