



Healthy, Safe and Resilient Bass Coast
Plan 2025-2029

Bass Coast Community Vision 2041

From its flowing hills to its wild unspoiled coastlines, the Bass Coast is a source of celebration for all who live in and visit the region. Our townships are vibrant, rich with culture and full of life, each with its own distinct character. Drawing on our creativity, innovation and resilience we've created a thriving and diverse economy that supports sustainable agriculture and industry. We live proudly on Bunurong Country and build on learnings from our First Peoples and their knowledge. We coexist in harmony with our environment and are prepared for future challenges and changes. We are the people of the Bass Coast. Experience our cultures and history and contribute to our story.

Acknowledgement of Country

Bass Coast Shire Council acknowledges the Bunurong as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands and waters, and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and Lore. Bass Coast Shire Council celebrates the opportunity to embrace and empower the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island Communities in their diversity. Bass Coast Shire Council will create opportunities for future recognition and respectful partnerships that will honour the Traditional Owners and Custodians, and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Diversity and Inclusion

Bass Coast Shire Council celebrates the diversity of our communities. We acknowledge and respect the skills, insights and life experiences of all community members irrespective of gender, ethnicity, ability, religious belief, sexuality or age.

Gender Impact Statement

In accordance with the Gender Equality Act 2020, a Gender Impact Assessment has been undertaken when developing the (insert title of strategy/plan).

Child Safe Statement

Bass Coast Shire Council is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and has a Child Safe Statement ([Policies | Bass Coast Shire](#))

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Definitions

Advocator	Council actively represents the interests of the community to influence decisions, secure funding, and shape policies at the local, state and federal levels.
Disadvantage	Unequal access to opportunities, services or resources that leads to poorer outcomes in health or participation driven by systemic barriers, not individual choice.
Enabler	Council removes barriers and creates conditions that make it possible for individuals, groups and communities to take action, access opportunities, and achieve better outcomes.
Circular economy	A model that designs out waste, keeps materials in use for as long as possible, and regenerates natural systems, delivering environmental, economic and social benefits.
Facilitator	Council brings people and organisations together to solve shared problems, builds strong networks, and leads by example to influence better outcomes across the sector.
World Health Organization (WHO)	The United Nations agency responsible for global health leadership, including setting standards and responding to health emergencies.
Promoter	Council actively shares information, raises awareness and encourages community participation to improve knowledge, engagement and positive health outcomes.
Intersectionality	Attitudes, systems and structures in society and organisations can interact to create inequality and result in exclusion. “Intersectionality” means that people can face overlapping forms of disadvantage. When these aspects or characteristics combine, there is an increased risk of people experiencing family violence and social isolation, and overall people find it harder to get the help they need.
Partner	Council works with state government departments, schools, sports clubs, other service deliverers in the region and Committees of Management.
Regulator	Council enforces local laws, policies and standards to protect public health, safety, amenity and the environment.
Resilient	Communities that can adapt, recover and thrive during disruptions or crises, while maintaining wellbeing and essential services.
Service Provider	Council directly delivers services to the community or contracts others to do so, ensuring quality, safety and equity in service delivery.

Message from our Mayor

Executive Summary

The Healthy, Safe and Resilient Bass Coast Plan 2025–2029 is Council’s Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, developed in line with the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic). It sets a clear, strategic direction for improving health, wellbeing, and equity for all who live, work and play in Bass Coast.

The Plan builds on the foundations of the 2021–2025 Plan and introduces a stronger focus on community-led, place-based and partnership-driven action. It responds to state and national health priorities, local data, and community insights across five key themes:

1. Healthy and Active Living
2. Safe and Inclusive Communities
3. Equitable Access and Social Infrastructure
4. Thriving Children and Young People
5. Country, Connection and Climate

Each theme outlines Council’s roles from facilitator and collaborator to service provider and advocate alongside measurable indicators of success. This ensures accountability while focusing on what Council can influence, and where partnership is essential.

The Plan includes a detailed Year 1 Action Plan and will be implemented through ongoing listening, co-design, delivery and evaluation. Council will report annually and review the Plan in four years to ensure it remains responsive to emerging challenges like cost-of-living, digital equity and climate resilience.

By embedding collaboration, human-centred design and cultural safety, the Plan aims to deliver long-term, system-level improvements particularly for those facing health inequities. It also aligns with Council’s broader planning ecosystem, including the Council Plan, Disability Action Plan, Active Bass Coast Plan, Climate Change Action Plan and Municipal Emergency Management Plan.

This is not just a plan for Council, but a shared commitment to creating the conditions for everyone in Bass Coast to live well.

From Strong Foundations to Future Focus

Bass Coast Shire Council's Healthy Communities Plan 2021–2025 sets a solid foundation by recognising the critical role of collaboration, community partnerships, and integrated planning in shaping positive health and wellbeing outcomes. That plan identified key priorities from healthy lifestyles and mental wellbeing to affordable housing and equity that reflected our community's voice at that time. It established important partnerships and focused efforts across the sector.

Over the past four years, we have experienced rapid change including the impacts of climate change on health, the continued need for mental health supports, increased cost-of-living pressures, and growing inequities across our region. These factors demand that we move beyond broad intentions and into more targeted, measurable, and accountable roles in increasing positive health outcomes.

Where we are heading is a shift from general aspiration to deliberate action, connected outcomes, and shared accountability.

Our new plan is shaped by this maturity. It moves us forward by embedding health and wellbeing priorities directly into the heart of Council's work through integrated planning aligned with the Council Plan 2025–2029 and its vision for a Healthy, Safe and Resilient Bass Coast. It doesn't stand alone; it guides and strengthens our decisions across infrastructure, planning, community services, environment, and partnerships.

Our Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

Bass Coast Shire Council takes an integrated approach to strategic planning one that connects community needs, long-term priorities and service delivery across all levels of the organisation. At the centre of this approach is the Council Plan, which sets the overarching direction and guides how resources are allocated, how advocacy is prioritised, and how outcomes are delivered through a network of aligned strategies.

This includes:

- The Healthy, Safe and Resilient Bass Coast Plan, which delivers on Council's legislative obligations and local priorities for community health and wellbeing.
- The Disability Action Plan, which drives equity, access and inclusion across Council's policies, services and built environment.
- A suite of supporting documents, including the Financial Plan, Asset Plan, and Climate Action Strategy, which provide the tools and frameworks to implement and resource Council's strategic intent.

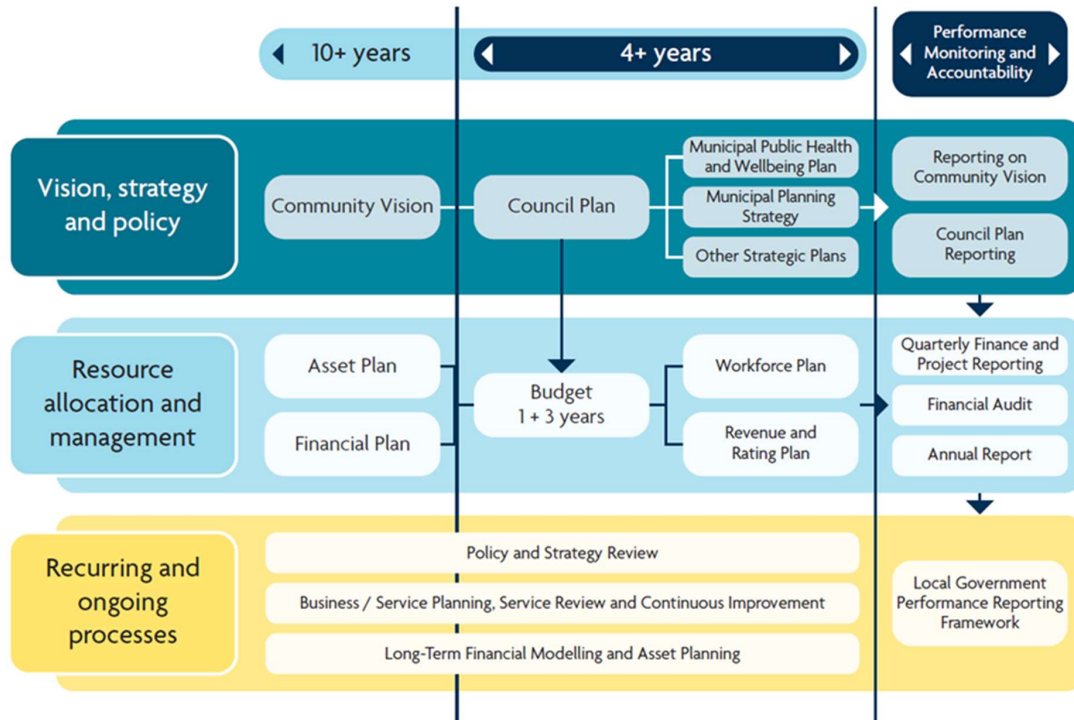
These plans are not developed in isolation. They are connected through shared objectives, co-designed monitoring and evaluation tools, and a unified delivery framework that ensures collective impact. Each plan aligns directly to one or more priorities within the Council Plan, enabling a whole-of-Council approach that is focused, measurable and community-driven.

Under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008, all Victorian councils must prepare a four-year Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) within 12 months of a general election. In Bass Coast, this requirement is fulfilled through the Healthy, Safe and Resilient Bass Coast Plan, which supports Council to anticipate risks, direct investment and deliver targeted strategies that improve health outcomes across our communities.

Council's functions under the Act include:

- Creating environments that support healthier choices and empower individuals and communities to improve their wellbeing.
- Leading local health planning and implementing targeted policies and programs to improve public health outcomes.
- Partnering with local organisations and service providers to strengthen community health and wellbeing through shared action.

Bass Coast Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework



Our Legislative Responsibility

The Healthy, Safe and Resilient Bass Coast Plan is Council’s Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and has been developed with regard to the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023–2027, particularly its priorities around mental wellbeing, active living, climate change and reducing health inequities. It aligns with international, national, state and local health strategies and outlines Council’s strategic direction for improving health, wellbeing and equity across our community.

Over the next four years, the Plan will guide our work in social planning, community development and service delivery. It reflects state health priorities, is informed by local data, and is shaped by the voices of our communities and partners.

The Plan meets Council’s legislative obligations and provides a shared framework for action. It identifies opportunities to better support people facing poorer health outcomes and ensures alignment with both the Council Plan and the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.



Council has a unique and critical role in health prevention and promotion. Through our policies and actions, we help shape the physical, social, economic and natural environments that influence the health of people living in Bass Coast.

We support preventative health through safe, walkable neighbourhoods, improved infrastructure and services, inclusive community programs, strong partnerships, and proactive responses to emerging health risks, including climate change.

The Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 describes Council’s functions to protect, improve and promote public health and wellbeing by:

- Creating healthy environments that support people to live well and make healthier choices.
- Leading local health planning by identifying community needs and setting health and wellbeing goals.

- Developing and delivering public health policies and programs focused on prevention and wellbeing.
- Supporting local agencies, including schools, health services, emergency services, and community organisations.
- Coordinating and providing immunisation services for children living or studying in the municipality.

These actions help prevent health problems before they start. Our role is to make sure the community stays healthy.

Working Together for Collective Impact

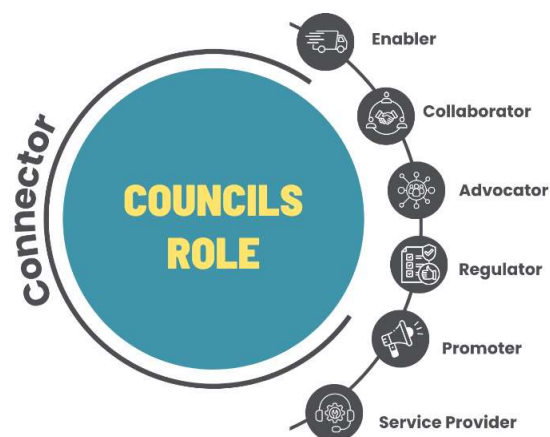
Council is not a direct provider of health services, but we play a vital role in creating the conditions for positive health outcomes across Bass Coast. We do this by enabling inclusive planning, facilitating partnerships, advocating for community needs, and supporting collaboration between service providers, funders and community groups. Council is one player in a broad ecosystem of services and supports. Our impact relies on respectful partnerships with health providers, government agencies, and community groups who each bring expertise, insight and resources to the table.

