Town of Mosman Park

*Between River and Sea*

**DISABILITY ACCESS AND INCLUSION PLAN**

**2011-2016**



**Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2011-2016**

This plan is available in alternative formats such as large print, electronic format (disk or emailed), on request.

Adopted 26 July 2011

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**Acknowledgements**

In pursuit of its ongoing commitment to developing an even more friendly and welcoming community and in response to its legal obligation under the State Disability Service Act 1993 (DSA) (and amendments 2004), the Town of Mosman Park engaged an experienced Disability Consultant to undertake an independent review of its Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2007-2011.

The Town of Mosman Park acknowledges the input received from many individuals and groups within the community, which has been invaluable in the preparation of this Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2011-2016.

In particular, thanks are given to everyone who provided feedback and comment, including:

* individual community members
* Local community groups
* Town employees
* Rocky Bay Inc. (staff and residents)
* WA Deaf Society
* Blind Citizens WA
* People with Disabilities WA Inc.
* Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre
* Disability Services Commission

2.0 Background

**The Town of Mosman Park**

Mosman Park is located along Stirling Highway approximately 14 kilometres from Perth and 3 kilometres from Fremantle. It is bordered by the suburbs of Cottesloe, Peppermint Grove and North Fremantle and is unique in having the Indian Ocean on its western boundary and the beautiful shores of the Swan River as its eastern boundary.

Mosman Park is a predominantly residential area and illustrates a relatively minor influence of other land use activities. Small industrial and commercial activity complements a diverse mix of residential development including some of the most exclusive property development in Western Australia.

Mosman Park’s largest industry could be said to be its education establishments. Within the Council’s boundary are six schools of which two have boarding facilities, and the total school population is approximately 2000 students.

The area is well served by a number of beautiful parks with the riverside parklands developed to encourage the passive enjoyment of one of the most attractive parts of the Metropolitan Area.

A variety of sporting activities are catered for, including lawn bowls, football, soccer, tennis, cricket and netball. Facilities for the performing arts are also provided and are actively promoted by a Community Arts Foundation.

Memorial Hall is a multi-faceted community centre incorporating a theatre, reception facilities, office space, dance studio and other meeting and activities area.

Extensive, accessible library facilities are provided jointly by the municipalities of Mosman Park, Cottesloe and Peppermint Grove at The Grove Precinct.

Adjacent to the Library is The Grove Community Learning Centre which provides meeting space and houses Westcoast Community Centre and the area’s Child and Adolescent Health Centre.

**Services to the Community:**

* provision and maintenance of playing areas, parks, gardens, reserves and facilities for sporting and community groups
* public library and information services
* senior citizen services
* immunisation and health education
* home support services via TAPSS Community Care
* citizenship ceremonies
* youth services
* community events and celebrations

**Regulatory Services:**

* planning of road systems, subdivisions, development control and town planning scheme amendments
* building approvals for construction, additions or alterations to buildings
* environmental health services and ranger services, including dog control
* development, maintenance and control of parking

**General Administration:**

* provision of general information to the public
* lodging of applications, bookings, payment of fees including rates and dog licences, handling queries and concerns.

**Processes of Government:**

* ordinary and special Local Government and committee meetings
* Council meetings and election of Council Members
* community consultations

The Town will seek to ensure the services and facilities of the municipality are accessible to people with disabilities, and where possible will influence other service providers within the community to ensure those services are also accessible to people with disabilities.

**Planning for Better Access and Inclusion**

The Town is committed to the pursuit of excellence in the provision of access and inclusion for people with disabilities and will actively work to identify and implement current best practices by ensuring that it:

* complies with all relevant disability legislation
* considers relevant access and inclusion standards, codes and guidelines
* maintains ongoing network contact with relevant groups and individuals including the major disability advocacy organisations, and
* maintains ongoing contact with relevant local community groups and individuals

It is a requirement of the State Disability Services Act (1993) that all Local Governments develop and implement a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) that outlines the ways in which they will ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to its facilities and services.

Other legislation underpinning access and inclusion includes the Western Australia Equal Opportunity Act (1984) and the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA). Under the DDA, organisations can voluntarily implement a disability Action Plan. While these Action Plans are not compulsory, they can assist organisations to become more accessible and inclusive, and can provide some clarity during disability discrimination proceedings. A DAIP can also satisfy the DDA’s requirements for Action Plans.

The Town’s DAIP 2011-2016 will be lodged with the Australian Human Rights Commission as a voluntary Disability Discrimination Action Plan.

