



Making Penrith More Accessible



DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2022-2026

PENRITH
CITY COUNCIL

[penrith.city](https://www.penrith.city)

Statement of recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage

Council values the unique status of Aboriginal people as the original owners and custodians of lands and waters, including the land and waters of Penrith City. Council values the unique status of Torres Strait Islander people as the original owners and custodians of the Torres Strait Islands and surrounding waters. We work together for a united Australia and City that respects this land of ours, that values the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage and provides justice and equity for all.



NICE (Nations in Cultural Exchange) project celebration Kingswood Park, February 2021. Photo courtesy of Jordan Wheatley.

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MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

It is my pleasure to present Penrith City Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan for 2022 to 2026. Penrith Council strives to be a Local Government leader in supporting people living with disability to fully participate in community life. This Plan provides us with a framework to achieve this over the next four years.

Council would not have been able to develop this Plan without the contribution of the Penrith community who have provided invaluable insights to make Penrith more accessible and inclusive.

As the mother of a child living with disability, the need for us to provide inclusive spaces and programs and services for people with disability is always front of mind – in fact, it was one of the reasons I first stood for Council.

Inclusion will help build a stronger, more connected and more inclusive Penrith for everyone. The Plan achieves this goal by

understanding the needs and aspirations of people living with disability, their carers, family, friends, and service providers.

Council has delivered important improvements in access and inclusion since the development of its first Disability Inclusion Action Plan in 2003, and I look forward to seeing the new Plan for 2022 to 2026 to continue leading important improvements across Penrith City.

I would like to thank the community members who took the time to give their ideas and advice, and who shared their personal experiences with us. Without your contributions, we would not have been able to develop the Penrith Disability Inclusion Action Plan, which will add value and further opportunities within the City.

I greatly look forward to seeing the Plan's implementation across our City over the next four years.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tricia Hitchen".

COUNCILLOR TRICIA HITCHEN
MAYOR OF PENRITH

MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

At Penrith City Council, we recognise the importance of making Penrith a place that is accessible and inclusive for all people, including those in our community who are living with disability. We are proud to be a champion of delivering the Penrith Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 to 2026 as part of our Delivery Program for the next four years.

I am committed to delivering access and inclusion outcomes as part of Council's day-to-day business across all our services and activities. We are all advocates and play an important part in making sure our City is an inclusive place for all.

As a council, we have a longstanding commitment to advocating for access and inclusion, but there is always more to do.

The Penrith Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 to 2026 is an important document that identifies the opportunities that we as a council and community need to make for Penrith City to be an accessible, inclusive, and thriving place to live and work.

The Plan provides an invaluable framework for how Penrith Council, as a local government leader and advocate for people living with disability, can make Penrith City more accessible and how we can continue to work alongside partners in the sector over the next four years.

We have seen significant changes in Penrith City through our previous Disability Inclusion Action Plans, including upgrading play spaces to ensure accessibility and the introduction of programs that promote and provide viable employment opportunities.

We all play a part in making sure our City is an inclusive place for all people. I look forward to seeing the outcomes that the Penrith Disability Inclusion Action Plan of 2022 to 2026 will bring.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Warwick Winn'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line extending to the right.

WARWICK WINN
GENERAL MANAGER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Penrith City is transforming, powering growth, and championing the aspirations of people in Western Sydney. The revitalisation includes significant infrastructure investment across transport, education, health, sport, culture, and public domain. It brings new opportunities for Penrith City Council (Council) to leverage this growth to meet the needs of our communities.

Penrith City has many strengths to draw on in meeting the challenges of building inclusion in the coming years. We share a strong community spirit and benefit from our diversity of experiences. We also have existing networks of committed and highly skilled local community service providers.

Inspired by our community, Penrith City Council is proud to lead the way in ensuring access and inclusion for all people living, working, and visiting Penrith.

We know that disability can be both visible and invisible. We recognise that the barriers people with disability encounter in participating in community life are not just about the individual or their differing abilities. Disability arises as a result of the interaction between people living with impairments and the physical, attitudinal, communication, and social barriers they face in their environments.

Our Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 (The Plan) seeks to address these barriers and outlines our priorities for the next four years to support access and inclusion through direct actions, partnerships, and advocacy efforts. The Plan aims to support people living with disability with opportunities to participate in all areas of community life.

As we progress, it is essential that we also build a community in which all our people share in that positive future. We are committed to creating an inclusive and accessible City for everyone.

Hearing from our community to understand their needs and aspirations has been central to the development of our Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

We listened to Council's Access Committee, people living with disability, carers, disability workers, community organisations, and other people living, working, or studying in Penrith. We also heard from staff throughout Council about challenges and opportunities.

All levels of government have committed to improving access and inclusion for people with disability and their families. Disability Inclusion Action Plans are a legislated requirement in New South Wales. They provide a consistent framework for all councils to identify how they will proactively address barriers in their day-to-day work across four focus areas:

- Attitudes and behaviours
- Liveable communities
- Employment
- Systems and processes

It has been a particularly challenging time for people with disability in Penrith City – the impacts of floods, bushfires, extreme heat, and the pandemic are a reminder about the importance of being responsive to emerging needs. Penrith City Council will continue to listen to and involve our community throughout the Plan's implementation. We will take regular "pulse checks" with people living with disability and the broader community and adjust our work where required to meet new and emerging needs.

The actions Council will take in implementing this Plan will not only result in improved outcomes for people living with disability, but for the wider community as well. Everyone benefits from increased flexibility, access, and service improvements.

We all benefit and are stronger together when we live in a community that values inclusion.



THE CASE FOR INCLUSION

Why Have We Prepared a Disability Inclusion Action Plan?

Penrith City Council is committed to improving access and inclusion for residents of Penrith City and advocating for stakeholders within our City to adopt access and inclusion in their work. When access and inclusion is front of mind, everyone in our community benefits from increased flexibility, access, and service improvements. Inclusive practice supports everyone to lead independent and meaningful lives and participate in all aspects of community life.

The Value of Diversity

The community of Penrith City is rich in diversity, home to people with different cultural backgrounds, religions, sexualities, ages, interests, skills, and abilities. Real diversity is not achieved unless people with disability are provided with equal opportunity to participate in community life.