Increasing positive health outcomes of our community relies on strong, respectful partnerships across government, non-government, and community sectors. Council recognises that no single organisation can address the complex, interconnected drivers of disadvantage and wellbeing alone. By working alongside our partners as equals we combine knowledge, resources, and lived experience to achieve better outcomes for our community.

Partnerships strengthen our collective ability to address the full spectrum of health and wellbeing housing, infrastructure, social connection, education, economic opportunity, and the environment. A strong example is our Housing Strategy, developed through collaboration with those who bring expertise in housing, infrastructure and community support. It focuses on areas where infrastructure supports growth and wellbeing, while addressing social and economic challenges.

This collaborative approach reflects our commitment to understanding the ways that health, housing, education, income, culture and environment intersect. We recognise that some people face greater barriers to wellbeing, and we are committed to shaping responses that are inclusive, equitable and effective.

At its core, this Plan champions partnership as the foundation for a healthier, safer and more connected Bass Coast, where shared knowledge, mutual trust and aligned action leading to healthier communities in line with the Department of Health's key priority areas.



The Communities We Are Planning For

Bass Coast is a thriving and growing community, known for its beaches, friendly towns and strong sense of connection. As one of Victoria's fastest-growing regions, we are shaping a future where everyone has the opportunity to live well, recognising that growth brings both opportunities and challenges for health and wellbeing.

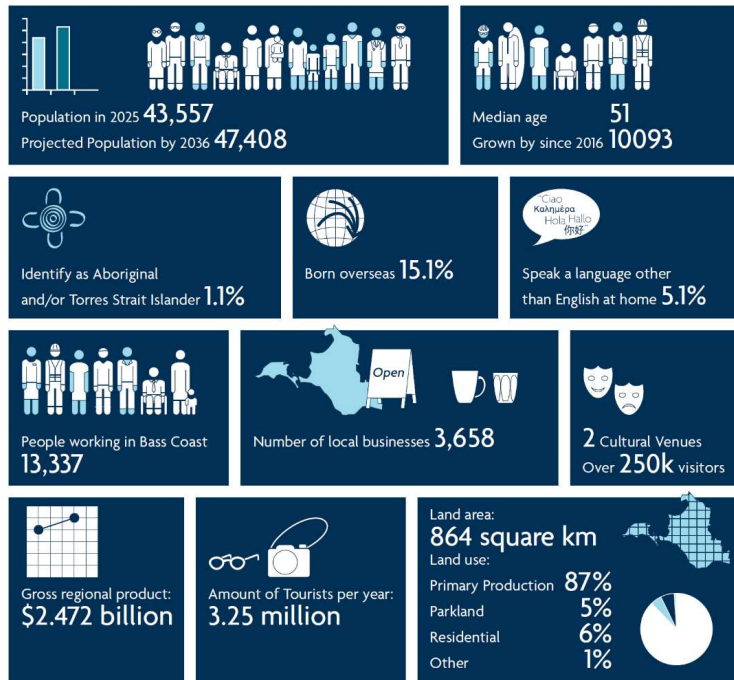
Our population is both growing and ageing. This increases demand for health care, housing, mobility and social connection. At the same time, young people and working-age residents are navigating challenges around education, employment, housing affordability and mental health. These issues impact people differently depending on their life stage. Our Plan is grounded in this understanding.

We recognise health is a journey and is influenced by age, ability, culture, income, and place. This Plan considers the distinct needs of children, young people, adults and older residents, ensuring people can stay active, connected and well throughout their lives.

We are also proudly diverse. Our community includes people from a range of cultures, abilities and backgrounds who enrich our region. We acknowledge the Bunurong people as Traditional Owners and are committed to learning from and walking alongside First Nations communities. Inclusive, accessible services are vital to ensure everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Tourism is central to our identity and economy, attracting 3.25 million visitors each year. While it brings vibrancy and opportunity, it also places pressure on housing, infrastructure and local services, particularly in peak periods.

Being healthy is about more than health care. It's about feeling safe, connected, active and supported. It means having access to healthy food, transport, welcoming public spaces, and opportunities to engage in community life.



Bass Coast is changing. The Healty, Safe and Resiliant Bass Coast Plan 2025-2029 plan ensures we grow in a way that places people’s health, wellbeing and inclusion at the centre no matter who you are, where you live, or your circumstances.

Life Course Approach

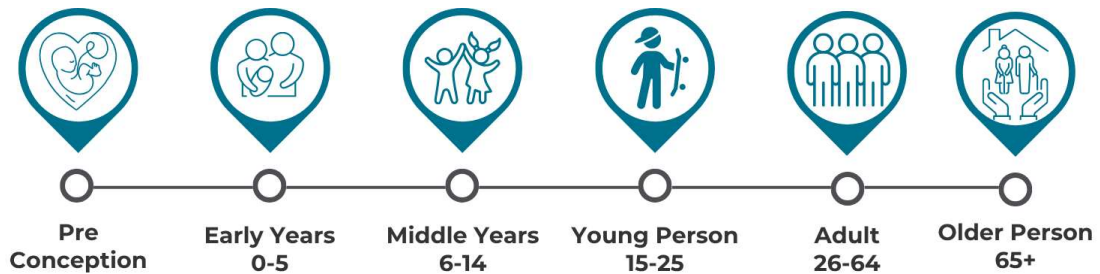
Health outcomes are shaped by social factors like housing, income, education and climate exposure across all life stages.

When people have fair access to nature, services and opportunities to take part in community life, it helps build connection and supports better health outcomes. Inclusive spaces and services ensure people of all ages and abilities can stay healthy, active and connected.

We also recognise that people living with disability often face additional barriers to good health and wellbeing. While our Disability Action Plan sets out key priorities, this Plan looks more broadly at how we can reduce disadvantage and strengthen inclusion.

Everyone’s health journey is different. That’s why we consider intersectionality and how different factors combine to shape people’s experiences of health and wellbeing.

Bass Coast's approach ensures our actions are tailored to those needs:



Early Years

Recent data from the 2024 Australian Early Development Census shows more young children are starting life with challenges in physical health, emotional maturity and social connection. These early vulnerabilities can shape a child’s lifelong wellbeing, learning and opportunities.

In Bass Coast, it’s not always easy for families to access the right support at the right time. Local access to services like paediatrics, allied health and specialist programs is limited. Access to Maternal and Child Health services through Bass Coast Health plays a vital role in supporting families, but there’s more to do to ensure every child gets the help they need when it matters most.

Early years services are more than health checks, they help build connection, confidence and community. By focusing on early intervention and improving access to health, development and education supports, we can give every child in Bass Coast the best possible start to grow, learn and thrive.

Young People

Young people are an important part of Bass Coast's future, but many face barriers that can impact their health, wellbeing and sense of belonging. Gippsland health data shows rising rates of psychological distress and declining emotional wellbeing among school-aged children and teens.

Challenges such as vaping, limited transport, and a lack of clear pathways to education and local careers narrow young people's choices and influence how they see their future in Bass Coast. Limited tertiary education and career pathways can leave young people uncertain about their future in Bass Coast and more likely to look elsewhere for opportunities.

Creating safe, inclusive environments, both at school and in the communities, is critical. When young people feel connected, supported and have access to services, education and opportunities to belong, it strengthens wellbeing and builds resilience for the future. Equitable access during these years can shape lifelong health outcomes.

Middle Years

Children aged 6 to 14 known as the middle years go through important physical, emotional and social changes that shape who they are and how they see the world. This stage plays a key role in building confidence, resilience, and healthy habits that can influence wellbeing into adulthood. While often overlooked in policy and programs, the middle years are a powerful time for early support. Positive peer relationships, inclusive environments and programs delivered in schools and communities, especially around key life transitions, can help prevent future mental health challenges and support children to thrive.

Adults

Many working-age adults in Bass Coast are balancing the pressures of work, caring responsibilities, rising living costs and limited access to timely healthcare. These daily challenges can make it harder for people to prioritise their health and wellbeing. Across Gippsland, data shows increasing rates of anxiety, depression and psychological distress among this age group.

Reduced physical activity, financial stress and delayed healthcare contribute to a growing risk of chronic disease, while some turn to unhealthy coping strategies, such as alcohol use. These pressures often compound over time, further impacting both mental and physical health.

Access to affordable mental health services, general healthcare and opportunities to stay active, connected and involved in community life is critical. Low-cost or no-cost activities, such as walking groups, community events, open spaces and recreation programs, play a vital role in helping people maintain their health, build social connections and manage life's pressures.

Inclusive, accessible social infrastructure and health promotion activities help create environments where working-age adults can stay well, feel connected and build resilience. Supporting access to these opportunities is key to improving wellbeing and preventing poor health outcomes in our community.

Older adults

Bass Coast's ageing population is growing faster than the state average, bringing increased demand for support with chronic disease, dementia, and reduced mobility. As more residents over 70 require help with daily tasks, the risk of social isolation and disconnection grows. Access to age-friendly spaces, preventative health care, and inclusive programs is essential for supporting older people to stay active, independent and connected to their communities.

What Our Communities Told Us

Bass Coast Shire Council undertook a broad and inclusive engagement process to strengthen our understanding of the current health barriers and enablers. We sought to reach diverse communities and to explore more deeply some of the issues which emerge from our population health profile.

What the community told us about their real-life experiences has helped shape and set key themes. Residents shared their experiences and priorities through engagement sessions and surveys.

Our engagement sought input from people across all life stages, locations and backgrounds. Children and young people, people living with disability, older adults, First Nations people, culturally diverse residents and LGBTIQIA+ community members shared their experiences, insights and ideas to help shape this Plan and its key themes.

Safety

Creating safer, more inclusive environments is a key priority. While Bass Coast has relatively low crime rates, many residents perceive safety concerns to be higher especially in poorly lit or isolated areas. These perceptions can significantly affect how people feel in and move through their community. Concerns have been raised about discrimination and unwelcoming spaces, especially for women, neurodiverse individuals, and LGBTIQIA+ communities. Accessible parking, safe youth activities, and safe spaces for vulnerable groups, including those navigating family violence is vital. Supporting older adults to rebuild social confidence post-COVID is also an important focus.

Services

Timely and equitable access to services especially health, mental health, and social supports remains a challenge across Bass Coast. Transport limitations, housing insecurity, and service gaps affect older adults, young people, and marginalised groups. There's a need for stronger face-to-face support, particularly for neurodiverse and LGBTIQIA+ youth, and better promotion of existing services. Communities value positive service experiences and call for more inclusive, affordable options for staying



Bass Coast has low crime rates, but many residents feel unsafe especially in isolated or poorly lit areas.



Safe spaces must be inclusive especially for women, neurodiverse individuals, and LGBTIQIA+ communities.



Communities want more in-person support, especially for LGBTIQIA+ and neurodiverse youth.



We need more accessible, inclusive, and smoke-free spaces that support movement, connection, and wellbeing.



Transport, housing stress, and service gaps make it hard for the community to access support.



People face gaps in mental health, housing, healthy eating, and transport. We need better coordination and access.

active, learning, and participating in community life. Supporting literacy, wellbeing education, and non-competitive recreation are key to long-term health outcomes.

Spaces

Bass Coast's natural assets beaches, parks, and trails are deeply valued for their role in promoting physical and mental wellbeing. However, community feedback highlights a need for more inclusive, accessible and safe public spaces. Inadequate infrastructure, limited mobility access, and poor lighting create barriers, particularly for youth, people with disability, and those requiring safe environments for physical activity or family emergencies. There is also growing demand for inclusive facilities (e.g. breastfeeding spaces, gyms for LGBTIQ+ and neurodiverse people), smoke-free events, and spaces that support social connection and hobbies.

Service Gaps and Barriers

While many services exist, barriers to access remain. These include limited support for older adults and people with disability, gaps in mental health and healthy eating services, and a lack of affordable housing and crisis accommodation. Barriers to transport, financial constraints, cultural stigma, and fragmented service coordination further restrict participation. Youth and education providers are calling for better support, especially in transitions, life skills, and after-hours access. A more inclusive, coordinated system with simplified referral pathways and improved service promotion is critical.

