

# **CONNECTED LIBRARIES**

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**Ignite your imagination**

## **AGENDA**

**Board Meeting**

**Wednesday 23 August 2023**

**4.00pm**

**Bunjil Place Library**

|           |  |                 |
|-----------|--|-----------------|
| <b>1.</b> | <b>Present</b>   |                 |
| <b>2.</b> | <b>Apologies</b>   |                 |
| <b>3.</b> | <b>Acknowledgement of the Traditional Owners</b>   |                 |
| <b>4.</b> | <b>Declaration of Conflicts of Interest</b>  |                 |
| <b>5.</b> | <b>Confirmation of the Minutes of The Casey-Cardinia Library Corporation (CL) Board Meeting held on Thursday 13 July 2023.</b> |                 |
| <b>6.</b> | <b>Strategies/Plans</b>  | <b>Page No.</b> |
|           | CC29/2023 <b>Draft Annual Report 2022-2023 including Year End Financial Report</b>   | 3               |
| <b>7.</b> | <b>Officers' Reports</b>   |                 |
|           | CC30/2023 <b>Finance</b>   | 5               |
|           | CC31/2023 <b>People and Culture</b>  | 8               |
|           | CC32/2023 <b>Operational Performance</b>   | 10              |
|           | CC33/2023 <b>Customer Experience</b>   | 13              |
| <b>8.</b> | <b>General Business</b>  | 16              |
| <b>9.</b> | <b>Next Meeting</b>  | 16              |

## STRATEGIES/PLANS

### CC29/2023 DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023 INCLUDING YEAR END FINANCIAL REPORT

*Report prepared by Beth Luppino*

#### **Purpose**

To present the Board with Connected Libraries Draft Annual Report 2022-2023 including the Year End Financial Report for consideration.

*CL Library Plan reference –4.6*

#### **Discussion**

Connected Libraries is required under Sections 125, 126 & 196(7) of the Local Government Act 1989, to prepare and submit an Annual Report to the Minister for Local Government within three months of the end of the financial year.

Clause 14.1 of the 2023 CCLC Regional Library Agreement requires that the CEO provide each member Council with a copy of the Annual Report within three months of the end of the financial year.

#### **Summary of Performance**

It has been year of change and transformation for Connected Libraries. We farewelled a significant part of our workforce on 30 November upon the withdrawal of Cardinia Shire from the Regional Library Agreement. Several staff who exited CCLC at that point had worked for the organisation for CCLC's entire 26-year existence. We have also completed the transition to a new trading name, and a review and re-sizing of our workforce structure after the Cardinia-based team members transitioned to Myli.

Despite the challenges transformation of this size raises, our team demonstrated the organisational values of creativity, love of learning, social intelligence, humour, teamwork and fairness to keep delivering services to the Casey and Cardinia communities throughout the change process.

The Renaming Project was exceptional, headed by Erin Commerford, Marketing Manager, with design and brand architecture developed by Fluid.

We have an updated and signed Regional Library Agreement (RLA) along with an updated Local Law and Board Governance Policy, that will carry Connected Libraries up to the next phase of our journey, to transition to beneficial enterprise/ compliant entity under the Local Government Act 2020 by 2030.

A service review was conducted between January-June 2023 to ensure that the needs of the current organisation were met with the right human resources supporting the business, within the context of available funding.

Opportunities for refreshing service delivery were embraced and a new organisational structure developed. We identified and better resourced key areas of community need such as children and youth services, outreach services, services for diverse communities, digital literacy and technology services, and building membership in newly developed areas in Casey South.

Community members of all ages rely on their public library for free and universal access to resources that improve their literacy, wellbeing and connectedness. As at 30 June 2023, Connected Libraries has over 77,000 members.

The Annual Report 2022-2023 is a celebration of services provided to the Casey and Cardinia communities throughout an exceptional year of change.

#### **Summary of Financial Year End Results**

##### Income Statement

During the 2022-2023 Financial Year, Connected Libraries delivered a surplus of \$0.25million. With costs relating to the withdrawal of Cardinia Shire Council, rebrand project and service review funded by Member Councils, Connected Libraries was able to retain the focus of recurrent revenue on the delivery of library

services to our communities with minimal interruptions. Employment costs continue to be the largest consumption of resources, with \$7.47 million incurred in 2023, representing almost 75% of total expenses.

#### Balance Sheet

As part of the withdrawal of Cardinia Shire Council from the RLA, Connected Libraries transferred assets valued at \$1.05 million, consisting of Collections, Furniture and Prepaid Expenses. Cardinia also assumed responsibility for \$0.15 million of employee provisions. The balance sheet is in a healthy position with current assets (\$2.92 million) greater than current liabilities (\$1.67 million). This means that Connected Libraries is in a position to meet all its liabilities, statutory or otherwise, including all short and long-term employee benefits, which stand at \$1.2 million. Current assets include cash of \$2.8 million.

#### Equity

Cardinia Shire Council withdrew \$1.47million in equity when they left the Regional Library Corporation, when taking into account the \$0.25million surplus achieved in the year, City of Casey remained as the sole member of the Regional Library Agreement, with \$4.46million in equity remaining.

#### Annual Report including Financial Report Submission

Connected Libraries emailed DJPR on Friday August 4, requesting an extension from 30 September 2023 due to the Audit Strategy noting the final reports will not be ready until the last week of October.

#### **Conclusion**

Connected Libraries Draft Annual Report provides a summary and celebration of the performance of the organisation from July 2022 to June 2023.

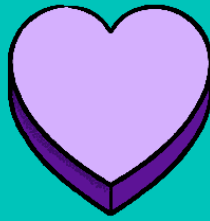
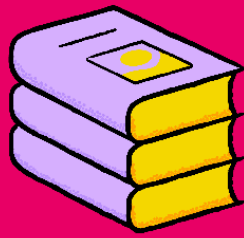
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#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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- 1. That the Board approve “in principle” Connected Libraries Draft Annual Report 2022–2023 and associated Draft Financial Report.**
- 2. That the Board authorise the Chairperson, a Board member and the CEO to sign the Financial Report included in the Annual Report once it has been ratified by the Auditors.**
- 3. That the CEO sign the Management Representation Letter once the Audit has been finalised.**
- 4. That the Board note Connected Libraries have applied to the Minister for Local Government for an extension on the submission deadline of the Annual Report including the Year End Financial Report from the 30 September 2023.**
- 5. That Connected Libraries forward the approved Annual Report including the Financial Report to City of Casey before submission to the Minister for Local Government.**
- 6. That Connected Libraries forward the approved Annual Report to the Minister for Local Government.**

**CONNECTED  
LIBRARIES**



# Annual Report

## 2022-2023

[connectedlibraries.org.au](https://connectedlibraries.org.au)

**Ignite your imagination**

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# Foreword

## Casey Cardinia Library Corporation has a new trading name – Connected Libraries!

In December 2022 when Cardinia libraries left our network to partner with Myli – My Community Libraries, we asked the Casey community for their ideas on what to call their library service.

More than 750 responses were received in less than 10 days. Many of the suggestions included the words “connected” or “connect”, so we listened. Connected Libraries is now our new name, and we have a fresh brand to go with it.

This name speaks to the heart of what we do in libraries – we bring people together with ideas, information and inspiration.

It has been another year of change and transformation for us, including the change of trading name, and a re-sizing of our service after the Cardinia branches and team members transitioned to Myli.

Despite the challenges transformation of this size raises, our team has been resilient and has consistently demonstrated our values of creativity, love of learning, social intelligence, humour, teamwork and fairness.

Community members of all ages rely on their public library for free and universal access to resources that improve their literacy, wellbeing and connectedness.

Victorian public libraries have two million members and many more visitors. As at 30 June 2023, Connected Libraries has over 77,000 members.

Public libraries mitigate the significant social and economic costs generated when people struggle to access resources and opportunities.

We are committed to addressing the following issues through our library services:

- **44% of adults do not have the literacy skills needed for everyday life<sup>1</sup>**
- **20% of very young children need more play-based development and reading to be ready for school<sup>2</sup>**

- **33% of adults feel lonely<sup>3</sup>**
- **28% experience digital exclusion with affordability a key driver<sup>4</sup>**

Increasingly communities are facing new challenges – such as the impacts of climate change and associated need for refuge and emergency resources, aging population, gambling rates, drug dependency and increases in cost of living – that impact more Victorians. ([Public Libraries Victoria Strategic Plan 2023-26](#))

Our libraries provide resources that can help reduce these issues, creating benefits for individuals, families and communities. Even people who are not regular users of libraries have reported they would feel a loss if they were gone. A 2022 survey with a sample of more than 34,000 Victorian library users found:

- **92% feel safe at the library**
- **88% believe libraries welcome people from all walks of life, and**
- **72% ‘feel better’ at the library.<sup>5</sup>**

The Board and Executive team are extremely grateful for the commitment the library team has shown to deliver excellent services to our community despite the changes occurring behind the scenes.

Read on for a snapshot of the ways we have supported literacy, lifelong learning and community health and wellbeing.



**Angie Peresso**  
Chairperson



**Beth Luppino**  
CEO

<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2013) [4228.0 Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies Australia, 2011-2012](#)

<sup>2</sup> Australian Government (2021) [Australian Early Development Census 2021](#)

<sup>3</sup> Australian Institute of Health & Welfare [Social isolation and loneliness](#), 16 Sept 2021.

<sup>4</sup> Centre for Social Impact Collaboration of Universities, ‘[Digital inclusion improving nationally but more to be done on affordability and equal access](#)’, 15 Oct 2021.

<sup>5</sup> SLV and PLV (2022) Victorian Public Library Survey 2022 summary results: [Inside our public libraries](#).



## Our Vision

Inspiring spaces where everyone is free to discover possibilities.

## Our Mission

To encourage lifelong learning, increase literacy and build strong, resilient communities across the Casey region.

## Governance

We are a values led organisation.

Our governance structure reflects our commitment to achieving a genuine model of community participation.

We are absolutely committed to supporting good governance as an organisation.

## Our Approach

We

- Put people first
- Pay it forward
- Follow up and reciprocate good deeds
- Help each other grow
- Share our stories and learn from each other
- Encourage authentic and courageous conversations
- Take quick little steps
- Give new things a go
- Choose momentum over perfection
- Encourage each other to take calculated risks
- Build confidence and resilience by working to our strengths
- Embrace the opportunity to learn when, things don't go as planned
- Share ideas freely
- Acknowledge our partners
- Celebrate success

## Acknowledgement of Country

Connected Libraries acknowledges the Bunurong, Boonwurrung and Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation as the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we meet and work, and offer our respect to their Elders past and present.





# Our Values and Guiding Behaviours

## Teamwork

- When we all contribute, we excel
- We look out for each other
- We play to each other's strengths
- We work with our community

## Humour

- Our humour enables us to express how we feel
- We like to laugh, bringing smiles to other people
- We use humour to build connections and create a positive experience for everyone



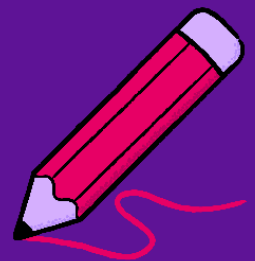
## Creativity

- Thinking of new ways to do things is crucial to our success
- We challenge the status quo, if we believe a better way is possible
- We cultivate creativity in others



## Social Intelligence

- We are mindful of people's feelings
- We know what to do to put others at ease
- We are kind, compassionate and look for the best in each other



## Love of Learning

- We love learning about new things.
- We believe there is always an opportunity to learn
- We learn from each other

## Fairness

- We treat people fairly and recognise them as individuals
- We do not let our personal feelings bias our decisions about others
- We actively support social inclusion and connection
- We are accountable for our behaviour

# The Board

## City of Casey

**Miguel Belmar**

Administrator  
Chairperson until November 2022



**Steve Coldham**



**Keri New**



**Noelene Duff**

Administrator \*

## Cardinia Shire

**Angie Peresso**

Cardinia Representative from December 2022  
Chairperson from February 2023



**Cr Jeff Springfield**

Until October 2022



**Lili Rosic**

Until December 2022



**Cr Jack Kowarzik**

Alternate Until December 2022\*  
Chairperson from November 2022

\* Alternate delegate

# The Executive Team

**Beth Luppino**

Chief Executive Officer



**Emily Ramaswamy**

General Manager, Finance and Digital Operations



**Janine Galvin**

General Manager, Organisational Development



**Bec Mitchem**

General Manager, Customer Experience  
- Acting until 1 December 2022

**Daniel Lewis**

General Manager, Digital Operations - Until 22 March 2023

**Sue Brown**

General Manager, Strategy and Customer Experience - From 18 January until 17 May 2023

# Our Community



Casey Cardinia Library Corporation operates in the traditional lands of the Bunurong, Boonwurrung and Wurundjeri peoples. First nations people from many different places live in the Casey Cardinia Region.

Our region continues to experience rapid population growth with significant residential development occurring in Clyde, Cranbourne and Officer. Cranbourne East had the largest population growth in Victoria in 2020-2021.

The latest Australian Bureau of Statistics report shows Casey's population has increased to 369,453 across the region's 409 square kilometers and Cardinia's 123,020 across its 1,282 square kilometers. ([Regional Population Growth, Australia – 3218.0 Australian Bureau of Statistics, Revised April 2023](#)). Our population is estimated to exceed 734,000 by 2041 across the Casey Cardinia region.

Our community is diverse. More than a quarter of residents were born in non-English speaking countries. Almost a third of the Casey Cardinia region's population speak a language other than English at home. Key languages other than English include Persian/Dari, Sinhalese, Punjabi, Mandarin, Hindi, Arabic and Spanish.

Casey Cardinia region has more couples-with-children households (43%) and single-parent households (11%) than the Melbourne average. Nearly 55% of residents are families with children.

Compared with other OECD countries, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) reports that Australians are struggling to achieve a work-life balance ranking in the bottom third of the OECD countries. ([Australia's Welfare 2017, AIHW, October 2017](#)). Despite satisfactory job performance and earnings, Australians spent less time on leisure and

personal care than those in other OECD countries. ([How's life in Australia? OECD, 2020](#)).

The City of Casey has the second highest Pokies expenditure of Victorian Local Government Areas. There are thirteen venues with Pokies across Casey and another five in Cardinia, with a total 1,237 Electronic Gaming Machines (EGM's). ([Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, 2020](#)). More than \$138 million dollars was spent on the Pokies in the Casey Cardinia region in 2021-2022.

Our community faces challenges with income, education, employment, occupation and housing. Casey and Cardinia rank 49th and 59th respectively in Victoria for socio-economic disadvantage. ([Population and Housing: Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas \(SEIFA\), Australia – 2033.0.55.001 Australian Bureau of Statistics, Revised March 2019](#)). Mortgage and rental stress are common in the Casey Cardinia region.

Casey Cardinia region has some of the highest recorded number of family violence incidents in Victoria. Both Local Government Areas have experienced increases in family violence levels in recent years, with City of Casey up 8.8 percent compared to the previous year. ([Crime Statistics Agency, Family incidents, March 2023](#)).

Time is a precious resource in our community. More than 93% of residents (15 years+) are employed. Approximately 65% of working people from Casey and Cardinia live in the area but work outside the area.

# The Numbers

Visits total  
**1,674,637**

physical visits **759,721**  
virtual visits **914,916**  
Average per week **32,205**



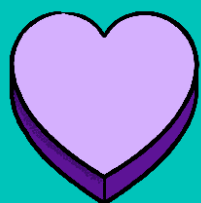
Loans total  
**2,253,335**

physical loans  
**2,190,682**  
and eLoans  
**783,053**

Membership at end of  
2022-2023, we had  
**77,341**

Membership before Cardinia withdrew  
at 30 November 2022 was 100,849.

Membership continues to grow with new members  
continuously being signed up.



eNewsletters  
over **73,125**  
subscribers

Online  
programming  
**youth 869**  
attendees to 76  
online sessions  
**adult 145**

attendees to 16  
online sessions.

Note: We observed a  
shift of participation  
this year from online to  
in-person programs as  
community confidence  
returned post-  
pandemic.

