

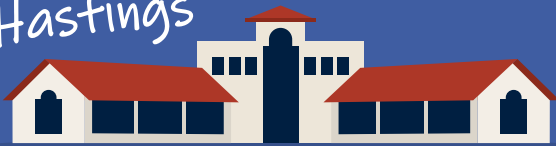
Hastings District Libraries' Strategic Plan 2021-2026



Havelock North



Hastings



Flaxmere

Vision

Hastings District Libraries will be centres for lifelong learning and recreation. Each library will be a focal point for its own community.

Mission

To enrich the life of the community by providing a library service that meets people's informational, recreational and cultural needs.





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Mayor's Message

I'm extremely proud, as Hastings Mayor, to be introducing the Hastings District Libraries' Strategic Plan 2021–2026.

This plan will guide the development of library services for our community. To ensure that the plan reflects what the community seeks in a library, wide public engagement was undertaken in 2019/2020.

Hastings District Libraries are Council's most visited community facilities and their usage remains strong, whether it be for traditional reading, through to programmes, events and other social activities.

The changing use of libraries underlines their value as community spaces supporting social connection as well as information and recreational needs.

Because their role is changing rapidly, the development of services and programmes is constantly evolving, with digital engagement being a particular focus.

Covid-19 was challenging for many of us – but there were some silver linings. Lockdown also stimulated growth in digital collections and digital engagements.

It is essential that our three Hastings District Libraries, in Hastings, Havelock North and Flaxmere develop into modern public library facilities.

Key feedback from the community engagement process was our impetus to phase out fines for late items which is occurring in other public libraries around the country.

I would like to acknowledge the work that went into the Hastings District Libraries' Strategic Plan 2021–2026. We are confident it reflects the views of our people who truly value these important facilities in our district.

Now is the time to ensure our community has a modern and fit-for-purpose library service that meets a wide range of needs, both now and in the future.



Kind regards

Sandra Hazlehurst
Mayor

Background

Hastings District comprises 81,537 people at the 2018 census, of whom 71.8% identify as European; 27.3% identify as Māori; 8% as Pasifika and 5.6% as Asian. The population includes a higher than national average proportion of both older and younger people.

The District is 5,200km² and is a large hinterland with small rural communities, with the main urban centres being Hastings, Havelock North and Flaxmere. Hastings District's education statistics show that the level of educational achievement in Hastings District is lower than nationally.

Similarly, employment stats show that fewer people than the national average are in employment. Of those that are in employment, a higher percentage of people in the Hastings District are in semi-skilled or unskilled occupations than the rest of New Zealand and this is reflected in income levels in the Hastings District, which are on average below those across the rest of the country. Supporting young people into education or employment is a key goal in Hastings District Council's *Great Communities Strategy*¹. NEET² figures for young people in the District are high and significant central and local government resources and energy are being expended to address this.

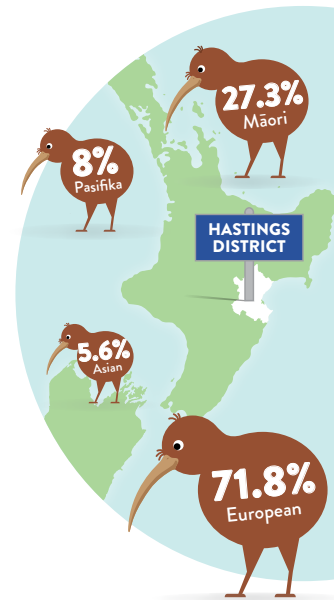
Latest census data³ show a range of outcomes on relevant key indicators for Hawke's Bay. Home ownership in Hastings District is slightly below the rest of New Zealand. At the same time, access to telecommunications show that 83.4% people in Hastings District have access to the internet (below the national average) and 91% have access to a mobile phone (also below the national average), although 68.8% have access to a landline (higher than the national average). A slightly higher proportion of people have no access to any telecommunication systems.



This illustrates that the Hastings District faces several challenges in achieving best possible social outcomes, impacting on the social support and services that need to be provided by central and local government agencies.

The Government's digital strategy aims to modernise and transform public services, acknowledging that technology touches the way we work, stay in touch with family and friends, move around, shop and learn⁴. The shift towards technology-based solutions to deliver what once was provided in hard copy, or what was delivered face-to-face from bricks and mortar premises impacts vulnerable communities however. Everyday examples include banking, shopping, communication, news delivery, use of government services for everything from assistance applications and payments, passports and immigration applications, tax returns and vehicle registrations, to rates and building consents. The employment supply chain is also now predominantly in the digital space.

The risk for some people is that without the skills, confidence or access to technology that they will be left on the wrong side of New Zealand's digital divide, particularly where one or more factors impacting vulnerability are in play. Affordability is a barrier for many, particularly for households on fixed incomes.



¹ Hastings District Council. (2021). *Great Communities Strategy [Draft]*.

² Not in Employment or in Education

³ Data from www.stats.govt.nz

⁴ New Zealand Government. (2020). *Strategy for a Digital Public Service*. www.digital.govt.nz



About Hastings District Libraries

Hastings District Libraries is one library service delivered from three sites at Hastings, Havelock North and Flaxmere, as well as online services from www.hastingslibraries.co.nz

With over 580,000 visitors, over 75,000 visits to the website and a steady social media following each year, Libraries are Council's most-visited community facilities.

Library services provided include:

- access to informational and recreational content in a range of formats from print to digital
- spaces for the community to relax, meet, study, or even read
- access to computing resources that enable people to learn, stay in touch, or be connected
- programmes, events or activities targeted at all ages and interests and delivered onsite, offsite or virtually
- service and support to customers in their use of library services and with their information needs
- outreach to community groups, organisations and individuals who may not be able to access library services physically

In line with national and international trends, use of physical collections is slowly declining over time, while use of technology, facilities and participation in programmes remains strong.

Globally, use of public libraries has shifted from being exclusively about catering for people's reading needs to catering for a diverse range of needs from a need for information, connection and support in a world that is increasingly digital. Public libraries have a significant ongoing role in supporting those who may be less able to navigate a changing and increasingly digital world and who are therefore at risk of being socially, economically, politically and culturally disengaged, disconnected and disadvantaged.





