

The background image is a vibrant outdoor scene. In the foreground, there is a large, dense bush of bright pink flowers. Behind the flowers, a brick building with a distinctive cupola on its roof is visible. To the right, a paved path leads towards a covered walkway or shelter, with a silver car parked nearby. The sky is a clear, bright blue, and a tall green pole stands in the middle ground. The overall atmosphere is sunny and pleasant.

BOURKE COMMUNITY DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2022

MAY 2022



**BOURKE
SHIRE
COUNCIL**



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

In the spirit of reconciliation, Bourke Shire Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of Bourke and country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community.

We pay our respect to our Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

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MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Bourke Shire Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan has been updated to reflect changes to legislation, consultation undertaken as part of Community Strategic Plan discussions and ongoing feedback from the Government and Non Government sector.

The updated action plan lists many strategies that Bourke Shire will undertake to improve access, liveability and the overall well being of local community members with a disability. Many of the strategies of the past plan have been incorporated in the Shire's ongoing improvement work.

These improvements to access are evident in our main street development, improvements to the wharf precinct and are an important consideration when planning footpath upgrades.

In the following four years it will be important to ensure that Council allocates resources to undertake the actions outlined. We will continue to work with all stakeholders to continue to update this plan and also ensure that the wide ranging number of actions are considered in work plans.

Cr Barry Hollman

Mayor



DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

Background

In August 2014 the NSW Disability Inclusion Act was passed. This Act requires Council to develop a Disability Inclusion Action Plan to help remove barriers and enable people with a disability to participate fully in their communities.

Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan will aim to provide improved access to Council information, services and facilities ensuring people with disabilities can fully participate in their community.

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan was initially developed following community consultation and local research. The Plan (2017) was undertaken in conjunction with the Community Strategic Plan with relevant questions posed to each group that was consulted.

In 2022 this plan has been updated to reflect the actions that are now completed and with consideration to the consultation undertaken as part of the development of the 2022 Community Strategic Plan.

Legislation

The Disability Inclusion Act 2014 defines disability as:

'The long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which in interaction with various barriers may hinder the full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.'

This definition reinforces the importance of viewing disability as the result of interaction between people living with a range of impairments and their physical and social environment. Disability is not just about the impairment. The onus to break down barriers rests with the whole community.



Inclusion

Personal choice and control for all people in society is only possible in a community which ensures access and inclusion for people with disability, including physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, cognitive disabilities, sensory disabilities, and those with mental health conditions. Without an inclusive society and the opportunities that an inclusive community provides, diversity is not promoted, control over choice is limited and positive change for people with disability may not occur.

The case for an inclusive society and community is strong:

As a community, we are poorer without a diverse range of viewpoints and individual perspectives.

Exclusion leads to disadvantage and discrimination, which have far reaching negative impacts across all aspects of life, including health, welfare, education and employment. These impacts are felt beyond the individual, with family units and the broader community all being negatively impacted by a non-inclusive society.

There is a strong economic imperative for increasing the inclusiveness of our society. Analysis indicates that providing people with disability real job opportunities and the chance to move off social service dependence can have a large economic impact

Social Justice Principles

The Community Strategic Plan has been developed utilising Social Justice principles.

The NSW Government's social justice strategy is based on the following interrelated principles:

Equity – there should be fairness in decision making, and prioritising and allocation of resources, particularly for those in need. Everyone should have a fair opportunity to participate in the future of the community. The planning process should take particular care to involve and protect the interests of people in vulnerable circumstances .

Access – all people should have fair access to services, resources and opportunities to improve their quality of life

Participation – everyone should have the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions which affect their lives

Rights – equal rights should be established and promoted, with opportunities provided for people from diverse linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds to participate in community life.

