



# universal design

CONFERENCE



17 - 18 May 2021

Victoria Pavilion, Melbourne Showgrounds

TITLE:

Presentation title

Inclusive Towns Project

---

PRESENTED BY:

Speaker name

Nikki Williams

---

Hosted by



Organised by



# What is Inclusive Towns?

---

Inclusive Towns is a project which aims to increase the accessibility of local businesses for people with disability. It is a partnership between the City of Greater Bendigo and the Loddon Shire Council, with support from the State Government.

**Inclusive Towns focuses on three key areas:**



**Inclusive  
communication**



**Physical  
environment**



**Disability  
awareness**

Inclusive Towns aims to create an inclusive community in which people with disability have the same opportunities and choice as those without.

# Why Inclusive Towns is important for your business

---

Every person with a disability is a potential customer. People with disability can be loyal customers to establishments that cater to their needs, which can mean more sales for your business.

Improving the accessibility of local businesses benefits everyone, especially people with disability, parents with prams, people with English as a second language and older residents.

Diversifying and expanding your customer base is a smart business approach.



**40% of adults**

identify as having some form  
of disability or long-term  
health condition.

## Disability statistics



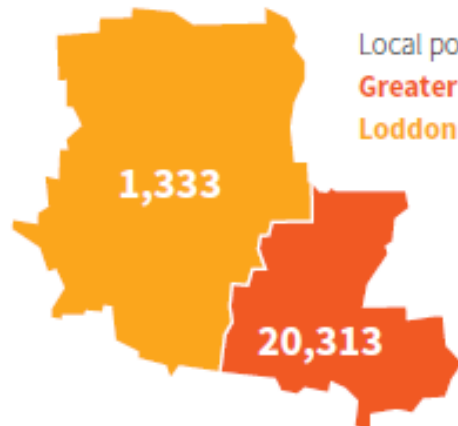
In 2014/2015 **31% of discrimination complaints** to the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) were lodged under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

**34%**

Complaints about employment

**37%**

Complaints involving the provision of goods, services and facilities



Local population living with disability

**Greater Bendigo – 20,313**

**Loddon Shire – 1,333**

# Project Team

- Inclusion Towns Project Officer
- Administration Officer – part -time
- Six Support Officers - casual



# What does the project involve?

Inclusive Towns supports businesses to make simple changes that will improve your accessibility. The project will involve three visits to your business:

## ➤ **Visit 1 (15mins): How accessible is your business?**

Project officers will visit your business and collect information on its accessibility. This will not be intrusive.

It might include a site inspection, a review of your printed materials and website, or speaking with you and your staff.

This information will be used to form an action plan to increase your business's accessibility and can be used to market your business through an online listing of accessible businesses.

We will place an Inclusive Towns sticker on your front window. The stickers will identify the businesses that have made a commitment to creating a more inclusive community. You will also be provided with an Inclusive Towns Guide for Businesses that contains tips and facts on how to increase your accessibility.





➤ **Visit 2 (20mins): Let's develop your action plan!**

We'll meet with you and talk through the information collected on your business' accessibility with recommended easy and simple changes you can make. Together we'll make a plan of 3-5 actions to increase your accessibility.

We'll then schedule a review of your action plan in three months' time.

We'll keep in touch with you over this period and provide information and advice to help you achieve your action plan.

➤ **Visit 3 (15mins): Action plan review**

We'll meet with you again and see how you went with achieving your action plan and discuss the next steps for your business to continue to include people with disability.

# Challenges with Businesses

- Previous poor experience with Council
- Lack of understanding of disability
- Not seeing people with disability as valued customers
- Fear of having to make expensive changes to their business.



# Positives for Business

- Solutions were easier to implement than first thought
- Small improvements for a great outcome
- Received positive feedback from customers and people with disabilities
- Being accessible for people with disabilities' increases accessibility for all



# Where to from here.....

- Evaluation recommended the need to include Inclusive Employment as part of the discussion with businesses.
- This was the starting point for the next ILC grant which was successful.
- Champions for Change focussed on Inclusive Employment within the Local government sector.
- Champions highlighted the need to develop and grow the organisations understanding of disability and the benefits of employing people with disability.



# Inclusive Towns legacy

Search for inclusive businesses, services and amenities

<input type="text" value="Search..."/>	<input type="text" value="Enter a location"/>		<input type="text" value="Select category"/>		<input type="submit" value="Q"/>
--	---	---	--	---	----------------------------------

A decorative graphic on the left side of the page consisting of several overlapping circles in various colors including pink, red, green, purple, and blue.

# Become an Inclusive Employer

.....

A photograph of a smiling woman with blonde hair, wearing a plaid shirt, in what appears to be a workshop or office setting. She is looking towards the camera.

[Why Become an Inclusive Employer?](#)

[Contact Inclusive Towns](#)

# Thank you

- <https://inclusivetowns.com.au/why-become-an-inclusive-employer/>
  - <https://inclusivetowns.com.au/>
- 
- More project documents and full evaluation available on request.