SECTOR CONNECTIONS

In terms of sector collaboration, HD Libraries is an active member of the Kōtui Consortium, a shared service partnership between local and central government to deliver shared library infrastructure, products and services, as well as two other regional collaborations relating to purchase of content in both print and digital formats.

As an active member of and participant in regional and national sector groups, several HDL staff represent the public library sector on national boards and councils, working both across the sector and with local and central government organisations.

Public libraries are connected internationally through membership of organisations such as LIANZA (representing the breadth of NZ's library sector) and PLNZ (Public Libraries of NZ) which are both actively connected with international counterparts. HD Libraries holds membership of both organisations and a number of staff are also active in these organisations and networks.



The changing landscape for libraries

The political landscape has changed significantly since the last *Libraries' Strategic Plan* was written, with New Zealand now led by a government with a strong social agenda.

This has translated to a stronger emphasis on social development investment and initiatives, largely funded by central government. Some libraries have struggled to leverage this policy shift as the



contribution that libraries make to building social capital is not always well understood by decision makers.

New Zealand has also had to respond to several natural hazard challenges in the last decade. The Canterbury earthquakes of 2010-11 continue to have far-reaching impacts for the building code, earthquake strengthening and building design, which has had implications for every local authority.

Another recent significant event was the Christchurch Mosque shootings, which has highlighted the contrast between inclusion and inclusivity, diversity and acceptance, against a wider international context of more politically conservative governments.

At the local level Hastings District Council has been affected by diverse but far-reaching impacts. The 2016 contamination of the Havelock North water supply had a very significant impact on Council expenditure, focus and processes. Similarly, increased gang activity and other antisocial behaviour has impacted council resourcing. A series of behavioural incidents in Council facilities in 2018 led to increased expenditure and emphasis on safety and security of Council facilities, their staff and their customers, although the recommendations of the Security review have yet to be fully implemented.

From 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has directly impacted every country on the planet socially, economically, environmentally and culturally. Both short- and long-term consequences of the pandemic have affected expenditure priorities, public health considerations and service delivery models.

Like others, Hastings District Council has been forced to reconsider expenditure priorities and service delivery models across the organisation.

Purpose of Libraries

Libraries are in a constant state of reinvention, as a response to advances in technology, but more importantly, as a response to the constantly changing needs of their communities. The Future of Libraries Summit (2015)⁵ noted that libraries in the twenty-first century are much less about the consumption of information and moving towards being places of creativity. They are social spaces which are the basis of social interaction, learning skills – including, but not limited to technology – as well as some of the services traditionally delivered by libraries.

International research shows that the conservative return on investment in public libraries is up to five times the level of investment (IFLA, 2020⁶) and includes a range of both tangible benefits (access to library services, information access, ICT resources) and intangible benefits (improved levels of literacy contributing to higher education opportunities and better employment prospects).

⁵ LIANZA. (2015). *Future of Libraries: Summit report*. Retrieved from: <https://lianza.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Future-of-Libraries-Summit-Report.pdf>

⁶ International Federation of Library Associations. (2020). *Library return on investment: Review of evidence from the last 10 years*. <https://www.ifla.org/publications/node/93198>



Libraries & literacy

A fundamental role of libraries is to support the development of literacy. Literacy development is not purely the ability to read, but includes the broader concepts of digital literacy, numeracy, financial literacy, social literacy, information literacy, etc. Literacy has been defined as:

[...] listening, speaking, reading, writing, numeracy and critical thinking, interwoven with the knowledge of social and cultural practices. Literacy empowers people to contribute and improve society (Literacy Aotearoa⁷)

The *Public Libraries of New Zealand Strategic Framework (2020⁸)* identifies literacy as the foundation of more resilient, tolerant and participative communities, more socially cohesive and more able to take advantage of enterprise and growth opportunities. The *Framework* articulates a baseline for service development for HDL and other NZ public libraries.

In short, libraries are not only spaces designed to support the development of a range of literacies, but they provide the means of connection and the opportunity for everyone to participate in the digital economy and navigate the digital world regardless of their circumstances or ability to pay.

⁷ Literacy Aotearoa. (n.d.). www.literacy.org.nz

⁸ Public Libraries of New Zealand. (2020). *Public Libraries of New Zealand Strategic Framework 2020-2025*. www.publiclibraries.org.nz



Libraries & the digital divide

Libraries have a pivotal role in helping people mediate the digital divide – they operate in the interface between technology and community. Many people have both the access and the confidence and the skills to navigate an increasingly digital world, but others have neither access, confidence nor the skills and this is having an impact on their ability to participate in and contribute to modern society. In addition to accessibility, skills and confidence, there may also be issues with affordability for many on fixed incomes.

Recent research into the link between internet access and wellbeing shows that Māori; Pasifika; those living in larger country towns; those in social housing; unemployed; disabled; or older persons are less likely to have internet access⁹. The problem intensifies if individuals are affected by more than one of these factors.

Access to the internet is correlated with several wellbeing factors, such as life satisfaction, mental health and civic engagement (*Digital inclusion & wellbeing in NZ, 2020*). With the increasing trend of delivery of services – particularly government services – libraries provide access and support to build skills, confidence to navigate the digital world. This is not the sole responsibility of public libraries, but they are free, neutral and trusted institutions in a unique position to support and advocate on behalf of people who are digitally excluded.

Overall, 12.23% Māori and 10.55% Pasifika have no access to the internet but this disparity is more prevalent amongst school students. 92% Pākehā students have internet access at home, around 86% Māori and Asian students, but less than 74% Pasifika students have home internet access. Pasifika students also spend less time on the internet (whether in or out of school) than other students.



Access to the internet decreases with age and there is a correlation between higher levels of education and internet access. Overall findings show a correlation between internet access and wellbeing – those without access record higher levels of dissatisfaction than do those with access (New Zealand Government, 2020).

With both essential and discretionary activities increasingly going online, it is clear that Hastings has people who lack the access and the skills to access online services. They may be vulnerable for other reasons as well, so experience the “double whammy” of exclusion and vulnerability.

Those with access in their homes and at their fingertips often fail to understand just how wide the divide is for those without the skills, the access or even the confidence to navigate the digital landscape.

