

MEDIA RELEASE

PLAN TO BOOST ACCESS, INCLUSION IN MID MURRAY

Access and inclusion will be enhanced in the Mid Murray for people with a disability and their carers.

The Mid Murray Council has adopted a new Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP), following consultation with community and the disability sector. It is the Council's third DAIP and builds on extensive work the Council has already undertaken in this area.

The new plan outlines the ways in which access, inclusion and equality will be improved locally for people living with physical, mental and intellectual disabilities, and for their carers and families.

The plan, developed with assistance from international disability access experts *EnvironArc*, includes a range of measures such as:

- Enhancing access for people with disabilities to public carparking, footpaths, buildings, sport and recreation facilities and tourism facilities;
- Promoting the rights of people with a disability, including advocating on behalf of the community with other authorities for improvements to accessibility and services outside the control of Council; and
- Ensuring development applications for housing estates, commercial, retail, industrial and other buildings meet accessibility guidelines before approval.

There is also a strong focus on improving access to and participation in local government services and decision making. Key actions in this area are:

- Installing a hearing loop in the Council Chambers and providing a recording of meetings online for people to access remotely;
- Council encouraging people with disabilities to participate in local decision making; and
- Improving access to Council information and community engagement processes for people with disabilities and their carers.

Mayor Dave Burgess says the new plan will assist in improving quality of life and accessibility for people with disabilities in the Mid Murray community.

"Our Council has worked hard over the years to enhance accessibility and increase equality for people with disabilities. However, we recognise there are always ways in which we can do more to increase the quality of life for people who face additional challenges in terms of access and equality," Mayor Burgess says.

"Access to public facilities, places, events and services is a fundamental right and we are committed to ensuring all people in our community feel welcome, connected and able to make a valuable individual contribution.

"It is also critically important to make sure Council is delivering accessible governance. We can do this by making it as easy as possible for people to attend meetings – whether in person or virtually – and provide meaningful input into our consultation and engagement processes."

About 42.7% of people in the Mid Murray region rely on some form of accessibility and inclusive support.



“With a growing population, including an increase in our older population, it’s become even more important to make sure that our commitment to accessibility, inclusion and equality is reflected in our local facilities, events and services,” Mayor Burgess says.

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