

Access Framework

for Action 2020-2024



- **Accessibility is being able to get into the building**
- **Diversity is getting invited to the table**
- ▲ **Inclusion is having a voice at the table**
- ⬡ **Belonging is having your voice heard at the table**

Acknowledgements:

- Thanks to the Access Advisory Committee for their continued commitment, strategic input and consideration of action to make Launceston a more accessible and inclusive city
- Thanks to the many organisations who contributed to the development of the Framework through regular consultation
- A special thank you to the individuals profiled in this framework, namely Greg, Natasha, Carol, Cooper, Jane and Sheila

Introduction

Why do we need this framework?

The National Disability Strategy (2010-2020) outlined that Australians with a disability have significantly worse life outcomes compared to others or compared to people with a disability in similar countries. People with a disability are more likely to experience relatively poor health, lower levels of participation in education, training and employment, social exclusion, and lack of access to goods, services and facilities and ongoing discrimination.¹

This framework is the collection of stories, actions, and promises the City of Launceston will do to ensure the best possible life outcomes for all of our residents with a disability, and those caring for someone with a disability. Council will work with the community and other key stakeholders to meet the vision of an inclusive municipality where people of all abilities are encouraged and enabled to lead satisfying, fulfilling and contributory lives.

In further developing our inclusive community, our vision is to extend that feeling of belonging to all residents. We have developed five commitments to get us there, and this framework will articulate our strategies, actions and goals to build on what we are already doing.

Who is this framework important to?

Throughout this framework, you will meet Greg, Sheila, Cooper, Jane, Natasha and Carol. They each experience barriers to accessibility and they will share their stories about how they live in Launceston, what they would like to achieve, and how Council's Access Framework might help them achieve that.

Although these people each represent a particular disability, the story is different for every person with a disability. In Launceston, we are fortunate to have many agencies who represent the needs of particular disabilities and we should listen to their needs to inform the story. There are also more than 6000 carers within the City of Launceston who have a different set of needs, and should also inform the story. Jane's story touches on the carer perspective.

¹ National Disability Strategy 2010-2020, Australian Government, 2011



What has helped us develop this framework?

There is significant legislation that supports the rights and provides strategic direction for people with a disability. Relevant to this document, we have considered:

- *Accessible Island: Tasmania's Disability Framework for Action* (DFA) is Tasmania's framework for improving the lives of people with disability.
- The National Disability Strategy (2010-2020) is a National Plan to improve the life for every Australian with a disability, their families and carers.
- The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) (2010) sets out to ensure that people with a disability are not treated less favourably, or not given the same opportunities as others in a similar situation.

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (the Charter) sets out the basic rights, freedoms and responsibilities of all Tasmanians. As public authorities, the charter requires Local Councils to consider human rights when they make, interpret and apply laws, develop policies and provide day-to-day services. The City of Launceston also adopts the principles of the Tasmanian Disability Services Act 2011.

The City of Launceston is committed to community engagement and has undertaken significant consultation with residents, agencies and other government bodies in the development of this framework.

Each consultation session focused on three key elements:

- What participants felt were priorities when addressing disabilities.
- Capturing current initiatives in Launceston.
- Identifying gaps/opportunities for action.

More information on the important legislation informing this framework is at the back of this framework.

Meet Greg

Greg (52) lives on a farm half an hour outside Launceston. He lost his eyesight due to diabetes related complications 7 years ago. Although born and bred in Launceston, Greg had been living in country Victoria until he and his wife moved to their new Tasmanian farm 3 years ago.

Greg is busy running the farm, where he has a farm hand come and help two days a week. For the rest of the time, he feeds the cattle, does fencing, and maintains carpentry tasks by himself. Twice a week, he goes to the Mens Shed in Rocherlea where he has been able to share his skills in woodwork with other participants.

Greg's biggest barrier to participating in other activities is physically getting around. Obviously there are no buses from his farm to the City, so he uses taxis, which comes at a cost. He can't use Uber because they won't come out that far. Once in town, he has a favourite coffee shop he would like to visit independently and he would like to be able to have lunch with his wife occasionally. As Greg uses a white cane for his primary method of navigation, he finds the uneven footpaths, lack of tactiles and insufficient audible pedestrian crossings a barrier to his independent mobility.