Total items  
**digital – 27,027**  
(eAudio and eBooks)  
**physical – 241,954\***

\*includes magazines title issues.

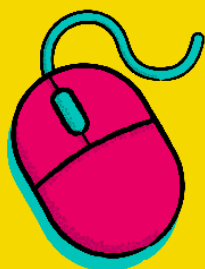


Programs (all)  
**youth – 49,500**  
attendees over 1,990 sessions  
**adult 8,599**  
attendees over 1,068 sessions



**LOTE items  
8,547**

in Chinese, Hindi,  
Panjabi, Persian  
and Sinhalese



Internet bookings  
**55,363**



Wi-Fi  
sessions  
**91,164**

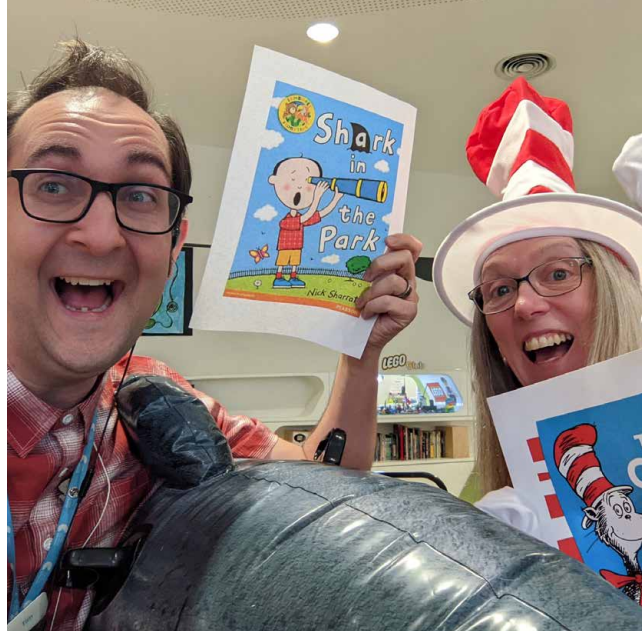
**458,787**

Website visits  
New Connected  
Libraries website  
was launched in  
June 2023.



Note – statistics for 2022-2023 are challenging to compare when interpreting with previous year's performance due to the withdrawal of Cardinia on 30 November 2022.

# Events Calendar



## Casey Winter Arts Festival

June – July

## Naidoc Week

3–10 July 2022

Get Up! Stand Up! Show Up!

## Library and Information Week

25–31 July 2022

Rewrite, Renew, Reimagine

## National Science Week

13–21 August 2022

Glass more than meets the eye

## CBCA Book Week 2022

20–26 August 2022

Dreaming with Eyes open

## Adult Learners Week

1–8 September 2022

## Archibald Prize at Bunjil Place

3 September–16 October 2022

## Loud at the Library

26 September–2 October 2022

## Celebrate Doveton

30 September 2022

## Ageing Positively and Seniors Month

October 2022

## 16 Days of Activism - Orange the World

25 November–10 December 2022

## Christmas/ End of Year celebrations

December 2022

## Big Summer Read

1 December 2022–31 January 2023

## Library Lovers Day

February 2023

## International Women's Day

8 March 2023

## National Simultaneous Storytime

24 May 2023 - The Speedy Sloth

## Reconciliation Week

27 May – 3 June 2023

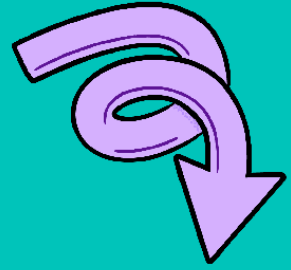
Be a voice for generations

## Refugee Week

18–24 June 2023



# A Year of Significant Change



## Withdrawal of Cardinia Shire

This has been a year of significant change for Casey Cardinia Libraries – now trading as Connected Libraries. While navigating the post-pandemic landscape of health, economic and social impacts that have followed two years of lockdowns, our Corporation has made big steps through a journey of transformation.

In September 2021, our member councils City of Casey and Cardinia Shire agreed to dissolve the Casey Cardinia Library Corporation (CCL). The decision was made due to several contributing factors, most notably the significant growth and change in demographics in Casey and Cardinia communities, along with new legislation in the Local Government Act 2020, which requires the current regional library model to be changed by 2030, and the timely need for a review of the existing model. Both Councils undertook a market testing exercise, and due diligence to explore the best models of service for their libraries in the future.

After the Councils explored all options, they landed on different pathways for their respective services.

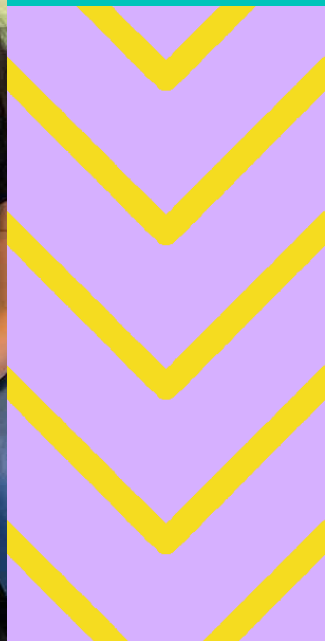
Cardinia resolved to withdraw from the Regional Library Agreement and instead partner with other Councils through Myli – My Community Library. Myli is known for delivering high quality contemporary library services for the communities of Baw Baw, Bass Coast and South Gippsland Shires. Myli completed its transformational journey to become a not-for-profit charity and beneficial entity under the

new Local Government Act in 2021. Cardinia completed the process of withdrawing from CCL on 1 December 2022. Pakenham, Emerald and the Cardinia Mobile library branches are all now affiliated with Myli.

Casey, with the support of Cardinia and the CCL Board, decided to continue with CCL as their library provider. Casey also resolved to support CCL to make the necessary transition to a corporate entity that complies with the Local Government Act 2020 over coming years.

With the decisions made on a pathway forward by each member Council there was a requirement to transition three library branches and a proportion of our workforce to Myli, and to create efficiencies with the remaining service.

Following Cardinia's withdrawal from the service, the CCL Executive led a broad service review and change process largely relating to the size and structure of the Connected Libraries workforce, to align with available funding from State and Local Government and future community needs.



## Rebrand

In December 2022, CCL asked the Casey community for their ideas on what to call their library service moving forward.

More than 750 responses were received in less than ten days. Many of those suggestions included the words “connected” or “connect” as part of the library name - so we listened. Connected Libraries is now our new trading name and there’s an exciting new brand to go with it. The new look and feel reflects our local library service, which is modern, forward-thinking and focuses on connecting people with information and each other. The brand is colourful and fun. It reflects the vibrance of our community, and the huge variety of programs and services on offer in our libraries.

## Regional Library Agreement and Local Law

Along with an update to our trading name, our library Board, member Council and the Minister for Local Government endorsed updates to our key Governance documents - the Regional Library Agreement and Local Law No.1 - to reflect the withdrawal of Cardinia and to allow us to continue to manage the corporation under the Local Government Act 1989.

## Independent Board Members

With the update to our Regional Library Agreement, and resignation of the Cardinia representative from the CCL Board, came the recruitment of two new Non-Executive Independent Board members who will be in place from the beginning of the new financial year. Penny Holloway and Helen Partridge will join the Board from 3 July 2023.



# Our Performance



# 1. Gather and Learn



Create safe, welcoming spaces that provide free access to information, knowledge and resources.

## Creating safe, accessible spaces

### NDIS Partnership

Connected Libraries conducted a review of accessibility in our branches with the support of NDIS workers. We made improvements to signage, accessible resources like keyboards, installing hearing loops and providing communication boards/magnifying sheets.

Our online images all have text tags that makes reading our website and social posts easier for people using aids.

We have made sure that there is wheelchair access available for people using library computers, self-loan kiosks and library catalogues.

### NDIS at Storytime

Author Julie Dascoli visited Bunjil Place Library for Storytime in December to share the book she wrote about making friends at school (with a focus on children with autism) called 'That Boy'. She also discussed her work as a disability carer in schools and how the story in the book is based on a real-life student.

This visit coincided with Nicole James from Link Health who came to talk with parents about the NDIS and how to seek support for their children if needed.

Our work with Link Health is one example of how health providers can share information with families who often don't approach their services directly, promoting better outcomes for our community.

*"It was very helpful to learn about the NDIS support. I would like to learn more.*

**- Bunjil Place Library storytime parent**

*"Making a connection between Link Health and Storytimes is a very good way to spread the word about the NDIS and support it provides in a safe and welcoming environment.*

**- Nicole James Link Health employee**

### Quiet Hour

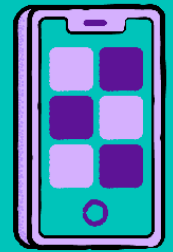
As part of our ongoing commitment to provide an inclusive and accessible service, the provision of a low sensory environment across all library branches was launched on 29 July.

Between 9-10am every Friday, our branches offered a "Quiet Hour". We invited community to experience our libraries during this time while lights were dimmed, phones and PC volumes turned down, movement reduced and conversations kept low.

*"This first neurodiverse friendly hour has been long awaited by me. Local PHD student with autism can now be in the library for more than 10 minutes Please expand this.*

**- Pakenham Library member**





## Bridging the Digital Divide

### Fountain Gate Community Hub

The library engaged in a weekly technology outreach program to the Fountain Gate Community Hub. By partnering with the Hub we were able to provide our skilled services to culturally and linguistically diverse community members.

We supplied tailored content and laptops and iPads, while the Hub gathered interested participants as well as assisting with translating and provision of childcare services.

From July to December the program worked on digital literacy skills including: emails, travel - google maps and the PTV app, basic Microsoft skills, online security and library resources including digital resources like Press Reader, Learning English and AussieDriver.

Some participants went on to engage in other library programs as a result of this success, including Women's Preventable Health in December.

*“They [the participants] were very happy that they had someone to help them understand the digital world and they know now how important technology is. They are keen to continue learning to get skills for future work.*

**- Mehnaz, Fountain Gate Community Hub Coordinator**

### Doveton

Doveton Digital Day Out was a wonderful collaboration supporting digital literacy opportunities for local community. Hosted at the Autumn Place Hub and Doveton Library, the event was supported by a range of service providers including: City of Casey Digital Services and Open Data Platform, Narre Warren Neighbourhood Learning Centre, City of Casey Job Advocates, Minnovation Technologies, Casey Tech, Lively, Deakin University and NBNCo, who all provided advice and helped attendees learn and grow their technology skills. Local community members enjoyed fun technology play, augmented and virtual reality and 3D printing.



# Literacy and Learning

## Bunjil Place Writing Groups

In December, Bunjil Place Library hosted its first end of year showcase for our two Bunjil Place Writing Groups. Members read their writing pieces to a large and appreciative audience.

Our Writing Groups are welcoming and inclusive, involving a broad demographic of writers aged between 19 to 86 years, all wanting to cultivate their writing and their connections to each other.

At this first showcase event, members felt vulnerable to share their pieces, but afterwards proud of their bravery. Fostering a love of literature, creativity and reading is essential work for Connected Libraries, and we are proud to support these groups of creative individuals.

## Book Matters Podcast

Connected Libraries podcast Book Matters has taken twelfth spot in a list of the top 42 podcasts and is testament to the hard work and passion of our small production and broadcast team. The Book Matters podcast inspires adults to share their passion for books and reading through author interviews and reading recommendations.

In under three years the team has managed to reach 3,500 podcast downloads. To put that in perspective that breaks down to almost 100 downloads per month over three years. This success story was shared on the statewide stage at the Public Libraries Victoria triennial conference in May.

## Authors in Conversation

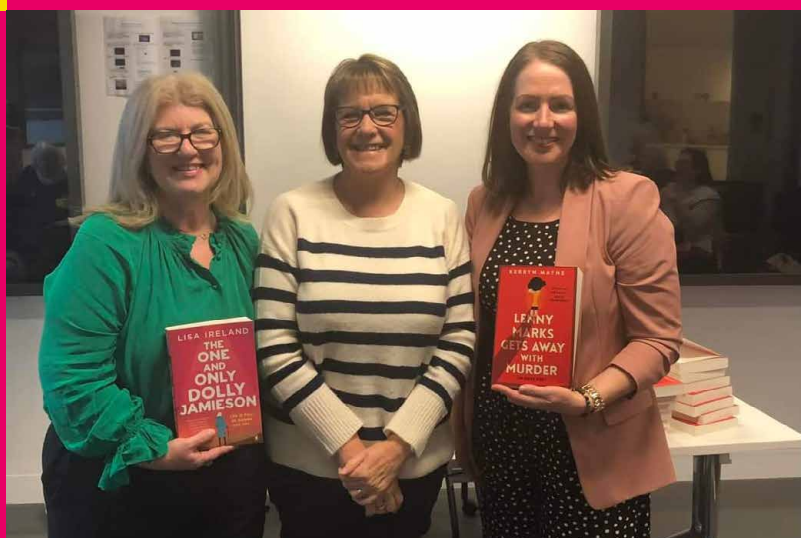
Authors in Conversation events featured a range of talented writers throughout the year and are a key element of our Reader Development programming.

## In Conversation with Rachael Johns

In November, popular West Australian and leading Australian Women's Fiction author Rachael Johns came to Bunjil Place Library to speak about her writing life and her new novel 'The Work Wives' which had just been released and was part of our Top Titles Collection. She is a prolific author with 25 titles to her name. A spirited discussion with Rachael was hosted by team member Janine (one of our own most prolific readers and connector with authors!) to the delight of our book-loving audience.

## In Conversation with Lisa Ireland and Kerryn Mayne

This was our second In Conversation using the author-interviewing-author interview format and it was a delightful event. Authors Lisa and Kerryn had a prior relationship and natural rapport. They spoke about their latest works, and Robinsons bookshop representatives sold signed copies of their books to enthusiastic audience members.



# STEAM

## Make-Do World Building

The Make-Dos are cardboard construction tools that allow children to imagine and build a new world.

During the September school holidays we had a delightful 75 Scallywags (newbie pirates) step aboard the Jolly Roger and claim some booty (make pirate hats and swords). In the April holidays the Cranbourne team welcomed budding knights and royalty to the branch for an afternoon of medieval fun, using the Make-Dos to build a castle with essential accessories – swords, shields, sheaths and of course crowns.

## Stop Motion

This fantastic program held at Bunjil Place Library explored the principles of filmmaking and combining still imagery to create motion.

Tables were set up with an iPad, a book stand and two Lego figures. Children were asked to use one Lego figure and make it walk across the screen from left to right. Then they learned how to manipulate objects at different speeds – participants had to put two Lego figures side-by-side and have a race. The next task was voice recording where the children made their two figures talk to each other. They mastered a free app so they could take their new skills home and create movies for fun. The children really had fun and learned a very easy activity to do despite never having done stop motion before – a great program supporting technology, engineering, art and mathematics.



## Eco Art

Eco Art ran at Cranbourne Library this year. Preschool and Primary aged kids got their hands dirty in the fun and mindful session, finding new scents, textures and shapes while creating a story. They were excited to play with the different autumn plant life and so proud to take home an art piece to share with their families. We also promoted our 'Seed Library', available to use at all our branches. This enabled the families to take their experience 'full circle' with the opportunity to create new plant life at home.

*“The families and children really appreciated the opportunity to get a “little” messy! I spoke to them about how mindfulness and connection to nature is so wonderful and having this opportunity to also explore a creative element really tied the experience together. The adults were so grateful to be part of the program*  
**– Jadine, Children and Youth team member**

## Australian Ballet

Hampton Park Library welcomed the Australian Ballet to work with local kids in the nearby Arthur Wren Hall during the April school holidays. The instructor presented an interactive version of the ballet of 'Sleeping Beauty' in a way that involved the young children. Children enacted various parts of the ballet – a prince, a cat, a wolf. The sessions involved dance, movement and sound. Mood colour lighting in the hall helped too! This was an imaginative session perfect for budding performing artists.



# Our Collections

The library collections provide our community with access to a wide range of physical and electronic items, fiction and non-fiction books, magazines, newspapers and audio supporting their literacy, reading, learning, information and leisure.