Some people’s needs may be greater and library services provide a neutral, free space, as well as the only access to the internet and means of assistance to navigate the digital economy. Provision of modern library services are a direct and tangible way in which Council supports wellbeing for those on the wrong side of the digital divide in our community.

⁹ New Zealand Government. (2020). *Digital inclusion and wellbeing in New Zealand*. Retrieved from: <https://www.digital.govt.nz/dmsdocument/161-digital-inclusion-and-wellbeing-in-new-zealand/html>



Libraries & recreation

Often considered only for their role in providing information, public libraries are also a shared community recreational service and asset. They provide not only spaces for relaxation, play and imagination; programmes that support learning and discovery; a flexible platform on which to extend formal learning; but they also provide access to reading material – enabling people to learn, develop fluency and literacy skills, support lifelong learning and to indulge their love of reading.

Recreational uses of HD Libraries range from casual and informal use; from social outings for those in care facilities to book groups; community talks and speaker events; major events; right through to hiring the library as a venue for after hours' birthday parties.

Libraries support their communities by providing spaces, services and programmes that enhance community wellbeing by promoting social connection; reducing social exclusion; supporting development of a broad range of literacies; promoting skills development and simply having fun – all of which also may relieve stress and promote relaxation and wellbeing. Because they provide free access, libraries also provide access to activities, services and resources to those who might not be able to otherwise access them because they lack the ability to pay. This is particularly an issue for those in fixed or low income households.

Many groups and organisations already use library spaces as well as library resources, programmes and services.

Libraries are a recreational space that acknowledges the value of social connection for people of all ages, backgrounds and beliefs in developing more tolerant and caring communities.

Progress on the Libraries' Strategic Plan, 2016-2020

Implementing recommendations from the last *LSP* resulted in an immediate increase of 14 hours across the libraries network at no additional cost to Council. It also saw the removal of charges for use of public internet and wifi.

These changes led to a 14% increase in visitation, while internet use almost doubled. Wifi use increased by more than 18 times compared with the previous year. These initiatives extended the libraries' accessibility for the community, a key theme of the last *LSP*.

Other areas of focus included:

SPACES & BUILDINGS

HD Libraries have been refurbished periodically to update their look and feel; improving the flow into and through the building with new layouts; relocating service points and adding meeting spaces.



COMMUNITY

The Libraries continue to enable and empower customers, evolving services with customer needs in mind and underpinned by a philosophy of enhancing appeal to diverse communities of interest. The Libraries are confident in experimenting with how to deliver these best and respond nimbly to changing needs and interests. Evidence of this is the development of inhouse summer holiday programmes for children and teens that are more tailored to local needs and which constantly evolve to meet changes in demand and trends. Another example is change to opening hours implemented from 2020 in response to patterns of use and customer preference for more late nights.

LEARNING & DISCOVERY

As appropriate to each person's need, customers are supported to be self-sufficient in their use of library services and technology, while staff are moving towards a role as curators rather than content creators. Programmes, particularly on the heels of the COVID pandemic include more self-driven activities that flex around busy lives rather than requiring physical attendance at a specific time and location to participate. Access to library-held information resources and technology remains free.

Technology offered includes a range of basic software, but balancing community expectations with the level of investment required is challenging. Some library services and content are available online 24/7 and this was boosted in 2020 as the country went into lockdown, with databases, ebooks and downloadable audiobooks both purchased and used more.



PROGRAMMES & OUTREACH

The link between low levels of literacy and social outcomes related to income, health, education through to crime has been well established. HD Libraries offer diverse programmes to support literacy and work with a range of community groups, agencies and government organisations (such as the Hawke's Bay Regional Prison) both on and offsite, but there is limitless opportunity to do more with additional resourcing.

Just as do other public libraries, significant resources have historically been directed towards supporting children and teens, but this is broadening. Furthermore, with an operating model based along functional lines as opposed to geography, these skills and expertise are utilised right across the network, not simply at a single site.

STAFF

A big focus of the last *LSP* was to foster greater skill diversity within HDL staff – a move away from branch-based roles and to support staff to collaborate more on programmes and services for customers. The previous model of staffing has been replaced with a model that emphasises the district-wide team, with all staff now working flexibly across all sites on a regular basis across hours of opening. This creates opportunities for job enrichment, but it also means that all staff have an appreciation for the different needs of each community, as well as an understanding of district-wide library service delivery.

A goal was to ensure greater diversity of staff in terms of better reflecting the communities served. Slow but steady progress has been made on this goal, although feedback from the stakeholder engagement indicates that more work is needed. As at late 2020 the Libraries have specialist resource targeted at older adults and Pasifika engagement, both noted as gaps in the previous *LSP*.

Confidence and competence with technology was a further goal and again, there have been some gains, but there is always more to work on.

What does the community say?

A cross section of community groups and individuals (both library users and nonusers) was engaged with in late 2019 to determine areas where library services are not currently delivering according to community expectations, as well as hear their ideas about their libraries of the future. Over 1500 individuals were engaged with using a variety of assessment methods from intercept surveys to self-completion consultation and focus groups. This means that some confidence can be placed on the views expressed.





Key areas to improve service delivery identified include:

1. SPACES

Several library spaces were described as looking tired and in need of a refresh. There were several comments about the lack of a culturally-appropriate welcome to spaces, especially about the number and location of toilet facilities at entrance points, particularly in Hastings. Council's library facilities were designed several decades ago and have been maintained to a basic level. Major asset maintenance may be delayed pending upgrade of projects involving adjacent facilities or assets, meaning that upgrades or replacements are often done well beyond their programmed timing. Examples are lighting, toilets, HVAC systems, exterior painting, etc – all of which contribute to customers' first impressions of the facility.

The Havelock North Library opened in 1980 and was refurbished in 2017, while the Flaxmere Library opened around 1987 and was refurbished in 2014. The Hastings War Memorial Library opened in 1959 and was extended in 1992 with the addition of two wings and a mezzanine floor. While changes and workarounds have been made, the fact remains that the building is over sixty years old. With the redevelopment of Civic Square, it is timely to consider the investment for future library service development *and* library space development rather than considering these in isolation from each other. The general approach has been to design services that fit within existing spaces but looking ahead, service needs should drive space design. The building now constrains the delivery of services, spaces and programmes that modern public libraries aspire to provide. With different types of use and demands on library spaces, building design needs to be flexible enough to respond to changing needs over time and different types of use.