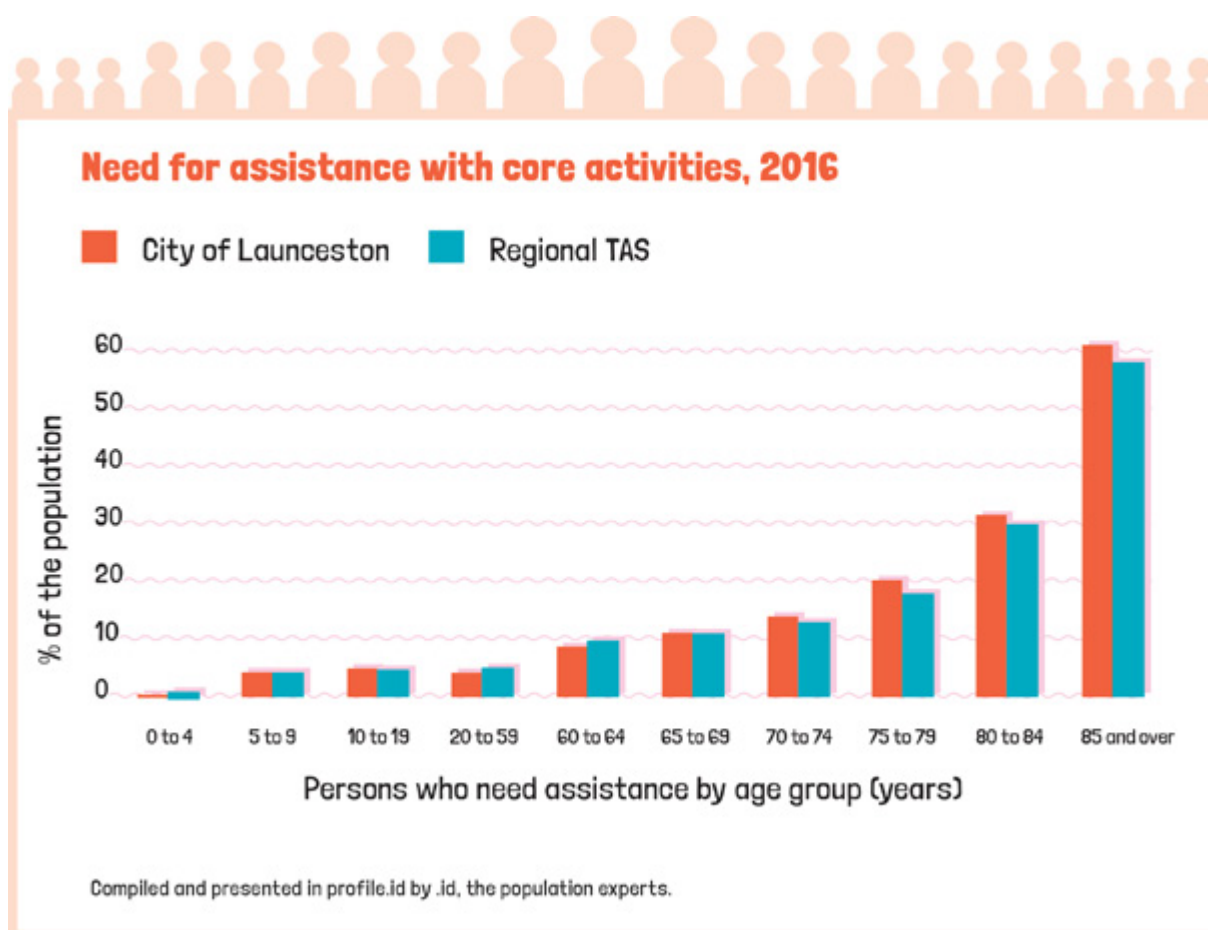


Launceston's accessibility story

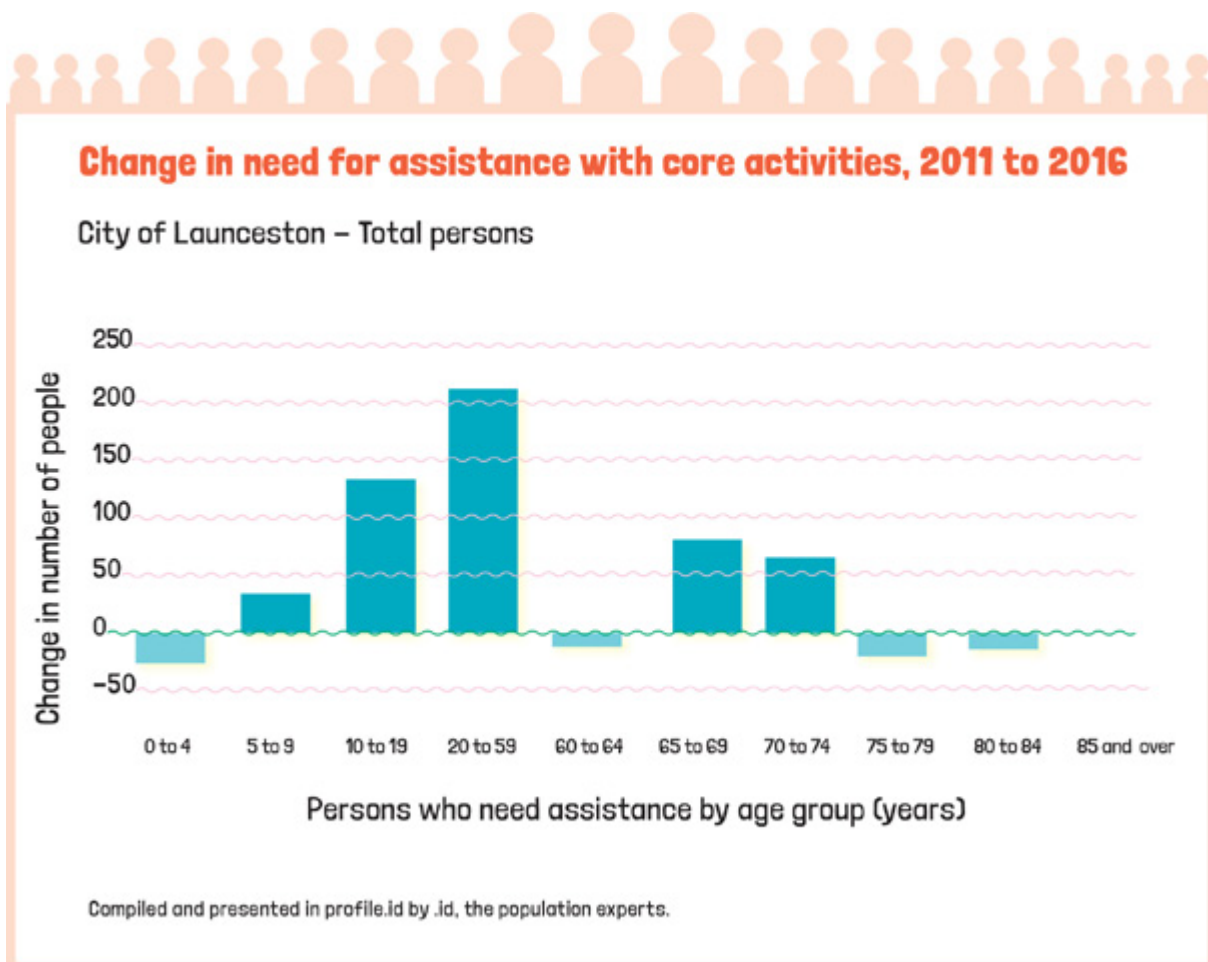
" 4,190 people or 6.4% of the population in the City of Launceston in 2016, reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability."

It should be noted this is a subjective assessment, as the census question asked whether the person ever needed someone to help them with self care.

Analysis of the need for assistance of people in the City of Launceston compared to regional Tasmania shows there was a similar proportion of people who reported needing assistance with core activities such as housework and transport.



Interestingly, the greatest change of numbers within age groups of people requiring assistance with core activities is in the 20-59 year old age group.



The localities within Launceston showing the highest population of persons requiring assistance with core activities are all within the northern suburbs. In particular, Rocherlea has the greatest percentage of population:

148 people or 13.3% of the population in Rocherlea in 2016, reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability."

