Yarra Plenty Regional Library
Annual Report 2022–2023

Telling Our Story

#ThisLibraryHas

Our Vision

Informed creative communities: connected, empowered, and well.

Our Purpose

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

Our Role

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

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

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

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

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

Our Values

Respect for all: promoting connection and fairness.

Integrity: honest and trustworthy.

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

Empower: supportive, innovative, and inclusive of diversity of thought.

Contact Us

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Banyule City Council | City of Whittlesea | Nillumbik The Green Wedge Shire | YARRA PLENTY REGIONAL LIBRARY

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About us

Yarra Plenty Regional Library (YPRL) is a service that welcomes everyone. Our branches are safe spaces where communities can come together to meet, learn, create, and work. Every day, thousands of residents of the City of Banyule, the City of Whittlesea, and the Nillumbik Shire read a book, find the information they need, connect with friends and family, learn or discover, work or study, meet new people or simply relax — all at their local library.

Our libraries are open to everyone: from the very young attending their first Storytime session to the young-at-heart coming together to tell stories over a cup of tea. We see researchers and students sitting across the table from job seekers and entrepreneurs. We provide services to people from any culture or age group and at every stage in life. We are there for our community, making a difference to people's lives. We are proud of our service and of our exceptional staff who make it possible to support the communities of Banyule, Whittlesea, and Nillumbik.

Read on for the story of how we grew and innovated throughout the year, supporting our community through rising cost of living and a world of digital transformation. Whether helping users skill up to get their next job, or their first job, we are unwavering in our commitment to help our communities learn, grow and discover something new every day.

403,243 items in the collection and if they were all returned at the same time, we'd need over **8 kilometres of shelving** to hold them all!

Whittlesea

Nillumbik

Whittlesea

Donnybrook

Mernda

Doreen

Arthurs Creek

St Andrews

Epping North

Galada

Hurstbridge

Panton Hill

Yarrambat

Christmas Hills

Mill Park

Lalor

Thomastown

Diamond Creek

Diamond Valley

Kangaroo Ground

Watsonia

Eltham

Warrandyte North

Heidelberg West

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our Vision

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our Role

Facilitate
Connect
Listen
Build capability
Share and create stories

Programs and pathways

Information and resources

OUR PRIORITIES

OUR OUTCOMES

Mental, physical and social wellbeing

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

Participation and belonging

Wellbeing
Helping people and communities to better engage, understand and take positive actions to support their mental and physical health.

Our communities

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

Connect to local experts

Outreach

Organisational Strength
Investment in our staff, capacity and practice ensuring we are environmentally and socially responsible, thriving and capable and ready to adapt, learn and empower our communities.

People and capacity

Governance and technology

Resilient and thriving organisation

Environmental and social sustainability

4

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1 NO POVERTY	**2 ZERO HUNGER**	**3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**	**4 QUALITY EDUCATION**	**5 GENDER EQUALITY**	**6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION**
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY	**8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**	**9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE**	**10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES**	**11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES**	**12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION**
13 CLIMATE ACTION	**14 LIFE BELOW WATER**	**15 LIFE ON LAND**	**16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS**	**17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS**	

THE PRINCIPLES THAT SHAPE OUR SERVICE

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

We always work **together**

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

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

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

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

Message from the Chair

As the Chair of the Library Board, I am pleased to present the 2022–23 Yarra Plenty Regional Library (YPRL) Annual Report. I welcome Cr Natalie Duffy back to the Board as well as welcoming Cr Rick Garotti and Ms Agata Chmielewski. I thank the departing Board Members Ms Kate McCaughey, Cr Elizabeth Nealy, and Cr Frances Eyre for their wonderful contributions to the library.

The outcomes achieved by the service throughout this year are a testament to the work YPRL staff have done to reactivate library usage across Banyule, Nillumbik and Whittlesea. Libraries are vital community spaces and their existence aids in our recovery from the pandemic. In March, YPRL visitation surpassed pre-pandemic levels for the first time since the mandated shutdowns. This shows how highly the community values our public libraries as places where they can play, learn and grow.

Throughout the year, YPRL has continued to champion inclusion, diversity and tolerance, adding collection items and creating programming for everyone in the community. From Pride Month events, to the work on the *Accessibility Action Plan*, or the formal adoption of the *Uluru Statement from the Heart*, all of these actions make YPRL a safer, more welcoming space for users. And it is clear that the local community love their local libraries and the opportunities they provide.

It's great to see the ongoing investment in library spaces continuing to improve services. The wonderfully refurbished Eltham Library has now been completed, and the Galada Click & Collect Hub also had a glow-up with new signage and shelving increasing the number of items

available and showcasing the full services available through the library. Meanwhile, the library service saw a range of digital modernisation initiatives to ensure that technology and workspaces remain fit for purpose into the future. Rosanna staff worked diligently to pack up the old Rosanna Library and move into the wonderful Pop-up Library alternative that will be their contact point with the local community until the new library is built and opened.

Creating welcoming spaces is only part of the puzzle, with the activities and information available within the buildings being another crucial part. The Board has continued to be amazed at the incredible programming that comes out of the library service, delivering to the needs of the community. Activities like the Talking Together program, engaging with the local Somali Australian community, the Armchair Travel program, taking some of our senior citizens back to their hometowns through the power of virtual reality, and the work of all of our branches embedding First Nations activities and knowledge sharing into YPRL's School Holiday Programs.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank my fellow Board members and our Member Councils for the significant role they play in bringing such vital

library services to the community, and I thank the CEO and the 162 dedicated, hardworking library staff for their work and service. It is so wonderful to see such an engaged and collaborative team working so hard to deliver for the residents of Banyule, Nillumbik, and Whittlesea.

Cr Alison Champion
Chair

Message from the CEO

What a fantastic year we have had at YPRL, continuing to grow the library services and activities and watching our community respond by joining in and joining up – we now have 156,426 members across our network of branches and hubs, meaning we welcomed over 20,000 new library users in the last year.

At YPRL, we have been working hard to create inviting spaces where diverse members of the local community feel safe, respected and included. As part of our commitment to diversity and inclusion, we have embedded the principles of codesign within all aspects of our work. Utilising codesign principles means that we work with targeted communities, library users and staff in a collaborative process to collectively design, develop and refine library programs, spaces, collections and other services to better meet their unique needs. In 2022/23 we have delivered a range of programs and services with a basis in these principles, including the Talking Together outreach programming with the Somali Australian community in West Heidelberg, consultation with young people in developing safe, LGBTQIA+ inclusive creative spaces at Eltham Library, and embedding First Nations knowledge and culture into our School Holiday Programs. The community have responded to this in droves, with over 118,000 people attending the more than 4,600 events we held this year.

Our digital transformation is also well underway and as an organisation we are always working to improve the systems we use to ensure that we have the capability to provide library services now and into the future. We need these tools to streamline processes and become more productive and cost efficient, ensuring we provide the community with value for money library services as well as astounding customer service! The rollout of Microsoft 365 has provided us with more flexible and adaptive systems that enable greater collaboration, improve efficiency and security and increase information security and control. Additionally, the introduction of our new SharePoint-based intranet has facilitated seamless communication and expanded opportunities for information sharing among our staff.

I have tremendous gratitude for all of YPRL's staff and volunteers for the flexibility, dedication and commitment that they have shown over the last year. Special acknowledgment goes to the Board for their support in empowering YPRL to deliver forward-looking and adaptive library services. Equally deserving of appreciation are our customer service staff, who tirelessly collaborate to develop and deliver culturally safe, inclusive programs and services tailored to the diverse communities within our regions. Collectively, we've curated captivating programs, resources, and inviting spaces that, as you will see in this report, deeply resonate with every member of the local community.

Jane Cowell
CEO

YPRL Board Members 2022–2023

Cr Alison Champion

Cr Elizabeth Nealy

Cr Rick Garotti

Cr Karen Egan

Cr Frances Eyre

Cr Natalie Duffy

Ms Lydia Wilson

Ms Kate McCaughey

Mr Anthony Traill

Ms Agata Chmielewski

July 2022 – November 2022	November 2022 – February 2023	February 2023 – April 2023	April 2023 – June 2023
Banyule City Council			
Cr Alison Champion, Deputy Chair	Cr Alison Champion, Deputy Chair	Cr Alison Champion, Chair	Cr Alison Champion, Chair
Cr Elizabeth Nealy	Cr Rick Garotti	Cr Rick Garotti	Cr Rick Garotti
Ms Kath Brackett (ex officio) Director Community Programs	Ms Kath Brackett (ex officio) Director Community Programs	Ms Kath Brackett (ex officio) Director Community Programs	Ms Kath Brackett (ex officio) Director Community Programs
Nillumbik Shire Council			
Cr Karen Egan, Chair	Cr Karen Egan, Chair	Cr Karen Egan	Cr Karen Egan
Cr Frances Eyre	Cr Natalie Duffy	Cr Natalie Duffy	Cr Natalie Duffy
Ms Corrienne Nichols (ex officio) Director Communities	Ms Corrienne Nichols (ex officio) Director Communities	Ms Corrienne Nichols (ex officio) Director Communities	Ms Corrienne Nichols (ex officio) Director Communities
City of Whittlesea			
Administrator Lydia Wilson	Administrator Lydia Wilson	Administrator Lydia Wilson, Deputy Chair	Administrator Lydia Wilson, Deputy Chair
Ms Kate McCaughey Director Community Wellbeing	Ms Kate McCaughey Director Community Wellbeing	Mr Anthony Traill, Interim Director Community Wellbeing	Ms Agata Chmielewski Director Community Wellbeing
Mr Anthony Traill, (ex officio) Manager Active and Creative Communities	Mr Anthony Traill, (ex officio) Manager Active and Creative Communities	Ms Amelia Ryan (ex officio) Acting Manager Active and Creative Communities	Mr Anthony Traill, (ex officio) Manager Active and Creative Communities

Attendance at Scheduled and Special Board Meetings

Attendee	Meetings
Cr Alison Champion	5/6
Cr Elizabeth Nealy	2/2
Cr Rick Garotti	3/4
Cr Karen Egan	4/6
Cr Natalie Duffy	2/4

Attendee	Meetings
Cr Frances Eyre	2/2
Administrator Lydia Wilson	5/6
Ms Kate McCaughey	2/3
Mr Anthony Traill	0/1
Ms Agata Chmielewski	1/2

YPRL services at a glance

16,905 people opened the YPRL app 386,512 times – an average of 1,059 times a day – to place 98,961 reservations and renew 66,574 loans

Members spent more than 2,700 hours (about 3 and a half months) listening to Prince Harry read his memoir *Spare*

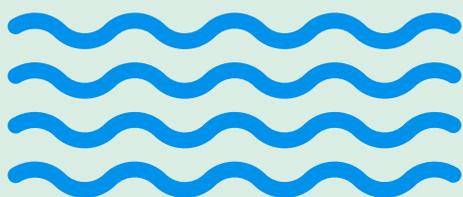2,693,546 loans – which means that on average each library user always has one item on loan from us

1,263,489 visitors to library branches which averages to 3 visits from each person across the local community

We held **4,605 events** with **118,289 participants**, averaging 12 events and **324 participants** every day

The tide rose for *The Rising Tide* **736 times**

Welcome
WE ARE
OPEN

Provided access to library branches for **571.5 hours each week** and to library services for a further **172 hours through the mobile library and hubs**

This year the Mobile Library **travelled more than 15,753 kilometres**, that's enough to drive around Australia on Highway 1!

DCI Vera Stanhope **cracked the case 3,214 times**

Year in review

Outcome: Wellbeing

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

Safe and inclusive spaces and programs are paramount to the way in which YPRL connects with local communities. We provide users with free and accessible information, knowledge and experts across key areas including health and wellbeing, early literary development, and reading for pleasure. This supports users mental health, skills development, and strengthens their capacity for better health outcomes in adult life. Public libraries across Victoria have a strategic focus on health and wellbeing, working towards the *Libraries for Health and Wellbeing: a strategic framework for Victorian public libraries towards 2024.*

Libraries play a key role in supporting the wellbeing of the community. From providing informal opportunities to connect with others, to programs like Chatty Cafe that are designed to reduce social isolation, the library is always a welcoming place. With experiences of loneliness rising in Australia, the role of the library in supporting social and mental health is vital. Many come along to programs and gain benefit from being in a group with others and just having a chat.

Priority: Mental, physical, and social wellbeing

Contribute to the wellbeing of our community through inclusive and safe programs, spaces, and opportunities, promoting health literacy, health and wellbeing programming and collections, and programs for those experiencing social isolation

Services snapshot

Indicator	Measure	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Loans	Number of Items borrowed	3,103,974	2,291,906	1,391,280	1,835,001	2,289,256
Program Attendance	Number of participants	176,926	132,941	30,555	72,299	118,289
Visitation Total	Door count	1,556,371	1,147,140	537,335	714,864	1,263,489
Opening Hours	Hours per week	537.5	537.5	628.0	723.0	741.0

Late night libraries

As part of the Libraries After Dark program, Mill Park, Thomastown and Watsonia libraries stay open until 10.00pm on selected days, offering a much-needed alternative option for those at risk of harm from gambling. Instead of turning out the lights and closing our doors to the community, these libraries transform into vibrant evening hubs that offer a diverse range of activities and provide safe spaces for people to meet and connect away from gaming venues.

Evening events are designed to encourage learning, relaxation and social engagement. Attendees engage in skill-building and creative experiences while also benefiting from extended access to traditional library resources. Our Libraries After Dark highlights include live music; night markets; art and craft sessions; cooking demonstrations; art therapy; and positive aging activities.

