



WAVERLEY  
COUNCIL

# My Amazing Library

Waverley Library  
Strategic Plan  
2014 to 2017



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# Summary

Waverley Library is a bustling and lively community space that is highly valued by the half a million visitors who walk through the doors each year. The Library aspires to position itself as a leading cultural and learning resource in the Eastern Suburbs, building upon its already strong reputation for excellent services. Through thoughtful programming, service delivery and strategic promotions, the Library seeks to shift community and stakeholder perceptions on the value and purpose of library services.

The Library has conducted a review and benchmarking exercise to inform new strategic directions and to assess capacity to meet changes in the library and local government industries. Libraries across the world have been redefining service delivery in response to new technologies and increased community expectations.

The Library is in a strong position to deliver on its vision and aspirations, with Council support, via the strategic priorities outlined in this document. These priorities summarise the technology, resources, partnerships and confidence that the Library requires to deliver an influential service as part of an 'Amazing Waverley'.

The *My Amazing Library* strategy has the overarching objective:

**To enrich the Waverley Community through creative, future focused library services, supporting lifelong learning and strong community connections.**

To achieve this objective, *My Amazing Library* focuses on the following strategic priorities:

**CULTURAL CONNECTIONS:** to build strong connections and partnerships and encourage participation in the library and its services and promote the library as a community learning hub

**SPACES:** to create multipurpose areas where possibility, creativity and innovation are fostered through cutting edge technologies, inspirational spaces and functional universal design

**TECHNOLOGY:** to position Waverley Library at the forefront of educating the community through digital resources and leading technologies

**COLLECTIONS:** to deliver inspiring, contemporary and relevant collections for all users

**LEARNING CULTURE:** to sustain a culture of capability, life-long learning and innovation through an expert and customer focused workforce

To ensure accountability, the *My Amazing Library* strategy includes a range of performance indicators against which the Library will measure itself during the implementation of the strategy.



# 1. Introduction

Waverley Library is an important community service operated by Waverley Council, providing a range of community events as well as traditional library services.

In 2009, the Library developed and implemented its *Way Forward* strategic plan which identified the following priorities:

- Services delivered in a cost effective manner with a focus on customer needs
- Collections & Services
- Information Technology
- Connect with the Community
- Staff & People

This new strategy seeks to strengthen the outcomes of the previous plan and position the Library as a cultural icon in the community and a leading organisation of best practice in the library industry.

The purpose of the *My Amazing Library* strategy is:

- To align Library operations and programs to community expectations and to demonstrate a working 21st century library model and effectively position the service over the next four years
- To provide a mechanism to inform the Waverley community of Council's plans for the Library
- To generate focused, relevant annual operating plans to guide the use of financial and human resources

## 1.1 Outcomes from the *Way Forward* Strategy 2009 to 2014

The Library achieved significant outcomes under the *Way Forward* strategy, including:

- Major changes to staff rostering, aligning rostering with service delivery priorities and improving access for customers
- Up-skilling of Library staff to ensure continuing relevance to meet requirements for modern libraries
- The introduction of RFID as a major step toward service improvement
- An upgrade of the library management system to ensure that our technology continues to support all Library operations
- Development of library branding and promotions to assist in rightly positioning the Library as a community hub.

# 2. Strategy Development

## 2.1 Community Strategic Plan

A starting point for the development of this strategy is Council's community strategic plan, the *Waverley Together 3* (WT3). The WT3 articulates the following goals, which are supported by defined goals in the delivery plans, as follows:

**GOAL:**

*C1a: Support programs that celebrate and strengthen our multicultural and indigenous culture and cultivate a sense of community appreciation of our cultural heritage and diversity.*

**DELIVERABLE/S:**

A coordinated program of social, recreational and cultural events targeting diverse groups.

Provide a program celebration of local history and heritage.

**GOAL:**

*C2b: Provide a socially inclusive, vital and welcoming library service that supports the educational, social and recreational needs of the community.*

**DELIVERABLE/S:**

A vibrant and relevant library space that meets user needs.

Programs/events and activities that meet the community needs and interests.

Current and relevant library collections and services.

A range of relevant and reliable information and technology services.