What the Community Wants to See

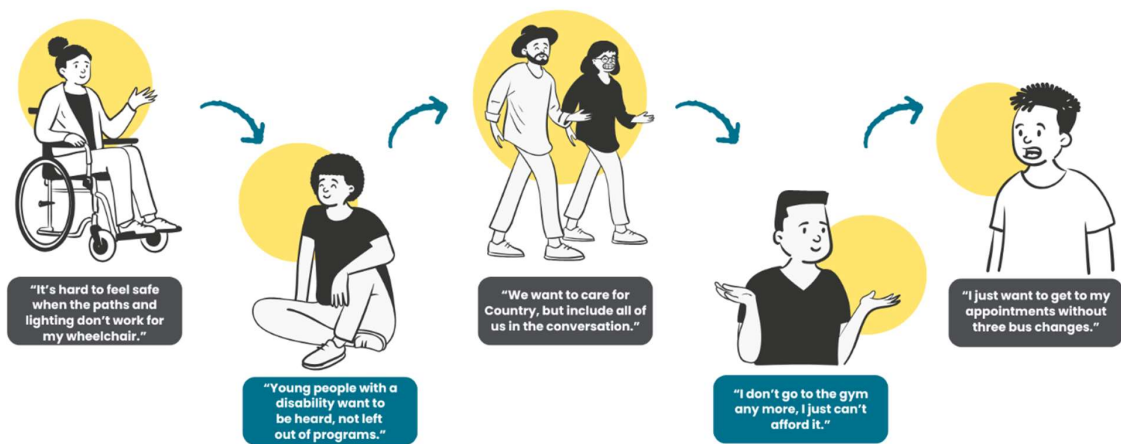
Local people shared great ideas for making Bass Coast healthier, more connected and easier to live in.

Here's what they suggested:

- More free and low-cost outdoor activities like walking groups to stay active and meet others.
- Safe and welcoming community spaces that include everyone, especially people who often feel left out.
- Confidence-building programs like cooking, mental health support and fitness classes to help people feel good.
- Better paths, lighting and access so it's easier and safer to get around especially for people using mobility aids.
- Clear and inclusive signage that helps everyone feel safe and like they belong.
- Easier ways to get help by making sure services talk to each other and know where to refer people.
- One central website or app where people can find local activities, services, parks and events.
- Support for access to healthy food and ways to reduce food waste in the community.

- More places open after hours so people can meet, relax or access support when they need it.
- Increased access to public transport

We analysed the information to uncover shared strengths, needs and challenges across our community. These formed the basis of our draft key themes, which were tested with local service providers, community organisations and government partners. Together, we explored what the data and lived experience were telling us and identified where we could have the greatest collective impact. This helped shape shared priorities and lays the groundwork for stronger collaboration and better health and wellbeing outcomes for Bass Coast.



The New Plan – Healthy, Safe and Resilient Bass Coast 2025-2029

Our new Plan sets a clear and strategic direction for the next four years, building on the foundations of the Healthy Communities Plan 2021–2025.

It reflects what we've heard from community and seen in the data that health and wellbeing are shaped by a complex mix of factors, including culture, income, environment, gender and life stage. Importantly, it doesn't stand alone. This plan works alongside other key Council strategies such as the Council Plan and Disability Action Plan, the Municipal Emergency Management Plan creating a united framework for a healthier, more connected and inclusive Bass Coast.

We recognise that four years is just the first stepping stone towards longer-term change. Meaningful shifts in health outcomes often take 10 to 12 years, or more, to emerge in data. This work lays the groundwork for that long-term impact, with a focus on building strong, lasting foundations for the future.

Taking a life course approach, we acknowledge that people's needs change as they move through different stages of life, from childhood to older age, and that access to the right support at the right time is critical. This approach identifies key milestones and focuses on creating opportunities for people to live well, stay connected and thrive at every stage.

Our key themes are shaped by strong evidence, from local health data and the voices of our communities. People told us clearly, they want greater inclusion, stronger connections, sustainable solutions and fair access to the right supports when they're needed most. These insights are further supported by the Bass Coast Community Profile, a companion document available on Council's website, which provides detailed data on our population, health indicators and social trends.

Within Council, we work collaboratively across teams to strengthen health outcomes. Beyond Council, our success depends on continued partnerships with health providers, community organisations, local businesses and residents who are all committed to building healthier, more connected and resilient communities.

Through bold, practical actions, we aim to create the opportunities for positive health outcomes, safe environments, social connection, access to nutritious food, opportunities to be active, and improved mental wellbeing. Together, we're shaping a Bass Coast where everyone can live well, at every stage of life.

Key Themes

These themes reflect what we heard, what we know, and where we're heading. Each is informed by lived experience, guided by inclusion, and underpinned by equity.



Together, the key themes recognise both the strengths and needs of our community. They reflect our role and acknowledge the barriers people face in achieving positive health outcomes at every stage of life. Whether that's accessing services, feeling safe and connected, or maintaining health and wellbeing, these themes are designed to work together, supporting our vision of a healthy, safe and resilient Bass Coast.

While each has a distinct focus, they all contribute to improving equity, strengthening connection, and creating environments where communities can thrive.

Our success measures are practical and reflect Council's unique role in each area. Not every key theme requires Council to act in the same way, sometimes we enable, sometimes we facilitate or advocate, and in some areas, we deliver services directly.

Across all key themes, we also play an important role as an information provider, identifying local gaps, sharing insights with partners, and ensuring communities needs are clearly understood. This role varies depending on the nature of the challenge and the partnerships already in place. Our monitoring focuses on what Council can influence through our policies, services, partnerships, information sharing and advocacy.

Monitoring our progress

Monitoring how we're progressing is a vital part of bringing this plan to life. Each year, we will assess how our role across the five key themes is making a difference in our

communities. Our annual reports to Council and the communities will highlight progress, share insights, and identify new opportunities to strengthen our impact.

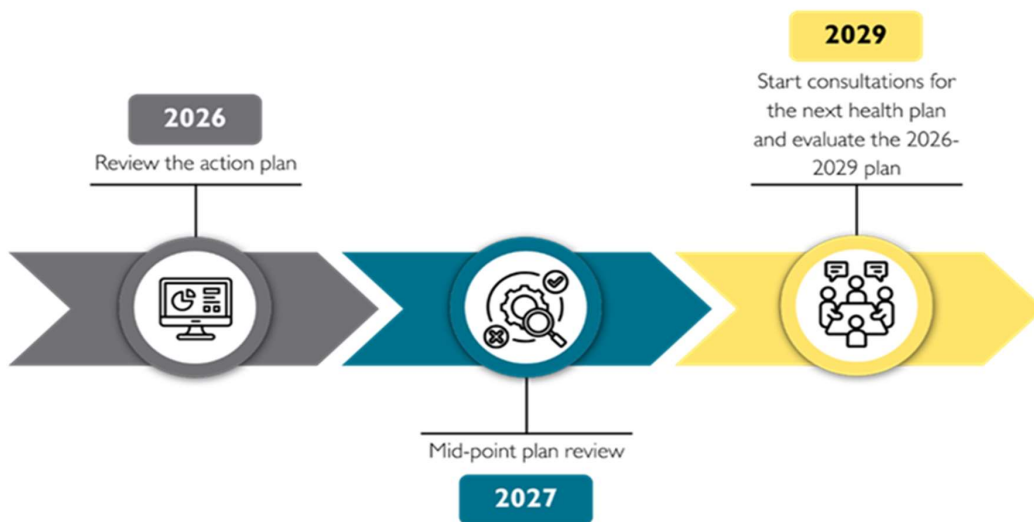
This annual progress reporting also meets our obligations under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* and aligns with Council’s broader Intergrated Planning and Reporting Framework. It ensures accountability, but more importantly, it helps us learn in real time and build on opportunities in an agile environment.

While significant change in population health data can take 10–12 years to emerge, we are focused on identifying and sharing early signs of change that enables us to ensure we are heading in the right direction. These include both data-driven indicators and stories from our communities that reflect real impact.

Success measures will vary across the five key themes and will align with Council’s role in each them, whether that’s enabling, advocating, collaborating, facilitating, regulating or delivering services. We’ll regularly review and update these measures as new data, insights and engagement findings become available.

Ongoing engagement with stakeholders and the community will remain central. Each year, we will update our action plans and local profile to reflect emerging needs and opportunities, ensuring the plan stays evidence-based, responsive, and future-focused.

Evaluating our progress as a Shire



Healthy & Active Living



Helping our community stay physically and mentally well at every stage of their life.

Council contributes to healthy, active living by creating environments and opportunities that make it easier for people to stay active, access nutritious food, and support their mental wellbeing. Through partnerships, programs, infrastructure and advocacy, we help make healthy choices part of everyday life, supporting long-term community wellbeing and reducing preventable health issues.

57% of adults in Bass Coast do not meet physical activity guidelines.

12% of children in their first year of school are not physically on track

13% of adults do no physical activity at all.

38% of residents say walking is their most popular form of physical activity.

How Council Contributes to Success:

Role	What This Looks Like	How We Monitor Change	Year 1 Action
Enabler	Brings together local service providers, partners and government agencies to improve alignment and coordination of programs, reduce duplication, and respond to identified service gaps.	Evidence of shared actions, stronger referral pathways, and streamlined service delivery models developed through stakeholder engagement.	Convene cross-sector stakeholder networks to consolidate existing and planned service delivery, programs and initiatives, and identify shared priority actions to be delivered over the next four years.
Enabler	Evidence of health considerations in Council strategies, capital works, planning schemes and design guidelines.	Embed health outcomes into Council's policies, planning and infrastructure to create environments that support active, healthy living.	Work with internal teams to map where health and wellbeing is currently embedded and explore future opportunities.
Collaborator	Partner with health, sport, and community	Number and diversity of collaborative	Work within our key networks to map

	organisations to co-design programs that improve physical activity and wellbeing outcomes.	projects delivered; participation and satisfaction data from joint initiatives.	existing and potential joint initiatives.
Facilitator	Facilitate access to inclusive programs, community spaces, and local grants that promote physical activity and healthy eating.	Uptake of relevant Council grants; utilisation rates of community spaces; community feedback on access and usability.	Promote access to current inclusive programs and grants supporting healthy living through community channels and partner networks.
Promoter	Raise awareness of healthy lifestyle choices by sharing campaigns, programs, and local opportunities to live well.	Reach and engagement measures across communications channels; community recognition of health campaigns.	Develop and share an annual calendar of aligned health and wellbeing campaigns across Council and partner communications channels.
Advocator	Identifying and prioritising regional recreation facilities and open spaces	Logged; funding secured; delivery of new or improved facilities linked to advocacy efforts.	Support the Advocacy Strategy by identifying priority health infrastructure needs and developing short briefing materials for regional partners or funding bids.

Safe & Inclusive Communities



Creating spaces where everyone feels safe, valued and connected.

Council plays a key role in building communities where people feel safe, welcome and connected. Our approach goes beyond regulation we focus on education, partnerships and inclusive design to strengthen community wellbeing and prevent harm.

We work alongside communities to understand local challenges and co-design practical solutions that build resilience and connection.

27% of young people listed violence, safety, or crime as a top concern.

25% of women with disability have experienced intimate partner violence.

15% of adults in Gippsland report being socially isolated.

863 family violence incidents were reported in Bass Coast in 2023–24.

How Council Contributes to Success:

Role	What This Looks Like	How We Monitor Change	Year 1 Action
Enabler	Embed principles of safety, accessibility and inclusion into Council's policies, public spaces, and service design.	Inclusion and safety objectives integrated into Council strategies, design briefs and project evaluations.	Review current and upcoming strategies, service designs and infrastructure projects and apply Council's Inclusive Design Guidelines to all new and renewed infrastructure projects
Facilitator	Enable access to programs and initiatives that strengthen community resilience, foster belonging and build inclusive communities.	Participation rates, demographic reach, and feedback from participants in resilience and inclusion-focused programs.	Promote participation in the Community Grants Program with a focus on projects that foster inclusion, belonging and resilience.
Collaborator	Work alongside Police, health services,	Number of joint initiatives (e.g. campaigns,	Deliver Respectful Relationships training in

	community organisations and local agencies to prevent family violence and promote respectful relationships.	training, referrals); increased awareness and engagement. Council will report to the Secretary on family violence measures.	partnership with community safety and family violence prevention networks.
Advocator	Champion investment in services, spaces and systems that enhance community safety and connection.	Funding secured; progress on Master Plans and capital projects (e.g. Aquatic Strategy, Rec Reserves, Tracks and Trails); facility usage and satisfaction data.	Advocate for priorities outlined in the Active Bass Coast Plan and related strategies, including Phillip Island Rec Reserve and Aquatic Strategy, through the State and Federal funding channels.
Regulator	Regulates essential public health protections through contracted services, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Health • Food Safety and Regulatory Inspections • Septic System Management 	Monitor performance of contracted services through regulatory compliance data, service request trends, inspection outcomes, and community feedback.	Review performance data from food safety, septic and environmental health services to assess community outcomes beyond compliance.

