



## **Disability Action Plan 2008 – 2012**

*“I love the library; I’d go every day if I could”*

Library user comment from the community consultations undertaken as part of the development of the  
Yarra Plenty Regional Library – Disability Action Plan 2008 - 2012

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**Forward**

Yarra Plenty Regional Library is committed to ensuring that the library service is accessible to and inclusive of all people, including people with disabilities and that the community has equitable, dignified access to all of the library services, programs, facilities, information, communication and employment systems.

In line with our Strategic Plan 2008 – 2012

YPRL is committed to:

*‘Creating informed connected, inclusive communities and to maintaining its position as a leading Australian public library service that remains relevant in a rapidly changing environment’.*

The Library recognises that people with disabilities and other access challenges comprise a significant part of the community and as such are considered to be an important focus of the library service and its development.

The development and implementation of this Disability Action Plan 2008 – 2012, which directly links to YPRL Strategic Plan, provides an important and strong planning framework. It will support the Library in moving forward in a proactive way, to ensure the needs of people with a wide range of disabilities and other access challenges are considered and addressed in all library operations.

Thank you to all of the library users who contributed to the development of this Disability Action Plan and to the staff who are committed to a library service that is fully accessible to all.

## Acknowledgements

The development of this Disability Action Plan was facilitated by Access Audits Australia (AAA):

- Joe Manton            Director
- Nicole Maslin        Community Engagement Strategist
- Anthony Nichols     Trainer and Access Consultant
- Lucas Wheeler       Training Consultant

With assistance from YPRL staff:

- Gayle Rowden        Manager Operations
- Ian Gofton            Manager People and Learning

Thank you to Gayle and Ian for their assistance and support in planning and organising the range of tasks required to effectively undertake the development of the Plan and for their commitment to the development of an effective and relevant Disability Action Plan.

Thank you to Branch staff for providing and organising venues for the consultations and for their valuable input and commitment to developing the Disability Action Plan.

Thank you to all of the participants of the Community Consultations as well as those who completed and returned surveys and those who agreed to be interviewed about their experiences, issues and needs in relation to creating an accessible library service.

Thank you also to Katie Goodrope - Community Inclusion Planner - Banyule City Council, for her assistance and support to YPRL and AAA in the development of the Disability Action Plan.

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## How to get a copy of this Disability Action Plan

Hard copies of this Disability Action Plan are available from each branch library listed below:

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Diamond Valley</b><br>Civic Drive<br>Greensborough 3088<br>Melbourne, Australia<br>Phone: (03) 9434 3809   | <b>Eltham</b><br>Panther Place<br>Eltham 3095<br>Melbourne, Australia<br>Phone: (03) 9439 9266              | <b>Watsonia</b><br>Ibbottson Street<br>Watsonia 3087<br>Melbourne, Australia<br>Phone: (03) 9435 2397   |
| <b>Ivanhoe</b><br>255 Upper Heidelberg Road<br>Ivanhoe, 3079<br>Melbourne, Australia<br>Phone: (03) 9497 5780 | <b>Lalor</b><br>May Road, Lalor, 3075,<br>Melbourne, Australia.<br>Telephone (03) 9465 2353                 | <b>Mill Park</b><br>394 Plenty Road<br>Mill Park 3082<br>Melbourne, Australia<br>Ph: (03) 9437 8189   |
| <b>Rosanna</b><br>72 Turnham Avenue<br>Rosanna, 3084<br>Melbourne, Australia<br>Phone: (03) 9459 6171         | <b>Thomastown</b><br>52 Main Street, Thomastown, 3074,<br>Melbourne, Australia.<br>Telephone (03) 9464 1864 | <b>Library Headquarters</b><br>Whittlesea City Council Offices<br>Ferres Boulevard<br>South Morang<br>Phone: 9408 7888<br>Email: <a href="mailto:ypmail@yprl.vic.gov.au">ypmail@yprl.vic.gov.au</a> |

Hard copies are available from the Mobile Library Services.

Copies are available for free download from the Library website at <http://www.yprl.vic.gov.au/> in both PDF and MS Word formats.

Copies are available in electronic format (email or CD) and large print upon request from Library Support Services.

## Links to related documents

The Disability Action Plan is one of a number of plans, strategies and guidelines of YPRL. The Disability Action Plan has implications for some of these. Copies of other documents can be found on the Library's website or by contacting Library Support Services at:

Whittlesea City Council Offices  
Ferres Boulevard  
South Morang  
Phone: 9408 7888  
Email: [ypmail@ypri.vic.gov.au](mailto:ypmail@ypri.vic.gov.au)

Other documents that may be of interest include:

- Annual Budget 2008 - 2009
- Annual Reports
- Collection Development Policy
- Guidelines for requesting YPRL to purchase new items for the collection
- Guidelines for the supervision of children in the library
- Inter – library loans service guidelines
- Internet Access Policy
- Library Users' Charter
- Mission Statement
- Notice Boards in the library
- Privacy Statement
- WiFi conditions of use guidelines
- YPRL Library Plan 2008 – 2012.

## Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)

YPRL has a responsibility under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA), to provide equitable, dignified access to goods and services and to premises used by the public. These are broadly defined and would include all aspects of the Library Service.

The DDA provides uniform protection against unfair and unfavourable treatment for people with a disability in Australia. It also makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person who is an 'associate' e.g. a friend, carer or family member. Disability includes:

- physical
- intellectual
- psychiatric
- neurological
- cognitive or sensory (a hearing or vision impairment)
- learning difficulties
- physical disfigurement and
- the presence in the body of disease causing organisms

This broad definition means that everyone with a disability is protected. The DDA supports the principle that people with a disability have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community. Provisions apply to a wide range of life activities including:

- access to premises used by the public
- education
- provision of goods and services
- employment and
- administration of Commonwealth laws and programs.