Significant feedback has been received relating to noise levels on library premises. Libraries have moved from being the exclusive domain of traditional use with expectations that libraries are places to research, read, reflect and similar quiet activities, to places that are filled with activity, excitement, energy and... noise. This reflects the changing use of libraries and is a significant proportion of general feedback each year. The facilities as they are currently do not provide well for different types of use or different types of users. The challenge is to provide services that meet the needs of users who have vastly different expectations of what libraries are and to accommodate their different needs in ageing facilities that are not easily adaptable. A master plan for current and future library development is needed.

Many comments related to wayfinding in the libraries – knowing where things were and where to queue were frequently-mentioned comments. There are clearly opportunities to improve the orientation and wayfinding experience, while considering signage in the context of navigation and logical co-location of elements.

11.1 Activity, noise and quiet spaces

- 1.1.1. Different and conflicting needs should be able to be accommodated through more flexible design. Many requests for separation of noisier activities from quieter activities were made
- 1.1.2. More meeting rooms were requested, which would go some way towards enabling the separation of different types of activities
- 1.1.3. The open mezzanine in the Hastings Library is challenging from a noise management and temperature control perspective. The low ceilings on both floors are unappealing and inhibit efficient temperature control

1.2 Technology layouts

- 1.2.1 The Hastings Library does not support flexible or easy use of technology – powerpoints can be hard to access (or non-existent) where people want to use devices. Cords can create tripping hazards
- 1.2.2 A large number of requests for computers to be separated out from each other in the Hastings Library were made

1.3 Foot traffic layouts

- 1.3.1 Building design inhibits to varying degrees the staff's ability to monitor customer needs, behaviours and safety, so layouts are generally planned to mitigate these needs
- 1.3.2 The customer desk at the Hastings Library was noted as inhibiting traffic flows through the building and creates confusion about where people should queue

1.4 Toilets

- 1.4.1 Toilets were noted frequently as being insufficient in number, smelly and in poor condition overall. Several noted the cultural inappropriateness of locating the public toilets at the entrance of the Hastings Library, the point at which people are welcomed to the building. Public toilets also significantly affect the air quality of adjacent staff offices at the Hastings Library, as well as for the numbers of people queueing to use them
- 1.4.2 The Havelock North Library toilets are not well designed for people with limited mobility or strength

1.5 Beverage facilities

- 1.5.1 The lack of drinking fountains and addition of a café was seen as a service that would enhance library services by many users. It would also provide a reason for many to visit who would not otherwise do so. A relaxed café culture enjoyed in a space with a pleasant outlook and with access to books, newspapers and social activity is modelled by many modern public libraries

1.6 Comfortable environment

- 1.6.1 Comfortable seating for all age groups and better connection with the outdoor environment, colour schemes and better incorporation of art and cultural elements were all frequently mentioned



2. COMPUTERS & TECHNOLOGY

Library computers and wifi are well used and have brought new user groups to the libraries in recent years, particularly as these services are now completely free. They are an important source of information, recreation and opportunity for many who would otherwise not have had this access, nor the ability to connect and engage online.

Overall, there seems to be a clear preference for smaller clusters of computers and a separation of types of use so that noisier activity can be separated from quieter use, a recurring theme consistent with what library users have signalled more generally elsewhere.

A lot of feedback was given about the Libraries' IT setup:

2.1. Location & privacy

- 2.1.1. Computers have historically been located adjacent to service points so that assistance can be offered conveniently. Interest was signalled in an arrangement of smaller clusters of computers with a specific focus
- 2.1.2. Some users are careful about securing their privacy, while others are less concerned. Smaller clusters of PCs may alleviate some users' privacy concerns

2.2. Queue management & demand

- 2.2.1. At peak times demand exceeds supply and queues form. This appears to have been less of a problem since reopening after the COVID lockdown, but will be monitored
- 2.2.2. Many computer users work collaboratively and the level of ambient noise increases quickly and creates a distraction for other computer users
- 2.2.3. Space can also become overwhelmed by user groups who may be clustered around a single PC, thereby encroaching on other users' space and privacy, which can be irritating and/or intimidating, particularly for older people

2.3. Time limits

Frequent comments made indicate that some types of computer use are viewed by some as being more important than other use and there is an expectation that the "higher value" use should be prioritised over activity deemed of lesser value. Equity of access is a key principle underpinning provision of library services in New Zealand and internationally:

"Libraries shall make materials, facilities and services equally accessible to all users. There shall be no discrimination due to race, creed, gender, age or for any other reason." (IFLA, 1999¹⁰).

- 2.3.1. Time limits on computer use was contentious for some, particularly those with fewer skills. Everyone has the same computer access regardless of activity. Sessions do time out and work can be lost, creating frustration and stress for the customer and staff
- 2.3.2. Comments have also been made about the possibility of users bringing their own device having access to unlimited wifi. This is currently being implemented across all sites and will alleviate pressure on desktop machines, as well as save library staff having to issue access codes



2.4. Technology versions

- 2.4.1. The lack of consistent desktop profiles and access to up to date software versions is problematic for customers and staff. To balance cost with demand, free online versions of software have been made available on desktop PCs and these versions usually have compatibility issues with latest software versions. The result is frustrating and stressful for users and also adds to the pressure already caused by time constraints
- 2.4.2. Council has signalled its policy direction is to support people who lack the means of improving their own lives and rollout of standard software versions is an easy way that Council can practically support the community. This issue will be partly addressed when latest versions of MS Office will be installed, with plans to migrate to an online enterprise model from the next LTP, when budget will be sought
- 2.4.3. A few comments were made about the lack of "interactive technology". By and large this seems to refer to touch screens, which may be easier for some customers.

