

Disability Inclusion Strategy for Services



2019–2022

Plain English Edition



This document was produced by the Wexford County Council Access Officer and staff in consultation with other council departments and external agencies.

Includes:

- Actions from the National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021.
- Recommendations from the National Disability Authority's publication "An Operational Review of the Effectiveness of Section 25 of the Disability Act 2005 (July 2019)".

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**Comhairle Contae
Loch Garman
Wexford
County Council**



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Glossary

CSU	Customer Service Unit (Reception)
HR	Human Resources
ICT	Information & Communications Technology
NALA	National Adult Literacy Agency
NDA	National Disability Authority
NDIS	National Disability Inclusion Strategy
PPN	Public Participation Network
WCC	Wexford County Council





Introduction

Welcome to the next step in Wexford County Council's Disability Inclusion Strategy. We encourage you to read, review and connect with us to make happen the actions and plans outlined in this document.

The 2016 census shows that there are over 643,000 people with a disability in Ireland. This is 13.5% of the population. In County Wexford this figure is higher, with 15% of people living here registered as having a disability. In our ageing society, many more people will develop a disability.

Our vision in Wexford County Council is to:

- **promote equality**
- **prevent discrimination**
- **protect the human rights of our employees, customers and service users**

We aim to continue to provide services, facilities, buildings and infrastructure that everyone can use. In line with our duties in the **National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017–2021 (NDIS)**, we must take certain actions to improve accessibility.

With our aim to keep access for all at the centre of our activities, we explored new ways to report on our actions. We agreed that each Wexford County Council section will be responsible for reporting on how accessible their services are.

Between 2018 and early 2019, we completely reviewed our services, facilities, buildings and infrastructure to see how accessible they are. As part of our review, we spoke to our employees, customers and service users and we took on board the actions listed in the NDIS. From this we created a template for reporting, and gave it to all our sections to complete. Their feedback was used to identify our goals, and what we will do to improve access to our services. This method will be used for updating, and reporting, on the goals and actions as set out here in this document. We believe this is a proactive and forward-thinking way to provide our services.

Our aim, across our entire organisation, is to provide accessible services for everyone. We acknowledge how important this is for us as a local authority, for the people we serve now and into the future.

Communication, Information and Services

NDIS Actions 16 and 23

What is our goal?	What will we do?	Sections in charge?	When will we do it?
We want to continue to improve the design of our website to make it more accessible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out an audit of our website. 	Access	2019
We want to do this using recognised standards of best practice for website and social media channels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute the National Disability Authority's (NDA) advice on website accessibility to our staff. 	Access	2019
When we have made our website and social media channels more accessible, we want to encourage more people with a disability to use them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a social media policy. 	Communications	2019
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with agencies to achieve standards of best practice design when their website is connected to our services. 	Access, Information & Communications Technology (ICT)	2019
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop procedures for uploading content to our website. 	Website Team	2019
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify specific content coordinators for each of our sections. 	Website Team	2019
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch Recite-Me or similar text-to-speech software for our website. 	Access, ICT	2020





Communication, Information and Services

NDIS Actions 17 and 24

What is our goal?	What will we do?	Sections in charge?	When will we do it?
<p>We want to continue to improve people's access to the information we share.</p> <p>We also want to continue to improve how we communicate with people.</p> <p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • telephone calls • letters • emails • forms • in person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop policies and best practice guidelines to help with the different ways of communicating. Give these to all staff. • Develop a portal on our Staff Intranet where all policies and best practice guidelines will be available. • Develop and set up a policy for the Online Sign Language Interpreter Service. <p>This service will be available in our:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headquarters (at first) • Libraries • Municipal District Offices 	<p>Access</p> <p>Access, ICT</p> <p>Access, ICT, Customer Services Unit (CSU)</p>	<p>2020</p> <p>2020</p> <p>2020-2021</p>



Communication, Information and Services

What is our goal?	What will we do?	Sections in charge?	When will we do it?
We want to make our staff more aware of our responsibilities under the government's Action Plan on Autism.	Our Library Service will lead our pilot autism plan.		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will arrange for an audit to see how autism-friendly our library services are. We will then look at what the audit recommends. 	<p>Library Services, Access</p> <p>Library Services</p>	<p>2020–2021</p> <p>2020–2021</p>



