

# Towards an Inclusive Environment

The Waimakariri Accessibility Strategy  
2017 - 2021



August 2017



WAIMAKARIRI  
DISTRICT COUNCIL





## Acknowledgements

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Waimakariri Access Group, Waimakariri Health Advisory Group, Community	Jill Waldron

Thanks also to the people and organisations that supplied photographs for this strategy including Hearing Dogs, Riding for the Disabled and Council staff.



## Mayor's Foreword

The New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026 is founded on the vision of New Zealand as a non-disabling society. The Waimakariri District Council shares this vision and this strategy has been developed in partnership with representatives from the Waimakariri Access Group, the Waimakariri Health Advisory Group, CCS Disability Action, IDEA/People First, Blind Foundation, and Waimakariri District Council staff.

The Waimakariri District is growing steadily and, like the rest of New Zealand, the population is ageing. Consequently the proportion of people in our District experiencing impairments is also increasing, particularly because impairments are more common amongst people of older age groups.

As a Council it is important that we minimise the barriers to members of our community as they go about their everyday life. We have a vision of an enabled community where people with impairments can live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life.

I endorse this strategy as a further step towards an enabled Waimakariri community.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Ayers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.


**David Ayers**

*Mayor, Waimakariri District Council*



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# Introduction

## What is the Accessibility Strategy?

The Waimakariri District Council Accessibility Strategy provides a framework for how the Council will contribute towards ensuring the local environment and facilities are inclusive for all people, including those with impairments. Impairments may be long or short term, may be physical, mental, intellectual or sensory and can often be more prevalent in people of older age groups.

Accessibility is a general term used to describe the degree to which a product, service or environment is available to as many people as possible. In this context it refers to the removal of barriers that prevent people participating fully in community and civic life. Accessible design benefits everyone, which includes families with young children as well as people with impairments and age-related disability.

The New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016 - 2026 defines “disability” as:

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.

An inclusive environment for all means reducing barriers and thus reducing “disability”. This includes changing Council and community attitudes towards people with impairments and providing a plan to encourage and support the participation of people with impairments in the democratic process and community life.

In light of current issues and barriers faced by people with impairments, as well as growing demands, this strategy sets out a vision for a society where all people can engage in personal, community and civic life with independence. It identifies key goals and objectives which together contribute towards achieving the vision and outlines a number of high level priority areas and Council actions for contributing towards an inclusive environment. More detailed implementation planning will be set out in a separate Action Plan which will accompany this strategy.

**“Anyone is only a drunk driver, a work accident,  
or a banana skin away from being disabled.”**

(Source: Inclusive Communities Disabled Persons Assembly, August 2010)



## Why do we need an Accessibility Strategy?

The Council wants to ensure its services, buildings and activities are accessible to everyone by working towards removing the barriers that prevent people from participating fully in community and civic life.

This strategy will act as a guide to enhance people's independence and ability to participate, engage in, and benefit from Council services. Providing accessible services, communication channels, transport, buildings and public spaces will make the Waimakariri District more inclusive for everyone. It will enhance the diversity of the District and make it attractive to residents and visitors of any age and ability.

Council is responsible for maintaining, managing and developing key public assets (such as roads, parks and halls) and delivering services (building and resource consents, events, community development, planning and regulation) that enhance the quality of life of the communities they are responsible for. Local authorities are able to play a major part in reducing the barriers (environmental and attitudinal) that contribute to disability for people in its communities.

Through this strategy the Council is able to advocate for accessibility by leading by example and influencing and enabling others to be inclusive so that in the future more services and facilities are inclusive (not just those owned by the Council).

According to the 2013 census, 24 percent of New Zealanders have a disability. The increase from the 2001 rate (20%) is partially explained by our ageing population. If people who experience temporary impairment (e.g. from injuries or illness) are included, the number of people with impairments in society is much higher. This shows that all of us are likely to experience a form of impairment at some point in our lives and it is important that our local environment is inclusive to allow and encourage full participation in all aspects of community life.

In March 2007 New Zealand, along with many other countries, signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The United Nations Convention has the purpose of promoting, protecting and ensuring "...the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity."

The New Zealand Government is responsible for implementing the Convention and reporting back to the United Nations. By signing the agreement, the Government bound itself to abide by it in domestic law. Local Government has a key role in ensuring mainstream services are inclusive of people with impairments and are delivered in non-discriminatory ways.



## How has the Accessibility Strategy been developed?

The 2011 Waimakariri Disability Strategy “Towards an Inclusive Environment” was developed collaboratively with representatives from disability groups, key disability service providers and the Council. A Disability Reference Group was established, and together with Council staff, this group led the development and consultation on the strategy. This is the first review of the 2011 strategy.

The review has been undertaken collaboratively, beginning with a review of the associated action plan and the progress Council has made towards achieving the goals of the strategy. This has been a two way review with Waimakariri Access Group members reporting back to Council their views on the achievements of Council since the strategy was adopted in 2011.

Consultation on the draft strategy commenced on 11 August 2017 and closed on 8 September 2017. The consultation process was not subject to the Special Consultative Procedure as prescribed by the Local Government Act 2002, however it was considered worthwhile to provide an opportunity for comment on the draft strategy through a submission process before the finalised strategy was adopted by Council and implemented. In addition to open public consultation key groups with an interest in disability issues were specifically invited to comment on the draft strategy.

Feedback received through consultation has been considered and, where appropriate, reflected in the adopted strategy.



