

TENTERFIELD SHIRE COUNCIL

DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2023 - 2026



RESOLUTION XXX/XXX



**TENTERFIELD
SHIRE COUNCIL**

247 Rouse Street
(PO Box 214)
TENTERFIELD NSW 2372

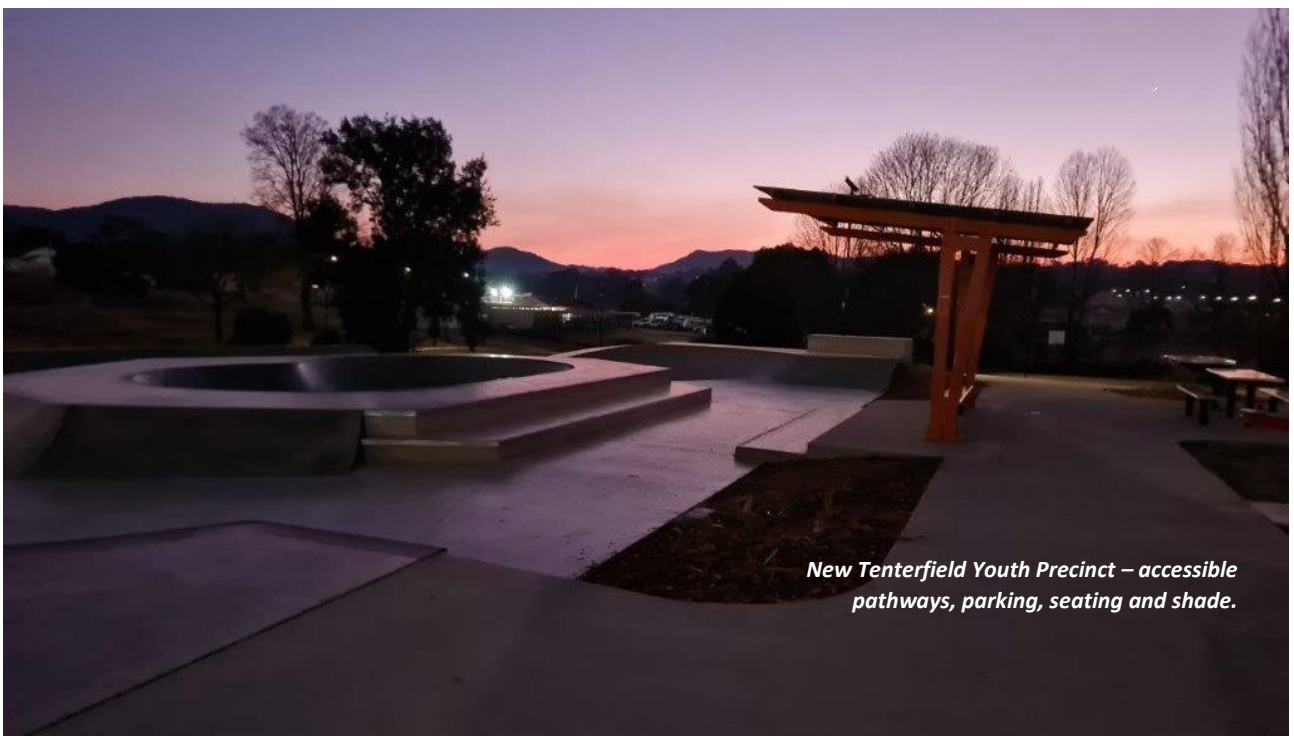
Phone:
02 6736 6000

Email:
council@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au

Website:
www.tenterfield.nsw.gov.au

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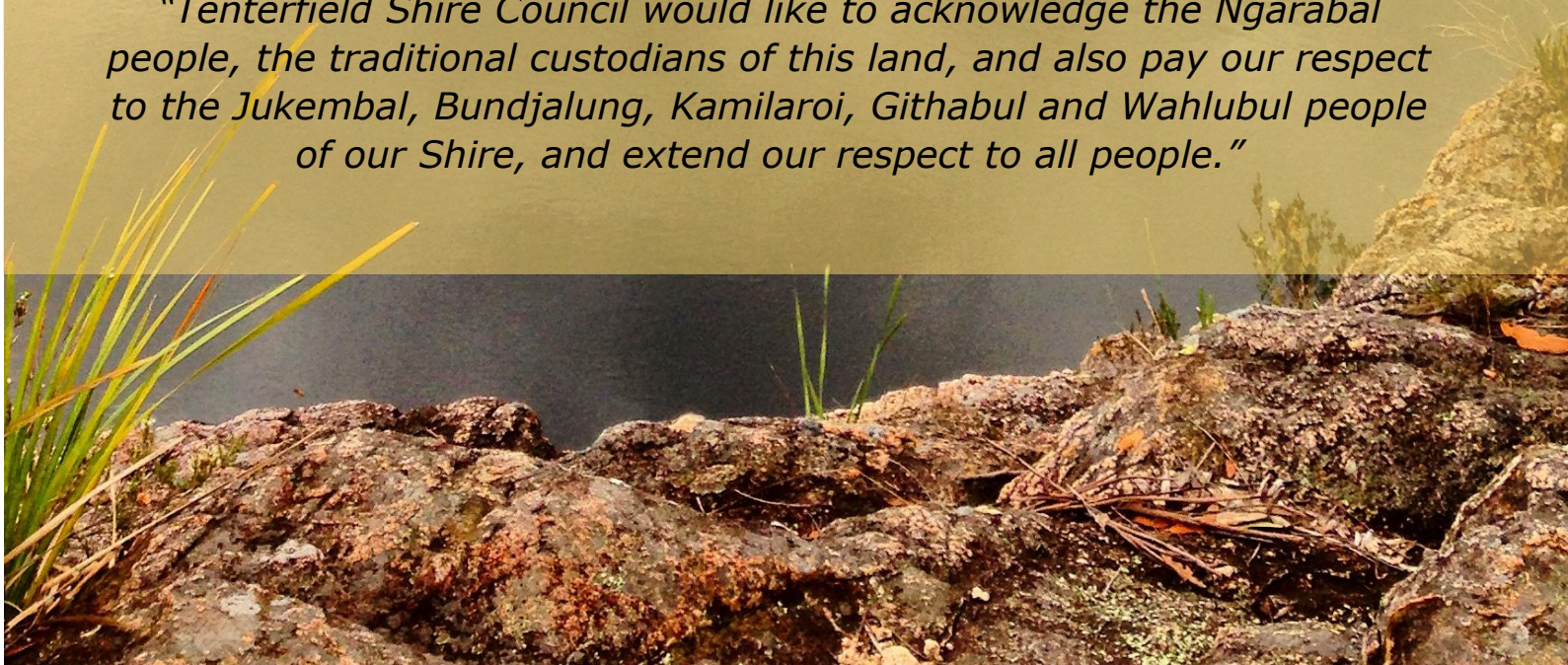


New Tenterfield Youth Precinct – accessible pathways, parking, seating and shade.



ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

"Tenterfield Shire Council would like to acknowledge the Ngarabal people, the traditional custodians of this land, and also pay our respect to the Jukembal, Bundjalung, Kamilaroi, Githabul and Wahlubul people of our Shire, and extend our respect to all people."



GUIDING PRINCIPALS

Tenterfield Shire Council is committed to continuing to work towards building an inclusive and accessible community that meets the needs of all its residents ensuring everyone can fully participate in their community.

The NSW State Government requires that each Council in NSW develop its own Community Strategic Plan (CSP). The CSP is the highest level of strategic planning undertaken by a council, with a ten-year plus timeframe. All other plans must support achievement of the Community Strategic Plan objectives.

The CSP identifies community priorities and aspirations for the future, to promote a positive lifestyle and improve the quality of living for our residents and visitors. Our CSP identifies the vision for Tenterfield Shire as ***Quality Nature, Quality Heritage and Quality Lifestyle.***

The CSP is based on social justice principals determined by the NSW Government of equity, access, participation and rights. These social justice principals are entrenched in the actions of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) and Council's other planning documents.

In alignment with the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan (DIP), our DIAP focuses on four key areas:

- Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours
- Creating liveable communities
- Supporting access to meaningful employment
- Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

The DIAP will also assist other members of the community who may not consider themselves as having a disability but who will benefit from improved access. These include people with limited mobility or temporary illness or injury; older people; and parents or carers of young children, particularly those with strollers or prams.



POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

PRINCIPAL LEGISLATION

NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014

The Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (DIA) is the legislative foundation for local government disability inclusion and access planning. The DIA outlines the Government's commitment to improving the lives of people with disability and reaffirms NSW's direction on building an inclusive community. In 2014, DIA required all NSW government agencies and local councils to develop Disability Inclusion Action Plans (DIAPs) in consultation with people with disability.

The diagram adjacent shows the connection between the DIA 2014, NSW Disability Inclusion Plan (DIP) and Council Disability Inclusion Action Plans (DIAPs). The DIA 2014 and all DIAPs are aligned with a range of international, Commonwealth and State legislation and policies that aim to increase opportunities and reduce barriers for access and inclusion.

INTERNATIONAL

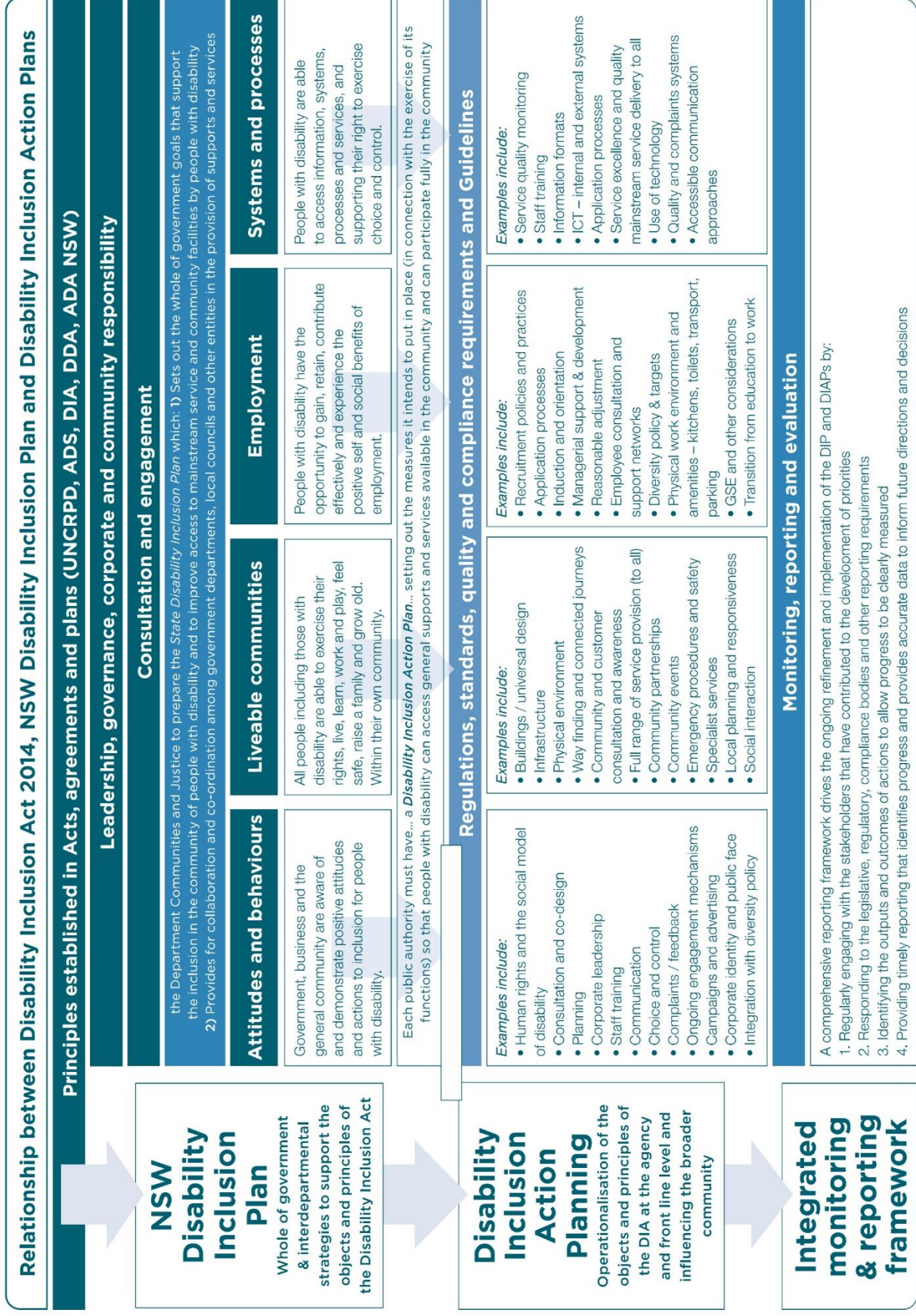
United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

In 2008, the Australian Government ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) "to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity." (United Nations (2006), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities).

