



Access and Inclusion Strategy

2020 – 26

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The Shire of Campaspe is the traditional lands of the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Yorta Yorta Peoples.

We respect and acknowledge their unique Aboriginal cultural heritage and pay our respect to their ancestors, descendants and emerging leaders as the Traditional Owners of this country.

We acknowledge their living culture and their unique role in the life of this region.



Introduction

This strategy demonstrates council's commitment to equal participation for people in our community. The document is a roadmap to a more accessible and supportive Campaspe. This includes not only the built environments, but also the social, economic and natural environments.

This is council's fourth Access and Inclusion Strategy. In developing this document, we have broadened the scope to include additional groups to better respond to the changing nature of our community.

Our Access and Inclusion Strategy 2020-26 is an important step towards achieving council's vision:

To be strong, supportive, vibrant and sustainable.

Campaspe Shire Council
Plan 2017-21

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Why do we have a strategy?

We have prepared this strategy because:

1. There are groups in our community who face barriers

"We will all likely feel marginalised at some point in our lifetime"

2. The whole community benefits if it's inclusive

"The economy is healthier and it's a nicer place to live"

3. Council as an organisation is in a good position to effect change

"We can improve the way we do things, as well as partner with others for change"

The *Victorian Disability Act 2006* also requires local government to prepare a Disability Action Plan. The Act states the purpose of these plans as:

- Reducing barriers for people with disability accessing information, goods, services and facilities;
- Reducing barriers to people with disability obtaining or maintaining employment;
- Promoting inclusion and participation in the community; and
- Achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices that discriminate against people with disability.

What do we mean by barriers?

Barriers are a range of obstacles that can make everyday life more difficult for some people. These might include:

Type of barriers	Examples
Physical	A lack of suitable access to buildings or spaces.
Social	Discriminatory attitudes and behaviours towards certain groups.
Economic	A lack of finances preventing participation in everyday life.
Circumstantial	Low English skills, or acquiring a mental health condition.

We can all do more to remove these barriers. Some examples:

- Modify our buildings so anyone can freely enter and move about.
- Change our behaviour and attitude so others feel safe and accepted.
- Consider a more diverse range of candidates when we employ.
- Rethink how we provide information, so anyone can understand and benefit.

How did we prepare this strategy?

To prepare this strategy, we have:

1. **Reviewed our previous strategy**
 - for its strengths and weaknesses.
2. **Examined other councils' documents**
 - to identify 'best practice'.
3. **Updated our understanding**
 - of changes to legislation.
4. **Reconsidered our perceptions**
 - of who the strategy could benefit.
5. **Consulted**
 - with our community and stakeholders.

Our consultation has included:

- **Council staff** – Forums with council staff who work closely with customers or local communities.
- **Sector stakeholders** – Forums with 'subject matter experts', such as agencies and health service providers.
- **General public** – Testing of ideas to gauge consistency with community perceptions. This included a public survey distributed to user groups and 'pop up' engagement sessions in three towns. 190 surveys were completed.



Communities of Priority

Disability Action Plans are required by law under the *Victorian Disability Act 2006*. In previous plans, we made improving access for people with disability our sole focus.

Our last plan in 2015 looked a little wider to include:

- Culturally and linguistically diverse communities (CALD); and
- People experiencing financial hardship