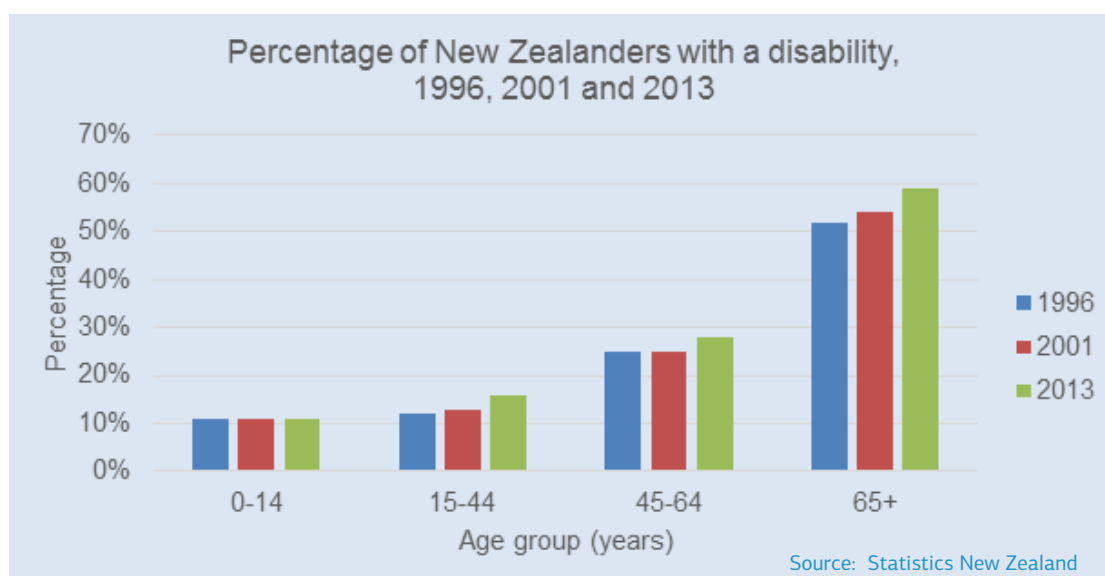
# Setting the Scene

## National Context

### People with Impairments in New Zealand

In the 2013 New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings, an estimated 1,018,000 New Zealanders reported a disability, defined by the survey as “a health problem or condition (lasting 6 months or more) causing difficulty with, or stopping (respondents) doing: everyday activities that people your age can usually do”.

The following graph depicts the percentage of people with a disability in New Zealand by age group over the three census years – 1996, 2001 and 2013.



1. The disability rate is the percentage of the total population, in each age group, that was disabled. Percentages are calculated on unrounded numbers.
2. We have reweighted the data for 2001 using population estimates based on the 2006 Census. We did this to increase comparability with 2013, which we also weighted using population estimates based on the 2006 Census.
3. The child (0-14 years) screening questions were changed in the 2013 survey. Be careful when comparing figures for children from the 2013 survey with those from previous surveys.

Breaking the occurrence of a disability down by age shows a much higher probability of disability as age increases, with just under 60% of people aged 65 or over suffering from a disability.

The 2013 Disability Survey, a survey conducted by Statistics New Zealand in conjunction with the 2013 census, provides information focusing mainly on the prevalence and nature of disability. The survey also collected information on barriers that people with impairments encounter in their everyday life.



The 2013 Disability Survey identifies that:

- In 2013, 24 percent of the New Zealand population were identified as disabled, a total of 1.1 million people.
- The increase from the 2001 rate (20 percent) is partly explained by our aging population.
- People aged 65 or over were much more likely to be disabled (59 percent) than adults under 65 years (21 percent) or children under 15 years (11 percent).
- Maori and Pacific people had higher-than-average disability rates, after adjusting for differences in ethnic population age profiles.
- For adults, physical limitations were the most common type of impairment. Eighteen percent of people aged 15 or over, 64 percent of disabled adults, were physically impaired.
- For children, learning difficulty was the most common impairment type. Six percent of children, 52 percent of disabled children, had difficulty learning.
- Just over half of all disabled people (53 percent) had more than one type of impairment.
- The most common cause of disability for adults was disease or illness (42 percent). For children, the most common cause was a condition that existed at birth (49 percent).
- The Auckland regional disability rate, at 19 percent, was lower than the national average. Bay of Plenty and Manawatu-Wanganui (both 27 percent), Northland (29 percent), and Taranaki (30 percent) experienced above-average disability rates.

### CONFIDENT DRIVING COURSE FOR THE MATURE DRIVER



As we age, we change physically and mentally. These changes can affect your driving ability and skills. Do you want to learn what you can do to make sure you stay safe on our roads?

**Wednesday 17 May 2017 - Kaiapoi Community Centre**


**What does the course involve?**

- A free class room based programme
- Lunch included (\$5 contribution)
- Held in a safe and enjoyable environment
- Workbook for future reference
- No tests or exams on the course
- Certificate of attendance

**Course is from 9.30am to 2.45pm - to book contact Age Concern Canterbury 366 0903**



Supported by 



In addition, according to the World Health Organisation, mental illness accounts for 15% of disease in the developed world, with depression set to become the second leading cause of disability in the world by 2020. The Social Report 2016<sup>1</sup> section on ‘Health’ reports the proportion of people with high or very high levels of psychological distress (such as anxiety, confused emotions, depression or rage), which indicates a high probability of an anxiety or depressive disorder. It is reported that “In 2013/14, an estimated 221,000 New Zealanders aged 15 years and over reported experiencing high or very high levels of psychological distress, an increase of 3,000 from 2012/13.”

## Inclusive Communities Document

The Disabled Persons Assembly (New Zealand) Inc (DPA) document<sup>2</sup> ‘Inclusive Communities’ provides the guiding strategic framework for this strategy. ‘Inclusive Communities’ sets out the general principles governing partnership with people with impairments and describes actions for removing barriers that prevent full inclusion in society.

The key principles set out in ‘Inclusive Communities’ for elected members and staff of Councils and District Health Boards are the same general principles that underpin the Disability Convention and include:

- Establishing a partnership of equality to ensure that, in all areas of policy making and service delivery, people with impairments are at the centre of decision making about their lives;
- Making immediate progress to remove existing barriers to full participation and inclusion in society;
- Acknowledging that people with impairments have the same rights as other New Zealanders to a dignified life; adequate standard of living; independence; non- discrimination; full and effective participation in society; access to the built and natural environment, information and transport, and support services; equality of opportunity, especially in education and employment; equality between men and women; and respect for their children;
- Partnership with people with impairments to achieve the above goals must include measurable outcomes, monitoring and information gathering;
- Understanding that these principles are part of international law and must be upheld.

<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Social Development, *The Social Report 2016*, *Te purongo oranga tangata* (<http://socialreport.msd.govt.nz/documents/2016/msd-the-social-report-2016.pdf>)

<sup>2</sup> Inclusive Communities, Disabled Persons Assembly [New Zealand] Inc, Third Edition, August 2010





## The New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016 - 2026

The New Zealand Disability Strategy presents a long-term plan for changing New Zealand from a disabling to an inclusive society. A fully inclusive society is the vision of the strategy and it suggests that this will be achieved when people with impairments can say they live in:

*“A society that highly values our lives and continually enhances our full participation.”*

The strategy emphasises the importance of the decisions made by territorial authorities and non-departmental public bodies that have an impact on the lives of people with impairments and can reduce a number of key barriers faced by people with impairments.

The strategy sees territorial authorities, as well as other public bodies, as vital in supporting and assisting with the implementation of the strategy. By implementing an Accessibility Strategy for the Waimakariri District and including complementary key goals and actions, the Council can significantly contribute towards the achievement of the New Zealand Disability Strategy vision at a local level.

### Outcomes - priorities for change

The New Zealand Disability Strategy identifies eight outcomes that will contribute towards achieving the vision of the Strategy:

#### Education:

- We get an excellent education and achieve our potential throughout our lives

#### Employment and Financial Resources:

- We have security in our economic situation and can achieve our potential.