**GOAL:**

*C6a: Enrich the community's cultural life and support lifelong learning through a variety of cultural events and activities, balancing the needs of residents and visitors.*

**DELIVERABLE/S:**

A diverse and exciting range of cultural events across Waverley.

Stronger connections and partnerships with the community that encourage participation in the Library and its services and promote the Library as a community learning hub.

All strategic initiatives, performance targets and action plans contained in the *My Amazing Library* strategy are designed to achieve the WT3 goals and the action items in the delivery plan.

The strategy also aims to align with place making concepts outlined in Council's Complete Streets project, such as *a public space providing cultural and leisure experiences and providing inspiration through spontaneous activity and public art*. The Library must also position itself to provide added value to the West Oxford Street Precinct project whose aims include bringing culture to the precinct and make it a destination in itself.

## 2.2 Library Vision

This *My Amazing Library* strategy has been developed to facilitate the continuing achievement of Council's vision for an 'Amazing Waverley' and to build library capacity to meet future directions.

Taking this vision, the planning process created a Library mission as its overarching objective for the My Amazing Library strategy, being:

**To enrich the Waverley community through creative, future focused library services, supporting lifelong learning and strong community connections.**

## 2.3 Consultation

The strategy was developed in consultation with a range of stakeholders and reference to relevant information, including:

- Library staff consultations
- Exit survey of Library customers
- Waverley Community Profile
- Future of the Library and information sciences profession: public libraries (ALIA report)
- State Library NSW reports and guidelines

These consultations resulted in a range of suggestions for future service and articulation of what is valued most about the Library. Collections and programs emerged as highly valued by library customers. Access to a variety of programs and niche collections was identified as a key focus area for excellent customer experience.

## 2.4 Current Statistics

In formulating the *My Amazing Library* strategy, the following statistics were referenced from the Library's Benchmark Report & Investigation of Best Practice in Public Libraries 2013:

MEETS OR EXCEEDS BENCHMARK	BELOW BENCHMARK
qualified staff with (17.7 FTE staff eligible for professional membership of ALIA)	turnover of stock (3.11 for lending collection)
visits per capita (7.5 per capita)	age of collection (24.65% purchased in past five years, 44.28% purchased in past ten years)
items in the collection per capita (3.28 items per capita)	targeted services (gaps include technology and digital resources)
loans per capita (8.26 per capita)	targeted programs (gaps include CALD programs, cross generational, programs for men, young adults)
access to PCs and internet (26 PCs with internet access)	



The *My Amazing Library* strategy seeks to add meaning to these statistics so that the Library can make an informed assessment of how and why they meet or do not meet the standards and form an understanding of future directions. The Library will also acknowledge gaps in current services and use the information to develop new ideas.

Occasionally the information taken from these benchmarks can be misleading and must be further interrogated for a proper understanding to be formed. For example, the Library exceeds the standards for the number of publicly accessible internet terminals, however the recently upgraded software is still behind the latest software releases with Microsoft Office 2007 the current standard and limited capacity for the Library to explore alternatives such as Opensource systems or Apple products. For the Library to build its reputation as a leading organisation and service and to meet the needs and expectations of its customers, benchmark data such as this must be interrogated and used to build relationships with the Digital Waverley Project for service improvement.

Similarly, the Library collection statistics must be interpreted with the extensive 'stack' collection of rare and out of print books. This collection skews the collection age statistic, and also turnover of stock. However, the existence of this collection is important to the Library's services, providing customers excellent access to rare titles that other libraries do not provide. The *My Amazing Library* strategy identifies actions for the library to improve access and awareness of this collection.



# 3. Strategic Priorities

The strategy development process identified a series of priorities which will be the focus of the development of the Library and its services for the next three to four years. These priorities build on the achievements from the *Way Forward* strategy and will ensure that the Library continues to provide a relevant service to the community in the context of an increasing use of technology in all aspects of daily life.

The strategic priorities for the next chapter in the life of Waverley Library are:

- Cultural Connections
- Space
- Technology
- Collections
- Learning Culture

## 3.1 Cultural Connections

### **OBJECTIVE:**

*To build strong connections and partnerships that encourage participation in the library and its services and promote the library as a community learning hub.*

Strong positive relationships with the Waverley community are key to the library's success and future services. Library customer expectations have changed in the past ten years with more people expecting libraries to stock titles as soon as they are released, have the latest software and hardware and to provide value added services such as workshops and learning programs. The Library has a role to play in promoting social inclusion and a sense of belonging among the community.