This is compared to other Launceston suburbs as follows:



Suburb	% of population
Rocherlea	13.3%
Norwood	8.6%
Kings Meadows	8.5%
Ravenswood	8.5%
South Launceston	8.1%
St Leonards – White Hills	7.2%
Newstead	7.1%
Mayfield	7.0%
Waverley	6.7%
Youngtown – Relbia	6.5%
Summerhill – Prospect	6.4%
Mowbray	6.2%
Invermay	6.0%
Newnham	6.0%
Rural east – Lilydale	4.5%
Windermere – Swan Bay	4.0%
West Launceston	3.5%
Trevallyn	3.5%
Launceston CBD	2.8%
East Launceston	2.7%

Meet Natasha



Natasha has lived in Launceston for her adult life and loves to be able to participate and contribute to her community. Her work has primarily been with agencies providing assistance to people with disabilities, as her passion is inclusivity - and everyone having opportunities regardless of disability or disadvantage.

Natasha has recently joined the atWork Australia DES team to support people living with disability, injury or health condition find sustainable work. In addition to her valuable experience, Natasha has extensive educational qualifications, graduating from the University of Tasmania with a Bachelor of Education and a Bachelor of Social Work. Natasha has also completed a Certificate IV in Assistive Technology Mentoring.

Some of the biggest barriers Natasha sees in her work and her own experiences is that physical accessibility in a town with topographical challenges and heritage constraints. She believes that access for all means that stock can be easily and safely brought into the shop, and viewed by everyone. It means parents with prams can buy what they need for their growing families. Having a physically level entry into a shop will then allow people with a range of additional needs to access the premises more easily.

“We have to think outside of the square and get ‘Joe Public’ to see accessibility as relevant to them. Language is important because in my experience if it is of an economic benefit or a health and safety issue it will be more likely to be addressed as there is legal and financial benefits to ‘Joe Public.’” For people with a disability, finding meaningful employment can also be challenging. Through Natasha’s work, and her great connections within the local community, there is the aim to improve the participation rate of people with disability in the Launceston region.

“I am passionate and driven to help more people with disability change their lives, which I hope to deliver through my work and my deep understanding of the right support networks for people with disability,” said Natasha.





Carers

This equates to 11.4% of the Launceston population and is consistent with regional Tasmania, where 11.8% of population provide unpaid care.

■ **In the City of Launceston there were 6,108 carers providing unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, long term illness or old age in 2016.** ■

Awareness

Attitudes towards people with disability can affect social inclusion in all areas of their life, including their social connections, their access to places and their involvement in employment, education, social participation and interaction.

People with a disability in the community often face discrimination that prevents them from being socially included. Discrimination can take multiple forms including denying a person access to a job, promotion or inclusion into an activity based on stereotypes about disability (such as a perception that the person may spend too much time attending medical appointments). Discrimination can also be less obvious, such as imposing conditions that by default exclude people with a disability because they are unable to meet those conditions (e.g. requiring employees to use a standard computer without reasonable modifications may be discriminatory towards an employee with vision impairment).

Meet Carol

Carol was born in England and moved to Fremantle, Western Australia in 1974. It was through a church activity in Brisbane that she met Simon, who lived in Launceston. They spent some time getting to know each other from afar before they held their two weddings (one in Perth and one in Launceston) and they chose to settle in Launceston in 2002.

Carol is deafblind. She was born with the effects of Congenital Rubella Syndrome which left her profoundly deaf and with a vision impairment. She has worked at Coles for 35 years and really enjoys her job and her work colleagues. Her commute to and from work is via public transport. Outside of work, she and her husband like to socialise and meet up with family and friends. She is a member of a local church and in her spare time, likes to swim and read. Carol values her independence.

Simon and Carol like to travel and have managed this between the two of them to date, but as Carol's eyesight fails further, they worry they may not be able to continue doing this. They have already modified their home to accommodate future changes and Carol is being very proactive learning Braille and Tactile Auslan. With family support and Carol's significant fan base from her years at Coles, the community will undoubtedly continue to ensure Carol maintains as much independence as possible.







Council's accessible Aquatic Centre

The Launceston Aquatic Centre is a very inclusive public place, well utilised by people with disabilities. Many wheelchair bound people use the pool facilities and the gym upstairs. Many physiotherapists assisting people whose mobility has been impaired by accident are using the pools for therapy sessions. And the reason is - because it is so accessible! Every pool is accessible by any wheelchair bound patron - where there isn't a ramp or "beach entry" there is a portable hoist that lifeguards can quickly set up on any pool. The program pool is the most popular, with the ramp, and numerous wheelchairs to enter the water with, including a new floating one. There's lots of space in the main changeroom area, there's multiple family changerooms and there are two accessible rooms (with separate ambulant toilet) one with a hoist and adult sized change table. After successfully applying for a grant, a new fully accessible (to Changing Places standards) changeroom has been installed closer to the pool, with a new ambulant toilet alongside. Launceston Aquatic Centre looks forward to continue building relationships with agencies and broadening their accessibility features.



Community participation

Generally speaking, less than a third of people with a disability are actively involved in community groups or activities. Barriers to this include:

- Lack of awareness of groups/activities that would interest them.
- Inaccessible buildings and public spaces.
- Fear of not being welcomed/fitting in/not wishing to be identified as a person with a disability.
- Information about community groups or activities is not available in an accessible format.
- Restricted transport options to attend such groups or activities.

Actively participating in ways to ensure inclusivity exists in all aspects of our community is the responsibility of all Launceston residents.

What does Council already do?

Council continues to work towards ensuring Launceston is an accessible city for all. Activities undertaken to date:

- Encourage compliance with DDA at the earliest stages of the planning and building permit process for all public buildings.
- Provide continuous accessible paths of travel for pedestrians.
- Provide disability parking bays (* disability parking permits are the responsibility of Service Tasmania) and enforce the use of these for those with genuine need (and the appropriate permit).
- Implement Council's Footpath Trading Policy to ensure safe path of travel on Council footpaths.
- Provide accessible and protected vantage points for events at UTAS Stadium.
- All events being assessed by the events facilitation team will be as inclusive and accessible as practically achievable.
- Provide a range of accessible toilets and accessible playground equipment in public spaces.
- Deliver a range of programs, activities and facilities at the Launceston Aquatic Centre for use by people of all abilities.
- Striving to ensure the Council website is compliant with WCAG 2.0.

Development of the Framework

What approach was used to develop the Framework?

The process to develop this Framework was designed to ensure that:

- All stakeholders had the opportunity to provide input.
- All legislative requirements were met.
- The strategic action areas were achievable, within Council's remit (and if not, that Council had a role to play) and would make a difference to making Launceston more accessible.

