

Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre Upgrades Social Story



Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre
1 Kunuwarra Place, Lake Gardens VIC 3350
(03) 5334 2499
www.ballarataquaticcentre.com/

Monday	6am – 9pm
Tuesday	6am – 9pm
Wednesday	6am – 9pm
Thursday	6am – 9pm
Friday	6am – 9pm
Saturday	6am – 6pm 8a
Sunday	8am – 6pm

BALC
Opening hours



The Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre is a proud member of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program.

Keep an eye out for staff wearing the Sunflower Supporter lanyard or pin.



This social story has been created to use as a learning tool and will help individuals to understand what to expect when visiting the Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre

This book aims to provide information about:

1. Building upgrades at the Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre (BALC)
 2. Some sounds and sights that people may experience
 3. Things people can do to feel comfortable and safe
 4. Where to get help
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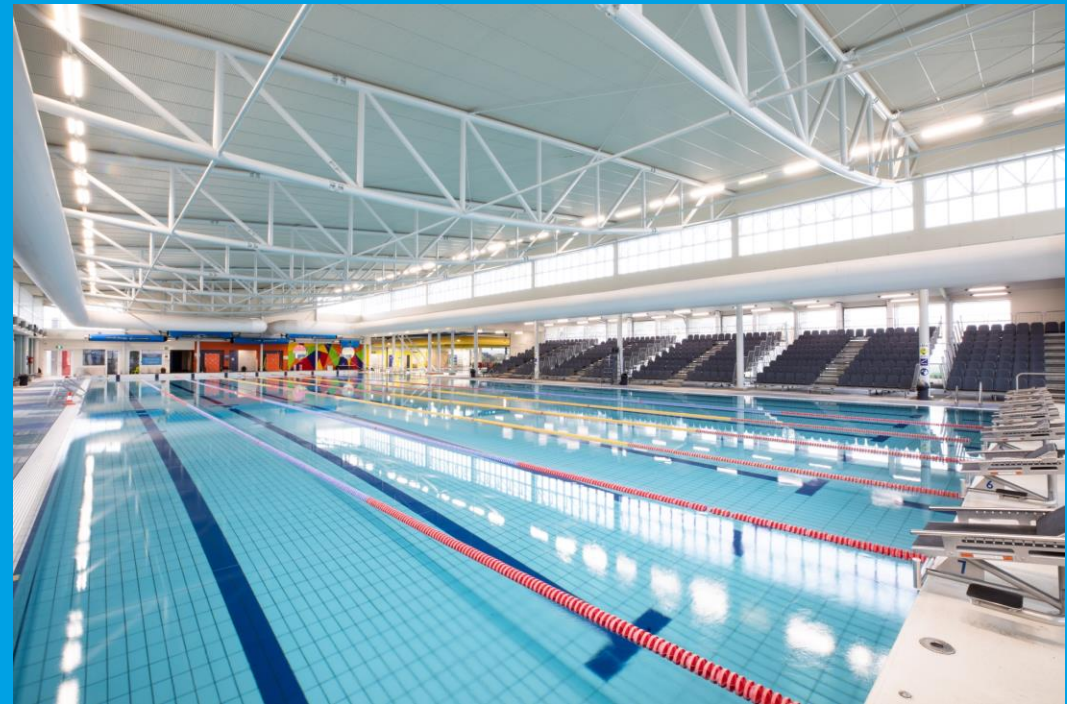
What is changing at BALC

Accessibility upgrades and more

I am going to the
Ballarat Aquatic
and Lifestyle
Centre.

This is close to
Lake
Wendouree.

It is open every day.



The City of Ballarat is improving facilities at BALC.

The City of Ballarat is making changes to the building.

These changes are for:

- people with disability
- people who need easier access





The goal is:

- more people can join in
- more people can be active

Why these changes are important

These changes mean:

- people can use the centre more easily
 - people feel safe
 - people feel welcome
 - people can take part in more activities
-

BALC will build two new
Changing Places bathrooms.

Changing Places are:

- large bathrooms
- made for people with high support needs

They have:

- a ceiling hoist
- extra space
- room for carers

This helps people:

- change safely
 - feel comfortable
-





Changing Places
toilets use a special
key.

This key is called an
MLAK.

You need an MLAK to
unlock the toilet.

There will be a green
light on this sign
when it is vacant.





An MLAK is a special access key.

It is used for:

accessible public facilities

MLAK keys are for people who need to use facilities.



The MLAK system helps make sure:

- facilities are clean
- facilities work properly
- people who need them can use them.

Some people can get an MLAK for free.

You may be able to get one if you have:

- a Victorian Companion Card

BALC is also upgrading entrances, gym and fitness studios. There will be:

- automatic doors
- wider entrances
- easier ways to move around

This helps people who:

