



Access and Inclusion Plan 2018 - 2022

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1. Executive summary

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale's Access and Inclusion Plan 2018 - 2022 provides a planned approach to improving the physical access to services and facilities, as well as incorporating inclusion at a participatory and service level. Understanding that individuals have varied needs and expectations, the Shire has the resources and capabilities to make a difference on the quality of life of the people with disability, who live, work and spend time in our community.

The Western Australian Disability Services Act (1993) requires that local governments develop a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) in accordance with the format prescribed in the Act and subsidiary regulations. The amendments to the Disability Services Act (1993) in 2004, contain the requirement for Local Government Authorities to develop and implement a DAIP that will further both the principles and the objectives of the Act. The Shire's DAIP has been prepared in accordance with these requirements.

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale is committed to improving the accessibility of its facilities and services for people with disability. The Plan provides the strategic direction and strategies for the Shire to improve its services and facilities as well as partnering with the community to achieve progress in this field.

The Shire will submit an annual progress report to the Disability Services Commission and report on the implementation of the Plan in the Shire's Annual Report. The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale will review its Access and Inclusion Plan every five years to ensure currency and relevance.

2. Definitions

Disability

A disability is any continuing condition that restricts everyday activities.

Access

Access in this context refers to an individual's physical ability to get to, into, and around facilities and services. This access is created by removing structural barriers and including mechanisms to enable structural access.

Inclusion

Inclusion in this context refers to an individual's ability to participate as fully as possible in programs and services provided by organisations in an integrated and holistic manner that does not ostracise, embarrass or humiliate an individual.

Discrimination

Discrimination is defined as treating people with a disability less favorably than people without a disability would be treated under the same circumstances.

The following acronyms are used in this document:

DAIP	Disability Access and Inclusion Plan
DSC	Disability Services Commission



3. Background

3.1 Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale – overview

The 2016 census found the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale to be the fastest growing local government in Australia. The population of the Shire grew from 18,501 in 2011 to 27,634 in 2016 and is predicted to grow to 46,764 by 2026. This represents an annual average growth rate of 6.38 % compared to Peel at 4.4% and WA at 2.6%.

Located 45km from the Perth CBD, Serpentine Jarrahdale spans 901 square kilometres and is set against the picturesque backdrop of the Darling Scarp within the Peel region. Located on the northern boundary of the Peel Region, there are 13 townsites and localities of Serpentine Jarrahdale: Byford, Serpentine, Jarrahdale, Oakford, Oldbury, Mundijong, Mardella, Karrakup, Whitby, Keysbrook, Cardup, Hopeland and Darling Downs.

It is geographically diverse with forested hills and wetlands being complemented by areas of pristine wilderness and an abundance of wildflowers and wildlife. The coastal flats are dominated by rural residential properties with a mix of natural vegetation and cleared grazing land supporting a vibrant equine industry. The Shire incorporates urban, suburban and rural communities. This unique landscape delivers an enviable rural setting in close proximity to a major metropolitan area.

3.2 Functions, facilities and services provided by the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale is responsible for a wide range of functions, facilities and services, including but not limited to:

1. *Services to property*

Construction and maintenance of Shire-owned buildings; construction and maintenance of roads, footpaths and cycle facilities; land drainage and development; waste collection and disposal; litter control and street cleaning; planning and caring for street trees; numbering of building and lots; street lighting; and bush fire control.

2. *Services to the community*

provision and maintenance of playing areas, parks, gardens, reserves and facilities for sporting and community groups; management of recreation centre; public library and information services; youth services, senior services, environment and health education programs, community and art and cultural events; and assistance and support to community groups.

3. *Regulatory services*

Planning road systems, subdivisions and town planning schemes; building approvals for construction, additions or alterations to buildings; environmental health services and ranger services, including dog control; and the development, maintenance and control of parking.

4. *General administration*

The provision of general information to the public and the lodging of complaints and payment of fees including rates, hall hire and dog licenses.

