

Shire of Halls Creek

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2013-2017

This plan is available upon request in alternative formats such as large print, Braille, accessible electronic format or audio.



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Introduction

All public authorities in Western Australia are required under the Disability Services Act to develop, implement, review and report on a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP).

This Disability Access and Inclusion Plan sets out the Shire's commitment to creating a community that welcomes and includes people of all abilities. It outlines the ways in which the Shire will work towards addressing barriers to access and inclusion for people with disability over the next five years.

Thank you

The Shire thanks the individuals and groups within the community and its staff who took part in the DAIP review and consultation process and provided their invaluable input to guide the development of the new DAIP. The Shire would also like to thank Jackie Softly from E-QUAL for her time and effort in reviewing the plan and preparing this revision.

Shire of Halls Creek Profile

Halls Creek is a busy service town for surrounding pastoralists, Aboriginal communities and travellers exploring northern Western Australia. Halls Creek is also the fourth fastest growing shire within Western Australia.

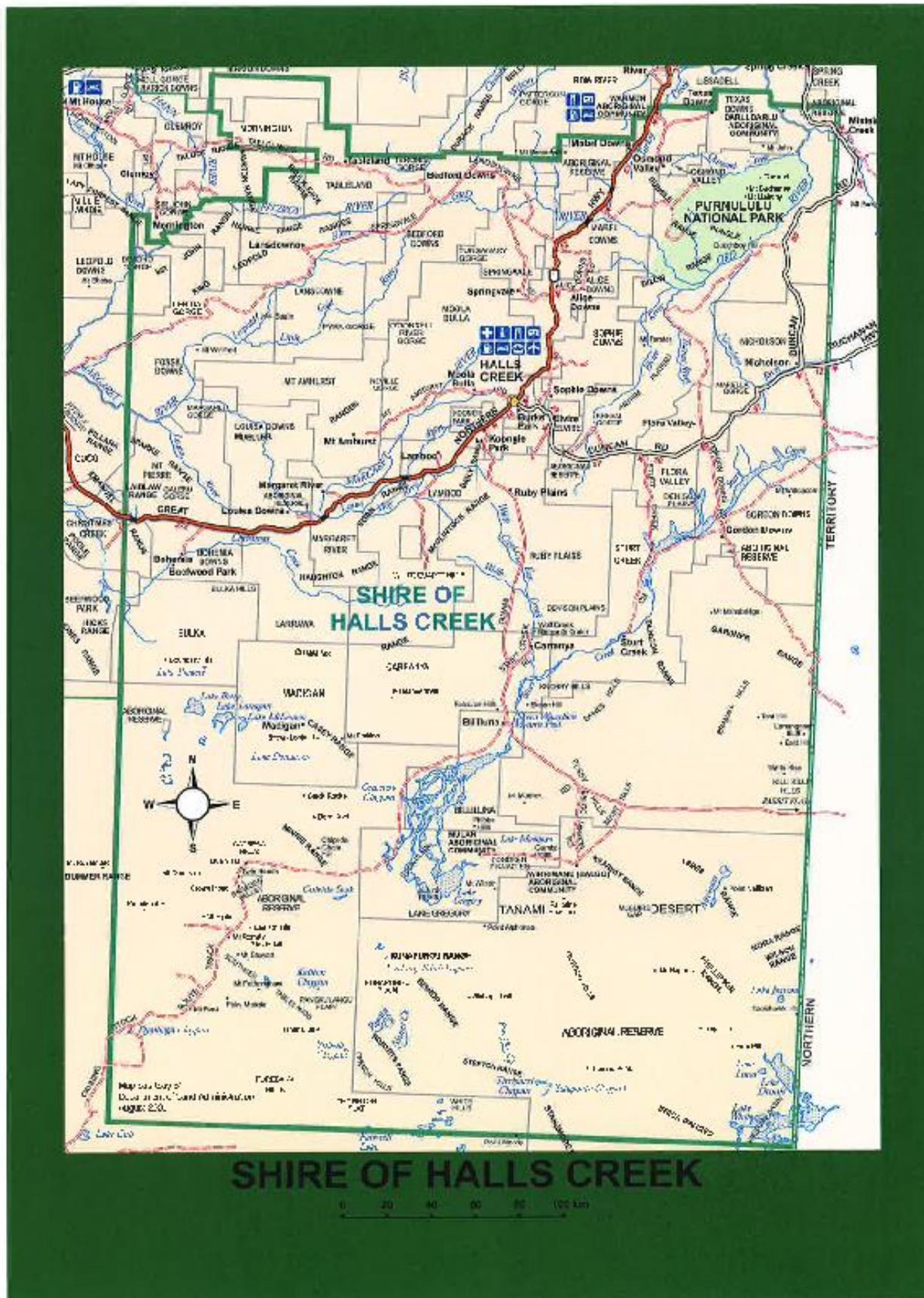
Situated in the heart of the Kimberley, Halls Creek is the gateway to a range of world renowned natural attractions, including the World Heritage listed Bungle Bungle ranges of Purnululu National Park.

