



*Shire of Shark Bay*

# *Access and Inclusion Plan 2019 - 2024*



***‘Shark Bay is a proud, unified community, respecting and sharing our pristine environment and great lifestyle’.***

***Our Vision***

## Contents

<i>The Shire of Shark Bay</i> .....	3
<i>People living with disability in the Shire of Shark Bay</i> .....	4
<i>Progress since 1995</i> .....	5
<i>Community consultation process</i> .....	7
<i>Strategies to improve access and inclusion</i> .....	8

This document is available in alternative formats upon request including large and standard print, in electronic format by email, in hard copy format in both large and standard print and on the Shire of Shark Bay's website.

If you would like to provide feedback, suggestions or obtain further information about the Shire of Shark Bay's progress towards increasing access and inclusion, please contact the Shire of Shark Bay:

**Address:** 65 Knight Terrace, Denham WA 6537

**Telephone:** (08) 9448 1218

**Email:** [admin@sharkbay.wa.gov.au](mailto:admin@sharkbay.wa.gov.au)

**Website:** [www.sharkbay.wa.gov.au](http://www.sharkbay.wa.gov.au)

## *The Shire of Shark Bay*

The Shire of Shark Bay is located in the Gascoyne Region of the Midwest. Shark Bay is a 2.2million hectare World Heritage Area located approximately 800 kilometres north of Perth, within Western Australia’s popular Coral Coast tourism region. Town site of Denham is identified as very remote, we are located 129 kilometres west of the North West Coastal Highway. Shark Bay is made up of two peninsulas, located at the westernmost point of Australia.

According to the 2016 Census, 946 people live in the Shark Bay region, with 54.1% of the population Males and 45.9% of the population Females. Between 2011–2016, Denham experienced a resident population growth of 7.4% with significant increase in the young family demographic and senior residents.

Shark Bay has a rich and diverse history. The Aboriginal people of the Shark Bay area are descendants of the Malgana people. Shark Bay is also home to the first recorded landfall by a European on the Australian coastline, with Dutch skipper Dirk Hartog’s vessel the Eendracht landing at Dirk Hartog Island, off the coast on Shark Bay in 1616.



Image: Shark Bay peninsulas

## Functions, facilities and services (both in-house and contracted) provided by the Shire of Shark Bay

The Shire of Shark Bay is responsible for a range of functions, facilities and services including:

- **Services to property:** construction and maintenance of Shire-owned buildings, roads, footpaths and cycle facilities, land drainage and development, waste collection and disposal, litter control and street cleaning, planting and caring for street trees, numbering of buildings and lots, street lighting, and bush fire control.
- **Services to the community:** provision and maintenance of public spaces, playing areas, parks, gardens, reserves and facilities for sporting and community groups, public library and information services, pensioner units, youth services and community events, and Shark Bay World Heritage Discovery and Visitor Centre.
- **Regulatory services:** planning of road systems, sub-divisions and town planning schemes, building approvals for construction, additions or alterations to buildings, environmental health and ranger services, including dog and cat control and the development, maintenance and control of parking and camping areas.
- **General administration:** the provision of general information to the public and the lodging of complaints and payment of fees including rates, fines and dog and cat registrations.
- **Processes of government:** Ordinary and special Council and committee meetings, Electors' meetings and election of Council members, ward meetings and community consultations.



**Image: Shark Bay Recreation Centre**  
*Photographer: Nick Thake*

## *People living with disability in the Shire of Shark Bay*

It is estimated that there is a number of residents living with disability within the Shire. The seasonal influx of tourists, including tourists living with disability, must also be considered for the area of Shark Bay.

### **Planning for better access**

Under the Western Australian Disability Services Act 1993, Local Governments are required to develop and implement a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan to ensure people with disability have equal access to services and facilities. The Shire of Shark Bay Access and Inclusion Plan fulfils the requirement of the Act.

Other legislation underpinning access and inclusion includes the Western Australia Equal Opportunity Act (1984) and the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA), both of which make discrimination on the basis of a person's disability unlawful.

### *Progress since 1995*

The Shire of Shark Bay is committed to facilitating the inclusion for people living with disabilities through the improvement of access to our information, facilities and services. Towards this goal, the Shire adopted its first Disability Access and Inclusion Plan in 1995 to address the access barriers within the community.