Phase	Research	Consultation
Legislative overview	✓	
Preliminary Analysis	✓	✓
Workshop concepts		✓
Development of Strategic Action Areas	✓	✓
Adoption and Launch		✓

Where did the information come from to inform the Framework?

A number of different tools and approaches to consultation were used to gather information:

- Census data analysis.
- Legislative analysis and impact on data.
- Data capture exercise of current City of Launceston initiatives.
- Extensive consultation plan developed, including targeted consultation with subject matter experts.
- Strategic partnerships.
- Workshops with various parties, especially City of Launceston Access Advisory Group.
- Attendance at various professional development sessions on topics targeting the strategic action areas.
- Continual verification of information to ensure relevance.

[Some relevant quotes from consultation]

- *“concerns were raised regarding accessibility for those with a disability and having an active disability action plan was suggested for improving access to facilities in heritage buildings”* – City of Launceston Organisation Alignment Project consultation May 2019.
- *What’s important - “Social connection” – being connected to a community of some sort, knowing someone believes in you to flourish*” TasCoss survey 2019.
- Second highest escalation topic to Department of Education from schools is around access to teacher aides, and disability support providers - Accessible Services – It’s in Our Hands seminar 14 November 2019.
- *“the biggest barriers for people with disability finding work – perceptions, accessibility within buildings, transport, lack of compassion and understanding”* - Disability employment seminar, 31 October 2019.
- QVMAG would like to *“provide a specialised service for people with disabilities eg. Visually impaired”* City of Launceston Organisation Alignment Project consultation May 2019.

Development of Strategic Action Areas

It is very important to understand that addressing all the barriers preventing people with disability living rich and fulfilling lives is not within the remit of local government.

Hence, this Framework’s Strategic Action Areas need to encapsulate areas that Council can play a role in. This role can be:

- **Lead** – where Council is the responsible authority for implementing that action, or leading that strategic direction, or regulating certain conditions.
- **Facilitator** – where Council can work with strategic partners and stakeholders to progress that action.
- **Advocate** – where Council doesn’t have control for implementing that action but can advocate to other levels of government to assist in the delivery of that action. This could also include advocating for funding to enable an action for which Council is the Lead, but doesn’t have the resources to implement (or fund).



Aligning Tasmanian priorities

Developing a sense of inclusivity and belonging is the responsibility of everyone. From a government perspective, all levels of government have a role to play to change this mindset. The Federal Government leads this through legislation and support of human rights, the State Government has developed the Accessible Island Strategy to guide Tasmanian efforts, and as local government, the City of Launceston considers all of this in developing this framework for action within its remit.

The State Government's vision (through the Accessible Island Strategy) is:

A fully inclusive society that values and respects all people with disability as equal and contributing members of the community. This will happen when people with disability:

- *can pursue their personal goals free from discrimination;*
- *are included in a community that is welcoming and accessible;*
- *have their needs met;*
- *have their independence recognised and are able to make choices about decisions which impact on their lives; and*
- *can participate in the development of policy and legislation that affect them.*

Meet Cooper

Cooper (20) grew up in Deloraine and completed Year 12 at St Patrick's College in Launceston in 2018. He wanted to join the defence force/military police but faced some challenges in the recruitment process and has deferred the application process.

In his own time, Cooper enjoys playing computer games, reading, and he is passionate about modern world history. To further this interest, Cooper volunteered in the history centre at the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery for two days a week. He doesn't mind getting out to pubs - especially the Deloraine pub - but struggles with the noise of music and people. In reality, he prefers to hang out with his grandparents!

Despite his volunteer history, he was keen for paid employment. When COVID hit Cooper got bored at home, not being able to do any volunteer work. He applied for a medical orderly position at Launceston General Hospital and ended up as COVID Support Officer. He says it's not the happiest place but the staff are great people, and he feels he has had to grow up very quickly. He makes sure he doesn't take any of the issues home with him, and manages to switch off when at home.

Cooper has never had a medical diagnosis, but suspects his condition is along the lines of Aspergers Syndrome. He did have challenges at school and needed some support with developing his literacy skills. The school always offered assistance but Cooper admits saying no was to his detriment. His best work situations are when he is able to work alone, although he does struggle when he has to exert authority due to social anxiety issues. He knew he had to take the time to find the 'right' job for him.

As for his future career, Cooper feels this job will help him re-apply for a military police or another job in defence. But he still wouldn't use government support services as he feels there are others who need that more than him. Cooper knows he has matured since working at the hospital - his problems now seem very insignificant to him when he sees people so much worse off than him.



The five following outcome areas both State Government and City of Launceston as local government are committed to in order to improve the lives of people with disabilities:

1. Inclusive and accessible communities

Access to buildings and public places remain critical to improving the capacity of people with disability to participate meaningfully in their community.

The need for improved accessibility to buildings is growing as Tasmania's population ages and greater premium is placed on facilitating equitable access to services within the community. The roll out of the NDIS will see these demands grow at a faster rate in coming years with the demand for full inclusion of people with disability in social, economic, sporting and cultural life.

The *Disability (Access to Premises - Building) Standards 2010* (the Premises Standards) came into effect on 1 May 2011.

Of particular concern in Launceston is the need also to ensure that the fit out of both new and refurbished buildings addresses and maintains the access requirements of people with disability.

The provision of adequate, affordable and accessible public transport underpins social inclusion. It is how people get to work, get to and from community events, get to meetings, go on holidays, go shopping and keep in contact with friends and family.

Importantly, public transport is often the primary mode of mobility for people with disability and others in the community such as the elderly who for various reasons are unable to drive or cannot afford the cost or upkeep of a private vehicle.

In Tasmania, the situation facing people with disability seeking to travel independently is affected by the lack of alternative modes of transport. In Launceston, transport is particularly important to people with disability so it is appropriate to retain this theme as a standalone commitment in Launceston's framework.

Public transport, bus stops and surrounding infrastructure

Council, State Government, and Metro as the contracted operator all have a role to play in working towards:

- More accessible bus stops.
- Alterations to services (particularly movement of bus stops) so as not to discriminate users with a disability.
- Timetables being accessible (both physically and electronically).
- Ensuring the Tiger Bus route is also accessible.
- Metro convenes a regular Disability Action Planning Group of interested parties to inform their ongoing commitment to accessible public transport.