- use wheelchairs or walkers
 - push prams
 - need more space or support
-



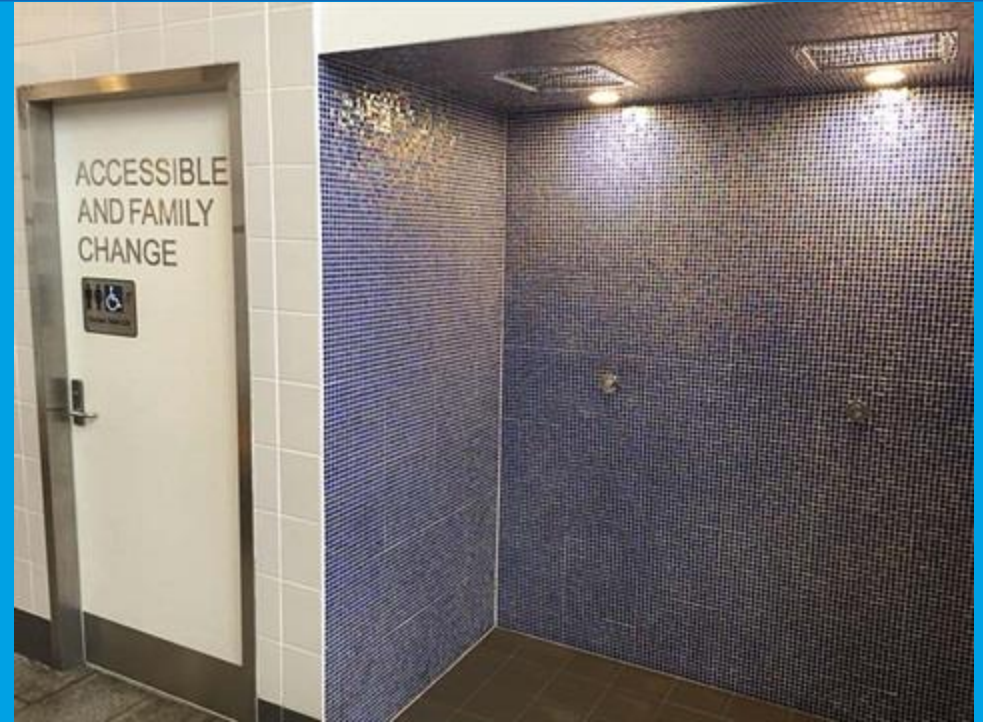
BALC will also be building new family change rooms for families with disability.

Family-friendly change rooms help:

- parents
- carers
- support workers

They make it easier to:

- support someone
 - stay together
 - feel comfortable
-



A large blue triangle pointing downwards from the top-left corner, covering the left half of the slide.

What to expect

While building is happening

Building work will happen in stages.

Stages mean:

- the work is done in parts

This helps to:

- reduce disruption
- keep the centre open

Building work is planned to start:

- In May 2026
-



The Individual Accessible Change Room behind the hydro pool pictured here will be changed into a Changing Places toilet.

What this means for you:

- this change room may be closed
- the corridor to this room may be blocked

When the room opens:

- you will need an MLAK to use it



Stage 2 will last about 10 weeks. In Stage 2:

- pool deck change rooms will be closed
- plywood barriers will block some areas
- you will not be able to walk through these areas



What this means for you:

- access to the pool may change
- there may be disruption near the main pool
- Classes will continue as normal

I can look for signs that show me where to go and what to do.

Signs and pictures can help me know where to go.



In Stage 3:

- the main reception will not be used
- you will enter through the west entry

What this means for you:

- the corridor to the communal change rooms will not be available
- family change rooms on the pool deck will be used instead



What this means for you:

- the corridor to the communal change rooms will not be available
- family change rooms on the pool deck will be used instead



At some times:

- group fitness doors will be replaced
- health club (gym) doors will be replaced

This may change how you enter these areas.

Staff and signs will show you another way.





During building work, there may be:

- loud or sudden noises
- tools and machines making sounds
- drilling or banging
- smells from paint or materials
- dust or different air smells
- bright lights or flashing lights
- different layouts or blocked spaces

These things might feel new or uncomfortable.

These changes are temporary.



If it is too loud or busy, I can:

- move to a different area
 - take a break
 - come back another time
 - I can wear headphones or earplugs
 - take a break in a quieter space
 - go during sensory quiet time
 - ask someone what is happening
 - go with a support person.
-



BALC has a **sensory quiet time**.

Sensory quiet time is:

3:00pm to 3:45pm

During this time:
noise is managed where
possible



The centre will:

- tell people what is happening
- try to make this less stressful for people

For updates:

- check the BALC website
 - check BALC social media
 - call BALC reception
-

BALC staff can:

- explain what changes may effect you
- say which areas are open
- help you find another way
- support your access needs

It is okay to ask for help.



Even when things
change:

the building is still
safe

staff are there to help
me.



The changes will not last forever.

The upgrades will help make BALC better for everyone.



Accessibility Information

Getting Here and Access Throughout
Accessible designated parking
Wheelchair access throughout the
Centre

Lift access to the gymnastics viewing
area

Aquatic Accessibility

Hydraulic hoist (SWL 230kg)

Electronic chair pool lift (SWL 182kg)

PAL2 pool lift (SWL 136kg)

Four aquatic wheelchairs

Gradual railed ramp entry to 50m Pool
and Multipurpose Pool

Changing Facilities

We also provide the following changing
facilities:

1 accessible change room with wall-
mounted, height adjustable change
table and ceiling hoist

24 individual change rooms

2 family change rooms

Assistance Animals

Assistance animals are welcome,
including an assistance dog within the
meaning of section 4(1) of the Equal
Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)

Assistance dog lead points

Communication and Sensory Support

Hearing Loop access for people who are
deaf or hard of hearing

Communication Board for people who
have difficulty with speech or
understanding spoken language

Sensory quiet times between 3:00pm –
3:45pm

**Accessibility
Information**



Need more information?

Contact the Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle
Centre

(03) 5334 2499
balc@ballarat.vic.gov.au

www.ballarataquaticcentre.com/