The DDA requires that appropriate changes be made to provide access. Where this does not occur, a person can take legal action through the Human Rights Commission (HRC) or the Federal Court.

## What is discrimination?

- Discrimination is defined as treating people with a disability less favourably than people without the disability would be treated under the same circumstances (**direct discrimination**).
- Discrimination also exists where there is a condition or requirement imposed which may be the same for everyone, but which unfairly, excludes or disadvantages people with a disability (**indirect discrimination**).
- It is also unlawful to discriminate against a person because their associates (family, carers, partners etc) have a disability.
- Different treatment of people with a disability is not unlawful discrimination where it is reasonably intended to ensure that they have equal opportunities or to meet their specific needs.
- 

## How many people have a disability?

The 2003 Australian Bureau of Statistics Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers found that 20% of people in Australia had a reported disability. By applying this to YPRC catchment area of the three municipalities, Banyule, Whittlesea and Nillumbik, with a combined total population of 299,305 (2006 Census), it is estimated that about 58,861 people have some form of disability.

According to the 2006 Census figures, 12,561 of the total population of the three municipalities need assistance with core activities. These include self-care, mobility and communication. Most anecdotal evidence indicates that the figures are under representations, particularly given the tendency for psychological and intellectual disabilities not to be either acknowledged or recorded.

## Ageing Population

The ageing population is particularly significant to YPRC catchment with 33,817 people of the catchment population being 65 or older. As disability is expected to increase with age and the community is generally getting older, it is expected that the impact of an ageing population and the resultant access issues that develop, will also impact on the need to ensure equitable dignified access is provided to all library services and operations.

## What is a Disability Action Plan (DAP)

The DAP provides the framework for YPRL to address disability access issues across all areas of library responsibility and operations and to support it in meeting its requirements under the DDA. The DAP will assist YPRL in removing access barriers and providing equity of access to services, facilities and employment for all people. The DAP is designed to ensure that YPRL practices are proactive in relation to meeting the needs of people with disabilities, their carers and associates, and that services and facilities will be accessible to all.

The DAP document:

- Identifies access barriers to YPRL
- Outlines actions to remove barriers
- Includes priorities for actions
- Identifies who has responsibility for ensuring actions are completed
- Outlines how monitoring, reviewing and evaluating of the DAP will occur

## Why prepare a Disability Action Plan

- Developing a DAP is one way that YPRL can begin to meet its responsibilities under the DDA
- The DAP will provide a framework for YPRL to address disability and access issues across all areas of the library service
- When the DAP is registered with the Human Rights Commission, it must be taken into account in any complaints made against YPRL in relation to disability discrimination.

## How we developed this Disability Action Plan

The DAP was developed through a comprehensive information and review process, in consultation with a range of key stakeholders. These included community members, community organisations, local municipal Councils and staff of YPRL. The development of the DAP was facilitated by Access Audits Australia (AAA), an organisation that has extensive experience in the facilitation and successful development of DAPs with a wide range of organisations. AAA has extensive skills in engagement of stakeholders and provided leadership and support to YPRL stakeholders and staff in facilitating the development of the Plan. Commitment from the Library Board, library management and library staff was confirmed as part of the development process.

## Overview of this Disability Action Plan

The DAP has been structured to link with and support YPRL's Strategic Planning framework in line with the six key objectives identified in the Strategic Plan 2008 – 2012.

### **YPRL Strategic Plan 2008 – 2012 states:**

*“Yarra Plenty Regional Library enjoys a reputation as an innovative, progressive and effective library service; providing library services to the municipalities of Banyule, Nillumbik and Whittlesea through 8 branches and 2 mobiles.*

*The role of the public library is evolving as people's information seeking behaviour changes and use of online media grows. The public library is increasingly being recognised as an essential community hub; a place where all are welcome and there is something for everyone. The public library builds community connections, facilitates learning opportunities and provides access to informational, educational and recreational resources.*

*To maintain its position as a leading Australian public library service and ensure that it remains relevant in a rapidly changing environment the library will pursue the following objectives over the next 4 years:*

*Libraries building community capacity  
Libraries as community hubs  
Libraries online  
Skilled and confident library staff  
Seamless integrated technology  
Sustainable and responsible finance and governance”.*

The DAP represents a 'whole of organisation' approach to addressing access. It reflects the need for all areas of the organisation to collectively work together in a coordinated manner to improve access for all.

The DAP will be systematically implemented, monitored, reviewed and evaluated on an ongoing basis.

## Objectives of this Disability Action Plan

In line with the Strategic Plan 2008 – 2012 YPRL is committed to:

### ***‘Creating informed connected, inclusive communities’***

The objectives of YPRL DAP are to ensure that the library service is accessible to and inclusive of people with disabilities and that the community has equitable, dignified access to all of the libraries services, programs, facilities, information, communication and employment systems.

In addition, the objectives aim to ensure that people with disabilities have appropriate access to consultative processes in order to effectively contribute to and participate in service planning and developments to improve access for all to the library.

Key objectives of the DAP are:

- To confirm YPRL’s acknowledgement of people with disabilities as an important and significant part of the community
- To confirm YPRL’s commitment to meeting the needs of people with disabilities, their families and carers as both library users, staff and volunteers
- To provide a framework for YPRL to work towards provision of accessible and equitable services in all areas of library planning and operations
- To promote participation and inclusiveness of people with disabilities in the library service
- To demonstrate community leadership
- To assist YPRL to meet its legislative requirements under the Disability Discrimination Act and other relevant legislation.

