

Accessible and Inclusive Sport and Active Recreation



"People with a disability receive the same physical, mental, and social benefits from participating in sport and physical activity as those not having a disability. Legally, Australians of all abilities should have access to sport and physical activity opportunities".

(Persons with disability and sport, Dr Ralph Richards, Senior Research Consultant, Clearinghouse for Sport, 2020)

March, 2021

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Attachment 1 - Clear Print Checklist from The Round Table for Information Access for People with Disabilities



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About this resource

Everyone has a right to feel included and belong in our community. This includes the right to participate in all parts of community life as a resident or visitor to the Central Coast including Sport and Active Recreation. Many of us are attracted to the Coast for the outdoor lifestyle and active pursuits it has to offer. This includes people with disabilities who want to enjoy all the things the Coast has to offer in a meaningful and inclusive way. This includes opportunities to stay active and be involved in community sport and active recreation.

People are not disabled by their impairment, but are disabled by the social, physical and economic barriers in our society. If we work together to remove these barriers, then people with disability, and the community more broadly, will experience the many social and economic benefits of being accessible and inclusive.

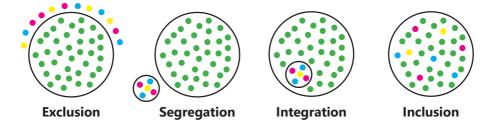
Whats is inclusion?

Exclusion - a person with a disability is directly or indirectly prevented or denied access to participating because of their difference

Segregation – a person's impairments are catered for but in a separate environment that is isolated from everyone else

Integration – a person with a disability is placed in the mainstream setting but must adjust and adapt to the standardised environment

Inclusion – where systemic change occurs enabling everyone to participate and experience in the same way where adjustments and adaptations are provided in a seamless way allowing a person to be their authentic self



Central Coast Council (Council) has developed this resource to help community sport and active recreation clubs and associations to offer inclusive mainstream activities and programs. You will find information on:

- how you can grow your programs, activities and competitions
- employment and volunteering opportunities to people with disabilities
- how to make your physical environment more accessible.

The objective is to help local community sporting clubs and associations move beyond business as usual towards best practice and innovation for accessible and inclusive sport and active recreation.

This booklet is informed by community feedback from groups including:

- people with lived experience of disability, their family, friends and carers
- the Central Coast Council Access and Inclusion Reference Group
- local providers and sector workers
- advocacy groups
- local experts from the sport and active recreation industry
- research on participation and aspirations of people with disabilities in sport and active recreation as well as research and case studies on inclusive sport in Australia.

You will also find several easy to use checklists to guide clubs and associations in improving accessibility. The information is based on the experience of someone with access needs who wants to join a sporting group or active recreation program based on a customer journey map. A customer journey map defines or visualises each of the stages of a customer interaction experience with a brand. Implementing some of the activities in the checklists will ensure a more inclusive and positive experience for all participants as they move along each customer 'touchpoint' in the customer journey.

The generic touchpoints for a sporting club or active recreation provider may include:

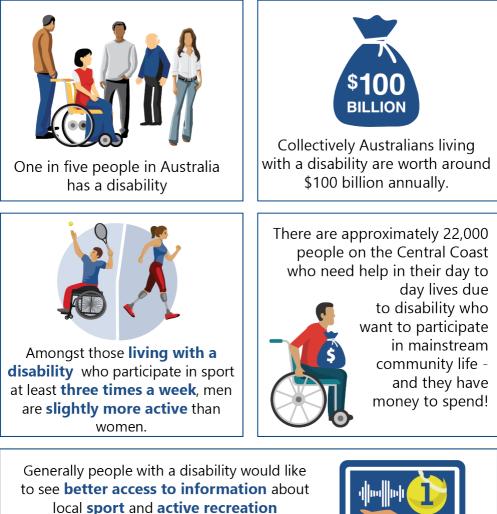
- The registration process
- Marketing and communication
- Staff and volunteer training
- Club premises, program development, facilitation and delivery
- Participation on the field
- Member retention

Community Grants and Sponsorship

Council also offers Community Grants and Sponsorship Programs to assist eligible community organisations to deliver initiatives that make a real difference to Central Coast residents. Please refer to the Grant information resource (refer to the 'Resource links' page). A list of resources at the end of this document provides links to other relevant information on accessibility.

Profile of disability in Australia and on the Central Coast

The Statistics



opportunities. Australian Sport Commission's AusPlay survey results, 2019





The personal income of Australians living with a disability is collectively worth around \$100billion annually, a figure that is only set to increase with an ageing population.

