

The background features a large orange circle on the left and a smaller yellow circle with a dot pattern on the right. A teal arc curves from the top left towards the bottom right, passing behind the circles.

# **Community Engagement Report:**

## **Burwood Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026**



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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Local government is required by the *NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014* (DIA) to undertake disability inclusion action planning. Cred Consulting was engaged by Burwood Council to conduct background research and deliver stakeholder engagement to inform the development of their new Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP).

The new Burwood DIAP 2022-2026 will provide a framework to create a more inclusive and accessible Burwood for people with disability, affording them access to Council facilities and services without barriers.

Each DIAP is required to include actions relating to four focus areas:

- Positive attitudes and behaviours
- Liveable communities
- Meaningful employment, and
- Better systems and processes.

This report provides a detailed summary of findings from community, service providers and staff engagement.

## 1.2 How we engaged

Community and stakeholder engagement to inform the DIAP took place between March and April 2022. In total, we heard from more than 156 people through surveys, focus groups, workshops and interviews. The table below provides an overview of engagement activities.

Engagement activities	Number of participants
Online survey	74 respondents
Easy Read survey	27 respondents
Community focus groups	21 participants
Service provider interviews	5 interviews
Council staff interviews	5 participants across all Council units
Council staff workshop	24 participants
<b>Total</b>	<b>156 participants</b>

## 2. Key findings across engagement

This section provides a high-level summary of key findings from community and stakeholder engagement related to the four themes of the DIAP.

### 2.1 Encouraging positive attitudes and behaviours

- 69% of survey respondents agree that the Burwood community has positive attitudes and behaviours towards people with disability, while 7% do not agree and 24% are unsure.
- Survey respondents want to see more accessible activities and events, more understanding of different types of disability, more understanding of how to communicate with people with disability and involving people with disability in raising awareness in the community.
- Respondents that completed the Easy Read survey would like to see more activities to have fun and meet people, information translated into their language, and friendlier attitudes from people.
- Service providers told us there is a lack of awareness about the different types of disabilities amongst the community, and within the business sector particularly when employing people with disability. We heard there needs to be more sharing of information and resources, all-inclusive events, and activities for people with disability.
- Staff told us they would like to see opportunities to deliver more training for staff including disability and inclusion awareness, cultural competency and understanding inclusive terminology (e.g. not disabled parking but accessible parking).

### 2.2 Creating liveable communities

- Survey respondents indicated that the most difficult places and spaces in Burwood to access are swimming pools, markets, festivals and events, toilets, and sports facilities. They told us they would like to see accessible toilets, ramps and lifts, accessible parking and information about accessibility prioritised.
- Survey respondents indicated it is not easy to access services including housing support, social groups and activities, mental health support and help finding employment.
- Survey respondents prioritised upgrades to footpaths and road crossings, more affordable and accessible transport options (e.g. subsidized taxi or community bus) and more physically accessible bus stops and train stations to make it easier to get around Burwood.
- A community submission told us they value Burwood's parks and community facilities and would like to see additional seating close to walking paths, specifically at Henley Park, accessible parking spaces near accessible paths, and the ability to book the Burwood Library Community Hub's rooms free of charge for 2 hours at a time for local students/residents.
- Focus group participants told us there is a need for accessible parking spaces and pick up/drop off zones close to essential services such as medical centres, post offices, grocery stores and Westfield; accessible toilets in public spaces; improved footpaths, kerbs and gutters; and more social and recreational opportunities and programs for people of all ages with disability.

- Service providers told us they value community facilities like Burwood Library, and there is a need for more accessible and affordable spaces and facilities to run social and creative programs and activities for people with disability.
- Staff told us they would like to focus on creating more accessible, activated and engaging public spaces, particularly as the community is coming out of COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions, and to complement the increasing development in Burwood.

### 2.3 Supporting access to meaningful employment

- Survey respondents indicated training opportunities, providing support for job applications, more inclusive workplace cultures, and more accessible and inclusive recruitment processes could be improved to make it easier for people with disability to access employment.
- Service providers would like to see more local employment opportunities for people with disability in Burwood, as well as more support for students looking for work placement opportunities. An opportunity was identified for Burwood Council to lead the way, in employing people with disability and tapping into existing connections such as the Business Chambers to support people with disability gain meaningful employment.
- Staff identified a gap in knowledge regarding access and inclusion, and what it means for Council's roles and responsibilities. Participating staff would like the opportunity to receive information on these topics by way of induction training. Staff also told us there is an opportunity provide placements for schools in Burwood.

### 2.4 Accessible systems and processes

- Survey respondents indicated it is somewhat easy to find information from, and communicate with Council. Respondents expressed that Council can better communicate with people with disability and their networks by listening more to people with disability about what they need, providing resources and events via newsletter or website, and providing Easy Read and large print versions of Council forms and documents.
- Respondents that completed the Easy Read survey told us it is difficult to access places in the community because they do not know about the variety of locations within the LGA. We heard they would like to receive information from Burwood Council through Council's website, newsletters and emails regarding programs on offer.
- Focus group participants would like to see more alternative formats and methods of communication such as Easy Read, braille, and hard copy information to improve communication with Council. We also heard people would like Council to update their DCP to increase and support inclusion and access, and providing information and supporting pathways to educational and employment opportunities.
- Service providers told us they would like to see more easily accessible information from Council about activities, events, and employment opportunities within the local area, as well as targeted consultation with people with disability when planning for access and inclusion.
- Staff told us there are opportunities for increased consultation with people with disabilities before and after major projects are delivered, and a need for improved communication and consultation with community groups.

## 3. Online community survey findings

### 3.1 About the online survey

An online survey was available for people with disability and their families, friends and support workers to complete from 8 March to 19 April 2022. A total of 74 respondents completed the survey.

The purpose of the online survey was to engage with community members, including people with disability, and unpaid and paid carers, living in the Burwood Local Government Area (LGA) to inform Burwood Council's second Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP).

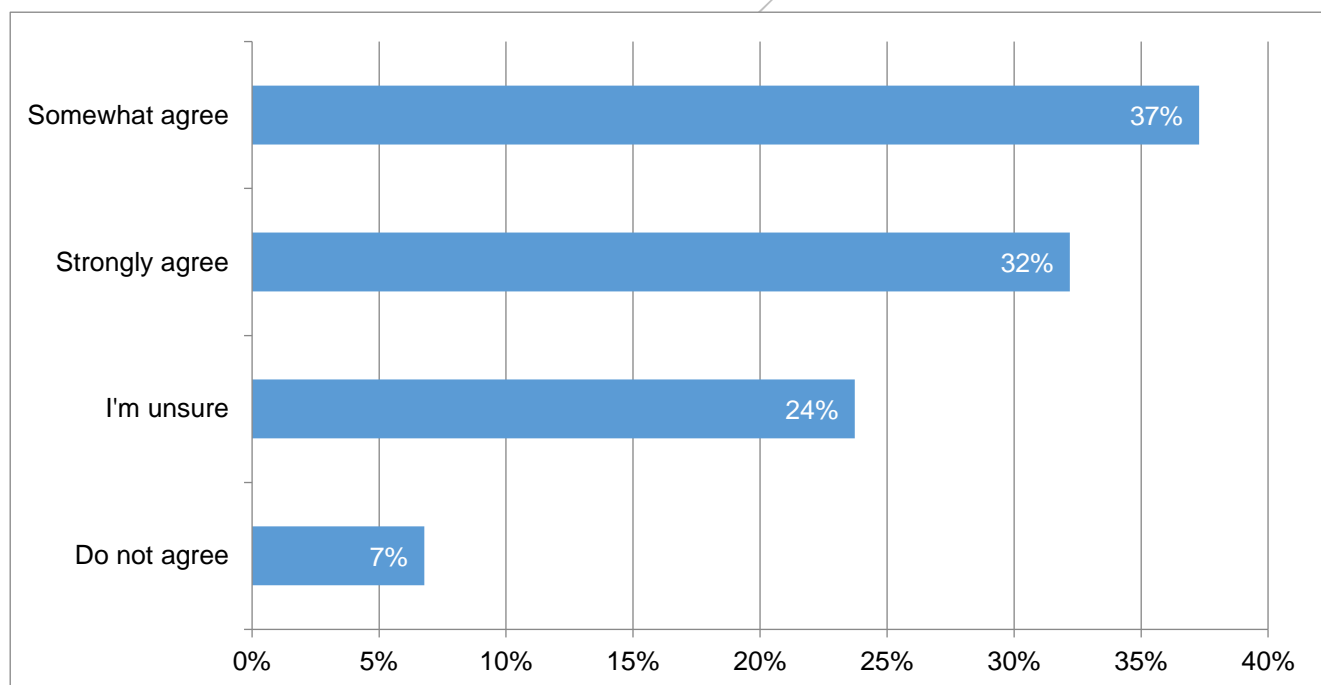
### 3.2 Detailed survey findings

#### 3.2.1 Community attitudes and behaviours

##### Perceptions of community attitudes and behaviours

As shown Figures 1, the majority of respondents agree that the Burwood community has positive attitudes and behaviours towards people with disability (69% 'strongly agree' or 'agree'), while 7% do not agree.

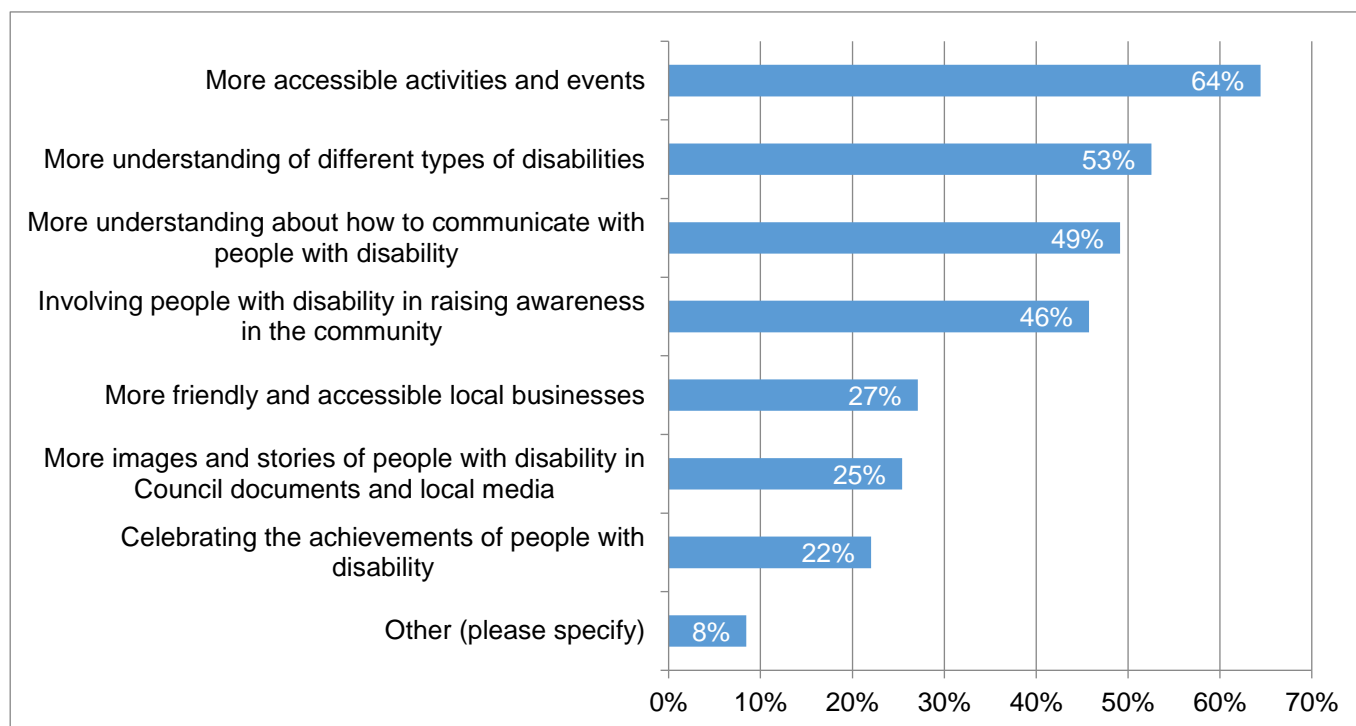
Figure 1 Do you agree the Burwood community has positive attitudes and behaviours towards people with disability?