The most popular physical collections this year were adult fiction, junior fiction, board books, begin-to-read level books and our Top Titles collection.

We know our community loves digital content, and our digital collections include over 26,000 borrowable e-titles as well as streaming platforms, newspapers and many varied databases.

This year Connected Libraries continued to lend laptops and personal computers to help people access information from home.



## Junior Top Titles

Building on the success of our adult Top Titles range, we released a Top Titles range for junior readers, ensuring that children have quick and easy access to the most popular current titles (these items are non-reservable, only available when you visit the library, and for a 2-week loan). While we added many titles to this collection throughout the year, some new releases included the 156-Storey Treehouse, Cheesy Weird!, Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Di\*per Overload, and Bad Guys 16.

## Big Summer Read – a roaring success in 2023

Over 11,500 children and young people across Victoria set a new summer reading record, logging 133,885 books in this year's Big Summer Read – an increase of nearly forty per cent – or over 37,000 books. Connected Libraries was the fourth highest participating service in the state. Here's how our local readers stacked up:

- 837 individual readers signed up
- 12,582 books read
- 987 entries in the prize draw.

Furthermore, we received generous donations for our prize packs (to award our local winners) from Moonlit Sanctuary, Gumbaya World, Paint a Pot, Lollipops Playland and Bunjil Place Theatre.

We had 129 people join us at Bunjil Place for the Big Summer Read party in February. It was a joy to see so many young people loving their library and reading over December and January. Tim Credible gave a hilarious performance and our team did a great job juggling bookmarks, scavenger hunts and prize handouts for the kids.

Big Summer Read is supported by the Victorian Government, sponsored by Bolinda Publishing and BorrowBox, and delivered in partnership with the School Library Association of Victoria. Statewide prizes of book vouchers and book packs were awarded in partnership with Readings Books. One of the winners of the major prize draw was local student Grace – she won a \$250 Readings bookstore voucher.



# Changes to Interlibrary Loans

Connected Libraries is part of the Public Libraries Victoria shared collections and services agreement.

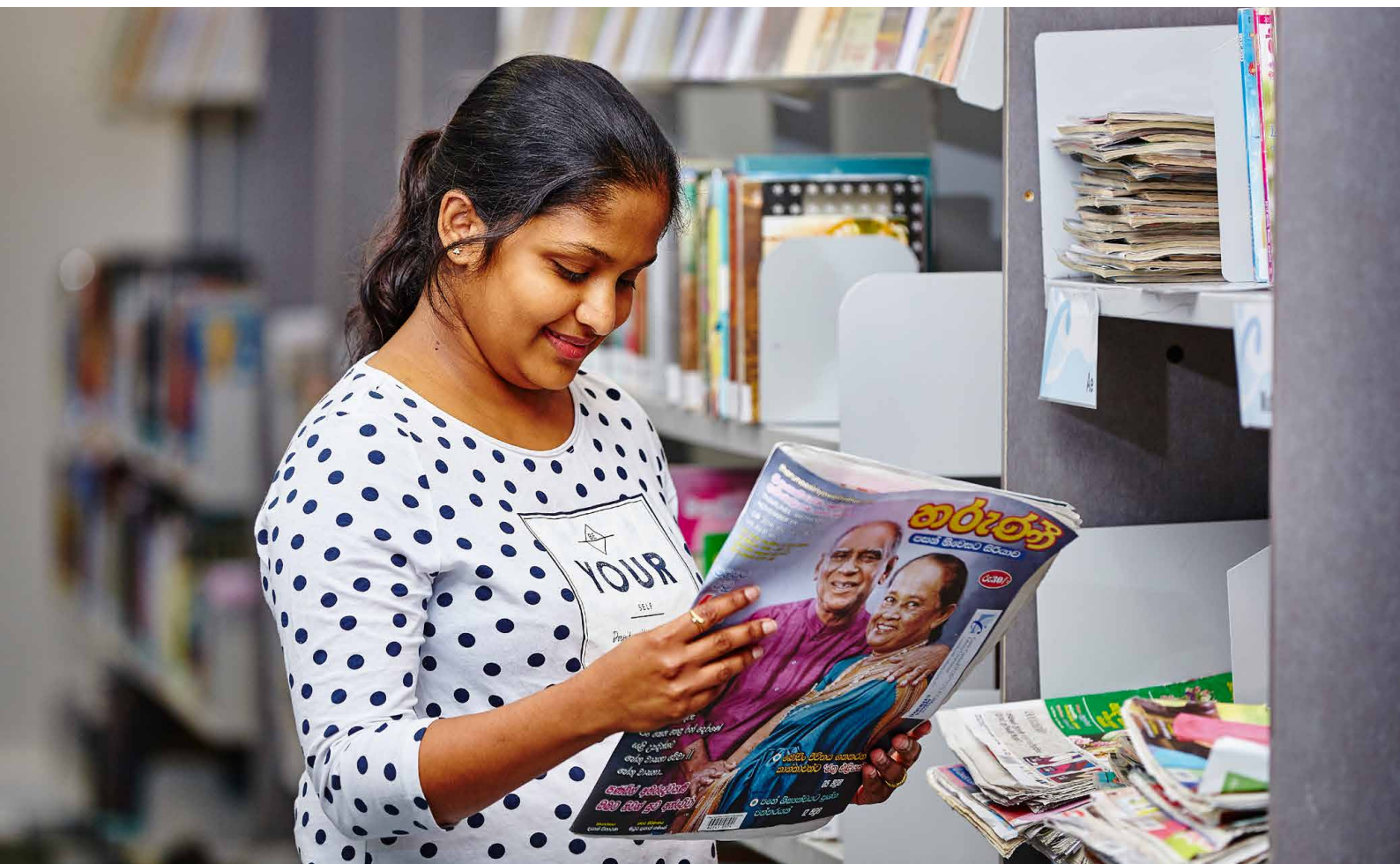
The Victorian State Government's courier service contract that is used by more than 500 organisations including the Libraries Victoria network underwent a tender process and review this year. Services were paused for several months while the review took place, and an alternate funding model was sourced.

Throughout that period, Connected Libraries worked with Myli – My Community Library and other neighbouring services to maintain smaller local exchanges, so that our borrowers did not completely miss out.

From May the service was reinstated, but with some new limitations in place to help manage the load in line with the current costs of courier services:

- a limit of 20 holds per member at any one time
- weekly deliveries of these items (rather than a daily service); and
- new release titles not eligible for interlibrary loans.

Our team and members were relieved to see the service back up and running again.





# This Year's Most Popular Adult Reads



## Adult fiction



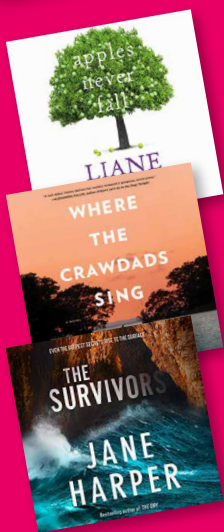
- 1 **Exiles**  
by Jane Harper
- 2 **Lying Beside You**  
by Michael Robotham
- 3 **Girl, Forgotten**  
by Karin Slaughter
- 4 **Where the Crawdads Sing**  
by Delia Owens
- 5 **Dirt Town**  
by Hayley Scrivenor

## Adult non-fiction



- 1 **Why Has Nobody Told Me This Before?**  
by Julie Smith
- 2 **Spare**  
by Prince Harry 1984
- 3 **The Barefoot Investor: The Only Money Guide You'll Ever Need**  
by Scott Pape
- 4 **Palace Papers**  
by Tina Brown
- 5 **The Psychology of Money: Timeless Lessons on Wealth, Greed, and Happiness**  
by Morgan Housel

## Adult fiction eAudio



- 1 **Apples Never Fall**  
by Liane Moriarty
- 2 **Where the Crawdads Sing**  
by Delia Owens
- 3 **Survivors**  
by Jane Harper



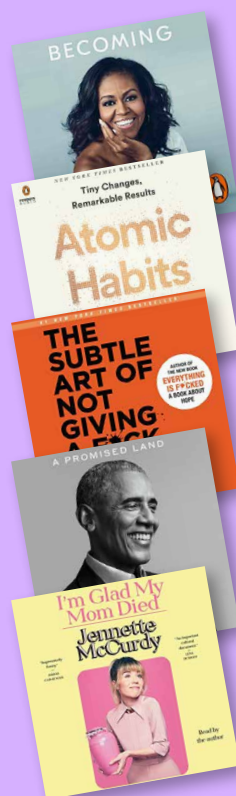
- 4 **Murder Rule**  
by Dervla McTiernan
- 5 **You Need to Know**  
by Nicola Moriarty

## Adult fiction eBooks



- 1 **Exiles**  
by Jane Harper
- 2 **Apples Never Fall**  
by Liane Moriarty
- 3 **The Last Thing He Told Me**  
by Laura Dave
- 4 **Murder Rule**  
by Dervla McTiernan
- 5 **Tattooist of Auschwitz**  
by Heather Morris

## Adult non-fiction eAudio



- 1 **Becoming**  
by Michelle Obama
- 2 **Atomic Habits**  
by James Clear
- 3 **Subtle Art of Not Giving a F\*ck**  
by Mark Manson
- 4 **Promised Land**  
by Barack Obama
- 5 **I'm Glad My Mom Died**  
by Jennette McCurdy

## Adult non-fiction eBook



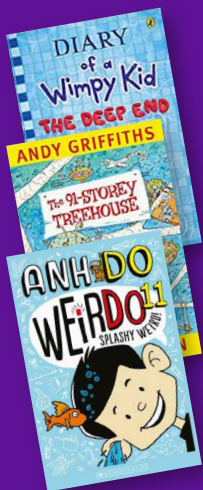
- 1 **Atomic Habits**  
by James Clear
- 2 **Nazis Knew My Name**  
by David Brewster, Magda
- 3 **Let Go**  
by Hugh van Cuylenburg



- 4 **Small Habits for a Big Life**  
by Rebecca Ray
- 5 **Ciao Bella!**  
by Kate Langbroek

# This Year's Most Popular Junior Reads

## Junior fiction



- 1 **Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Deep End (15)**  
by Jeff Kinney
- 2 **91-Storey Treehouse**  
by Andy Griffiths
- 3 **Splashy Weird!**  
by Anh Do



- 4 **Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Meltdown (13)**  
by Jeff Kinney
- 5 **Bad Guys Episode 15: Open Wide and Say Arrrgh!**  
by Aaron Blabey

## Junior fiction eAudio



- 1 **Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows**  
by J.K. Rowling
- 2 **Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire**  
by J.K. Rowling
- 3 **Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince**  
by J.K. Rowling
- 4 **Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone**  
by J.K. Rowling
- 5 **Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix**  
by J.K. Rowling

## Junior fiction eBooks



- 1 **Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban**  
by J.K. Rowling
- 2 **Really Weird**  
by Anh Do and Jules Faber
- 3 **Tasty Weird**  
by Anh Do and Jules Faber
- 4 **Extra Weird!**  
by Anh Do
- 5 **Even Weirder!**  
by Anh Do

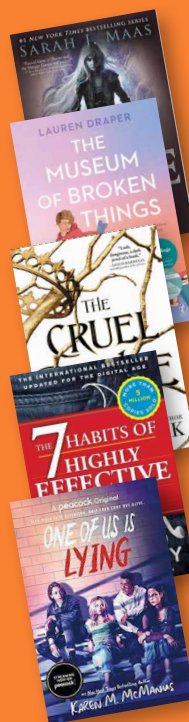


## Young adult fiction



- 1 **The Summer I Turned Pretty**  
by Jenny Han
- 2 **One of Us is Lying**  
by Karen M. McManus
- 3 **A Good Girl's Guide to Murder**  
by Holly Jackson
- 4 **The Final Gambit**  
by Jennifer Lynn Barnes
- 5 **Dragon Ball Super. 15**  
by Akira Toriyama

## Young adult fiction eBooks

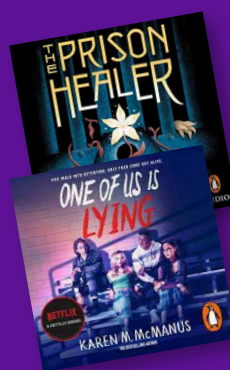


- 1 **Throne of Glass**  
by Sarah J. Maas
- 2 **Museum of Broken Things**  
by Lauren Draper
- 3 **Cruel Prince**  
by Holly Black
- 4 **7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens**  
by Sean Covey
- 5 **One of Us is Lying**  
by Karen M. McManus

## Young adult fiction eAudio



- 1 **Cruel Prince**  
by Holly Black
- 2 **Good Girl's Guide to Murder**  
by Holly Jackson
- 3 **The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes**  
by Suzanne Collins



- 4 **Prison Healer**  
by Lynette Noni
- 5 **One of Us is Lying**  
by Karen M. McManus

## 2. Partnership and Innovation



Strengthen partnerships and encourage innovation to broaden and deepen our impact.

### Libraries and Council teams – working together

#### Casey Kids Carnival

The Connected Libraries youth team had a strong presence at Casey Kids carnival in March. It was the first year the event had been held since pandemic disruptions with a sell-out crowd of over 1,000 people. The event is one of the biggest community days held in Casey and was a great opportunity to promote library memberships to new and existing families.

The team set up a reading corner and read and sang to the children while promoting the Autumn events booklet and our Sid the Sloth membership campaign.



#### Emerald Library and Hills Hub Family Fun Day

The Family Fun Day was supported by the Emerald Library and Hub teams, precinct partners U3A and Men's Shed and offered a broad range of opportunities to discover something new. Both buildings came alive as hundreds of people joined in, enjoying toddler play spaces, fairy tea parties, robotics, Japanese doll painting, giant bubble blowing, percussion workshops, a science show, live music and face painting. There were activities for people of all ages and visitors made the most of the day, enjoying everything on offer at the Hills precinct.





## The Archibald Prize at Bunjil Place

Australia's oldest and most prestigious art award, The Archibald Prize was shown exclusively in Victoria at Bunjil Place providing the library team with a unique opportunity to work with the broader precinct partners to deliver a range of tie in activities and events.

Our Children and Youth team hosted Art Storytime and Rhyme Time sessions that included a tour of the Young Archies, and award-winning artist Neloo Kreltzheim delivered a three-week Acrylic Portraiture workshop for beginners and advanced students. Visitors were encouraged to think outside of the box with a hands-on digital workshop demonstrating our free online resource Creativebug.

We used our strong relationships with publishing bodies across Australia to secure an author talk with author Anne-Louise Willoughby (official biographer of Nora Heysen, the first woman to win the Archibald Prize in 1938 for portraiture and the first Australian woman appointed as an official war artist).

*"I'd like to thank you and the team at Bunjil Place for a truly wonderful experience. I have done many talks around the country at major institutions and would like to say that the beautiful organisation and elegant evening that resulted was such a pleasure to be a part of, one of the best I have participated in. Everything was so well organised and the facilities are absolutely outstanding - a real gift for any guest speaker. The visitors that I spoke to after the event were so impressed with the auditorium and with the extraordinary creative hub that is Bunjil Place."*

**- Anne-Louise Willoughby, author**



## Night MODE at Bunjil Place

Night MODE was created by the Bunjil Place Gallery, Bunjil Place Plaza and Bunjil Place Library teams. Held every three months, the program was modelled on the late-night programs run by National Gallery of Victoria (NGV). Designed to engage with a traditionally hard to reach audience (18–30-year demographic); the program offered late night access to the gallery with music, craft activities, artist talks, food, and more across the Bunjil Place precinct. The Bunjil Place team delivered three iterations of Night MODE, delivering on different themes that connect with the exhibitions on display in the gallery, including the Cycle of Life, Abundance and Portraiture editions.



## Celebrate Doveton

Connected Libraries partnered with the City of Casey and Autumn Place to Celebrate Doveton. Almost 1,000 people visited the library throughout the day, and the atmosphere was alive with fun and laughter. The library had free books to giveaway, a magician's performance, face painting and art classes. We ran a hands-on robot demonstration using sferos and beebots which was extremely popular. Outside the library was a petting zoo and police car for children to sit in and experience. We asked visitors to complete a survey to help us shape future programs and events – a random prize-winner was selected and the winner received a refurbished laptop.