Exclusion leads to disadvantage and discrimination, with far reaching negative impacts across all aspects of life including health, welfare, education, and employment. The impact is felt not only at the individual level, but more widely by households that make up our broader community. As a community, we are richer with a diverse range of viewpoints and perspectives.

'Disability' is often misunderstood. A disability can be visible or invisible to others, be temporary or permanent, and can be experienced since birth or acquired over time. It can be physical, mental, sensory, psychiatric, neurological, cognitive or intellectual. Some people manage independently whilst others need support, and the type of support will vary for each individual and throughout their lifetime.

By recognising that people are limited not by their impairment, but by their environment, it becomes easier to recognise and address the barriers faced by all people – including those with disabilities.¹

¹ Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, Sept 2020, Disability and Health Disability Barriers | CDC

When access and inclusion is front of mind, everyone in our community benefits.



Understanding Our Community – People Living with Disability in Penrith City

In preparing this Plan, we researched data about the incidence and impact of disability in our community. Our sources of information include the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data from 2016, the ABS Survey of Disability and Ageing (2018), the Penrith Disability Snapshot we prepared with community feedback in 2021, and data from the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Unless otherwise stated, the data shown comes from ABS 2016.

There are more than 200,000 people living in Penrith City. In 2018, 13% of the Penrith City population (that's around 25,800 people) were identified as living with some form of disability. To put this in perspective, this is similar to the whole population of places such as Glenmore Park (24,627 people in 2020) and the suburb of Parramatta (31,112 people in 2020).

As of December 2021, there was 4,530 active participants within Penrith City with an approved plan with the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Of the people accessing NDIS in Penrith:

- 36% receive support for Autism
- 21% receive support for Intellectual Disability and Down Syndrome
- 11% receive support for Developmental and Global Development Delay
- 7% receive support for Psychosocial Disability
- 5% receive support for Hearing Impairment



Imagine if Penrith City was a village of 100 people. 13 people would be living with some type of disability, and of those, five would live with a profound or severe disability and seven would live with a mild or moderate disability. Chances are that you know, live, or work with a person whose life is or has been touched by disability.

Children and Adolescents with Disability

For children aged 5-14 years old with disability, 69% were male. Differences in the gender distribution can be attributed to the prevalence of autism diagnosis in boys and underdiagnosis in girls.

Ageing and Disability

There is a strong correlation between age and disability. In Penrith, just under 45% of the total community living with disability are people aged 65 years and over.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Penrith has a significant and proud Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. 7.1% of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Penrith have disability. This is considerably higher than the non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community (5.5%). The age profile of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living with disability is young – children aged 5-9 years are the most significant age group.

The Carer Workforce

In 2016, there were 17,500 carers, 11% of the total population in Penrith City, providing unpaid assistance to meet the needs of people living with disabilities. This is an increase of 2,102 people identifying themselves as carers from 2011. 17% (2,032 people) or one in every six people aged between 55 and 59 years provide unpaid care to a person with disability. 5.3% of people aged 15-24 years, or one in every 20 people in this age bracket, provide unpaid care.

For more information, see the [Penrith Disability Snapshot 2021](#).



COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT TO ACCESS AND INCLUSION

Fulfilling Penrith City Council's Vision for the Community

Every day, Council makes decisions that impact peoples' lives. Being a local leader and championing access and inclusion aligns with our values to be an accountable, respectful, and innovative organisation.

We believe that our Disability Inclusion Action Plan is a vital part of our work to achieve Penrith Council's vision and implement our priorities for the City which are outlined in our Community Strategic Plan:

- **OUTCOME 1:** We protect and enhance an ecologically sustainable environment
- **OUTCOME 2:** We are welcoming, healthy, happy, and connected
- **OUTCOME 3:** We plan and shape our growing City
- **OUTCOME 4:** We manage and improve our built environment
- **OUTCOME 5:** We have open and collaborative leadership.

Council will embed the actions in the Plan throughout the organisation within its key planning and resourcing documents, including:

- **The Resourcing Strategy:** a 10-year document that captures Council's long term financial position and workforce and asset management plans
- **The Delivery Program:** a four-year document that details the strategies for how Council will address the community's aspiration
- **The Operational Plan:** a one-year document that breaks down the activities to be delivered each year.

Our Role

Council's role in access and inclusion extends to being a:

- **Planner:** understanding community needs and expectations now and into the future and planning to harness growth and investment to deliver positive community outcomes for all
- **Provider:** of inclusive programs, services, facilities, and events
- **Partner:** harnessing collective resources of many to meet the challenges of the City
- **Advocate:** who promotes the needs of people living with disability to other agencies and authorities
- **Capacity builder:** developing relationships, sharing learnings and building skills with the local community sector, local employers and major industries
- **Regulator:** monitoring compliance with conditions set out in our Development Control Plan and other legislation.

In Australia, Inclusion is a Legal Requirement

All levels of government have committed to improving access and inclusion for people with disability and their families. Everyone has the right to attend events, use services and facilities and have a job that embraces their skills, interests, and capabilities.

Local Government plays a key role in achieving socially just, inclusive, and sustainable communities. Council's work is underpinned by a commitment to uphold access, equity, community participation, basic human rights, and freedom for all members of the community.

Disability Inclusion Action Plans are a legislated requirement in New South Wales. Our Plan aligns with the intentions of the:

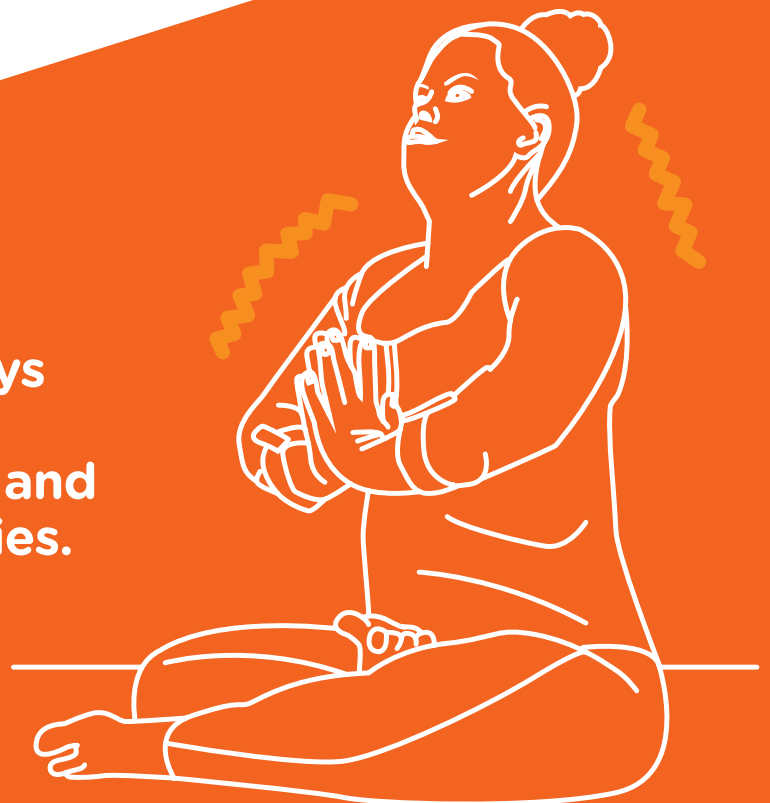
- United National Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability
- Australia's National Disability Strategy
- New South Wales Disability Inclusion Act 2014
- New South Wales Disability Inclusion Plan
- New South Wales DIAP Guidelines.