¹⁰ International Federation of Library Associations. (1999). IFLA statement on libraries and intellectual freedom. Retrieved from: www.ifla.org

3. BEHAVIOURS & SAFETY

Around the world libraries are regarded as a safe space for everyone, regardless of circumstance. While libraries support community wellbeing and connectedness, this means accepting both the highlights and the not-so-highlights. Not all library users are aware of, or even respect the norms of social behaviour. As John Szabo, former Director of the Los Angeles Public Library wrote:

“The most beautiful thing about public libraries is that they’re open and free to everyone [...] With that promise, there are unquestionably tough challenges that our library and public libraries across the nation face every day. Of course, they’re not unique to libraries - they’re big, complicated community-wide issues.” (Orlean, 2018, p.244¹¹).

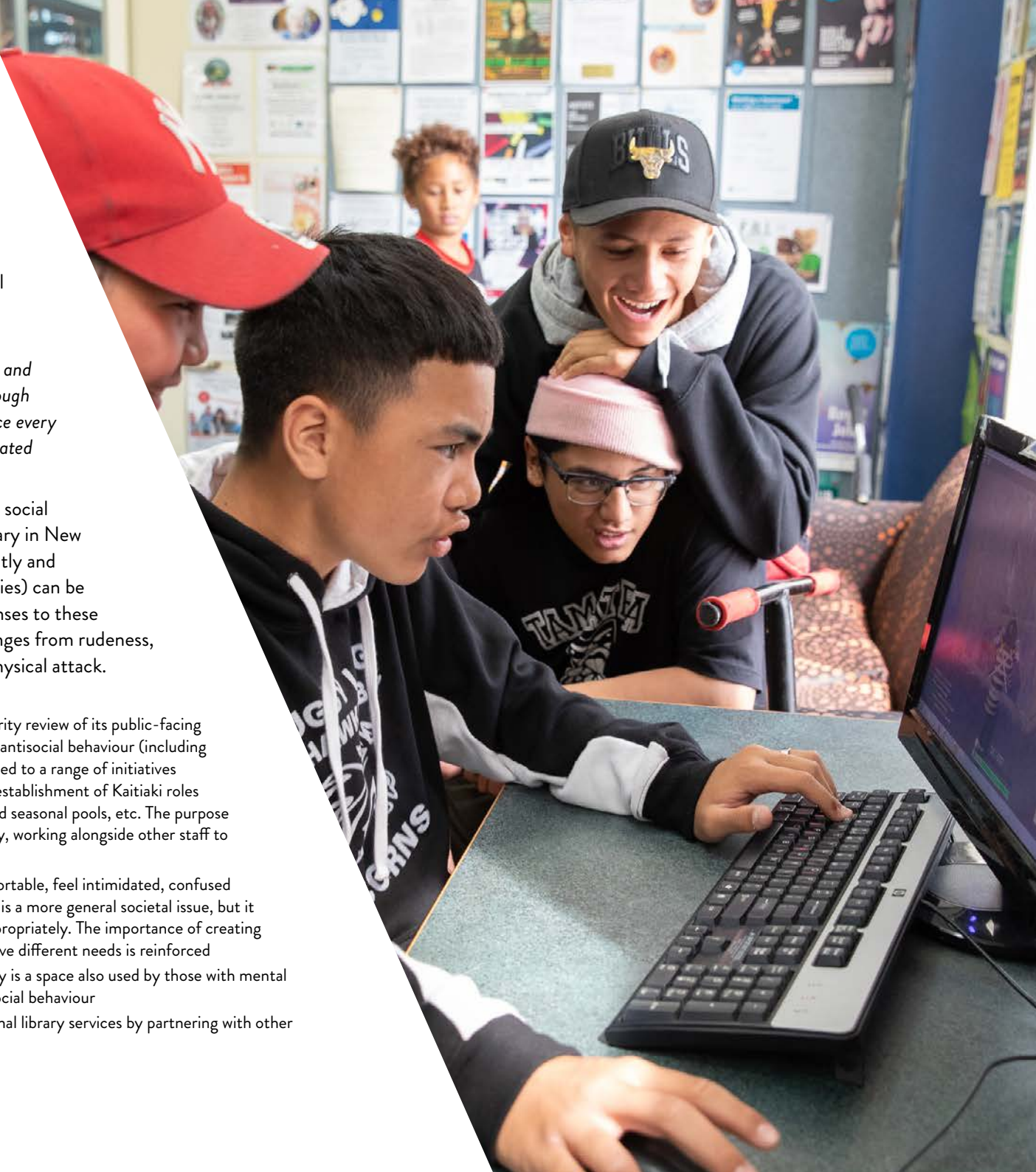
People affected by mental health issues, substance abuse, or by social vulnerability are part of the working reality for every public library in New Zealand. Many customers use services and facilities independently and successfully, but for some use of social services (including libraries) can be challenging, alienating, overwhelming or even fearsome. Responses to these feelings can manifest in a range of antisocial behaviours that ranges from rudeness, verbal aggression and abuse through to threats of violence or physical attack.

3.1. Safety

In response to increasingly antisocial behaviour, Council undertook a security review of its public-facing facilities in 2018, following a number of episodes involving assaults and/or antisocial behaviour (including an increase in gang-related activity) in or near Council premises. This has led to a range of initiatives including (but not limited to) upgrade of security equipment, CCTV and establishment of Kaitiaki roles across Council facilities from libraries to the Art Gallery, Splash Planet and seasonal pools, etc. The purpose of these roles is ambassadorial and monitoring rather than straight security, working alongside other staff to proactively manage situations.

- 3.1.1. Some members of the community indicated that they are not comfortable, feel intimidated, confused or are scared by some of the behaviours they see in the library. This is a more general societal issue, but it is important that both behaviours and expectations are managed appropriately. The importance of creating quieter spaces and creating some separation for library users who have different needs is reinforced
- 3.1.2. There is opportunity to create understanding of diversity - the library is a space also used by those with mental health issues or social vulnerabilities - while also not accepting antisocial behaviour
- 3.1.3. There are opportunities to support those with needs beyond traditional library services by partnering with other agencies which work in this space

¹¹ Orlean, S. (2018). *The Library Book*. London: Atlantic Books.





4. ACCESS

Access is a key measure the community uses to evaluate library services, with hours of opening being a significant measure as well as ease of access to key services (such as computers or carparking). Post COVID the community voiced their dissatisfaction of reduced hours of opening as well as the reduction of service levels.

