

# Report

## Community Consultation on Mobility Issues

in the townships of  
Blackheath, Springwood and Winmalee

November 2018



Lady Fairfax Walk, Govetts Leap Lookout, Blackheath

Researched and prepared by

Great Community Transport



# Acknowledgements

## Acknowledgment of Country

The City of the Blue Mountains is located within the Country of the Darug and Gundungurra peoples. The Blue Mountains City Council recognises that Darug and Gundungurra Traditional Owners have a continuous and deep connection to their Country and that this is of great cultural significance to Aboriginal people, both locally and in the region.

For Darug and Gundungurra People, Ngurra (Country) takes in everything within the physical, cultural and spiritual landscape - landforms, waters, air, trees, rocks, plants, animals, foods, medicines, minerals, stories and special places. It includes cultural practice, kinship, knowledge, songs, stories and art, as well as spiritual beings, and people: past, present and future.

Blue Mountains City Council pays respect to Elders past and present while recognising the strength, capacity and resilience of past and present Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Blue Mountains region.

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## Acronyms

<b>ABS</b>	Australian Bureau of Statistics
<b>BMCC</b>	Blue Mountains City Council
<b>DIAP</b>	Blue Mountains City Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021
<b>GWH</b>	Great Western Highway
<b>RMS</b>	NSW Roads and Maritime Service
<b>PAMP</b>	Blue Mountains Pedestrian Access & Mobility Plan 2025

# Executive Summary

This mobility study, undertaken from July to October 2018, seeks to 'enable Council to better respond to the needs of the ageing population and people with a disability who may potentially be socially and physically isolated and foster an environment that promotes active participation that optimizes opportunities for health and wellbeing'<sup>1</sup>. This is at a time when population trends and forecasts clearly indicate a significant growth in the number of Blue Mountains residents who are over the age of 65 and/or have a disability.

This research secured input from people directly affected by actual barriers to access to facilities and amenities in their local townships, with a view of providing insight into how to best address the limitations with transport and mobility infrastructure and information.

This research has focused on three representative towns in the Blue Mountains, Springwood, Winmalee and Blackheath, as a starting point to help develop a whole-of-Mountains approach to improving mobility and access for older people and people with disabilities. It is intended to expand this approach to analysis of townships across the Blue Mountains.

It has identified specific barriers that people face when moving around their communities in these three townships, particularly examining issues that limit their ability to participate in activities that they care about, be actively mobile and be engaged with their communities.

To engage with older people and people living with disabilities and to obtain detailed data on the barriers people face, a survey was conducted through Council's *Have Your Say* survey strategy. This was conducted both through Council's website and the distribution of hard copies delivered to isolated residents in conjunction with local support services. A total of 140 survey responses were received.

Group and individual consultations were also held involving a total of 92 people in 11 group discussions. The approach to group consultations involved identifying and linking in with currently existing community groups and reaching out to them in their own environment, rather than approaching engagement with an expectation that people would come to us and consult in structured group settings. This approach was received very positively with participants being appreciative of the opportunity to have their say in this manner and share their individual experiences.

Identifying the specific locations and type of barriers that people face has been the primary driver for this mobility analysis and participants have willingly contributed time and energy to ensure an understanding of the specific barriers they face to make their towns more accessible for their own and future generations.

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<sup>1</sup> Blue Mountains City Council, 'Specification, Attachment four' in *Request For Quote: Consultancy Services For A Mobility Study Of Older People Including Mobility Scooter Usage In The Blue Mountains* RFQ Number 2017/18-NCW 1, page 37

# Overview of Recommendations

The following overview of recommendations has been aligned with the eight key themes from the *WHO Global Aged Friendly Cities – A Guide*<sup>2</sup>. The full recommendations, with contextual information and specific examples of barriers and issues in the three townships relating to these recommendations can be found in the Key Findings and Recommendations section of this report.

Key themes	Overview of Recommendations	
Outdoor spaces and buildings	1.	Separate to the specific recommendations listed below, as a general initiative, it is recommended that each barrier identified in the Documentation of Findings section of this report be reviewed, prioritised and considered for inclusion in Council's planning processes over the next three to five years. Some suggestions or barriers may already be incorporated in Council's planning processes. (See <b>page 11</b> )
	2.	Implement timely investigation and actions to alleviate key hotspots in the townships of Blackheath and Springwood, as identified in this study. (See <b>page 12</b> )
	3.	Advocate with the NSW Roads and Maritime Service (RMS) for highway upgrading to address major intersection and footpath issues identified in this mobility study along the Great Western Highway (GWH) in Blackheath.  While highway upgrade work is being undertaken over an estimated 18-month period, liaise with RMS for strategies to reduce the impact of works on Blackheath residents, particularly older people and people with disabilities. (See <b>page 13</b> )
	4.	Explore and improve partnerships with key business stakeholders in Blackheath, Springwood and Winmalee to identify opportunities to improve access to shops, food outlets, and other businesses. (See <b>page 14</b> )
	5.	The outcomes of Council's <i>Active Transport Review</i> acknowledge the input that has been provided by older people and people with disabilities via this Mobility Study. It is noted that thoroughfares from residential areas or key attractions to town centres, particularly, require priority attention. (See <b>page 14</b> )
	6.	Investigate and implement strategies to minimize traffic hazards. This could include partnerships with police regarding monitoring speed limits, publicizing and promoting speed limits for cars, bikes and scooters through major towns and thoroughfares and on shared pathways. (See <b>page 15</b> )

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organisation. *Global Aged-friendly Cities: A Guide*, WHO Press, Switzerland, 2007

Key themes	Overview of Recommendations	
	7.	Review the specific barriers identified in the Documentation of Findings of this Study relating to accessible toilets in conjunction with the findings of the <i>Audit and Community Consultation for the Provision of Accessible Access for Council Owned Public Toilets</i> to ensure consolidation of inputs from people living with disabilities. (See <b>page 15</b> )
Transport	8.	Strategies and actions identified in Blue Mountains City Council's <i>Ageing Strategy 2017-2027</i> and <i>Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2107-2021</i> regarding transport are implemented within proposed time-frames in Council's planning processes to ensure transport options are improved for older people and people with disability living in the Mountains in the future. (See <b>page 16</b> )
	9.	Priority be given to the upgrade of bus stops which have been identified through the mobility study and feedback from Blue Mountains Bus Company. Council should identify and address accessibility upgrades of bus stops located on the Great Western Highway. (See <b>page 17</b> )
	10.	Through the Blackheath Masterplan Council should review and implement strategies to enable older people to have access to accessible car parking close to Blackheath Post Office, including the feasibility of having additional accessible parking in the car park behind the Post Office. For many older people involved in this study, access to the local Post Office was identified as important. (See <b>page 17</b> )
	11.	In partnership with relevant parking authorities, explore and implement ways to ensure appropriate use of accessible car spaces in Springwood, Winmalee and Blackheath. This may include increased monitoring, improved signage and enforcement. (See <b>page 17</b> )
	12.	As a priority, investigate and implement actions such that kerb ramps are located to link the road with footpaths at key transport interchange locations such as accessible car parking spaces and taxi ranks. (See <b>page 17</b> )
	13.	Council consider a pilot of charging sites for electric scooters and wheelchairs, in conjunction with Recharge Point, with a focus on cost effective sites which provide benefit to residents and visitors who use electric scooters and wheelchairs. (See <b>page 17</b> )
Housing	14.	When new housing developments are proposed, Council should aim that adequate infrastructure such as parking, footpaths, kerbs and guttering, and traffic calming strategies are considered to cater to the needs of older people and people with disability, enhancing their ability to access their community. (See <b>page 18</b> )
Social participation	15.	In partnership with NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and other relevant authorities, utilize and implement a 'whole of route' approach when planning accessibility, particularly at key lookouts in Blackheath. (See <b>page 19</b> )

Key themes	Overview of Recommendations	
	16.	Investigate and implement actions to improve access to identified key recreational parks in Blackheath and Springwood to improve social inclusion outcomes for people with disabilities and older people. (See <b>page 19</b> )
	17.	Advocate to and liaise with NSW Dept of Education to improve access to Blackheath Public School and Winmalee Public School. (See <b>page 19</b> )
	18.	Continue to work in partnership with local transport services so that as many people as possible can access social events and activities of their choice. This includes working to address any individual barriers to use of community transport that people may experience such as client contribution cost or fitting pick up times around personal care needs. Council's Access Bus is also a key service in meeting this need. (See <b>page 20</b> )
Respect and social inclusion	19.	Establish an ongoing mechanism to keep the community engaged and continue to obtain feedback on mobility barriers and improvements needed, including mobility studies in other towns in the Blue Mountains. (See <b>page 20</b> )
	20.	Ensure Blue Mountains Access Advisory Committee is consulted in a timely manner on new developments and access initiatives in the Blue Mountains at the beginning of planning processes. (See <b>page 21</b> )
	21.	Consider using available resources, such as <i>Creating Dementia friendly communities</i> , as well as local consultation, to assess the needs of people with dementia and those who support them as part of ongoing access, inclusion and infrastructure initiatives in the City of Blue Mountains. (See <b>page 22</b> )
Civic participation and employment	22.	Consider opportunities to contract and consult on a fee basis with local people with lived experience of disability on specific access building projects. Develop a resource/skills list of people in different locations. (See <b>page 22</b> )
Communication and information	23.	In addition to communication and information strategies outlined in Council's <i>Ageing Strategy 2017-2027</i> , <i>Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021</i> , <i>Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan 2025</i> , provide mobility and access information in hard copy to older people and people with disabilities and explore opportunities to expand its hard copy provisions of other relevant information and communications. (See <b>page 22</b> )
	24.	Explore opportunities to support local initiatives that assist older people and people with disabilities to access and stay abreast of information technology which assists them access their communities and the supports they need. This will also increase opportunities for older people and people with disabilities to connect with Council online. (See <b>page 23</b> )

Key themes	Overview of Recommendations	
	25.	Consider Blue Mountains City Council joining the Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. (See <b>page 23</b> )
Community Support and Health Services	26.	Investigate and implement actions on specific obstacles to health services as identified in this mobility study. (See <b>page 24</b> )



No footpaths on Hawkesbury Road Winmalee

# Introduction & background

The Blue Mountains, surrounded by a World Heritage National Park, is a unique environment with a thriving community comprising of 27 towns and villages spread along 100 km of mountainous terrain. The majority of these towns are dispersed along the transport corridor, which consists largely of the Great Western Highway and the Blue Mountains train line, both which connect towns within the area and more broadly to Sydney.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 Census reveals that the population of the Blue Mountains has a significantly higher proportion of people at post retirement age than Greater Sydney. Overall 27.1 percent of the Blue Mountains population are aged 60 years and over, compared with 19 percent for Greater Sydney<sup>3</sup>. Between 2016 and 2026, the age structure forecasts for the Blue Mountains indicate a 31.9 percent increase in population of retirement age, with the largest increase in people between 2016 and 2026 forecast to be in the age range of 75 to 79.<sup>4</sup>

In addition, the percentage of people who reported needing help in their day to day lives due to disabilities increased from 3,390 people (4.5 percent) in 2011 to 4,228 (5.5 percent) in 2016. When planning for the future, it is worth noting that some studies reveal a much higher number of people impacted by disability in the community. A local survey conducted as part of *Community Connections: Vulnerability and Resilience in the Blue Mountains Project 2015*, found that approximately 12 percent of residents under the age of 65 reported experiencing chronic illness and disability that limited their mobility and participation in everyday activities, significantly higher than the six percent recorded by the 2011 Census<sup>5</sup>.

Given this population trend, it is imperative that the Blue Mountains can adapt to the needs of and support its changing population into the future. Blue Mountains City Council commissioned this mobility study to 'enable Council to better respond to the needs of the ageing population and people with a disability who may potentially be socially and physically isolated and foster an environment that promotes active participation that optimizes opportunities for health and wellbeing'.<sup>6</sup>

This study is looking at increasing mobility options by exploring the barriers that older people and people with disabilities face in getting around their towns, getting to local events, attractions and destinations in their communities. It is about improving broader connections between residential areas and town centres and for commuters, this can also be about 'the last mile home'. It is important that people who use mobility aids are able to pursue active transport as a means of getting around their community. By identifying and reducing the barriers which limit 'the walkability' of towns, the potential for improved health and wellbeing outcomes for these sections of the community can be significant.

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<sup>3</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics *Census of Population and Housing 2016*. Compiled and presented in profile.id.com.au, by .id, the population experts. Blue Mountains City Council Community Profile.

<sup>4</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Census of Population and Housing 2016* Compiled and presented in 'Population and age structure' on forecast.id.com.au, Nov 2017, by .id, the population experts. Blue Mountains City Council population forecast.

<sup>5</sup> Redshaw, Dr S. and Ingham Dr V., *Community Connections: Vulnerability and Resilience in the Blue Mountains Project Report*, CSU Bathurst, March 2015 (referred to in Specification, Attachment four Ibid, page 37).

<sup>6</sup> Blue Mountains City Council, 'Specification Attachment four' *op.cit.*, page 37

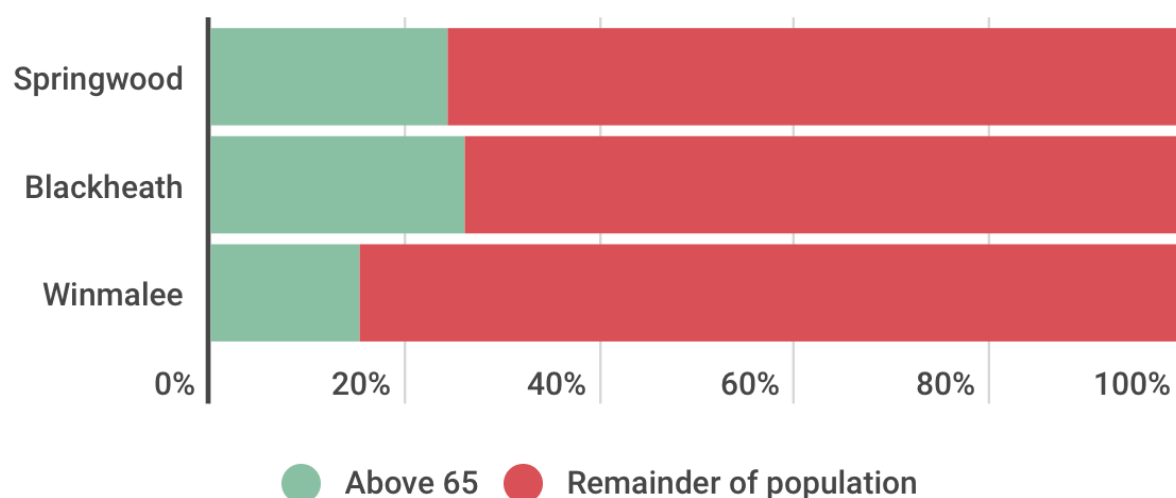
With the growth in use of Mobility Scooters in particular, this study looks at ways that Council can assist with safe and effective transport options for the increasing number of older people and people with disabilities using them. The need and usefulness of scooter charging stations is explored as part of this study.

As the first study of its kind focusing on mobility for older people and people with disabilities in the Blue Mountains, its initial focus has been on the townships of Springwood, Winmalee and Blackheath as they have higher populations of older people and people with disabilities in these communities. The methodology for mobility analysis is also tested in this Study.

With reference to ageing, for example, the national average of people who are 65 and over is 15 percent (based on 2016 ABS Census)<sup>7</sup>. The corresponding figures in the three townships in this study are as follows:

- Springwood has a population of 8,475 people, with 2,059 **(24.3 percent)** 65 and over
- Blackheath has a population of 4,396 people, with 1,147 **(26.1 percent)** 65 and over
- This represents the highest percentage ageing population in the Blue Mountains
- Winmalee has a population 6,202 people, but with 942 **(15.2 percent)** 65 and over, this is close to the national average<sup>8</sup>

## Township populations



<sup>7</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Older Australia at a Glance*, Web report, last updated Sept 2018

<sup>8</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics *Census of Population and Housing 2016*, Census QuickStats

[www.censusdata.abs.gov.au](http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au) Codes - SSC13629 (Springwood), SSC10393 (Blackheath), SSC14334

Other factors that support the selection of these three towns in the initial study include their topography – with relatively flat town centres and surrounding streets. They also provide a range of differences which enable some insight into what to expect when engaging with other towns. These include:

- Winmalee is not on the highway or the train line whereas both Springwood and Blackheath are on the main transport corridor
- The Great Western Highway is the main street in the township of Blackheath, but this is not the case in Springwood and Winmalee
- Winmalee has a shopping plaza, whereas the shopping precinct in the other towns consists of individual shopfronts, the majority located on the main road
- Blackheath has major tourist destinations within its surrounding streets, whereas tourists do not have such an impact on the other two towns

It is anticipated that the results of this study will help to provide direction for Council in terms of the best approach moving forward for enhancing mobility for older people and people with disabilities, not only in the three townships of Springwood, Winmalee and Blackheath but across the whole local government area of the Blue Mountains.

# Key findings & recommendations

This mobility study has attempted to clearly capture and articulate specific barriers and issues that older people and people with disabilities face when accessing the townships where they live. It builds on the work undertaken by Council's *Pedestrian and Mobility Plan 2025 (PAMP)*, *Ageing Strategy 2017-2027*, *Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021 (DIAP)* and the *Blue Mountains Active Transport Review (2018)* by drilling down to specific locations and types of barriers in the three towns of Springwood, Winmalee and Blackheath, providing details of the impacts of these barriers for community members. Due to demographics, these three towns provide a useful starting point to help develop a whole of Mountains approach to improving mobility.

In conducting this study, it has been a privilege to engage with members of the community who have willingly contributed time and energy to ensure their towns are more accessible for their own and future generations. People have gone out of their way to explain the barriers they face, and in some cases, taken photos of barriers that are important to them to ensure that the issues are understood. The goodwill generated through this process has been invaluable.

The barriers and issues identified in this report are numerous and will not all be covered in this section of the report. Please see Documentation of Findings section for full details. Instead, key themes (with examples of specific barriers) have been identified, aligning with the framework of the eight key themes from the WHO *Global Age Friendly Cities - A Guide*.<sup>9</sup> It is important, however, that all individual barriers that people have identified during this process are acknowledged and reviewed, and where possible and appropriate, actions are taken to improve accessibility.

## **Recommendation 1**

Separate to the specific recommendations listed below, we recommend as a general process, that each barrier identified in the Documentation of Findings section of this report be reviewed, prioritised and considered for inclusion in Council's planning processes over the next three to five years. Some suggestions or barriers may already be incorporated in Council's planning processes. Some other suggestions or barriers, due to topography or cost, will not be able to be resolved in the short to medium term. It is important to the community, though, that agreed outcomes are clarified and advice is provided on those issues which cannot be pursued, articulating the reasons why no further action is possible.

It should be noted that there is much convergence with the four Focus areas identified in *Blue Mountains City Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021 (DIAP)* and the recommendations below reinforce the actions listed in the DIAP. Council's DIAP has been

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<sup>9</sup> World Health Organisation. *Global Aged-friendly Cities: A Guide*, WHO Press, Switzerland, 2007

developed to fulfil its commitment to meeting the requirements of the Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW).

The four focus areas for Council's DIAP are:

**Focus Area 1:** Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours

**Focus Area 2:** Creating liveable communities

**Focus Area 3:** Supporting access to meaningful employment

**Focus Area 4:** Improving Access to Services through better systems and processes.

Key themes and recommendations are listed below:

## Theme 1: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

‘An age friendly city provides a pleasant, clean and secure environment with green spaces. Buildings, pavements and walkways are easy to use and access with safe pedestrian crossings and adequate rest areas.’ (*Blue Mountains City Council Ageing Strategy 2017-2027*, page 20)

Most of the issues and barriers identified by survey and consultation participants align with this theme. Barriers identified particularly relate to the ‘walkability’ of their town, the accessibility of amenities and relate to people feeling able to safely navigate outdoor spaces and buildings when going shopping, banking, eating in cafes and participating in social and recreational activities.

Key hotspots were identified in Springwood and Blackheath, which were flagged as either unsafe or in some cases dangerous, particularly for people using mobility aids. Some participants indicated that they had experienced falls or other incidents which made them feel vulnerable and, in some cases, caused injury. Some participants have indicated that as far as possible they avoid these hotspots, but this can make it difficult to get around their town. As a matter of priority, these hotspot areas need to be addressed and community members notified of the outcomes to ensure risk minimization in these towns.

### **Recommendation 2:**

Implement timely investigation and actions to alleviate identified key hotspots in the townships of Blackheath and Springwood. These hotspots include:

#### *Springwood*

- Intersection Macquarie Road and Greenway Lane (west side) near Post Office – no pedestrian crossing. This intersection is very busy with pedestrians (particularly older people wanting to access the post office) and two-way traffic on Greenway Lane.
- Pedestrian crossing outside Priceline on Macquarie Road – The kerb ramps leading to the pedestrian crossing are too steep – removing the ramps and levelling access from the footpath to the crossing has been suggested as per crossings used elsewhere.
- Pedestrian crossing outside Aquinas Court on Macquarie Road – traffic speed, significant amounts of traffic coming off the round-about and sun

reflection affects drivers' ability to see pedestrians crossing the road. With the bus stop located in the vicinity, the intersection is too busy, and buses reduce visibility. In addition, the kerb ramps to the crossing are too steep and unsafe for people using mobility aids, particularly walking frames.

- Kerb ramp (west side) at intersection Homedale and Macquarie Road has been recently installed but already shows signs of erosion. The incline is difficult for people using walking frames.

### *Blackheath*

Intersection Govetts Leap Road and Wentworth. This involves:

- Investigation and implementation of safe ways for pedestrians to cross this intersection (including exploration of traffic lights, pedestrian crossings or roundabouts and traffic calming options)
- Adjustments to kerb ramps to reduce steepness and angles
- Repairs to kerb ramps where deterioration has created gaps and trip hazards

Additional hotspots were identified in Blackheath, particularly along the Great Western Highway. With highway upgrades due to commence in Blackheath from October 2018, it is critical and opportune to confirm that the issues raised in this study are in scope for the highway upgrade.

### **Recommendation 3: .**

Advocate with the NSW Roads and Maritime Service (RMS) for highway upgrading to address major intersection and footpath issues identified in this mobility study along the Great Western Highway (GWH) in Blackheath.

While highway upgrade work is being undertaken over an estimated 18-month period, liaise with RMS for strategies to reduce the impact of works on Blackheath residents, particularly older people and people with disabilities. Major highway intersection and footpath issues identified in this study include:

- Intersection – GWH and Govetts Leap Road – kerb ramps steep and angled. Hazardous particularly for people using wheelchairs with small front castor wheels
- Intersections at Gardiners Crescent and Hathill Road and pathway going west past the Cemetery to Radiance Ave
- Footpaths along the GWH to Evans Lookout Road– uneven, rough surfaces, missing footpath links or no footpaths

The Blue Mountains City Council's *Ageing Strategy 2017-2027* identifies having 'close and reasonably level access to shops, services and facilities' (page 20) as an important component to healthy ageing. The DIAP provides strategies for informing, encouraging and rewarding businesses who address access and inclusion (Focus Area One Strategy Three). Lack of access to shops, cafes and businesses has been flagged by participants as impacting significantly on the quality of life for older people and people with disabilities and is particularly evident in Blackheath, where the majority of shops have at least one step to

access, with narrow entrances and aisles and no accessible toilets (with a few exceptions). While Council is not directly responsible for ensuring accessibility, particularly to older privately-owned shops and businesses, it has a key role in developing partnerships and resources that support and assist businesses address the issue of accessibility.