The NSW DIAP Guidelines provide a consistent framework for all councils to identify how they will proactively address barriers in their day-to-day work across four focus areas:

1. Attitudes and behaviours
2. Liveable communities
3. Employment
4. Systems and processes

The Plan is embedded into existing Council work and involves people with disability throughout implementation. Council will report on its progress annually to the NSW Disability Council and will renew the Plan every four years.

Local Government plays a key role in achieving socially just, inclusive, and sustainable communities.



WHAT DID COUNCIL ACHIEVE IN OUR 2017-21 PLAN? KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Attitudes and Behaviours

“Nepean Jobs for All” was a series of business breakfasts to educate local businesses about the benefits of employing people with disability and address some common myths and stereotypes.

The initiative was led by Penrith City Council in partnership with Blue Mountains City Council, Hawkesbury City Council, and the Regional Strategic Alliance.

The project resulted in enhanced links between Disability Employment Service providers and local businesses, and the employment of three people with disability was a direct result of the forum.

Liveable Communities

During 2017-2021, Council **installed 24 Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant bus shelters**. These were installed in Claremont Meadows, Cambridge Park, Jamisontown, Cranebrook, St Clair and Kingswood.

Since 2019, Council has **installed more than 155 tactile indicators at bus stops** in high priority locations across the City. These improvements support moving around Penrith.

Penrith is exceeding the national standards by choosing to require adult change facilities in venues not currently required by the standards, such as shopping centres for 3000+ people and large entertainment facilities.

Council applied for the NSW Government’s ‘Everyone can Play Program’ to provide **more inclusive playgrounds** around the City. Between 2018 and 2022, Council secured \$677,961 to upgrade nine playgrounds.

Meaningful Employment

In 2018-2019, Council’s **traineeship program** employed 15 trainees who identified as having disability in the Business Administration and Children’s Services teams.

Systems and Processes

The **Access Committee** was committed to supporting Council throughout the four-year implementation of the 2017-2021 Plan. Members championed improvements in planning, design, and delivery of projects.

In 2017-2018, an **access audit of Penrith Council’s website** was commissioned. All recommendations were implemented. In February 2019, Council’s website migrated to a new platform, and we continue to maintain accessibility standards.

In 2019-2020, **20 Council staff were trained** by the Centre for Inclusive Design to create accessible documents in Word, Excel, and PDF format. Resources have been developed to assist all staff with meeting accessible document standards.



DEVELOPING THE PLAN

Council has taken the following steps to develop the Plan for 2022-2026:

- ✓ Review the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021 implementation outcomes.
- ✓ **Desktop research** – to identify current best practice approaches to improving access and inclusion outcomes, including within a local government context.
- ✓ **Demographic research** – to identify the profile of people living with disability in Penrith City, including the preparation of a Penrith Disability Snapshot 2021 report.
- ✓ **Community and stakeholder engagement** – to capture feedback from residents, community services sector, and the Access Committee and listen to what is working well and what Council could improve upon.
- ✓ **Staff engagement** – to hear from teams across all Council departments about what is working well, the opportunities to improve access and inclusion in their work and ideas about what Council's priorities should be for the next four years.
- ✓ **Data analysis** – to review and consolidate feedback and identify key issues, needs, gaps, aspirations and priorities.
- ✓ **Drafting the Plan 2022-2026** – prepare draft documents and review with Council's Access Committee.
- ✓ **Public Exhibition of the draft Plan 2022-2026** – present the draft to the community, asking the community 'did we get it right?'
- ✓ **Review feedback and amend Plan 2022-2026.**
- ✓ **Final Plan 2022-2026** – Council endorsement and submission to the Department of Communities and Justice by 30 June 2022.

Involving the Access Committee

Since 1992, the Access Committee has provided strategic, expert, and impartial advice on the development, implementation, and review of Penrith City Council's business. Their input has enhanced access and inclusion of people with disability in our City.

Committee members bring a diverse range of lived experiences and expertise. They consider reports on a range of matters, including:

- Strategic planning and policy advice across all departments of Council
- Detailed consideration of major development proposals across the City
- Advising staff on relevant submissions relating to State and Federal Government policies and legislation
- Overseeing the development and implementation of Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan and Disability Access Improvement Program
- Providing advice to Council about emerging issues relevant to people with disability.

We recognise the long-standing contribution of the Access Committee since 1992, and the many diverse members who over 30 years have given generously of their time to support Council in delivering positive outcomes for the community.

The Access Committee's advice was critical in the design and development of this Plan. Their ongoing guidance will be instrumental to the success of its implementation and review process.

WHAT YOU TOLD US

Listening to Our Community

The experiences and aspirations of our community were central to the development of this Plan. There were two opportunities for the community to shape the DIAP.

During the first stage, Council invited the community to share their aspirations for what would make Penrith more accessible. Council listened, reflected on what we heard, and responded with a draft DIAP.

During the second stage of the engagement, we used the public exhibition process to present the draft DIAP for comment. This is a formal process that supports the community to provide feedback. Participants were asked to consider how the draft DIAP reflected what the community told us, identify any gaps in the work and share their overall satisfaction with the draft actions.

Full details on the stage one and stage two engagements are found in the Engagement Outcomes Report on Council's website at penrith.city/DIAP.



How Did We Engage?