## Ideas to encourage positive attitudes and behaviours

As shown in Figure 2, to improve community attitudes and behaviours, respondents prioritised more accessible activities and events, greater understanding of different types of disability, greater understanding of how to communicate with people with disability and involving people with disability in awareness raising initiatives.

Figure 2 What types of things would you like to see in Burwood to encourage more positive attitudes and behaviours towards people with disability?



Other suggestions to improve community attitudes and behaviours included:

- Structured playgroups for children with disabilities (including school aged kids) where those children can make friends (a major struggle for our kids) and parents can meet others in a similar boat and exchange information / support
- Would tick all. Including making information for supports and services proactively available in accessible and translated format. Including getting community involved in DIAP. Mailing/emailing residents about this would've been helpful, as I would not have known about DIAP had I not gone to the council website.
- Less focus on disability being a separate item more focus on inclusion
- Community participation programs people with disabilities are interested in
- All these things are important.

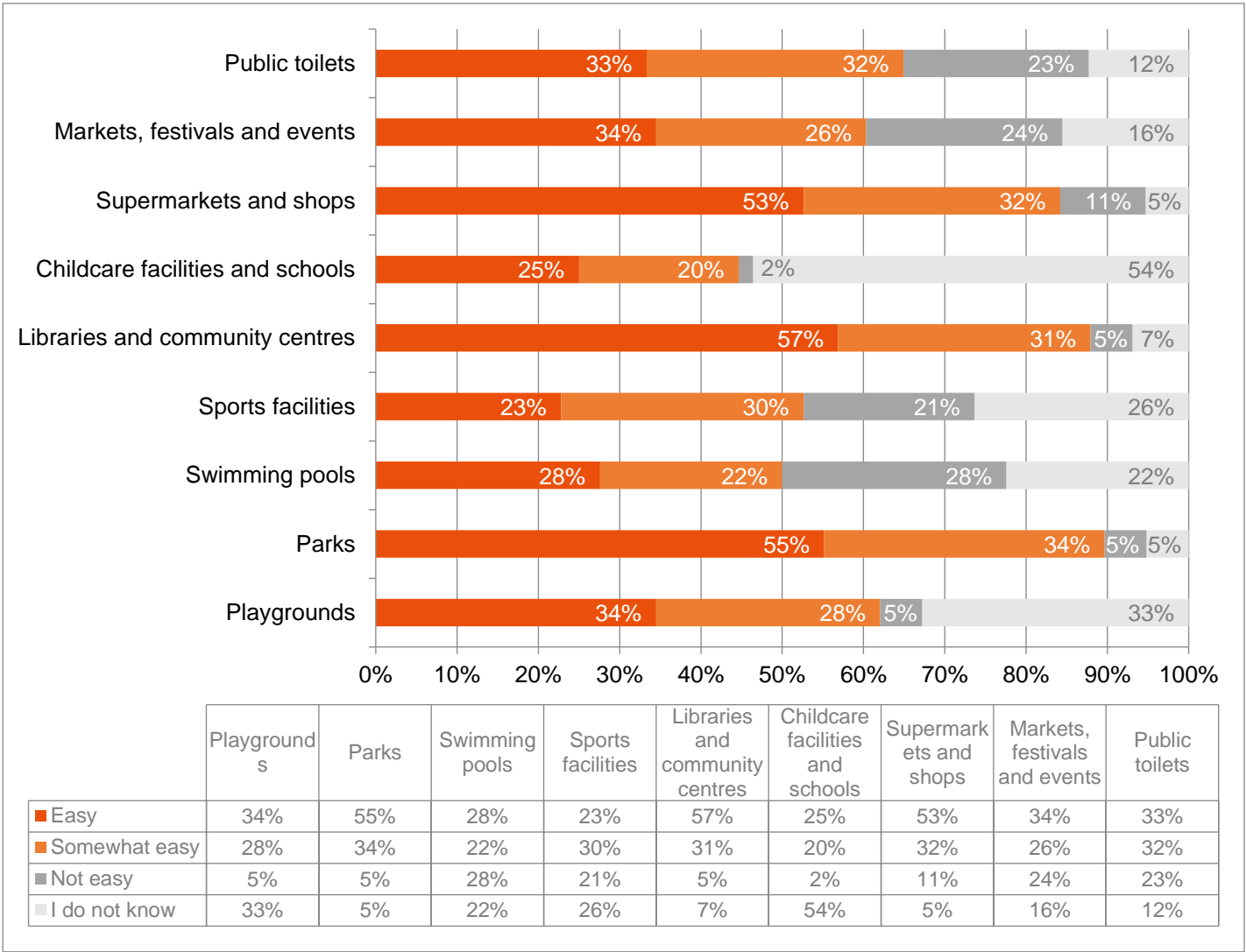


### 3.2.2 Liveable communities

#### Rating the accessibility of places and spaces in Burwood

As shown in Figure 3 below, respondents indicated that the most accessible places and spaces in Burwood are libraries and community centres, parks, supermarkets and shops. Places and spaces that were less accessible include swimming pools, markets, festivals and events, toilets and sports facilities.

Figure 3 How easy is it for people with disability to visit the following places in the Burwood Council area?



## Specific places that need improvements to accessibility

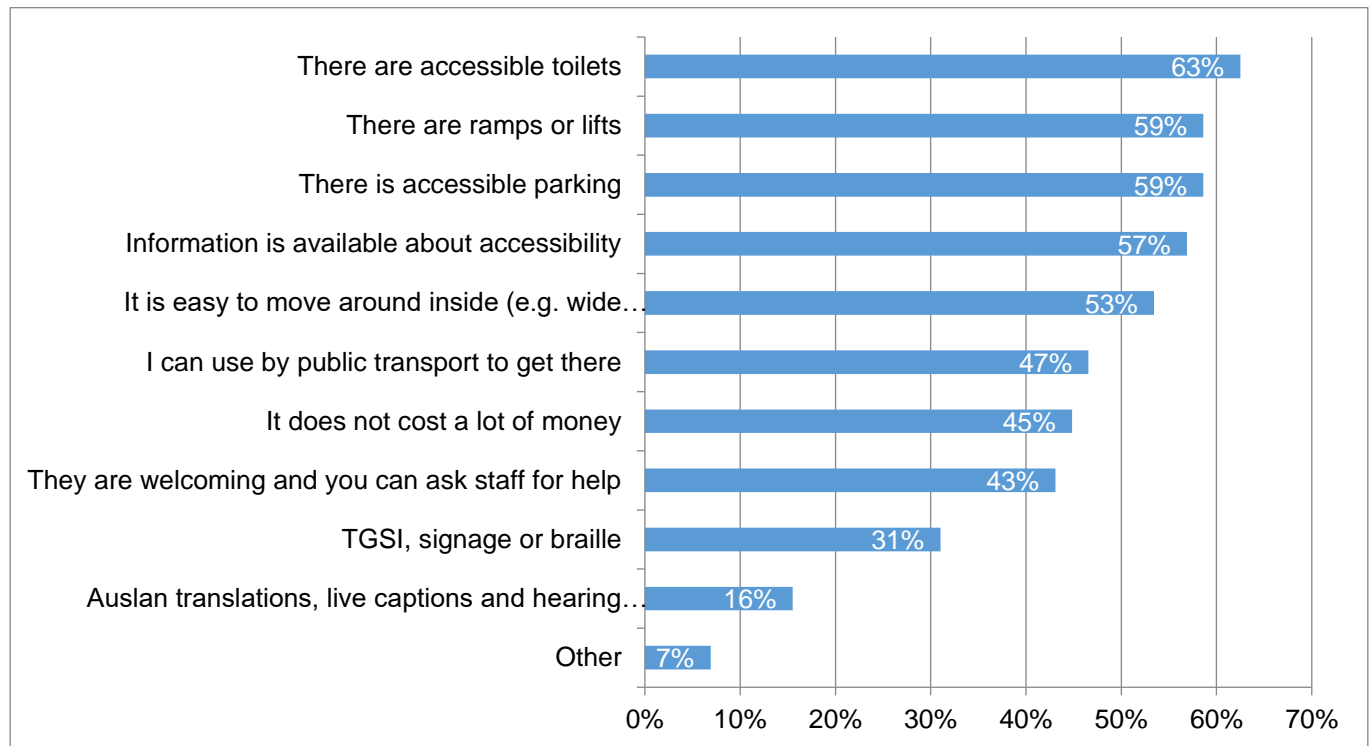
Respondents were asked to identify any specific places, buildings or events in Burwood that are not accessible and to explain why they are not accessible. Comments included:

Theme	Comment
Accessibility in public and commercial spaces (4 comments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some shops, for example in The Strand, have a very high step up to enter with no handrail</li> <li>The footpath to Westfield Burwood has foot traffic that is chaotic and lends to trips and falls it should be directional and not have bike scooters skateboards and electronic mobility scooters that weave and travel at greater speeds than walking</li> <li>No public toilets along Cooks River bike ride track for disabled people.</li> <li>No covered areas to take shelter or rest for people with disabilities</li> </ul>
Accessible parking (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insufficient disability parking close to shops especially including Westfield</li> <li>Lack of disability parking and parking in general sometimes prevents access to amenities.</li> <li>Main stretch of Burwood where medical centres are on the street side with limited parking, no disabled parking places</li> </ul>
Swimming pools (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hydrotherapy pool, I have to go to Ashfield</li> <li>Enfield pool too expensive for disability groups</li> </ul>
Parks and playgrounds (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More seats in the parks</li> <li>Hard to use wheelchairs in parks</li> </ul>
Transport (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use public transport, need places that are accessible</li> <li>Need to walk to venues</li> </ul>
Sensory needs (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Burwood festival becomes a sensory overload for the people I care for</li> <li>Festivals &amp; businesses do not provide sensory zones or headphones. Westfield supermarkets and department stores like Coles Burwood and Target push self-service checkouts so I now shop at Leichhardt that provides checkout assistants</li> </ul>
Access ramps (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 Condor Street: access from parking lot needs a ramp to allow easy access for disabled people, people with leg injuries, strollers, elderly etc.</li> <li>The downward slope of the pedestrian path at Burwood Road where it intersects with Railway Parade is quite steep for people with physical disabilities.</li> </ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide Chinese newspapers to the communities</li> <li>I am legally vision impaired and use a white cane and people don't move for me</li> <li>A lost and found if we get separated would be good</li> <li>It is important to note that disability support and community inclusion involves more than physical accessibility to venues (although this is very important)</li> </ul>

## Ideas to make places and events more accessible

As shown in Figure 4, respondents prioritised accessible toilets (63%), ramps and lifts (59%), accessible parking (59%) and information about accessibility to make places and events more accessible. Some comments indicated that all options are equally important and should be considered when planning for accessible and inclusive places and events.

Figure 4 Which of the following options are most important to make places and events accessible?



