

2020

Adelaide Hills Council

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# **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (PHASE 1) OUTCOMES REPORT**

## **DISABILITY ACCESS AND INCLUSION PLAN (DAIP)**

**October 2020**

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# Summary

## Purpose of this report

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This report sets out the methods and findings from Phase 1 of the community engagement project, which was designed to involve community members in the development of Council's new provisional Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2020-24. This report is intended for consultation participants and anyone with an interest in access and inclusion in the Adelaide Hills Council (AHC) district and organisation.

## Background to the project

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The *SA Disability Inclusion Act 2018* (the Act) requires every State authority (local councils and State Government agencies) to develop a disability access and inclusion plan (DAIP) through community consultation, and then publish its provisional DAIP on its website by 31 October 2020.

Council must prepare and implement a DAIP based on principles agreed in the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(UNCRPD\)](#) and in support of South Australia's first [State Disability Inclusion Plan 2019-2023 – Inclusive SA](#).

AHC's new DAIP must:

- include measures to ensure that people living with disability can access AHC's mainstream supports and services;
- show how AHC will give effect to the State Plan (*Inclusive SA*);
- include strategies to support people with disability in accessing AHC's built environments, events and facilities, information and communications, programs and services, and employment (the Act, section 16).

In developing its DAIP, AHC must consult with people with disability, their families and carers, and persons or bodies representing the interests of people with disability, in relation to the development of its DAIP (section 16 of the Act, and DI Reg 9).

## Community engagement approach

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A Community Engagement Strategy was developed to guide how the community and relevant stakeholders within the AHC district could participate in the development of the new DAIP. The strategy set out three phases for community engagement, with the first two phases to be undertaken from September to December 2020:

- Phase 1: Feedback to inform the development of a provisional DAIP (October 2020)
- Phase 2: Feedback on the provisional DAIP (November-December 2020)
- Phase 3: Feedback on the updated DAIP (Ongoing from late January 2021)

This report sets out the method and findings for Phase 1 of the Community Engagement Strategy, which ran from 10 September until 26 October 2020. Preliminary findings are being used to inform the preparation of the provisional DAIP, which was adopted by Council on 27 October 2020 for Phase 2 of the Community Engagement Strategy.

At the time of preparing this report, Phase 2 of the Strategy has opened (until 6/12/20), and calls for further community and stakeholder feedback on the provisional DAIP itself.

A revised version of the DAIP, incorporating community feedback received during Phase 2, is scheduled to be released at the end of January 2021, and will remain open to ongoing community feedback for continuous improvement throughout the lifecycle of the plan.

Feedback could be provided by:

- Completing an online / hard copy survey ([engage.ahc.sa.gov.au](http://engage.ahc.sa.gov.au))
  - Two versions: easy read and traditional survey
- Face to face meetings/ interviews
- Telephone 8408 0400
- Email [jspier@ahc.sa.gov.au](mailto:jspier@ahc.sa.gov.au)
- Post PO Box 44, Woodside SA 5244

The Community Engagement Strategy identified people living with disability, their families and carers, and disability services agencies as priority groups for consultation on the new DAIP.

Engagement activities used in Phase 1 were about ensuring the proposed actions in our DAIP address the issues that are important for community members living with disability. Activities were also focused on developing actions that were based on community and stakeholder ideas for making the AHC district and organisation more welcoming, accessible and inclusive for all.

**Community feedback was received from:**

Feedback type	Responses
Survey (online and hardcopy)	20
Written submission from the Training, Consultancy and Research Manager at Autism SA	1
Emails from residents	2
Interviews and meetings	6

**Summary of interviews and meetings**

Targeted community and stakeholder feedback was also gathered by our staff through conducting the following interviews and meetings from 10 September until 26 October 2020:

- **Stakeholder interview:** with resident/mother of a child living with an intellectual disability who attends primary school at Stirling.
- **Community Bridging Services (CBS), Stirling Group Interview:** with Jobnet Regional Manager (South/East Metro), Jobnet Coordinator (Adelaide & Stirling) and Employment Officer
- **Carers and Disability Link (CADL), Woodside Group Interview:** with Carer Support Worker (Mental Health) and Direct Care Services Coordinator at Carers and Disability Link (CADL), Woodside
- **The Hut Community Centre, Aldgate Group Interview:** with Executive Officer and Community Development Manager
- **atWork Australia, Stirling Interview:** with the Community Engagement Manager (Adelaide metropolitan area)
- **AHC’s Youth Leadership Program (YLP) Group Interview:** with participants

# Survey outcomes

The survey was developed in partnership with staff at Mission Australia's NDIS Local Area Coordination Service for the Adelaide Hills region, who assisted with survey design and distribution, and produced an Easy Read version.

The survey was designed to find out what people think about access and inclusion in the Adelaide Hills.

It asked people to assess the accessibility of public spaces, public amenities, public buildings, volunteering and leadership opportunities, Council information, services and decision-making.

We also asked people about when they feel included and not included in their communities, and how often they feel their communities understands and value their rights. A combination of closed and open questions were used. Anyone could participate in the survey.



## Survey promotion

The survey was promoted through a number of channels including Hills Voice: your Adelaide Hills eNewsletter.

The survey and accompanying information was made available on our engagement portal Hills Voice: *your say* ([engage.ahc.sa.gov.au](http://engage.ahc.sa.gov.au)).

The survey was also distributed through the following networks:

- The Adelaide Hills Disability Inclusion Reference Group (DIRG)
- Adelaide Hills Reconciliation Working Group (AHRWG)
- The Hut Community Centre
- AHC's Positive Ageing Centre volunteers
- The Summit Community Centre

## Survey responses

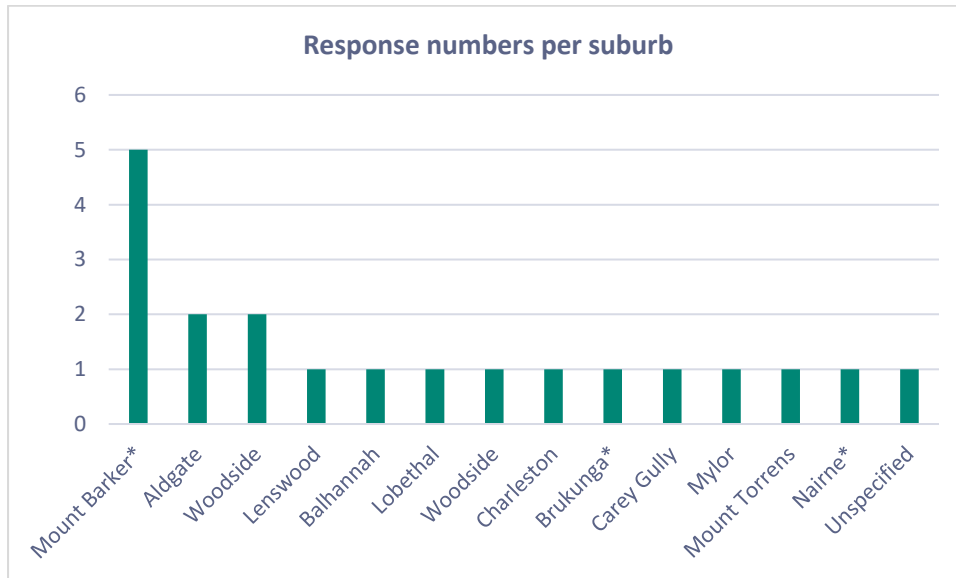
A total of 20 survey responses were received during the course of the consultation, and comprised:

- 5 hardcopy responses to the Easy Read version
- 3 online responses to the Easy Read version
- 12 online responses to the non-Easy Read version

**Suburb representation**

Survey participants were asked where they live. Respondents represented a range of different suburbs:

**Figure 1: Suburb representation**



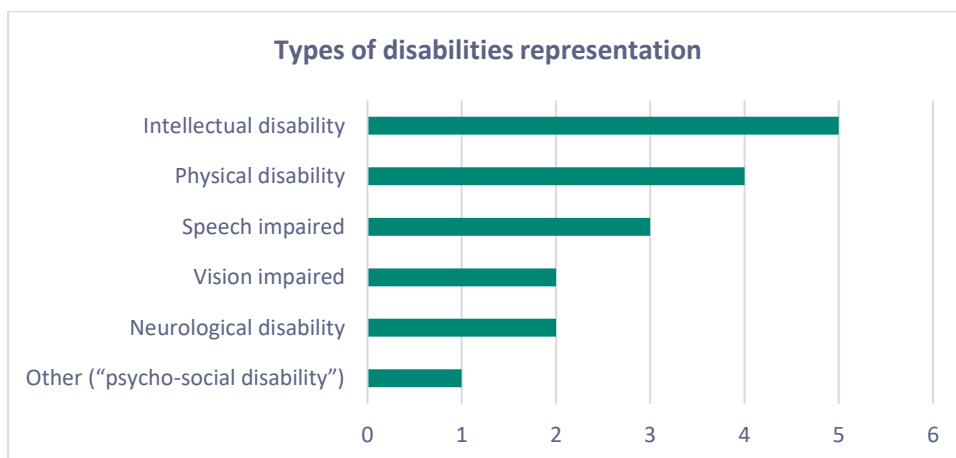
\*Locations outside of AHC area but included was included as information is valuable to the development of our DIAP.