COMMONWEALTH

Disability Strategy 2021 – 2031

Australia's Disability Strategy (ADS) 2021-2031 replaces and builds on the National Disability Strategy 2010-2020.



The Disability Strategy (DS) presents a national framework that all governments in Australia have signed up to. It sets out a plan for continuing to improve the lives of people with disability in Australia over the next ten years. It supports Australia's commitment under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The Strategy's vision is for an inclusive Australian society that ensures people with disability can fulfil their potential as equal members of the community. It includes targeted action plans for each of the outcome areas.

The Strategy drives change in seven outcomes areas:

- 1. Employment and financial security:** Providing jobs and career opportunities for people with disability and making sure they have enough income to meet their needs.
- 2. Inclusive homes and communities:** Increasing the number of accessible, affordable and well-designed homes and creating a community that is inclusive and accessible.
- 3. Safety, rights and justice:** Ensuring the rights of people with disability are promoted, upheld and protected, and people with disability feel safe and enjoy equality before the law.
- 4. Personal and community support:** Providing people with disability access to support so they can live independently and engage in their communities.
- 5. Education and learning:** Supporting people with disability to access education and learning throughout their lives so they reach their full potential.
- 6. Health and wellbeing:** Increasing support and capability in the healthcare sector to meet the needs of people with disability and ensuring disaster preparedness and emergency responses include the needs of people with disability.
- 7. Community attitudes:** Recognising the positive contribution people with disability make to society and building confidence in the community to work and engage with people with disability.



Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992

The **Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992** (DDA 1992) recognises the rights of people with disability to equality before the law and makes discrimination based on disability unlawful. The DDA 1992 covers many areas of life including employment, education, access to premises and provision of goods, services and facilities. DDA 1992 sections 60 and 61 set out the provisions for the completion of DIAPs that fulfil the intent of the DDA and sets measurable and accountable goals. Public authorities may wish to draft their DIAPs under the DIA in such a way as to comply with both the DIA 2014 and the DDA 1992.

STATE

NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (ADA)

The **NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977** (ADA) relates to discrimination in places of work, the public education system, delivery and goods and services including services such as banking, health care, property and night clubs.

NSW Government Sector Employment Act 2013

The **Government Sector Employment Act 2013** (GSE Act) and the associated Regulation and Rules provide a statutory framework focused on NSW government sector employment and workforce management. The GSE Act repealed the requirement for Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plans under the ADA. Instead, strategies for workplace diversity are now required to be integrated with workforce planning across the government sector. Integrating diversity requirements into workforce planning represents a shift in the way diversity is addressed in public sector employment.

Additional NSW Acts

- *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010*
- *Ageing and Disability Commissioner Act 2019*
- *NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977*

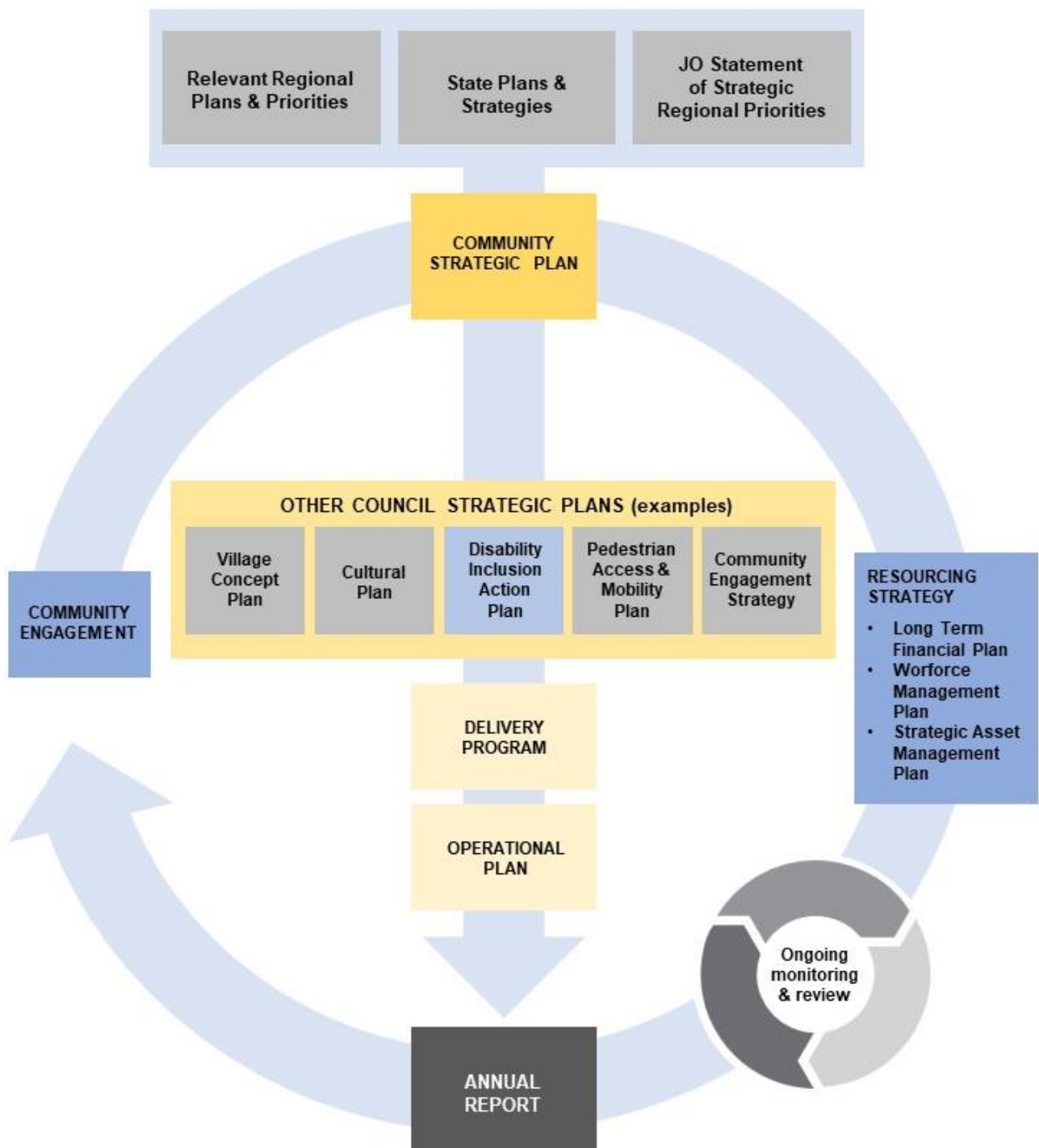
In addition to aligning with the above-mentioned international, Commonwealth and State policies, our DIAP also aligns with existing council plans and policies including