The development and implementation of this DAP provides an important planning framework. It will support YPRL in moving forward in a proactive way, to ensure the needs of people with a wide range of disabilities and other access challenges are considered and addressed in all library planning, service delivery and operations.

## **Overview of YPRL**

Yarra Plenty Regional Library, formerly Heidelberg Regional Library Service, was established in 1965 to provide library services to the City of Heidelberg and the Shires of Diamond Valley and Eltham. The City, (then Shire) of Whittlesea joined the service in 1976.

In 1995, following changes to the Local Government boundaries, the new municipalities of Banyule, Nillumbik and Whittlesea continued their support for the regional library service and Yarra Plenty was one of the first incorporated library regions established under the new Local Government Act.

The library service covers an area of 983 square kilometres and includes metropolitan, urban fringe and rural populations. It reaches a population of 316,000 of whom 145,000 are members.

It has a collection of more than 480,000 items, lends more than 3.7 million books and other items each year.

In 2007/08 The library attracted more than 1.6 million visits and more than 48,000 people attended library activities.

In addition, there were approximately 160,000 on line retrievals recorded in 2007/08.

YPRL employs 88 equivalent full-time staff (160 people) with a budget in 2007/08 of more than \$10 million.

Branch libraries are located at Diamond Valley, Eltham, Ivanhoe, Lalor, Rosanna, Thomastown, Watsonia and Mill Park. A Mobile Library provides service to areas without easy access to a branch library and a specially designed van visits residents who cannot leave their home or live in supported accommodation throughout the region.

Responsibility for the provision and management of YPRL rests with the Regional Library Board, which comprises two representatives from each of the three member Councils.

## Access Requirements

There are a wide range of **Access Requirements** relating to the provision of an accessible Library Service. These relate to library operations including:

- Buildings and facilities
- Collections – access and scope
- Communications
- Consultations
- Equipment, technical and adaptive technology
- Events
- Format of reading materials
- Furniture
- Internet and related materials and supports
- Loans
- Presentations
- Publications
- Reference materials relating to disabilities
- Resource sharing
- Service delivery methods
- Signage
- Staff and volunteer employment, training and support
- Support services.

These have all been considered in the development of this DAP.

## Summary of Key Issues

The issues to emerge from the consultations in relation to current access barriers to YPRL generally relate to the areas listed above. Key issues identified are as follows:

1. Inaccessible buildings and facilities at some locations, particularly at the older library buildings. Issues include lack of the following:
  - Handrails from entrances to enquiry counters
  - Accessible emergency exits
  - Accessible parking for people with disabilities close to the building entries
  - Accessible parking for scooter users
  - Accessible baby change areas
  - Accessible height book return chutes
  - Clear paths of travel from outdoor to indoor areas
  - Direct access to a fully accessible toilet
  - Fire alarms that can be seen and heard
  - Level, ramp or lift access to all areas e.g. Ivanhoe library
  - Lever style door handles at an accessible height
  - Safety markings across the full width of glass doors and adjacent panels
  - Step free staff access
  - Wide security barriers at exit doors for ease of use by person using a wheelchair
  - Wide self opening or easy to open entrance doors
  - Wide, clear internal walkways
2. Lack of clear external and internal directional signage incorporating symbols and Braille and tactile elements.

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3. Limited access to some furniture and general equipment including:

- Accessible height notice boards and displays
- Accessible payment /borrowing options
- Accessible shelving and lockers
- Adjustable/accessible tables/benches etc.
- Accessible height buzzers on the enquiry counters
- Areas to sit whilst waiting to borrow items
- Book trolleys for members to use whilst browsing
- Clear space between furniture for a person to manoeuvre a mobility aid e.g. wheelchair, walking frame, stick, crutches
- Low height, 'clutter free' enquiry counters at some libraries
- Seating with backs and armrests throughout the facilities
- Photocopiers
- Computer terminals
- Emergency evacuation procedures and fire hydrants

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4. Limited reference materials relating to a variety of disability issues.

A search of the on line-catalogue was undertaken using the 'keyword' search facility, to identify library resources available relating to disability access, disability references, disability support groups and disability support equipment. Common disability issues relating to physical disability, vision and hearing impairment, mental illness and intellectual disability were also searched. The following results were achieved:

| <b>Keyword</b>           | <b>No of items listed</b> | <b>Keyword</b>       | <b>No of items listed</b> |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Access and inclusion     | 0                         | Adaptive technology  | 0                         |
| Assistive technology     | 0                         | Auslan               | 26                        |
| Braille books            | 15                        | Brain damage         | 15                        |
| Brain injury             | 6                         | Carers               | 27                        |
| Dementia                 | 0                         | Depression           | 309                       |
| Disability advocacy      | 0                         | Blindness            | 27                        |
| Disability agency        | 0                         | Disability access    | 0                         |
| Disability assistance    | 0                         | Disability directory | 0                         |
| Disability equipment     | 0                         | Deafness             | 17                        |
| Disability support group | 0                         | Hearing impairment   | 2                         |
| Intellectual disability  | 2                         | Large print          | 10,626                    |
| Mental illness           | 80                        | Vision impairment    | 0                         |

Whilst there are a range of disability and access related materials and resources available, this 'snapshot' suggests that the scope is limited and in some cases non existent, particularly in areas such as adaptive and assistive technology, disability advocacy, assistance, and equipment.

Directories relating to disability support services and items relating to support groups are also not available. However resources relating to mental illness, particularly depression, appear to be extensive. Resources relating to vision and hearing impairment are also limited.