Located on the edges of the Great Sandy Desert and Tanami Desert, 362km south of Kununurra, 1288km south-west of Darwin and 2873km north-east of Perth, Halls Creek offers a genuine insight into the spectacular Australian outback.

Covering some 142,908 square kilometres of predominantly desert and pastoral country, Halls Creek has something for everyone, from wide open spaces and magnificent natural attractions, to rich Aboriginal and European history and culture.

The population of the Shire of Halls Creek is 3,560, of which 78.2% are indigenous (Census 2011). While English is the main language used, more than five other local languages are spoken in the Shire.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (2009) 18.5% of Australians, or almost 1 in 5 people, identify themselves as having some form of disability. Based on the population estimate and these findings, it could be estimated that there are around 250 people with disability in the Shire of Halls Creek local government area. In addition, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, the rate of disability in indigenous Australians is much higher than in the rest of the population. However, the lower average age of the Shire's population (26 years) may balance this somewhat.



Our Services

The Shire of Halls Creek is responsible for a wide range of functions, facilities and services, typical to local government authorities of such size and revenue. These include:

Services to Property

- Construction and maintenance of roads and footpaths;
- Land drainage and development;
- Waste collection and disposal
- Litter control and street cleaning;
- Planting and caring for trees;
- Street lighting; and
- Bush fire control.

Services to the Community

- Provision and maintenance of playing areas and reserves;
- Management of recreation centres;
- Library and information services;
- Environmental health services;
- Building planning services;
- Building services; and
- Health education.

Regulatory Services

- Planning;
- Building; and
- Environmental Health Services.

General Administration

- The provision of general information to the public;
- Lodging of complaints; and
- Payment of rates.

Processes of Government

- Ordinary and Special Council and Committee meetings; and
- Electors' meetings and Election of Council members.

Development of the DAIP

The Shire contracted E-QUAL, disability consultants, to carry out a review of the existing plan and any other relevant information, conduct a staff and community consultation and draft a new DAIP for the next five years.

Review

The Shire's DAIP and Implementation Plan for 2008-2012, as well as Shire Annual Reports and an annual DAIP status report, were reviewed to identify what progress had been made as well as any incomplete actions remaining. The Halls Creek Community Strategy 2008-2018 was also examined to identify any potential links with the DAIP.

The review identified that the Shire had achieved some significant improvements to access, including:

- New footpaths in areas previously inaccessible.
- Areas of high traffic have been modified to include ramps from the roadside kerb down to the road, for ease of use by people using wheelchairs and families with prams.
- A small pathway was created opposite the shops in the main street, so that people can cross the road within close vicinity to the shops.
- The footpath to Mardiwah Loop has been completed, improving access for people in wheelchairs/with mobility impairments.
- An audit of street lighting in the site was carried out, to determine deficiencies. This was of importance for all residents but especially those with mobility and vision issues, due to the high number of residents who don't have motor vehicles. Several streets that were of significant concern have now had new street lighting put in.