- *Tenterfield Shire's Community Strategic Plan*
- *Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan*
- *Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP)*
- *Equal Employment Opportunity – Management Plan*
- *Child Safety Policy*
- *Parks and Sportsgrounds Plan of Management*
- *Village Concept Plans*
- *Tenterfield Cultural Plan*

The linkages between our plans will assist in ensuring that the needs of people with disability will be included in all aspects of Tenterfield Councils' services, infrastructure and resources.

INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING

THE FRAMEWORK



"To encourage all people to participate in the economic and social life of the community with a supportive attitude towards equal life chances and equal opportunity for access to Shire resources."



WHAT IS A DISABILITY

The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA) defines disability in relation to a person as:

- *total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; or*
- *total or partial loss of a part of the body; or*
- *the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or*
- *the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or*
- *the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; or*
- *a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or*
- *a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour; and includes a disability that¹:*
 - *presently exists; or*
 - *previously existed but no longer exists; or*
 - *may exist in the future (including because of a genetic predisposition to that disability); or is imputed to a person.*

Categories of Disability Explained



Intellectual

Affects a person's abilities to learn e.g. down syndrome, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.



Neurological

Affects the person's brain and central nervous system e.g. acquired brain injury, epilepsy, dementia, multiple sclerosis, parkinson's disease.



Physical

Affects a person's mobility or dexterity e.g. quadriplegic, amputee, cerebral palsy.



Mental Illness

Affects a person's thinking processes e.g. anxiety, depression, post traumatic stress disorder.



Development and Learning Disability

Affects a person's ability to complete a task or use certain skills e.g. autism, dyslexia.



Sensory

Affects a person's ability to hear or see e.g. hearing or vision impaired.

¹ To avoid doubt, a disability that is otherwise covered by this definition includes behaviour that is a symptom or manifestation of the disability.



OUR COMMUNITY

The Tenterfield Shire is located in Northern NSW. From the Queensland/New South Wales border in the north and across the range to New South Wales' northern rivers, the Shire enjoys alpine summers, vibrant autumn reds, white-frosted winters and floral springs. Adventure seekers, history buffs and boutique lovers are bound to find something that speaks to their soul in this region.

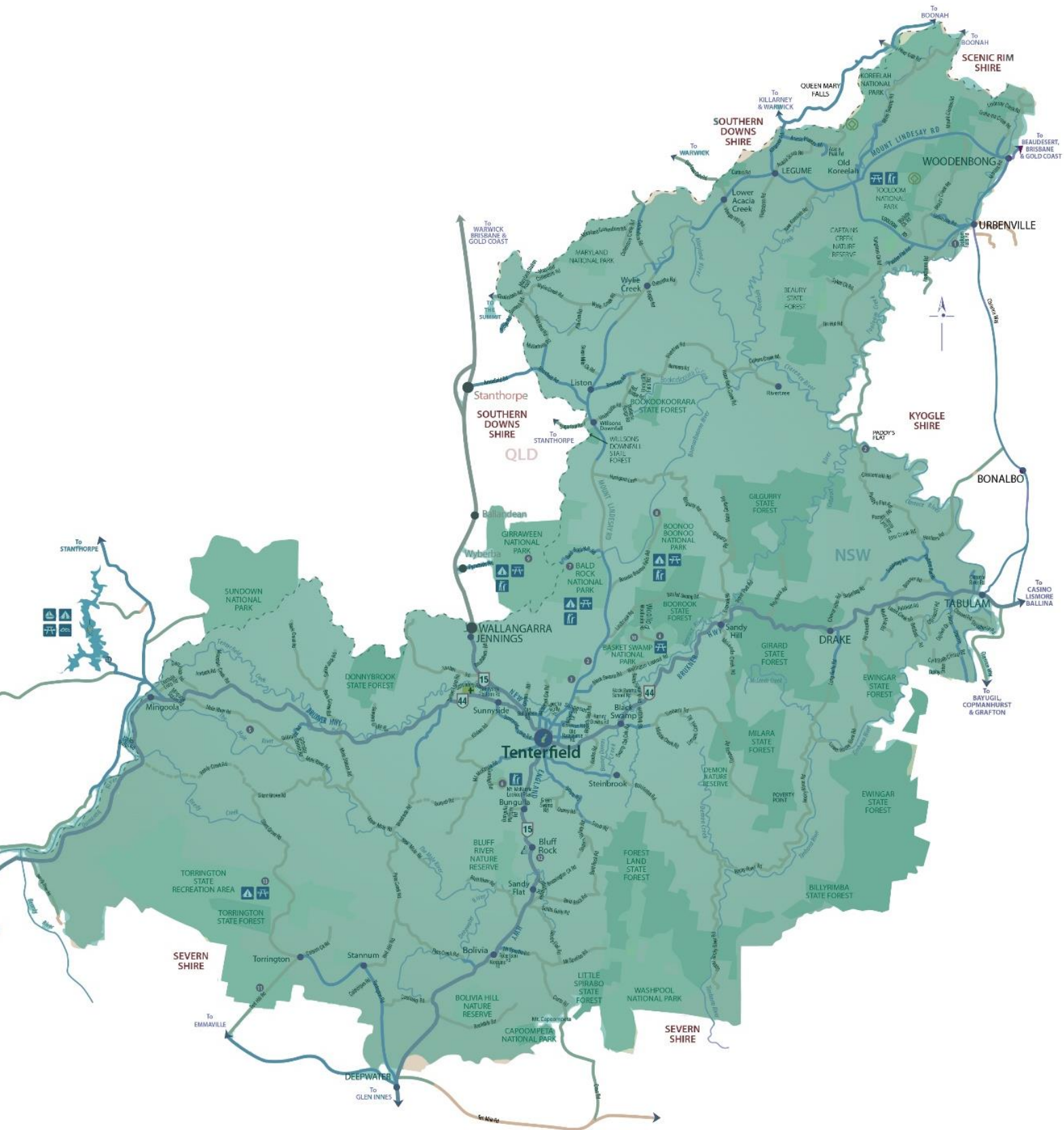
Tenterfield Shire is home to approximately 6,700 people, with half living in the town and the other half across the broader Shire.