5. *Processes of government*

Ordinary and special Local Government and committee meetings; Council meetings and election of Council Members; ward meetings and community consultations.



3.3 A profile of people with disability

While there have been many improvements in the lives of people with disability, significant barriers still remain. Data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2015 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC) provides a profile of people with disability in Australia:

- Almost one in five Australians reported living with disability (18.3% or 4.3 million people)
- The majority (78.5%) of people with disability reported a physical condition, such as back problems, as their main long-term health condition. The other 21.5% reported mental and behavioural disorders
- The likelihood of living with disability increases with age, 2 in 5 people with disability were aged 65 years or older
- Almost 1/3 of people with disability had a profound or severe disability
- Around 3 in 5 people with disability needed assistance with at least one activity of daily life
- Around half of people with disability used aids or equipment to help with their disability
- People with disability aged 15-24 years were 10 times more likely to report the experience of discrimination than those aged 65 years and over
- Over one-third (35.1%) of women and over one-quarter (28.1%) of men aged 15 years and over had avoided situations because of their disability
- 53% of people with disability participated in the workforce, compared with 83% of people with no reported disability
- The weekly median income of people with disability was \$465, which was less than half of those with no reported disability

Approximately 27,634 people reside in the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale (based on ABS data from 2016). The population is rapidly increasing, and as it does so too does the diversity of the people in the local community. Based on the statistics provided by the ABS, that one in five people have a disability, it is estimated that approximately 5,527 people living in the Shire have a disability.

3.4 Planning for access and inclusion

Related legislation

To plan for better access and inclusion, there is a range of legislation and strategic framework to guide and direct the Shire in its delivery of services and facilities. These include:

Equal Opportunity Act 1994 (WA)	The <i>Equal Opportunity Act</i> recognises that people with disability require and are entitled to the same level of service as is available to other members of the community. This Act makes it unlawful for a person to discriminate against any person on the grounds of impairment.
Disability Services Act (1993) (WA)	The <i>Disability Services Act</i> states that a person with a disability has the right to be respected for their human worth and dignity and has the same human rights as other community members, regardless of the degree and nature of their disability.
Disability Discrimination Act (1992) (Commonwealth)	The <i>Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)</i> is a Commonwealth Act that provides protection against discrimination based on any form of disability (i.e. Physical, Intellectual, Sensory, Psychiatric and Neurological) for everyone in Australia. Under the Act it is unlawful to discriminate against a person or their associates (partner, carers, friend, family member or business partner), if they have a disability.



Australian Standards	The <i>Australian Standards (AS)</i> sets out requirements that must be referred to when making decisions that impact on people with disability: <i>Australian Standard 1428 - Design for Access and Mobility</i> prescribes the basic requirement for physical access which must be adhered to in the planning, development and construction of all buildings.
Building Code of Australia	The <i>Building Code of Australia (BCA)</i> applies to new buildings undergoing significant refurbishment or alteration. The BCA provides a comprehensive statement of the technical requirements relevant to the design and construction of buildings and other related structures.
Count Me In	<i>Count Me In – Disability Future Directions</i> is the State Government’s long term plan based on its vision that, ‘All people live in welcoming communities that facilitate friendship, mutual support and a fair go for everyone’.
United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disability	Australia is one of 50 countries to have both signed and ratified the UN convention of the Rights of Persons with Disability, which came into effect in May 2008. As a party to the Convention, Australia is required to promote, protect, and ensure the full enjoyment of human rights by people with disability, and ensure that they enjoy full equality under the law.