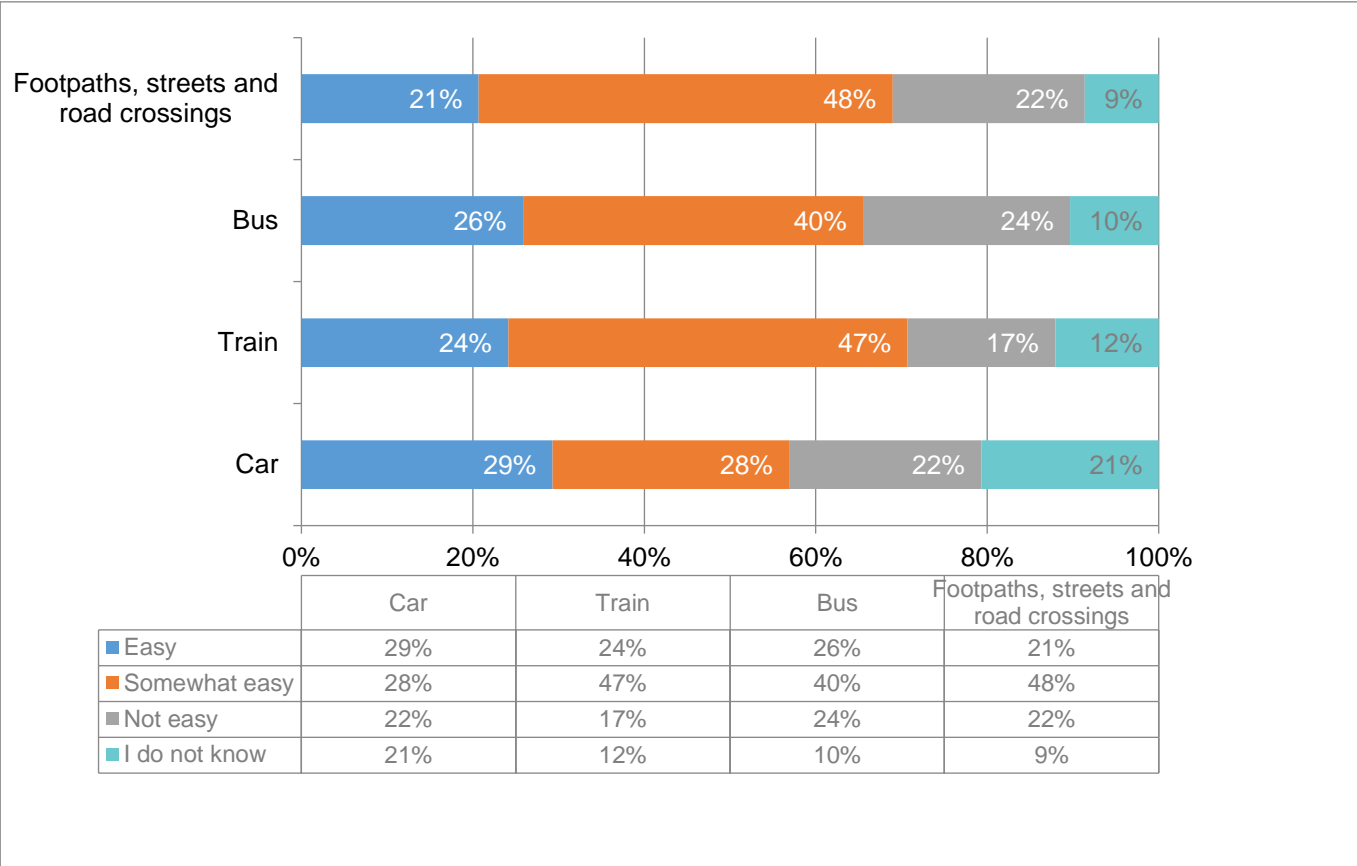
Additional comments included:

- Ability to get there
- We are not referred to special options for people with disability. We want to be included in the main.
- All of these things make for an inclusive community.
- Autism friendly with sensory hours or rooms

Getting around in Burwood

As shown in Figure 5, respondents indicated that it is most difficult to get around Burwood using buses (24% not easy), followed by car (22% not easy), as well as footpaths, streets and road crossings (22% not easy).

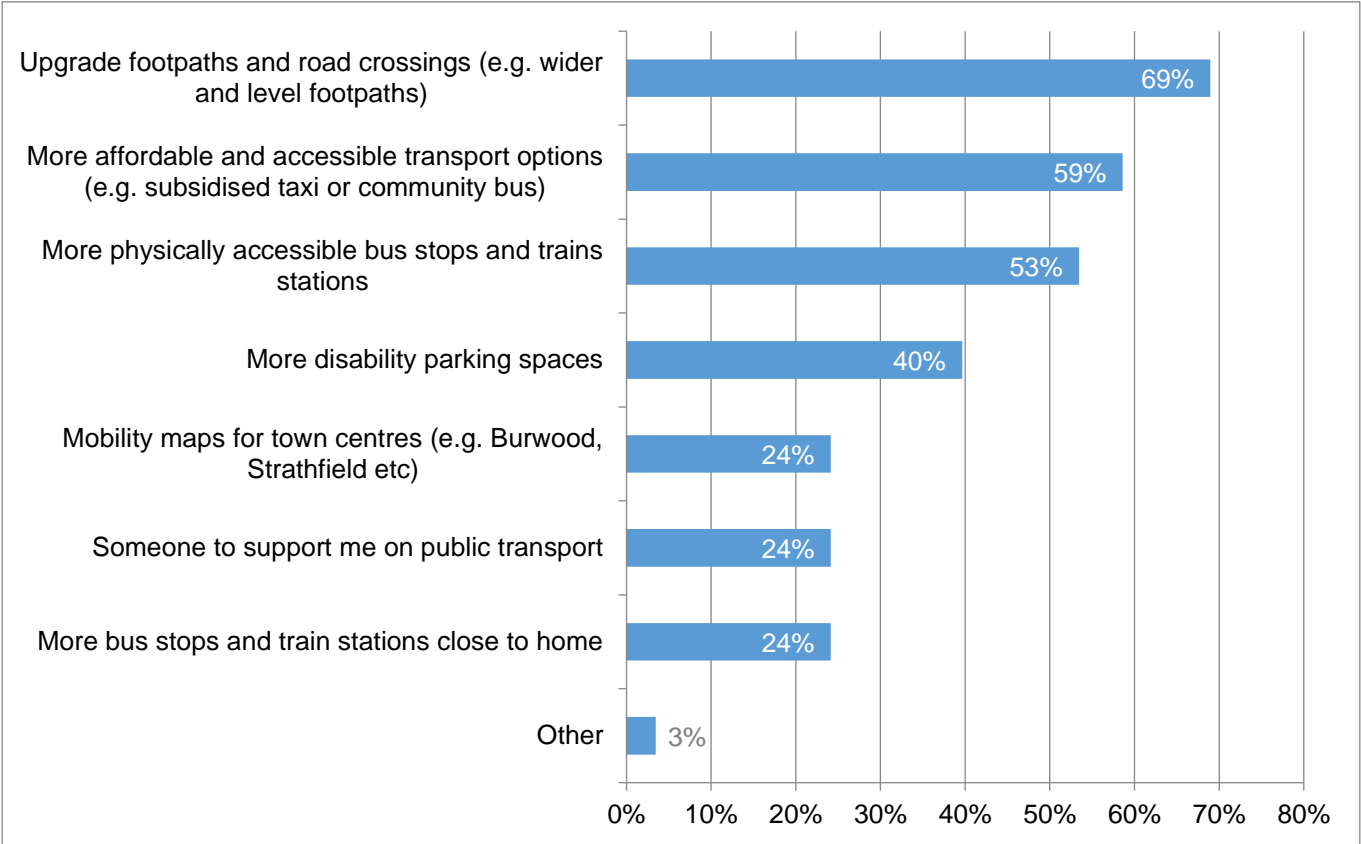
Figure 5 How easy is it for people with disability to use the following in the Burwood Council area?



**Ideas to make it is easier to get around Burwood**

As shown in Figure 6, respondents prioritised upgrades to footpaths and road crossings, more affordable and accessible transport options (e.g. subsidized taxi or community bus) and more physically accessible bus stops and train stations to make it easier to get around Burwood.

Figure 6 What could be improved to help people with disability get around Burwood?



Additional comments included:

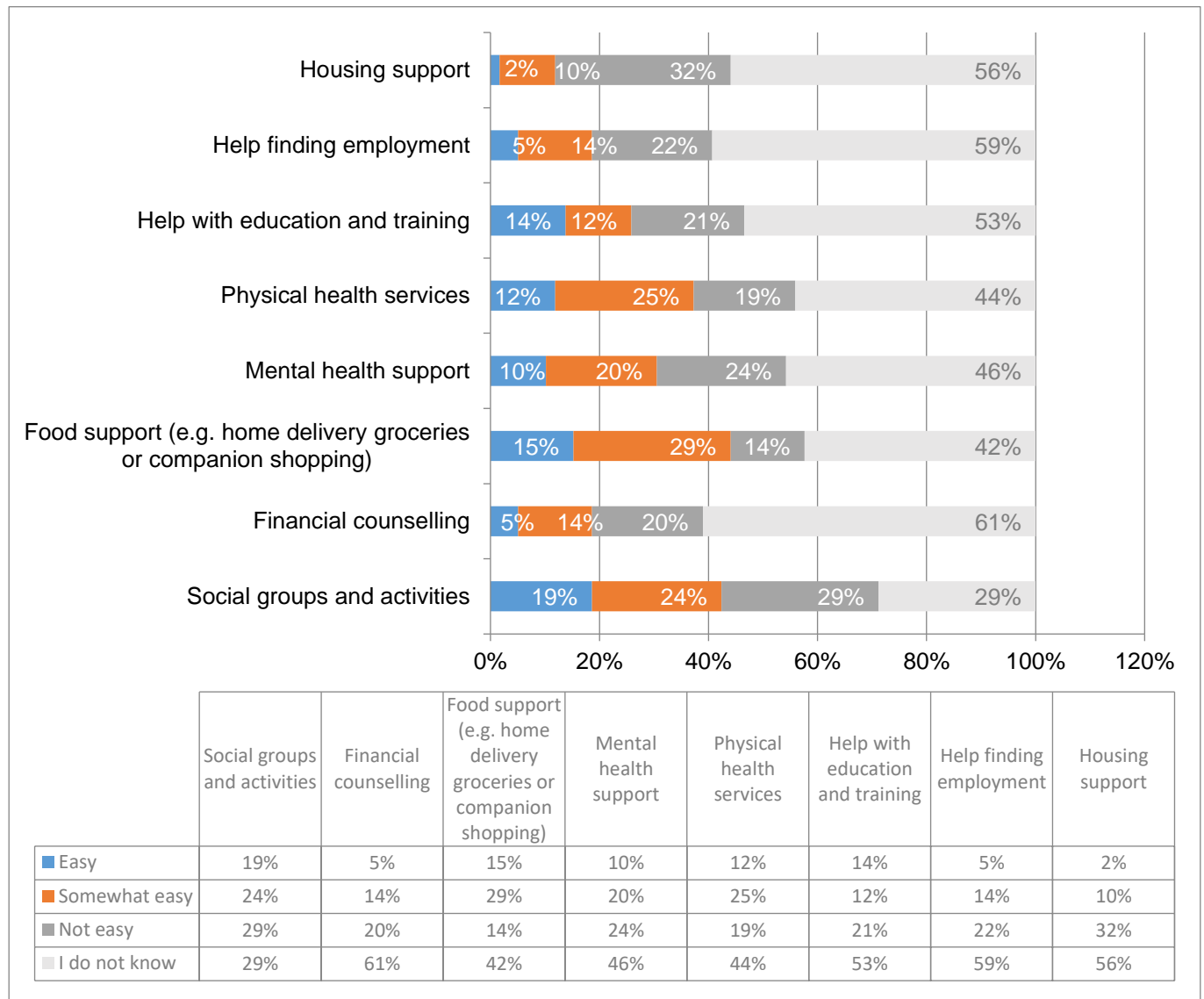
- Shuttle bus
- Weather shelters at bus stops

## Accessing services in Burwood

As shown in Figure 7, respondents were more likely to indicate services including food support, physical health services and social groups and activities are 'somewhat easy' to access in Burwood.