Our Shire covers over 7,322 square kilometres, ranging from 150m to 1,500m above sea level including many landscapes and climates.

The Shire is also home to seven villages:

Urbenville, Drake, Jennings, Legume, Liston, Torrington, and Mingoola.

A strong agricultural region, Tenterfield Shire also offers residents and visitors many opportunities to get off the beaten track and discover history, nature and culture.

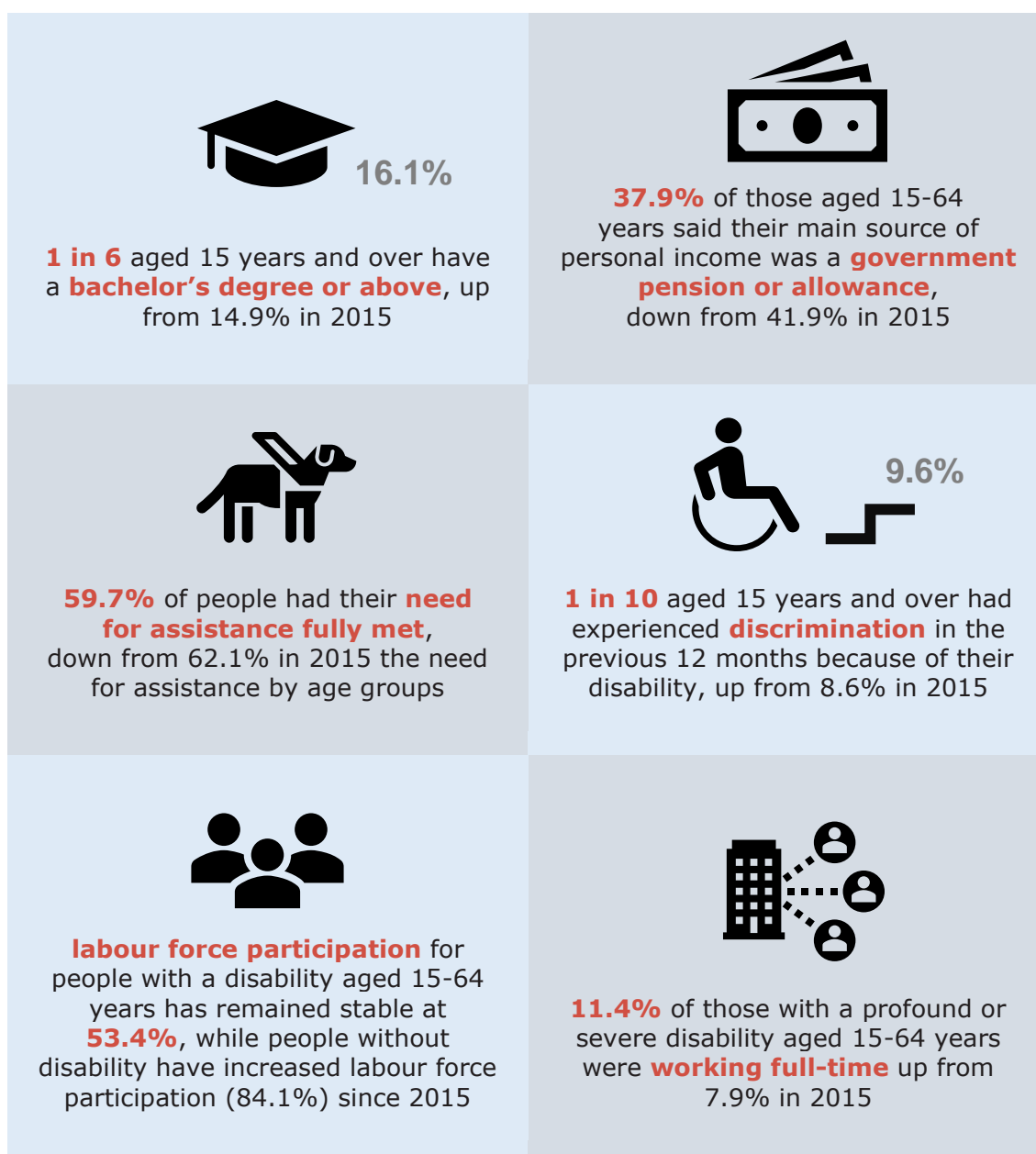


DISABILITY DATA

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) conducts a survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers. The most recent survey was completed in 2018. The survey measures the incidence of disability in Australia, to measure the need for support for older people and people with disabilities, to provide a demographic profile of people with disability compared with the general population.

The following summary of results provides a profile of people with disability in Australia.





DISABILITY IN TENTERFIELD SHIRE

In 2021, 552 people (or 8.1% of the population) in Tenterfield Shire Council reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability. This was a percentage increase from 2016.²

Tenterfield Shire's disability statistics relate directly to need for assistance due to severe or profound disability. The data helps in understanding the prevalence of people who need support in the community, and along with information on unpaid care to a person with a disability, how that support is

² Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2016 and 2021.

