

# Library Strategy



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# Acknowledgement of Country

Bayside Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians, the Gadigal/Bidjigal people of the Eora Nation.

The people of the Eora Nation, their spirit and ancestors will always remain with our waterways and the land – our Mother Earth.

**Image:**

Amelia Bates,  
*The hand saving the  
lost generation.*







# Introduction

## Purpose

Over the past decades, public libraries across the globe have expanded their roles to become community hubs providing vital public spaces and access to resources, services and information that support the liveability and resilience of our cities and communities. Today, libraries are some of the top visited and trusted public institutions in Australia.

As spaces where people of all ages and backgrounds are welcome, Bayside Libraries (hereafter referred to as the Library) help to make our community stronger by encouraging and enabling lifelong learning, providing spaces and services where everyone is welcome, supporting digital inclusion and connecting people to each other, to Council and to local services.

To keep pace with industry trends and respond to the evolving needs and expectations of our changing and growing community, the Library needs to think ahead and plan strategically.

The Library Strategeg sets out a long term vision and strategic direction alongside a three-year action plan for the Library to ensure that our services remain relevant, efficient and impactful into the future.

This Strategy is the first for the Bayside Council since the former City of Botany Bay and former Rockdale councils amalgamated in 2016. It provides a holistic shared vision for what we want our Library to be by 2032, and a roadmap for how we will achieve that vision.



# How we developed the Strategy

## RESEARCH

Research to support the development of this Strategy included demographic and place context analysis to understand what our community looks like today and how it will change in the future.

We completed a strategic context review to make sure we are aligning with other government strategies. We also looked at innovative examples of library services to understand the key trends that the Library can learn from.

## REVIEW

We undertook a review of our library services, collections and operations to understand our current strengths and challenges. We compared our performance against neighbouring and similar councils to better understand how we are tracking.

We undertook an assessment of our current library facilities and looked at industry benchmarks to better understand current gaps and what is needed for the future.

## ENGAGEMENT

We are proud and thankful that more than 1,300 community members contributed their feedback and ideas to help shape this Strategy. Engagement activities included an online community survey and focus groups with local residents.

## COLLABORATION

We collaborated across Council teams to develop the Strategy. Our aim is to foster cross-organisational collaboration and further integrate the Library with other Council services.

# Why libraries matter

**Libraries provide social, educational, cultural, wellbeing and economic benefits to individuals and communities. Across the world, studies show that investing in libraries is a smart move. For example, a 2005 study found that, for every dollar spent on NSW public libraries, the value back to the community is between \$2.80 and \$4.20.**

**The 2016 Australian public library standards, guidelines and outcome measures document describes six key outcomes from the work of public libraries.**

## **Literacy and lifelong learning**

Libraries play a valuable role in helping children to learn to read through Story Time programs and children's collections. Libraries also offer programs and resources to support adult literacy and digital literacy. Collections and programs enable people of all ages to pursue formal and informal learning.

## **Stronger and more creative communities**

Libraries strengthen communities by providing an inclusive forum and support for creativity and cultural identity. They preserve the past, celebrate the present and embrace the future by ensuring equitable access, promoting local culture, and celebrating diversity and tolerance.

## **Digital inclusion**

Libraries play an important role in supporting digital inclusion by providing free access to computers and the internet, technical support to computer users, and training to people with low levels of digital literacy.

## **Informed and connected citizenship**

Many people come to their library to connect with one another and find out what is happening in their community. The library is becoming the new 'town square', a non-commercial place in a central location integrated with other community facilities.

## **Personal development and wellbeing**

Everyone is welcome to use the library as they choose, be this reading for pleasure, meeting friends, accessing everyday information, accessing information that supports health and wellness, managing personal finances or being somewhere safe.

## **Economic and workforce development**

Libraries support economic development by providing access to WiFi and computers to search and apply for jobs online. Libraries are increasingly providing spaces where small businesses can work and collaborate with customers and partners.





**“I have lived here for five years and didn’t know anybody when I moved. Bayside Libraries have been my rock. I’m constantly impressed by the range of books that you have.”**

**- Survey response**



# Our library services

## Spaces

The Library operates seven facilities that provide welcoming spaces for our community to borrow collections, study, work, play or just sit and read quietly.

Eastgardens and Rockdale Libraries are large flagship libraries co-located with Council customer service centres. Arncliffe, Bexley North, Brighton Le Sands, Mascot and Sans Souci are smaller branch libraries used by local communities.

## Collections and resources

Our collections and resources include a broad range of materials to suit different ages and interests. Along with the bulk of the collection in print, books and periodicals, there are also multimedia items, DVDs, CDs, eBooks, eAudio and eMagazines.

Responding to the cultural diversity of our population, including 52% of our population speaking non-English languages at home, we offer books and magazines in community languages including Mandarin, Greek and Arabic.

Our library services also play a unique role in preserving and making available material pertaining to local history. The collection consists of materials such as books, photos, maps and ephemera, brought together from what was originally two local government areas and is in varying states of cataloguing and digitising.

## Online services

The Library provides access to digital collections via the library website. The library catalogue can also be searched and reservations made online, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Members can also access a range of external resources and collections via the library website, such as online research databases and genealogical research hubs.

## Tech resources and support

Library members and non-members can access a range of technology resources at the Library, including public computers, free WiFi, printers, copiers and scanners. We also run digital literacy programs such as Tech Savvy Seniors in multiple languages that help support digital inclusion in our community.

## Programs

The Library delivers inclusive programs throughout the calendar year. Our programs for babies and toddlers, such as baby rhyme time, help to support early literacy and are highly valued by our community. Our school holiday activities cater to students with diverse interests from robotics, to drama and poetry writing.

We also provide space for social groups, such as movie and book clubs and knitting groups, that are particularly popular amongst older community members.