- 4.1. Library hours were strongly identified by many stakeholders as not meeting their expectations. Coming out of the last *LSP*, the Libraries adopted 6pm closure most weekdays. Use between 5-6pm was low and from late 2020 the Libraries are trialling different hours arrangements. Assessing the need for and cost of extended Sunday hours at the Hastings Library will be undertaken, as Sundays are a popular day for family groups and may align well with Hastings City Art Gallery hours, should these return to pre-COVID settings
- 4.2. Furniture and fittings also need to be mobile and multifunctional, especially for seniors.
As a significant library user group and an increasing demographic over time, seniors must be able to safely and comfortably enjoy library spaces using furniture designed with their needs in mind
- 4.3. Lack of carparking was also noted, particularly at some times of the day. It is unclear whether this relates to a specific library site but there are indications that more parking spaces for mobility card holders and new parents are wanted. Secure parking systems for other forms of transport such as bikes was also desired
- 4.4. In 2021 the Libraries will be converting to Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) as the means of managing use and development of the collections. This will enable opportunities for future growth (depending on budget) with kiosks enabling library collections to be available for checkout and checkin at remote locations



5. COLLECTIONS & CONTENT

Providing access to collections is a core function of libraries – historically this has been print books, magazines, newspapers and other hard copy media. The formats in which libraries provide access to informational and recreational content now varies from print, audiovisual formats such as CDs, DVDs and other playback media, to online, downloadable and streamed content and services.

5.1. Fines

A key piece of feedback indicated that fines are a cost barrier. Many people expressed a strong view that fines should be removed, particularly for children. This has formed part of the Libraries' LTP budget submission. A significant number of both large and small New Zealand public libraries no longer charge fines for children's material (including Napier) and an increasing number have removed fines altogether.

This marks a shift in understanding that library services contribute to social development and placing barriers is a disincentive in building social capacity and thereby supporting communities. It is also acknowledgement of the low return on investment – weighing up the cost of managing and recovering fines relative to the individual amounts involved, particularly when relatively small sums of money owing then become the reason for people not using library services at all.

Hastings District Council has a focus on addressing poverty, housing, employment, health and wellbeing issues, yet charging for overdue children's material may be considered out of date and incongruous with these goals.

5.2. Loan periods

Other comments made related to extending the loan period on material and increasing the number or accessibility of locations to which material can be returned.

Over time lending of the physical collections is slowly declining in line with international trends, but it remains to be seen what impact of the global pandemic has on this. Library usage generally increases during times of significant financial impact, as austerity measures by households drive up the use of free public services such as libraries. The impacts that a pandemic have on library use are still unfolding today however, as COVID level changes ebb and flow according to the wider public health landscape.

5.3. Streaming services & digital content

Streaming services are now becoming more widely used and thus far the Libraries have not subscribed to streamed content, yet neither have these services been requested. This raises the question whether streaming services are considered a private responsibility. It has been noted that use of audiovisual collections has decreased. CDs are no longer purchased and this collection has now been withdrawn due to declining use. DVDs are still purchased but use of this collection is declining over time and they will also be withdrawn in time.

Stakeholders noted that more ebooks and digital resources are desirable. Digital content has been consciously increased, which has resulted in a slight increase in use, although use of specific digital resources increased substantially during lockdown. Newspapers and magazines are noted as potential areas of the collection to develop. By and large digital use accounts for approximately 5% of total loans annually, but in 2020 this increased to almost 20% due to strong use of digital content during lockdown and constraints around lending of physical items.

5.3.1. Stakeholders noted that education on how to use digital content would be useful. All staff are expected to be able to assist the public with different platforms and content

5.3.2. Some stakeholders indicated that collections need “more of” across a number of specific collection areas. These are not always real gaps in the collection, but indicates that customers may not always find what they expect to and staff assistance maybe needed to explore alternative formats

5.3.3. In 2021/22 with external funding, staff will begin digitising local history material to ensure long term preservation of unique resources that tell stories of local people and places

6. STAFFING

Use of library book borrowing services remains a core service and is a key sustainability initiative – Council funded resources which are used and reused over a long period of time.

RFID will enable time savings for staff and customers, with less manual handling and more streamlined collection management processes, with staff being freed up to work with customers, outreach, programmes and collection promotion.

6.1. Staff diversity

External funding available through the New Zealand Libraries Partnership Programme has enabled the appointment of a specialist to engage with Pasifika communities, which area has not previously been resourced and which remains a common feedback theme.

Library staff are also actively encouraged and supported to grow their awareness and knowledge of Te Reo and Te Ao Māori

6.2. General comments

Stakeholders were otherwise generally satisfied with the level of support and expertise available from staff





7. PROGRAMMES & OUTREACH

2020 marked a shift in the way programmes were delivered, with a global pandemic necessitating a move to more online delivery. This allows greater flexibility - participation at a time that works for each household - while also ensuring that sudden changes in COVID levels are proactively planned for. The mix of virtual programming and onsite activities and events will evolve according to needs and taking account of public health requirements.

The mixed model of programme delivery partly addresses the gap in programme provision for rural communities identified by some stakeholders. With a significant rural hinterland and a local economy based on horticulture and agricultural production it can be difficult to engage this sector and efforts have hitherto focused on engaging with rural schools, but opportunities exist, assuming that internet connectivity is adequate.

7.1. Suggested programme themes

- 7.1.1. Several responses suggested programme ideas, with Māori cultural programmes and activities being of keen interest. This will require greater focus on developing relationships with local iwi and hapū, with the libraries potentially being a venue for activities
- 7.1.2. Other areas of interest for programmes included genealogy/family history, always an area of interest and with plenty of library resources to supplement research, not to mention the range of community groups that may have an interest, there are plenty of collaborative opportunities
- 7.1.3. Further investigation is needed into the needs of rural communities to assess what their needs are and how library services can best meet these
- 7.1.4. Technology classes were also requested and partnership opportunities with providers should be explored. The Libraries have run tech classes in the past but discontinued these due to low demand, opting instead to deliver assistance at point of need
- 7.1.5. Tweens & teens programming was also suggested as an area for development. After children's programming, activities and events for young adults has the most significant investment. This age group can be difficult to engage, but it indicates that there is an ongoing level of interest
- 7.1.6. A desire for "more talks" was also expressed, thus highlighting a later point about the need for "more publicity about what's going on". Many of the talks delivered each month are actually hosted and organised by external parties and the Libraries may be the venue and although as much publicity as can reasonably be provided is offered, the responsibility for publicity lies elsewhere



Desired outcomes

Library services contribute to Council's community priority areas of focus as part of its Great Communities Strategy¹²:

- 1. Communities are safe, vibrant and resilient**
- 2. Smart innovation connects citizens and services**
- 3. There are great spaces for people**
- 4. Civic pride, cultural diversity and relationships are strong**
- 5. There are pathways for youth**

This Strategy provides a contextual framework for library services. It also points to areas for improvement in the delivery of library services.

