

HUTT CITY ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS PLAN 2017-2018



WHAT IS A DISABILITY

Disability is something that happens when people with impairments face barriers in society that limit their movements, senses or activities.

Disabled people are people who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. This is the understanding of disability in the Convention ¹

The underlying approach

The principles and underlying approach of Hutt Council's Accessibility and Inclusiveness Plan 2017-2027 are based upon three key documents:

- The New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016 to 2026;
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2008;
- and the Treaty of Waitangi.

NEW ZEALAND DISABILITY STRATEGY 2016-2026

The aim of the New Zealand Disability Strategy (NZDS) is to ensure that government departments and agencies consider disabled people's needs before making decisions. Underpinning the New Zealand Disability Strategy is a vision of a fully inclusive society.

'A society that highly values our lives and continually enhances our full participation.'

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (the Convention) is an international agreement about protecting and promoting the human rights of disabled people throughout the world. New Zealand signed the Convention on 30 March 2007, and ratified it on 26 September 2008.

The Convention recognises that people with impairments often face discrimination because of their disability and from not being recognised in Government policy and services. The purpose of the Convention, as stated in Article 1 is:

"To promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all people with disabilities and to promote respect for their inherent dignity"

¹ New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026

UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES 2008

The two articles of the Convention that will be of particular relevance to the Hutt Council's Accessibility and Inclusiveness Plan 2017-2027 are:

Article 8 – Awareness Raising; and

Article 9 – Accessibility

Article 8 states that Governments should take immediate, effective and appropriate steps to;

- Raise awareness throughout society, including at family level, and to encourage respect towards disabled people,
- Eliminate prejudice and abuse against disabled people,
- Raise awareness of the value of the contribution disabled people make to society.

Article 9 of the Convention states that to enable disabled people to live independently and take part in all areas of life, government should take action to ensure accessibility, equal to that of non-disabled people. This includes taking action in relation to the built environment, transport, public services or facilities as well as information and communication services, and emergency services.

Also important is Article 4.3 which states that in the development and implementation of legislation and **policies to implement the present Convention and in other decision making processes concerning issues relating to persons with disabilities**, State Parties shall **closely consult with and actively involve persons with disabilities**, including children with disabilities **through their representative organisations**.

TREATY OF WAITANGI

There are a number of provisions in the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act) that relate specifically to Māori. The key provision is in section 4 of the [Local Government Act 2002](#). In order to recognise and respect the Crown's responsibility to take appropriate account of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, and to **maintain and improve opportunities** for Māori to contribute to local government decision-making processes, Parts 2 and 6 provide **principles and requirements** for councils that are intended to **facilitate participation by Māori** in local government decision-making processes.

Whilst section 4 clearly acknowledges responsibility for the Treaty obligations lie with the Crown, Parts 2 and 6 of the Act are intended to facilitate participation of Māori in local government. Local government is charged with the responsibility to promote opportunities for Māori and other members of the public to contribute to its decision-making processes. These provisions apply to **all** Māori in the city, district, or region. They acknowledge that Māori other than mana whenua may be resident in the area.

The principles of the Treaty are:

- **Partnership:** Maori and the Crown have a relationship of good faith, mutual respect and understanding, and shared decision making
- **Participation:** the Crown and maori will work together to ensure Maori (including whanau, hapu, iwi and communities) participate in the disability sector at all levels of decision making around disability issues. Participation includes the right to seek opportunities for self-determination and self-management.
- **Protection:** the Crown actively contributes to improving the wellbeing of Maori including support for independent living and the protection of Maori property and identity, in accordance with Maori values. Maori have the same rights and privileges as other citizens.

VISION

Vision one: Hutt City is a liveable, accessible and inclusive city where everyone has the opportunity to participate fully in our community.

Vision two: One accessible and inclusive experience of service for all

PRINCIPLES

Equity

Everyone has the same rights and opportunities. Human rights are protected as the fundamental foundation of all Council policy and practise.

Inclusion

Hutt City encourages the involvement of all people in our community. The value of a fully inclusive and mutually supportive community is respected.

Partnership

People with disabilities are involved in community decision making processes.

