

yass valley council

the country the people



# **2024-2026 DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN**



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this land and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging of the Ngunnawal Nation.

The Council thanks all those people who contributed to the development of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2024-26.

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## Mayoral Message

On behalf of Yass Valley Council, I am thrilled to present our Disability Inclusion Action Plan for 2024-2026. This plan reflects our unwavering commitment to enhancing the quality of services, facilities, systems, and programs to better serve all members of our community.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all community members, service providers, and staff who participated in the consultation process. Your insights and feedback have been invaluable in shaping this plan and I am confident that together, we can create a more inclusive and welcoming Yass Valley for everyone.

We recognise the importance of ensuring that people with disabilities have equal access to services, facilities, and opportunities. Through this plan, we will work to remove barriers and promote inclusion across all aspects of community life.

Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to making our community a better place for all.



Allan McGrath  
**Mayor**

## STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

This Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2024-26 addresses the ongoing needs for our local community by:

- advocating equal rights for all,
- progressing positive community attitudes and behaviors,
- creating livable communities by providing a range of facilities, services and events that make our council a great place for people to live, work and play,
- supporting access to meaningful employment, education, and professional development opportunities,
- improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes,
- collaborating with business partners, service providers and community groups,
- strategic planning to meet the changing needs and expectations of the growing community, and
- monitoring compliance to legislation.

## WHAT IS A DISABILITY?

Australia is party to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The CRPD states in Article 1 " *Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others*", This statement is supported by the **NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014** section 7(1) disability in relation to persons.

Article 33 requires countries to establish and designate a framework to promote, protect and monitor Implementation of the CRPD. The Australian Disability Strategy 2021-2031 Is such a framework to ensure the principals of the Convention are enacted into policies and programs affecting people with disabilities, their families, and carers.

Disability is multi-dimensional by way of interaction between a person's impairment and contributing factors such as:

- Environmental factors: attitudes and access to services.
- Personal factors: age and identity.

These interactions result in positive or negative influences on a person's ability to perform everyday activities and participate in community life. Therefore, those with similar impairments can have opposing experiences. Moreover, what may be viewed as disability for one may not be for another.



## WHAT IS A DIAP?

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) is the operationalisation of the core elements within the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan. They include:

- Attitudes and Behaviors
- Livable communities
- Employment, and
- Systems and Processes.

With the enacting of the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW) all NSW Local Government authorities are required to develop a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) to ensure that people with disability have equity of access and inclusion to functions, facilities, services, and information provided by the Council.

## DISABILITY IN AUSTRALIA

### Demographics

*The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIWH) and Australian Disability Network (ADN)*

- 1 in 6 people (18%) in Australia have disability (4.4 million people) AIWH.
- 1 in 3 people (32%) with a disability have severe or profound disability (about 1.4 million) AIWH.
- 1 in 4 people (23%) with a disability, the main form is mental or behavioral. AIWH.
- 17.8% of females and 17.6% of males have disability ADN.
- Half of the Australian population age 65 and over live with disability ADN.
- 1 in 9 (11.6%) of people aged 0 - 64 live with disability ADN.

### Types of disability

- In 2018, of the 4.4 million Australians living with disability, 76.8% reported the main condition was a physical disorder.
- 5.7 % of all Australians are living with a profound or severe disability.
- 23.2% of all people with disability reported mental or behavioral issues as their main issue.
- 3.6 million Australians have level of hearing loss.
- 453,000 people are estimated to be living with low vision or blindness by Vision Australia.
- About 45% of Australians aged 16 to 85 will suffer from mental illness at some point.
- 1 in 5 Australian will experience mental illness each year.