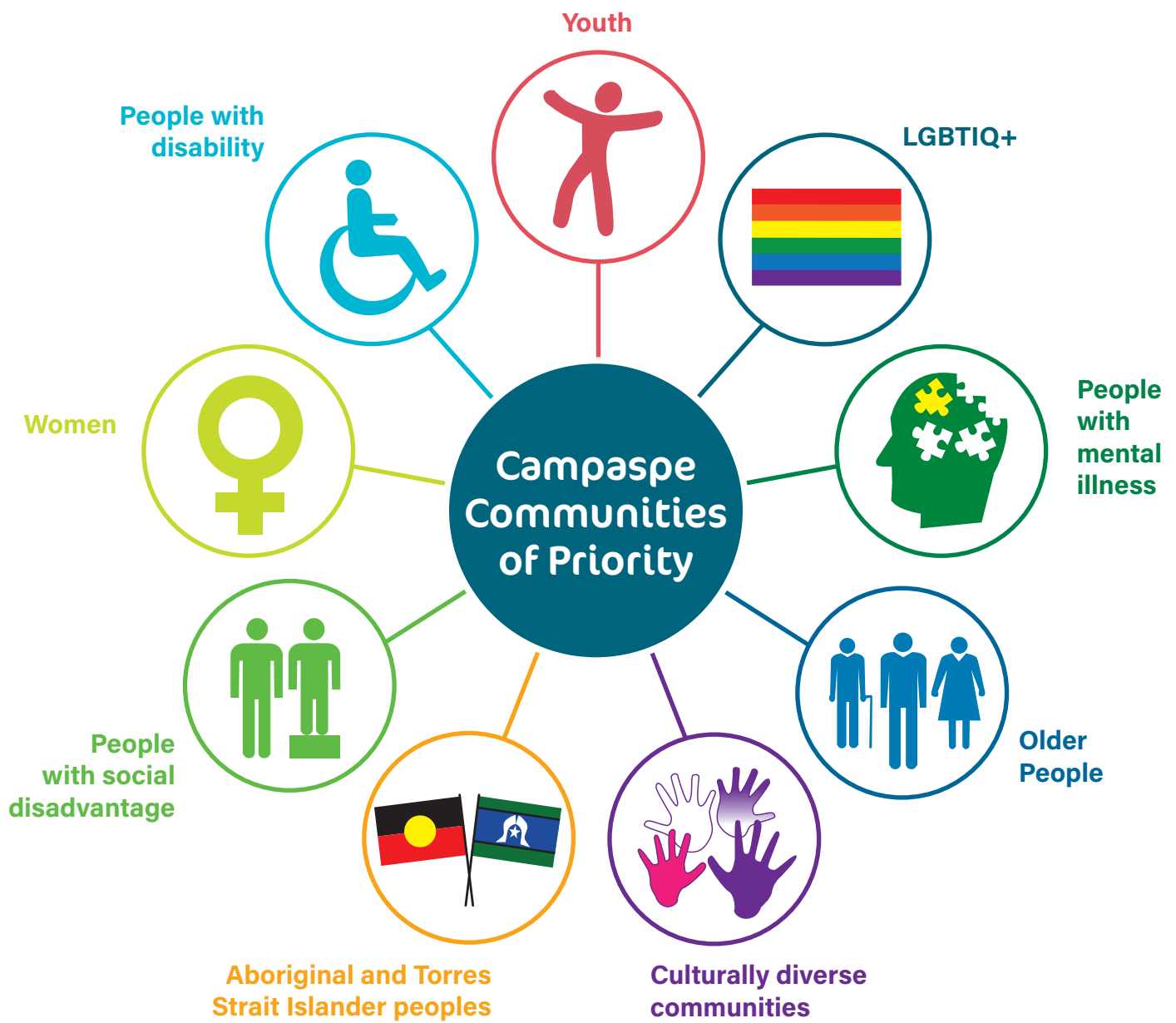
In this strategy, we have broadened our scope. A recurring theme during consultation was a desire to widen the project's focus to better respond to the changing nature of our community.

Improving access and inclusion for people with disability remains at the centre of this strategy. In developing this strategy, we have had the opportunity to consider a more holistic concept of inclusiveness. This strategy acknowledges there are a range of people and groups who experience barriers to equal participation.

