



**TE KOMITI ĀPITI MŌ NGĀ TAIPAKEKE ME TE  
ĀHEINGA  
AGE AND ACCESSIBILITY SUBCOMMITTEE**

17 February 2026

Order Paper for the meeting to be held in  
Te Kakano O Te Aroha Marae  
(136 Randwick Road, Moera, Lower Hutt)  
on:

**Tuesday 24 February 2026 commencing at 11:45 am**

**Membership**

Cr G Barratt (Chair)  
Cr C Parkin (Deputy Chair)

Cr TA Puketapu  
Cr N Shaw  
Deputy Mayor K Brown (Alternate)

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**Have your say**

You can speak under public comment to items on the agenda to the Mayor and Councillors at this meeting. Please let us know by noon the working day before the meeting. You can do this by emailing [DemocraticServicesTeam@huttcity.govt.nz](mailto:DemocraticServicesTeam@huttcity.govt.nz) or calling the Democratic Services Team on 04 570 6666 | 0800 HUTT CITY

# TE KOMITI ĀPITI MŌ NGĀ TAIPAKEKE ME TE ĀHEINGA AGE AND ACCESSIBILITY SUBCOMMITTEE

<b>Chair:</b>	Cr Glenda Barratt
<b>Deputy Chair:</b>	Cr Chris Parkin
<b>Membership:</b>	Cr Te Awa Puketapu Cr Naomi Shaw  Including appointed members <b>Alternate</b> - Deputy Mayor Brown
<b>Quorum:</b>	Half of the membership
<b>Meeting Cycle:</b>	Meets quarterly
<b>Reports to:</b>	Te Komiti Oranga Hapori, Oranga Taiao   Connected Communities, Climate and Resilience Committee

## Overview:

The Subcommittee supports Council's goals for an accessible and age-friendly city.

## Area of Focus:

- Provide input into the development and review of Council's policies, bylaws, strategies and plans relating to accessibility, including disabled people and older residents. Considering subjects including, but not limited to, transport, public spaces, housing, digital access, emergency management and community facilities.
- Provide early advice on major projects and initiatives, including relevant infrastructure, streetscapes, facilities and service design.
- Oversee the development of, and then monitor progress against, an Age and Accessibility Plan.
- Champion Te Tiriti o Waitangi commitments and equity for Māori and Pacific disabled people and kaumātua, encouraging kaupapa Māori approaches where appropriate.
- Strengthen connections between Council and community networks and share insights from lived experience.

## Purpose:

To provide strategic advice to Council to ensure plans, policies and services are inclusive, age-friendly and accessible for disabled people and older residents.

### **Delegations for the Subcommittee's areas of focus:**

The subcommittee has no decision-making powers other than those set out in these terms of reference. The subcommittee may make recommendations to Te Komiti Oranga Hapori, Oranga Taiao | Connected Communities, Climate and Resilience Committee.

### **Reporting:**

The Age and Accessibility Subcommittee reports to Te Komiti Oranga Hapori, Oranga Taiao | Connected Communities, Climate and Resilience Committee. Minutes and any recommendations from Subcommittee meetings will be provided to the Connected Communities Committee, etc, for information and/or endorsement. Matters requiring a Council decision will be referred to Council through the Te Komiti Oranga Hapori, Oranga Taiao | Connected Communities, Climate and Resilience Committee.

The Chair of the Subcommittee, or their delegate, may also provide regular updates to Te Komiti Oranga Hapori, Oranga Taiao | Connected Communities, Climate and Resilience Committee on key issues, progress, or emerging priorities within the Subcommittee's areas of focus.

**HUTT CITY COUNCIL**

**TE KOMITI ĀPITI MŌ NGĀ TAIPAKEKE ME TE ĀHEINGA  
AGE AND ACCESSIBILITY SUBCOMMITTEE**

Meeting to be held in the Te Kakano O Te Aroha Marae  
(136 Randwick Road Moera, Lower Hutt Wellington 5010) on  
Tuesday 24 February 2026 commencing at 11:45 am.

**ORDER PAPER**

**PUBLIC BUSINESS**

**1. OPENING FORMALITIES - KARAKIA TIMATANGA**

Tuia te mana akiaki	<i>Sow the seeds of courage</i>
Rarangahia te mana	<i>Weave the power of unity</i>
rangatira	<i>To grow and prosper</i>
Kia tipu, kia puāwai	<i>There are ripples in</i>
E ripo ngā wai	<i>Te Awa Kairangi</i>
O Te Awa Kairangi	<i>There are Kaitiaki on the land</i>
He Kaitiaki ki te whenua	<i>Protected environment</i>
He oranga taiao	<i>Thriving people</i>
He oranga tangata	<i>Connected, united, affirmed!</i>

Haumi e, hui e Taiki e!

**2. APOLOGIES**

No apologies have been received.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Generally up to 30 minutes is set aside for public comment (three minutes per speaker on items appearing on the agenda). Speakers may be asked questions on the matters they raise.