Strategic links

The Access and Inclusion Plan aligns itself with the Shire’s Strategic Community Plan 2017-2027 and Corporate Business Plan 2017-2021 as seen below:

Our Vision – “City living offering a rural lifestyle for a diverse community with abundant opportunities”**PEOPLE**

A connected, thriving, active and safe community

Outcome 1.1 A healthy active, connected and inclusive community

Outcome 1.2 A recognised culture and heritage

Outcome 1.3 A safe place to live

PLACE

A protected and enhanced natural, rural and built environment

Outcome 2.1 A diverse, well planned built environment

Outcome 2.2 A sustainable natural environment

Outcome 2.3 A productive rural environment

PROSPERITY

An innovative, commercially diverse and prosperous economy

Outcome 3.1 A commercially diverse and prosperous economy

Outcome 3.2 A vibrant tourist destination experience

Outcome 3.3 An innovative, connected transport network

Outcome 3.4 An innovation centre of excellence

PROGRESSIVE

A resilient organisation demonstrating unified leadership and governance

Outcome 4.1 A resilient, efficient and effective organisation

Outcome 4.2 A strategically focused Council



3.5 Progress since 1995

In 1995 Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale lodged its first Access and Inclusion Plan with the Disability Services Commission. In accordance with the 2004 amendment to the WA Disability Services Act, the Shire produced a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2007-2011 and 2012-2016 which has guided progress until now.

Since the adoption of the initial plan, the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale has implemented a number of initiatives to ensure access and inclusion for people with a disability:

- Renovations to community halls to improve access at the facilities
- Provision of adaptive equipment and audio and large print books at the Mundijong Public Library
- Braille signage installed in Serpentine
- Tactile ground surface indicators installed in Byford
- Staff training workshops in disability awareness
- Shire coordinated events and activities accessible to people with disability
- Asset management program includes a maintenance program for footpaths
- A new disabled BBQ installed at Kandimak Reserve Byford
- Disability suitable play equipment at Bill Hicks Reserve

4. Development of the Shire's Access and Inclusion Plan 2018 – 2022

4.1 Review

In preparing the Shire's Access and Inclusion Plan 2018-2022 the following steps were undertaken:

- A review of the DAIP 2012-2016 to identify gaps and areas which require ongoing development
- Review of annual progress reports, relevant council documents and disability legislation
- Benchmarking in order to investigate best practice in access and inclusion

4.2 Consultation process

In developing the Shire's Access and Inclusion Plan 2018-2022 consultation took place with:

- Residents and ratepayers, in particular people with a disability, their families, carers
- Disability service agencies and organisations
- Local community and sporting groups
- Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale employees, executive management and elected members

The following consultation methods were used:

- Advert in the local newspaper
- Residents invited to provide comment on improvements or access barriers that existed in the Shire via questionnaire. A total of 62 questionnaires were received.
- Questionnaire promoted on the Shire's Website and Facebook page
- Information communicated via E-Newsletters (SJ Matters, Club Corner and Off the Shelf), internal mediums (Councillor Information Bulletins, Noticeboards)
- Email to local community associations, sporting organisations, education and church groups



- Formulation of an internal working group
- Direct contact with people with a disability, their families, carers
- Direct contact with key disability service agencies and organisations
- Direct contact with agents and contractors, and Shire facility lessees
- Direct contact with Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale employees
- Attendance at the Serpentine Jarrahdale Community Fair
- Presentations of findings to Executive Management team, Policy Committee Forum and Council
- Liaison with Disability Services Commission

4.3 Findings

The consultation provided an opportunity for a cross-section of staff and community members to provide comment and feedback. The major findings which have been incorporated into the Plan include:

- The need to focus on inclusion for all, rather than only on disability, thus, the Access and Inclusion Plan 2018-2022 was developed with this expanded scope. Access and inclusion issues can also be experienced by members of the community that may not normally identify themselves as having a 'disability'. Pregnant women and mothers with prams or small children, people with a temporary illness or injury, those experiencing various mental health issues, people with low literacy or English language skill and aged and frail members of the community all experience, from time to time, issues with access and inclusion.
- Improve the coordination and achievement of strategies by establishing an Access and Inclusion Advisory Group
- Provide a greater advocacy and advisory role
- Create a directory of services, agencies and organisations operating in the community to develop and foster relationships (including special education teachers / schools)
- Difficultly attending events, no transport available
- Lack of awareness of events
- Lack of public transport services
- Inadequate bus stops with shelters and seating
- Difficulties with existing and lack of footpaths emerged as one of the strongest issues
- Improve footpaths, ramps and entrances to buildings, facilities (ovals/courts) and toilets
- Change disabled toilets to include sliding doors
- Lack of ACROD parking
- Greater education and training of relevant staff and community members in identifying and assisting people with mental health issues, dementia and physical disabilities
- Greater education and training of local businesses in identifying and assisting people with mental health issues, dementia and physical disabilities
- Include Screen-Reader or Accessibility options for those who are blind/deaf/colour blind
- Audio Loop in the Council Chambers
- Raise awareness and investigate employment opportunities
- Budget provision to ensure events, facilities and services are accessible
- Source grant funding as options to upgrade facilities to improve access and inclusion
- Provide grant funding, as part of the Community Grants Program, to local community groups providing programs for people with a disability



5. Policy statement

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale is committed to ensuring that the community is an accessible and inclusive community for people with disabilities, their families and carers.

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale interprets an accessible and inclusive community as one in which people with a disability can access and are welcomed to participate in all Local Government functions, facilities and services (both in-house and contracted) in the same manner and with the same rights and responsibilities as other members of the community.

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale:

- Recognises that people with disability are valued and contributing members of the community who make a variety of contributions to local social, economic and cultural life;
- Believes that a community that recognises its diversity and supports the participation and inclusion of all of its members makes for a richer community life;
- Believes that people with disability, their families and carers should be supported to remain in the community of their choice;
- Is committed to consulting with people with disability, their families and carers and, where required, disability organisations to ensure that barriers to access and inclusion are addressed appropriately;
- Will ensure that its agents and contractors work towards the desired outcomes in the Plan;
- Is committed to working in partnership with local community groups and businesses to facilitate the inclusion of people with disability through improved access to information, services and facilities in the community;
- Will ensure that recruitment policies, procedures and practices actively encourage and include people with a disability.

6. Outcomes

The Disability Services Commission identifies the following seven (7) desired outcomes which provide the framework for the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale's Access and Inclusion Plan 2018-2022:

1. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.
2. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.
3. People with disability receive information from the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.
4. People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale as other people receive from the staff of the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.
5. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.
6. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.
7. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale



7. Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale – Access and Inclusion Strategies

The seven desired outcomes provide a framework for improving access and inclusion for people with a disability in the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.

As a result of the consultation process, key strategies have been developed under each desired outcome. These strategies will guide the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale towards improving access to its services, buildings and information.

Outcome One: Services and events

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.

Strategy
1.1 Develop links between the Access and Inclusion Plan and other Shire plans and processes
1.2 Ensure events organised by the Shire are planned and delivered in accordance with the Disability Services Commission's 'Creating Accessible Events Checklist'
1.3 Educate community event organisers on accessible and inclusive events by providing resources on the Shire's 'Planning an Event' webpage
1.4 Build relationships with key services providers, people with disabilities, carers and their families
1.5 Identify opportunities to raise staff and community awareness about access and inclusion
1.6 Invite feedback on the Shire's accessibility

Outcome Two: Buildings and facilities

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.

Strategy
2.1 Provide accessible and inclusive buildings
2.2 Include access improvements and standards in external environments such as parks, playgrounds and public open space areas
2.3 Ensure people with disability and parents with prams are able to move freely around the community so they can access facilities and be included in community life
2.4 Advocate the benefits of accessible buildings and facilities to the community, including local businesses

Outcome Three: Information

People with disability receive information from the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.