**Recommendation 4:**

Explore and improve partnerships with key business stakeholders in Blackheath, Springwood and Winmalee to identify partnership approaches and opportunities to improve access to shops, food outlets, and other businesses. This could involve creating opportunities to partner with Chambers of Commerce and other local business groups to purchase shared portable ramps or build permanent fixtures where feasible. Particular focus should include:

- The majority of shops in Blackheath are inaccessible for people using wheelchairs or scooters but food outlets were particularly emphasised by participants as impacting on quality of life.
- Banks in all three towns can be difficult to access. In Blackheath, after the closure of the Commonwealth Bank, the one remaining bank, Family First Credit Union has steps to enter. In Springwood the ANZ bank has a step to enter and in Winmalee the ATMs on the veranda of the shopping centre have very limited passageway.

As indicated in the results of this mobility study survey, footpaths continue to be the major barrier faced by older people and people with disabilities across the three towns. The PAMP gives clear direction into future planning of footpaths and the more recent *Active Transport Review (2018)* will help to articulate priority areas for development. This Review will assist Council to improve the broader pedestrian environment, promote “active transport” and support the development of the Blue Mountains as a “walkable city”. As part of this mobility study, approximately 250 specific barriers (including footpath issues and accessibility issues) identified by older people and people with disabilities have been included in the Active Transport Review Social Pinpoint Interactive Map and will form part of the consolidated outcomes.

**Recommendation 5:**

The outcomes of Council’s *Active Transport Review* acknowledge the input that has been provided by older people and people with disabilities via this Mobility Study. It is noted that thoroughfares from residential areas or key attractions to town centres, particularly, require priority attention. Some key examples include:

- Hawkesbury Road Winmalee – heading eastwards towards Hawkesbury Heights – there is no footpath on either side of the road past Winmalee High School. Heading to Springwood along Hawkesbury Road, inconsistencies in footpaths and lack of pedestrian crossings make it difficult to walk safely to destinations.
- Footpaths to bushwalks in Springwood, e.g. Bee Farm Road. No footpaths and obstructions along verges (e.g. garden beds, rocks, parked cars etc).

- Macquarie Road Springwood – footpaths are uneven with tree root damage, drops to verges, and obstructing vegetation blocking passage.
- Evans Lookout Road to Evans Lookout Blackheath – no footpaths on either side of the road to the Lookout.
- Wentworth Street, Clanwilliam and other intermediate roads that provide linkages between south/east Blackheath and the city centre have no paths outside of the town centre, with uneven surfaces, steep slopes and stairs.
- Govetts Leap Road – Footpath to lookout requires repair and maintenance as it is a major thoroughfare for vehicles, tourists and local pedestrians.
- Footpaths on streets surrounding and in major parks and amenities in Blackheath – such as Whitley Park (dog off leash area) and Leichardt oval. These parks are not accessible for people using wheelchairs.

A consistent issue that has been raised in all three towns covered by this mobility study relates to pedestrians feeling unsafe due to the increased amount of traffic on major and intermediate roads, with speed limits being exceeded. Due to the lack of footpaths highlighted above, often the only option to getting to a destination is to walk on the road but the speed and amount of cars on the road can be hazardous. For some disability service providers in the Blackheath area, they have had to resort in some situations to providing their own transport to ensure the safety of their clients, which may impact on independence and choice of movement.

#### **Recommendation 6:**

Investigate and implement strategies to minimize traffic hazards. This could include partnerships with police regarding monitoring speed limits, publicizing and promoting speed limits for cars, bikes and scooters through major towns and thoroughfares and on shared pathways.

Given that Council has simultaneously commissioned a report into accessible toilets in the Blue Mountains, toilets has not been a major focus of this study. However issues have arisen and can be used to complement the outcomes of the Report. Issues were raised in Blackheath and Springwood in relation to public toilets, covering themes such as insufficiency of current toilets and specific facilities offered (such as change tables), different viewpoints on the benefits of accessible toilets being locked via MLAK key system and the equity of paying for accessing the keys.

#### **Recommendation 7:**

Review the specific barriers identified in the Documentation of Findings of this Study relating to accessible toilets in conjunction with the findings of the *Audit and Community Consultation for the Provision of Accessible Access for Council Owned Public Toilets* to ensure consolidation of inputs from people with disabilities.

## Theme 2: Transport

‘An age friendly city has accessible, affordable, linked and safe public transport, age-friendly driving conditions and appropriate parking facilities.’ (*Blue Mountains City Council Ageing Strategy 2017-2027*, page 24)

Accessible public transport is critical in enabling older people and people with disabilities to get around their communities. This is particularly true as people age and are no longer able to keep a driver's licence. For people with disabilities, the wait times to obtain a disabled driver registration permit is prohibitive and obtaining the skills privately is very costly. Both Council's *Ageing Strategy 2017--2027* (see page 25-26) and DIAP (Focus Area Two, Creating Liveable Communities, Strategy Six page 27) have identified strategies to improve transport and the findings from this study are consistent with these strategies.

Consistent issues raised by participants in this study included:

- Lack of access to the majority of train stations in the Mountains (stairs, gaps from platform to train). While Springwood station is accessible (except large gap between platform and train) and Blackheath mainly accessible (issues regarding travelling over the train tracks without getting stuck for people using wheelchairs or walking frames with castor wheels), some destinations have not yet been upgraded for accessibility as part of the roll-out of the accessible train platform program.
- Infrequency of trains and buses west of Katoomba significantly impact on Blackheath residents. The 9am weekday train travelling east from Blackheath is no longer available, limiting availability to get around.
- Bus service between Springwood and Winmalee – gaps in timetable (no weekends, gap in weekday afternoon timetable, missed connections between trains and buses).
- Limited availability of ‘low floor’ accessible buses on route services by the Blue Mountains Bus Company. Consultation participants advised in some cases they needed to ring to request an accessible bus on a particular route. In addition, where there may be a low floor bus in service, bus stops without kerbs or inclines may impede the operation of ramps by bus operators.
- Accessible car parking, including commuter car parking and town centre parking in all three towns is not sufficient and not monitored to ensure appropriate usage. Some spots are not sufficiently wide enough for cars with hoists and in Springwood Commuter Car Park the height of the ceiling is not sufficient to fully open some vehicle doors that use hoists.
- General car parking in all three towns is insufficient to meet demand and some car parks need to be better maintained with pot holes and uneven surfaces evident (e.g. Old Scout Hall Car Park next to IGA in Springwood, and Sutton Lane Car Park in Blackheath).

### **Recommendation 8:**

Strategies and actions identified in Blue Mountains City Council's *Ageing Strategy 2017-2027*, *Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021*, *Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan 2025* and the *Integrated Transport Strategic Plan 2035*, regarding transport are implemented within proposed time-frames in Council's planning processes to ensure transport options are improved for older people and people with disability living in the Mountains in the future.

Some specific recommendations relating to transport access in the towns in this study include:

**Recommendation 9:**

Priority be given to the upgrade of bus stops which have been identified through the mobility study and feedback from Blue Mountains Bus Company. In particular, Wentworth Street, Blackheath, where signage has been changed from bus stop. This is considered an important stop for access to local shops. In addition, improvement to stops at Hawkesbury Heights to improve use by local wheelchair users. Some noted bus stops include Near Booker Street, Hawkesbury Road, Bus stop near Brightlands Road, GWH, Blackheath. It is also noted that there are very few bus shelters on Hawkesbury Road (easterly direction). In addition to these local area sites, Council should identify and address accessibility upgrades of bus stops located on the Great Western Highway.

**Recommendation 10:**

Through the Blackheath Masterplan Council should review and implement strategies to enable older people to have access to accessible car parking close to Blackheath Post Office, including the feasibility of having additional accessible parking in the car park behind the Post Office. For many older people involved in this study, access to the local Post Office was identified as important.

**Recommendation 11:**

In partnership with relevant parking authorities, explore and implement ways to ensure appropriate use of accessible car spaces in Springwood, Winmalee and Blackheath. This may include increased monitoring, improved signage and enforcement.

**Recommendation 12:**

As a priority, investigate and implement actions such that kerb ramps are located to link the road with footpaths at key transport interchange locations such as accessible car parking spaces and taxi ranks. Specifically, ramps are currently not provided at the following locations and people using wheelchairs have to travel along busy roads to access the footpath:

- Accessible car park on Govetts Leap Road near intersection GWH, Blackheath
- Taxi Rank on Macquarie Road near Greenway Lane, Springwood

The review of research and demand for one or more charging stations for scooters and wheelchairs did not identify major demand. There was, however some interest and dependent on costs, Council could consider one or two pilot sites, including the sites requested on Govetts Leap Road, at Echo Point and at Katoomba library. In addition, Springwood town sees a useful choice for a site to assist Winmalee scooters users and locals. Council could engage with the Recharge Point project to gain advice so that the sites can be easily found by potential residents and visitors.

**Recommendation 13:**

Council consider a pilot of charging sites for electric scooters and wheelchairs, in conjunction with Recharge Point, with a focus on cost

effective sites which provide benefit to residents and visitors who use electric scooters and wheelchairs.

### Theme 3: Housing

‘An age friendly city provides affordable, well-designed and safe housing options that have good connectivity to social services and the community.’ (*Blue Mountains City Council Ageing Strategy 2017-2027*, page 28)

While housing was not a major component of this mobility study, participants identified the importance of ensuring that appropriate infrastructure such as adequate parking, footpaths, kerbs and gutting, and traffic calming strategies are in place for all new housing developments. Particular reference was made to the St Elmos Housing Development on Hathill Road, Blackheath and the building of 15 Units at Wingara on Macquarie Road, Springwood. From what is understood, the Wingara Development, in particular, is targeting single older people and parking and footpath maintenance is already an issue for current residents. Where home care services are required, this increases the need for car parking availability, with home care staff requiring quick and easy access due to limited time availability.

#### **Recommendation 14:**

When new housing developments are proposed, Council should ensure that adequate infrastructure such as parking, footpaths, kerbs and guttering, and traffic calming strategies are considered to cater to the needs of older people and people with disability, enhancing their ability to access their community.

### Theme 4: Social Participation

‘An age-friendly city supports a range of accessible and affordable activities and encourages participation and intergenerational integration’. (*Blue Mountains City Council Ageing Strategy 2017-2027*, page 32)

Barriers to social participation are varied and, as highlighted in Council's *Ageing Strategy 2017-2027* the provision of affordable and inclusive events and activities which engage and involve people is key to minimizing social isolation. This mobility study focussed on the physical barriers people face to participating in community life and the following recommendations highlight specific barriers identified that limit participation in outdoor activities, family and community events.

Participants flagged the benefits of being able to enjoy the beautiful Blue Mountains National Park with family and friends. While work has been done to improve access in this area specific barriers were noted. Council's DIAP refers to a ‘whole of route’ approach to planning (Focus Area two; Creating Liveable Communities, Strategy six, page 27) and this would be very useful to apply, specifically at Govetts Leap Lookout and other lookouts in Blackheath. To illustrate, while the Lady Fairfax Walk at Govetts Leap Lookout is seen as a very positive step to improving access to the national park, the carpark at the end of the walk is not paved with pebbled gravel surfaces and the lookout itself is not fully paved, with erosion creating a stepped entrance. The return path along the road is also not paved and there is a step into the top car park from that pathway.

**Recommendation 15:**

In partnership with NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and other relevant authorities, utilize and implement a 'whole of route' approach when planning accessibility, particularly at key lookouts in Blackheath. Specifically, so that the work done to create access at Govetts Leap Lookout by building the Lady Fairfax Walk can be fully utilized by supporting accessible infrastructure to car parks and the lookout.

Similarly, access to family or community activities in local parks and schools are a key element to encouraging social inclusion. Key outcomes of Council's *Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2018* include ensuring public open spaces make it easy to exercise, play, socialise and relax whilst providing diverse opportunities for recreation and sport that are well located and distributed equitably across the Blue Mountains by

- improving off-road linkages
- building more accessibility, diversity and flexibility into the open space network
- responding to changing trends in park design and recreation participation
- establishing realistic and sustainable standards of service
- renew, replace, expand and upgrade open space networks

As a community it is imperative that we support and value the roles of older people and younger people with disabilities as parents, grandparents and family members. Specific barriers can be improved to enable equal access and increase intergenerational connection and enjoyment.

**Recommendation 16:**

Investigate and implement actions to improve access to the following key recreational parks to improve social inclusion outcomes for people with disabilities and older people:

- "The Gardens", GWH behind the community centre, Blackheath – brick trimming along the pathway throughout the park prevents access to grassed areas. This park hosts regular community markets and is a focal point for the local community events and festivals.
- Whitley Park, Jubilee Park (Leichhardt Street Oval) and Memorial Pool Park in Blackheath provide opportunities for community and family engagement each offering different options (e.g. dog off leash area, sports activities and children's playground). Improvements should be identified for access from the road, pathways around and through the parks and paved areas.
- Summerhayes Park in Winmalee is extensively used as a sporting facility but with no pedestrian crossing on Hawkesbury Road near the park it is difficult to access from the other side of the street, particularly for people using mobility aids

**Recommendation 17:**

Advocate to and liaise with NSW Dept of Education to improve access to Blackheath Public School and Winmalee Public School. This includes

exploring maintenance of surrounding footpaths and the provision of accessible parking on the street at Winmalee Public School and improving pathway access onto the school grounds and modifying internal doors to the office at Blackheath Public School.

Transport to social events, doctors and shopping is a critical component, particularly for people not able to access public transport. For community transport clients, pick up times to participate in community transport outings can be difficult to coordinate, particularly where personal care support is required and costs for longer health trips can prevent some people from accessing community transport.

**Recommendation 18:**

Continue to work in partnership with local transport services so that as many people as possible can access social events and activities of their choice. This includes working to address any individual barriers to use of community transport that people may experience such as client contribution cost or fitting pick up times around personal care needs. Council's Access Bus is also a key service in meeting this need.

## Theme 5: Respect and Social Inclusion

'An age-friendly city respects older people and ensures their social and economic inclusion in the community.' (*Blue Mountains City Council Ageing Strategy 2017-2027*, page 36)

*Blue Mountains City Council Ageing Strategy 2017-2027* identifies the following as a strategy to achieve this theme.

'Ensure senior residents are consulted and informed about Council's planning and strategies' (page 37).

The methodology used in this mobility study has provided a unique opportunity to explore ways to build relationships with older people and people with disabilities in the community by linking in with currently existing networks and activities. Consistent positive feedback was obtained from mobility study participants who appreciated that consultations were 'brought to them', and welcomed the face-to-face contact, the provision of surveys and other material in hard copy and individual follow up over the phone.

While some participants indicated that Council has in the past followed up on reported issues, a common theme was that many of the issues and barriers raised in the mobility study had been previously brought to the attention of Council with little or no follow up. In order to change this perception, it would be beneficial to build on the relationships established via these consultations, which can be used to communicate outcomes of this and other relevant reports and obtain future feedback on mobility issues across the Mountains.

**Recommendation 19:**

Establish an ongoing mechanism to keep the community engaged and continue to obtain feedback on mobility barriers and improvements needed, including mobility studies in other towns in the Blue Mountains. It is recommended that this includes the allocation of staffing resources to

provide a Community Liaison and Engagement role focussed on mobility. This role would enhance visibility and communication by:

- Participating in ongoing face-to-face interactions with the community by attending and providing mobility updates at local community gatherings and local resident groups such as those involved in this study e.g. residents' committees at aged care facilities and retirement villages, Blue Mountains community restaurants, specialised disability groups, educational, social and other relevant community groups connected with individual towns and local Neighbourhood Centres. Time would be well spent by developing further relationships with people with disabilities connected with disability organisations and through Local Area Coordinators and Ability Links;
- Providing a mechanism to enhance interaction between Council, the community and other stakeholders such as NSW Parks and Wildlife Service, NSW Roads and Maritime Service (particularly with the Blackheath upgrade scheduled to commence October 2018);
- Preparing a six-monthly news sheet (also linked to BMCC rates newsletter), which involves a hard copy distribution to individuals in the community utilizing services such as Great Community Transport, Blue Mountains Food Services, local resident groups, and groups affiliated with Neighbourhood Centres as well as soft copies via Council's website and social media. This news sheet could be used to clearly inform the community of short, medium and long-term priorities and achievements to date, decisions on hotspots, and provide contact point details for further information.
- Participating and linking in with specific events which attract people with disabilities and older people such as the Disability Expo, Annual Seniors Festival and Senior's Recognition Awards. These events provide invaluable opportunities to seek and provide feedback on mobility issues.

Council's Ageing Strategy also recommends maintaining a consultation data base (page 38) which could be overseen in connection with the above role.

The role of the Blue Mountains Access Advisory Committee is critical to ensuring ongoing improvements to mobility in the Blue Mountains. It is imperative that it is consulted in a timely manner before new initiatives are undertaken that will have an impact on access and mobility for people with disabilities and older people.

***Recommendation 20:***

Ensure Blue Mountains Access Advisory Committee is consulted in a timely manner on new developments and access initiatives in the Blue Mountains at the beginning of planning processes.

**Dementia** is an increasing health and participation challenge in Australia. The study villages have high proportions of older residents living at home. Dementia Australia has developed resources to support dementia friendly environments and the ability of people with dementia to continue to participate in community life. The toolkit for local government is an important

resource to support inclusion and participation. Council should use this resource, in the context of its ageing and disability strategies, to support the needs of residents with dementia and the people who support them.

**Recommendation 21:**

Consider using available resources, such as *Creating Dementia friendly communities*, as well as local consultation, to assess the needs of people with dementia and those who support them as part of ongoing access, inclusion and infrastructure initiatives in the City of Blue Mountains.

## Theme 6: Civic participation and employment

‘Age-friendly cities have volunteer and employment opportunities and encourage civic participation’. (*Blue Mountains City Council Ageing Strategy 2017-2027*, page 40)

While employment is not a major component of this study, opportunities for civic participation, particularly in relation to council decision-making can be addressed as outlined in **Recommendation 19** above. In addition, there are opportunities for Council to employ consultants with lived experience of disability to further enhance the quality of access provisions. Council’s *Disability Inclusion Access Plan 2017-2021* emphasises achieving best practice that ‘goes beyond compliance’ in relation to several components of Focus Area two: Creating Liveable communities (pages 24 – 27). Contracting people with lived experience of disability may be an appropriate way of supporting this strategy, while improving outcomes for individuals with disabilities and access in general.

**Recommendation 22:**

Consider opportunities to contract and consult on a fee basis with local people with lived experience of disability on specific access building projects. Develop a resource/skills list of people in different locations.

## Theme 7: Communication and Information

‘Age-friendly cities distribute appropriate and age-friendly information.’ (*Blue Mountains City Council Ageing Strategy 2017-2027*, page 44)

One lesson learnt in conducting this survey is the importance of providing information in hard copy to older people. Out of 140 surveys completed, 111 were completed in hard copy, representing 79 percent of participants. As far as possible Council information dissemination strategies should include hardcopy options, particularly in relation to information of relevance to older people. Council’s provision of a hard copy newsletter that is mailed out to residents with their rates notice, its provision of hard copies of its Community Care Guide, Physical Activities Services Directory and Guide to Services and Activities for Families indicates Council’s commitment to this approach. **Recommendation 19** above includes reference to a news sheet with hard copy distribution which would enable information on mobility issues to be as widely accessed by older people as possible.

**Recommendation 23:**

In addition to communication and information strategies outlined in Council’s *Ageing Strategy 2017-2027* (page 46), *Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-*

2021, *Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan 2025*, Council provide mobility and access information in hard copy to older people and people with disabilities and explore opportunities to expand its hard copy provisions of other relevant information and communications.

Over recent years, Neighbourhood Centres and LEEP Inc have initiated activities which support older people and people with disabilities to access information and communication technology (using computers, tables and phones, internet, emails, skype etc). Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre for example runs CYBER\_SHED for over 50s and this program supported its participants to engage in the online survey, as part of this mobility study. These initiatives significantly assist older people to stay connected with their families, friends, communities and access supports they need.

**Recommendation 24:**

Explore opportunities to support local initiatives that assist older people and people with disabilities to access and stay abreast of information technology which assists them access their communities and the supports they need. This will also increase opportunities for older people and people with disabilities to connect with Council online.

The Global Network of Age Friendly Cities is a WHO convened network which promotes development and sharing of effective strategies for age friendly environments.<sup>25</sup> Australian Councils are members of this network. Blue Mountains City Council has shown leadership in its approach to inclusive design and implementation of local pedestrian initiatives. By joining this network, and networking with Australian and other members, Council can continue to build its capacity, source good practice and build its commitment to age friendly and inclusive environments.

**Recommendation 25:**

Consider Blue Mountains City Council joining the Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities

## Theme 8: Community Support and Health Services

“Age friendly cities have a wide range of accessible and affordable health services”. (*Blue Mountains City Council Ageing Strategy 2017-2027*, page 48)

Access to health services was identified as an issue by many participants in this mobility study. While most health services are reasonably accessible, getting to a doctor or health service can be problematic. An illustration of this was provided by people living at Wingara, on Macquarie Road, Springwood. In order to get to their doctor at Balance Clinic on Ferguson Road, they were able to cross the railway directly opposite Wingara while using walking frames but felt unsafe to cross Ferguson Road to access the Clinic. There is no pedestrian crossing or refuge island on Ferguson Road which would have made the situation significantly better. In order to get to appointments, they were using taxis and eventually changed doctors. Other people coming from the commuter car park to the Clinic also conveyed concerns about crossing the car park into Jerseywold Ave with cars speeding and no safe passage through.

Other health locations where access issues were identified in this study have been included in the following recommendation:

### **Recommendation 26:**

Investigate and implement actions on specific obstacles to health services as identified below:

- No pedestrian crossing or refuge island to enable crossing Ferguson Road to Balance Clinic
- No safe thoroughfare for pedestrians to cross the commuter car park to access Balance Clinic and other Health Services along Ferguson Road
- No footpaths along Whitecross Road to access Whitecross Health Centre
- No pedestrian access to cross Hawkesbury Road to access Physiotherapist at 1A Hawkesbury Road. This is a major thoroughfare for cars travelling to Winmalee from the East.

## **General access issues covering all towns in the Blue Mountains**

The following issues were obtained from individual consultations and relate generally to access issues in the Mountains, particularly for people using electric wheelchairs or mobility scooters.

- A significant number of ramps coming off pedestrian crossings in the Blue Mountains are too steep or have dips which make it unsafe to use for people using wheelchairs, walking frames or mobility scooters. Wheelchairs and mobility scooters can tilt forward or backwards making it unsafe. It can also be problematic for people using walking frames due to the steep climb onto or off the crossing.
- Ramps from footpath to road need to be level, not tilting to one side when going up/down an incline.
- Ramps between footpaths and road crossing/intersection need to be at right angle to the corner, not diagonally facing the opposite corner of the intersection. Ramps facing the diagonally opposite corner of the intersection mean that people using wheelchairs can find it difficult to manoeuvre and are forced to head into traffic unsafely.
- Rolled gutters are difficult to go up or down for many types of wheelchairs and mobility scooters, especially if they have small wheels (castors). The castors spin and cannot travel across the rolled gutter. They are regularly used on driveways across the Blue Mountains and as kerbing.
- Several people acknowledged that Council has promptly responded to some issues when reported as dangerous. One example of where soil erosion meant a large hole developed at the set of lights at intersection of GWH and Wascoe Street/Hare (South side of Highway). This was dealt with quickly by Council once they were alerted to the issue.
- Along major footpaths some tree branches are lower than 2.5 metres off the ground which are an obstruction to people using mobility aids. Needs to be regularly maintained and monitored.



