

New Plymouth District Council

Accessibility Strategy

2021



Tē Kaunihera-ā-Rohē o Ngāmotu
**New Plymouth
District Council**



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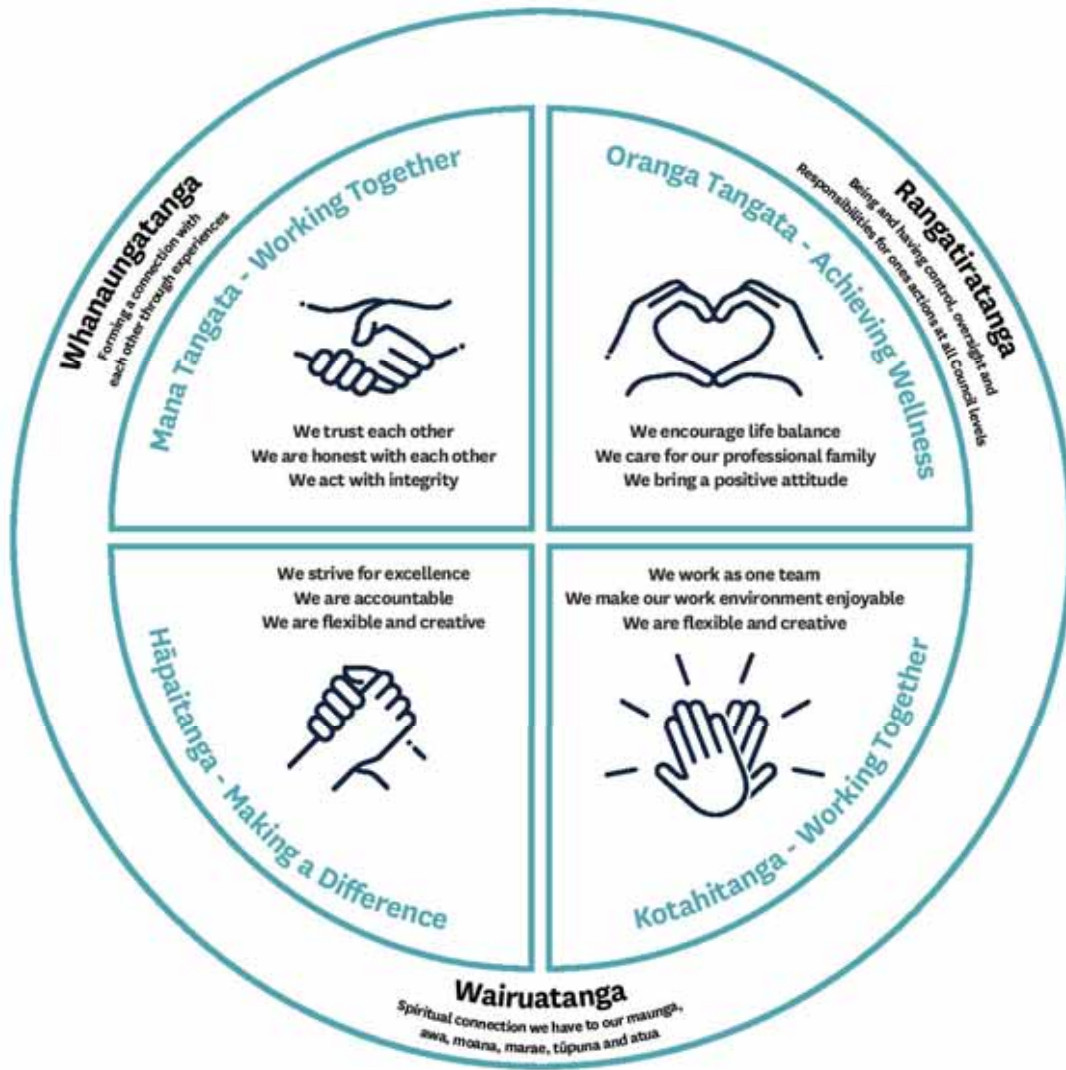
Strategic Vision

New Plymouth District Council Provides Equitable Services for All of Our Communities.