Some key findings from the review that highlight the need for future work are that:

- The Shire needs to develop a system of tracking DAIP progress, to identify more clearly what has been achieved, and facilitate further implementation, annual status reporting, five-yearly reviews and development of the next DAIP.
- The Shire needs to develop a system to ensure it meets its legislative obligations regarding agents and contractors.
- The Shire needs to develop some standardised processes to ensure access and inclusion becomes integral to its work.
- An access audit of key buildings and facilities in Halls Creek is needed, so that a program of access improvement can be built into existing asset management.

Consultation

The consultation was advertised:

- In the local newspaper, the Halls Creek Herald in the July 2013 edition
- On the Shire's website
- Directly to key staff

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People were offered a range of ways to take part in the consultations, including individual interviews in person and by phone, group meetings and electronic or hard copy surveys. The consultant met with four community representatives as well as with members of the Shire's Aboriginal Advisory Committee, and with 17 Shire staff. No surveys were received.

The consultation invited people to provide their views on access improvements to date and to raise any concerns they may have regarding specific buildings, facilities, services and information that need improvement.

People said that the main achievements in recent years are the improvements to footpaths, kerb ramps, roads and lighting in the town of Halls Creek.

Community members also raised some concerns, about both council and non-council services. These included:

- Physical access issues at specific locations and lack of street lighting in some areas
- Lack of places to go during the day, especially for older people
- Lack of transport for people in camps, and lack of bitumen roads and paths
- Lack of accessible housing for people using wheelchairs
- Not having access to information in ways people can understand, such as plain language and local languages

Staff who took part in the consultation were asked about their awareness of the DAIP, achievements to date, any difficulties they had experienced in implementing the DAIP, what they would like to see in the new DAIP, what thoughts they had that would make the new DAIP more user friendly, any suggestions for tracking and reporting on DAIP implementation and for any other thoughts on how the DAIP and its implementation could be enhanced.

Staff made a number of suggestions to assist implementation of the DAIP by setting up standardised processes, linking the DAIP to other council processes and strategies and establishing a monitoring role within the management structure. They also said there needs to be an education program to raise and maintain awareness of the DAIP and its requirements as well as a store of resources, such as guidelines, checklists and templates to help staff ensure they worked in ways that are inclusive, and ensure any contractors also did so.

Shire staff also raised the need for more accessible infrastructure including more seating in parks and around town and better access to some buildings, as well as enhancements to access at existing facilities such as the Aquatic Centre.

Overall, the review and consultation showed that the Shire of Halls Creek has made some progress in improving access for people with disability to its facilities and services; however there are still barriers to full access and inclusion that must be addressed, including some DAIP management issues.

The findings of the review and consultation were provided to the Shire in a comprehensive report containing recommendations for the new DAIP. Following feedback and clarification, this DAIP and its accompanying detailed Implementation Plan were developed.

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2013-2017

This DAIP was endorsed by the Shire of Halls Creek Council on 21 November 2013 and submitted to the Disability Services Commission.

DAIP 2013–2017 Goals

This five-year plan focuses on the following goals. The DAIP Implementation Plan contains detailed strategies to assist the Shire of Halls Creek to meet the goals over the life of the DAIP.

Outcome 1

People with a disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by the Shire of Halls Creek.

We will do this by:

- Linking the DAIP to the Shire's strategic plan and other shire strategies, so that inclusive practice is integrated into the work of the Shire.
- Making sure we are familiar with the expectations and opportunities in the State Government's Count Me In – Disability Future Directions strategy.
- Making sure that all our staff, agents and contractors are aware of and carry out their responsibilities under the Disability Services Act.
- Making sure we track progress of the DAIP to inform ongoing implementation and our reporting obligations.
- Putting Accessible Events guidelines and checklist on our intranet for Shire staff to use when planning events.
- Resourcing our Library to maintain a range of technology and resources to meet people's different needs.
- Advocating to other organisations in the community, to help achieve better access to services for people with disability.

