



2023-2025

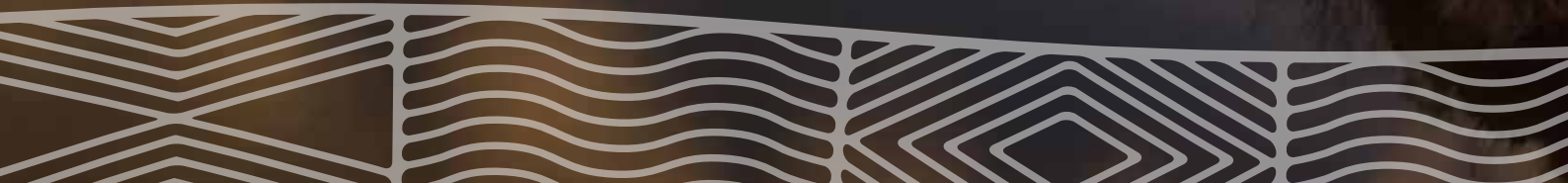
Accessibility and Inclusion Plan *Year One Report*

Acknowledge of Country

Wyndham recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Custodians of the lands on which Australia was founded.

We acknowledge the Bunurong and Wadawurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which Wyndham is being built, and on which we work and live, and where learning takes place. We pay respect to their Ancestors and Elders who always have, and always will, care for Country and community, today and for future generations.

We pay respect to the diversity of Aboriginal communities past, present and future, and the richness our Aboriginal community members bring to Wyndham and their learning that has been passed across generations for thousands of years.





The Accessibility and Inclusion Plan 2023-2025 responds to the Wyndham 2040 Community Vision, a place for people, by upholding the vision for a safe, connected and inclusive community. Through this plan Council commits to improving access and inclusion for people living with disability in Wyndham and their carers.

A primary objective of the Plan is to build confidence by facilitating equitable engagement and participation for people with disability in our community. The goal is to provide the same level of access that people without disability enjoy and to ensure people are not discriminated against based on their disability.

The vision for the plan was renewed from the previous Wyndham City Accessibility Action Plan 2019-2022:

“People with disability, our families and/or carers experience dignity, respect and inclusive access to opportunities and services. Our voice is respected, we have control over our lives, and disability pride and diversity are celebrated.”

This Plan aligns closely with both the State and Federal Government access and inclusion plans. This alignment assists us in working together for collective impact where local priorities reflect state and national priorities. The pillars of this Plan align with the themes of the Wyndham 2040 Community Vision, Wyndham City’s Council Plan, and the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

This first year 2023-2024 report demonstrates the many ways that Council and its partners have continued to meet the accessibility and inclusion needs of the Wyndham community.

Development and consultation Process

The Accessibility and Inclusion Plan was informed by discussion on refreshing the vision of the Plan, and on drafted pillars and priorities. During consultation and engagement we sought alignment with the Community Vision, Council Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, drawing upon other extensive community engagement that also preceded development of this Plan.

Targeted consultations included feedback on the draft priorities from Wyndham’s People’s Advisory Panel. This also included an open invitation to people with lived experience in Wyndham (who may not be Panel members), as well as workshops with appropriate networks.

Engagement across the organisation is ongoing to identify and action opportunities over the duration of the Plan to make progress against the identified outcomes and improve access and inclusion in Wyndham.



Wyndham

Demographic Profile



People with a disability are an important and sometimes disadvantaged population group often in need of specific services provided by local and state government. Their living arrangements may differ markedly from the rest of the population. In 2021, there were 12,089 people with a need for assistance living in the City of Wyndham out of those 4,488 people or 3.1% are from non-English speaking population, reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability.