Since the adoption of the initial Disability Access and Inclusion Plan, the Shire has implemented many initiatives and made significant progress towards better access. The Shire of Shark Bay has revised its town planning scheme and access and inclusion are included in planning decisions.

New public buildings and facilities that incorporate access and inclusion:

- Shark Bay World Heritage Discovery and Visitors Centre
- Public School
- Silver Chain medical facility
- Joint building: Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions / Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
- Emergency Services Precinct
- Shark Bay Recreation Centre precinct
- Playgrounds
- ACROD parking at Denham Town Hall
- Denham foreshore redevelopment
- Public toilets and footpaths.

In 2011, the Shire adopted a five year footpath plan and allocated \$50,000 per annum for the construction of new footpaths in the town site. This strategy has significantly improved the access around the town site. The Council revises the plan annually and reassess priorities in-line with budget and community needs.

In 2012, the Shark Bay Recreation Centre was officially opened to the community of Shark Bay. The new building was developed with access and inclusion as a major consideration and has full disability access with toilet and shower facilities, in both the main centre and the adjacent gymnasium. The centre offers sporting and recreation programs for all abilities and ages, and encourages community members and tourists to participate. As part of the precinct development, an amphitheatre has been constructed to facilitate performances. Footpaths have been installed to ensure full access to the area including the tiered seating.

A new children and adults playground has been constructed in the recreation precinct, which features an accessible gazebo and barbeque area with direct access to the playground.

In 2016, Shark Bay Foreshore Redevelopment Plan took into account the needs of people living with a disability and accessibility to natural features such as the beach. The development included accessibility to new fishing and boat jetty, public toilets and foreshore recreation areas. The footpaths were realigned to facilitate freedom of movement and ACROD parking was installed.

Water fountains have been installed on the Denham Foreshore and inside the Shark Bay Recreation Centre, both of which are accessible for people living with disability.

The entrance to the Shire's administration building was modified to improve access for people living with disability. The Shire has an ongoing plan to install footpaths in all streets within the township. These paths are all designed for ease of use for people living with disability.

The Shire strives to create an accessible and inclusive community for all abilities, ages and backgrounds. By taking a holistic approach to increasing access and inclusion throughout the organisation and the community. In 2019, the process to renew the Shire's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan undertook a new direction focusing on access and inclusion. This resulted in changing the Plan's name to the Shire of Shark Bay Access and Inclusion Plan 2019 – 2024 to reflect our community.

- ✓ **Access** refers to the physical access and the ability to approach and enter buildings, facilities, use of public places and information.
- ✓ **Inclusion** refers to social inclusion and feeling welcome to participate in the community and being treated equally and with dignity.

The Shire's new approach aims to improve access and inclusion by addressing our community's demographic and accommodating our seasonal tourist influx. By coordinating, developing and implementing strategies that benefit the community as a whole. The Access and Inclusion Plan continues to fulfil the requirements of the Western Australian Disability Services Act 1993 and legislated to address seven key outcome areas.

## Community consultation process

The Disability Services Act (DSA) Regulations (2004) set out the minimum consultation requirements for public authorities in relation to Access and Inclusion Plans.

The Shire's Community Development Officer led the community consultation process to identify achievements and improvements for our community's access and inclusion. The process included:

- Analysis of the Shire's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2014-2019 and subsequent progress reports
- Consultation with Shire of Shark Bay staff
- Consultation with the community
- Footpath audit with community member living with disability.

The community was informed through the Shire's website, noticeboards, local media and social media regarding the development of the new Plan. The community was invited to provide their input to address access and inclusion barriers for people living with disability and their families. The feedback was received in writing and in person, and has been reflected in the Plan's strategies and future planning.



**Image: Denham Seniors Group**  
*Photographer: Nick Thake*

## Responsibility for implementing the Access and Inclusion Plan

Implementation of the Access and Inclusion Plan is the responsibility of all areas of the Shire. The Department of Communities requires all public authorities to take all practical measures to ensure that the Access and Inclusion Plan is implemented by its officers, staff, agents and contractors.

All Shire staff are provided with a copy of the Access and Inclusion Plan upon commencing their employment. Access and Inclusion requirements are included in all service agreements and contracts, to agents and contractors providing their services to the community on behalf of the Shire. The Shire's annual report will highlight the progress completed by the Shire's staff, agents and contractors.