Communication, Information and Services

NDIS Action 27

What is our goal?	What will we do?	Sections in charge?	When will we do it?
We want to make sure our procurement (buying) policies and procedures for buildings, facilities, goods and services continue to meet the accessibility rules of current procurement laws.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the accessibility rules in current procurement laws, and our own Procurement Policy, when we are buying goods and services. 	Procurement, all relevant sections	2019-2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop procedures for commissioning or other funding of services we support to make sure they meet accessibility rules. 	Corporate, Finance, Procurement, all relevant sections	2019-2022



Service Provision Through Irish Sign Language



Buildings and Infrastructure

NDIS Action 24

What is our goal?	What will we do?	Sections in charge?	When will we do it?
We want to continue to improve access to associated heritage sites and attractions in line with Part 3 of the Disability Act 2005 e.g. The Irish National Heritage Park, Hook Lighthouse, Enniscorthy Castle Museum.	• Arrange meetings with relevant stakeholders.	Access, Tourism	2020
	• Carry out an audit of heritage sites.	Access	2020
	• Tell heritage sites owned, operated or helped by us about the NDA's advice and standards of best practice for website accessibility.	Access	2019
	• Give Recite-Me or similar text-to-speech software to our associated heritage sites to install on their website.	Access	2019

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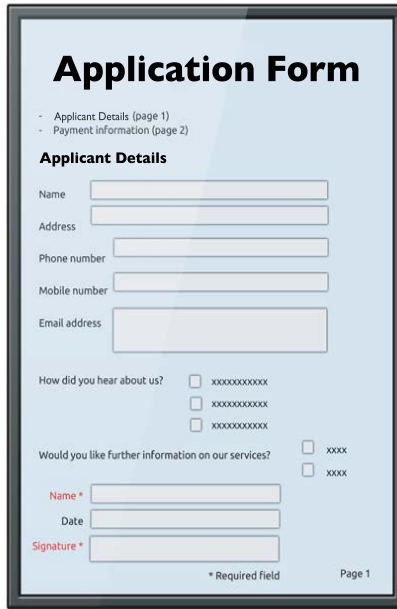


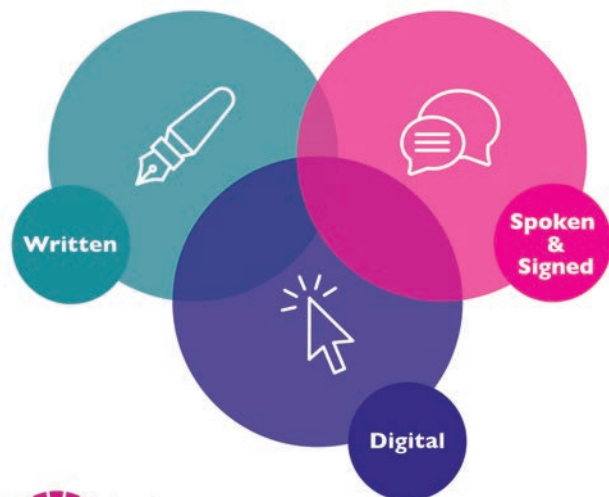
Buildings and Infrastructure

NDIS Actions 24,25 and 75

What is our goal?	What will we do?	Sections in charge?	When will we do it?
We want all our public buildings (where possible) to meet the Building Regulations TGD Part M 2010 standards by 2022.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review our current buildings and prioritise accessibility works where relevant and possible. 	Access	2021
We want to continue to make sure that new buildings and facilities for the arts, sport or leisure are based on universal design principles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop our own policy and procedure for disability-proofing our new building projects. 	Access, Corporate, all relevant sections	2021







Plain English
Approved by NALA

Employment and Training

NDIS Actions 20 and 46

What is our goal?	What will we do?	Sections in charge?	When will we do it?
We want to continue to provide and encourage staff to complete disability awareness training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff who have not completed the NDA eLearning module will be asked to do so. 	Access	2019
<p>We want to make sure that all training courses we offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide real value are worthwhile encourage accessibility support accessibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise Plain English training and awareness (with NALA) for our: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> website content coordinators report and policy authors Organise Part M and Universal Design training for our technical staff. Develop online training courses on access and disabilities for our staff. 	Access, HR	2020
		Access, HR	2021
		Access, ICT	2020-2021