Figure 1 - Poetry slam at Rockdale Library



## The Library services at a glance



**2** flagship  
libraries

- ▶ Eastgardens
- ▶ Rockdale



**5** branch  
libraries

- ▶ Arncliffe
- ▶ Bexley North
- ▶ Brighton Le Sands
- ▶ Mascot
- ▶ Sans Souci

**726,333**

Library visits across all  
branches in 2018/2019.  
That's just over  
**4 visits per capita**

**669,782**

loans in 2018/2019

That's about  
**4 loans per capita**



**167,512**  
physical lending  
items in the  
collection



**55** public access  
computers

**30,120** computer  
bookings

**123,509** website  
visits



**35,086** active members

That's **20%** of our total population

**\$33.84**

expenditure per capita  
ranking **83 out of 90**  
NSW library services

**1,651**

programs run in  
2018/2019 attended by  
**33,737 people**

**41**

Average weekly opening  
hours per branch.

# Strategic drivers

The Library's future direction is influenced by strategic priorities at the international, national, state and local levels.

## International

Libraries play an important role in contributing towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to create more sustainable societies by providing equitable access to information and resources, and providing safe, inclusive and free meeting spaces.

## Federal, state and regional

There are several national and state bodies with guidelines and policies that guide library services, including the State Library of NSW and the Australian Library and Information Association.

State government priorities for social infrastructure include a focus on increased access to high-quality public spaces such as libraries within 10 minutes' walk, especially in growing areas such as Bayside.

The Greater Sydney Region Plan & Eastern City District Plan include a focus on providing social infrastructure such as libraries to meet demand from population growth and to support liveability, productivity and sustainability.

## Local


This Strategy aligns with the vision set out in our Community Strategic Plan (CSP) to be "A City built on trust, with engaged communities, effective leadership and access to decision making."

Our priorities align with the CSP strategic goals to create innovative public spaces that put people first; to deliver public buildings that are well maintained and accessible; to provide safe and engaging spaces; to harness technological change and to provide opportunities to participate in arts and culture.



Figure 2 - United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals.





**“The library was a source of wonder and magic as a child and it continues to this day with the wonderful libraries I have access to in this area. The library has been refurbished over the last few years and it’s fresh, modern, and fantastic.”**

- Survey response

**Library**  
**& Customer**

# Our community

## Our community today

Located in Sydney's south-eastern suburbs, in 2021, the Bayside Local Government Area (LGA) was home to 176,061 people. Our community is diverse in terms of age, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, requiring our library services to be flexible to respond to a range of community needs.

Compared to the average across Greater Sydney, our community is more culturally diverse with more than half of our residents speaking a language other than English at home and almost one in ten residents not fluent in English. This highlights the important role of the Library in providing access to services in community languages, connecting people to appropriate services and supporting English literacy.

On average we are younger compared to Greater Sydney with a high and growing proportion of adults aged 18-34 years, indicating a need for access to library services outside of work hours and on the weekends. We also have a growing number of seniors and elderly residents, many of whom access the library to borrow books and for social connection to librarians and the community.

As a largely suburban and urban area, our area is characterised by a high proportion of high-density dwellings, with apartment living concentrated in the northern areas of our LGA and near strategic centres in suburbs such as Mascot, Wolli Creek, Eastgardens, Rockdale and Kogarah. Ensuring equitable access for residents in high-growth areas and providing library spaces that function as a comfortable "third place" outside of home and work will be a priority into the future.

## Bayside at a glance 2021

Estimated resident population  
**176,061**



Population aged 0-18 years  
**17.7%**



Population aged 60+ years  
**19.5%**



Population born overseas:  
top countries are China,  
Nepal and Indonesia  
**53.3%**



Population speaking a  
non-English language at home:  
top languages are Mandarin,  
Greek and Arabic  
**58.9%**



Population not fluent in English  
**15.1%**



High-density dwellings  
**52.2%**



2021 ABS Census of Population & Housing (via profile.id)



## How our community is growing and changing

### Diversity across our places

Bayside is a large place and our communities differ from suburb to suburb. Ensuring our library services and spaces are equitably distributed and flexible to respond to the differing needs and challenges of our diverse people and places is essential. For example, younger and higher density communities such as Wolli Creek and Mascot will have different needs to ageing suburban communities such as Ramsgate and Sans Souci.

### Forecast population growth

The Bayside population is forecast to grow by 31% to 2036, with growth concentrated in and near strategic centres including Wolli Creek, Mascot, Eastgardens, Arncliffe and Rockdale. Population growth will place increased pressure on existing library services, while population-based benchmarking indicates that some of these areas already have an under supply of library floorspace. Upgrading existing library spaces to work harder and delivering new, fit-for-purpose spaces is a priority for the future.

### Change in age profile

There will be growth in the number of our residents across all age groups, however, between 2022 and 2036, the highest growth by numbers will be in residents aged 25-39 years old, indicating ongoing need for access to library services outside of work hours and on weekends.

### Changes in dwelling type

The majority of the growth in Bayside will be in apartments in areas such as Wolli Creek and Mascot. This will result in increased density in these areas and a need to plan for libraries that provide a space to connect outside of the home and public open space that functions as a “community lounge room” for residents living in apartments.

### Changes in household type

The Bayside community is characterised by mainly couple families with children and this will continue into the future. However, there will also be a significant increase in the proportion of lone person households and couples without children households. With an increasing number of people living alone, libraries can offer a space for social connection outside the home.



Figure 3 - Bayside forecast population growth 2016-2036  
(Source: Forecast.id)

# What we heard

More than 1,300 community members helped shape the development of this Strategy. We received an overwhelming response to our online survey and people also participated in two online focus groups.

The purpose of engagement was to collaborate with the community to develop a shared vision for the Library and to understand current levels of satisfaction as well as community priorities for the future. We also wanted to hear from non-users about why they don't use our library services and what would need to change for them to do so.

