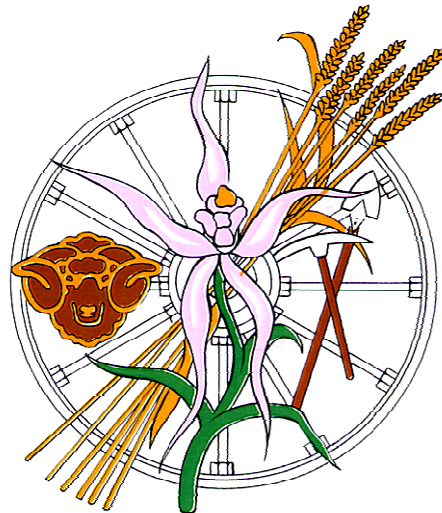


SHIRE OF WESTONIA

DISABILITY ACCESS AND INCLUSION PLAN

2012 – 2016



This plan is available upon request in alternative formats such as large print, electronic format (disk or E-mailed), audio or Braille.

Reviewed July 2012

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A. BACKGROUND & HISTORY

- SHIRE OF WESTONIA

The Shire of Westonia is a small rural community located near the eastern border of the Central Wheatbelt Region. The Shire takes its name from the main townsite named Westonia, which was named after Alfred David Weston, a sandalwood cutter who also prospected and discovered gold near the Boodalin Soak in 1910. Westonia townsite is located 10 kilometres north of the Great Eastern Highway and the Carrabin Roadhouse/Service Station, and is 316 kilometres east of Perth.

Westonia is a long skinny Shire of 3,268 square metres in area. The population of the Shire is 330 people with approximately 80 people residing in the Westonia townsite.

The main industry in Westonia is cereal crop farming, plus some growing of sheep for the wool and meat trades. There is a small Gypsum mine to the north-west of Westonia townsite. The Edna May Gold Mine situated 1 kilometre north of the Westonia townsite is currently operational with both open cut and underground mining operations occurring. An accommodation camp was established next to the caravan park on the south side of town to house and feed the mining staff and its contractors.

While small, the Westonia townsite has a pleasant and welcoming feel to it. The residential area is growing as people identify with the town and decide to live here rather than in a large city. The weather is generally good, although the farming community would like to see more rain each year during the winter/spring period. Each winter/early spring there will be a number of frosts over night, and in February/March there will be a number of days with maximum temperatures above 35°C. A lack of built-up areas, along with clear skies, affords people excellent views of the heavenly objects.

The Edna May Gold Mine was established in 1911 by Edmund John Annear, and it was a very successful mine. The mine had a number of operational changes, and was last closed in 1991. The viewing platform constructed by the Shire that overlooks the Edna May Gold Mine unfortunately has been closed to the general public although mining holds a fascination for many tourists. Other tourist attractions include the many granite outcrops scattered throughout the Shire and the diverse wildflowers and wildlife. The Shire is in the process of establishing a museum next to the Shire Administration Office in the main street. A previous resident of Westonia who accumulated a small museum sized collection of farm life items and tools has left it the Shire.

History is important to the community. To preserve the past, the Shire has re-developed the frontages of many of the buildings in the main street to look like they did in the early 1900's. The new Shire Administration Office building houses the Shire Administration Office, the public library, and offices for the local Natural Resource Management Officer and the visiting doctor, also has a frontage that reflects the same historical period.

1. RESPONSIBILITY FOR PLANNING PROCESS

It is a requirement of the Western Australian Disability Act that all local and state government authorities develop and implement a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) that outlines the ways in which the authority will ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to its facilities and services. This must be completed and lodged with the Disability Services Council by 31st July 2007.

Other legislation underpinning access and inclusion includes the WA Equal Opportunity Act (1984) and the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA), both of which make discrimination on the basis of a person's disability unlawful. While Action Plans are not compulsory under the DDA, they can assist organizations become more accessible and inclusive, and can provide some clarity during disability discrimination proceedings. A DAIP may also satisfy the DDA's requirements for Action Plans.

2. FUNCTIONS, FACILITIES AND SERVICES (Both in-house and contracted) PROVIDED BY THE SHIRE OF WESTONIA

The Shire of Westonia is governed by six elected members of Council, who are responsible for an annual budget of about \$2.29 million. The Shire of Westonia provides a range of functions, facilities and services including:

Services to property include: construction and maintenance of roads and footpaths; stormwater drainage; domestic waste collection and disposal; waste motor oil collection facility; drumMUSTER collection services and facility; litter control and street cleaning; street tree and roadside tree pruning; bushfire control; dog control; and care and maintenance of parks and gardens.

Recreation Services to the community include: provision and maintenance of outdoor playing areas, including the public swimming pool facility, children's playground, and heritage walk trail; plus provision and maintenance of the sporting complex with its social lounge/bar facilities and an indoor hall which caters for basketball/netball/volleyball/hockey/and tennis.

General Services to the community include: providing rooms for the visiting doctor service; a public library; Community Resource Centre (previously known as TeleCentre); provide and take bookings for the community bus; cooperative general store (building and management); small caravan park; and cemetery.

Local Government Regulatory Services to the community include: planning processes; building control; environmental health; public health; and dog ranger service.

Local Government Administration Services to the community include: provision of general information to the public; lodging and resolution of complaints; collection of rates; vehicle licensing; firearms licensing; and dog registrations.

Processes of Local Government include: ordinary and special council and committee meetings; electors meetings; and election of council members.

3. ACCESS AND INCLUSION POLICY STATEMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, THEIR FAMILIES AND CARERS

The Shire of Westonia is committed to ensuring that the community is an accessible and inclusive community for people with disabilities, their families and carers.

The Shire of Westonia interprets an accessible and inclusive community as one in which all council functions, facilities, and services (both in-house and contracted) are open, available and accessible to people with disabilities, providing them with the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities enjoyed by all other people in the community.

The Shire of Westonia recognizes that people with disabilities are valued members of the community who make a variety of contributions to local social, economic and cultural life. The Shire believes that a community that recognizes its diversity and supports the participation and inclusion of all its members makes for a richer community life.

The Shire of Westonia believes that people with disabilities, their families and carers who live in country areas should be supported to remain in the community of their choice.

4. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION PROCESS

In 2012, the Shire undertook to review its Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP), advertised for public comment or input into this review, consulted with local Shire staff, and drafted this new DAIP to guide further improvements to access and inclusion into the future.

The process included:-

- Examination of the latest version of the Shire's DAIP and subsequent review reports to see what has been achieved and what still needs to be considered/done;
- Investigation of contemporary trends and good practice in access and inclusion;
- Consultation with key staff, and consultation with the community.