**Respondents living with disability**

65% of the total responses (n=13) indicated that they live with disability (or were proxy responses, meaning they were responding to the survey questions on behalf of someone living with disability).

As shown in Table 2, this respondent group represented a diversity of disabilities, with 3 indicating they live with multiple types of disability.

**Figure 2: Types of disability representation**





### Age of respondents

The 26-65 age group was the most represented age group (n=8). Refer to Table 3.

**Table 3:** Age group representation

Age of person with disability	No. of responses
0-12	1
13-25	2
26-65	8
Over 65	2
Total	13

Additional demographic characteristics of the 13 respondents living with disability (including proxy responses) included:

- 1 Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person
- 10 receiving **NDIS funding**
- 8 females and 5 males
- 11 born in Australia, 1 in Tanzania (1 who did not specify their country of birth)
- Nil require an interpreter
- All speak English at home



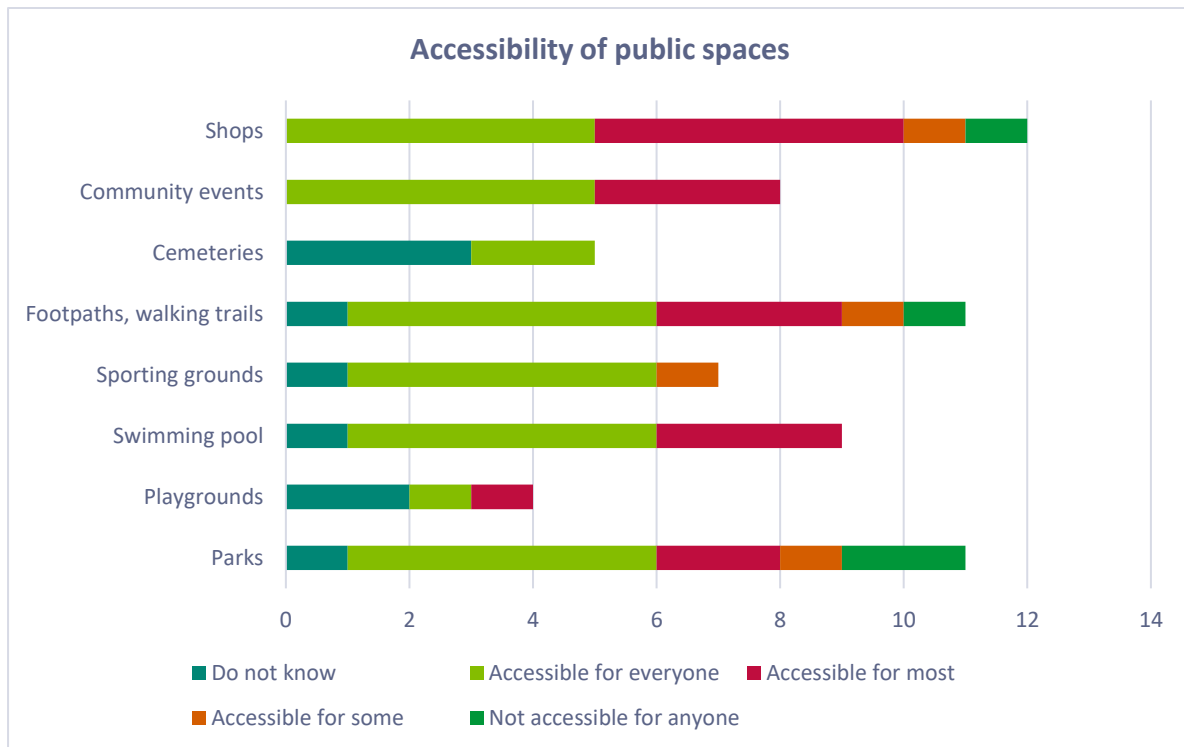
### Accessibility of public spaces

*Public spaces are places everyone should be able to go such as parks, playgrounds, Adelaide Hills Swimming Centre in Woodside, sporting grounds, footpaths/ walking trails, cemeteries, shops and community events.*

Survey participants were asked to rank the accessibility of various public spaces (which they already use in the AHC area) along a Likert scale from “accessible for everyone” to “not accessible for anyone” (with an option of “do not know”).

Figure 4 shows **parks, footpaths/trails** and **shops** are the most used public spaces by respondents with disability (including proxy responses). This respondent group tended to feel that these public spaces are accessible “for everyone” or “most people”. However, a small number of respondents (n=2-3) felt that these public spaces were only accessible for “some people” or “not accessible for anyone”, with **parks** seemingly the most inaccessible for respondents with disability.

**Figure 4:** Accessibility of public spaces



2 out of the 4 respondents living with **physical disability** indicated that **footpaths/trails** are only accessible for “some people”.

**Comments from respondents with disability (including proxy respondents) regarding usage and accessibility of public spaces included:**

**For me to safely walk with a stick I need a made pathway.**

**It would be good to have bench seats for rest breaks in parks, so that I can walk a greater distance eg Balhannah dog park**

**I doubt all disabilities are taken into consideration when planning community events.**

**Footpaths along Nairne Rd are not all that accessible for mobility impaired people**

**I can get everywhere I need and want**

**I can get everywhere**

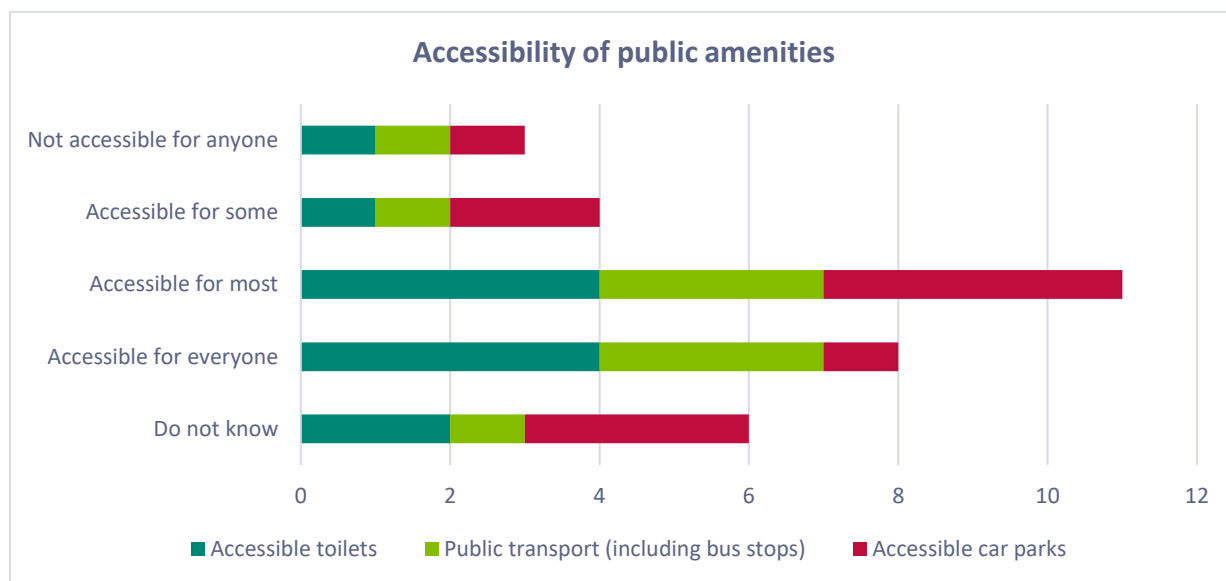
**Accessibility of public amenities**

*Public amenities are things which everybody should be able to use. Sometimes they need to be changed to make sure everybody can you use them. These include: accessible toilets, public transport (including bus stops) and accessible car parks.*

Survey participants were asked to rank how they felt about the accessibility of different public amenities (which they already use in the AHC area) along a Likert scale from “accessible for everyone” to “not accessible for anyone” (with an option of “do not know”).

Table 5 shows **accessible toilets** and **accessible car parking** are the most used public amenities by respondents with disability (including proxy responses). This respondent group agreed that accessible toilets are accessible “for everyone” or “most people”. Responses also suggest a felt need for more accessible car parking amongst respondents with disability, along with a higher level (n=3) of uncertainty about how accessible car parking is in the district (3 indicating “do not know” in relation to accessible car parking).

Figure 5: Accessibility of public amenities



The following comments were provided by respondents with disability (including proxy respondents) regarding the usage and accessibility of public amenities:

*are safe*

*if can't find I ask someone*

*Toilets require bench space around a sink for people with an ostomy to be able to change there [sic] appliance comfortably, and they require the mirror to go to the top of the bench so it facilitates the change process.*

*Silver toilets without a seat are not suitable for a disabled person to sit on.*

*Rails are sometimes not placed in the correct position to assist a disabled person to get off the toilet.*

*The toilet door opening into a cubicle, makes access very difficult for a person who mobilises with a walking aid eg stick or frame. The door should open outward.*

*can't find enough accessible toilets - would use but can't find*

*Please look after the disability public amenities it is so hard to go places when it's been vandalised.*

*More disability parking would be helpful behind oak tree plaza and where the fruit and veg shop plaza and Physio. Also one in front of Matilda bookshop.*

### Accessibility of public buildings

Public buildings are places everyone should be able to go to get information or services. Examples include: Libraries (Gumeracha, Stirling or Woodside), recreation facilities - recreation centre / sports clubs / gym, Community centres (Gumeracha, Norton Summit, The Hut in Aldgate), Public offices - centrelink / council offices / hospitals, Education settings (schools, childcare), Resource Recovery Centre in Heathfield, Depots in Gumeracha and Stirling and Arts hub in Lobethal.