- Hedges alongside footpaths need to be maintained regularly and monitored as they can reduce the width of pathways considerably, preventing access for people with mobility aids.
- Garden beds or woodchips on footpaths are very problematic as they stop access for people using wheelchairs or scooters and create trip hazards for people using walking sticks and walking frames.

The link to the following YouTube video “Wheelchair to Blackheath Golf Club” was provided by a group consultation participant. While his wheelchair is very robust and has been built to handle most access barriers, the video gives an insight into the obstacles people encounter – particularly evident from five minutes onwards in the video.

Go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YX9hPPaoq3o&t=133s>

# Methodology & Consultative Approach

## Literature Review

This literature review looks at Australian and global initiatives and work on active transport planning and action at a local level to support the participation of older people and people with disability in the communities of Springwood, Winmalee and Blackheath in the city of Blue Mountains. It also looks at the needs of people who use electric scooters, electric and manual wheelchairs and other mobility aids such as walking frames. The full review is at page 60.

The review finds strong international support for an inclusive approach to planning. The World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Strategy and Action Plan on Ageing and Health (2015) defines healthy ageing as “the process of developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables wellbeing in older age”<sup>10</sup>. WHO has also promoted the concept of age friendly environments to support this in planning and other disciplines through the Global Network for Age Friendly Cities and Communities, of which 25 Australian Councils are members. Similarly, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCPRD) states “On the fundamental issue of accessibility (Article nine), the Convention requires countries to identify and eliminate obstacles and barriers and ensure that persons with disabilities can access their environment, transportation, public facilities and services, and information and communications technologies”<sup>11</sup>

The Australian, State and Local Governments have, as parties to these agreements, developed localised responses. The National Disability Strategy 2010-2020 is the Australian Government response. As well as policies and plans, the Strategy is enabled by the Disability Discrimination Act 1990 and its Standards, relevant to this study are the Disability (access to premises-buildings) Standard 2010 and the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport. The NSW Government enacts these by the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan 2015. Blue Mountains City Council has incorporated these objectives into strategic documents including the Ageing Strategy, the Disability Inclusion Action Plan and the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan.

All these strategic documents support the approach taken by Blue Mountains City Council of using evidence-based approaches in conjunction with a strong focus on seeking input from affected communities and people. The evidence for the benefits of an inclusive approach to land use planning, the development, construction and maintenance of environments that are accessible, safe, comfortable and welcoming for people of all ages and abilities. There is frequent reference to the provision and maintenance of public toilets and public seating to assist older people and people with disabilities. Council is currently researching community

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<sup>10</sup> World Health Organization Department of Ageing and Life Course: Global strategy and action plan on ageing and health (2016- 2020) WHO website <http://www.who.int/ageing/healthy-ageing/en/> accessed 20.9.18

<sup>11</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs: The Convention in brief. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/the-convention-in-brief.html> accessed 20.9.18

needs in relation to this. In addition, the importance of well-designed lighting and effective signage is highlighted for older people, people with disabilities and people with dementia.

## Engaging participants

This mobility study's focus has been on obtaining detailed feedback from older people and people with disabilities about the barriers they face to getting around their community. It was important to engage with as many people as possible in the three towns in scope for this study, Springwood, Winmalee and Blackheath and to get feedback particularly from people who had firsthand experience dealing with issues of access. To achieve this, it was agreed to identify and link in with currently existing community groups and reach out to them in their own environment, rather than approaching engagement with an expectation that people would come and consult with us in structured group settings.

It was also recognised that people engage with these consultation processes in different ways, so it was important to offer a range of ways people could get involved. To do this, the different options offered included the following:

### Mobility Study Survey

This survey was designed to align with Council's Active Transport Review but was adapted to identify and cater for older people and people with disabilities in Springwood, Winmalee and Blackheath. (Please see Appendix Two for Survey questions.) Given the target of this study, it was important to ensure that people who didn't have access to computers or the internet could still participate in the process. Both online and hard copy versions of the survey were made available and distributed widely. The online survey was available through Council's *Have Your Say* Website. Approximately 500 surveys in hard copy were printed and distributed.

Promotion and distribution included:

- Development of a flyer, providing an outline of the study and providing links to the survey, and contact details for further information and follow up. (See Appendix Three)
- Using the flyer, online survey promotion through Council's *Have Your Say* website, the Blue Mountains Gazette, Blue Mountains Community Care Forum, and Facebook (including Council, relevant Neighbourhood Centres, Blue Mountains 4 U, Great Community Transport, and individual contacts).
- Distribution of a hard copy version of the survey via Neighbourhood Centres, individual disability and aged care community-based services, residential aged care providers, local shops, Disability Employment Services, Council on the Ageing (Blue Mountains members) and Physical Disability Council of NSW.
- Reaching out to more isolated residents through delivery of surveys to clients of Great Community Transport, Blue Mountains Food Services and Volunteer Home Visitors Service.

The survey included opportunities for participants to self-identify if they were interested in discussing the issues further or if interested in attending consultations. Follow up emails were sent to people with details of consultations they could attend in their local town. People were also given the opportunity to have an individual discussion over the phone or face-to-face if that was their preference.

## Consultations

From past experience<sup>12</sup>, it is evident that holding specific and separately organised consultation meetings does not necessarily attract the number of participants required to validate the process. It can be problematic due to inclement weather, mobility barriers including cost, clashes with other activities and might not be seen as enough of a 'draw card' to attend, particularly for people who may have difficulty getting there.

In consultation with Council, a different approach was undertaken which involved identifying specific groups of people who already regularly meet and requesting to attend and facilitate a discussion on mobility in their towns. Groups that were most likely to include people with mobility issues either due to old age or disability were targeted.

Specific groups were identified through discussions with Springwood, Blackheath and Winmalee Neighbourhood Centres, Blue Mountains Food Services and Council. In Winmalee, it was harder to find relevant groups to engage with, so a separate Winmalee Discussion Group was organised and promoted via Winmalee Neighbourhood Centre, Blue Mountains Community Care Forum, Blue Mountains 4 U Facebook page and Blue Mountains Gazette.

The final groups consulted included:

Springwood/Winmalee Consultation Groups	Date	No. of people	Blackheath Consultation Groups	Date	No. of people
Aquinas Court Retirement Village	13 August	11	Kirinari	14 August	2
Open Door Group – via Springwood Neighbourhood Centre	14 August	8	Blackheath Community Restaurant – via Blue Mountains Food Services	29 August	25
Vision Impaired Persons Group	27 August	5	Stepping On Group	31 August	11
Buckland Resident's Committee	27 August	6	Welcome Table – via Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre	7 Sept	** 6
Springwood Community Restaurant – Via Blue Mountains Food Services	6 Sept	* 4			
Chair Yoga Group	6 Sept	2			
Winmalee Discussion Group	17 Sept	3			
<b>Individual Discussions</b>	various	4	<b>Individual Discussions</b>	various	5
<b>Total</b>		<b>43</b>			<b>49</b>

\* Although approximately 30 people were at the Springwood Community Restaurant, this consultation was organised specifically to meet these four individuals who had expressed interest in a meeting, as a follow up from their survey participation.

\*\* Although approximately 25 people were present at the Welcome Table, the event was socially focussed so engagement was limited to six people, who actively initiated discussions.

<sup>12</sup> Bitzios Consulting, *Blue Mountains Pedestrian Access and Mobility Background Study*, for Blue Mountains City Council, February 2016, page 26

By using this approach and reaching out to these different groups, it meant that the framework for the consultations needed to be flexible to be able to adapt to the different group structures and dynamics. It was also important to capture the detail in terms of specific barriers people face so the focus of discussions was on drilling down to specific locations, identifying the details of each barrier and impact it had on people's access. Large printed town maps, Council's Social Pinpoint Interactive Map and Google maps (via iPad) were used to prompt this detailed discussion.

As indicated above, some survey participants self-identified for further discussions. Some people preferred individual discussions rather than attend the group consultations.

## Consultation with Bus Company

Discussions were held with Blue Mountains Bus Company (BMBC) regarding this study. Advice provided by BMBC drivers identified a bus stop at Blackheath which is a useful drop off to local shoppers and where changed signage now precludes buses stopping. In addition, the need for improved bus stop platform at Hawkesbury Heights was consistent with feedback from a local resident who uses an electric wheelchair to catch low floor buses. While not located in the study area, BMBC also advised that the Carrington Hotel bus shelter does not provide sufficient rain or sun shelter number of people who use it. It should be noted the mobility scooters are not carried on BMBC buses due to the difficulty placing them safely on buses. Electric wheelchairs are carried, as there is a National Standard "footprint" on which the design of bus storage areas for wheelchairs is based.

## Scooter Usage and Recharging Stations

This project sought specific experience and views regarding (electric) charging needs of scooter and wheelchair users. This was initiated following a request for such facilities by a local resident, who was not, herself, a scooter user. The literature review yielded no research on this specific issue, nor the frequency with which scooter users lose power or need to recharge while visiting local town centres to shop or for other purposes. Scooter research, to date, is almost overwhelmingly focused on road and other safety issues for scooter users, accident analysis and pedestrians sharing footpaths with scooter users.

### Attitudes of users

As discussed, the need for charging stations was raised by a local resident. Email feedback sought from local aged and people with disability networks and survey respondents also did not raise this issue as a priority need. Online user forums, similarly, do not highlight this as a concern. One survey respondent provided advice that the batteries in powered chairs can discharge without warning, leaving users stranded. In some areas where mobility scooter use is high, Councils have provided charging stations through the Recharge Point program. The program advises on design and accessible location of these facilities and maintains a national online database to advise users of their nearest charging station. In addition, the NRMA provides a facility whereby a person can join as a member and nominate their scooter or wheelchair as a vehicle on which to seek roadside assistance.

## Likely locations

Few suggestions were made in consultations. The respondent previously cited, a Blackheath resident, requested a facility in Katoomba, at Katoomba Library. In addition, she requested a facility in Blackheath on Govetts Leap Road shopping precinct and at the new adult changing facility at Echo Point, which might be of value to both residents and visitors. Council has indicated that a Council managed facility might be a preferable location. Springwood is a major local shopping destination for Springwood and Winmalee residents, including those who use scooters and powered chairs. Recharge Point will advise on appropriate locations to install a charging point. Springwood Hub has been suggested. Hours of availability and space to wait safely while charging are important factors to consider.

## Likely use

Given the lack of evidence of current need, or the incidence of battery failure, it is difficult to judge the need and likely use. The charging points are not high cost facilities. A small pilot may be of value at one of the proposed sites. Tourism facility operators may be interested to contribute given potential value to their clients. Changes in battery technology, particularly rapid charging, may make this a more useful service. Operating the charging station under the Recharge Scheme may assist with promotion and awareness for potential users.

## Input into Active Transport Review

As part of the Mobility Study brief, input was required into Council's Social Pinpoint Interactive Map, which was gathering community input for the Active Transport Review. The mobility study flyer promoted this initiative, providing links to the Interactive Map. The online mobility survey also referred people to the Interactive Map, if they were from a town in the Blue Mountains other than Springwood, Winmalee or Blackheath. All detailed data, which identified specific locations and barriers from the mobility study survey, group and individual consultations was individually entered into the Interactive Map. In total approximately 250 individual entries were made. To view the interactive map, go to

<https://bluemountaincitycouncil.mysocialpinpoint.com/activetransportreview#/>

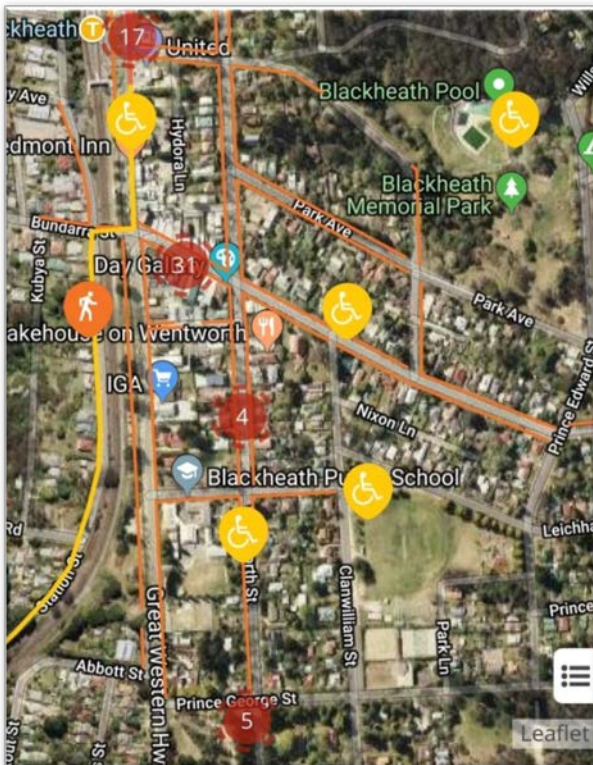
## Springwood



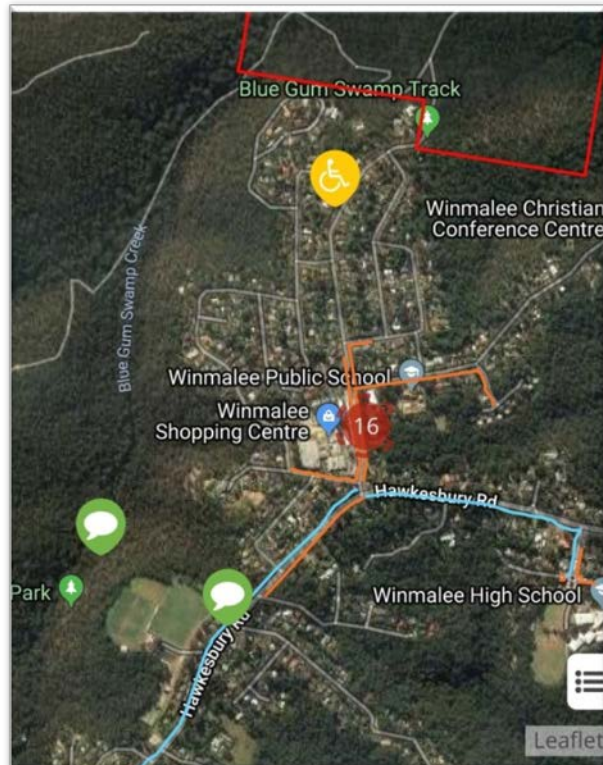
### Social Pinpoint Interactive Map – a snapshot

This Interactive Map shows the number of comments for each location (see red circles flagging number of comments received if more than one). When viewing online, the screen can be enlarged so specific locations and entries can be identified and read.

## Blackheath



## Winmalee



# Documentation of findings

## Mobility Study Survey

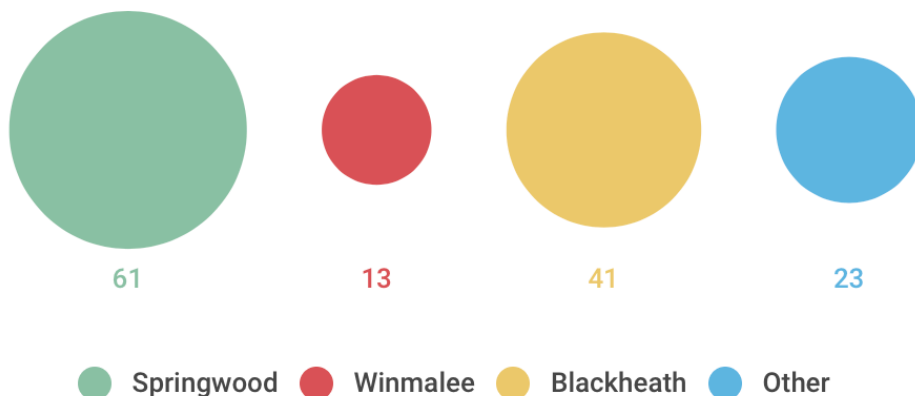
### Survey responses

140 people participated and completed the mobility study survey during the survey period (28 July – 31<sup>st</sup> August 2018). Of these, 111 participants (79 percent) completed surveys via hard copy and 29 participants (21 percent) completed surveys on line.

#### 1. Responses by town

While 17 percent of people answering this question identified as from a town other than Springwood, Winmalee or Blackheath, 52 percent of these people were from neighbouring towns (Valley Heights, Faulconbridge, Yellow Rock, Medlow Bath and Mt Victoria), often providing comment on towns within the study. It is assumed this is due to those towns providing the main amenity in their area.

### Response By Town



It is noted that Winmalee has a low survey response rate compared to other townships. This is partially reflective of the smaller percentage of the population being 65 and over (15.2 percent compared to Springwood at 24.3 percent and Blackheath at 26.1 percent)<sup>13</sup> but it was also generally harder to find opportunities to engage with Winmalee residents. In the group consultation process, however, participants generally provided comments on both Springwood and Winmalee regardless of where they lived. They tended to visit both townships as the amenities are different, with Winmalee having a modern indoor shopping complex and

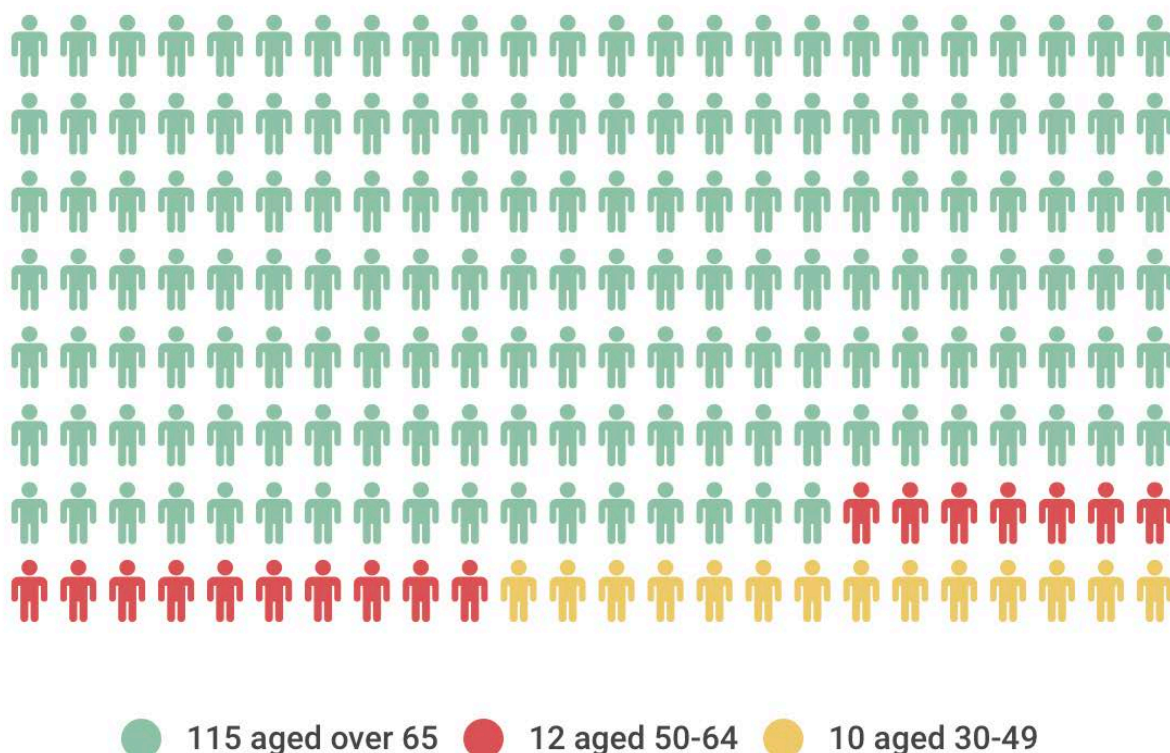
<sup>13</sup> 2016 Census QuickStats [www.censusdata.abs.gov.au](http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au) Codes - SSC13629 (Springwood), SSC10393 (Blackheath), SSC14334 (Winmalee)

Springwood having a much broader range of individual shops, food outlets and entertainment venues.

## 2. The Participants

A significant majority of survey participants were people who had a disability or health condition (89.5 percent), with 10.5 percent identifying as carers. It should be noted that 18.5% of survey participants did not respond to this question. This may mean that they do not relate to either category. In terms of those participants who use mobility aids, Springwood participants primarily used walking frames followed by walking sticks and Winmalee participants primarily used walking sticks followed by walking frames. In Blackheath participants mainly used walking sticks followed by wheelchairs.

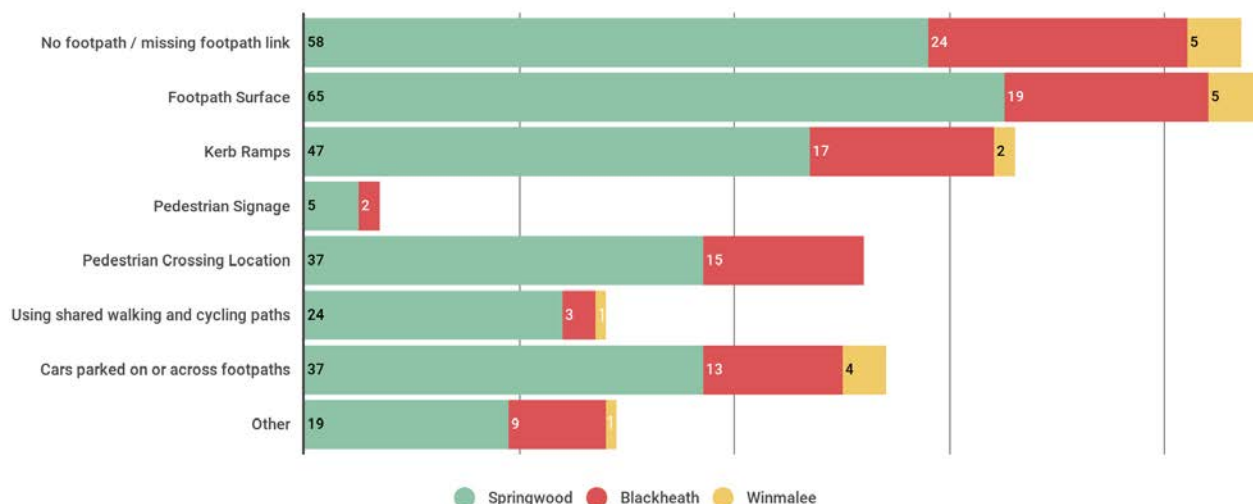
16.1 percent of those who participated in the survey were people with disabilities under the age of 65, with the remaining 83.9 percent being people 65 and over. Within the townships surveyed, Blackheath represented a larger proportion of people with disability under the age of 65 responding to the survey (21 percent), compared to 9.5 percent in Springwood/Winmalee.



### 3. Responses about barriers

## Responses about barriers

Are there any barriers to you when you are out and about?



