

1. Inclusive communities

1.1 Changing attitudes

- Improve access to information for people with disability that enables them to make informed decisions about their lives. Refer *Positive Ageing Strategy 1.1*.
- Implement a mandatory training module for Council staff and volunteers on disability awareness and inclusion.
- Offer further training for customer-facing staff on better service for people with specific disabilities (physical, sensory, cognitive).
- Embed Universal Design principles in Council processes by adopting the *Whole of Victorian Government Universal Design Policy 2022*.
- Take a leadership role in modelling inclusive practice.

1.2 Transport

- Support initiatives that provide effective, safe, affordable and accessible transport options. Refer *Positive Ageing Strategy 5.1*.
- Improve the community's knowledge of existing local accessible transport options available in Hepburn Shire. Refer *Positive Ageing Strategy 5.2*.
- Advocate, promote and investigate solutions to the continual improvement of an accessible transport and mobility system that supports the wellbeing of people with disability. Refer *Positive Ageing Strategy 5.3*
- People with disability contribute to the development and implementation of a new *Integrated Transport Strategy* (incorporating walking and cycling).
- Support people experiencing transportation barriers to attend Council programs and events.

1.3 Digital inclusion

- Increase support for internet access and digital technology (accessible technology). Refer *Positive Ageing Strategy 1.2*.

1.4 Assistance animals

- Inform staff, community and businesses of new national accreditation standards for assistance animals.
- Update Council documents to reflect new accreditations.
- Review registration fees for any new categories of assistance animals.
- Share stories of assistance animals in Council publications.

1.5 Sport and recreation

- Support accessible transport to sport and recreation facilities.
- As Council sports facilities are redeveloped, upgrade them to be accessible for competitors and spectators (indoor and outdoor venues).
- Promote inclusion at Hammon Park Bike Trails and trailhead facilities, leveraging public interest in sports (of all abilities) around the 2026 Commonwealth Games.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of Council's *Recreation and Open Space Strategy*.

1.6 Parks and tourism

- Complete Hammond Park Trailhead and Creswick Trails facility as best-practice for inclusion and accessibility.
- Launch and celebrate Hammon Park and Creswick Trails.
- Promote accessible tourism to our region.
- As maps of paths/trails are developed, include a rating to communicate degree of difficulty for all users, and accessibility for wheelchair users.

2. Health, housing and wellbeing

2.1 Health

- Advocate for improved health services, including hospital upgrade, and for these to be fully accessible.
- Share information with residents on visiting health services for people with disability.
- Ensure Council's Child and Maternal Health service continue to be inclusive.

2.2 Mental health

- Integrate accessibility considerations into Council’s mental health initiatives, eg, *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan*, *Positive Ageing Strategy* and *ACE Youth Development Strategy*.

2.3 Housing

- Include accessible housing in Council’s *Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan*.
- Advocate for wholistic housing solutions that include accessible transport options.
- Encourage the early adoption of ‘Gold’ and ‘Platinum’ levels of *Liveable Housing Design Guidelines*, before these are mandated by state government.
- Advocate for improved accessibility standards in public housing stock in the Shire.

2.4 Supporting a high-quality NDIS

- Maintain our awareness of changes to the NDIS at Federal and State government levels.
- Promote links to NDIS service providers working in our region.

2.5 Children and families

- Integrate accessibility into activities undertaken in the *Early Years*, *Middle Years* and *ACE Youth Development* strategies.
- Ensure Child and Maternal Health services are accessible.

3. Fairness and safety

3.1 Safety in emergencies

- Ensure Emergency Relief Centres are accessible for people with disability.
- Investigate the development of person-centred Emergency Management Plans for people with disability.

3.2 Disability advocacy

- Advocacy by Council's Disability Advisory Committee, bringing to Council's attention issues requiring action or external advocacy.

3.3 Preventing abuse and neglect

- Train staff and volunteers to 'call out' and report abusive or neglectful behaviours observed in the community.
- Ensure that Council's Anti-Violence programs are accessible and inclusive.
- Show images of people with disability in Council communications when discussing groups experiencing (higher-than-average rates of) abuse and neglect.

3.4 Family and sexual violence

- Train staff and volunteers to 'call out' and report violent behaviours that they observe in the community.
- Ensure that Council's Anti-Violence programs are accessible and inclusive.
- Show images of people with disability in Council communications about groups experiencing (higher-than-average rates of) family and sexual violence.
- Advocate for respectful relationships education for people with disability and incorporate content relevant to people with disability.

3.5 Justice

(No specific Council action required for this point of State Disability Plan.)

3.6 Right to expression of sexuality and gender identity

- Ensure that the rights of people with disability have been considered in the development of all relevant Policies, Strategies and Action Plans recommended for Council approval (eg, Disability, Gender Equity, LGBTIQ+, Youth Development, Positive Ageing, People & Culture).

4. Opportunity and pride

4.1 Education

- Increase opportunities and decrease barriers of engagement in a range of education and continual learning activities. Refer *Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025, Priority 2*.
- Advocate for improved specialised education services in Hepburn Shire for people with disability.
- Advocate for improved accessible transport to education facilities.
- Ensure that accessibility is built into activities undertaken for the *Early Years Strategy, Middle Years Strategy* and *ACE Youth Development Strategy*.
- Advocate for respectful relationships education for people with disability and incorporate content relevant to people with disability.
- Ensure that staff and volunteers with disability have access to training opportunities.

4.2 Employment and economic participation

- Increase opportunities and decrease barriers of engagement in a range of employment and volunteering activities. Refer *Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025 (GEAP), Priority 2*.
- Gather data on the level and types of disability for Council staff and volunteers. Refer *GEAP, Priority 3*.
- Promote the value of inclusion and diversity demonstrated within our staff. Refer *GEAP, Priority 3*.
- Build awareness and train Coordinators and Managers on inclusive recruitment benefits and practices.
- Explore external funding opportunities and government subsidy to employ people with disability.

4.3 Voice and leadership

- Support the Disability Advisory Committee and engage them to advise on significant Council decisions affecting people with disability.
- Promote the work of the members of the Disability Advisory Committee.
- Encourage recruitment of people with disability to various Council advisory and consultative groups.

4.4 Creative industries

- As venues are upgraded, make them fully accessible for artists, performers and audiences (indoor & outdoor venues).
- Engage with organisers of cultural festival for Commonwealth Games 2026 to advocate for works by and/or for people with disability.

4.5 Pride and recognition

- Encourage applications and nominations of people with disability for Council's existing Award programs.
- Propose an Award category to celebrate the achievements of people with disability, in all fields.
- Propose an Award category for improving access/inclusion for people with disability.