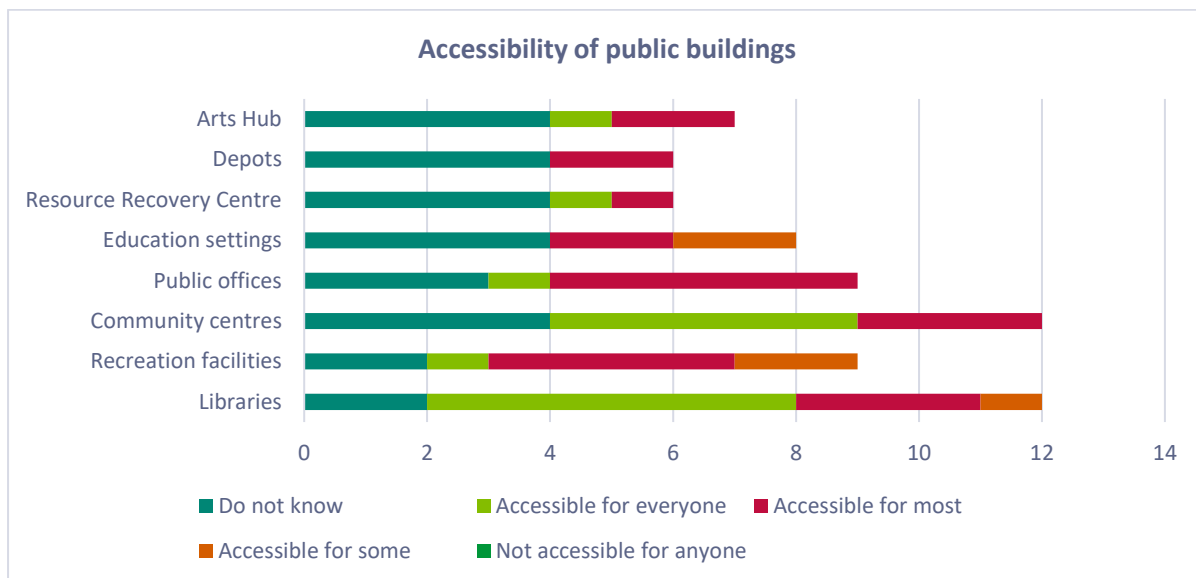
Survey participants were asked to rank the accessibility of different public buildings along a Likert scale from “accessible for everyone” to “not accessible for anyone” (with an option of “do not know”).

Figure 6 shows that survey respondents with disability (including proxy responses) tended to feel that the most-used public buildings (libraries, community centres and public offices) already offer a high degree of accessibility.

Responses suggest that **recreation facilities** (including sports clubs and gyms) and **educational buildings** (schools, childcare) across the AHC area may be potential sites for improvement in terms of accessibility and social inclusion, with 2 respondents in this group feeling these types of public buildings are only accessible for “some people”. Only 1 of 9 respondents who reported using recreational facilities feel they are accessible “for everyone”, while nil of 8 who use educational buildings feel they are accessible for all users.

This respondent group reported a low level of usage and knowledge about the Resource Recovery Centre in Heathfield, the depots in Stirling and Gumeracha, and the Arts Hub in Lobethal.

**Figure 6:** Felt accessibility of public buildings used



**Respondents with disability (including proxy responses) offered the following comments regarding their usage and accessibility of public buildings:**

***I use rec centre (not sports club or gym)***

***Not enough supports***

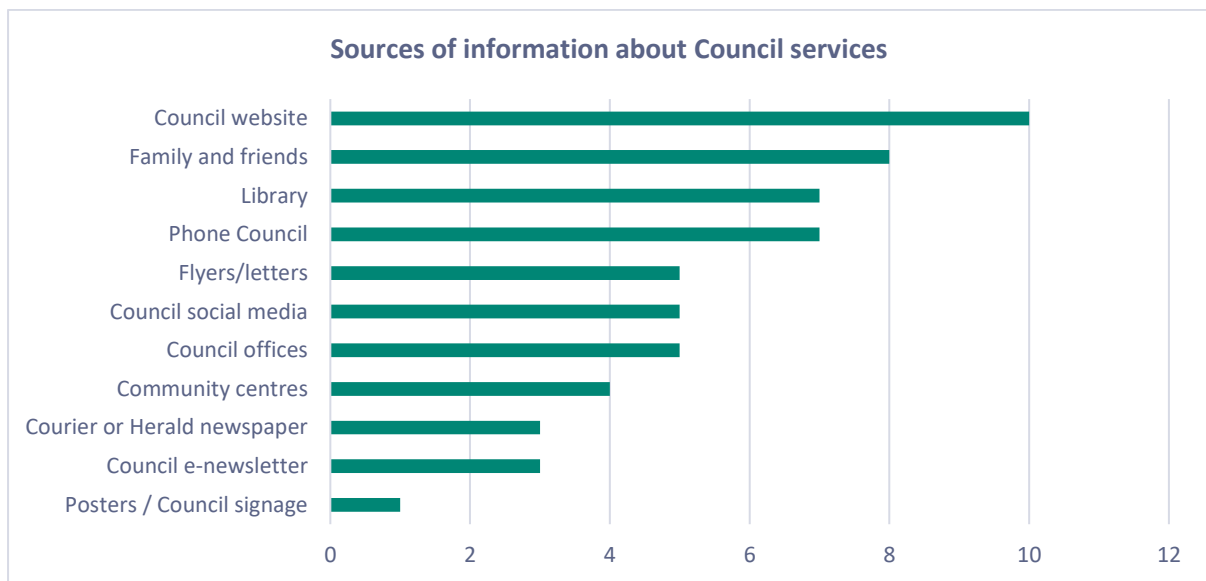
***More high schools need special needs units i.e. Heathfield, my son had to go to Mt Barker because there were no suitable facilities for him at Heathfield.***

**Sources of information I use about Council services**

Survey participants were asked where they looked for information about Council services.

Table 7 shows that survey respondents with disability tended to rely on the AHC website, family and friends, and Council’s customer and library services for information about Council services. No one indicated they receive updates from rates notices and Council meetings.

**Figure 7:** Sources of information about Council services

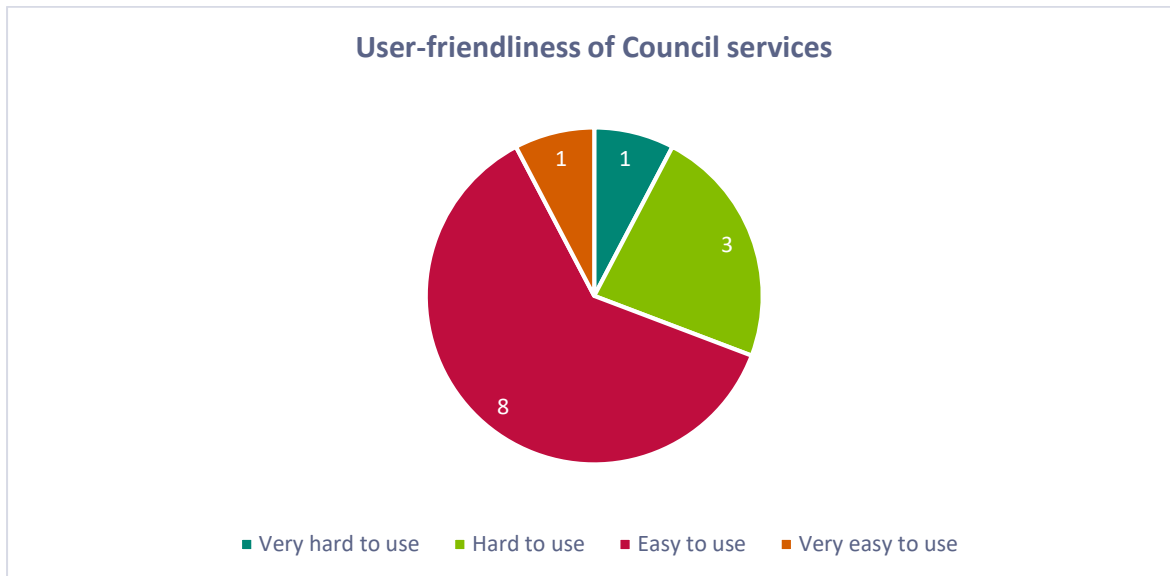


### User-friendliness of Council services

Survey participants were asked to rank the difficulty of using Council services.

As Figure 8 shows, 9 out of the 13 respondents with disability thought Council services are “easy” or “very easy” to use. However 4 disagreed (30%), rating the difficulty level of using Council services as “hard” or “very hard” to use.