*(Comment: although the library holds items in these categories, cataloguing practices used have meant that they are not retrievable by users.)*

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5. Lack of, or limitations to, some collections in alternative formats, particularly large print non fiction and reference material as well as audio and captioned materials.
6. Limitations to accessible equipment, technical and adaptive technology including:
  - Battery recharge point (for electric scooters and wheelchairs)
  - Braille output devices
  - Communications boards
  - Digital accessible information systems (daisy)
  - Large computer screens
  - Modified keyboards
  - Optical character recognition devices
  - Page turners
  - Reading stands
  - Screen magnifiers
  - Screen readers
  - Shopping (book) trolley (accessible by a person using a wheelchair)
  - SMS
7. There is extensive information provided on the library service website; however, there is limited accessibility to information and resources as the site does not comply with the World Wide Web W3C Accessibility Guidelines. Some issues include:
  - Limited appropriate alternatives to PDF forms for users to complete on the website e.g. Strategic Plan and Annual in PDF only
  - Lack of appropriate ALT text on some logos and photos
  - Non operable links to some documents e.g. Library Plan
  - Website membership form for individuals but not for organisations

8. Limitations to additional support services including:

- Mail services for people with Print disability
- Personal reader services
- Photo-enlarging facilities
- Production of materials in alternative formats
- Sign language interpreters
- Signed storytelling programs
- Staff proficient in sign language

9. Lack of accessible information and information in alternative formats including:

- Clear, large print name tags on officials or staff
- Enrolment forms in large print
- General library information in large print
- Large print clocks

10. Limitations to accessible employment and volunteer opportunities including lack of an affirmative action employment policy for people with disabilities, lack of access to recruitment processes in a variety of formats and limitations to adaptive technology for staff and volunteers with disabilities.

## What we have done so far

Whilst there appears to be a wide range of access issues still to be addressed, YPRL had implemented many actions to date, to improve access. These have included:

- Access Audits of Banyule libraries to identify and prioritise access issues and upgrades of some facilities
- Consultation with people with disabilities to identify and resolve access issues
- Current review of the library Website
- Development of this DAP
- Display of 'Assistance Animal Welcome' Stickers at libraries
- Helpful staff who are willing to provide assistance
- Installation of Braille signage at some book return chutes
- Large print labels on collections
- Maintenance of large print and audio collections
- Ongoing review of collections to update relevant materials
- Provision of an accessible Mobile library service
- Provision of wheelchair at Watsonia library to assist users with mobility issues
- Purchase and installation of new furniture, fixtures and fittings to improve access
- Purchase of adaptive equipment and technology at some branch libraries
- Recognition and celebration of key 'International Days'
- Support for volunteers with disabilities at Mill Park library in conjunction with local service provider groups
- Training of some library staff in disability access awareness issues
- Upgrade of loan technology and equipment to improve access

## What we plan to do

As a result of the consultation process and the review of library access, the following strategic actions have been developed in line with the six key areas of YPRL Strategic Plan 2008 – 2012. These form the basis of the DAP which is structured as follows:

- Strategic Plan component and summary of key elements
- Issues or barriers identified that link to the Strategic Plan component
- Strategic actions to address issues or barriers
- Identification of library section responsible for action
- Priority of actions

## 1. Libraries building community capacity

Key elements from YPRL Strategic Plan include partnering with other agencies to deliver wider agendas and developing co-operative arrangements that will improve and expand services to the community and ensure services are focussed and balanced according to principles of social justice and equity.

| <b>Issue</b>  | <b>Actions</b>  | <b>Responsibility</b>  | <b>Priority</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential</li> <li>• Important</li> <li>• Preferred</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul> |
|---|---|------------------------|--|
| 1.1<br>Ensure appropriate Information relating to disability issues is available for access in the library. | General <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Provide access to the most current information:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• regarding various disabilities including medical, educational and legal issues</li> <li>• to support independent living</li> <li>• regarding government services for people with disabilities</li> <li>• directories relating to local disability support services</li> <li>• regarding National self help and support groups</li> <li>• relating to equipment that can be used to support people with disabilities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- ensure links to appropriate websites are accessible through the catalogue</li> <li>- ensure user-friendly terminology is applied in all catalogue</li> </ul> | Manager<br>Collections | Important<br>Ongoing   |

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|  |                            |  |  |
|--|----------------------------|--|--|
|  | records for this material. |  |  |
|--|----------------------------|--|--|

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| Issue | Actions   | Responsibility | Priority <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Essential</li><li>• Important</li><li>• Preferred</li><li>• Ongoing</li></ul> |
|-------|---|----------------|--|
|       | <p>b) Promote the National Union Catalogue for People with Disabilities.</p> <p>a) Actively participate in inter-library lending of materials and aids that support people with a disability.</p> <p>b) Link with agencies and services that target / provide for people with disabilities</p> <p>c) Access specialist collections overseas through the internet.</p> |                |  |

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| Issue   | Actions   | Responsibility         | Priority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential</li> <li>• Important</li> <li>• Preferred</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul> |
|---|---|------------------------|---|
| 1.2<br>Ensure collections support and can be accessed by people with a variety of disabilities. | <b>Hearing Impairment</b><br>a) Continue to provide access to materials and information to support people who are Deaf or hearing impaired including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General information on deafness and hearing impairment</li> <li>• Information on all aspects of deafness, including legal rights, deaf culture and heritage</li> <li>• Information about organisations, institutions and individuals providing services for people who are Deaf or hearing-impaired</li> <li>• Books regarding sign language, dictionaries of signs, etc.</li> <li>• Establish collections of High-interest / low-vocabulary reading materials</li> <li>• Well-illustrated materials</li> <li>• DVDs including captioned materials.</li> </ul> | Manager<br>Collections | Important<br>Ongoing  |