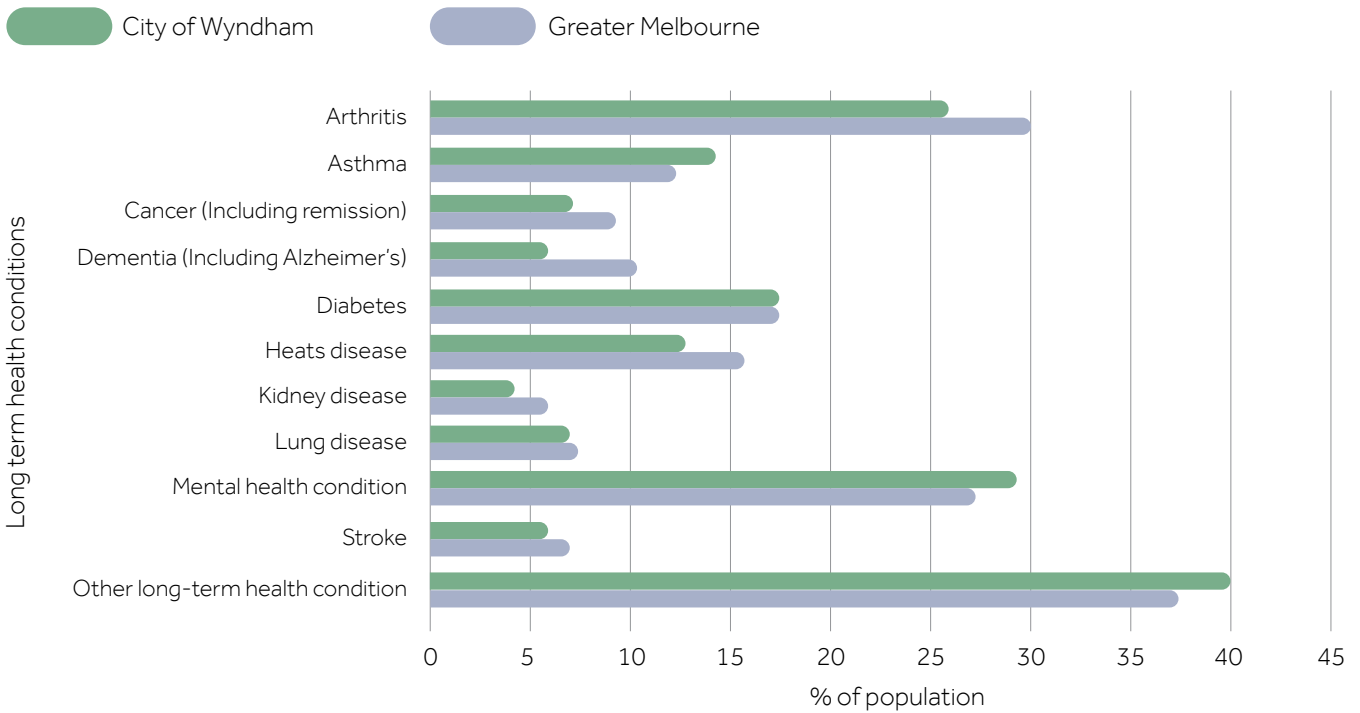
Need for assistance with core activities, 2021