### Employment of people with disability

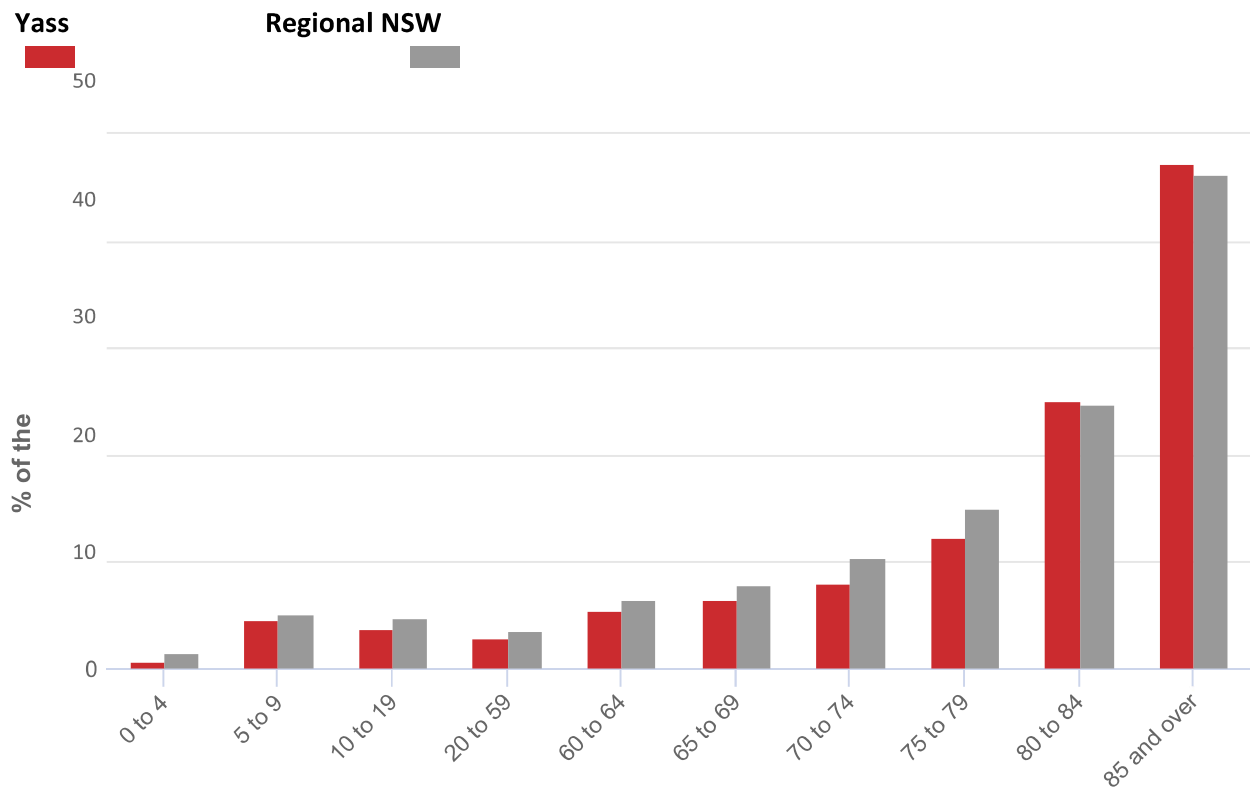
People with disability have:

- The most common occupations of persons in Australia living with disability are,
  - Professionals 23%
  - Technicians & trades 15%
  - Administration 13%
  - Laborers 12%
- In 2018, 28.3% of all people of working age with a disability had fulltime employment. Compared with 54.8% of persons without a disability.
- Those aged between 15-64 are twice as likely to be unemployed than those without a disability.
- People with disability are more likely to be employed on a part-time basis, than people without disability.

Yass Valley Statistics  
(Idcommunity demographic resources)

- 17,477 population for Yass Valley with growth forecast of 27,230 by 2036.