These warm, welcoming, and inclusive nights have helped to build social connection and combat loneliness, especially for vulnerable members of the local community.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

'The library is great for local networking and I have met a lot of similar-minded creatives through the after dark program. The library is always warm and welcoming — I particularly love that it provides a well-lit and safe "third space" at night.'

An inclusive Christmas experience

Since 2014, YPRL has been at the forefront of providing open and inclusive programming that embraces families with neurodiverse children. Among our most beloved initiatives is the Sensitive Santa program. Tailored to the specific needs of children on the autism spectrum, these sessions take place in a carefully managed library environment where families can enjoy a magical Christmas experience without unnecessary stressors like crowds and noise.

With Sensitive Santa, neurodiverse children and their families can feel confident that they have the support and understanding they need. YPRL engages with families to plan for each individual session to create a customised experience that meets their needs.

In December 2022, Sensitive Santa was expanded to a full weekend event at Mill Park Library, welcoming 22 families with neurodiverse children. Each family enjoyed a 20-minute session with Santa where volunteers from the Diamond Valley Photographic Society were able to capture hundreds of photos. For many, this was their very first photo taken with Santa.

Demand for the Sensitive Santa sessions is growing every year. Sessions provided in 2022 were drawn from more than 80 EOIs from families – a wonderful sign of the value of this program as well as an increasing community need.

'Sensitive Santa was such an amazing experience for the boys. Navigating life with an Autistic member of our household can be amazing but it is difficult and isolating when we can't attend things that our friends would. Thanks again for a wonderful experience, the boys had so much fun!'

Emily

Reading big over summer

Every summer, libraries across Victoria encourage regular engagement with library collections to keep children reading over their break from school. Aimed at primary school children, Public Libraries Victoria's Big Summer Read aims to overcome the 'summer slide' in reading levels over the school holidays to counteract potential literacy losses.

The 2022/23 Big Summer Read at YPRL drew 760 registrations, with more than 6,000 books read and borrowed as part of the program. We delivered a range of targeted family-friendly events in support of the summer reading challenge, including a special illustration workshop with the talented Zeno Sworder offered as a prize and enjoyed by 30 readers who took part in the challenge.

It was fantastic to see increased engagement with our junior collections across the board, but we saw particularly significant gains across all four libraries in the City of Whittlesea especially at Lalor and Thomastown.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

'It's a place where my child gets to meet new friends and I feel like I'm building a community for myself.'

Library overview

Indicator	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Population – Regional (ABS estimate)	418,510	426,963	433,698	422,629	427,062
Total members	141,641	118,443	120,899	135,957	156,426
Members as % of population	33.84%	27.00%	28.00%	32.17%	36.63%
Active users	74,875	64,518	53,113	56,439	67,243
Mobile Library locations	13	13	13	13	13
Collection items total	407,465	403,799	436,944	506,751	492,186
New Collection items	96,030	116,424	72,809	91,987	119,802
eCollection usage	473,749	549,086	587,028	547,682	539,419
Wi-Fi sessions	267,574	210,152	75,508	76,464	125,694
Public access internet sessions	191,218	131,834	37,998	42,941	87,682
Total eAccess	2,370,642	2,341,531	1,918,946	2,443,293	3,168,125
Programs total	7,726	4,383	1,613	2,209	4,605
Staff (EFT)	93.17	93.19	96.32	97.34	99.92

The youngest member to join was just **9 days old** when they signed up at the Mobile Library (Mernda stop)

'I never feel lonely when I walk through the door because there are options of reading a paper, doing some study or sitting having a warm cuppa with friendly, like minded people around and helpful staff.'

Readers met the **Bridgerton family** in Regency London **455 times**

The warmth of a good read

Warm Winter Read is a statewide winter reading program created by Public Libraries Victoria to inspire healthy reading habits and make reading a daily routine during the colder months.

At YPRL, we encouraged the community to get reading via the Beanstack reading tracking app, distribution of official Warm Winter Read bookmarks and other promotional items, a fantastic blogs series with cosy reading recommendations, and curated in-branch displays to inspire library visitors to take part. We were thrilled to see 2,700 readers participate and read as part of the program over the course of the nine-week campaign.


A crafty community

In November 2022, Watsonia Library and Mill Park Library played host to talented local makers and crafters at our Twilight Community Craft Markets. An array of small businesses – many proudly owned and operated by women – descended on our library spaces to showcase their creativity and skills in a vibrant community setting.

Market stalls were held by a diverse range of makers from enthusiastic teens to experienced adults, many of whom were engaging in first time testing of new products in an environment where they could hone their customer service skills.

Community organisations also took the chance to get involved, with the Country Women's Association, and members of library knitting groups lending their support to the market. Local businesses were generous in their support of the community events, providing everything from live music to catering.
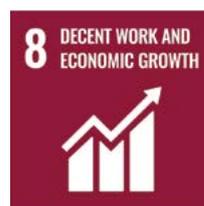
Community stories

Every day we hear amazing stories about the positive impact of our library services to the lives of users. The YPRL Community Storytelling project was developed to bring these stories to light and demonstrate the role and value of our libraries in a diverse community.

In mid-2022, library staff signed up for a training session led by the talented local storyteller Lara McKinley. The training encompassed various skills including story discovery, framework creation, effective interviewing techniques, photography, and quick editing.

Eager to put their skills to use, YPRL's newly trained storytellers embarked on a project for Library and Information Week 2022. They collected tales from a group of library users and shared these across YPRL's social media platforms, website and other channels. The community response was fantastic, particularly on Twitter, where the stories reached a large group of Twitter users and even caught the attention of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in the United Kingdom, sparking international interest.

These stories not only showcase the library's positive influence on individuals, but also emphasise the transformative role of libraries and their significance in fostering community, reducing loneliness and isolation and connecting library users with literature, art and culture.

Learning to live well

The Living Well in Lalor Expo was created to provide the local community with free advice and support on how to navigate cost-of-living pressures in a welcoming and inclusive setting. On Saturday 20 May 2023, Lalor Library offered an array of drop-in sessions which included health presentations, mortgage stress and financial service information, craft and exercise activities, a First Nations Storytime, and a range of wellness exhibitions.

Developed in partnership with U3A, DPV Health, City of Whittlesea, Innovation Youth Centre, and many local businesses, the Living Well in Lalor Expo was underpinned by codesign principles to ensure community needs and interests would be reflected in every session and presentation.

The expo attracted more than 750 attendees who happily borrowed from specially curated collections that were on display, and many kicked up their heels to join in a line dancing session too! As part of the Coats for Kindness program, 55 coats were also collected for donation to provide warm clothing to people in need.

'What a great day, I just smiled all day and forgot all about being lonely.'

Helen 73

Sensational seniors

Throughout October 2022, YPRL marked Seniors Month by hosting 39 events across the region. Highlights included a harp performance, landscape painting workshops, and a platform for lively chats and new friendships in a discussion group. We also hosted intergenerational Storytimes, offered in partnership with Nillumbik Positive Aging, Bunnings, healthAbility, Estia Health, and Apollo Parkways Preschool, and attracting participants ranging from 3 to 103 years old.

YPRL also partnered with Whittlesea Council and Victoria Police to roll out specialised life skills sessions which included lessons in scam awareness and a 'Healthier You' safety session with a crime prevention officer. Older people in the community were better equipped to navigate digital technologies after developing tech skills, attending smart phone help sessions and device fixes at our Repair Cafe.

Yiayia Next Door had **494 visitors** from the library

Pride on display

For Pride Month 2023, YPRL delivered a range of events to promote understanding, inclusivity, and acceptance, and create a welcoming space for all while highlighting the rich experiences and stories within the LGBTQIA+ community. This program included: a presentation by acclaimed author Will Kostakis sharing his insights into the LGBTQIA+ characters and themes present in his work, a Pride Weaving Workshop at Thomastown Library, a Pride Community Collaborative Art Project at Whittlesea Library, a Teen Pride Chill Zone to foster a sense of belonging and safety at Lalor Library, and a Pride Family Fun Afternoon promoting acceptance and celebrating diversity at Diamond Valley Library. We also hosted two Online Rainbow Storytimes with drag performer Frock Hudson, who read books by the many authors and publishers who reached out to offer the digital performance rights to YPRL in direct response to the move of our IDAHOBIT Rainbow Storytime to online.

Throughout the month, all library branches also offered Rainbow Shoelace Project bead kits for members of the LGBTQIA+ community and allies to wear on their shoelaces in a show of support. The program was well-received by attendees and provided a brilliant opportunity to reaffirm YPRL's commitment to fostering acceptance and inclusivity in the community.

Library usage

Location	Members	Loans	Reservations	Internet sessions	Wi-Fi connections
Diamond Valley	8,317	121,025	27,654	3,742	4,638
Eltham	20,822	258,958	57,042	10,102	19,879
Ivanhoe	16,757	239,183	60,866	16,254	47,461
Lalor	17,466	91,524	13,152	18,011	8,027
Mill Park	26,088	294,322	46,693	14,816	24,308
Rosanna	10,119	111,506	33,629	2,161	4,578
Thomastown	8,304	55,015	12,996	8,260	5,922
Watsonia	12,539	194,189	45,572	10,530	9,701
Whittlesea	3,551	39,121	9,452	2,278	1,980
Mobile Library	4,283	36,654	5,157		
Outreach Vehicle	1,026	11,208	2,285		
Digital Members	27,086	823,666			
Donnybrook		494	149		
Galada		5,665	1,902		
Hurstbridge Hub		6,726	3,837		

Over **half a million minutes of TV & Movies** streamed on Kanopy. That's the equivalent of a library member **watching their favourite show non-stop for the whole year!**

'Library is a important place for me when I felt lonely at home. When I just retired, I don't have any local friends. Since I visited library I met so many local people and became friends. I could also read magazines, newspapers, or have a cup of coffee in the library. It is a nice place to meet a friend as well.'

Priority: Connect to local experts

Work alongside experts to bring the best to our local communities by inviting, including, and hosting wellbeing partners within our spaces, and partnering with member councils to deliver better outcomes.

As librarians, we believe in quality information and the power of experts. Our programs, services, and spaces are informed by best practice, and we link the community to the best people to support their needs. This includes partnering with our three member councils to amplify their services, as well as working together with community partners to expand what we can offer.

Adding our voice

Reconciliation Week at YPRL was a powerful and enriching experience for the local communities, offering an opportunity to delve into shared histories, culture, and achievements, with a range of thoughtful events under the national theme: Be a Voice for Generations.

Throughout the week, First Nations Storytimes at Thomastown and Whittlesea libraries nurtured an appreciation for First Nation storytelling and traditions. The Family Storytime and First Nations children's play session at Ivanhoe Library, in partnership with Banyule City Council, further celebrated the local cultural heritage of First Peoples.

Emphasising the critical role of libraries in fostering dialogue, our Reconciliation Week program included an insightful event on the *Uluru Statement from the Heart*. Led by Yankunytjatjara and Wirangu woman Shelley Ware and Wotjobaluk woman Aunty Janine Coombs, the event shed light on the significance of the Statement for Aboriginal people and the broader Australian community.

At YPRL, we recognise the pivotal role libraries play in facilitating discussions around reconciliation by providing access to vital information and resources and creating culturally safe spaces. Reconciliation Week served as a testament to our commitment to building understanding and supporting reconciliation efforts within local communities.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

'The library hosts various cultural and artistic events such as lectures, exhibitions and performances. These events provide opportunities for people to be exposed to different cultures and art forms, enriching their lives.'

A festival for Booklovers

YPRL's annual Booklovers Festival, held in November, embraced a diverse program focused on self-expression, connection, and skill development with informative and engaging author talks and workshops tailored to the creative interests of the local community.

A standout event featured author Christos Tsiolkas and Public Libraries Victoria CEO Angela Savage in a captivating conversation at Ivanhoe Library. The pair shared the books that profoundly influenced them, discussed the crucial role of libraries and teachers in fostering a love for literacy and reading, and considered the intricacies of the creative process. The theatrette audience was buzzing with excitement at the session and left with a lengthy list of borrowing recommendations.

The Booklovers Festival provided a space for celebrating the magic of reading and writing as well as reaffirming the role of the library in the lives of established and aspiring authors.
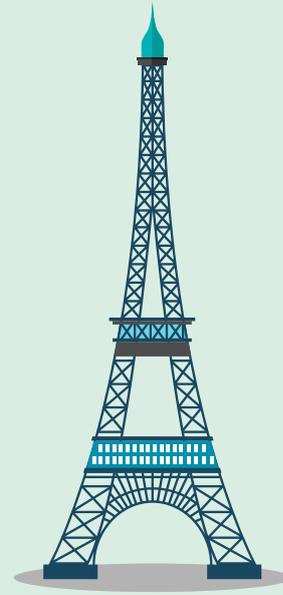
359 readers went in search of the *Paris Bookseller*

'My family and I love the library; it is a place for fun and learning. My daughter loves learning to code and my son loves reading to Carita and giving her treats. Both look forward to the library every week and feel right at home at Watsonia Library thanks to the wonderful staff.'

Putting a spotlight on Code Club

YPRL's Code Clubs are instrumental in encouraging young people to develop foundational knowledge of the technologies that play an enormous role in their lives. After noticing YPRL's work running Code Club online during lockdowns, the Telstra Foundation reached out to us, suggesting a partnership to develop a video to promote both Code Clubs generally and the support of the Telstra Foundation.

In July, the Telstra Foundation arranged for a camera crew to film an in-person coding session in action at Diamond Valley Library. YPRL staff members Orit Elijah and Jane Petryszyn led the session where participants were provided with Code Club t-shirts to wear for filming. YPRL CEO Jane Cowell also provided an interview detailing the reasons for

running Code Club and the history of the program at YPRL. In appreciation of everything that we do the Telstra Foundation gifted us a voucher to use to invest in updating our tech equipment.