¹² *Hastings District Council. (2021). Great Communities Strategy [Draft].*

In summary, library services, facilities and programmes should be:

Accessible, safe and inclusive

- Uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi and te reo and tikanga Māori
- Flexible, fit for multiple purposes and responsive to community needs
- Welcoming and safe, easy to navigate
- Delivers beyond the physical space and into the community 24/7 as much as possible and in partnership with others

Responsive and reflective

- Agile, collaborative and responsive, delivering across multiple channels to multiple audiences
- Celebrating, reflecting and delivering to the diversity within our communities
- Anticipating and responding to changing community needs

Connected, collaborative and innovative

- Enables connection through technology solutions
- Working with a wide range of partner organisations to deliver library services – government, NGOs and nonprofits, iwi and mana whenua, community groups, etc
- Working within the library sector

Inspiring and exciting

- Opportunities to play, be curious, experiment, create and have fun
- Opportunities to connect with others
- Resources to support shared and individual learning and discovery

Specific actions have been identified and documented in the accompanying Action Plan to support the *Libraries' Strategic Plan, 2021-2026*.

Planning for the long term future of Hastings District's library services needs to be considered against the context of community expectations, investment opportunities, future developments in the sector and related Council projects and upgrades to ensure that Hastings District residents have access to a modern and exciting library service that is fit for purpose for years to come.

Libraries' Strategic Plan 2021-2026: Action Plan

The Action Plan has been developed from needs identified in stakeholder engagement undertaken both as part of the Strategic Plan review and also more recently as part of engagement work undertaken with various communities within the wider Pasifika community.

The vast majority of the feedback related to library spaces and physical facilities – indicating that library spaces need more than programmed maintenance and asset replacement to be fit for purpose. While physical facilities are not the focus of library services, they do influence what and how services and programmes can be delivered, which in turn influences how people feel about these.

What is lacking is a coordinated overarching conceptual plan that connects long term service development with space needs, internal activity with external environment and current with future needs to deliver the outcomes the community expects. A master plan for library service delivery is needed to ensure future investment decisions are based on a wider understanding of needs and will enable the right outcomes to be delivered for the community.

Based on community engagement as part of its Libraries' Strategic Plan development, a number of outcomes that determine delivery of library services, facilities and programmes have been identified. These are listed below within the wider context of Council outcomes, notably the *Great Communities Strategy*.

Great Communities Strategy outcomes (GCS)	Library services, facilities & programmes outcomes (LSP)
Communities are safe, vibrant and resilient	Accessible, safe & inclusive
Smart innovation connects citizens and services	Responsive & reflective
There are great spaces for people	Connected, collaborative & innovative
Civic pride, cultural diversity and relationships are strong	Inspiring & exciting
There are pathways for youth	

IDENTIFIED NEED	ACTION	TIME	RESPONSIBILITY	DESIRED OUTCOME/S DELIVERED	NOTES
STAFFING					
Community diversity to be reflected in staffing	Recruit greater diversity – eg. age, gender, culture, etc	Ongoing	Libraries	Accessible, safe & inclusive (LSP) Responsive & reflective (LSP)	
Staff proficient with range of technology	Ongoing training to develop confidence & competence	Ongoing	Libraries, Asset Management	Civic pride, cultural diversity & strong relationships (GCS)	
SPACES					
No roadmap of future space development and needs	Develop master plan for future library space development	YR1-2	Libraries, Asset Management	Accessible, safe & inclusive (LSP) Great spaces for people (GCS)	
Spaces do not accommodate different types of library use eg. noisy vs quiet use, communal vs private spaces	Design for flexible spaces that take account of different types of use	YR4			
Spaces look tired and in need of refresh, colour palette is bland	Deliver programmed upgrades according to master plan Modernise colour palette	YR5			
Entry spaces lack culturally appropriate welcome	Upgrade entry spaces incorporating Council's design principles Ensure staff are visible on entry to all sites	YR5		Accessible, safe & inclusive (LSP) Responsive & reflective (LSP) Great spaces for people (GCS)	
Toilets are in poor condition and smelly	Undertake significant upgrade of toilet facilities	YR5		Accessible, safe & inclusive (LSP) Great spaces for people (GCS)	
Not enough toilets for the size of the building	Review number of toilets required for building size/ visitor numbers and upgrade	YR4			
Toilets should not be at the entry (welcome) point	Upgrade entry spaces incorporating Council's design principles	YR2-5			
Insufficient or inaccessible safe power points for public use	Provide more power points in locations where safe and accessible, safe for public use	YR5			

IDENTIFIED NEED	ACTION	TIME	RESPONSIBILITY	DESIRED OUTCOME/S DELIVERED	NOTES
SPACES (CONT)					
Building design inhibits easy monitoring of use, needs, behaviours and safety around the building	Develop master plan for future space development noting layout improvements Lower stacks Increase CCTV coverage inside buildings Increase mobile surveillance by staff	YR1-2	Libraries Asset Management	Accessible, safe & inclusive (LSP) Great spaces for people (GCS) Safe, vibrant & resilient communities (GCS)	
Service desk too big and inhibits traffic flows	Decrease desk size Relocate	YR3			
Confusion about where to queue	Signage Smaller desk to reduce ambiguity	YR3			
Difficult for people with limited mobility/strength to access toilets at Havelock North Library	Review design in relation to Building Code and modify to enhance accessibility	YR3			
Lack of drinking water facilities for users	Install drinking water fountains at each facility	YR4			
Seating options not appropriate for everyone (especially older adults)	Review furniture needs and programme appropriate replacements for each site as short term measure Longer term options include development of an Older Adults' space in the Hastings Library	YR2-3	Libraries	Accessible, safe & inclusive (LSP) Responsive & reflective (LSP) Great spaces for people (GCS)	Will be thoroughly reviewed at Hastings Library as part of the development of a specific Older Adults' space, tentatively programmed for 22/23FY as part of Civic Square redevelopment
Poor connection with outdoor environment	Review provision for indoor/outdoor connection in line with Council's design principles and master plan for future library development	YR4	Libraries Asset Management	Accessible, safe & inclusive (LSP) Inspiring & exciting (LSP) Great spaces for people (GCS)	
Lack of art and cultural elements in building	Review provision for arts/cultural elements in line with Council's design principles and master plan for future library development	YR4		Civic pride, cultural diversity & strong relationships (GCS)	