People with a disability seek out the same experiences and destinations as everyone else - going to the beach, getting out in nature, wanting to keep active and participate in mainstream sport and active recreation pursuits.

'Participation in sport and recreation activities not only enhances people's health and wellbeing but provides people with opportunities to interact with others, increasing social inclusion and a feeling of connectedness to their local community.' (Waters, T, 2015)

The Australian Sport Commission's AusPlay survey results in 2016 showed that people with disability are 10% less likely to participate in sport or active recreation at least once per week when compared to the general population, however, this is not because of lack of demand. Individuals surveyed did not necessarily regard their impairment as the major reason for their non-participation. Nonparticipants across several disability types expressed a desire to participate, particularly as a means of social interaction, but identified other constraints such as cost, transportation, venue access and supervision.

An inclusive approach to community sport and active recreation

Inclusive and universally designed programs 'encourage integration and inclusion at all levels, not just separate or stand-alone activities for people with disabilities. If this is not possible in some sports, pathways and options for participation for people with disabilities at all levels of club activity from recreational and therapeutic experiences, to training and skills development, club competition, and high-performance development should be explored.' (Waters, T, 2015).

What is universal design?

Universal design is about the design of things to be accessible and inclusive - buildings, products, open spaces, activities, experiences, programs, services and policies. Things that are designed this way are useable by as many people of different ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds in the community to the greatest extent possible.

A universal design approach responds to three questions asked by the customer:

- 1. Can I access it?
- 2. Can I fully participate?
- 3. Can I stay?

(Adapted from the Everyone Can Play Guidelines, NSW Dept of Planning 2019)



The 7 Principles of Universal Design

There are 7 principles of universal design. Incorporate these by asking yourself the following questions:

Equitable Use – Can anyone easily access your club, activities and venue in the same way? E.g. Everyone including a wheelchair user, enters via one accessible entrance.

Flexibility in Use – Can modifications easily be made to improve accessibility?

Simple and Intuitive Use – e.g. Is your website and information easy to access, interpret and intuitive to use? Is the registration process easy and hassle free for everyone? Does the process make sense?

Perceptible Information – Is your hard copy and online information, forms, signage and wayfinding easy to read? Can it be perceived and interpreted by anyone? Do you provide alternative formats?

Tolerance for Error – Does everything have to be perfect? Is your information or service easy to use and adapt for those who need it?

Low Physical Effort – Is it easy to get in and out of your premises? Is your equipment easy to access and use?

Size and Space for Approach and Use – Is your premises, layout and equipment useable by people of all shapes and sizes?

A universal design approach means that the sporting and recreation venue and its programs are designed to meet the needs of the **broadest range of people to the greatest extent possible.**

Community sport and active recreation clubs and associations are encouraged to consider how the principles of universal design apply to:

- the activities offered and how they are facilitated
- venues, premises and equipment
- available information and how and to whom it is promoted to reach everyone in the community.



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Does accessibly cost more?

The case for making accessibility a priority for your club is there!

There are assumptions that improving accessibility is expensive and difficult, but this is not true. Designing with the needs of people with disability in mind can expand the reach of your product or service and result in a stronger bottom line.

A recent report for the Australian Centre for Inclusive Design (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2019) focused on the financial, education and retail industries. It found that when access challenges are not considered in the design process, a significant percentage of the population are excluded, and further costs can be incurred for retrofitting. The PWC report quantified the cost of retrofitting as reaching up to 10,000 times the cost of introducing inclusive design earlier on. This means that planning from the outset to include universal design should not only save you money but earn you more in the long run.

Approximately five million Australians, including people living with a disability and seniors, are unable to access products and services because of poor design yet they want to participate and have money to spend. The economic opportunity from this 'Missed Business' market is significant, as this group possesses an annual disposable income of over \$40 billion. This number does not include further opportunity from the millions of Australians who are also vulnerable to exclusion due to location, gender, ethnicity or financial status (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2019). This research shows the opportunity for the untapped business waiting for services and providers to be more accessible and inclusive.

Understanding the needs of different users

The matrix opposite shows the accessibility needs of different users and what your club or association should consider improving to attract their business and membership. Clubs and sporting associations can use this matrix to help plan how to start improving accessibility.