The _final video_ featuring Diamond Valley Library has been used to promote the Telstra Foundation and their support of Code Clubs nationally.

Pop-up vaccinations

In July 2022, The Multicultural Awareness of Covid Immunisation (MACI) team from City of Whittlesea partnered with DPV Health and YPRL to deliver COVID-19 booster doses for community members in a series of pop-up sessions.

Feedback from the community indicated that visitors were pleased to have ready access to vaccinations in a familiar location. The sessions proved so popular that the partnership continued to deliver vaccination pop-ups on Tuesdays throughout August and September.

The pop-up was instrumental in improving access to vaccinations, and it had the dual effect of providing an opportunity for library users to reconnect with the service and reengage with their favourite programs in-branch.

> **'Mill Park Library was by far the most successful site in recent months for the COVID mobile vax model that was implemented across the municipality, consistently attracting double digit figures every week.'**
>
> MACI staff

Celebrating culture

Diamond Valley Library has proudly unveiled two artworks by renowned Wurundjeri and Yorta-Yorta Traditional artist Simone Thomson. A grant through the Nillumbik Community Fund assisted YPRL in commissioning the works. Ms Thomson wrote in her letter of support for the project that 'It is extremely important to have visual elements of Aboriginal Culture present in a place of knowledge and learning and to be accessible for the wider community. Users of the space will feel a sense of ownership to the art as they gain understanding of the Dreaming stories and their symbols. Aboriginal people who use the library will also feel a sense of belonging and inclusiveness and importantly – cultural safety.'

These pieces pay profound respect to the Wurundjeri Peoples and commemorate the region's millennia of history as a gathering site and can now be admired on the walls of Diamond Valley Library. Titled *'Bargoongagat Kyinandoo Wilam – Gather at the Clever Hut'*, the artist has paid tribute to the local area throughout the work.

Creative networking

On Tuesday 16 May 2023, Diamond Valley Library hosted the Creative Industries Networking Event: Good Art, Good Business, in partnership with the Nillumbik Economic Development and Tourism Team. The event provided a platform for local creatives to explore the ways in which the Nillumbik Creative Industries Team fosters creative entrepreneurship, in addition to highlighting promotional and practical opportunities both within the library and across the wider Nillumbik community.

The evening began with a Smoking Ceremony conducted by Uncle Bill before the unveiling of two artworks by Wurundjeri and Yorta-Yorta Traditional artist Simone Thomson. Following the launch of her artwork, Simone joined Lisa Radford, artist, writer, and Board Member for The National Association for the Visual Arts, and Tess Edwards Baldessin, founder and President of Baldessin Studio, on a panel where the three discussed their creative inspirations and experience establishing themselves as working artists.

The event had a fantastic turnout and provided invaluable networking opportunities for artists, emphasising the transformation of creative practices into successful businesses.
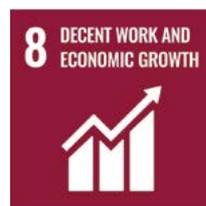
Outcome: Connection

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

Libraries are all about connection. Through our spaces, our programs, our partners, and our welcoming staff and volunteers, we create an environment of belonging where people of all ages and backgrounds can actively engage with each other. We connect people with books, ideas, diverse services, and with their local and wider communities. Through regular programs, drop in Maker Spaces, special events, and friendly chats with our staff, the library is somewhere that everybody can feel welcome, safe, and valued. Through our Mobile Library, our Community Hubs, and our outreach programming, that connection goes far beyond the walls of our library buildings, engaging with people where they are and delivering what they need. Our creativity, innovation, and partnership mindset has meant that we can get library programs out into more community locations.

Libraries are spaces where people belong. Our programs are inclusive, accessible, and community-driven, giving people opportunities to connect. They reflect the diverse community we serve. This year, people have returned to our spaces and our programs in ever-increasing numbers. Opportunities for connecting and belonging also come through volunteering, and we treasure our amazing team of volunteers who enable us to expand the reach of what we do.

Priority: Participation and belonging

Deliver places, spaces, and services that provide safe, accessible digital environments and programs, volunteering, and other opportunities to participate, and increased participation in our service.

Library membership

Location	Banyule	Murrindindi	Nillumbik	Out-Area	Whittlesea	Total
Diamond Valley	1,527	7	6,198	233	352	**8,317**
Eltham	2,470	26	16,991	998	359	**20,844**
Ivanhoe	14,405	5	157	1,904	286	**16,757**
Lalor	165	5	57	1,128	16,111	**17,466**
Mill Park	616	46	308	952	24,166	**26,088**
Rosanna	9,465	1	139	374	140	**10,119**
Thomastown	120	1	25	654	7,504	**8,304**
Watsonia	11,210	9	334	512	474	**12,539**
Whittlesea	334	82	41	114	2,980	**3,551**
Mobile Library	271	12	1,993	40	1,967	**4,283**
Home Library	20	0	7	0	19	**46**
Outreach Vehicle	277	1	276	2	470	**1,026**
Library Support Services	7,271	129	2,227	9,965	7,494	**27,086**
Total	**48,151**	**324**	**28,753**	**16,876**	**62,322**	156,426

156,426 library members – that is more than the number of people who attended the AFL Preliminary Finals in 2022 – **with 44,160 members borrowing a physical item this year** – that is more than **the population of Wodonga**

School holiday fun

YPRL's school holiday programs continue to thrive, evident in our strong registration numbers and impressive turnout. We are focussed on enhancing community access and aim to craft diverse offerings that engage the wide spectrum of families within the library community.

Throughout September our branches buzzed with activity, attracting families seeking entertaining and educational activities to make the most of the school break. All-day attractions like board games, giant chess, movies, and puzzles provided free enjoyment to participants, many contending with the rising cost-of-living.

STEAM programming took centre stage in January, featuring coding, augmented reality, and RoboGirls sessions alongside artistic activities like tie-dying and *Let's Make Art!*, presented in collaboration with the National Gallery of Victoria. Events

engaging with First Nations culture were offered at every branch with a focus around Indigenous Infusion, Indigenous Storytelling (run by the Cultural Infusion Foundation), or Indigenous plants.

Come April families flocked to our branches, taking part in more than 50 events catering to nearly 1,500 attendees. Highlights included an Indigenous dance and storytelling, escape rooms, boomerang throwing, and a digital programming jam. Our outreach extended to various community hubs, with school holiday sessions providing the opportunity to learn and connect.

Summer sensations

YPRL's Homegrown Summer is an annual regionwide initiative presented each January to build community engagement and social connections through a series of fun and interactive events. This year we delivered nineteen events, drawing community into our branches to connect with each other, support local businesses and artists, and borrow our collections. These events showcased local cuisine, offered gardening and food preparation insights, and presented live music.

Feedback highlighted the desire of our users to shift away from their screens and towards shared activities, strengthening connections by taking time out and enjoying activities as a community. Homegrown Summer is a fantastic summer celebration that kindled connections, nurtured creativity, and fortified the local community.

Thrifty Gardening inspired **411 readers to get outside**
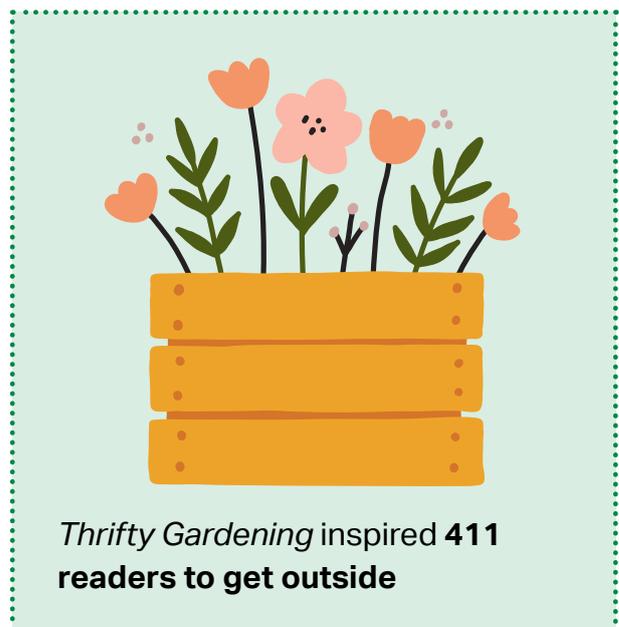
Engaging young minds

A collaboration between Banyule Youth Services and YPRL, Immersive Worlds was a program designed specifically to encourage young people to return to the library by creating opportunities to connect. Held at Ivanhoe Library, Immersive Worlds blended virtual reality experiences, Dungeons & Dragons sessions, and an escape room event, along with various other games. It drew an impressive attendance with nearly sixty young people ranging in ages from 12 to 22 years-old joining in. Many of those attending were first-time library visitors.

Immersive Worlds created space for young people to explore diverse interests and meet new friends in a safe and social setting, reaffirming the library as an inviting hub for exploration and positive interaction. It was fantastic to observe groups form and exchange contact information, emphasising the event's success in forging new connections amongst young people who might otherwise experience isolation.

Youth takeover Mill Park Library

Following on from the success of a series of Youth Takeover Nights at Mill Park Library, the City of Whittlesea Youth Services Baseline team and Mill Park Library joined forces to roll out a special Baseline 'Battle of the Brains' event.

Held as part of the Baseline School Holiday Program, the event drew in attendance from 28 young people to take part in an exciting trivia contest on the beautiful outdoor deck area. A steady supply of slushies from a slushie machine fuelled the trivia session and added fun to the occasion.

Baseline Youth Development Officer Lisa Wellington shared her tremendous feedback: 'The event was so well attended, and all the young people enjoyed themselves, we could not have run that event and had such a fantastic turn out without [YPRL] support.'
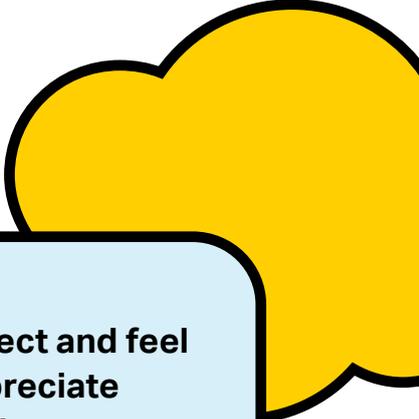
'A place to connect and feel safe. I really appreciate the rainbow stickers on the door — it lets me know that our 2-mum family is welcome at storytime.'

The AMWF 2022 theme 'Our Table' sought to discover the role of diverse writers in Australian publishing and to amplify the voices of Muslim writers as they explore identity and personal experience. As part of the festival, Lalor Library hosted a fantastic family day that showcased Muslim children's writers Nazeem Hussain, Ozge Sevindik Alkan and Huda Hayek, creating an opportunity for writers, publishers, illustrators and community to feel welcome, and to explore and promote literacy and writing for young children.

Australian Muslim Writers Festival

In October 2022, YPRL partnered with the Right Pen Collective, a local group whose mission is to connect, support and inspire Australian Muslim writers. The partnership saw Lalor Library act as a satellite venue for the Australian Muslim Writers Festival (AMWF), hosting a schedule of fantastic events for attendees of all ages. Offering a range of creative workshops, the Festival invited Australian Muslims and people from all backgrounds to share their passion for storytelling.

'It was wonderful to see the children so excited and enjoying themselves but what is more valuable is seeing the Muslim writers of the future and them seeing themselves represented here today in the authors who are sharing their stories with them.'

Participating author

A real-time response to cost-of-living concerns

Continuing our commitment to the community, a diverse and ever-evolving series of events and activities have been introduced across YPRL to support the community with information and advice to assist in the cost-of-living crisis over the last year.

Driven by community feedback, YPRL staff have rolled out tailored events on an ongoing basis to encourage the use of our library services and collections as a cost-saving measure, in addition to providing education in priority areas like cooking, energy saving, sustainability, entertainment and keeping active.

Events have included sessions on saving at the supermarket and basic car maintenance, health talks and cooking demonstrations using the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden, as well as resume building and clothes mending workshops.

YPRL's cost-of-living sessions demonstrate our commitment to listening to the local community and responding to needs as they are identified, to provide relevant and meaningful support to library users.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

'Over the last year my rent has increased so much, the cost of living has gone up and it's come to the point where I can't afford the basics. A while ago I read in a council flyer that the library has free internet. It's such a beautiful place and the staff are always so welcoming.'

Bev, retired library user

Recognising our volunteers

YPRL volunteers play a pivotal role in delivering our rich array of programs and events, an offering that would not be possible without the generous contributions of a diverse group of individuals. Our volunteers are instrumental in some of our most loved programs, from social connection through our Chatty Cafe, to skill-building at Tech Help, Chess Club and Line Dancing sessions.

The unwavering support of our volunteers towards both our staff and the community is instrumental in delivering the meaningful programming that is core to what libraries do. To our invaluable volunteers: we recognise and appreciate your dedication and effort in fostering positive connections in the community and supporting lifelong learning at YPRL.

Soo Nickels Celebrating 20 Years
Soo Nickels is a proud wife, mother, and soon-to-be grandmother, with a legendary status as an intrepid traveller and adventurer. She is also an avid reader, community supporter and library volunteer with YPRL. Soo first volunteered with us in 2003, when she started helping out with our Home Library Service before moving into assisting staff and users in branches.

YPRL is immensely grateful for Soo's dedication to our library and her two decades of making meaningful connections and supporting the YPRL community through change and challenges.

Priority: Outreach

Look beyond our existing places to build strong links with local communities, engage with youth, CALD, and First Nations communities, and explore and test colocation and integration of services.