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| Issue | Actions   | Responsibility                 | Priority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential</li> <li>• Important</li> <li>• Preferred</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul> |
|-------|---|--------------------------------|---|
|       | <p><b>Vision Impairment</b></p> <p>b) Continue to provide access to information and materials to support people who are blind or vision impaired including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large-print books - for both adult and junior readers (fiction and non fiction)</li> <li>• Talking books</li> <li>• Liaise with specialist organisations to provide audio /online magazines and newspapers</li> <li>• Large-print magazines and newspapers</li> <li>• Computer files of text</li> <li>• Promote the availability of Braille materials through specialist organisations.</li> <li>• Provide tactile materials e.g. tactile picture books for children</li> <li>• Audio-descriptive DVDs.</li> </ul> | <p>Manager<br/>Collections</p> |   |

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| Issue | Actions   | Responsibility                 | Priority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential</li> <li>• Important</li> <li>• Preferred</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul> |
|-------|---|--------------------------------|---|
|       | <p><b>Intellectual Disability</b></p> <p>c) Continue to provide access to information and materials to support people with intellectual disability or reading difficulties including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish collections of High-interest / low-vocabulary materials (fiction and non fiction) including age appropriate / easy English or Easy To Read formats</li> <li>• Materials with pictograms to support understanding</li> <li>• CD-and-text kits</li> <li>• Well-illustrated materials</li> <li>• Music collections</li> <li>• Audio materials.</li> </ul> | <p>Manager<br/>Collections</p> |   |

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| <b>Issue</b>   | <b>Actions</b>   | <b>Responsibility</b>  | <b>Priority</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential</li> <li>• Important</li> <li>• Preferred</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul> |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>1.3<br/>Ensure the library service meets best practice principles in relation to communication, information and service provision to people with disabilities</p> | <p>a) Maintain partnerships with the three member Councils and other relevant organisations involved in the provision of library and information services to people with disabilities, to keep abreast of innovations, initiatives and activities that support improved access to operations.</p>                      | <p>CEO, Manager Outreach,<br/>Manager Operations,<br/>Manager People and Learning,<br/>Branch managers</p> | <p>Important<br/>Ongoing</p>   |
| <p>1.4<br/>Engage with relevant disability service providers to identify specific supports and programs available to assist in improving access to the library</p>   | <p>a) Consult with key disability services providers to ensure library services are accessible and relevant</p> <p>b) Utilise disability service providers, local government Access Workers and advocacy agencies to obtain feedback in relation to access for people with disabilities in specific client groups.</p> | <p>Manager Outreach</p>  | <p>Important<br/>Ongoing</p>   |

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| <b>Issue</b>  | <b>Actions</b>   | <b>Responsibility</b> | <b>Priority</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential</li> <li>• Important</li> <li>• Preferred</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul> |
|---|--|-----------------------|--|
| 1.5<br>Ensure that library users with disabilities are consulted in library service planning and development. | a) Undertake an annual community consultation to obtain feedback in relation to the progress of improvements for people with disabilities to the library as well as service planning and development.                          | Manager<br>Operations | Essential<br>Ongoing   |
| 1.6<br>Ensure library users with electric mobility aids can recharge batteries whilst in the library          | a) Introduce the Battery Recharge Scheme throughout each branch library including provision of an accessible power point and appropriate Scheme advertising incorporating Battery Recharge Stickers at available power points. | Manager<br>Operations | Preferred  |

## 2. Libraries as community hubs

Key elements from YPRL Strategic Plan include the recognition of libraries as essential community hubs where all are welcome and there is something for everyone. The library service needs to have quality facilities and the ability to engage effectively with the community.

| <b>Issue</b>   | <b>Actions and Performance Indicators</b>   | <b>Responsibility</b> | <b>Priority</b><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential</li> <li>• Important</li> <li>• Preferred</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul> |
|--|---|-----------------------|---|
| 2.1<br>Ensure all library buildings and facilities are accessible to all | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Liaise with Nillumbik and Whittlesea Councils to appoint Accredited Access Consultants to undertake access audits of all branch libraries (excluding Banyule libraries as access audits were undertaken in 2007/08) to identify and prioritise access issues and recommendations for action.</li> <li>b) Budget for and implement upgrades over agreed timelines.</li> <li>c) Ensure an Accredited Access Consultant is engaged to review all proposed new works / plans for library buildings prior to 'sign off' for construction.</li> </ul> | CEO                   | Essential<br>Ongoing  |

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|--|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| 2.2<br>Ensure furniture and general equipment is accessible to all | a) Develop a Furniture and General Equipment Purchasing Policy that incorporates accessible, adjustable and adaptive furniture and general equipment to suit the needs of older users and people with disabilities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seats with backs and armrests</li> <li>• furniture with effective contrast to surroundings</li> <li>• adjustable height desks</li> <li>• accessible book trolleys</li> <li>• easy to use carry bags</li> <li>• page turners</li> <li>• accessible height notice boards and displays</li> </ul> | Manager Operations, Branch Managers | Important<br>Ongoing   |

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|--|--|-----------------------------|--|
| <p>2.3<br/>Ensure effective accessible signage is available at all libraries to support access for all.</p>                            | <p>a) Develop and implement a comprehensive Signage Strategy for the library service incorporating both external and internal areas. This should provide consistency of signage and include symbols, Braille and tactile components where necessary, as well as appropriate font types and print sizes, to support users with a range of disabilities including vision impairment.</p> | <p>Manager<br/>Outreach</p> | <p>Important<br/>Ongoing</p>   |
| <p>2.4<br/>Participate in and celebrate a variety of events that support and acknowledge people with disabilities in the community</p> | <p>a) Develop events and or promotions relating to people with a disability e.g. International Day of People with a Disability - December 3<sup>rd</sup> annually, Carers Week etc., local community awareness and promotions.</p> <p>b) Utilise an Access Checklist for Events in planning and presenting of library events.</p>  | <p>Manager<br/>Outreach</p> | <p>Preferred<br/>Ongoing</p>   |