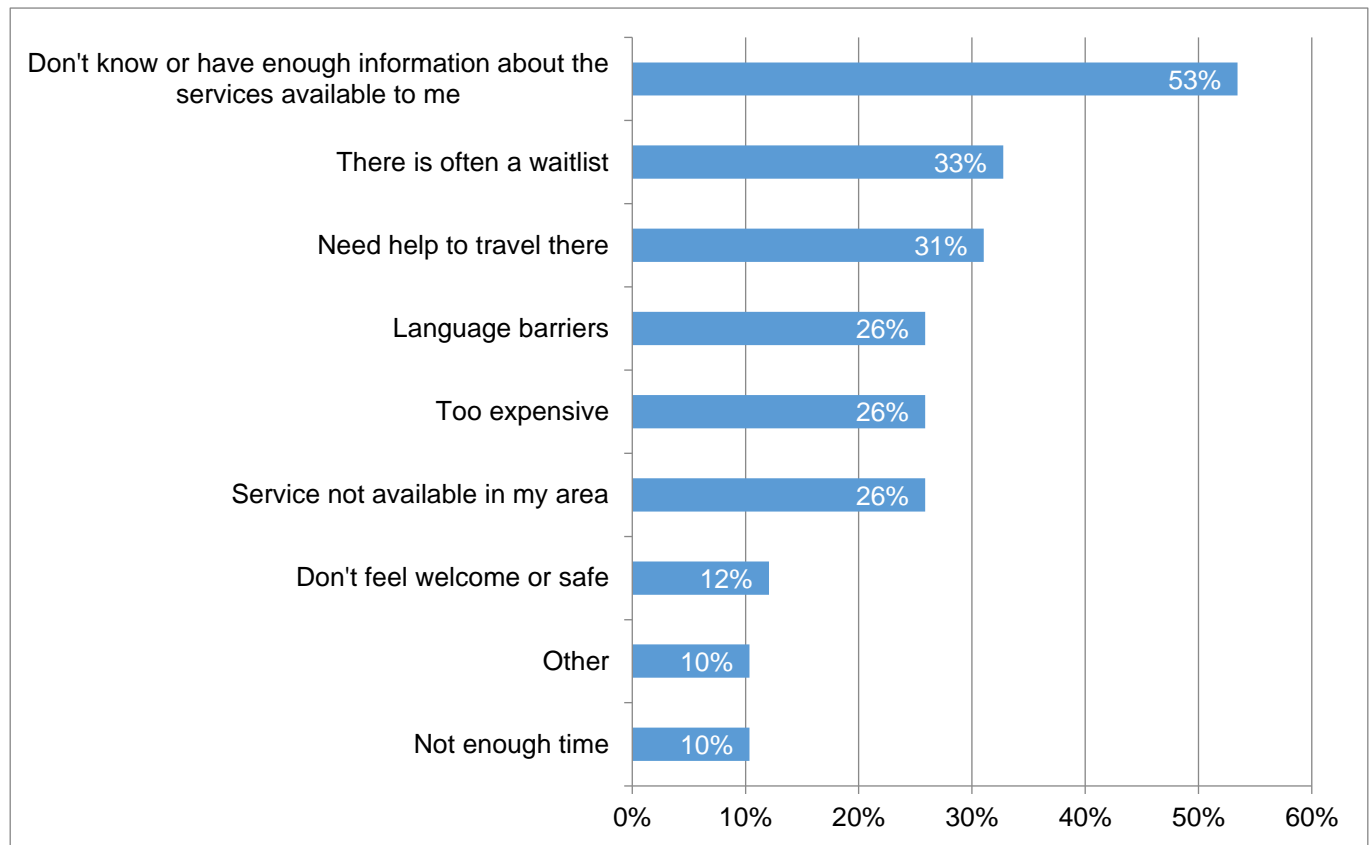
Respondents indicated it is less easy to access services including housing support (32% 'not easy'), social groups and activities (29%), mental health support (24%) and accessing help finding employment (22%).

Figure 7 How easy is it for people with disability to access the following services



As shown in Figure 8, when asked what makes it difficult to access these services respondents indicated they don't know or have enough information about the services available (53%), there is often a waitlist (33%), the need to travel there (31%) and language barriers (26%).

Figure 8 What makes it difficult for people with disability in Burwood to access these services?



Additional comments included:

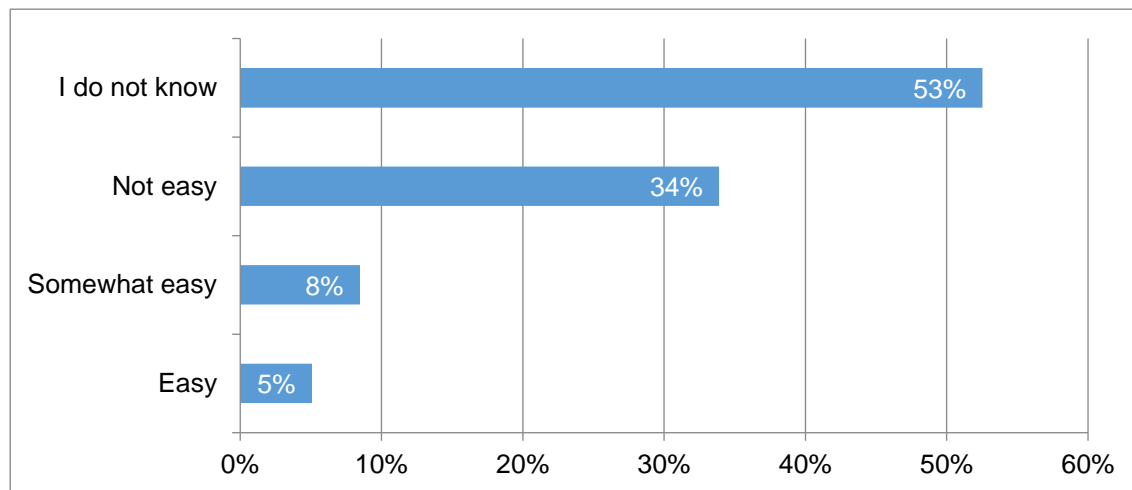
- Services are accessible, bookings can be quite difficult
- Transport
- I had a temporary disability and had no idea regarding any of the services mentioned in question number 13. I still don't. I spent 3 weeks completely alone having difficulty to move around my own home and not able to cook. I did not have any information regarding services available.
- Dependent on clients NDIS funding and how well they are supported
- Lack of information on how to access these services, usually very basic services offered not customised to person's needs and circumstances
- The lack of education that some people in those positions hold. Through this pandemic it has become apparent that community-based organisations aren't delivering food assistance which becomes a big barrier for those who already have accessibility issues.

### 3.2.4 Access to meaningful employment

#### Meaningful employment for people with disability in Burwood

As shown in Figure 9, respondents were more likely to indicate they do not know how easy it is for people with disability to access meaningful employment, followed by 34% of respondents that indicated it is not easy for people with disability to access meaningful employment in Burwood.

Figure 9 How easy is it for people with disability to access meaningful employment in Burwood?



#### Ideas to make it easier to access meaningful employment

As shown in Figure 10, respondents indicated training opportunities (54%), providing support for job applications (46%), more inclusive workplace cultures and more accessible and inclusive recruitment processes (41% each) could be improved to make it easier for people with disability to access employment.

Figure 10 What could be improved to make it easier for people with disability to access meaningful employment?



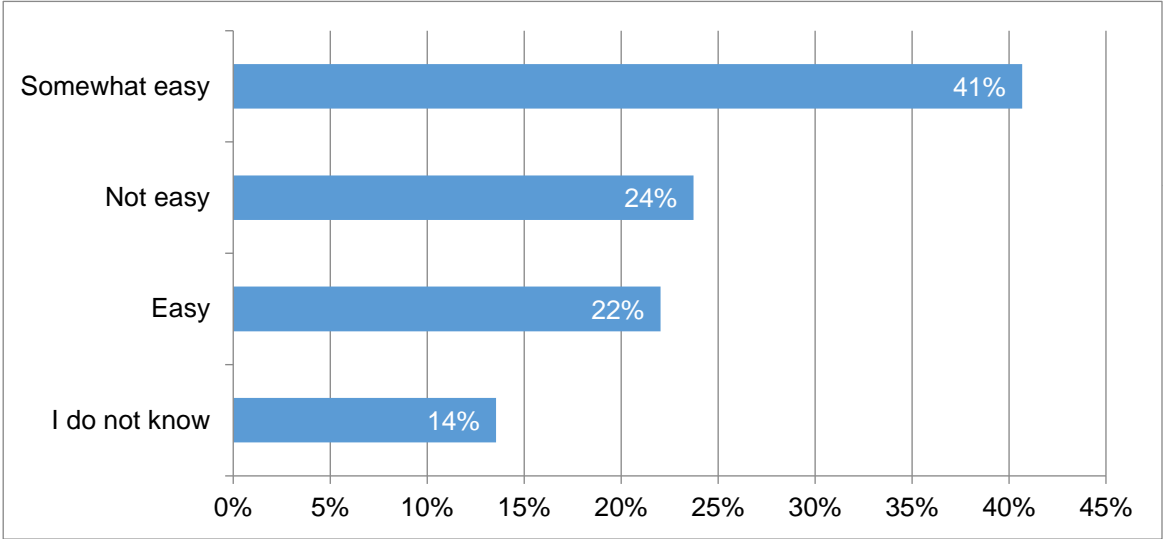


### 3.2.5 Systems and processes

#### Communicating with Council

As shown in Figure 11, respondents were more likely to indicate it is somewhat easy to find information and to communicate with Council (41%), followed by 24% of respondents that think it is not easy.

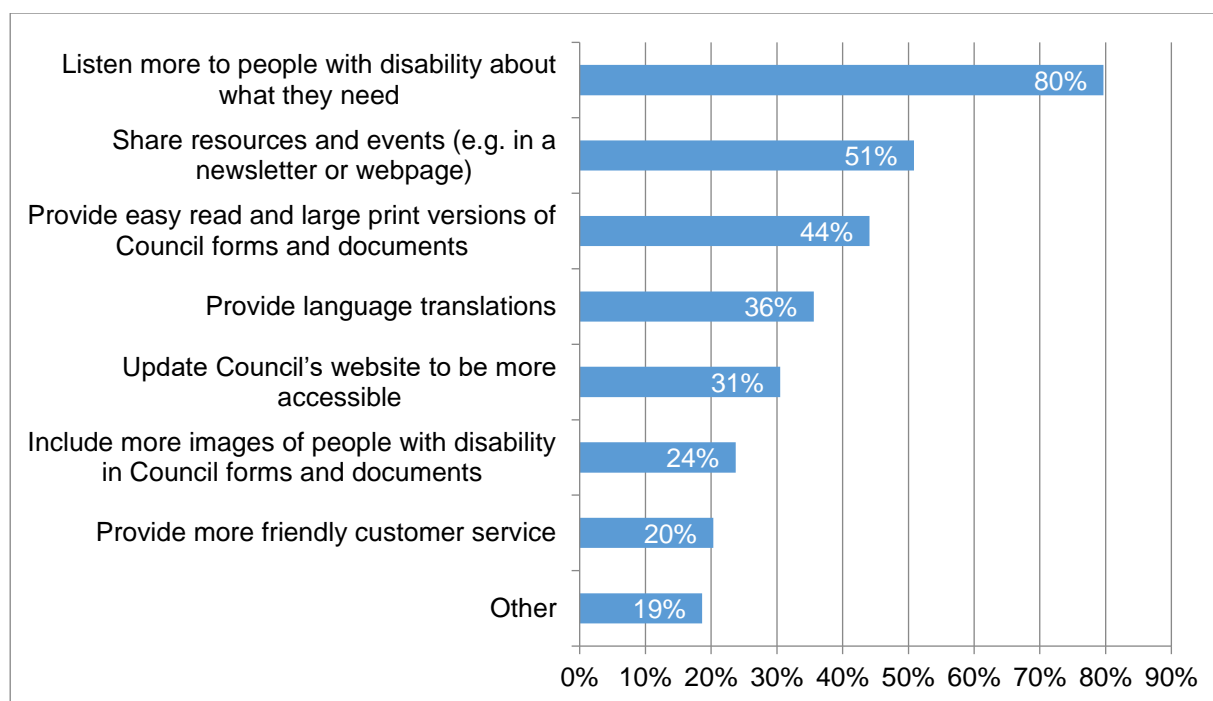
Figure 11 How easy is it for people with disability to find information and to communicate with Council?