Need For Assistance with Core Activities, 2021

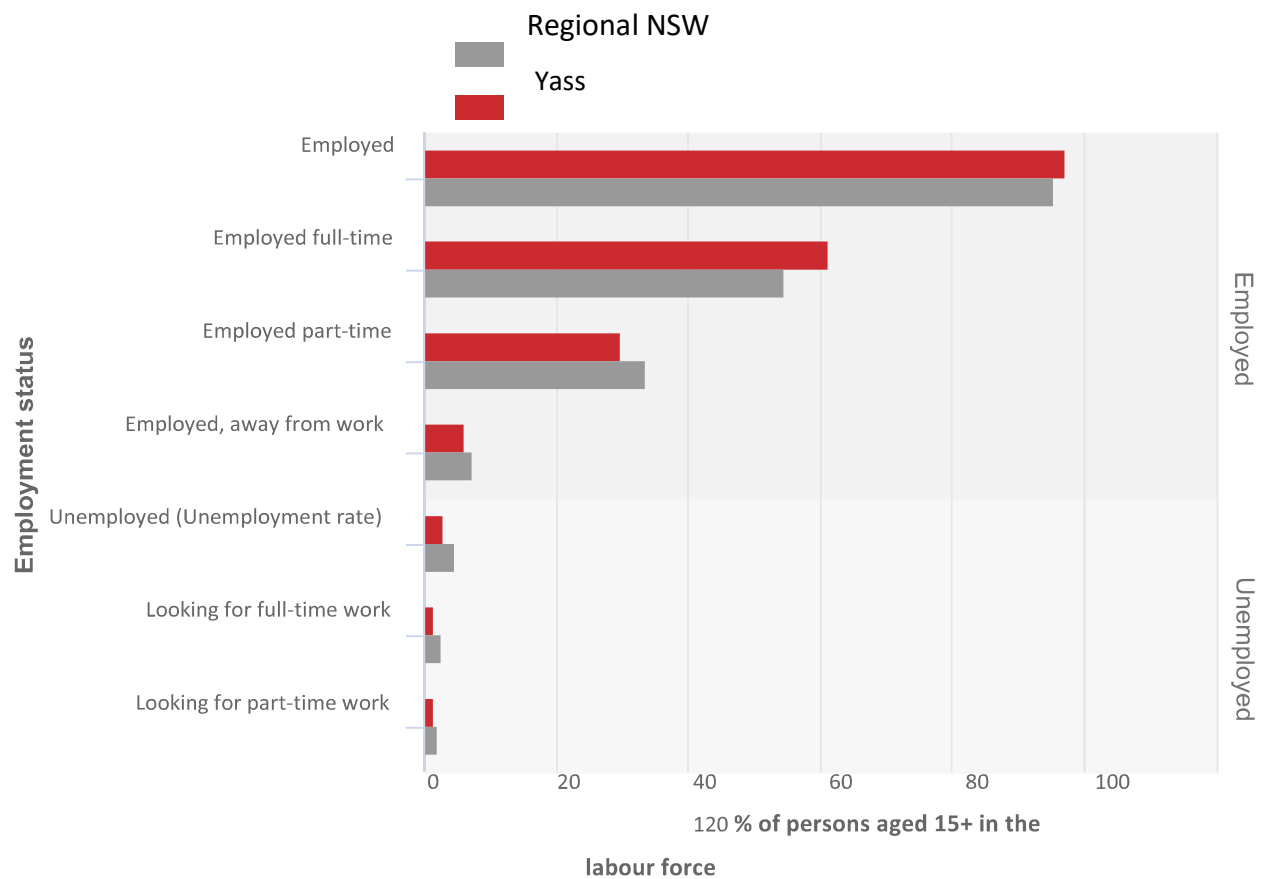


Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2021 (Usual residence data). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id (informed decisions).



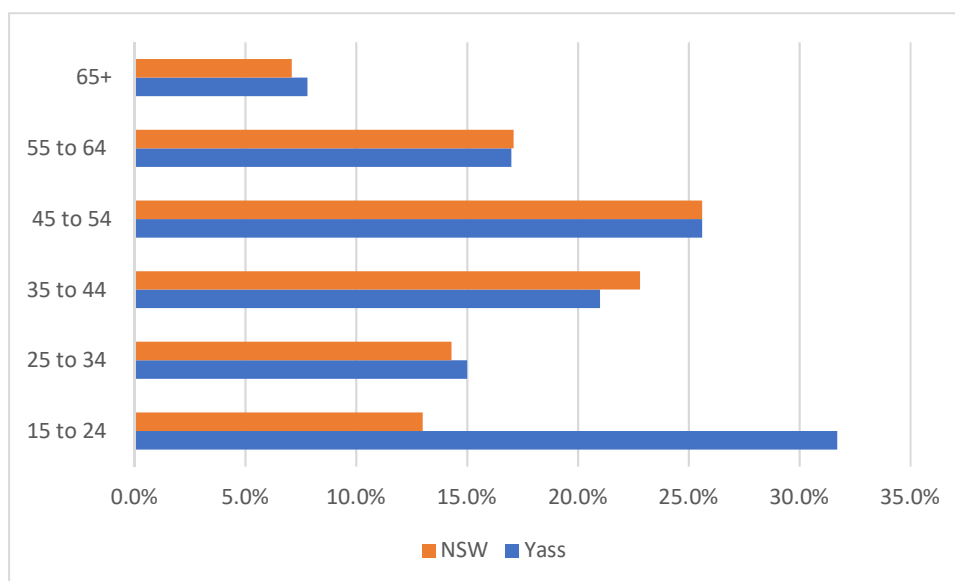
## Employment Status 2021

Total persons in the labour force



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2021 (Usual residence data). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id (informed decisions).