Strategy
3.1 Provide all Shire information and publications in alternative formats upon request
3.2 Improve the Shire's website in terms of online accessibility
3.3 Investigate the availability of an Audio Loop in Council Chambers
3.4 Provide adequate resources in all formats when it comes to library services
3.5 Provide on-line training and support for community members requiring assistance

Outcome Four: Quality of Service

People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale as other people receive from the staff of the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.

Strategy
4.1 Build an access and inclusion culture at the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale
4.2 Provide access and inclusion training to ensure staff have the appropriate level of awareness, skills and training to provide a high level of service to people with a disability
4.3 Improve the Councillors awareness of access and inclusion issues
4.4 Ensure volunteers assisting the Shire with delivery of a service to customers are supported in providing a quality service to people with disabilities
4.5 Seek feedback on improvements in service provision to provide quality service to people with disabilities
4.6 Ensure all contractors or agents planning or delivering services or works on behalf of the Shire are aware of their obligations under the Disability Services Act 1993

Outcome Five: Complaints

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.

Strategy
5.1 Ensure the Shire's complaints procedures are made available in flexible and accessible formats
5.2 Improve staff knowledge so they can facilitate the receipt and resolution of complaints
5.3 Improve community awareness about the Shire's complaints and feedback process

Outcome Six: Public Consultation

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.



Strategy
6.1 Ensure public consultations are accessible by community members
6.2 Improve community awareness about the Shire's consultation processes, in particular to people with a disability, their careers and families
6.3 Continue to consult and seek a broad range of views from people with a disability, their carers and families

Outcome Seven: Employment

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.

Strategy
7.1 Ensure recruitment policies and selection processes are accessible and supportive of people with disabilities
7.2 Ensure Shire staff responsible for recruitment are adequately trained to encourage and include people with a disability
7.3 Provide employment, work experience, volunteer and traineeships opportunities for people with disability
7.4 Ensure workspaces are accessible, inclusive and supportive for people with a disability
7.5 Strengthen relationships with disability employment agencies

8. Implementation

8.1 Implementation Plan

An Implementation Plan has been developed outlining actions, timeframes, responsibility and budget. The Implementation Plan will allow the Shire to monitor progress and achievements of the Access and Inclusion Plan 2018-2022.

The Implementation Plan will be reviewed and amended annually.

8.2 Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee

The Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee will meet on a bi-monthly basis. As part of each meeting, the group will initially review the progress of the annual implementation plan and any associated issues.

The Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee will be comprised of the following Shire and community representatives:

- At least one (1) Councillor
- At least one (1) staff member from each Directorate
- Up to three (3) community members
- Up to three (3) community agency / organisation members



8.3 Communication of the plan

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale Access and Inclusion Plan 2018-2022 will be communicated via the following means:

- Council minutes
- Advert in the local newspaper promoting the new Plan
- An electronic copy uploaded to the Shire website
- Shire Facebook page and E-Newsletters (SJ Matters, Club Corner and Off the Shelf)
- Copies available upon request and available in different formats
- A copy distributed to each member of the Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee
- An email to Shire staff advising how it may impact their business area and training available
- Information packs to contractors and agents

9. Monitoring, reviewing and reporting

9.1 Monitoring and Reviewing

The Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee will monitor progress towards achieving stated outcomes in the Plan.

The Access and Inclusion Plan 2018-2022 will be reviewed at least every five years, in accordance with the Act. Should the Plan be amended, a copy of the amended Plan will be lodged with the Disability Services Commission. The Implementation Plan will be updated more frequently if required.

Community Development Officers will continue to inform and seek feedback from people with a disability, their families, carers and disability organisations regarding the Access and Inclusion outcomes and strategies.

Community Development Officers will continue to liaise with contractors, professionals and business owners on the effectiveness of the Plan.

9.2 Annual reporting

As per the Disability Services Act (1993), the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale will report on the implementation of the Access and Inclusion Plan through its annual report and the prescribed proforma to the Disability Services Commission by 30 June each year.

These annual reports will advise of the progress made by the Shire, and its agents and contractors, in achieving the desired outcomes.