An advertisement was placed in the local community newsletter, *The Westonian*, asking for interested people to nominate to be on a working committee to review and develop the Shire's new DAIP or to provide advice on aspects that should be included in the DAIP. People were advised that the process would probably take 1-2 meetings to determine the aspects to be included in the DAIP, and that the final plan would need to be adopted by Council. Unfortunately no one from the community nominated themselves. Therefore the DAIP was drafted by Shire staff and has been advertised for public comment.

5. PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE SHIRE OF WESTONIA

From the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings 2009 there has been an overall fall in the Australian disability rate in the six years from 2003 to 2009, with the rates for Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, and South Australia decreasing the most. Between 2003 and 2009, the largest reduction in the disability rate at the state level occurred in Queensland, which dropped from 22.1% to 17.9%. Victoria, Western Australia, and South Australia had reduction rates of 20.0% to 18.4%, 20.6% to 17.4%, and 23.8% to 20.9%, respectively.

Since 2003, the proportion of Australians disabled because of physical health conditions such as asthma and back problems declined. In Western Australia disability caused by physical conditions dropped from 16.8% to 14.5%, including a significant decrease in disability caused by asthma (dropping from 0.8% to 0.4%). Disability caused by mental and behavioural disorders also dropped, from 3.9% to 2.9%, including a significant drop in disability caused by psychoses and mood affective disorders (1.3% to 0.8%).

Four million Australians (18.5%) had a disability in 2009 and over a million Australians had a profound or severe core activity limitation (5.8%). Rates of profound or severe core activity limitation were highest in Tasmania (6.8%), South Australia (6.4%) and Victoria (6.2%), and lowest in the Northern Territory (4.0%) and the Australian Capital Territory (4.5%) reflecting the age structure of these regions.

Referring to the Disability Services Commission of Western Australia's (DSC) website information sheet Profile of Disability for the Shire of Westonia, the figures are based on the 2003 Survey of Disability Ageing and Carers (SDAC) data from the ABS and are estimate figures only. Out of a total population in 2003 of 224 people it was estimated that 35 people had at least one disability. Out of this 35 people, there are 25 males with disabilities and approximately 19 females with core activity limitation of which some are considered a disability. Of this 35 people with disabilities, 14 are sensory disabilities, and 21 are physical disabilities. The information also indicates that within the Shire there are 12 people aged 15 years or more who require accommodation support; 7 people aged 15 years or more who require assistance with transport; and 19 people of all ages who require assistance with personal and health care.

A copy of the Australian Bureau of Statistics Survey information for 2009 and the Disability Services Commission of WA's profile of disability information sheet are attached.

Due to the size of the population and its proximity to the Shire of Merredin, which is a regional centre, there are very limited facilities provided in the Westonia Shire for people living with disabilities.

There is no hospital, or daily medical service provided within the Shire, however, a local Nurse Practitioner visits Westonia townsite each week plus a Community Nurse from Southern Cross visits every 6 weeks to take blood samples or other duties, and both work

out of a room in the Council Administration Office and Library building. Several local residents give their time and resources to drive people to Merredin for medical appointments if they have no other means of getting there. The toilet facilities in the Council Administration Office, the Recreation Centre, and the public toilets have facilities suitable for people with **mobility** disabilities. There is no specific aged accommodation available within the Westonia townsite.

6. PROGRESS SINCE 1995

The Shire of Westonia is committed to facilitating the inclusion of people with disabilities through the improvement of access to its facilities and services. To meet this goal, the Council adopted a Disability Access Plan in 1995 to address barriers for people with disabilities. This Plan was reviewed in 2003 and changed to being a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan in 2007. Since adopting the abovementioned plans, the Shire of Westonia has implemented a number of initiatives, some of which are highlighted in Appendix 1.

B. ACCESS AND INCLUSION POLICY STATEMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, THEIR FAMILIES AND CARERS

The Shire of Westonia is committed to ensuring that the community is accessible and inclusive for people with disabilities, their families, and carers.

The Shire of Westonia also interprets an accessible and inclusive community as one in which all Council functions, facilities, and services (both in-house and contracted) are as open, available and accessible to people with disabilities as for other people in the community.

The Shire of Westonia:

- recognizes that people with disabilities are valued members of the community who make a variety of contributions to local, social, economic, and cultural life.
- believes that a community that recognizes its diversity and supports the participation and inclusion of all its members makes for a richer community life.
- believes that people with disabilities, their families and carers should be supported to remain living and participating in the community.
- is committed to consulting with people with disabilities, their families and carers, and the community in general, to ensure that barriers to access and inclusion are appropriately addressed.
- is committed to supporting local community groups and other relevant organizations to facilitate the inclusion of people with disabilities through access to information, services, and facilities in the community.
- is committed to ensuring that its agents and contractors work towards the desired outcomes in the Town's DAIP.

The Shire of Westonia is also committed to achieving six desired outcomes through its DAIP. They are:-

- 1) People with disabilities, their families and carers have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organized by, the Shire of Westonia.
- 2) People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access all buildings of a public nature, plus other facilities provided by the Shire of Westonia.
- 3) People with disabilities receive information from the Shire of Westonia in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.
- 4) People with disabilities receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of, and contractors/agents to, the Shire of Westonia.

- 5) People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Shire of Westonia.
- 6) People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation process with the Shire of Westonia.

C. DEVELOPMENT OF THE DISABILITY ACCESS AND INCLUSION PLAN

Responsibility for the planning process

An Access and Inclusion Planning Committee (AIPC) was established in June 2012 comprising of the Shire administration staff. No members of the community or Council indicated a desire to be part of this working Committee.

The Shire of Westonia's Access and Inclusion Plan is for the period of 2012 – 2016.

Community Consultation Process

In June 2012, the Shire of Westonia undertook to review its Disability Access Plan to guide further improvements to access and inclusion. The process included:

- Examination of the current Disability Access Plan and subsequent progress reports to see what has been implemented to date, and to decide which areas require ongoing attention;
- Consultation with key staff;
- Consultation with key members of the community.

The Disability Services Act Regulations 2004 set out the minimum consultation requirements for public authorities in relation to Disability Access and Inclusion Plans. Local Governments must call for submissions, either general or specific, by notice in a newspaper circulating in the Local Government area or on any website maintained by or on behalf of the Local Government.