**Figure 8:** Difficulty level of using Council services



### Additional services I would use if available

Survey participants were asked what Council services they would use if available. Two respondents with disability offered the following suggestions:

***I would love to attend Stirling market and fringe events more but find parking access difficult. Parking is the difficult bit for me at all places I would like to attend in my local area and toilet access.***

***Toilets need to include at least one toilet for disabled people, both with physical disability and or medical disability.***

**Feeling included and not-included**

Survey participants were asked when they feel included in the community. Respondents with disability shared the following answers:

**Survey participants were asked when they feel included in the community. Respondents with disability shared the following answers:**

*playing basketball at day options*

*group outings*

*when going on group outings*

*cricket, sporting, bowling*

*coffee club. charity craft (at home)*

*I feel included by having easy access to transport to social things.*

*at the mens shed*

*If I am able to access a place easily ie venue and toilet facilities. If I feel welcome by organisers of events or proprietors of venues.*

*Charleston Hall has an excellent outside disabled toilet, but still needs bench space for a person with an ostomy to be able to safely change their appliance, and a mirror to the top of the sink. All toilets in the area would benefit from having hooks to hang change bags or hand bags on, so it is not necessary to put these on the floor.*

*You tell me what special needs clubs you have for my son???*

**Respondents were then asked about times when they do not feel included. Respondents with disability responded as followed:**

*My son at Heathfield high school.*

*felt quite isolated during the recent Cudlee Creek bushfires. Because of the nature of the fires, her family was not able to access the area to assist. Whilst receiving early telephone calls to see that she was all right, there was no obvious plan in place for evacuation of vulnerable residents and none of the relevant authorities, eg Mt Barker Hospital, appeared to be aware of any plans or strategies that were in place to ensure the safety of vulnerable residents*

*I don't feel included in sports*

*I always feel included*

*When neighbours wake me*

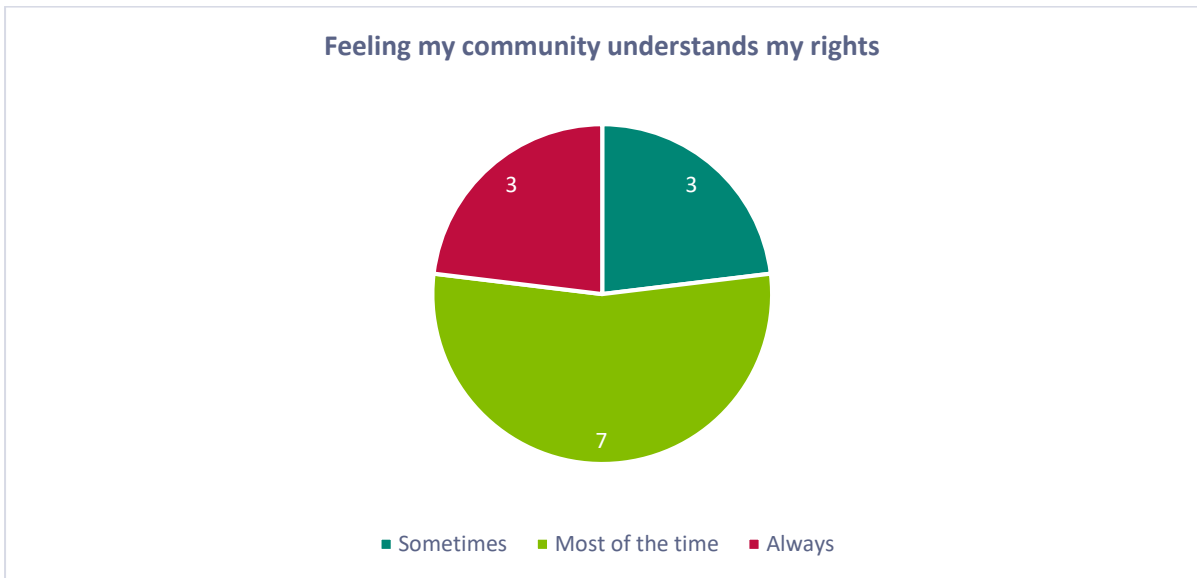


<i>When there are cliques within the groups</i>
<i>When there is no transport to things</i>
<i>I need a little more time and ability to park close , if there is not sympathetic accommodation for this I obviously would not feel included</i>

**Feeling my community understands my rights**

Survey participants were asked how often they feel their community understands and values their rights. Figure 9 suggests that the majority of respondents living with disability feel frequently that their communities understand and value their rights. However, 3 respondents in this group indicated a low frequency of feeling that their rights are understood by their communities.

**Figure 9:** Frequency of feeling



**Feeling that I can participate in decision-making**

Survey participants were asked how often they feel they can participate in community and Council decision-making. Table 10 suggests that there may be barriers for many people with disability to participating in community and Council decision-making. Only 3 respondents with disability feel they can participate in decision-making “most of the time”, with 0 feeling they “always” feel they can participate in this aspect of community life.

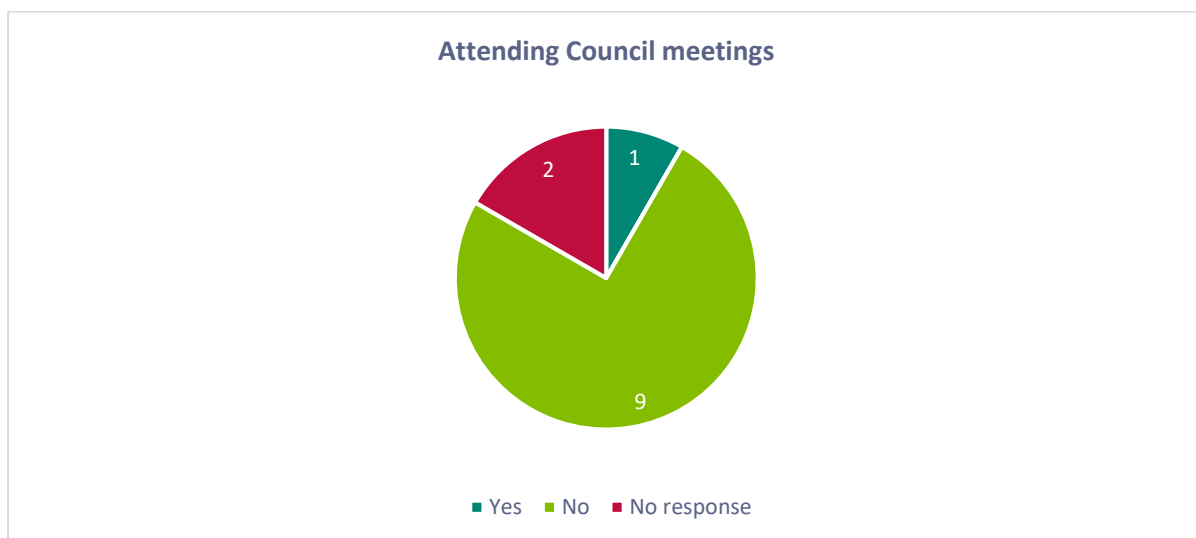
**Figure 10:** Frequency of feeling



**Attending Council meetings**

Survey participants were asked if they have attended a Council meeting before, and if not, what the “main reason” was for never attending. Only 1 respondent with disability indicated they have previously attended a Council meeting.

**Figure 11:** Prior attendance at a Council meeting



Respondents with disability provided the following reasons for non-attendance:

- *Never considered it for me to attend.*
- *My husband did, the council did what they wanted anyway.*

Survey participants were then asked how they would like to participate in community and Council decision-making. The following responses were provided by respondents with disability:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>give opinions of likes and dislikes</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>would like to one day go to a meeting</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>want to attend a council meeting</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Definitely</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Zoom video conferencing.</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I'm happy to be able to access my community like anyone else and would hope and expect my council to consider this always when designing places and communicating services and if I needed to communicate a need that this is recognised as important as any in the community.</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>by having email contact to canvas the opinion of disabled individuals or their carers, and what facilities they require.</i></li> </ul>

These comments show that people with disability are willing and interested in participating in community and Council decision-making by attending accessible Council meetings and other channels.

### Opportunities I would like to see in my community

The survey asked what opportunities respondents would like to see in their community. Respondents with disability want to see:

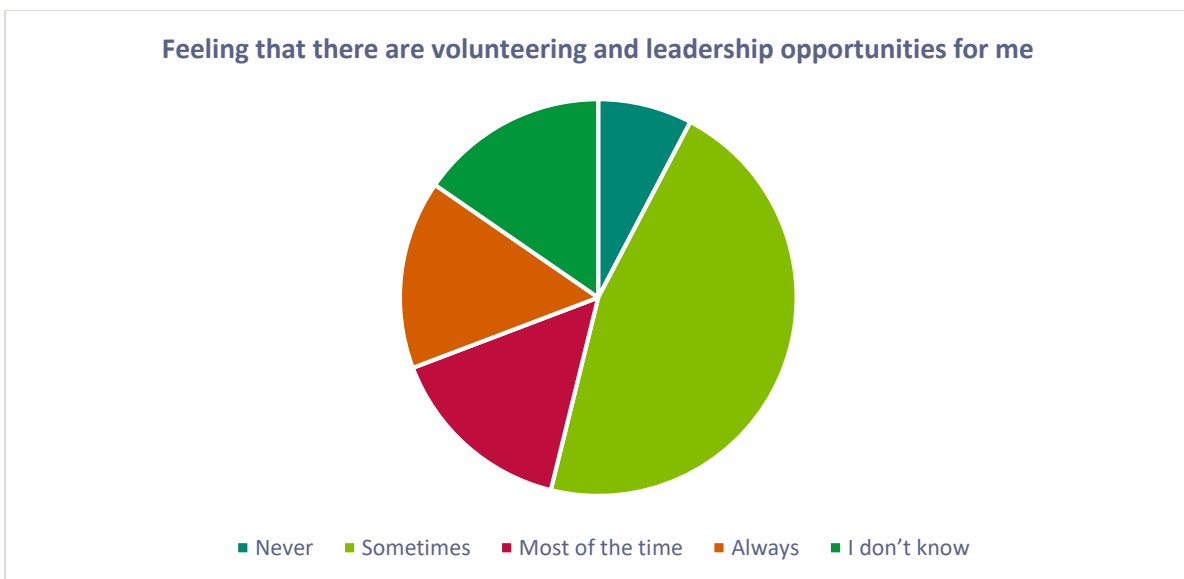
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Good walking trails with adequate toilets and bench seating to support people with mobility and other disabilities. I find Laratinga wetlands are excellent and I walk at Balhannah dog park, which needs bench seats for elderly and people with mobility difficulties, and I also walk at the Balhannah oval which have toilets available, but not easy for disabled people to use especially considering hygiene needs. Woodside oval has no walking paths for exercise, and the toilet blocks in the area are not really suitable or easy for people with disabilities to use.</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>More special needs sporting events.</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>volunteer at the shed</i></li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>places to meet people</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>gardening</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>a decent pool where one could do physiotherapy daily if needed. One that you get in and OUT easily</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I like to be included in the decision making of the development of structure where people with disabilities with visual impairments being considered.</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Just access always to anything provided, no less. Just want to be able to participate like the general public to all events, shopping and recreational opportunities.</i></li> </ul>

**Feeling that there are volunteering and leadership opportunities for me**

Survey participants were asked how frequently they feel there are volunteering and leadership opportunities available for them in their communities. 7 respondents with disability indicated they have only feel there are volunteering and leadership opportunities for them “sometimes” (n=6) or “never” (n=1).

**Figure 12:** Frequency of feeling



**Other general comments about access and inclusion in my community**

- *re volunteering / leadership opps - don't want to do*
- *I think the council does a great job in providing facilities and including those with disabilities*

### Respondents who support people with disability

In addition to the 13 respondents living with disability (including proxy responses), there were 7 other survey respondents, comprising:

- 3 carers of someone with disability
- 2 members of disability service providers
- 1 family member or friend of a person with disability
- 1 interested member of the public.

In the following section of the report, this respondent group will be referred to as “supporter respondents”.

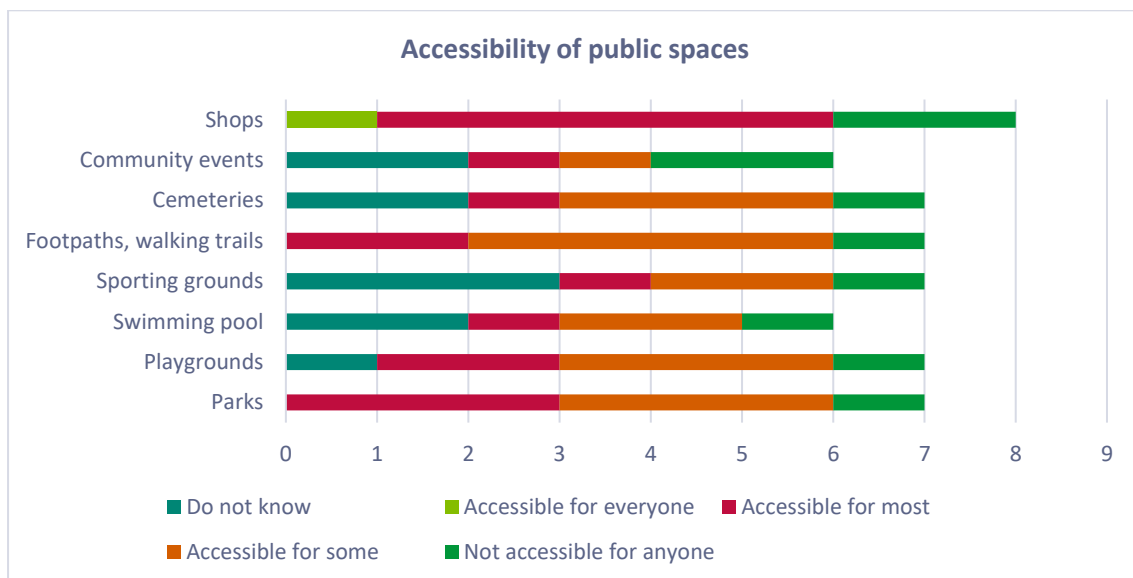
### Accessibility of public spaces

*Public spaces are places everyone should be able to go such as parks, playgrounds, Adelaide Hills Swimming Centre in Woodside, sporting grounds, footpaths/ walking trails, cemeteries, shops and community events.*

Survey participants were asked to rank the accessibility of various public spaces (which they already use in the AHC area) along a Likert scale from “accessible for everyone” to “not accessible for anyone” (with an option of “do not know”).

Table 13 suggests that supporter respondents tended to feel that **shops** are the most accessible public spaces, and **footpaths/trails** the most inaccessible public spaces.

**Figure 13:** Accessibility of public spaces



Supporter respondents provided the following comments in relation to the accessibility of public spaces:

*Ramps are not available to access shops and public places and events*

*Foot paths are hideous and some crossings are too dangerous, narrow and on really bad angles.*

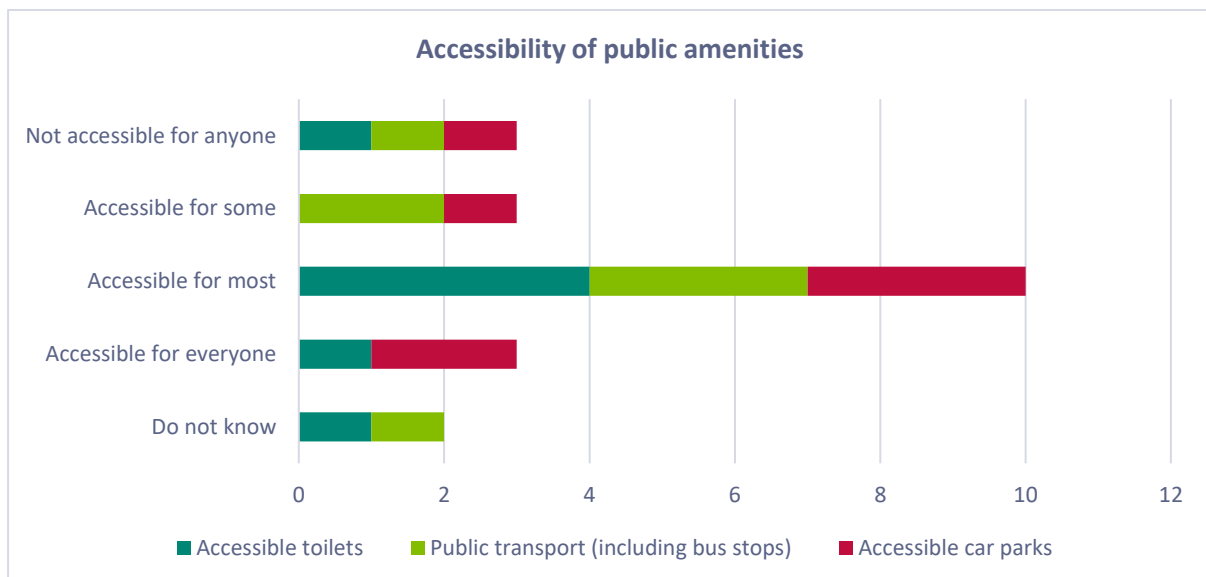
### Accessibility of public amenities

*Public amenities are things which everybody should be able to use. Sometimes they need to be changed to make sure everybody can you use them. These include: accessible toilets, public transport (including bus stops) and accessible car parks.*

Survey participants were asked to rank how they felt about the accessibility of different public amenities (which they already use in the AHC area) along a Likert scale from “accessible for everyone” to “not accessible for anyone” (with an option of “do not know”).

Figure 14 shows supporter respondents tended to agree that, in general, public amenities are accessible for most people. However, 3 of the 7 respondents in this group identified **public transport** as relatively inaccessible.