AREAS OF FOCUS

The NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan identified four areas of focus that people said were priority areas. These were:

1. Developing positive community attitudes towards disability
2. Creating liveable communities
3. Increasing access to meaningful employment
4. Improving access to mainstream services through improved systems and processes

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan is supported by the Bourke Shire Council Community Strategic Plan as follows:

- Our community values its safe, healthy lifestyle and is caring towards each other
- Ensure a relevant and up to date Local Environmental Plan (LEP)
- Maintain a viable health system
- Respect and make welcome our senior citizens
- Improve disability access
- Foster a community that respects the diversity of our population and is supportive of cultural differences, ages and abilities of communities members
- Ensure adequate levels of public and community transport
- Improve lighting throughout the township
- Ensure NBN availability and maximise mobile phone coverage
- Ensure active community precincts
- Encourage community events and festivals
- Further develop Davidson Oval precinct plan
- Ensure adequate levels of aged care facilities

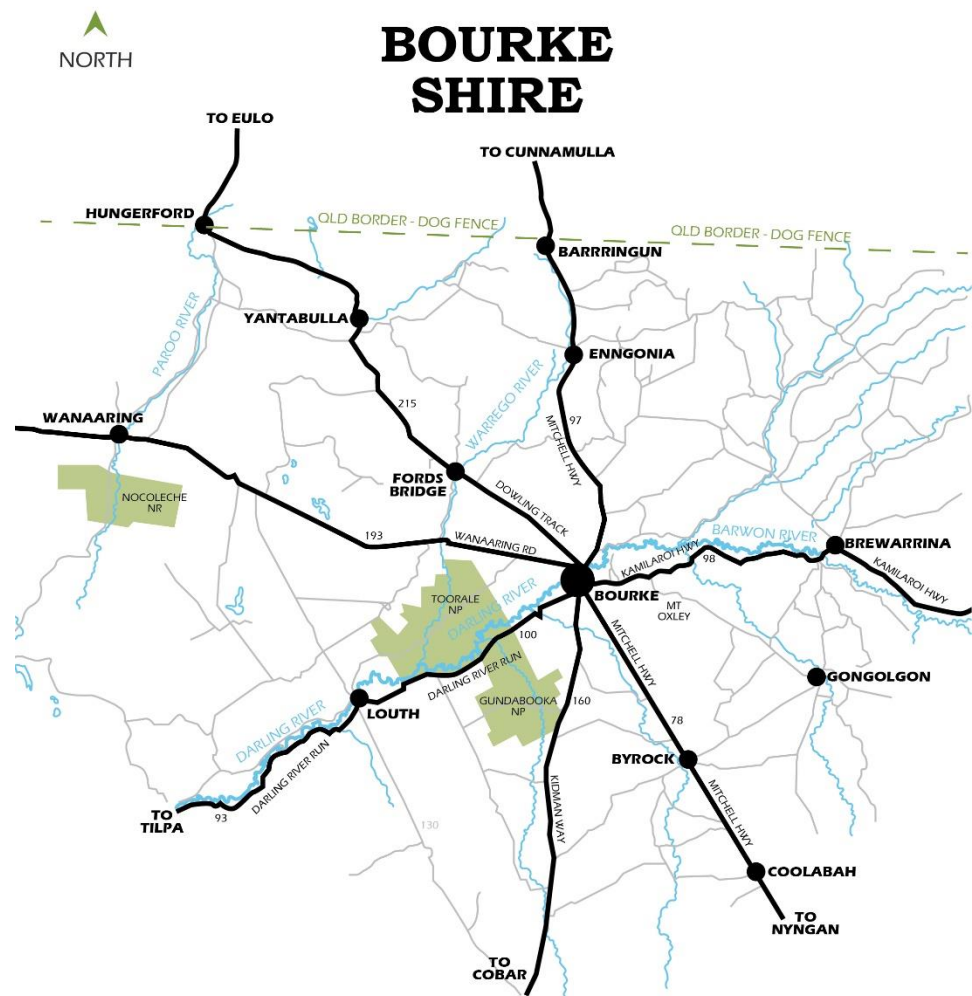


REGIONAL OVERVIEW

Bourke Shire is located in North Western NSW and covers an area of 43,116 square kilometres. The town of Bourke is located on the banks of the Darling River and is the intersection of three significant cross country transport routes - the Kidman Way, Mitchell Highway and Kamilaroi Highway. The shire is considered a gateway into south west Queensland and the far west of New South Wales and is home to many small villages including; Barrington, Byrock, Enngonia, Fords Bridge, Wanaaring and Louth.

Historically, the town was a vital link for agriculture in the west and larger cities to the east. Traditionally a wool growing area, Bourke was once the biggest wool railhead in the world. The Shire's main agricultural products now include cotton, cattle production, wild goat, wool and sheep meat. Employment in both the Government and Non Government sector also continues to be strong now employing more people than the Agricultural sector.

