



Disability, Access, and Inclusion Plan

FY26 – FY30

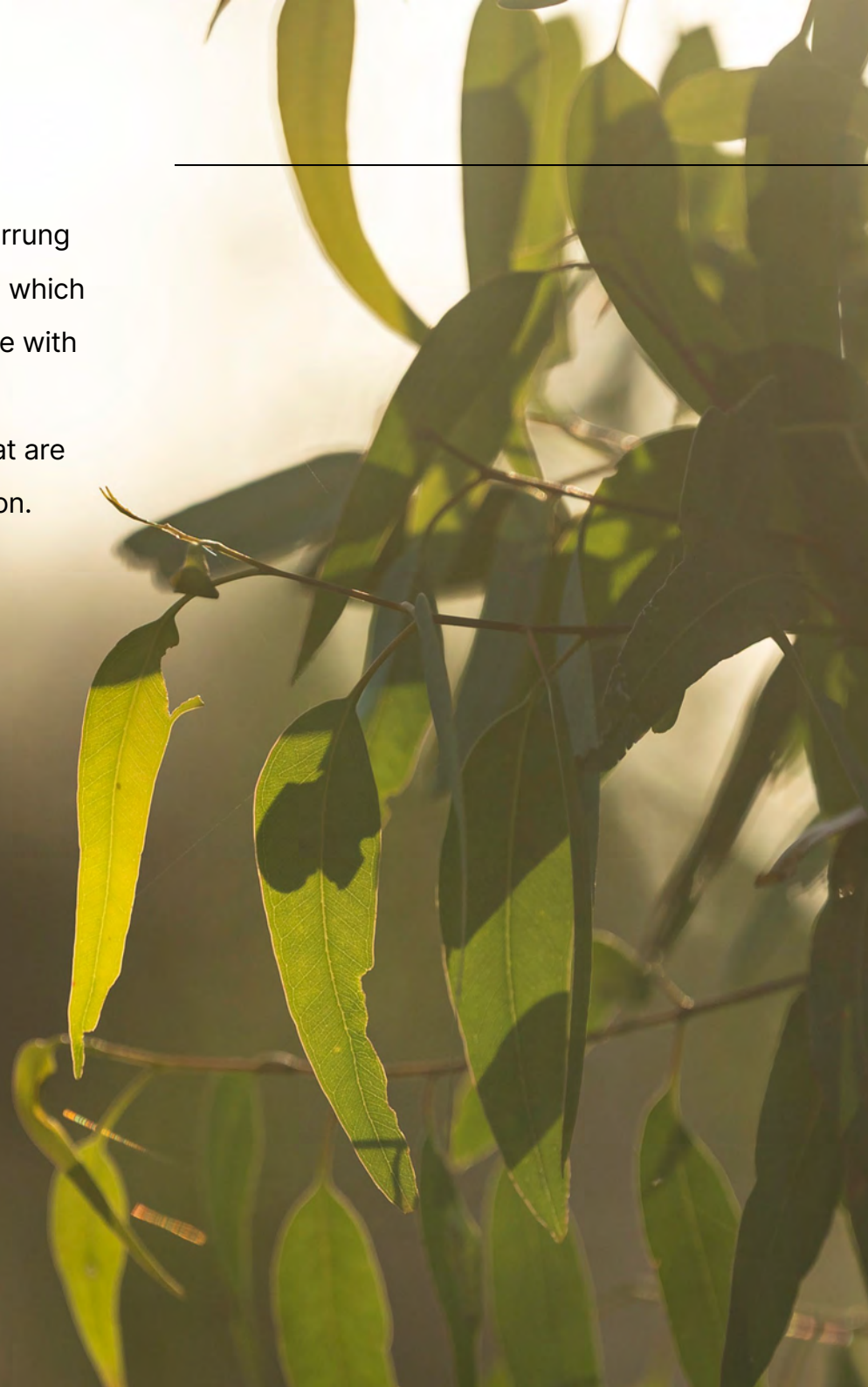


The Greater Metropolitan
Cemeteries Trust

Acknowledgement of Country

We respectfully acknowledge the Bunurong and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung People as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways on which we operate. We recognise that First Nations peoples, including those with disability, hold deep, ongoing connections to Country.

Their voices and knowledge are vital in shaping inclusive spaces that are culturally safe, responsive, and respectful of this enduring connection.