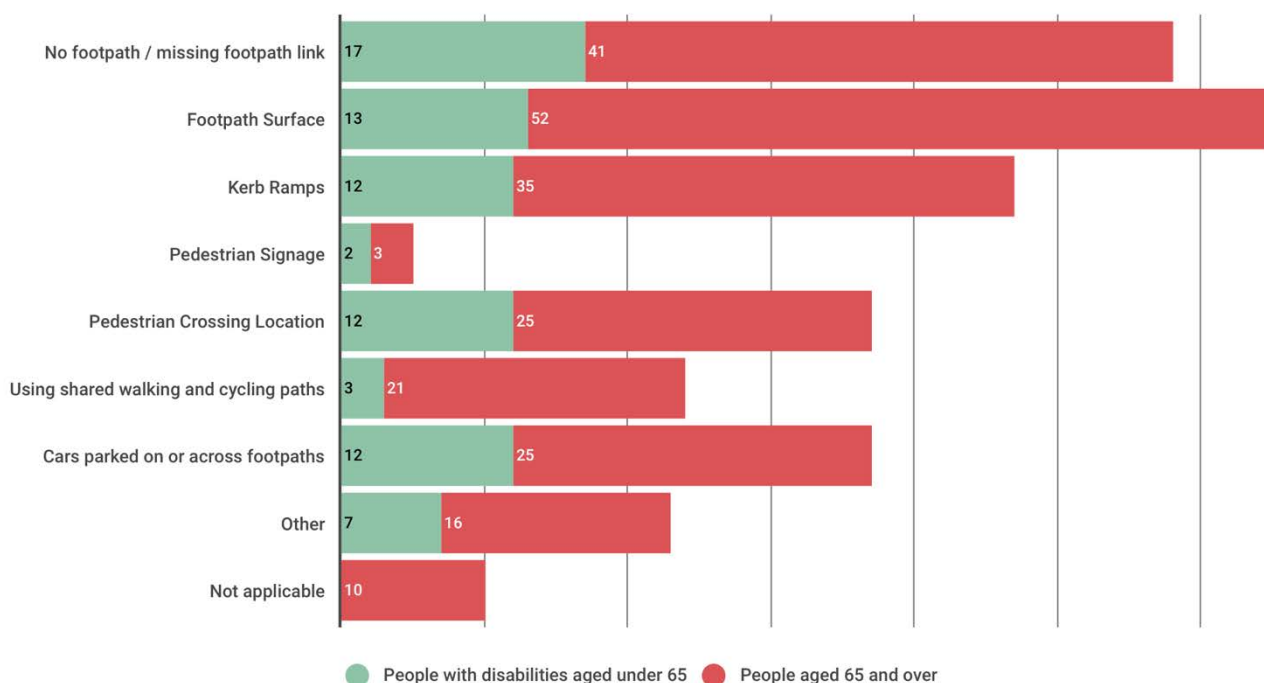
There are quite notable differences between the priorities of the three towns. Some highlights include:

- All three towns identify footpaths as a priority area, but footpath surfaces are seen as more of an issue in Springwood whereas missing footpaths are of more concern in Blackheath. In Winmalee both are given the same weighting. All three towns identify poor quality as the main issue for footpath surfaces.
- Kerb ramps are less of an issue in Winmalee than the other two towns. The main issue for kerb ramps in Springwood and Blackheath were poor quality. For Winmalee residents the main issue was lack of kerb ramps.
- All three towns identify carparking on or across footpaths as of concern.
- Pedestrian crossing locations are identified as more of a priority in Blackheath than elsewhere.
- Using shared walking and cycling paths is identified as a barrier more consistently in Springwood than in the other two towns.

There are also differences between the priorities for younger people with disabilities and people 65 and over.

## Priorities for younger people with disabilities and people 65 and over

Are there any barriers to you when you are out and about?



Some highlights include;

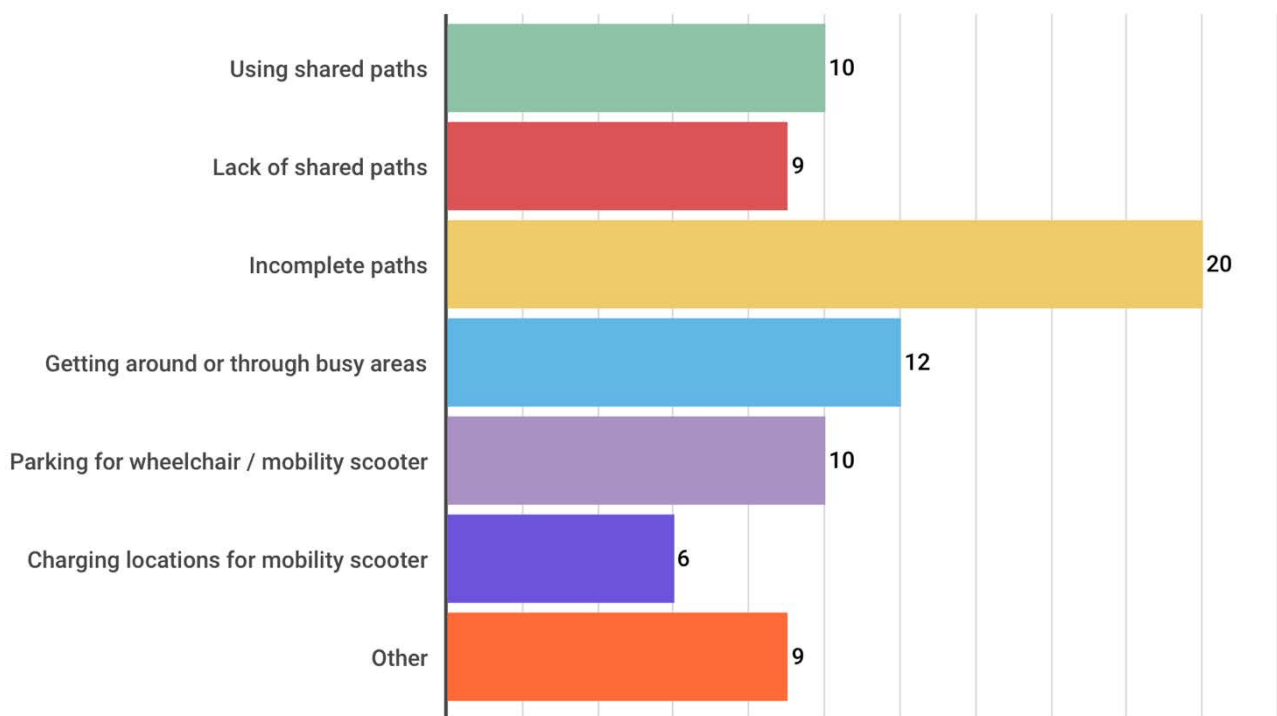
- With footpaths, more younger people with disability see missing footpaths as a barrier, while more older people see footpath surfaces as a barrier. Both groups see footpath issues as the biggest barrier to getting around their communities.
- More older people see using shared walking and cycling paths a barrier than younger people with disabilities.
- Kerb ramps are consistently an issue for both groups of people.
- More younger people with disabilities identify cars parked on or across footpaths as an issue than people over the age of 65.

#### 4. Responses about barriers for people using mobility scooters or wheelchairs

Of the 30 people who responded to this question, the most highly reported barrier identified for people using mobility scooters or wheelchairs was incomplete paths across the three towns (66.6 percent of participants, followed by getting around or through busy areas (40 percent).

Approximately one third of participants who responded to this question also indicated using shared paths, parking for wheelchairs/mobility scooters and lack of shared paths as barriers.

#### Responses about barriers for people using mobility scooters or wheelchairs



Different towns had different rankings as follows:

##### **Springwood**

1. Getting around busy areas
2. Incomplete paths

##### **Blackheath**

1. Incomplete paths
2. Parking for wheelchairs / mobility scooter

##### **Winmalee**

All ranked the same.

With reference to charging locations for mobility scooters, 20 percent of people who responded to this question identified this as a barrier. Of these participants, three were from Blackheath, two from Springwood and one from Winmalee.

## 5. Details of barriers

Many of the specific details of barriers identified in survey responses are similar to those conveyed through the group and individual consultations. More detailed descriptions of hazards, including photo illustrations are found in the Mobility Study Consultation section below. Please also see full listing of survey responses at Appendix Four.

Barriers identified more than once in survey responses include:

### Springwood

- Greenway Lane outside Post Office – no pedestrian crossing, heavy traffic both ways with cars travelling fast in the area **(this was the most significant issue highlighted by the greatest number of Springwood survey participants)**.
- Steepness of pathways and kerb ramps on Greenway Lane (east exit onto Macquarie Road).
- Steepness of ramps onto pedestrian crossings and location of pedestrian crossings along Macquarie Road, particularly outside Aquinas Court.
- Tree roots and broken footpaths along Macquarie Road.
- Kerb ramp (western side) too steep and uneven footpath on corner of Homedale Street and Macquarie Road.
- Lack of footpaths or footpaths needing repair along residential streets in Springwood – identified streets included George Street, Holland Street, Ellison Road, Florey Crescent, Lalor Drive, Lawson Road, Scrivener Lane, Plateau Road and Hawkesbury Road.
- The Old Scout Hall Site currently used as a car park outside IGA has very uneven surface.
- More street lighting needed on streets in Springwood, particularly western end of Macquarie Road.
- Hawkesbury Road through to Winmalee - footpaths needing repair and consistency of pathways, lack of pedestrian access to cross Hawkesbury Road, particularly at the two roundabouts close to Macquarie Road.
- Limited pedestrian space on footpaths in and around the town centre, with obstacles such as seating, shop displays and signage, particularly with shared pathways.
- Some shops are inaccessible or difficult to enter with steps and narrow aisles.
- Lack of accessible car parking spaces in centre / main streets of Springwood.

### Winmalee

- Uneven surfaces of footpaths, eroded shoulders and lack of footpaths on the streets surrounding Winmalee Public School.
- No disability parking outside Winmalee Public School.
- Not enough accessible parking at Winmalee Shopping Centre.
- Poor condition of footpath along Whitecross Road.

### Blackheath

- Intersection Wentworth Street and Govetts Leap Road – hazardous intersection with steep angled kerb ramps, no pedestrian crossings, and eroded paths **(this was the most significant issue highlighted by the greatest number of Blackheath survey participants)**.
- Lack of paved footpaths, or poorly maintained footpaths with uneven surfaces and tree roots along residential streets in Blackheath including Govetts Leap Road, Evans

Lookout Road, Great Western Highway from Evans Lookout Road to town centre, Clanwilliam Street, Chelmsford Ave, Hargraves Street, Brightlands Road, Belvedere Ave, Great Western Highway westwards through to Radiance Street, Robb Ave, Hathill Road (past Clarence Street) and Godson Ave near the new St Elmo Housing development area.

- The majority of shops, cafés and businesses in Blackheath are inaccessible with steps at entrances.
- Lack of wide paved pathways in local parks, particularly 'The Gardens' where local markets are held. No level access between park areas and pathway.
- Kerb ramps are too steep and angled at intersection on Great Western Highway and Govetts Leap Road.
- Potholes on the shoulder outside the community centre on corner of Gardiners Crescent and Great Western Highway.
- Poor or no street lights around Blackheath, particularly Govetts Leap Road and from Evans Lookout Road to town centre.
- Speeding cars make walking along the streets or crossing roads difficult (particularly Govetts Leap Road).



'The Gardens', Great Western Highway, Blackheath

# Mobility Study Consultations

## Springwood/Winmalee Group Consultations



**‘The rough patch outside IGA. Over three years ago. I was in a hurry to get to my car in the carpark and didn't notice a step up to the asphalt and tripped and fell heavily putting a hairline fracture in my pelvis. This was quite painful for almost three months.’**

Springwood Survey participant.

Seven group consultations were held in Springwood and Winmalee ranging from two to eleven participants. A total of 39 residents were engaged with the process. Most consultations involved discussion across both towns as residents move across both towns for shopping, recreation and social activities. In addition, four people participated in individual consultations. Comments on towns outside of this study can be found at Appendix Five.

### Consultation One – Springwood/Winmalee

Aquinas Court Retirement Village, Springwood

10.00am -11.30am, 13 August 2018

11 Participants –nine women and two men, several using walking frames and walking sticks

### General Comments

- Residents at Aquinas Court have raised and continue to raise access and ‘walkability’ issues with Council. Approximately 2-3 years ago they met with a representative from Council and discussed issues on Macquarie Road, particularly around the pedestrian crossing outside Aquinas Court. To date, no action has been taken. Questions were raised about what has happened to the Springwood Master Plan developed by Council.
- Residents conveyed their appreciation for the seats along Macquarie Road and indicated that they are all well used.
- Residents indicated that access to the train station was good and with platform extensions this has reduced the size of the gap between the train and platform. Station staff are very helpful and will organise ramps for people to get on/off train and ring forward to destination points.

## Specific comments below:

Location	Barrier Type	Description	Further comments/suggestions
<b>Springwood</b>			
Macquarie Road – Springwood Sports Club side going to Springwood shops from Aquinas court	Trees uprooting footpaths and edging brickwork uneven.	At several spots the tree roots have created cracking and uneven surfaces along the footpath. Difficult for people using walking frames or walking sticks.	(See <b>Image 1</b> )
All along Macquarie Road, but particularly at pedestrian crossing outside Aquinas Court	Speed of traffic – hazardous to cross roads at pedestrian crossings	40km speed limit along Macquarie Road not observed. Pedestrian crossing at Aquinas Court is not raised so does not provide a speed deterrent.	More visible signage and educational promotions of speed limit (in Gazette etc)
Pedestrian crossing and bus stop outside Aquinas court	Hazardous crossing due to poor visibility and too busy	Speed, significant amounts of traffic coming off the round-about and sun reflection affects drivers' ability to see pedestrians crossing the road. With the bus stop there too, the intersection is too busy, and buses reduce visibility. In addition, for some people access to the pedestrian crossing from the footpath is too steep if they use mobility aids.	Most Aquinas Court residents no longer use this crossing because they feel it is unsafe. They would like the pedestrian crossing moved closer to the shops and away from the round-about. <b>This issue has been consistently identified as dangerous.</b>
Bus stop outside Aquinas Court	Community Transport bus not able to stop there to pick up passengers	Residents are picked up from the Sports Club but for some the steps and/or driveway are quite steep.	
Macquarie Road – left hand side going to Springwood shops from Aquinas court – particularly 82-84 Macquarie Road (Dentist)	Shrubs from properties partially blocking footpath.	This has meant that pedestrians with walkers end up walking on the grass verge and the surface is not even. Approx. 2-inch drop from foot path to grass verge in some parts – falls away to dirt/grass and can be slippery. One resident advised she fractured her hip falling here.	This has improved recently after complaints have been made but hedge maintenance needs to be monitored. (See <b>Image 2</b> )
Macquarie Road – left hand side going to Springwood shops from Aquinas court	Nuts from trees are a trip hazard	One resident advised she fell and sprained her ankle from tripping on the nuts.	
Macquarie Road – between Red Cross Hall and Springwood Sports Club	Previously a seat was there but has been removed.	This seat was helpful as a rest stop when walking to the shops and is missed.	Suggestion to install a new seat.
Corner Macquarie Road and Greenway Lane – east of shops	The dip from footpath to crossing is too steep and narrow. Uneven footpath in front of Thai Square.	Quite a lot of traffic turn at this intersection. Residents do not have the time to navigate the steep crossing safely – too many cars coming from different directions.	Suggestion to make Greenway Lane one way and this point would be the exit back onto Macquarie Road. (See <b>Image 3</b> )
Corner Macquarie Road and Greenway Lane – west of shops (at Post Office)	Pedestrian crossing has been removed from between car park and post office.	Quite a lot of traffic and speeding in this intersection. Residents use the post office regularly and sometimes unsafe to cross.	Put in another crossing a bit further up Greenway Lane than previously located. Greenway Lane being converted to one way would improve safety.

Location	Barrier Type	Description	Further comments/suggestions
<b>Springwood</b>			
Macquarie Road – footpath in front of Telstra building (near discount shop)	Metal plate on footpath potential trip hazard		
Macquarie Road – major shopping precinct	More shops using the footpath to display goods or provide café seating	This can be an issue, particularly when you also have pedestrians stopping to talk. It is hard to navigate with a walking frame or scooter.	Do shops have certificate to use footpaths and is this monitored?
Round about near Aquinas Court at intersection Macquarie Road & Hawkesbury Road	No crossing to go to car yard and beyond.	Traffic congestion is significant, especially in the afternoon.	
Round-about on Hawkesbury Road and Silva Road	No pedestrian crossings and significant traffic.	There is no pedestrian access other than a refuge island for people coming from Hawkesbury Road, Winmalee to Springwood shops.	Suggestion to put pedestrian crossing more towards George Street along Silva Road.
Commuter car park near Jerseywold Ave	No safe passage through car park with speeding cars	Many residents use this route to access doctors and dentists on Ferguson Road. No clear pathway through commuter car park to access Jerseywold Ave.	
Shared cycle/scooter/ pedestrian pathways all along Macquarie Road and other streets in Springwood	Shared pathways with speeding bicycles/scooters	With children now allowed to use footpaths up to the age of 16 and speeding of some mobility scooter users, this can be a safety issue for pedestrians.	Promote speed limits for bicycle and scooter users.
Springwood Hub	Lift not big enough	Particularly an issue when events are held at the Hub with large crowds. The lift only accommodates 2 – 3 people using walking frames.	
<b>Winmalee</b>			
Buses to Winmalee	No buses to Winmalee shops on Sundays		

## Photo Gallery



**Image 1:** trees uprooting footpath outside Springwood Sports Club, Macquarie Road, Springwood.



**Image 2:** Shrubs partially blocking footpath 82 – 84 Macquarie Road, Springwood.



**Image 3:** Steep and angled pedestrian ramp at east side of Greenway Lane & Macquarie Road, Springwood.

## Consultation Two – Springwood/Winmalee

Open Door Group – affiliated with Springwood Neighbourhood Centre

9.30am – 10.30 am, 14 August 2018

Eight participants – all women

### General Comments

- There was a general concern about pressure to cross roads quickly and that more awareness was needed to encourage drivers to slow down. It was recommended that traffic lights that allow for slow crossers (adjustable), such as those used at Lennox Centre, be used at key intersections where older people reside and that more signage be used to indicate elderly populations.
- One participant indicated that they would like the cost of community transport trips (shopping trips etc) to be cheaper.

### Specific comments below:

Location	Barrier Type	Description	Further comments/suggestions
<b>Springwood</b>			
Pedestrian crossing outside Priceline shops and car park	Ramp from footpath to crossing is steep	One participant who uses a walking frame fell due to steepness due to dip.	The pedestrian crossing near the Bunker is not so steep. (See <b>Image 4</b> )
Corner Greenway Lane and Macquarie Road, at Post Office	No pedestrian crossing to access post office	This is a very busy intersection and is hazardous to cross without a pedestrian crossing.	
Macquarie Road pedestrian crossing at Aquinas Court	Heavy traffic and visibility issues	Afternoon sun light reflection issues for drivers make it hard to see pedestrians and too close to bus stop.	Suggestion to put traffic lights in or move crossing closer to Springwood shops. (see <b>Image 5</b> )
Major pedestrian crossings along Macquarie Road	Speeding cars and low visibility		Suggestions to install Belisha Beacons (as in England) or similar device to warn drivers of pedestrian traffic.
Great Western Highway bus stop (western direction) opposite Springwood pool	No pedestrian crossing	There is a refuge but not enough for safe crossing due to traffic	
Bee Farm Road Springwood	No footpaths on either side of road – uneven surfaces, narrow, slippery grass, vegetable patches on footpaths block thoroughfare and parked cars.	One participant indicated that she is no longer able to walk to Springwood shops from her home on Bee Farm Road due to these barriers.	This is a thoroughfare for bushwalkers to access bush tracks (Wiggins Track, Sassafras Reserve)
<b>Winmalee</b>			
Hawkesbury Road, Winmalee (near Summerhayes park)	No pedestrian crossing or lights	This is an issue due to the increased activity at Summerhayes Park & traffic in the area around school times.	

## Photo Gallery



**Image 4:** Steep pedestrian crossing outside Car Park and Priceline, Macquarie Road, Springwood.



**Image 5:** Busy intersection with poor visibility and steep ramps at Macquarie Road Pedestrian crossing outside Aquinas Court, Springwood.

### Consultation Three – Springwood/Winmalee

Vision Impaired Persons Group – affiliated with Springwood Neighbourhood Centre

10am – 11.30am, 27 August 2018

Five participants – all women

#### General Comments

- With increased traffic on Macquarie Road there are lots of hazards for pedestrians and drivers.
- Council's Community Access bus is often too full to fit in walking frames. If all seats are taken, there is no room to stack them safely. It was recommended that this be reorganised with straps to secure walkers.

#### Specific comments below:

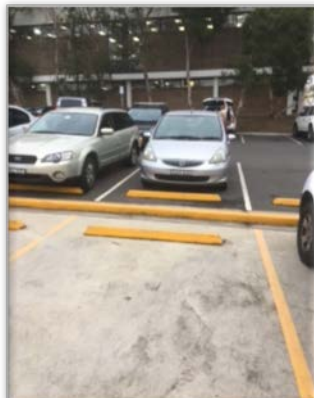
Location	Barrier Type	Description	Further comments/suggestions
<b>Springwood</b>			
Macquarie Road car park – outside IGA	Not enough accessible car parking spaces	three accessible car parks in total in main car park and two behind Springwood Square across the Road	
Pedestrian crossing on Macquarie Road outside Aquinas Court	Ramps from footpath to crossing too steep and poor visibility		Better signage to encourage drivers to be more cautious
BM Theatre and Community Hub parking area (behind Macquarie Road)	Stainless steel handrails at stairs unsafe	The handrails are protruding, very sharp and pointy. Concerns that height is at children's face level and for people with vision impairment.	(See <b>Image 6</b> )
BM Theatre and Community Hub parking area (behind Macquarie Road)	Orange concrete step in between adjacent car parking bays a trip hazard	The orange concrete strip is in between facing car spaces and between orange concrete parking barriers. Quite a few people have tripped on it and particularly problematic for people with vision impairment.	Should be painted with luminous colours so can be clearly seen day and night. (See <b>Image 7</b> )

Location	Barrier Type	Description	Further comments/suggestions
Springwood train station	Gap between platform and train too wide	Can be problematic, particularly for people with vision impairment.	
Bus stop in front of library on Macquarie Road	Steep descent from bus	Particularly with buses that aren't accessible, bus does not stop close enough to path and steep climb down to road before stepping onto footpath.	
<b>Winmalee</b>			
Hawkesbury Road – between Springwood and Winmalee	No pedestrian crossings	People can only cross safely at the traffic lights. The refuge islands are not safe to cross.	
Hawkesbury Road at Summerhayes Park	No pedestrian crossing	This park is well used. People regularly cross but it is hazardous, particularly for children and people using mobility aids/vision impairment	
Single's Ridge Road intersection with Hawkesbury Road	Not safe to cross for cars as well as pedestrians		Round-about might improve safety
Winmalee shopping centre	Not enough sheltered accessible parking. No sheltered walkway. Car park poorly lit at night.	Shelters over car park not adequate if raining. Shelter should be provided between car park and the building. Doesn't feel safe at night.	Apparently, there is an underground ramped accessible car park just reserved for staff which could be made available. (See <b>Image 8</b> )
Coles at Winmalee and other supermarkets	Moving items to different shelves	Difficult for people with visual impairment to locate shopping items if moved.	
Train/bus connection at Springwood to Winmalee	Connections aren't always timed well	If train is late, bus will leave before train arrives	
Buses from Springwood to Winmalee	Gap in timetable between 2.30pm to 4.30pm.	This gap relates to buses run Monday to Friday.	Also suggests a free shuttle bus could be provided around Springwood to improve accessibility.
Bus stops along Hawkesbury Road (from Springwood to Winmalee)	No shelter	Very few have shelter from the rain and stainless-steel seats too hot in summer.	Please note: it appears the steel seats have been replaced.

