

MEDIA RELEASE

COMMUNITY TO HAVE SAY ON NEW MID MURRAY DISABILITY ACCESS AND INCLUSION PLAN

People with disability, their carers and the wider community are being asked to give feedback on a plan to improve disability access and inclusion in the Mid Murray district.

The Mid Murray Council's new *Disability Access and Inclusion Plan* (DAIP) will be released for consultation next week and sets out ways in which access, inclusion and equality can be enhanced for people with physical, mental and intellectual disabilities.

Council has worked closely with the community and international disability access experts *EnvironArc* to develop the plan, consulting widely with people with disabilities, their carers, disability service providers and the broader community throughout January and February 2020.

The plan includes priorities for Council such as:

- Improved access for people with disabilities to public carparking, footpaths, buildings, sport and recreation facilities and tourism facilities;
- Improving accessibility to Council information and community engagement processes for people with disabilities and their carers;
- Encouraging participation in decision making for people with disabilities;
- 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;
- Improving access to Council meetings such as installing a hearing loop in the Council Chambers and providing recordings of meetings online; and
- Ensuring development applications for housing estates, commercial, retail, industrial and other buildings meet accessibility guidelines before approval.

Mid Murray Mayor Dave Burgess says Council is committed to planning and delivery outcomes that ensure people with disabilities have equality of access and enhanced outcomes.

"We want to ensure that all people in our community are given the opportunity to live their life to the full in our district," Mayor Burgess says.

"Our district is a friendly and welcoming place. We welcome diversity and we want everyone to feel that they belong here and make a valuable contribution.

"This is Council's third disability access plan and we've delivered many improvements over recent years in this area. However, we recognise that there is more to be done.

"It's essential that facilities and events are accessible, that our programs are inclusive and that we are providing - and encouraging - equality at every opportunity."

An estimated 42.7% of people – or about 3883 individuals – in the district rely on some form of accessibility and inclusive support.

“These figures reinforce the importance of delivering improved support and access to a wide range of services to those in our community living with disability, their carers and visitors with disabilities,” Mayor Burgess says.

“This plan has been developed with valuable input from those in our community who will benefit most from these improvements in areas such as access to public facilities and services, communication, participation in engagement and decision making, access to events and even employment opportunities.

“We now need all stakeholders to review this plan and give us their feedback to ensure that the final document will deliver real improvements in accessibility and inclusion for our residents and visitors.”

Consultation on the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan will begin on 17 June.

For more information on the plan or how to have your say, visit www.mid-murray.sa.gov.au.

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