There were six engagement methods used to gather insights and feedback from our community, including:



Online via Your Say Penrith. Tools such as an ideas wall to collect and display experiences of disability in Penrith, a feedback form that reflected the four focus areas that frame this work, and a quick poll.



Briefings to community services about the Plan's development process and opportunities for staff and clients to provide feedback. Attendees worked with young people, people experiencing homelessness, disability, ageing, and domestic violence.



In-person focus groups promoted through interagencies and established networks. This resulted in nine focus groups including participants who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, who are deaf, have low vision, and are from vulnerable communities.



Email responses received from individuals, highlighting concerns about barriers for access and inclusion in Penrith.



One-on-one conversations in-person and over the phone held with people with disability, carers and organisations to discuss their experiences in Penrith what they think should be prioritised over the next four years.



Public exhibition process using a mix of methods to collect feedback on the Draft DIAP.

The opportunity to provide feedback was promoted to our community in various ways, including:

- Through Access Committee members
- Posts on Council's social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn accounts)
- Media releases to local media publications
- Attending local services and meetings including the Homelessness Interagency, Penrith and St Marys Interagencies, Penrith Community Care Forum, Penrith Youth Interagency
- Posters in Penrith City Library's three branches
- Business newsletters and social media
- Through key stakeholders' networks using content supplied by Council (such as via email lists or social media), including those that support Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, young people, people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, seniors and LGBTQIA+ communities.

Who Did We Hear From?

The people who provided feedback were passionate and enthusiastic to see improvements to access and inclusion in Penrith City. The feedback gathered is meaningful and useful in considering a way forward to meet the challenges and in planning for a more accessible and inclusive Penrith. Some projects will require further engagement in their design to ensure that they meet the needs of participants in their delivery.

Stage One

We know 199 people viewed information on Council's online Your Say Penrith page titled 'Make Penrith more accessible' and 27 people completed the feedback. Over half the participants were aged 35-44 (56% of respondents) with 60% living in Penrith and Cranebrook. Some participants also identified as LGBTIQ+ and a number spoke a language other than English at home.

Disclosing information about the type of disability was optional, and where this occurred was recorded in the participant's own words.

We heard from:



Stage Two

There were approximately 400 unique visitors to the Your Say Penrith page titled 'Make Penrith More Accessible'. Data shows that 91% of visitors were first time visitors to Your Say Penrith.

Disclosing the type of disability was optional, with five identifying as blind/low vision, eight as deaf or hard of hearing and three with physical disability. One person identified as a carer with disability.

One person identified as gender and sexually diverse, two from culturally diverse backgrounds, and eight are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

We heard from:



What Did We Hear?

Overall, 91% of respondents were satisfied that the draft DIAP responded to community needs and priorities. The experiences shared generated 15 key themes that remained consistent across the two stages of engagement. Community priorities were:

- **Inclusive transport (public and private)** enabling people living with disability to go where they want, when they want independently.
- **Safe pathway networks** including path quality, lower kerb ramps, consistent tactile dots and wider crossing refuges to enable safe commutes to essential services, appointments and recreation.
- **Inclusive events and programs** ensuring people living with disability and their families can participate in recreation activities including program design and having access to clear information to plan attendance A range of no to low-cost arts and recreation activities that match their interests.
- **Meaningful employment pathways and support to stay in jobs** to move from volunteering to work experience, traineeships and permanent work as well as supporting employers to provide quality job opportunities and have people living with disability employed in jobs that match their skills, abilities and interests.
- **Understanding of visible and invisible disability** in the community so that everyone is treated with respect and within Council so that it is considered in everything we do.
- **More support for carers and families** ensuring timely information from diagnosis, opportunities for respite and connection with community groups.
- **Communication in different formats** with information about Council's work and programs that is clear, simple, timely and relevant so that individuals, carers or support workers can access information relevant to their needs and interests.
- **Access to quiet and sensory spaces** supporting people with sensory overload to participate in everyday life.
- **Consistent inclusive customer service at local businesses** ensuring everyone can access all local businesses have to offer and that businesses can meet varying customer needs.
- **Accessible buildings and facilities across Penrith.** Working towards all buildings being compliant with Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Guidelines and best practice. Giving consideration to the placement of adult changing places that are maintained and accessed through self-locking Master Locksmith Association Keys (MLAK).
- **Community services register** ensuring families and carers know about local providers and support groups in one place.
- **Inclusive engagement opportunities** to increase awareness amongst people living with disability and stakeholders of the channels and processes used for community engagement and participatory decision making and ensuring community engagement methods are accessible and inclusive.
- **Mobility parking** so that supply moves towards meeting demand for cars and communal minibus transportation in Penrith.
- **Support in emergency situations**, with information in a variety of accessible formats, specifically visual communication and Easy English.
- **Australian Sign Language (AUSLAN) training** supporting skill development for Council staff, businesses and the community so that sign language is increasingly valued and able to be used as a community language during customer service interactions.

We Will Keep Listening

Penrith Council appreciates that the time during the development of the DIAP 2022-2026 has been particularly challenging for people with disability, their carers, and the disability sector. There have been considerable stressors for our community, including COVID-19 and natural disasters, which have impacted on their ability to engage.

We will continue to engage community members throughout the implementation of the DIAP 2022-2026 so that lived experience informs everything Council does to improve access and inclusion in Penrith City and to make sure our DIAP achieves the outcomes we seek for the community.



OUR COMMITMENTS

Council has listened to feedback from the community and our staff to identify priorities over the next four years (2022-2026). Strategies and actions have been listed by focus area.

There are different types of actions in this Plan:

- **Owner:** actions where Council has direct ownership over an improvement, such as how inclusive Council events and programs are
- **Advocate:** actions where Council is not directly responsible, but can advocate on behalf of our community for change and improvement
- **Capacity builder:** actions where Council will identify needs of others and use our resources and influence to create change
- **Partner:** actions where Council will work with other stakeholders and agencies to achieve change together.

The actions are measurable and achievable, and we will report on them regularly through the Access Committee and in our reports to the New South Wales Disability Council.

The detailed Plan is found at **Appendix Item 1**.

