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# Access and Inclusion Plan

2024-2026

## Introduction

Thunderbird Park is a premier adventure and nature park located on Tamborine Mountain, Queensland. To ensure that all visitors, including those living with disabilities, can fully enjoy the park's amenities and activities, we have developed this comprehensive Access and Inclusion Plan. This plan will help outline the steps Thunderbird Park can take to enhance accessibility and inclusion, providing a welcoming environment for all visitors.

## Market Overview

Accessible tourism is a significant and growing market in Australia. According to Tourism Research Australia, approximately 20% of Australians have a disability, and the accessible tourism market contributes over \$8 billion annually to the Australian economy. Moreover, travellers with disabilities often travel with companions, further amplifying the economic impact of accessible tourism. Ensuring accessibility can thus attract a substantial and loyal customer base.

## Objectives

1. Enhance physical accessibility across all areas of Thunderbird Park.
2. Improve staff awareness and training regarding disability inclusion.
3. Provide comprehensive information and resources to support visitors with disabilities.
4. Foster an inclusive environment that promotes participation in all activities.

### 1. Enhancing Physical Accessibility

#### 1.1. Infrastructure Improvements

- **Parking:**
  - Increase the number of accessible parking spaces near the main entrance and key activity areas. Ensure these spaces are clearly marked and compliant with Australian Standards.
  - Ensure all parking areas have smooth, level surfaces and easy access to paths.
- **Pathways and Trails:**
  - Upgrade pathways to ensure they are wide, smooth, and free from obstructions. Install ramps where necessary to replace steps.
  - Ensure all trails and paths have smooth, hard surfaces and gentle slopes.
  - Install ramps where necessary to replace stairs or steep inclines.
- **Restrooms:**
  - An accessible toilet is available, or staff know the location of the nearest accessible toilet a customer would be able to use. Accessible toilets are specifically designed to provide enough space to accommodate wheelchair access.
  - Ensure all restroom facilities have accessible options, equipped with grab rails, lower sinks, and adequate space for manoeuvring.

- Install emergency call buttons in restrooms for added safety.
- Equip restrooms with adult changing tables.
- Seating is in colour contrast with walls and floors.
- **Accommodation:**
  - Increase the number of fully accessible lodges with features such as roll-in showers, grab bars, lower countertops and shower chair.
  - Taps, Light switches and directories within reach of someone using a wheelchair. If not enough room, consider placing the most frequently used items at an accessible height and train staff to help where needed.
  - Provide accommodations equipped with visual and vibrating alert systems for hearing-impaired guests.

## **1.2. Assistive Technology Availability**

- Provide hearing loops in meeting and dining areas for guests with hearing impairments.
- Offer loaner mobility devices, such as wheelchairs and scooters, for guests to use during their visit.
- Offer shuttle services with wheelchair lifts to transport guests around the park.
- Golf buggy with wheelchair access
- Ensure all park vehicles are accessible to guests with mobility impairments.

## **2. Staff Training and Awareness**

### **2.1. Training Programs**

- Implement comprehensive disability awareness training for all staff, covering topics such as communication etiquette, emergency procedures, and the specific needs of visitors with different types of disabilities.
- Conduct regular training sessions on how to assist guests with various disabilities.
- Regularly update training materials to reflect best practices and emerging trends in disability inclusion.

### **2.2. Designated Accessibility Coordinators**

- Appoint designated staff members as Accessibility Coordinators, responsible for assisting visitors with disabilities and ensuring the implementation of accessibility measures.

## **3. Information and Resources**

### **3.1. Pre-Visit Information**

- Update the Thunderbird Park website to include detailed accessibility information, such as available facilities, parking, pathways, and activity modifications.

- Ensure the website and booking systems comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 at the AA or AAA level. This includes providing text alternatives for non-text content, making all functionality available from a keyboard, and ensuring content is easily navigable. Refer to [www.userway.com](http://www.userway.com)
- Optimize the website for screen readers used by visually impaired visitors, ensuring all interactive elements and forms are properly labelled.
- Design booking forms with clear, simple instructions and error messages that are easily understandable. Ensure forms can be navigated using a keyboard alone.
- Use high-contrast colour schemes and offer adjustable text sizes to aid visitors with visual impairments.
- Provide captions for video content and transcripts for audio content to assist visitors with hearing impairments.
- Offer an accessible booking assistance hotline and live chat support for users who may encounter difficulties with the online system.
- Clearly describe the accessibility features available at the park within the website content, making it easy for visitors to plan their visit with confidence.
- Provide downloadable maps highlighting accessible routes and facilities.
- Offer a dedicated phone line and or email address for accessibility inquiries and support.