The Library aims to be a place that community members want to go to – for a variety of purposes such as solving information problems, having new learning experiences or socialising and playing. With an increased focus on the arts and cultural role of the Library, new opportunities exist for the community to connect with each other and with the Library.

Library staff have an understanding of customer trends and preferences through everyday interactions. This understanding will be strengthened by initiating and maintaining communication mechanisms with the community of library users as well as non-users. The Library will be in a strong position for continuous improvement of services and will be able to identify emerging needs. With the help of community participation, current services such as multicultural and young adult collections and programs can be improved and the library can move toward a culture of enabling the community to reach the goals expressed in WT3, building capacity through partnerships. Opportunities also exist through participation and partnerships for the library to act as a facilitator and help community groups to run their own programs with varying levels of assistance from the Library.

The Executive Manager of the Library also has carriage of Council's cultural services and therefore there is the opportunity to collaborate with the Bondi Pavilion and create new programs, as well as promoting, guest hosting and sharing events over multiple sites. This will create a strong place making connection between Bondi Beach and Bondi Junction.

### 3.1.1 Cultural Connections Action Plan

<b>CULTURAL CONNECTIONS</b>	
Strong connections and partnerships that encourage participation in the library and its services and promote the library as a community learning hub.	
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>
Develop a program of community participation and customer feedback, utilising this intelligence to strategically enhance service offerings	Medium term
Develop an outreach plan for moving the library service beyond Library walls	Short term
Identify staff skills in multicultural access and services, young adult services and develop program to address current service gaps in these areas	Short term
Work with Cultural Programs team to assist community to facilitate their own programs	Medium term
Maintain a positive and mutually beneficial relationship with FOWL	Immediate
Utilize social media for promotion of services and two way feedback mechanism on Library services	Short term
Investigate feasibility of outreach via Library scholarships, internships or residency programs	Medium term
Develop strong partnerships with Cultural Programs to share, split and swap programs between the Library and the Bondi Pavilion and other sites as identified	Immediate
Partner with Cultural Programs to reinvigorate The Nib Waverley Library Award for Literature	Immediate
Raise the profile of Local Studies resources and collections via Public Programming and digital access	Short term

### 3.2 Spaces

**OBJECTIVE:**

*To create multipurpose areas where possibility, creativity and innovation are fostered through cutting edge technologies, inspirational spaces and functional universal design.*

The role of libraries is now commonly recognised to have shifted from being a place of only holding and lending books, towards being a place of inspiration and ideas, where people can connect to curated information such as exhibitions and talks or can inspire their curiosity to discover new ideas and guide their own learning. The Library welcomes different learning styles by providing space for social interactions, labs and workshops for testing out new technology and access to wifi and areas to sit quietly and think. The Library service is committed to providing a space that is convenient, inclusive and responsive to evolving community needs.

The Library has new opportunities for partnerships and sponsorship as services and spaces are developed or adjusted to encourage new interactions with information. This includes technologically supported group learning and meeting spaces, social spaces such as a cafe, and hands on

learning spaces such as maker spaces and technology labs. There are a host of opportunities for the Library to make its spaces relevant, vibrant and inviting such as:

- Incorporating smartboards, data projectors and other tools to facilitate the use of space by a variety of groups
- Expanding the use of the Library theatre, eg. as a musical rehearsal space
- More dedicated areas for loud and quiet study
- Alternative learning experiences such as Massively Open Online Course (MOOC) hosting
- Designated areas for experimenting and creating with technology

### 3.2.1 Spaces Action Plan

<b>SPACES</b>	
Multipurpose areas where possibility, creativity and innovation are fostered through cutting edge technologies, inspirational spaces and functional universal design	
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>
Investigate alternative uses of Library spaces to create and meet demand	Long term
Establish a 'coffee culture' in the Library either through the running of a cafe in library space, or through creating cafe like spaces where customers can meet to chat and exchange ideas	Medium term
Incorporate technology to learning spaces	Medium term
Commence long term space planning in consultation with relevant Project Teams	Long term
Investigate management of the balance between loud and quiet activities	Medium Term

## 3.3 Technology

### OBJECTIVE:

*To be at the forefront of educating the community through digital resources and leading technologies*

The library industry will continue to be enhanced by advances in technology and it is important that Waverley Library remains proactive in taking a leading role in educating and enabling access to new software, media and devices.