**4. CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS**

Members are reminded of the need to be vigilant to stand aside from decision making when a conflict arises between their role as a member and any private or other external interest they might have

5. **RECOMMENDATION TO TE KOMITI ORANGA HAPORI, ORANGA  
TAIAO | CONNECTED COMMUNITIES, CLIMATE AND RESILIENCE  
COMMITTEE - 3 March 2026**

Implementation of the Age and Accessibility Subcommittee and establishment of the Age and Accessibility Advisory Group

Report No. AAS2026/1/1 by the Senior Community Facilitator 6

**CHAIR'S RECOMMENDATION:**

"That the recommendations contained in the report be endorsed."

6. **INFORMATION ITEM**

**Age and Accessibility Subcommittee Forward Programme 2026**

Report No. AAS2026/1/8 by the Democracy Advisor 28

**CHAIR'S RECOMMENDATION:**

"That the recommendation contained in the memorandum be endorsed."

7. **QUESTIONS**

With reference to section 32 of Standing Orders, before putting a question a member shall endeavour to obtain the information. Questions shall be concise and in writing and handed to the Chair prior to the commencement of the meeting.

8. **CLOSING FORMALITIES - KARAKIA WHAKAMUTUNGA**

Unuhia!

Unuhia!

Unuhia i te uru-tapu-nui

Kia wātea, kia māmā

Te ngākau, te tinana,

te wairua i te ara takatū

Koia rā e Rongo

whakairihia ake ki runga

Kia wātea, kia wātea!

Ae rā, kua wātea!

Hau, pai mārire.

Release us from the  
supreme sacredness of our  
tasks

To be clear and free  
in heart, body and soul in  
our continuing journey

Oh Rongo, raise these  
words up high so that we  
be cleansed and be free,  
Yes indeed, we are free!

Good and peaceful

Vanessa Gilmour  
**DEMOCRACY ADVISOR**



# Age and Accessibility Subcommittee Meeting

02 February 2026

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Report no: AAS2026/1/1

## Implementation of the Age and Accessibility Subcommittee and establishment of the Age and Accessibility Advisory Group

### Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval to operationalise Council's new Age and Accessibility Subcommittee (Subcommittee) including the establishment of an Age and Accessibility Advisory Group (Advisory Group).

### Recommendations

That the Subcommittee recommends that the Connected Communities, Climate and Resilience Committee:

- (1) notes and receives the report;
- (2) notes the current progress on the 2017-2027 Plan and possible next steps set out in Appendix 4 attached to the report;
- (3) agrees with the establishment of an Advisory Group and the proposed process to appoint members to the group as outlined in paragraphs 19-21 of the officer's report;
- (4) notes that Age and Accessibility Subcommittee will consider applications and select up to eight members to be invited to be part of the Advisory Group for this triennium; and
- (5) asks officers to report back at the next meeting on the development of an updated draft Age and Accessibility Plan, for consultation with the Advisory Group.

For the reasons that Council supports focus on older and senior communities as identified communities of interest, to ensure Council's policies, programmes and investments continue to support an age-friendly and accessible City.

## Background

2. Lower Hutt is experiencing demographic change that will increase the importance of age-friendly and accessible city planning over time.
3. The 2023 Census identifies 15,807 residents aged 65 years and over, representing approximately 15% of the city's population. This is an increase from 2018 and signals an ageing population profile.
4. The 2023 Census also shows that Lower Hutt City has a higher than national proportion of residents who report 'a lot of difficulty' or 'cannot do at all' in one or more functional areas, including walking, seeing, hearing, cognition, self-care, and communication. This difference is more pronounced for Māori residents and represents an increase from 2018 census data.
5. Collectively, these trends highlight existing equity deficits and indicate a likely increase overtime in demand for accessible Council services, facilities, communications, and public environments.
6. The Seniors and Disability Community of Interest Profiles, attached as Appendices 1 and 2 to the report provide further insight into lived experience and the practical barriers residents encounter. Key themes include physical accessibility challenges across the built environment, affordability pressures, transport and mobility constraints, and the compounding impacts of digital exclusion. These insights reinforce the need for a clear and coordinated approach to ensuring Council services and investments support full participation in city life for older adults and disabled people.
7. The 2017-2027 Plan attached as [Appendix 3](#) to the report was intended to be reviewed every three to five years, however, no formal review has taken place since its adoption in 2017.
8. The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Subcommittee outline its purpose, scope, and governance role in guiding Council's work on ageing and accessibility. The Subcommittee's ToR are on page 2 of the agenda.

## Discussion

### *Council's ongoing work to support Hutt City's older and disability communities*

9. Council continues to play a supporting and brokering role in community-led seniors and disability programmes, with a particular focus on access, inclusion, and participation. The Connected Communities team, through the Senior Community Facilitator, provides targeted support including relationship brokering, programme development, enabling access to Council venues and funding, internal advocacy, and promotion.

10. Both communities of interest are considered in engagement for key Council projects and are involved where appropriate. For example, a disability advocate was a member of the Community Advisory Group for the Whakatapu Ngaengae project, providing advice and feedback on all design elements. Officers also engage with these communities during consultation on the Annual Plan, Long Term Plan, and Residents Satisfaction Survey to support proportional and inclusive representation.