## Employment by Age group



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2016 and 2021.



## POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS

*Council supports and encourages positive and inclusive attitudes and behaviours.*

### What Council already does

- Enables social justice principles on access, equity, rights, and participation to planning.
- Cultural awareness training for staff.
- Policies and procedures that promote non-discriminatory practices.
- coordinates a calendar of events to promote initiatives acknowledging disability.
- Promotional material includes diverse, positive, and inclusive images.
- Working with the community to raise awareness of disability and increase accessibility in the Yass Valley.

### Improvement Projects

- Provide resources for note taking at events.
- Distribute Council information to providers for internal distribution.
- Investigate use of mobile library as mobile community hub
- Events checklist to include transport options - community transport - quiet spaces for people overloaded at events.
- Inclusion awareness for Council staff so young people who participate in these events feel safe.
- Provide accessible information on where to go - accessible parks, etc.





## Actions

Key positive attitudes & behaviours themes	Initiatives & projects	Timing	Performance indicator
1.1 Visual representation	Improve Council's visual representation of people with disability, promoting abilities and participation in all aspects of life	Ongoing	Number of publications and reports that contain photos of people with disability
1.2 Continually improve Council events to be more inclusive and accessible	Include QR codes on all Council events information/published material	Early 2025	Council Checklist created, QR codes on published material
	Council events checklist created with access and inclusion considerations	Early 2025	Event checklist published
	Engage with young people with disability to ensure Council youth programs/events more accessible and inclusive	ongoing	Number of young people with a disability engaged in planning, promoting, and implementing Council youth programs and events
1.3 Equip staff with knowledge and skills to demonstrate appropriate attitudes and behaviours	Include disability awareness training as part of Council's employee's induction.	2025	
	Facilitate disability awareness training for all frontline customer-focused staff.	2025	Knowledge and skills are enhanced, improving the customer experience

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

*Council is committed to equal employment and workplace opportunities for all staff.*

Council has several employees who identify as having a disability.

### Improvement Projects

- Flexible working arrangements
- Do not 'identify' positions.
- Note on advertisements that assistance is available for applications.
- Provide leadership to employers in the Yass Valley about employing people with disabilities.
- Opportunity for work experience for students, or cadetship programs within Council
- Disability Employment Service, School Leavers Employment Service to work with Council to find employment opportunities.

### Actions

Key employment opportunity's themes	Initiatives & projects	Timing	Performance indicator
2.1 Council provide leadership in the community and effectively attract, retain and support a diverse workforce	Promote Council as an inclusive workplace and encourage people with disability to apply for positions within Council	June 2025	Increase the number of people who identify through screening
	Review current recruitment, support and retention policies related to inclusive employment	2025	Recruitment /onboarding, measures reviewed.
	Strengthen relationships with local disability employment services	2025	Initiatives supported and partnerships formed.
	Partner with disability service provider that focuses on employment pathways for people with a disability	ongoing	Initiatives supported and partnerships formed.

## SYSTEMS & PROCESSES

*Improving Council's systems and practices that are easy to use and information is accessible.*

### What Council already does

- Council's is working towards standards of accessibility.
- Council's Library offers full accessibility.
- Councils Visitor and Information center offers full accessibility.

### Actions

Key systems & processes themes	Initiatives & projects	Timing	Performance indicator
3.1 Council information accessibility	Seniors Directory for website	2025	Seniors Directory available in accessible formats
	Systems training for staff to ensure Council documents include accessibility features where relevant	Ongoing	
	Promote images of people with disability in Council publications, materials and social media when available	Ongoing	
	Maintain Council web to maintain WCAG2.1 AA standard and follow accessibility guidelines for AAA rating	Ongoing	Progress made towards AAA compliance
	Ensure access and inclusion are considerations when introducing new technology – externally and internally.	Ongoing	
3.2 Community Engagement and internal processes are accessible	Develop an Accessibility document check list/style guide		Accessibility check list/style guide implemented
	Work with our local service providers to increase our photo stock library of inclusive and accessible friendly photos	Ongoing	Build on photo library
	Set a target for media promotion each year to support access and inclusion	Ongoing	Monitor media exposure

Key systems & processes themes	Initiatives & projects	Timing	Performance indicator
	Investigate audio embedded systems to be accessible on “Your Say”	Ongoing	

## LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

*Council supports the community to promote access and inclusion for everyone and reduce barriers to liveability factors such as transport, recreation, and social inclusiveness.*

*One community with equal opportunities to live, work and play.*

### What Council already does

- Continuing review of council facilities and amenities to identify improvements for the disabled.