#### Ideas to improve communication with people with disability

As shown in Figure 12, respondents think Council can better communicate with people with disability and their networks by listening more to people with disability about what they need (80%), providing resources and events via newsletter or website (51%) and providing easy read and large print versions of Council forms and documents were also priorities (44%).

Figure 12 How can Council better communicate with people with disability and their networks?



Additional comments included:

- Hard copy mailed to me (3 comments)
- Print version or hard copy
- Having a relationship with staff
- Some people can't read - maybe a QR code to link to a short video or just audio on the information.
- Need for a range of communications available so the whole community can access the information, for example braille, Auslan interpreter, easy to read formats etc. Have people with disability listened to first and foremost in matters relating to the Disability community.
- Create events and forums where people with disability (children and adults) can come together in a safe space and get to know one another - social isolation is a big thing especially children with complex disabilities like our nonverbal 7-year-old who loves to engage with others but doesn't know how to.
- Include outreach programs
- Start a network of people with disabilities, ask charities in Burwood LGA to focus on needs of people with disabilities
- Be inclusive

### 3.2.6 Other comments

We asked respondents whether they wanted to share any other priorities or needs for Council to consider in preparing the DIAP. Themed comments are shown in the table below.

Theme	Comments
Programs and activities (5 comments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free physio, exercise groups</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exercise for mental health programs</li> <li>Provide programs for wellness targeting people with disabilities, access to services at discounted rates where possible.</li> <li>Cheaper rates for disability access to Enfield pool it's way too expensive even though it's so close, we have to take clients to Leichhardt pool.</li> <li>I've recently joined a 4-week Mood Active course, advertised in Social Media by Burwood council. What an amazing resource! I couldn't speak highly enough about the organisation. Hope more engagement will be available for other members of the community.</li> </ul>
<b>Transport (3 comments)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More bus trips</li> <li>Easy transport, staff check in all seniors</li> <li>More disabled parking spots on main streets</li> </ul>
<b>Inclusion for people with invisible or non-physical disabilities (2 comments)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider the needs of people with non-physical disabilities.</li> <li>Also needs to incorporate those with hidden disabilities such as MS or autism</li> </ul>
<b>Consulting with people with disability (2 comments)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please include young children and their families in your considerations, not just people in wheelchairs. Our young kids often have complex needs and the journey can be very difficult, stressful, exhausting and lonely</li> <li>Speak to and engage the Disability community first and foremost. They are the people impacted not staff that are in paid employment for the Disability community.</li> </ul>
<b>Accessible information (2 comments)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information that is more accessible to the public. In different languages. More channels of communication for e.g. social media</li> <li>Provide all council information in alternate formats on request including braille and audio</li> </ul>
<b>Support for parents and carers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families of children with disabilities are often inadequately supported leading to carer burnout. Accessible platforms for PWD to actively engage and contribute to voice their issues. Commitment to recruiting PWD and of diverse backgrounds</li> </ul>
<b>Access to employment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I would like Council to coordinate simple but meaningful work-related activities for people with disabilities. This can be with shopping centres such as Coles, Woolies to collect trolleys etc. Some disable people love to be engaged in such activities.</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The staff at Burwood library are fantastic and amazing and helpful whenever we go there</li> <li>Major developments should have central and front access and not behind a whole lot of dingy back door corridors</li> <li>Council has a good Footpath Activation Policy - let's keep it that way</li> </ul>

### 3.3 Respondent profile

Which best describes you?	%	#
Community member	31%	18
Provider of services to people with disability (including paid carers and community workers)	20%	12
Family member or friend of a person with disability	19%	11
Person with disability	17%	10
Unpaid carer or a person with disability	8%	5

Other responses included 'No', 'I am another community member' or 'Recreation provider looking to provide access to people with disabilities.'

5%

3

Which suburb do you live in?	%	#
Burwood	37%	22
Other (included: Merrylands, Dulwich Hill, Maroubra, Ermington, Homebush West, Concord and Cabramatta)	29%	17
Croydon	12%	7
Croydon Park	12%	7
Strathfield	7%	4
Enfield	3%	2
Burwood Heights	0%	0

What is your gender?	%	#
Female	80%	47
Male	19%	11
Prefer not to say	2%	1
Non-binary	0%	0

What is your age?	%	#
5 to 11	0%	0
12 to 17	2%	1
18 to 24	2%	1
25 to 34	12%	7
35 to 49	22%	13
50 to 59	24%	14
60 to 69	12%	7
70 to 84	21%	12
85 and over	5%	3

Do you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?	%	#
No	95%	56
Yes	3%	2
Prefer not to say	2%	1

Do you identify as LGBTQIA+?	%	#
Yes	8%	4
No	86%	44
Prefer not to say	6%	3

Do you speak a language other than English at home?

%

#

Other

50%

29

No

50%

29

Top non-English languages spoken were Arabic (29%), Italian (24%), Cantonese (18%), Mandarin (12%), Vietnamese (12%) and Spanish (6%)



## 4. Easy Read community survey findings

### 4.1 About the Easy Read survey

An Easy Read survey was available for people with disability and their families, friends and support workers to complete between 8 March 2022 to 19 April 2022. Community members were also able to access the survey via Council's website. A total of 27 Easy Read surveys were completed.

### 4.2 Respondent profile

Demographic theme	Response	No. of responses
Relation to disability	Person with disability	10
	Paid carer for a person with disability	10
	Community member	4
	Family member or friend of person with disability	3
Age	25 to 34	2
	50 to 59	9
	60 to 69	8
	Did not want to say	2
Gender	Female	17
	Male	10
Suburb	Burwood	3
	Croydon; Croydon Park	2
Suburbs outside of the Burwood LGA	Baulkham Hills (2); Campsie (2); Quakers Hill (2); Concord West; Denistone; Epping; Gordon; Hornsby; Liberty Grove; Lidcombe; Newington; Penthurst.	1 (each) unless otherwise stated
Language spoken at home	Korean	19
	Cantonese	5
	Chinese	3
Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	Yes	Nil
	No	27
	I do not want to say	Nil
Identify as LGBTQIA+	Yes	Nil
	No	27
	I do not want to say	Nil

### 4.3 Key findings

Key findings from the easy read survey responses included:

- Respondents indicated that shopping centres, cafes and restaurants, libraries and places of worship are easy to access. Festivals and events, sports facilities, swimming pools, and parks and playgrounds can be less easy to access.
- Respondents indicated it is easy to use footpaths and a bus or train. However, some respondents also indicated it is less easy to use footpaths, as well as access public toilets.
- Thinking about why it is difficult to access places in the community, the majority of respondents indicated no knowledge of these places and things. Some respondents further indicated they cannot get to the bus stops or train stations, there are problems with the footpaths, it costs too much money and they have no support person to go with them.
- Overall, respondents find it easy to get around, and feel safe and included where they live.
- To make the Burwood LGA more inclusive and accessible, respondents would like to see more activities designed to have fun and meet people; information translated into their language, and more friendly people.
- The most common way that respondents would like to receive information from Burwood Council is by Council's website, newsletters and emails.

## 4.4 What we heard

### 4.4.1 Livable communities

#### How easy it is for people with disability to access public spaces, facilities and events?

Respondents were asked to tick how easy it is to go to facilities, public spaces and events in Burwood.

Place	Easy	Okay	Not easy	I do not go there
Libraries	12	5	4	6
Sports facilities	8	7	5	7
Swimming pools	8	7	4	8
Cafes and restaurants	14	10	3	0
Shopping centres & shops	17	8	2	0
Festivals and events	10	8	7	2
Places of worship	12	8	1	6
Parks & playgrounds	12	11	4	1

#### How easy it is for people with disability to get around?

Respondents were asked to tick how easy it is to get around in Burwood.

Mobility	Easy	Okay	Not easy	I do not go there
Use footpaths	16	6	5	0
Use a bus or train	12	9	3	3
Get a taxi service	10	7	3	6
Go to public toilets	10	9	4	3

#### What makes it hard to go to places in your community?

Respondents were asked to tell us what makes it hard to go to places in the Burwood community. Respondents were provided with a list of options to tick.

- I do not know about these places and things (13 responses)
- I cannot get to the bus stops or train stations (6 responses)
- There are problems with the footpaths (5 responses)
- It costs too much money (5 responses)
- I have no support person to go with me (5 responses)
- There are no ramps or lifts (3 responses)
- There is no accessible parking (3 responses)
- There are no things to help me like TSGL, signage braille or hearing loops (3 responses)
- I do not feel welcome (2 response)



#### 4.4.2 Community behaviours and attitudes

##### How do you feel about living in the Burwood LGA?

Respondents were asked to tell us how they feel about living in the Burwood LGA.

Perception	Yes	Sometimes	No
I feel safe where I live	18	7	2
I feel included where I live	17	8	2
I find it easy to get around	20	6	1
I feel there are lots of fun activities for me to do	11	10	6
I find it easy to get information I need	8	14	5
I find it easy to get the support I need	9	14	4

##### What would you like to see more often?

Respondents were asked to tell us what they would like to see more often to make the Burwood LGA more inclusive and accessible. Respondents were provided with a list of options to tick.

- More activities to have fun and meet people (16 responses)
- Information translated into my language (12 responses)
- People are more friendly (10 responses)
- Someone to help me go places (8 responses)
- Help me fill in forms (7 responses)
- Help me find a job (6 responses)
- Make things easy to read (6 responses)

#### 4.4.3 Systems and processes

##### How would you like to get information from Burwood Council?

Respondents were asked to tell us how they would like to get information from Burwood Council. Respondents were provided with a list of options to tick.

- Website (16 responses)
- Newsletters (9 responses)
- Send me emails about activities (8 responses)
- Meetings to talk about important things (7 responses)
- I do not know (2 response)

#### 4.4.4 Other comments

Respondents were asked what else they would like to see in the Burwood LGA. Respondents were provided a text box to write a free entry. Comments included:

- More shows (2 comments)
- Free parking
- More activities for overseas students
- More activities for seniors, and
- Place for shopping and a good place to exercise.

# 5. Community focus group findings

## 5.1 About the community focus group

Two focus groups were held with Burwood Council community members on Tuesday 15 March, 6pm to 7.30pm and Thursday 17 March, 10.30am – 12pm. The first focus group was held online via Zoom and the second was held in-person at Burwood Library. A total of 21 participants attended the sessions.

The purpose of the focus group was to engage with residents living in the Burwood LGA to inform Burwood Council's second Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP), and to understand from the community what is working well and can be changed to improve inclusion and accessibility for people with disability in Burwood, and their ideas to make the Burwood area a more inclusive and accessible place to live.

## 5.2 Overview of activities

Following a short presentation on the purpose of the focus group, a discussion was facilitated around the following questions:

- What is working well in Burwood when you think about inclusion and accessibility for people with disability?
- What needs improvement when you think about inclusion and accessibility for people with disability?
- What are your ideas to make Burwood more inclusive and accessible?

## 5.3 Key findings

- Top comments regarding successful accessibility and inclusion in Burwood include recent upgrades to Burwood Library that have resulted in the building being more accessible for people of all abilities to visit and connect; good access to public transport; flat surfaced and wide footpaths; and council's communication via email and newsletters.
- When thinking about what isn't working well in Burwood, the top comments indicated lack of accessible parking close to essential services such as medical centres, post offices, grocery stores and Westfield; lack of social opportunities for people with disability, particularly young people; and lack of active recreation opportunities that are inclusive and accessible.
- Community focus group participants provided the following ideas and opportunities to improve access and inclusion in Burwood: increased accessible parking spaces and pick up/drop off zones; increased programs, events and recreational activities that are inclusive, affordable and accommodate a range of interests; improved communication between Council and the community such as using alternative formats and methods of communication; improved accessibility of footpaths, kerbs, gutters and stairs; updating Councils DCP to increase and support inclusion and access; providing information and supporting pathways to educational and employment opportunities.