non-English



Long term health conditions, 2021

Need for assistant

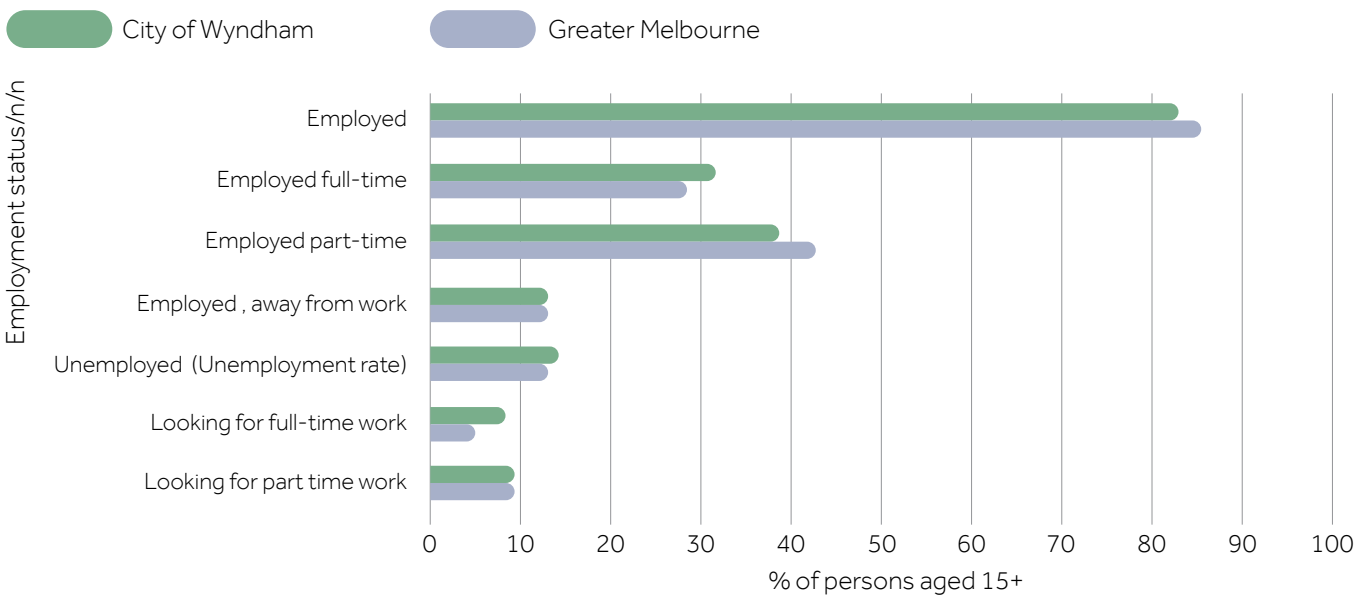


Analysis of the population needing assistance in the City of Wyndham in 2021 shows that there was a lower proportion with long term health conditions (84.5%) compared with 87.1% in Greater Melbourne.

Analysis of the labour force participation rate of the population needing assistance in the City of Wyndham in 2021 shows that there was a higher proportion in the labour force (12.9%) compared with Greater Melbourne (9.9%).

