

Yarra Plenty Regional Library

Library Plan 2021-2025

#ThisLibraryCan

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement of Country

YPRL acknowledges the Wurundjeri peoples of the Kulin Nation, the traditional owners of this Country, paying respect to Elders past, present, and emerging, who have been an integral part of the region's history. We acknowledge the leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the right to self-determination in the spirit of mutual understanding and respect.

Recognition of diversity and inclusion

YPRL is committed to equality, inclusivity, and respect. We welcome and respect everyone in our communities irrespective of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, ability, or generation.



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From the Board

The Yarra Plenty Regional Library Board and Yarra Plenty Regional Library (YPRL) Corporation have a shared commitment to deliver excellent library services for our diverse and multicultural communities. Libraries are essential to the lives of so many people in our region, connecting our communities in a way that benefits everyone. Our libraries provide a place for literacy, learning and recreation, as well as offering equitable access to resources and social inclusion. This 4-year plan confirms the commitment of the three member councils and the YPRL Board to providing a dynamic and diverse library collection and a safe space for all to meet. Together, the YPRL Board, Banyule City Council, City of Whittlesea, Nillumbik Shire, and YPRL staff and local communities have engaged and collaborated on the development of this new YPRL Strategic Plan.

From the CEO

Yarra Plenty Regional Library holds an important place in our communities. Whether to read a book, find information, learn, discover, work, connect with friends and family, meet new people, or just relax; we recognise our role in providing safe, inclusive places for every member in our communities.

The world and our communities are ever changing. Libraries around the globe are working to deliver on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030, to ensure everyone at the local level has opportunities to live well and learn. As a result, our role, and the services we provide will continue to change and evolve. This can be seen through an increased focus on digital skills, exploring new ways to engage and interact with our collections, and building the capacity of our communities to access employment or use public services. Creating places and spaces for our communities to connect, live well and participate in community life is also a demonstrated need. We will listen to these needs, continue to adapt, and work alongside our staff, communities, and Council partners to deliver.

The future of YPRL is focused on balancing our heritage and traditional services while investing in the new. We plan to use technology better to strengthen our practice and improve the experience of every library user. We're also continuing to support our staff, ensuring they have the skills they need and meaningful opportunities to develop. **The future is about ensuring our communities thrive, are empowered, and live well.**



Jane Cowell
CEO

our Plan on a Page

our Vision

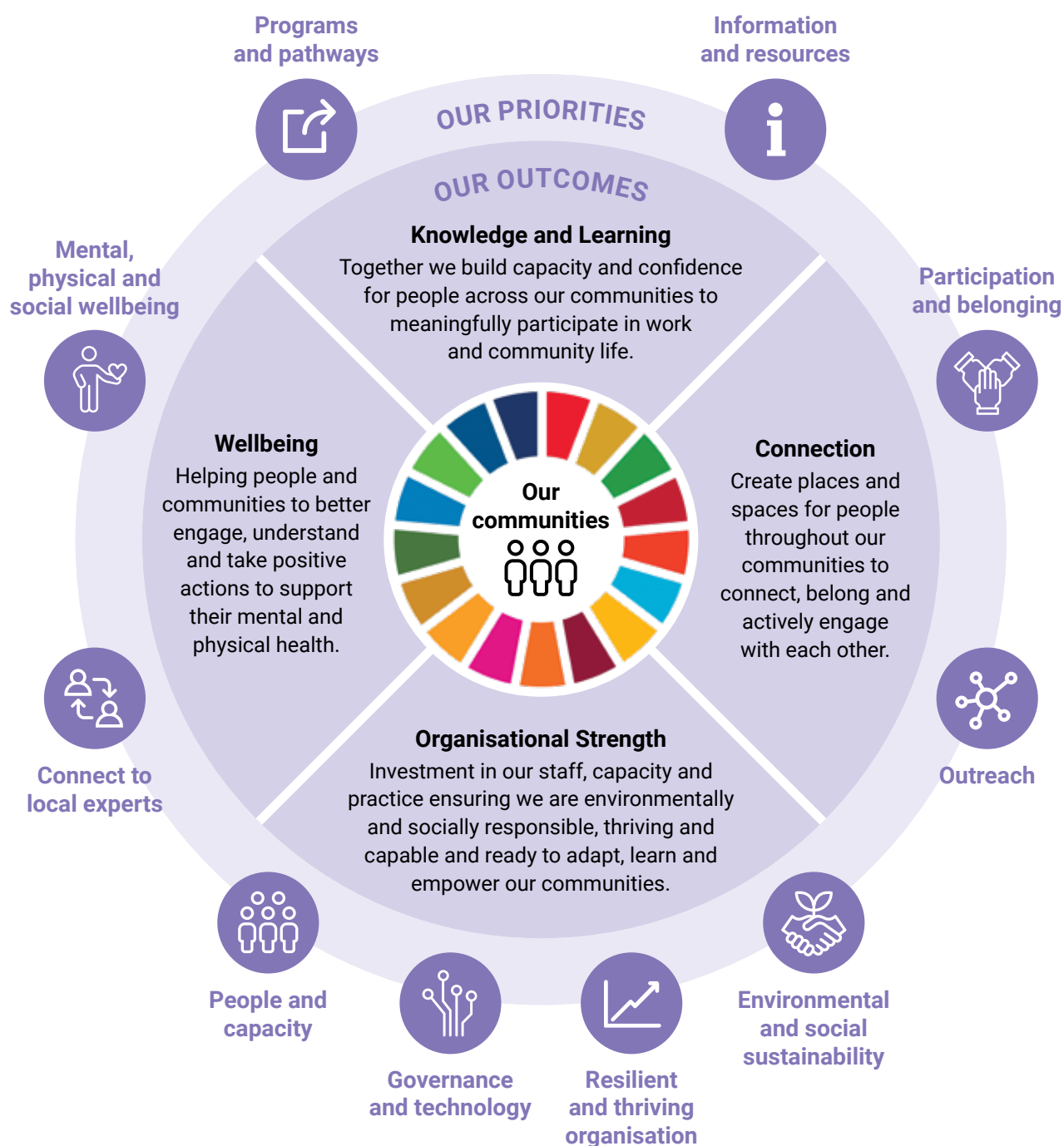
Informed creative communities:
connected, empowered
and well