#### Health and Wellbeing:

- We have the highest attainable standards of health and wellbeing.

## Rights protection and justice:

- Our rights are protected; we feel safe, understood and are treated fairly and equitably by the justice system.

## Accessibility:

- We access all places, services and information with ease and dignity.

## Attitudes:

- We are treated with dignity and respect.

## Choice and control:

- We have choice and control over our lives.

## Leadership:

- We have great opportunities to demonstrate our leadership.





## Accessibility Charter – Canterbury

The Charter initiative developed from a commitment the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) made to the Barrier Free New Zealand Trust (BFNZT) to strive for the level of accessibility in the rebuild to go beyond minimum compliance requirements. A process was agreed which included mandatory accessibility audits for all Anchor Projects at key stages. The inclusion of mandatory accessibility audits was a pragmatic and practical measure to negate the likely impact of outdated legislation and varying levels of expertise on universal design in design teams.

When CERA was replaced with new rebuild agencies, some momentum was lost. As BFNZT and the Earthquake Disability Leadership Group (EDLG) conferred with these agencies about how the impetus might be restored, the concept of an overarching Charter arose. The Charter's goal is for each government accountable organisation to implement a process, (individual and specific to that organization), to ensure the level aspired to in relation to accessibility in the environment is 'best practice' rather than minimum compliance.

It is anticipated that, through commitment to the Charter, each organization will include independent technical expertise and user perspectives, education of staff and those who can influence accessible design and construction of projects. For leaders to be proactive in their commitment to ensure new builds surpass minimum compliance until the legislation changes and higher level expectations are made mandatory.

The Earthquake Disability Leadership Group is a disability advocacy group established in December 2011. The group is a coalition of disabled leaders, disabled persons organisations, disability organisations and service providers. The collaboration of these groups and agencies provide a strong local perspective and national overview to all issues relating to access. There is extensive expertise both technically and in policy.

### Accessibility Charter - Canterbury

#### Vision

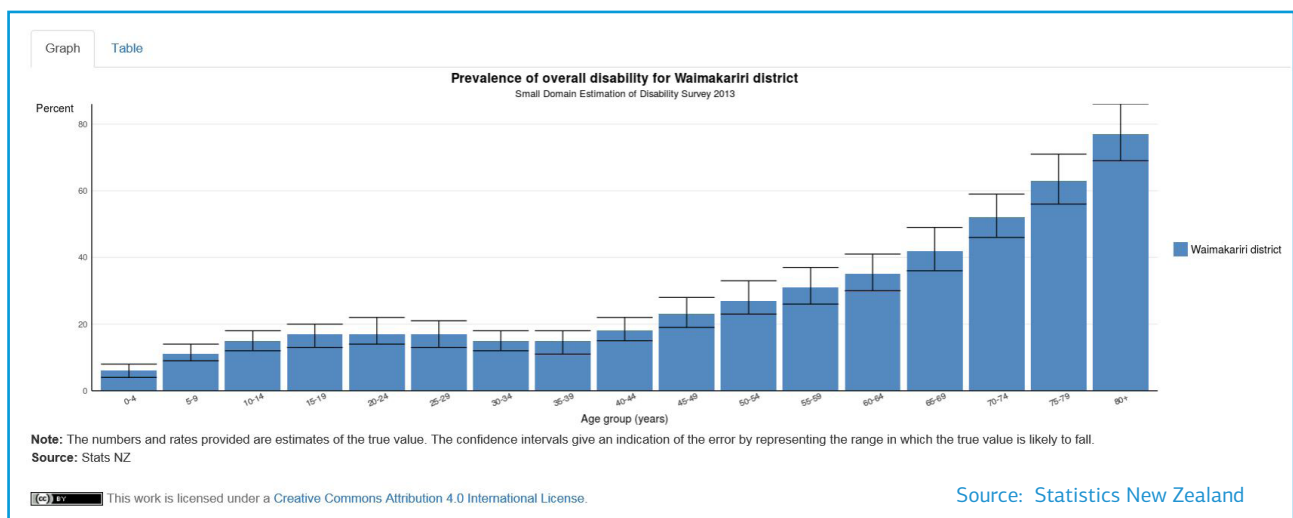
Waitaha-Canterbury will become a model of best-practice accessibility through our community and business leaders advocating for places and spaces that are accessible for all people.

On 3 November 2017 the Waimakariri District Council became a foundation signatory to the Canterbury Accessibility Charter.

## Local Context

### People with Impairments in the Waimakariri District

The 2013 New Zealand Disability Survey is made up of two surveys: the 2013 Household Disability Survey taken on Census night and the Disability Survey of Residential Facilities. The data for the Waimakariri District is a recent release from Statistics New Zealand using a statistical model to produce estimates for areas smaller than regions.



The above graph shows that there are approximately 12,890 people with impairments living in our District, 25.8% of a total population of 49,989 (2013 Census, usually resident population). The number of people with impairments increases with age. In fact, over half (53%) of District residents aged 65 and over have an impairment. The proportion is likely to be much higher when looking at only those aged over 80.

The population of the Waimakariri District has increased steadily over the last 10 years with a 14.1% increase between 1996 and 2001, a 16.1% increase between 2001 and 2006 and a similar increase (16.7%) between 2006 and 2013.

The greatest percentage increases were recorded for the 60-64 years age group (41.0%) and the 65 years and over age group (40.4%), signifying an ageing population. Overall, in 2013 some 23% of the District residents were aged 65 and over, a 9% increase since 2006.

A key feature of an ageing population is the decline in the percentage of children in the population. In the 10 years from 1996-2006 the number of young children in the population has dropped from 15.3% in 1996 to 12.9% in 2013.

As impairments are much more prevalent in older age, as shown in the graph, Waimakariri's increasingly ageing population may mean greater demands on health and disability services and an even greater need to ensure the local environment is inclusive for all in order to enable people with impairments to lead an independent life.

## Local Barriers to Accessibility

The Waimakariri Access Group identified a range of local barriers for people with impairments and suggest the following:

### Communication

Improve signage for public toilets and request the use of the international symbols of access (Department of Building and Housing, [www.dbh.govt.nz](http://www.dbh.govt.nz)).

Improve signage at Dudley Park Aquatic Centre regarding the provision of the hoist and variable height change table in the accessible changing facility.

### Consultation

The Waimakariri Access Group requests that they are consulted early on in the planning of projects as it is difficult to make changes in later stages. They also highlight that it is important that they continue to be consulted throughout the design and development of final audits.

### Physical Access

Request that accessibility is an integral part of traffic management plans when footpath repairs are being undertaken.

