To make it easy to live, visit, work and play in the Port Macquarie-Hastings Council area for people with a disability
This book is in Easy English

It uses easy words and pictures.

Easy English books are mainly for people who may have trouble reading.

Easy English books are useful to lots of other people too.

In this book we will write the Strategy. This is a short way of saying the Port Macquarie-Hastings Disability Strategy for 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018.

Hard to understand words
Some words in this book are hard to understand.

When we write a hard to understand word it is in **bold**.

Then we say what the word means.
Port Macquarie-Hastings Council is very happy to present this strategy which will help us to become more disability-friendly.

Council has listened to lots of people with a disability, their families and carers.

What was said has helped Council to develop this strategy.

Thank you to everyone who helped us with the strategy. We hope it makes a difference.

- Aces Incorporated
- Alzheimer’s Australia
- Bago Magic Performance Group
- Disability Advocacy
- Hastings Aboriginal Disability and Mental Health
- Hastings Disability Interagency Network
- Hastings District Respite Care
- Hastings Headway
- House with No Steps
- Mid North Coast Local Health District
- National Disability Services
- NewIDAFE Inc.
- NewHorizons
- PMHC Access Sub-Committee
- St Agnes Parish
About the Strategy

A **Strategy** is what we want for a better future. It is the things we are going to do.

The strategy starts on **3 December 2014** and will be launched at International Day of People with a Disability.

It is for everyone with a disability, their families, carers, friends and **our community**.

**Our community** is all the people who live in the Port Macquarie-Hastings area.

It has seven big ideas to make life better for people with a disability, their families, carers and everyone in our community.

**Council agrees to do these seven big ideas.**
People with a disability know what is most important to them. People with a disability helped us to write this plan.

You told us that sometimes it is hard to do the same things as everyone else because:

- of the way other people treat you
- it is hard to get a job or get training
- it is hard to join in
- it is hard to get to the places where you can work, volunteer, learn or meet people.

Council wants to make sure that life is made better for all people with a disability and their families and carers.

The Council will keep talking to people with a disability to make sure our seven big ideas work.
Council staff will work together to take **barriers** away or make them smaller.

A **barrier** is anything that stops things or makes things harder. For example a brochure that has lots of big words is a barrier for people who can’t read well.

You should have services that are easy to use. You will be able to join in with your community if you want to.

The law says you must have access to Council information, buildings and services.

Council has an Action Plan from 2009 to 2018. This helps Council remove barriers or make them smaller. The Access Committee prioritises actions and helps make sure all areas of council (what we say, do, write and build) is more disability friendly.

For example by building footpaths that link to places you want to go helps everyone in the community.
Facts from the 2011 Census:

4,826 people or 6.6% of the population in Port Macquarie-Hastings Council area said they needed help in their day-to-day lives due to disability.

This is higher than the Australian average of 4.6% of the population.

12.9% of our residents are carers who give unpaid care assistance. There are 7,710 carers supporting their loved ones or friends in our community.

There are also 17,927 people 65 years and older who live here. This is 24.7% of our citizens who will also benefit from an access friendly community.
Our seven big ideas:

1. Give better access to community facilities that are run by council: libraries, parks, sporting ovals, swimming pools, beaches, council offices, community halls, airport, Glasshouse, car parking, public toilets, cycleways and footpaths, playgrounds and other outdoor areas like the community garden and Cowarra Dam.

**Access** means buildings and places in the community will be:
- easier to get into
- easier to move around in
- safer

2. You will be able to ‘Have Your Say’ about Council decisions.

We want to live in a community where people with a disability can take part – just like everyone else.

- Have Your Say about Council plans
- Have Your Say about Council issues that affect you
- Council will keep talking to people with a disability to make sure this strategy is working. For example the Access Committee is a group of 12 people from our community. They regularly meet with Council and help by highlighting issues and saying what are the most important things to be fixed first.
3. Council information will be easy to read.

Make information about what we do:
- easier to read
- easier to get
- easier to understand
- use words, pictures or videos to better promote what Council is doing

4. Council will do more to include people with a disability to join activities, go to events and work together with community groups.

- Events and activities run by council are disability friendly
- Council promotes the events and activities in words, pictures or video

5. The Access Committee and Council encourages shops and businesses be disability friendly for our community and tourists.

- Encourage business owners to have a shop that you can easily get in and out of
- Encourage business owners to train staff in friendly customer service
6. Council advocates to State and Federal Governments, developers, businesses and community for you.

- Council listens to what you say
- Council supports issues that are important to you and speak on your behalf.

Advocate means we strongly support you.

Developers are a company that buys a piece of land and creates buildings on it or open areas.

7. Council staff will work together on these big ideas, and be a disability friendly place to work.

- Council departments will work together to take barriers away or make them smaller
- Council is a friendly and easy to get around place for staff with a disability to work
- It is easier to volunteer at Council and help the community
How can I get more copies of this Strategy?

You can use a computer:  
www.pmhc.nsw.gov.au

You can send an email to: 
council@pmhc.nsw.gov.au

You can ask us to post the strategy to you.

You can phone us on (02) 6581 8111.

You can visit one of the Council Customer Contact Centres. All are open 8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday.

• 17 Burrawan Street Port Macquarie
• 49 High Street Wauchope
• 9 Laurie Street Laurieton

Please tell us if you need this book in a different way, for example if you need it in large print.

You can contact the National Relay Service on www.relayservice.com.au / call 1300 555 727 or SMS Relay 0423 677 767.
1. Give better access to community facilities
2. Have your say about council decisions
3. Council information is easier to read, get and understand
4. Make it easier to join in with your community
5. Encourage shops and businesses to be disability friendly
6. Council listens and supports
7. Council is a disability friendly workplace