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To Christchurch City Council please find DPA’s submission on the Akaroa Wharf Replacement

## Disabled Persons Assembly NZ

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# Introducing Disabled Persons Assembly NZ

The Disabled Persons Assembly NZ (DPA) is a pan-disability disabled person’s organisation that works to realise an equitable society, where all disabled people (of all impairment types and including women, Māori, Pasifika, young people) are able to direct their own lives. DPA works to improve social indicators for disabled people and for disabled people to be recognised as valued members of society. DPA and its members work with the wider disability community, other DPOs, government agencies, service providers, international disability organisations, and the public by:

* telling our stories and identifying systemic barriers
* developing and advocating for solutions
* celebrating innovation and good practice

# The submission

DPA welcomes the opportunity to submit on the Akaroa Wharf replacement. This new replacement wharf will ensure that all disabled people and their whanau will be able to access and enjoy the events Akaroa has to offer. It will also cater to the growing number of disabled people who will visit this great tourist destination in the years ahead.

**The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)**

The UNCRPD Articles most relevant to our submission are:

* Article 4.3 Involving disabled people and our organisations in decisions that affect us
* Article 9 Accessibility
* Article 9: Accessibility
* Article 19: Living independently and being included in the community
* Article 20: Personal mobility
* Article 30: Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport

New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026:

* Outcome 5 - Accessibility

# DPA’s recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** DPA strongly recommends that the wharf is repaired and made accessible for all users, and this especially includes disabled people who are mobility impaired such as, for example, people using wheelchairs, mobility scooters, and walking frames as well as for people pushing children’s strollers.

**Recommendation 2:** DPA welcomes proposed changes to the height and width of the replacement wharf. It appears to us from the architect’s drawings on the website that it will be made wider than the current wharf in order to accommodate more people and this will be beneficial for disabled people who use wheelchairs, mobility aids (such as walking frames) and people pushing children’s strollers. Indeed, ensuring full and safe accessibility for all pedestrians and other wharf users will be vital.

**Recommendation 3:** DPA strongly recommends the availability of wheelchair and mobility aid user-friendly hoists to access boat trips departing from the wharf.

**Recommendation 4**: DPA strongly recommends that there be an accessible entrance created for everyone to commercial sites on the wharf, and this includes for disabled people using mobility wheelchairs, scooters and other aids as well as blind and low vision people.

**Recommendation 5:** DPA strongly recommends that there be tactile strips placed at strategic points along the wharf and jetty area to accommodate the needs of both blind people and low vision people navigating the area.

**Recommendation 6:** DPA strongly recommends the incorporation of safety features along the wharf including the erection of small wooden barriers to prevent people (including disabled people) from falling into the water and the placement of warning signs in accessible formats (i.e., New Zealand Sign Language) to indicate elevated risk areas.

**Recommendation 7:** DPA strongly recommends that seating be placed at strategic points along the Akaroa wharf of varying heights (either higher or lower), and these should include armrests so that people with mobility impairments, children and older people can easily get in or out of the seats.

**Recommendation 8:** DPA strongly recommends that there are sufficient mobility car parking spaces made available to accommodate the growing number of disabled visitors to the wharf area and that these be placed near the wharf.

**Recommendation 9**: DPA strongly recommends that it be involved alongside other disabled people’s organisations (DPOs) as part of a comprehensive co-design process and these organisations include People First, Deaf Aotearoa, Muscular Dystrophy Association, Kapo Maori and Blind Citizens. To this end, our local Kaituitui and DPA members are available to become involved in this project to ensure its accessibility.

# Conclusion

DPA welcomes the City Council’s proposal to replace the ageing Akaroa Wharf with what will hopefully be a more inclusive, accessible and safer wharf designed to meet the needs of both the Akaroa community and visitors going forward.

DPA looks forward to hearing the Council’s response on our submission.