Housing and Community

NDIS Actions 32 and 33

What is our goal?	What will we do?	Sections in charge?	When will we do it?
We want to continue to actively engage people with a disability, through committees and other suitable meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise community workshops for relevant stakeholders and programme organisers. 	All relevant sections	2019-2020
We want to continue to encourage a culture and process of early engagement in mainstream service design and evaluation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a procedure for sending information about access and disability through the Public Participation Network (PPN) to its members. 	Access, Community, PPN Secretariat	2020-2021





Housing and Community

NDIS Action 74

What is our goal?	What will we do?	Sections in charge?	When will we do it?
We want to continue to develop steps at community level to build and sustain disability-competent and welcoming communities.	• Develop design instructions for public realm projects to include universal design principles as well as Part M Building Control standards.	Access, All relevant sections	2021
	• Install a Changing Places facility where possible in each municipal district to support access to services, facilities, recreation and sporting venues.	Access, Special Projects, Municipal District Managers	2021
	• Continue to engage with local community groups and organisations under the Access for All Gardens, Parks and Community Spaces initiative.	Access, Environment	2020
	• Continue our Arts Ability Programme to build suitable facilities so that people with a disability can have long-term access to and take part in creative art experiences.	Arts	2019–2022



Housing and Community

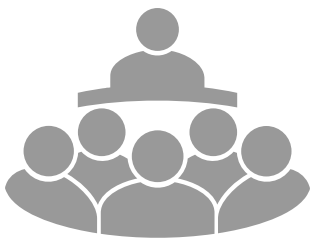
NDIS Actions 77 and 29

What is our goal?	What will we do?	Sections in charge?	When will we do it?
We want to continue to develop steps to support people with a disability to be able to actively take part in community life, sports and society.	• Sports Active Wexford will continue to work with communities and organisations as part of its strategy to support people with a disability to take part in physical activity.	Sports Active Wexford	2019–2022
	• Ensure disability-proofing is done at design stage when developing and retrofitting playgrounds.	Access, Community	2019–2022
	• Continue to carry out activities in line with Wexford Local Economic and Community Plan High Level Goal 2.	Community	2019–2022
	• Continue to maintain fully inclusive library services for people with a disability.	Library Services	2019–2022
	• Support stakeholders and national measures to improve the accessibility of voting facilities.	Franchise	2019–2022



Housing and Community

NDIS Actions 93 and 94

What is our goal?	What will we do?	Sections in charge?	When will we do it?
<p>We want to continue to carry out the objectives of "Time to Move on from Congregated Settings: A Strategy for Community Inclusion".</p> <p>This gives people with a disability who live in institutions and congregated settings the choice and control over where and with whom they live within the community.</p> <p>We will continue to work with the relevant stakeholders on this.</p>	<p>Continue to support ongoing quarterly meetings of the WCC Housing Steering Committee.</p>	<p>Access, Housing</p>	<p>2019-2022</p>
			



Housing and Community

NDIS Action 96

What is our goal?	What will we do?	Sections in charge?	When will we do it?
<p>We want to continue to deliver appropriate and relevant housing in keeping with the “National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011–2016”.</p> <p>We will continue to work with the relevant stakeholders on this.</p>	• Develop a suite of adaptable housing designs using the principles of universal design.	Housing, Access	2019–2022
	• Develop design instructions which include universal design principles as well as Part M Building Control standards.	Access	2019–2022
	• Develop a policy for buying Part V adaptable housing units	Housing, Access	2019–2022

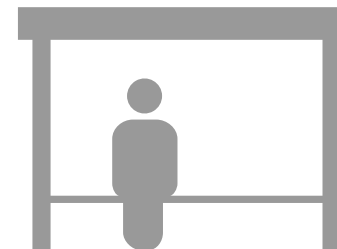




Transport and Connectivity

NDIS Actions 100 and 109

What is our goal?	What will we do?	Section in charge?	When will we do it?
We want to continue to improve access and connections to public train and bus stations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a programme of work to support the installation of bus shelters. 	Roads	2019-2022
We will work with the relevant stakeholders to do this.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a programme of work to upgrade urban bus stops so accessible buses can use them. 	Roads	2019-2022





Transport and Connectivity

NDIS Actions 107 and 108

What is our goal?	What will we do?	Sections in charge?	When will we do it?
<p>We want to continue to carry out a programme of dishing footpaths in urban areas.</p> <p>This will help and encourage access to services and facilities, including outdoor recreation facilities and trails.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a dished footpath programme of work to support connections between key town facilities and services. Include this goal in any local or county development plans. 	<p>Roads</p> <p>Planning</p>	<p>2019–2022</p> <p>2020</p>





Summary

This Disability Inclusion Strategy is a 'living document'. This means we will update it from time to time. Newer versions of this strategy will include updated and more ambitious actions, and we will base these on progress to date.