### Actions

Key liveable communities' themes	Initiatives & projects	Timing	Performance indicator
4.1 Create and contribute to liveable and accessible public places	Prepare and implement Integrated Transport Strategy for the whole Shire which will identify and prioritise active transport network upgrades	ongoing	A prioritised list of infrastructure upgrades to support and improve active transport
	Promote Over 55's developments which are required as part of the SEPP (State Environmental Planning Policy) to install footpaths and have footpaths accessible to nearby bus shelters to comply with access requirements (gradients less than 1:14)	Ongoing	The quality of infrastructure provided as part of new development, supports and enhances active transport and mobility for the whole community
	Continue to actively seek grant funding to implement connections identified in the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMPS)	Ongoing	
	Investigate inclusion of Social Impact Assessment in the DA process/DA checklist/Development Control Plan	2025	
	Develop and implement an annual program of accessible parking upgrades	Ongoing	Annual
	Place Based Planning System that will identify the allocation of strategic infrastructure at a local level		

4.2 Enhance Council's recreation and outdoor amenities to improve access and inclusion.	Identify key Council destination and recreational areas to install QR codes (Investigate capacity to integrate online story telling and reporting tool – Eg. Storymap)	2026	Complete
	Plan and improve access to local swimming pools	2026	Plan Developed
	Audit of recreational facilities to identify improvements for improved access and mobility within the space	2025	Audit Complete
	Consider New Animal Shelter to be built/fully accessible		
4.3 Continue to improve the access and inclusion of our libraries	Investigate magnifier technology options to improve customer accessibility to collections located at the library	2025	Magnifier technology installed/available at library
	Investigate options which will allow greater access to the Mobile Librarians Service for customers with disabilities	2025	Investigation report complete
	Investigate, integrated library management system (ILMS) which will allow greater accessibility to information and recreational material	2024	New ILMS installed and ready to use by community and staff
	Investigate the current lighting at the Library to see if it meets lighting standards for the visually impaired	2025	Report including recommendations for lighting solutions/upgrade completed
	Sensory Space –specifically designed to reduce sensory over stimulation at the library branch	2026	
	Purchase/obtain sound cancelling children's earmuffs/ear plugs for each branch library to help reduce sensory over stimulation for children	2025	Earmuffs/ear buds located at customer service desks



4.4 Upgrade of Toilets	Develop Public Toilet Strategy for the renewal of public toilet facilities to be compliant	Ongoing	Development of strategy
4.5 Accessible tourism	Review events and implement strategies to improve access. Include information about access in marketing and promotional material of all events.	Ongoing	Number of events reviewed Access information included in promotional material.
	Investigate a communication tool, such as an App, that promotes the accessibility of businesses and attractions in our area	Ongoing	
4.6 Enhance Council facilities to improve access and inclusion	Develop and implement an annual program of upgrade and renewal of bus shelters in accordance with disability access standards	2026	
	Investigate an audio loop to be available in Council's public meetings	2025	Audio loop installed
	Include asset and accessibility upgrades with refurbishment or new projects of Council buildings to ensure DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliant	Ongoing	Opportunities taken as refurbishment projects are delivered
	An audit of all Council owned buildings against the Building Code of Australia (BCA) which will create an action plan for future works to support accessibility on Council owned buildings	2026	

## WHAT CAN I DO?

*You can help create an accessible, equitable and inclusive community in Yass Valley, with greater opportunities for people with disability.*

### Individuals

- Be active in and supportive of Council events.
- Collaborate In the exchange of Ideas and knowledge.
- Be active in community engagement activities.

### Businesses and organisations

- Continuous improvement of access and inclusion in your business activities
- investigate the Companion Card for your business.
- Engage with Council to improve accessibility in and around Yass Valley
- Become an inclusive employer in your business or workplace.

***Whether you have a disability, care for someone with a disability or have no disability, it is up to all of us to work together to create a community that is vibrant, connected, and inclusive.***