our Purpose

To provide opportunities for our diverse communities to read, learn, create, connect and live well. Supported by equitable access to collections, technology, programs and welcoming and safe spaces.

our Role

Facilitate
Connect
Listen
Build capability
Share and create stories



#ThisLibraryCan: Communities connected, empowered and well

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



THE PRINCIPLES THAT SHAPE OUR SERVICE

We welcome and are **here for everyone** in our communities

We always work **together**

We are not afraid to try, **test and learn**

We always seek **continuous improvement** in what and how we deliver

We **innovate** to help our service grow and create positive outcomes

We undertake **radical collaboration** to make the most of everything we have

About us

Yarra Plenty Regional Library (YPRL) is a place where everyone is welcome and communities come together to meet, learn, create, and work. Every day, thousands of residents from the Banyule City Council, the City of Whittlesea and the Nillumbik Shire read a book, find the information they need, connect with friends and family, learn or discover something new, work or study, meet new people and just relax – all thanks to their local library. From young children and teenagers, students, families, and seniors; to researchers, job seekers and business people; from any culture or age group and at every life stage, our libraries are open to all. Whether you simply use the library or love the library, our branches make a difference to the lives of our communities.

YPRL delivers services to our diverse communities through an integrated network of library branches, mobile library, the outreach service, the YPRL website and app, associated resource apps, and outreach activities in our communities.

YPRL, like all local government services, must be:

- accountable to our communities,
- demonstrate value for money, and
- continually look for ways to improve the quality and efficiency of the service we provide.

We are proud of our service and of our exceptional staff that make it possible to support the communities of Banyule, Whittlesea, and Nillumbik. We exist for everyone in these communities; we commit to continuing to evolve and adapt, to remain relevant, and to ensure we meet the needs of our rich, vibrant, and diverse communities every day.



The principles that guide us

Our **principles** underpin everything that we do, from the way we work with each other and our partner Councils, to how we support and deliver to our communities. These principles help define who YPRL is as an organisation.



We welcome and are **here for everyone** in our communities.



We always work **together**.



We are not afraid to **try, test and learn**.



We always seek **continuous improvement** in what and how we deliver.



We **innovate** to help our service grow and create positive outcomes.



We undertake **radical collaboration** to make the most of everything we have.

our Why

Our communities are constantly changing, and their needs from our services are ever evolving. We must listen to and understand what our communities need and expect from their library. The following trends have been vital in shaping our strategy for the next four years and beyond.

The world is changing

Connection is critical: People are living longer, there are more single-person households than ever before, and new communities are forming all the time. More people are looking for opportunities and places to meet and connect with others to overcome social isolation.