Ensure that accessible car parks are available to accommodate vans that are 'rear loaders' enabling safe use of ramps and hoists at the back of the vehicle.

## Implementation of the Strategy

Since the adoption of the 2011 Disability Strategy the Council has addressed local barriers for people with impairments.

Council staff have continued to undertake awareness training through the Waimakariri Access Group which includes representation from CCS Disability Action and the Blind Foundation. This training aims to heighten awareness of disability issues so that staff members can consider the impact their work has on people with impairments ensuring plans and projects do not have a negative impact on accessibility.





There is a programme of maintenance and/or reconstruction for footpaths to ensure they remain physically accessible, comfortable and safe. Associated with this is the installation of directional and tactile pavers during upgrades of crossing points in the towns. These pavers assist those who are blind or have low vision to identify the location of hazards and to orient and navigate the environment.



Accessible routes to schools are prioritised which include upgrading/installing footpaths and cycle ways.

Accessible parking spaces are provided, monitored and the restrictions enforced.



All accessible parking signage has been updated and incorporated into the first schedule of the Parking Bylaw.

The Council's Customer Services department maintains a list of residents undergoing dialysis to ensure they are contacted if water services are to be interrupted.

The Council and library websites are designed using E-Govt Accessibility criteria.

The library has wheelchairs available in the Rangiora and Kaiapoi facilities and offers a book pick-up and delivery service for people who are unable to easily travel from their homes. The library catalogue includes talking and large print books for people with vision impairments. Computers with internet access (as well as WiFi within the library) are available at no charge and these are installed with enlargement software to make them user friendly for people with vision impairments.

Dudley Park Aquatic Centre has been designed with a wheelchair ramp and a wet wheelchair to enable access to the main pool for people with physical impairments. Hoist access to the spa pool is provided and a ceiling hoist and height adjustable change table has been installed in one of the accessible changing rooms.

Parks and reserves in the District are designed using Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. The CPTED approach designs places to be, and feel, safer.

While the Council already addresses some key barriers faced by people with impairments through its current activities, it is recognised that more can be done to contribute towards an inclusive environment for all. This will in turn contribute towards achieving key community outcomes.





## Waimakariri Community Outcomes

All Council actions are designed to contribute towards achieving the Community Outcomes, which are the aspirations of the community for the District as prepared for the 2018-2028 Long Term Plan. The Disability Strategy contributes towards achieving a number of Community Outcomes, particularly:

### **Governance**

#### **Effect is given to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi**

- The Council in partnership with Te Ngai Tuahuriri Runanga, continue to build our relationship through mutual understanding and shared responsibilities.

#### **There are wide ranging opportunities for people to contribute to the decision making that affects our District**

- The Council makes information about its plans and activities readily available.
- The Council takes account of the views across the community including mana whenua.
- The Council makes known its views on significant proposals by others affecting the District's wellbeing.
- Opportunities for collaboration and partnerships are actively pursued.

### **Environment**

#### **There is a safe environment for all**

- Harm to people from natural and man-made hazards is minimised.
- Our district has the capacity and resilience to quickly recover from natural disasters and adapt to the effects of climate change.
- Crime, injury and harm from road crashes, gambling and alcohol abuse are minimised.
- Our District is well served by emergency services and volunteers are encouraged.

### **Places and Spaces**

#### **The community's cultures, arts and heritage are conserved and celebrated**

- There are wide-ranging opportunities to participate in arts and cultural activities.



### **Public spaces and facilities are plentiful, accessible and high quality**

- There is a wide variety of public places and spaces to meet people's needs.
- There are wide-ranging opportunities for people to enjoy the outdoors.
- The accessibility of community and recreation facilities meets the changing needs of our community.

### **The distinctive character of our takiwa – towns, villages and rural areas is maintained**

- The centres of our towns are safe, convenient and attractive places to visit and do business.

### **People are friendly and caring, creating a strong sense of community in our District**

- There are wide-ranging opportunities for people of different ages, abilities and cultures to participate in community life and recreational activities.

The high-level implementation table within this document outlines more specifically how key priorities and Council actions contribute towards achieving the above Community Outcome.



# Overall Planning Framework

The following statutes, policies, plans and strategies provide a framework for the development and implementation of the Disability Strategy for the Waimakariri District.



# The Strategy

## The Waimakariri Vision

The Waimakariri District Council has a vision for an inclusive District where all people can engage in personal, community, and civic life without barriers. The associated nine keywords represent overarching guiding principles that are accepted as vital and true for creating an inclusive society.



## Goals

The following eight goals have been identified for the Council to create a more inclusive environment within the Waimakariri District. These are accompanied by more descriptive objectives.

At a glance, the eight goals are:





## Communication

The Council communicates a lot with the wider community, whether in person at Council Service Centres and Libraries, through signs and advertisements, in newspapers, via the website or emails, through pamphlets, policies, strategies and plans.

Some people with impairments (intellectual, vision and/or hearing), who are elderly, or new migrants (with English as a second language), face barriers to being able to access or understand commonly used forms of communication. It is important that the Council communicates information in a way that is appropriate to people's needs.

### **Goal 1: Communication allows and encourages full access to Council information, events, services and facilities.**

- Information about services, events and facilities is provided in a variety of ways and media to meet different needs;
- Information about Council services and events is publicised through disability networks;
- Targeted information for people with impairments and service providers is provided;
- Council facilities have clear signs including internationally recognised symbols and indicators.



## Consultation and Decision Making

The Council regularly consults with the wider community on issues that affect them, including proposed changes to services, proposals for new services, changes to the physical environment such as roads, intersections or spaces in their neighbourhoods, and more.

The Council also conducts a number of surveys that gauge the community's views about particular matters, or involves representatives in developing strategic directions to address particular issues facing the District and its residents.

It is essential that the Council ensures its consultation and decision making mechanisms are accessible to all people and that it specifically consults with people with impairments and relevant agencies on matters that impact on their lives.

### **Goal 2: Everyone, including people with impairments, is able to fully participate in Council consultation and decisions that impact their living in the District.**

- Council consultation processes do not create barriers that prevent anyone from participating in making decisions that affect their lives;
- Council engages in ongoing dialogue with people with impairments and their agencies to ensure their needs are recognised and considered when making decisions;
- Carers of people who experience disability are able to contribute to decisions that affect them;
- People with impairments are involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services, new developments and redevelopment;
- The Waimakariri Access Group is utilised as a disability reference group to ensure appropriate expertise is available for planning, reviewing and implementing services.



## Access to Council Services, Programmes and Events

The Council provides a number of District services such as supplying water and sewer, collecting rubbish and recycling and renting Council housing. Council services, programmes and events play a significant role in the wider community in creating a functional and enjoyable District in which to live and create stronger communities.