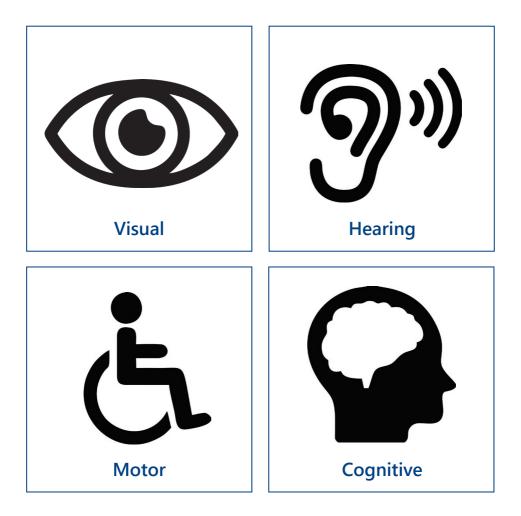
It often starts with simple small adaptations such as having someone on hand to offer assistance, putting out bowls of water for assistance animals, or placing a portable ramp at the entrance. Local research shows many clubs and associations are already doing things but not actively promoting how they are accessible.



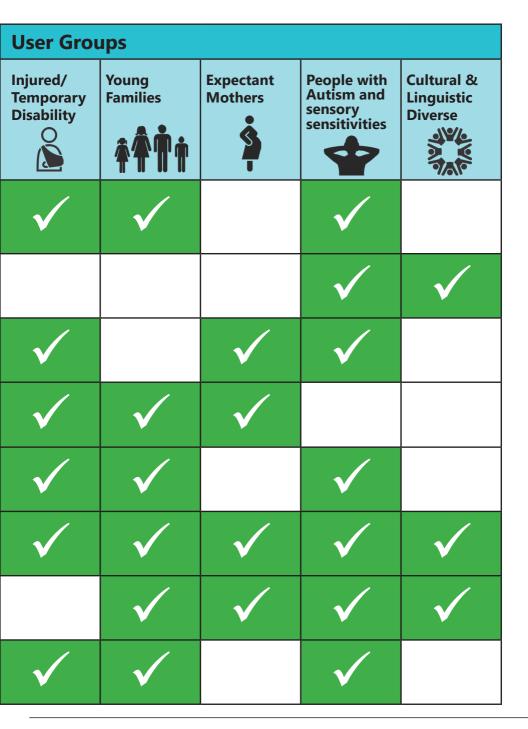
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You don't have to be an expert - four areas of disability to consider

You don't have to be an expert on disability to consider what the challenges and barriers could be. If you apply these four areas to your planning, you are on your way to creating a welcoming and inclusive experience for members, potential members and their friends and families.



	User Grou	ups		
Characteristics to consider	Wheelchair Users	Older People	Blind or Low Vision	Deaf or Hard of Hearing
Requires continuous path of travel to get around easily	\checkmark	\checkmark		
Interpreting information in other formats		\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Poor balance, co-ordination or orientation		\checkmark	\checkmark	
Stamina and strength limitations	\checkmark	\checkmark		
Height limitations	\checkmark			
May require assistance	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Require family friendly facilities	\checkmark	\checkmark		
Require additional facilities or equipment	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark



	User Grou	aps		
Characteristics to consider	Wheelchair Users	Older People	Blind or Low Vision	Deaf or Hard of Hearing
Uses assistive technology (e.g. text-to-speech) to perceive information		\checkmark		\checkmark
Uses mobility equipment	\checkmark	\checkmark		
Require a quiet space to retreat from noise, bright lights, stimulation and crowds		\checkmark		
Visual difficulty with depth perception and distinguishing objects and features		\checkmark	\checkmark	
Requires information to plan in advance before going out	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
At risk of social isolation due to barriers to access in the community	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Other specific examples/ considerations	Adult lift & change facility	Regular toilet visits, Special dietary reqt's	Guide dogs catered for eg. bowls of water	Hearing loop system

User Groups				
Injured/ Temporary Disability	Young Families	Expectant Mothers	People with Autism and sensory sensitivities	Cultural & Linguistic Diverse
\checkmark	\checkmark			
	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	
	\checkmark		\checkmark	
\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
\checkmark	\checkmark		\checkmark	\checkmark
Spare wheelchairs or walking frames on hand	Baby change table,High chair	Regular toilet visits	Noise cancelling headhones, stymy/fidget toys, weighted blanet	Customs, etiquette and language



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Your toolkit - making access and inclusion a reality in your sport or active recreation activity

People have a variety of motivations for participating in sport and active recreation. They need to be able to access spaces, places, services, activities and information in diverse ways. Your programs, competitions and presentation events, club meetings and premises need to be as welcoming, accessible and inviting as possible for everyone.