Employment status 2021

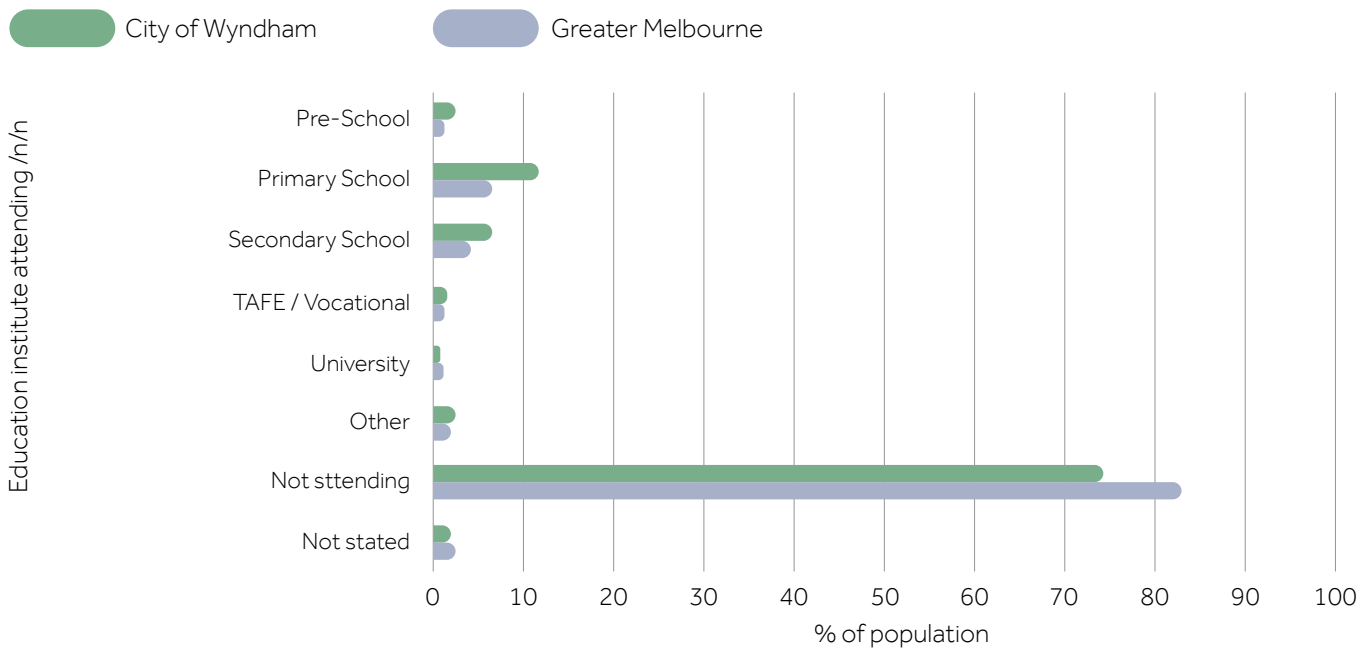
Need for assistant



In 2021, 24.5% of people who needed assistance in the City of Wyndham attended an educational institution.

Education institution attending 2021

Need for assistant



Reporting

Wyndham City has undertaken a range of initiatives to support accessibility and inclusion across Wyndham. Below are a few examples of initiatives undertaken since the inception of the plan.

Thriving

LIT Event - The third annual LIT event was held at Wyndham Park over 14 nights from 8-24 March 2024 and was attended by over 76,000 people. This free light-based experience is suitable for a wide audience, connecting our community and transcending age and culture to provide an experience that anyone can enjoy. LIT combines cutting edge technology with curated installations and interactive experiences to deliver an unforgettable experience for its audience. In 2024, a Sensory Friendly evening was introduced, where installations were altered for a quieter and more gentle sensory experience – this improved inclusivity and accessibility to the event.

Disability Expo/ Forums

Lack of information about services available for people with a disability was deemed a priority for services providers. Since October 2023, two local Disability Service providers have run three disability forum/ expo's in Wyndham to give residents an opportunity to learn more about local disability services.

Establishment of working group

Wyndham Disability Services Network established a working group with four service providers that will be able to host a Expo/Forum in 2025. This forum/expo will continue to give residents of Wyndham an opportunity to find out what services are available to them in the local municipality.

Introduction of Cérge @ Western Leisure Centre

Late in 2023, Western Leisure Services which include Aqua Pulse, Eagle Stadium and the Outdoor Pool complex, introduced Cérge into their customer service. The Cérge Companion App provides service staff with the confidence to ensure empathetic customer service and deliver meaningful social impact. Cérge allows residents to discreetly message from the App direct to the venue which empowers customer service staff with complete confidence and knowledge to ensure an inclusive experience.

Training Session (Easy English)

About 44per cent of Australian adults have low literacy, and struggle with a range of everyday reading tasks. Carefully honed messages may be completely out of reach for nearly half the Australian population. Access English ran an Insights on Literacy for Communications Professionals' workshops for departments within council to assist them to develop better messaging to our community.

Introduction of Story Boards

Story boards have been introduced at most events in Wyndham City Council facilitated events. The aim of the story boards is to give people who may need a visual representation of what is going to happen at a local event prior to their arrival. This assists event holders to get a better understanding of what might assist them in making a more pleasant or less anxiety prone activity for them.

Charter of Rights for Carers with children in child protection system

Court Services Victoria launched a Charter of Rights To Carers And Parents with a disability involved with children in child protection. The Charter contains expectations about how rights are to be protected and respected, and the steps parents/carers can take to make a complaint. When they don't agree with decisions that are made during their involvement with the child Protection system. The Charter was a collaboration between the Funds in Court Human Rights Advisory Committee, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing; advocates and persons with a lived experience of disability; and key disability organisations in Victoria. This charter was presented to the Wyndham Disability Services Network and send out to all service providers to share the information with their participants.

Library Q&A Speech pathologist sessions

Wyndham libraries offer an opportunity for parents/carers to have a Q&A with a Speech pathologist to share any concerns and ask questions about their child's language development. These monthly sessions across different libraries offer an opportunity to receive informal advice in an relaxed setting.

Pre School Field Officers (PSFO)

The PSFO Service is designed to deliver professional support and consultation. It aims to build the capacity of early childhood educators to provide for the inclusion and participation of all children in funded kindergarten programs. From October 2023 to June 2024, the PSFO team supported about 442 early childhood educators to provide for better inclusion and participation for children aged 3 and 4 years old to early child years services to ensure a better start to their schooling journey.