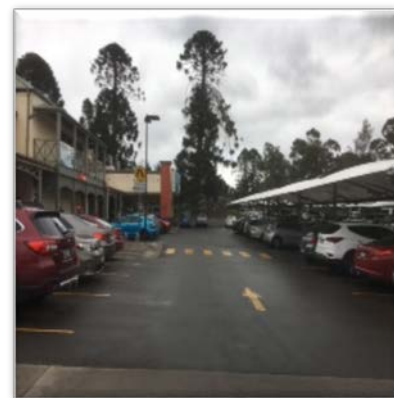
## Photo Gallery



**Image 6:** Stainless steel handrails at stairs unsafe at back carpark, Springwood Hub.



**Image 7:** Middle orange concrete strip a trip hazard at back carpark, Springwood Hub.



**Image 8:** Shelters over accessible carparking spots not adequate if raining at Winmalee Shopping Centre.

## Consultation Four – Springwood/Winmalee

Residents' Committee - Buckland Aged Care Services

9.30am – 10.30 am, 27 August 2018

six participants – four men and two women – One resident had unspecified disability and used a wheelchair and scooter.

### General Comments:

- Residents' Committee members indicated at the outset that they had very few issues with getting around. Buckland provides a range of transport options and a bus stop is on site. Their location enables access both to Winmalee and Springwood.
- A Lithgow maintenance service comes to Buckland and provides maintenance for wheelchairs and scooters, checking over these vehicles and pumping tires. This ensures there are no concerns with equipment issues when out. NRMA also provide a member service for people with wheelchairs/scooters.
- Coles provide trolleys with two arms for people with wheelchairs to use, which is very helpful.
- Springwood Golf Club is accessible and is just across the road for residents to use.

### Specific comments below:

Location	Barrier Type	Description	Further comments/suggestions
<b>Springwood</b>			
Pedestrian crossings along Macquarie Road, Springwood	Steep ramps	Ramps are steep from footpaths to pedestrian crossings and water collects in the drains	
IGA car park, Macquarie Road – Old Scout Hall Site	Car park has huge pot holes & uneven gravel surface	This car park is very unsafe for people using mobility aids or people using shopping trolleys	(See <b>Image 9</b> and image of <b>No footpaths on Hawkesbury Road Winmalee</b> )
<b>Winmalee</b>			
Hawkesbury Road – east of Winmalee High School	No footpath	It can be difficult to walk along Hawkesbury Road particularly if using a mobility aid with the dirt paths.	Participant is also very hesitant to cross the road due to no pedestrian crossings. (See <b>Image 10</b> )
Winmalee shopping centre	Shelter over accessible car spaces do not offer full protection when raining	Particularly difficult for people who have to load / unload wheelchair from their car and then transfer.	
Winmalee shopping centre	Access to ATMs limited – walkway too narrow and ground slopes.	ATMs located near the external entrance to the shopping centre have very limited space. Difficult to use or walk past if using a mobility aid. The ground also slopes down to drain in front of the ATM area.	(See <b>Image 11</b> )

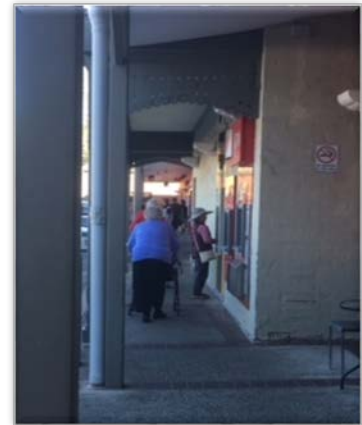
## Photo Gallery



**Image 9:** Old Scout Hall site Car park in Springwood has huge pot holes & uneven gravel surface.



**Image 10:** No footpaths or crossings east of Winmalee High School, Hawkesbury Road, Winmalee.



**Image 11:** Access to ATMs is limited at Winmalee Shopping Centre. The walkway is too narrow & ground slopes.

### Consultation Five – Springwood/Winmalee

Springwood Community Restaurant 11.00am – 12.30pm, 6 September 2018

Engaged with four participants – three women and one man – three people using walking frames. Although approximately 30 people at the community restaurant were present, this consultation was organised specifically to meet with these individuals who had expressed interest in a meeting. Two of these participants were from Wingara Hamlet Retirement community.

### General Comments:

- There are not enough toilets in Springwood.
- Traffic along Macquarie Road is generally too fast and unsafe for pedestrians. Drivers ignore the speed limits. Example includes the pedestrian crossing next to Train Station.
- All pedestrian crossings have gaps and uneven surfaces which can be difficult when using walking frames.
- With expansion of the Wingara accommodation (15 more units to be built, mainly for older people) it is important that access, parking and infrastructure are adequate to adapt to increased demand. Parking is a big issue, particularly as there is insufficient parking for current residents, and for carers providing support to residents, where they are under pressure to limit times taken to provide support for each person.

### Specific comments below:

Location	Barrier Type	Description	Further comments/suggestions
<b>Springwood</b>			
<b>Greenway Lane near Post Office on Macquarie Road</b>	No pedestrian crossing and traffic too fast. Real Estate Agent's vehicle parks near here blocking vision.	Older people generally require regular access to the Post Office. For people using walking frames this is a particularly hazardous intersection with no safe place to cross. It is very busy with cars turning into & driving very fast down Greenway Lane.	(See <b>Image 12</b> ). Request re-installation of pedestrian crossing and one-way traffic. <b>This issue was identified as crucial by many participants at most consultations in Springwood.</b>

Location	Barrier Type	Description	Further comments/suggestions
<b>Springwood</b>			
Accessible Toilets at Blue Mountains Theatre and Community Hub	Accessible toilets are not on the ground floor.	Accessible toilets are on the first floor and at the far end of the corridor. Lift is too small to take many people using mobility aids.	This is particularly problematic when events are on.
Balance Clinic at 14-16 Ferguson Road	No safe place to cross Ferguson Road from train track crossing.	The pedestrian rail crossing is useful, particularly for Wingara residents but Ferguson Road is too busy and unsafe to cross if using a walker, with some residents having to take a taxi to get to the Clinic.	Request either a refuge island with protective rail or pedestrian crossing on Ferguson Road.
Corner Homedale and Macquarie Road – western side	Western ramp from footpath to road is steep and has uneven cement.	These are recently completed ramps. The eastern ramp is fine but the western one is steep, rough and uneven, with small walking frame wheels getting stuck in the gutter.	This is further complicated with water accumulating there during rain periods. (See <b>Image 13</b> )
Corner Raymond Road and Raymond Lane (near Funeral Parlour	The footpath is quite steep	It is felt to be unsafe for people using walking frames.	(See <b>Image 14</b> )
Greenway Lane, in front of Medicare office	Steep pathway – unsafe for people using mobility aids	Medicare office is frequently accessed by older people, but access is difficult.	
Physiotherapist office, 1A Hawkesbury Road, next to Springwood Motor World	No safe way to cross the road coming from Springwood shops	Very busy thoroughfare and intersection with no pedestrian crossing or refuge island.	
Salvos Store, 61 Macquarie Road, next to Springwood Motor World	No safe way to cross the road coming from Springwood shops	Very busy thoroughfare and intersection with no pedestrian crossing to access that side of Macquarie Road.	
Macquarie Road, between Red Cross Hall & Aquinas Court	Seat removed	The seat that was previously there has been removed. It was a useful rest stop.	It was noted that the bus stop nearby does have a seat.

## Photo Gallery



**Image 12:** No pedestrian crossing and traffic too fast outside Post Office at Greenway Lane, Springwood.



**Image 13:** New ramp is steep and uneven at corner Homedale and Macquarie Road (on west side) in Springwood.



**Image 14:** Footpath is steep at corner of Raymond Road & Raymond Lane (near Funeral Parlour) in Springwood.

## Consultation Six – Springwood/Winmalee

Chair Yoga Group – Winmalee Neighbourhood Centre, 2.30pm – 3pm, 6 September

Engaged with two participants after their group session – two women.

### General Comments:

- Generally, they felt access around Winmalee was good though more footpaths would be better. Both women did not need to use mobility aids.

### Specific comments below:

Location	Barrier Type	Description	Further comments/suggestions
Springwood			
Springwood main car park on Macquarie Road near IGA	Irresponsible driving	Some drivers reverse the wrong way out of the car park. Dangerous for pedestrians.	
Winmalee			
Red-Crowned Court	Footpath only on initial part of the road.		
Leslie Street, Winmalee	No kerb & guttering		
Winmalee Shopping Centre	Shelter over car park	The partial canopy is good, but better to have full shelter.	

## Consultation Seven – Springwood/Winmalee

Winmalee Discussion Group, Winmalee Neighbourhood Centre 10.00am – 11.30pm, 17 September 2018.

Three Participants – one woman and two men. One man had paraplegia and uses an electric and manual wheelchair, the other two had mobility issues with one man using a walking cane.

### General Comments:

- The difficulties and issues that people face in having to deal with barriers to getting around their community creates ongoing anxiety.
- It was noted that Springwood Aquatic and Fitness Centre is very accessible with good ramps and pathways.
- Being able to drive is crucial for many people with mobility issues living in the Blue Mountains. Where a disabled driver's licence is required, this can be very prohibitive. Waiting times to have the various testing and lessons via the public system is very slow (up to two years) which has meant that two participants have had to opt for paying privately to obtain their disability driver's licences. This can cost from \$1,000 - \$2,000 for people who invariably have greater costs to bear due to their disability.
- While pedestrian ramps around Springwood and other areas in the Mountains are generally possible to negotiate using certain types of electric wheelchairs, using a manual wheelchair is very restrictive with most ramps too steep or inaccessible. For people wanting to keep their fitness levels up while using a wheelchair, this is quite limiting.
- Car parking on driveways or crossing/blocking footpaths is a constant issue for people with mobility issues. It needs to be monitored.

- Compared to international experiences, there is limited community understanding of and consideration given to the issues people face in getting around the community if they have mobility issues.

### Specific comments below:

Location	Barrier Type	Description	Further comments/suggestions
<b>Springwood</b>			
Taxi rank, Macquarie Road Springwood (near Greenway Lane)	No pedestrian ramp from road to footpath	If using a wheelchair, once out of the taxi, you are required to travel along Macquarie Road to Greenway Lane (Post Office) to access footpath. Same issue when trying to get into a taxi from the footpath.	(See <b>Image 15</b> )
Springwood ANZ Bank, Macquarie Road	Steps into bank	This is the only bank in Springwood that does not have a ramp or level access.	
<b>Winmalee</b>			
Hawkesbury Road east of Winmalee shops	No footpaths from Winmalee High School eastwards. No crossings	No footpaths from Winmalee High School eastwards towards Hawkesbury Heights on either side of road. No pedestrian crossings or other ways of safely crossing the road.	
Bus Stop, Hawkesbury Road near Booker Road, Hawkesbury Heights	No paved surface at bus stop/uneven	If using a wheelchair, unable to get on an accessible low floor bus unassisted as no paved area and uneven surfaces. Driver must assist, If raining, it is not feasible to get on the bus with muddy, slippery surfaces.	Must ring every morning to request accessible bus. Some form of paved area would make it possible to get on the bus unassisted. (See <b>Image 16</b> )
Buses east of Winmalee shops	Very infrequent	One bus goes to Springwood at 9.20am (before that school buses only) & two return from Springwood in the afternoon – 1.30pm and 4.45pm.	
Whitecross Road, north of Pymble Ave	No footpaths / uneven, slippery surfaces	There is no stability on the verges, no footpaths and when grass is wet it is slippery.	Most older people, people with mobility issues and people using prams walk on the road.
Whitecross Health Centre, 100 Whitecross Road Winmalee	No footpaths along Whitecross Road	No able to walk to the Health Centre from town. One person has had to change the doctor they use.	
Winmalee Public School, Whitecross and Leslie Rds	No accessible parking on the street	There is some accessible parking inside the school grounds, but permission is not always given to use them.	
Footpaths around the school on Whitecross and Leslie Street	Drop off on sides of footpath	Due to erosion, verges on side of footpath drop-off at various locations	(See <b>Image 17</b> )
Ecole Ave, Winmalee	No footpath and congested with school parking	Used for parking & dropping off/picking up children. surface slopes with no footpaths.	Particularly an issue for grandparents with mobility issues / parents with prams.

Location	Barrier Type	Description	Further comments/suggestions
Winmalee Shopping Centre, Whitecross Road	Not enough accessible parking	The car park is busy & accessible car spots are usually full.	
ATMs on the outside of Winmalee shopping centre	Space around the ATMs is very limited.	The width of pathway is too limited. People using ATMs block the path.	Particularly an issue if using mobility aids.
Butchers and Shopping Centre at 281 Hawkesbury Road	No pedestrian crossing to access	There is only a refuge island here but not safe way of crossing the road.	

## Photo Gallery



**Image 15:** No pedestrian ramp from road to footpath at the Taxi Rank, Macquarie Road, near Greenway Lane, Springwood.



**Image 16:** No paved surface and uneven at 'Near Booker Road bus stop on Hawkesbury Road, Hawkesbury Heights.



**Image 17:** Drop off on sides of footpath around Winmalee Public School, Winmalee.

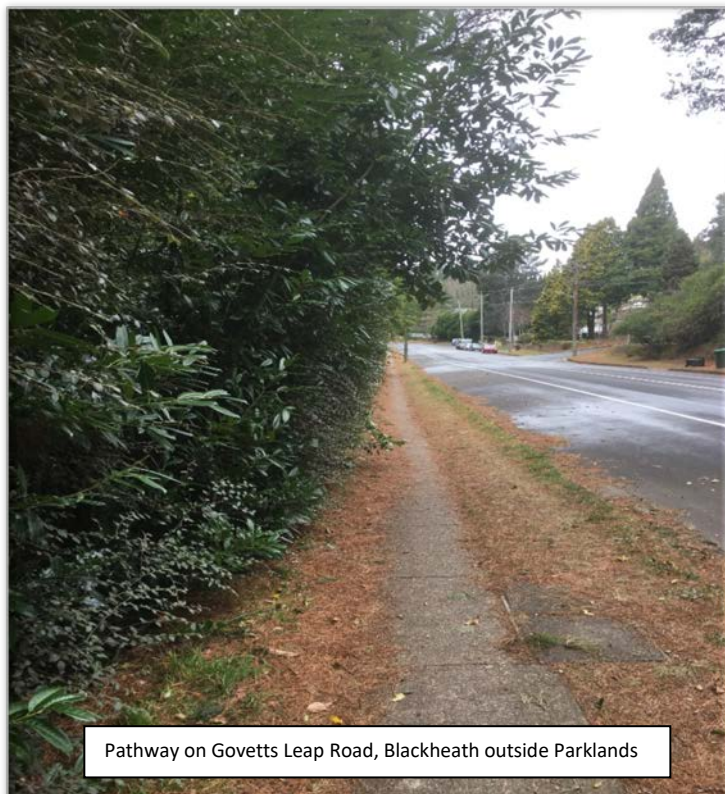
## Springwood/Winmalee Individual Consultations

Four people participated in individual consultations. three people were from Springwood and one person (a family carer of a person with a disability) was from the Winmalee area. three consultations were held via phone conversation and one person face-to-face.

Location	Barrier Type	Description
<b>Springwood</b>		
Ellison Road, Springwood (near School)	No footpath	No footpath on Ellison Road. Also complicated by parked cars blocking the street at school times
Macquarie Road, Springwood – pedestrian crossing nearest to Priceline and main car park outside IGA	Access to pedestrian crossing (dip to gutter level) is quite steep	The pedestrian crossing is quite raised, as is the street at that point, compared to the guttering. The dip is very difficult for people using walking frames. It is suggested to remove the dip and provide a level ramp from footpath to pedestrian crossing with provision for water drainage underneath. Examples were cited in Richmond (on Windsor Road, near Coles), where pedestrian crossings have been built which provide good access. See <b>Image 18</b> .
Prince Street, Springwood	No footpath	Pedestrians often have to walk on the road, due to no footpaths. Cars and buses travel very fast along the street and pedestrians have to quickly get off the road. This resident has had two falls along this road when avoiding cars.
Macquarie Road Springwood – pedestrian crossing between Ori and Finn and Co. Café	Poor visibility on Finn and Co side of crossing -	Due to trees and shadows it is very hard to see people using the pedestrian crossing from the northside to the southside. Perhaps the pedestrian crossing could be moved to in front of the Hub. This would also make it easier for older people to access Hub events
<b>Winmalee</b>		
Bus Stop Hawkesbury Road, two houses down from Booker Road intersection	No footpath and uneven surface	No footpath / uneven surface at 'After Booker Road' Bus Stop. Person in electric wheelchair cannot get on bus – needs assistance from Bus Driver.
Hawkesbury Road, from Winmalee shops through to Hawkesbury Heights and lookout	No footpath and uneven surface	No footpath between Hawkesbury Heights and Winmalee shops – not accessible for electric wheelchair
Dr's Surgery, 100 Whitecross Road	No footpath	No footpath on Whitecross Road to Whitecross Health Centre (100 Whitecross Road)



**Image 18:** Recommended type of pedestrian crossing for Macquarie Rd, Springwood which provides good access (located on Windsor Rd, Richmond).



Pathway on Govetts Leap Road, Blackheath outside Parklands

**‘Apart from Blackheath CBD, footpaths in Blackheath are almost non-existent. The footpath down one side of Govetts Leap Road is the exception. Where there is an unpaved footpath, it is invariably inaccessible for my power wheelchair because of uneven weeds or impassable resident-made footpath garden. The rolled kerb on many of Blackheath’s footpaths is unnavigable for manual wheelchairs, mid-range and rear drive power wheelchairs as well as front-wheel drive wheelchairs with front castors.’**

Blackheath survey participant

Four group consultations were held in Blackheath ranging from three to twenty-five participants. A total of 35 residents were engaged with the process. In addition, five people participated in individual consultations. Comments on towns outside of this study can be found at Appendix Five.

### Consultation One - Blackheath

Blackheath Community Restaurant 11am – 1pm, 29 August 2018

25 participants – Two participants had MS (using electric wheelchairs) and one identified as legally blind. Many others used walking frames and other mobility aids.

### General Comments:

- Many people commented on how busy the main roads in Blackheath are and that on the back roads, speed limits were generally not adhered to, making it unsafe for pedestrians, particularly where paved footpaths were not available to use.
- With crowds on the weekend it is hard to walk down the main streets in Blackheath, particularly if using mobility aids, with people blocking pathways.
- The lack of parking in the town centre was also widely commented on, particularly on the weekends with large numbers of tourists present and with the markets being held twice a month. This included accessible car parking spots, particularly with people using these car spots without a disability sticker and people parking across driveways. This does not appear to be monitored to ensure appropriate usage. Commuter car parks are generally full by 8am so very difficult to access public transport. Consistently, older people raised the issue of not being able to park near the post office and suggested that

accessible car parking spots be made available in the car park directly behind the post office.

- Public transport and the infrequency of trains from/to Blackheath was also a frequent comment and now even more so with the 9am train (travelling east) no longer provided on Monday to Friday. It was also mentioned that for people using wheelchairs or mobility scooters, many of the trains still don't enable people to sit in the carriages, having to sit in entrance ways. Accessible buses are better in this way.
- Rolled kerbs used in many streets in the Mountains and Blackheath are inaccessible for many different wheelchairs, particularly those with front small castor wheels - wheelchair castors catch and then the driving wheel is isolated and can't move forward.
- Leaves in autumn are a significant hazard.
- Comments were received about the difficulty of obtaining information for older people if they don't use the internet or computers.
- Community Transport – to access transport services, generally pick-ups are at 7.30 in the morning. This is difficult for people who require daily personal care support prior to going out in the morning. Also requests to have more outings/tour options both within the Blue Mountains and further afield (Barangaroo, Vivid, Bondi Sculpture in the Park).

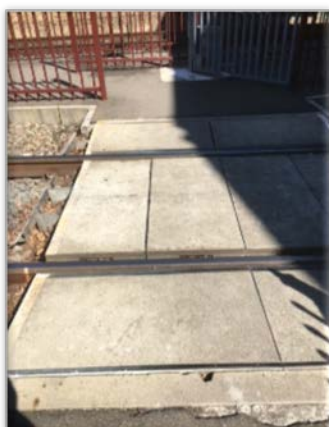
### Specific comments below:

Location	Barrier Type	Description	Further comments/suggestions
West side of train station	No accessible parking spots. No accessible access to platform from this side. (Stairs only)	There used to be two accessible car parking spots but have been removed. No ramp to access platform from this side.	
East side of GWH – town centre	Not enough accessible car parking spots. Often used by people without disability stickers	two in front of Neighbourhood Centre, one on Govetts Leap Road (with no ramp access to footpath), and two in main car park but one of these not clearly marked.	Recommended that signage should include a penalty for misuse of accessible parking (Perth does this – fines exceeding \$500).
Sutton Lane Car Park	Rough, uneven surface	This car park is difficult for both cars and pedestrians with mobility issues.	
Toilets in main car park – behind New Ivanhoe Hotel	Regular toilets too small for walking frames	There is a accessible toilet but not everyone with a disability has a MLAK key to access	People tend to use accessible toilet at Neighbourhood Centre but not open weekends/evenings.
Toilets on train platform	Toilets not accessible	Big step into toilets and no handrail. Train station toilets are also closed on weekends.	
Blackheath train station	Access to platform	While there is access, you are required to go over the railway tracks. The small castor wheels that some wheelchairs have can get stuck in between the track lines.	(See <b>Image 19</b> )
Women's toilets in 'The Garden' behind Neighbourhood Centre	Badly sign posted, poorly lit and dingy/dirty	These toilets are considered not to be safe to use.	(See <b>Image 20</b> )
Leichardt Street Oval near Clanwilliam Street	Limited toilet access	Toilets only open when game is on.	

Location	Barrier Type	Description	Further comments/suggestions
Unsealed lane along GWH between Evans Lookout Road and Brightlands Street	No kerb and guttering Bus stop wrong way around	Difficult for people using mobility aids to walk along and to get on bus. This means it is hard to see if bus is coming.	
Corner Gardiners Crescent and Highway	Potholes and uneven surfaces on road	This area has not been repaired since the storms a few years ago.	
Hathill Road (past Clarence Road)	No footpaths or kerbing and guttering	Lack of infrastructure, particularly with housing developments on this street	
Wentworth Street to Whitley Park	Footpath very uneven		
Evans Lookout Road	No footpaths	There are lots of people walking along this street due to no footpaths. They generally walk on the road, with speeding cars and buses. 50 km speed limit not adhered to.	
Blackheath Cemetery	Loose uneven surfaces	This is very difficult to access if using a mobility aid	
Lady Fairfax Walk - Govetts Leap lookout	Car park at the end of the walk is pebbled and difficult to access. Lookout has gravel surface with lip.	The paved Lady Fairfax Walk was identified as a very positive initiative but the pebbled car park at the end is not accessible. Also limited access to the actual lookout.	(See Image 21 & Image 22)
Restaurants/cafes and shops in the Town Centre	Not accessible – at least one step into most shops and cafes, no accessible toilets	Only exception is Ivanhoe Hotel (but there are certain inaccessible parts such as the enclosed veranda), Golf Course and Bates Hall (Community Restaurants).	<b>This was flagged as a key issue for people using wheelchairs and/or mobility scooters in terms of their quality of life.</b> Portable ramps would be great for all inaccessible shops in Blackheath.
Intersection Govetts Leap Road and GWY	Ramps onto traffic light crossing excessively steep	This has been identified as a significant issue for many people using mobility aids. With people using wheelchairs with small castor wheels at the front, the castors just spin around with no traction.	<b>This issue has been consistently identified as dangerous.</b> (See Image 23)
Commonwealth Bank Corner – Wentworth Street and Govetts Leap Road	Steep incline outside of bank	This is difficult for people using mobility aids.	
Corner Wentworth Street and Govetts Leap Road	Ramps on both sides too steep and angled.	Due to angling (not 90 degrees or level incline) and steepness of ramps, electric wheelchair castors catch and then the driving wheel is isolated. Angle of intersection also impacts on visibility of pedestrians and cars.	<b>This issue has been consistently identified as dangerous</b> with several stories of falls & incidents. Suggestion to have traffic lights installed here, particularly with more and more cars using this route to avoid highway traffic.