*Progress to date*

11. The 2017-2027 Plan sets out Council's long-term commitment to creating a city that is accessible, inclusive, and welcoming for all residents, ensuring that people of all abilities can fully participate in community life.
12. Appendix 4 provides an overview of progress against the 2017-2027 Plan, including the goals, key performance indicators, achievements to date, and proposed next steps. This includes:
- a) **Accessible communications:** Council has made progress improving information accessibility, including Council's website being designed to accessibility standards and the addition of an Accessibility Page, alongside voting information provided accessibly in 2022 and 2025 election processes.
  - b) **Workforce capability gap:** Disability awareness training and related internal process improvements are ad hoc and not consistently reported or embedded.
  - c) **Built environment focus:** Some progress on accessibility in the physical environment has been made, with community expectations for regular street audits and clearer pathways for requesting accessibility improvements remaining a priority for strengthening delivery.
13. While the current 2017-2027 Plan provides a foundation for disability access and inclusion, it is largely silent on the specific needs and outcomes associated with an ageing population.
14. Officers also note that the 2027-2027 Plan was intended to be reviewed every three to five years; however, no formal review has been undertaken since its adoption due to competing Council work programme priorities.
15. Officers recommend developing an updated Age and Accessibility Plan and establishing an Advisory Group to support Council projects and decision-making. These actions are further discussed below.

*Subcommittee Operations*

16. The Subcommittee's ToR set out its purpose, focus areas, delegations and reporting requirements. The Subcommittee Chair will provide verbal reports to the Connected Communities and Climate Resilience Committee following each quarterly meeting of the Subcommittee.
17. The Subcommittee is intended to operate as a practical leadership lever that strengthens delivery outcomes for older and disabled communities by supporting earlier visibility of issues, improving planning quality and reducing avoidable rework. When accessibility considerations are integrated early in project and policy development, Council can reduce the risk of late-stage design changes, minimise the need for costly retrofits or remediation and improve public confidence in delivery. This approach can also reduce the volume of reactive complaints and service requests by addressing barriers before they become entrenched problems for residents and communities.
18. Examples of value creation through early engagement include improvements to mobility access and inclusive design in Council-led projects and services. This includes upgrades and modifications informed by community feedback at Petone Esplanade and Te Ngaengae Pool, as well as renewed attention to accessible amenities such as the Days Bay beach access mats. These examples demonstrate the practical benefits of structured input from lived experience, particularly where accessibility outcomes rely on early design decisions and effective cross-team coordination.

*Advisory Group*

19. A priority would be to establish an advisory body that supports the Subcommittee and Council officers with lived-experience insight and practical guidance. The Advisory Group would be an advisor predominantly to the Subcommittee, not holding any formal delegations or decision-making authority, and would not act as a committee of Council.
20. The Advisory Group would be non-statutory and unpaid and would operate as an input mechanism to support Subcommittee advice and Council accessible, inclusive service design. It would complement, but not replace, formal consultation processes and statutory engagement requirements.

21. Officers propose the following process to appoint the Advisory Group:
- a) An Expression of Interest letter will be drafted by officers backgrounding the Advisory Group and its role, and asking for applications which include a short statement on lived experience;
  - b) The letter would be circulated to relevant groups already connected to Council, and others identified by Committee members;
  - c) The Subcommittee will consider applications and select up to eight members to be invited to be part of the group for this triennium, seeking a range of representation.

### **What changes for Council teams**

22. To ensure the Subcommittee and Advisory Group can strengthen delivery, officers will embed an “early advice” approach across relevant workstreams, initialing when new business plans have been approved for each year. This includes communicating to Council teams this new Subcommittee and its role informing age and accessibility projects and policy decisions, and feeding relevant projects into the Committee’s work programme. working with teams to develop a rolling cross-Council forward work programme.

### **Resource and funding**

23. While the Democratic Services team will support the Subcommittee, officers propose the co-ordination of the Advisory Group is led by the relevant facilitator in the Connected Communities team, to be managed in line with available resource and other priorities.
24. Given Council’s current financial constraints, it is assumed there is no other support required and no additional costs.
25. If new projects/workstreams/resource requirements are identified by the Advisory Group or Subcommittee, these would be progressed through the Annual Plan/Long Term Plan for funding consideration against other priorities.

### **Risks**

26. **Delivery delay / rework risk:** if the Subcommittee and Advisory Group are engaged late in project or policy development then advice may come too late to influence outcomes, potentially causing redesign, rework or delivery delays. This can be mitigated through setting clear guidance for Council teams and establishing a rolling Subcommittee forward work programme.
27. **Role clarity / delegations risk:** if the Advisory Group’s role, authority and reporting lines are not explicit, then there may be confusion around its role. This can be mitigated through confirming the Advisory Group is advisory-only, non-statutory and unpaid, and clarifying through its Terms of Reference its role and relationship with the Subcommittee.