## 16 days of activism – campaign against Gender-based Violence

This year we hosted a program of events in partnership with Casey and Cardinia Councils across all branches, spanning the entire 16 days of the campaign November 25 – December 10.

\$5,000 was granted from Safe & Equal to develop Storytime Kits that supported the development and delivery of Intentional Storytime kits. They contained a curated collection of books and materials promoting gender equality, kindness and respect for differences. The kits also contain support notes for presenters/caregivers. The kits were used as the basis for themed storytime sessions across the 16 Days campaign and made available for loan to families and community services afterwards.

*“Celebrate Doveton is one of the most important events that the library participates in each year. It helps the community recognise that they are valued; and for many, it is one of the only opportunities they have to visit an animal farm, enjoy the experience of having their face painted or see a magician live. To be able to connect this sort of experience back into the library and have people see it as an extension of their learning environment is just wonderful.*

*- Library team member*





# Infrastructure investment and improvement

## Endeavour Hills Library

The City of Casey celebrated a new chapter for the Endeavour Hills Library following the completion of a \$114,000 renewal project at the facility. The project was jointly funded by Council and the State Government and delivered:

- A more welcoming, fully accessible service desk and self-check station
- A dedicated meeting room for study and group use
- Re-purposed floor space after the removal of an old, indoor garden to create extra room for activities and programs.

We wanted to create a more welcoming, inclusive and creative space for all. Students and community groups embraced the new meeting room, furnished by Connected Libraries' partner - Federation University. Our youngest community members now enjoy a newly defined children's area; and the new health and wellbeing corner and gaming zone are popular with older kids and teens.

This project was made possible thanks to a \$54,000 grant from the State Government's through the Living Libraries Infrastructure Program, with Council funding the remaining \$60,000.



## Emerald Library

Upgrades were completed at the entrance to Emerald Library thanks to a grant secured by Cardinia Shire Council to improve access and use of the reading garden. A large permanent shade structure was installed to improve the usability of the space all year round, as well as strategically placed fixed tables where people now enjoy their lunch or place to work outdoors. Two chess tables were installed, along with a new bench seat and large moveable cushions. The Reading garden was made more inviting by the improvements, allowing for more flexibility to deliver outdoor programs and events for children and families.



*“Lovely to have the new meeting room for quiet community use. The set up and renovations are lovely and welcoming.  
- Kate, Emerald Library user*

# Community partnerships

## Seed Library

The Seed Library officially launched across all our branches on 10 October after a successful pilot program at Hampton Park and Pakenham Libraries. Borrowers took up to three different types of seeds each season and were able to return and donate other seeds to help build a sustainable collection. The Seed Library had over 470 members sign up this year. We are grateful to our partner Enliven for supporting this initiative.

## Midsumma Picnic

In January, we participated in the Midsumma Picnic at the Old Cheese Factory in Berwick. The Midsumma Picnic is an inclusive annual event hosted by City of Casey and Casey Rainbow Community to celebrate the LGBTQIA+ community. The event hosted a number of different organisations and services that operate in the City of Casey as well as performances from LGBTQIA+ artists.

This year the library had a stall, where passionate staff talked to community members about the services we offer highlighting our Rainbow Collection (LGBTQIA+ resources), Rainbow bookclub, and online Living Libraries project that documents and archives local LGBTQIA+ stories from the area. It was the perfect opportunity to run a Rainbow Storytime and craft for kids, grab some new members and lend out items from our Rainbow Collection.

## Driver Education

Our six-week Driver Education Program delivered at Hampton Park by SouthEast Community Links supported newly arrived Afghan community members. The program was delivered through a series of workshops and included sessions by Victoria Police, RACV and the Department of Transport. Participants used library laptops to practice the Hazard Perception Test online. We love connecting community to lifelong learning opportunities and supporting settlement needs.

## Headspace

Headspace are one of the largest providers of Mental Health Services in Australia. Casey and Cardinia both have high demand for their services and these centres serve a huge amount of young people. The Headspace centre in Narre Warren can be daunting for newcomers. Visiting Headspace can feel the same as visiting a clinic or hospital. The Headspace team identified Bunjil Place Library as a warm and welcoming space to connect with young people about their services, and make referrals for further support.

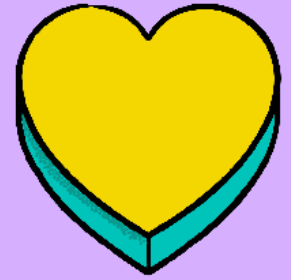
The Headspace team ran games in the library every Tuesday afternoon from February to April. This was a great way to capture after school groups who socialise in the library.

To support young adults (18-25 years) there was a Headspace Drop in Service available on Mondays at the library, with a peer support worker from Headspace available.

*“The Library [is] a nice place (to run events) that’s a little less intimidating for curious young people or for those who might be a bit scared of attending a Headspace centre.”*  
- Caitlin Frost, Headspace



# Our Volunteers



Connected Libraries sincerely appreciates the contributions made by our volunteers and supporters. In 2022-2023 they helped:

- Provide prizes for reading programs and writing competitions
- Promote the value of libraries to their networks
- Deliver the Home Library Service to housebound community
- Assist and run informal programs for library users including Tinies Time, hand crafting, English conversation classes and Code club.

## Home Library Service Volunteers

This year Connected Libraries provided a free Home Library Service (HLS) to 135 members living in the City of Casey and 85 to people living in Cardinia Shire, delivering over 1,700 times. The HLS supports people who are unable to access the library due to illness, age, disability, being housebound, a full-time carer or a resident in a care facility.

This service would not be possible without our Home Library Service Officers, Makaila and Donna and the help of our incredible volunteers who donated their time to select items and deliver loans to our members.

*“I just wanted to thank you for taking the time and making the effort to drop in some talking books for me. These books are essential for me as they help me pass some of the fairly lonely time that I get to spend in hospital. Thanks again to Makaila...  
- John, HLS recipient*



## Friends of Casey Cardinia Libraries

The Friends of Casey Cardinia Libraries (FOCCL) are valued and important supporters of our libraries. One of the most important ways our Friends supported the library is by spreading the word to the whole community that 'Libraries Change Lives'. This group is the first to receive our published strategic reports and news announcements, and are often consulted as key stakeholders when we are conducting surveys about improving our service.



## Farewell - Friends of Doveton Library

In April 2023, we farewelled our loyal Friends of Doveton Library (FODL) volunteers. After many years of support, events, fundraising, fun and friendships, the Friends of Doveton Library were celebrated and thanked at an afternoon tea at Doveton Library. The outgoing committee members were each presented with a gift and a certificate of appreciation, marking their commitment to support library services in Casey.

Over many years this group have delivered a young writer's competition for young people 8 to 15 years. The prize-winners celebration was held in October, attendees heard young people read their entries and receive prizes. Award winning author Andrea Rowe kindly contributed her time and expertise, providing valuable feedback on each individual entry helping to inspire an ongoing love of writing.

### History of the Friends of Doveton Library

- Doveton Library formed in the 1960's from a book exchange at the Doveton Presbyterian Church, officially becoming a library run by the Doveton Library Committee (volunteers) in 1967. In 1973, two years after the Dandenong Valley Regional Library Service began, Doveton Library became their second branch when the

Committee donated all assets to DVRLS.

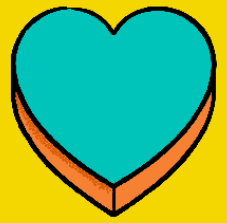
- In 1983, Doveton Library moved to its newly refurbished building in Autumn Place (the building used to be a service station). The Friends group was established at the time of the move – and the Friends had their first meetings and constitution signed in 1984 (their official start year).
- In 2006, the Friends group was petitioning the City of Casey to commit to expansion plans for the Doveton Library.
- In 2009, when the library was extended, a meeting room was built and named in Connie Newman's honour in 2011. Connie had lived in Doveton since 1958 and had been a longstanding member of the Doveton Friends group.
- The Friends ran booksales and events for decades, raising money for the library service, and promoting literacy and lifelong learning to the Doveton Community.
- A most valuable event delivered annually was the Young Writers Competition, open to all junior library members, and was funded, supported and judged by the Doveton Friends.

*(Historical tribute – Kate Davis,  
Local History Librarian)*



Photo provided by Connected Libraries Local History Archive

# 3. Community Connection



Contribute to thriving, healthy and inclusive communities.

## Health and wellbeing

### Loud at the Library

Funded through the SLV Libraries Change Lives and PLV Vaccination Ambassador programs, we hosted “Loud at the Library” – a week of loud, unexpected events across the service. Running from September 26 to October 2, Loud at the Library was created to connect with people of all ages to enhance mental wellbeing, promote social connectedness and offer a subtle reminder of the important role of vaccinations.

Raucous events that turned up the volume included Laughing Yoga, a toddler disco, drumming circles, an Open Mic Night with Frock Hudson, a choir, Bollywood dance demonstrations and workshops, live acoustic music from Rogerson, circus workshops and Hooperclass class.



### Tiny Art Show

Modelled on the American public libraries ‘Mini Art Show’ program; our Tiny Art Show fostered creativity on really small canvases in a range of mediums including wool, paint, watercolour and ink.

Hosted at Cranbourne, Emerald, Endeavour Hills, Hampton Park and Pakenham Libraries, the program was wildly popular and due to the high level of engagement, extended out beyond the original timelines. Library visitors were encouraged to vote for their favourite winners across the last week.

Feedback was overwhelming, with many people sharing their delight and enthusiasm for the event. We received 78 entries and the artists of the winning entries received a \$50 art pack.

Our regional winner was Kathleen Kendall – her work was a showstopper.





# Children and Youth

## Children's Book Week

Our staff brought the magic of reading to life during children's Book Week in August. This year's theme, 'dreaming with eyes open' provided a wonderful opportunity to encourage children from birth to get lost in the wonder of storytelling and let their imaginations soar.

More than 1,000 children and their families across Casey and Cardinia were taken on flights of fantasy through story, song and costume, with our always inspiring youth team stepping up the game with some inspirational costumes and displays. With changes in Covid restrictions, for the first time in three years our team was able to take Children's Book Week beyond the library walls, making 22 external visits to childcare centres and schools.

A special thanks to Councillor Brett Owen who visited Hampton Park Library and shared a storytelling of the CBA winning title, 'Jetty Jumping' by Andrea Rowe.



## Wilson Botanic Park Storytime

2023 saw the return of our Storytime in the Park events at Wilson Botanic Park in Berwick. We supported families in the area with the Bunjil Place Library team presenting a storytime in the park on the first Thursday of each month. The event attracted current and new members, making use of the beautiful outdoor spaces of the gardens and the creative and fun storytelling of our youth library team. Groups from local kinders and childcare centres often attended as part of a regular field trip. We valued the support of the Wilson Botanic Park management team who consistently promoted the storytime

through their popular social media page and helped setup every month with their Friends of the Garden group. This program has been a great success drawing big numbers - the first event for 2023 saw a crowd of 76 people join in the fun.

*"We wish it could be on every week, the kids get a lot out of it!"*

**- Friends of the Garden volunteer**

*"It was so much fun today, everyone really enjoyed themselves, lots of energy well done!"*

**- Janelle Sale (Wilson Botanic Park event organiser)**



## National Simultaneous Storytime

Over 300 children and their carers celebrated National Simultaneous Storytime (NSS) across our Connected Libraries and out into the community at 11 am on the 24 May. This annual event featured *The Speedy Sloth* by Rebecca Young and Heath McKenzie and promoted the value of reading and literacy across libraries, schools, preschools, childcare centres, bookshops and homes across Australia.

At Cranbourne Library children got the chance to show how “speedy” they were with jumps, runs, bean bag toss and footy handball, alongside our own library mascot Sid the Sloth.

At Hampton Park Library, Senior Constable Brett Owen read the story to students from Noble Park Language School giving children newly arrived to Australia the opportunity to meet a police officer and see a police car in a non-threatening environment. Brett also brought photos of police on horseback and in helicopters and working with police dogs to show students the variety of police work.

Naomi from Doveton Library took NSS to Myuna Farm and over 100 parents and children.



## Orana Community Place Opening

Connected Libraries was at Orana Community Place to celebrate the opening of this new community facility. The centre provides a variety of support services as well as a coffee shop and early years learning centre.

Orana is a 25-minute drive from Bunjil Place and nearly 20 from Cranbourne Library- to date, library support for this community comes through online programming and outreach. It was exciting to meet some of our long-standing code club students in person. Our team was happy to be a part of this event to connect with a part of the community that does not have a nearby library branch.

*“We love Code club. I can join after school and I don’t have to race to the library in the car.”*

**- Kris 12, Code Club student**

## Wetland Birds – With City of Casey Sustainability Team

A joint session was developed between City of Casey’s sustainability team and our library youth team, presenting an interactive talk on the Wetland wildlife of Casey.

The information described ways the community can support local wildlife, ecosystems and reduce damage caused by human interference. Our audience discovered what birds could be found in Casey’s wetlands and children learnt about how to identify birds through a scavenger hunt, feather experiment and bird sorting activity.

## Thank a First Responder Week

June 7 was Thank a First Responder Day, and to celebrate all the great work our first responders do Cranbourne Library had events for an entire week. Keith and Silv from the SES paid a visit to After School Club, Senior Sergeant Nigel from the Police visited Storytime, and Frank and a team from our local Fire Rescue Victoria arrived for Toddler Time. Children and families were so thrilled to learn more about the work the responders do and meeting these real life heroes. The Responders were delighted to receive handwritten messages of thanks from staff and community in return.





## Inclusive Communities

### Kaleidoscope of Cultures

The Kaleidoscope of Cultures outdoor event highlighted the diverse and broad communities of Casey. The library was part of this Council-led event with stalls, activities, live performance celebrating local cultures to entertain both kids and adults. With a high number of families with young children present, it was the perfect place to attract more members to our libraries. Over 100 library bags containing our promotional flyer, Cranbourne Library kids' program trimmings, and the Sid the Sloth stamp bookmarks, were handed out – and some also contained information in local community languages of Singhalese, Panjabi and Hindi.

### Native Bush Gardening

Passionate cooks and gardeners came to the Cranbourne Library fascinated by this opportunity to learn more about Australia's native food plants. They learnt which plants grow best in different gardens, including guidance in growing and propagating native food plants. The session then extended into culinary uses, which included a lovely morning tea of Home baked Lemon Myrtle Anzac biscuits and a variety of teas.

### Bush Playgroup

Meeting every Tuesday for the past five years at the Cranbourne Royal Botanic Gardens (RGB), Bush Playgroup provides indigenous families an opportunity to connect with country and culture through the exploration of language, traditional craft and flora and fauna. Originally facilitated in partnership with Communities for Children (CFC) Cranbourne, the Bush Playgroup was at risk of ending when the CFC funding ceased at 30 June 2022.

Having identified the program as essential to the wellbeing of our local Indigenous community, work began to ensure that the partnership could continue into the future.

With the support of the Cranbourne Library youth team, the gardens have been able to continue to offer the program weekly. The successful transition of this program has allowed for further conversations to take place on the development of an MOU between Connected Libraries and RGB Cranbourne which will capture the cross sharing of training, programs and information to better support our local indigenous community long term.

## Communities of Practice

Hampton Park Library participated in a Community of Practice (CoP) for Early Years services working with children and families of refugee backgrounds.