Outcome 2

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and facilities of the Shire of Halls Creek.

We will do this by:

- Conducting an access audit of Shire buildings and facilities, including parks and play spaces.
- Continuing to provide accessible paths of travel.
- Continuing to improve street lighting.
- Incorporating remedial works required into a Shire Asset Management Strategy and works schedule to help with budgeting and planning.
- Making sure access and inclusion is part of all projects from the planning stage to completion.

Outcome 3

People with disability receive information from the Shire of Halls Creek in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.

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We will do this by:

- Providing all public documents in alternative formats on request.
- Providing an audio loop at events on request whenever amplified sound is used.
- Making sure we produce accessible, user-friendly information.
- Providing information in local languages on request.
- Using local radio to get information to the community.
- Making sure our website and information on it is accessible.
- Using current technology to send out information and gather feedback.

Outcome 4

People with disability receive the same level and quality of service as other people receive from the staff of the Shire of Halls Creek.

We will do this by:

- Providing induction training on access and inclusion to new staff and elected members.
- Making sure our staff receive training relevant to their work, and have access to resources to provide a quality service to people with disability.

Outcome 5

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Shire of Halls Creek.

We will do this by:

- Making sure our Complaints process is accessible, and that staff know how to support people with disability to have their complaints addressed.

Outcome 6

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any consultation by the Shire of Halls Creek.

We will do this by:

- Making sure people with disability have ways of giving their input on disability issues.
- Making sure that Council meetings, Aboriginal Advisory Committee meetings and any other meetings, consultations and information are accessible.

Outcome 7

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to gain and maintain employment at the Shire of Halls Creek.

We will do this by:

- Improving the way we recruit staff, so that more people with disability are employed by the Shire.
- Improving our support of employees with a disability, to help keep them in our workforce.

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- Making sure our workplaces are accessible.

Responsibility for implementing the DAIP

The DAIP Implementation Plan will contain specific responsibilities; however all officers, employees, agents and contractors have a legislated responsibility to carry out their work in accordance with the DAIP.

The Shire will seek feedback from the community to inform DAIP implementation.

The Shire's Management Group will oversee DAIP implementation.

Reviewing the DAIP

The DAIP will be reviewed at least every five years, as required by The Act. The Implementation Plan may be amended more regularly to reflect progress and any new issues that may arise. If the DAIP is amended, the revised plan will be sent to the Disability Services Commission.

The Shire will consult with the community to gather feedback on DAIP progress.

There will be a standing item on DAIP implementation at every Management Group meeting. Each management area will provide information on progress.

Reporting on the DAIP

The Management Group will prepare an annual status report, on the prescribed proforma, for Council on DAIP Implementation. The report will outline:

- The Shire's progress towards each of the outcome areas in the DAIP.
- The progress of the Shire's agents and contractors towards meeting relevant DAIP outcome areas.
- The ways in which the Shire informed its agents and contractors about their obligations under the DAIP.

The status report will be lodged with the Disability Services Commission by 31 July each year.

The Shire's Annual Report will contain a summary of DAIP implementation over the year, including specific examples.

The review of this DAIP 2013-2017 will be included in the new DAIP to be developed and lodged with the Disability Services Commission in 2018.

Telling our community about the DAIP

The DAIP was endorsed by Council on 21 November 2013 and lodged with the Disability Services Commission on 25 November 2013.

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The Shire of Halls Creek then made copies of the DAIP available to everyone who took part in the consultation and planning process, including individuals and groups in the community, staff and elected members.

The Shire has promoted the DAIP in the local media and on its website, so that people know they can either download a copy or request a hard copy or a copy in their preferred format, which may include Large Print, Braille, audio or accessible electronic format.

Copies of the DAIP are also held in the Shire's Library.