28. **Unfunded expectations / cost-to-serve risk:** if the scope and engagement expectations for the Subcommittee and Advisory Group are not matched to available resourcing, then Council may face unfunded cost-to-serve pressures in a constrained financial context. This can be mitigated through staging implementation, confirming priorities early, and including transparent reporting on resourcing/cost implications.
29. **Representation risk:** if member selection is not transparent or does not achieve a balanced mix of lived experience and representation, then the Advisory Group may lack community buy-in, and its advice may be contested or underutilised. This can be mitigated through using a clear appointment method (EOI and/or mixed approach), applying a skills/representation matrix, and setting term lengths

### **Next steps**

30. Subject to the Subcommittee's approval of these proposals, including establishment of an Age and Accessibility Advisory Group, officers will:
- a) Confirm the Subcommittee's operational arrangements as set out in this report;
  - b) Implement the process to appoint the Advisory Group as outlined in this report;
  - c) Communicate to Council teams new expectations for earlier central visibility of Age and Accessibility work, and work with Council teams to establish forward work programme for the Subcommittee; and
  - d) Progress a review and refresh of the Accessibility and Inclusiveness Plan, including aged component, and downstream Subcommittee reporting.

### **Climate Change Impact and Considerations**

31. There are no climate change impacts arising from this proposal.

### **Consultation**

32. Officers will continue to work collaboratively with the Advisory Group and disability and seniors' stakeholders throughout the process and going forward.

### **Legal Considerations**

33. The Advisory Group is proposed as a non-statutory advisory body with no formal delegations or decision-making authority. Decision-making remains with elected members through established committee and Council processes, and the Advisory Group's role is to provide structured lived-experience input to inform planning, design, and service delivery.

## Financial Considerations

34. While the proposed Advisory Group would be unpaid, there are resource and operational costs associated with supporting the Subcommittee and Advisory Group to function effectively. These costs may include staff time for coordination and facilitation, agenda development and secretariat support, preparation of accessible materials, and ensuring meetings are delivered in accessible formats where required.
35. These resourcing implications sit within a broader financial environment where Council is actively managing cost pressures and pursuing organisational sustainability.

## Appendices

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**Author:** Ya'el Friedlander  
Senior Community Facilitator

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**Reviewed By:** Adrienne Moor  
Head of Connected Communities

**Approved By:** Andrea Blackshaw  
Director Neighbourhoods and Communities

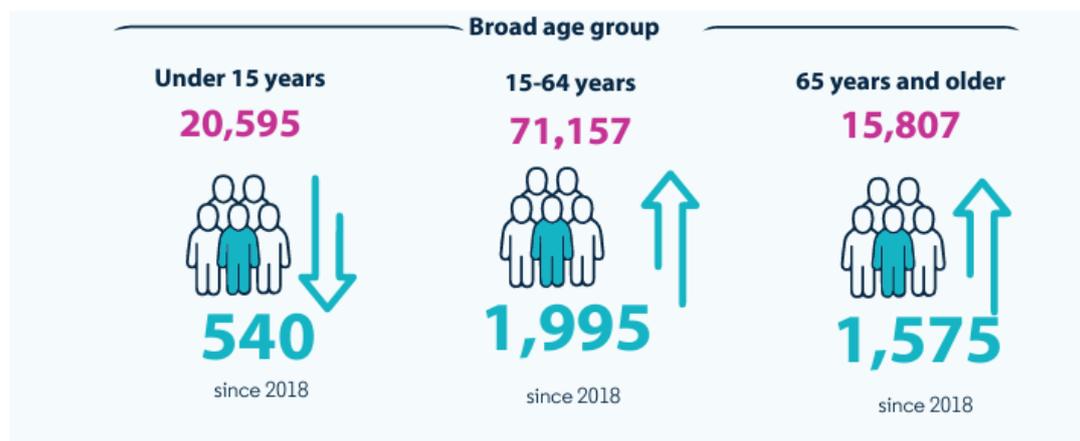
16 December 2025

Authored by Yael Friedlander, Senior Community Facilitator

# Seniors Community of Interest Profile

This document seeks to provide a brief snapshot of our support for older adults in Lower Hutt Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai.

## Key statistics



According to the 2023 Census, we have 15,807 residents who are 65 years old and older, comprising about 15% of our population, which is an increase since the 2018 census and represents an ageing population. The median age of our population is 37.5 years, which is lower than the national median of 38.1 years.

According to the 2024 Quality of Life survey, Lower Hutt residents over 65 years old report on average a higher level of satisfaction with their quality of life, a greater sense of community in their neighbourhood, and higher levels of trust in government and public systems than the general Lower Hutt population.

## Our Programming

In 2025, Hutt City Council facilitated over 1700 programmes and events within our Hubs and Libraries specifically targeting seniors. These range from digital literacy programmes, to physical health, to social connection and the arts.

Some of the most well-attended programmes of the year included: the Lower Hutt Kaumātua Games, International Senior's Table Tennis at Walter Nash, the weekly Kaumātua rōpū at Wainuiomata Neighbourhood Hub, and the Ready Steady Balance classes at various hubs.

Some of our smaller programmes, such as Eastbourne's Scrabble group, Petone's Colouring group, and Naenae's craft group have attracted a loyal following, supporting

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Authored by Yael Friedlander, Senior Community Facilitator

groups of older adults to form close bonds with each other and library staff, reducing social isolation and increasing community cohesion.