The following consultation methods were used:-

- In May 2012 a public notice was published in the local fortnightly newsletter advising the community that the Shire of Westonia intended to review its Disability Access and Inclusion Plan and asked for interested people to either nominate to be on a working committee that would have 1 or 2 meetings to review the Plan, or to make suggestions/recommendations of issues that should be included in the revised Plan.
- No one (local resident or Councillor) indicated a desire to be part of the working committee, so the review of the Plan has been carried out by the Shire administration staff.

Findings of the Review

The review found that a number of objectives listed in the reviewed Disability Access and Inclusion Plan had been achieved and that a new plan was required to address the remaining access barriers and issues regarding inclusion as required by the current legislation.

❖ Access Barriers

The review identified a variety of remaining barriers to access and inclusion that are addressed in this DAIP.

There has been a range of barriers identified in the DAIP that still require redress, as outlined in Appendix I. Those that have been addressed are listed below in colour, and any remaining access and inclusion barriers are listed in black:

- the front counter at the Shire administration building requires a section to be lowered to improve access to staff rather than speaking to them from the side of the service counter;
- removing un-even footpaths along the main street;
- ensuring that the sloped access from footpath to road surface has a minimal or no trip lip;
- identify car parking spaces for people with disabilities to use outside public facilities;
- the shoe mat in front of the front door to the Westonia Co-Operative store should be set into the brick paving to be level with the pavers and not be an impediment to shoppers;
- unisex toilets for people with disabilities have not been provided yet at the public swimming pool facility;
- a unisex ablution facility suitable for people with disabilities has not been provided at the Westonia Caravan Park;
- provide signage to facilities for people with disabilities in Braille as well as normal visual symbols;
- access from pathways to laundry and ablution facilities at the Westonia Caravan Park needs to be sloped at 1:14 gradient rather than via the current steps;
- no purpose built aged accommodation units have been constructed as yet to help assist older members of the community to continue to live in Westonia; and
- the Council website requires improvements to best meet the needs of people with disabilities and/or language issues by providing links with other service providers.

The identification of these and the additional newly identified barriers formed the development of strategies in this DAIP. The barriers have been prioritised in order of importance, which assists in setting timeframes for the completion of strategies to overcome those access and inclusion barriers.

Responsibility for implementing the DAIP

It is a requirement of the Disability Services Act that public authorities must take all practical measures to ensure that the DAIP is implemented by its officers, employees, agents, and contractors. Implementation of the DAIP is the responsibility of all areas of the Shire of Westonia. All of the actions in the Implementation Plan will apply to the Westonia townsite. The Implementation Plan sets out who is responsible for each action.

Communicating the plan to staff and people with disabilities

- On completion, a copy of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan was distributed to other members of the Shire administration staff for comment.
- Council advertised the DAIP in its local newsletter advising that copies can be obtained from the Shire administration office, and to seek public comment on the DAIP.

- Copies of the DAIP will be made available via the Shire's website, as well as in alternative formats.
- As DAIPs are amended, both Shire staff and the community will be advised of the availability of updated plans.

Review and evaluation mechanisms

The Disability Services Act outlines the minimum review requirements for public authorities in relation to DAIPs. The Shire of Westonia's current DAIP will be reviewed at least every 5 years, in accordance with the Act. The DAIP Implementation Plan may be amended on a more regular basis to reflect progress and to action any access and inclusion issues as they arise. Whenever the Shire's DAIP is amended, a copy of the amended plan will be lodged with the Disability Services Commission.

Review and monitoring

- The Access and Inclusion Planning Committee will conduct an ongoing review of progress in implementing the DAIP and provide a report to Council on progress and recommendations for changes to the implementation plan on a regular basis.
- The DAIP will be reviewed and submitted to the Disability Services Commission each financial year. The report will outline what has been achieved under the Shire of Westonia's DAIP in that financial year.

D. REPORTING ON THE DAIP

The Disability Services Act sets out the minimum reporting requirements for public authorities in relation to DAIPs.

The Shire of Westonia will report on the implementation of its DAIP through its annual report and the prescribed proforma to the Disability Services Commission by 31 July each year, outlining:

- Progress towards the desired outcomes of its DAIP;
- The strategies used to inform its agents and contractors of its DAIP; and
- Provide a brief description of any significant DAIP initiatives undertaken by or on behalf of the organization by contractors.

E. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE ACCESS AND INCLUSION

The six desired outcomes provide a framework for strategies aimed at improving access and inclusion for people with disabilities. The following strategies were included in Council's 2007-2011 Implementation Plan and their progress is reported on in Council's new 2012-2016 Implementation Plan.

Outcome 1: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organized or sponsored by Council.

Strategies	Timeline
Review existing and future funding opportunities to maximize access options that meet individual needs of people with disabilities.	Ongoing
Ensure that people with disabilities are provided with an opportunity to comment on access services provided by the Shire of Westonia.	Ongoing Anyone may make comment in person or via telephone, fax or E-mail on services provided.
Monitor and review the Shire of Westonia's Access and Inclusion policy and the DAIP to ensure that they support equitable access to services by people with disabilities throughout the various functions of the Council.	Ongoing
Install a copy of the Shire of Westonia's DAIP on its website and allow people to make comment on the DAIP via E-mail.	Done
Create links between the Shire of Westonia's website and other sites to assist people with disabilities and language issues.	Done
Make the library technology as accessible as possible; have a variety of audio books, videos, and large print books available and accessible; and provide clear signage indicating where to find them in the library.	Done but Ongoing Large print books, audio books, & DVDs are available and are located within easy reach.
Council will ensure that any events are organized so that they are accessible to people with disabilities.	Ongoing
Construct purpose built aged accommodation units within the Westonia townsite suitable for people with disabilities.	In 2010/2011 Council built 5 townhouses for retirees & seniors with 3 units single storey & suitable for people with disabilities - Done
Ensure that Council staff, agents, and contractors are aware of the relevant requirements of the Disability Services Act.	Ongoing

Outcome 2: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities provided by Council.