Accessibility

'If something is accessible it is easy to reach, enter, get, understand or be appreciated by anyone in the community. This includes people with physical or cognitive challenges, temporary injuries, seniors, young children and their carers, people with Non-English speaking backgrounds and from a range of cultures'

Our Approach



Mana Tangata, Oranga Tangata, Kotahitanga and **Hāpaitanga** are the New Plymouth District Council values and behaviours. They feed into each other and capture our collective thinking as an organisation.

Whanaungatanga, Rangatiratanga and **Wairuatanga** are principles central to tikanga Māori. These were incorporated to reinforce the New Plymouth District Council Values and strengthen the actions in this strategy.

Collectively, these values frame how the Strategy will function in our evolving environment and ensure New Plymouth District Council provides accessible environments for staff and residents. Examples of these values are tagged in the action plan.

Our Purpose

New Plymouth District Council are champions of an inclusive society that promotes the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of our communities.

Championing accessibility in our built environments, in our communication, in our democratic processes and in the provision of services and events is a fundamental part of all four well-beings.

Our Goals

Goal 1

Council services, facilities and assets are accessible to people with a wide range of abilities.

This goal underpins the tools Council staff use to engage with the community and/or customers, and the assets or facilities that it provides. It includes Council's websites, customer service areas, communications mediums, roads, footpaths, parks, access and delivery of events, venues and exhibitions.

Goal 2

Council staff are aware of accessibility in the community and receive appropriate training.

People are at the core of Council services and facilities. Council staff need to be trained and aware of accessibility challenges to better equip them to undertake their work in a more inclusive manner. This extends to beyond front facing staff - a common understanding must be shared at all levels of the organisation.

Goal 3

Council are active champions of an inclusive society.

Council can play a major role in encouraging a more inclusive community. Council's portfolio includes a large number of facilities, a significant proportion of employment and constant engagement with organisations and our communities. Council's large profile in the community provides opportunity for active leadership and advocacy on accessibility issues. This aims to encourage change across businesses, groups and individuals in the district.

Our Community

One in four New Zealanders identify as living with a disability. Comparatively, 26% of Māori, 19% of Pacifica and 16% of Asian report the same limitations. In New Plymouth, the proportion of people living with a disability is greater (28%). The accessibility needs of this group differ amongst the community:



Physical

16%

approx. 50% over 65 years old



Hearing

11%

approx. 50% over 80 years old



Psychological

6%

approx. 50% under 40 years old



Vision

4%

approx. 50% over 60 years old

There is a significant proportion of Māori living with a disability (tāngata whaikaha) in New Plymouth. The resources and services available to tāngata whaikaha, whānau, iwi and hapū need to reflect the cultural diversity in our community and acknowledge the shared values and beliefs of tangata whenua.

For all demographics, the percentage of individuals with disability increases with age. Given New Plymouth's ageing population, creating accessible environments is critical. Additionally, disability is context dependent. It can be permanent, temporary or situational; an individual with one arm, a broken arm or a parent holding a child all face similar access limitations. Prioritising accessible environments provides for all contexts. More people benefit from these services and it serves a greater proportion of the population.



Strategic Alignment

Local Government Act 2002

“Local Authorities to play a broad role in promoting the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of their communities, taking a sustainable development approach.”

National Strategies and Plans:

- United Nations Convention on Right of Persons with Disabilities 2007. Ratified by the New Zealand Government in 2008.
 - Independent Monitoring Mechanism for the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). As signatories to the Convention, New Zealand recognises persons with disabilities continue to face barriers in their communities and should be afforded equal participation in all services and opportunities offered in our country.
 - Building Act 2004
 - Office for Disability Issues – findings of the National Local Authority Survey on Accessibility
 - NZ Disability Strategy 2016 - 2026 & Disability Action Plan 2019 – 2023
 - Whāia Te Ao Mārama: Māori Disability Strategy Action Plan 2018 – 2022
 - The 'New Zealand Standard 4121:2001 - Design for access and mobility: Buildings and associated facilities'
 - **Enabling Good Lives**
Enabling Good Lives is a new approach to support people living with disabilities. Instead of dependence on day care centres, resources and support systems enable people living with a disability to participate in everyday activities. This grants people living with a disability more opportunities, more choices for support and greater control over these decisions.
- New Plymouth District Council will adopt this approach and be guided by the Age and Accessibility Working Party and the Enabling Good Lives organisation to support people living with disability within New Plymouth District Council and the community.