## 5.4 What is working well?

Thinking about inclusion and accessibility for people with disability, participants noted that the following is working well in Burwood:

Theme	Comments
Burwood Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The relocation of Burwood Library to a more accessible location with additional parking spaces</li><li>• The new structure makes the facility a lot easier to navigate and for service providers to bring people together and organise activities for people of all abilities</li><li>• Every room in this building has tactile and braille signage, and colour contrasts to make it much</li><li>• Heritage of the building was retained</li><li>• Diverse collection of books including a large selection of books in community languages</li></ul>
Good access to public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There are many bus routes that pass-through Burwood</li><li>• The area is well serviced by trains including Croydon, Burwood and Strathfield</li><li>• It's easy to travel to Burwood but also to travel out of area</li></ul>
Adequate footpath surfaces and widths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Generally, footpaths and walkways are flat, well paved and wide</li><li>• One participant noting as new development comes into the area the footpaths are being maintained and/or better constructed</li></ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Council communication via emails about available activities for people of all ages, such as children's disability programs and workshops</li><li>• Council's Burwood Cares newsletter which summarises essential information and highlights opportunities for engagement.</li><li>• Community events and activities that celebrate people with disability such as International Day of People with Disability community event and Groovability</li><li>• A multicultural and welcoming community which can be built on to improve access and inclusion.</li><li>• A strong sense of community and safety, with a buzzing feel</li><li>• Community transport run by services providers</li><li>• Council initiated the Burwood Access Committee long before their first DIAP which exemplifies a commitment to access and inclusion.</li><li>• Location is central and convenient for shopping and access to medical centres.</li><li>• Council's Footpath Activation Policy that supports people with disability, particularly people that are vision impaired or use a wheelchair.</li></ul>

## 5.5 What needs improvement?

Thinking about inclusion and accessibility for people with disability, participants noted that the following needs improvement in Burwood:

Theme	Comments
Accessible parking close to essential services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of accessible parking spaces in a barrier to accessing essential services, such as medical centres, post office and grocery stores.</li> <li>• Lack of accessible and covered drop off zones outside of Burwood Public School.</li> <li>• Short term parking has been removed outside of shopping centres and post offices.</li> <li>• Expressed the need for better interconnectivity between public transport (i.e. railway stations) and vehicles.</li> <li>• Conflict and abuse related to accessible parking spaces (i.e. self-policing and slurs). This suggests there is a lack of accessible parking spaces at key locations in Burwood.</li> <li>• Strong reliance on private vehicles to get people from place to place.</li> </ul>
Increased services and social opportunities for young people with disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited understanding or awareness about the activities that are available in the local area.</li> <li>• Need for more group gatherings and social outings, particularly post COVID-19.</li> <li>• Need for more services that teach young people with disability how to live independent lives, e.g. how to use public transport or do grocery shopping.</li> </ul>
Supporting inclusive and accessible sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expressed need for sports that enable people with disability, and particularly people in wheelchairs, to be active.</li> <li>• Concerns that sports fields are largely synthetic and only cater to hockey and soccer.</li> <li>• Expressed need for more options for people with intellectual disabilities.</li> <li>• Funding for volunteer sporting organisations.</li> </ul>
Increased communications between Council and community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expressed that many people are not connected to Council facilities and need to use shopping centres to distribute important information.</li> <li>• There is no one size fits all model to communicate with people with disability.</li> </ul>
Development Control Planning to better reflect access and inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expressed there is not enough parking for multi-story complexes meaning that it is more difficult to find on street parking in residential streets.</li> </ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring Council's Footpath Activation Policy is enforced by rangers, including ensuring building lines remains clear for vision impaired pedestrians.</li> <li>• Limited work for people with disability that is meaningful and suitable for them.</li> <li>• Local employers need to understand the skills and capabilities of people with disability and break down barriers to help support employment.</li> </ul>

## 5.6 Ideas to make Burwood more inclusive and accessible

Participants shared the following ideas to make Burwood more inclusive and accessible for people with disability:

Theme	Comments
Increased accessible parking spaces and pick up/drop off zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority locations for additional accessible parking spaces include Burwood Library, Burwood Plaza, Burwood Westfield, outside of medical centres and on Burwood Road.</li> <li>• Develop an information sheet or map that highlights accessible and affordable parking locations and pick up/drop off points in Burwood LGA.</li> <li>• Provide covered pick up/drop off zones where possible.</li> <li>• Reinstate two parking spaces with 20-minute time limit outside of the Burwood Post Shop.</li> <li>• Improve interconnectivity between railway stations and vehicles with convenient drop off points near railway stations, e.g. kiss and ride area next to Burwood Station and Emerald Square (Burwood Plaza).</li> <li>• Investigate the idea of valet parking for people with disability and whether this can be supported via the NDIS.</li> <li>• Ensure clear signposting for accessible parking spaces, including in shopping centres.</li> </ul>
Increased inclusive programs, events and recreational activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider more accessible and inclusive sporting facilities and programming, e.g., wheelchair sports or goalball.</li> <li>• Move towards multi-purpose spaces that can accommodate a range of activities and facilities.</li> <li>• Deliver more social gatherings and events in outdoor spaces.</li> <li>• More affordable activities for people with disability and their carers. One participant noted they visit leisure centres outside of the LGA because Enfield Aquatic Centre entry fees are higher. Suggestion for local service providers within the area to receive a discount, and out of region service providers pay full price.</li> <li>• Organise art expeditions for people with disability and carers.</li> <li>• Better utilise the Burwood Park Community Centre, including performances and events.</li> <li>• Collaborate with local service providers and organisations to deliver social activities and events.</li> <li>• Deliver a program for young people with disability in Burwood Library.</li> <li>• Provide youth nights for people with disability and their carers. Activity recommendations included film nights, themed nights and group dinners. There could be a \$5 entry fee which is donated toward a local charity.</li> </ul>
Improved communications between Council and community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all communications methods have maximum accessibility, e.g. all emails drafted in accordance with WCAG 2.0/2.1 standards.</li> <li>• Use alternative communications methods to provide information. Ideas included email, audio, leaflet box outside of shopping centres, SMS messages, and recorded information on telephone systems.</li> <li>• Participants indicated emails can be better than the community newsletter, particularly for people with visual impairment that can't read the newsletter</li> <li>• It was noted that having text in an email is easier to read, with some participants noting that not all PDF attachments are accessible</li> <li>• Opportunity for library staff to help with communicating and promoting programs and activities (however people will need to know that this is a service that is available first)</li> <li>• Council to update their language and focus on inclusion, so people with disability aren't seen as a "problematic group" and reduce stigma</li> <li>• Suggestion for Access Committee to review Council written materials to ensure inclusive language is used</li> </ul>

Improved accessibility of footpaths, kerbs, gutter and stairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update footpaths and install wheelchair ramps in Woodstock Park and Burwood Park. Participants noted the pathways to access these parks are in good condition.</li> <li>• Better maintain pathways near to trees.</li> <li>• Ensure continuous TGSi connectivity, e.g. from bus stops to points of interest</li> <li>• Ensure all stairs have appropriate accessibility to minimise hazards.</li> </ul>
Review Control Plan to increase relevance to inclusion and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council to revisit off street parking for households with people with disability.</li> <li>• Council to enforce more visitor parking for multi-story complexes.</li> <li>• Investigate what other councils are doing to improve parking access for residents, e.g. parking scheme for residents with disability.</li> <li>• Council to require more accessible toilets in its DCP.</li> <li>• Update language in the DCP so that when new infrastructure is being built, it's to the most current accessible standard (e.g. are being built 'To the most current version...' of that standard).</li> </ul>
Increased provision of accessible toilets in public spaces and available information on locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council can link the National Toilet Map on their website to inform people of where accessible toilets are located across the LGA.</li> <li>• Opportunity to co-locate accessible amenities with Westfields for people to access out of Westfield hours, for example people dining out at night.</li> <li>• Increased provision of accessible adult change facilities, particularly for community events to allow people to come and stay.</li> </ul>
Supporting pathways to education and employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity for Council to integrate employment services and local businesses through their business forums they run.</li> <li>• Include information of local employment services in Council's weekly business newsletter to connect local businesses with potential employees.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
Increased signage and wayfinding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide tactile ground surfacing to lead people to bus stops to support people with visual disabilities.</li> <li>• Provide accessible street signage like in the City of Sydney that reads "You are standing on the corner of..."</li> </ul>
Affordable housing provision, requirements and information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased information to understand where there is adaptable housing across the LGA, noting Council has a requirement that housing must include 10% adaptable housing yet this is not known by the local community.</li> <li>• Council and services can have an advocacy role in regard to the promotion of social workers, how accessible are they, what is their availability like.</li> <li>• Need for livable housing and to incorporate design guidelines such as width of doors and internal corridors, visible toilets, shower in the corner, handrails etc.</li> </ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a publicly accessible mobility map for the three town centres.</li> <li>• Council can be the centralised place of information for all types of disability services.</li> <li>• Establish Council grants category for people with disability to pursue arts and creative practices.</li> <li>• Provide performance opportunities for artists with disability.</li> <li>• Increased community education and awareness workshops about important community issues, including ability diversity, domestic violence etc.</li> <li>• Ensure a high-level statement access and inclusion is included in all Council documents, plans and strategies.</li> <li>• Advocate Transport NSW to provide a second accessible gate at Burwood Station.</li> <li>• One participant would like to see a ban on platform lifts as they aren't maintained.</li> <li>• Service provider to that participated in the focus group indicated their clients are looking to volunteer and run or contribute to social programs and activities, noting this goes hand in hand with building capacity, skills and work life opportunities.</li> </ul>



## 6. Submission

Council received one submission from a local resident via email on 23 March 2022. This participant indicated their lived experience and interest are twofold:

- The participant has a sibling with physical and intellectual disabilities, including vision impairment and epilepsy
- The participant is employed as a secondary teacher working with students who have diverse needs including students on the autism spectrum and those with sensory challenges

Key points included:

- Additional seating close to walking paths, specifically at Henley Park.
- Disabled parking spaces near accessible paths such as this one at Henley Park (pictured)
- The ability to book the Burwood Library Community Hub's rooms free of charge for 2 hours at a time for local students /residents.



"Burwood Council area contains fantastic parks for our diverse community and walking around the parks is popular. Feedback from my brother's experience at Henley Park from family and his assistants for many years has been that there is limited seating, and particularly limited seating close to the path, as there is a need to walk across grass to get to many seats at Henley Park. My brother's vision impairment, epilepsy and physical limitations, particularly as he gets older mean that walking from the path, across grass, to seating can be challenging, and the limited seating in general often limits his walking capacity. Also, paths need to be flat and wide for my brother and his assistant to walk comfortably, and disabled parking needs to correspond with accessible paths.

- Submission

"Burwood Library has become a fantastic space for students in our suburb and I have spent a great deal of time working with students at the library both in busy times (such as during the HSC exam period) and quieter times. Students on the autism spectrum and those with sensory disorders (sound, visual, people) can be easily distracted and anxious. The ability to use the library's private rooms as booked study rooms free of charge would improve the inclusive nature of these fantastic spaces as it would allow such students the certainty of a space that would not provide distractions. The State Library allows bookings in their study rooms via their website for 2 hours free of charge which I utilise with students at times. In addition, I have utilised the library's spaces, HSC resources and technology regularly and can provide feedback as to their inclusive nature and "user-friendliness".