Facts and figures (as at January 2020)

- 12 new Metro buses came into action in January 2020, which makes all Launceston buses accessible.
- Feedback from the 2019 route review incorporated disability requirements. Indeed, Metro have invited people with a disability to come and trial a bus at the depot, particularly if they haven't done it before, or it is something in their NDIS Plan that they want to try.
- 760 bus stops across greater Launceston.
- 136 bus stops are considered DDA compliant.
- 66 bus shelters.
- 25 of the bus shelters have seats.
- 97 of the bus stops have tactiles.
- Approx. 50 stops being removed.

* Route review implemented in early 2020 so some of these figures are subject to change.

2. Rights protection, justice and regulation

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (the Charter) sets out the basic rights, freedoms and responsibilities of all Tasmanians. Alignment to this and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006 is covered in the appendix to this framework.

Local government has a strong advocacy role to ensure that the voices within its local communities are being heard across the other spheres of government.

3. Economic security

Accessing meaningful employment opportunities remains a significant barrier for people with disability in Tasmania.

Return to work from injury or illness

Maintaining attachment to the workforce is also critically important to those who are injured or ill whilst employed, or who become disabled as a result of either of these.

It is evident from complaints and enquiries received by Equal Opportunity Tasmania that the response to employees returning to work after injury or illness is in many cases negative and often results in loss of employment.

Council's role in working towards this outcome area is to lead by example. As one of the largest employers in Launceston, Council should be encouraging people with disabilities to apply for jobs within the organisation, and encouraging contractors to employ people with disabilities. It also has a role to play in reducing the barriers to employment for people with a disability.

Facts and figures

- Of Tasmanians with a reported disability aged 15 years and older:
 - 17.7% are wage or salary earners .
 - 3.4 % derive their income from business.
 - 62.3% are reliant on a government pension or allowance as their primary source of income.
- 16.2% of Tasmanian's with disability are unemployed.
- Average income (2019) \$465 per week (less than half the average income).
- 56.2% of graduates with a disability take longer to find work.
- Largest barriers to work.
 - Perception.
 - Accessibility to buildings.
 - Transport.
 - Lack of compassion and understanding.
- People with disability are attracted to businesses that have an access and inclusion strategy.

4. Personal and community support

There are many agencies across Launceston that provide support to individuals with a disability, to the carers who support those with a disability and organisations to enhance inclusivity.

Council's role in this outcome area is somewhat difficult to define, but could include:

- Ensuring greater accessibility at all events held in Launceston to increase community participation
- Advocating for culturally appropriate services
- Considering an element of accessibility in community grants

5. Learning and skills

Children with disability in Tasmania face barriers to engaging in mainstream education and training environments. These barriers have impeded their ability to gain the skills required to participate in the broader social and economic life of our community.

In August 2015 the Tasmanian Government released the final report and recommendations of the Ministerial taskforce on Inclusive Education for Students with Disability. Whilst the Taskforce acknowledged significant progress in meeting the needs of students with disability, it emphasised the need to make inclusive education a priority in all Tasmanian schools.

Actions within this outcome area are not within the remit of local government, other than for advocacy.

Meet Jane



Jane is a Disability Support Worker for one of Launceston's disability services where she has worked for more than 15 years. She works with 8 clients each week, but has capacity to help a further 6 clients. The job can be both mentally and physically challenging so Jane relies on family support and winds down by doing aqua aerobics four nights a week.

Her clients range from physical disabilities through to extremely autistic with or without physical disabilities. Jane believes the public aren't aware that disability support workers have qualifications, and don't realise some of the complex things they do for their clients. She is passionate about ensuring that her clients are able to undertake meaningful and enjoyable activities and therefore she sometimes gets frustrated that these activities don't always cater for certain disabilities, or that other community members are less than tolerant.

Initially, some of her clients with autism don't present as having a disability, and this can become a challenge for them when they go to public places. She describes a time entering McDonald's to dine in "when suddenly the clients grab members of the public trying to get food from them". Her workplace offers activities like music programs, bingo, cooking and art, which are conducted at their facilities. But she does like to go offsite and use private or public facilities. One major concern with the Aquatic Centre is that it is impossible to get parking most days near the pool. There is not enough disabled parking, and certainly not right next to the building with lift access. Being metered, it needs to be 2 hour parking as their work vehicles are constantly being booked for going over 1 1/2 hours. The swimming helps the clients with strengthening their muscles, and helps with relaxation. Although the new change rooms have state of the art technology, they are terribly hot which makes it difficult to change clients. The new flooring also retains water which is dangerous. There are also not enough in-pool wheelchairs to access the pool. QVMAG has similar issues with parking but it is great that the clients are encouraged to look and see different items that are not threatening to them. Other wish list items to make her work easier include: a wheelchair swing in City Park; suitable parking for vans near City Park for disabled clients; better signage at UTAS Stadium for disabled parking bays; and better location of ticket machines near the disabled parking bays.

Facts and figures: (State of Public Health report, 2018)

- life expectancy at birth has reached 83 years for females and 79 years for males
- more than 80 per cent of Tasmanians rate their health as good to excellent
- teenage pregnancy, smoking (notably among teenagers and pregnant women) and some harmful patterns of alcohol consumption have declined
- nearly 95 per cent of Tasmanian children are fully immunised by five years old.

But by many measures, Tasmania still ranks poorly compared with other Australian states and territories, and health inequities continue to affect the health of Tasmanians living in settings of social disadvantage.