Across engagement activities, we heard that:

- ▶ Our community wants our libraries to be community hubs that are inclusive and welcoming of people of all ages, cultural backgrounds and abilities.
- ▶ Our community places high value on libraries being clean, modern and functional and easily accessible by transport with separated noisy & quiet spaces. Extended opening hours on week nights and weekends was a priority to cater to the needs of students and workers.
- ▶ Our community is very satisfied with services provided by library staff. The friendliness and professionalism of library staff was seen as very important for the future of our library services.
- ▶ While digital collections are on the rise, our community values physical collections most and wants to see a wider range and more up to date collections and improved access to online collections.
- ▶ Our community wants better access to information about what's on at the Library and wants to see more creative arts programs and events.
- ▶ Access to computers and free WiFi is an important value driver for our community - more highly valued by young people and people who don't currently use the Library.

**My mum who is unable to commute is still able to utilise your resources! A friendly library man comes to her home with a bag of Greek language books and magazines which give her so much joy!**

**Thank you for this service which halts any anxieties and depressions she would feel if she were not connected to her Eastgardens library.**

**The Library is an extremely important part of my reading experience.**

**As a pensioner buying books to read can sometimes become very expensive and having a library close by to be able to borrow my books is great to keep my brain active.**

**The Library enables you to be a part of the community, helps you to learn and discover new things.**

**I've been able to gain access to services that I didn't even know existed.**



## Snapshot of library survey findings

**1,259** survey responses

**85%** were library users

### Levels of satisfaction

**79%** library staff

**76%** library buildings

**66%** physical collections

**38%** library website

**8%** opening hours

### Your priorities for the future

**96%**

Libraries are clean, modern and functional

**94%**

The friendliness and professionalism of staff

**92%**

Libraries can be easily accessed by different modes of transport

**92%**

Opening hours

**87%** The most common reason for using our Libraries was to borrow books, audiobooks, CDs and DVDs



**91%**

The library design separates spaces for noisy and quiet activities

**90%**

Range, relevance and quality of physical collections

### Non-users

Survey respondents that don't currently use the Library gave the following reasons:

**36%** use a library service in a neighbouring LGA

**20%** don't have time

**18%** don't know what's available

### Suggested improvements

Survey respondents would like to see a wider and more up to date range of physical collections; extended opening hours on week nights and weekends; upgrades to library facilities including separated noisy and quiet areas and more study and meeting spaces; a wider range of programs and activities for diverse ages and interests outside of work hours; improved access to online collections and better technology resources and support.

# Our spaces

## Bayside Library facilities today

The Library operates seven facilities providing 4,500m<sup>2</sup> of library floorspace across the LGA. Eastgardens and Rockdale Libraries are large flagship libraries co-located with Council customer service centres, while Arncliffe, Bexley North, Brighton Le Sands, Mascot and Sans Souci are smaller neighbourhood libraries. Our community can also access a number of libraries located close to our borders in neighbouring council areas, including in Kogarah and Hurstville.

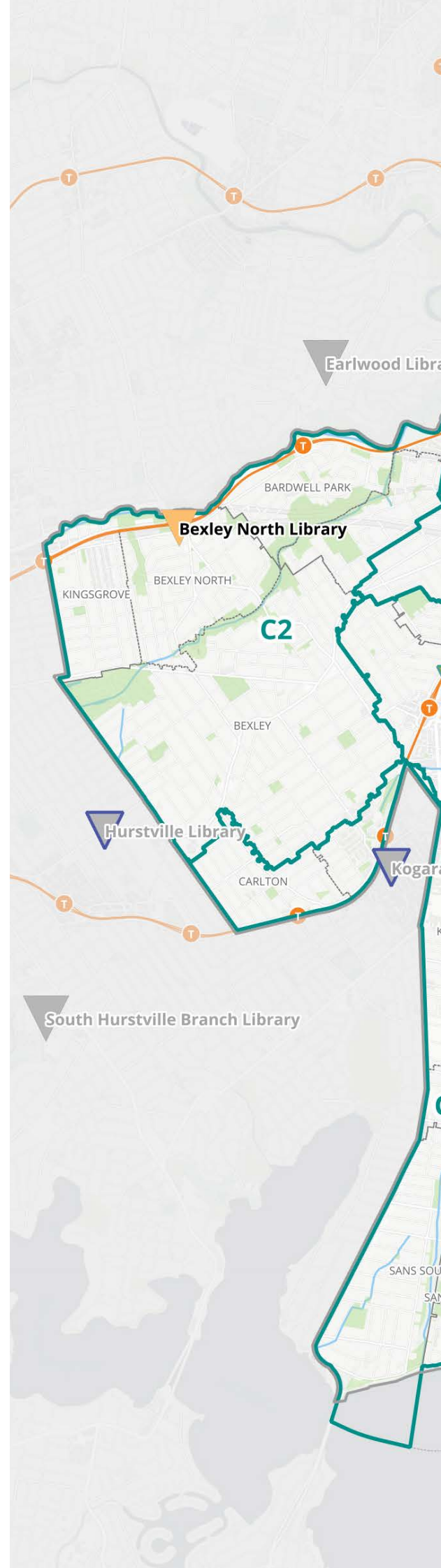
Most of our neighbourhood libraries are small and ageing. In particular, Brighton Le Sands and Arncliffe Libraries are smaller than recommended minimum standards and are not fit-for-purpose to deliver library services. While most of our libraries are well-located to public transport, Brighton Le Sands, Eastgardens, Mascot and Sans Souci are not easily accessible by train.