### **3.2. On-Site Resources**

- Ensure that signage throughout the park is clear, large-print, and includes braille and tactile elements.
- Have a braille POS terminal available for guests with visual impairments.
- Provide mobility aids, such as wheelchairs or scooters, for visitors to borrow during their visit.
- Install hearing loops and provide written materials for visitors with hearing impairments.

### **3.3. Communication Aids**

- Provide materials in multiple formats, including large print, braille, and digital formats.
- Offer Australian Sign Language (Auslan) interpreters for guided tours and activities upon request.

## **4. Fostering an Inclusive Environment**

### **4.1. Community Engagement**

- Collaborate with disability advocacy groups and organizations to gather feedback and improve accessibility measures.
- Host events and activities specifically designed for visitors with disabilities to promote inclusion and community engagement.

### **4.2. Sensory-Friendly Spaces**

- Highlight and actively promote our existing quiet zones (Cozy corner near our bar area) to guests with autism or sensory processing disorders.
- Provide sensory kits with noise-cancelling headphones, fidget tools, and weighted blankets.

#### 4.3. Marketing and Communication

- Highlight Thunderbird Park's commitment to accessibility and inclusion in marketing materials.
- Share testimonials and stories from visitors with disabilities to inspire confidence and encourage others to visit.

#### 4.4. Improved Emergency Procedures

- Develop emergency evacuation plans that consider the needs of guests with disabilities.
- Continue to ensure that emergency plans include personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEP) for staff and guests who may require extra assistance. Ensure continued training of Emergency Control Organisation members to perform drills that include a variety of situations and variety of guests.

#### 4.5. Accessible Dining Options

- Ensure all dining areas are wheelchair accessible and have menus available in braille and large print.
- Aisles are wide enough for a wheelchair or mobility device – preferably 1.2 metres (this provides space for a wheelchair to turn around)
- Provide some table heights with adequate room underneath for a person using a wheelchair to be able to sit comfortably.
- Provide dietary accommodations for guests with food allergies or sensitivities.

#### 4.6. Feedback Mechanism

- Establish a system for guests to provide feedback on accessibility, with options for written, digital, and verbal submissions.
- Regularly review feedback and make necessary adjustments to improve accessibility continuously.

### 5. Activities to review for future Accessibility and Inclusion Planning

#### 5.1. Activity Accessibility

- **Tree Top Challenge and Canyon Flyer Zipline tour:** Develop alternative routes or modified harness systems to allow participation by individuals with mobility impairments. Develop adaptive equipment for activities such as ziplining and the high ropes course.
- **Thunderegg Fossicking:** Create accessible digging stations and provide adaptive tools to assist visitors with limited dexterity. Adapt fossicking for thundereggs to be wheelchair friendly.
- **Mini Golf and Laser Skirmish:** Ensure these activities have accessible entry points and provide adaptive equipment where possible. Install viewing platforms for visitors to watch the activity.
- **Crystal Panning and Rainforest Amphitheatre areas:** continue to improve accessibility and experiences for people with disability when considering refurbishments, overall improvements and

upgrades. Crystal Panning is located at the rockshop with accessible pathway access and the Rainforest Amphitheatre is one of our wedding venues which last year received a ramp update and installation of an accessible bathroom.

- **Inclusive Play Areas:** Develop playgrounds with equipment that is accessible to children with physical and developmental disabilities. Include sensory play elements such as textured surfaces and musical instruments, along with sensory elements to planned upgrades to edible garden areas.

## Conclusion

By implementing this Access and Inclusion Plan, Thunderbird Park will not only comply with legal requirements but also position itself as a leader in accessible tourism. Enhancing accessibility and inclusion will create a more welcoming environment for all visitors, drive business growth, and contribute to the overall success and reputation of Thunderbird Park.