There have also been a range of changes in the environment to influence this perception. These include:

- The changing nature of council services.
- The changing nature of funding available to council.
- Inconsistent funding of services for different groups across the shire.
- The rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
- Through immigration, Campaspe is welcoming people from different backgrounds.
- Growth in people from low socio-economic backgrounds experiencing financial hardship.
- A changing economic environment.
- An increase in community awareness of mental illness and the need for services.
- The needs of people who have experienced domestic violence.
- Young people (aged 12-25) identifying a lack of social connectedness and poor employment opportunities.
- Campaspe's older population.
- Growing opportunities for partnerships with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
- Growing community understanding of barriers and needs within the LGBTIQ+ community.

These groups are called our **Communities of Priority**.



Communities of Priority

People with Disability

The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* describes a disability as ‘an impairment of a physical, sensory, intellectual and cognitive and psychiatric nature.’

People can have a permanent or temporary disability. Disability can be present from birth, or something that is acquired at some point in our life. Our understanding of disability continues to evolve and improve. Most of us will be affected by some form of disability within our lifetime.

In Campaspe, **21.3%** of people have a permanent disability, another **6%** have a temporary disability. This means that **one in four** have a disability.



Why include People with Disability?

The likelihood of disability increases with age

54%

of people **over 65** years of age have a disability.

81%

of people **over 84** years old have a disability.

Australia ranks

27th Lowest

among developed countries for the relative income of people with disability.

Workforce participation for people with disability is low at around

54%

This compares to

83%

for people without a disability.

1.2 Million

people with disability report difficulties using public transport.

90% of women

with intellectual disability have been sexually abused.

Some of the barriers People with Disability face

- Physical access to public spaces, buildings, sporting event and transport
- Getting employment that's suitable
- Accessing the services needed

Where there's improvement

Since 2013, the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has progressively been rolled out across Australia. The NDIS is Australia's first nation-wide system to coordinate disability services.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

Campaspe is in Yorta Yorta, Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung country. Aboriginal people's physical and spiritual connection with Australia extends back more than 40,000 years.

Around 870 people in Campaspe identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. This is **2.4%** of the population, which is higher than the state average of **0.8%**.



Why include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples?

The average life expectancy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is approximately

10 years

less than non-Indigenous Australians.

Nationally, just over half **52.2%**

of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged between

15 & 64 years were

not

employed in 2012-13

Around **half**

of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged

15 years & over

have some form of disability.

Around **1 in 12**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults are part of the

Stolen Generations

Older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are almost

3 times more likely

than non-Indigenous people to need assistance with daily tasks.

Some of the barriers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples face

- Discriminatory attitudes and stigmas
- Inter-generational trauma
- Language and shared understanding
- Accessing culturally appropriate information and services
- Engagement with education and employment opportunities

Where there's improvement

41.7% of 15 to 24 year olds who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander were attending an educational institution. This is an increase from **38.3%** in 2011.

Culturally Diverse Communities

6.3% of our population was born overseas and **2.8%** were from a non-English speaking background. This is lower than the state average. The main non-English speaking country of birth is Italy.

Between 2006 and 2011, the number of people in Campaspe:

- born overseas increased by **11.2%**.
- from a non-English speaking background increased by **16%**.



Why include Culturally Diverse Communities?

16%
of Australians
reported
discrimination
because of their
skin colour
or
ethnic origin
or
religion

6%
reported
physical attacks
based on their
race and/or
traditional dress.

People born in countries where English is not the main language are:

3 times
as likely to
experience workplace
discrimination.

2 times
as likely to
experience
discrimination in
education.

4 times
as likely to
experience
discrimination in
policing and housing.

Around 35%
of recent migrants
said they faced
hurdles finding their
first job, due to:

**A lack of Australian
work experience or
local connections.**

**Language
difficulties.**

**Difficulties having
their skills or
qualifications
recognised**

Some of the barriers Culturally Diverse Communities face

- Discriminatory attitudes and stigmas
- Accessing education and employment
- Accessing culturally-relevant information and services

Where there's improvement

The vast majority of Australians (**84%**) believe that multiculturalism has been good for Australia.