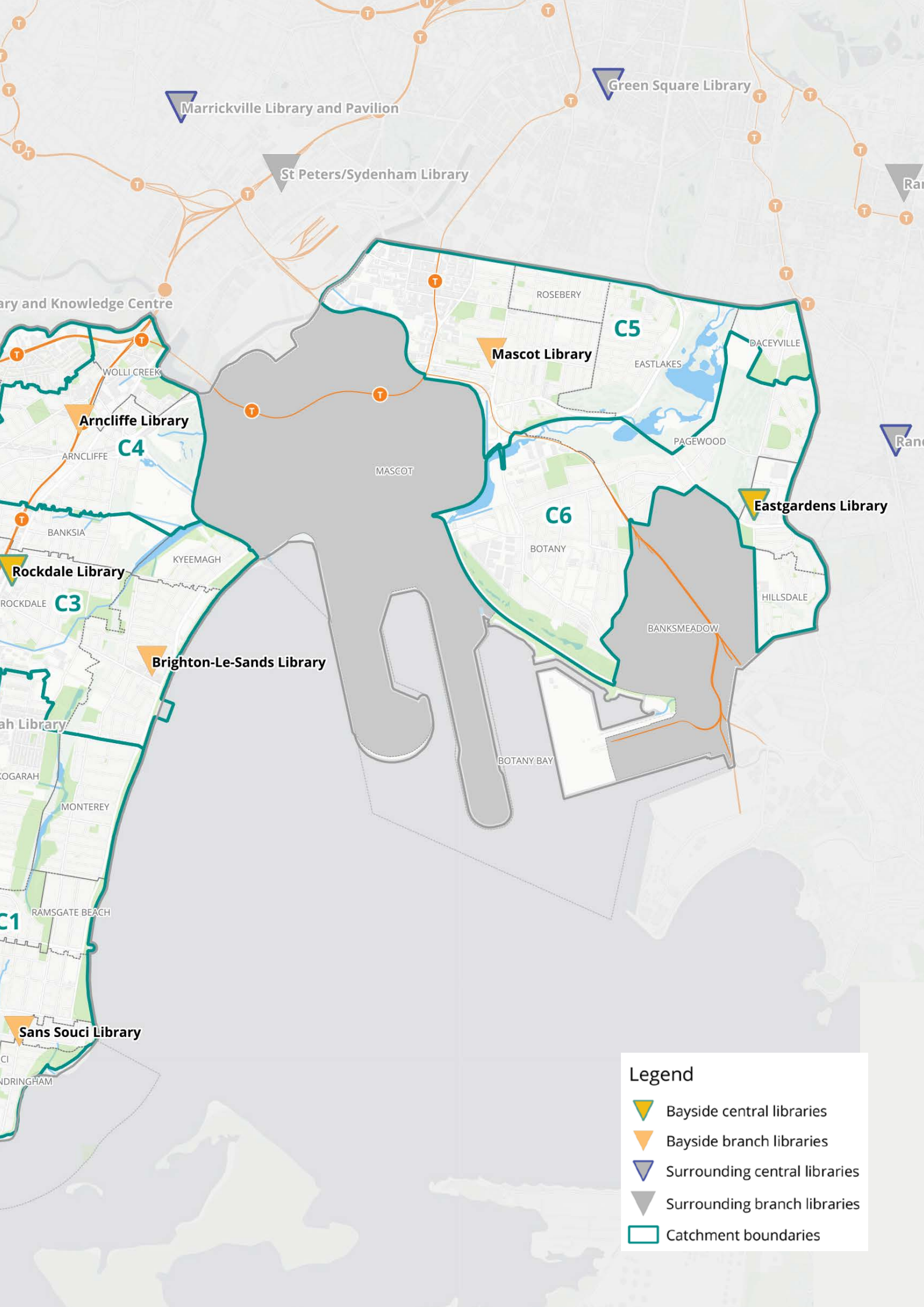
Benchmarking against State Library of NSW standards indicates that based on current and forecast population demand there is or will soon be a below benchmarked provision of library floorspace in all Bayside planning catchments, with the largest gap in our high growth and high density areas of Wolli Creek and Arncliffe.

## What's needed for the future?






To deliver contemporary library services and ensure equitable access to high-quality facilities across the LGA, our priorities for the future of the Bayside Library network will be to improve our existing library spaces as multi-functional and welcoming hubs to stay; provide increased library floorspace to cater to our significant forecast population growth in high growth areas and consolidate or re-purpose facilities which are poor performing and not fit for purpose to deliver services.

In planning for our future library network, we will consider industry best practices and trends, including for libraries to be located in town centres in proximity to public transport to support community access and activation of local centres.





Legend

-  Bayside central libraries
-  Bayside branch libraries
-  Surrounding central libraries
-  Surrounding branch libraries
-  Catchment boundaries



# What library trends can we aspire to?

Planning for future library service provision in Bayside should consider best practice trends and principles including as outlined below and illustrated through case studies.

## Multipurpose and co-located

Across the globe, there is a trend towards multipurpose library spaces that are flexible to change with the interests and needs of the community. Design trends include moveable furniture, bookshelves and walls that allow for flexible reconfiguration of spaces.

Libraries are increasingly co-located with other community and cultural services and facilities, providing a one stop shop for residents with the aim to become community focal points and allowing for facility management efficiencies for councils.

## Mobile and pop-up services

There is a trend for library services to move beyond the physical library building and become present where the community is, offering touch points at places where you might not expect it such as shopping centres, train stations and parks. In urban growth areas in particular, there is a trend for temporary, pop-up and kiosk libraries, for example in mobile vans or shipping containers. Some councils are delivering book vending machines to provide access to lending collections.

## Extended access models

Designed to complement staffed library hours, some libraries are adopting extended access models that entrust community members to use library spaces after opening hours in the evenings and on weekends. Different models exist, such as providing access to an entire library or only a section using a swipe card.