A full checklist for accessible and inclusive event planning is also available in the <u>Planning Accessible Events Guide</u> on the Central Coast Council website. This document can be utilised when planning any event.

Useful checklists to improve accessibility and inclusion

Considerations for accessible and inclusive community activities:

Give a person with a disability the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities with non-disabled players and observe for how you might provide adjustments
Provide disability awareness training to coaches and other club officials
Communicate openly and respectfully
Promote fair and inclusive play
Offer programs and activities that are suitable for supported [with a carer or aid] or independent participation
 Venue accessibility: All users can enter at the same place in the same way without separate entrances or back-tracking Clearly defined and continuous paths of travel leading to, around and within the facility Information and signage for orientation and guidance is
 perceptive, colour contrasted and in different accessible formats-written, visual, braille, audio, Easy English, hearing loops installed Sensory friendly environment, free from bright flashing lights and different textured surfaces. Create a quiet sensory retreat for players, staff and spectators to
 retreat to manage sensory overload and reset so they can resume participation Car parking and set down and pick up zones as close as possible to the entrance Provide shade and seating
Have presentations, information and come and try days and other events Auslan interpreted to welcome the Deaf community who want to get involved. Interpreters can be booked at least 2 weeks in ad- vance through organisations such as <u>Sweeney Interpreting</u>
Train staff and volunteers to be confident to offer assistance to people with disabilities
Provide information and promote how your club and events are accessible

Customer contact - first impressions last

Making the interactions with prospective and existing members of your club or association more accessible and inclusive:

 Train your staff to be disability confident: Use person first language e.g. 'person who is blind', 'person who uses a wheelchair'. Do not use terms like 'wheelchair bound' or 'has a development issue'. Use the diagnosis e.g. 'has Autism', 'is blind', 'has low vision', 'is Deaf'. Do not use descriptors such as 'the blind man'. A person is not defined by their disability. Be patient, listen and respond appropriately and respectfully Sit at the same level as someone in a wheelchair Interact with the person not with their interpreter or carer and don't assume they speak on behalf of them Don't pat or distract a Guide Dog or Assistance Animal Speak normally Don't assume they have other disabilities Ask what adjustments you may provide so they can fully participate Learn basic Auslan signs and keep a pen and paper handy or the Deaf Society
 Make your physical premises accessible and compliant with the Disability Access to Premises Standards: Ramps not steps and continuous paths of travel Clear, colour contrasted accessible signage Accessible toilets Wide doorways Remove obstructions Low counter and table heights for users of mobility equipment Install a Hearing Loop system Provide shade and seating Remove or minimise things that can trigger people with sensory sensitivities and consider reduced lighting, a sensory retreat space and keeping ambient noise to a minimum
Be assistance animal friendly, put some water bowls out
Host an information session and present the accessible features of the club and registration process
If hosting a BBQ or providing catering, consider the dietary needs and preferences of attendees e.g. food allergies and intolerances, people with limited mobility, cultural appropriateness of food served, needs of older people, children etc



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Marketing & Promotion

Accessible and inclusive marketing is about making it easy for everyone to find your information, receive and understand your communication, and engage with your club or association.

Again, try to incorporate planning for accessibility from the beginning and have it be a part of every communication, process, product and service rather than doing it separately later just for one specific audience type.

The provision of information requires consideration from two different perspectives.

The first is developing content that informs and reaches people who may not access information by the usual methods. Think about alternative ways to reach people in the community who don't use a computer, have limited English skills or are not as social. They too aspire to participate in mainstream sport and leisure but don't know how.

The aim is to ensure that as many people as possible are provided with information that demonstrates the positive attributes and what is accessible and inclusive about your service. This information enables people with disabilities to know what to expect including what facilities are available. This will help them to decide if the opportunity is right for them and so they can plan ahead and minimise the potential to be faced with any barriers once they have left home.

The second consideration is the presentation of the information. This needs to be presented in an accessible format as well as alternative formats such as Easy English version, other languages and captioned video content to reach a wider audience and is accessible and perceptible to as many people as possible.

The 'Round Table on Information Access for People with Disabilities' define a "Clear Print" approach to the design of books, reports, newsletters, posters and other printed material. This results in legible, uncluttered clear text that is easier to perceive and be read and interpreted (see Attachment 1).