Attitudes and Behaviours

- **Strategy 1:** Increase awareness and knowledge of access and mechanisms for inclusion for Penrith City Council staff
- **Strategy 2:** Raise awareness and promote the benefits of inclusion to the community
- **Strategy 3:** Raise awareness and promote the benefits of inclusive customer practices with local business

“While society is more aware now of people with disabilities in the community, we still have a long way to go for people to truly accept and understand life from our perspective, with our challenges.”

Giuliana, parent, carer and founder of Plan Wise Living



Liveable Communities

- **Strategy 4:** Deliver accessible and inclusive community events, programs, and services
- **Strategy 5:** Increase access and participation in recreational and sporting opportunities
- **Strategy 6:** Support participation in the creative arts for producers, makers, and audiences with disability
- **Strategy 7:** Improve accessibility within Penrith City's town centres
- **Strategy 8:** Provide accessible Council buildings and facilities
- **Strategy 9:** Improve accessible transport and pedestrian movement in and around Penrith
- **Strategy 10:** Support people with disability to be prepared, respond, and recover from emergencies, shocks, and stresses



Meaningful Employment

- **Strategy 11:** Increase employment of people living with disability within Penrith City Council
- **Strategy 12:** Support employment of people with disability within local businesses



“I always had a love for food. I’m a lover of the industry and I found that the only way to really get employment is to go out and get my own café. Now, I’d like to be able to employ people with disability and have them dine as well.”

**Craig, owner of
The Blind Chef Café**

Systems and Processes

- **Strategy 13:** Increase engagement and participation of people living with disability in Council decision making
- **Strategy 14:** Embed inclusion focused outcomes in Council planning processes and program and service design
- **Strategy 15:** Increase access to information



“My experience in the Access Committee has been very positive. People in the vision impaired community have been aware of my position. They have come to me with problems, and I have been able to alert Council. We have always felt that we were listened to and, wherever possible, changes were made or explanations given.”

Alan, Access Committee Member

LEADING THE WAY FOR GREATER IMPACT

Council is committed to listening and reflecting the community's aspirations and priorities in our work. The strategies and actions in this Plan are delivered with existing resources. Council is scoping four stretch projects and avenues for additional funding to effect significant change and meet community needs. If resources can be identified, the following projects would be prioritised:

- **A public awareness campaign** — assisting to shift attitudes on disability by promoting the contribution of people with disability to the City and why access is important.
- **Autism-Friendly Playspace Guides** — supporting families and communities to visit and make use of some of our great playspaces through supported specific user guides and templates.
- **A 'City Challenge'** — supporting meaningful employment outcomes within local business and Council. Promoting the contribution that people with disability can make to an organisation when workplaces are physically and culturally fit for employees with disability.
- **Undertaking Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plans (PAMP)** — developing a plan for pedestrian facilities that are practical and cater for the needs of different users in Penrith, St Marys, and Kingswood, including connections to essential services and recreation locations.

As 2022 is the 30th year of Penrith City Council's Access Committee, it is an opportune time for Council to build on our business as usual. The identified projects will lift and confirm Council as a leader in access and inclusion and acknowledge the significant contribution of Access Committee members to the City.

IMPLEMENTING, MONITORING, AND EVALUATING OUR PLAN

Council is committed to achieving a more accessible Penrith to live, work, and visit.

With the Access Committee's guidance, we will implement this Plan over the next four years. We will document our progress annually and share this information with the Access Committee, the community via our website, and the New South Wales Disability Council.

An impact and evaluation framework will be developed as an action within the Plan. It is intended to provide a baseline for tracking change and progress over time.

Meaningful change cannot be achieved without the perspectives of people with disability, their families, and carers.

People with lived experience of disability will be involved on a project level to provide specific advice throughout the implementation of the Plan.

We will monitor emerging needs in an annual "pulse check" to ensure we are responsive to changing needs in the community. Where resourcing is identified, we will add commitments to the Plan.





APPENDIX ITEM 1: DETAILED ACTION PLAN 2022-2026

PENRITH
CITY COUNCIL

[penrith.city](https://www.penrith.city)



HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

This document outlines strategies and actions that Council will take, in four key focus areas:

- Attitudes and Behaviours
- Liveable Communities
- Meaningful Employment
- Systems and Processes

Council has listened to feedback from the community and our staff to identify priorities over the next four years (2022-2026).

Strategies and actions have been listed by focus area. There are different types of actions in the DIAP:

- **Owner:** actions where Council has direct ownership over an improvement, such as inclusive Council events and programs
- **Advocate:** actions where Council is not directly responsible, but can advocate on behalf of our community for change and improvement
- **Capacity builder:** developing relationships, sharing learnings, and building skills
- **Partner:** actions where Council will work with other stakeholders and agencies to achieve change together.

ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS

Developing Positive Community Attitudes and Behaviours towards People with Disability

“While society is more aware now of people with disabilities in the community, we still have a long way to go for people to truly accept and understand life from our perspective, with our challenges.”

Giuliana, parent, carer, and founder of Plan Wise Living

“I have a voice and can articulate thoughts and ideas. Yet, people speak to my mum. Having members in our community understand that, although I may process things differently, [that] doesn't mean I don't understand.”

Person with disability

What we heard from our community and staff

- Stigma exists; there is a lack of understanding about visible and invisible disability. Different cultures perceive and understand disability in different ways.
- Learning more about visible and invisible disability is a priority for staff.
- People with disability often feel judged, especially when they use disability bathrooms, adult change rooms, and mobility parking spaces.
- There are attitudinal, physical, and communicative barriers that limit how people living with disability interact with local businesses as customers and potential employees. People with disability want a consistent and respectful customer experience.
- There was a sense that some businesses miss out on the economic spend of people with disability, their carers, families, and friends because they are not accessible.
- Carers feel like inclusion is an afterthought in planning programs and services.
- It is important that we consider the experiences of our growing ageing population and disability acquired with age in all our work.
- It is important that Council considers the experiences of people with disability who identify as gender and sexually diverse in all our work.
- Promote the work of the Access Committee to the community, including how they have influenced decisions.

The outcomes we want to achieve

- Increased community awareness of visible and invisible disability and the social and economic benefits of inclusion.
- Increased awareness and knowledge of access and mechanisms for inclusion amongst Council staff.