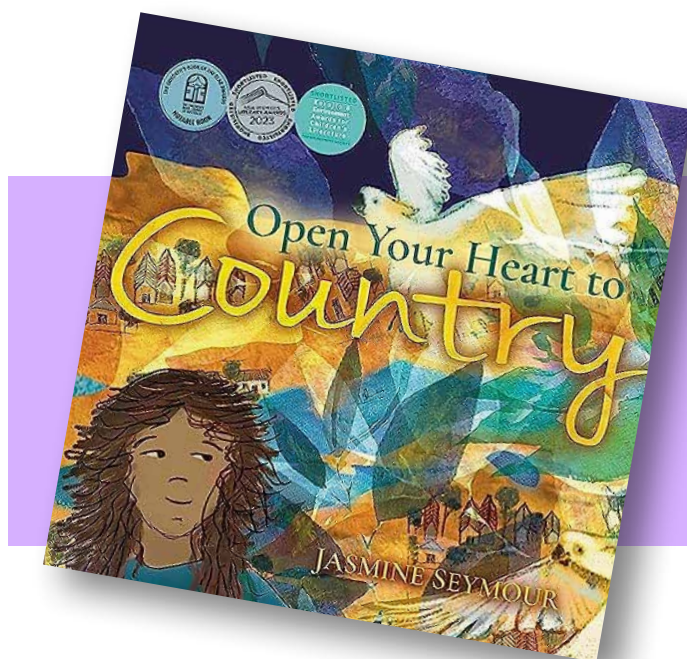
Facilitated by Foundation House, staff participated in workshops and meetings and were provided resources from service providers to build professional development within the early years sector and enhance opportunities for people with a refugee background to engage with services.

The library is a key early years' service provider in the local Hampton Park area. Recently the team have contributed to a new edition of Jeanette Rowe's book 'Whose Animals' - translated into Dari and Samoan, with copies shared throughout early years services and available for borrowing through our library.

## NAIDOC Week

We celebrated NAIDOC Week with events at Bunjil Place and Pakenham Libraries alongside a colouring competition for children, with a winner at each branch receiving a copy of 'Open Your Heart to Country' by Jasmine Seymour and 'My Kind' by Eddie Betts.

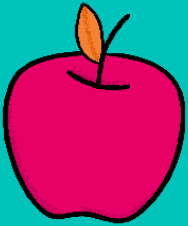
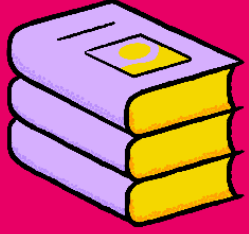
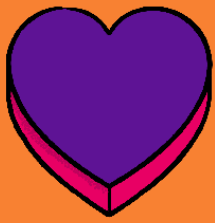
A highlight was a community mural event at Bunjil Place, with artist, teacher and parrdarrama pangenna woman N'dene Riley, guiding an artwork inspired by the message **'Get Up! Show Up! Stand Up!'** 65 people of all ages joined in, and their beautiful works of art were then displayed in the library.



“

*Love, love this venue (Bunjil Place), something for everyone....The library has to be the best I've had the pleasure to explore, 3 stories of magnificent architecture loaded with an endless supply of books, DVDs (Cheryl, community member). Well laid out place for people to meet, learn and enjoy, always something of interest. Caters for all ages which is a real plus. I personally am part of the knitting group that meets every Friday, the community spirit is very strong in this group.*

**- Sandra, Bunjil Place Library user.**



“

*It's great that you do these free activities. We have all the cousins with us and we could all attend. It's wonderful, we might do Tie Dye at home after this.*

– Caitlyn, parent

## Paying it Forward

### International Women's Day Storytime for Children

Recognising the tremendous work of women in the world, International Women's Day was a chance to read stories of women, by women and raise awareness of the significant contributions made by women to the world we live in. In particular we looked at the book 'Girls Can Do Anything!' By Caryl Hart. Children made a crafty paper heart to accompany the storytime

### Asylum Seekers Resource Centre Food Drive

We participated in the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC) annual food drive for a second year, raising more than \$2,800 in donations for asylum seekers in need. Coordinated by Connected Libraries team member Sam, a passionate human rights supporter, we delivered more than 60 boxes of food to ASRC. We thank Australia Post for delivering this mighty load for us free of charge.

### Library Lovers Day Donation Drive

In celebration of Library lovers Day 2023 we partnered with The Kimbe Assistance Project to collection donations of brand-new books for primary school aged students and preschool children The project since 2010 has sent more then 8,500 boxes of books, school furniture and equipment, tables, wheelchairs, waling frames and other hospital equipment and aids that have been donated to the people in Kimbe Papua New Guinea.

Our community generously donated over \$4,000 worth of new books that included, junior fiction, secondary textbooks, young adult fiction, picture books and so much more.



## 4. Organisational Excellence



Strengthen our capacity to lead adapt and innovate to meet changing community needs



In 2022-2023 Connected Libraries employed the equivalent of

**77.96 full-time staff** (FTE)

**176 staff** (41 full-time and 135 part-time)

### Service Review

After the withdrawal of Cardinia from the Casey Cardinia Regional Library Agreement (No.4) on the 30 November 2022, City of Casey became the sole member of the Regional Library Corporation. A service review was conducted between January-June 2023 and a new organisational structure developed. There was a focus on key areas of community need such as services for children/youth, outreach, diverse communities, digital literacy and technology services, and building membership in newly developed areas in Casey South.

Alongside the Service Review, there were several other key projects and activities including the rebrand and search for a trading name, the updating of our Regional Library Agreement and Local Law, and the recruitment of new Independent Board members.

The process of change was challenging, particularly in light of the pandemic, post-pandemic and organisational change announcements that had buffeted the workforce in previous years. Our team were feeling the effects of the previous years before the challenge of the current changes had even begun. The Connected Libraries Executive are proud of and grateful for the endurance, resilience and values-driven performance that the library team has shown throughout the process, and look forward to the changes coming to life over the coming year, making a real difference to our members.

### Representation on Public Libraries Victoria (PLV) and the Libraries Victoria Consortium

There is a strong network of professional groups for Victorian Public Libraries, headed by the peak body PLV. The Connected Libraries team represented our service on the following Special Interest Groups in 2022-23:

- PLV Executive, and Managers group
- Reader Development
- Library Operations
- Multicultural Services
- Marketing and Advocacy
- Collections
- ICT
- Home Library/Outreach Services
- Childrens and Youth Services
- Libraries Victoria (Shared Collections and services Consortium)
- VALA (Libraries, Technology and the Future)

# Our Key Measures

Connected Libraries used the following measures to track our performance in 2022-2023.

| Measure  | Actual<br>2020/2021 | Actual<br>2021/2022 | Projections<br>2022/2023* | Actual<br>2022/2023 |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Engagement</b>  |                     |                     |                           |                     |
| <b>Utilisation of Technology</b><br>(Wi-Fi, Public PC user in branch)                    | 107,171             | 100,188             | 266,050                   | 146,527             |
| <b>Net Promoter Score</b><br>(Community Survey)  | 76                  | 75.5                | 65                        | N/A                 |
| <b>Memberships**</b>   | 105,930             | 99,264              | 89,400                    | 77,341              |
| <b>Visits</b>  |                     |                     |                           |                     |
| <b>Visits – physical</b>   | 435,263             | 507,704             | 983,450                   | 759,721             |
| <b>Visits – virtual</b>  | 847,362             | 939,118             | 793,050                   | 914,916             |
| <b>Total visits</b>  | 1,282,625           | 1,446,822           | 1,776,500                 | 1,674,637           |
| <b>Program and events attendance</b>   | 36,345              | 33,279              | 58,650                    | 58,099              |
| <b>Collection</b>  |                     |                     |                           |                     |
| <b>Loans</b><br>(total physical and digital)   | 2,055,629           | 2,216,273           | 2,125,000                 | 2,253,335           |
| <b>Turnover rate – physical items</b>  | 4.5                 | 4.6                 | 7.0                       |                     |
| <b>Turnover rate – digital items</b>   | 21.1                | 32.6                | 20.0                      |                     |
| <b>Physical quality of library collection</b><br>(age of collection - less than 5 years) | 66.2%               | 69.7%               | 68.0%                     |                     |
| <b>Cost of Delivery</b>  |                     |                     |                           |                     |
| <b>Cost of library service per capita</b>  | \$23.20             | \$23.82             | \$23.99                   |                     |
| <b>Cost of library service per visit</b><br>(total expenditure)                          | \$27.12             | \$9.79              | \$10.89                   |                     |

\* Revised projections from those presented in the Library Plan 2021 – 2025 (Updated April 2023). Revised projections for 2023/23 were based on 5 existing branches in the City of Casey and include Cardinia Shire branches (Emerald, Pakenham and the mobile library service) for 5 months (July to November 2022)..

\*\* Membership database impacted by the split in membership when Cardinia Shire withdrew on 30 November 2022.

## For more detail:

- Local Government Reporting Framework measures go to [City of Casey](#) websites
- Key Performance Indicators can be sourced from the [Annual Survey of Public Libraries](#)
- Australian Library and Information Association ([ALIA](#)) [Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures for Australian Public Libraries -2020](#)

# Funding Partners, Philanthropy and Donations



Connected Libraries is largely funded through contributions from City of Casey, Cardinia Shire Council (to 1 December 2022) and the Victorian State Government. We also receive in kind and financial support from local businesses and community organisations.

Connected Libraries are grateful to partners who support our mission to encourage lifelong learning, increase literacy and health and wellbeing, and build strong, resilient communities across the Casey Cardinia region.

Connected Libraries is endorsed by the Australian Tax Office as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR). We welcome bequests, donations and sponsorships.

We are deeply thankful to those members of our community who have considered or committed a bequest to our library service to benefit the community.



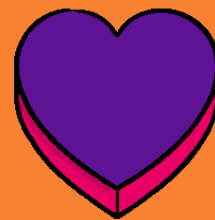
“

*Today we came in to print information and fix up our library cards.  
We were welcomed with friendly helpful staff.  
It was a joy to enter the library. What an amazing public service.  
Thank you to the wonderful staff.*

**- Fiona, Bunjil Place Library user**



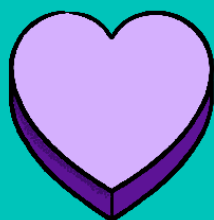
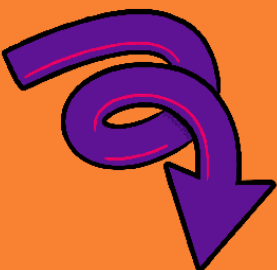
# Thank you, we are grateful



Casey Tech  
Federation University  
Monash Health  
YMCA  
Aligned Leisure  
AMES  
Andrews Centre, Endeavour Hills  
Arthur Wren Hall Management,  
Hampton Park  
Asylum Seeker Resource Centre ASRC  
Australian Library and Information  
Association (ALIA)  
Australian Taxation Office (ATO)  
Australia Post  
Autumn Place Community Hub  
Balla Balla Community Centre  
Be Connected Grant funding  
Berwick Mechanics Institute  
Bunjil Place Precinct Partners  
Casey Aboriginal Gathering Place  
Casey North Information and  
Support Services  
Casey Rainbow Community  
Catalyst Training  
Chisholm Institute  
City of Casey Digital Services and  
Open Data Platform  
City of Casey – Job Advocates  
Community Information and Support  
Cranbourne Inc. (CISC)  
Cranbourne & District Community  
Services Group (CDCSG)  
Cranbourne West Community Hub  
Dandenong and District Aborigines  
Co-Operative Limited (DDACL)  
Doveton College  
Doveton Eumemmerring  
Township Association  
Doveton Neighbourhood  
Learning Centre  
DSS – Australian Government  
Department of Social Services  
Eastern Regional Mental Health  
Association (ERMHA)  
Emerald Arts Society

Emerald and District Lions Club  
Emerald Hills Hub  
Endeavour Hills Town Square  
Endeavour Hills Shopping Centre  
Endeavour Hills Neighbourhood House  
enliven Enhancing Social Health:  
Food from Home  
Escabags  
Family Life  
Friends of Casey Cardinia Libraries  
Friends of Doveton Library  
Follow Bless Collective  
Greater Dandenong Libraries  
Grow Australia  
Gumbaya World  
Hampton Park Community Gardens  
Hampton Park Community House  
Hampton Park Youth Services  
Holy Family Doveton  
Jobs Victoria  
Justices of Peace  
Kaye Charles Real Estate Emerald  
Libraries After Dark  
Linkedin Learning Partnership with  
Casey Cardinia  
Local Community Houses and  
Community Groups across the  
Casey Cardinia Region  
Local History Societies  
Local Maternal Child Health  
Centres, Childcare and Kindergartens  
and schools.  
Lollipops Playland  
Max Employment  
Men's Shed  
Moonlit Sanctuary  
Myuna Farm  
Narre Warren & District Family  
History Group Inc  
Neighbourhood and Learning Centres  
across the Casey Cardinia Region  
Orange Door  
Paint a Pot  
Pakenham Gazette

Pakenham Living and Learning Centre  
Peninsula Community Legal Centre  
(PCLC)  
Public Libraries Victoria  
Readings Books  
Reclink  
Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria,  
Cranbourne  
Salvation Army  
(Doveton and Pakenham)  
Save the Children Australia  
School Library Association of Victoria  
Share the Dignity  
Sikh Community  
Spectrum Real Estate  
South East Local Learning and  
Employment Network (SELLEN)  
Springvale Learning and Activity  
Centre (SLAC)  
Springvale Monash Legal Services  
(SMLS)  
Star News  
State Library of Victoria  
Southeast Community Links  
South East Yoga  
Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre  
(SMRC)  
The Andrews Centre  
The Emerald Messenger  
The General Food Store, Emerald  
Transit Soup Kitchen and Food  
Support  
U3A – Cardinia, Casey, Cranbourne  
and Emerald  
Uniting Church – Romina Perera  
VACCA - Victorian Aboriginal Child  
Care Agency  
WAYSS – Homelessness  
Wellsprings for Women  
Women's Friendship Groups  
WIRE (Women's Information and  
Referral Exchange)  
Woolworths Dandenong South  
Writers Victoria



**CONNECTED  
LIBRARIES**

[connectedlibraries.org.au](http://connectedlibraries.org.au)  
1800 577 548



## OFFICERS REPORTS

### CC30/2023 FINANCE

*Report prepared by Emily Ramaswamy*

#### Purpose

To provide the Board an update on Connected Libraries' financial performance as at 31 July 2023.

CL Library Plan reference – 4.5, 4.6

#### Discussion

| Income Statement<br>Month Ended 31 July 2023 |                            |                         |                         |          |                       |
|--|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------|-----------------------|
|  | Total<br>Budget<br>2023-24 | Budget YTD<br>July 2023 | Actual YTD<br>July 2023 | Variance | % Actual Vs<br>Budget |
| Income                                       |                            |                         |                         |          |                       |
| Council Contributions                        | 7,198,580                  | 570,465                 | 570,465                 | 0        | 0.0%                  |
| Government Grants                            | 2,207,392                  | 0                       | 0                       | 0        |                       |
| Interest on Investments                      | 87,500                     | 7,292                   | 10,656                  | 3,364    | 46.1%                 |
| Other Income                                 | 110,015                    | 8,221                   | 6,759                   | (1,462)  | (17.8%)               |
| Total Income                                 | 9,603,487                  | 585,978                 | 587,880                 | 1,902    | 0.3%                  |
| Expenditure                                  |                            |                         |                         |          |                       |
| Employee Costs                               | 6,607,846                  | 378,989                 | 320,618                 | 58,371   | 15.4%                 |
| IT & Communications                          | 645,000                    | 100,417                 | 101,221                 | (804)    | (0.8%)                |
| Library Materials                            | 358,640                    | 100,300                 | 98,011                  | 2,289    | 2.3%                  |
| Promotions & Marketing                       | 102,960                    | 6,866                   | 4,611                   | 2,255    | 32.8%                 |
| Administration                               | 433,303                    | 68,342                  | 51,231                  | 17,111   | 25.0%                 |
| Depreciation                                 | 1,085,721                  | 76,912                  | 76,912                  | 0        | 0.0%                  |
| Total Expenditure                            | 9,233,471                  | 731,826                 | 652,604                 | 79,222   | 10.8%                 |
| Net Gain(loss) disposal of plant & equipment | 0                          | 0                       | 150                     | 150      |                       |
| Net Gain(loss) Revaluation of Vehicle        | 0                          | 0                       | 0                       | 0        |                       |
| Net result for the reporting period          | 370,017                    | (145,848)               | (64,573.58)             | 81,274   | 55.7%                 |

#### Income

Total income is in line with budget for July.