6. Health and wellbeing

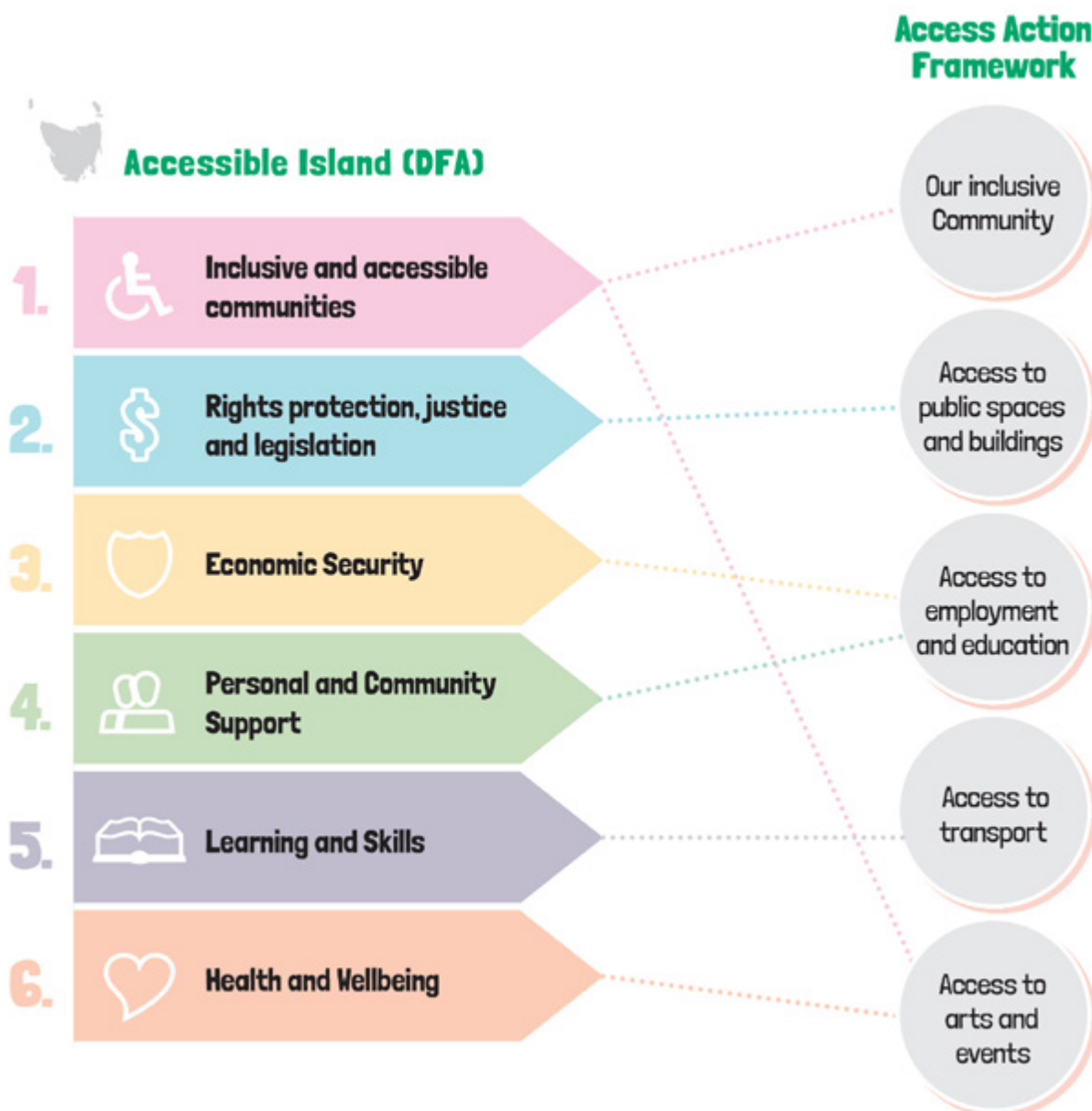
As the tier of government closest to the community, Council has a role to play in promoting the wellbeing of the community. Although the responsibility for health services lies with State Government (assisted by the Federal Government), there are opportunities for Council to provide open space to encourage exercise, facilities to encourage participation in good physical health, cultural opportunities for good social health and event facilitation opportunities to bring people together. Obviously this all needs to be accessible, which is covered within this framework.

Council, and State Government have a role to play in working towards:

- Developing and supporting opportunities for sport and recreation, through the Regional Recreation Plan
- Promoting community health and wellbeing
- Ensuring health services are designed to meet the needs of people with disability
- Providing timely, comprehensive and effective prevention and early intervention
- State Government's Healthy Tasmania Plan will give Tasmanians and their communities the information and tools they need to make positive and healthy changes to their lives

Our commitment

The City of Launceston's Access Framework is aligned to these outcome areas.



Prior to the development of Council's annual budget, an action plan will be developed to enable advocacy for funding for each action.

At the conclusion of each year of the framework, a progress report will be developed.

Meet Sheila

Sheila (84) arrived in Launceston from England via East Africa when her husband John got a job at the Launceston Hospital. Only one of her three children still lives in Launceston, with the others in Hobart. Unfortunately, John passed away many years ago and Sheila has not driven since then. Although Sheila is very active and in good health for her age, she recognises that as people age, they acquire different infirmities and she is no exception to this. Her frustration with ageing is the impact this has on her ability to get out to the events and activities she enjoys.

Sheila is a well-respected poet, and a published author. She is an active user of the School for Seniors and often leads book sessions. Her interests also include art and film, and she loves the sound of the accordion so enjoys some of the music sessions. The library is one of her favourite destinations - she finds the staff incredibly welcoming and accepting of all user needs. Being an avid reader, Sheila loves the library but she is also very happy to sit and talk with the many like-minded people who gather around the café or meeting rooms simply to be able to chat to other people.

Access to information and transport is Sheila's biggest barrier to participation in all these activities. She has struggled with the recent bus changes and finds it very difficult to source the new timetables. Being more active than some of her fellow students at School for Seniors, she does find it worrying that others are now not able to access the School and hence membership is declining. Similarly, she enjoys participating in some of the seniors' exercise classes at the Launceston Aquatic Centre as she thinks it is a beautiful venue but she does struggle with the steps and notes that others find the carparking difficult.



Commitment 1: Our inclusive community

Why is this Commitment important?

Inclusive communities will not merely remove physical, social and procedural barriers to equity of access but will also create and promote the concept that non-inclusive communities are incomplete.

What strategies does this include?

- People with disability are able to access and join their communities as freely as do people without disability
- People with disability will experience no procedural, performance, cultural or economic barriers to contributing equitably as valued members of their communities
- People with disability are respected within their community and the wider municipality
- Our community will provide opportunities for social and cultural participation for all people
- Our community learns and promotes that not all disabilities are visible
- Council coordinates its response to accessibility issues in a strategic and coordinated approach advised by the Access Advisory Committee
- Council's communications are in accessible formats
- Council's customer service is a positive experience for people with disability
- Community consultation will be accessible to all

What might some of the actions look like?

- Ensuring Council's websites are WCAG compliant
- Providing captions on all Council made videos
- Advocating for resources to lead and coordinate Council's response to improved inclusivity
- Including people with a disability on appropriate Council committees and working groups and implementation of this Framework's action plan
- Promoting assistive devices at all Council owned spaces
- Implementation of disability awareness training for Council staff (**This will help Cooper**)
- Working with tourism providers to enable more accessible tourism

What is Council's role in this Commitment? Who is likely to be involved in the actions?