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION	TIMEFRAME				LEAD
			2022 /23	2023 /24	2024 /25	2025 /26	
1. Increase awareness and knowledge of access and mechanisms for inclusion for Penrith City Council staff	1.1 Deliver staff training in access and inclusion and lived experience of disability	Council as owner	●	●	●	●	Customer Experience; Children's Services Operations; Library Services; City Activation, Community and Place
	1.2 Support staff attendance at Access Committee meetings, as appropriate, to build awareness and knowledge of key issues and opportunities	Council as owner	●	●	●	●	Library Services; City Activation, Community and Place; City Planning, City Strategy
2. Raise awareness and promote the benefits of inclusion to the community	2.1 Increase visibility of the role of Council's Access Committee within the community	Council as owner	●	●	●	●	City Activation, Community and Place
	2.2 Promote diversity and inclusion through marketing campaigns and positive use of Council imagery as appropriate	Council as owner		●			City Economy and Marketing
	2.3 Deliver, support, and participate in community events that create awareness of people living with disability	Council as owner	●	●	●	●	Library Services; City Activation, Community and Place
	2.4 Prepare a study into the impact and needs of people living with disability who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or coming from a culturally diverse background	Council as owner	●	●			City Activation, Community and Place
	2.5 Prepare a study into the impact and needs of people living with disability who identify as LGBTIQ+	Council as owner				●	City Activation, Community and Place
3. Raise awareness and promote the benefits of inclusive customer practices with local business	3.1 Identify and share opportunities for access and inclusion training with small businesses	Council as capacity builder	●				City Economy and Marketing
	3.2 Develop and promote resources to support and encourage small businesses to participate in inclusive practices	Council as advocate	●	●			City Economy and Marketing
	3.3 Showcase local businesses who provide excellence in inclusive customer service	Council as capacity builder		●			City Economy and Marketing; City Activation, Community and Place
	3.4 Explore opportunities to partner with local industry to promote accessible Penrith City tourism to businesses as a potential customer market	Council as partner			●		City Economy and Marketing; City Activation, Community and Place

LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

Creating Liveable Communities

“Access should be a given, not asked for at each event.”

Person with disability

“I’m happy to take [Council staff] out for the day in a wheelchair to see exactly how inaccessible Penrith is.”

Person with disability

What we heard from our community and staff

- The importance of safe pathways, manageable kerb ramps, consistent use of tactile dots, and disability parking across Penrith is a priority for community and staff.
- Carers and families of people with disability want more support. This includes access to information, respite, and opportunities to network with other carers.
- The community would like Council to advocate for more accessible public and private transport, including visual communication on public transport and more frequent accessible bus routes.
- The community would like more accessible toilets and adult change facilities. Awareness of MLAK-fitted facilities and how to obtain a key is low among carers and people with

disability. To consider upgrading MLAK locks to a self-locking mechanism.

- Participating in events and programs is important, but people living with disability and their carers find it hard to find information to assist with planning and determining if they can practically attend.
- The community asked us to be mindful of people with autism and sensory needs, provide opportunities for specialised facilitation, and communicate whether an event is inclusive or targeted to particular disabilities.
- People with disability and the support workers need more targeted information to assist with responding to extreme weather events.
- The community sector is concerned that people with disability have a higher risk of experiencing family and domestic violence and face more barriers to accessing support, such as financial assistance.
- The community raised the different communication needs of people who are deaf or have an intellectual disability in an emergency.
- Safe access to waterways for recreational use.

The outcomes we want to achieve

- New and upgraded public buildings and facilities meet Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) standards.
- More accessible and inclusive Council events, programs, services, and facilities.
- Increased access to parking, transport, and DDA-compliant pedestrian pathways.
- Increased participation by people with disability in all aspects of community life.

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION	TIMEFRAME				LEAD
			2022 /23	2023 /24	2024 /25	2025 /26	
4. Deliver accessible and inclusive community events, programs, and services	4.1 Incorporate inclusive practices into community events planning, programming, delivery, and communications	Council as owner	●	●	●	●	City Activation, Community and Place
	4.2 Continue to deliver and improve accessible and inclusive Council Library services, programs, and activities	Council as owner	●	●	●	●	Library Services
5. Increase access and participation in recreational and sporting opportunities	5.1 Include access and inclusion outcomes when implementing specific actions in Council's Sport and Recreation Strategy in the areas of play, recreation, sport, and open space infrastructure projects and planning	Council as owner	●	●	●	●	Community Facilities and Recreation
	5.2 Explore opportunities for NDIS programming and other opportunities at Aquatic and Leisure Facilities for the Aboriginal community	Council as partner	●				Ripples; City Activation, Community and Place
	5.3 Identify and promote accessible programs and activities provided by sports clubs and associations in Penrith City	Council as partner	●	●	●	●	Community Facilities and Recreation
	5.4 Support and encourage use of Council's Community and Recreation Facilities for accessible events, activities, and programs	Council as partner	●	●	●	●	Community Facilities and Recreation
	5.5 Review opportunities for increased access to waterways in future programmed projects such as river masterplanning, and development of structure plans	Council as owner			●	●	Community Facilities and Recreation

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION	TIMEFRAME				LEAD
			2022 /23	2023 /24	2024 /25	2025 /26	
6. Support participation in the creative arts for producers, makers, and audiences with disability	6.1 Incorporate inclusive practices into Penrith Performing and Visual Arts planning, programming, delivery, and communications	Council as partner	●				Penrith Performing and Visual Arts
	6.2 Continue to provide and improve accessible and inclusive creative arts facilities and venues at Penrith Regional Gallery, Home of the Lewers Bequest and The Joan	Council as partner	●				Penrith Performing and Visual Arts
	6.3 Identify and establish long-term partnerships with peer and sector organisations that deliver inclusive creative arts practices	Council as partner		●			Penrith Performing and Visual Arts
	6.4 Embed access and inclusion outcomes into the development and implementation of Council's Cultural Strategy and Action Plan and ensure people with disability are represented	Council as owner	●				City Activation, Community and Place
7. Improve accessibility within Penrith City's town centres	7.1 Embed access and inclusion outcomes within strategic planning directions for Council's Corridors and Centres Strategy	Council as owner	●				City Strategy
	7.2 Embed access and inclusion outcomes within strategic planning directions for St Marys Structure Plan and Master Plan	Council as owner	●				City Strategy
	7.3 Determine demand for disability parking and pathway improvements across the local government area	Council as owner	●				City Strategy; Engineering Services
	7.4 Support and build the capacity of community to advocate for Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliance	Council as capacity builder			●	●	City Activation, Community and Place