Strategies	Timeline
Ensure that all buildings and facilities are physically accessible to people with disabilities.	Ongoing Done for newer buildings but some old buildings have not been made accessible due to need/costs/and ease to alter building.
Ensure that all new or redevelopment works provide access to people with disabilities, where practicable.	Done but ongoing.
Alter the front counter at the Shire administration office to provide a lowered area so that people with disabilities have improved access to Council staff.	Done New front counter has been installed.
Remove un-even footpath surfaces along the main street.	Ongoing
Ensure that the sloped access from footpath to road surface has a minimal or no trip lip.	Ongoing
Allocate suitably located and number of car parking spaces outside of Council's facilities for people with disabilities.	Due to the population & the number of elderly or people with disabilities in town & the fact that there is ample car parking outside of all facilities, this strategy is not an issue and is being removed from this Plan. Delete
The shoe mat in front of the front door to the Westonia Co-Operative store to be set into the brick paving of the footpath so the top of the mat is level with the top of the pavers.	Done
Provide unisex toilet for people with disabilities at the public swimming pool facility.	As the current Pool Manager does not wish to operate the access pool seat, accessibility of the pools is reduced and therefore the requirement to provide suitable

	toilet facilities is removed. Delete
Provide a unisex ablution facility suitable for people with disabilities at the Westonia Caravan Park.	Done
Ensure that access from pathways to laundry and ablution facilities at the Westonia Caravan Park is a sloped surface at 1:14 gradient to allow all people with disabilities access.	Pathways were improved but do not meet standards as yet. May 2013
Provide signage to all facilities for people with disabilities in Braille as well as normal visual symbols.	At this time the community demand is nil for this form of signage. Delete
Encourage TransWA to provide access to passenger trains by people with disabilities at the Carrabin Train Station.	Ongoing Council requested TransWA install an access platform but there are no plans for this as yet.
Ensure that parks and reserves are accessible, including access to salt lake viewing areas and granite outcrop picnic areas.	Those places that have suitable access will be identified and advertised in tourist information. September 2012

Outcome 3: People with disabilities receive information from Council in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.

Strategies	Timeline
Improve community awareness that Council information can be made available in alternative formats upon request.	Ongoing Information is included in the local newsletter from time to time.
Improve staff awareness of accessible information needs and how to obtain information in other formats.	New staff need to be advised. August 2012
Ensure that Council's website meets contemporary good practice.	Done but ongoing.
Provide documentation regarding services, facilities & customer feedback in an appropriate format using clear concise language.	Done but ongoing.

Outcome 4: People with disabilities receive the same level and quality of service from Council staff as other people receive from the staff of Council.

Strategies	Timeline
Improve staff awareness of disability and access issues and improve skills to provide a good service to people with disabilities.	New staff need training. August 2012
Improve the awareness of new staff and new Councillors about disability and access issues.	New staff and new Councillors need training. August 2012
People with disabilities to be informed that alternative arrangements for the removal of rubbish can be made upon request.	People with no relatives or friends are advised and Council staff assist them in this matter. Ongoing
People with mobility problems to be informed that prior arrangement can be made with Council for transport from Westonia to near by essential services.	Done but ongoing.

Outcome 5: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to Council.

Strategies	Timeline
Ensure that current grievance mechanisms are accessible for people with disabilities.	Done but ongoing. Information is included in the local newsletter from time to time.
Improve staff knowledge so they can facilitate the receipt of complaints from people with a disability.	New staff need training. August 2012

Outcome 6: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by Council.

Strategies	Timeline
Implement a Consultation Policy to ensure that the needs of people with different communication needs are met by appropriate consultation strategies, and ensure the Policy is regularly reviewed for suitability.	Done but ongoing.

Develop means of consulting a broader range of people with disabilities including the use of local community networks.	Done but ongoing.
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APPENDIX 1

Progress Since 1995 Under the Disability Service Plan and the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

Outcome 1: Existing Functions, Facilities and Services are adapted to meet the needs of People with Disabilities

- Where applicable, grant fund applications do and will include access to new or existing facilities as part of the criteria for the application.
- People with disabilities are able to comment on the Shire's activities by various means such as letters, E-mails, telephone, coming into the Shire office, or having comments delivered via family/friends.
- A copy of the current Shire's DAIP has been added to its website. There is a link on the website to the Disability Services Commission of WA's website too.
- The Shire Library has increased the number of audio books (talking books) and large print books held at the library, and these are regularly rotated through the WA LISA rotation program. These books are located at easily accessible levels and are signed well.
- Means of integrating people with disabilities into recreational activities has been a challenge and difficult to achieve for severely disabled people, however, those with minor disabilities are able to participate in activities readily.
- In 2010/2011 the Shire built 5 townhouses for retirees or seniors. Two of the townhouses are double storey, while the other three townhouses are single storey. While the single storey townhouses were not specifically designed to comply with the Australian Standards for Access and Mobility AS1428-1, they would be suitable for people with disabilities. Council has also submitted a joint business plan with the Shire of Yilgarn to build more units for aged accommodation during the 2012/13 year.

Outcome 2: Access at Council Buildings and Facilities Improved

- A public toilet block has been constructed at the local playground off Cement Street near the town centre that is suitable for people with disabilities.
- Footpaths along the main street have been upgraded wherever possible.

- Access ramps from footpaths to road surface have been provided and are monitored to ensure that road subsidence does not cause a “lip” to form, and if found, these are repaired so they are functional.
- Due to the population and the number of people with disabilities within town or the Shire, the need for specific car parking bays for people with disabilities is not an issue. There are adequate car parking spaces on-road directly outside of commercial and public facilities, and Council has received no complaints with regards to this issue. Therefore this strategy is to be deleted.
- The shoe mat in front of the front door at the Westonia Co-Operative store has been inlaid in a well within the brick paved footpath so there is no longer a trip hazard.
- A purpose built unisex transportable ablution block has been installed at the accommodation camp or village for the mining company which adjoins the Westonia Caravan Park. People staying at the Caravan Park may access this ablution block.
- There are a couple of natural tourist sites within the Shire that are accessible by people with disabilities.

Outcome 3: Information about Functions, Facilities and Services is Provided in Formats which meet the Communication Needs of People with Disabilities

- Council has a policy that all information made available to the community is to be written in a clear and concise language.
- The Shire advertised through the local Council newsletter that Council information is available in alternative formats upon request.
- Council’s website is updated regularly and meets contemporary good practice standards.

Outcome 4: Staff Awareness of the Needs of People with Disabilities and Skills in Delivering Advice and Services are Improved

- Key Council officers have had disability awareness training, but this needs to be ongoing so that new staff are similarly trained.

- People with mobility problems who are unable to bring rubbish bins to the kerb side can request assistance from Shire staff to take out and bring in their rubbish bins.
- People with mobility problems who do not have transport to access essential services in nearby Merredin that are not provided in Westonia can seek assistance with transport by contacting the Shire Administration office.
- Local residents volunteer, including the Shire staff, to assist people with transport to near by essential services.

Outcome 5: Opportunities are provided for People with Disabilities to Participate in Public Consultation, Grievance Mechanisms and Decision Making Processes

- The Shire advertises through the local Council newsletter of any planned new works to seek public comment; any electoral matters; that Council meets on the third Thursday of each month and that the public can attend; and that complaints can be lodged at the Shire administration office in person, in writing, via telephone, or as an E-mail.
- On election day the Shire provides a mobile voting service that travels to those who are unable to go to a voting centre in the District.