New Plymouth District Council Strategic Framework

New Plymouth District Council has a vision to create a Sustainable Lifestyle Capital –an innovative and resilient district with quality infrastructure, a healthy environment and a successful economic transition.

This rests on five pou:

Five NPDC pou



Sustainability



Community



Prosperity



Partnerships



Delivery

The Accessibility Strategy will facilitate strong partnerships with key accessibility organisations and mana whenua, deliver accessible services and facilities across our organisation and create equitable environments for our communities. These, alongside sustainability and a prosperous economy, will create a district where people want to work, live, learn, play and invest.



These areas contribute to our vision and sit alongside this strategy:

Taranaki Disability Strategy 2017

Taranaki can be a place where people with impairments live a life free of barriers. This future requires improving the awareness and understanding of accessibility in the community, valuing all strengths and abilities, and providing everyone equal opportunity to engage in the community. The primary areas of focus are:

- **Public spaces, transport, sport and culture**
- **Employment**
- **Housing**
- **Communication**

As partners of the Taranaki Disability Strategy Coalition, The New Plymouth District Council Accessibility Strategy acknowledges these areas of focus and reflects these in the action plan

New Plymouth Positive Ageing Strategy 2010 - 2020

The ageing population is increasing in New Plymouth. As a city, we need to embrace the opportunities of ageing. The ageing community must be physically and digitally connected, financially secure, feel safe and have access to public spaces and recreational opportunities. Choice, participation, the positive contribution to the economy and fulfilling the needs of ageing Māori and Pasifika people are strong themes that need to be acknowledged.

Transport and Accessibility

An accessible journey is an access route usable by people living with a disability unaided. An accessible New Plymouth District Council has transport facilities, council vehicles, and information and services that are usable for all abilities. To create this reality, New Plymouth District Council has committed to tailoring the provision of infrastructure and transport services, including:

- **Providing affordable, safe, sustainable and easy transport options**
- **Additional investment in bus stops, end of journey facilities, shared paths and cycle lanes**
- **Divesting from private transport and supporting alternative transport options to avoid congestion**
- **Encouraging a change in transport behavior**

In the New Plymouth District Council vision, anyone, regardless of age and ability, can travel from A to B without barriers and with dignity.

Management and Implementation

The 2021 Accessibility Strategy is a high-level organisational document that will guide policies and practices within the different parts of New Plymouth District Council. It is a living document that will evolve to reflect changing accessibility needs.

A group of Accessibility Change Champions will drive implementation across all workteams. This group is intended to have a diverse representation of council operations and will be led by the Age and Accessibility Working Party, the Community Partnerships Team and supported through sponsorship of the Deputy Chief Executive. They will be a point of contact for staff accessibility issues.

Accessibility must become business as usual - one of the lenses Council staff unconsciously adopt to promote the well-being of our communities.





Action Plan

Goal 1

Council services, facilities and assets are accessible to people with a wide range of abilities.

Key Actions:

NPDC Team Accessibility Action Plans

All teams develop Accessibility Action Plans specific to their role

They will:

- Prioritise universal design
- Identify priorities in short, medium and long term
- Collaborate with other teams

Accessibility Audits

- Civic Centre, Puke Ariki, TSB Showplace, TSB Stadium, Bowl of Brooklands and Community Libraries
- Follow through on accessibility improvements within budgets
- Provide a platform for visitors to feedback on the accessibility of Council services and facilities

Accessible Communication

- Accessible formats given to major documents, plans and strategies
- Phase in Te Reo-English bilingual signage at parks and venues
- Explore English - Te Reo translation on NDPC website
- Assess feasibility of translation tools for customer facing staff

Employment and Operations

- Utilise Ministry of Social Development Accessibility Guide for accessible and inclusive employment and retention of people living with a disability
- Staff enquire about accessibility requirements for meetings, interviews and events (e.g visibility, mobility, hearing etc) to ensure Accessible Journey

Universal Design

- Universal design implications are included in Point of Entry Business Case for projects
- Universal design review of NZS4404 Land Development and Subdivision Infrastructural Standards for NPDC
- Customer centric projects are reviewed by Age and Accessibility Working Party

Cultural Accessibility

- Review Marae Development Grant with accessibility lens
- Continue to provide resources for Māori to engage in council decision making





Goal 2

Council staff are aware of accessibility in the community and receive appropriate training.