Learning is changing: The nature of education has adapted as more formal and informal learning activities occur in a digital environment, changing the way even our oldest institutions teach. The reality of lifelong and online learning means that libraries will continue to experience increased demand in providing online learning opportunities and spaces with reliable digital access.

Digital skills are key: Our engagement in workplaces and public services are rapidly changing and increasing the demand for digital skills. Libraries are filling the void of access and digital knowledge and will be increasingly sought after to support digital literacy and access to digital services, in particular government services.

Information and misinformation are everywhere: The internet, social media, and our access to new and evolving applications have created an explosion of information that is readily available to the public and increased the pace at which it can be shared. Some of this information is authoritative, but most are un-mediated and untested. Skills in searching for, accessing, filtering, and interpreting information will continue to increase in demand.

Libraries are evolving

Keeping pace with change: Public libraries across Australia and around the world are grappling with the challenge of adapting to the changing needs and demands of library users. Balancing the traditions of our collections, to the future of our programs and engagement within our communities is key.

Libraries are part of the knowledge economy: Many people look to libraries as a place for learning and building skills for the future, from the youngest to the oldest members of our communities. Libraries are at the centre of the knowledge economy. The need to look at new areas of focus, such as the emergence of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics) is a priority for our public library programming.

Co-designing with communities: Our communities want to contribute to and be involved in the design of community services. As libraries, we need to look at how we engage communities and respond in kind by shifting practices and building the skills to design services with and alongside our communities.



our Strategy

This strategic plan sets out YPRL's direction for the next four years and builds on our existing services. It will continually evolve as we learn and will inform the annual plans that set out our discrete activities and actions each year.

our Vision

Informed creative communities: connected, empowered and well.

our Purpose

To provide opportunities for our diverse communities to read, learn, create, connect, and live well. Supported by equitable access to collections, technology, programs, and welcoming, safe spaces.

our Role

To facilitate: working with our diverse communities to support and realise opportunities.

To connect: create places where everyone is welcome, a safe place for all.

To listen: ensuring our communities are part of everything we do.

To build capability: to empower our diverse and vibrant communities to participate.

To share and create stories: to ensure our local stories are created, shared, and heard.

our Values

Respect for all, promoting connection and fairness.

Integrity honest and trustworthy.

Service community focussed, accessible, valued by our customers and team members.

Empower supportive, innovative and inclusive of diversity of thought.



"I love the library as a central community gathering space where stories, creativity, learning and ideas can flourish."

JU-LIN, IVANHOE

"The staff are always warm and so helpful, the book choices are fabulous and Click & Collect is the best invention since the printing press!"

our Strategy

outcomes and Priorities

Our **outcomes** define what we will focus on and strive towards over the next four years. Our **priorities** inform our actions, decisions, and investment.

Knowledge and learning

Together we build capacity and confidence for people across our communities to meaningfully participate in work and community life.

Programs and pathways

Develop programs and pathways that focus on:

- partnerships for youth capacity building
- pathways to employment
- community resilience
- community-led programming and collections.

Information and resources

Build on our existing collections, assets, and services through investment in:

- digital resources, collections, and assets
- resources that are reflective of our diverse communities
- supporting local creatives
- early years, adult, and digital literacy.

Connection

Create places and spaces for people throughout our communities to connect, belong and actively engage with each other.

Participation and belonging

Deliver places, spaces and services that provide:

- safe, accessible digital environments and programs
- volunteering and other opportunities to participate
- increased participation in our services.

Outreach

Look beyond our existing places to:

- build strong links with local communities
- engage with youth, CALD and First Nations communities
- explore and test co-location and integration of services.

"At the library, there are no barriers to anyone connecting with information and experiences that can be life changing. It's a special place."

Outcomes and Priorities

Organisational strength

Investment in our staff, capacity, and governance to ensure we are capable and ready to adapt, learn and empower our communities in environmentally and socially responsible ways.

People and capacity

Invest in our people through:

- building people's capability and capacity
- creating opportunities for growth and learning.

Governance and technology

Strengthen our service by ensuring:

- effective governance-strengthening decisions and partnerships
- technology as an enabler for delivering services
- technology that improves user experience.

Environmental and social sustainability

Responsible, relevant, and conscious organisation through ensuring:

- diverse and inclusive practice
- environmental and socially sustainable practice and procurement.

A resilient and thriving organisation

Secure and grow our organisation through:

- financial diversification
- development of a new business model in response to Local Government Act 2020 requirements.

"Libraries give me comfort in this ever changing and challenging times. I can escape in a good book any time I'm feeling anxious."

DORIS, DOREEN

Wellbeing

Help individuals and communities to better engage in, understand, and take positive actions to support their mental and physical health.