**Figure 14:** Felt accessibility of public amenities



The following comments were provided by supporter respondents regarding the accessibility of public amenities:

**Not enough** disability parking. **There is a big problem with ease of access to smaller shops and amenities.**

**Not enough** car parks, access toilets

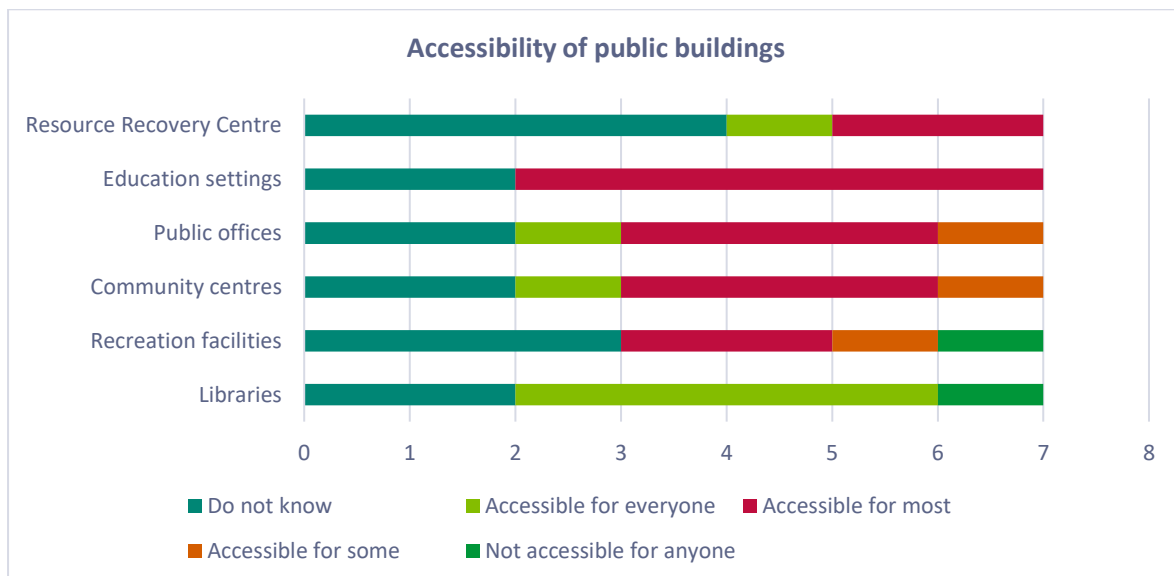
### Accessibility of public buildings

Public buildings are places everyone should be able to go to get information or services. Examples include: Libraries (Gumeracha, Stirling or Woodside), recreation facilities - recreation centre / sports clubs / gym, Community centres (Gumeracha, Norton Summit, The Hut in Aldgate), Public offices - centrelink / council offices / hospitals, Education settings (schools, childcare), Resource Recovery Centre in Heathfield, Depots in Gumeracha and Stirling and Arts hub in Lobethal.

Survey participants were asked to rank the accessibility of different public buildings along a Likert scale from “accessible for everyone” to “not accessible for anyone” (with an option of “do not know”).

Figure 15 shows that, in general, the supporter respondents agree that public buildings are accessible.

**Figure 15:** Felt accessibility of public buildings



Regarding the accessibility of public buildings, 1 supporter respondent commented that there is “not enough supports”.



### Other relevant feedback

One supporter respondent, a Charleston resident who cares for someone living with disability, provided the following in-depth suggestions and comments:

- *Council needs some improving with listing available supports for those caring*
- *There needs to be more funding put in place for Carers in the Woodside area*
- *I don't feel included due to the lack of support in Woodside for Carers as the local Carers and disability link are underfunded and I have no other option due to Carers SA being too far (in Adelaide) for me to access*
- *I believe my sons rights are considered but not that of the person that supports him*
- *I am not aware of when council meetings are*
- *[I would like] more services available for Carers such as respite services, therapy, retreats and so on*
- *[I would like to see] more funding put towards Carers in the Woodside area so they may look after their mental and emotional health*

# Outcomes from interviews

This section presents findings from the interviews our staff conducted with targeted local stakeholders from 10 September until 26 October 2020.

## Interview with a mother of a child with an intellectual disability

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On 10 September 2020, our Community and Social Planning Officer interviewed Tracy (not her real name). Tracy is an AHC resident whose daughter Molly (not her real name) lives with an intellectual disability and attends an AHC primary school. Tracy was asked about her own and Molly's experiences of access and inclusion in their local communities.

Summary of key points raised in interview:

- Molly lives with an intellectual disability and has “high needs”
- There is a need for more secondary schools in the AHC area with a special disability program
- We are considering having to send Molly to Cornerstone or Mt Barker High School
- Finding inclusive sport and recreation opportunities for Molly has been difficult
- We have had to link Molly with a gymnastics program in Blackwood - which only has 1 weekly class that is appropriate – early on Sunday morning
- There is a need for more inclusive sporting and rec opportunities for children with disabilities
- Molly's participation in Onkaparinga Swimming Club has been a notable and positive exception
- Thinking about Molly's post-school life is terrifying for us
- At this stage, Molly's future adult life involves living with us
- We are unsure about employment pathways for Molly
- In Molly's future, we want her to be included in a local mainstream employment
- We have felt at times like other parents and people in our community are judging us and watching us as parents, when supporting our Molly in public spaces, like at the shops
- Clear signage is important for Molly, especially in equipping her to navigate community spaces independently
- Many signs in local businesses are not clear for Molly – e.g. we were in a local restaurant which has funky / coded gender toilet signs, Molly needed us to work out which toilet to use

## Meeting with Community Bridging Services (CBS), Stirling

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On 11 September 2020, our Community and Social Planning Officer interviewed the Jobnet Regional Manager (South/East Metro), the Jobnet Coordinator (Adelaide & Stirling) and the Employment Officer at Community Bridging Services (CBS), Stirling

Summary of key feedback:

- Government agencies and businesses are often reluctant to create inclusive employment and supported positions because of misconceived idea of what disability is – the talents, skills and contributions people with disability bring, and the support that is available for employers. Can be addressed through disability awareness training for HR and management and all staff
- Increasing category of disability is mental health

- Our clients may have gone through recovery – they come to us for re-training
- Someone may start with physical disability, which leads to unemployment, which leads to mental illness
- We see a lot of people who have sustained a workplace injury – but while they can't work, or when work-cover pay runs out, mental health concerns arise (e.g. older men)
- Uni graduates with disability struggling to attain work in their field of study
- Flinders Uni partners with the University Specialist Employment Partnerships (USEP) program, a collaborative program preparing and connecting tertiary students with disability to employment relevant to their qualifications.
- Stories of success about our clients: our CBS payroll officer who is a former client and today one of CBS's most valuable employees; young person with autism recently employed at Mt Torrens Hotel; and City of Mitcham Council have taken on a client through the University Specialist Employment Partnership (USEP) at Flinders Uni.
- Best thing AHC can do is to "model it!" "lead by example" as disability-inclusive employer
- Don't just create Register of residents with disability who are interested in being on Council advisory groups and committees – better to make existing groups more inclusive and accessible
- People with disability, especially socially and physically isolated people with physical disability, limited mobility, transport from family friends – are particularly vulnerable community in event of bushfire emergency – do they know what to do in case they have to evacuate quickly? Who can offer support? There are vulnerable people who are very isolated – particularly in Hills, little public transport and community transport... In these emergency situations, do they know who to contact? Some don't have family and friends. Need for a dedicated service
- Don't assume new buildings that are "DDA compliant" are necessarily accessible (experience of a CBS client working in new SAHMRI building, with spinal cord injury, doors were very heavy and hard to open in wheelchairs, we worked for them to install swipe cards and toilets)

Ideas for actions to go in DAIP:

- Setup and conduct annual (anonymous) staff survey to identify number of AHC employees who identify as living with a disability (and needed supports)
- Develop pilot program with the University Specialist Employment Partnership (USEP) at Flinders
- Partner with CBS and their clients to offer disability awareness training for AHC staff
- Partner with CBS and their clients to produce an induction video for all new staff about working with people living with disability
- Partner with CBS to create a supported paid position at Council for resident(S) living with disability
- Offer Mental Health First Aid training for staff and volunteers
- Start using the Labour Market Information Portal to source data to help us understand our local labour market for people with disability
- Speak to other SA councils who have worked with CBS
- When released, use new Guide for government departments on hiring people with disability, being developed by CBS and SA's CTP Insurance Regulator (Release date Mid-October 2020)
- Identify existing Council advisory groups and committees, ensure accessible and inclusive for people with disability

- Appoint staff member/s as contact point for people with disability in community (advocacy, access etc)
- Work with internal and external partners providing bushfire preparedness to identify gaps and ways to support bushfire preparedness for vulnerable people living with disability
- Work with community centres to make more accessible
- Review and update community services directory – where visitors and community can find activities / destinations that are accessible
- Provide Easy Read training for all relevant and interested staff - how to make Council documents and communications easier to read

### Meeting with Carers and Disability Link (CADL), Woodside

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On 17 September 2020, our Community and Social Planning Officer interviewed the Carer Support Worker (Mental Health) and the Direct Care Services Coordinator at Carers and Disability Link (CADL), Woodside.