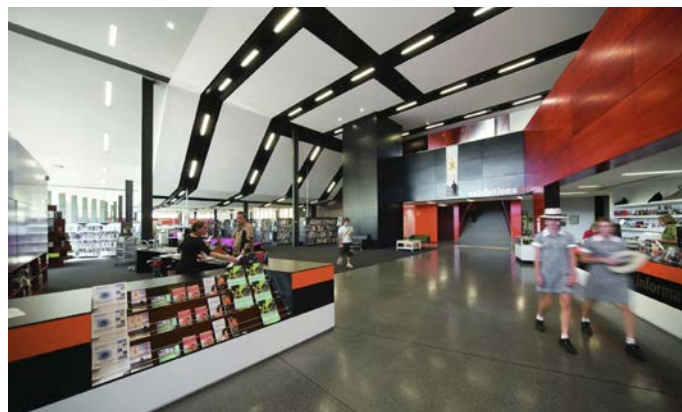


Figure 5 - The award-winning Albury Library Museum provides a library service as well as museum space suitable for a range of exhibitions.



Figure 4 - The City of Ipswich has installed a self-service Library Pod at a local shopping village. The pod enables members to use either their mobile phone or their library card to browse, borrow and return books.

## Outreach services and programs

Outreach library services and programs can support equitable access across a large service catchment area. One popular approach is mobile library services delivered from a bus or van, which has the added benefit of being flexible to move around between areas where communities might congregate such as events, shopping centres or local parks.

## Supporting culture and creativity

Libraries are increasingly co-located with arts and cultural services, such as galleries, theatres and function centres. Libraries support local creativity in a range of ways including through organising exhibitions and displays; hosting workshops, programs and events; and providing access to creative equipment or software. There is also an increasing trend towards providing maker spaces within libraries.

## Strengthening small businesses

More and more libraries are playing a role in nurturing and promoting entrepreneurship and supporting small businesses by providing space for work, collaboration as well as business support programs and resources. With many working-aged adults in Bayside and an increasing number of people working from home, there is significant opportunity to support local economic development and entrepreneurs.

## Inclusive spaces and programs

Many libraries are exploring how they can make their spaces and programs more inclusive for everyone in the community including people with disability, and there is a trend for offering low-sensory hours outside of regular opening hours to support people living with autism.

## Access to digital tech and skills

Public libraries play an important role in closing the “digital divide” and increasing digital inclusion through access to WiFi, computers, laptops and tablets, as well as providing digital literacy programs for all ages. With ever-evolving technology the role of library staff needs to be continually redefined to ensure staff can provide support.



Figure 6 - The BieBus is a mobile library service for children with a shipping container with comfortable beanbags in Amsterdam.



Figure 8 - Cabramatta Library's the Workary is a business incubator space with bookable meeting rooms, dedicated work space and a variety of business support programs available. The Workary is on the second floor separated from other (noisy) library uses.

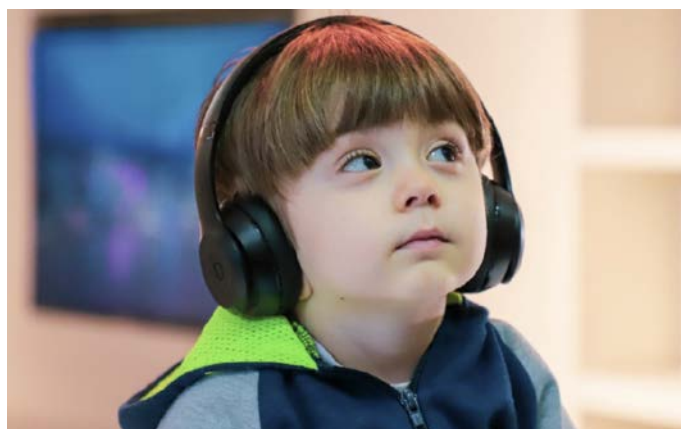


Figure 7 - Wollongong's Library After Hours programs offers the opportunity to socialise with others living with autism in a welcoming, low-sensory and judgment-free space for all family members.



# Our vision

**Our vision for the future of Bayside library services has been developed based on extensive consultation with more than 1,300 Bayside community members.**

The Library provides contemporary services, spaces and collections that actively respond to the needs and interests of our diverse, growing and changing communities.

We provide a dynamic network of high-quality physical and digital spaces and experiences that connect our community to the resources they need to learn, grow and thrive.

Our services are inclusive and welcoming of people of all ages, cultural backgrounds and abilities.

We build trust and support a vibrant, cohesive and resilient community.





**“My little ones love libraries not only for the books but also the interactions with the librarians. It’s so lovely when we meet staff that remember and engage with the kids.”**

**- Survey response**



# Our focus areas

**This section sets out our ten-year roadmap for the delivery of contemporary library services in Bayside. We have developed six strategic focus areas and statements of intent that will guide our future planning and decision-making.**



## **FOCUS AREA 1 Community**

Bayside Library services are focal points for community life, strengthening social cohesion, resilience and wellbeing for community members of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds. We listen to our community to promote and continually improve our services.



## **FOCUS AREA 4 Collections**

The Library provides dynamic physical and digital collections in a range of formats and languages that evolve based on the needs and interests of our community. Our local history collections are shared and preserved for future generations.



## **FOCUS AREA 2 Spaces**

The Library is modern, comfortable and welcoming community hub that provide a range of flexible spaces where everyone can shape their own experience - from quiet study to noisy play or collaboration. Our library network enables equitable access across our growing and changing LGA.



## **FOCUS AREA 5 Technology**

The Library provides access to contemporary technology resources, support and skill-development opportunities that support our community to learn, work and collaborate.



## **FOCUS AREA 3 Programs**


The Libraries works in partnership to deliver inclusive programs and initiatives that support literacy, lifelong learning, creativity and bring people from diverse backgrounds together around shared interests and experiences.