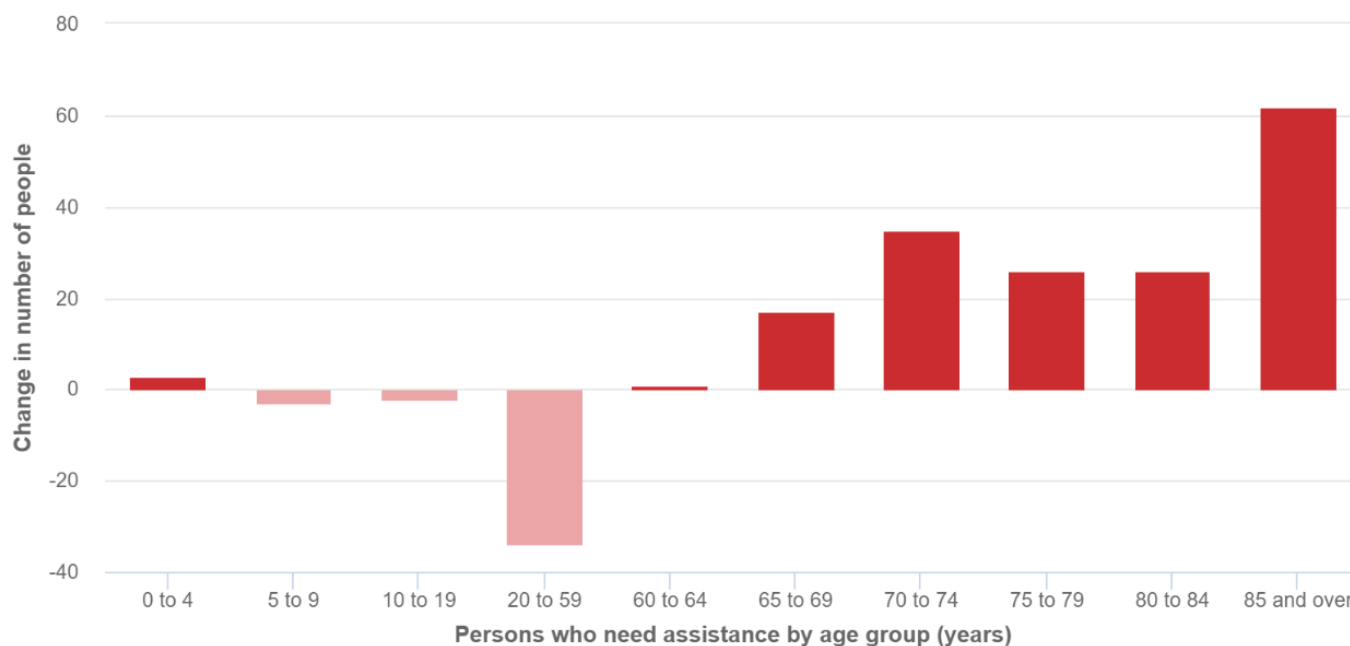
provided. The tables below show an overall increase in the number of people who identified as needing assistance.

People with a profound or severe core activity limitation are those needing assistance in their day to day lives in one or more of the three core activity areas of self-care, mobility, and communication because of:

- *a long-term health condition (lasting six months or more)*
- *a disability (lasting six months or more)*
- *old age*

Change in need for assistance with core activities, 2016 to 2021

Tenterfield Shire – Total persons



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

NEED FOR ASSISTANCE WITH CORE ACTIVITIES

Tenterfield Shire persons (usual residence)

Assistance needed by age group (years)	2021			2016			Change
	No.	% of total age group	Regional NSW %	No.	% of total age group	Regional NSW %	2016 to 2021
0 to 4	3	1.1	1.6	0		1.3	+3
5 to 9	13	4.3	5.0	16	4.3	3.8	-3
10 to 19	22	3.2	4.8	24	3.3	3.6	-2
20 to 59	127	4.9	3.5	161	5.9	3.6	-34
60 to 64	50	7.2	6.5	49	7.1	7.0	+1
65 to 69	58	8.0	7.8	41	6.2	7.9	+17
70 to 74	65	9.6	10.4	30	6.3	9.6	+35
75 to 79	56	14.2	14.9	30	9.6	14.1	+26
80 to 84	64	26.4	24.8	38	18.4	23.1	+26
85 and over	95	45.9	46.2	33	19.3	43.8	+62
Total persons needing assistance	552	8.1	6.8	408	6.2	6.3	+144

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

EMERGING GROUPS

The major difference in the age groups reporting a need for assistance between 2016 and 2021 in Tenterfield Shire Council was in the age groups:

- 85 and over (+62 persons)
- 70 to 74 (+35 persons)
- 75 to 79 (+26 persons)
- 80 to 84 (+26 persons)