Outcome 6: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by Council.

- Different and broader means of communication with members of the community are achieved not only through the normal methods of publishing notices/information items in the local Westonian publication or the Council newsletter but this is a small community where most people know each other.

Shire of Westonia

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

2012 - 2013

Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan itemizes what the Shire of Westonia will be undertaking in 2012-2013 to improve access to its services, information and facilities for people with disabilities.

The Implementation Plan is presented using a table to outline the:

- individual tasks being undertaken;
- timeline for completion of the individual tasks;
- officer position or part of the public authority with responsibility for completing the individual tasks; and
- the broad strategy that the individual tasks are supporting.

As outlined in the Shire of Westonia's DAIP, many of the broad strategies will not be completed in 2012-2013, however individual tasks to support the achievement of those strategies may well be undertaken in part or whole in 2012-2013 through the Implementation Plan.

Broad strategies that will not be achieved in 2012-2013 will be supported by tasks outlined in future Implementation Plans.

Outcome One: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organized or sponsored by Council.

Strategies	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
Review existing and future funding opportunities to maximize access options that meet individual needs of people with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shire administration staff to monitor grant funding available and make submissions where appropriate. 	Ongoing	Administration Officer, Environmental Health & Building Officer, & CEO
Ensure that people with disabilities are provided with an opportunity to comment on access services provided by the Shire of Westonia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regularly advertise in the Council newsletter that anyone can make comment on the Council's access services provided. 	Ongoing	CEO & Administration Officer
Monitor and review the Shire of Westonia's Access and Inclusion policy and the DAIP to ensure that they support equitable access to services by people with disabilities throughout the various functions of the Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shire administration staff to monitor and review Council's DAIP annually. ○ Shire administration staff to consult with local people living with disabilities for comment on the DAIP. 	Ongoing Current review to be completed July 2012	Environmental Health & Building Officer, Administration Staff & CEO
Install a copy of the Shire of Westonia's DAIP on its website and allow people to make comment on the DAIP via E-mail.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shire to arrange for Council's DAIP to be installed on the Council's website. ○ Include on Council's website information requesting people's comments on the DAIP and the means by which to make comment. 	Current and reviewed versions of Council's DAIP to be on Council's website. July 2012	Administration Officer & CEO
Create links between the Shire of Westonia's website and other sites to assist people with disabilities and language issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Install links to the Disability Services Commission, ACCORD, Independent Living Centre, and other suitable websites. 	A link to the Disability Services Commission of	Administration Officer & CEO

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Install a link to change the language from English to another language. 	WA has been added to Council's website. Others will be added where possible. September 2012	
Make the library technology as accessible as possible; have a variety of audio books, videos, and large print books available and accessible; and provide clear signage indicating where to find them in the library.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to improve accessibility of technology and collection. 	Ongoing	Shire Receptionist/ Librarian
Council will ensure that any events are organized so that they are accessible to people with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure all events are planned using the Accessible Events checklist. 	Ongoing	Events Coordinator, who ever it is for each event
Ensure that Council staff, agents, and contractors are aware of the relevant requirements of the Disability Services Act.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Promote Council's policy and procedures regarding the Disability Services Act's requirements to agents and contractors as part of the contract, and include it in the induction process for all new staff. 	Ongoing	All Shire staff

Outcome Two: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities provided by the Shire of Westonia.

Strategies	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that all buildings and facilities are physically accessible to people with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Audit and identify access barriers to buildings and facilities using the Access Resource Kit checklists and Disability Access Consultants. 	Ongoing	Environmental Health & Building Officer
Ensure that all new or redevelopment works provide access to people with disabilities, where practicable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Apply the requirements of the Building Code of Australia, Australian Standards on Access (mandatory and recommended) when new building work is undertaken. ○ Include appropriate specifications in tender documents. 	Done and ongoing	Environmental Health & Building Officer
Remove un-even footpath surfaces along the main street.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify sections of footpaths that are uneven and include these in the Council Footpath Program either as a capital item if extensive work is required, or as maintenance if a small area of work is required. ○ Allocate funds for the repair or maintenance of footpaths in Council's Annual Budget figures. 	Ongoing	Works Manager
Ensure that the sloped access from footpath to road surface has a minimal or no trip lip.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify sloped ramps between footpaths and road surfaces that have a "lip" of more than 5mm and include these in the annual Shire Works 	Ongoing	Works Manager

	<p>Program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Allocate funds in Council’s Annual Budget figures to carry out works to reduce this “lip”. 		
<p>Ensure that access from pathways to laundry and ablution facilities at the Westonia Caravan Park is a sloped surface at 1:14 gradient to allow all people with disabilities access.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Carry out audit of access to all buildings (laundry and ablution blocks) to identify work required to allow access by people with disabilities. ○ Arrange for or carry out necessary works to provide access to facilities by people with disabilities. 	<p>Footpaths have been improved but they still do not meet the standards. May 2013</p>	<p>Environmental Health & Building Officer, Works Manager, and CEO</p>
<p>Encourage TransWA to provide access to passenger trains by people with disabilities at the Carrabin Train Station.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue discussions with TransWA regarding the installation of a raised platform to assist people with disabilities to access passenger trains at the Carrabin Train Station. 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Environmental Health & Building Officer, and CEO</p>

Outcome Three: People with disabilities receive information from Council in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.

Strategies	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
<p>Improve community awareness that Council information can be made available in alternative formats upon request.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advertise in the Council newsletter that Council information can be made available in alternative formats upon request. 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Administration Officer and CEO</p>
<p>Improve staff awareness of accessible information needs and how to obtain</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advise staff of the various alternative information formats that can be 	<p>New staff need training.</p>	<p>Manager Environmental</p>

information in other formats.	<p>produced in-house, and those that need to be done by others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conduct Accessible Information training and include this as part of the induction for new staff. 	August 2012	Health & Building Officer, and Administration Officer
Ensure that Council's website meets contemporary good practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Redevelop website according to the W3C guidelines as outlined in the State Government Access Guidelines. ○ Ensure that forms and applications are available electronically. 	Ongoing	Environmental Health & Building Officer, Westonia TeleCentre Manager, and CEO
Provide documentation regarding services, facilities & customer feedback in an appropriate format using clear concise language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adopt State Government Guidelines for Information, Services and Facilities, and incorporate into general practice by Council staff. 	Ongoing	Environmental Health & Building Officer, and all staff

Outcome Four: People with disabilities receive the same level and quality of service from Council staff as other people receive from the staff of Council.