Tourism continues to grow as an industry due to the area's natural beauty, historical connections and the presence of seasonal travellers.



Bourke, and the surrounding area is rich in Indigenous cultural history. Traditionally country of the Ngemba/ Ngemba people, Bourke is now home to around 24 different recognised Indigenous language groups. Many of Bourke's Indigenous peoples are Wangkumara people from the Tibooburra region, but also include those from the Murawarri, Barkindji/ Gurnu and Yandruwandha Nations to name a few.

Bourke Shire Council provides leadership in maintaining and improving services and opportunities that meet the needs of the local community.

The Shire is within an area known as the Orana region (Orana meaning 'welcome' in Wiradjuri), which stretches across the Central West and Western Region of New South Wales (NSW). The Orana region is the largest and most diverse region in the State and covers a quarter of NSW.

Bourke Shire Council along with Cobar and Walgett Councils, is a member of a group of Council's forming the Far North West Joint Organisation of Council's. This has been an important alliance in seeking out improvements for the Bourke Shire communities over the past 5 years.



OUR DEMOGRAPHIC AND BUSINESSES

	Period	Value
Demographic		
Estimated resident population	2020	2625
Projected population	2041	2850
Median person income (weekly)	2016	\$800-\$999
Median Household income (weekly)	2016	\$1750-\$1999 \$2000-\$2499 (NSW)
Employment		
Number of people who work in the region	2020	1036
Largest employing industry	2020	Public Administration and Safety
Average unemployment rate	September 2020 September 2021	3% 10%
Economic Output		
Gross Regional Product	2020	\$164.3 M
Output	2020	\$287 M
Value Added	2020	\$155 M
Housing		
Building approvals (value)	2020-21	\$2.5M
Median weekly rent (3 bedroom)	2022	\$300
Median sales price (3 bedroom)	2022	\$145,000
Business Activity		
Count of businesses	2017	414
Industry with largest number of businesses	2020	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
Tourism		
Economic contribution of tourism	2020	\$13M
Proportion of local jobs attributable to tourism	2020	6.6%

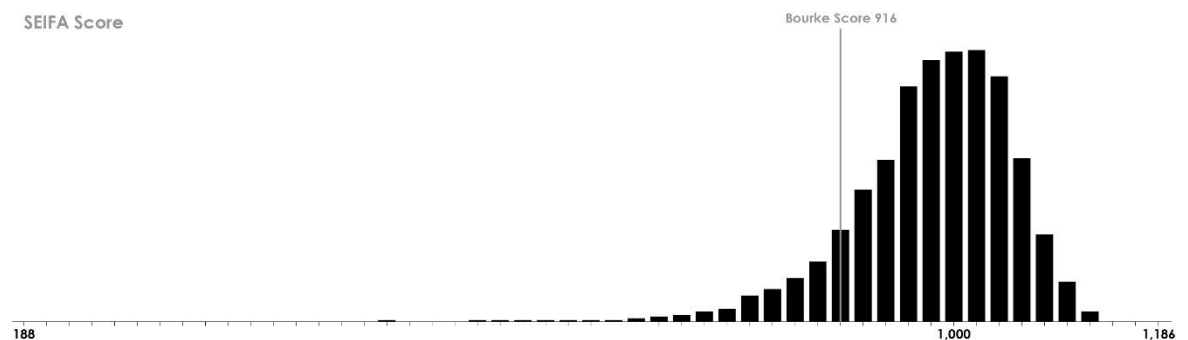


SOCIO ECONOMIC INDEXES FOR AREAS (SEIFA)

SEIFA is a measure that have been created from Census information. For each index, every geographic area in Australia is given a SEIFA number which shows how relatively 'disadvantaged' that area is compared with other areas in Australia.

The SEIFA score for Bourke in 2016 was 916.