# 7. Service provider interview findings

## 7.1 About the service provider interviews

Service providers were invited to participate in a 30-minute phone interview between 7 March and 18 March 2022. A total of 5 service providers were consulted, including:

- St Anthony's Family Care
- Inner West Disability Forum
- Ability Links Local Area Coordination Program (LAC)
- Eurella Community Services
- Participate Australia

The purpose of the service provider interviews was to engage with organisations delivering services to people with disability in the Burwood LGA to understand the needs, priorities, ideas and opportunities for disability inclusion and access in the Burwood LGA.

## 7.2 Overview of questions

Following a short description on the purpose of service provider interviews, a discussion was facilitated around the following questions:

- How does your organisation contribute to disability service provision in Burwood?
- How have you collaborated with Burwood Council?
- What is working well in Burwood when you think about inclusion and accessibility for people with disability?
- What would you like to see improved? Can you identify any specific needs or issues which Council could address through their DIAP?
- Are there any groups in the Burwood area that experience more challenges or need more support in relation to disability inclusion and access?
- Do you have any ideas for how Council and local service providers can better work together to deliver disability inclusion and access in the Burwood area?

## 7.3 Key findings

Key findings from the service provider interviews included:

- When thinking about what is working well, service providers commented on the accessible parks and play spaces, Council's community facilities, community events and accessible public transport services.

- When thinking about the challenges to inclusion and accessibility, services providers were concerned about lack of employment opportunities, education and learning support, community attitudes and awareness of disability, public transport, roads and footpaths, accessible parking, and accessible toilets.
- When thinking about ideas and opportunities to improve access and inclusion, services providers provided ideas about pathways to employment, increasing awareness and understanding of different types of disability, accessible and affordable spaces and facilities, all-inclusive events and programs, targeted consultation processes and access to affordable housing.

## 7.4 What is working well?

Thinking about inclusion and accessibility for people with disability, service providers noted the following is working well in Burwood:

Theme	Working well
Accessible parks and play spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wangal Park in Croydon which has water play, toilets, slide, exercise equipment.</li> <li>• Henley Park in Enfield which has accessible equipment and a ramp</li> <li>• Burwood Park</li> </ul>
Council including facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woodstock Community Centre</li> <li>• Burwood Library</li> </ul>
Community events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groovability event</li> </ul>
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buses and trains are accessible</li> </ul>

## 7.5 What are the challenges?

Thinking about inclusion and accessibility for people with disability, service providers noted the following challenges and needs in Burwood:

Theme	Challenge
Lack of employment opportunities within Council and local businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service providers expressed there is lack of employment opportunities within Council for people with disability</li> <li>• Need for increased understanding of different types of disability amongst the recruitment of new staff and for existing staff in Council</li> <li>• There is a lack of understanding amongst local businesses of what people with disability can contribute, with one service provider expressing people with disability are very loyal</li> <li>• It was noted there is a perception of people with disability that they cannot contribute to employment and only rely on NDIS or Centrelink</li> </ul>
Lack of learning support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service providers indicated there is a lack of learning support for people with disability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Need better educational support to help transition from education to employment</li> <li>– Students with disability are not supported in finding their work placements, which can leave them without the work experience</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Retailers can be reluctant to take on young people with disability for work placement</li> </ul>
Change attitudes and creating more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to promote peoples understanding and attitudes of people with disability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– One service provider indicated there is a stigma in CALD communities with people with disability, which can silence their voices and create barriers</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

awareness within the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to integrate access and inclusion in the lives of the wider community</li> <li>• Community attitudes towards people with disability, particularly local businesses to employ people with disability</li> </ul>
Public transport, roads and footpaths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for better access between public transport and main public spaces. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– One service provider indicated the distance from the train station to Woodstock Community Centre is too far for people with disability.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• One service provider noted that there is a lot of construction along Burwood Road which causes physical barriers</li> <li>• Ensuring walkways are wide enough and need a continuous commitment from Council to ensure this in future planning</li> <li>• Ensure accessibility on public transport</li> </ul>
Lack of accessible parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of accessible parking is a barrier to getting to and from places, particularly near key destinations such as along Park Road</li> <li>• One service provider noted parking at Burwood Park is difficult; people can park at shopping centres but then they need to come out and cross the road</li> </ul>
Accessible toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for accessible toilets in buildings, particularly in shops and restaurants</li> <li>• Hooks in bathrooms behind the door are too high for people in a wheelchair</li> </ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expressed need for more community hub spaces where people with disability can interact and connect with the wider community</li> <li>• Council does one event for people with disability, however, there needs to be more to celebrate people with disability</li> <li>• Signage is very busy in Burwood which is a particular issue around parks and services such as Service NSW</li> <li>• The main priority for the DIAP is ensuring all public spaces and facilities are disability friendly and accessible.</li> <li>• Local businesses are super congested and are not accessible, particularly the width of doors or having steps to enter</li> <li>• There is high demand for after school programs, particularly as many children with disability living within the Burwood and inner-city area have two working parents and higher NDIS plans</li> <li>• Lack of accessible information particularly for CALD clientele during COVID-19</li> <li>• Lack of affordable and accessible housing is a big issue, as well as homelessness</li> </ul>

## 7.6 Priority target groups

Service providers identified the following target groups that experience more challenges or need more support in relation to disability inclusion and access:

- Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people with disability and their families
  - There is a stigma around disability within the CALD community
  - Language barriers are a challenge in accessing information and resources, and this was a particular issue during the COVID-19 pandemic
- People with intellectual disability
  - One service provider indicated people with intellectual disability need predictability and this was a challenge during COVID-19 pandemic
- People living within high density areas
  - Need accessible and inclusive green spaces and playgrounds including water and sensory play

## 7.7 Ideas and opportunities for access and inclusion

Service providers shared the following ideas to make Burwood more inclusive and accessible for people with disability, their family, friends and carers:

Theme	Ideas and opportunities
Pathways to employment and financial independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service providers indicated a strong need to provide and support employment opportunities for people with disability, including young people with disability looking for workplace experience.</li> <li>• Examples of ways to improve pathways to employment and financial independence include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– There was a former network across Sydney for high school students with disability to participate in work experience opportunities (typically people with intellectual disability have poorer outcomes in terms of employment and career progression, and in gaining work experience)</li> <li>– Ticket to Work Network was a program for students with intellectual disability, (Year 10 students) that were put into a work experience placement to give them exposure to employment</li> <li>– Sutherland Shire Council make it very welcoming for students to be part of a work placement program there. Burwood Council has an opportunity to engender diversity and inclusion to show commitment to people with disability by showing these types of opportunities; work experience, but also employment and engagement of people with disability.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Council should provide meaningful employment for people with disability, noting it should not be tokenistic</li> <li>• Employers need to recognise people have visible and invisible disabilities</li> <li>• Increased awareness of employers about people with visible and invisible disabilities, and the contributions they can make</li> <li>• Opportunity for council to work with the business chamber to help students and people with disability finding employment, such as work placement</li> <li>• Council needs to take leadership to work with local businesses, service providers, people with disability and their families to make employment opportunities happen <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Work with community leaders to support local employment within local businesses</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Council can provide support with businesses, such as incentivizing and upskilling local businesses to create employment opportunities for people with disability</li> </ul> <p><i>“I had a client living in Burwood and worked for McDonalds in the city for 30 years. Because of his support needs it took him longer to get ready in the morning, that’s why it’s important for local opportunities for people to remain within their community.”</i></p>
Increased understanding about disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for council to investigate initiatives to change some of the attitudes in the community, including some local businesses in the area to employ people with disability</li> <li>• Creating better visibility of people with disability and having representation across the community</li> <li>• Communication collateral such as newsletters should be consulted on with people with disability to make sure it is accessible, inclusive and representative</li> <li>• More opportunities for people with disability to engage with the wider community. One service provider indicated whilst people are at work, people with disability will go to their day program between 9am-3pm and there is little opportunity for interaction between people with disability and the wider community.</li> <li>• Need to raise the voice of people with disability</li> <li>• Promoting a positive image and increasing visibility of people with disability in the Burwood community to make genuine connections and not transactional connections</li> </ul>

<b>Accessible and affordable facilities and spaces</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expressed need for more affordable spaces to hire, including Council and private facilities</li> <li>Opportunity for community spaces incorporated in public open spaces, such as Enfield Park. One service provider would like access to an indoor community centre to run information sessions, peer support, carers groups etc.</li> <li>Council facilities, urban areas and green spaces are accessible via parking</li> <li>Ensure physical accessibility of all Council facilities</li> <li>Audit of cultural and community venues to ensure accessibility</li> </ul>
<b>All-inclusive events, activities and programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many service providers would like to see more inclusive events of all people in the community including people with disability, First Nations people, culturally and linguistically diverse, and LGBTQI <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Events that are inclusive of the whole community</li> <li>Sometimes more disability specific events can be more segregating if it's not done well</li> <li>Groovability is a fantastic event</li> </ul> </li> <li>All events should be inclusive and accessible, and don't necessarily need to ask people if they require an interpreter but saying one will be available</li> </ul>
<b>Targeted consultation processes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better understand the ways to consult with different target groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One service provider noted parents with young children like to be engaged over the phone as it provides more flexibility for them, where as a person with intellectual disability might prefer face to face consultation</li> </ul> </li> <li>Paying people for their time if they are a person with lived experience</li> <li>Establish an advisory group to guide the process of consultation to include some of the services and people with disability</li> </ul>
<b>Accessible housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some service providers expressed a need for more accessible and affordable housing for people with disability that want to live independently</li> <li>Greater awareness around rough sleepers in Burwood that have a disability and need support in accessing housing</li> </ul>
<b>Other ideas and opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing with community grants because they assist and help deliver local programs</li> <li>Advocacy of Council to different levels of government for issues such as affordable and accessible housing</li> <li>Council is a first point of contact for many people within the community and should be able to refer people to relevant service providers and resources. Understand that Council isn't responsible for everything, but they can be a first point of call.</li> <li>Need for clear signage that includes pictures, particularly for multicultural people, people with low literacy skills or a cognitive disability.</li> <li>Council's communications and digital environment needs to be visible to all people, including people who don't have vision, including website content and flyers that go out to the community</li> <li>New buildings that require elevators should include audio that lets people know which floor they are on</li> <li>Thinking of other types of disabilities that can benefit from physical access needs</li> </ul>

## 7.8 Collaboration between Council and service providers

Participants were asked for ideas on how Council and service providers can better collaborate, and shared the following ideas:

Theme	Ideas for collaboration
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Information sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was noted that services providers are happy to work with council to come up with flyers, content and deliver widely (staff, council staff, general community members) to gradually break biases and prejudices</li> <li>Need to connect people with ideas and information with service providers as well as what else is happening in the community</li> <li>More information directly shared with services about events that are inclusive and offer accessibility (e.g. service providers and some clients can't attend events near major roads).</li> <li>Provide information about Council's strategic direction so they can align grant funding (e.g. for example around CALD and Chinese communities)</li> <li>Many services providers would like to see more information sharing about the services and facilities that Council provides. Some questions included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is Council NDIS registered? Want to know more about Council's role and offering</li> <li>Does the library do a 'loud hour' for adult people with disabilities to be noisy?</li> <li>Does Council have access to mini buses that services could hire out at below market rate to help cover the overheads and reduce cost for participants?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Connecting community services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold a forum with local service providers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunity for service providers across different sectors to come together quarterly, such as leaders in disability aged care and multicultural providers, to help deliver and be part of improving outcomes of people with disability.</li> <li>Interagency forums where local issues are addressed, finding local solutions to a local problem</li> <li>Setting up a working party for the DIAP to embed the actions</li> </ul> </li> <li>Strengthening partnerships with local providers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council running events, having community groups, running social programs to keep people with disability socially connected.</li> <li>Connecting and collaborating with service providers so they are not working in isolation and can achieve outcomes together.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Service providers are looking for options on how to get people back into the community in safe ways post COVID-19, including creating spaces and hubs and linking service providers, businesses, initiatives together</li> </ul>
Community programs, events, and activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many service providers would like to collaborate with Council in delivering a wide range of community events, programs and activities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council run International Day of People with Disability events in collaboration with local services, to take the pressure off local services to each run something and foster collaboration</li> <li>Provide opportunities for service providers to be present within Council events such as employment, service or volunteer expos to increase visibility of local services in the area.</li> <li>Need for more post-school and transition to employment opportunities. Would love to work with Council on a coffee program for people with higher support needs to support their transition to work. Support worker would do most of the work – but persons with disability can take orders or cash. Can Council provide access to catering/kitchens?</li> <li>Would like to work with Council to run homeless programs or soup kitchens during the day.</li> <li>Council to organise a post COVID-19 'relaunch' on addressing social issues in collaboration with services</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Cross-collaboration and consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Burwood connect with Vision Australia so they can look at what they can implement in the community to improve access in the community to people who are low vision or blind. For example, pedestrian crossings – some lights beep, and beep faster when it's ready to cross and some of them don't beep at all.</li> <li>There are a lot of interagency networks – Inner West Disability Forum is one, but there are other ones in the inner west and Sydney region – important to know some of the challenges and what's happening around the region (if you focus just on Burwood you miss out on all of the good things that are happening elsewhere). Cross collaboration</li> </ul>

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with councils. Be present and visible with other networks nearby. It's a good opportunity to see what good practices are happening or provides an opportunity to understand what are some of the issues and challenge in other areas – is this an issue in Burwood that we can address together.