Strategies		Timeline	
Improve staff awareness of disability and access issues and improve skills to provide a good service to people with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conduct survey of all staff to determine training needs. ○ Conduct regular in-house training of staff. 	New staff need training. August 2012	Environmental Health & Building Officer
Improve the awareness of new staff and new Councillors about disability and access issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prepare information and plan the establishment of training in the induction of new staff and new Councillors. 	Ongoing	Environmental Health & Building Officer, and CEO

People with disabilities to be informed that alternative arrangements for the removal of rubbish can be made upon request.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advertise regularly in the Council newsletter that this service is available. 	Ongoing	CEO
People with mobility problems to be informed that prior arrangement can be made with Council for transport from Westonia to near by essential services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advise regularly in the Council newsletter that this service is available. 	Ongoing	CEO

Outcome Five: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to Council.

Strategies	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that current grievance mechanisms are accessible for people with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review current grievance mechanisms, and consult with locals to determine their accessibility. ○ Develop other methods of making complaints such via a website or E-mail. ○ Advertise in the Council newsletter the various methods of making a complaint to Council. 	Ongoing	Environmental Health & Building Officer, Administration Officer, and CEO
Improve staff knowledge so they can facilitate the receipt of complaints from people with a disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Incorporate good practice in handling complaints from people with disabilities into induction and disability awareness training. 	New staff need training. August 2012	Environmental Health & Building Officer, and all staff

Outcome Six: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by Council.

Strategies	Task	Timeline	Responsibility
Implement a Consultation Policy to ensure that the needs of people with different communication needs are met by appropriate consultation strategies, and ensure the Policy is regularly reviewed for suitability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review the current consultation policy/practices, and speak to local residents to determine their effectiveness and suitability. ○ Amend the current policy or develop a new policy to incorporate the new consultation strategies. 	Ongoing	Environmental Health & Building Officer, and CEO
Develop means of consulting a broader range of people with disabilities including the use of local community networks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advertise in the Council newsletter, plus speak to members of the community that live with a disability on issues before Council, seeking their comments. 	Ongoing	Administration Officer and CEO

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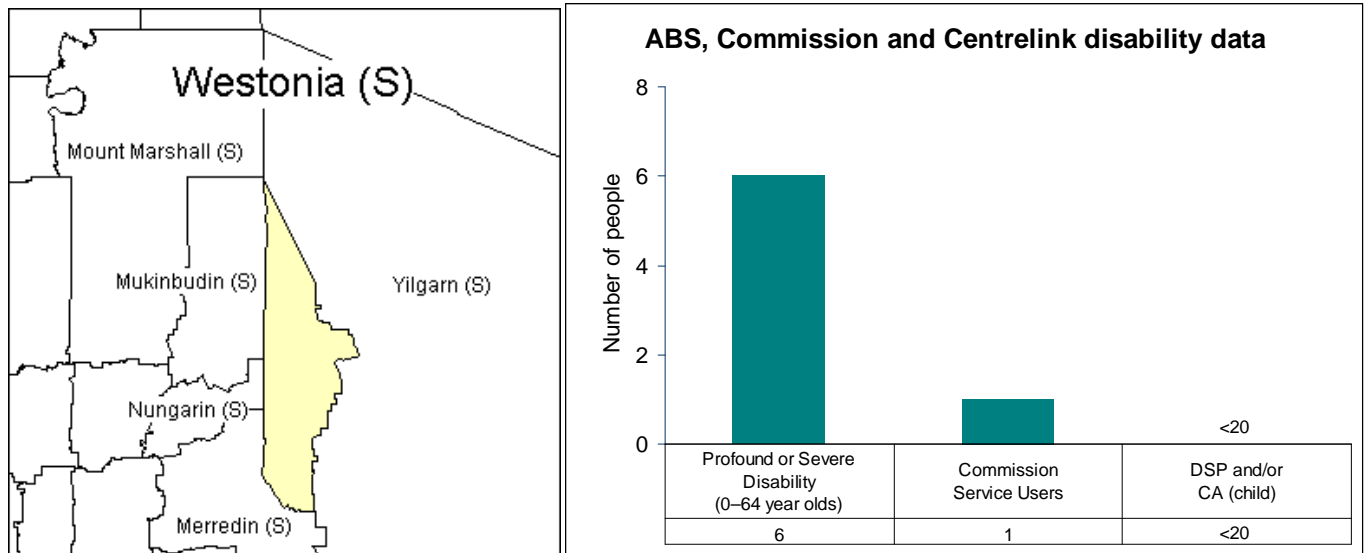


Profile of Disability

Midlands Statistical Division Shire of Westonia



This profile shows estimates of the number of people with disabilities in the Shire of Westonia, as well as the number of Disability Services Commission (the Commission) service users and the number of people receiving from Centrelink a Disability Support Pension (DSP) and/or Carer Allowance (CA) for their children.



The data contained in the following tables are 'Small Area Estimates of Disability' produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the National Disability Administrators. The estimates are based on data from the 2003 Survey of Disability Ageing and Carers (SDAC).

In these tables, **Total persons with disabilities** includes persons with profound, severe, moderate and mild core activity limitations, as well as those with schooling or employment restrictions and disabilities with no restriction or limitation. **Total population** is based on June 2003 Estimated Resident Population counts produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, adjusted to comply with SDAC scope restrictions.

Appendix 2

Table 1: Total persons with disabilities and total population, 2003

	0–24	25–44	45–64	Total aged 0–64	65 and over	Males	Females	Persons (all ages)
Total persons with disabilities								
	* 5	* 9	* 21	35	NP	25	* 19	44
Total population								
	67	71	68	206	18	114	110	224

Table 2: Persons with disabilities by level of core activity limitation, by sex, 2003

Level of core activity limitation	Males	Females	Persons
Profound or Severe	* 4	* 3	* 7
Moderate	* 4	* 4	* 8
Mild	* 6	* 5	11
Total persons with core activity limitation(a), all ages	* 14	12	26
Total persons with disabilities, all ages	* 25	* 19	44
Total population, all ages	114	110	224

(a) Total persons with core activity limitation includes only persons with profound, severe, moderate and mild core activity limitations.

Table 3: Persons with disabilities by level of core activity limitation, by age group, 2003

Level of limitation or restriction	0–24	25–44	45–64	Total aged 0–64	65 and over
Profound or Severe	NP	NP	NP	* 6	NP
Moderate	NP	NP	NP	* 5	NP
Mild	NP	NP	NP	* 8	NP
Total persons with core activity limitation(a)	NP	NP	NP	19	NP
Total persons with disabilities	* 5	* 9	* 21	35	NP
Total population	67	71	68	206	18

Appendix 2

(a) Total persons with core activity limitation includes only persons with profound, severe, moderate and mild core activity limitations.