You don't need to be in our library buildings to access library services or programs. Online programming and our eLibrary means that more of the community can engage with us from the comfort of their own homes, while the Home Library Service offers a valuable lifeline in delivering print books and magazines to our house-bound patrons. Our outreach programming continues to expand all over the community, from storytimes in different locations, to school holiday events, festivals, and visits to nursing homes, kinders, schools, and shopping centres.

Our communities spent **1,201 hours learning new things** with LinkedIn Learning

'The services a library provides is crucial for our communities. It helps people to connect in several ways. It is great for those who are vulnerable within our communities. '

Expanding our reach

YPRL's network of Click & Collect Hubs extends our reach into more locations to provide better access to physical collections for those who may not live near a library branch.

Hurstbridge Hub has been a fantastically successful site of community activation and it continues to grow. Our Hurstbridge Hub-based library users can return items, collect holds, as well as browse and borrow from a curated collection of books and resources. YPRL also delivers weekly storytime sessions and school holiday programming at the hub, with support from staff at Eltham and Diamond Valley libraries.

Donnybrook Hub, supported by Whittlesea Library, is another site of growing community engagement – evident in the strong attendance at school holiday programs delivered at the site. Visitors to the Shared Cup Cafe are enthusiastic borrowers from the hub's collection. YPRL staff run regular Storytimes and the attendance from first-time families is a sure sign of the need to support early years literacy in the area.

Galada Hub has become a spot for locals to meet, borrow and engage with library programs including Storytime, school holiday activities and a Conversation Cafe pilot. Approximately 1,300 children have attended Galada Storytimes over the last year and a small refurbishment has allowed a doubling of the collection which now includes Book Express and an extended children's section which is well loved by the onsite kindergarten. Galada is supported by Thomastown and Lalor, with wonderful support from council's Community and Activity Centre staff.

Library on wheels

YPRL's Mobile Library is on the road five days a week, 46 weeks a year. Making 13 stops at 12 locations, it has welcomed nearly 24,000 visitors this year. Mobile Library users have borrowed over 36,000 items and more than 400 new members have signed up at stops.

The Mobile Library team is essential to our outreach, regularly delivering to 40 kindergartens, daycare centres, schools and community groups. At any one time, 1,400 Mobile Library items will be in the hands of the local community.

During Eltham's closure in June 2023, the Mobile Library received additional outreach programming support and offered storytimes. Dozens of children joined in and loved the chance to enjoy picture books together. The Mobile Library serves as a dynamic regional hub, with a dedicated team, personalised services and outreach programming for the community.

'The Mobile Library means being met with warm and friendly greetings by lovely staff who always make the time to chat and learn my interests, whilst also being kind enough to keep an eye out for and reserve any books that they think my children or I may enjoy.'

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Social media

Platform	2021/22	2022/23	Growth
eNewsletter	50,857	58,315	14.66%
Facebook	6,893	7,269	5.45%
Instagram	3,584	3,923	9.46%
X (formerly known as Twitter)	2,352	2,326	-1.11%
LinkedIn	848	958	12.97%
Total	**64,534**	**72,791**	**12.79%**

Digital interactions

Platform	2021/22	2022/23	Growth
Digital program engagement	3,688	1,076	-70.82%
Website	1,364,675	1,613,496	18.23%
Online catalogue	367,902	415,322	12.89%
YPRL app	283,917	386,512	36.14%
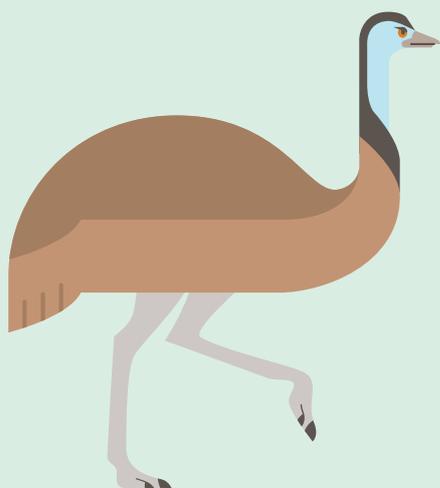
10 emus is the most spotted by Mobile Library staff in a single day!

'My experiences are steeped in nostalgia and borrowing from the Donnybrook pop-up helps me stay connected to a more simple way of life I had forgotten. I've returned to borrowing books later in life for Sustainability reasons and am so grateful to have access to these resources in the outer reaches of Melbourne.'

Using Storytime as outreach

YPRL has committed to running outreach Storytimes in key locations to maintain community connection and our early literacy focus during the development of the new Rosanna Library. We have partnered with Banyule City Council and Kids First to deliver weekly Storytimes at Banyule Community Health, Macleod Community Hall, and Bellfield Community Hub. Storytime attendance is increasing each week and we are receiving fantastic feedback from families delighted to still have Storytime sessions near home.

'It's fantastic to have a Storytime here in Macleod! I have a really lovely half day out with my two children now. We are able to have a play on the playground, watch some trains, and come to Storytime.'

Macleod Storytime attendee
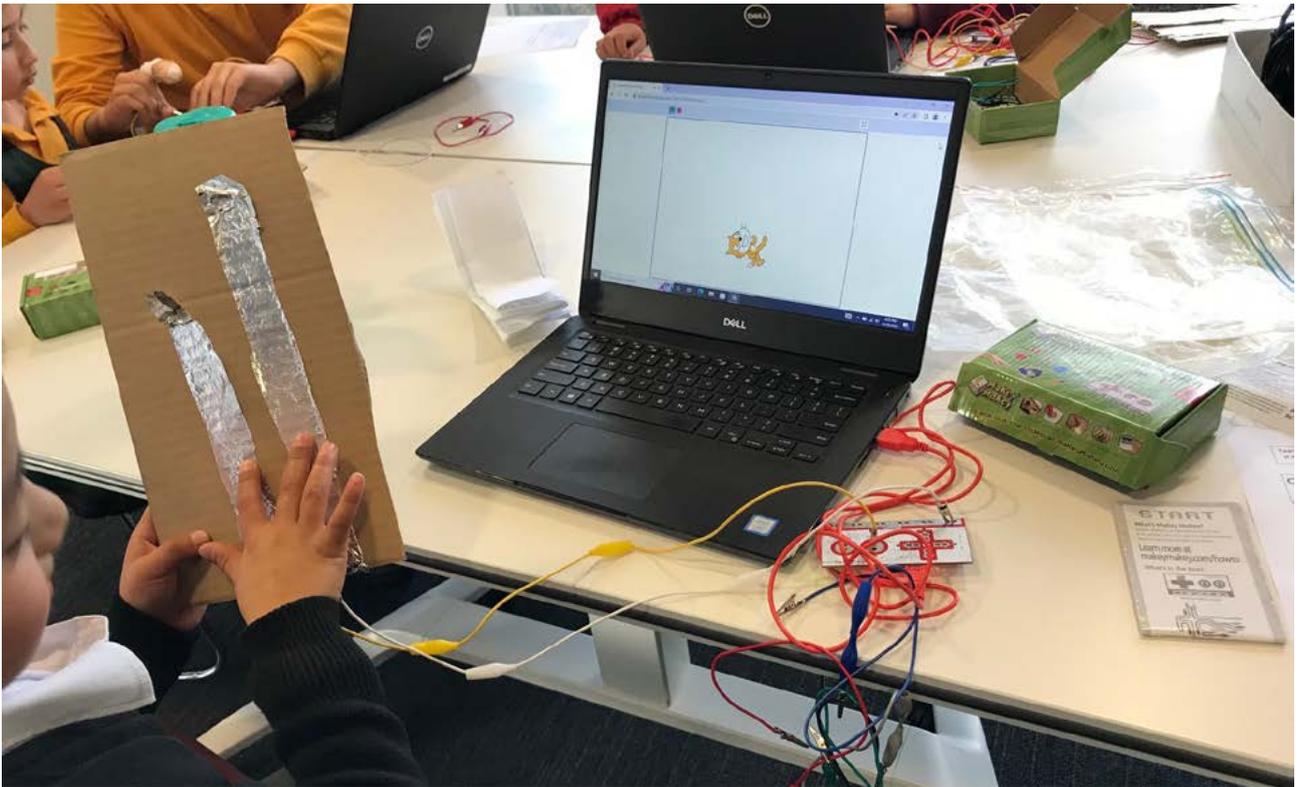
National Science Week

In August 2022 YPRL celebrated National Science Week, hosting sixteen events delivered over the course of a fortnight. More than 330 attendees participated in the fun and educational sessions, with some travelling across the region for the occasion.

Highlights included the Science Discovery Dome Mobile Planetarium, coding sessions, Minecraft, and events featuring kaleidoscopes and optical illusions. Beyond cultivating scientific curiosity and an interest in technology, our Science Week events provided a warm and welcoming space for families to bond while discovering fantastic STEAM collections and programs.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

'I moved into the area to look after my elderly father eight years ago. As a carer I had little time for myself and was feeling isolated and down. My sister suggested joining the library and attending some of the activities. I joined two groups (Chat & Connect and a Walking group) that I am still with to this day. I look forward to these activities every week. I can't imagine life without them.'

Home services lifeline

YPRL's Home Library Service (HLS) has bounced back post-lockdown. Over the last year, more than 6,000 loans have been provided to housebound and low-mobility library users. We have streamlined onboarding process for new Home Library users and volunteers to ensure we are able to provide the best services to our HLS users.

Our HLS is a critical service providing a vital lifeline to the world of literature, film, culture and current affairs. Housebound and low-mobility users are at a higher risk of social isolation, and the connection created between clients and volunteers through the HLS reduces loneliness.

For one widowed client, the HLS is life changing: 'I would be lost without it.' Our HLS volunteers value the experience too: 'I find it really rewarding enabling people to continue their love of reading.'

YPRL's HLS is expanding to meet the rising community need. We will partner to build ongoing capacity within the service so that we can continue to enrich the lives of those who access our services from home.

Grants received

Name of Grant	Funding body	Purpose	Amount received
JumpStart	VicHealth	Codesigned healthy eating & gardening workshops for youth	$12,500.00
Digital Literacy for Seniors	Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions	Providing digital literacy programming for seniors	$91,216.00
			$103,716.00

'The Outreach Van is just a delight! Having it come right into our village is fantastic and the staff are a great help 👍.'

Outcome: Knowledge and learning

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

Through our collections, programs, and partnerships, YPRL supports the community to learn and grow. We are a community of readers, with both print and digital loans increasing this year. Borrowing books remains one of the main reasons that our members visit library branches, with both leisure reading and knowledge seeking highly valued. YPRL provides one of the largest and most up-to-date collections in Victoria, with more than 400,000 books and 20+ Digital Library platforms to support our community to learn, create, and live well.

Another key reason people visit our libraries is to engage in our wide variety of events and programs. From our youngest attendees of Baby Storytime through to our oldest attendees of social chat groups, our programming offers something for everyone. YPRL programs are creative, innovative, and responsive to community needs.

Priority: Programs and pathways

Develop programs and pathways that focus on partnerships for youth capacity building, pathways to employment, community resilience, and community-led programming and collections.

Library programs educate, entertain, inspire, and connect. Our codesign approach to programming puts community needs at the centre of all we do. We partner with others and collaborate to make the most of everything we have. From our daily Storytimes, providing quality early years education to families, through to specialised programming such as Family History Month and Maker Space inductions, we foster creativity and curiosity, build skills, and encourage innovation.

Nurturing literacy and inclusion

YPRL Storytimes continue to captivate children, families and carers, inspiring a love of reading, words and language. Delivered to more than 1,400 people each week, our early years literacy programs offer welcoming and enjoyable opportunities to gather, read, learn, sing and create. Families and carers are supported to build knowledge, skills and confidence to nurture children's reading and language development beyond the library.

Storytimes reflect the diverse communities YPRL serves, creating inclusive opportunities to experience various languages, cultures, traditions and perspectives. In 2022–23 our regular Storytimes included First Nations, bilingual and intergenerational sessions, with feature programs celebrating significant dates such as Reconciliation Week, IDAHOBIT, Pride Month and NAIDOC Week.

Storytimes are offered across all YPRL branches, with staff regularly delivering outreach sessions at our library hubs, community locations, early childhood services and schools. Select Storytimes and early years programming features special guests in collaboration with community partners such as local health services and our member Councils.

Delivered 32 Storytime sessions each week to an average of 1,465 people
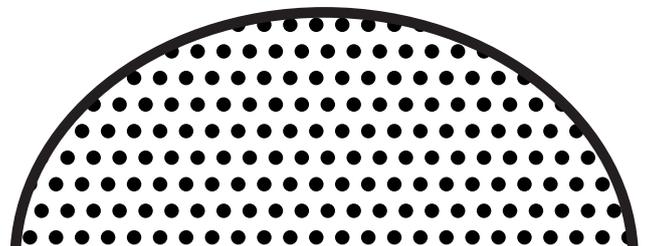
Storytime sessions

Storytimes	Sessions	Attendance
Diamond Valley	177	8,231
Eltham	294	17,083
Ivanhoe	196	12,204
Lalor	199	5,276
Mill Park	211	11,986
Rosanna	176	6,477
Thomastown	126	3,166
Watsonia	178	8,787
Whittlesea	145	2,909
Online	3	70
Total	**1,705**	**76,189**

'For the past 7 years my kids and I have visited Whittlesea Library weekly. It has such lovely staff, storytime is wonderful for fostering in my kids a real enthusiasm for books, and it's here that I'm connected with other local events via flyers on the wall.'
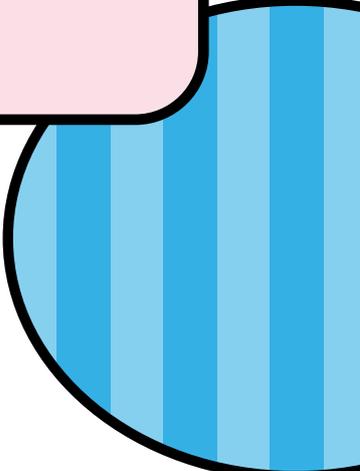
National Simultaneous Storytime

National Simultaneous Storytime (NSS) in an engaging annual event that aims to promote the value of reading and literacy. Each year highlights a picture book created by an Australian author and illustrator to be read simultaneously to children across the country.