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|---|---|-----------------------------|--|
| <p>2.5<br/>Promote and market accessible features of the library service to support improved access</p> | <p>a) Develop a Library Access Guide for posting on the library website and production in hard copy that includes accessible features of each library including information relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities and services</li> <li>• Public transport access</li> <li>• Car parking</li> <li>• Drop off areas</li> <li>• Accessible entry points</li> <li>• Companion and carer supports</li> <li>• Wheelchair / stroller loan / hire</li> <li>• Accessible seating</li> <li>• Accessible toilets</li> <li>• Lifts</li> <li>• Telephone Typewriter (TTY) number</li> <li>• SMS contact details</li> </ul> | <p>Manager<br/>Outreach</p> | <p>Important</p>   |

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| Issue | Actions and Performance Indicators   | Responsibility | Priority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential</li> <li>• Important</li> <li>• Preferred</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul> |
|-------|--|----------------|---|
|       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collections in alternative format e.g. large print, DVD, CD etc.</li> <li>• Accessibility of website</li> <li>• Hearing augmentation and assistive listening devices</li> <li>• Availability of activities with Sign language interpreters</li> <li>• General information in alternative formats e.g. Braille, large print</li> <li>• Audio descriptions and familiarisation tours</li> <li>• Wayfinding systems</li> <li>• Assistance animals</li> <li>• Security systems</li> <li>• Emergency management procedures</li> <li>• First aid support</li> <li>• Maps of facilities and venues</li> <li>• Staff assistance</li> <li>• Contact information</li> <li>• Any other access supports.</li> </ul> |                |   |



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|--|---|-----------------------------|--|
| <p>2.7<br/>Ensure appropriate access is provided in all library publications</p> | <p>a) Utilise Accessible Publications Checklist in the development and implementation of library publications.</p> <p>b) Develop a current listing of alternative format information providers and translation services and maintain for use across the library.</p> <p>c) Develop and maintain a register of Braille users.</p> <p>d) Develop a large print 'book mark' detailing library operating hours and contact details.</p> <p>e) Include an annotation in library publications that they can be provided in alternative formats.</p> | <p>Manager<br/>Outreach</p> | <p>Essential<br/>Ongoing</p>   |

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|---|---|---|---|
|   | f) Provide key information in all publications in large print e.g. date, cost, due date, time of location of event etc.   |   |   |
| 2.8<br>Ensure appropriate access is provided in all library consultations | a) Utilise the Accessible Consultations Checklist in the development and implementation of library consultations.<br><br>b) Investigate the purchase of a portable 'phonic ear' hearing augmentation system for use in meetings, consultations, presentations, training sessions etc. | Manager Operations<br><br>Manager People & Learning | Essential<br>Ongoing  |
| 2.9<br>Ensure appropriate access is provided in all library presentations | a) Utilise the Accessible Presentations Checklist in the development and implementation of library presentations.<br><br>b) Develop a protocol for booking sign language interpreters.  | Manager Outreach, Branch Managers                   | Essential<br>Ongoing  |

### 3. Libraries Online

Key elements from YPRL Strategic Plan identify that libraries need to ensure they are providing the information that people require and to remain relevant in an increasingly online world.

| <b>Issue or Barrier</b>  | <b>Actions</b>  | <b>Responsibility</b>                              | <b>Priority</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential</li> <li>• Important</li> <li>• Preferred</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul> |
|--|---|--|--|
| 3.1<br>Ensure the library website is accessible to users with disabilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Ensure the redeveloped library website is accessible and meets World Wide W3C accessibility requirements.</li> <li>b) Provide any downloadable documents from library website, that are in PDF, in a text only alternative, suitable for access by people using screen reading software.</li> <li>c) Include information about accessible library features and supports on the library website.</li> <li>d) Provide on line facilities for all users to access collections, book meeting rooms, book activities, enrol, change personal details etc.</li> </ul> | Manager Online<br>Delivery,<br>Manager<br>Outreach | Essential<br>Ongoing   |



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| Issue or Barrier   | Actions   | Responsibility              | Priority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential</li> <li>• Important</li> <li>• Preferred</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul> |
|--|---|-----------------------------|---|
|  | e) Ensure that fire wardens are aware of the needs of people with disabilities and that these are considered in the development of the emergency evacuation plans for each library building.  | Manager People and Learning |   |
| 4.2<br>Ensure library recruitment policies and practices are accessible and meet the needs of people with disabilities | a) Review employment policies to ensure they incorporate appropriate disability access requirements.<br><br>b) Ensure position descriptions can be provided in accessible formats on request.<br><br>c) Undertake employment advertising and position application processes using a variety of accessible mediums.<br><br>d) Ensure that selection committees are trained in the responsibilities of the library as an Equal Opportunity Employer and have undertaken disability awareness training.<br><br>e) Undertake an audit of employment within the library service to identify opportunities for people with disabilities | Manager People and Learning | Important<br>Ongoing  |