DAIP contact information

If you would like to receive an alternative format copy, ask questions or give feedback about the DAIP, please contact:

Shire of Halls Creek
Lot 71 Thomas Street
Halls Creek WA 6770

Reception hours 8.00am to 4.00pm Monday to Friday

Phone 08 9168 6007
Fax 08 9168 6235
Email hcshire@hcshire.wa.gov.au



Shire of Halls Creek

DAIP

2013-2017

Implementation Plan

Shire of Halls Creek DAIP 2013-2017 Implementation Plan

Outcome 1: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access services of, and any event organised by, the Shire of Halls Creek.

Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
1.1. Ensure all shire strategies support access and inclusion for people with disability.	1.1.1. Ensure the Plan is linked with the Shire's Community Plan and other Shire strategies to ensure inclusive practice is integrated into the work of the Shire. 1.1.2. Become familiar with the expectations and opportunities in the State Government's Count Me In – Disability Future Directions document to guide service development.		
1.2. Develop and implement processes to ensure that all staff and agents and contractors are aware of and implement the requirements of the Disability Services Act around agents and contractors.	1.2.1. Insert required clause into contract documents. 1.2.2. Provide agents and contractors with link to information booklet and reporting proforma. 1.2.3. Collate contractor reports and provide data to Management group for inclusion in annual DAIP status reports.		
1.3. Monitor and gather feedback on progress in relation to DAIP outcomes across council and report as and when required to the Disability Services Commission.	1.3.1. Develop a consistent process for reporting on DAIP implementation. 1.3.2. Ensure DAIP implementation is a standing item on Management group agendas. 1.3.3. Develop annual status reports, including contractor information, and lodge with Disability Services Commission by 31 July each year.		
1.4. Ensure staff have access to and know about appropriate resources to plan and run Accessible Events.	1.4.1. Make the Accessible Events guidelines and checklist available on the intranet. 1.4.2. Promote to staff.		

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1.5. Library to provide adaptive technology to meet diverse needs.	1.5.1. Seek feedback from people with disability on hardware and software needs. 1.5.2. Investigate current technology. 1.5.3. Provide adaptive technology to meet needs.		Library
1.6. Advocate on behalf of people with disability to relevant organisations.	1.6.1. Continue to actively lobby to improve transport services. 1.6.2. Liaise with relevant government agencies regarding the lack of appropriate housing. 1.6.3. Liaise with relevant government and non-government agencies regarding services needed by the community.		Community Development

Outcome 2: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the Shire of Halls Creek

Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
2.1. Improve access to existing buildings and facilities.	2.1.1. Conduct an access audit of Shire buildings and facilities, including parks. 2.1.2. Address access issues already identified including access into Arts Centre Hall and the heavy door at the Travel & Tourism Centre. 2.1.3. Integrate all remedial works identified into the works schedule. 2.1.4. Incorporate access for people with disability into a comprehensive Shire Asset Management Strategy. 2.1.5. Encourage and inform business owners about access to their premises and services. 2.1.6. Investigate using the You're Welcome WA website to provide the community and tourists with useful information on accessibility derived from the access audit.		Building Services Community Development

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2.2. Ensure all new developments are accessible.	2.2.1. Develop a process to ensure access and inclusion is integral to all projects from planning to completion. 2.2.2. Ensure that the advice of an appropriately experienced Access Consultant is sought where required when planning and designing any public facilities or undertaking major refurbishments.		
2.3. Ensure continuous accessible paths of travel.	2.3.1. Ensure all new footpaths are built to a high level of accessibility. 2.3.2. Respond to requests for footpath installation or repairs as a matter of priority for people with disability.		

Outcome 3: People with disability receive information from the Shire of Halls Creek in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.

Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
3.1. Ensure information is provided in alternative formats.	3.1.1. Ensure that all public documents include a statement that the document is available in alternative formats on request. 3.1.2. Ensure that staff are aware of how to provide information in alternative formats on request. 3.1.3. Identify ways of meeting communication needs of different language groups. 3.1.4. Use local radio to provide information to the community.		
3.2. Ensure people with hearing impairment are able to access information provided at events.	3.2.1. Provide Auslan interpreters for people who are deaf on request at all events. 3.2.2. Ensure an audio loop is available at key events and on request whenever amplified sound is used.		
3.3. Ensure all informational materials produced by the Shire meets a high level of accessibility.	3.3.1. Develop a Shire Style Guide for documentation and promotional material, and ensure it includes how to provide Accessible Information. 3.3.2. Promote the Style Guide to all staff. 3.3.3. Identify which documents should be produced in the		

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	main local languages and develop a process for getting the information out to people who can read this to others in the community.		
3.4. Ensure web based information is accessible.	3.4.1. Review the website and ensure it complies with the W3C Accessibility Guidelines, including offering alternatives to PDFs.		Information Technology
3.5. Ensure an adequate ongoing supply of alternative format resources in the libraries.	3.5.1. Library services to ensure its alternative format resources such as Large Print and Talking Book collections meet community demand.		Library

Outcome 4: People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of the Shire of Halls Creek as other people receive.

Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
4.1. Ensure staff and elected members receive training on disability access and inclusion.	4.1.1. Provide induction training on access and inclusion to new staff and elected members. 4.1.2. Conduct training on access and inclusion for staff across all areas, at least every two years and provide training tailored to staff requirements in different areas of Council.		Human Resources
4.2. Ensure staff have easy access to the resources they need to implement their DAIP obligations.	4.2.1. Make a range of access resources available on the intranet, such as links to the <i>Access Guidelines</i> , <i>Access Resource Kit</i> , <i>List of Access Consultants</i> , <i>Employment resources</i> and other useful disability information. 4.2.2. Promote these to staff.		Community Development

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Outcome 5: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Shire of Halls Creek

Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
5.1. Ensure the Shire's Complaints processes provide flexibility to accommodate people's access requirements.	5.1.1. Develop a simple complaints process to ensure that people with access needs are supported to have their complaints addressed.		
	5.1.2. Promote the Shire's accessible complaints processes to staff and the community.		

Outcome 6: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation held by the Shire of Halls Creek

Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
5.2. Ensure people with disability have ways of providing input on disability issues.	5.2.1. Identify and implement ways of gathering input from the community eg online, advisory groups, requests for input on access to new facilities and services.		
5.3. Ensure that people with disability can attend and take part in Council meetings.	5.3.1. Follow the Accessible Events and Accessible Information guidelines and checklists when planning and running Council meetings, including agendas, papers and minutes.		
5.4. Ensure that people with disability can attend and take part in Aboriginal Advisory Committee meetings.	5.4.1. Follow the Accessible Events and Accessible Information guidelines and checklists when planning and running the committee meetings, including agendas, papers and minutes. 5.4.2. Provide the meeting papers in other local languages on request.		
5.5. Ensure that community consultations are planned and implemented according to best practice in accessible events.	5.5.1. Follow the Accessible Events and Accessible Information guidelines and checklists when planning and running all consultations, including venue access, agendas, information and minutes.		

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Outcome 7: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to gain and maintain employment at the Shire of Halls Creek

Strategy	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
6.1. Develop policy and procedures to support the employment of people with disability.	6.1.1. Review EEO and other HR policies and procedures to ensure they do not discriminate against people with disability.		Human Resources
6.2. Ensure workplaces are accessible.	6.2.1. Carry out an access audit of workplaces. 6.2.2. Ensure new council buildings or refurbishments meet the Access to Premises – Buildings Standard, and follow enhanced standards for fit out and other areas not covered by the BCA.		Human Resources
6.3. Improve retention of employees with a disability.	6.3.1. Promote an inclusive culture that supports and encourages employees with disability. 6.3.2. Use the DSC employment Toolkit to guide recruitment and employment of people with disability. 6.3.3. Ensure employees have access to adaptive equipment. 6.3.4. Establish employment pathways for employees with disability to establish clear career development opportunities.		Human Resources