LEAD



Commitment 2: Access to public spaces and buildings

Why is this Commitment important?

Council provides and maintains amazing facilities for the enjoyment of the whole community. This must include those who have accessibility issues.

What strategies does this include?

- The public built environment is barrier free and accessible to all
- Staff have a greater awareness of accessibility requirements at venues
- Staff have the confidence to assist people with accessibility issues to have the best experience at a Council facility

What might some of the actions look like?

- An audit of pedestrian crossings to determine a priority list for Tactile Ground Surface Indicators (TGSi), audible pedestrian crossing signals, pedestrian crossovers in the direction of travel
- Replace/insert high priority TGSi at high traffic pedestrian intersections **(This will help Greg)**
- Hearing Loop availability promoted at Council venues
- Advocating for resources to lead and coordinate Council's response for inclusive access to public spaces and buildings
- Raise awareness with business operators of the importance of clear pathways of travel along streets, in front of shops and at entrances and respect for all clients, including those with disability
- Sensory description on what to expect when visiting Council facilities
- Consideration of sensory calming sessions at Council facilities
- Clarification/signage of more disabled parking at venues such as Launceston Aquatic Centre (LAC) and QVMAG **(This will help Jane)**
- More promotion of the portable hoist at LAC, and training for staff on how to use it in other pools
- Council staff to work with providers to incorporate activities into NDIS plans eg. An aqua aerobics class for vision impaired/hearing impaired **(This will help Carol)**
- Working with agencies to educate their clients on what is acceptable behaviour in public facilities
- Review of options at Princess Theatre to enable performers with disabilities being able to access the stage

What is Council's role in this Commitment? Who is likely to be involved in the actions?

LEAD, together with State Government as the owner of some other public assets.

Commitment 3: Access to employment & education

Why is this Commitment important?

People with disabilities and their carers are among the most socially and economically disadvantaged groups in Australia. The social and economic disadvantage in which they live is a major contributor to their poor health.

There needs to be an equity of access to education and training to enable appropriate and valued employment opportunities.

What strategies does this include?

Contribute to a business support program that works with local business owners to encourage the economic participation of customers with disabilities

- Work with local schools and advocate for increased support for students with disabilities in the local area.
- Connect and network with a variety of disability employment providers to research and identify gaps and barriers to create local employment opportunities **(This will help Cooper)**
- Council demonstrates leadership as one of Launceston's major employer by recruiting people with disability
- Partner with support agencies to undertake archiving or inventory recordings by harnessing passion of people with disabilities eg. People with autism can apply their skills to various tasks at QVMAG
- Council's employees are equipped to work with a person with disability
- Greater community awareness of accessibility
- City of Launceston partnerships with arts and cultural providers leverage accessibility

What might some of the actions look like?

- Lead by example by employing people with disabilities
- Establish disability work experience/employment pilot programs with council teams
- Remove some of the physical barriers in City of Launceston facilities that deter a person with disability from working at those sites
- Undertake disability awareness training for staff
- Social enterprise
- Work with partner agencies to implement social enterprise opportunities that are inclusive

What is Council's role in this Commitment? Who is likely to be involved in the actions?

ADVOCATE, although there is opportunity for Council to lead by example and employ more people with disability.



Commitment 4: Access to transport

Why is this Commitment important?

People with a disability need to have access to a range of transport options. Transport is identified as one of the biggest barriers to community participation, employment and recreation for people with disability. This includes suitability, availability and cost.

What strategies does this include?

- Accessible transport is optimised across our City
- Pedestrian access is clear and open to all on Council footpaths
- Accessibility is included in our place making activities

What might some of the actions look like?

- Advocate to governments and transport providers to enhance accessibility of public transport services and facilities in the municipality
- Continue to upgrade and monitor the changes that will impact public transport stops to meet DDA requirements in line with the changes to the Metro bus fleet **(This will help Natasha)**
- Undertake an audit of footpaths to determine priority repairs for streamlined access
- Undertake an audit across the city to determine the number and location of current public accessible parking bays
- Continue to work with Metro and State growth to ensure all bus stops are accessible **(This will help Shelia)**
- Ensuring bus timetables are in an accessible format
- What's the role of Uber since it has been introduced? How does this work with service dogs - are there the same standards as for taxis?
- Consider language in information and communication - use technology to "describe" a path

What is Council's role in this Commitment? Who is likely to be involved in the actions?

Council is primarily an Advocate in this commitment, although Council has a LEAD role in ensuring that the Tiger Bus is accessible



Commitment 5: Access to the arts and events

Why is this Commitment important?

Less than a third of people with a disability are active in community participation. Their disability can often preclude them from a range of social interactions, including accessing the extensive range of cultural offerings across the City.

What strategies does this include?

- More QVMAG exhibitions are accessible
- All facilities and events are welcoming to people identifying as having a disability
- Ensure events are accessible to all
- More sporting events consider the use of technological aids to ensure a fulfilling experience for their attendees
- Council owned performance venues are accessible to audience and performers

What might some of the actions look like?

- All events being assessed by the events facilitation team will be as inclusive and accessible as practically achievable
- Promote the Tasmanian Government Accessible Events Guidelines and Checklist to event organisers
- Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery (QVMAG) offers exhibitions that are accessible to a wider range of people **(This will help Jane)**
- Upgrade the QVMAG website to include sensory descriptions of facilities and exhibitions
- Enable a resource sharing pool of equipment to ensure all events are accessible
- Working with event organisers to ensure that events and festivals are accessible to all **(This will help Natasha)**

What is Council's role in this Commitment? Who is likely to be involved in the actions?

LEAD, for activities at the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery

FACILITATOR, for event facilitation

Implementation of the Framework

Step One:

Develop Access Framework

1

- ☒ Legislative Overview
- ☒ Preliminary Analysis
- ☒ Workshop concepts
- ☒ Development of Commitments
- ☒ Council endorsement of Access Framework

Year One

Step Two:

Develop Annual Action Plan

2

- ☐ Establish implementation framework
- ☐ Develop and prioritise actions for each Commitment
- ☐ Allocate existing resources/advocate for additional resources for each prioritised action

Ongoing

Step Three:

Implement and Monitor

3

- ☐ Implement agreed and resourced actions
- ☐ Advocate for new resources as agreed
- ☐ Undertake annual review, planning and reporting activities with Access Advisory Committee
- ☐ Integrate ongoing evaluation into planning processes



What might success look like?