#### Summary of key feedback:

- Most people we support are NDIS participants and their family members who care for them
- We support participants with a disability through their NDIS plans with plan management, support coordination, & Direct Care Services (Support workers funded through their Core Supports of their NDIS plan)
- For younger participants, goals in their plan often focus on developing skills for independent living
- An important skill is learning how to use public transport
- Limited public transport in Hills often limits what activities carers and providers can access (with and for participants)
- NDIS general transport funding sometimes included in plan if participant they cannot use public transport without disability-related difficulty
- Activity Based transport funding does not cover for carers transporting family member for everyday commitments
- Providers of support can claim for Activity Based transport costs to cover the transport expenses for the Support workers when accompanying participant's to access community and supporting them at the activity (e.g. volunteering roles, shopping, social outing)
- May be worth trialling alternative services (e.g. the Keoride on-demand bus service) in Adelaide Hills district
- Be good to map residential clusters of NDIS participants / families and regular weekly travel needs (to community activities, volunteering and work opps) – to identify areas that need more connectivity
- Several families are using their child's NDIS funds to get them to and from school – which is not the purpose of funds and could be better used for other supports
- In some cases, support workers are being engaged to transport kids to and from school
- Potential need to work with schools to help integrate children (e.g. with autism) on their school bus services – needs to be led by schools
- Funding for carer peer-support groups has stopped
- Now carers needing peer-support are referred to the new Carer Gateway (Aust Gov), including online Community Forum. CADL still receive some state funding to support carers

(carers that care for someone that is under 65 and carers that care for a loved one who has mental health)

- My Time groups meet in Hills area (support parents/carers of Children that have a disability or special needs). Two groups operate, one at Mt Barker and one at Aldgate
- Agree there is need for more supported employment – most NDIS participants are travelling to CBD or Mt Barker to access supported employment
- We looked at seed funding, through NDIS/ILC, scheme to build capacity of sporting clubs to integrate participants with disability in sport teams/activities (e.g. through disability awareness training; and buddy / mentoring strategies). We looked at this because the feedback we had had from carers and participants was that they were not inclusive and accessible environments and cultures for our participants
- Our Op Shop has had some success in past with supported employment opportunities for participants with disability

### Meeting with The Hut Community Centre, Aldgate

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On 8 October 2020, our Community and Social Planning Officer interviewed the Executive Officer and Community Development Manager at The Hut Community Centre, Aldgate

Summary of key feedback:

- We are keen for our Hut staff and volunteers to be included in AHC staff training opportunities relevant to accessibility, such as training in communicating with people with disability
- We run community bus services to anyone under the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) living in the Adelaide Hills Council area. There could be opportunities for use by disability service agencies to support people with disabilities
- Our platform community garden could be potential space to offer café space for parents and carers of people with disability to connect and support one another
- We are keen to support more people with disability to volunteer with us
- Hut Community Centre is currently involved in Community Centres SA's "Amping up" Disability Access and Inclusion Pilot Project" (funded by Department of Human Services). A survey was conducted to ascertain if our programs are relevant and inclusive to people with a disability and their families and carers, and to also ensure our staff and volunteers consider accessibility as a key aspect of programming and communication. When we receive outcomes of survey, we will see if we can share learnings with AHC to help inform development of the AHC DAIP.
- We are happy to invite our Board members, volunteers, paid staff and program participants to provide feedback on the new DAIP when it has been drafted
- We will provide other relevant contacts of service providers for you to speak with (e.g. Homecare Australia, AHH Lifeskills, My Time Aldgate)

### Meeting with participants in AHC's Youth Leadership Program (YLP), Woodside

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On 14 October 2020, our Community and Social Planning Officer interviewed the participants in Council's 2020 Youth Leadership Program (YLP), Woodside.

Summary of key feedback:

- Visual impairment: braille signage at school campuses are sometimes wrong, and there is a challenge to getting around (a possible need for improved wayfinding strategies – including signage and other forms of wayfinding)
- Schools need to look into their DDA compliance re wheelchair ramps and elevators (an advocacy role for Council?), e.g. Oakbank Area School senior years have classes upstairs but no ramps or elevators.
- Oakbank has OT and Speech Therapist support for Primary School students with mental disability
- Disintegrated vs integrated education:
  - Some schools have special ed classes with specialised teachers, but this does not seem to be a widely shared arrangement at PSs in our district and there may be more individualised arrangements at schools in our district?)
  - Is there a difference in approach and resourcing between public & private schools?
- Public and school transport access for students: what can schools and students do to help?
  - Bus buddies? Buddy programs can work for a range of barriers including physical, behavioral and anxiety – but risk creating co-dependence issues.
- Thoughts for YL to ponder:
  - How to improve access to Council facilities & programs?
  - How YL program can be more accessible for future participants with disability?
  - Attitudes can be barriers to inclusion and participation
- Community and Social Planning Officer to fwd provisional plan to YL through Community Development Officer (Youth & Recreation) for their feedback, and look to do a follow-up workshop with the group to get their input.

### Meeting with atWork Australia, Stirling

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On 8 October 2020, our Community and Social Planning Officer interviewed the Community Engagement Manager (Adelaide metropolitan area) from atWork Australia, Stirling

Summary of key feedback:

- [atWork Australia](#) helps people to look for work while they are managing an illness, injury, disability or medical condition. This is part of the [Disability Employment Services](#) (DES) program.
- We operate across Adelaide, from a number of permanent atWork offices, but also as part of outreach arrangements from various community locations, such our recent commencement at The Hut.
- Many of our clients come through the Centrelink referral system, as they are claiming income support and must connect with an employment services provider
- Many of our clients come through the Centrelink referral system, as they are claiming income support and must connect with an employment services provider
- Other people can also receive assistance on a voluntary basis, subject to individual circumstances. This may include those who are ineligible for income support due to their partner or parent's income
- In general, people need to provide medical evidence, and be assessed by Centrelink as being able to work in open employment for at least 8 hours per week

- In some circumstances, students in their final year of school can also participate, without any Centrelink involvement.
- The atWork team member I mentioned is [Shaun Pianta](#). He has recently been running Disability Awareness sessions (online) for employers. There is another one coming up later this month.
- Rafaella Oke is our new Aldgate Job Coach for local job seekers – based at The Hut
- We are keen for AHC to assist us with any ideas or connections to get the word out about who we are and what we do to community organisations; traders; schools; medical facilities; and anyone else with any interest in knowing more!



# Email submissions

Council received 3 email submissions in Phase 1 of this community engagement project from

- The Training, Consultancy and Research Manager at Autism SA
- 1 resident living with disability
- 1 parents of a child with disability
- 1 person from general public with interest in access and inclusion

## Submission 1

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**From:** Niki Welz [mailto:nwelz@autismsa.org.au]

**Sent:** Tuesday, 6 October 2020 2:51 PM

**To:** Josh Spier

**Subject:** DAIP- Autism SA

Dear Josh,

I hope that you are well and thank you for providing Autism SA with the opportunity to input into your DAIP.

Autism SA is passionate about supporting organisations to develop and implement their DAIP to enhance inclusion and accessibility for the autism community and for those with invisible disabilities.

### Background Information:

Autism is a different way of thinking, a neurological developmental difference that changes the way a person relates to the environment and people around them.

Put simply, autism changes the way that a person sees, experience and understands the world. There are no physical differences between a person with an autism diagnosis and a person without a diagnosis as it is a neurological disability, classifying it as an *Invisible or Hidden Disability*. Autism can be characterised by differences in social communication, social interaction and engagement in restricted or repetitive behaviors and interests, which can include differences in processing sensory stimuli.

In 2018 the Australian Bureau of Statistics reported that there were 205,200 Australians with autism, a 25.1% increase from the 164,000 people with autism in 2015. In South Australia, there are more than 15,000 individuals registered with Autism SA. Males were 3.5 times more likely than females to have autism, with prevalence rates of 1.3% and 0.4% respectively. As of the 31 March 2018, 29% of NDIS participants with an approved plan had a primary disability of an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), making it the largest primary disability category for the NDIS.

A survey, commissioned by the Australian Autism Alliance, which Autism SA is a part of, in 2020 recorded that 68% of autistic individuals felt socially isolated, 48% felt sometimes unable to leave the house because they are worried about people behaving negatively towards them because of their autism. The places that people with autism avoided going were to pubs/bars (58%), family gatherings (52%), concerts (47%), shops (46%), sporting events (45%) and pools or gyms (45%). Families with a child on the autism spectrum also reported feeling socially isolated (73%) and felt unable to leave the home (60%).

The reasons people on the autism spectrum avoided going to public places were because of crowds/number of people (92%) and levels of light and noise (82%). The main reasons families avoided going to public places were because of crowds/number of people (87%) and concerns around how people would respond to them (58%). 37% of autistic individuals indicated that they don't receive support to

access social and recreational activities but would like to. The types of activities that they would like to participate, or increase participation in, include Sporting activities (45%), Social or recreation activities (65%) and Volunteering activities (48%).

In 2019 the Australian Autism Research Council conducted a survey in which autistic respondents reported that “raising awareness and educating the Australian community about autistic people” (70%) was an area of high priority.

Participation in the workforce is important for social inclusion and economic independence, but people with autism spectrum often encounter barriers in entering and staying in the workforce.

In 2018 the Australian Bureau of Statistics reported that the labour force participation rate for people on the autism spectrum was 38.0% among the 94,600 people of working age (15-64 years). This is compared with 53.4% of all working age people with disability and 84.1% of people without disability. Concerningly the unemployment rate for people on the autism spectrum was 34.1%, more than three times the rate for people with disability (10.3%) and almost eight times the rate of people without disability (4.6%).

In 2020, the Australian Autism Alliance, reported that only 30% of individuals that held a paid job told their employer that they had autism stating that they were concerned that they would be judged negatively (59%), that they were not confident that it would help (42%), not believing that they would understand or that anything would change (41%), or that they were concerned that they would lose the job or have their hours reduced (31%).