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|--|--|------------------------------------|--|
| <p>4.3<br/>Ensure staff with disabilities can undertake their work effectively and that appropriate supports are available</p> | <p>a) Ensure that staff and volunteer training courses are accessible and meet the needs of people with disabilities.</p> <p>b) Provide all staff and volunteers with the free Banyule City Council 'Communicating with people with a disability' handbook.</p> <p>c) Ensure the library intranet is accessible to staff and volunteers with disabilities.</p> <p>d) Provide reasonable assistance and adaptations to accommodate the needs of staff and volunteers with disabilities.</p> | <p>Manager People and Learning</p> | <p>Essential<br/>Ongoing</p>   |
| <p>4.4<br/>Ensure that any contractors and contracts are consistent with the objectives of the DDA</p>                         | <p>a) Develop guidelines for contractors working in the library services and for any contract specifications that detail the library expectations in relation to compliance with the DDA.</p>  | <p>Manager Corporate Services</p>  | <p>Preferred<br/>Ongoing</p>   |

## 5. Seamless integrated technology

Key elements from YPRL Strategic Plan identify the value of innovation and pride in providing resources, programs, services and up to date technology that are continually evolving to meet the needs of the community.

| <b>Issue or Barrier</b>   | <b>Actions</b>   | <b>Responsibility</b>                              | <b>Priority</b>   |
|---|--|--|---|
| 5.1<br>Ensure appropriate accessible equipment and technical and adaptive technology is available to support staff and library users with disabilities in accessing library services and operations | a) Investigate the options for adaptive and assistive technology and related equipment and aim to provide the following at each branch library: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication Board</li> <li>• Screen reader</li> <li>• Headphones</li> <li>• Screen magnifier</li> </ul> b) continue to provide DAISY readers through Vision Australia<br><br>c) Provide devices to enlarge print or microfiche such as hand held magnifiers | Manager Online<br>Delivery,<br>Manager<br>Outreach | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential</li> <li>• Important</li> <li>• Preferred</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul> Essential<br>Ongoing |

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| <b>Issue or Barrier</b> | <b>Actions</b>  | <b>Responsibility</b> | <b>Priority</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential</li> <li>• Important</li> <li>• Preferred</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul> |
|-------------------------|---|-----------------------|--|
|                         | <p>Investigate the demand for providing other equipment such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On line Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) in large-print</li> <li>• Large computer screens and large print screen output</li> <li>• Adaptive keyboards or keyboard overlays for users with motor / manipulatory disabilities –</li> <li>• Page turners</li> <li>• Reading stands</li> <li>• Audio loop or portable phonic ear system</li> <li>• Telephone Typewriter (TTY)</li> <li>• SMS contact number and notice service</li> </ul> <p>b) Develop an implementation program for upgrade of adaptive and assistive technologies and related equipment at each branch library.</p> |                       |  |

## 6. Sustainable and responsible finance and governance

Key elements from the Strategic Plan include measurement of sustainability ratios and proactively ensuring that all legislative requirements are met and that all processes and procedures meet best practice through regular internal audits.

| Issue or Barrier   | Actions  | Responsibility | Priority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential</li> <li>• Important</li> <li>• Preferred</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul> |
|--|--|----------------|---|
| 6.1<br>Ensure that the DAP is appropriately resourced and funded on an ongoing basis | a) Consider the implementation costs of the DAP in each library budget and funding cycle and allocate funds to support ongoing access improvements.<br><br>b) Investigate any external funding opportunities to improve access and assist in implementing actions identified in the DAP. | CEO            | Essential<br>Ongoing  |

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|--|--|-----------------------|--|
| <p>6.2<br/>Review, monitor and evaluate the DAP to ensure access improvement actions are implemented appropriately.</p>  | <p>a) Provide an annual report to the Library Board in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the progress of implementation of actions identified in the DAP</li> <li>• achievements to date</li> <li>• areas still requiring action</li> <li>• any disability discrimination complaints</li> <li>• and new areas requiring action.</li> </ul> | CEO                   | Essential<br>Ongoing   |
| <p>6.3<br/>Ensure that Banyule, Whittlesea and Nillumbik Councils are aware of their areas of responsibilities in the DAP, particularly in relation to access to buildings and facilities.</p> | <p>a) Submit copies of the DAP to each Council representative on the Library Board for formal presentation to their respective Councils.</p>   | CEO                   | Important  |

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| <b>Issue or Barrier</b>   | <b>Actions</b>   | <b>Responsibility</b> | <b>Priority</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Essential</li><li>• Important</li><li>• Preferred</li><li>• Ongoing</li></ul> |
|---|--|-----------------------|---|
| 6.4<br>Register the DAP with the Federal Human Rights Commission in both MS Word and PDF formats. | a) Provide copies of the DAP in MS Word and PDF in both hard copy and on line to the Human Rights Commission (HRC) and request that these are included on HRC website as a registered DAP. | CEO                   | Essential   |

## How we will monitor, evaluate and update this Disability Action Plan

This DAP will be monitored, reviewed and updated as follows:

- Reports from responsible Managers to CEO every six months in relation to progress of actions in their areas of responsibility
- Annual report to the Library Board regarding the status of all actions identified within the DAP
- Annual consultation with people with disabilities to gain feedback in relation to progress of the DAP
- Development of a working party to undertake an audit and review the DAP during 2011 and to develop an updated DAP.

The Human Rights Commission notes that a DAP is not a static document, but changes according to practices, review and evaluation. HRC describes 'reviewing' as the process of assessing and revising the DAP.

*(HRC Website)*

## How we will communicate this Disability Action Plan

The DAP will be communicated by the following processes:

- Posting on the library website in both MS Word and PDF for free download
- Provision in hard copy and electronic format to the municipalities of Banyule, Nillumbik and Whittlesea
- Provision to all library staff
- Provision of copies at all branch libraries and library headquarters
- Provision to all Library Board members
- Registration with the Human Rights Commission and posting on the HRC website in both MS Word and PDF formats.