Each of our section heads must make sure that their section's activity is guided by this strategy. They must make sure that the goals and actions in this strategy are taken into account and applied in their programmes of work.

All our sections are required to achieve the six key actions listed below:

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 17 | <p>We will encourage compliance with the obligations set out under Section 28 of the Disability Act 2005 regarding access to information and communication including electronic communication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any oral or written communication to be communicated in an accessible form, as far as practicable, if so requested.• Electronic communication to be accessible, as far as practicable.• Information published by WCC to be in clear language that is easily understood, as far as practicable. |
| 20 | <p>We will provide disability awareness training for all staff.</p> |
| 24 | <p>We will set out commitments in our strategy statements and business plans to ensure compliance with our obligations to make buildings and services accessible in line with Part 3 of the Disability Act 2005. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the use of any place or amenity owned, managed or controlled by WCC.• the provision of information or an information resource or a scheme or an allowance or other benefit administered by WCC.• any cultural or heritage services provided by WCC. |



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We will ensure:

- that public procurement of buildings, facilities, goods and services complies with the accessibility requirements of relevant regulations, legislation and codes including relevant EU Law and the EU Web Directive 2016.
- that commissioning, or other funding of services, also comply with these accessibility requirements.

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We will:

- actively engage people with disabilities through consultative committees and/or other appropriate fora.
- provide information for an annual report in relation to implementation of the Disability Inclusion Strategy.
- participate in a midterm review of the strategy in consultation with disability interests.

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We will embed a culture and process of early engagement with people with disabilities in mainstream service design and evaluation.

References

Access for All Gardens, Parks and Community Spaces Initiative – aimed at community groups offering ways of making an existing community garden, park or space more accessible for everyone.

Action Plan on Autism – the purpose is to better understand autism and to effectively provide supports for people with autism to access our services.

Arts Ability Programme – a person-centered initiative set within a caring environment to provide access to high quality art experiences for participants.

Building Control Regulations TGD Part M Access and Use – Part M (2010) of the Building Regulations requires that adequate provision be made for people to access and use a building, its facilities and its environs.

Changing Places Facility – a 12m² accessible WC designed to enhance the health, safety, comfort and dignity of someone who may need extra support and additional equipment during personal care tasks.

Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015–2024 – has six strategic priorities to build skills, capacity and independence and provide bridges and supports into work and make work pay for people with a disability.

Congregated settings – an environment where a number of people meet, or gather, or live and share the same space for a period of time.

Disability-competent – the ability to provide appropriate services and supports for people with disabilities while ensuring their values, interests and preferences inform design and delivery of their care.

Dishing – modifying a footpath to allow ease of access.

Part 3 of the Disability Act 2005 – the Disability Act 2005 is part of a framework of Government legislation. Part 3 places an obligation on public bodies to make their buildings and services accessible.

Part V – of the Planning and Development Act 2000 provides for social and affordable housing obligations for developers.

Procurement – the process of selecting and examining potential contractors and suppliers for the purchase of goods and services.

Programme of work – works to be carried out in connection with budgets and/or contract as set out in agreements or plans of Wexford County Council.

Sports Active Wexford Strategic Plan 2017–2021 – this four year plan sets out Sports Active Wexford’s goals and objectives for sport and physical activity in County Wexford.

Universal Design – the design and make up of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability.

WCC Housing Steering Committee – set up to provide appropriate housing within the community for people with a disability to move from congregated settings to accommodation of no more than four people.

Wexford Local Economic and Community Plan 2016–2021 – High Level Goal 2 supports and encourages communities to become socially inclusive and sustainable.

This image shows a full page of blank white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, typical of notebook or legal stationery. There are no margins, text, or other markings present.



Top: WCC Disability Inclusion Strategy Consultation Event 2018
Bottom: Library Park, New Ross (opened 2016)



Top: Launch of Poolpod at Ferrybank Swimming Pool and Leisure 2018
Bottom: Duncannon WC (opened 2019) accessible design pilot initiative