Accessible marketing and promotion

Widely promote the accessible and inclusive features of your programs and premises. e.g. 'Naturally Accessible' (2017) provide information that makes bushwalking accessible; naturally. Includes details about the track conditions and what people can expect
Ensure the content on your website is accessible with information that is easy to locate and view, layout is simple e.g. left justified, good use of colour contrast, text direction is horizontal
Website text is easily distinguishable, use sans serif font types and minimum font size 12, don't italicise or underline as this restricts readability
Use succinct, descriptive URL link descriptions that clearly indicate the destination of the link to the website
Ensure graphics are clear and legible and all pictures and images have an image description for assistive technologies to pick up to describe to a person with a vision impairment what is in the picture
Ensure that presentation of information does not rely solely on text and contains symbols and pictures to support it
Ensure documents are bound so they can be opened flat
Use image descriptions for non-text content – see the instructions for using the Alt Text function later in this document
Distribute your information in alternative formats e.g. Easy English document version, captioning or Auslan interpreted video content, <u>Braille</u> <u>versions</u> , audio. <u>Easy English</u> versions of documents convey information that is easy to understand using everyday words, simple sentences, images and symbols to enable people who have lower levels of literacy or where English is not the first language understand the information.
Include an accessibility statement on your recruitment, induction and pre- season registration material that encourages people of all abilities and backgrounds to join and what adjustments/modifications you may offer
Actively extend your marketing to hard to reach, marginalised and isolated groups through community and advocacy groups, not for profit organisations, service providers, sector interagencies and <u>local government</u> ,
 Make your organic search marketing more accessible by including: Use Alt-Text fields to describe images and videos Optimize and create friendly URLs and image names

Registration

"Accessibility should be paramount regardless of the number of athletes with a disability registered at the club." (Ideas.org, 2020).

The following tips will ensure an inclusive and accessible registration and joining experience for everyone of all abilities:

 Ensure forms are in an accessible format and include form prompts Don't replace form labels with placeholder text
Provide an Easy English version of the registration form
Provide trained staff or volunteers to offer assistance with registration process
Have an Auslan interpreter
Group players or participants according to their skill levels rather than segregating disabled and non-disabled participants
Don't make assumptions about a person's capability and always seek to understand by asking what they can do and their aspirations for their chosen sport
Where appropriate, offer modified sport options that can bring people from similar paths together in a fun, casual and supportive environment.
If you are a Registered NDIS provider offering programs that are accessible for people with disabilities, widely promote it
Remember that disclosure of a person's disability is at the individual's discretion



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Member retention

Considerations to build loyalty, create value and provide an engaging and inclusive relationship with your members, which will in turn encourage them to stay:

Recognise and reward members who demonstrate and promote inclu- sive practice as well as for effort and achievement
Keep communication open and check in to see if further modifications can be made or changed to maintain inclusive and equitable participation
Network with local disability advocacy groups and service providers
Develop and promote an accessible and inclusive policy and promote fair and inclusive play
Seek feedback and ideas from all people engaged with your club
Continue to check and track customer satisfaction levels
Develop a complaints management process and develop the skills of your staff and volunteers to effectively identify, capture, respond to and resolve issues and complaints

Providing a smooth exit – leave a good impression

Make the exiting process smooth and easy, by being easy to contact and the process to cancel or suspend membership or booking simple. Try to find out the reason for leaving for an opportunity for customer retention
Let an exiting member know you valued their contribution, thank them and let them know you are sorry to see them leave
Seek to find out why they are leaving and attempt to remedy any issues
Try to see what else you can do in a sincere and gracious way to retain their membership
Develop a member feedback form to survey exiting members and use the insights from data collected to improve processes and systems or staff training gaps Important information on your form to collect and analyse could include: Length of membership/ Reason for can- celling/suspending/Moving to another club Y/N/Number of members in family/Overall how do you rate your experience with us? Satisfied, Dissatisfied

Case Study: Black Belt Martial Arts

Black Belt Martial Arts (BBMA) was founded by Kyoshi Liz Mahler over 33 years ago with five dojos across the Central Coast. Studying martial arts at BBMA is a life transforming journey and the staff challenge their students to become the best they can be.

The BBMA Martial Arts program welcomes everyone - men, women and children of all ages and all levels of ability and cultural backgrounds. A BBMA student could walk into any BBMA school and feel at home with the same curriculum, the same visual layout, the same uniforms, the same level of professional teaching standards and the same people focused management systems.

Kyoshi Liz explains, "There is a spectrum for everyone. Not everybody has to be like Bruce Lee. First, we work out what is your starting point, then we set goals together that can be adjustable."

Their highly trained staff, all black belts, work with every student every step along their martial arts journey. People of all abilities at each graded level train in the one mainstream graded class. "We live on the Central Coast and a lot of people like doing physical activity. As ambassadors of that lifestyle, we have a responsibility to be adaptable."