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Trust Chair and CEO's Foreword

The Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust is committed to fostering inclusivity across all our sites, providing equitable access to our products and services, and ensuring that people with disability are active participants in the decisions that affect them.

Our FY26 – FY30 Disability, Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) is a testament to these ongoing commitments.

Building on the progress made through our first DIAP, this new plan sets out the objectives we will work to meet over the next five years to create environments that support people with disability in meaningful ways.

It recognises that accessibility goes beyond compliance; it is about creating a space where everyone, including those with a disability, can feel valued and are able to fully participate and engage with the services and experiences we provide.

We are incredibly grateful to those individuals with lived experience who have provided their invaluable perspectives, guidance, and support as we developed this plan. Their insights, as

well as those we have collected through consultations, workshops, and site access appraisals, have not only shaped our understanding of disability, but also allowed us to identify both immediate and long-term opportunities for improvement across our products, services, and sites.

As leaders in the cemetery sector, we are committed to engaging meaningfully with our communities. Whether a person's disability is visible or invisible, impacts their sight, hearing, mobility, dexterity, cognition, or affects them in other ways, we want to create spaces that go beyond providing basic accessibility and foster full physical and social participation.

Integrating universal design principles and removing barriers to full participation will be



Michael Doery (Trust Chair) and Andrew Eriksen (CEO)

critical in our work to ensure every person can visit and honour their loved ones with dignity and ease, and has an equal opportunity to connect, contribute, and belong.

Our approach to access and inclusion will continue to be centre around community voices, lived experience, and the knowledge that care looks different for everyone. Whether it's smoothing a pathway, offering multilingual information, or challenging systems that weren't built for all of us, we are committed to doing the work – together.

This journey is one of continuous learning and we will hold ourselves accountable as we work to enhance and create places and spaces where accessibility and inclusivity are not just ideals, but realities for all.

Eliza Hull & Mac Zamani (Disability Advocates)

For disabled people, access to cemeteries isn't just important – it's essential, which is why we are proud to have contributed to the Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust's (GMCT) Disability Access and Inclusion Plan FY26-FY30.

Grief is a universal experience. We all deserve to mourn, to feel connected, and to honour and celebrate our loved ones. Cemeteries play a critical role in facilitating this connection and reflection but are too often designed without the needs of disabled people in mind.

This plan sets out the steps GMCT intends to take to change that.

It recognises that disability doesn't look just one way and, to truly be inclusive, spaces need to be designed with the full spectrum of disability in mind with their access needs considered from the very beginning. Whether it's a newly created cemetery, or an existing cemetery that can be adapted, accessibility should be the standard – not a feature.

Throughout our collaboration with them on this work, GMCT has demonstrated a clear commitment to listening and engaging with community voices through genuine and thoughtful consultation. With an approach centred around the voices of people with lived experience, this plan will help deliver meaningful change that truly meets the needs of our community.

It is a commitment to keep showing up, to keep learning, and to keep working together with community to create places of remembrance that are inclusive of everyone.

We look forward to continuing to work alongside GMCT as they turn this plan into action.

Eliza Hull and Mac Zamani



Eliza Hull



Mac Zamani

Overview

People's experiences of disability are shaped by many aspects of who they are – including race, gender, sexuality, religion, culture, and age – and, with one in five Victorians living with a disability, the needs of the community are wide-ranging, diverse, and evolving.

Everyone deserves to feel seen, safe, and supported, which is why our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) is grounded in the understanding that these identities don't exist in isolation. We're committed to addressing the overlapping barriers faced by members of our community in a way that is compassionate, inclusive, and responsive to real-life needs.

Beyond the physical elements, we recognise the need for information about accessibility to be accessible too. This means providing it in ways that are culturally appropriate, inclusive of disabled people for whom English is not a first language and mindful of socio-economic barriers like digital literacy and access to technology and the internet.

This plan also supports families, caregivers, and individuals of all ages, recognising that accessible spaces benefit everyone. By ensuring these spaces are inclusive, we enable all people – a person with disability or supporting a loved one – to come together and fully engage with the services and experiences we provide.



Purpose

We want to provide equitable and dignified access to our sites, services, and products for all individuals, ensuring a welcoming environment where all people with disability can fully participate.