Equitable Access & Social Infrastructure



Ensuring people can reach the essential services they need – when and where they need them.

Making it easier for everyone to participate in community life regardless of ability, background or circumstance is at the heart of equitable access. Council plays a key role in reducing barriers through inclusive planning, accessible infrastructure, advocacy and partnerships that centre community needs.

This focus is strongly aligned with our Disability Action Plan (DAP), which guides how we embed universal design and equity principles across Council services and projects. Together, the Healthy, Safe and Resilient Bass Coast Plan and the DAP reinforce our shared commitment to creating spaces and systems where all people feel welcome, supported and able to thrive.

Our contribution to access includes a combination of roles enabling inclusive policy and design, collaborating on shared infrastructure projects, regulating public health and access standards, and advocating for improved transport, housing and affordability. These roles are reported through measurable outcomes like increased accessibility in built environments, compliance data, collaborative project delivery, and successful advocacy for better access across the Shire.

26% of residents report having a disability.

72% of people with a disability needing assistance earn under \$650 per week.

21% of people with limited English need daily living assistance.

1,864 people provide unpaid care

How Council Contributes to Success:

Role	What This Looks Like	How We Monitor Change	Year 1 Action
Enabler	Integrate universal design, accessibility, and equity principles into infrastructure, land use planning, and community development.	Increased integration of access and equity considerations in capital works, planning schemes, and infrastructure guidelines.	Apply Council's Inclusive Design Guidelines and Universal Design principles to all new or renewed infrastructure and planning projects
Advocator	Champion policy and funding reforms that	Record advocacy submissions, funding outcomes,	Contribute to state and regional advocacy

	support equitable access to transport, housing, digital connectivity and essential services.	and policy wins linked to improved access and affordability.	priorities by documenting key infrastructure and service equity gaps for inclusion in funding bids and reform campaigns.
Collaborator	Partner with government, developers and service providers to improve physical and digital access across the Shire.	Record co-delivered infrastructure and access initiatives; monitor service availability, uptake, and user satisfaction.	Engage with infrastructure and service partners to identify joint opportunities to improve physical and digital access, particularly in growth areas.
Promoter	Foster inclusive and future-ready workplaces that reflect community values and build pride of place.	Staff engagement survey results; progress on workforce inclusion and pride initiatives.	Deliver pilot workforce initiatives that enhance inclusion and celebrate local identity.

Thriving Children & Young People



Supporting children and young people to grow, belong and lead.

Creating opportunities for children and young people to grow, belong and lead.

Council contributes by embedding the needs of children and young people in planning, fostering partnerships and supporting services that enable strong foundations for health, learning, connection and wellbeing.

31% of young adults aged 20–24 did not complete Year 12.

16% of young people (15–24) are not in education, training or work.

38% of young people say mental health is their biggest barrier to achieving goals.

42% of youth aged 18–29 have never done work experience.

How Council Contributes to Success:

Role	What This Looks Like	How We Monitor Change	Year 1 Action
Service Provider	<p>Delivers key services for children and young people through contracted services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maternal Child Health • Youth Services • Early years <p>Preschool Field Officer</p> <p>Delivers core preventative health services directly to the community, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childhood and school-based immunisations • Community immunisation sessions <p>Central Registration</p>	<p>Monitor performance of contracted services through KPIs, reporting, and participation data. Evaluate engagement and outcomes of programs and services.</p>	<p>Continue delivering core preventative health and youth services, and complete annual contract reviews for Maternal Child Health, Youth Services, and CRES to assess reach, access, and alignment with community need.</p>

	Enrolment Scheme (CRES)		
Facilitator	Strengthen connections across the service system by bringing partners together to increase access to learning, wellbeing and connection opportunities for children and young people.	Co-delivered initiatives, participation data, service network engagement feedback, program outcomes.	Convene a cross-sector service roundtable focused on early years and youth to explore shared priorities and opportunities over the next 4 years. Collaboration via the Early years and YSP networks
Collaborator	Work closely with kindergartens, schools, health services and youth organisations to support shared goals for the wellbeing of children and young people.	Number of co-designed initiatives, service referrals and increased access points.	Engage with local education and health partners to scope opportunities for joint programs or referral pathways that strengthen local support for young people and families.
Advocator	Champion investment in youth-focused services, transport and infrastructure that support development and participation.	Record advocacy actions and outcomes (increased services, new facilities).	Capture and consolidate youth-raised transport, infrastructure and access priorities into briefing material to inform strategic advocacy efforts over the next 4 years

Country, Connection & Climate



Caring for our land, culture and our future together.

Strengthening connection to Country, protecting our environment, and building resilience for a sustainable future.

Council contributes by embedding sustainability, resilience and cultural connection in planning and action. We walk alongside Traditional Owners and partners to create sustainable, climate-ready communities connected to place and culture.

36°C. Mortality risk increases significantly during heat waves.

136 people were estimated to be homeless in Bass Coast in 2021.

1.1% of Bass Coast's population identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

How Council Contributes to Success:

Role	What This Looks Like	How We Monitor Change	Year 1 Action
Enabler	Embed climate resilience, sustainability, and cultural knowledge into Council policies, infrastructure, and everyday operations.	Record the integration of climate and cultural priorities across Council strategies, major projects, and planning documents.	Incorporate climate resilience measures and tree canopy targets from the Climate Change Action Plan and Urban Forest Strategy into the scoping or design phase of at least three new infrastructure or policy projects in Year 1.
Facilitator	Coordinate local programs and partnerships that strengthen environmental sustainability and support climate adaptation in our communities.	Record participation levels, reach, and outcomes of sustainability programs, partnerships and initiatives.	Deliver environmental education and community engagement activities aligned to the Climate Change Action Plan, with a focus on household

			sustainability and climate preparedness.
Collaborator	Walk alongside Traditional Owners and environmental partners to care for Country and deepen connection to place.	Increased partnership activities, co-designed initiatives, and cultural knowledge-sharing through collective impact and engagement reporting.	Support the preparation and advocacy for implementation of the Bass Coast Statement of Planning Policy (SPP)
Advocator	Advocate for policy change, investment and action that supports environmental health, climate resilience, and cultural protection.	Record advocacy efforts, funding secured, and initiatives influenced or delivered in partnership with Traditional Owners and environmental organisations.	Advocate for investment in climate and Country outcomes through state and federal policy channels.
Facilitator	Partner with Police, emergency services and community organisations to build community resilience during emergencies.	Community feedback post-emergency; number of joint preparedness and support activities; incident response reviews.	Continue providing emergency support services and strengthen cross-agency coordination for community resilience.
Promoter	Raise awareness of safe travel and local safety campaigns in partnership with TAC and visitor networks.	Visitor campaign reach and engagement; behavioural insights; incident reports.	Promote safe travel initiatives including “Stop, Revive, Survive” coffee stations and seasonal safety messaging.

Putting Our Key Themes into Action

Our 4-year plan takes a staged and strategic approach to improving communities' health and resilience outcomes. We know that lasting change happens over time not through one-off programs, but through deep listening, practical action, and strong partnerships that build capacity and connection.

We will bring this plan to life through a continuous cycle of listening, co-design, action and evaluation, building each year on what matters most to our communities. Our implementation approach is grounded in ongoing engagement, not just at a single point in time but throughout the life of the plan. This ensures our actions are shaped by lived experience, shared expertise and practical insights from the people who live, work and play in Bass Coast.



How we will deliver the plan over four years

Year 1 –Explore and Set Key Actions

We will deepen our understanding of local needs, building on what we already know and listening closely to what's changing.

This includes:

- Reviewing existing work aligned to each key theme
- Continuing delivery of core Council services and programs
- Identifying what matters most through engagement and data
- Mapping and planning collaborative projects with key partners
- Transitioning relevant Council-led initiatives to community leadership (where appropriate) to build program sustainability.

Year 2 – Consolidate Key Actions and Co-Design Solutions

With shared priorities identified, we'll move into co-design and early implementation.

This includes:

- Collaborating with partners and community members to design inclusive, locally relevant projects
- Co-designing and early implementation of value-added initiatives across key themes
- Continuing delivery of core Council services and programs

Year 3 – Deliver and Consolidate

Year 3 is focused on delivery and building momentum.

This includes:

- Rolling out key projects and programs
- Strengthening partnerships and refining approaches
- Embedding inclusive design and accessibility principles across initiatives
- Beginning to evaluate impact to inform future work

Year 4 – Reflect and Build for the Future

In the final year of the plan, we will reflect on what's worked, what we've learned, and look ahead.

This includes:

- Consolidating successful projects
- Capturing good practice and creating 'blueprints' for the next planning cycle
- Engaging community in reviewing outcomes and setting new directions

Throughout all four years, we will continue delivering core Council services across each of the key themes. Our commitment is to ensure business-as-usual continues while also driving innovation and long-term change.

In line with the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic), this Plan will undergo a formal review at the end of its four-year cycle. We will provide annual updates to Council, the communities and partners on how this plan is making a difference by sharing progress, learnings, and where we're heading next.

Implementation Risks and Mitigation

While this Plan sets out an ambitious and long-term vision, we acknowledge there are key risks that could impact delivery.

These include:

- Workforce limitations across Council, health services, and community organisations
- Funding constraints that may affect the scale and pace of delivery
- Digital inequity, limiting access to services and engagement opportunities
- Structural and systemic barriers, including service fragmentation and policy misalignment
- Limited access to timely data, which may impact evidence-based decision making

To mitigate these risks, we will embed agile project design, monitor delivery through annual evaluations, strengthen partnerships to share capability, and prioritise annual actions that improve equity and long-term system resilience.

Focusing on the Future

This Plan sets a clear direction for the next four years and lays the groundwork for longer-term change. It builds on the Healthy Communities Plan 2021–2025 and strengthens our commitment to equity, inclusion and place-based action across Bass Coast.

Looking ahead, we recognise the growing role of digital health, data and technology in shaping how people access services, engage with their community and stay well. Embracing innovation through tools like telehealth, digital engagement platforms and AI-informed service planning will help future-proof our work and ensure we remain responsive to emerging needs.

At its core, this plan is about creating the conditions for people to thrive at every life stage. It brings together lived experience, local knowledge and strong partnerships to drive action across five interconnected key themes: Healthy and Active Living, Safe and Inclusive Communities, Equitable Access and Social Infrastructure, Thriving Children and Young People, and Country, Connection and Climate.

But this is just the beginning.

How We'll Keep the Plan Alive

Implementation will follow a deliberate, staged approach guided by best practice:

- 1. Engage stakeholders**
Bringing together partners, services and communities
- 2. Communicate the scope**
Clarifying the focus and shared vision
- 3. Use our evaluation framework**
Anchoring our approach in what matters
- 4. Collect and share the data**
Monitoring change and surfacing insights
- 5. Analyse, consult, and establish outcomes**
Turning evidence into direction
- 6. Share findings and determine next steps**
Reflecting, reporting and adapting

Alongside this cycle, we will deliver on our annual action plans, monitor impact, and report annually to Council, partners and communities. These annual impact reports will highlight what's working, what's evolving, and how we can adapt our collective efforts to deliver stronger positive health outcomes.

The future of Bass Coast is being shaped now. Through this Plan, we're committing to roles that will make our communities stronger, healthier and more connected not just today, but for generations to come. It's not about doing more; it's about doing better together.

With courage, partnership and care, we are building a Bass Coast where everyone belongs and can thrive.

References and supporting documents

- Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023–2027
- Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008
- Bass Coast Council Plan (pending)
- Circular Economy Framework
- Climate Change Action Plan
- Disability Action Plan 2025 - 2029
- Gippsland PHN Priorities 2025–2028
- Australian Government. (2021). *Australian Early Development Census National Report 2021*. Australian Government Department of Education. <https://www.aedc.gov.au/resources/detail/2021-aedc-national-report>
- Active Bass Coast

For a full list of contributing plans and documents, please refer to the online version of this Plan.