Access to the internet and confidence in using computers and devices have positive impact on a person's ability to participate fully in the society in which they live. The Library already plays a role in providing access and learning opportunities to members of the community. This role can be strengthened to provide current software and hardware and the freedom and support to explore emerging technology in the library context.

Introducing access to cutting edge technology in the Library will also attract a new audience of tech enthusiasts excited to try out the latest products through a technology loans program, programmers and coders looking for space and access to develop new solutions, and an online following who connect with the Library through social media and the Library website and online services. Through initiating relationships, the Library will be in an interesting position

to explore and develop experimental technologies for library services with community groups.

The increasing acceptance of self-service concepts offers the Library opportunity to move some systems and procedures online and make it easier for customers to interact with the Library and access services and resources they want and need. The Library Management System is a key element in customer service and for promoting Library collections and providing access to resources. Library staff use it to create efficiencies in their jobs and participate in customer focused projects. Potential efficiencies include automated services reducing the need for staff intervention, digital signage and social media over print promotional material, and an improved Library website for meaningful access to Library information.

### 3.3.1 Technology Action Plan

<b>TECHNOLOGY</b>	
The Library at the forefront of educating the community through digital resources and leading technologies	
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>
Evaluate service delivery against post-internet customer attitudes with the aim of facilitating easy self-service to Library services /enhance opportunities for customer self service within Library services	Short term
Develop a digital strategy covering an increase in digital platforms, digital signage and social media and align strategic directions with the Digital Waverley Project	Short term
Conduct feasibility study of virtual exhibitions and interactive Local Studies resources	Medium term
Establish partnerships with technology experts for experimental service provision	Medium term
Develop reporting measures for library online presence and participation	Short term

## 3.4 Collections

### OBJECTIVE:

*To provide inspiring, contemporary and relevant collections for all users*

Changes to the publishing industry and technological advances have increased the information formats that libraries can offer their customers. Ebooks have been introduced and embraced by some customers, while others prefer traditional formats for their reading. The Library Collections Strategy needs to balance these preferences as well as explore new options for different demographics.

Keeping with the ALIA *Future of the Profession* discussion paper, the Library acknowledges the 50:50 by 2020 recommendation- that we aim to provide an even balance of physical and electronic collections by 2020. There is much potential for the Library to reach out to members of the community who are not regular visitors to the Library but who can benefit from library collections. Further development and promotion of collections such as ebooks and emagazines can cater to young professionals or working parents who are not regular visitors to the Library.

The Library will also develop new ways to engage with the community to

work toward a shared vision of what the Library collects. This can be as direct as inviting the community in to choose items to go into the collection or as big as developing new alternative collections of items to meet community needs, such as ipads, musical instruments or bike repair kits.

The Library also has an important role to play through its collecting guidelines as a collector and creator of local content. Part of this aim can be met through the Local Studies role and the digitisation of existing collections. Digitising photographs and vertical files provides better access and exposure to the collection. The Library also aspires to lead the active collection of new content, providing the community opportunities to showcase their own artefacts and encourage involvement in the curation process for the community to tell their stories.

### 3.4.1 Collections Action Plan

<b>COLLECTIONS</b>	
An inspiring, contemporary and relevant collection for all users	
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>
Establish collecting guidelines and priorities for publication on Library website	Short term
Commit appropriate budget to non traditional collection development, such as digital, electronic, experimental (eg power tools, bike maintenance kit, art materials)	Medium term
Develop a plan for community participation in Library collection activities	Medium term
Identify and build upon staff skills in negotiating new contracts for library materials and identify alternative models of content licencing	Long term
Implement a two yearly refresher training cycle for Readers Advisory across all library service points	Short term
Develop a clear, relevant set of collection benchmarks	Short term
Develop guidelines for the maintenance and promotion of the stack collection	Medium term
Explore opportunities for Waverley Library and community to generate new content (eg through library programs, Local Studies)	Short term
Explore opportunities to collaborate with self publishers to contribute to excellence in literature	Long term
Work with Cultural Programs and External Events teams to showcase and promote Local History	Short term