IDENTIFIED NEED	ACTION	TIME	RESPONSIBILITY	DESIRED OUTCOME/S DELIVERED	NOTES
COMPUTERS & TECHNOLOGY					
Different types of computer use lead to tension and overcrowding	Separate computers out into smaller clusters around the building to accommodate different types of use	YR1-2	Libraries IMBT	Connected, collaborative & innovative (LSP) Accessible, safe & inclusive (LSP) Great spaces for people (GCS)	Size of groups and noise levels
Location of and privacy at computers	Smaller clusters of computers around the building	YR1-2			Libraries are public spaces so privacy is not assured Security (of personal details/ data) may be an unrecognised issue
Lack of charging stations around the libraries	Provide more power points in locations where safe and accessible, safe for public use	YR5	Libraries Asset Management	Connected, collaborative & innovative (LSP) Great spaces for people (GCS) Smart innovation connects citizens & services (GCS)	
Unlimited free wifi access is available in all libraries	Migrate all three sites on to Council's public wifi networks	Early 2021	IMBT		COMPLETE
Restricted public wifi for people who BYOD	Merge library wifi with Council's unlimited public wifi at all sites	Early 2021			To be rolled out in early 2021
Inconsistent desktop profiles on public PCs with out of date software	Standardise desktop profiles Replace freeware with standard MS Office suite	Mid 2021			To be rolled out in early 2021 Budget for Enterprise version to be sought in 2024/25 LTP bid

IDENTIFIED NEED	ACTION	TIME	RESPONSIBILITY	DESIRED OUTCOME/S DELIVERED	NOTES
BEHAVIOURS & SAFETY					
Some customers do not feel safe in the libraries	Implement recommendations of 2018 Security Review, including (but not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaitiaki • Staff training • CCTV • Creation of safe spaces • Personal & fixed alarms • Access controls • Relationship with Police & agencies • Policy/legislative levers (eg. enforcement of the Gang Insignia Act) 	From 2021	Security Libraries	Accessible, safe & inclusive (LSP) Great spaces for people (GSC) Safe, vibrant & resilient communities (GSC)	Ongoing engagement with community about different public library uses and users is needed to ensure realistic expectations Security Review implementation of recommendations: Flaxmere Library – COMPLETE Havelock North Library NOT COMPLETE Hastings Library NOT COMPLETE
Some customers find the libraries too noisy/busy	Plan and separate smaller activity areas around the building to accommodate different types of use	Trial YR1-2 Plan YR4	Libraries IMBT	Accessible, safe & inclusive (LSP) Great spaces for people (GSC)	

IDENTIFIED NEED	ACTION	TIME	RESPONSIBILITY	DESIRED OUTCOME/S DELIVERED	NOTES
ACCESS					
Library hours do not meet user needs	Restoration of pre-COVID hours prioritised Review hours to include more weekday late nights Review possible extension of Sunday hours	YR1	Libraries	Accessible, safe & inclusive (LSP) Great spaces for people (GSC)	
Not enough carparking at some times of the day (especially mobility and new parent parks)	Undertake review of parking needs at each site Include in master plan for future library space development	YR1-2 for plan YR5 for delivery	Planning & Regulatory		
Secure parking systems for bikes and scooters					
Fines are a barrier to library use	Removal of fines on children's materials Removal of fines on all other materials	YR1 (Children) YR4 (Adults)	Libraries	Accessible, safe & inclusive (LSP) Pathways for youth (GCS)	
Greater convenience when returning books	Implement RFID self returns Increase number of locations to which material can be returned – implement RFID remote kiosks	Mid 2021 YR3-5		Accessible, safe & inclusive (LSP) Smart innovation connects citizens & services (GCS)	

IDENTIFIED NEED	ACTION	TIME	RESPONSIBILITY	DESIRED OUTCOME/S DELIVERED	NOTES
COLLECTIONS & CONTENT					
More digital and streamed content	Trial streaming services	YR2		Inspiring & exciting (LSP) Connected, collaborative & innovative (LSP) Responsive & reflective (LSP) Accessible & inclusive Smart innovation connects citizens & services (GCS)	
Customers do not know how to access digital content	Make it easier for customers to access digital content – eg. classes, online videos, one on one tutorials, library download capability	From YR1		Inspiring & exciting (LSP) Responsive & reflective (LSP) Smart innovation connects citizens & services (GCS)	
More Pasifika & Māori resources	Increase purchasing of Pasifika and Māori resources	From YR1		Accessible & inclusive (LSP) Responsive & reflective (LSP) Civic pride, cultural diversity & strong relationships (GCS)	
Access to vulnerable and unique local history resources	Employ staff with external funding to digitise local history material				
PROGRAMMES & OUTREACH					
More culturally diverse activities/programmes	Investigate collaboration opportunities with other agencies or partners Investigate funding opportunities to assist eg. Ethnic Communities Digital Inclusion Fund Deliver onsite/offsite/online in partnership with others	From YR1	Libraries Partners	Accessible & inclusive (LSP) Responsive & reflective (LSP) Civic pride, cultural diversity & strong relationships (GCS)	
More genealogy & family & local history programmes					
Need technology classes					
Do we understand rural needs and are we meeting these?	Investigate rural opportunities Deliver onsite/offsite/online as appropriate	From YR2			

The blue shaded items relate specifically to the Hastings Library





LIBRARIES *CONNECT* COMMUNITIES



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TE KAUNIHERA Ā-ROHE O HERETAUNGA