In 2023, more than 2 million children across Australia sat down to listen to the *The Speedy Sloth* written by Rebecca Young and illustrated by Heath McKenzie. YPRL invited special guest readers for each of our NSS sessions to read the book, from Banyule City Cr Alison Champion and Cr Tom Melican; from City of Whittlesea Administrator Lydia Wilson, and staff Janine Morgan, Amelia Ryan, Anthony Traill; and from Nillumbik Shire Mayor Cr Ben Ramcharan and Cr Natalie Duffy.

YPRL's NSS activities focussed on reading, literacy, wellbeing, connectedness, and belonging. YPRL invited local primary schools and kindergartens to visit our libraries to enjoy *The Speedy Sloth* and other stories, choose some books to take home, and participate in sloth-themed activities. NSS was a fantastic event highlighting the joy of reading in a social setting.

Insights into family history

Each year, our Family History Month program offers opportunities for family history researchers and others interested in the past to engage in a series of events to help get started or sharpen skills. Family History Month events provide attendees with a fascinating journey into their ancestral past, fostering connections, uncovering stories, and enriching understanding.

YPRL partnered with the University of Tasmania's Family History Department and Melbourne Dead Persons Society to present Family History Month events including talks by authors and research experts; a cemetery tour; opportunities to workshop research challenges; an introduction to family research session; digital story creation lessons; photo digitisation sessions; and DIY family 'food memory' bookmaking. Our most popular sessions were Celebrating 150 Years of State Schooling, Writing Migrant Family History and No Ordinary Convict.

Havens of innovation

We take pride in our diverse Maker Spaces across our library branches and Council areas, each offering unique avenues for creativity, entrepreneurship, and learning.

Diamond Valley Library's garden Maker Space nurtures connection, wellbeing, and knowledge through programs focused on sustainability and garden play. YPRL has partnered with The Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation to deliver a monthly program where children use produce from the garden to learn about healthy eating.

Thomastown Library's textile Maker Space is a haven for crafters and now provides borrowing access to sewing and overlocker machines. With a lending library that offers frame looms, printmaking gear, and tool boxes, it serves as a vibrant creative space where YPRL and our partners have delivered events such as lantern making, and hosted expert-led clothes mending workshops.

Ivanhoe Library's design Maker Space empowers self-directed tech creativity via 3D printing, laser cutting, and Cricut – a smart cutting device controlled by an app. This year, more than 150 new participants completed safety inductions and started exploring 3D printing and laser cutting.

We are committed to maintaining cutting-edge Maker Spaces to create hubs of innovation and learning. Staff are currently investigating the future of the new Rosanna Library Maker Space and looking at how to best meet community need in the Mill Park Maker Space to ensure we're delivering for our community now, and into the future.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

'At your libraries I have learned how to design and make earrings on a fancy new printer, I have enhanced my understanding of botany, explored the world, and discovered new life skills that offer hope I may be able to work or study again.'

All YPRL events

|	Events			Participants		
Location	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Banyule	305	693	1457	6,123	13,636	40,894
Nillumbik	138	379	1007	3,708	12,734	33,972
Whittlesea	398	756	2120	7,256	40,111	42,769
Online	881	381	21	14,458	5,818	654
Total	**1,722**	**2,209**	**4,605**	**31,545**	**72,299**	**118,289**

Gathering for Children's Day

On 4 August 2022, the local community came together at Thomastown Library to connect, share, yarn, and support each other. We celebrated the day by connecting with culture and country, celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children growing up strong, safe and knowing their cultural traditions.

Thomastown welcomed and celebrated several elders on the day who shared their stories, culture and country. This included a yarn with Uncle John Baxter on Wominjeka, the Wurundjeri word, it's meaning and significance. We also collaborated with community, elders and partners on reflecting on the SNAICC Creating Change through Partnerships audit tool, working together on how to best promote the principles of 'Proud in Culture, Strong in Spirit', which was the theme for the event.

National Aboriginal & Children's Day held a unique significance for YPRL, the event established cultural underpinnings, engaged and welcomed the community. Engaged and welcomed community who may not typically use our libraries. Our intention is to further develop and expand upon this experience as we look ahead to next year.

YPRL's celebration of National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day was held in partnership with local First Nations Community, Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC), Victorian Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS), Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Association (VACCA), Yarn Strong Sister, the Victorian Government *Best Start* initiative, Thomastown Neighbourhood House, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Bubup Wilam Aboriginal Child & Family Centre Incorporated, Playgroup Victoria and other organisations.
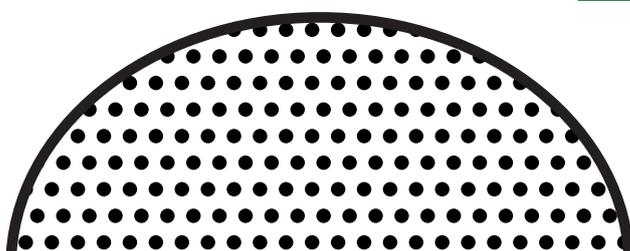
Advocating for community employment opportunities

YPRL has partnered with Job Advocates Australia to provide regular pop-up sessions in our libraries, supporting jobseekers across the region with advice on local employment opportunities, employment support, and low or no-cost education and training. Job Advocates Australia also share information and tips about getting a job, including resume refreshes, and connects attendees with additional services such as housing support or counselling.

The Job Advocates Program received promotion in our Storytimes and throughout our libraries to highlight the employment and training opportunities available to support people re-entering the workforce.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Priority: Information and resources

Build on our existing collections, assets, and services through investment in digital resources, collections, and assets; resources that are reflective of our diverse communities; supporting local creatives; early years, adult, and digital literacy.

Quality and reliable information is a touchstone of library services. Our collections remain one of the key drawcards in our spaces, as people visit every day to read, learn, discover, relax, and connect with information. This year, we worked hard to align our collection with local needs and reviewed our community language collections to best reflect who we are. We have had exciting upgrades and additions to our spaces, including a new reading retreat at Greensborough Plaza, and have focussed on making collections appealing and simple to browse.

There were **1,833,110 hours of eAudiobooks listened to**… think of how many daily commutes or vacuuming sessions that is!

Our collections

In the past year, our collections made their way into the hands and onto the screens of community members 2,693,546 times as they continue to delight, empower, and inform. This represents a 47% increase in loans throughout 2022–23 compared to the previous year, as usage continues to rebound after the pandemic. Our updated *Collection Development Policy* ensures our collections are responsive to community needs, support local creatives, celebrate First Nations culture, and reflect and support our diverse communities. Nine out of ten titles suggested for purchase were acquired by the library as community driven acquisitions continue to build dynamic physical and digital collections to meet the needs of the community.

We added more than 30 items to our local history collections, including *Whittlesea's Dark Past* by Mill Park Library's very own Jack Chan, a publication that was funded by a Local History Grants Program. More than 500 items were also added to our Digital Archives, including the Mary Zhou collection of drawings of local landmarks in the City of Banyule; contemporary photos taken as part of the Whittlesea Township walking map project; community newsletters; and YPRL organisational archives.

Loans from our eLibrary reached another all-time high, now accounting for more than 15% of our total collection loans and rounding out our eighth year of consecutive digital loan growth. eAudiobooks remain our strongest trending format, allowing our users to relish the convenience of enjoying a book on the move. We also saw significant growth across our Children's digital platforms, with StoryBox Library and LOTE4Kids both rising in usage by over 50%.

Our priorities for the digital collection this year were increasing breadth, reducing the wait time for popular titles, and a stronger focus on community driven acquisitions. We purchased more copies than ever before of in demand titles to reduce the average wait time for holds by 88%.

Collection statistics

Items	2021/22	2022/23
Total physical Items	**353,384**	**342,500**
Banyule	123,104	111,197
Whittlesea	149,591	151,117
Nillumbik	80,689	80,186
Total digital Items	**60,412**	**60,743**
eBooks	40,746	39,011
eAudio	16,985	19,005
eMags	2,681	2,727
Total collection (physical and digital)	**413,796**	**403,243**

Loans	2021/22	2022/23
Total loans of physical items	**1,835,002**	**2,289,237**
Banyule	686,193	835,381
Whittlesea	606,230	776,644
Nillumbik	542,579	677,212
Total loans of digital items	**396,747**	**404,309**
eBooks	153,052	149,394
eAudio	168,133	183,311
eMags	75,562	71,604
Total loans (physical and digital)	**2,231,749**	**2,693,546**

Turnover	2021/22	2022/23
Turnover all items	**5.4**	**6.7**
Phyisical Items	5.2	6.7
Banyule	5.6	7.5
Whittlesea	4.1	5.1
Nillumbik	6.7	8.4
Digital Items	6.6	6.7

Purchases	2021/22	2022/23
New items	**92,227**	**93,189**
Banyule	32,818	37,284
Whittlesea	37,440	27,271
Nillumbik	21,969	28,634

Introducing a braille collection

YPRL is dedicated to responding to the diverse needs of our community. We know it is incredibly important for children to have access to books and have committed to adding and growing a braille collection with 34 picturebook titles added this year so that readers with vision impairment can enjoy stories from our collection. These titles were also read at Storytimes to increase community awareness and introduce all children to braille reading. We want to ensure that every child can engage with our collections and develop a love for reading.

Braille books employ a tactile writing system using a series of raised dots on pages to represent letters, numbers and punctuation. Children's braille picture books contain images along with both braille and lettering for the sighted, offering a wonderful way for sighted and visually impaired readers to enjoy books together.

The foundations of early literacy depend upon an early introduction to reading. Holding a book and sharing a moment with caregivers strengthens bonds and initiates familiarity with language, spelling and punctuation, contributing significantly to a child's developmental journey.

The role of reading is pivotal in children's learning and development, and braille books can help children with impaired vision to learn and develop in a format tailored to their needs. We are committed to growing this collection to ensure that all our library families can enjoy reading together.

More sought-after titles

YPRL's popular Book Express collection provide a bookstore experience in our libraries, allowing visitors to browse sought-after titles and blockbuster releases to borrow right away. Dedicated Book Express shelving originally featured at the entrances of Mill Park, Eltham, Watsonia and Ivanhoe libraries. In the last year this was expanded to all branches after a pop-up Book Express trial during the 2022 Warm Winter Read campaign indicated that the community wanted this trending collection to be available at all of our libraries.

The Book Express collection looks to bestseller lists with a 'no holds: no waiting' approach. We have made sure to refine and optimise our selection processes to tailor available titles to the needs of the local communities and strengthen the breadth of this collection.

Book Express titles are borrowed an average of 4.3 times across a three-month period. With a three-week loan, the Book Express collection is borrowed at a very fast pace! In total, Book Express titles were borrowed 12,862 times in 2022–23. As an extremely popular feature of our collection that drives foot traffic in our physical libraries, we are committed to offering this option to YPRL readers on an ongoing basis.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Expanding our eLibrary

Use of YPRL's digital collections is growing and there is an appetite in the community for an expanded offering in this space. This year, we have increased the arts and culture as well as language learning options for our library users.

Four new digital resources were added to YPRL's eLibrary including Craftsy – a database containing over 1,400 instructional videos for creative hobbies; Qello – a streaming platform containing the world's largest collection of live concerts and music documentaries; Classica – a streaming platform featuring recordings of classical music concerts, opera and ballet; and Clear Pronunciation – a library of video tutorials for English learners of all levels to introduce the sounds of Australian English.

YPRL will keep seeking opportunities to expand our popular eLibrary with digital collections and platforms that meet the needs of our diverse community by increasing opportunities to learn, connect, and be entertained.

Finding the facts

YPRL was the first library in Victoria to offer free access to *The New York Times*, an essential daily news source with a reputation for ethical, thoughtful, high-quality journalism. Our library users have unlimited onsite access to *The New York Times* when connected to library Wi-Fi, and can access from home with an unlimited renewable 24-hour subscription token.

Libraries play a vital role in offering dependable resources for digital literacy, teaching source reliability assessment, and countering misinformation. Offering free access to the award-winning journalism of *The New York Times* is a fantastic way to build toward the achievement of these learning outcomes.

Expanding in-language collections

This year, we surveyed our Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) community in ten community languages to find out which of our language collections they currently access, what they would like to see more of in those collections, and if they would like more expansive digital collections in their language.

We heard from more than 220 library users, with the general themes across all community language groups requesting more bilingual books for children; more bestselling fiction titles; and more adult nonfiction books on popular topics like psychology and cooking.

As a result, we added 4,500 eBooks and eAudiobooks in the top 8 community languages spoken in our region to our eLibrary, and feedback from survey participants fed directly into our 2023–24 physical collection acquisition specifications.