#### Expenditure

##### Employee Costs

Savings have been achieved in July due some positions being vacant (recruitment for these either now complete or in process). Connected Libraries are planning on using these savings to bolster outreach and awareness campaigns, including the opening of Cranbourne West Community Hub in early 2024.

##### Administration

PLV has in recent months been conducting a trial for new inter-library loans distribution across the state. This trial was funded by State Government, and as such CL has not incurred the usual courier costs during the month.



**CASEY-CARDINIA LIBRARY CORPORATION BOARD MEETING**  
**Wednesday 23 August 2023**

| <b>Capital Expenditure<br/>Month Ended 31 July 2023</b> | <b>Total<br/>Budget<br/>2023-24</b> | <b>Budget YTD<br/>July 2023</b> | <b>Actual YTD<br/>July 2023</b> | <b>Variance</b> | <b>% Actual Vs<br/>Budget</b> |
|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Library Materials                                       | 1,146,373                           | 152,142                         | 155,298                         | (3,156)         | (2.1%)                        |
| Motor Vehicles  | 152,000                             | 0                               | 0                               | 0               | 0.0%                          |
| Furniture & Equipment                                   | 276,362                             | 1,000                           | 675                             | 325             | 32.5%                         |
| <b>Capital Exp. for the reporting period</b>            | <b>1,574,735</b>                    | <b>153,142</b>                  | <b>155,973</b>                  | <b>(2,831)</b>  | <b>(1.8%)</b>                 |

### **Capital Expenditure**

#### **Library Materials**

Library materials spend is on track.

#### **Furniture & Equipment**

Furniture & Equipment purchasing is planned to take place in the coming months leading up to the launch of Cranbourne West Library.

### **Credit Card Expenditure**

| <b>Card Holder</b>              | <b>Transaction<br/>Date</b> | <b>Detail</b>  | <b>\$</b>         |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|-------------------|
| <b>General Manager, Finance</b> |                             |  |                   |
| June Statement                  | 30/05/2023                  | ABC 2000 - Qty 300 badge components  | \$120.58          |
|                                 | 2/06/2023                   | Elementor - Elementor Pro  | \$78.16           |
|                                 | 5/06/2023                   | Johnny Boys Pizza Endeavour Hills - Catering - Pizza - Library staff farewell event                                      | \$205.80          |
|                                 | 5/06/2023                   | Dominos - Catering - Pizza - Library staff farewell event  | \$61.06           |
|                                 | 5/06/2023                   | Adobe Creative Cloud - Creative Cloud Licences   | \$460.27          |
|                                 | 7/06/2023                   | Fountain Gate - Toymate - Voucher for Sid the Sloth Competition Prize  | \$400.00          |
|                                 | 9/06/2023                   | Midjourney Inc. - Basic plan software  | \$148.58          |
|                                 | 12/06/2023                  | Amazon Web Services - Website Hosting - May  | \$1,356.36        |
|                                 | 20/06/2023                  | Amazon Prime Membership - Amazon Prime delivery fee  | \$6.99            |
| <b>Total June 2023</b>          |                             |  | <b>\$2,837.80</b> |
| July Statement                  | 27/06/2023                  | CPA Australia Ltd - Cyber Security Recorded Webinar training   | \$24.75           |
|                                 | 29/06/2023                  | Homeless Training - Ryan Dowd Homelessness Online training access for all staff  | \$2,107.41        |
|                                 | 7/07/2023                   | Amazon Web Services - Website Hosting June 2023  | \$1,305.34        |
|                                 | 8/07/2023                   | Adobe Creative Cloud - Creative Cloud Licences   | \$460.27          |
|                                 | 9/07/2023                   | Learn Auslan On - Access to online training for Auslan Stories, Songs and Nursery Rhymes for Youth Services staff member | \$41.20           |
|                                 | 10/07/2023                  | Share the Dignity Ltd - Qty 5 boxes for branches deposit points in support of the campaign                               | \$225.00          |
|                                 | 18/07/2023                  | EB- Children Amp Youth - Ticket to Children & Youth Services SIG Seminar 2023 for 3 Youth Services team members          | \$102.60          |
|                                 | 19/07/2023                  | Amazon Prime AU - Prime Membership Fee   | \$9.99            |
|                                 | 21/07/2023                  | Amazon Marketplace - Qty 4 - Nintendo controllers for Bunjil Place Library   | \$94.12           |
|                                 | 21/07/2023                  | Amazon Marketplace - Qty 4 - Nintendo controllers for Hampton Park Library   | \$94.12           |
| <b>Total July 2023</b>          |                             |  | <b>\$4,464.80</b> |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                    |                             |  | <b>\$7,302.60</b> |

**CASEY-CARDINIA LIBRARY CORPORATION BOARD MEETING**  
**Wednesday 23 August 2023**

| Card Holder                    | Transaction Date | Detail   | \$                |
|--------------------------------|------------------|--|-------------------|
| <b>Chief Executive Officer</b> |                  |  |                   |
| June Statement                 | 31/05/2023       | Campaign Monitor - EDM Credits   | \$1,001.00        |
|                                | 5/06/2023        | Bunnings - Farewell Gifts - Library staff farewell event                                       | \$206.18          |
|                                | 5/06/2023        | Woolworths - Catering - Library staff farewell event   | \$20.50           |
|                                | 6/06/2023        | Seek AU - Advertisement of general manager organisational development position                 | \$368.50          |
|                                | 7/06/2023        | Campaign Monitor - June EDM Credits  | \$1,001.00        |
|                                | 16/06/2023       | Amazon Marketplace AU - Qty 5 x Art Cases for Tiny Art Show 2023 prizes                        | \$302.95          |
|                                | 16/06/2023       | Amazon Marketplace AU - Qty 5 x Art Cases for Tiny Art Show 2023 prizes                        | \$302.94          |
|                                | 26/06/2023       | Buzzsprout - Podcasting  | \$18.55           |
| <b>Total June 2023</b>         |                  |  | <b>\$3,221.62</b> |
| July Statement                 | 14/07/2023       | EB- Children Amp Youth - Ticket to Children & Youth Services SIG Seminar 2023 for Beth Luppino | \$34.20           |
|                                | 24/07/2023       | Buzzsprout - Podcasting  | \$18.39           |
| <b>Total July 2023</b>         |                  |  | <b>\$52.59</b>    |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                   |                  |  | <b>\$3,274.21</b> |

### **Bank Reconciliation**

A Bank Reconciliation is available on request.

### **FY2023 Audit**

VAGO have confirmed that the final visit is to occur 20 -22 September 2023 (Audit Strategy attached). CL has applied to the Minister for an extension to the Annual Report submission deadline of September 30, as VAGO's timetable has estimated the completed Financial Report will not be available until late October.

### **Conclusion**

Connected Libraries is managing the current environment with measured financial decisions.

Connected Libraries is in a sound financial position.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1. That the Finance Report be noted.**



# Casey-Cardinia Library Corporation

## **Audit Strategy Memorandum For the financial year ending 30 June 2023**

Presented to the board meeting on 13 July 2023

## Background

I enclose for your information the audit strategy memorandum (ASM) for the year ending 30 June 2023.

The ASM provides an overview of our planned approach to the annual audit of the financial report of the Casey-Cardinia Regional Library Corporation. This document covers matters we believe to be significant in the context of our work. The draft ASM was discussed at the board meeting on 26 April 2023.

## Acknowledgement

I also take this opportunity to thank your executive team and staff for the time they made available to us during the planning phase of our audit.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Derricott'.

Travis Derricott  
*Sector Director, Financial Audit*

Melbourne  
13 July 2023



# Contents

Introduction ..... 1

Planned audit approach ..... 3

Key risks and areas of audit focus ..... 4

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Other responsibilities ..... 7

Audit timetable ..... 8

Fees and key contacts ..... 9

Other information ..... 10

    APPENDIX A Planned audit approach ..... 12

# Introduction

## Purpose of the audit strategy memorandum

This document outlines our planned approach to the audit of the Casey-Cardinia Regional Library Corporation financial report for the financial year ended 30 June 2023.

It is a key document for us to communicate with those charged with governance and management.

This document should be read in conjunction with our engagement letter addressed to Chair and Chief Executive Officer dated 18 August 2022.

## Scope and purpose of the audit

### Financial Report

The *Audit Act 1994* requires the Auditor-General to

- form an opinion on whether your financial report presents fairly in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014* and the Australian accounting standards and to provide an audit report to you
- provide a copy of the auditor's report to
  - the Minister responsible for your financial report, and
  - the Assistant Treasurer where we provide a modified audit opinion, or where the Auditor-General directs.

## Independence

The Auditor-General is:

- an independent officer of the Victorian Parliament
- appointed under legislation to examine on behalf of parliament and taxpayers, the management of resources within the public sector
- not subject to the control or direction of either parliament or the government.





# Planned audit approach

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## Risk identification and assessment



We understand your entity and its environment to:

- set materiality
- identify material transactions, balances, disclosures, and significant events
- identify and assess risks of material misstatement and the controls in place to mitigate these risks
- develop our audit strategy, including scope, timing, and direction of the audit—refer to **Appendix A** for the details of our planned approach.

---

## Risk Response



We choose and execute procedures to obtain audit evidence. This may include:

- testing key manual and application controls
- performing substantive testing of transactions and balances
- substantive analytical procedures
- reliance on the work of others and specialist experts
- use of data analytics.

---

## Reporting



We report:

- in our interim and final management letters, observations, and our recommendations to improve your internal controls and other identified deficiencies
  - in our closing report, the outcome of our audit, informing you of financial reporting matters that are not related to internal controls
  - our audit opinion in our audit report.
-

# Key risks and areas of audit focus

## Financial Statements

We identified that the following financial statement balances/ disclosures/ areas pose a higher risk of material misstatement to your financial report. We will focus particular audit attention to these areas. In addition, we will perform procedures to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence on other material classes of transactions, balances, and disclosures in your financial report to obtain assurance that they are fairly presented.

| Key risk of material misstatement                      | New in 2022-23 | Why we think it is of higher risk  | Our proposed audit response   | Significant judgements |
|--|----------------|--|---|------------------------|
| 1. Cardinia Shire Council cease to be a member council | Yes            | <p>The <i>Local Government 2020</i>, namely section 330(4), requires an existing regional library corporation to be wound-up in accordance with section 197G of the <i>Local Government Act 1989</i> before the expiry of the period of 10 years after the commencement of section 110.</p> <p>The CCRLC is dependent on contributions from the member Councils to carry out its daily activities.</p> <p>In October 2022, the CCRLC Board endorsed Cardinia Shire Council's decision to withdraw from the CCRLC Regional Library Agreement, effective 30 November 2022 under Clause 12 of the Regional Library Agreement.</p> <p>CCRLC will continue to exist to provide library services for the City of Casey.</p> <p>In preparing the financial statements for 2022-23 management will need to consider:</p> | <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ sight documentation to confirm the exit of Cardinia Shire Council</li> <li>→ review the new Regional Library Agreement</li> <li>→ sight documentation to confirm the funding arrangements for subsequent financial years</li> <li>→ review the 'special purpose financial report' for the period to 30 November 2022</li> <li>→ verify the transfer of assets and liabilities on 30 November 2022</li> <li>→ evaluate the adequacy and appropriateness of the financial report disclosures, including details of Key Management Personnel</li> </ul> | Yes                    |

# OFFICIAL

| Key risk of material misstatement                          | New in 2022-23 | Why we think it is of higher risk   | Our proposed audit response  | Significant judgements |
|--|----------------|---|--|------------------------|
|  |                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ accounting for the transfer of Cardinia Shire Council's interest in the library corporation's net assets on 30 November 2022</li> <li>→ the adequacy of disclosures at the notes to the accounts (i.e. Note 1 Overview and Statement of compliance, Note 6.1 key management personnel, Note 6.2 related party transactions etc...)</li> </ul>                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ review the representations within the management representation letter to be signed by the CEO</li> </ul>   |                        |
| 2. Outsourced accounting function (payroll and purchasing) | No             | <p>Outsourced purchasing and payroll functions require that there be appropriate management oversight and monitoring of the third-party provider's activities.</p> <p>There is a risk that purchases, salary expenditure and employee entitlement liabilities may not be complete and accurate.</p> <p>Material errors may occur due to ineffective of insufficient monitoring or preventative controls at the Library.</p> | <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ review the effectiveness of monitoring controls over the accuracy and completeness of the purchasing and payroll processing undertaken by Casey City Council on behalf of the Library and</li> <li>→ perform an analytical review and substantiate any variances</li> <li>→ perform cut-off testing.</li> </ul> | Yes                    |

# OFFICIAL



# Materiality

We use our professional judgement to decide what is material by considering qualitative and quantitative factors.

We use materiality to make judgements about the:

- balances and disclosures that require detailed audit attention
- amount of audit work we perform
- effect of misstatements.

We start with an overall materiality for the financial report. Our view is that uncorrected errors above this amount, either individually or in aggregate, would mislead the users of the financial report.

For our audit we use amounts less than overall materiality, to reduce the probability that the aggregate of uncorrected and undetected misstatements exceeds overall materiality. We call this 'performance materiality'. We will need you to correct any errors above performance materiality before we issue our opinion.

We will not need you to correct any errors that are clearly trivial—an amount below which we judge those misstatements are of no quantitative consequence. If we identify such misstatements, we will not communicate these to you.

We will reassess materiality before providing our audit opinion. Our planning materiality levels are shown in the table.

| Description               | Benchmark                          | Amount (\$) |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------|
| Overall materiality       | 5% of FY23 budgeted total expenses | 626,676     |
| Performance materiality   | 50% of overall materiality         | 313,338     |
| Clearly trivial threshold | 5% of performance materiality      | 15,667      |

# Other responsibilities

Refer to our engagement letter for a complete list of responsibilities.

## Internal control

Management is responsible for maintaining suitable accounting records and designing and operating internal controls that prevent and detect fraud and error.

The control environment is an integral part of the governance framework. It represents management's commitment to establishing and executing well-controlled business operations. Our ability to rely on systems of control is directly related to how effective we assess they are.

Our preliminary assessment of your control environment is that it supports our reliance on your internal systems of controls.

We will promptly write to those charged with governance on significant internal control deficiencies that come to our attention during the audit.

## Fraud

During our audit we ask those charged with governance, management, and others to identify any known instances of fraud. We also make enquiries to understand where you consider fraud risks are and if you have any knowledge of actual or suspected fraud. This includes considering the risk of management override of controls. Our audit is not designed to detect fraud. However, should instances of fraud come to our attention, we will report them to you.

## Suspected corrupt conduct

The *Audit Act 1994* requires us to notify the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC) where we become aware of any matter during our audit that we reasonably suspect involves corrupt conduct occurring or having occurred. If we need to notify IBAC, this will override the existing confidentiality provisions in the *Audit Act 1994*.

## Waste, probity, and financial prudence

If we become aware of any wastage of public resources or any lack of probity and financial prudence in the management or application of public resources, we will report it to management and/or Parliament via our reports.

# Audit timetable

| Milestone  | Date                           | Responsibility      |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Planning of our audit commences  | 9 January 2023                 | VAGO and Management |
| Draft audit strategy discussed at the board meeting                                      | 26 April 2023                  | VAGO and Management |
| Interim audit commences  | 11 July 2023                   | VAGO and Management |
| Draft financial report submitted to audit after internal quality assurance by management | August 2023 <sup>^</sup>       | Management          |
| Final audit commences  | 20 September 2023              | VAGO and Management |
| Closing meeting with auditors  | Early October 2023             | VAGO and Management |
| Closing report discussed at the board meeting  | 25 October 2023                | VAGO and Management |
| Financial report adopted and signed by governing body                                    | 25 October 2023                | Management          |
| Independent Auditor's Report signed*   | 26 October 2023*               | VAGO                |
| Annual report printers proof provided to audit for review                                | Late October 2023 <sup>^</sup> | Management          |
| Final management letter issued by  | 26 October 2023~               | VAGO                |

*Note:* <sup>^</sup> to be confirmed

*Note:* \* date subject to VAGO receipt of signed financial report and management representation letter

*Note:* ~ to be issued no later than four weeks from date of audit report

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we undertake our audit delivery. In 2022, we released our Better Normal: a new way of working together information sheet that explained our hybrid model we now work under.