**Improved Access and Inclusion for People with Disabilities**

The Town is committed to facilitating the inclusion of people with disabilities through the improvement of access to its facilities and services. Towards this goal the Town adopted its first Disability Service Plan (DSP) in 1995 to address the barriers within the community for people with disabilities. The DSP addressed its statutory requirements under the WA Disability Services Act (1993).

Since the adoption of the initial DSP, the Town has implemented many initiatives and made significant progress towards better access. Some of these are highlighted in ‘Findings of the Review’ below.

3.0 Access and Inclusion Policy Statement

**Disability Rights**

The concept of disability rights simply implies ensuring that people with disabilities get a **‘fair** **go’** at accessing and participating in all aspects of community life. The Town acknowledges that people with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as all other members of the community and takes action to make the world more accessible and inclusive because it is **‘the right and proper thing to do’**.

**Principles Applicable to People with Disabilities**

A set of internationally recognized principles applicable to people with disabilities have been developed to inform and guide the implementation of disability laws, practices and policies.

The 10 principles are:

1. People with disabilities have the inherent right to respect for their human worth and dignity.
2. People with disabilities, whatever the origin, nature, type or degree of disability, have the same basic human rights as other members of society and should be enabled to exercise those basic human rights.
3. People with disabilities have the same rights as other members of society to realise their individual capacities for physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual development.
4. People with disabilities have the same right as other members of society to services which will support their attaining a reasonable quality of life in a way that also recognises the role and needs of their families and carers.
5. People with disabilities have the same right as other members of society to participate in, direct and implement the decisions which affect their lives.
6. People with disabilities have the same right as other members of society to receive services in a manner that results in the least restriction of their rights and opportunities.
7. People with disabilities have the same right as other members of society to pursue any grievance concerning services.
8. People with disabilities have the right to access the type of services and supports that they believe are most appropriate to meet their needs.
9. People with disabilities who reside in rural and regional areas have a right, as far as is reasonable to expect, to have access to similar services provided to people with disabilities who reside in the metropolitan area.
10. People with disabilities have a right to an environment free from neglect, abuse, intimidation and exploitation.

The Town is committed to operating in a manner that is consistent with these principles.

**Social Inclusion**

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

The Town 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 Town of Mosman Park recognises that people with disabilities are valued and contributing members of the community who make a variety of contributions to local social, economic and cultural life. The Town 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.

The Town of Mosman Park believes that people with disabilities, their families and carers should be supported to remain in the community of their choice.

**Consultation**

The Town is committed to consulting with people with disabilities, their families and carers and, where required, disability organisations to ensure that barriers to access and inclusion are identified and addressed appropriately.

**Working in Partnership**

The Town is committed to working in partnership with relevant Government Departments, local community groups and businesses to facilitate the inclusion of people with disabilities through improved access to information, services and facilities in the community.

**Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP)**

The Town is committed to achieving the six desired outcomes of its DAIP. These are:

1. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the Town of Mosman Park.

2. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the Town of Mosman Park buildings, facilities and infrastructure.

3. People with disabilities receive information from the Town of Mosman Park in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.

4. People with disabilities receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of the Town of Mosman Park.

5. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Town of Mosman Park.

6. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the Town of Mosman Park.

In addition, the Town has decided to include a seventh

outcome area relating to employment even though it is not specified by the

legislation.

7. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access employment and other work opportunities offered by the Town of Mosman Park.

Development and Review of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

Responsibility for the DAIP Process

Overall responsibility for the DAIP process lies with the Town’s Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The Town’s Manager Community Development reports directly to the CEO and is delegated to oversee the DAIP.

The Town’s Social Sustainability Advisory Committee acts as a community reference group to assist with the overseeing of the development, implementation, review and evaluation of the DAIP.

DAIP Review Process

In early 2011 the Town engaged a disability consultant to undertake an independent review of its DAIP 2007-2011.

This DAIP review was conducted in accordance with the requirements as set out in the Disability Services Act.

The project extended over a four month period and included:

* Background research and information gathering
* Consideration of effectiveness and achievements of existing DAIP 2007-2011
* Review of all relevant disability related legislation
* Review of current access and inclusion practices and other relevant policies
* Community and stakeholder consultations

The review process included input from a range of both internal and external stakeholders including:

* Town of Mosman Park Staff and Contractors (across a range of functions and management levels)
* People with disabilities their family members and carers
* Residents, ratepayers and visitors to the Town
* The Disability Services Commission
* The Ministerial Advisory Council on Disability
* Disability advocacy organisations including:
  + People With Disabilities WA Inc
  + Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre
  + Blind Citizens WA
  + WA Deaf Society
* Disability service providers including Rocky Bay
* The local community and general public

The consultation was aimed at identifying:

* The Town’s achievements in improving access in recent years
* Difficulties and barriers community members still experience with the Town’s services and events, buildings and infrastructure, customer service, information, complaints mechanisms, and consultation processes.
* Possible outcomes, objectives and strategies for inclusion in the revised DAIP, and
* Priorities for the revised DAIP.