Awareness and respect for all abilities

Recognise and value a person's abilities and their potential to contribute rather than focusing on reasons why they cannot.

Leadership

Hutt City Council will provide leadership to the wider community by demonstrating a commitment to the vision through its internal policies and practices.

Barrier free

The need to eliminate barriers created by the social and physical environment that interfere with the human rights of disabled people.

GOALS

Goal 1:

Council communication and information is accessible to all people

- Accessibility of HCC websites and published information
- Voting information is provided in easy read and captioned when online

KPIs

Accessibility of HCC websites and published information

- i. The [Ministry of Social Development guidelines](#) on best practice communication are applied when developing communications material and engaging face to face (kanohi ki te kanohi).
- ii. Council's website is in the top 5% in New Zealand for accessibility to disabled people
- iii. Council's website contains an "Accessibility page" which gives options for feedback and use of the website
- iv. Key strategy and policy documents are easy to access and read. This means
 - They are not only available in PDF form
 - The font size, colour and contrast used is easily readable by people with sight impairments

Voting information

- i. Council promotes accessible voting information with the Electoral Commission.

Goal Two

Council culture and processes² include disability awareness and staff receive appropriate training

KPIs

- i. All council staff receive regular disability awareness training measured by HR records of training staff receive this includes:
 - a. Induction processes
 - b. The level of visibility of practical assistance that is available e.g. assistance for hearing and sight impaired
 - c. Contracts containing disability focused requirements
- ii. That relevant officers are introduced to the Advisory Group once it is established to advise the group on their areas of responsibility and establish a process for involving the Advisory Group in decision making processes where decisions will have a direct impact on the disability community. Specific areas include:
 - Strategy and Planning
 - Community Partnerships
 - Leisure Active
 - City Development
 - Libraries
 - Museums
 - Parks and Gardens
 - Environmental Policy
 - Urban Design
 - Road and Traffic
 - Environmental Consents
 - City Promotions (includes web site development)

Goal Three:

All people are able to move about the city easily and safely without being limited by the physical environment

² This means Councillors and Council staff conducting themselves in a knowledgeable and empathetic way that is respectful of disabled people

KPIs

- i. Street Audits of Lower Hutt are carried out on a regular basis measured by the street audit report
- ii. Council makes every effort to ensure that all Council owned assets and facilities are accessible and inclusive to all people.

Goal Four:

In order to give effect to Articles 8 and 9 itself Council will champion and promote employment opportunities for people with impairments and also:

KPIs

- i. Establish an Accessibility and Inclusiveness Advisory Group (AIAG)
- ii. Provide support to groups in the community that are giving effect to CRPD articles 8 & 9
 - a. Provide opportunities for valid employment of disabled people where possible
 - b. Ensure job descriptions make it clear that disability is not a barrier to employment at Council

Review

The Accessibility and Inclusiveness Plan will be reviewed every three to five years.

DEFINITIONS

Meaningful participation is:

- the active involvement of informed citizens in government decision-making outside the ballot box
- ensuring that citizen needs, concerns and values are represented in policy and action.³

Diversity

The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing our individual differences. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual.⁴

³ <http://www.ceffect.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/12/meaningful-participation-by-gayle-l-gifford-acfre1.pdf>

⁴ <http://gladstone.uoregon.edu/~asuomca/diversityinit/definition.html>

Accessibility

Accessibility refers to the design of products, devices, services, or environments for people with disabilities. The concept of accessible design ensures both "direct access" (i.e. unassisted) and "indirect access" meaning compatibility with a person's assistive technology (for example, [computer screen readers](#)). Accessibility is strongly related to [universal design](#) which is the process of creating products that are usable by people with the widest possible range of abilities, operating within the widest possible range of situations. This is about making things accessible to all people (whether they have a disability or not⁵)

Inclusiveness

Inclusion of people with disabilities in society means involving them in every aspect of social participation others enjoy. Inclusion is something that must come from a desire to include them in the activities of the community, family, friendships and more and therefore must come from the actual desire to spend time with and interact with them. Including people with disabilities is something that you cannot legislate into the hearts and minds of people; it is something that people must want.⁶

⁵ <https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/accessibility/>

⁶ <https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/accommodation-inclusion.php>