- Need to approach other mainstream stakeholders, not just service providers, such as mental health providers, schools, hospitals to share knowledge and resources about different communities

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**Other**

- Opportunities for service providers to attend an Access Committee during work hours – (e.g. a short, structured meeting with clear information and outcomes)
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## 8. Staff interviews

### 8.1 About the Council staff group interviews

Five one on one interviews were held with members of the Burwood Council Executive Team between Thursday 7 April and Friday 9 April 2022. The following Directorates were represented:

- Community Life
- City Assets
- Corporate Services
- People and Performance
- City Strategy

The purpose of the interviews was to engage with senior staff to understand what is working well and what can be done better in relation to inclusion and accessibility for people with disability in Burwood, and their ideas to make the Burwood area a more inclusive and accessible place to live.

### 8.2 Overview of activities

Following a short outline introducing the DIAP and four focus areas, a discussion was facilitated around the following questions:

- How does your team contribute towards disability access and inclusion outcomes in Burwood?
- What worked well in the previous DIAP? Why?
- Would you keep any existing actions in the new DIAP? Why?
- What did not work well? Why?
- Do you have any ideas, actions or opportunities to improve disability access and inclusion that you would like to see included in the DIAP?

### 8.3 Key findings

#### **Opportunities:**

- Opportunities through major projects that are already committed to in the DP & OP:
  - Burwood Urban Park and Arts and Cultural Centre
  - Delivery of two sensory gardens: one in Woodstock and one in Burwood Park
  - New or upgraded inclusive play spaces
  - Streetscape projects
  - Upgrades to pram ramps



- Opportunities to ensure programming in community facilities and the Library is inclusive for everyone.
- Opportunities to deliver increased in-house social research to better understand needs.
- Opportunities to ensure planned reviews of services and processes are inclusive. As systems are increasingly digitized, don't leave out the needs of people with disability or older residents.
- Strong focus on creating more accessible, activated and engaging public spaces. Big focus coming out of COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions and forthcoming developments in Burwood's Town Centre and the Burwood North Metro Station precinct.
- Opportunities to deliver more training for staff:
  - Disability awareness
  - Cultural competency
  - Understanding inclusive terminology (e.g. not disabled parking but accessible parking)
- Opportunities to consider inclusion and accessibility within delivery of smart cities projects.
- Opportunities for increased consultation with people with disabilities before and after major projects are delivered.
- Improved communication and consultation with community groups.
- Opportunity to engage more with community organisations and recruitment agencies to support employment opportunities.
- Opportunity to provide placements for schools in Burwood.
- Opportunity to incorporate basic disability awareness information into the induction process.
- Council has an online e-learning system that we could utilise to have a module regarding this topic customised to Burwood Council.

#### **Other identified needs or comments:**

- Need to ensure next DIAP is integrated within IP&R framework.
- Need to raise awareness and position of the DIAP internally.
- Need to improve reporting processes and capabilities.
- Ensuring we meet the needs of people experiencing language and cultural barriers.
- Where programs are required to upgrade – e.g. pump or playgrounds – their maintenance needs to be adequately funded. What we will deliver is not reflected in the budget.
- Council does not currently provide any traineeships or internal training.
- Council has limited resources to deliver initiatives – we need to understand priorities within holistic service delivery.

# 9. Staff workshop findings

## 9.1 About the staff workshop

An online workshop with Burwood staff was held on Tuesday 12 April, 10am – 11.30am. A total of 24 participants attended the sessions.

## 9.2 Overview of activities

Following a short presentation on the purpose of the focus group, a discussion was facilitated around the following questions:

- How does your role or team currently contribute towards access and inclusion outcomes in Burwood?
- What would help you or your team to better contribute towards access and inclusion outcomes in Burwood?
- What are your ideas and opportunities to improve and increase accessibility and inclusion across the four focus areas?
  - Focus area 1: Positive attitudes and behaviours
  - Focus area 2: Liveable communities
  - Focus Area 3: Access to meaningful employment
  - Focus Area 4: Improved systems and processes
- What are the top priority needs for the Burwood DIAP to address?

## 9.3 Roles in access and inclusion

### How Burwood Council currently contribute to access and inclusion

When asked how Council staff's role or team currently contribute towards access and inclusion outcomes in Burwood, staff told us:

Theme	Comments
<b>Council plans, policies and other strategic documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development Control Plan (DCP) and Local Environmental Plan (LEP) (3 comments)</li><li>• Policies and plans (3 comments)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Management of planning policy across Burwood</li></ul></li><li>• Responsible for DIAP</li><li>• Bus stop DDA compliance</li><li>• Development of built form policy including development control plans, public domain strategies</li></ul>
<b>Services and programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Home Library Services (3 comments)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Items delivered to house bound customers and/or their carers, large print items, online books, magazines, movies etc.</li><li>- Staff deliver library materials to individual homes and care facilities</li></ul></li><li>• Mobile Playvan is an inclusive outdoor playgroup for local families</li><li>• Creating accessible options for events</li><li>• Assistance with technology</li><li>• Direct services (e.g. library services, aquatic services, community programs), community safety (compliance investigations)</li><li>• Enable easier access to community programs</li><li>• Education program</li></ul>
<b>Community resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Access to Wi-Fi through Burwood Library and Community Hub</li><li>• Provide information through online and hard copy formats to residents.</li><li>• Suitable library resources; large print, audiobooks</li><li>• Diverse items for loan through Burwood Library</li></ul>
<b>Systems and processes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make websites compliant on "AA" site accessibility guidelines as defined in the WCAG</li><li>• Customer service (phone, in person and online)</li><li>• Community engagement</li><li>• Ensure all forms of communications are accessible and simple</li></ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Training in what is needed for people with diverse needs such as neurological differences, mental health etc.</li><li>• Supporting and enabling others in the organisation to make decisions to support access and inclusion.</li></ul>

### Support to better contribute towards access and inclusion outcomes in Burwood

When asked what would help staff or their team to better contribute towards access and inclusion outcomes in Burwood, they told us:

Theme	Comments
<b>Understanding community needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Better understanding and awareness of the needs and challenges of the community (5 comments)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Regular surveys and consultations with the community</li><li>– Needs around access to community facilities</li></ul></li></ul>

<b>Additional resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding and staff to deliver access and inclusion (2 comments) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Funding allocated in projects to meet the needs of the community</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and education on the issues and challenges the community faces</li> <li>• Greater awareness and understanding of barriers experienced by people with disability - hands on and interactive training</li> </ul>
<b>Accessible and affordable options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free parking close to the library.</li> <li>• Pickup and drop off areas along Burwood Road. Seniors and people with mobility issues have trouble being dropped off for medical appointments, shopping etc. Taxis do not want to come to Burwood due to this issue.</li> </ul>
<b>Increase information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing information to families about disability and inclusion</li> <li>• Greater awareness of services who work with people with disabilities</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to provide fee subsidies or fee waivers to enable participation</li> <li>• Proactively seeking technology to assist</li> <li>• Being able to provide more targeted programs for folk living with a disability.</li> <li>• Making the Library space better accessible, e.g. a lowered catalogue</li> <li>• Understanding of legislation, when and where it applies</li> <li>• Clearly understanding the positive outcomes that can be achieved for users by promoting access and inclusion</li> </ul>

## 9.4 Ideas and opportunities for access and inclusion across the four focus areas

Participants were asked to suggest any ideas or opportunities for access and inclusion across the four focus areas. These included:

Focus Area	Comments
<b>Positive attitudes and behaviours</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Showcasing the work of staff with disability and their contribution to the committee</li> <li>• Getting to know the community about their needs</li> <li>• Sharing good news stories</li> <li>• Broadening our work on International Day for People with Disability to be more integrated</li> <li>• Make it as usual - It should be part of the way we just do things.</li> <li>• Celebrate diverse language weeks. Signs in other languages</li> <li>• Working better with stakeholders</li> </ul>
<b>Liveable communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessible transport (5 comments) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ensure parking restrictions meet the needs of users (disabled parking, short term parking, drop off/pick up areas etc.)</li> <li>– Promote accessible transport providers for local people</li> <li>– Free commuter bus service around the LGA</li> <li>– Drop off/ pick up close to essential services such as doctors.</li> <li>– Complete ban on any forms of public transport that are not 100% accessible.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Set up dementia cafe</li> <li>• Consulting more with the local community members on accessibility on new spaces and venues</li> <li>• Easy access to facilities and visible signs for communities to find those facilities.</li> <li>• Great streets to allow people to move around the community with ease.</li> <li>• Including more representation of people all abilities in our public art program as well as making artworks more accessible.</li> <li>• Families attending Mobile Playvan outdoor playgroup in the parks of Burwood</li> <li>• Creation of support networks for parents and carers to allow sharing approaches for supporting people with disability</li> </ul>
<b>Meaningful employment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage people with disability to apply for Council jobs.</li> <li>• Provide an employment opportunity in Records team - as done at Inner West Council</li> <li>• Advertising all roles on a flexible basis (not part time or full time) to support a range of groups in returning or entering the workplace.</li> <li>• Locate contractors and businesses that engage people with disability. There are catering companies where all employed staff are people with disability for example.</li> <li>• We do have staff with disability and make workplace adjustments, but we need to review our internal processes and policies to really push inclusion and raise awareness internally on what is possible</li> <li>• Providing work experience or volunteering opportunities within Council</li> <li>• Ensuring customer service, feedback, complaints and consultation mechanisms are accessible</li> </ul>
<b>Systems and processes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paper copies of newsletters and calendars to be mailed to residents as not everyone is online</li> <li>• Important that departments within Council inform other departments about services and programs</li> <li>• Booking systems need to be accessible online as well as face to face</li> <li>• Better design of communication materials to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities</li> </ul>

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- Check for and address potential barriers to participation in Council Meetings and other local democracy groups.
  - Longer timeframes allocated for survey/feedback distribution, promotion and responses.
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## 9.5 Priority needs

Staff told us the top priority needs for the Burwood DIAP to address are:

- Council staff and councillor awareness training (3 comments)
  - Building our internal capability
- A DIAP Champion to support delivery
- Resources, access, connections
- Community engagement
- Accessibility and affordability
- Website accessibility
- Resourcing to support dissemination of information and collecting feedback in various languages and different avenues
- Information for the community
- More communication between departments
- More visibility on DIAP actions, particularly as council have now integrated DIAP delivery into our draft operational plan and delivery program for first time
- Partnerships with local organisations that are specialists in disability