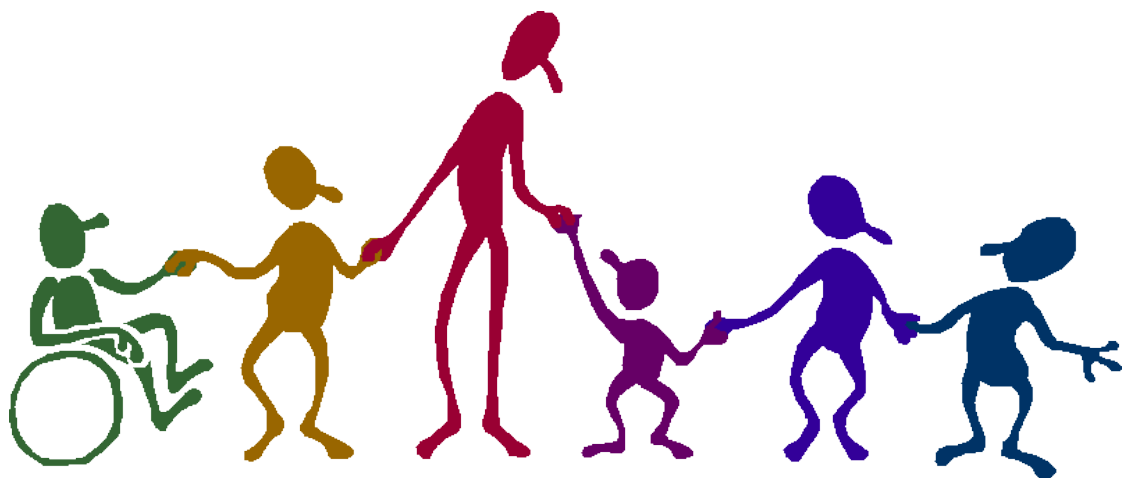
Across Australia's local government areas SEIFA scores range from 188 (most disadvantaged) to 1186 (least disadvantaged).



Bourke:

- Ranks 88 out of 544 local government areas with SEIFA scores in Australia,
- There are 456 local government areas which are less disadvantaged, and
- There are 87 local government areas that are more disadvantaged.

The Bourke Shire is relatively disadvantaged when comparing other local government areas. Its remoteness, lower economic opportunity, increased health issues and overall lower standard of living contribute to this indicator.



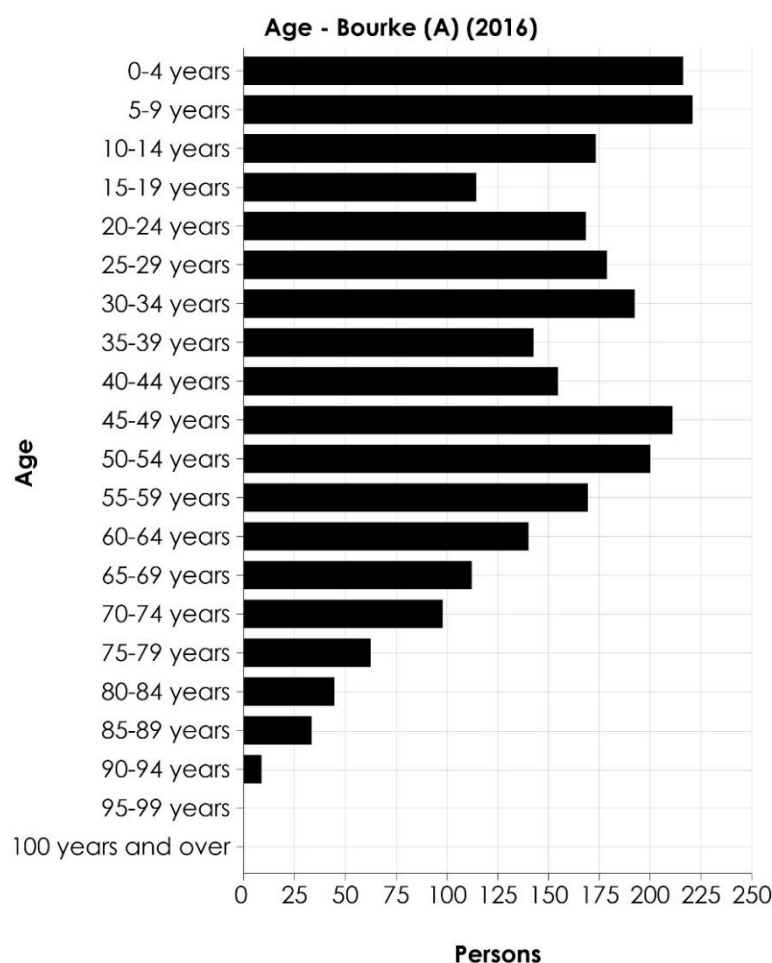
POPULATION

The estimated resident population of Bourke, as at 30 June, 2020 is 2,625 people. Between 2005 and 2020 Bourke's (estimated resident) population has contracted by around 700 persons, equivalent to an average annual rate of contraction of 1.5% (or -1.5%), compared to the New South Wales average annual compound rate of growth of 1.3%.