Location	Barrier Type	Description	Further comments/suggestions
'The Gardens' on GWH next to Community Centre	Brick trimming prevents access to grassed areas	Other than right in front of Bates Hall a brick trim goes all around the pathways, preventing access to grassed areas for people using scooters or wheelchairs.	(See <b>Image 24</b> )
Shared pathway and extension of Bike Trail from Sunbeam and Radiance Ave along GWH	Proposed shared path unsafe for pedestrians (currently being constructed).	This path is currently used by people with vision impairment (legally blind) and mothers, young children and prams. With extensions and bikes using it, there is a sense of vulnerability. Will pedestrians be separated from bikes and will there be enforceable speed limits?	Shared pathway/Bike trail should be built on the other side of the highway. Will there be clear division between pedestrians and bike riders to ensure safety?

## Photo Gallery



**Image 19:** While the station is accessible, crossing the train tracks can cause problems for castor wheels on walking frames & wheelchairs at Blackheath Station.



**Image 20:** Women's Toilets in 'The Gardens' in Blackheath are badly sign posted, poorly lit and dingy/dirty.



**Image 21:** New Lady Fairfax Walk at Govetts Leap Lookout, Blackheath is accessible but the carpark at the end is gravel, pebbled and difficult for access.



**Image 22:** Govetts Leap Lookout, Blackheath has gravel surface with step created from erosion.



**Image 23:** Pedestrian ramps at intersection GWH & Govetts Leap Road, Blackheath are steep, angled and uneven.



**Image 24:** Brick trimming prevents access to grassed areas at 'The Gardens' on GWH, Blackheath.

## Consultation Two - Blackheath

Stepping On Group Blackheath 11.30am – 12.30pm, 31 August 2018

11 participants – nine women and two men – several people using walking frames, walking sticks and one person in a wheelchair

### General Comments:

- Blackheath is quite an isolated town and particularly when the weather is bad. Shipley is even more isolated.
- Nature strips are often used to grow plants/vegetables or are mulched, and this can block pathway access, particularly for people using mobility aids. It forces people to use the road which can be unsafe.
- A suggestion was made that when trees are cut down or trimmed, trained arborists be approached to ensure tree sustainability and minimise destruction.

### Specific comments below:

Location	Barrier Type	Description	Further comments/suggestions
Car parking behind the Ivanhoe Hotel	Not enough parking	Older people are required to park further and further away from the Town Centre and uneven, rough footpaths make it difficult to access	Suggest more accessible parking behind post office and better monitoring of current spots
Accessible Car parking spot on Govetts Leap Road between HWY and Wentworth Street	No access ramp to footpath from road	From the accessible car parking spot, people in wheelchairs have to travel along Govetts Leap to the intersection to be able to get on the footpath. This is a very narrow road with lots of traffic.	Also, this accessible parking spot frequently used by delivery trucks and others without stickers. (See <b>Image 25</b> )
GWH from Blackheath to Medlow Bath	No paved footpaths	Only alternative is the Great Blue Mountains Trail which can be problematic	
Station Street between Bundarra Street and Shipley Road	Unpaved pathways	Grass hard to walk on, ditches and rough surfaces, water puddles after rain.	Also, when travelling north to train crossing along Station Street, there is no flashing light visible.
Shipley Road	No pathway	Can't walk along Shipley Road – walking track goes over a hill	Recommend a board walk on valley side with safety fence
Corner Gardiners Crescent and GWH	Uneven surfaces, potholes	Area has never been redone after trees taken out.	
Corner Govetts Leap Road and Wentworth Street	No safe crossing	Main access to Commonwealth Bank. People tend to cross anywhere which makes it more dangerous	Pedestrian crossings needed at this intersection.
HatHill Road, Strickland Lane and Wentworth Street	Very poor lighting along streets and at the back of 'The Gardens	'Poor lighting in these streets and Strickland Lane is very dark at night.	Suggest exploring red lighting so as not to scare off bats
Lady Fairfax Walk – Govetts Leap Lookout	Track is great but needs maintenance	Tree roots pushing path up in sections. It is breaking away in a few sections	Suggest board walk
Govetts Leap Road	Traffic travelling too fast	Speed limits not adhered to – dangerous for pedestrians	More signage

Location	Barrier Type	Description	Further comments/suggestions
Evans Lookout Road	No footpath Overhanging trees and roots. Dip in road hazardous	Many people walk down the road on the weekend due to no footpath and obstructions	
Station Street between Blackheath & Mt Victoria	Blocked access with bollards		Suggest this could be used as an alternative route

## Photo Gallery



### Image 25:

Accessible Car Parking spot on Govetts Leap Road, near GWH intersection at Blackheath - from the accessible car parking spot, people in wheelchairs have to travel along Govetts Leap Road to the intersection to be able to get on the footpath. This is a very narrow road with lots of traffic, particularly on the weekends.

## Consultation Three - Blackheath

People with disabilities living in Kirinari supported accommodation

3pm – 3.30 pm, 20 August 2018

Two participants – both women. Also, feedback from Community Access Service (CAS) Coordinator (Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre) who supports these clients and other people with disability in the community.

### General Comments:

- Walking around Blackheath shops is reasonably accessible.
- When they do trips to Springwood shops (via CAS) it is flat, with wide pathways and comfortable to work down.
- The lack of regular trains and buses at Blackheath are of considerable concern for people trying to access other towns in the mountains. To ensure people with disabilities are able to get to other towns, CAS has to offer its own transport, which is not funded under NDIS.
- Katoomba Street is quite hard to walk up or down but it is possible to do so.
- They have a bus stop right outside their house which makes it very convenient to get to and from Katoomba from home.
- Some door widths into shops and residences are too small for larger people to get through.
- General lack of accessible toilets in the Blue Mountains region.

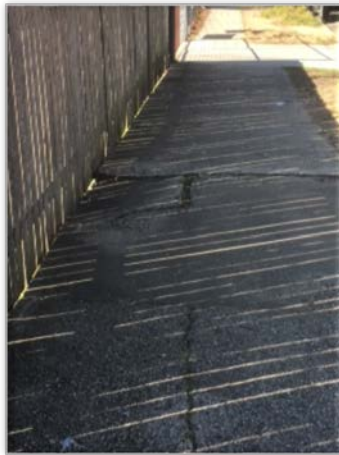
## Specific comments below:

Location	Barrier Type	Description	Further comments/suggestions
Valley View Road near corner Eady Street	Pathway to steep and new steps not possible to use	This part of the road is too steep to walk along the footpath. The new steps do not make it easier to use the pathway. For residents living in Evans Lookout Road, they must walk along the highway to get to Blackheath (which is not paved)	From residents (See <b>Image 26</b> )
Evans Lookout		It is not safe for them to walk around Evans Lookout on their own. They always have someone to accompany them.	From residents
Traffic lights at intersection GWH and Govetts Leap Road	Not enough time to cross the road	The pedestrian crossing and traffic lights change quite quickly which can make it difficult to cross the road in time.	From residents
Near Bakehouse on Wentworth Street	Uneven path	The footpath is uneven with broken tiles	From residents (See <b>Image 27</b> )
Driveway at St Vinnies in Katoomba, Waratah Street	Pathway too steep	The pathway going down to St Vinnies shop is too steep. They usually walk along the driveway to access the shop.	From residents
Hathill Road	Trip hazard – unmaintained footpath		From CAS staff
Hathill Road and Govetts Leap Road	Traffic too fast	The 50km speed limit is often not adhered to making it unsafe for people to cross the road. With developments at Hathill Road it is becoming more of an issue.	Would speed humps or other speed reduction structures be useful here? From CAS staff
Main parking lot at Blackheath shops	Potholes are a trip hazard for pedestrians	Massive potholes in the car park are dangerous for people walking through to access shops, public toilets and public transport.	From CAS staff (See <b>Image 28</b> )
Public toilets in Blackheath car park	Accessible toilet requires MLAK key	Many people using mobility frames (walkers) cannot fit into normal toilets but do not hold a MLAK key for the accessible toilet.	From CAS staff

## Photo Gallery



**Image 26:** Valley View Road near Corner Eady Street, Blackheath is very steep. The new stairs do not make it any easier to access.



**Image 27:** Uneven paved footpath with broken tiles on Wentworth Street, Blackheath



**Image 28:** Potholes in the main car park in Blackheath are hazardous for pedestrians walking through to access shops, toilets and public transport. (NB recently patched).

### Consultation Four – Blackheath

Welcome Table, Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre 3.30pm - 5pm, 7 September 2018  
Engaged with six participants – five women and one man. One person uses a mobility aid and another person spoke of her experiences with a friend visiting the Blue Mountains who uses a wheelchair. Although approximately 25 people were present at the Welcome Table, the event was very socially focussed so just engaged individually with a few participants who expressed interest in having a say.

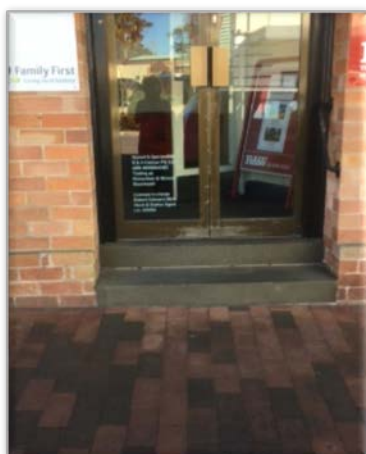
### General Comments:

- Not enough car parking facilities in Blackheath town centre.
- In back streets of Blackheath, it is hard to work out where the public buses stop as not all stops are sign posted. Also, it can be difficult to clarify bus times.
- Lack of footpaths and not enough maintenance of footpaths in the streets of Blackheath (outside of the town centre) means that many people walk on the roads, including people using mobility aids and young mothers with children in prams. It was expressed that other LGAs have significantly better footpaths and that Council should prioritise this instead of spending so much of its resources on other issues.
- Some people using mobility scooters take significant risks. One person has been seen driving fast on Govetts Leap Road near GWH intersection. When using a mobility scooter, it is hard to hear traffic due to the noise of the scooter. Are scooter speed limits clear and well publicized? Is there a need to further clarify use of scooters on roads vs footpaths?
- For people who have two children using a pram, it is very difficult to get into any shops or other facilities in Blackheath and the Blue Mountains generally.

## Specific comments below:

Location	Barrier Type	Description	Further comments/suggestions
Prince George Street, from Wentworth Street to Clanwilliam Street and beyond	No footpaths and very uneven surfaces	Unsafe for people using mobility aids or prams	
Intersection Govetts Leap Road and Wentworth Street	No pedestrian crossing or lights.  Angle of gutters unsafe for scooter and wheelchair users.	Dangerous to cross this intersection. Also, it is a long walk to cross the street from Art Shop to Commonwealth ATM without a pedestrian crossing.	
Family First Credit Union, Govetts Leap Road	Steps to entrance	With the recent announcement of the Commonwealth Bank closing, the Credit Union is now the only bank in Blackheath but can not be accessed by people using scooters or wheelchairs and will be difficult for others with mobility aids.	(See <b>Image 29</b> )
Blackheath restaurants, cafes and shops	Narrow doors, steps and no ramps to access	Very difficult to access most restaurants and even if able to get inside, very little space to manoeuvre once inside. The Golf Club is the exception to this. With the Ivanhoe Hotel, you can access inside but not the enclosed veranda area.	(See <b>Image 30</b> )
Balance Medical Centre, Wentworth Street	Small lips can be a barrier ( lip on driveway from road)	Whilst it is positive that it has a ramped entrance, even small lips can create problems for people using wheelchairs.	(See <b>Image 31</b> )
Hat Hill Road	No footpath beyond Clarence Road	Footpaths on only one side of the street to Clarence Road and no footpath's past that point	
Intersection Hat Hill Road and Wentworth Street	Trees on corner blocks vision	Can be difficult to cross the street, both as a pedestrian and driver.	
Hat Hill Road – new housing development	No kerb and guttering for new housing development		
30 Hat Hill Road	Gutter not aligned with house	Can be an issue when reversing car.	

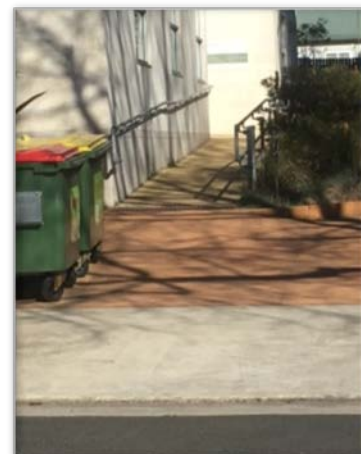
## Photo Gallery



**Image 29:** Soon to be the only bank left in Blackheath, the Family First Credit Union has steps to access.



**Image 30:** The Gardner's Inn, just one of many examples of an inaccessible venue in Blackheath CBD.



**Image 31:** Balance Medical Centre on Wentworth Street, Blackheath has installed a ramp but even small lips (on road) can make access difficult.

## Blackheath individual consultations

Five people participated in individual consultations and two other people wrote emails/letters to expand on their survey responses. Of the five people participating in individual consultations, four consultations were over the phone and one face-to-face. One of these participants is a member of the Blue Mountains Access Committee and provided significant and detailed information about access issues in Blackheath for people using wheelchairs.

Location	Barrier Type	Description
Bus stops GWH near Brightlands Ave	No kerb and guttering – accessing bus	No kerbs mean that to get on a public bus (not accessible) there is too big a step from road level and the resident has no strength in his arms to pull himself up into the bus
Blackheath train station and other stations	Gap between train and platform	Gap too wide at all stations.
GWH from Brightlands Ave to Shops	No footpath and/or uneven surfaces	No footpath and/or uneven surfaces. From the eastern side of Blackheath, there is no safe route to Blackheath CBD. Alternative routes via adjacent streets e.g. (via Valley View Road) are no better. (See <b>Image 32</b> )
Wentworth Street/Valley View Road near Eady Street	Steps	New steps are too difficult to climb.
Clanwilliam Street	No footpath	Uneven surfaces/grass etc along Clanwilliam Street into town
154-156 Wentworth Street	No footpath	No paved footpath from supported accommodation (Civic Disability Services) at 154 Wentworth Street into Blackheath town. Residents have to walk on the road as the track is unsafe/uneven.
Blackheath trains and buses	Public transport availability	Train & bus services very minimal from Blackheath to Katoomba (heading east). Some disability support services need to provide their own transport for people to travel safely.

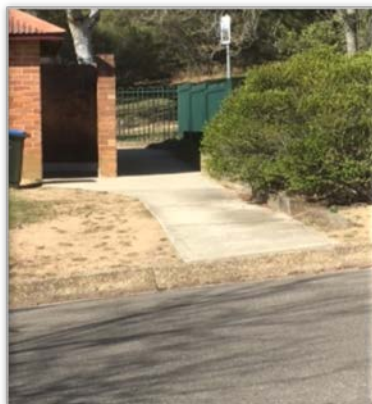
Location	Barrier Type	Description
Shops, cafes and restaurants in Blackheath	Steps into most shops/food outlets	Steps bigger than 150 mm are inaccessible for many people using wheelchairs. In terms of quality of life this is one of the key issues/barriers for residents in Blackheath who use wheelchairs or scooters. Examples of different levels of access include: Ivanhoe Hotel is partially accessible but not to enclosed veranda areas & outdoor seating. Gardner's Inn has two steps to access, glass doors are narrow – need to open both to get in with a wheelchair. Supermarket has a ramp but very narrow inside the shop. Anonymous café has a level entry, tight but possible to manoeuvre to find seating inside. Cannot access Therapist on Wentworth Street, next to Police..
Govetts Leap Lookout	Not sealed pathways	Walkways around Govetts Leap lookout are not sealed. Pebbles and rocks make it very difficult to access for wheelchairs / mobility scooters.
Lady Fairfax Walk, Govetts Leap lookout	Pebbled/gravel car park at bottom of walk. Return walk next to road not paved – gravel surface. Step from return walk to top car park.	While the Fairfax Walk is accessible, the bottom car park is gravel/pebbled. These access issues make it difficult to experience the full route if using a wheelchair. At the actual lookout, there are flush surfaces but due to weather erosion this creates uneven surfaces and becomes a step. (See <b>Image 21</b> & <b>Image 22</b> in above group consultations).
Anvil Rock Lookout and Pulpit Rock Lookout	No ramped access to lookouts	
Whitley Park, between GWH and Wentworth Street	A range of barriers to access	No accessible toilet in park No footpath, uneven surfaces on Prince George Street to access park, No ramp from Prince George Street into park Gate into the park is difficult to open for some people with disability With reference to the path in the park, areas on the side of path have eroded creating large drops/steps and uneven surfaces. (See <b>Image 33</b> )
Accessible car park spots in main town car park – back of Ivanhoe Hotel	Accessible car spots not large enough	If vehicle ramp is located on the side of the car, accessible parking spaces are not big enough. If vehicle ramp is in the back of the car, it is a bit better but still unsafe as car park quite narrow with traffic at times.
Corner Wentworth Street and Govetts Leap Road	Steep Pedestrian ramps with gaps from water erosion	Very steep ramp and wheelchair castor wheels get stuck in eroded gap between road and ramp where water drains. (See <b>Image 34</b> )
Corner GWH and Hathill Road	Pedestrian ramps very steep	These ramps from footpath to road are steep, particularly on the western side.
Blackheath Public School	Number of issues to accessing the school	As not accessible pathway into the school, staff have to open driveway gate for entry if in a wheelchair. No access to office via the street – heavy glass sliding door (there is a back way in but a long way around). These issues make it very difficult for a mother with a disability to visit the school where her child attends.
Leichhardt Street and GWH around the Principals' Cottage, Blackheath Public School	Concern that RMS Highway upgrade will impact on pedestrian safety on footpaths	This area is not only heavily used during school arrival and departure times but there is also consistent use by older people with mobility issues accessing CYBER_SHED's classes held at the Principal's Cottage during the day. Assurance is sought that highway works will occur at night.
Wentworth Street	Where footpaths exist not maintained and no paved footpaths	Where paved footpaths exist, in some areas the footpath is not level with area on either side. This can create a significant drop or step, often due to erosion/wet weather. Can get boggy for wheelchairs and create trip/safety hazards.
'The Gardens', GWH & Community Centre	Various barriers	No accessible toilet No ramp to access grassed areas from pathways.

Location	Barrier Type	Description
GWH – from Ridgewell Road to Mt Boyce	No pathway	It will be good to have the footpath completed along here.
Shipleigh Road	No pathway	No pathway along Shipleigh Road to access lookouts.
Swimming Pool	Various barriers	Toilets are very old. Park is difficult to access. If someone parks in front of accessible car spot, can't access the park. – no clear accessible pathways to get to children's play areas and due to dampness, there are sink holes at various locations. No hard surfaces near children's play areas for people with wheelchairs to use. Access to Memorial Pool Park from Gardiner's Crescent very difficult as the path turns into a step. Under the trees it is also very damp with soft surfaces. (See <b>Image 35</b> ).
Train station area and railway crossing	Train tracks	No easy route for people using wheelchairs and walking frames to cross to Station street from highway. Castor wheels can get stuck in train tracks. The station itself is accessible.
Jubilee Park (Leichhardt Street Oval)	No paved paths	No easy access anywhere along Clanwilliam or Leichardt Street to access the Park and oval. Once on oval, hard surface areas would be beneficial to be able to get close enough to watch games. (See <b>Image 36</b> )
Wentworth Street (Valley View Road), from Evans Lookout Road to Blackheath Public School	Inconsistent and hazardous bicycle track, gradient very steep, bushes/trees obstructing route	Clearly marked cycle track at beginning of Wentworth Street, but then disappears at the base of very steep hill heading towards Blackheath, at Eady Street. Dangerous for children going to school (please see detailed letter at Appendix Six).
Corner Valley View Road and Evans Lookout Road	Poor lighting	Better lighting at the road junction when turning right into Wentworth Street. Hard to see the turn off.
Parklands, Govetts Leap Road	Overgrown hedges, slippery pathway, steep grass verge	This Road is very busy with bushwalkers. Very little room with overgrown and spiky hedges and people forced onto road. (See <b>Image 37</b> ).
Govetts Leap Road – half way into town	Seat removed	There was a seat halfway along Govetts Leap Road which was used by older people or people with health conditions. This has been removed since the windstorm a few years ago and hasn't been replaced.
Corner GWH and Govetts Leap Road	Poor lighting	Turning into GWH towards Lithgow from Govetts Leap Road, poor light and bad line of sight makes it hard to see pedestrians crossing the road.

## Photo Gallery



**Image 32:** Limited footpath and uneven surface along GWH from Brightlands Road to Blackheath CBD.



**Image 33:** A range of barriers to Whitley Park, Blackheath – e.g. a step from road, inaccessible toilets, gate difficult to open.



**Image 34:** Steep Pedestrian ramps with gaps from water erosion at intersection Govetts Leap Road and Wentworth Street, Blackheath



**Image 35:** Playgrounds at Blackheath Pool difficult to access if using a wheelchair.



**Image 36:** No easy access anywhere along Clanwilliam or Leichardt Street, Blackheath to access Jubilee Park and oval.



**Image 37:** Overgrown hedges, slippery pathway, with steep grass verge alongside Parklands, Govetts Leap Road, Blackheath.

## Scooter Usage Analysis

From consultations:

- In individual discussions with five people who use a mobility scooter and/or wheelchair, the need for recharging stations and was raised they were asked about risks of wheelchairs breaking down or having flat tyres when out. They indicated that it would not be beneficial because of the following:
  - The batteries on scooters have a long life – e.g. able to travel 25 - 30kms per charge. People using scooters/wheelchairs are advised to ensure that their mobility device is always over 50 percent charged at all times.
  - It can take five hours or so to recharge a wheelchair, so it is not viable to recharge when out
  - Different wheelchairs/scooters have different charging connections so difficult to provide a public charging station that all can use.
  - Residents at Buckland have a mobility aids provider/repairer who regularly attends the Aged Care Facility and maintains scooters and wheelchairs, checking tyres etc.
  - Three people referred to NRMA providing a service for wheelchairs and scooters – including being able to provide voltage input for flat batteries
  - 'My daughter will be getting an electric wheelchair. I think it would be forward thinking of council to offer charging stations/locations for electric wheelchairs or scooters. At times these electric equipment items can discharge without warning and potentially leave vulnerable persons at risk. We live in Blackheath and often shop in Katoomba. Possible appropriate location could be at the BM library, council building at Civic Place and new adult continence/comfort room in Echo Point Katoomba. I'm unsure of council buildings located in Blackheath. However, I would suggest a charging station that is sheltered, wheelchair accessible and located within the shopping precinct on Govetts Leap Road.'
  - Both castors and larger wheels for some wheelchairs/scooters are puncture proof or do not involve pump ups.
  - '... wheelchair does not have an on-board charger, so the public charging stations would not be of any use to us. We would need to put the chair in manual and hope a strong person comes along and helps to push it to the car. If we get a puncture, we would call the NRMA who are very helpful in such situations and would prioritise our request.'