Library visitation

Location	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	% Change
Diamond Valley	110,161	78,924	22,219	32,570	67,068	105.92%
Eltham	267,087	190,181	104,138	131,349	195,911	49.15%
Ivanhoe	164,039	122,938	66,062	155,262	295,509	90.33%
Lalor	298,611	207,459	84,662	92,455	168,923	82.71%
Mill Park	161,134	130,499	65,508	100,247	173,133	72.71%
Rosanna	128,847	111,096	67,692	59,596	73,629	23.55%
Thomastown	144,051	103,684	43,257	43,245	102,484	136.98%
Watsonia	197,435	141,359	62,446	66,481	133,888	101.39%
Whittlesea	49,962	35,942	21,351	23,132	42,852	85.25%
Mobile Library	35,044	25,058	18,880	10,527	23,976	127.76%
Total Visits	1,556,371	1,147,140	556,215	714,864	1,277,373	78.69%

Eltham Library's revamp

In March 2023, Eltham Library bid farewell to old, not-so-faithful book sorter Bessie, which had returned and sorted the collections circulating through Eltham for the last 10 years. In Bessie's stead, staff welcomed our sleek, state-of-the-art new book sorter, quickly dubbing it 'The Big Labookski, AKA The Dude.'

The new, improved and smaller book sorter is the little engine that can! This Australian made machine was even built with a local touch, with an Eltham resident and library user contributing their electronic engineering expertise to its design. This machine can process as many books as can be returned at one time and provides much excitement as library users of all ages watch their returns on the journey along the conveyor belt and into the return trolleys. Eltham staff and patrons alike have welcomed this new addition to the team, and appreciate its role in easing a significant manual handling task.

YPRL also undertook extensive internal renovations in June 2023, with the changes to be unveiled in July 2023. Enhancements include a redesigned information desk, upgraded furnishings in the learning lounge, young adult and community zones, improved study spaces, and engaging collection spotlights highlighting the Eltham community's most borrowed books. Improvements to Eltham Library's spaces will create a more usable and inviting environment for library users to connect, learn, and thrive.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Rosanna Library's new chapter

In March, Rosanna Library closed its doors in preparation for construction of the new library.

Built in the early 1970s, Rosanna Library has been a much-loved place for learning and connection but, as Rosanna has grown and changed, so have the needs of the community. In the weeks leading up to the original library's closure, library users engaged in a series of events created to capture memories and experiences of the Rosanna Library.

In a partnership with Woolworths, Banyule City Council will deliver a new Rosanna library – a proposed three storey, 1600sqm building incorporating indoor and outdoor spaces in the heart of Rosanna. The new space will expand the children's area and offer co-working and study spaces, community meeting rooms, quiet zones, a podcasting and recording studio, Maternal Child Health services and the Banyule Toy Library.

YPRL has partnered with Banyule City Council to deliver the Rosanna Library Pop-up just a few minutes' walk away from the original library to serve library users. The Rosanna Library Pop-up services include: Click & Collect, curated collection, printing and photocopying services, newspapers, computer access and Wi-Fi. Since opening, the pop-up has received more than 10,000 visitors and loaned over 15,000 items.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Galada Hub upgrade

In February 2023, the Galada Community Centre Hub underwent a vital upgrade to meet the growing demand for collection in the space. Enhancements included new shelving, permanent signage and book displays, creating a more user-friendly experience and a stronger presence for YPRL in the centre.

Shelving updates and the introduction of stand-alone units for picture books have effectively doubled the collection available at the Hub. The addition of clearer signage and wall displays not only aids in creating connections in outreach visits but also incorporates focal points to highlight the growing collection. An interactive addition to the Hub are new book recommendation spots, collaboratively maintained by YPRL staff, Galada Community Centre staff, and community members sharing the common goal of telling others about the books they love.

The revamped children's shelving improves access to age-appropriate books for families and kinder groups, while the addition of Book Express to the Galada collection extends access to the newest and most sought-after items amongst library users. The Galada upgrade has made this much-loved YPRL Hub more inviting, usable and accessible, and has significantly improved the experience of library users visiting the space.

'We walk to the library, get our favourite books. Now she's 17 months and has a sense of 'her' books and how we go to get them from Galada. It's such a relief since the hub expanded.'

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Updating our support

Our Library Support Services (LSS) office in South Morang was closed for refurbishment from late July until mid-November 2022. During this time, our support staff relocated to branches and filled nearly every available space.

The refurbishment included new lighting, carpet and a complete transition to hotdesking for all of our support staff, with the CEO and manager offices transitioned into meeting rooms. Sit-stand desks were installed, and laptops with docking stations provided to all of our support staff, allowing them to be more efficient on the go and when helping out in branch.

James Patterson's *Escape* broke out of our collection **580 times**

'I love the Book Express. I can run in and grab a couple of books and know they will be interesting.'
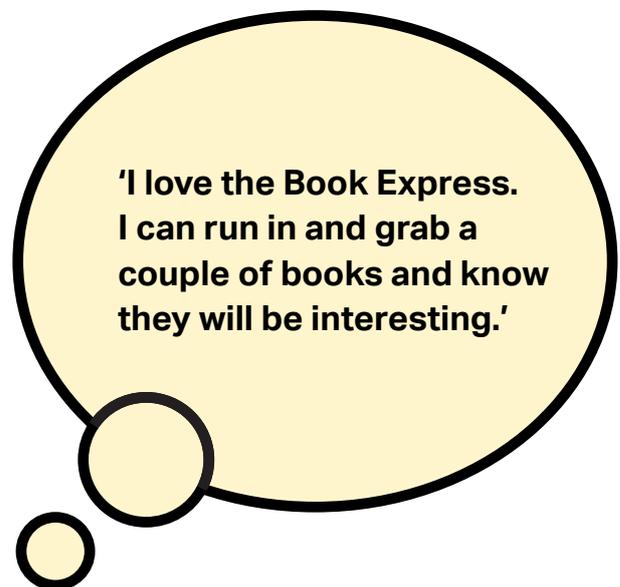
Connecting communities

Greensborough Plaza has established a Reading Retreat space with support from YPRL. The Greensborough Reading Retreat invites people to donate books that can be taken, read, and then returned to the space for others to enjoy. YPRL has provided items from our collection to offer for borrowing from the retreat, with staff consistently refreshing the selection available to the community.

The Reading Retreat is a great space to promote our services to an engaged local community. Information on how to access YPRL's eLibrary and details of our library programs are available, and a 'Meet a Librarian' engagement opportunity and Storytime session were arranged for its launch.

YPRL will be utilising the Reading Retreat space to better understand the needs of the Greensborough community and gauge areas of interest to inform future library programming, including potential school holiday activities and a queer book group for young people. We are thrilled to be involved in activating local spaces and developing our understanding of the community in Greensborough.

Enabling dialogue on treaty

In February 2023, Thomastown Library hosted a Treaty Community Forum presented by the First People's Assembly of Victoria. The forum was an opportunity to 'hear about the Self Determination Fund and processes for Treaty-making in Victoria, have a yarn, ask questions and help us shape the next steps on the journey.'

The Treaty Community Forum achieved a fantastic turnout with attendance by local library regulars, staff from Thomastown Library and the City of Whittlesea, along with members of the wider community. YPRL looks forward to continuing to support Treaty and the First People's Assembly of Victoria by providing a safe and welcoming space for community and allies to meet and discuss the path ahead.

Outcome: Organisational Strength

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

Behind the scenes, YPRL is committed to supporting our staff to enable them to serve the local community. We empower our staff through training, good structures and governance, and the right technology, so that they can focus on delivering what local communities need. Having the right infrastructure in place makes our staff more confident and adaptable to coming change. We see our staff as a major asset and invest in them accordingly, supporting their development, career progression, and wellbeing. Our responsibility to the local community is one that we take seriously. As well as delivering high-quality library services, we take a sustainability lens to all that we do. Libraries inherently support sustainability in the community, with our model of shared resources, and we are always striving for ways to do better. As we work to update several of our spaces, we re-use and repair materials where we can, and prioritise the use of sustainable materials in all our activities.

Priority: Governance and technology

Strengthen our service by ensuring effective governance-strengthening decisions and partnerships; technology as an enabler for delivering services; technology that improves user experience.

YPRL takes a continuous improvement approach across the board, and that includes governance and technology. We have undertaken large-scale work to upgrade our digital environment, with a migration to Microsoft Office 365, a new corporate intranet, a major PC upgrade, new reporting systems, and a new expense management system. These upgrades mean that our staff can continue to produce high-quality work, supported by the most streamlined systems.

460 sets of eyeballs wanted to look at *My Darling Daughter*

Digital transformation

YPRL has made significant progress toward the outcomes in our Information and Communications Technology (ICT) strategy and Digital Transformation Plan. Our shift to Microsoft 365 from the old on-premises data centre enables authorised staff to access corporate data securely anytime, anywhere, enhancing internal collaboration. This change has changed the way we work and collaborate alongside our change management action plan that was put in place to aid staff throughout this transition.

We launched a new corporate intranet and digitised our corporate forms, enhancing communication, information availability and delivering efficiency and productivity improvements. YPRL is focused on continual improvement of our new digital environments.

Despite vendor delays, our corporate PC and laptop deployment project is underway with the cloud PC management environment and the procurement process completed. Deployment will be completed when devices are delivered.

YPRL continues to enhance staff cyber security awareness through targeted training, with a dedicated training platform aiding in building a robust defence against cyber threats. These initiatives position YPRL to offer agile library services, poised to tackle future challenges effectively.

'It's peaceful and safe. A place where I know I will be welcomed and respected, where I see people from all walks of life. I can sit quietly, learn, work, study, read, reflect and ponder. It gives me a space outside my home and work environments, where I am always able to recharge. I love my local libraries and appreciate having them available.'

Financial fundamentals

Our digital transformation is supporting more efficient management of finance requirements at YPRL and we have delivered significant innovations. Our Financial Sustainability Framework is a comprehensive plan to ensure the long-term stability of YPRL's financial health and lay the foundation for strategic decision-making that aligns with the organisation's objectives. We have an Investment Policy and Strategy that optimally allocates resources, maximises returns, and maintains a controlled risk exposure.

An internal review of YPRL's payroll function assessed the design and effectiveness of our internal controls embedded into payroll processes, identified potential risks, and sought opportunities to improve related practices. Auditors concluded that YPRL has established appropriate payroll management practices fortifying YPRL financial integrity and enhancing employee trust and satisfaction.

We implemented a new corporate card expense management system, representing a significant leap forward in streamlining financial processes and reinforcing YPRL's commitment to efficiency and transparency. The system seamlessly integrates all corporate card transactions into a centralised platform that optimises expense tracking, reconciliation, and reporting.

We launched a new financial reporting system which harnesses advanced technology to empower our staff and stakeholders with real-time, insightful data for informed decision-making. We also presented as a panellist in the IT Systems Transformation Panel at the FinPro (Local Government Finance Professionals) conference where we were able to showcase our organisational practices as a best-of-kind approach in leveraging technology to enhance financial operations, sharing our learnings with the broader library sector.

Professional membership

- ALIA (Australian Library & Information Association)
- Australian HR Institute
- FinPro (Local Government Finance Professionals)
- IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions)
- IPA (Institute of Public Accounts)
- PLV (Public Libraries Victoria)
- PLV Collections Special Interest Group
- PLV Home Library Service Special Interest Group
- PLV ICT Special Interest Group
- PLV Marketing, Advocacy and Engagment Special Interest Group
- PLV Local Studies Special Interest Group
- PLV Resource Sharing Special Interest Group
- Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Foundation
- VALA (Libraries, Technology and the Future Inc)
- VECCI (Victorian Chamber of Commerce & Industry)

Processes updated

Date	Policy
Jul-22	Public Interest Disclosures Procedures
Jul-22	Guidelines: Filling Vacant Shifts and Positions
Sep-22	YPRL CCTV Standard Operating Procedures
Sep-22	YPRL Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy 2022 (formerly Child Safe Policy)
Sep-22	Recruitment & Selection Procedure 2022
Sep-22	Employee Assistance Program Procedure 2022
Sep-22	COVID-19 Vaccination Policy
Oct-22	YPRL Employee Reward and Recognition Procedure
Nov-22	YPRL Membership Policy 2022 - 2025
Nov-22	Unattended or Lost Child Procedure 2022
Nov-22	Conference and Course Travel Expenses Procedure (formerly Travel Expenses Guidelines)
Dec-22	YPRL Fire Safety Procedure
Dec-22	Instrument of Sub Delegation 2022
Jan-23	OHS Manual
Jan-23	YPRL Payroll Policy 2022
Mar-23	YPRL Volunteer Policy
Mar-23	YPRL Conflict of Interest Procedure
Mar-23	Collection Development Policy 2022-2026
Mar-23	YPRL Privacy Policy
Mar-23	YPRL Fraud and Corruption Control Policy (formerly Fraud and Corruption Prevention Policy)
Jun-23	Equal Employment Opportunity Anti-Discrimination Bullying & Sexual Harassment Policy

Priority: Environmental and social sustainability

Responsible, relevant, and conscious organisation through ensuring diverse and inclusive practice; environmental and socially sustainable practice and procurement.

At YPRL our work around inclusion and diversity is fundamental to all that we do, as we truly believe that libraries are for everyone. Building on programming such as Sensitive Santa, we're doing a thorough review of our accessibility across our services, spaces, and programs as part of our Accessibility Action Plan. Through the Talking Together program we have connected with the Somali Australian community and brought the benefits of library engagement to a new audience. Ongoing work with the LGBTQIA+ community has included IDAHOBIT events across the region.

Sustainable refurbishment

YPRL prioritised sustainable practice in refurbishing both corporate and library spaces this year. At Eltham Library, this meant choosing to repurpose much of our existing furniture and joinery instead of buying new – cushions in the children's area were reupholstered; table legs on PC desks were reused; existing shelving units were retained and revitalised; timber bay ends were resurfaced; and chairs and tables were refinished rather than replaced.

During our Library Support Services upgrade we used the same sustainable mindset. Most of YPRL's retired furniture was not sent landfill, with 70% donated for reuse. We were also able to improve the quality of lighting while reducing energy use by moving to LED – a change we anticipate will save an estimated 40% on power consumption and bills. YPRL is committed to ensuring our libraries and offices are up to date and fit for purpose while prioritising sustainability as a cornerstone in our decision making moving forwards.