Bourke is home to slightly more females than males, with the females representing 51%. This is the same as the breakdown for New South Wales (i.e. 51% females and 49% males). Bourke's Indigenous population is well represented with a nearly a third (30%) of its residents identifying as Indigenous, significantly above the state average of 3%. Half (or 50.2%) of those residents identifying as Indigenous are aged 24 years or younger.

POPULATION BY AGE

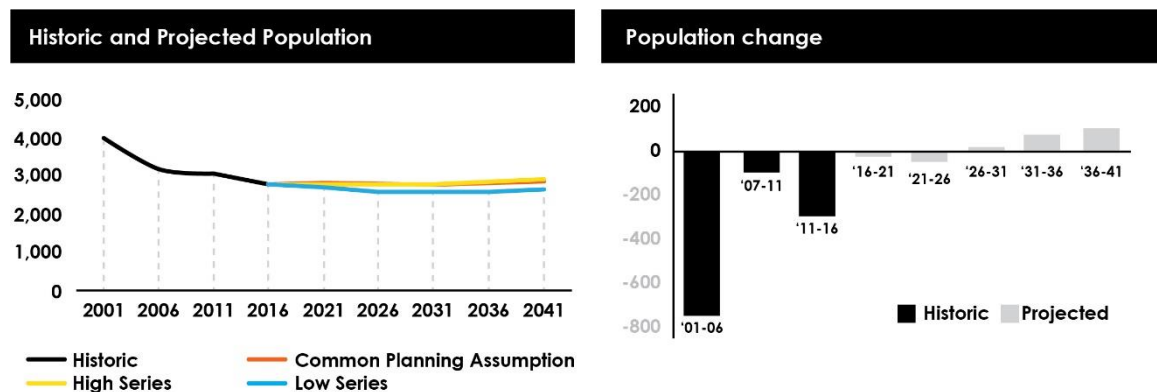
The median age in Bourke is 35 years, slightly younger than the median age for New South Wales (38). Persons aged 0-4 years account for 9.3% of the population in Bourke, slightly higher than the rate for New South Wales (6.3%). Generally those within the 15-64 year age group are considered of working age. In Bourke 63.3% of the population is considered to be of working age, slightly below the rate for New South Wales (66.5%).



PROJECTED POPULATION

New South Wales and Local Government Area population projections were released in 2019 by the NSW Government.

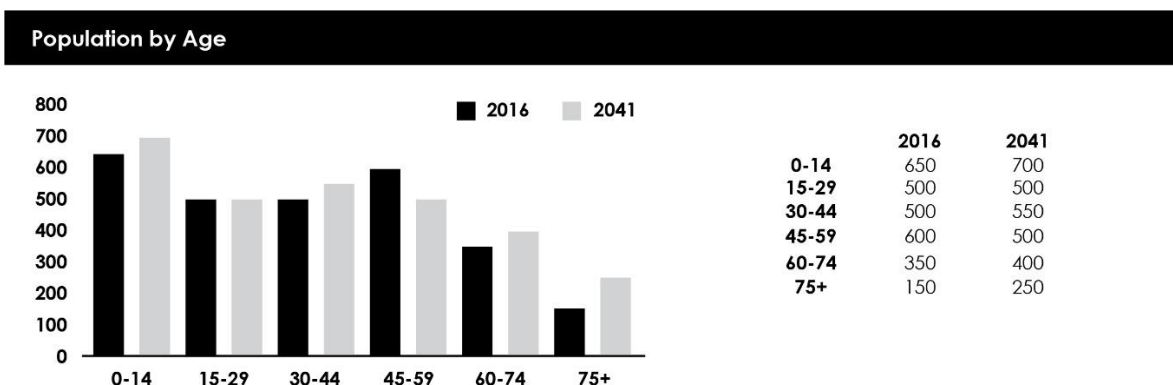
The population of Bourke is projected to remain fairly stable out to 2041. The population of the Bourke Shire is expected to grow slightly to 2850. (2,625 at present). This represents an increase in population of 225 people on today's numbers.