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION	TIMEFRAME				LEAD
			2022 /23	2023 /24	2024 /25	2025 /26	
8. Provide accessible Council buildings and facilities	8.1 Continuously upgrade and renew Council's assets to standard of Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Compliance accessibility	Council as owner	●	●	●	●	City Assets
	8.2 Continue to assess all new developments for compliance with DDA Standards as appropriate	Council as owner	●	●	●	●	Environmental Health and Compliance; Design and Projects
	8.3 Identify funding opportunities to improve DDA compliance of Aquatic and Leisure facilities to meet the needs of the community	Council as owner	●	●	●	●	Ripples
	8.4 Undertake an access and inclusion audit for Council's Cemetery Service	Council as owner		●			Community Facilities and Recreation
	8.5 Review the process for distribution of MLAK to improve access for people requiring access to public toilets and adult change facilities	Council as owner	●				City Activation, Community and Place
	8.6 Develop guidance to support implementation of DCP guidelines related to adult changing facilities for public buildings	Council as owner			●	●	City Activation, Community and Place
	8.7 Develop resources that support implementation of access and inclusion outcomes in Greenfield developments	Council as owner			●	●	City Activation, Community and Place

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION	TIMEFRAME				LEAD
			2022 /23	2023 /24	2024 /25	2025 /26	
9. Improve accessible transport and pedestrian movement in and around Penrith	9.1 Investigate options and resources to complete audits of the pedestrian footpath network and supply of disability parking, and identify priority needs	Council as owner	●				City Activation, Community and Place
	9.2 Identify funding opportunities to deliver high priority pedestrian pathways based on audit outcomes	Council as owner	●	●	●	●	City Assets
	9.3 Investigate new DCP controls to ensure all large-scale redevelopment sites provide more accessible parking, pick-up, and drop-off facilities	Council as owner	●	●			City Planning
	9.4 Advocate for accessible public transport outcomes, including in major infrastructure projects	Council as advocate and partner		●			City Strategy
	9.5 Investigate short-medium term community transport options to meet gaps and needs in moving around our community	Council as owner	●				City Activation, Community and Place
10. Support people with disability to be prepared, respond, and recover from emergencies, shocks, and stresses	10.1 Work with partners to develop improved emergency response and resilience measures for people and families living with disability, including in the area of domestic and family violence	Council as partner	●				City Activation, Community and Place
	10.2 Oversee the implementation of actions contained in the Resilient Action Plan	Council as owner	●	●	●	●	City Resilience
	10.3 Review emergency procedures in Council public buildings with consideration of people with visible and invisible disability	Council as owner	●	●			City Activation, Community and Place, Customer Experience



MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT

Increasing Access to Meaningful Employment Opportunities

"I always had a love for food. I'm a lover of the industry and I found that the only way to really get employment is to go out and get my own café. Now, I'd like to be able to employ people with disability and have them dine as well."

**Craig, owner of
The Blind Chef Café**

- Staff need support to embed meaningful employment pathways.
- There is work to be done across the system to address barriers to employment, including addressing exploitation where it exists in volunteer and lower-paid roles.
- Respondents feel like Council and key local industries should model inclusive employment.
- Supporting volunteering in retirement to assist people with disability to stay connected and involved with the community.
- The community feels that more needs to be done to achieve dignified employment, particularly for people with cognitive impairments. They believe people with disability are more likely to start their own business due to challenges with being an employee.

What we heard from our community and staff

- People with disability feel like they are not being matched with jobs that suit them. They define meaningful employment as a job that aligns with their interests and skills, and that an employer can support them to perform.
- The community would like to see more people with disability in public-facing roles, not just "back of house".
- People with disability feel overlooked for employment opportunities.
- People with disability of working age are twice as likely than those without disability to be unemployed.
- Employers are missing out on tapping into the skills and capabilities of people with disability.

The outcomes we want to achieve

- Increased awareness and interest from local business in employing people living with disability.
- Increased employment of people living with disability within Penrith City Council.

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION	TIMEFRAME				LEAD
			2022 /23	2023 /24	2024 /25	2025 /26	
11. Increase employment of people living with disability within Penrith City Council	11.1 Develop a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy	Council as owner			●		People and Culture
	11.2 Identify opportunities for targeted for employment	Council as owner				●	City Activation, Community and Place; People and Culture
	11.3 Increase awareness of Council procurement processes amongst local social enterprises and business owners and managers who operate inclusive practices	Council as owner		●			Financial Services; City Activation, Community and Place
12. Support employment of people with disability within local businesses	12.1 Identify local business leaders who can assist Council to promote accessible local businesses and the benefits of workplace programs for people with disability	Council as advocate			●		City Economy and Marketing; City Activation, Community and Place

SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

Improving Access to Services through Better Systems and Processes

“My experience in the Access Committee has been very positive. People in the vision impaired community have been aware of my position. They have come to me with problems, and I have been able to alert Council. We have always felt that we were listened to and, wherever possible, changes were made or explanations given.”

Alan, Access Committee Member

What we heard from our community and staff

- People with disability want to be more involved in Council’s decision making. Residents living with disability generally were not aware of the key channels available to influence Council decision making. Those who were aware had mixed experiences regarding how much they felt their feedback influenced decisions.
- There are opportunities to further embed inclusion in Council planning.
- Concerns exist regarding access to Council and community information in varying formats.

- Access to information is a barrier to participation. There needs to be more timely and easily accessible information and support available to people with disability, carers and families.
- People with disability desire to see themselves reflected in Council work.
- Support to ensure youth services are inclusive.
- Support for people with cognitive impairments through the justice system.

The outcomes we want to achieve

- People with disability are included in consultation.
- Council meetings are inclusive, and the community is involved in decision making processes.
- All communications meet accessible standards.
- Council business planning and projects address access and inclusion objectives.