## **Communicating the plan to staff and people with disabilities**

The community was informed through the Shire's website, noticeboards, local media and social media that copies of the plan were available upon request, and in alternative formats if required.

## **Review and evaluation mechanisms**

The Disability Services Act 1993 requires our Access and Inclusion Plan to be reviewed at least every five years. Whenever the Access and Inclusion Plan is amended, a copy of the amended plan must be lodged with Department of Communities. The implementation plan can be updated more frequently if desired.

## **Evaluation**

An evaluation will occur as part of the five-yearly review of the Shire's Access and Inclusion Plan. The community and Shire staff will be consulted as per the endorsed consultation strategies, as part of any evaluation.

## **Reporting on the Access and Inclusion Plan**

The Disability Services Act 1993 requires the Shire to report on the implementation of our Access and Inclusion Plan within our annual report. The Shire is also required to report on progress in the prescribed format to Department of Communities by 1<sup>st</sup> July each year.



**Image: Denham Town Centre**  
*Photographer: Nick Thake*



## Strategies to improve access and inclusion

### Outcome 1:

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

Strategy	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that people living with disability are consulted on their needs for services and the accessibility of current services.	Ongoing	Community Development
Monitor Shire services to ensure equitable access and inclusion.	Ongoing	Community Development
Develop the links between the Access and Inclusion Plan and other Shire plans and strategies.	Ongoing	Community Development
Ensure that events, whether organised, funded or sponsored by the Shire are accessible to people living with disability.	Ongoing	Community Development
Encourage the business community to consider the needs for people living with disability when providing facilities and services.	Ongoing	Community Development
Consider access and inclusion needs for people living with disability participating in sport and active recreation services and programs.	Ongoing	Community Development

**Outcome 2:**

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of a public authority.

Strategy	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that all buildings and facilities meet the standards for access and any demonstrated additional need.	Ongoing	Building Officer
Ensure that all new or redevelopment works provide access to people living with disability, where practicable.	Ongoing	Planning Officer
Ensure that ACROD parking meets the needs of people with disability in terms of quantity and location.	Ongoing	Planning Officer
Ensure maintenance on current building and facilities are completed in a timely manner to ensure accessibility is maintained.	Ongoing	Works Manager
Ensure the Shire's agents and contractors provide services that are consistent with the Shire's access and inclusion principles.	Ongoing	Works Manager

**Outcome 3:**

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

Strategy	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that the community is aware that Shire information is available in alternative formats upon request.	Ongoing	Community Development/ Administration
Improve staff awareness of accessible information needs and how to provide information in other formats.	Ongoing	Community Development/ Administration
Ensure the Shire's website meets contemporary good practice.	Ongoing	Community Development

**Outcome 4:**

People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of a public authority as other people receive from the staff of that public authority.

Strategy	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that all staff, existing and new, and elected members are aware of disability and access issues and provided with the Shire's Access and Inclusion Plan.	Ongoing	Executive Managers
Provide opportunity to all staff, existing and new, and elected members to enhance skills and attend training workshops when necessary.	Ongoing	Executive Managers / Community Development

**Outcome 5:**

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to a public authority.

Strategy	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure staff and residents are aware of the accessible complaints mechanisms and are available in flexible formats.	Ongoing	Community Development/ Administration
Ensure that complaints are acted upon in a timely manner.	Ongoing	Community Development/ Administration

**Outcome 6:**

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by a public authority.

Strategy	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that people living with disability are actively consulted about the Shire's Access and Inclusion Plan and any other significant planning processes.	Ongoing	Community Development
Ensure that people living with disability are aware of and can access other established consultative processes.	Ongoing	Community Development
Ensure all aspects of council meetings and community forums are accessible.	Ongoing	Community Development

**Outcome 7:**

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment within a public authority.

Strategy	Timeline	Responsibility
Use inclusive recruitment practices to improve methods of attracting, recruiting and retaining people living with disability. All future employment position advertisements to include an Equal Employment Opportunity statement.	Ongoing	Executive Managers / Community Development
Workplaces will be accessible and safe for existing and new staff.	Ongoing	Executive Managers / Community Development
Work with key disability employment support providers to employ a person with disability. By seeking assistance to develop a flexible job description, interview process and employment requirements when necessary.	Ongoing	Executive Managers / Community Development