Communities of Priority

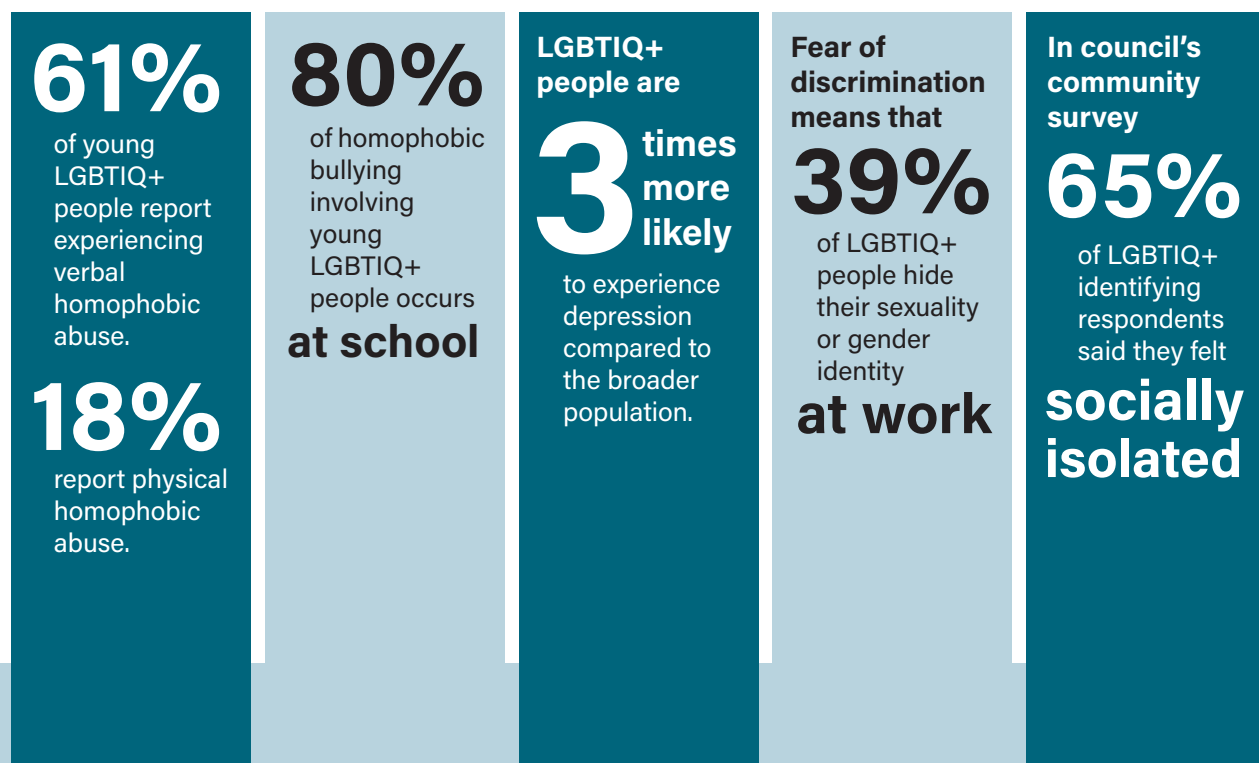
LGBTIQ+

LGBTIQ+ is the acronym used to describe people who identify as either Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer or other diverse sexual orientation or gender identity. This broad group includes approximately **11%** of Australians.

In 2013, the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* was changed to prohibit discrimination because of a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.



Why include LGBTIQ+?



Some of the barriers LGBTIQ+ people face

- Discriminatory attitudes and stigmas
- Accessing support services and information

Where there's improvement

From 9 December 2017, sex or gender no longer affects the right to marry under Australian law and same-sex marriage became legal in Australia.

Campaspe Shire Council publicly supported marriage equality in 2017.

Communities of Priority

Youth

Council's youth services focus on the 12-25 age bracket. The issues affecting young people can vary enormously across this age group.

Negative circumstances facing youth will often impact on the remainder of their lives. It can affect their health, employment and wellbeing as adults.