## **FOCUS AREA 6 Systems and processes**

The Library is well-managed, sustainable and resourced to meet the needs of our growing and changing community. Our highly-valued staff have the skills and resources to support our community and provide excellent customer service.





**“Bayside Libraries enable you to be a part of the community and help you to learn and discover new things. I’ve been able to gain access to services that I didn’t even know existed. The library enables you to grow and connect with locals.”**

- Survey response



## FOCUS AREA 1: People

**The Library services are focal points for community life, strengthening social cohesion, resilience and wellbeing for community members of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds. We listen to our community to promote and continually improve our services.**



### Evidence

- ▶ Community members told us they want the libraries to be community hubs that are inclusive and welcoming of people of all ages, cultural backgrounds and abilities.
- ▶ Bayside's demographic profile is changing and our library services need to adapt to meet the needs of an increasing number of people living in apartments in high growth areas, emerging and ageing cultural groups, and a high and growing young workforce population.
- ▶ Our membership numbers are low with opportunity to promote the value and benefits of membership to non-users. However, our visitor numbers are good suggesting people visit our libraries for programs, computers and social connection.
- ▶ There is a need for more mechanisms to regularly measure community satisfaction with our services with opportunity for more evidence-based decision-making.

### Our goals:

- ▶ 1.1: Our library services strengthen the resilience and wellbeing of our growing and changing community.
- ▶ 1.2: Our library services continually evolve to respond to community needs and interests across the LGA.
- ▶ 1.3: Our library services reflect and embrace people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities and champion inclusion.

### We will:

- ▶ Extend library hours on weekdays and weekends where feasible to better meet the needs of workers and students.
- ▶ Increase methods to capture and report on community feedback and satisfaction that informs decision making for library services, programs and collections.
- ▶ Deliver a diverse range of cultural, linguistic and arts programs and initiatives that engage our community and support life-long learning.
- ▶ Investigate opportunities to provide meaningful ways for community members to volunteer their time and skills at the Library.
- ▶ Investigate the delivery of sensory hours to support inclusion for people with disability.

## FOCUS AREA 2:

# Spaces

**The Libraries are modern, comfortable and welcoming community hubs that provide a range of flexible spaces where everyone can shape their own experience - from quiet study to noisy play or collaboration. Our library network enables equitable access across our growing and changing LGA.**



## Evidence

- ▶ Community members told us they place high value on libraries being clean, modern and functional and easily accessible by transport with separated noisy & quiet spaces. Extended opening hours on week nights and weekends was a priority for students and workers.
- ▶ Most of our neighbourhood libraries are small and ageing. In particular, Brighton Le Sands and Arncliffe Libraries are smaller than recommended minimum standards and are not fit-for-purpose to deliver library services.
- ▶ While most of our libraries are well-located to public transport, Brighton Le Sands, Eastgardens, Mascot and Sans Souci are not easily accessible by train.
- ▶ Benchmarking against State Library of NSW standards indicates that based on current and forecast population demand there is or will soon be an under supply of library floorspace in all Bayside planning catchments, with the largest gap in Wolli Creek and Arncliffe.
- ▶ Best practice is for library spaces to be multipurpose and co-located, located in town centres in proximity to public transport to support community access and activation of local centres.

## Our goals:

- ▶ 2.1: Our library network enables equitable access to fit-for-purpose library facilities across our LGA.
- ▶ 2.2: Our library facilities are welcoming and flexible multipurpose community hubs.
- ▶ 2.3: Our library services extend beyond our facilities to meet our community members where they are.

## We will:

- ▶ Plan and seek funding opportunities to provide new modern library spaces within multi-purpose community hubs, prioritising areas with significant forecast population growth and residents living in high density housing.
- ▶ Review and optimise existing library spaces including separation of noisy and quiet spaces where feasible, increased study facilities, rationalisation of shelving and comfortable seating to support a range of library users.
- ▶ Investigate opportunities to rationalise underperforming libraries and facilities and replace with more modern facilities and/or alternative library models (e.g. mobile or book vending machines) to service the community.
- ▶ Investigate providing alternative library service models to enable increased access to library services and collections (e.g. mobile services, book lending machines, access to library facilities outside of staffed hours).

## FOCUS AREA 3:

# Programs

The Libraries work in partnership to deliver inclusive programs and initiatives that support literacy, lifelong learning, creativity and bring people from diverse backgrounds together around shared interests and experiences.



## Evidence

- ▶ Programs and events was a relatively low value driver for the future for survey respondents, however this may reflect limited engagement with and awareness of what's on offer.
- ▶ Community members told us they would like to see more creative arts, cultural and craft, health and wellbeing, and technology programs.
- ▶ Community members told us they would like more opportunities to volunteer at local libraries in delivering programs.
- ▶ A service review indicated opportunity for more coordination of programs across our library branches.
- ▶ Best practice trends include programming that is created for and in collaboration with local communities, as well as outreach programs and initiatives in public spaces.

**Our local Sans Souci library is excellent for my daughters who read up to 5 books a week. Being a local library, they can walk there, borrow, and sit and read books themselves as a pleasant outing. They would like to visit on weekends as week afternoons are busy.**

## Our goals:

- ▶ 3.1: Our inclusive programs and activities support lifelong learning and encourage community participation.
- ▶ 3.2: Our strong partnerships and streamlined processes support the delivery of impactful programs.

## We will:

- ▶ Develop an annual program to better coordinate the delivery of programs across library branches.
- ▶ Implement a staff training program to strengthen staff capacity and capability in program design and delivery.
- ▶ Develop strong partnerships across Council, library networks, schools and service providers to collaboratively plan and deliver programs and initiatives that support our community's diverse needs and interests.
- ▶ Work with stakeholders to promote and expand home library service for homebound community members and nursing homes.



## FOCUS AREA 4: Collections

The Library provides dynamic physical and digital collections in a range of formats and languages that evolve based on the needs and interests of our community. Our local history collections are shared and preserved for future generations.