Mental, physical, and social wellbeing

Contribute to the wellbeing of our communities through:

- inclusive and safe programs, spaces, and opportunities
- promoting health literacy
- health and wellbeing programming and collections
- programs for those in our communities experiencing social isolation.

Connect to local experts

Work alongside experts to bring the best to our local communities by:

- inviting, including, and hosting wellbeing partners within our spaces
- partnering with member councils to deliver better outcomes.

Measuring success

YPRL is committed to implementing and monitoring this strategic plan. To do this, we will use a range of indicators to evaluate progress and performance. These indicators will include the measurement and assessment of our organisational activity, as well as the broader outcomes we contribute to at a community level.

Organisational performance indicators

These indicators tell us about the use and efficacy of our services.

Organisational examples:

- *Collections measures*, including volume of digital and physical loans and age of the collection.
- *Service measures*, including the number of members, branch visits, program and events attendance, and computer and Wi-Fi use.
- *Library benchmarks*, including the costs for service provision.

Community indicators

These indicators assess a range of community outcomes. In combination, they provide a view on how YPRL is creating a positive impact in our communities.

Over the course of this strategic plan, YPRL will look to use existing tools to understand how communities are being positively impacted through our service, alongside exploring and aligning to other outcomes frameworks.

Localised and existing tools:

- *Community surveys*, including library satisfaction surveys, and program and events feedback.
- *Case studies*, including stories of our users and how our service has impacted them.

National and International frameworks

Victorian public libraries have committed to embedding the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into our planning. The SDGs provide a framework to demonstrate how libraries can support positive change, from quality education to reducing inequalities. This helps libraries reflect on and align with other organisations to determine how they can create localised outcomes that contribute to meaningful change for the whole of a nation.



Alignment to SDG indicators include:

- **SDG 1: End poverty**
Public access to information, programs and resources that gives people the opportunity to improve their lives.
- **SDG 3: Good health and wellbeing**
Public access to health and wellness information in public libraries.
- **SDG 4: Quality education**
Libraries provide dedicated staff who support early literacy and lifelong learning.
- **SDG 5: Gender equality**
Libraries provide safe and welcoming meeting spaces and dedicated programs designed to meet the needs of women and girls.
- **SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth**
Libraries provide access to information and skills training that people need to find, apply for, and succeed in work.
- **SDG 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure**
Libraries provide access to technology and high-speed internet that may not be available anywhere else.
- **SDG 10: Reduced inequalities**
Libraries provide neutral and welcoming spaces that make learning accessible to all.
- **SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities**
Libraries are trusted institutions devoted to promoting cultural inclusion and understanding.
- **SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions**
Libraries provide training and skills needed to understand and access civic services.
- **SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals**
Libraries are part of a global network of community-based institutions, focussed on supporting their local communities.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

About the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Launched by the UN in 2015, the SDGs consist of 17 overarching goals that set out a global aspiration for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. The SDGs cover a broad spectrum of social, economic, and environmental health and wellbeing indicators. They use a shared language and set of aspirations that can be communicated across organisations, industries, and countries. In total, 230 indicators underpin the 17 goals, with organisations targeting those that most align to their purpose.

"The library eased old age and illness by helping me to become digitally literate and access a vast world of ideas at a finger tap."

Fiona, Ivanhoe

"The friendly helpful staff and the services on offer. It's a welcoming, educational and relaxing space that makes you feel part of the community."

|||||
**Libraries
Change Lives**

Banyule

Ivanhoe

275 Upper Heidelberg Road
Ivanhoe 3079
Telephone 9497 5780

Rosanna

72 Turnham Avenue
Rosanna 3084
Telephone 9459 6171

Watsonia

4–6 Ibbottson Street
Watsonia 3087
Telephone 9435 2397

Nillumbik

Diamond Valley

Civic Drive
Greensborough 3088
Telephone 9434 3809

Eltham

Panther Place
Eltham 3095
Telephone 9439 9266

Whittlesea

Lalor

2A May Road
Lalor 3075
Telephone 9465 2353

Mill Park

394 Plenty Road
Mill Park 3082
Telephone 9437 8189

Thomastown

52 Main Street
Thomastown 3074
Telephone 9464 1864

Whittlesea

Whittlesea Community
Activity Centre
57–61 Laurel Street
Whittlesea 3757
Telephone 9716 3028

Regional Service

Home Library Service

Telephone 9488 3425

Outreach Library Service

Telephone 0418 107 724

Mobile Library Service

Telephone 0419 883 159

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