Table 4: Persons with disabilities by area of core activity limitation and area of restriction(a), by sex, 2003

Area of core activity limitation	Males	Females	Persons
Self care	* 5	* 5	* 10
Mobility	* 6	* 5	* 11
Communication	* 2	** 1	* 3
Area of restriction	Males	Females	Persons
Schooling, ages 5–20 years	NP	NP	* 2
Employment, ages 15–64 years	NP	NP	* 17

(a) People are counted in more than one area of core activity limitation or restriction if they had disabilities which limited or restricted a range of activities.

Table 5: Persons with disabilities by disability group(a), by sex and age group, 2003

Disability group	All ages			Total aged 0–64
	Males	Females	Persons	
Sensory	* 13	* 6	* 19	14
Intellectual	* 3	* 2	* 5	* 4(b)
Physical	* 14	* 13	27	21
Psychological	** 1	** 1	** 2	** 2(b)
Head injury, stroke or brain damage	* 2	** 1	* 3	* 2(b)
Total persons with disabilities	25	* 19	44	35
Total population	114	110	224	206

(a) People are counted in more than one disability group if they had multiple disabilities which belonged to more than one group. As a result, the sum of the component items will not equate to the total persons with disabilities.

(b) The number of people aged 0–64 years with an intellectual disability, a psychological disability, or a head injury, stroke or brain damage are approximate estimates which assume that the age distribution of total persons with disabilities is the same as the age distribution for each of these disability groups.

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Table 6: Persons with disabilities by disability group(a)(b), by age group, 2003

Disability group	0–24	25–44	45–64	Total aged 0–64	65 and over
Sensory	NP	NP	NP	14	NP
Physical	NP	NP	NP	21	NP
Total persons with disabilities	* 5	* 9	* 21	35	NP
Total population	67	71	68	206	18

(a) People are counted in more than one disability group if they had multiple disabilities which belonged to more than one group. As a result, the sum of the component items will not equate to the total persons with disabilities.

(b) Estimates of the number of persons with disabilities by disability group by age group are not available for the intellectual, psychological or head injury, stroke or brain damage disability groups.

Table 7: Persons with disabilities by type of assistance needed(a), 2003

Assistance needed(b)	All persons
Accommodation support(c), ages 15 years and over	* 12
Transport, ages 15 years and over	* 7
Personal/health care, all ages	* 19

(a) People are counted in more than one assistance need group if they needed assistance with more than one task.

(b) A person is considered to need assistance whether or not assistance is actually received.

(c) Accommodation support includes people who needed assistance with housework, meal preparation and property maintenance.

Accuracy of the estimates

The above estimates are subject to a range of statistical and collection errors. Caution should be exercised when interpreting them as there are likely to be differences between the estimates and the actual number of people with disabilities in some regions.

Estimates which are not considered to be sufficiently reliable are annotated with a single or double asterisk (* or **) or an NP (not available for publication). Due to limitations in the precision of the estimates, rounding was employed in their calculation. As a result, discrepancies may occur between the sum of the component items and totals.

Detailed information about the estimates can be found in the [Profile of Disability Explanatory Notes](#).

Appendix 2



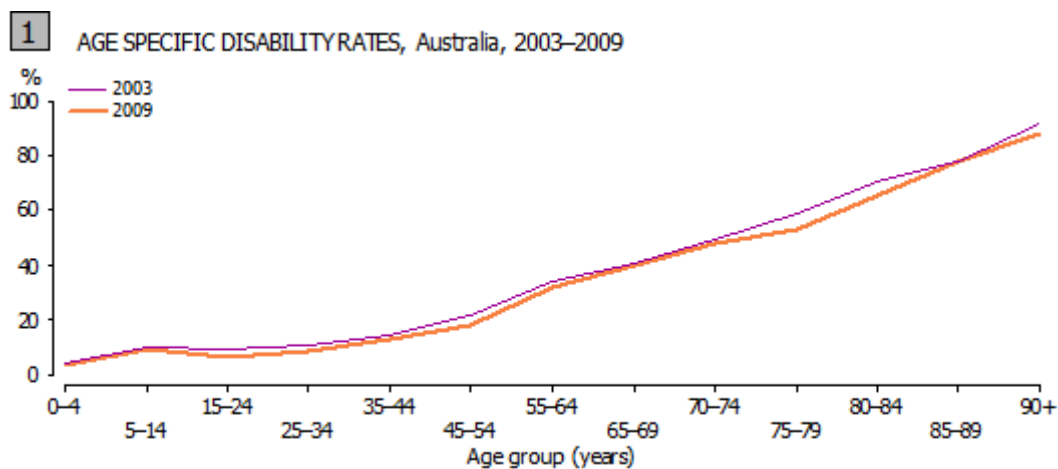
DISABILITY PREVALENCE

Just under one in five Australians (18.5% or 4.0 million persons) reported having a disability in 2009. A further 21% had a long-term health condition that did not restrict their everyday activities. The remaining 60% of the Australian population had neither a disability nor a long term health condition. Of those with a disability, 87% had a specific limitation or restriction; that is, an impairment restricting their ability to perform communication, mobility or self-care activities, or a restriction associated with schooling or employment.

The prevalence of disability in Australia has fallen 1.5 percentage points from 20.0% in 2003 to 18.5% in 2009. After removing the effects of different age structures the age standardised rate fell by 2.1 percentage points, from 19.8% in 2003 to 17.7% in 2009.

As people grow older, there is an increased tendency to develop conditions that cause disability. This strong relationship between age and disability is evident in that younger people are less likely to report disability than older people. Of those aged 4 years and under, 3.4% were affected by disability, compared with 40% of those aged 65-69 years and 88% of those aged 90 years and over. While the prevalence of disability amongst the Australian population declined 1.5 percentage points, the decrease is particularly noticeable in the younger age groups. Between 2003 and 2009, the disability rate for 15-24 year olds fell from 9.0% to 6.6%. Over the same period the rate of disability also decreased for those aged 25-34 from 11% to 8.6%. Similarly, 22% of 45-54 year olds reported a disability in 2003, compared with 18% in 2009 (Graph 1).