## Stakeholders and agencies

There are many services, agencies, and community groups working with the seniors of Lower Hutt. Some of the key stakeholders our Connected Community team work with include:

- Age Concern
- Dementia Wellington
- Kokiri Marae
- Wellington Tenth Trust: Kaumātua Rōpū
- Wesley Community Action
- Nuku Ora

## Feedback Themes

The Senior Community Facilitator spends time in the community with older adults, engaging in conversations and listening to their needs. The following themes have been gathered through kōrero and whakawhanaungatanga rather than formal consultation. There is no single consensus within this very diverse community of interest; however, the themes below reflect some of the concerns expressed.

- **Social Isolation:** Some older adults describe a lack of community cohesion. Many are living away from whenua and whānau and lack local supports, both informal and formal.
- **Cost of living, including rates:** seniors express worries about the rising costs of living. Many note that increases in everyday expenses, including council rates, kai, and housing, create financial pressure and contribute to uncertainty about their ability to maintain a stable quality of life.
- **Physical accessibility:** Older adults highlight challenges related to physical accessibility in their daily environments. This includes issues with local infrastructure such as footpaths, public spaces, and buildings, as well as the availability, reliability, and affordability of public transportation. Especially for those who can no longer drive, these barriers can limit their independence and ability to participate in community life.
- **Digital literacy and navigating our changing world:** Many seniors find it difficult to navigate an increasing shift toward digital systems and online service delivery. Changes in legislation, administrative processes, and the ways support services engage with clients can be confusing or overwhelming for those who are not

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Authored by Yael Friedlander, Senior Community Facilitator

confident with digital technology. This can create barriers to accessing essential information and support.

- **Health and healthcare access:** Health and wellbeing are significant areas of concern. Numerous older adults describe difficulties in accessing timely and appropriate healthcare, including long wait times at GP clinics and the impacts of pressured hospital services. Many feel that these system constraints reduce opportunities for meaningful engagement with health professionals and limit their ability to have their health needs understood and addressed.
- **Access to culture and community:** Some non-Pākehā elders—including Māori, Pasifika, and members of other ethnic communities—express a sense of disconnection from their cultural practices. Feelings of whakamā may arise from lost or disrupted access to cultural knowledge, traditions, or language. At the same time, many are actively seeking opportunities to reconnect by engaging with groups and communities that share their cultural identity and experiences.
- **Feelings of safety:** Older adults in certain suburbs have raised concerns about their safety when moving around their neighbourhoods. For those who no longer drive, walking to local services or public transport links can feel daunting due to fears of anti-social behaviour or unsafe environments. These concerns can further limit independence and community participation.

# Disabilities Community of Interest Profile

This document seeks to provide a brief snapshot of our support for our disabilities in Lower Hutt Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai.

## Key statistics

Disability prevalence in Lower Hutt is higher than national averages. While the 2023 Census estimates that 7.5% of residents have a disability, national survey data from the 2023 Household Disability Survey indicates that around 17% of the population is disabled. When combined with local activity limitation data, it is understood that more than 17% of Lower Hutt residents may be living with a disability—equating to approximately 18,000–19,000 people.

Disability prevalence is higher among Māori residents, reflecting national trends. The disability community in Lower Hutt is diverse and includes people with physical, sensory, intellectual, cognitive, and neurodiverse impairments, with many residents experiencing overlapping barriers related to income, access, and inclusion.

## Our Programming

Hutt City Council plays an enabling and facilitative role in supporting community-led disability programmes, primarily through the Connected Communities team and the Disabilities and Seniors Community Facilitator.

Council support includes relationship brokering, internal advocacy, enabling access to council venues, and promoting inclusive participation. Recent and ongoing programmes supported by Council include:

- **Everybody Dance Now** – a weekly dance class for disabled adults at Walter Nash Centre, with over 50 regular participants
- **Terrific Together** – a monthly inclusive storytime at War Memorial Library
- **Neurospicy Parents Group** – a peer-support group for neurodiverse parents and caregivers hosted at Wainuiomata Hub
- **ASD Community WLG board game group** for autistic young adults at War Memorial Library
- **SENCo Expo (March 2025)** – supporting connections between schools, whānau, and disability service providers
- **Tākiwatanga / autistic whānau hui** at Wainuiomata Marae, with ongoing support planned for Māori autistic tamariki and whānau

Council also continues to support advocacy groups such as Wheels and Canes and the FERNZ Hutt Valley Community Advisory Group through officer attendance at hui and by brokering pathways into Council decision-making.

## Stakeholders and agencies

Council maintains active relationships with over 40 disability sector organisations and stakeholders. Key partners include:

- CCS Disability Action
- Autism New Zealand
- MASH Trust
- Manaaki Ability Trust
- FERNZ Hutt Valley Community Advisory Group
- Wheels and Canes
- Evaro
- Workbridge
- Dementia Wellington

These relationships underpin Council's community-led and partnership-based approach to disability inclusion.

## Feedback Themes

The following themes have been gathered through ongoing kōrero, hui, and officer engagement rather than formal consultation. While there is no single consensus within this diverse community, the themes below reflect recurring concerns.