Disability Action Plan 2025 – 2029
Year One Actions (2026)
DRAFT

The below **Year One Actions** for the **Disability Action Plan 2025 – 2029 (DAP)** provide a more detailed explanation of the high-level strategic priorities listed in the DAP. Below, we address the deliverables for each of the actions. For **Easy Read** and summary, please see the shaded blue table below.

Healthy and Active Living

Action #	Action Description	Deliverable
1. Embed co-design processes in internal operations	1.1 Embedding co-design into Council policies, strategies and planning to increase participation in public spaces and services	Embed a process or internal departments to consult with the Access and Inclusion Committee on relevant initiatives with a focus on improving access to public spaces and services for people with disability
2. Increase access to localised data	2.1 Collaborate to gather data to inform programs, projects and services to improve health outcomes for people living with disability and their Carers	Collaborate with service providers to develop a comprehensive survey, aimed at understanding how residents engage with our towns and public spaces. The findings will guide and strengthen future decision-making
	2.2 Collaborate to identify gaps and opportunities in the way resources are shared, and services are promoted across the Shire	Coordinate a centralised platform for service providers and community organisations to promote their programs and services, enhancing community awareness and access
3. Support the Recognition of Carers	1.1 Partner with local Carers Support Programs	Deliver an annual event to celebrate and recognise Carers in our community

Safe and Inclusive Communities

Action #	Action Description	Deliverable
1. Embed advocacy and partnership initiatives	1.1 Collaborate with community organisations to better resources for Renters living with a disability	Support to develop a Renters rights resource kit for people living with a disability and their Carers

	1.2 Collaborate with Surf Life Saving Clubs (SLSC) to continue building on initiatives that improve beach accessibility	Maintain a partnership with local SLSC to co-develop and implement accessibility initiatives and support these clubs by identifying grant opportunities to enable larger-scale improvements
	1.3 Collaborate with Economic Development Team to support businesses in improving their accessibility	Provide resource materials to enable Economic Development Team to effectively support local businesses in improving accessibility and support opportunities for community education
	1.4 Collaborate with Emergency Management Team to support capacity building of people with disabilities and Carers	Embed disability and Carer inclusion into emergency planning across Council operations

Equitable and Social Infrastructure

Action #	Action Description	Deliverable
1. Promote accessible space, services and activities across Bass Coast	1.1 Collaborate with local sports clubs and community organisations to identify weekly activities and collect data on usability to inform inclusive participation	Promote sports clubs and community organisations that lead activities and programs for people with a disability outside of mainstream hours (9-3pm)
	1.2 Collaborate with Future Places Team to Support the improvement of accessibility in public spaces and places	Analyse disability related - data from isolated townships to identify priority areas for accessibility upgrades to inform planning and decision-making

Thriving Children and Young People

Action #	Action Description	Deliverable
1. Advocate and promote Youth lead programs and initiatives	1.1 Recognise the Intersectionality between LGBTQIA+ and Young People living with disability	Support programs that are co-designed by LGBTQIA+ Young People

Country, Connection and Climate

Action #	Action Description	Deliverable
1. Co-design with First Nations persons	1.1 Strengthen recognition of the connection to Country in disability-inclusive programs, services, and environments	Support to deliver cultural awareness/training sessions with local Traditional Owners focused on understanding the intersection between disability, culture, and Country

Easy Read and Summary below:

Staying Healthy:

- Listen to People with Disability When We Plan
- Use Local Data to Make Better Decisions
- Celebrate Carers in Our Community

Staying Safe:

- Help Renters with Disability
- Make Beaches More Accessible
- Support Local Businesses to Be More Inclusive
- Plan for Emergencies with Everyone in Mind

Spaces and Places:

- Improve Accessibility in Public Spaces

Young People:

- Support Youth-Led Programs

Our Country

- Include First Nations voices



Disability Action Plan 2025 – 2029

Bass Coast Plan

DRAFT

Bass Coast Community Vision 2041

From its flowing hills to its wild unspoiled coastlines, the Bass Coast is a source of celebration for all who live in and visit the region. Our townships are vibrant, rich with culture and full of life, each with its own distinct character. Drawing on our creativity, innovation and resilience we've created a thriving and diverse economy that supports sustainable agriculture and industry. We live proudly on Bunurong Country and build on learnings from our First Peoples and their knowledge. We coexist in harmony with our environment and are prepared for future challenges and changes. We are the people of the Bass Coast. Experience our cultures and history and contribute to our story.

Acknowledgement of Country

Bass Coast Shire Council acknowledges the Bunurong as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands and waters, and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and Lore. Bass Coast Shire Council celebrates the opportunity to embrace and empower the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island Communities in their diversity. Bass Coast Shire Council will create opportunities for future recognition and respectful partnerships that will honour the Traditional Owners and Custodians, and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Diversity and inclusion

Bass Coast Shire Council is committed to providing communications and engagement that is welcoming, safe, accessible and inclusive for our community including First Nations, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD), Lesbian, Gay Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and Asexual (LGBTQIA+) peoples, people with disability and of all ages.

Gender Impact Statement

In accordance with the Gender Equality Act 2020, a Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) has been undertaken when developing the Healthy, Safe and Resilient Bass Coast Plan 2025 – 2029 and the Disability Action Plan 2025 – 2029.

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Definitions – Easy Read

Access/Accessibility	How easy is it for someone to use or get to something
Advocator	A person who speaks up or acts to support or protect the rights of others
Barriers	Things that make it hard for someone to take part, move around, or access something
Community engagement	Working together with people in a local area to listen, share ideas, and make decisions together
Council	A team from local government that works to improve the community
Collaborate	A person or group you work with to achieve a goal together
Co-design	Working together with people (especially those with lived experience) to create or improve something, from the start
Discrimination	Unfair treatment of someone because of their disability, race, gender, age, or other differences
DDA Compliance	Following the rules in the <i>Disability Discrimination Act</i> (DDA), which make sure people living with disabilities are treated fairly
Diversity	Having many kinds of people in a group – with different backgrounds, cultures, identities, or abilities
Employment	Having a job or work that earns money
Enable	To help make something happen more easily – like a meeting, program, or activity
Inclusion	Making sure everyone can join in and be part of things, regardless of their background or abilities
Intersectionality	Understanding how different parts of a person’s identity (like disability, race, gender) combine to affect their experiences
Lived experience	Personal knowledge or understanding that comes from going through something yourself
LGBTQIA+	People with diverse sexualities and gender identities: including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and others
Promoter	To share and spread helpful information, or to encourage people to learn about something
Regulator	To set and check rules to make sure things are safe, fair, or working properly

Sensory friendly	Environments that are calm and comfortable for people who are sensitive to noise, lights, smells, or touch
Service provider	A person or group that gives support or services, like health care, education, or transport
The missing middle	People who don't need full-time support but still need some help – and often don't get enough services
Universal design	Design buildings, products, or services so that they work for everyone

Thank you

During the engagement period, the Bass Coast Shire Council Connected Communities team engaged with over 400 people, including children and people living with disabilities, to determine the key themes that would inform the Healthy, Safe and Resilient Bass Coast Plan 2025 – 2029 and the Disability Action Plan 2025 – 2029. We would like to thank the Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee, the Bass Coast Service Providers and the wider community for their feedback and input into the development of this Draft Disability Action Plan 2025 - 2029. We look forward to continuing to work together to make Bass Coast accessible and inclusive for everyone in our community.

Executive Summary

The Disability Action Plan 2025 - 2029 (DAP) outlines Bass Coast Shire Council's commitment to creating an inclusive, accessible, and equitable community for people living with disability. Shaped through engagement with over 400 community members, including carers, families, young people, and service providers, the DAP places lived experience at the centre of planning and action.

Aligned with the Council Plan 2025–2029 and the Healthy, Safe and Resilient Bass Coast Plan 2025–2029, the DAP supports a whole-of-Council approach to inclusion across services, programs, and infrastructure. It focuses on improving access to health and wellbeing services, ensuring welcoming public spaces, and fostering inclusive participation and community connection. The DAP also emphasises intersectionality and includes climate resilience to ensure people with disability are considered in emergency and environmental planning.

Council will act as an enabler, collaborator, advocate, and promoter to reduce barriers and support a community where all people can thrive. Progress will be tracked through annual action plans and reporting, with ongoing opportunities for community feedback and review.

This Draft DAP will be published alongside the **Year One Actions for 2026**. We recognise the importance of being flexible and responsive to funding and community needs, so a new action summary will be released each year to reflect current priorities and opportunities.

Our integrated planning and reporting framework

Bass Coast Shire Council takes an integrated approach to strategic planning, one that connects community needs, long-term priorities and service delivery across all levels of the organisation. At the centre of this approach is the Bass Coast Shire Council Plan 2025 – 2029 (Council Plan), which sets the overarching direction and guides how resources are allocated, how advocacy is prioritised, and how outcomes are delivered through a network of aligned strategies.

This includes:

- The Healthy, Safe and Resilient Bass Coast Plan 2025 – 2029 (Healthy, Safe and Resilient Plan), which delivers on Council’s legislative obligations and local priorities for community health and wellbeing.
- The Disability Action Plan 2025 – 2029 (DAP), which drives equity, access and inclusion across Council’s policies, services and built environment.
- A suite of supporting documents, including the Long-Term Financial Plan, Asset Plan, and Climate Change Action Plan 2020 - 2030 which provide the tools and frameworks to implement and resource Council’s strategic intent.

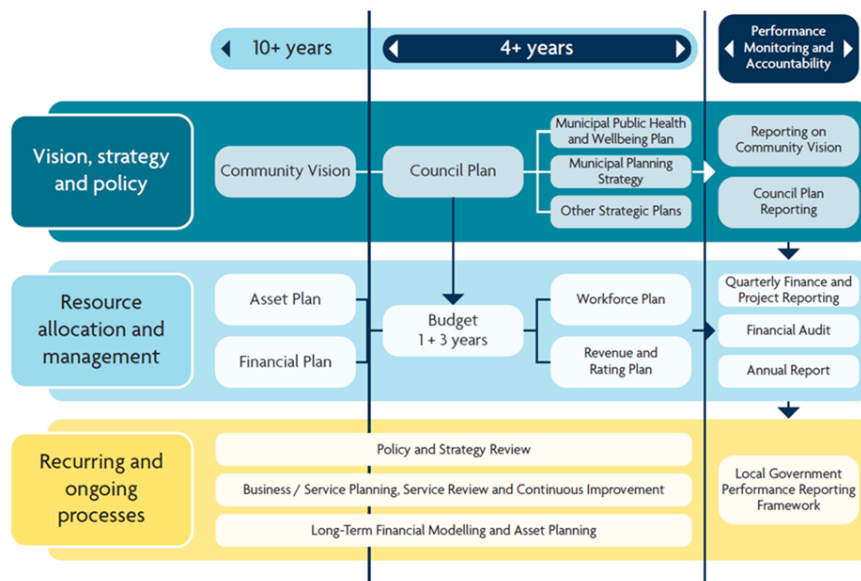
These plans are not developed in isolation. They are connected through shared objectives, co-designed monitoring and evaluation tools, and a unified delivery framework that ensures collective impact. Each plan aligns directly to one or more priorities within the Council Plan, enabling a whole-of-Council approach that is focused, measurable and community-driven.

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 2006, each Victorian Local Council will prepare a four-year Disability Action Plan within 12 months of Council elections. The DAP is a strategic partner to both the Healthy, Safe and Resilient Plan and the Council Plan. Together, these plans form a unified framework that guides Council’s efforts to build a more inclusive, equitable, and thriving community.

Councils’ responsibilities are:

- Ensuring access to public spaces and services
- Prevent both direct and indirect discrimination
- Provide reasonable adjustment to support Carers, assistance animals and disability aids

Bass Coast Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework



Bass Coast Shire Council works with community to make plans to help everyone

The Main Plan – Council Plan

The Council Plan is the big plan. It shows:

- What is most important
- Where money goes
- What Council will work on

Council also has other plans to support the big plan:

Healthy, Safe and Resilient Bass Coast Plan

- Helps people stay well and safe

Disability Action Plan (DAP)

- Helps make things fair for people with disability

Other Support Plans

- Plans for money, buildings and the environment

How to read the Disability Action Plan

The DAP has been developed for people living with disability, their families, friends, support providers and carers.