Celebrating inclusion

On 17 May 2023, YPRL marked International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) with a planned Rainbow Storytime hosted by Eltham Library. The inviting family event was to feature drag performer, Frock Hudson, reading from inclusive children's books, bringing stories of inclusion to the community. Unfortunately the session was moved online based on police advice, where more than 3,000 people have now viewed the inclusive message, a far greater number than could ever have fit in the library for an in-person event. This fantastic turnout demonstrated the importance of positive visibility and representation for LGBTQIA+ families in our library spaces.

Eltham Library received an immense amount of support from rainbow families in and around Eltham, as well as families from near and far. Our IDAHOBIT event became a catalyst for forging new community partnerships, firmly establishing the library as a safe space to celebrate IDAHOBIT and for our diverse library families to feel truly seen and embraced.

'Thank you so much for spreading the Rainbow love for IDAHOBIT day. This means so much for Rainbow families and all of us in the trans and queer community! Love to all the staff.'

'Dear library staff, Thank you for supporting next week's IDAHOBIT drag storytime. As a member of the queer community, I find hope in the darkness when people and organisations like you stand up for people like me.'
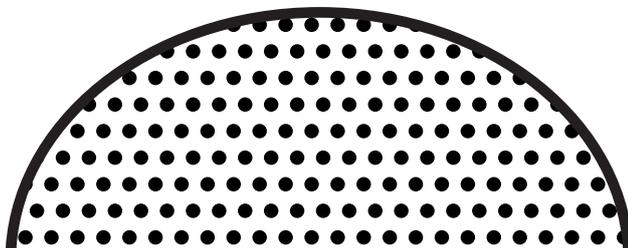
Embracing the Uluru Statement from the Heart

In June 2023, the YPRL Board of Directors made the unanimous decision to endorse the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* in full. This is a positive step in continuing to build a strong and respectful relationship with the First Nations community and this endorsement signifies YPRL's commitment to promoting positive change within the community.

We recognise the vital role public libraries can play in supporting the Uluru Statement and fostering understanding of First Nations culture. Public libraries are uniquely positioned to support the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* and contribute to reconciliation efforts.

We can ensure accurate information is accessible and work with local First Nations communities to provide educational opportunities to learn more about First Nations culture. By sharing information and collaborating with First Nations communities and organisations, as well as our councils, YPRL is providing communities with trusted resources to make informed decisions in the upcoming referendum.

Accessibility in action

YPRL is working to make our services more accessible and ensuring our staff can identify and address barriers to library services for people with disability is crucial to this effort. Disability confidence in libraries supports both staff and library users and a key action from our Accessibility Action Plan involves assessing and improving staff confidence in the space. We conducted a survey which indicated there was a varying degree of confidence among staff.

In response to the survey findings, we offered opportunities for staff to attend customer disability training and take on the role of branch champion. Staff who completed the training reported increased confidence in understanding and addressing accessibility issues and felt more empowered to advocate and promote greater understanding, empathy, and respect for people with disability in our libraries.

By reviewing our service through an accessibility lens, our staff are able to contribute to our Accessibility Action Plan and build a more welcoming and inclusive library service that actively seeks out and removes barriers to access. Each change brings YPRL one step closer to ensuring our libraries meet the needs of everyone in the community.

'I have struggled with physical disabilities but always found the library very accessible and 100% free of judgement, I would curl up in little chairs and feel so happy again, look out the window and be able to be productive. I owe so much of my recovery to Ivanhoe library.'

Hairy Maclary left Donaldson's Dairy **2,866 times**
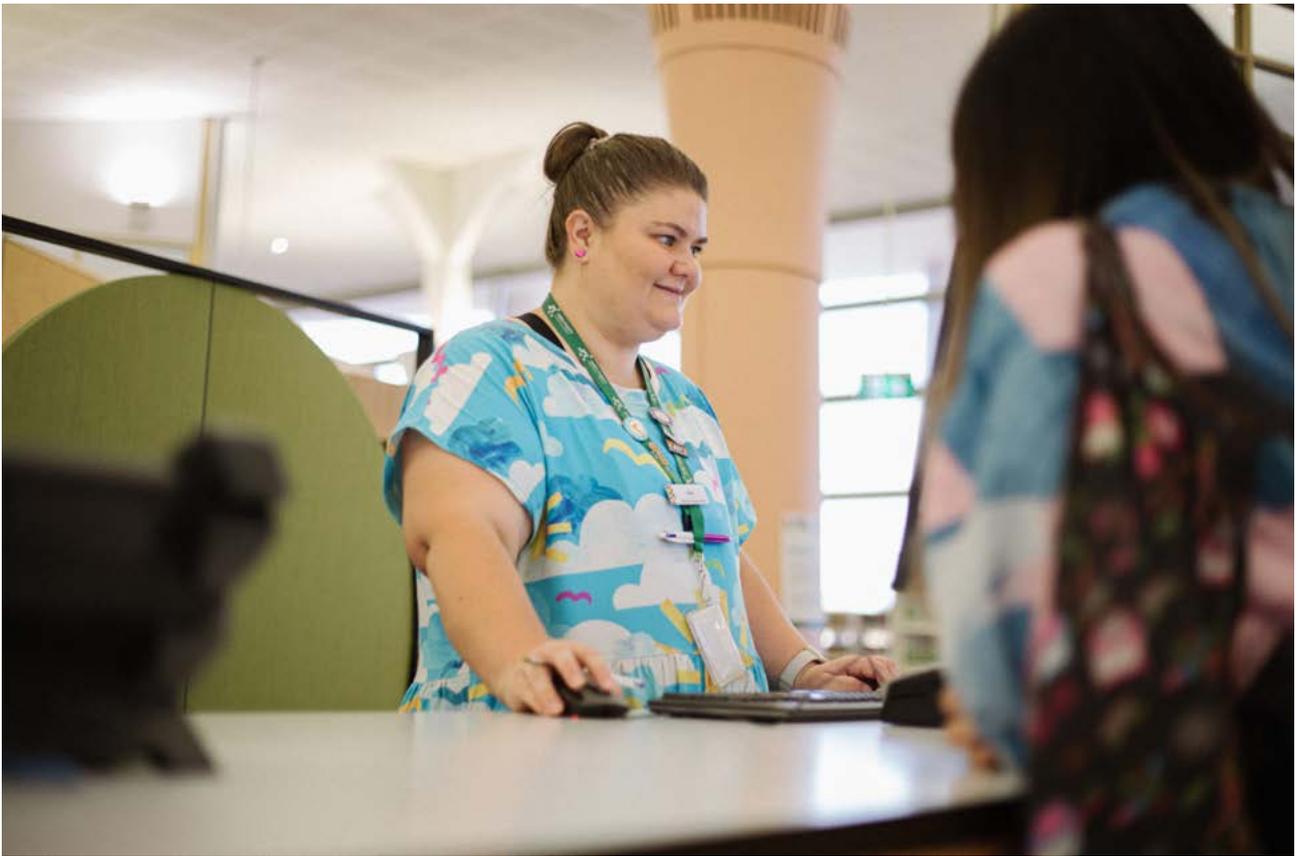
Priority: People and capacity

Invest in our people through building people's capability and capacity; creating opportunities for growth and learning.

YPRL is nothing without our amazing staff. Our continued investment in our teams through training, professional development, and an all staff development conference mean that our library staff are engaged, in touch with industry trends, up to date with best practise, and are leaders across our libraries. A new internal structure has given more opportunities for staff to grow, develop, and progress.

YPRL staff

Staff Totals	Number of staff	% of YPRL Workforce
Full Time	40	25%
Part Time	107	66%
Casuals	15	9%
Total	162	

558 borrowers had *Dinner with the Schnabels*

Public Participation restructure

In early August 2022, YPRL announced a restructure in the Public Participation department. Three new senior positions were created to increase engagement with councils, partners, and community, replacing three existing Branch Manager roles.

These three new positions of Senior Manager, Engagement and Operations have a regional portfolio, liaise with councils, and lead a culture of community codesign. In addition, three Team Leader: Operations positions were created to support the Senior Manager positions. Consultation took place with all YPRL staff throughout August and the staff's union (Australian Services Union) were fully informed during the process.

Our all staff conference

After a three-year hiatus, the Staff Development Conference made a triumphant return in 2023. Held on Friday 3 March at Plenty Ranges Arts & Convention Centre the day saw a record surge in attendance fuelled by the enthusiasm and energy of staff enjoying the opportunity to connect in person.

The day started on a high note, with a brilliant presentation from Banyule City Council First Nations Lead Zali Mifsud. Her insights shed light on the need to integrate First Nations perspectives within our libraries and the vital importance of the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* and upcoming referendum.

We were grateful to hear from all our expert presenters, including Dr Barbara Barbosa Neves and Prof Alan Petersen from Monash University, Leanne Hart from Hart2heart Wellbeing and our moderator Margaret Devlin from the Centre for Organisational Development.

We have received brilliant feedback from staff and presenters indicating that our Staff Development Conference is a tremendously valued opportunity for learning and connection at YPRL. We look forward to delivering another great program in 2024.

External training

- A Culturally Responsive Way of Being
- AI Fluency and Libraries
- Building Aboriginal Cultural Competency
- Bushfire Safety for Workers
- Codesign Champion Training
- COVID-19 Safety at Work
- Creating Child Safety Champions
- Defibrillator Training
- Effective Performance Management
- Fire Safety Training
- First Aid and CPR
- First Nations – Walking in Two Worlds
- Health and Safety Representative Training
- Infection Control
- Injury Management for Managers
- Book Data Analysis
- LGBTQIA+ Awareness
- Librarians Guide to Homelessness
- Manual Handling
- Mental Health Awareness
- Occupational Health and Safety for Managers and Supervisors
- Pathways to Inclusion in Early Childhood
- Read, Play and Connect
- Supply Chain Compliance for Management
- Uluru Statement from the Heart
- Working with Young People with ASD

Conference attendance

- ALIA Conference 2023
- Meerkin & Apel Workplace Relations Forum
- PLV 2022 Planning Summit
- PLV Conference 2023
- PLV Libraries Change Lives Champion Forum
- ALIA Disability – What is Disability?
- State Library Victoria Partnership Mapping Seminar
- PLV WynTalk Pathway to Reconciliation
- Early Years Conference
- ALIA Future Libraries – Better Communities Stakeholder Symposium
- Whole Person Librarianship Seminar
- PLV Social work in Libraries Symposium
- Australian Classification Board – What Libraries need to know
- Thought Leadership Workshop
- Future Libraries: Better Communities Stakeholder Symposium
- Asia Oceania Regional Division Committee Webinar
- Australia Public Libraries Alliance Lightning Talk – Celebrating Library Staff
- ALIA Asia-Pacific Health, Law and Special Libraries Conference

YPRL presentations and appointments

Event	Staff
PLV Conference 2023 – Youth Takeover	Kate Hansen and Scott Mundell
PLV Conference 2023 – Talking Together	Robyn Ellard and Mahamed Hassan Awl
Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals Digital Leadership For Libraries – Digital Marketing section	Brendan Eichholzer
State Library Victoria Shared Leadership Program	Ian Wedlock and Kate Ferguson
PLV Leadership Summit	Jane Cowell and Robyn Ellard
Australia Public Libraries Alliance Lightning Talk – Celebrating Library Staff	Jane Cowell
ALIA Asia-Pacific Health, Law and Special Libraries Conference – welcome and introduction	Jane Cowell
ALIA Mentoring Scheme – Online Presence	Jane Cowell
ALIA Mentoring Scheme – Selection Criteria	Jane Cowell
ALIA Professional Development Webinar – Job Roles and Job Descriptions	Jane Cowell
Rotary Club of Banyule – Modern Library Services	Jane Cowell
ALIA Queensland Conference 2022 – Talking Together	Kate Ferguson
State Library Victoria Libraries for Health and Wellbeing Partnership Mapping Seminar	Kate Ferguson
FinPro (Local Government Finance Professionals) – IT Systems Transformation Panel	Luciano Lauronce
PLV Health & Wellbeing Working Group	Jane Cowell
Nillumbik Youth Council	Annie Lee
Nillumbik Positive Aging Advisory Committee	Annie Lee
Nillumbik Positive Aging forum	Dione Fisher
Early Literacy: Getting Ready to Read	Coralie Kouvelas
ALIA Mentor	Jane Cowell Kate Ferguson and Brendan Eichholzer
CAVAL Mentor	Robyn Ellard
PLV Local Studies and Collections combined SiG – The value of local history collections in public libraries	Liz Pidgeon
PLV Local Studies SiG Co-convenor	Liz Pidgeon
PLV Marketing, Advocacy & Engagement SiG Co-convenor	Brendan Eichholzer

Event	Staff
PLV Opperations Special Interest Group	Tracey Jermieson
PLV Reader Development Special Interest Group	Sarah Schmidt
PLV Community Programs Special Interest Group	Kate Hansen and Kate Ferguson
PLV Children's & Youth Special Interest Group	Kate Ferguson and Coralie Kouvelas
PLV Multicultural Services & Programs Special Interest Group	Cherry Byford-Sibbing
PLV ePLV Special Interest Group	Cherry Byford-Sibbing
PLV ePLV Special Interest Group Working Group	Cherry Byford-Sibbing
PLV Collections Special Interest Group	Cherry Byford-Sibbing
PLV Collections Special Interest Group Mentor	Jane Cowell
VALA Tech Camp Organising Committee 2023	Karen Seligman

Featured articles

Publication	Details
Memories of the Shire of Diamond Valley 1964–1994	Liz Pidgeon contributed several articles to this book published by the Greensborough Historical Society, 2022.
Designed posters for IFLA working groups	Marieclaire Baird developed two items for use by the Libraries as Actors of Climate Empowerment program and the Public Library Manifesto 2022.
Talking Together *INCITE* article	Cover article for ALIA's *INCITE* magazine, written by Kate Ferguson about the Talking Together program.
Whittlesea's Dark Past	Book written by Jack Chan through a Local History Grant and Yarra Plenty Regional Library gratefully acknowledges the Local History Grants Program and Public Record Office Victoria, supported by the Victorian Government through the Community Support Fund.