### Evidence

- ▶ The range, relevance and quality of physical collections was one of the most important value drivers identified through engagement. 66% of library users were satisfied with the current state of physical collections and just 30% were satisfied with online collections.
- ▶ Engagement participants told us it can be difficult to access online resources via the library website and want the website to be easier to navigate with some suggesting a Library app.
- ▶ While the collection size, based on items per capita, is slightly smaller than the Australian Library and Information Association target and the benchmarked services, loan rates and turnover would suggest that the collection size is right for our community.
- ▶ A service review found that there are opportunities to manage our collections more efficiently to decrease manual handling.
- ▶ A review of our local history collections found that there is a need for more suitable storage space and resources to catalogue, digitise and interpret material.

### Our goals:

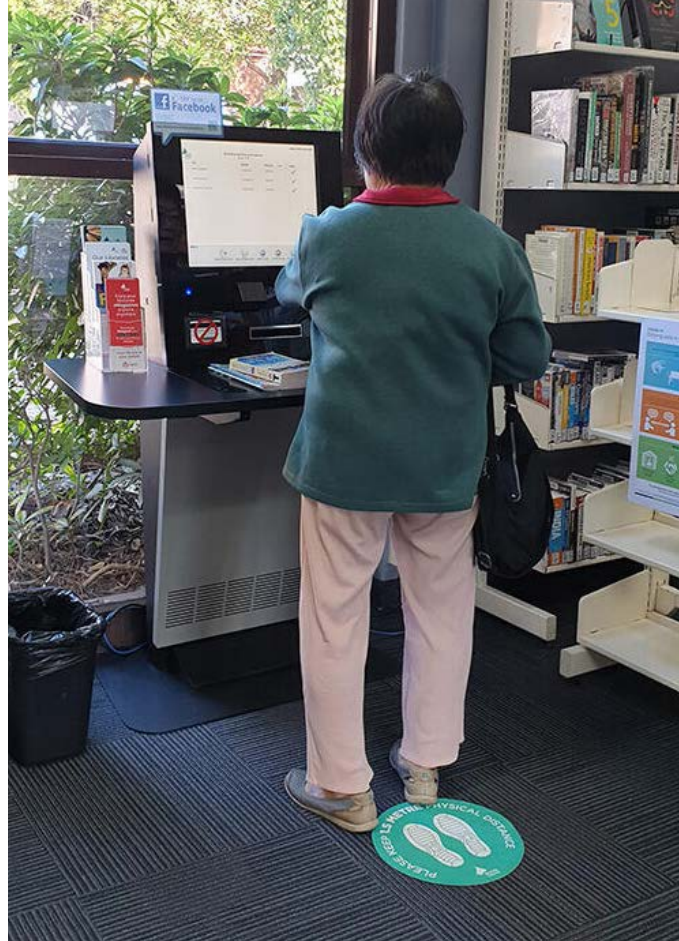
- ▶ 4.1: Our collections and resources are responsive and relevant to our diverse and changing community.
- ▶ 4.2: Our physical and digital collections are easily accessible and managed efficiently.
- ▶ 4.3: Our local history collections preserve and connect our community to Bayside's diverse past, present and future stories.

### We will:

- ▶ Provide physical and digital collections that are informed by 2021 Census Data, usage data (e.g. loans) and community feedback to align community's current and emerging needs and interests.
- ▶ Expand, improve and promote access to online collections and library resources.
- ▶ Implement Local History Harmonisation plan to improve storage, preservation and access to Bayside's Local History physical and digital collections.

## FOCUS AREA 5: Technology

**The Library provides access to contemporary technology resources, support and skill-development opportunities that support our community to learn, work and collaborate.**



### Evidence

- ▶ Nearly half of survey respondents told us that access to reliable public computers and other technology devices to use was important for the future of the Library.
- ▶ Unsurprisingly, young people (18-24) were more likely to value free WiFi, access to printers, scanners and photocopiers and public computers, while older people were less likely to value these aspects of library services.
- ▶ A service review found that there is a need to increase IT support to manage day-to-day troubleshooting in our libraries, and to upgrade technology assets and infrastructure to meet the organisations and the community's needs.

### Our goals:

- ▶ 5.1: Our technology resources and services and optimized ICT systems support digital access and skills for our community.
- ▶ 5.2: Our online platforms increase the accessibility of library content, resources and services.

### We will:

- ▶ Develop a formal Library ICT Plan to ensure that the library's technology infrastructure meets the community's needs now and into the future.
- ▶ Resource and upskill roles to manage, troubleshoot and maintain library technology systems, hardware and applications to ensure a seamless customer experience.
- ▶ Undertake a review of the core library management system (LMS) to ensure it remains efficient, cost effective and meets contemporary library administrative needs.
- ▶ Improve the library website and its relationship with Council's main website to improve and enhance user experience and access to information and resources.

## FOCUS AREA 6:

# Systems and processes

**The Library is well-managed, sustainable and resourced to meet the needs of our growing community. Our highly-valued staff have the skills and resources to support our community and provide excellent customer service.**



### Evidence

- ▶ Library user survey respondents were highly satisfied with library services provided by library staff (79% 'Satisfied' or 'Very satisfied').
- ▶ The friendliness and professionalism of library staff was one of the most important value drivers identified across both users and non-users in the survey. People told us they highly value library staff being able to assist in using the library (e.g. booking a room, using technology) and having face-to-face interactions with friendly library staff.
- ▶ A service review found that library-qualified staff numbers are comparable with Randwick and Sutherland but lower compared to other benchmarked LGAs and low in relation to the Australian Library and Information Association standard.
- ▶ As an amalgamated Council, the Library has been working hard to consolidate policies and procedures and there is a need for continual improvement.