Using Universal Design principles, this Plan is designed to be easy to read, navigate and understand for everyone. It outlines key facts, emerging trends and clear goals to improve the experiences of people living with disability in our communities.

We encourage individuals, families, carers and service providers to download or print the DAP and share it within their networks.

To support accessibility, **Easy Read** sections are embedded throughout. These are shown in the shaded light blue sections throughout the DAP. They provide helpful summaries and ensure that everyone can engage with the DAP.

Have a question or suggestion for how we can improve accessibility in the Bass Coast?

Get in touch via the contact information found in the Easy Read section here.

This document is designed to be readable by all people

These sections throughout the Plan are in Easy Read

Where there is no shaded text, refer to pictures and icons.

We have met with a large sample of the community to get these findings

We thank all the communities for their feedback and contributions to this Plan.

We want you to be part of this plan. You can:

- Download or print the Plan
- Write or draw your ideas on the pages at the back
- Talk to us about your ideas to make things better

Contact us here:

(03) 5671 2211

basscoast@basscoast.vic.gov.au

Speak to Listen users:

Call 1300 555 727 then ask for 1300 226 278

National Feedback Service:

Follow the prompts on the Bass Coast Shire Website

Introduction

Bass Coast Shire Council’s Access and Inclusion Plan 2021 – 2025 built a strong base for inclusion through collaboration and community partnerships. It identified key themes in accessibility, inclusion, equity, and participation, that reflected the needs and aspirations of our communities.

The Disability Action Plan 2025 – 2029 builds on this progress. It outlines how we will continue working to make Bass Coast more accessible, inclusive, and fair for people living with disability. The DAP will guide decision-making and prioritise roles that reduce barriers, through clear policy direction and a strong sense of purpose.

Council aims to foster connection and equity ensuring people living with disability have real choice and the opportunity to participate in community life.

Focusing on the Future

Year 1:

Reinforce partnerships

We will deepen our understanding of local needs, building on what we already know and listen closely to what’s changing from collaborating networks.

This includes:

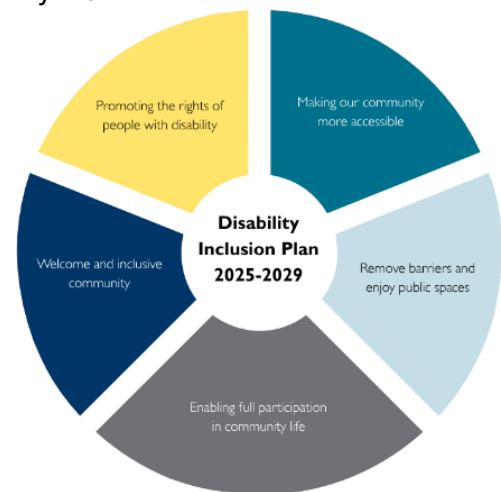
- Completing the final year of the existing Access and Inclusion Plan 2021 - 2025
- Continuing delivery of core Council services and programs
- Mapping and planning collaborative projects with key partners
- Identifying what matters most through up-to-date data and engagement

Year 2:

Align key actions and co-design solutions

With shared priorities identified, we’ll move into co-design and early implementation.

This includes:



- Collaborate with partners and community members to design inclusive, locally relevant projects
- Start strong with co-designed initiatives guided by intersectional thinking
- Continuing delivery of core Council services and programs

Year 3:

Deliver and Consolidate

Year 3 is focused on delivery and building momentum.

This includes:

- Rolling out key projects and programs
- Embedding Universal Design and accessibility principles across initiatives
- Beginning to evaluate impact to inform future work

Year 4:

Reflect and Plan for 2029 - 20

In the final year of the plan, we will reflect on what's worked, what we've learned, and look ahead.

This includes:

- Reviewing projects, embrace lessons, and celebrate success with partners
- Capturing good practice and creating blueprints for the next planning cycle
- Engaging community in reviewing outcomes and setting new directions

Throughout all four years, we will continue delivering core Council services across each of the key themes listed below.

Our commitment is to ensure business-as-usual continues while also driving innovation and long-term change.

Valuing diversity and inclusion

People's lives are enriched by a wide range of experiences, identities, and backgrounds including gender identity, age, and culture. This diversity is one of Bass Coast's greatest strengths, we proudly celebrate the unique contributions, stories, and perspectives of everyone who lives, works, plays and visits our community. It is this intersectionality, that prompts us to embed a holistic, person-centred approach when planning.

Disability is a natural part of human diversity. It can influence how someone moves, communicates, thinks, or interacts with others. When we acknowledge this diversity, we help build healthier, and more connected communities.

Recognising the connections between disability, mental health, neurodiversity, and LGBTQIA+ identities is key to fostering meaningful inclusion. By actively listening to people with lived experience, we can co-design actions that are inclusive, responsive, and reflective of the rich diversity across Bass Coast.

To support people with disability, as our community grows and changes, Council will:

- **Listen to, and work alongside, people living with disability** recognising the many different identities and life experiences people bring
- **Plan with diversity in mind** ensuring our services, spaces, programs and information are accessible to everyone
- **Use a person-centred approach** in our decision making, putting fairness, dignity and equity at the centre
- **Improve how we collect and use community feedback** so our planning better reflects the real needs and strengths of all people in Bass Coast
- **Partner with groups and organisations** that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, LGBTQIA+ communities, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities, older people, young people and others who may experience additional barriers



The DAP helps make our community more fair, inclusive, and welcoming for people with disability, so everyone can take part and feel supported

Council will:

- Listen to you
- Plan with you
- Make fair and respectful decisions
- Work with groups that support people who may face extra challenges
- Ask you for your feedback
- Report back to you with outcomes

What makes you feel welcome and a part of the Bass Coast community?

Our legislative responsibility

In Australia

Australia's *Disability Strategy 2021 – 2031 (ADS)* is a framework that guides all Australian governments. It sets out a plan for continuing to improve the lives of people with disability in Australia over 10 years

In Victoria

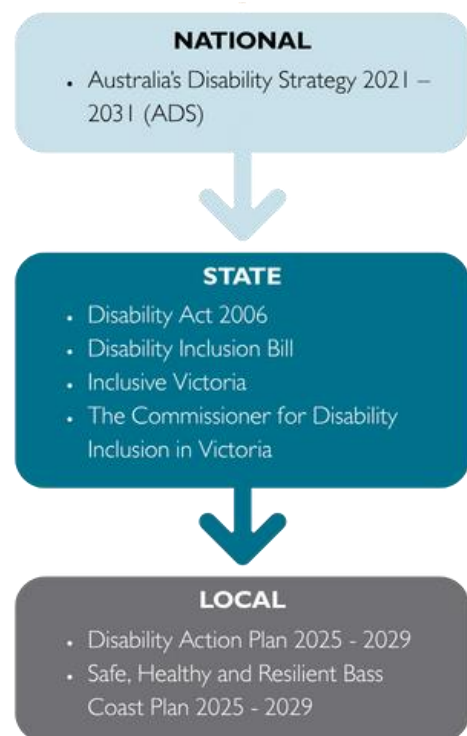
The **Disability Act 2006** sets out what councils and other public organisations need to do to make sure people with disability can fully take part in community life. Actions to enable full participation include:

- Making it easier for people with disability to access spaces and facilities
- Create fair opportunities for employment
- Support being active in community life
- Changing attitudes and practices that can discriminate against a person with disability

The law recognises that disability includes physical and sensory disabilities, learning difficulties, mental health conditions and more. Supporting inclusion in Victoria the **Disability Inclusion Bill** acts to make sure that there is better coordination accountability across government. We are also guided by the **Inclusive Victoria plan** which sets out a vision for a fairer Victoria.

The DAP promotes big picture reforms with a focus on:

- Building inclusive communities
- Improving health, wellbeing and housing
- Creating fairness and safety for all
- Providing opportunities for people with disability to lead and be recognised.



In Bass Coast

Advocating for practices that make people feel safe, confident and included is a vital role for local government. We have a direct connection to people living in the community and we can shape the places where people live, work, play and connect. As part of the regulatory and legislative framework we work to include everyone by:

- Reducing barriers
- Designing service, programs and spaces that include everyone
- Listen and partner with people in the community living with disability
- Create a community where people feel safe, valued and connected.

This framework ensures people with disability have a say in planning and decision making.

Our Role

We play a role in supporting inclusion by developing a plan that positions us as:

Enabler: We bring people together to identify and resolve challenges, spark ideas and lead actions that make our community more inclusive and welcoming

Collaborator: We work with people with lived experience, community groups, services and businesses to create solutions that improve access and inclusion

Advocator: We speak up for the needs and rights of people living with disability, making sure their voices are heard

Regulator: We help make local spaces, services and events are safe and accessible so that everyone can be a part of community life

Promoter: We share information, raise awareness and encourage community participation to improve knowledge, engagement and positive health outcomes

Service Provider: We deliver services and programs for everyone that celebrate and promote wellbeing, connection and being part of our community



Local councils help make the community safe, welcoming, and fair for everyone.

As part of our role, we work to include people with disability by:

- **Removing barriers** that make life harder
- **Designing services, programs, and spaces** that work for everyone
- **Listening to people living with disability and working together**
- **Creating a community** where everyone feels **safe, valued, and included**

We want people living with disability to **have a say in planning and decisions** about our community.

Look at the above roles, how can Bass Coast Council support you?

How do we ensure people with a Disability have a say locally?

Bass Coast Shire Council Access and Inclusion Committee

The Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee (the Committee) plays a vital role in ensuring our Council remains responsive, inclusive, and equitable for all members in our communities. By providing informed advice, lived experience, and a diverse range of perspectives, the Committee helps guide policies and initiatives that break down barriers to participation and foster a more accessible and welcoming environment.

Some projects that the Committee has consulted in 2024-2025 are listed below:

- Collaborated with as key stakeholders during the Accessible Beaches Audit
- Advocated for improved footpaths and accessible parking
- Contributed to road safety advocacy and consultation.
- Provided accessibility advice to support the improvement of parks and community spaces

The **Access and Inclusion Committee** helps the Council include everyone in the community.

The Committee gives advice to help the Council make better choices and plans.

They talk about how to:

- Make things fair
- Include more people
- Remove barriers that make it hard for people to join in

The Committee worked on many projects, such as:

- Beach access
- Better footpaths and parking
- Safer roads
- Better parks and community spaces

Understanding Disability in Bass Coast

People living with disability contribute valuable knowledge, insights, and experiences to our communities. However, they can encounter barriers caused by attitudes, design, or limited access to services and supports.

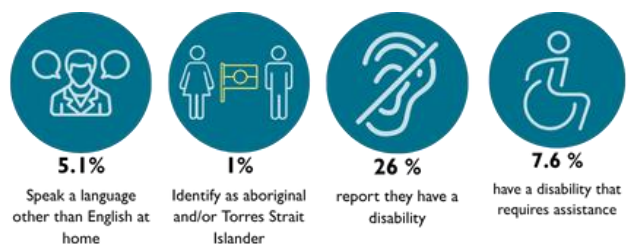
As our population grows and changes, alongside rising living costs, climate challenges, and an ageing demographic, it's increasingly important to ensure our places, services, and systems are accessible and adaptable for all.

While population data helps us understand broader trends, it doesn't always capture the full picture. Many people living with disability are underrepresented in the data, and access to current, detailed information can be limited. That's why listening to people with local, lived experience is essential to shaping inclusive policies, services, and spaces that reflect real community needs.



Living with different abilities

Disability looks different for everyone. It can affect how people move, think, feel, communicate, or take part in community life. This includes areas such as work, study, recreation, and caring for themselves or others. Disability can also impact social roles, such as being a parent, friend, employee, volunteer, or community member. These roles may be harder to take on or maintain if environments, attitudes, or systems are not inclusive or accessible.