DOMINANT GROUPS

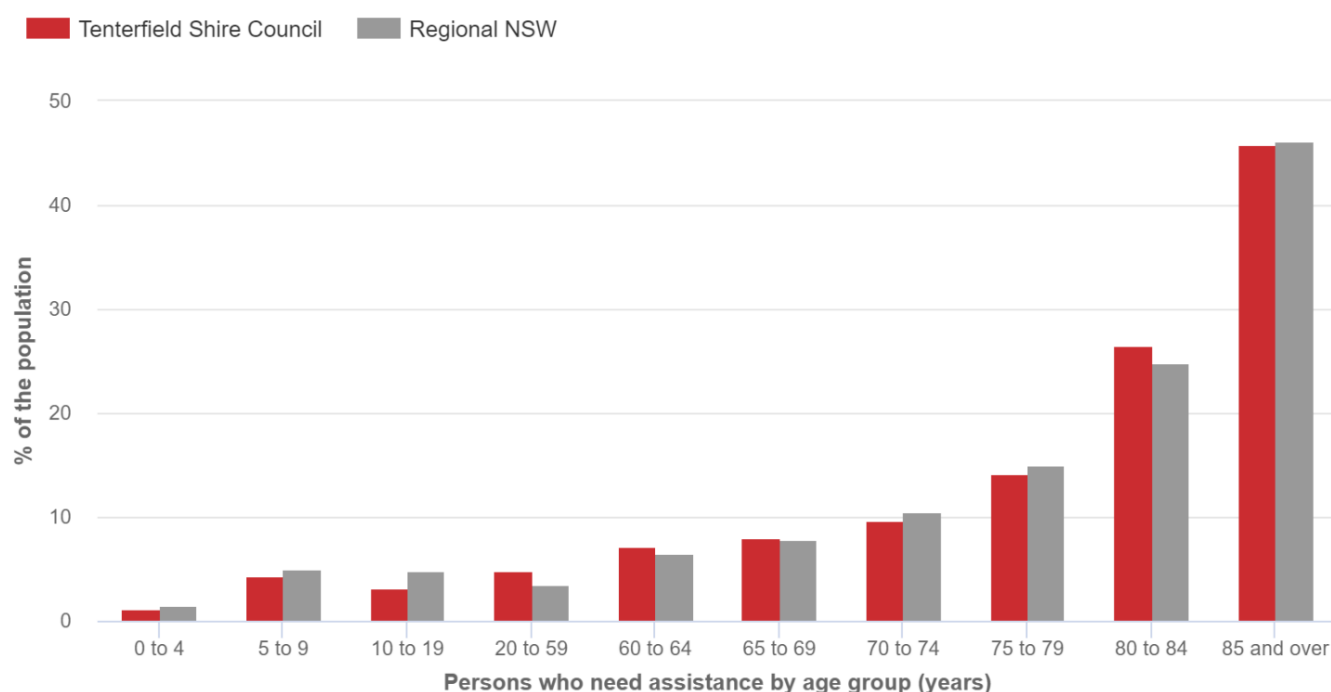
Analysis of the need for assistance of people in Tenterfield Shire Council compared to Regional NSW shows that there was a higher proportion of people who reported needing assistance with core activities.

Overall, 8.1% of the population reported needing assistance with core activities, compared with 6.8% for Regional NSW.

The major differences in the age groups reporting a need for assistance in Tenterfield Shire Council and Regional NSW were:

- *A large percentage of persons aged 80 to 84 (26.4% compared to 24.8%)*
- *A larger percentage of persons aged 20 to 59 (4.9% compared to 3.5%)*
- *A smaller percentage of persons aged 10 to 19 (3.2% compared to 4.8%)*

Need for assistance with core activities, 2016 to 2021



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

In Tenterfield Shire Council, 853 carers were providing unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, long term illness or old age in 2021. This represents 14.5% of the population aged 15+. The proportion of people providing unpaid care for the aged and disabled in Tenterfield Shire Council can be an important indicator of the level of demand for aged care services and facilities by local and state governments. An increasing proportion of carers among the population may indicate inadequate aged care provision, or the need for in-home support, or support for the carers themselves.



UNPAID CARE

Ballina Shire persons aged 15+ (usual residence)

Assistance to a person with a disability, long term illness or old age	2021			2016			Change
	Number	%	Regional NSW %	Number	%	Regional NSW %	2016 to 2021
Provided unpaid assistance	853	14.5	13.1	721	12.9	12.6	+132
No unpaid assistance provided	4,369	74.5	79.3	4,032	72.1	77.0	+337
Not stated	641	10.9	7.6	837	15.0	10.3	-196
Total persons aged 15+	5,863	100.0	100.0	5,590	100.0	100.0	+273

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



New accessible parking space -
Tenterfield Youth Precinct

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PREVIOUS DIAP

- *From 2017 to 2022 Council has delivered a range of projects and implemented actions that directly support the needs of people with a disability including:*
- *Disability Inclusion Access Advisory Committee meetings occurred when possible*
- *All events consider inclusive planning for our community*
- *Distribution of information and any potential funding opportunities shared with community and stakeholders via Tenterfield in Touch monthly e-News*
- *The library promotes the services available for people living with disabilities via Council's media streams including website Your Local News printed newsletter and Facebook Page*
- *Infrastructure projects are planned considering creating more liveable communities*
- *Funding proposals and grant applications consider how to best create a liveable community for our Shire*
- *Upgrade of public facilities for accessibility included toilet facilities at Shirley Park, a new toilet block at Memorial Hall. Memorial hall is also used as the emergency evacuation centre therefore the upgrades vital for creating a more accessible facility*
- *Secured State Government grant funding to construct new accessible amenities at Legume, Liston, Urbenville and Drake Community Halls*
- *Building infrastructure upgrades also to our Council Chambers and Council building that includes access ramps and increased accessibility to services*
- *Staff training includes Code of Conduct for all staff as part of initial induction training and an annual refresher training program for all staff to promote 'Dignity & Respect in the workplace'*
- *Free life-long learning opportunities were offered as part of the Library's annual program including 'Tech Savvy Seniors' and weekly 'Storytime*
- *Seniors Week and Youth Week planning considers access needs to ensure that the activities are inclusive*
- *Library access hub was established at Urbenville for people who experience difficulties to travel to Tenterfield*
- *The Tenterfield public library provides Home Library services for community who may have accessibility issues and includes two aged care facilities*

- *The Tenterfield public library provides free access to computers, internet and scanning services to all members of the community*
- *A wide selection of large print books and Talking books for hearing and sight impaired community members are available at the library and access to online databases via the Council's website*
- *Special private screenings of blockbuster movies at the Sir Henry Parkes Memorial School of Arts theatre were organised for local aged care residents to reduce risk of exposure to Covid-19*
- *Tenterfield Shire Council provides employment opportunities for a number of staff with disabilities*
- *Council has implemented an Equal Employment Management Opportunity Management Plan*
- *Council has reviewed its Workforce Plan and has promoted itself as an Equal Opportunity Employer*
- *Council offers flexible work options including working remotely, flexible hours, leave, and the use of mobile technology*



"To establish a community spirit which promotes opportunities to participate in sport and recreation, promotes equal access to all services and facilities"

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

This plan was developed through research of best practice examples in the creation of more accessible places; demographic analysis of disability rates in our local government area; review of other DIAP's and relevant literature; and through community engagement sources.

Consultation

This plan has been formulated from a review of the previous DIAP and community feedback including a printed and online survey, one-on-one conversations and a public charette held at Tenterfield Public Library on 15 February 2023; and feedback received as part of the development of Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP).