Some young people from vulnerable groups need particular assistance to make sure their rights are protected, such as:

- Young people experiencing homelessness or living in out-of-home care.
- Young people with mental health issues or disability.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth.



Why include Youth?

Around 27% of students are affected by bullying at school.

18-24 year olds have the **highest prevalence** of mental illness of any age group

Around 1 in 5 young people (15-19 years old) meet the criteria for a probable serious mental illness.

1 in 3 people accessing homelessness services were under the age of **18** in 2011-12

Some of the barriers Youth face

- Lack of independence to make decisions
- Access to services and information
- Financial barriers

Where there's improvement

Most children say they are able to get support from outside their household in times of crisis.

Communities of Priority

People with Mental Illness

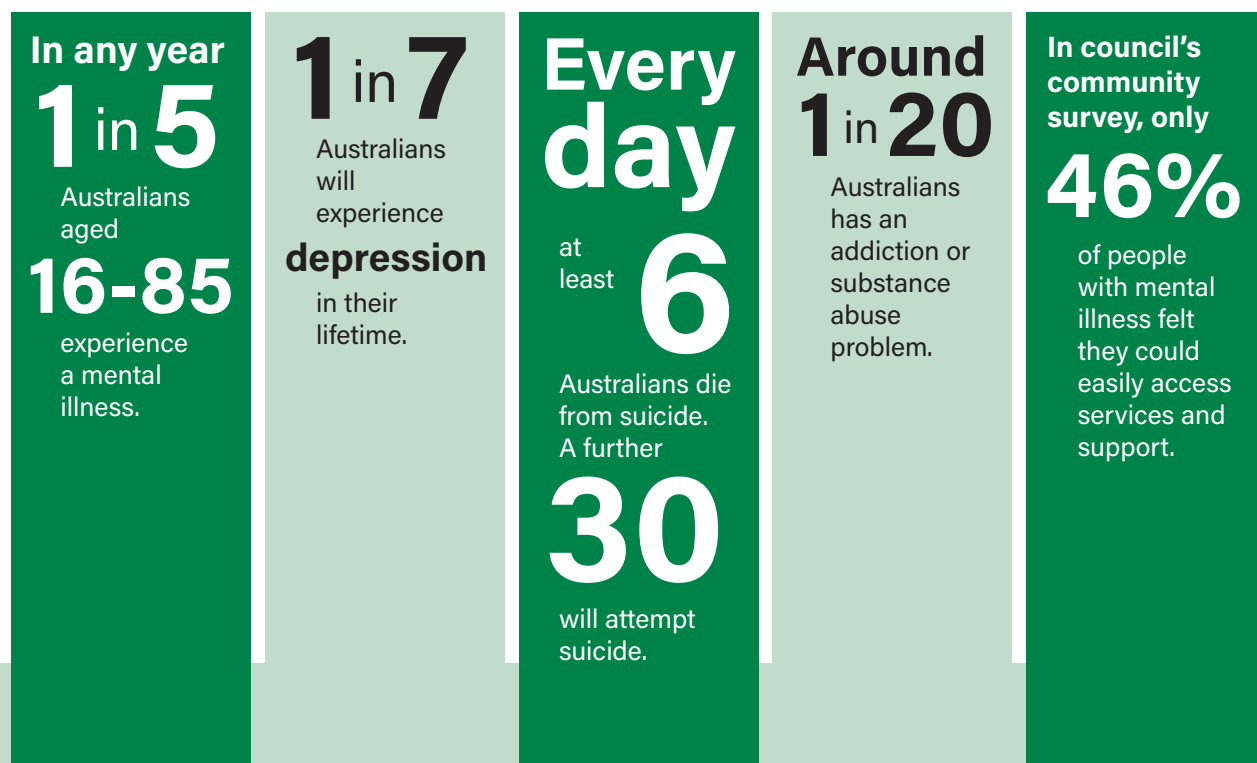
In Australia, mental illness is very common and almost half the population will experience a mental illness in their lifetime.