It is important that access to services, programmes and events is inclusive for all and allows maximum opportunities for participation for people with impairments. For example, the increase in services that are accessible over the phone or internet have significant benefits for people with vision or mobility impairments. It is important to ensure services are delivered without discrimination against people with impairments.

### **Goal 3: Council services, programmes and events are accessible for everyone, including people with impairments.**

- Council services meet the specific needs of people with impairments;
- Council housing is of appropriate design, is accessible, available and safe for people with impairments;
- Rubbish and recycling collection services are accessible and do not create hazards;
- Council-run and sponsored events and programmes are accessible to people with impairments and physical access needs are met;
- Recreation and sports programmes are accessible for everyone, including people with impairments.





## Physical Access

The Council is responsible for providing and maintaining a number of public spaces such as roads, footpaths, parks and recreational areas, laneways, squares and on and off-street car parking. It also provides public facilities and buildings which house services, including libraries, service centres, sports facilities, museums, pools, town halls, and information centres. At the same time, the Council regulates requirements for other buildings the public regularly uses, such as commercial and retail facilities, health care services, cafés and restaurants.

Public spaces and facilities provide an important community function – they are places where people meet and socialise; where people learn, work, shop or do business; where people obtain health care or other services; or are simply means of getting from one place to another. Physical barriers, such as steps, heavy doors, lack of colour contrasting, high door handles or lift buttons, poor lighting, lack of accessible way finding and signage, can all become obstacles for people in accessing facilities and services.

Public spaces and buildings are heavily utilised by the community. It is essential that these are accessible for everyone in order to maximise the opportunity for all people to fully participate in this important aspect of community life. This means no-one is prevented from participation in recreational, social or employment activities because of architectural or attitudinal barriers.

### **Goal 4: Everyone, including people with impairments, have access to public services, facilities and spaces.**

- Footpaths, crossings, paved areas and streets are designed, constructed and maintained in ways which are safe, usable and accessible for everyone;
- Specific road safety issues raised by people with impairments such as particular pedestrian crossings, intersections and footpath surfaces are addressed;
- Mobility car parking is accessible, safe, appropriately located and monitored;
- Footpaths and streets are unobstructed so that people are able to move about safely and easily;
- Existing Council services, facilities and public spaces maximise the opportunities for people to access and participate;
- Statutory requirements for buildings and amenities to ensure their compliance with the Building Act Section 118 relating to design for Access and Mobility are enforced;
- Appropriately designed changing facilities and public toilets are available at Council facilities where relevant;
- Public transport is accessible and affordable



## Advocacy

The Council has a role to advocate for access and equity issues such as, but not limited to, education, employment and training, cultural events and programmes, and youth disability services, as they relate to people with impairments in the Waimakariri District. This includes supporting advocacy groups and agencies such as the Waimakariri Access Group, Social Services Waimakariri and the Waimakariri Health Advisory Group. At the same time, people with impairments need to be empowered to self-advocate to achieve independent living.

### **Goal 5: The rights of people with impairments are supported and promoted through advocacy and empowerment.**

- Advocacy is provided for policies, programmes, practices, and procedures that guarantee equal opportunity for all people with impairments;
- People with impairments have the opportunity to advocate on their own behalf;
- Disability advocacy services and agencies are supported;
- Advocacy is provided for the planning and development of an inclusive and accessible environment for everyone;
- People with impairments are portrayed by the media in a positive way, particularly through Council's own publications and publicity material.



**Deaf** AOTEAROA  
New Zealand  
TANGATA TURU

**DEAF COMMUNITY**

Deaf people feel positive about being Deaf.



*Deaf people see being Deaf as a difference, not a disability. – Being Deaf is a way of life.*

The Deaf community is quite unique, with its own language, values, rules for behaviour and traditions. Deaf people see themselves as a distinct group within a country and their first language is sign language - in New Zealand it's New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL).

Deaf identify with other Deaf people because of shared experiences - communication barriers, issues, different needs and goals. As a group of people who respond to things visually, Deaf customs include various forms of artistic expression, such as signed poetry, story-telling and visual arts.

Because Deaf people use visual communication, rather than verbal, the following points may help:

- Deaf people ask for attention by waving, stamping, touching or tapping one another, or switching lights on and off
- In conversation, eye contact is very important and people need sufficient personal space for arm movements
- Deaf people can't interrupt conversations the way hearing people can. They need to see what is being said, so they can only pay attention to one person at a time. Deaf people wait until the person who is signing stops, before the next person signs
- Dim light makes it hard to see facial expressions and NZSL
- At meetings sit in a semi-circle, so everyone can see each other

**What is the difference between Deaf and deaf?**

The word Deaf (spelt with a capital "D") denotes a unique community. The use of sign language as one's first language is the principle characteristic of people who identify with this community.

With a small "d", deaf refers to hearing loss - eg "he is deaf". The majority of people with hearing loss do not use sign language, as they generally become deaf late in life or are born with mild hearing loss. They most likely speak fluently and understand spoken language (possibly with the help of a hearing aid or surgery) and, for the most part, are integrated into hearing society.



## Prevention

The Council acknowledges that one fifth to one third of impairments are caused by lasting effects of injury as identified by the Ministry of Health. It is therefore important that injury caused by a variety of things including motor vehicle accidents, poor diet and health are minimised, thereby reducing the overall rate of incidence of some forms of impairments in the Waimakariri District.

### Goal 6: Injuries are avoided and rates of impairment reduced.

- Advocacy is provided for policies and strategies which influence health, in order to improve people's standard of living and vulnerability to injury and disease;
- Preventative measures to reduce injury or diseases which can lead to impairments are advocated;
- Healthy living is encouraged and promoted;
- Injury prevention programmes are supported;
- Road safety is promoted;
- Environmental health statues such as food licensing, dangerous goods, sale of liquor, insanitary buildings, offensive trades and hazardous substances are enforced;
- Civil defence practices are in place in order to plan for and respond to emergencies.





## Diverse Workforce

For most people, the chance to get and keep a job is central to their independence and participation in society. For people with impairments, this can often be far more difficult than for those without impairments – people with impairments are amongst those in society with the lowest employment rates.

It is widely recognised that there is a positive correlation between gainful employment and wellbeing. Positive attributes of employment include time structure, shared experiences, contacts and social networks, which often lead to an increase in self-esteem. Work can in itself be an important step in the road to recovery and rehabilitation, as well as providing obvious personal economic benefits.