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**Disclaimer**

Due care has been taken by Access Audits Australia in preparing this Disability Action Plan. The consultants believe the contents to be fair and accurate. Access Audits Australia does not accept responsibility or liability for the results of specific action taken on the basis of this information nor for any errors or omissions.

Legal issues in the area of anti-discrimination law are in the process of change. In addition, constant change is occurring in relation to Australian Standards and Building Codes. Due reference should be given to these and other relevant Standards. All actions taken by a public authority, organisation or individual in reliance on an Access Appraisal remain the responsibility of that public authority, organisation or individual.

## Appendix 1 - Abbreviations

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| AAA     | Access Audits Australia  |
| ABS     | Australian Bureau of Statistics  |
| ALT     | Alternative text (displayed on a website when an image can be displayed or read) |
| CD      | Compact Disk   |
| DAP     | Disability Action Plan   |
| DDA     | Disability Discrimination Act  |
| DVD     | Digital Video Disk   |
| EEO     | Equal Employment Opportunity   |
| HRC     | Human Rights Commission  |
| MS Word | Microsoft Word document  |
| PDF     | Portable Document Format   |
| RPH     | Radio for the Pink Handicapped   |
| SMS     | Short Message Service  |
| TTY     | Telephone Typewriter   |
| WWW     | World Wide Web   |
| YPRL    | Yarra Plenty Regional Library  |

## Appendix 2 - List of Common Terms

**Access/ Accessible** – Means that a person with a disability is, without assistance, able to approach, enter, pass to and from and make use of an area and its facilities.

**Advocacy** - Support and encouragement for a cause. To make changes to laws, policies and practice to improve life for everyone in the community.

**Assistive Devices** - Compensatory equipment used to overcome a physical or sensory disability including hand held, electronic and prosthetic aids.

**Built environment** - Refers to more than just buildings. It includes footpaths, streetscapes, outdoor areas and any space we make for people to use.

**Disability** - The loss or reduction of functional ability and activity that is consequent upon impairment. (World Health Organization) The negative prefix *dis* is considered to be problematic due to the built-in negative bias. Some of the other terms we use to describe people with disabilities have the same built-in attitudinal bias: *infirm*, *deformed* *invalid*, and *impaired*.

**Discrimination** - Differential treatment or practise either intentional or otherwise that can occur through action, policy, procedure or practise.

**Hearing impairment** - Ranges from hard-of-hearing to complete deafness. Can arise from congenital conditions, disease, or deterioration caused by ageing or accident.

**Impairment** - Any disturbance or interference with the normal structure and functioning of the body, including the systems of mental function. (World Health Organization) This may or may not be a disability, for example high blood pressure is an impairment but not a disability.

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**Integrate/Integration** - To include everyone. The process of making public or private facilities, services, and programs open and available to everyone in the community.

**Large Print** - Large print is generally a print size of 18 point or greater (if possible, items produced specifically for an individual should be in a font appropriate for that person).

**Mobility Disability** - Congenital, disease or injury related conditions that result in impaired motion or mobility.

**Person with a disability** - An individual with a physical, visual, hearing, cognitive, mental, emotional, or learning impairment that substantially limits a major life activity.

**Physical Disability** - A physiological disorder or condition, which deviates from the body norm and may or may not be disabling.

**Print Size - Twelve Point** - 12 point refers to the size of printed text. It is widely accepted that text should be printed in at least 12 point. This benefits all community members and is important as our community is ageing.

**Preferred Font (Typeface)** - Refers to print that is at least 11 point in size and uses a sans serif typeface such as Sans Serif, Univers, Arial or Helvetica. A sans serif typeface does not have the small counter strokes capping the ends of each character's main strokes, as incorporated in a serif typeface. This information is typed with a Sans Serif Typeface (Arial).

**Preferred Font Style** - The Association for the Blind recommends a simple and uncluttered font style such as Sans Serif, Univers, Arial or Helvetica.

**TTY - Telephone Typewriter (TTY)** - A TTY is essentially a keyboard which connects into a standard phone outlet to enable people who are deaf to send or receive messages to and from other people or public authorities who also have a TTY through the phone system. A TTY service is only useful if the public is made aware of its availability. This can be achieved by contacting Telstra and requesting inclusion in the National TTY Directory.

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**Vision Impairment** - Impaired vision, which may be caused by congenital conditions, disease and deterioration from ageing, or accidents. Serious conditions may cause problems with distance vision, vision acuity, blurred vision, tunnel vision or complete blindness.

**Wayfinding** - The perceptual, cognitive and decision making processes necessary for a person to orient themselves and find their way.

## Appendix 3 - Consultations

Opportunities for consultation and input were provided in the development of the DAP via the following processes:

- Workshop with representatives of library staff from all branch libraries and library headquarters
- Completion of 'Access Checklists' provided to staff from each branch library
- Three Community Consultation forums. One in each of the municipalities i.e. Banyule, Whittlesea and Nillumbik
- On line and hard copy surveys available on YPRL website and at all branch libraries, other service provider agencies and via local government disability networks
- Direct email and telephone contact with Access Audits Australia.

## Appendix 4 – AAA Access Checklists

Appendix 4 is provided as a 'stand alone' document. It comprises five (5) Access Checklists developed by Access Audits Australia, for use by YPRL as guides when developing and upgrading new systems and processes to support access for all.

These Access Checklists include:

- Access Checklist for Communications
- Access Checklist for Consultations
- Access Checklist for Publications
- Access Checklist for Presentations
- Access Checklist for Websites.