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# Appendices

## Appendix One:

### Literature Review

#### Introduction

This literature review looks at Australian and global initiatives and work, regarding active transport planning and action at a local level, to support the participation of older people and people with disability in the communities of Springwood, Winmalee and Blackheath in the city of Blue Mountains. It also looks at the needs of people who use electric scooters, electric and manual wheelchairs, as well as other mobility aids such as walking frames,

The review finds strong international support for an inclusive approach to planning. The World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Strategy and Action Plan on Ageing and Health (2015) defines healthy ageing as ‘the process of developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables wellbeing in older age.’<sup>14</sup> WHO has also promoted the concept of age friendly environments to support this in planning and other disciplines through the Global Network for Age Friendly Cities and Communities, of which 25 Australian Councils are members. Similarly, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCRPD) states ‘On the fundamental issue of accessibility (Article 9), the Convention requires countries to identify and eliminate obstacles and barriers and ensure that persons with disabilities can access their environment, transportation, public facilities and services, and information and communications technologies.’<sup>15</sup>

The Australian, State and Local Governments have, as parties to these agreements, developed localised responses. The National Disability Strategy 2010-2020 is the Australian Government response. As well as policies and plans, the Strategy is enabled by the Disability Discrimination Act 1990 and its Standards. Relevant to this study are the Disability (access to premises-buildings) Standard 2010 and the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport. The NSW Government enacts these by the NSW Disability Inclusion plan 2015. Blue Mountain City Council has incorporated these objectives into strategic documents including the Ageing Strategy, the Disability Inclusion Action Plan and the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan.

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<sup>14</sup> World Health Organization Department of Ageing and Life Course: *Global strategy and action plan on ageing and health* 2016- 2020 World Health Organisation website Accessed 20.9.18, <<http://www.who.int/ageing/healthy-ageing/en/>>.

<sup>15</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs: *The Convention in brief*. Accessed 20.9.18 <<https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/the-convention-in-brief.html>>.

### 3.1 Blue Mountains City Council documents

#### 3.1.1 Blue Mountains Ageing Strategy

##### Current actions

- Develop strategies to improve the ease with which people can enjoy the Blue Mountains, including those associated with footpaths, roads, active transport and community facilities, including:
  - Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP);
  - Bike Plan
  - Open Space, Recreation Strategy.
- Construct, landscape and maintain streetscapes for walking, cycling and wheelchairs

#### 3.1.2 Blue Mountains Disability Inclusion Action Plan

- Advocate with Transport for NSW and bus and taxi industry to provide additional accessible taxis and buses.
- Incorporate whole of route (including footpath) approach to strategically plan universal access to key cultural, commercial and transport sites

#### 3.1.3 Blue Mountains Pedestrian Access and Mobility Strategy 2025

- That the City develops a pedestrian friendly network including off-street links to schools, local facilities, and longer commuter routes into town centres and public transit hubs.
- That the City sets appropriate design standards for accessible routes of travel.

### 3.2 NSW Government documents

#### 3.2.1 NSW Ageing Strategy

- Priority 4 Getting Around
- Objective: Older people in NSW will be able to travel safely and appropriately to participate in social and economic life and access services.
- Response: We will work across the transport sector to increase awareness of the needs of older passengers. We will explore new or emerging models of delivering transport services that could benefit older people who may need more support, including those living in regional, rural and remote areas of the state. We will continue working to make sure older drivers can drive safely for as long as practical without putting themselves and others at risk. Additionally, we will work to improve pedestrian safety for older people and encourage them to walk and cycle to get around, particularly for short trips and to stay active and healthy.

#### 3.2.2 Transport for NSW Disability Inclusion Action plan

- New Intercity Fleet Program – A new fleet will be introduced. The fleet will significantly improve accessibility and will progressively replace the existing intercity fleet, including the ageing V-set trains.

#### 3.2.3 Transport for NSW Strategy document: Future Transport 2056

- Upgrades to the Blue Mountains Line, to accommodate the new fleet of intercity trains and provide reliable, comfortable and accessible services to customers

- Transport Access Program (station upgrades). Blackheath Station is not wheelchair accessible. Springwood Station is wheelchair accessible.

#### 3.2.4 CDC NSW (Blue Mountains Bus Company) Accessible Transport Action plan

- Activity: Review services to develop a route priority policy for accessible buses
- Performance measure: Since 2012 more than 55% of CDC's services have been provided by low-floor buses and 80% of services will be accessible by end of 2017
- Status: CDC is fully compliant and exceeds DDA requirements, and has timetabled services to ensure >55% accessibility across all routes & services
- All new regular route buses to be DDA compliant (excluding School Buses).
- Activity: New buses will have a "kneeling" suspension, an extending wheelchair ramp for level entry and a flat no-step floor making it easier for less mobile people to board and alight the bus. In addition, new buses will also have priority seating and improved destination signs.
- Performance measure: Scheduled wheelchair accessible trip percentage to be greater than Commonwealth DDA requirement
- Status: Fleet composition already exceeds DDA requirement and services are timetabled above the DDA target levels where feasible

### 3.3 Australian government documents

Need for regulation of mobility scooters, also known as motorised wheelchairs: Report to The Senate by the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee, Canberra September 2018.

The report recommends that:

'..the Australian Government ensure that Austroads has adequate funding to undertake research and consultation activities to inform the establishment of a nationally consistent regulatory framework for motorised mobility devices.'<sup>16</sup>

This report has a key focus on safety, for scooter users and safe use of scooters. The report also considered electric wheelchairs. issues raised by some submissions related to speeds travelled on pavement, use of scooters on roads and the need for evidence to support appropriate standards and regulation to advise users about purchase, consider road safety aspects and consider safety for other users, in particular pedestrians.

A response to the report by the Australian Government has not yet been provided.

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<sup>16</sup> Sterle, G. *Report: Need for regulation of mobility scooters, also known as motorised wheelchairs*. Commonwealth of Australia, Accessed 20.9.18, <[https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Rural\\_and\\_Regional\\_Affairs\\_and\\_Transport/MobilityScooters/Report/c04](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Rural_and_Regional_Affairs_and_Transport/MobilityScooters/Report/c04)>.

### 3.4 Other Australian resources

3.4.1 Active and healthy ageing local government action guide. Health and Human Services Victoria State Government Oct.2017

- Resource for Victorian Councils to support strategies for healthy ageing.

3.4.2 *Healthy ageing literature review: Final report to the Department of Health and Human Services* (Victoria) October, 2016 p. 109

- 'Reviews examining these interventions have identified a number of key features of successful strategies to create age-friendly environments, including:
  - A collaborative approach that engages multiple stakeholders
  - Empowering older people and engaging them in the whole process
  - Addressing local needs and using multiple interventions
  - Ensuring interventions are theory and evidence-based.'

### 3.5 Research

3.5.1 Transport and sustainability Volume 10: Transport, travel and later life. Edited Charles Musselwhite 2017 Emerald Publishing 978-1-78714-624-2

Ch.6 Creating a convivial public realm for an ageing population

- Older people are reluctant to use pedestrian areas where they feel threatened by other users, such as cyclists. (p.2)
- Maintenance is crucial, given concerns for falling (p. 21-22)
- Seating and access to public toilets is important (p. 14)
- Ch 3 Old age: Difficulties and vulnerabilities in the transport environment
- Pedestrians- slower walking time at crossings, reaction time, time to notice vehicles can put older people at risk of accidents.

3.5.2 Age friendly transport for Greater Manchester

Key recommendations

- Staff working in transport to be trained in older people's issues
  - Transport service providers
  - Planners
- Getting more older people involved in transport planning and design
  - Pedestrian crossing times
  - Availability of seating and clean, safe public toilets
- That other sectors, in particular health, help manage transport demand better
- Community resources and support, in particular ride sharing, pooled access to community vehicle resources
- Demonstrator "communities" to showcase good practice and inclusive design and consultation processes

### 3.6 Mobility scooters

#### 3.6.1 Hall-Foote, E *et. al.* 2012 *Mornington Council Motorised Mobility Devices Policy Statement*

[The Mornington Peninsula Shire is committed to enhancing the safe participation and health and wellbeing of people who use motorised scooters and other motorised mobility devices so that they maximise their independence and can remain active and engaged in community life. The Shire will promote and plan for safe use of motorised mobility scooters and motorised mobility devices in the local community for all.]

#### Objectives:

In planning for the needs of the community, (the policy statement) aims to create a well maintained and connected environment for its residents, which would:

- Create a safer path of travel for scooter users, who would not need to venture onto the road
- Provide better access between key sites and landmarks
- Complement a Scooter RECHARGE Scheme that would maximise the ability of scooter users to not be stranded
- Offer increased social connectedness (reducing the incidence of loneliness or depression)
- Increase autonomy and independence for users
- Be incorporated into the principles of HACCC Active Service Model
- Reduce risks of falls or preventable accidents to scooter users
- Reduce health care costs due to a lowering of scooter related accidents

#### 3.6.2 Mobility scooter charging

Scooter charging away from home is a specific question for this project. A resident request was made for charging stations for (mobility) scooters at town centres, potentially using council venues such as libraries. There is no specific research relating to this question. About 50% of scooters require a specific charging base. Two potential problems for scooter and wheelchair users are loss of power and flat tyres.

A key resource in Australia is the Recharge Point scheme which advocates and advises Councils and some businesses on design and placing of charging points to assist scooter users (residents or visitors) to recharge away from home to enable them to continue to use their scooter.

<https://www.rechargescheme.org.au/recharge-finder>

Published research on power failure issues, incidence and impact for powered scooters and wheelchairs was not found for this literature review, despite searches of consumer online forums, manufacturers websites and published research.

#### 3.6.3 *Mobility scooter usage and safety survey report.* 2012. Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (with NRMA, Choice)

#### Key findings:

- 50% of scooter users were under 60.
- Mobility scooters are a lifeline to independence and emotional well-being, making it imperative to find a way to ensure it is safer and easier for road users to incorporate scooters into the transport mix

- Scooter users see themselves as pedestrians. The scooter does not replace a car, it “replaces their legs” when they are no longer able to walk long distances

### 3.7 Dementia Friendly Communities Toolkit for Local Government. 2016. Alzheimers Australia Victoria.

‘People living with dementia have described their priority areas as:

- Increasing community awareness and understanding about dementia
- Improving access to social activities and opportunities for engagement including volunteering
- Employment opportunities or support to remain employed
- Access to appropriate health and care services to support them to continue to live at home for as long as possible
- Access to affordable and convenient transportation options
- Improved physical environments including appropriate signage, lighting and colours.’<sup>17</sup>

The Kit Guide recommends that three steps to create a dementia friendly community are:

- Creating a climate for change
- Engaging with colleagues and the community
- Implementing and sustaining change.

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<sup>17</sup> Citation in Toolkit for these details: Alzheimer’s Australia 2014. Living with dementia in the community: challenges and opportunities. Available at [www.fightdementia.org.au/files/DementiaFriendlySurvey\\_Final\\_web.pdf](http://www.fightdementia.org.au/files/DementiaFriendlySurvey_Final_web.pdf), accessed November 2015.

## Appendix Two:

### Mobility Study Survey questions

Please note the following survey questions were used in the hard copy format. In the online survey, a further range of responses was available for question four.

# Mobility Study Survey

## Getting around your town



This mobility study, commissioned by Blue Mountains City Council, aims to identify specific barriers to getting around Springwood, Winmalee and Blackheath. The study will focus on older people and people with disabilities. The survey will close Friday 31 August, 2018.

1. Which town or village are you from?

- ☐ Springwood
- ☐ Winmalee
- ☐ Blackheath
- ☐ Other

2. I am taking this survey as ..... (tick relevant box below)..... that impacts on the ability to get out and about

- ☐ a person who has a disability or health condition
- ☐ a carer of a person who has a disability or health condition

3. Please select your age range

- ☐ 18-29 years old
- ☐ 30-49 years old
- ☐ 50-64 years old
- ☐ 65 years old and over

4. Are there any barriers to you when you are out and about?

- ☐ No footpath/missing footpath link
  - ☐ Footpath surface
  - ☐ Kerb ramps
  - ☐ Pedestrian signage
  - ☐ Pedestrian crossing location
  - ☐ Using shared walking and cycling paths
  - ☐ Cars parked on or across footpaths
  - ☐ Other
  - ☐ Not applicable
- (including using your mobility aid)

5. Do you use any of the following mobility aids to help you get around?

- ☐ No aid
- ☐ Walking stick
- ☐ Walking frame
- ☐ Wheelchair
- ☐ Mobility scooter
- ☐ Mobility cane (for vision impairment)
- ☐ Other

6. If you know the location of any specific barriers you have identified above, please use this space to provide details and any recommendations you have

--

7. If you use a mobility scooter or wheelchair, what are the main barriers when you are out and about?

- ☐ Using shared paths
- ☐ Lack of shared paths
- ☐ Incomplete paths
- ☐ Getting around or through busy areas
- ☐ Parking for wheelchairs/mobility scooter
- ☐ Charging locations for mobility scooter
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Not applicable

8. Do you have any other comments or suggestions you would like to add?

--

9. If you would like to discuss these issues and more, you can be part of local discussion groups that will be taking place in Springwood, Blackheath and Winmalee in August and September.

If interested, please provide contact details below and we will be in touch.

Name	
Email Address	
Phone Number	

**Thank you for your participation**

## Appendix Three:

### Mobility Study Flyer

# Mobility Study

Getting around your town



## Are you...

- **Living in Springwood, Winmalee or Blackheath?**
- **Aged 65 and older or have a disability?**
- **Interested in improving ways to get around your town?**

Blue Mountains City Council wants to assist local residents to move easily and safely around our towns and enjoy a quality of life that getting out and about gives us.

Council has commissioned Great Community Transport to undertake the Mobility Study to identify the physical barriers that older people and people with a disability face in navigating the townships of the Blue Mountains - beginning with Springwood, Winmalee and Blackheath.

Great Community Transport is keen to hear from you about the specific barriers in your town and surrounding streets. This can be relevant for people wanting to walk to get to local events and destinations in their community, to the shops or to public transport. For commuters it can be about 'the last mile' home.

Identifying these barriers will help Council to pursue various opportunities to improve the way people get around their community.

Emphasis in this project will be on those who rely on mobility aids, such as walking sticks, walking frames, wheelchairs or mobility scooters.

**The survey will close Friday 31 August, 2018.**

## Get Involved

- Participate in an online survey at [www.bluemountainshaveyoursay.com.au/mobility-study](http://www.bluemountainshaveyoursay.com.au/mobility-study)
- Contact us on **4722 3083** or [mobilitystudy@gct.org.au](mailto:mobilitystudy@gct.org.au) to let us know about some of the issues you face in your town, or if you would like to be part of local discussion groups in your town in August and September.
- If you do not live in Blackheath, Winmalee or Springwood, you can let us know your thoughts on where footpaths, shared paths, bike routes and accessibility options can be improved. The Active Transport Reveiw also closes on Friday 31 August, 2018. To leave a comment on the interactive map visit: [www.bluemountainshaveyoursay.com.au/ActiveTransportReview](http://www.bluemountainshaveyoursay.com.au/ActiveTransportReview)

## Appendix Four:

### Individual comments from survey participants

## Individual survey comments from participants in Springwood

NB: In the following tables comments from Question 6 are not from the same participant as comments from Question eight.

Question 6 – Specific barriers	Question 8 – Other comments
Footpath along George Street, Springwood. Newish, but wrong camber, being lifted by tree roots, slippery in damp weather because of volume of fallen leaves and poorly lit at night as to be dangerous to the elderly. Ramp at end of above footpath at George Street / Holland Street intersection is so steep it propels you into roadway where you cannot see approaching traffic and they cannot see you due to vegetation.	Crossing very busy Greenway Lane in Springwood with a Rollator (Walker) where there no traffic lights or marked pedestrian crossing or signage to slow the traffic down to allow time for slow moving elderly people to cross safely to visit the Post Office etc.
Ellison Road Springwood	Crossing at Aquinas Court too close to roundabout
The dangerous location is Greenway Lane in Springwood where many drivers enter the area from Macquarie Road or leaving Greenway Lane at excessive speed in front of the entrance to the Post Office.	Please could we have more footpaths wide enough for both pedestrians and cyclists if we have to share. I take my life in my hands on the road just to get to a footpath
Footpaths in Florey Crescent and Lalor Drive	Some shops have a step to get into also the bank. I have to lift up my walker to go inside.
Laneway is steep at Greenway	I find the fact that mobility scooters are so silent difficult because I have very little indication that they are approaching.
Tree roots make the footpath around the bust stop outside Waratah Village in Lalor Drive dangerous.	It is difficult to park near or very close to coffee shop to take person who has difficulty walking for morning tea or Lunch in Springwood
No street gutters in some places adjoining shopping centre car park adjoining IGA Springwood. Rough and uneven.	Would like to receive more information.
Shop displays directly outside shops and rubbish bins, seats, signage etc one the other side leave very little space/uncertain space in between. Main street of Springwood. I find it easier to walk along the kerb or next to the buildings. Irregularity of the passageway is challenging. Familiarity with the route helps the situation.	We also need more dedicated disabled parking spots, and more senior dedicated spots. We avoid potentially busy times because we know we won't be able to park in an accessible spot, and therefore can't unload our daughter in her wheelchair out of the car. In order to access the community like everyone else can, we need to be able to park our vehicle.
We need to walk on the road but fortunately we have polite residents in our street so we survive	Bad footpaths. Dangerous. Cracks in footpaths and public walkways. Needs improving on busy roads.
More lights in the street. More safety after dark for the public especially on the roadway.	More footpaths
Hawkesbury road Lawson Road Scrivener Lane	Have discussed the survey with a group of over 55's and I would need more paper to discuss these issues.

Question 6 – Specific barriers	Question 8 – Other comments
<p>The seat near the toilets opposite Coles have been removed. Since my stroke I need to sit when tired but having the seat removed means walking further to sit down in the community area outside the old seafood shop. I'm trying to let go of needing my walker as a seat but fatigue makes me anxious about seating. The rest of the Centre is amazing for seniors but the Coles area needs a bench (opposite the registers if possible) as there's an unused space that would be a perfect location. It's very scary when you're fatigued and can't see anywhere to sit. Elderly people must feel the same way.</p>	<p>No unlocked accessible public toilets- we shouldn't be forced to pay for a key- no one else does and it's a barrier to accessibility. Accessible toilets also not having change tables and hoists further limits accessibility for those who need those in the bathroom to be able to access the community</p>
<p>A lot of places in Springwood and Winmalee, the footpaths and driveways and pedestrian crossing are an accident waiting to happen even new pavements and driveways etc are a nuisance for the elderly.</p>	<p>I am 80 and live in Endeavour Assisted Living in Springwood. I have no family and am dependant on Great Community Transport or a local taxi for medical appointments etc.</p>
<p>The rough patch outside IGA. Over three years ago. I was in a hurry to get to my car in the carpark and didn't notice a step up to the asphalt and tripped and fell heavily putting a hairline fracture in my pelvis. This was quite painful for almost three months.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Greenway Lane should be one way - access dangerous</li> <li>* 40kph speed limit in Macquarie Road from Hawkesbury Road should be better advertised/sign posted.</li> <li>* All seating in Springwood shopping area should be retained.</li> <li>* Seats required in Ferguson Road where health facilities are located.</li> </ul>
<p>Kerbs and ramps at the pedestrian crossing at Aquinas court. Kerb crossing at the lane near the Red Cross Hall at Springwood.</p>	<p>Kerbs and ramps are too high for people with walking sticks and wheelchairs etc.</p>
<p>There are problems in the shopping area of Macquarie Road in Springwood with too steep an incline to or from the road. There is also a problem with the corner of Macquarie Road and Homedale Street, again too steep and too short a distance between the footpath and the road.</p>	<p>I live in Faulconbridge but I have to go to Springwood almost daily for shopping and mail collection and I (and others of my age and limited walking ability) go to the Post Office, crossing Greenway Lane either from the Northern Car Park or at it's junction with Macquarie Road. I would like see at least, a marked pedestrian crossing on Greenway Lane either at the entrance to the Northern Car Park (preferably) or at its junction with Macquarie Road.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Crossing near roundabout at Hawkesbury Road and Macquarie Road - western side</li> <li>2. Crossing limits corner Silva and Hawkesbury Roads at the roundabout.</li> <li>3. Crossing limits east side at the roundabout at Hawkesbury and Macquarie Roads.</li> </ol>	<p>I raise the question of why blue mountains city council is using public money to engage a transport company that is "fee for service" regardless of it is not for profit to commission this. How is this an organisation that can be impartial in its opinion when it relies upon payment for transport services and transport subsidy schemes and grants to operate. I therefore question the integrity of this study and further question whether council has followed appropriate procurement guidelines.</p>
<p>Some footpaths are not even. Tree roots push up paths. Care must be taken by pedestrians crossing Greenway Lane in Springwood as there is three way traffic. Also care must be taken at the shopping areas as people are very rude and do not stand back for seniors.</p>	<p>The road pedestrian crossing at Macquarie Road near Aquinas Court is too steep on one side and the same applies in the lane near the Red Cross shop in Springwood.</p>
<p>Slope from dip to road is too steep - I lose my balance if I do not have my stick.</p>	<p>The branches that hang over the road have to be avoided - In wet weather raindrops dump water on you as you touch them.</p>

Question 6 – Specific barriers	Question 8 – Other comments
The crossing across Macquarie Road needs the kerb roads adjusting. They are too high. Also the kerb ramps on either side of Greenway Lane needs the same treatment. It is difficult going up and down with ease.	The theatre at the hub needs attention regarding the lack of hand rails leading up the centre steps. it is difficult walking up and down and could be very dangerous especially in an emergency.
There used to be crossing marks in front of Springwood Post Office facing the car park next door. It is a hazardous spot to cross. I would like the zebra crossing reinstated.* Across western end of Greenway Lane.	Glad you are doing the fact finding.
Parts of Hawkesbury Road need repair.	Garbage bins on pathways.
The path from Macquarie Road down Greenway Lane is too steep.	
Sidewalks on many streets in Springwood and Winmalee make it difficult to walk with a disability as ground is uneven.	In shopping centre near IGA, people using the carparking have not mobility sticker. There are only three spaces.
Footpaths are uneven	Uneven sidewalks are easy to trip on for those less mobile
Springwood hub and library.	Footpaths are a disgrace especially with a walker
From Uniting Aged Care at Springwood into Springwood main shopping area.	No room when using scooter on the road with other cars in Springwood. Cars are going too fast.
Cross from footpath to footpath at entrance to the park. The driveways are pretty rough.	We should have a Seniors Centre in Springwood
Plateau Road Springwood - footpath on both sides.	More parking is needed in shopping areas. It is a long walk to the shops if one is parked a mile away.
Dangerous footpath on one side of Homedale Street. In need of repair either side in Springwood	The corner in front of funeral parlour in Raymond Lane slopes too much and is difficult to manoeuvre. This provides access to Central Medical Centre. Ferguson Road needs pedestrian safety island in front of Balance Medical Centre. There are many seniors who need to cross more safely.
Macquarie Road in Springwood - broken footpath.	Better public bus service regular and with lowered stairs for entry. I do not wish to be bothered with community buses - having a hearing problem and ability to use the phone is impaired for bookings.
Ineffective street lighting especially the western end of Macquarie Road. Safer access to Balance Medical Centre would be a big plus. The kerb ramp on west side of Homedale Street and Macquarie Road, whilst recently done, is not acceptable. The whole corner at Baptist Church is not good as is the whole path in front of said church.	I am often in Winmalee shops because they are all on one level and under cover. I enjoy the community atmosphere but there are often children running or on their scooters and they seem unaware of the danger they pose to slow, frail people like me. I love being out amongst everyone and seeing children but worry about being knocked over.
In Chapman Parade there are none to maybe only a few public buses. I am 93 with walking aids, and although a bus driver said he would take me closer to the destination, depending on school location, I had difficulty climbing the stairs to the bus.	