People with impairments have the right to productive and meaningful employment that provides flexibility, equal opportunity and career path development. The Council is one of the District's largest employers. It provides a wide range of workplace opportunities for local residents. It is vital that the Council provides equitable employment opportunities for people with impairments in order to ensure that assumptions and stereotypes do not prejudice the selection of candidates. Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) allow the Council to recruit the best person for the job, once they (the Council) have made any reasonable adjustments.

### **Goal 7: The Council has an Equal Employment Opportunities environment and a diverse workforce.**

- Employment and development of staff with impairments is facilitated and key service providers and disability agencies consulted regarding the removal of barriers;
- Communication services, resources, and flexible workplace options are available;
- Job modification, skills training and on the job training is available;
- The requirements of the Health and Safety Act are implemented;
- There is no discriminatory or insensitive behaviour towards employees with impairments.

## Cultural Change

In many cases, it is society's attitudes towards people with impairments that create problems or a "disability". Cultural change is one of the most fundamental steps in creating an environment that is truly inclusive for all, independent from whether an individual suffers an impairment or not.

Cultural change is about considering and appropriately providing for the needs of people with impairments in everyday work. Attitudes and ignorance towards people with impairments must be challenged to avoid institutional discrimination. This will ensure all in Council understand why rights are necessary and what they mean.

### **Goal 8: Disability training programmes are developed and implemented at all levels within the Council.**

- All Council staff and elected members will undertake disability awareness training;
- Staff whose work impinges directly on the well-being of people experiencing disabilities undertake more specific training to ensure they are appropriately educated about removing barriers faced by people with impairments;
- Universal Design seminars for Council officers to improve staff understanding and ability to be responsive to needs of people with impairments are sponsored;
- Resource material and expertise of the Waimakariri Access Group is available and communicated to Council staff to enhance their awareness and understanding of potential barriers, appropriate consultation processes available networks and strategies to integrate the needs of the impaired community into services, facilities and decision-making processes.



The following pages outline key priority areas and Council actions for achieving these goals. A detailed Action Plan is will be developed as a separate document, outlining specifically how the Council will work towards achieving the goals.





## Priority Areas and Council Actions

The following table represents a high level schedule of actions. The priority areas and actions in this table build on existing good practice or are new initiatives to assist in achieving our vision of an inclusive community where all can engage in their personal, community and civic life with independence. While some actions may already be underway, many can be improved; a separate detailed Action Plan will further examine and identify how this will be done.

This table identifies how each action contributes to the District's Community Outcomes and aligns to the objectives of the New Zealand Disability Strategy. The success of this strategy is largely dependent on the whole of Council working in partnership with people with impairments to identify needs, priorities and practical responses from Council to support the vision of this strategy.

Priority Areas and Council Actions	Who	Community Outcomes	New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026 (NZDS)
<b>Communication</b>			
<b>Goal 1:</b> Communication allows and encourages full access to Council information, events, services and facilities			
Incorporate different formats and access features in the Council website complying with the "New Zealand Government Web guidelines".	Communication Team	<b>People have wide ranging opportunities for learning and being informed</b> Our people are easily able to get the information they need  <b>There are wide ranging opportunities for people to contribute to the decision-making by public organisation that affects our District</b> Local, regional and national organisations make information about their plans and activities readily available.	<b>Accessibility</b> We access all places, services and information with ease and dignity.
Make all key Council communications available in a range of accessible formats that are easier for the wider disabled community, such as large print, radio, websites, simple language and diagrams, Braille, message services etc, and applying Easyread design principles.	Communication Team		
Target communication for people with impairments and their service providers about information that directly affects them.	Communication Team		
Ensure that Council facilities have accessible signage including internationally recognised symbols and indicators.	Parks and Recreation		

Priority Areas and Council Actions	Who	Community Outcomes	New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026 (NZDS)
Publicise information about Council services and events through disability networks, including the Waimakariri Access Group.	Property Communication Team Community Team		
<b>Consultation and Decision Making</b> <b>Goal 2:</b> Everyone, including people with impairments, is able to fully participate in Council consultation and decisions that impact their living in the District			
Develop the role of the Waimakariri Access Group as a disability reference group and ensure Council units utilise it to gain insight of their expertise when planning, reviewing and implementing services.	Policy & Strategy	<p><b>There are wide ranging opportunities for people to contribute to the decision-making by public organisations that affects our District</b></p> <p>Local, regional and national organisations make information about their plans and activities readily available.</p> <p>Local, regional and national organisations make every effort to take account of the views of people who participate in community engagement.</p> <p><b>People have wide ranging opportunities for learning and being informed.</b></p> <p>Our people are easily able to get the information they need.</p>	<p><b>Choice and control</b></p> <p>We have choice and control over our lives.</p> <p><b>Leadership</b></p> <p>We have great opportunities to demonstrate our leadership.</p>
Ensure that people with impairments are involved in the early planning, implementation and design stages of new developments and redevelopment. Consultation and final audits include accessibility audits.	All		
Ensure that Council consultation processes, including the Annual Plan, Long Term Plan and other major consultations, do not create barriers for people with impairments to be able to participate, including making any relevant consultation documents available in alternative formats and in a variety of media to meet their needs.	All		
Participate in ongoing dialogue with people with impairments, their support people and agencies in order to recognise their specific needs when making decisions that affect them.	All		

Priority Areas and Council Actions	Who	Community Outcomes	New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026 (NZDS)
<p><b>Access to Council Services, Programmes and Events</b></p> <p><b>Goal 3:</b> Council services, programmes and events are accessible for everyone including people with impairments</p>			
<p>Ensure that services meet the specific needs of people with impairments and continue to audit physical access to libraries, swimming pools and community buildings.</p>	Parks and Recreation	<p>The community's cultures, arts and heritage are conserved and celebrated</p> <p>Different cultures are acknowledged and respected.</p> <p>There are wide-ranging opportunities to participate in arts and cultural activities.</p> <p>People are friendly and caring, creating a strong sense of community in our District</p> <p>There are wide ranging opportunities for people of different ages to participate in community and recreational activities.</p>	<p><b>Health and Wellbeing:</b> We have the highest attainable standards of health and wellbeing.</p> <p><b>Accessibility:</b> We access all places, services and information with ease and dignity.</p>
<p>Ensure that Council housing is of appropriate design, accessible, safe and available to people with impairments.</p>	Property		
<p>Monitor rubbish and recycling services to ensure these are accessible and do not create hazards.</p>	Utilities		
<p>Ensure that Council-run and sponsored events and programmes are accessible for everyone including people with impairments and physical access needs are met and participation encouraged.</p>	Community Team		
<p>Ensure that recreation and sports programmes are accessible including recognising physical access needs and participation is encouraged.</p>	Community Team Parks and Recreation		