Guiding Principles

- **Informed by lived experience:**
We involve people with disability in making the decisions that will impact them.
- **Create inclusive, safe, and respectful spaces:**
We strive to provide inclusive and respectful spaces that are physically, emotionally, spiritually, and culturally safe.
- **Care for Country:**
We are committed to listening to the voices of disabled First Nations Peoples to help guide how we balance cultural, environmental, and access needs in respectful and meaningful ways.
- **Transparent and accountable:**
We are transparent about the barriers we may face and will hold our stakeholders accountable as we create an accessible and inclusive environment.
- **Govern responsibly:**
We continue to meet our legislative obligations, while remaining agile to new and evolving approaches.

Our focus areas

Community and Social Impact

Removing accessibility barriers to meet the needs of the community

Objectives:

- Complete investigation and assessment of current spaces, facilities, and infrastructure to identify and address barriers to accessibility
- Ensure all on-site signage, wayfinding, and digital information are available in accessible formats

Planning and design

Creating accessible spaces through thoughtful and informed design

Objectives:

- Apply accessibility standards and guidelines for future developments
- Involve individuals with disabilities in planning and design processes
- Integrate universal design principles into all planning and design processes

Products, Services, and Operations

Enabling all people to fully engage with the services and experiences we provide

Objectives:

- Strengthen on-site customer support services to better meet the needs of individuals with disabilities.
- Streamline operations processes to prioritise accessibility upgrades
- Review and modify existing products and services for accessibility

Community and Social Impact

Removing accessibility barriers to meet the needs of the community

Objective: Complete investigation and assessment of current spaces, facilities, and infrastructure to identify and address barriers to accessibility

Delivery expected	Actions
2026-27	In addition to the original 2021 physical audit, a new audit will be conducted with consultants who have lived experience to apply a further practical lens of improvement opportunities.
2026	Establish DAIP Working Group comprising representatives from key GMCT departments to lead, coordinate, and monitor the implementation of access and inclusion initiatives across the organisation.
2026	Establish complaints register to record disability access and inclusion issues. Will be reviewed quarterly by DAIP Working Group to identify trends, address barriers, and inform continuous improvement.
Annually	Continue proactive asset maintenance with a strong focus on risk management, prioritising footpaths, car parks, and other facilities to identify and remove accessibility barriers.
2026-27	Ensure full transparency about all aspects of accessibility, including identifying and acknowledging inaccessible spaces.
2026	Feature more images of individuals with disabilities across the website and social media to promote diverse representation and inclusive community communication.

Objective: Ensure all on-site signage, wayfinding, and digital information are available in accessible formats

Delivery expected	Actions
2026	Create both printed and digital FAQs that include accessibility information, ensuring all visitors can easily access the details they need.
2026	Include alt text or image descriptions with all social media images to enhance accessibility for individuals with visual impairments.
2026	Promote accessibility features – such as areas of our cemeteries that are accessible for services and for loved ones to visit – to ensure everyone can participate and connect with dignity. For example points of reflection seating.
2027	Implement a text-to-speech feature on the website to support visitors with visual impairments or reading challenges.
2028	Develop and implement accessible digital experiences, including tactile video tours, to ensure people with vision impairment can independently explore and engage with facilities.

Planning and Design

Creating accessible spaces through thoughtful and informed design

Objective: Apply accessibility standards and guidelines for future developments

Delivery expected Action

2026-2027	Designate wheelchair-accessible spaces in the chapel to ensure equal participation in services for all community members.
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Objective: Involve individuals with disabilities in planning and design phases

Delivery expected Action

2027-2028	Explore opportunities for quiet spaces for visitors with sensory sensitivities to decompress and feel comfortable during their visit.
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Objective: Integrate universal design principles into all planning and design processes

Delivery expected Action

2027-2029	Add more resting spots in the graveyard area to enhance accessibility for visitors with mobility challenges and promote inclusivity.
2028	Replace gravel carparks near FMP Chapels with smoother surfaces to improve access for individuals using mobility aids and enhance their overall experience.
2028-2029	Ensure tactile flooring is embedded in frequently used active spaces to help visually impaired visitors navigate more easily and safely. For all new designs, tactile flooring must be a key consideration.