The most common mental illnesses are depression, anxiety and substance use disorder. These three types of mental illnesses often occur in combination.

Accessing mental health support services can be a challenge in rural and regional Australia. Stigma and lack of understanding can often prevent people from seeking help.



Why include People with Mental Illness



Some of the barriers People with Mental Illness face

- Access to support services
- Getting employment that's suitable
- Financial barriers
- Stigma and poor community understanding

Where there's improvement

Nearly **9 in 10** Australians say the country has become more accepting and understanding of mental health issues over the past five to ten years.

Communities of Priority

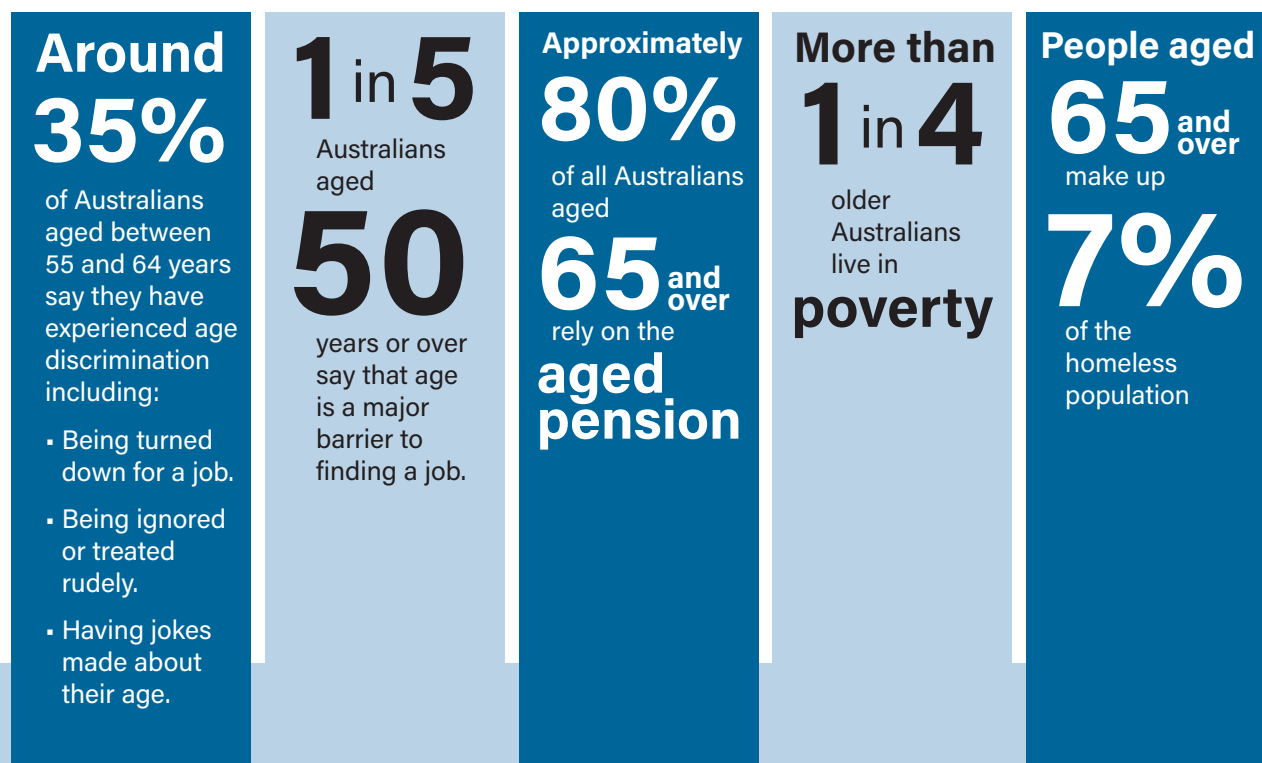
Older People

Campaspe, like many areas of Australia, has an aging population. By 2050, around one quarter of all Australians will be aged 65 years and over. As a retirement area, Campaspe will likely have an even higher proportion of older people.