Priority Areas and Council Actions	Who	Community Outcomes	New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026 (NZDS)
<p><b>Physical Access</b></p> <p><b>Goal 4: Everyone, including people with impairments, has access to public services, facilities and spaces.</b></p>			
<p>Work towards a “barrier free” environment with accessible footpaths, public spaces and buildings including public toilets, ensuring appropriate facilities are available through planning and regulatory requirements.</p>	<p>Parks and Recreation Roading Building Unit</p>	<p>There is a safe environment for all Harm to people from natural and manmade hazards is minimised.</p>	<p>Accessibility: We access all places, services and information with ease and dignity.</p>
<p>Identify and address in a timely fashion specific road safety issues that have been raised by people with impairments.</p>	<p>Roading</p>	<p>Crime, injury and harm from road accidents, gambling and alcohol abuse are minimised. The distinctive character of our towns, villages and rural areas is maintained</p>	
<p>Enforce the Signage Bylaw 2012, the objective of which is to “To seek to avoid public nuisance by ensuring advertising displays and signage on footpaths does not obstruct the passage of pedestrians and/or disabled people”</p>	<p>Policy and Strategy Environmental Services</p>	<p>The centres of our main towns are safe, convenient and attractive places to visit and do business. Transport is accessible, convenient, reliable, affordable and sustainable</p>	
<p>Ensure the statutory requirement of the Building Act Standard relating to design for Access and Mobility is complied with for existing and new or redeveloped buildings.</p>	<p>Building Unit</p>	<p>Communities in our District are well linked with each other and Christchurch is readily accessible by a range of transport modes. The District is well served by public transport.</p>	
<p>Provide an appropriate number of mobility car parks that are suitably located, monitored, and labelled and restrictions enforced.</p>	<p>Environmental Services Planning</p>	<p>Public spaces and facilities are plentiful, accessible and high quality There is a wide variety of public places and spaces to meet people’s needs</p>	
<p>Work with Environment Canterbury (Canterbury Regional Council) to ensure public transport is accessible for people with impairments as well as affordable. This includes acting as an advocate to communicate particular issues for people with impairments to Environment Canterbury.</p>	<p>Roading Policy and Strategy</p>	<p>There are wide ranging opportunities for people to enjoy the outdoors. The range and accessibility of community and recreation facilities meets the changing needs of our community.</p>	



Priority Areas and Council Actions	Who	Community Outcomes	New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026 (NZDS)
<p><b>Advocacy</b>  <b>Goal 5: The rights of people with impairments are supported and promoted through advocacy and empowerment.</b></p>			
<p>Advocate for equity and access for people with impairments through policies, programmes, practices and procedures both within the organisation and externally, to guarantee the provision of an accessible and inclusive environment for everyone.</p>	<p>Mayor and Councillors All staff</p>	<p><b>People are friendly and caring, creating a strong sense of community in our District</b>            There are wide ranging opportunities for people of different ages to participate in community and recreational activities.</p>	<p><b>Education:</b> We get an excellent education and achieve our potential throughout our lives.  <b>Employment and Economic Security:</b> We have security in our economic situation and can achieve our potential.</p>
<p>Support and encourage people with impairments to advocate on their own behalf and provide the opportunity for this to occur.</p>	<p>Community Team</p>	<p><b>People have wide ranging opportunities for learning and being informed</b>            Our people are easily able to get the information they need.</p>	<p><b>Health and Wellbeing:</b> We have the highest attainable standards of health and wellbeing.  <b>Attitudes:</b> We are treated with dignity and respect.</p>
<p>Support disability advocacy services and agencies.</p>	<p>Community Team Policy and Strategy</p>	<p><b>Our community's needs for health and social services are met</b></p>	<p><b>Choice and Control:</b> We have choice and control over our lives.</p>
<p>Ensure that people with impairments are portrayed by the media in a positive way, particularly through Council's own publications and publicity material.</p>	<p>Communication Team</p>	<p>Our people are supported by a wide range of health services that are available and accessible in our District.            Participation in community-based support services is acknowledged and encouraged.</p>	

Priority Areas and Council Actions	Who	Community Outcomes	New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026 (NZDS)
<p><b>Prevention</b>  <b>Goal 6: Injuries are avoided and rates of impairment reduced</b></p>			
<p>Advocate for policies and strategies which influence health, such as access to education, employment opportunities, adequate income and safe housing in order to improve people's standard of living and avoid preventative disease and people being unwell that can lead to impairment.</p>	<p>Community Team  Policy and Strategy</p>	<p>There is a safe environment for all  Harm to people from natural and manmade hazards is minimised.  Crime, injury and harm from road accidents, gambling and alcohol abuse are minimised</p>	<p>Education: We get an excellent education and achieve our potential throughout our lives.  Health and Wellbeing: We have the highest attainable standards of health and wellbeing.</p>
<p>Support injury prevention programmes.</p>	<p>Community Team</p>		
<p>Promote road safety through monitoring, research, physical changes and educational programmes.</p>	<p>Roading  Community Team</p>	<p>The community's needs for health and social services are met  Our people are supported by a wide range of health services that are available in our District.  Transport is accessible, convenient, reliable, affordable and sustainable  The standard of our District's roads is keeping pace with increasing traffic n</p>	<p>Health and Wellbeing: We have the highest attainable standards of health and wellbeing</p>
<p>Encourage and promote healthy living through relevant recreation and leisure programmes and facilities.</p>	<p>Community Team  Parks and Recreation</p>		
<p>Ensure environmental health statutes such as food licensing, dangerous goods, sale of liquor, insanitary buildings, offensive trades and hazardous substances are administered and enforced.</p>	<p>Environmental  Health</p>		
<p>Maintain a civil defence capability to plan for and respond to emergencies.</p>	<p>Emergency  Management and  Civil Defence</p>		

Priority Areas and Council Actions	Who	Community Outcomes	New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026 (NZDS)
<p><b>Diverse Workforce</b>  <b>Goal 7: The Council has an Equal Employment Opportunities environment and a diverse workforce</b></p>			
<p>Ensure that communication services, resources and flexible workplace options are available, including potential job modification, skills training and on the job training for staff with impairments.</p>	<p>Human Resources</p>	<p><b>Businesses in the District are diverse, adaptable, and growing</b></p> <p>There are growing numbers of business and employment opportunities in the District.</p> <p>There are opportunities for our young people to enter employment and gain skills in our District.</p>	<p><b>Education:</b> We get an excellent education and achieve our potential throughout our lives.</p> <p><b>Employment and Economic Security:</b> We have security in our economic situation and can achieve our potential.</p> <p><b>Choice and Control:</b> We have choice and control over our lives.</p> <p><b>Leadership:</b> We have great opportunities to demonstrate our leadership.</p>
<p>Implement the requirements of the Health and Safety Act and the Council's employment policies.</p>	<p>Human Resources</p>		
<p>Ensure that there is no discriminatory or insensitive behaviour towards employees with impairments.</p>	<p>Human Resources</p>		