Annual monitoring and reporting will be more specific

Commitment	What might success look like?
Our inclusive community	<p>People with disability feel they have more opportunities to participate in our community</p> <p>A greater level of disability awareness and consideration of needs throughout our community</p> <p>Communication from the City of Launceston is clear and accessible</p> <p>The City of Launceston website is engaging, easy to navigate, relevant and accessible to all users</p>
Access to buildings and public spaces	<p>People with disability independently access and enjoy the built and natural assets of our city</p>
Access to Employment and Education	<p>Our inclusive work environment will encourage and support people with disability to be a valued and respected part of our paid and volunteer workforce</p>
Access to transport	<p>People with disability confidently use footpaths, bicycle paths and crossings to travel safely throughout our city</p>
Access to arts and events	<p>People with disability have the opportunity to create memorable moments by being part of our events and activities</p>

Legislative and policy Framework

The Framework is a living document. It will be updated as needed if changes in the legislative or policy framework have an impact on its operation.

Human rights

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006 extends the international human rights framework, first established in 1948 by the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Australian Government ratified the convention in 2008.

Councils play an important role in advocating, protecting and promoting the human rights of all of their citizens.

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (the Charter) sets out the basic rights, freedoms and responsibilities of all Tasmanians.

The charter protects 20 fundamental human rights, including the right to recognition and equality before the law. These basic rights form the foundation of a democratic and inclusive society that values human dignity, equality and freedom.

As public authorities, the charter requires Councils to consider human rights when they make, interpret and apply laws, develop policies and provide day-to-day services.

Councils must ensure that:

- All council decisions give proper consideration to human rights
- All actions, policies and services are compatible with human rights
- Local laws are interpreted and applied consistently with human rights
- People who work on behalf of councils do so in a way that respects human rights.

By understanding and promoting human rights, Councils can help build a culture of human rights in the community.

Human rights principles of the Tasmanian Disability Services Act 2011

The City of Launceston adopts these principles:

- a.** The needs and best interest of persons with disability are to be promoted;
- b.** So far as is practicable, and having regard to the intellectual capacity of the person with the disability, decisions or actions that may directly affect a person with disability -
 - i. Should only be taken after the person has been consulted; and
 - ii. Should take into account the wishes of the person, to the extent that they are consistent with the needs and best interest of the person and the safety of the person and others; and
 - iii. Should only result in the restriction of the freedom of decision and action of the person, if at all, to the smallest extent that is practicable in the circumstances;
- c.** The inherent dignity of persons with disability and their individual autonomy, including the freedom to make their own choices and their right to independence is to be respected;
- d.** Persons with disability are not to be discriminated against;
- e.** Persons with disability are to be given the opportunity for full and effective participation and inclusion in society;
- f.** There is to be respect for persons being different, and acceptance of persons with disability, as part of human diversity and humanity;
- g.** Persons with disability are given opportunities that are equal, or equivalent, to the opportunities available to persons without disability;
- h.** Specialist disability services are to be physically and technologically accessible as possible to persons with disability;
- i.** Equality between men and women is to be promoted;
- j.** The fact that the capacities of children with disability may evolve as they mature, and the right of children with disability to preserve their identities as equal citizens, are to be respected.

National Disability Strategy 2010–2020

The National Disability Strategy is a National Plan to improve the life for every Australian with a disability, their families and carers.

The Strategy is a vision for an inclusive Australian society that enables people with a disability to fulfil their potential as equal citizens.

Its aim is to:

- Establish a high level policy framework to give coherence to, and guide government activity across mainstream and disability-specific areas of public policy
- Drive improved performance of mainstream services in delivering outcomes for people with a disability
- Give visibility to disability issues and ensure they are included in the development and implementation of all public policy that impacts on people with a disability
- Provide national leadership toward greater inclusion of people with a disability

The National Disability Strategy has six broad outcome areas:

1. Inclusive and accessible communities
2. Rights protection, justice and legislation
3. Economic Security
4. Personal and community support
5. Learning and skills
6. Health and wellbeing

The Australian Local Government Association assisted in the development of the strategy which recognises that Local Government has a strong role in the implementation of the strategy.

Tasmanian Government approach

Accessible Island: Tasmania's Disability Framework for Action (DFA) is Tasmania's plan for improving the lives of people with disability. This third iteration of the plan was reviewed in 2018. The DFA adopts a rights based model as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD), which was ratified by Australia in 2008.

The Premier's Disability Advisory Council keeps an eye on the National Strategy and Tasmania's DFA and prepares an annual report on how the State is tracking in improving the lives of Tasmanian's with a disability.

The Tasmanian Disability Services Act 2011 and the Tasmanian Disability Services Regulations 2015 are the most relevant pieces of legislation pertinent to the planning of services and provision of funding of specialist disability services.

NDIS

A Productivity Commission report released in 2011 found that disability services across Australia were underfunded, unfair, fragmented and inefficient. People receiving disability services had limited flexibility in terms of the support and service provider options.

In response to these findings the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) was created and is now being rolled out across Australia. The transition to NDIS is now complete in Tasmania, and so is now open to anyone to apply to the scheme and have their eligibility assessed. The NDIS focuses on the needs of the individual via a package of support.

The NDIS supports the lives of people with disabilities. Around 7,910 Tasmanian residents have accessed services under the NDIS, of which 1200 live in Launceston.

As at the end 2019, the following provides a statistical overview of NDIS participation in Tasmania:

Performance summary

- **7,910** participants have entered the scheme (incl ECEI) since July 2013 and currently reside in Tasmania. **7,784** of these continue to be active
- **3,622** active participants are receiving supports for the first time
- In the current quarter, **690** participants have entered the scheme and there are **105** children with initial supports in the ECEI gateway at the end of December 2019
- On a year to date basis, **1,565** participants have entered the scheme (with an initial approved plan) which is **113%** of the operational target
- **1,921** plans were reviewed this quarter. On a year to date basis, total reviews completed are at **107%** of the plan review operational target
- **844** access decisions have been made in the quarter, **594** of which met access and are still active as at **31 December 2019**
- **63 (9.1%)** of the new active participants this quarter identified as indigenous, taking the total number of indigenous participants in TAS to **588 (7.7%)**
- **26 (3.8%)** of the new active participants this quarter are Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD), taking the total number of CALD participants in TAS to **241 (3.1%)**