Understanding disability in Bass Coast:

- 26% of people report having a disability
- 7.6% of people live with a disability that requires assistance
- 7.1% of people in Bass Coast need support with everyday tasks

Understanding disability in Gippsland

- 50% of people aged 65+ live with disability
- 7.8% of people living with severe or profound disability

Understanding other demographic data in Bass Coast

- 1.1% of people in Bass Coast say they are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- 29.6% of people in Bass Coast are aged 65 or older
- The average income in Bass Coast is lower than in the rest of Victoria and Australia

In regional Victoria:

- 6.9% of people in regional Victoria need support with everyday tasks
- 15% of adults and 23% of children live below the poverty line
- Many people face extra challenges because they live long distances from services. This can result in people experiencing more serious disadvantage

In Australia:

- 77% of people with a disability have a physical disability
- 23% of people with a disability have a mental health or behavioural disability
- Other common disabilities include blindness, hearing loss, deafness and autism
- Nearly 1 in 4 people aged 80-84 need help with daily activities
- 32% of people with disability feel high or very high levels of stress or distress. Only **8% of people without disability** feel the same.

Barriers faced by people with a disability in Bass Coast

People living with disability in Bass Coast have told us about the things that make it harder for them to live healthy, active and connected lives. These barriers exist in many parts of daily life from getting around, finding work, staying healthy, and accessing safe and inclusive spaces.

These issues matter because they prevent people from fully participating in our communities. Working towards removing these barriers will help create a Bass Coast where everyone belongs.

Health and Wellbeing

People shared that it is not always easy to stay healthy and well in Bass Coast.

Some of the key barriers include:

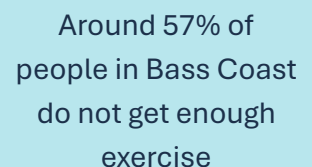
- Long wait times to access health specialists, especially for mental health and paediatric services
- The cost of health care can make it harder to get support when needed
- A lack of accessible activities that support physical and mental wellbeing

Access to Spaces and Places

Being able to move freely and safely around our community is essential.

People told us:

- Some parks, beaches and other public spaces are not accessible for people with mobility devices
- Footpaths and roads are not always safe or easy to use
- Poor lighting and unsafe pathways make people feel less safe.



Around 57% of people in Bass Coast do not get enough exercise

Housing, Work and Volunteering

People with disability face challenges when trying to:

- Find housing that is affordable, accessible and close to services
- Secure jobs and volunteering opportunities that are inclusive and flexible
- Engage with workplaces and activities that understand and support their needs

Transport and Getting Around

Access to transport was a common concern.

People told us:

- Public transport timetables don't meet people's needs

- Infrequent or inaccessible transport makes it harder to get to shops, work, health care and activities
- Getting around safely with mobility aids is often difficult

Inclusion and Community Connection

People want to feel welcome, included and connected to others.

However:

- Some activities and community places are not designed with disability in mind
- Everyday activities, like visiting a café, can be difficult if the space isn't accessible
- Neurodivergent people experience misunderstanding and a lack of local support
- Families, friends and carers need more support, especially while waiting for assessments or services

These barriers limit people's independence, wellbeing and connection to community life. The stories shared by our communities help us understand what needs to change so we can build a more connected Bass Coast. Using data and information from diverse communities can assist Council in determining what role is required to improve supports to areas of Bass Coast that have more people living with disability.

People with disability in **Bass Coast** have told us about what makes life harder for them.

These are called **barriers**.

Barriers can make it harder to:

- Stay healthy
- Get around
- Find work or a place to live
- Feel safe and included

When people face barriers, they may not be able to:

- Take part in everyday life
- Be active in their community
- Feel connected and supported

What our communities told us

To help shape this Plan, we spoke directly with people living with disability and their family members. Through Engage Bass Coast, we invited the broader community to share their personal experiences of health and wellbeing in the region. People attended targeted sessions and pop-up events, while others contributed through focus groups.

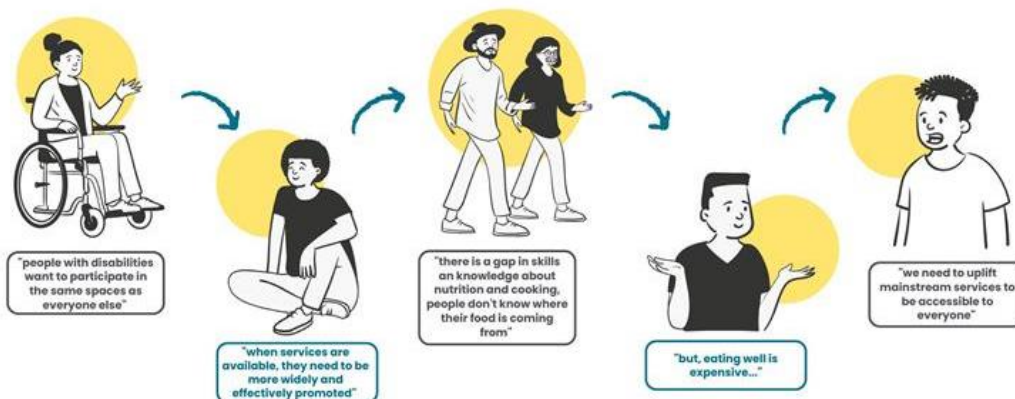
These conversations gave valuable insight into how living in Bass Coast impacts the health and wellbeing of people living with disability and people supporting a disability in the home and workplace.

We were guided by the insights shared by:

- LGBTQIA+ youth (16–25) focus group
- Disability Service Providers focus group
- Families and carers with disabilities engaged on the key themes of this Plan and the Healthy, Safe and Resilient Bass Coast Plan 2025 - 2029 via pop-ups
- The Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee
- The Bass Coast Stakeholders Workshop which included a diverse range of health and support organisations

These groups included neurodiverse people, non-binary people, and young people living in and out of home.

The ideas and experiences shared by the communities have played a key role in shaping this Plan. We're committed to continuing the conversation, seeking feedback, listening to new perspectives, and working together to design future actions.



How we listened to communities

- People shared their feedback on **Engage Bass Coast**, our community website
- People came to **focus groups and workshops** to share their ideas.
- We held **pop-up events** in the community

People told us how living in Bass Coast affects their **health and wellbeing**

Who We Spoke With

We listened to a range of people with disability and those who support them, including:

- **LGBTQIA+ young people (ages 16–25)**
This group included: neurodivergent people, non-binary people, and young people living in and out of home
- **Disability service providers shared their views**
- **The Access and Inclusion Committee**
- **We held a workshop with local partners**

The feedback from these sessions helped us with this Plan and the Safe, Healthy and Resilient Bass Coast Plan

What we heard

- Getting around our community can be challenging with a disability (e.g. paths, roads, access to the beach and infrequent public transport)
- People want fair access to services that support a healthy and active life. Intersectionality influences how easy it is to access services.
- People in our community want to co-design spaces and places (e.g. parkland design)
- A gender and diversity lens should be applied to achieve meaningful consultation
- People in our community want better resources and services to improve mental health
- People in our community want preventative actions to reduce violence. People living with disability have a higher risk of experiencing violence. Violence can include intimate partner violence and emotional and economic abuse. (*The 2021–2022 Person Safety Survey, ABS*).
- People recognised that gender impact needs to be considered in how people access the community
- People want greater community connection
- People in our community want increased opportunities to be active

“ I'm a carer of my adult disabled daughter ... We moved to this community in order to give her a better adult life. ”

“ I find it, well, I have mental health issues, so I find it really hard. I have to make myself get out and do stuff, because otherwise I would just sit at home. So that was one of the reasons I took up volunteering, was to make sure I get out. ”

“ It was a big thing for me this year to make myself get out and do something. But I do feel better for it. Sometimes, you know, you just think, I just want to curl up in a cocoon and not do anything. But I guess we will have days like that. ”

Active lives, Connected Communities

Participants were asked about their views and experience being active in Bass Coast. We asked about participation in activities that help people look after their mental health and feel connected in the community. We asked about being able to eat healthy food, being able to move from education or volunteering into work and about managing climate change. It was identified that it was important to offer programs that allow people to be physically active. Additionally, having limited activities available within a radius of the home, lack of community awareness of invisible disabilities and past negative experiences can also be barriers to participation, especially when trying something new. Some people in Bass Coast find technology a barrier when trying to get active,

whether it's looking up information or making a booking to join in. As we look to the future, we see digital tools like telehealth, online platforms, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) playing a bigger role in how people access services, connect with others, and stay healthy. By supporting the community to use these innovations, we can make sure our work keeps up with changing needs and continues to support the community effectively.

Safe Spaces

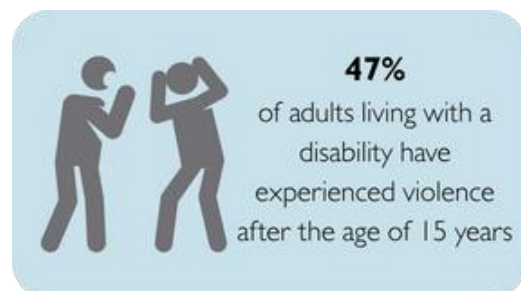


Everyone deserves to feel safe at home, in public and in relationships. However, research shows that people living with disability in Australia are more likely to experience violence, abuse and harassment than people without disability. This includes physical harm, sexual violence, and emotional or financial abuse. These experiences can have a lasting impact on a person's safety, wellbeing and ability to live freely.

Abuse and violence take many forms, including physical, sexual, emotional violence and economic abuse. Women aged 18 and over living with disability are more likely to have recent experiences of violence, abuse and harassment than women without disability. Both men and women living with disability report having experienced more physical violence compared with people without disability.

Women with psychosocial disability have experienced more physical violence than other women with disability. Violence, discrimination and exclusion can be linked.

Council is committed to making Bass Coast a safer and more inclusive place for all.



Towards a Climate-Ready Community

Changes to our climate can severely affect people in the community. Bass Coast declared a climate emergency and developed the **Climate Change Action Plan 2020–2030**. Foreshore erosion and increased risk of bushfire are two examples of the impact that climate change is having on our community. These events can be especially hard for people living with disability as physical barriers can increase risk to leave a location safely, like extreme heat, fire and flooding.

Additionally, stress and anxiety can increase during and after emergencies and delay time in accessing support.

Accessing accurate information, planning and being able to reach safe places quickly are important, particularly in more rural or remote areas of the Shire. Council is actively working to reduce local emissions, support community resilience and include people living with disability in emergency and climate planning.

Helping our community accept the effects of climate change and adapt to the changes on the Bass Coast is important. We want to help people to stay safe, informed and supported.

“ A venue would be great to open up if you knew you were going to have a few days of over 30 degrees. ”

Parks, reserves and the natural environment

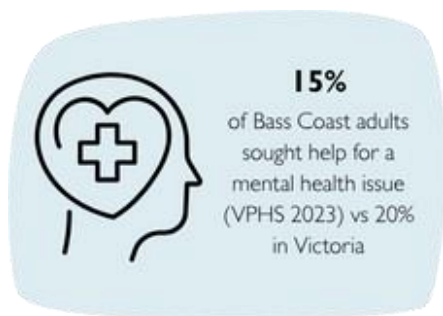
The coastal and outdoor environments are valued greatly by the people of Bass Coast. Fresh air, physical activity, relaxation and activity are essential for our health and wellbeing. Some of our community told us that improving facilities with more inclusive designs could allow more people to experience the benefits of outdoor life.

Linking paths and roads to increase accessibility for people who are less mobile will enable increased participation in community life.

“ There is a real lack of accessible services... especially mental health and disability supports. ”

“ I've been on the access and inclusion committee for about 5 years or more. I can't remember when I started, but working with the council, community groups, I've always found I needed to advocate for people with special needs, and they certainly do it, and the progress I've seen with the access and inclusion committee has been enormous from the time I started and to now.”

Support When and Where It Is Needed



Accessing services to assist with diagnosis, treatment and ongoing support can be challenging in Bass Coast. Community members can experience long wait times to access health professionals. Often the services that they need to access are outside the Shire. Limited public transport timetables can mean, that their one appointment can take up most of a day. Finding the right home can be hard for people living with disability. If

housing is in the wrong location, it can make it harder for people to independently get to the shops, services and take part in community life. Council has been working with government to improve housing availability through the **Bass Coast Shire Housing Strategy 2024**. It is important that we continue to work together and advocate for more housing options that meet the diverse needs of our community, including people with disability. When people have access to housing close to services, friends, family, and the things they enjoy, they are more likely to feel connected, supported, and less isolated

Recognising carers

Not everyone living with disability has carers supporting them, however, many do. In Bass Coast, 1864 people provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, health condition or old age (ABS 2021). Carers in Bass Coast range in age from 10 to 89 years, with the majority identifying as female.