It should be noted that the Community continues to undertake positive initiatives to grow the community evidence by redevelopment in the agricultural sector, continued improvement to the tourism sector, improvements to the towns amenity and the development of the new Abattoir.

It is expected that 50 additional households will be required in this time.

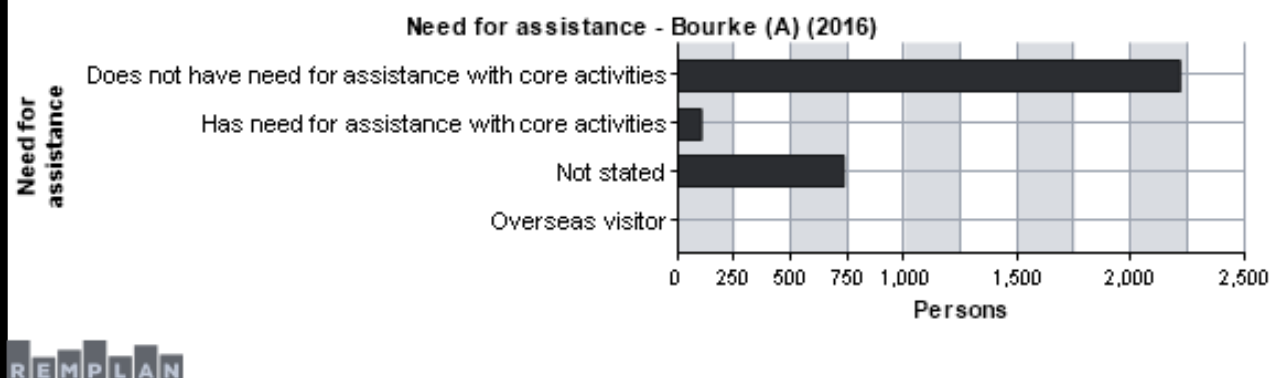
The population aged over 60 is expected to grow significantly up until 2041.





NEED FOR ASSISTANCE

This variable identifies people who report a need for assistance due to a profound or severe disability. People with a profound or severe disability are defined as those people needing help or assistance in one or more of the three core activity areas of self-care, mobility and communication, because of a disability, long term health condition (lasting six months or more) or old age. This data provides an indication of the characteristics of people who report a need for assistance as opposed to the total population prevalent of people with a profound or severe disability.



	Bourke (A) (2016)	
	Persons	%
Need for assistance		
Does not have need for assistance with core activities	2,215	72.43%
Has need for assistance with core activities	103	3.37%
Not stated	731	23.90%
Overseas visitor	9	0.29%
Total	3,058	100.00%

It should be noted that the NSW average for those that need assistance is 5.3%. Within the NSW State averages 6.85% is not stated compared to Bourke's 23.9%. As such it is reasonable to assume that the numbers of people that do need assistance is much higher than outlined in census data.

This assumption is supported by the low socio-economic statuses outlined in the SEIFA index.

CLOSING THE GAP

The former NSW Premier signed the new National Agreement on closing the gap in July 2020, alongside the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations and the Australian Local Government Association. The Bourke Shire Community Strategic Plan acknowledges the importance of the priority areas of reform in Closing the Gap and the importance of its partnerships with local Aboriginal Community organisations led by the Maranguka Community Hub, Bourke Tribal Council and the Bourke Aboriginal Corporation Health Service (BACHS).

The five priority reforms are:

1. Formal partnerships and shared decision making
2. Building the community controlled sector
3. Transforming government organisations
4. Shared access to data and information as a regional level
5. Employment, business growth and prosperity.

Further to this it is also important to acknowledge the work of Aboriginal Affairs NSW and the OCHRE plan which aims to support strong Aboriginal communities in which Aboriginal people actively influence and participate fully in social, economic and cultural life. The aims are in keeping with the closing the gap principals and include:

- Teach more Aboriginal languages and culture to build peoples identity
- Support more Aboriginal students to stay at school
- Support more Aboriginal young people to get fulfilling and sustainable jobs
- Grow local Aboriginal leaders' and communities' capacity to drive their own solutions
- Focus on creating opportunities for economic empowerment
- Make both government and communities more accountable for the money they spend.