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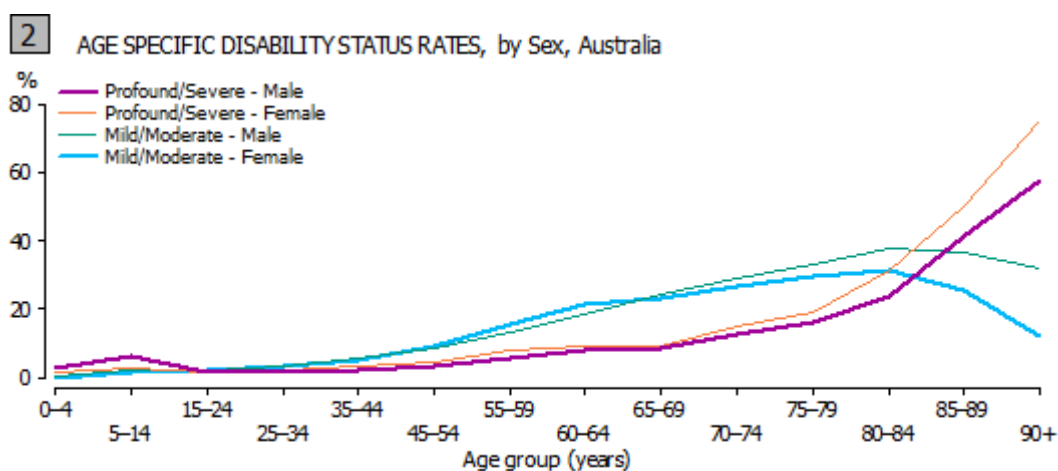


While the rate of profound or severe limitation in the core activities of communication, mobility and self-care declined from 6.3% in 2003 to 5.8% in 2009, significant differences were found across age/sex groups in the type of restriction (Graph 2).

For example, the rate of profound or severe core-activity limitation for 5-14 year old males (6.6%) was close to double that of females of the same age (3.0%).

In contrast, women aged 90 years and over had a higher rate of profound or severe core-activity limitations (75%) than men of the same age (58%).

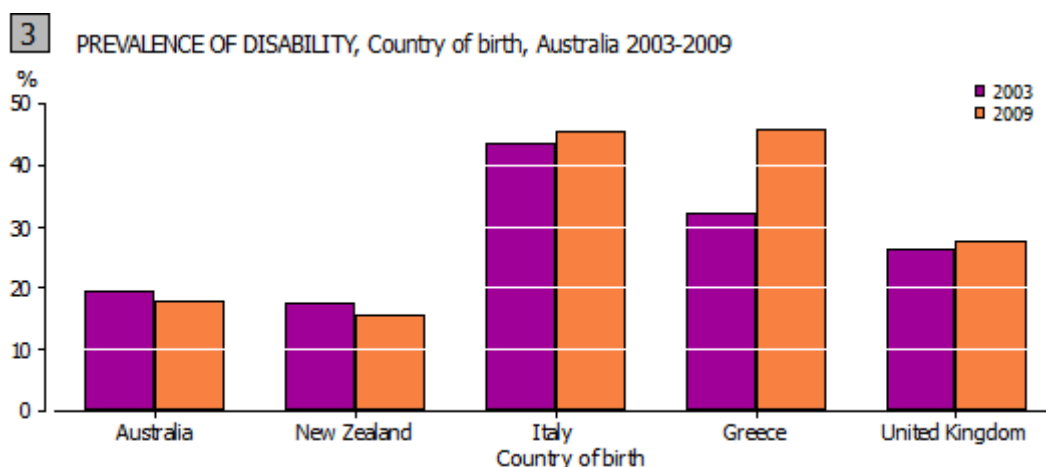
Similar patterns are observed in the moderately and mildly disabled population until late in life when the prevalence plateaus and then decreases.



Disability varies by birthplace or immigrant group. There was a decline in the proportion of people with disability in the population who were born in Australia or New Zealand, while disability rates for those born in South Eastern Europe have increased since 2003. This reflects the older age profile of the immigrant population from South Eastern Europe. Since age and disability are correlates, sub-populations in Australia with older median ages (such as

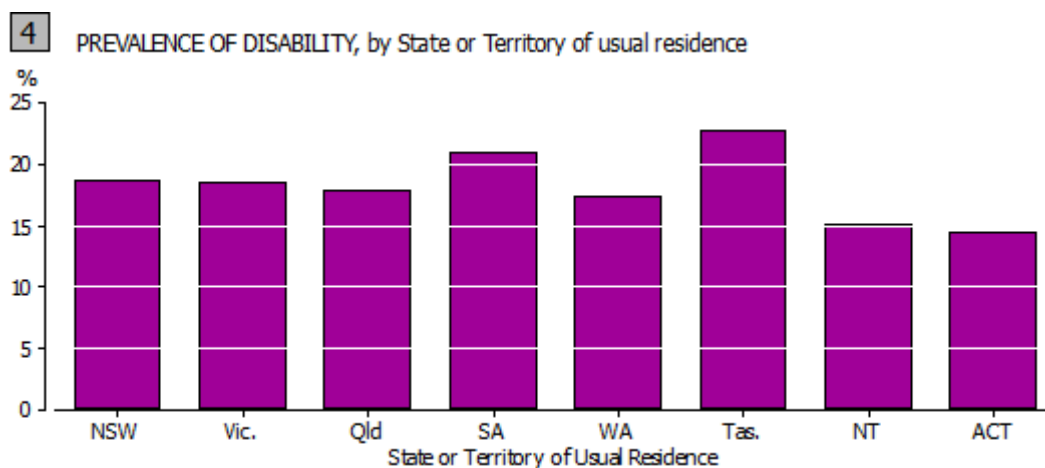
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those born in South Eastern Europe) can be expected to show higher rates of disability (Graph 3).



Source: ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, 2003 and 2009, (cat. no. 4430.0)

There is some variability in the distribution of disability reported across States and Territories. The disability prevalence rate is highest in Tasmania (Graph 4) and lowest in the Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory. This pattern relates to the differing age structures of the populations of the states and territories. The Northern Territory (31.2 years) and Australian Capital Territory (34.7 years) have the lowest median ages in the country, while Tasmania has the highest (39.6 years).



Source: ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, 2009 (cat. no. 4430.0)

The prevalence of disability according to remoteness has changed between 2003 and 2009 (Graph 5). The prevalence of disability in the Major cities and Outer Regional and Remote areas of Australia has decreased by 2 percentage points in the 6 years between surveys, while the prevalence in Inner Regional Australia has increased marginally (by 0.6 percentage points). Of the people living in Inner Regional Australia, 22% reported having a disability, compared to 17% of those living in Major Cities and 20% of those living in Outer Regional and Remote Australia.

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Source: ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, 2003 and 2009 (cat. no. 4430.0)