# Fees and key contacts

## Fees

We will advise you of the estimated audit fee in a separate letter.

Fees are based on our planned audit approach and will be billed progressively based on work complete.

Fees are subject to change if the scope, volume, or complexity of the audit changes.

Fees may change if agreed milestones are not met such as limited availability of key finance staff to assist the audit process.

## Key contacts

### Signing officer

Travis Derricott

Sector Director, Financial Audit

[Travis.Derricott@audit.vic.gov.au](mailto:Travis.Derricott@audit.vic.gov.au)

03 8601 7063 or 0409 149 542

### Engagement leaders

Martin Ma ... audit planning  
Tim Loughnan ... year-end

Manager, Financial Audit

[Martin.Ma@audit.vic.gov.au](mailto:Martin.Ma@audit.vic.gov.au)

[Tim.Loughnan@audit.vic.gov.au](mailto:Tim.Loughnan@audit.vic.gov.au)

### Team leader

Angela Kiang

Auditor, Financial Audit

[Angela.Kiang@audit.vic.gov.au](mailto:Angela.Kiang@audit.vic.gov.au)

03 8601 1664

# Other information

## Financial reporting updates



### Fair value measurement in the public sector

The AASB has considered comments from stakeholders on ED 320 *Fair Value Measurement of Non-Financial Assets of Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities*. The AASB has scheduled a 30-day comment period ending in November 2022 for its draft '[fatal-flaw review](#)' document. The approved amendments are expected to apply prospectively for annual periods beginning on or after 1 January 2024, with earlier application allowed.

### Post implementation review of AASB 1059 *Service Concession Arrangements: Grantor* (AASB 1059)

The AASB has released an Invitation to Comment 49 (ITC 49) and is seeking feedback from stakeholders on the post implementation review of AASB 1059. [ITC 49](#) is open for comment until 28 February 2023.

### Financial reporting alerts

VAGO provides financial reporting alerts on a regular basis on [our website](#).

## Reports to Parliament



### Results of Financial Audits

VAGO will table two reports summarising the results of the 2022–23 financial audits:

- *Auditor-General's Report on the Annual Financial Report of the State of Victoria: 2022–23* (covering all sectors other than local government). We expect to table this report in November 2023.
- *Local Government: Results of the 2022–23 Audits*. We expect to table this report in November 2023.



#### Performance Audits

- A list of performance audits in progress are on [our website](#).
- Details of planned performance audits are in our [Annual Plan](#).

### Key VAGO links and resources



[VAGO's website](#)

[VAGO's role](#)

[Reports and Publications](#)

[Information privacy](#)

[Transparent Report](#)

[Complaints about VAGO](#)

[Public Sector Perspectives](#)

[Improving Public Sector Financial Reporting: Power of streamlining](#)

# APPENDIX A

## Planned audit approach

| Material component                       | Inherent risk assessment*<br>(Likely/Possible/Unlikely) | Controls reliance*<br>(Yes/Partial/No) | Planned internal audit reliance<br>(Yes/No) | Residual risk of material misstatement*<br>(High/Moderate/Low/Negligible) | Planned reliance on substantive audit procedures<br>(High/Moderate/Low/Negligible) |
|--|---|--|---|---|--|
| <b>Revenue and Income</b>                |   |  |   |   |  |
| Contributions – Monetary Member Councils | Unlikely  | No                                     | No  | Low   | Low  |
| Contributions – Monetary Government      | Unlikely  | No                                     | No  | Low   | Low  |
| <b>Expenses</b>                          |   |  |   |   |  |
| Employee costs                           | Possible  | Yes                                    | No  | Low   | Low  |
| Material and services                    | Unlikely  | Yes                                    | No  | Low   | Low  |
| Depreciation and amortisation            | Unlikely  | No                                     | No  | Low   | Low  |
| Other expenses                           | Unlikely  | Yes                                    | No  | Low   | Low  |
| <b>Assets</b>                            |   |  |   |   |  |
| Cash and cash equivalents                | Unlikely  | No                                     | No  | Low   | Low  |
| Other financial assets                   | Unlikely  | No                                     | No  | Low   | Low  |
| Plant and Equipment                      | Unlikely  | No                                     | No  | Low   | Low  |
| <b>Liabilities</b>                       |   |  |   |   |  |
| Trade and other payables                 | Unlikely  | No                                     | No  | Low   | Low  |
| Employee provisions                      | Possible  | No                                     | No  | Moderate  | Moderate   |



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| Material component                | Inherent risk assessment*<br>(Likely/Possible/Unlikely) | Controls reliance*<br>(Yes/Partial/No) | Planned internal audit reliance<br>(Yes/No) | Residual risk of material misstatement*<br>(High/Moderate/Low/Negligible) | Planned reliance on substantive audit procedures<br>(High/Moderate/Low/Negligible) |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|---|--|
| <b>Equity</b>                     |   |  |   |   |  |
| Member contributions on formation | Unlikely  | No                                     | No  | Low   | Low  |
| Accumulated surplus               | Unlikely  | No                                     | No  | Low   | Low  |
| <b>Notes to the accounts</b>      |   |  |   |   |  |
| Related parties                   | Possible  | No                                     | No  | Moderate  | Moderate   |
| Commitments and contingencies     | Unlikely  | No                                     | No  | Low   | Low  |
| Financial instruments             | Unlikely  | No                                     | No  | Low   | Low  |
| Dissolution disclosure            | Unlikely  | No                                     | No  | Low   | Low  |

Note \*: We have changed our risk of material misstatement categories due to amendments to Australian auditing standard ASA 315 *Identifying and Assessing the Risk of Material Misstatement*. This standard is effective for financial reporting periods beginning after 15 December 2021. A summary of the changes and impact as per the table that follows.

| Risk Category                          | What is this?  | Impact from amendments to ASA 315?   |
|--|--|--|
| Inherent risk                          | The likelihood of material misstatement before considering internal controls   | No change – continues to be assessed as either unlikely, possible, or likely risk of material misstatement by considering whether risk escalation factors are present. A risk assessed as likely is a significant inherent risk – VAGO categorise significant risks as 'high' in our table above.  |
| Control risk                           | The control risk associated with relevant controls that the auditor intends to rely upon and plans to test for operating effectiveness.                                      | No change – continues to be categorised as high, moderate, or low depending on the auditor's preliminary assessment of the effectiveness of key controls.<br><br>Please note, the control risk must be set as 'high' when controls are absent, poorly designed, or where the engagement team plans not to test them as it is not appropriate or efficient to do so.  |
| Residual risk of material misstatement | The risk of a material misstatement after considering control effectiveness and inherent risk. It is the risk that the financial report may contain a material misstatement. | We have reduced our previous 5-point scale for the (residual) risk of material misstatement to a 4-point scale. We now classify risk of material misstatement as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ High</li> <li>→ Moderate</li> <li>→ Low, or</li> <li>→ Negligible.</li> </ul> Essentially, this will not change our audit approach. Our prior 5-point scale provided subtle differentiation in risk ratings to leverage reliance on substantive audit procedures where it is appropriate and efficient to do so. We are confident that this risk response is embedded into our engagement approach, and we will continue to leverage on these procedures to provide an efficient risk response. |

CC31/2023 PEOPLE AND CULTURE

**Report prepared by Janine Galvin**

**Purpose**

To provide the Board with an update on workforce development, staffing changes and legislative requirements.

CL Library Plan reference – 1.1, 1.4, 2.2, 3.5, 4.1, 4.3, 4.6, 4.7

**Discussion**

**Recruitment** (Library Plan reference 4.1, 4.3)

We have successfully recruited 11 new staff to the organisation since the service review and are currently onboarding, training and supporting our new team members.

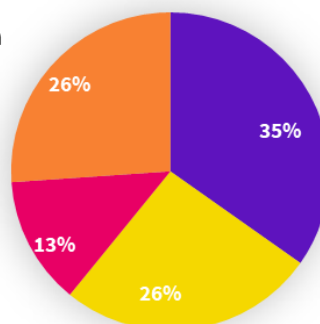
We are in discussions with the Union Representatives currently around the proposed casual pool to support our branch customer service rosters.

**Occupational Health and Safety** (Library Plan reference 4.6)

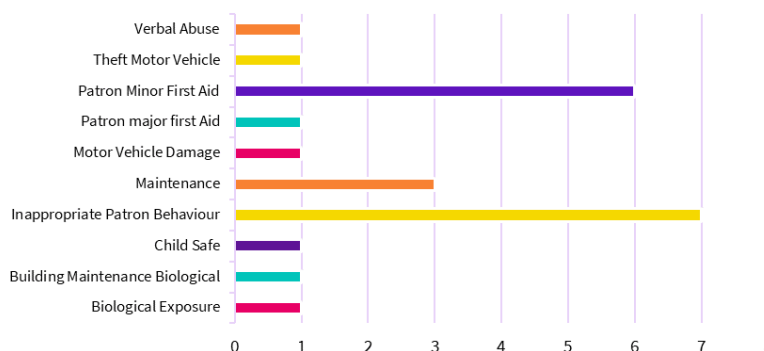
The below graphs provide an overarching view of OHS incidents across our branches. The majority of incidents relate to Inappropriate Patron Behaviour. We have increased our training in de-escalating community behaviour to support staff in this area. A fortnightly on-line self-help group, a safe space for staff to talk through their feelings also continues.

**Incident Reports by Branch  
Jun - Jul 2023**

■ Bunjil Place  
■ Cranbourne  
■ Doveton  
■ Endeavour Hills  
■ Hampton Park



**Incident Reports by Type - Jun - Jul 2023**



**Workforce Development** (Library Plan reference 4.3)

We are currently creating our 2023-2025 Workforce Development Plan. Effective workforce development includes identifying what skills and strengths our staff need to perform their job well and how we can plan and train our workforce for the future needs of our community. This will ensure that recruitment, training and development activities are well informed and built on evidence.

CL's annual Staff Development Day is planned for Thursday 30 November, all Casey branches will be closed so that all staff may attend. Library Board members will receive an invitation and are welcome to attend all or part of the day.

**Enterprise Agreement** *(Library Plan reference 4.3)*

We have commenced work with ASU Organiser and Connected Libraries Union Representatives to review part A and part B of our Enterprise Agreement, with the view to consolidating into one section. Once this process is completed, we will have a starting document to commence negotiations.

**Staff Culture and Wellbeing Survey** *(Library Plan reference 4.3)*

We launched our Staff Culture and Wellbeing Survey with a closing date of 21 August 2023. Our preliminary results are generally positive, considering we have just come out of a service review and significant workforce change. Most staff think they have enough/the right support from the Executive Team to be successful at work. Staff feel recognised and appreciated for their contribution to Connected Libraries and feel they belong and are part of a team. There is constructive feedback that the Executive and Leadership team will be able to discuss and consider in more detail. We are looking forward to reviewing the full results when the survey closes.

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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

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- 1. That the People and Culture Report be noted.**



**CC32/2023 OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE**

**Report prepared by Melinda Rogers**

**Purpose**

To provide the Board with a summary of CL's performance.

CL Library Plan reference – 4.3, 4.4,

**Discussion**

**Library Usage** (Library Plan reference 4.3)

Community visitation trends continue to be strong. While monthly physical visitation declined from the high visitation in May to June, it bounced back to over 61,000 visits in July. Temporary 'Winter hours' for 6 weeks began on Monday 24 July until Friday 1 September (Bunjil Place Library remains unaffected, while other branches are closing earlier in the evenings).

| VISITS                | Mar 2023       | Apr 2023       | May 2023       | Jun 2023       | Jul 2023       | % Variation<br>Jun/Jul |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Cranbourne            | 12,303         | 11,367         | 13,675         | 13,704         | 12,973         | -5.33%                 |
| Doveton               | 3,835          | 2,939          | 3,749          | 3,518          | 3,642          | 3.52%                  |
| Endeavour Hills       | 6,718          | 5,544          | 7,098          | 6,633          | 6,950          | 4.78%                  |
| Hampton Park          | 8,539          | 6,461          | 9,048          | 8,250          | 7,547          | -8.52%                 |
| Bunjil Place          | 28,769         | 24,475         | 32,815         | 30,456         | 30,489         | 0.11%                  |
| <b>Regional Total</b> | <b>60,164</b>  | <b>50,786</b>  | <b>66,385</b>  | <b>62,561</b>  | <b>61,601</b>  | <b>-1.53%</b>          |
| Virtual Visits        | 70,887         | 65,789         | 69,379         | 60,372         | 72,635         | 20.31%                 |
| <b>TOTAL</b>          | <b>131,051</b> | <b>116,575</b> | <b>135,764</b> | <b>122,933</b> | <b>134,236</b> | <b>9.19%</b>           |

Virtual visits have remained relatively steady in recent months. Our new [connectedlibraries.org.au](https://connectedlibraries.org.au) website was launched in June and visit statistics between the old and new website were impacted. Community are still being redirected to our new website if they use the old website address. Recording of website statistics has also changed slightly due to Google analytics update. Connected Libraries App access has increased since May, aligning with the reinstatement of interlibrary loans.

| VIRTUAL VISITS | Mar 2023      | Apr 2023      | May 2023      | Jun 2023      | Jul 2023      | % Variation<br>Jun/Jul |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Website        | 39,960        | 36,816        | 39,236        | 26,000        | 39,000        | 50.00%                 |
| Enterprise     | 15,210        | 14,242        | 13,678        | 14,865        | 15,349        | 3.26%                  |
| CL App         | 15,717        | 14,731        | 16,465        | 19,507        | 18,286        | -6.26%                 |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>70,887</b> | <b>65,789</b> | <b>69,379</b> | <b>60,372</b> | <b>72,635</b> | <b>20.31%</b>          |

Physical loans have been stable, with month-on-month small increases. eLoans dropped slightly after the increase in May.

| LOANS                 | Mar 2023       | Apr 2023       | May 2023       | Jun 2023       | Jul 2023       | % Variation<br>Jun/Jul |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Regional Support      | 1,559          | 1,221          | 1,261          | 1,245          | 1,145          | -8.03%                 |
| Cranbourne            | 30,179         | 30,950         | 33,621         | 35,043         | 35,525         | 1.38%                  |
| Doveton               | 2,678          | 2,874          | 2,813          | 3,220          | 3,018          | -6.27%                 |
| Endeavour Hills       | 12,907         | 11,863         | 13,811         | 13,279         | 13,775         | 3.74%                  |
| Hampton Park          | 9,941          | 9,661          | 10,267         | 11,124         | 10,567         | -5.01%                 |
| Bunjil Place          | 41,660         | 44,273         | 43,387         | 48,075         | 50,526         | 5.10%                  |
| <b>Regional Total</b> | <b>98,924</b>  | <b>100,842</b> | <b>105,160</b> | <b>111,986</b> | <b>114,556</b> | <b>2.29%</b>           |
| eLoans                | 61,324         | 63,778         | 65,454         | 62,653         | 63,131         | 0.76%                  |
| <b>TOTAL</b>          | <b>160,248</b> | <b>164,620</b> | <b>170,614</b> | <b>174,639</b> | <b>177,687</b> | <b>1.75%</b>           |

**CASEY-CARDINIA LIBRARY CORPORATION BOARD MEETING**  
**Wednesday 23 August 2023**

Holds have also remained steady in recent months. System holds across LibsVic recommenced on 1 May with a new service model after being on hold since October 2022 when the State Government was out of contract with the statewide courier.

Memberships have increased again month on month to 78,887 members at end of July, up from 77,341 in June and from 75,282 members at the end of May. Membership changes include new members signing up, and ongoing regular database maintenance (where expired memberships are removed).