Priority Areas and Council Actions	Who	Community Outcomes	New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026 (NZDS)
<p><b>Cultural Change</b>  <b>Goal 8: Disability training programmes are developed and implemented at all levels within the Council</b></p>			
<p>Encourage all Council staff and elected members to undertake disability awareness training and ensure that staff whose work impinges directly on the well-being of people experiencing impairments undertake more specific training.</p>	<p>Mayor and Councillors  Human Resources</p>	<p><b>People are friendly and caring, creating a strong sense of community in our District</b></p> <p><b>There are wide ranging opportunities for people to contribute to the decision-making by public organisations that affects our District</b></p> <p>Public organisations make information about their plans and activities readily available.</p> <p>Public organisations make every effort to accommodate the views of people who contribute to consultations.</p>	<p><b>Objective 6:</b> Foster an aware and responsive public service.</p>
<p>Sponsor Universal Design seminars for Council officers to improve staff understanding and ability to be responsive to the needs of people with impairments.</p>	<p>Management Team</p>		
<p>Ensure the resource material and expertise of the Waimakariri Access Group is available and communicated to Council staff to enhance awareness and understanding of potential barriers, appropriate consultation processes, available networks and strategies to integrate the needs of the impaired community into services, facilities and decision-making processes.</p>	<p>Community Team  Policy and Strategy</p>		



# Monitoring and Review

## What is the Accessibility Strategy?

This is a new strategy and will develop over time. Issues and priorities may change, however, it is important that Council is accountable to people with impairments and their organisations for the actions it has committed to.

Monitoring and review will be a two way process where Council reports to people with impairments and their organisations; and people with impairments report to Council regarding the impact and effectiveness of the strategy. The process will include:

- The Disability Strategy Reference Group and a core team of Council officers to monitor delivery of the Action Plan across Council activities;
- Community forums and other processes for people with impairments to give feedback;
- Inclusion of information in Council reports regarding consultation with people with impairments.

The strategy will be reviewed three years from adoption by Council. The Action Plan which is a separate document will be reviewed and reported on annually.

## References

Inclusive Communities, What New Zealand local authorities and district health boards need to know about the rights of disabled people. Disabled Persons Assembly (New Zealand) Inc, Third edition, August 2010.

The New Zealand Disability Strategy, 2016-2026 Ministry of Social Development, November 2016.  
2013 Disability Survey, Statistics New Zealand, June 2014.

The Accessible Journey, Report into the Accessible Public Land Transport. Human Rights Commission September 2005.

To have an 'ordinary' life – Kia whai oranga 'noa'. Community membership for adults with an intellectual disability. A report to the Minister of Health and the Minister for Disability Issues from the National Advisory Committee on Health and Disability, September 2003.

2013 District Profile, Waimakariri District Council, June 2014.

Our Health, Our Future. Hauora Pakari. Koiora Roa. The Health of New Zealanders. Ministry of Health, 1999.

Te Rau Hinengaro: The New Zealand Mental Health Survey, Ministry of Health, September 2006.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, United Nations, December 2006.

Accessibility Policies, Strategies and Action Plans from a variety of Councils were also reviewed.

Easyread information: [www.communicationpeople.co.nz](http://www.communicationpeople.co.nz)

Earthquake Disability Leadership Group, <http://www.edlgchristchurch.com/>

Deaf Aotearoa: [www.deaf.org.nz/](http://www.deaf.org.nz/)

# Glossary

## Access / Accessibility / Barrier free

These terms are used interchangeably throughout the strategy. They refer to the removal of barriers, attitudinal or environmental, which increases the opportunity for people of all ages, life stages and abilities to participate in their community safely, easily and equitably.

## Accessible Journey

In order to comply with access requirements (The Building Regulations 1992 First Schedule, Clause A2 p.9) a building must have an “accessible route”. This is defined as a “... continuous route that can be negotiated unaided by a user of a wheelchair, walking frame or guide dog.” The route must extend from a street boundary or car parking area to those spaces within the building required to be accessible to enable people with impairments to carry out independently normal activities and processes within the building.

## Approachability, Accessibility, Disability-friendly and Usability

These concepts enable a person with an impairment to approach, enter and use a building, and its facilities, and carry out the normal functions and activities for which the building was designed.

## Disability

Disability is the outcome of the interaction between a person with impairment(s) and the environment and attitudinal barriers he/she may face. It is also the process that happens when one group of people create barriers by designing a world only for their way of living, taking no account of the impairments other people have.

## Impairments

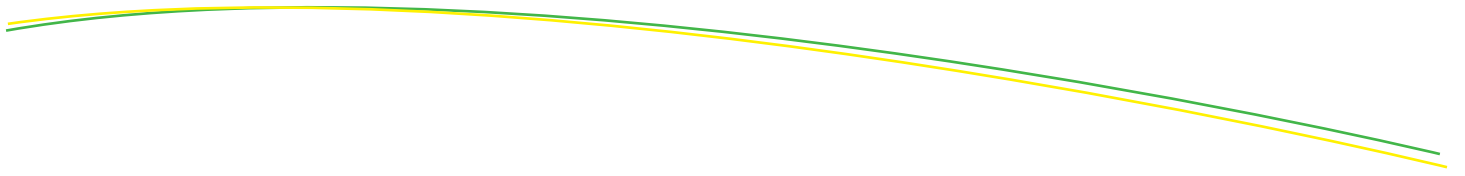
Impairments are something that individuals have, they are long term (greater than six months) and may be physical, sensory, neurological, psychiatric, or intellectual.

## Tactile ground surface indicators (TGSIs)

These provide blind, deafblind and vision impaired pedestrians with visual and sensory information. There are two types of TGSIs - warning indicators and directional indicators. Warning indicators alert pedestrians to hazards in the continuous accessible path of travel, indicating they should stop to determine the nature of the hazard before proceeding further. They do not indicate what the hazard will be. Directional indicators give directional orientation and designate the continuous accessible path of travel when other tactile or environmental cues are missing. When combined with other environmental information, TGSIs assist blind, deafblind and vision impaired people with their orientation and awareness of impending obstacles, hazards and changes in the direction of the continuous accessible path of travel.

## Universal Design

Also known as human centered design. This holistic approach ensures buildings, public spaces and transport amenities are easy and intuitive to use for a wide range of people no matter their age, physical ability, or level of language comprehension.





**Accessibility** *rather than* Disability



**Possibility** *rather than* Limitation



**Innovation** *rather than* Status Quo