### Our goals:

- ▶ 6.1: Our organizational structure and skilled workforce support the delivery of flexible, contemporary library services.
- ▶ 6.2: Our effective marketing builds the Library profile to increase community awareness and membership.
- ▶ 6.3: Our streamlined policies, systems and processes support a sustainable library service.
- ▶ 6.4: Our library services provide value to our community and are resourced to meet demand from a growing population.

### We will:

- ▶ Upskill staff to deliver consistent exceptional customer service across all libraries.
- ▶ Undertake a marketing campaign to highlight the benefits of being a library member and to raise awareness of library services, programs and facilities.
- ▶ Establish and maintain an online centralised calendar of library events, programs and activities that is accessible to the public.
- ▶ Review and update library service policies and procedures to ensure they remain current and relevant.



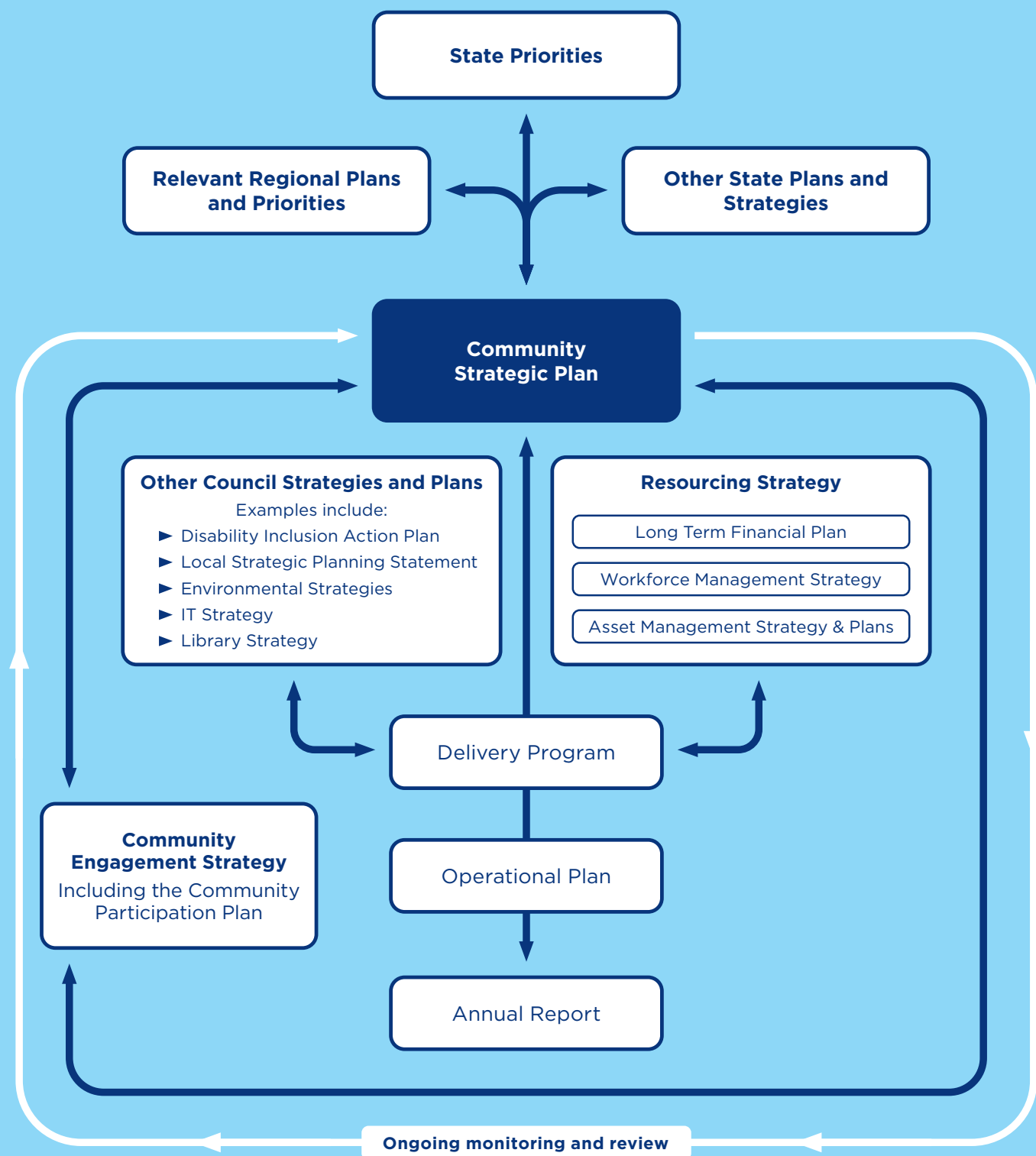
# Implementing the Strategy

## Measuring success

This Strategy is supported by an internal three-year Action Plan. This Action Plan will be reported through Council's existing mechanisms, such as the 4-year Delivery Program and Operational Plans. The implementation of the Strategy will also focus on enhancing existing internal data collection systems and reporting mechanisms to monitor the implementation of the Strategy.

FOCUS AREA	MEASURES OF SUCCESS
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Services, collections and programs reflect the diversity of our communities.</li></ul>
Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Increased level of community satisfaction with library spaces.</li><li>▶ Increased provision of library floorspace in areas with undersupply based on population-based benchmarks from State Library NSW.</li><li>▶ Increased utilisation of library spaces.</li></ul>
Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Increased level of community satisfaction with library programs.</li></ul>
Collections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Increased level of community satisfaction with library collections.</li><li>▶ Proportion of local history items available in digital format.</li></ul>
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Increased level of community satisfaction with technology resources and support.</li><li>▶ Increased use of technology resources.</li></ul>
Systems and processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Increased library membership.</li><li>▶ Number of reviewed and updated policies, systems and processes.</li></ul>

# Strategic alignment within the IP&R Framework





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