Many parents, siblings and spouses provide care. The role that carers play as supporters, advocates and enablers is vital. Sometimes, carer responsibilities can reduce people's ability to work or participate in other activities. When carers are well, they can provide better supports to their family member, spouse or friend.

Supporting carers is important to ensure the wellbeing of carers and the people they care for.



3% aged between 10 - 19
22% aged between 60 - 89

What we heard from communities

Being Active and Connected

- People want to stay active and feel part of the community
- People are experiencing barriers, such as not enough local programs, technology issues, and invisible disabilities.
- We need safe, inclusive spaces for all ages, abilities, and genders

Feeling Safe

- People with disability face more risk of violence and abuse
- This includes emotional, physical, and financial abuse

Climate Change

- Climate change is already affecting Bass Coast (like erosion and bushfire risk)
- People with disability face more challenges during emergencies
- We need better plans, safe places, and clear information

Nature and Parks

- People value parks and beaches, but not all can access them
- We need better paths, roads, and inclusive designs so everyone can enjoy nature

Access to Support

- It can be hard to get medical help or support nearby
- Transport and long waits make this harder

Housing

- Finding an accessible, affordable home near services is difficult
- Council is working with others to improve housing options

Supporting Carers

- Many people in Bass Coast care for a family member with disability
- Carers need support too, so they can stay well and continue helping others

Key Themes

The Disability Action Plan and the Healthy, Safe and Resilient Bass Coast Plan 2025 - 2029 are key documents driving Council and the community's pursuit for increased positive health outcomes for people living in and visiting the Bass Coast. The key areas include:



Together, the key themes recognise both the strengths and needs of our community. They reflect our priorities for action and acknowledge the barriers people face in living well, whether that's accessing services, feeling safe and connected, or maintaining health and wellbeing. These themes are designed to work together, supporting our vision of a healthy, safe and resilient Bass Coast.

While each has a distinct focus, they all contribute to improving equity, strengthening connection, and creating environments where communities can thrive.

Our success measures are practical and reflect Council's unique role in each area. Not every key theme requires Council to act in the same way, sometimes we enable, sometimes we facilitate or advocate, and in some areas, we deliver services directly. These roles vary depending on the nature of the challenge and the partnerships already in place. Our monitoring focuses on what Council can realistically influence through our policies, services, partnerships and advocacy.

Disability, Safety, Health and Resilience

Here's how the key themes from Healthy, Safe and Resilient Bass Coast Plan 2025 – 2029 link to this plan.

Healthy and Active Living

Council contributes to healthy, active living by creating environments and opportunities that make it easier for people to stay active, access nutritious food, and support their mental wellbeing. Through partnerships, programs, infrastructure and advocacy, we help make healthy choices part of everyday life, supporting long-term community wellbeing and reducing preventable health issues.

Role	What this looks like in Action	How we Monitor Change	Easy Read
Enabler	Embedding co-design into Council policies, strategies and planning to increase participation in public spaces and services	Increasing the number of projects that embed co-design within the concept stage	Making sure there is a voice from people with disabilities in Council planning
Collaborator	Partner with key service providers to gather data to inform programs, projects and services to improve health outcomes for people living with disability and their Carers	Auditing the number of co-designed programs and projects delivered from data collected	Work with service providers to make sure programs and services meet people's needs today
Advocator	Champion for investment with service providers to enable healthier choices	Number of increased advocacy submissions made and delivery of new or improved projects	Speak up for more ways people can access healthy choices

Safe and Inclusive communities

Helping people feel safe, welcome and connected where they live, work and play. Council contributes to safe, inclusive communities by shaping environments that promote belonging, prevent harm and support connection. Through partnerships, programs and advocacy, we create opportunities for people to participate, feel valued and strengthen their wellbeing through social connection.

Role	What this looks like in Action	Monitoring	Easy Read
Promotor	Lead initiatives to promote community activities and education that build connection and visibility	Number of community members who attended community awareness training and events held	Support organisations to lead educational activities, bringing people together
Advocate	Advocate for opportunities that support people living with disability to actively participate and be heard in community life	Record number of opportunities from co-design led initiatives	Create safe and welcoming spaces where people with disability can take part
Advocate	Advocate for Universal Design principles to be embedded in community spaces and businesses	Increase the number uptake of the Bass Coast Council Accessible Business Grants	Speak up to improve community spaces and businesses so that everyone can use them easily

Equitable Access and Social Infrastructure

Making it easier for everyone to access services, spaces and opportunities to live well. Council contributes to equitable access through planning, infrastructure, advocacy and partnerships that reduce barriers to participation and ensure services and facilities meet diverse community needs.

Role	What this looks like in Action	How we Monitor Change	Easy read
Enabler	Implement practical initiatives that reduce participation barriers (e.g. Access Keys, inclusive signage, Changing Places)	Percentage increase in participation of people living with disabilities in Council services or programs	Work within Council teams to help reduce barriers in community
Facilitate	Invite carers, people living with disability, and service providers to guide areas of improvement via the	Number of projects guided by the committee	Support the ongoing work with the Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee

	Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee	with improved outcomes	
Promoter	Promote accessible spaces, services and activities across the community	Number of accessible spaces, services and activities across the community promoted across council marketing platforms	Support sharing knowledge and resources from services and programs to reach a wider audience
Advocate	Advocate for more inclusive infrastructure beyond minimum standard	Number of successful grants or advocacy outcomes that improve accessibility	Support changes in the community that go beyond what is expected by Law

Thriving Children and Young People

Creating opportunities for children and young people to grow, belong and lead. Council contributes by embedding the needs of children and young people in planning, fostering partnerships and supporting services that enable strong foundations for health, learning, connection and wellbeing.

Role	What this looks like in Action	Monitoring	Easy read
Collaborator	Collaborate with schools, sports clubs and community groups to reduce barriers and to support service linkage	Number of schools, community groups and sports clubs engaged	Connect with school and sport club leaders to better outcomes for all people
Facilitator	Support programs that are co-designed and empower young people with disabilities to thrive	Number of increased co-designed projects that partner with youth living with disabilities	Support giving youth living with disabilities a voice on decision making
Advocate	Advocate for the removal of structural barriers to health and play in public spaces	Number of reduced structural barriers in public spaces	Speak up to improve safe access to parks and playgrounds

Country, Connection and Climate

Strengthening connection to Country, protecting our environment, and building resilience for a sustainable future.

Council contributes by embedding sustainability, resilience and cultural connection in planning and action. We walk alongside Traditional Owners and partners to create sustainable, climate-ready communities connected to place and culture.

Role	What this looks like in Action	Monitoring	Easy Read
Collaborator	Collaborating with persons with disability, LGBTQIA+, First Nations persons and strengthen relationships between service providers and Council to create better resources for community	Number of partnership-based approaches with First Nations persons, LGBTQIA+ and people living with disability	Work with First Nations people, people living with disability, and LGBTQIA+ people. We know that some people belong to more than one of these groups
Promote	Promote co-designed initiatives for climate change and emergency planning for people living with disabilities and carers	Number of increased initiatives directed at carers and people living with disability	We will listen to older adults, share ideas, and learn from each other to see how things are going.
Enable	Embedding Universal Design into Relief and Recovery activities	Number of policies and activities that include universal design	Make Relief and Recovery spaces in an emergency fair and equal for all
Advocate	Advocate for investment and action on climate resilience and cultural protection	Record advocacy efforts and track relevant developments in climate and cultural protection initiatives	Speak up about climate change issues and how it impacts people living with disabilities and carers.

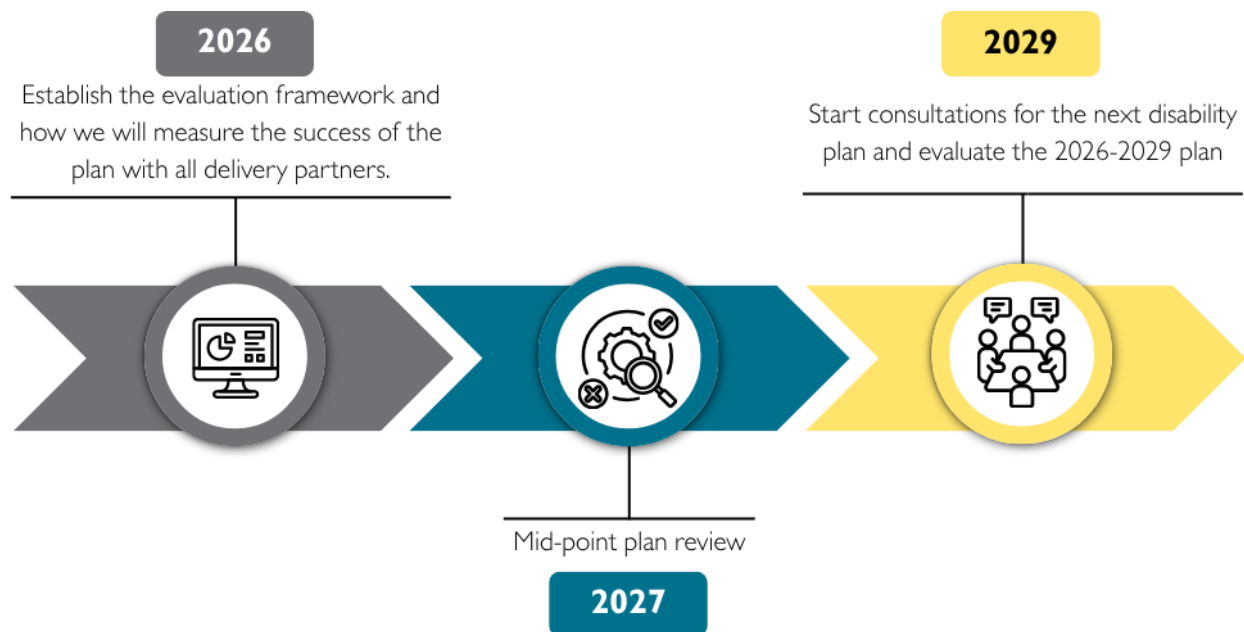
Monitoring our progress

Time allows for adaption

Progress takes time, especially when it comes to removing barriers, whether they're physical, cultural, or attitudinal. Through the Disability Action Plan 2025–2029 (DAP), we recognise that meaningful change is built on trust, listening, and shared learning. We are committed to walking alongside our community, building on from our previous Access and Inclusion Plan 2021-2025, and learning from lived experience. By embedding the DAP into how we 'adapt' for the future, we ensure our work remains responsive, inclusive, and grounded in the voices of those it's designed to support.

Next Steps

Each year, we will review the work delivered in Bass Coast and check the outcomes against this Plan. As we move through the next 4 years, we'll work closely with our partners and community groups to see what is working and what needs to improve.



We will share a progress report each year showing what we have achieved and what we plan to do next. We will make the report accessible to everyone in the community by providing it:

- Online via the **Access for All** Bass Coast Shire Website
- in hard copy at libraries
- at Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee meetings

- at Service Provider Network meetings

We will also share social stories and demonstrate good practice throughout the year.

We will use clear indicators from the Action Plan to track our progress.

The yearly check in will help us:

- ✓ see what goals we've reached
- ✓ understand what we've delivered to the community
- ✓ learn and make changes if needed
- ✓ plan for the years ahead.

This review will be done together with our partners and the community to see what is working well and what we might need to do differently. Council will use the outcomes of this to identify barriers in systems and processes. Our Social Planner and people with disability will be key people in evaluating the outcomes of the plan.



References and supporting documents

- Access, Equity and Inclusion Bass Coast Plan 2021–2025
- Australia’s Disability Strategy 2021–2031
- Bass Coast Shire Council Housing Strategy 2024
- Circular Economy Framework
- Climate Change Action Plan for Bass Coast 2020 – 2030
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Gippsland PHN Priorities 2025–2028
- Healthy, Safe and Resilient Bass Coast Plan 2025–2029
- Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023–2027
- Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008
- Bass Coast Council Plan 2025 – 2029
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

Tell us what you think

Drop off your ideas to us at:

Access and Equity Social Planner

Bass Coast Shire Council

76 McBride Ave, Wonthaggi. 3995