Organisational functions that were reviewed include:

* Services and events
* Buildings and facilities
* Customer service
* Complaints mechanisms
* Consultation processes, and
* Employment

A consultation strategy was agreed with the Town which involved information being collected through a range of methods including:

1. Written surveys returnable by post or email - a DAIP Review Survey was developed and circulated widely
2. Face to face interviews
3. Attendance at the Town’s annual community fair.
4. Telephone interviews
5. Consultation with major disability groups
6. Face-to-face meetings with community members including the use of relevant organisations to host small group sessions
7. SMS; TTY; NRS; over the internet AUSLAN services
8. E-mail communication, including an email survey of the Town’s staff
9. One on one interviews with the CEO and all senior managers

Promotion of the DAIP review process included:

* A consultation stall at the Town’s annual Community Fair
* Widespread email circulation of the review Survey
* Advertisements in Local Newspapers (The Post and The Western Suburbs Weekly) were run over a four week period
* On the Town’s website
* At the Town’s Administration Office
* Notices on local notice boards
* Announcements on 6RPH Information Radio
* Information included in two E-News mail outs
* Local contacts and community groups mailed, emailed and phoned directly
* A range of stakeholder organisations emailed and phoned directly

DAIP consultation meetings were held with the following groups:

* People with Disabilities WA Inc.
* Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre
* WA Deaf Society
* Blind Citizens WA
* Social Sustainability Advisory Committee
* The Town’s CEO and Senior Managers
* CEO and residents of Rocky Bay
* Mosman Park Residents and Ratepayers Association
* Disability Services Commission Local Area Coordinator for Mosman Park
* Disability Services Commission Access Branch

A DAIP 2007-2011 Review Report and a draft DAIP 2011-2016 were compiled and submitted to Council for its endorsement in July 2011.

Findings of the Review

The Town is responding very positively to its obligations under Federal and State disability laws.

There are good levels of awareness among staff about the overarching legal obligation not to discriminate on the basis of a person’s disability and to ensure equitable access and inclusion for everyone. Staff are committed to working in a more accessible and inclusive way but some may feel they don’t always have the necessary skills, information and/or knowledge to do so.

Staff and community members are keen for the Town to go beyond the minimum legal requirements and pursue excellence by identifying and implementing contemporary best practices in access and inclusion.

Since implementing a formal disability planning process in 1995, the Town has developed and implemented a range of initiatives to improve access and inclusion. Some of the more notable of these include:

* A complete disability access audit has been conducted on all Town owned and operated buildings. The audit has identified what needs to be done to meet minimum standards and has set priorities for the work. The Town is currently working to complete the high priority items and will continue to implement all improvements over time.
* An audit of footpaths has been completed and a program of upgrades is underway.
* Playground facilities are being assessed to improve access for people with disabilities.
* The new Grove Library precinct provides fully accessible facilities as well as upgraded materials and a range of alternative format resources such as talking books and captioned videos and DVDs.
* Town Staff have worked in partnership with other organisations to make sport and recreation activities more accessible to people with disabilities.
* Town information is made available in a range of formats including Braille, large print, audible and digital format upon request.
* The Town has an ongoing disability awareness training program for Staff.
* Municipal elections are held via the Electoral Commission’s postal voting service. On poll day the Town’s accessible administration building is open to assist voters who may wish to vote in person.
* The Town has partnered with the Disability Services Commission (DSC) and local business to implement the ‘Your Welcome” program, aimed at making local business more accessible and inclusive.
* The Town is part of the Companion Card initiative which offers discounts to people with disabilities and their carers to help reduce the cost of participation in ticketed events.

The review also identified a variety of remaining barriers to access and inclusion to be addressed in the revised DAIP.

Access Barriers

While the review and consultation noted a great deal of achievement in improving access it also identified a range of barriers that require redress. These access barriers include:

* Community members reported that there were some areas where the accessibility of the pedestrian environment could be improved.
* Events may not always be held in a manner and location that best facilitates the participation of people with disabilities.
* Some processes engaged by the Town may not be as accessible and inclusive as possible.
* Suitable parking for people with disabilities may not be meeting the needs of this growing demographic.
* Elements of the Town’s website may require improvement to best meet the needs of people with disabilities.
* Some staff may be uninformed or lacking in confidence to adequately provide the same level of service to people with disabilities.
* People with disabilities may not be aware of consultation opportunities with the Town.