BBMA member and 2nd Dan Black Belt, Lachlan Woodward

Lachlan joined BBMA just over 10 years ago. He achieved black belt in five years and is now working towards his third Dan! He joined BBMA because of the community who go there and the friends he has made. "No one tried to talk me out of it."

He likes that he is given more time and guidance when he needs it. "Everyone is very supportive, and I'm not excluded from any activities because of my disability. I feel like a normal part of the BBMA community."

Learn more at blackbeltmartialarts.com.au



Case Study: Achilles Hunter Central Coast

Achilles facilitates training and participation in running and walking events in a supportive social environment where people with disabilities can achieve life changing goals. Their vision is to create an Australia where people with disabilities can enjoy the social, recreational and health benefits of an active lifestyle.

Their experienced guides ensure that members feel safe and welcome at regular training sessions where they work with their members to achieve their fitness goals be that walking in a 5km event to running a marathon or an ultra-marathon.

The Hunter Central Coast Chapter of Achilles works towards increasing participation of athletes with a disability and guides at Parkruns around the Woy Woy, Maitland and Newcastle areas of the Hunter Central Coast Region.

Achilles member Kathy Fela loves to run and walk. "It gives me the opportunity to do that without having to worry about bumping into things. We get to participate in big events like City to Surf and the Blackmores Running Festival and participating in interstate events."



Learn more at achillesaustralia.org.au

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Case Study: Scuba Gym

The Scuba Gym offers therapeutic and adaptive diving programs to enable people with a range disabilities, veterans and others suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) to experience the benefits of diving. The programs offered include Scuba Gym therapy, the RAIDaptive and RAIDaptive Buddy courses and Scuba Camp for young people with disability.

Scuba Therapy allows for unique therapy in a weightless environment giving people the ability to increase strength and flexibility not possible during normal workouts. At the Scuba Gym, individualized workouts are designed in a gravity free environment

Learn more at thescubagym.com.au



Case Study: Central Coast Bicycle Users Group

Central Coast Bicycle Users Group (CCBUG) leads regular weekend rides covering the best locally known routes the Central Coast has to offer. The group is also an advocacy voice for all bicycle users on the Central Coast, whether they cycle for sport, fitness, transport or recreation, even MTB enthusiasts. Since its inception CCBUG has also grown into a large riding and social group, both online and offline, whilst retaining its original advocacy objective as a primary focus.

The CCBUG Rides Assist program provides people living with vision impairment and other disabilities on the Central Coast the opportunity to regularly experience the joys and benefits of riding a bicycle.

As a "stoker" on the back of a tandem, with an experienced and accredited ride leader as "pilot" up front, they participate in a healthy and popular activity – riding a bicycle. This is something they may not able to do safely on their own. The program also provides social interaction amongst all ride participants during the ride and at regular coffee stops and at other CCBUG events.

Learn more at ccbug.org.au



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Central Coast Council Community Grants and Sponsorship <u>www.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au</u> and **search 'grants and sponsorship'**

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www.centreforinclusivedesign.org.au/index.php/the-benefits-of-designing-foreveryone-report/

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Centre for Universal Design, Australia www.universaldesignaustralia.net.au/

Ideas.org.au www.ideas.org.au

Sport Inclusion Australia www.sportinclusionaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/CoachingTipsFactSheet.pdf

Accessible Marketing

www.advertiseonbing-blob.azureedge.net/blob/bingads/media/library/insight/ moder-marketing-is-accessible-marketing/accessibility-marketing_gbl.pdf

Resources

Organisations such as Australian Network on Disability-<u>www.and.org.au</u> provide disability awareness training or contact Council's Disability Inclusion Officer who can provide more information at <u>Jodie.Frost-Foster@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au</u>

Braille can be produced by organisations such as Vision Australia at **www.visionaustralia.org.au**

Easy English documents can be produced by organisations such as

Scope Australia

https://www.scopeaust.org.au/

Accessibility Matters

https://www.accessibilitymatters.com.au/

Access Easy English https://accesseasyenglish.com.au/

Learn basic Auslan

Auslan Sign Bank: www.auslan.org.au

The Deaf Society: thedeafsociety.org.au

Auslan Interpreters can be booked at least 2 weeks in advance through organisations such as:

Sweeney Interpreting: sweeneyinterpreting.com.au

The Deaf Society: thedeafsociety.org.au

My Auslan: myauslan.com