- **Accessibility of the Physical Environment** - Community members continue to report significant barriers across the street network, including unsafe or impassable footpaths and crossings. Regular street audits and dedicated funding for accessible infrastructure are seen as essential, particularly in suburbs such as Naenae, Eponi, and Days Bay.
- **Mobility Parking** - Concerns persist regarding the design, availability, and enforcement of mobility parking, including spaces that cannot accommodate rear- or side-loading vans.
- **Cost of Living and Financial Barriers** - Recent cuts to disability allowances and rising living costs have increased financial pressure. Venue hire costs are a growing barrier for smaller disability groups, particularly those reliant on benefits or reduced incomes.
- **Access for the Deaf Community** - Many Council events, programmes, and public meetings remain inaccessible due to limited funding for NZSL interpretation, resulting in exclusion from civic participation.

- **Inclusion in Mainstream Events** - Many disabled residents do not want separate or specialised events, but instead want universal accessibility embedded into all Council programming—particularly clear accessibility information, trained staff, and access to NZSL interpretation.
- **Employment and Participation** - Community partners report challenges in securing meaningful employment opportunities for disabled jobseekers. Council has been encouraged to lead by example through accessible recruitment practices and internal work experience placements.
- **Advisory and Engagement Structures** - The disbanding of the Accessibility and Inclusiveness Advisory Group (AIAG) in 2020 has left a gap in formal engagement pathways. While there is mixed appetite to re-establish the group in its previous form, there is a strong desire for a clear and structured mechanism for community input into Council decision-making.

# HUTT CITY ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS PLAN 2017-2027



## WHAT IS A DISABILITY

**Disability** is something that happens when people with impairments face barriers in society that limit their movements, senses or activities.

**Disabled people** are people who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. This is the understanding of disability in the Convention <sup>1</sup>

### The underlying approach

The principles and underlying approach of Hutt Council's Accessibility and Inclusiveness Plan 2017-2027 are based upon three key documents:

- The New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016 to 2026;
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2008;
- and the Treaty of Waitangi.

## NEW ZEALAND DISABILITY STRATEGY 2016-2026

The aim of the New Zealand Disability Strategy (NZDS) is to ensure that government departments and agencies consider disabled people's needs before making decisions. Underpinning the New Zealand Disability Strategy is a vision of a fully inclusive society.

*'A society that highly values our lives and continually enhances our full participation.'*

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (the Convention) is an international agreement about protecting and promoting the human rights of disabled people throughout the world. New Zealand signed the Convention on 30 March 2007, and ratified it on 26 September 2008.

The Convention recognises that people with impairments often face discrimination because of their disability and from not being recognised in Government policy and services. The purpose of the Convention, as stated in Article 1 is:

*"To promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all people with disabilities and to promote respect for their inherent dignity"*

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<sup>1</sup> New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026

HUTT CITY ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS PLAN 2017-2018

## UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES 2008

The two articles of the Convention that will be of particular relevance to the Hutt Council's Accessibility and Inclusiveness Plan 2017-2027 are:

Article 8 – Awareness Raising; and

Article 9 – Accessibility

Article 8 states that Governments should take immediate, effective and appropriate steps to;

- Raise awareness throughout society, including at family level, and to encourage respect towards disabled people,
- Eliminate prejudice and abuse against disabled people,
- Raise awareness of the value of the contribution disabled people make to society.

Article 9 of the Convention states that to enable disabled people to live independently and take part in all areas of life, government should take action to ensure accessibility, equal to that of non-disabled people. This includes taking action in relation to the built environment, transport, public services or facilities as well as information and communication services, and emergency services.

Also important is Article 4.3 which states that in the development and implementation of legislation and **policies to implement the present Convention and in other decision making processes concerning issues relating to persons with disabilities**, State Parties shall **closely consult with and actively involve persons with disabilities**, including children with disabilities **through their representative organisations**.

## TREATY OF WAITANGI

There are a number of provisions in the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act) that relate specifically to Māori. The key provision is in section 4 of the [Local Government Act 2002](#). In order to recognise and respect the Crown's responsibility to take appropriate account of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, and to **maintain and improve opportunities** for Māori to contribute to local government decision-making processes, Parts 2 and 6 provide **principles and requirements** for councils that are intended to **facilitate participation by Māori** in local government decision-making processes.

Whilst section 4 clearly acknowledges responsibility for the Treaty obligations lie with the Crown, Parts 2 and 6 of the Act are intended to facilitate participation of Māori in local government. Local government is charged with the responsibility to promote opportunities for Māori and other members of the public to contribute to its decision-making processes. These provisions apply to **all** Māori in the city, district, or region. They acknowledge that Māori other than mana whenua may be resident in the area.

## HUTT CITY ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS PLAN 2017-2018

The principles of the Treaty are:

- **Partnership:** Maori and the Crown have a relationship of good faith, mutual respect and understanding, and shared decision making
- **Participation:** the Crown and maori will work together to ensure Maori (including whanau, hapu, iwi and communities) participate in the disability sector at all levels of decision making around disability issues. Participation includes the right to seek opportunities for self-determination and self-management.
- **Protection:** the Crown actively contributes to improving the wellbeing of Maori including support for independent living and the protection of Maori property and identity, in accordance with Maori values. Maori have the same rights and privileges as other citizens.