The identification of these barriers formed the basis for the development of strategies in the DAIP 2011-2016. A DAIP Implementation Plan will be developed which will identify specific tasks and timeframes for each strategy.

Responsibility for Implementing the DAIP

It is a requirement of the Disability Services Act that a public authority must take all practical measures to ensure that the DAIP is implemented by its officers, employees, agents and contractors.

Implementing the DAIP has implications across all functions of the organisation. Responsibility for implementing the DAIP lies with all staff. Some actions in the Implementation Plan will apply to all areas of the Town while others will apply to a specific area. The Implementation Plan sets out who is responsible for each task and a timeframe for completing that task.

Review and Evaluation Mechanisms

The Disability Services Act sets out the minimum review requirements for public authorities in relation to DAIPs. The Town’s DAIP will be reviewed at least every five years, in accordance with the Act. The DAIP Implementation Plan may be amended on a more regular basis to reflect progress and any access and inclusion issues which may arise. Whenever the DAIP is amended, a copy of the amended plan will be lodged with the Disability Services Commission.

Communicating the Plan to the Community

The Town will inform the Community through the local newspaper and the Town’s website that it has developed a DAIP. In addition, the Town will circulate this information via the same networks engaged for the community consultation.

Monitoring and Reviewing

The Social Sustainability Advisory Committee will meet as required to review progress on the implementation of the strategies identified in the DAIP. The minutes of these meetings will be presented to Council for noting.

The Town’s DAIP 2011-2016 will be reviewed in early 2016.

Evaluation

Reports on the DAIP implementation process will be presented to Council for endorsement.

Once a year, in the Annual Report, the Town will provide advice to the community regarding the progress of the DAIP.

The community will be encouraged to provide feedback to the Town regarding their access and inclusion needs on an ongoing basis.

The Town’s Administration Staff will execute the DAIP Implementation Plan. Wherever possible, any needs brought to the Town’s attention that are not already scheduled within the implementation plan will be prioritised for action.

If the Town’s DAIP Implementation Plan nears completion before the end of the five year time-frame formal, advertised, accessible community consultation will commence.

A notice about the consultation process will be placed in the Local Community newspaper, posted on the Town’s website and circulated to disability service providers.

In seeking feedback the Town will also seek to identify additional barriers that were not identified in the initial consultation.

The Town will use some of the consultation processes used during the initial consultations including: questionnaires, meetings with people with disabilities and disability organisation phone-ins.

Elected Members of Council and Town employees will also be requested to provide feedback on how well they believe the strategies are working and to make suggestions for improvement.

Implementation Plans will be amended based on the feedback received.

Reporting on the DAIP

The Disability Services Act sets out the minimum reporting requirements for public authorities in relation to DAIPs.

The Town will report on the implementation of its DAIP through its Annual Report and the prescribed progress report template to the Disability Services Commission by 31 July each year, outlining:

• progress towards the desired outcomes of its DAIP;

• progress of its agents and contractors towards meeting the six desired outcomes; and

• the strategies used to inform its agents and contractors of its DAIP.

4.0 STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE ACCESS AND INCLUSION

As a result of the review process the following overarching strategies will guide tasks, reflected in the Implementation Plan, that the Town will undertake from 2011-2016 to improve access to its services, buildings and information. The seven desired outcomes provide a framework for improving access and inclusion for people with disabilities in the Town.

The Town’s DAIP Implementation Plan identifies individual tasks and timeframes to be completed under each broad strategy.

**Outcome 1: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by the Town of Mosman Park.**

**Strategies**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Strategy** | **Timeline** |
| 1.1 | Ensure that the Town’s staff, agents and contractors are aware of the relevant requirements for providing equitable access as set out in the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act and the State Disability Services Act. | Ongoing |
| 1.2 | Continue to ensure that all Town events are organised in a way that makes them as accessible and inclusive as possible. | Ongoing |
| 1.3 | Use the Town’s Social Sustainability Advisory Committee as a community reference group to guide the implementation of DAIP activities | Ongoing |
| 1.4 | Develop links between the DAIP and other Town plans, policies and strategies. | Ongoing |
| 1.5 | Ensure that people with disabilities have an opportunity to comment on access to services. | Ongoing |