Public PC internet and Wi-Fi usage was up in all branches for May, dropping in June and again slightly in July. All branches besides Hampton Park saw a decline in Wi-Fi usage from June to July, however at the same time there was an increase in community booking our public internet PC's – shift in usage pattern.

| INTERNET        | Mar 2023     | Apr 2023     | May 2023     | Jun 2023     | Jul 2023     | % Variation<br>Jun/Jul |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Cranbourne      | 972          | 844          | 1,017        | 937          | 1,085        | 15.80%                 |
| Doveton         | 460          | 349          | 493          | 413          | 486          | 17.68%                 |
| Endeavour Hills | 540          | 401          | 601          | 507          | 545          | 7.50%                  |
| Hampton Park    | 910          | 763          | 963          | 937          | 836          | -10.78%                |
| Bunjil Place    | 1,550        | 1,253        | 1,674        | 1,610        | 1,672        | 3.85%                  |
| <b>TOTAL</b>    | <b>4,432</b> | <b>3,610</b> | <b>4,748</b> | <b>4,404</b> | <b>4,624</b> | <b>5.00%</b>           |

| Wi-Fi           | Mar 2023     | Apr 2023     | May 2023     | Jun 2023     | Jul 2023     | % Variation<br>Jun/Jul |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Cranbourne      | 1,953        | 1,410        | 1,953        | 1,774        | 1,681        | -5.24%                 |
| Doveton         | 558          | 480          | 630          | 587          | 553          | -5.79%                 |
| Endeavour Hills | 868          | 720          | 1,023        | 877          | 821          | -6.39%                 |
| Hampton Park    | 992          | 810          | 1,054        | 870          | 963          | 10.69%                 |
| Bunjil Place    | 3,450        | 2,799        | 4,000        | 3,233        | 2,954        | -8.63%                 |
| <b>TOTAL</b>    | <b>7,821</b> | <b>6,219</b> | <b>8,660</b> | <b>7,341</b> | <b>6,972</b> | <b>-5.03%</b>          |

eResources remain steady after a jump in May. Consistent performers in our eResource collection continue to be eAudiobooks, eBooks, eMagazines and Press Reader.

| ELECTRONIC RESOURCES | Mar 2023      | Apr 2023      | May 2023      | Jun 2023      | Jul 2023      | % Variation<br>Jun/Jul |
|----------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Age Library Edition  | 726           | 762           | 813           | 825           | 737           | -10.67%                |
| Bolinda eAudiobooks  | 8,656         | 8,662         | 9,053         | 9,009         | 9,536         | 5.85%                  |
| Bolinda eBooks       | 5,386         | 5,892         | 6,178         | 6,150         | 6,368         | 3.54%                  |
| Choice               | 64            | 75            | 66            | 95            | 86            | -9.47%                 |
| Kanopy               | 845           | 754           | 853           | 1,047         | 1,009         | -3.63%                 |
| Libby eAudiobooks    | 1,446         | 1,507         | 1,416         | 1,684         | 1,933         | 14.79%                 |
| Libby eBooks         | 1,000         | 1,097         | 1,002         | 1,214         | 1,388         | 14.33%                 |
| Libby eMagazines     | 1,467         | 1,529         | 1,739         | 1,708         | 1,817         | 6.38%                  |
| Press Reader         | 41,183        | 42,795        | 43,769        | 40,518        | 39,821        | -1.72%                 |
| Storybox Library     | 131           | 23            | 23            | 91            | 91            | 0.00%                  |
| Tumblebooks          | 420           | 682           | 542           | 312           | 345           | 10.58%                 |
| <b>TOTAL</b>         | <b>61,324</b> | <b>63,778</b> | <b>65,454</b> | <b>62,653</b> | <b>63,131</b> | <b>0.76%</b>           |

Digital engagement is strong across many platforms, including eNewsletters, social media, and the website. There were more than 72,000 subscribers for our eNewsletter in July.

Our regular weekly programs plus targeted programs continue to attract community. Attendance and program offerings dropped in June after a bumper month in May. July attendance picked up, this included our holiday program. Program attendance patterns align with physical visitation. In July, 4,888 attended

**CASEY-CARDINIA LIBRARY CORPORATION BOARD MEETING**  
**Wednesday 23 August 2023**

250 sessions ranging from our regular weekly programs targeting early childhood and children to art and craft sessions for all, social connection and learning English sessions.

| Program Type                      | Apr 2023         |                  | May 2023         |                  | Jun 2023         |                  | Jul 2023         |                  |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                                   | Youth attendance | Adult attendance | Youth attendance | Adult attendance | Youth attendance | Adult attendance | Youth attendance | Adult attendance |
| <b>Baby Rhyme Time</b>            | 387              | 0                | 682              | 0                | 420              | 0                | 520              | 0                |
| <b>Book Ninjas</b>                | 10               | 0                | 18               | 0                | 0                | 0                | 24               | 0                |
| <b>Group visits</b>               | 118              | 0                | 1,627            | 0                | 788              | 0                | 759              | 0                |
| <b>Art and Craft</b>              | 205              | 130              | 63               | 158              | 70               | 104              | 195              | 149              |
| <b>STEAM Activities</b>           | 284              | 0                | 465              | 0                | 503              | 0                | 308              | 0                |
| <b>Storytime</b>                  | 518              | 0                | 1,340            | 0                | 673              | 0                | 915              | 0                |
| <b>Toddlers Time</b>              | 600              | 0                | 961              | 0                | 1,114            | 0                | 821              | 0                |
| <b>Entertainment</b>              | 505              | 85               | 41               | 9                | 122              | 103              | 360              | 49               |
| <b>Author Talks/Book Groups</b>   | 0                | 45               | 0                | 53               | 0                | 47               | 0                | 60               |
| <b>Creative writing</b>           | 0                | 0                | 0                | 9                | 7                | 108              | 0                | 23               |
| <b>Cooking Home and Garden</b>    | 0                | 31               | 0                | 41               | 0                | 14               | 0                | 33               |
| <b>Health and Wellness</b>        | 10               | 0                | 3                | 8                | 0                | 3                | 19               | 7                |
| <b>History</b>                    | 15               | 0                | 88               | 120              | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                |
| <b>IT and Technology</b>          | 24               | 29               | 96               | 46               | 75               | 43               | 191              | 69               |
| <b>Jobs and Employment</b>        | 0                | 2                | 0                | 3                | 0                | 6                | 0                | 8                |
| <b>Citizenship and Government</b> | 0                | 83               | 0                | 75               | 0                | 19               | 0                | 25               |
| <b>Learning English</b>           | 0                | 67               | 0                | 228              | 0                | 153              | 0                | 195              |
| <b>MCHC/New Parent Groups</b>     | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 420              | 0                | 0                | 0                |
| <b>Social Connection</b>          | 5                | 11               | 6                | 60               | 0                | 18               | 0                | 110              |
| <b>Cultural and Identity</b>      | 0                | 0                | 700              | 0                | 14               | 0                | 0                | 48               |
| <b>Homework Help</b>              | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                      | <b>2,681</b>     | <b>483</b>       | <b>6,090</b>     | <b>810</b>       | <b>3,786</b>     | <b>618</b>       | <b>4,112</b>     | <b>776</b>       |

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Operational Performance Report be noted.

**CC33/2023 CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE**

***Report prepared by Beth Luppino***

**Purpose**

To provide the Board with an update on community engagement, collections and services, including programs, events and partnerships.

*CL Library Plan reference – 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.4 and 3.5*

Programs and events at Connected Libraries (CL) provide opportunities to promote the library as a community space where people of all ages gather for a range of activities including early literacy programs for young children; literacy and creative programs for school aged children and teens, school holiday programs; lifelong learning, digital literacy, and reader development programs for adults.

**Discussion**

**Outreach, Partnerships and Collaboration** (Library Plan reference 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.5)

**Innovation Projects – Outreach Expansion**

Planning is well underway for the implementation of Connected Libraries three outreach innovation projects.

Sue Osborne has been appointed to the role of Project Manager – Outreach and Innovations until December 2023. Sue brings experience in the acquisition and implementation of library lockers, and development of new library spaces along with decades of experience in public and school library settings. She will lead the development of these projects over the coming five months.

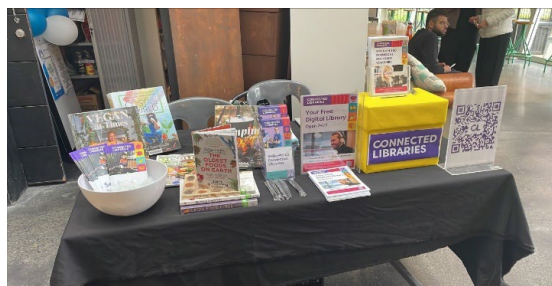
Site visits at Cranbourne West Community Hub have yielded useful discussions with Council's team on the potential for the space, and service integration through the rest of the Hub. Coming priorities include mapping of furniture requirements to support collections and ICT, and sourcing relevant quotations. We will also work closely with the Hub team on a marketing and comms plan, and integrated program plans to start rolling out in January 2024.

Additional quotes are being sought for the Library Van, including vehicle model and fit-out options.

We anticipate that the Library Lockers will be ordered in August and will be the first of the projects to be activated, followed by the Van in the second quarter of this financial year, and the Hub project live from January 2024.

**Partnerships**

Our team were onsite at Federation University twice in August. We had a table in the student lounge to promote the library service to students during FedFast week. Students were excited to hear about the dedicated study spaces available at Connected Libraries and the digital library platform. We also signed up a number of new members this month.



**Outreach**

New Outreach team members Elysia and Makaila visited the new Clyde Creek primary school this month. Communities in Casey South are a particular focus for Connected Libraries, we were pleased to visit this school, which only opened in 2022. Clyde Creek has 85 prep students spread across 5 classes. Teachers were encouraged to sign up for an institutional card and borrow literacy kits.

The children learned about our libraries and enjoyed Elysia reading a story with them. Each child was sent home with a library bag and membership form to bring back to their local branch.



### **Community Connections and Wellbeing** (Library Plan reference 3.1, 3.5)

1,600 children and their carers attended Connected Libraries July School Holiday program. Our branch teams were busy – visitation statistics now reflecting pre-covid levels.

A rich offering of programs and activities was scheduled across the libraries.

There was a celebration of Australian flora, fauna and Aboriginal culture at Cranbourne Library and across all branches during NAIDOC week. Local artist N' Dene helped our communities create murals for display in our libraries.

Library staff visited Cranbourne West Community Hub for a Lego STEAM event - a fantastic precursor to future programming for the Hub Satellite library.

Art inspirations were a hit at Doveton. Artist and illustrator Lou Endicott created an enchanting work across the windows of the library with images of local flora and fauna, before running a workshop with the children.

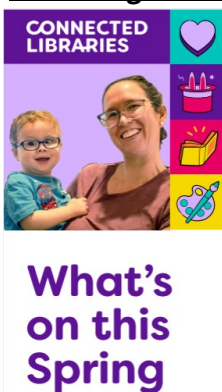
Endeavour Hills Library collaborated with the Casey 360 Youth Bus and the Endeavour Hills Shopping Center to present a Super Silly storytime at the Shopping Centre, a toddler disco, a baby bounce and wiggle session, FunFit circus skills workshop, Lego building, a spy night, and a book launch by local author Diyenka.

The Gruffalo (aka Tim, Children and Youth Librarian) returned to Bunjil Place Library for a reading of the Gruffalo's Child by Julia Donaldson. This event was a promotion for the theatre production of the same name that was about to come to the precinct.

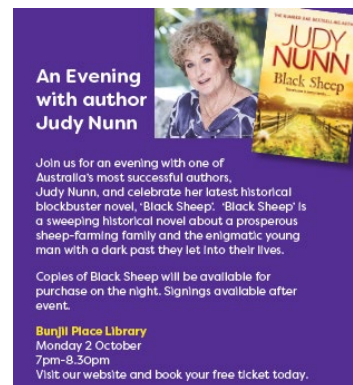
Our Local History Librarian Kate worked with kids at Bunjil Place Library on Historical Snaps. Children looked at historical photographs and using green screens and iPads superimposed themselves into local historical photos that included the old train station and main street in Berwick.



### **Marketing and Promotions** (Library Plan reference 3.1, 3.4)



Connected Libraries has finalised the 'What's On' booklet for Spring. There is a focus on Ageing Positively events in October, in line with Seniors Month. We have also featured a number of Local and Family history events including searching Military records, using Ancestry and Find my Past (available free to CL members), and researching heritage homes. High profile author and actress Judy Nunn will be at Bunjil Place Library on 2 October – this will be a large event and include Judy signing copies of her latest book 'Black Sheep'.



## **Engagement Statistics**

### **Social Media**

|           | April 2023  | May 2023   | Jun 2023   | Jul 2023  |
|-----------|---|--|--|---|
| Facebook  | Followers: 9,248<br>Reach: 43,251<br>Engagement:1,438 | Followers:9,257<br>Reach: 44,979<br>Engagement:2,666 | Followers: 9,287<br>Reach: 1,137<br>Engagement:1,028 | Followers: 9,290<br>Reach: 9,650<br>Engagement: 540 |
| Instagram | Followers: 1,713                                      | Followers: 1722                                      | Followers: 1,758                                     | Followers: 1,784                                    |

### **eDM/eNewsletters**

| Month      | Recipients | Opens  | Click through rate<br>(number of people that opened then clicked a link) |
|------------|------------|--------|--|
| April 2023 | 69,805     | 22,284 | 1.5%   |
| May 2023   | 70,595     | 28,960 | 0.86%  |
| Jun 2023   | 72,787     | 26,583 | 1.48%  |
| Jul 2023   | 72,387     | 35,626 | 2.39%  |

### **Read Next Newsletter (EDM)**

| Month      | Recipients | Opens | Click through rate<br>(number of people that opened then clicked a link) |
|------------|------------|-------|--|
| April 2023 | 820        | 362   | 3.78%  |
| May 2023   | 815        | 339   | 1.96%  |
| Jun 2023   | 831        | 372   | 4.00%  |
| Jul 2023   | 828        | 416   | 5.52%  |

### **Local History Newsletter (EDM) - Quarterly**

| Month      | Recipients | Opens | Click through rate<br>(number of people that opened then clicked a link) |
|------------|------------|-------|--|
| April 2023 | 221        | 150   | 14.48%   |
| May 2023   | N/A        | N/A   | N/A  |
| Jun 2023   | N/A        | N/A   | N/A  |
| Jul 2023   | 221        | 158   | 17.05%   |

### **Website**

| Month         | Visits | New Visits | Percentage of new visits | Page Views | Average Session Duration | Engagement Rate<br>(new metric June 2023)* |
|---------------|--------|------------|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------|--|
| February 2023 | 35,980 | 15,808     | 43.93%                   | 136,466    | 2:34                     | -  |
| March 2023    | 39,960 | 18,253     | 45.67%                   | 158,398    | 2:38                     | -  |
| April 2023    | 33,847 | 19,240     | 56.84%                   | 133,234    | 2.25                     | -  |
| May 2023      | 39,236 | 17,202     | 43.84%                   | 153,407    | 2.36                     | -  |
| June 2023     | 26,000 | 25,000     | 26.00%                   | 99,311     | 1:20                     | 56.00%                                     |
| July 2023     | 39,000 | 20,000     | 51.28%                   | 83,123     | 3.68                     | 55.05%                                     |

Engagement rate: In Google Analytics 4, engagement rate is the ratio, represented as a percentage, of your engaged sessions to your total sessions. For example, if you had 100 engaged sessions, and 1,000 total, your engagement rate would be 10%. The average engagement rate for a website is 55%.

### **Conclusion**

The Connected Libraries team continues to find innovative ways to engage community and deliver services and resources.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1. That the Customer Experience Report be noted.**

## **GENERAL BUSINESS**

### **NEXT MEETING**

The remaining planned meetings for 2023 are as follows:

- Thursday 12 October – 9.30am-4.30pm - Strategic Workshop
- Wednesday 25 October – 4.00pm – Online Teams Meeting
- Wednesday 29 November – 4.00pm – Online Teams Meeting