Through its Memorandum of Understanding, Bourke Shire will continue to work with the Maranguka Community Hub to empower the community to greater self responsibility in coordinating services and caring for its own. Maranguka seeks to work closely together to ensure all people have the best outcomes and opportunities.



COMMUNITY AND KEY STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

A summary of key issues from the 2017 Action Plan and recent community consultation is seen below.

Key access issues

Access to footpaths needs to improve
Gutter laybacks to key areas of town needs to improve
Wet roads and gutters after rain means access to some areas of town restricted
Minimal access to services if living in Village
Levels of community transport not adequate especially for those with a disability
Access to public buildings not adequate
Includes Doctors surgery, library, public toilets
Access to pool not adequate
Disability parking at schools
Early intervention program
Access to qualified staff and teachers
Access to play facilities

Key issues for all levels of Government

Improve coordination of services at all levels
Local levels of service not well known
Time available for aids within the Education system
Ensure availability of modern equipment in services
Increase community awareness about disabilities
Ensure information to the community about disabilities
Provide information about the National Disability Insurance Scheme

Health and well being issues

Access to Mental Health diagnosis and support required
Improved training for those using
mobility scooters
Greater amount of employment opportunities



ACTION PLAN

1.0 DEVELOPING POSITIVE COMMUNITY ATTITUDES TOWARDS DISABILITY

Action	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe
Audit website to ensure images include people with disabilities and the language is appropriate	Website includes appropriate Images and language	Manager Corporate Services	December 2022
Renew disability awareness training amongst staff	Training completed	Manager Corporate Services	June 2023
Support the promotion of International Day of Disabled Persons www.idpwd.com	Campaign completed	Manager Economic Development	December 2022
Renew disability awareness training amongst Shire staff	Training completed	Manager Corporate Services	December 2022

2.0 CREATING LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

Action	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe
Renew audit of events run by Council to ensure accessibility	All events are accessible	Manager Economic Development	Ongoing
Progress actions within Council's Pedestrian Access mobility Plan	Completion of actions within plan	Manager Works	December 2022
Ensure access is available for transportation of those with a disability within the community	Transport access provided	Manager Economic Development	December 2022
Ensure available parking spaces and access ramps are improved as upgrades and new works occur	Access is considered for new and upgrade works	All Managers	July 2022



3.0 INCREASE ACCESS TO MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT

Action	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe
Continue to ensure that recruitment processes provide access to those with a disability	Forms reviewed and changed if needed	Manager Corporate Services	September 2022
Ensure use of contractors that may be employing those with disabilities	Increased usage of contractors	Manager Corporate Services	December 2022
Continue to ensure that recruitment processes provide access to those with a disability	Forms reviewed and changed if required	Manager Corporate Services	December 2022
Increase the awareness of local businesses of the opportunities to employ those with disabilities	Yearly update to businesses and discussion at business house meetings	Manager Economic Development	December 2022

4.0 IMPROVING ACCESS TO MAINSTREAM SERVICES THROUGH IMPROVED SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

Action	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe
Update disability service directory available to Council staff so that it can be forwarded to the public, new residents and business as required Includes ensuring information to key disability services and facilities are highlighted on Council's website	Hard copy available Weblinks updated Email copy available	Manager Corporate Services	September 2022
Ensure continued liaison with the Interagency, Health professionals and Maranguka	One meeting per year conducted Service gaps noted	General Manager	December 2022
Request that agencies update local services to ensure local suitability	Suitable statements made by Departments	General Manager	December 2022

MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

The performance of Council in achieving the aims and outcomes contained in the Community Strategic Plan will be annually via Council's annual report and quarterly performance reports.

Monitoring

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan includes timelines to guide the completion of the actions. The process will be monitored and evaluated through the Integrated Planning and Reporting cycle. Actions will be monitored twice yearly at the end of the December and the June.

The Manager of Corporate Services will monitor overall progress of the plan.

Reporting

Outcomes and achievements will be reported in Council's annual plan and via community updates in the Integrated Planning and Reporting cycle.

Review

The Plan will be reviewed annually in line with the Integrated Planning and Reporting. An audit of the success of the plan will be conducted at the end of its term.



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