## VISION

**Vision one:** Hutt City is a liveable, accessible and inclusive city where everyone has the opportunity to participate fully in our community.

**Vision two:** One accessible and inclusive experience of service for all

## PRINCIPLES

### Equity

Everyone has the same rights and opportunities. Human rights are protected as the fundamental foundation of all Council policy and practise.

### Inclusion

Hutt City encourages the involvement of all people in our community. The value of a fully inclusive and mutually supportive community is respected.

### Partnership

People with disabilities are involved in community decision making processes.

## HUTT CITY ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS PLAN 2017-2018

**Awareness and respect for all abilities**

Recognise and value a person's abilities and their potential to contribute rather than focusing on reasons why they cannot.

**Leadership**

Hutt City Council will provide leadership to the wider community by demonstrating a commitment to the vision through its internal policies and practices.

**Barrier free**

The need to eliminate barriers created by the social and physical environment that interfere with the human rights of disabled people.

## GOALS

**Goal 1:**

Council communication and information is accessible to all people

- Accessibility of HCC websites and published information
- Voting information is provided in easy read and captioned when online

**KPIs*****Accessibility of HCC websites and published information***

- i. The [Ministry of Social Development guidelines](#) on best practice communication are applied when developing communications material and engaging face to face (kanohi ki te kanohi).
- ii. Council's website is in the top 5% in New Zealand for accessibility to disabled people
- iii. Council's website contains an "Accessibility page" which gives options for feedback and use of the website
- iv. Key strategy and policy documents are easy to access and read. This means
  - They are not only available in PDF form
  - The font size, colour and contrast used is easily readable by people with sight impairments

***Voting information***

- i. Council promotes accessible voting information with the Electoral Commission.

## HUTT CITY ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS PLAN 2017-2018

**Goal Two**

Council culture and processes<sup>2</sup> include disability awareness and staff receive appropriate training

**KPIs**

- i. All council staff receive regular disability awareness training measured by HR records of training staff receive this includes:
  - a. Induction processes
  - b. The level of visibility of practical assistance that is available e.g. assistance for hearing and sight impaired
  - c. Contracts containing disability focused requirements
- ii. That relevant officers are introduced to the Advisory Group once it is established to advise the group on their areas of responsibility and establish a process for involving the Advisory Group in decision making processes where decisions will have a direct impact on the disability community. Specific areas include:
  - Strategy and Planning
  - Community Partnerships
  - Leisure Active
  - City Development
  - Libraries
  - Museums
  - Parks and Gardens
  - Environmental Policy
  - Urban Design
  - Road and Traffic
  - Environmental Consents
  - City Promotions (includes web site development)

**Goal Three:**

All people are able to move about the city easily and safely without being limited by the physical environment

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<sup>2</sup> This means Councillors and Council staff conducting themselves in a knowledgeable and empathetic way that is respectful of disabled people

## HUTT CITY ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS PLAN 2017-2018

**KPIs**

- i. Street Audits of Lower Hutt are carried out on a regular basis measured by the street audit report
- ii. Council makes every effort to ensure that all Council owned assets and facilities are accessible and inclusive to all people.

**Goal Four:**

In order to give effect to Articles 8 and 9 itself Council will champion and promote employment opportunities for people with impairments and also:

**KPIs**

- i. Establish an Accessibility and Inclusiveness Advisory Group (AIAG)
- ii. Provide support to groups in the community that are giving effect to CRPD articles 8 & 9
  - a. Provide opportunities for valid employment of disabled people where possible
  - b. Ensure job descriptions make it clear that disability is not a barrier to employment at Council

**Review**

The Accessibility and Inclusiveness Plan will be reviewed every three to five years.

## DEFINITIONS

**Meaningful participation is:**

- the active involvement of informed citizens in government decision-making outside the ballot box
- ensuring that citizen needs, concerns and values are represented in policy and action.<sup>3</sup>

**Diversity**

The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing our individual differences. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ceffect.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/12/meaningful-participation-by-gayle-l-gifford-acfre1.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <http://gladstone.uoregon.edu/~asuomca/diversityinit/definition.html>

## HUTT CITY ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS PLAN 2017-2018

**Accessibility**

Accessibility refers to the design of products, devices, services, or environments for people with disabilities. The concept of accessible design ensures both "direct access" (i.e. unassisted) and "indirect access" meaning compatibility with a person's assistive technology (for example, [computer screen readers](#)). Accessibility is strongly related to [universal design](#) which is the process of creating products that are usable by people with the widest possible range of abilities, operating within the widest possible range of situations. This is about making things accessible to all people (whether they have a disability or not<sup>5</sup>)

**Inclusiveness**

Inclusion of people with disabilities in society means involving them in every aspect of social participation others enjoy. Inclusion is something that must come from a desire to include them in the activities of the community, family, friendships and more and therefore must come from the actual desire to spend time with and interact with them. Including people with disabilities is something that you cannot legislate into the hearts and minds of people; it is something that people must want.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/accessibility/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/accommodation-inclusion.php>



Appendix 4: Accessibility and Inclusiveness Plan 2017-2027 Progress and possible next steps:

Goals	KPIs	Progress to Date	Possible Next steps
<p><b>Goal 1: Council communication and information is accessible to all people</b></p>	<p><b>Accessibility of HCC websites and published information</b></p> <p>i. MSD best practice communication guidelines are applied.</p> <p>ii. Website in top 5% in NZ for accessibility.</p> <p>iii. Website has an Accessibility Page with feedback options.</p> <p>iv. Key documents are accessible (not only PDFs, readable fonts/contrast).</p> <p><b>Voting information</b></p> <p>i. Council promotes accessible voting information in partnership with the Electoral Commission.</p>	<p>• 2022 – HCC website reported as designed to accessibility standards.</p> <p>• Accessibility page added.</p> <p>• 2022 and 2025 election process included accessible voting information and alternate formats</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing review of website and council communications to ensure adherence to accessibility standards</li> <li>Review accessibility of key documents – eg. Policies and agendas as PDFs</li> </ol>
<p><b>Goal 2: Council culture and processes include disability awareness and staff receive appropriate training</b></p>	<p>i. All Council staff receive regular disability awareness training (induction, visibility of accessibility assistance, contracts containing disability-related requirements).</p> <p>ii. Relevant officers introduced to Advisory Group once</p>	<p>Not specifically reported.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit disability related training completed by current staff (via HR records).</li> <li>Implement training, for example: (a) in person training for current staff; (b) contract external agency to develop e-learning for induction.</li> <li>KPI (ii) dependent on Goal 4 being completed.</li> </ol>

Goals	KPIs	Progress to Date	Possible Next steps
	<p>established, and process created for involving group in decisions affecting disability community (across strategy, libraries, parks, transport, planning, website, etc.).</p>		
<p><b>Goal 3: All people can move about the city easily and safely without being limited by the physical environment</b></p>	<p>i. Street audits of Lower Hutt carried out regularly (measured by audit report).                      ii. Council ensures all Council owned assets/facilities are accessible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2022 – Wheels and Canes requested Council to employ CCS Disability Action to carry out audit.</li> <li>• A street audit was reported as planned, but no evidence has been seen.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implement regular accessibility street audits.</li> <li>2. Implement accessibility audit of council owned facilities such as hubs and pools</li> <li>3. Clarify mechanism for community members to request accessibility audits (separate from current “report a problem”)</li> <li>4. Build on 2023 accessibility audit by further implementing recommendations</li> </ol>
<p><b>Goal 4: Council champions and promotes employment opportunities for disabled people and gives effect to CRPD Articles 8 &amp; 9</b></p>	<p>i. Establish an Accessibility &amp; Inclusiveness Advisory Group (AIAG).                      ii. Support groups giving effect to CRPD Articles 8 &amp; 9:                      • Provide employment opportunities where possible.                      • Ensure job descriptions indicate disability is not a barrier to employment.</p>	<p>Not been established</p>	<p><b>What we need to do:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Previous focus access and inclusion. Add focus on age now?</li> <li>2. Work with local groups to establish an Accessibility &amp; Inclusiveness Advisory Group.</li> <li>3. Audit job descriptions and hiring processes to ensure best practices for accessible hiring.</li> </ol>

**TO:** Chair and Members

**FROM:** Vanessa Gilmour

**DATE:** 02 February 2026

**SUBJECT:** AGE AND ACCESSIBILITY SUBCOMMITTEE FORWARD PROGRAMME 2026



**Age and Accessibility Subcommittee Meeting**

**Purpose of Memorandum**

1. To provide the Age and Accessibility Subcommittee with a forward Programme of work planned for the Committee for 2026.

**Recommendation**

That the Subcommittee receives and notes the Forward Programme for 2026 attached as Appendix 1 to the memorandum.

**Background**

2. The Terms of Reference for the Subcommittee require it to provide strategic advice and make recommendations to Council on matters relating to accessibility and age-inclusivity. The Subcommittee focuses on ensuring Council's policies, plans and services are inclusive and accessible for disabled people and older residents.
3. The forward programme for 2026 provides a planning tool for both members and officers to co-ordinate programmes of work for the year. The forward programme is attached as Appendix 1 to the memorandum.

**Forward Programme**

4. The forward programme is a working document and is subject to change on a regular basis.

**Appendices**

No.	Title	Page
1↓	Appendix 1: Age and Accessibility Subcommittee work programme 2026	29

**Author:** Vanessa Gilmour, Democracy Advisor

**Reviewed By:** Kate Glanville, Senior Democracy Advisor

**Approved By:** Kathryn Stannard, Head of Democratic Services

<b>Age and Accessibility Subcommittee work programme 2026</b>				
<b>Description</b>	<b>Responsible team</b>	<b>24 June 2026</b>	<b>25 Aug 2026</b>	<b>10 Nov 2026</b>
Work Programme	Democratic Services	✓	✓	✓
Updated Draft Age and Accessibility Plan	Neighbourhood and Communities	✓		
Report back on progress on Advisory Group	Neighbourhood and Communities	✓		
Office of the Auditor General's Report on Accessibility of Community Facilities	Neighbourhood and Communities	✓		