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION	TIMEFRAME				LEAD
			2022 /23	2023 /24	2024 /25	2025 /26	
13. Increase engagement and participation of people living with disability in Council decision making	13.1 Review and update Council's Community Engagement Strategy to reflect inclusive practices	Council as owner		●			Business Transformation
	13.2 Establish and implement principles for timely engagement of people living with disability in relevant major development (Council and other), precinct renewals, and relevant planning controls reviews	Council as owner	●	●	●	●	City Planning; City Strategy
	13.3 Conduct an audit to identify areas for improvement to provide inclusive and accessible Council meetings, including business papers and documents	Council as owner	●	●			Governance
	13.4 Develop a presentation guide for staff attending Council's Access Committee to support timely input from the Access Committee and informed decision making	Council as owner	●				City Activation, Community and Place
14. Embed inclusion focused outcomes in Council planning processes and program and service design	14.1 Embed access and inclusion in business planning, reporting, and project management tools	Council as owner	●	●			Business Transformation
	14.2 Include access and inclusion outcomes when undertaking service reviews or business improvement projects to ensure quality customer experience, compliance, and levels of service	Council as owner	●	●	●	●	Business Transformation
	14.3 Increase disability inclusion practices across Child Services, including centre philosophy and provision of resources to assist staff.	Council as owner	●	●	●	●	Child Services Operations
	14.4 Review facilitation practices for community service interagency meetings and identify opportunities to elevate and advocate for access and inclusion outcomes within the sector	Council as owner	●	●	●	●	City Activation, Community and Place
	14.5 Review Council's processes and procedures related to payment of rates to ensure accessible and appropriate information, as well as considerations where financial hardship exists	Council as owner	●	●	●	●	Financial Services; City Activation, Community and Place

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION	TIMEFRAME				LEAD
			2022 /23	2023 /24	2024 /25	2025 /26	
15. Increase access to information	15.1 Develop a detailed measurement framework for the Disability Inclusion Action Plan and update associated reporting as relevant	Council as owner	●				City Activation, Community and Place
	15.2 Review accessibility of key corporate and customer focused documents and platforms, and explore opportunities for presenting information in different formats	Council as owner	●	●			Business Transformation; Financial Services; Governance
	15.3 Work with partners to assist the community with access to up-to-date information on local community services and supports	Council as partner	●				City Activation, Community and Place
	15.4 Identify opportunities and resources to communicate Council's work in formats used by people with visible and invisible disability	Council as owner		●			City Activation, Community and Place

INTERPRETING ASSISTANCE

ENGLISH	If you do not understand this, please contact the Telephone Interpreting Service on 131 450 and ask them to contact Penrith City Council on your behalf on (02) 4732 7777. Or come to the Council offices and ask for an interpreter.
ARABIC	إذا لم يكن بإمكانك قراءة النص أعلاه، الرجاء الاتصال بخدمات الترجمة الفورية الهاتفية (TIS) على الرقم 131 450 والطلب منهم الاتصال بدورهم بمجلس مدينة بنريث نيابة عنك على الرقم 4732 7777 (02). أو يمكنك الحضور إلى المجلس وطلب ترتيب مترجم فوري لك.
CHINESE	如果您无法阅读这些文字，请致电 131 450 联系电话传译服务中心，请他们代您拨打 (02) 4732 7777 联系 Penrith 市议会。您也可以亲自到市议会来并要求获得口译服务。
GREEK	Αν δεν μπορείτε να το διαβάσετε αυτό, τηλεφωνήστε στην Τηλεφωνική Υπηρεσία Διερμηνέων στο 131 450 και ζητήστε τους να επικοινωνήσουν με το Δήμο Penrith (Penrith City Council) για λογαριασμό σας στον αριθμό (02) 4732 7777, ή ελάτε στη Δημαρχία και ζητήστε διερμηνέα.
HINDI	यदि आप इसे नहीं पढ़ पाते हैं, तो कृपया 131 450 पर टेलीफोन दुभाषिया सेवा से संपर्क करें और उनसे कहें कि वे आपकी ओर से पेनरथि सिटी काउंसिल से (02) 4732 7777 पर संपर्क करें. या आप काउंसिल आएँ और एक दुभाषिये की माँग करें.
ITALIAN	Se non riuscite a leggere questo, contattate il servizio telefonico di interpretariato al numero 131 450 e chiedetegli di contattare da parte vostra il comune di Penrith City al numero (02) 4732 7777 oppure venite in comune e richiedete un interprete.
MALTESE	Jekk ma tistax taqra dan, jekk jogħġbok, ikkuntattja lit-Telephone Interpreting Service fuq 131 450 u itlobhom biex jikkuntattjaw Penrith City Council f'ismek fuq (02) 4732 7777. Jew ejja l-Kunsill u itlob għal interpretu.
PERSIAN	اگر نمی توانید این مطلب را بخوانید، لطفاً به خدمات ترجمه تلفنی به شماره 131 450 زنگ بزنید و از آنان بخواهید با شورای شهر پنریت Penrith City Council به شمار 4732 7777 (02) از جانب شما تماس بگیرند. یا اینکه به شهرداری Council آمده و مترجم بخواهید.
SINGHALESE	ඔබට මෙය කියවීමට නොහැකි නම්, කරුණාකර දුරකථන අංක 131 450 ඔස්සේ දුරකථන පරිවර්තන සේවාව (Telephone Interpreting Service) අමතා ඔබ වෙනුවෙන් දුරකථන අංක (02) 4732 7777 අමතා පෙන්රිත් නගර සභාව (Penrith City Council) හා සම්බන්ධ කර දෙන ලෙස ඉල්ලා සිටින්න. නැතිනම් නගර සභාව වෙත පැමිණ භාෂා පරිවර්තකයකු ලබා දෙන ලෙස ඉල්ලා සිටින්න.
TAMIL	இதை உங்களால் வாசிக்க இயலவில்லை என்றால், 'தொலைபேசி உரைபெயர்ப்பு சேவையை 131 450 எனும் இலக்கத்தில் அழைத்து 'பென்றித் நகரவை'யுடன் (02) 4732 7777 எனும் இலக்கத்தில் உங்கள் சார்பாக தொடர்பு கொள்ளுமாறு கேளுங்கள். அல்லது நகரவைக்கு விஜயம் செய்து உரைபெயர்ப்பாளர் ஒருவர் வேண்டுமெனக் கேளுங்கள்.
VIETNAMESE	Nếu quý vị không thể đọc được thông tin này, xin liên lạc Dịch Vụ Thông Dịch Qua Điện Thoại ở số 131 450 và yêu cầu họ thay mặt quý vị liên lạc với Hội Đồng Thành Phố Penrith ở số (02) 4732 7777. Hoặc hãy tới Hội Đồng và yêu cầu có thông dịch viên.

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PENRITH
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