## 3.5 Learning Culture

### **OBJECTIVE:**

*To sustain a culture of capability, life-long learning and innovation through an expert and customer-focused workforce*

In 2013, the Library developed its own vision for its contribution to the Waverley community. This vision is for the Library workforce to be:

**Fearless**

**Switched On**

**Smiling**

**Valued**

The Library workforce needs to be empowered and supported to deliver the items in this strategy and an investment in continuous skills development is paramount to its success. The Library workforce consists of many passionate, enthusiastic and highly qualified professionals who want to deliver the best service to bring the Library to a leadership position in the profession. It is important that the team is equipped to deliver responsive and proactive service and are empowered to take control of their professional development.

By focusing on professionalism and workforce capability, the Library aims to develop itself into a centre of excellence for librarianship. Its aspiration is to be the reference point for other public libraries, as a library on the front foot of innovation in library services and a source of information and know-how. The Library envisages using its already strong skills in analysing trends, generating new ideas and implementing them to improve services and participate in professional discussions. Activities such as presenting at industry conferences and creating library blogs will assist in developing a high-profile within library circles. Visible leadership by the Library will also help shift perceptions of the value of the library to the community.

Through this strategy, facilitated by a recent organisational restructure which saw the merging of library and cultural services, the Library aims to re-position itself as a pivotal and central service to the community.



### 3.5.1 Learning Culture Action Plan

#### LEARNING CULTURE

Culture of capability, life-long learning and innovation through an expert and customer-focused workforce

ACTION	TIMEFRAME
Undertake a skills audit for the Library workforce	Short term
Strengthen succession planning, deploying expertise to fill vacancies or cover absences	Medium term
Develop the Library Workforce Development Plan to address skills gaps, plans for emerging skills and links to organisational imperatives	Short term
Embrace and implement organisation wide staff reward and recognition programs	Short term
Develop project based teams within the Library for service delivery and for sharing responsibilities throughout library team and building skills	Long term
Investigate opportunities to partner or share services or specialisations with neighbouring LGAs, seeking skills not traditionally associated with librarianship	Medium term
Implement system of rostered time to explore new technology and programs, promote self directed learning on site	Short term
Create opportunities for Library staff to raise their professional profile eg. through professional blogs, other on-line activities and conference presentations	Medium term
Actively engage with Council's New Directions project	Immediate

# 4. Performance Indicators

The Library will implement a process to regularly measure and report on its achievement of its strategic initiatives. The performance indicators for the *My Amazing Library* strategic plan are as follows:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	HIGH-LEVEL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
<p><b>Cultural Connections</b>  <i>To build strong connections and partnerships that encourage participation in the library and its services and promote the library as a community learning hub</i></p>	<p>Increase in the number of library users (of collections, resources, space and online)                      Increase in the number of targeted programs                      Increase in partnerships with Council Project Teams and community groups                      Increase in positive feedback and community interaction with library</p>
<p><b>Spaces</b>  <i>To create multipurpose areas where possibility, creativity and innovation are fostered through cutting edge technologies, inspirational spaces and functional universal design</i></p>	<p>Increase in specific-use spaces                      Growth in visitors to the Library                      Growth in bookings for different spaces                      Increased breadth of creative programs</p>
<p><b>Technology</b>  <i>To be at the forefront of educating the community through digital resources and leading technologies</i></p>	<p>Internal efficiency gains                      Increased use of self-service options                      Growth in workforce capacity                      Increased customer satisfaction                      Increased community awareness of library services</p>
<p><b>Collections</b>  <i>To provide inspiring, contemporary and relevant collections for all users</i></p>	<p>Increase in collection use                      Expansion of relevant formats available                      Increased positive feedback                      Increase in Local Studies collection access and use                      Increase in collection of items of local community and cultural significance</p>
<p><b>Learning Culture</b>  <i>To sustain a culture of capability, life-long learning and innovation through an expert and customer-focused workforce</i></p>	<p>Increase in participation in professional development activities among library workforce                      Increased staff satisfaction</p>