Key Actions:

Staff Training

- Develop Disability /Accessibility Responsiveness Training
- Align training with Te Ao Māori Framework
- Develop database of accessibility resources e.g. Arts Access Aotearoa, Taranaki Disabilities Information Centre, strategic documents from mana whenua and Office for Disability Issues

Accessibility Awareness

- Launch internal campaign for accessibility awareness
- Create accessible events toolkit:
 - Accessibility maps
- Sensory requirements
- Health and Safety

Goal 3

Council are active champions of an inclusive society.

Key Actions:

Partnerships

- New Plymouth District Council is open to partnerships with accessibility organisations
- New Plymouth District Council collaborate with Office for Disability Issues to lobby for legislation, standards and codes
- Employment opportunities for Māori are maintained to enable the role of Kaitiakitanga

Leadership

- Elect executive sponsor for the Accessibility Strategy
- New Plymouth District Council sign the MSD Accessibility Charter

Public Awareness

- Deliver external accessibility campaigns and events to promote awareness
- Whānau, hapū and iwi are made aware of accessibility support services available through New Plymouth District Council



Long Term Actions

New Plymouth aspires to be a fully accessible district by 2035

Accessible Communication

- Review of all public and front facing information
- All major public facing documents are available in Te Reo
- Council information and services are available in Te Reo Māori

Staff Training

- Accessibility awareness and Te Ao Māori training compulsory part of induction
- Develop multi-cultural competency training

Mana Whenua

- Promote accessibility in sites of significance for Māori.
- Provide access to physical resources and space for tikanga Māori
- Develop measurement tools that reflect the perspective of mana whenua in the District. Tools reflect Whanaungatanga, Rangatiratanga, Wairuatanga, Tangata, Tikanga, Turangawaewae and Taio

Facilities

- Investment in Council infrastructure, venues, housing, parks and digital content for future accessibility needs.
- Achieve all public spaces being fully accessible (footpaths, toilets, playgrounds, walkways, parks and reserves)

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Accessibility Strategy Action Plan will be monitored by the indicators below.

Goal 1

Indicator	Target 2020/2021	Target 2022/2023	Target 2023/2024
Work teams develop specific accessibility action plans	100%	100%	100%
Percentage of actions in Accessibility Action Plans achieved	85%	90%	100%
Percentage of work streams contributing to yearly written report	100%	100%	100%
Actions identified in the accessibility audits implemented	90%	90%	90%
Council run events are accessible according to NPDC Accessibility Strategy definition	100%	100%	100%
Key public facing documents available in accessible formats (PDF, Word, Large Text, Easy Read)	30%	50%	60%
Accessible signs in Council owned facilities and public spaces	90%	100%	100%
Average of feedback on accessibility experience of front facing Council facilities (1 – 10)	8	9	9.5

Goal 2

Indicator	Target 2020/2021	Target 2022/2023	Target 2023/2024
Action plan milestones are achieved	100%	100%	100%
Actions in work stream action plans achieved	85%	90%	100%
Percentage of facilities with access to accessibility event toolkit and accessibility resource database	100%	100%	100%
Internal accessibility awareness events held	4	4	4
Key Council staff that have completed accessibility responsiveness training	80%	100%	100%
Key Council staff that have Te Ao Māori cultural competency training	80%	100%	100%

Goal 3

Indicator	Target 2020/2021	Target 2022/2023	Target 2023/2024
Action plan milestones are achieved	100%	100%	100%
Actions in work stream action plans achieved	85%	90%	100%
Council Projects received by Age & Accessibility Working Party for review	100%	100%	100%
Successful applications for the iwi/hapū resource management fund	100%	100%	100%
Successful Marae Development Grants	100%	100%	100%
Submissions prepared by Age & Accessibility Working Party each year	1	1	1
External awareness campaigns for accessibility	2	2	2



Reporting

The prior indicators will be included in the following reporting framework:

- 6 month update on Action Plan to Age and Accessibility Working Party after the launch of the Strategy
- Verbal report to Age and Accessibility Working Party every half financial year
- Written report to Age and Accessibility Working Party every financial year

The Accessibility Strategy will be reviewed every 3 years in line with the Long-Term Plan - the next review will be completed in the first half of 2023.



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