Only 31% of autistic adults reported that they knew where to get help if they experienced discrimination or exclusive practices and only 40% of autistic adults are confident to speak up for themselves and self-advocate.

#### **Access and Inclusive Practices for Consideration when developing Disability Access and Inclusion Plans;**

When developing and planning for implementation of DAIP's, it is important for organisations to understand the broader scope of the term 'disability'. Disability includes both physical and cognitive disability, many of which are invisible but make up the significant number of 1 in 5 people who have a disability. It is also important to note that a significant number of people with disability do not disclose their disability in their workplace. For individuals on the autism spectrum, this is around 70%.

To support people in the workplace and accessing supports and services, it is essential that an inclusive culture is embedded in all aspects of practice. This culture should be focused on celebrating diversity, opposed to acceptance of diversity. To support an inclusive culture, training for the wider workforce that takes into consideration the context of the sector, the roles, and responsibilities of the individuals attending needs to be considered. The training should have a specific focus on hidden disabilities, tailored specifically for workplaces for all employees. Training should considerate the employees roles and responsibilities, the environment, the nature of the activities and tasks, the States and Territories Rules and Regulations and engagement with individuals with a disability both internally and externally. Focus should be on developing employees understanding and confidence in applying inclusive practices to increase accessibility and inclusion.

The language around disability and autism is constantly changing and evolving. Language is a powerful way to promote positivity and to change perceptions, attitudes and beliefs. There are many ways in which the autism spectrum is described and many ways in which the individual refers to themselves. It is essential for organisations to consider and develop in consultation with their wider communities, an 'Inclusive Language Guide' reflecting the views and guidelines around language use and that these guidelines are adhered to consistently across the organisation both in written and verbal communication use.

When developing Disability Access and Inclusion Plans the environment needs to be carefully considered both in relation to the Disability (Access to Premises- Building) Standards 2020, and against best practice

autism friendly environments standards. Consideration should include consideration to the sensory environment (colours used, furniture layout, lighting, sound reduction measures, smell consideration, traffic flow and crowd number management, wait spaces and management and incorporation of sensory walls/spaces) and to communication aspects (information on what is going to happen, where, when and why and how this information is presented) as well as the physical environment.

In the workplace considerations in DAIP's should include establishing advisory groups that meaningfully influence the wider workplace, as well as creating considered volunteer programs that are supporting and inclusive. Organisations should review traditional recruitment practices to consider if they are inclusive and allow for people that do not have a strength in social and communication skills, yet may have significant and relevant skills needed on the job and that would contribute significantly to workforces.

Working with Local Peak body services to connect with the wider disability communities to influence organisations DAIP's is important and strengthen community partnerships.

### Supports and Resources:

Autism SA is an established, well-governed, registered for purpose, charitable organisation. As the first organisation of its kind in Australia, Autism SA was founded in 1964 by people with autism and their families. The founding members were families driven by the desire to ensure that they had access to the best information, education, intervention, and support. They advocated for acceptance and understanding. They encouraged research and leadership in the community. Since 1964, Autism SA has been single-minded in its focus upon supporting the autism community. Autism SA has been at the forefront of service development and advocacy with a strong legacy of being responsible for bringing many firsts to the community in South Australia and nationally.

Today the organisation prides itself on strong values-driven culture of empowerment of, and support for, individuals living with autism.

The Autism Friendly Charter, <https://autismfriendlycharter.org.au/>, was developed by Autism SA to support mainstream business and events offered by organisations to be accessible and inclusive. Free online training has been developed to support employers to train their employees in applying inclusive principals. An eligibility criteria applies for business wanting to sign up.

Autism SA Training, Consultancy and Research Team can support organisations by developing tailored training programs specifically for their workplace. Training is carefully designed and implemented to support workplaces in building awareness and confidence in applying inclusive and accessible practices in different environments. We are also able to provide consultancy which can be used to support workplaces to apply inclusive practices.

For more information, please contact [nwelz@autsimsa.org.au](mailto:nwelz@autsimsa.org.au)

### References:

- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. People with disability in Australia 2019: in brief. Cat. no. DIS 74. Canberra: AIHW.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2018. Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings
- Summary of results from consultation survey to inform a submission into the Federal Senate Select Committee on Autism (2020) Prepared by ACU Engagement for the Australian Autism Alliance Authors: Sandra C Jones, Simone Mizzi, Chloe Gordon
- Autism Friendly Charter: <https://autismfriendlycharter.org.au/>
- Australian Autism Research Council, Australian Autism Research Council: 2019 Research Priorities. (2019)

Thank you again for providing Autism SA with this opportunity to influence your DAIP.

If you would like to arrange a meeting to further discuss the development of your DAIP in relation to the above, please do not hesitate to reach out and we can arrange a time.

Kind regards,



**Niki Welz - Training, Consultancy and Research Manager**

**t** 08 8462 0635 **Infoline** 1300 288 476

**p** PO Box 304, Marleston DC SA 5033 **w** [www.autismsa.org.au](http://www.autismsa.org.au)

Mon, Tues & Wed



## Submission 2

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 8 October 2020 12:09 AM  
**To:** Mail <[mail@ahc.sa.gov.au](mailto:mail@ahc.sa.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

Hi.

I am a 63 year old married male living at [REDACTED], Aldgate, phone [REDACTED].  
I have the disability of MS which very much limits my movement without physical support.

I was recently gifted an outstanding electric wheelchair the previous owner no longer wanted.  
I have been for some forays around the district but I find many footpaths either unfit for use  
or so narrow and so close to roads so as to be frightening and therefore not usable.  
The wheelchair is easily capable of driving the distance to Stirling, and returning.  
At this point I feel unable to take this hazardous journey.  
I can't comment on any other events, parks, shops council facilities as can't get very far.

Thanks for your attention,  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 8 October 2020 12:14 AM  
**To:** Mail <[mail@ahc.sa.gov.au](mailto:mail@ahc.sa.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** Disability Access and Inclusion Plan - Addendum.

Hi.

I also meant to add that there are few disability parks in the parking area behind the eastern side of the main  
Stirling shopping area. I refer to the Westpac bank side of the road as a reference.

Thanks,  
[REDACTED]

### Submission 3

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 9 October 2020 3:22 PM  
**To:** Mail <mail@ahc.sa.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Disability access

Hi

From 2 perspectives

Child in wheelchair  
Difficult to find public disabled toilet that had enough internal room to fit wheelchair and pram. Very difficult  
Unable to open doors that pull in by yourself.

Couldn't use the disabled swing at playground. Looked forward to all week. Got there  
Was locked and sign said to collect key from council. Argh!

Poor foot paths.

Must have stop light crossing at hospital. PLEASE!  
Unable to safely cross road in my wheelchair. Unable to physically go down to train crossing as will physically  
tire.

UNSAFE TO cross in coles shops car park in wheelchair. No official pedestrian crossing

Not enough disabled car parks anywhere

Would like to see public water fountains for filling up drink bottles, like in city and other suburbs.

Thanks  
[REDACTED]

## Submission 4

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 8 October 2020 8:31 PM  
**To:** Mail <mail@ahc.sa.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2020-24.

Hello,

I am writing in regards to the upcoming disability access and inclusion plan. I am not personally affected by a disability but have made some observations around the Woodside area. The first is that there is no disability access to the Post Office, however I am not sure whether this has anything to do with council.

The second is the footpath leading from the main Street into Saint Mark's Drive. The surface is uneven, and on the South side the footpath just ends with no ramp to get onto the road. There are a lot of people with strollers, and little kids on bikes. Where Saint Mark's Drive turns left it's a blind corner and with no footpath it doesn't feel very safe.

Thank you for listening to my concerns,

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]



## Conclusion and next steps

Early feedback\* received during Phase 1 (via the interviews) was used by our staff to prepare the provisional AHC Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2020-24. This plan outlines the actions we will take over the next four years to improve accessibility and inclusiveness for people with disability in our community and organisation.

The provisional DAIP was adopted by Council on 27 October 2020 for [publication on our website](#) and for Phase 2 of community consultation...

Phase 2 of the DAIP community consultation project is open from **29 October 2020** until **6 December 2020**, and invites further community and stakeholder feedback on the actions under each of the 4 themes of the provisional DAIP.

[Click here to download a copy of the provisional Disability Access and Inclusion Plan](#)

All feedback received during both phases 1 and 2 of consultation will be used to update and improve the provisional DAIP, which is scheduled to go back to Council for consideration and endorsement at the end of January 2021.

\*All of the feedback received during Phase 1 of community consultation (reported in this document) is still being analysed in detail, and will be used to strengthen and amend the provisional DAIP.

### Participating in Phase 2:

To help us enhance the provisional DAIP we would especially like to hear from:

- people with disability who use our services, built environments, facilities and information
- people supporting our residents with disability
- workers from the disability sector
- interested members of the AHC community

Community members can provide feedback on the provisional DAIP through the following ways:

- Completing the online [feedback form](#)
- Joining the online discussion forum
- Phoning Josh on 8408 0579
- Emailing [jspier@ahc.sa.gov.au](mailto:jspier@ahc.sa.gov.au)
- Meeting with us. We will ensure social distancing measures are in place to keep everyone safe. To arrange a meeting, phone 8408 0579 or email [jspier@ahc.sa.gov.au](mailto:jspier@ahc.sa.gov.au)