The DIAP survey feedback was invited from 21 January to 24 February 2023 and promoted via Council's media streams including website, Your Local News printed newsletter, Tenterfield-in-Touch e-News, Council's Facebook page and a Media Release distributed to all local media channels. Accessible printed versions of the survey were made available at all Council community touchpoints and local social service providers. In total, 14 surveys were completed with 7 submitted online and 7 in hard copy format.

Key messages received from community feedback are summarised as follows:

- Increase community awareness and education about disability and the diversity of different types of disability that exist including less visible disabilities such as mental illness to reduce prejudice and promote greater inclusion
- Increase of accessible infrastructure to enable greater access to public spaces and places for people with a disability including parking, footpaths, ramps, retail spaces, café's and public amenities such as toilets and changerooms
- Increase public transportation options was identified as a significant barrier for people with a disability to participate in community life
- Promote and make available information on various support and/or service providers available to people with a disability
- Increase availability of accessible information in various formats
- Advocacy and support for an increase local employment and volunteer opportunities for people with disability

Community Acknowledgement

Council would like to thank and acknowledge all members of the community and Council staff who provided their input and involvement in the development of this Plan.



STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The DIA 2014 outlines four focus areas to guide Council's in developing a DIAP, planning and action priorities. These are:

1. Promote positive community **ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS** to increase awareness and change negative perceptions over time. This is a long-term goal to be implemented in stages.
2. Create **LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES** to ensure people with a disability can fully participate in all aspects of community life. This is more than just the physical environment and covers accessible housing and transport, community recreation, social engagement, and universal design.
3. Implement **SYSTEMS AND PROCESS** to ensure people with disabilities can access information and services. This is an ongoing process of improvement to minimize barriers for people with disability to access the information, services and supports they need in the community.
4. Support **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES** to increase opportunities for people with disabilities to hold meaningful employment. Council should promote leadership in this area taking an "inclusion by design" approach in workforce planning and management.



ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS

Council will work to improve community attitudes and awareness of access issues and disability inclusion

action		priority	resource	measure & targets
1.1	Continual review/improvement of Council's community engagement framework to ensure input of People with a disability and their carer's into Council Delivery and Operational Plans	High	Integrated into existing staff processes	Review and assessment processes established / recorded
1.2	Work and advocate with local business to reduce barriers and promote inclusion and accessibility	High	Integrated into existing staff processes	Participation in meetings and/or sharing accessibility information with local business
1.3	Deliver disability awareness training to all staff and elected Council	High	Integrated into existing staff processes	Training delivered
1.4	Promote disability awareness and accessible Council services to Community	High	Integrated into existing staff processes	Articles and information published via Council's media channels

LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

Council aims to improve access and inclusion for all people living with a disability to participate in our community

action		priority	resource	measure & targets
2.1	Improve footpaths, ramps, and accessibility for shops in the village areas across the shire	High	Integrated into existing staff processes	Universal design incorporated into design process
2.2	Ensure any upgrade of recreational facilities (playgrounds, sports fields, amenities, parks, etc.) to incorporate access and inclusion provisions	High	Integrated into existing staff processes	Increased accessible recreational spaces
2.3	Ensure access requirements for people with disabilities are considered in all projects for public buildings	High	Integrated into existing staff processes	Universal design incorporated into design process
2.4	Advocate for universal design in planning of new housing, infrastructure, and buildings	Medium	Integrated into existing staff processes	Participation in meetings and stakeholder's advocacy
2.5	Advocate for accessible public transport hubs and infrastructure	Medium	Integrated into existing staff processes	Participation in meetings and stakeholder's advocacy
2.6	Encourage and promote accessibility considerations with event organisers	High	Integrated into existing staff processes	Increased accessible events

SYSTEMS AND PROCESS

Council aims to ensure its systems and process are inclusive and meet the needs of people with a disability

action		priority	resource	measure & targets
3.1	Review and improve Council's communication channels to incorporate accessible formats	High	Integrated into existing staff processes	Increased accessibility of Council information
3.2	Ensure Council's website is compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1AA to ensure minimum standards of accessibility requirements (vision and hearing impaired)	High	Integrated into existing staff processes	Increased accessibility of Council information
3.3	Embed accessibility/inclusion into procurement processes	Medium	Integrated into existing staff processes	Accessibility embedded in operational processes
3.4	Dedicated PWD information section on Council's website to share both Council and community information.	Low	Resource dependent	Increased accessibility of information

MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT

Council aims to assist in increasing work opportunities for people with disabilities

action		priority	resource	measure& targets
4.1	Continual review/improvement of Council's recruitment processes to ensure inclusion and accessibility in line with the Equal Employment Accessibility plan	High	Integrated into existing staff processes	Reduce barriers and increased opportunities for PWD
4.2	Provide flexible working times and places for Council's staff with a disability	High	Integrated into existing workplace processes	Reduce barriers and increased opportunities for PWD

MEASURING OUR SUCCESS

Council will continue to ensure that access and inclusion is embedded into our systems and processes, and to be responsive to issues as they arise, responding accordingly. Council uses reporting mechanisms to track and report progress on our plans.

These include:

- *Monthly Operational Reporting presented to Council each month at its Ordinary Council Meeting*
- *Delivery Program and Operational Plan Progress Reports submitted bi-annually to Council*
- *The Annual Report, reported within five months of the end of each financial year.*
- *The End of Term Report. This report is tabled at the last meeting of the outgoing Council. It provides an update on the Council's progress in implementing the Community Strategic Plan over the term of the Council, as well as the results and outcomes the implementation of the Community Strategic Plan has had for the Tenterfield community*
- *A community survey, undertaken every two years to gauge whether the community is satisfied with the progress and provide feedback on areas requiring priority in the future. This survey assists Council ensure services match community needs*
- *Ongoing feedback from Council's Disability Inclusion and Access Advisory Committee.*
- *As per legislative requirements of the DIA 2014, an end of year report will also be lodged with the Disability Council of NSW*

All Council monthly, quarterly, and annual reporting are available on Council's website at **tenterfield.nsw.gov.au/your-council/council-committee-meetings/council-business-papers**

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(PO Box 214)
TENTERFIELD NSW 2372

Phone: 02 6736 6000

Email: council@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.tenterfield.nsw.gov.au