LearnWest Project

The LearnWest Project is all about celebrating the joy of learning throughout life, fostering social connections, bridging generations, boosting health, and unlocking economic opportunities. A Wyndham Disability Network guest speaker shared his story to inspire other people with a lived experience about his challenges with lifelong learning.

Sing and Sign Rhyme time

In Term 2 2024, the Library Children's Team, in collaboration with Hey Dee Ho, presented Sing and Sign Rhyme Time sessions at the Williams Landing Library Lounge and Hoppers Crossing Library, to 212 community members. The weekly sessions over 4 weeks engaged children from ages 1-5 in learning basic AUSLAN signs, including simple greetings, actions, colours and animals.

Wyndham Disability Network Employment Session

Wyndham Disability Services network ran a session on employment to assist service providers to gain a better understanding on ways to assist their clients to maintain and gain employment opportunities. These included lived experience speakers and a carer of a young person.

Healthy

Footpath guidelines redevelopment

Currently the Council footpath trading guidelines are being revised with an additional disability lens to better accommodate those with a lived experience of a disability to feel welcomed into the spaces in the city centre.

Playground Chat Board Project

Place making team within Wyndham City Council is piloting a project to enhance communication and accessibility in Hoppers Crossing. The Placemaking and Activation team plans to install a 'Playground Chat Board' at Powell Reserve Playground, Hoppers Crossing. The Open Space team strongly supports expanding this project based on the pilot's success.

Try Before you Ride Project

Travellers Aid presented to the Wyndham Disability Network about their "Try before you ride day". They encourage members to attend this event and discover how accessible public transport can be, and to allow people to have an opportunity to take the first step towards confident and independent travel on public transport.

Sport4All

Wyndham City has been working in partnership with Get Skilled Access' Sport4All disability inclusion program since March 2023. The program now has 28 clubs, fitness organisations and 14 schools involved in the program.

Across 2023-24, two Inclusive Multi Sport Afternoons were run at Tarneit P-9 and Eagle Stadium. 91 people with disability and over 100 of their family and friends attended. These fun events allowed participants to try multiple sports in one place where they could feel safe and supported and to connect with organisations where they can continue to participate. 16 organisations provided activities as part of a second afternoon.

Activities and organisations that are welcoming for people with disability can be found on wyndham.vic.gov.au/activedisability

Safe

'Are you ready' Project

The Wyndham City Council emergency team presented at the Wyndham Disability Network in October 2023 their "Are You Ready?" campaign - a joint Council initiative that encourages families and individuals to be prepared for any emergency by completing an emergency preparedness plan. Service providers were encouraged to take copies of the brochure and have conversations with participants about keeping themselves safe during an emergency.

Conversations and planning have begun to deliver sessions to people with a lived experience in 2025 to better understand emergency communications and their role in maintaining themselves safe during an emergency.

16 days of activism campaign

In December 2023, a string of internal and external events were held across multiple locations to bring awareness of the 16 days of activism, including a Lunch and Learn session for internal and external partners in the Wyndham Disability Network to build awareness of Family Violence for women with disability.

Opportunity

Community engagement Opportunities

The Future Wyndham project will create the Wyndham 2050 Community Vision and help inform the next Council Plan (including the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) as well as the Long-Term Financial Plan and Asset Plan. Activities included a workshop for people with lived experience of disability to gain community feedback. This will help us recreate the Vision, decide how council can allocate funds and over what time frame, what projects we prioritise, how we look after our existing assets, and where we direct our resources. Feedback received will also help shape Council's major long-term plans and the 2025-26 Draft Budget.

Hidden Disability Sunflower Initiative

In April 2024, in conjunction with World Autism Day the Wyndham Libraries launched the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower initiative to recognise people with hidden disabilities. The idea is to provide a way for people to be discreetly identified, and for staff to be able to recognise it and offer personal support. Over 100 council staff have been trained to recognise the sunflower merchandise and assist residents in the library spaces. Conversations have started with other departments within the organisation about launching the initiative into other customer facing services.