## Individual survey comments from participants in Winmalee

Question 6 – Specific barriers	Question 8 – Other comments
The footpaths around Winmalee Public School are inefficient and dangerous. The shoulders are in a poor dangerous condition with rocks, tree roots and uneven ground protruding. This makes walking unsafe especially when trying to control young children to the car and place them in car restraint seats. There is no disability parking outside the school for people with needs. More disability parking is required in shopping centres and other parking areas.	There is not enough Disability Parking in shopping centres and other parking areas in the Blue Mountains area. Too many times I have to park well away from the shops which means I have a long way to walk and walk back to my car.
Because of the condition of the footpath on White Cross Road, it is necessary to walk on the road to reach the bus stop and the shopping centre.	There should be parking for disabled at the station to get to the St George Bank.
I mainly drive	It is difficult sometimes with a wheelchair sharing the pathway with a cyclist or a dog attached to the cyclist or a mobility scooter.
Because of the condition of the footpath in White Cross Road, it is necessary to walk on the road to get to the bus stop and the shopping centre.	

## Individual survey comments from participants in Blackheath

Question 6 – Specific barriers	Question 8 – Other comments
Apart from Blackheath CBD, footpaths in Blackheath are almost non-existent. The footpath down one side of Govetts Leap Road is the exception. Where there is an unpaved footpath, it is invariably inaccessible for my power wheelchair because of uneven weeds or impassable resident-made footpath garden. The rolled kerb on many of Blackheath's footpaths is unnavigable for manual wheelchairs, mid-range and rear drive power wheelchairs as well as front-wheel drive wheelchairs with front castors.	Most venues in the CBD of Blackheath are inaccessible to wheelchairs and difficult for walkers. The only venue serving food which has a disabled toilet is the Blackheath Golf Club, some 5km from my home. The Community Lunch held in the Community Hall is the only other exception. All other food venues are either inaccessible and/or without a disabled toilet. I think most commercial premises are inaccessible. The kerb ramps at the junction of GWH and Govetts Leap Road are at an angle unsafe/impossible for manual and non-front wheel drive wheelchairs.
Majority of businesses/shops have a step which isolates our ability to enter. All entries need a ramp to transition from footpath into shop/business.	Lack of safe and accessible crossing options at or near to main intersections.
Lack of safe cement and extra width paths in parks. Unable to enjoy parks or access activities in parks e.g. markets.	Locations/buildings not able to take wheelchairs. Not enough room.
Along great western highway from Evans lookout pad to park at top of hill! Along Clanwilliam Street as no paved footpaths and have to use roads Cars do not give way to pedestrians at road entries! E.g. At car park in Govetts leap road and service stations along great western highway Unevenness of surfaces in too many streets to name! Like Wentworth street, Clanwilliam street Evans and Brightlands roads to name a few!	Remove trees on power line side as they age. More lighting in laneway.
Urgent need for FOOTPATHS in Evans Lookout Road BLACKHEATH	Understand that many buildings are inaccessible due to historical status etc but there are so many places, cafes/shops etc, that could do better by just adding a small ramp and arranging interiors slightly differently. Leura is particularly difficult.
The road shoulder of the Great Western H'way outside the Blackheath Community Centre between Gardners Road and the War Memorial - has not been repaired since the trees were removed after the wind storm. The footpath/ shoulder leading to the Blackheath railway station entrance The unsurfaced road (Great Western highway) shoulder road between Brightlands Ave and Evans Lookout Road The deteriorating surface of the car park between Sutton lane, Wentworth Street, & the highway	Some gutters are very high. Limited locations to cross road safely and only option is to go up to the lights at highway. Needs another crossing near Wentworth Street.
A decent footpath in Belvedere Avenue in Blackheath. The corner of Clanwilliam and Belvedere Avenue is extremely dangerous for pedestrians.	Blackheath Rail Station is one of the few in the Blue Mountains which is wheelchair accessible. Blackheath Community Centre gardens have paths throughout lined with unbroken edging which is inaccessible to wheelchairs - the gardens and the paths cannot be accessed one from the other. BMCC's response to the exclusion of the disabled from Blackheath's commercial life was to advise that pamphlets encouraging access for the disabled were distributed to entities which denied access.

Question 6 – Specific barriers	Question 8 – Other comments
Crossing Wentworth Street near to the Govetts Leap Road intersection is almost impossible. The access to the intersection is very poor, steep and broken. The intersection is busy. I have to walk much further up Wentworth Street on either side of Govetts Leap Road in order to cross the road safely and easily	As above Urgent need of Footpath in Evans Lookout Road Blackheath
Crossing Bundarra Street at the lights at the intersection of the Great Western Highway and Govetts Leap Road/Bundarra Street is dangerous. The only kerb ramp on the western side (?) of the crossing forces wheelchair users to drive almost into highway traffic.	The angle of ramps from the footpaths to the street ?? disability standards for the very acute angles- esp for wheelchairs
Crossing the Great Western Highway to access Govetts Leap Road on the east side (? - directly in front of the Ivanhoe Hotel) is difficult with a manual wheelchair. The kerb ramps at the zebra crossing are very steep. The pedestrian island between the zebra crossing and the highway is inadequate, too small.	At present able to use a car for local shopping but am advised by Doctor that this will cease shortly as sight further worsens am at present restricted to 50K from home in Blackheath, have just received Taxi Vouchers.
In general, Blackheath lacks good quality continuous footpaths, most shops lack disability access, the ramp access at the local pool is far too steep for a manual wheelchair and disability access to Blackheath Station could be improved. I do acknowledge that there have been some recent improvements made to footpaths on Wentworth Street and quality kerb ramps installed on Station Street at the corner of Bundarra Street.	An upgrade of the intersection of Wentworth Street and Govetts Leap Road is overdue. This intersection is dangerous for all pedestrians but especially for those with impaired mobility and those using wheelchairs or prams. It is also a terrible intersection for vehicles. It could really use a roundabout and two pedestrian crossings on Wentworth Street, on either side of Govetts Leap Road and set back a little from the intersection.
Speeding vehicles and poor street lights	Lower speed limits. Too few street lights in residential streets.
Most medical office and buildings make it hard for people in wheelchairs. Not enough room and unhelpful staff who will not open doors or assist you in or out of buildings.	The intersection of the Great Western Highway and Govetts Leap Road/Bundarra Street is generally dangerous for pedestrians and desperately needs improving. I realise that Blue Mountains City Council is not responsible for State Roads, however at the very least, provision of adequate kerb ramps would improve the safety for those with impaired mobility, wheelchair users and parents with prams.
ROBB AVENUE off Hat Hill Road - street accesses new St Elmo housing development, Godson Avenue etc - very narrow, steep 'lane-like' street - used by trucks, cars, kids on bikes, pedestrians, dogs - however absolutely NO FOOTPATH! HAT HILL ROAD grass verge footpaths - often have angled parked cars, forcing pedestrians onto roadway, a roadway that many road users speed on :(	The lack of footpaths and continuous footpaths has been a significant barrier for me accessing the community with my daughter for the past 10 years. I have brought this to the attention of Blue Mountains City Council in the past and some remedial work was eventually taken out near my home to give me safer access while crossing Abbott Street.
No concrete footpath from Clarence Road down in Blackheath	At Cyber_Shed I tutor vulnerable over 50 year olds, some who use mobility aids. At least one student recently nearly flipped his mobility scooter backwards when negotiating steep kerb ramps at the intersection of Govetts Leap Road and Wentworth Street. The ramp gradient is clearly inappropriate.
Road repairs needed. Our pavements do not exist	Not enough disabled parking anywhere
Blackheath needs another crossing in Wentworth Street near the Commonwealth Bank to get back safely over to the shops from the bank and the ATM.	Maybe this survey could be done again over time as things change health-wise.

Question 6 – Specific barriers	Question 8 – Other comments
Lack of paths	I have not known of any new paths made in the main old areas of Blackheath
In Chelmsford Avenue and Hargraves and Brightlands Avenue, they have no footpaths so going for any sort of walk is like taking a bush walk.	Evans Lookout Road has no kerbs and gutters unlike Brightlands Road. Hardly any lights. I would like to be able to walk to the shops, the post office, and the library.
Some areas of Blackheath e.g. Govetts Leap Road, poorly lit and uneven footpaths make walking at night difficult.	Possibly need humps on the road to slow the traffic down in Govetts Leap Road near the shops. Very difficult to cross roads with speeding cars.
Whopping potholes outside our meeting hall. Dangerous. Already reported to the local paper a month ago. Corner Gardeners Crescent and Great Western Highway.	Usually housebound and has assistance when in public spaces. Some footpath surfaces are uneven which can be difficult
I fell on footpath Govetts Leap Road as it is very uneven. Fortunately I did not have a fracture as I have osteoporosis. I would like the chance to train on the footpaths in Blackheath.	Only better street lighting in areas around town away from the village centre.
Evans Lookout Road - walkers forced to walk on the road as footpath is impassable in some spots. Surface of footpath is a big risk for falls. Wentworth Street and Govetts Leap Road - hard to cross here safely.	Thankyou BMCC for looking out for your residents from Blackheath resident.
The corner of Govetts Leap Road and Wentworth Street - needs traffic lights and crossing.	Complete lack of information to local people
Around Katoomba, many footpaths cut off at certain points though main roads are reasonably accessible. Tourist bus drivers and visiting car drivers seem to be less aware at crossings for pedestrians especially for people in wheelchairs or scooters. Also parking in Katoomba. Need one or two more disabled spots at different points at each end of the street	Blackheath Library - The library entrance and parking on Great Western Highway - it would be very helpful to have one or two disabled parking sections as it is very difficult to get parking near the entrance leading to the library. People leave their cars there all day using that area to catch the train.
The height of the kerb to the road in the shopping area of Blackheath.	We need people to walk for health issues. Need to use the footpaths for walking groups I lead.
Most shops in Blackheath have a step up, preventing wheelchair access. The park on the highway also has steps and pebble paths, making it very difficult to push a wheelchair. Can't access many events like the markets due to the step up to the stall. The Memorial Park playground is nearly impossible due to uneven slope and chip base on the ground.	
The kerb ramps on the corner of Wentworth Street and Govetts Leaps Road are too steep and need to be graded better. Footpaths are lacking apart from up near the school and shops and a lot of them are uneven.	

## Individual survey comments from participants in other towns

Question 6 – Specific barriers	Question 8 – Other comments
Too many in the Blue Mountains to list. Surface on footpath in Parke Street Katoomba is particularly bad. Placement of zebra crossings in Leura are atrocious. Too many locations are still missing footpaths and locations with footpaths are often poorly done or maintained.	No wheelchair parking in streets in villages such as Springwood. No footpaths in most residential streets. Difficult for anyone in a wheelchair. Dangerous to use the road.
<p>The corner of Hill Street and Moore Street at the old scout hall Glenbrook at the stairway and easement that leads to the footpath through the eastern end of Glenbrook Oval. With the installation of the new traffic lights at Glenbrook there will be installed a set of traffic and a pedestrian crossing linking this footpath to Ross Street and then to the railway station when the lifts are installed. This will allow residents to directly access Glenbrook shops, bus stops and railway station without having to walk all the way up Moore Street to Hare Street then cross the Highway at Wascoe Street and the walk all the way back down Wascoe Street to Ross Street. This in itself is a fair walk for an able body person let alone a person who has mobility issues. My concerns are that the access to the footpath that runs through the Eastern end of Glenbrook Oval is not suitable for anyone else other than those who can use the stairs. To one side of the stairs is a worn rough path that has been made over the years to start with by bike riders then by those who are not able to use the stairs. This rough and worn path is totally not suitable for people who have issues mobility, who are elderly and unsteady on their feet as this is a falls and trip hazard and they are not able to use the stairs, for young mothers who struggle to push their prams and strollers up this very uneven worn path, for people like myself who have major mobility issues and use a powered wheelchair and a mobility scooter this access is not only totally unsuitable but downright dangerous. To use this easement in a wheelchair or a mobility scooter could result in serious injuries. This thoroughfare desperately needs a suitable ramp to be installed so the residents and visitors to this part of Glenbrook access the passage way through the park, new pedestrian crossing at the new sets of traffic lights, Glenbrook Shops, bus stop and railway station in safety without fear of falls, trips and injuries. The installation of a suitable access ramp in this location is a screaming emergency.</p>	<p>Glenbrook like most townships in the Blue Mountains the streets, footpaths and easements have hardly been touched by council as most of the mobility access areas and footpath upgrades are only done and redone over and over at Katoomba. There are some very dicey easements to the footpaths from my home to Glenbrook shops some are just too dangerous to use. One other major concern is home owners planting trees, creepers on their fences and garden beds in the footpath. It is lovely to have trees lining our streets but the low hanging branches should be removed to allow easy access to other residents and those that use mobility devices like wheelchairs and scooters. The same for those who plant creepers on their fence lines these should be trimmed back as to not obstruct the access of the footpath and force people who use mobility devices like wheelchairs and scooters out onto the roadway to play dodgems with the cars. The same for those home owners who turn the footpath in to a garden bed which totally prohibits the use of the footpath all together forcing everyone out onto the roadway and into the pathway of the vehicles</p>
Neither Caley Lane, Glossop Road nor Tollgate Dr have footpaths.	Community opportunities in places where there is no accessibility!

Question 6 – Specific barriers	Question 8 – Other comments
Railway parade Hazelbrook between Woodford and Hazelbrook particularly no ramp access up to the overpass to drop kids off at school. Need to go all the way to Hazelbrook station bridge and back to the school Valley road Hazelbrook cars fly up there	When I go out, it is typically to Springwood. Public footpath facilities are generally good, but many shops are inaccessible- no ramps. The shops that are accessible often put merchandising displays in the aisles. It's very challenging to get to the cash registers at the Priceline Chemist. Bloom's Chemist is so tightly packed that I don't bother going in. My scooter is almost exactly the size of a standard shopping trolley, but unlike a trolley, only the front wheels steer. Placement of displays often makes it impossible to turn corners on the scooter
No paths	More opportunities for people with a disability to participate in!
No footpaths in many residential streets. Disabled parking spots that are too narrow for wheelchairs - cannot get alongside my car to get in or out of my car and use my wheelchair hoist. Inadequate or poor toilet facilities in villages.	As I mainly use a powered wheelchair and a mobility scooter there are lots and lots of concerns and areas where it is dangerous to use this equipment. The Blue Mountains Council over the years, and I have lived in the Blue Mountains since 1975, have done very little and in some cases nothing at all to improve mobility access. In the mobility circles many areas of the Blue Mountains is considered a no-go zone.
Chapman Road in Faulconbridge. There is no footpath beyond a certain point. Cars parked on the nature strip and gardens encroach. Bus service is limited to connect to train and shops.	Need wheelchair specific parking. So many people have a disabled parking permit. I am unable to use a normal parking spot at all. Better access to shops such as in Hazelbrook. Tired of being excluded.
No bus service	The lack of a bus service providing service in out street means the elderly and handicapped persons are unable to walk, myself included, to the nearest stop in Green Parade. We need a bus service.
No crossing to Post Office from foot path and to Red Cross Hall.	The trains are a problem. Coming from Sydney when alighting at Katoomba railway station there is a dangerous gap between the train and the platform. You are supposed to ring ahead to get staff to put out a ramp. I have heard of people falling and breaking their leg and spending several weeks in hospital. This should not be happening.
Taxi Ranks not able to get down onto road to be able to be loaded into Accessible Taxi.	regular train services to and from Mount Victoria making it extremely difficult to move around it is a huge inconvenience to every resident across the Blue Mountains and tourists
There are no footpaths in Medlow Bath.	The branches are a nuisance when left to be cut for long time.
From Blackheath station to Radiance lack of sealed footpath too close to the highway speeding traffic especially speeding trucks; blind resident of the above street walking to and from Blackheath main shopping area five days a week	Need for somewhere to walk near the cafe as many cars are parked there
The slope to the road is too steep for me. It needs to be flatter. I lose my balance.	The pedestrian crossings in Springwood have an enormous dip on each side. Very hard to navigate in a wheelchair or mobility aid. Water collecting in the gutters makes this more of a hazard.
Wentworth Street in Blackheath. Tree roots in footpaths.	
Drainage problems with gutters in Blackheath. Wentworth Street.	
Hub car parking space.	
Uneven footpath in Macquarie Road outside Sports Club and Hub in Springwood due to tree roots.	

Question 6 – Specific barriers	Question 8 – Other comments
In Medlow Bath, your mostly need to walk on the road	
<p>Dangerous crossing outside IGA carpark/Post Office in Springwood. Old paint markings remain on the ground from previous crossing. Speed limits need to be imposed as cars speed around the bend. Cars drive against the white arrows in the carpark. Drivers go the wrong way as a short cut. Car spots are too small for larger vehicles. No room to get in or out of your car. Carpark not safe for pedestrians.</p>	

## Appendix Five:

### Barriers identified in other towns outside the scope of this study

These barriers were identified in group and individual consultations.

Location	Barrier Type	Description
Glenbrook – pedestrian crossing on Wascoe , outside Jim Aitkins Real Estate	Ramps too steep on pedestrian crossing	The ramp from the pedestrian crossing is too steep (when coming off the crossing) if using a wheelchair or mobility scooter. The device tilts because of steepness and makes it unsafe to use.
Glenbrook – near scout hall, corner Moore and Hill Streets – access pathway to GWH	Steps	Need proper ramp here. Currently stairs and worn pathway which is not suitable for people using wheelchairs, mobility scooters or prams. This will be a major thoroughfare once Ross traffic lights on the highway have been finished. (See Image 37)
Glenbrook/Blaxland – on GWH near Coughlan Road exit on Hardware Shop side of GWH	Sloping traffic island	Pedestrian crossing traffic island (where road crossing button is) is dangerous for people using wheelchairs. It slopes and is difficult to manoeuvre wheelchairs.
Glenbrook – outside Creative Arts Centre	Garden beds/hedges blocking footpath	Garden bed / hedges can block access to footpath for people using mobility aids
Glenbrook – Hare	Trees branches too low	Some tree branches are lower than 2.5 metres off the ground which are an obstruction along pathways to people using mobility aids. Needs to be regularly maintained and monitored.
Glenbrook/Blaxland – bus stop on GWH (eastbound) near King	Bus no longer stops at bus stop	Although the bus stop is still there, the buses no longer stop there unless you ring beforehand. It is understood that the roadworks at Glenbrook have impacted on this.
Corridor of Oaks - Faulconbridge	Footpath is rough/even with exposed roots	
Faulconbridge train station	Inaccessible, no lift and steep stairs	
Corner Shirlow and Adeline , Faulconbridge	No footpath, dips and grass slippery	
Lawson Station	Steps to platform	
Badgery's Creek Road, Lawson	Narrow and no paved footpath	Main off highway thoroughfare on north side to Queens Road but inaccessible if using wheelchair

Location	Barrier Type	Description
Bullaburra Station and other train stations	Not accessible	My wife and I are aged 72 and 73 respectively and in reasonably good health. One concern for both of us is access to Blue Mountain's rail stations. We live in Bullaburra on the south side. To access the rail station on the north side we have to either use about 140 steps or alternatively use 500 metres of ramps and then two sets of stairs to the station. Access to Lawson station is easier but there are still two sets of steps to the platform. Wentworth Falls has lifts, but to use that station would involve a five-kilometre drive only to have difficulties finding long term parking within walking distance to the station. If lifts are eventually installed at Hazelbrook, then similar parking problems will arise.
Wentworth Falls	Inaccessible café and restaurants	Most cafés/restaurants do not offer ramped access. The only exception is Schwartz's deck area.
Accessible toilet at Wentworth Falls lake	Toilet not big enough for wheelchairs	
Leura Memorial Gardens	Rolled gutters	Rolled gutters prevent people in wheelchairs (with small wheels) or mobility scooters from accessing the Wheelchair accessible toilet
Intersection GWH and Civic Place, Katoomba	Layered ramps at crossing.	Walking frames get stuck in layers on run up at this intersection. Light changes too quickly to safely cross
Katoomba train station	Gap between platform and train	A recent knee operation (and childhood polio) has made mobility harder and she now uses a walking stick. The gap is too wide for her to safely get on and off the train and she has had problems with station staff regarding using the ramp.
Katoomba Cultural Centre	Accessible toilets – requiring key from reception	To access accessible toilets, you are required to obtain key from reception desk. This can be problematic when there are queues of people at the desk and waiting can be a problem.
Katoomba train station and other train stations	Gap between train and platform	The size of the gap between the train door and some station platforms, especially Katoomba. Getting onto the train is a lesser problem but leaving the train can be a risk at several stations.
Medical Centre at 61 Parke Katoomba	No ramp access from street to footpath	People using wheelchairs/scooters have to go down to the bottom intersection along the road to gain access to the footpath
Medlow Bath –on eastern side of train station	Unpaved footpaths	Only a very small strip of paved footpath on the east side of the station. Further paved footpaths are needed, particularly for people using mobility aids.
Mt Victoria train station	Steps to platform – travelling east	Not accessible on platform heading in an easterly direction. Steps only. Also, long wait with large gaps in train timetable.

## Photo Gallery



**Image 38:**

Access pathway from corner Moore and Hill to GWH at Glenbrook. Currently stairs and worn pathway which is not suitable for people using wheelchairs, mobility scooters or prams. This will be a major thoroughfare once Ross traffic lights on the highway have been finished.

## Appendix Six:

### Letter from Blackheath Survey participant (individual details removed)

Cycle to school in September PLEASE.

30/8/2014

It is dangerous to ride a bike to school on Wentworth Street from Evans Lookout Road.

At the beginning of Wentworth Street, then north past Brightlands, Chelmsford and Hargraves Streets, there is a cycle track clearly marked. There is a sign post with a bike sign on top at the beginning of a steep, hump backed hill with double white centre lines. At the base of the hill the cycle track disappears.

I have asked students what they do when going up the hill if a vehicle comes up behind them and they said they alighted and stood against the hedge. It's worth mentioning that when cycling up a hill one tends to stand up, off the saddle, and **wobble** to pedal hard.

The dedicated bicycle track disappears adjacent to Eady Street and cyclists attempting to turn across the road are in danger from any vehicle coming down the hill. When they reach the Eady Street junction they find access so steep they have to get off the bike and push it across Wentworth Street.

I would like the Council to organise the bushes, trees and grasses on the side of the hill be removed and the gradient adjusted or evened to make the hill safer for cyclists to get to school, and to make it safe for them to stop when on Wentworth Street from Evans Lookout Road PLEASE.

*It would also be safer for adults, to go to the village.*

I would like better lighting at the road junction of Evans' Lookout Road, when turning right, into Wentworth Street at night time. I have missed the turn off a few times.

*I have sent this letter several times!  
over the years.*



# Contact

**For further information on this mobility study  
contact Blue Mountains City Council**

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