Products, Services, and Operations

Enabling all people to fully engage with the services and experiences we provide

Objective: Strengthen on-site customer support services

Delivery expected	Action
2026	Provide detailed visual descriptions of the site on the website to assist visually impaired visitors in navigating the space more easily.
2026-2027	Update website and printed maps with current accessibility info
2026-2027	Include advanced accessibility info (e.g. gradient, surface type etc.) as part of GMCT website upgrade.
2026	Improve wayfinding and provide clear signage to support all visitors, particularly those with disabilities.
2026-2027	Ensure that text in both printed and digital materials is large enough to be easily read by individuals with low vision.
2026	Clearly communicate the acceptance of Auslan interpreters and provide resources for local Auslan interpreter services to ensure accessibility for the Deaf community.
2026	Caption all videos on the website to improve accessibility for visitors with hearing impairments.

Objective: Streamline operational processes to prioritize accessibility upgrades

Delivery expected	Action
2027	Install essential amenities, like nappy bins, in all restrooms to support families with young children and adults with incontinence.
2028	Install a wireless microphone system in the chapel to improve accessibility for individuals.
2028	Install an adjustable lectern in the chapel to ensure inclusivity for speakers of all abilities.
2027-2029	Lay matting in grass areas to make outdoor spaces more accessible for individuals using wheelchairs or mobility devices where practical.

Objective: Review and modify existing products and services for accessibility

Delivery expected	Action
2026	Move sanitary bins closer to toilets for better accessibility, especially for those with limited mobility.

Legislative and Policy Context

GMCT is governed by the Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003 (Vic). Under this legislation, we ensure safe and equitable access to our facilities, particularly in locations that can be reasonably modified, experience high pedestrian traffic, or pose safety risks for people with disability.

In the development of this Plan, we have also been guided by all other relevant legislation including:

- The federal *Disability Discrimination Act* (DDA) 1992
- The Victorian *Equal Opportunity Act* 2010
- The *Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards* 2010 (Premises Standards)
- The National Construction Code (NCC) and Building Code of Australia (BCA)
- The United Nations *Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities*, the Australian *Human Rights Commission Act* 1986, and the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act* 2006.

The DAIP has been developed to align with GMCT's Annual and Strategic Plan, principally denoting key actions around accessibility belonging, inclusion, accessibility and providing community need.



Disability, Access, and Inclusion Plan 2.0

VISION

Our peaceful places and compassionate support provide solace and belonging so families and friends can cherish and preserve the lasting memories of their loved ones.

PURPOSE

We provide the final care for your loved ones, with dignity and kindness. We respect all peoples, our heritage, our communities and the environment.

VALUES ALIGNMENT



Compassion

We provide spaces that are physically, emotionally, spiritually and culturally safe. We involve people with disability in decision-making, valuing their insights, and enabling disabled voices to have an active role in shaping solutions.



Respect

All people are treated with respect and compassion when visiting loved ones across our sites. We foster environments where people with disabilities are integrated into all aspects of life, promoting equal opportunities and participation.



Integrity

We are transparent about existing barriers and hold all stakeholders accountable in creating an accessible and inclusive environment.



Sustainability

We recognise our role in caring for Country and value the ongoing connection of Traditional Owners to the land and waterways that we operate on through listening to disabled First Peoples' voices.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Past

Facilitate clear and transparent communication about accessible and inaccessible aspects of existing cemeteries

Present

We prioritize short-term accessibility improvements while working on long-term projects to support disabled visitors now.

Future

Design inclusive, accessible precincts and memorial parks that incorporate learnings from existing cemeteries to meet the diverse needs of the community.

Leadership & Support

People with disabilities provide education on inclusive connections, while leaders endorse improved accessibility across all GMCT sites for the community and staff.

STRATEGIC PILLARS

Community & Social impact

Removing accessibility barriers to meet the needs of the community

Planning & Design

Creating accessible spaces through thoughtful and informed design

Products, Services, and Operations

Enabling all people to fully engage with the services and experiences we provide

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Complete investigation and assessment of current spaces, facilities, and infrastructure to identify and address barriers to accessibility.
- Ensure all on-site signage, wayfinding, and digital information are available in accessible formats.
- Apply accessibility standards and guidelines for future developments
- Involve individuals with disabilities in planning and design processes
- Integrate universal design principles into all planning and design processes
- Strengthen on-site customer support services to better meet the needs of individuals with disabilities.
- Streamline operations processes to prioritise accessibility upgrades
- Review and modify existing products and services for accessibility



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