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**Outcome 2:** **People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access Council buildings, facilities and infrastructure.**

**Strategies**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Strategy** | **Timeline** |
| 2.1 | Continue to improve physical access to the Town’s buildings, facilities and infrastructure. | Ongoing |
| 2.2 | Ensure that relevant Town staff are aware of and comply with the latest version of the Building Code of Australia released 1 May 2011. | July 2011  and ongoing |
| 2.3 | Ensure that the Town’s pedestrian facilities are built and maintained so that they are accessible to people with disabilities. | Ongoing |
| 2.4 | Ensure that accessible parking facilities are adequate in terms of number, design and location. | Ongoing |
| 2.5 | Advocate to local businesses the requirements for and benefits flowing from improved access for people with disabilities | Ongoing |
| 2.6 | Ensure that the Town’s parks, gardens, playgrounds and reserves are as accessible to people with disabilities as possible. | Ongoing |
| 2.7 | Ensure that accessible toilet facilities are adequate in terms of location, design and maintenance. | Ongoing |
| 2.8 | Encourage Town staff, agents and contractors to consider access and inclusion issues during all stages of a project. | Ongoing |
| 2.9 | Work in partnership with other organisations to ensure that relevant pedestrian infrastructure complies with the Accessible Public Transport Standard. | Ongoing |

**Outcome 3: People with disabilities receive information from the Town**

**of Mosman Park in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.**

**Strategies**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Strategy** | **Timeline** |
| 3.1 | Improve community awareness that Town information is available in alternative formats upon request. | Ongoing |
| 3.2 | Improve staff awareness of accessible information needs and how to obtain information in alternative formats. | Ongoing |
| 3.3 | Ensure that the Town’s website meets contemporary good practice. | Ongoing |
| 3.4 | Provide documentation regarding services, facilities, events and customer feedback in an appropriate format using clear and concise language. | Ongoing |
| 3.5 | Continue to promote the National Relay Service (NRS) and consider the appropriateness of introducing a TTY facility for use in disaster/emergency management situations. | Ongoing |
| 3.6 | Consider the use of social media to improve access to the Town’s information for people with disabilities. | Ongoing |

**Outcome 4: People with disabilities receive the same level and quality of service as other people from the staff of the Town of Mosman Park.**

**Strategies**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Strategy** | **Timeline** |
| 4.1 | Improve employee awareness, knowledge and skills to provide an accessible and inclusive service to people with disabilities. | Ongoing |
| 4.2 | Improve the awareness of new employees and new Councillors about disability and access issues. | Ongoing |
| 4.3 | Consider creative ways of generating and sustaining staff awareness, knowledge and skills of disability access and inclusion issues. | Ongoing |
| 4.4 | Increase staff awareness that ensuring access and inclusion for people with disabilities has implications across all functions within the organisation and that all staff members have responsibility for implementing the DAIP. | Ongoing |

**Outcome 5: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Town of Mosman Park.**

**Strategies**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Strategy** | **Timeline** |
| 5.1 | Ensure that people with disabilities have an opportunity to comment on the Town’s services, events, infrastructure, customer service, communication and information provision. | Ongoing |
| 5.2 | Ensure that current grievance mechanisms are accessible for people with disabilities. | Ongoing |
| 5.3 | Increase staff awareness that comments and complaints from people with disabilities provide invaluable assistance in ensuring equitable access and inclusion for all. | Ongoing |

**Outcome 6: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in public consultation by the Town of Mosman Park.**

**Strategies**

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Strategy** | **Timeline** |
| 6.1 | Improve community awareness about consultation processes in place. | Ongoing |
| 6.2 | Commit to ongoing monitoring of the DAIP to ensure implementation and satisfactory outcomes. | Ongoing |
| 6.3 | Improve access for people with disabilities to the established consultative processes of the Town. | Ongoing |
| 6.4 | Seek a broad range of views on disability and access issues from the local community. | Ongoing |
| 6.5 | Develop and implement an Access and Inclusion feedback form. | January 2012 |
| 5.6 | Develop and implement a strategy to maintain regular communication with the major disability advocacy organisations, interested residents/ratepayers/visitors and relevant State Government Departments. | Ongoing |

**Outcome 7: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access employment and other work opportunities offered by the Town of Mosman Park.**

**Strategies**

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Strategy** | **Timeline** |
| 7.1 | Continue to apply the Town’s Equal Employment Opportunity policy when recruiting new staff, agents or contractors. | Ongoing |
| 7.2 | Consider offering employment opportunities directly to people with disabilities via established disability employment services. | Ongoing |