In 2004, the *Age Discrimination Act* came into effect. The Act makes it unlawful to treat people unfairly on the basis of their age. It also highlights the need to tackle negative stereotypes that can lead to age discrimination.



Why include Older People?



Some of the barriers Older People face

- Discriminatory attitudes and stigmas
- Getting employment that's suitable
- Keeping up with technological and social changes
- Physical access to public spaces and buildings
- Financial barriers

Where there's improvement

Australians enjoy one of the highest life expectancies in the world. Men today live nearly 80 years and women live 84 years, both up 25 years from a century ago.

Communities of Priority

Women

Women continue to experience inequality in many parts of their lives, despite sexual discrimination being illegal. This can limit the choices and opportunities available to them.

Australia has made significant strides towards gender equality, however the workforce still remains highly segregated by gender. Women still earn less than men on average.

Changing gender stereotypes can often be challenging in rural and regional Australia.



Why include Women?

The national gender pay gap is **15.3%**
It has remained between **15% & 19%** for the past two decades.

In 2015-16 the average Australian woman retired with **\$113,660 less** superannuation than the average man.

More than **half** of women aged **18 or older** have experienced **sexual harassment**

At least **1 in 3** Australian women has experienced **physical or sexual violence** in her lifetime.

In 2017 Australia was ranked **35th** out of **144** on a global index measuring **gender equality**

Some of the barriers Women face

- Discriminatory attitudes
- Gender stereotypes
- Financial barriers
- Personal safety

Where there's improvement

The number of women on the Boards of ASX-listed companies grew from **8.3%** in 2009 to **26.2%** in 2017.

People with Social Disadvantage

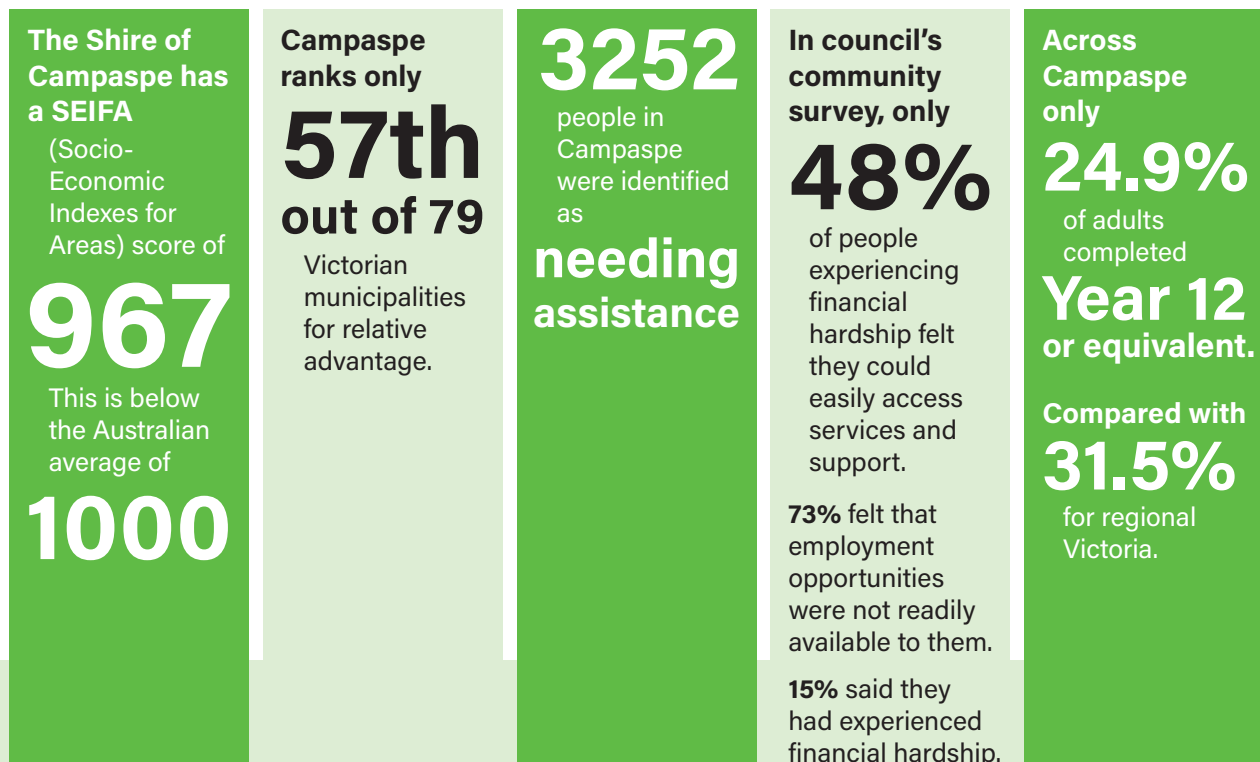
In general, people from poorer social or economic circumstances:

- are at greater risk of poor health
- have higher rates of illness, disability and death; and
- live shorter lives than those who are more advantaged.

Campaspe has a relatively high proportion of people who are socially disadvantaged.



Why include People with Social Disadvantage?



Some of the barriers People with Social Disadvantage face

- Financial barriers
- Accessing education and employment
- Accessing the services they need

Where there's improvement

Campaspe's SEIFA index moved up from **947** in 2011 to **967** in 2016. This means that relative advantage (compared to other areas) has improved.



Our Framework For Change

Based on the information gathered from stakeholders and our acquired knowledge, we have developed a framework to respond to the challenges faced by our **Communities of Priority**.

Council has a number of roles and duties, which are set out in legislation. Sometimes council delivers specific services, while sometimes it acts as an advocate or partner to encourage other levels of government or organisations to assist.

Our framework has four layers that will guide council's activities over the coming four year period:

- Our overall **vision** for access and inclusiveness
- The **outcomes** we want to see
- **Strategies** for effecting change
- Specific **actions** we will implement

Our Vision

Campaspe enables communities to be accessible, inclusive and equitable.

The Outcomes We Want

Our communities:

- Feel socially included
- Have equitable physical access
- Are engaged and respected
- Have increased satisfaction with council services

Council is:

- Adaptive and flexible to the need of the Communities of Priority
- Effective in delivering appropriate services and infrastructure
- Aware to the needs of our Communities of Priority

Our partners:

- Identify council as a supportive partner
- Consider council an effective advocate/ stakeholder

Strategy 1 - Plan and deliver council services that enable access and inclusion.

Actions

Strategy 2 - Ensure council's decision making processes include participation by, and consideration for, Campaspe's Communities of Priority.

Actions

Strategy 3 - Advocate for the needs of council's identified Communities of Priority.

Actions

Strategy 4 - Develop and maintain partnerships with groups that support the needs of council's identified Communities of Priority.

Actions

Vision

This vision is long-term. Council understands that this current strategy is just one step towards achieving this vision. It is intended that this vision will carry through to subsequent versions of this document, to ensure that we continue to work towards a common goal.

Underlying council's vision is an understanding that the pathway to equal participation requires the progressive elimination of barriers.

Outcomes

The outcomes are intended to be measurable indicators. Council's 2019 community survey provides a starting point to measure success. Further consultation and evaluation will indicate whether this strategy is achieving its intended outcomes for access and inclusion.

Strategies

Strategies identify the types of things we can do to achieve our desired outcomes.

Four strategies have been developed acknowledging council's legislated roles and capacity to effect change.

Actions

The four strategies directly inform the specific day-to-day **actions** council will implement over the life of this document. The Action Plan is intended to be dynamic, and will be updated over the life of this strategy to ensure council's response remains current.



References

The following legislative documents underpin the development of this strategy:

- Victorian Disability Act 2006
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- Local Government Act 1989
- State Disability Plan 2017-20

Additional information and data has been sourced from:

- https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/LGA21370
- https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/2?opendocument
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