Internal training

- CEO On the Spot
- Introduction to Storytimes
- Grant Writing
- Child Safety
- Staff Professional Development Conference
- Coordinator Workshops
- Microsoft 365
- Injury Management

Employee wellbeing

YPRL is committed to supporting staff's overall health and happiness and we have implemented a range of initiatives to invest in staff wellbeing for a healthy, motivated and productive workforce.

Our staff Wellness Hub Portal is regularly updated with resources to support staff's mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing. Our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a valuable resource for employees and managers seeking confidential counselling and support for personal or work-related issues, with specialist helplines also available for First Nations, LGBTQIA+ and domestic and family violence. An EAP Portal with a monthly eMagazine, and an array of resources on individual mental health and wellbeing, nutrition and lifestyle is also available to staff. YPRL also shares a monthly *Well at Work* newsletter offering information on wellbeing topics as well as practical tips, success stories, and recipes. The newsletter has been well-received with a good subscriber base indicating that staff find the content valuable and engaging and are keen to stay informed about health and wellness matters at YPRL.

Priority: A resilient and thriving organisation

Secure and grow our organisation through: financial diversification; development of a new business model in response to Local Government Act 2020 requirements.

YPRL continues to grow as an organisation through creative solutions such as supporting smaller libraries to deliver library services, maintain a library management system and sharing collection. Service level agreements with Murrindindi Library Service and Warrnambool Library Service leverage our strengths and give these smaller organisations access to higher level systems and services than they could not otherwise afford.

Service level agreements

YPRL and Murrindindi Library Service (MLS) have maintained a long-standing, mutually beneficial service level agreement (SLA) since 1996 which continues strongly to this day. Our newer relationship with Warrnambool Library Service (WLS) began in 2021, and WLS opened the Warrnambool Library and Learning Centre in October 2022, welcoming South West TAFE into their shared facility. YPRL supports WLS and MLS with Library Management System support and collection services.

These partnerships offer financial benefits by sharing systems, collections, and expertise, but there is additional value to our users in sharing systems, collections and learnings with each other. YPRL is proud to support smaller libraries in the delivery of library services to their communities.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

'I have found our partnership with YPRL to be a valuable and generous asset. Everyone I have spoken with has been supportive and inspirational with their time, advice and patience and have mentored me, even if they've been unaware. YPRL's attention to detail and their dedication to their communities through empathetic collection management and programs, and their dedication to creating a community space for all, are an inspiration.'

Michelle Whatnall, Coordinator Murrindindi Library Service

Organisation chart

CEO

PA to the CEO

Executive Manager Special Projects

Executive Manager Technology & Assets

Executive Manager Corporate Services

Library Systems Administrator

Reader Development Coordinator

PC Desktop & IT Support Officer

Local & Family History Librarian

ICT Project & Support Coordinator

Quality Assurance Officer

ICT Project Manager

Serials Officer

Manager Collections & Library Systems

Resource Sharing Officer

Collections Projects Officer

People & Culture Coordinator

Administration Officer People & Culture

People & Culture/Payroll Officer

Volunteers Coordinator

Administration & Accounts Officer

Finance & Administration Manager

Library Operations Officer

Executive Manager Public Participation

Marketing & Media Coordinator

Marketing & Communications Manager

Marketing & Analytics Officer

Programs Manager

Senior Manager*

Branch Manager^

Team Leader

Outreach Manager

Coordinator, Programs & Engagement

Librarians

Coordinator, Programs & Engagement

Technician Reading, Learning & Community

Librarians

Officer Reading, Learning & Community

Team Leader

Senior Customer Service & Events Officer

Technician Reading, Learning & Community

Officer Reading, Learning & Community

Venue & Events Officer

Mobile Library Officers

* Senior Manager
Eltham
Ivanhoe
Mill Park

^ Branch Manager
Diamond Valley
Lalor
Thomastown
Watsonia
Whittlesea

Information Privacy Act

The Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 is designed to protect the private information of individuals. The Corporation has a Privacy Policy available on the library website. No complaints were received during 2022–2023.

Freedom of Information

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* provides people with the opportunity to obtain information held by state and local government departments and authorities. The Act gives people the right to request documents relating to their personal affairs. YPRL did not receive any requests during 2022–2023.

Public Interest Disclosures

In accordance with the provisions of s. 58 of the Public Interest Disclosure Act *2012*, the Corporation has a procedure for dealing with disclosures made under the Act. The Executive Manager Corporate Services is the Corporation's Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator. YPRL has not received any disclosures directly nor has it received any referrals from the Ombudsman during 2022–2023.

Yarra Plenty Regional Library Service
Annual Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Table of Contents

Certification of Financial Statements

In my opinion, the accompanying financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989 (as per the transitional provisions of the Local Government Act 2020), the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014, the Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.
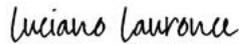
Luciano Lauronce
Principal Accounting Officer
Dated: 20 September 2023
South Morang

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly the financial transactions of the Yarra Plenty Regional Library (YPRL) for the year ended 30 June 2023 and the financial position of YPRL as at that date.

At the date of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances that would render any particulars in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.

We have been authorised by YPRL and by the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014 to certify the financial statements in their final form.

Alison Champion
Councillor
Dated: 20 September 2023
South Morang

Rick Garotti
Councillor
Dated: 20 September 2023
South Morang

Jane Cowell
Chief Executive Officer
Dated: 20 September 2023
South Morang

Independent Auditor's Report

VAGO
Victorian Auditor-General's Office

To the Board members of Yarra Plenty Regional Library Service

Opinion	I have audited the financial report of Yarra Plenty Regional Library Service (the library) which comprises the:
	- balance sheet as at 30 June 2023 - comprehensive income statement for the year then ended - statement of changes in equity for the year then ended - statement of cash flows for the year then ended - statement of capital works for the year then ended - notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies - certification of the financial statements.
	In my opinion the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the library as at 30 June 2023 and their financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the *Local Government Act 1989*, the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014* and applicable Australian Accounting Standards.
Basis for Opinion	I have conducted my audit in accordance with the *Audit Act 1994* which incorporates the Australian Auditing Standards. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of my report.
	My independence is established by the *Constitution Act 1975*. My staff and I are independent of the library in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.
	I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.
Board members' responsibilities for the financial report	The Board members of the library are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the *Local Government Act 1989*, the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014* and for such internal control as the Board members determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.
	In preparing the financial report, the Board members are responsible for assessing the library's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is inappropriate to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report	As required by the *Audit Act 1994,* my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the library's internal control
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Board members
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Board members' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the library's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the library to cease to continue as a going concern.
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Board members regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

MELBOURNE
22 September 2023

Travis Derricott
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

Comprehensive Income Statement
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

	Note	2023 $	2022 $
Income/Revenue			
Contributions - monetary	3.1	13,758,187	13,488,419
Grants - Operating	3.2	2,961,243	2,914,205
Grants - Capital	3.2	87,629	-
User fees and charges	3.3	230,026	121,051
Interest income	3.4	271,489	12,933
Other income	3.5	240,130	219,967
Total income / revenue		**17,548,705**	**16,756,576**
Expenses			
Employee costs	4.1	11,488,893	10,553,448
Materials and services	4.2	4,264,534	3,700,662
Depreciation	4.3	1,680,730	1,739,854
Amortisation – right of use assets	4.3	104,181	108,427
Utility charges	4.4	347,831	300,208
Finance costs - leases	4.5	10,908	14,166
Net loss on disposal/write-off of assets	4.6	188,813	180
Total expenses		**18,085,889**	**16,416,945**
Surplus /(deficit) for the year		**(537,184)**	**339,631**
Other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive Result		**(537,184)**	**339,631**

The above comprehensive income statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Balance Sheet

As at 30 June 2023

	Note	2023 $	2022 $
Assets			
Current Assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	5.1	3,411,986	4,351,250
Trade & other receivables	5.1	88,959	56,387
Other financial assets	5.1	3,000,000	3,000,000
Other assets	5.2	42,110	46,601
Total current assets		**6,543,055**	**7,454,238**
Non-current assets			
Bookstock, plant and equipment	6.1	4,205,790	3,779,593
Right-of-use assets	5.7	578,175	682,355
Total non-current assets		**4,783,965**	**4,461,948**
Total assets		**11,327,020**	**11,916,186**
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	5.3	671,682	647,584
Unearned income/revenue	5.3	62,371	-
Lease liabilities	5.7	84,076	94,728
Provisions	5.4	2,202,228	2,247,125
Total current liabilities		**3,020,357**	**2,989,437**
Non-current liabilities			
Provisions	5.4	98,585	103,594
Lease liabilities	5.7	556,179	634,072
Total non-current liabilities		**654,764**	**737,666**
Total liabilities		**3,675,121**	**3,727,103**
Net assets		**7,651,899**	**8,189,083**
Equity			
Accumulated Surplus	9.4	6,277,394	6,814,578
Reserves		1,374,505	1,374,505
Total Equity		**7,651,899**	**8,189,083**

The above balance sheet should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Changes in Equity
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

2023	Note	Total	Accumulated Surplus	Other Reserves
		$	$	$
Balance at beginning of the financial year		8,189,083	6,814,578	1,374,505
Deficit for the year		(537,184)	(537,184)	-
Transfers to other reserves		-	-	-
Balance at end of the financial year	9.4	**7,651,899**	**6,277,394**	**1,374,505**

2022	Note	Total	Accumulated Surplus	Other Reserves
		$	$	$
Balance at beginning of the financial year		7,849,452	6,524,947	1,324,505
Surplus for the year		339,631	339,631	-
Transfers to other reserves		-	(50,000)	50,000
Balance at end of the financial year	9.4	**8,189,083**	**6,814,578**	**1,374,505**

The above statement of changes in equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Cash Flows
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

	Note	2022/2023 Inflows/ (Outflows) $	2021/2022 Inflows/ (Outflows) $
Cash flows from operating activities			
Contributions - monetary		13,758,187	13,488,419
Grants - operating		2,961,243	2,914,205
Grants - capital		150,000	-
User fees and charges		230,026	121,051
Interest received		224,936	3,923
Other receipts		254,111	291,257
Employee costs		(11,435,054)	(10,692,099)
Materials and services		(3,603,019)	(3,085,687)
Net GST payment		(770,852)	(843,543)
Other payments		(313,650)	(268,701)
Net cash provided by operating activities	**9.2**	**1,455,929**	**1,928,825**
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payments for bookstock, plant and equipment		(2,295,740)	(1,654,884)
Payment for investments		-	(3,000,000)
Net cash used in investing activities		**(2,295,740)**	**(4,654,884)**
Cash flows from financing activities			
Interest paid – lease liability		(10,908)	(14,166)
Repayment of lease liabilities		(88,545)	(96,938)
Net cash used in financial activities		**(99,453)**	**(111,104)**
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		(939,264)	(2,837,163)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		4,351,250	7,188,413
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year		**3,411,986**	**4,351,250**

The above cash flow statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Capital Works

For the Year Ended 30 June 2022

	Note	2023 $	2022 $
Bookstock			
Bookstock	6.1	1,540,612	1,608,177
Total bookstock		**1,540,612**	**1,608,177**
Plant and equipment			
Plant and equipment	6.1	755,128	46,707
Total plant and equipment		**755,128**	**46,707**
Total capital works expenditure		**2,295,740**	**1,654,884**
Represented by:			
New		127,629	-
Renewal		2,168,111	1,654,884
Total capital works expenditure		**2,295,740**	**1,654,884**

The above statement of capital works should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Notes to the Financial Report

for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 1 OVERVIEW

Introduction

The Yarra Plenty Regional Library Service (YPRL) was established by an Order of the Governor in Council on 11 January 1996 and is a body corporate.

The YPRL's main office is located at Unit 6, 1 Danaher Drive, South Morang, VIC 3572.

Statement of compliance

These financial statements are a general-purpose financial report that consists of a Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows, Statement of Capital Works and Notes accompanying these financial statements. The general-purpose financial report complies with Australian Accounting Standards (AAS), other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board, the *Local Government Act 1989* (as per the transitional provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020*) and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014*.

YPRL is a not-for-profit entity and therefore applies the additional AUS paragraphs applicable to a not-for-profit entity under the Australian Accounting Standards.

Significant accounting policies

Basis of Accounting

Accounting policies are selected and applied in a manner which ensures that the resulting financial information satisfies the concepts of relevance and reliability, thereby ensuring that the substance of the underlying transactions or other events is reported. Accounting policies applied are disclosed in sections where the related balance or financial statement matter is disclosed.

The accrual basis of accounting has been used in the preparation of these financial statements, except for the cash flow information, whereby assets, liabilities, equity, income, and expenses are recognised in the reporting period to which they relate, regardless of when cash is received or paid.

The financial statements are based on the historical cost convention unless a different measurement basis is specifically disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The financial statements are in Australian dollars. Minor discrepancies in tables between totals and the sum of components are due to rounding to the nearest dollar.

Judgements, estimates, and assumptions are required to be made about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated judgements are based on professional judgement derived from historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and also in future periods that are affected by the revision. Judgements and assumptions made by management in the application of AAS's that have significant effects on the financial statements and estimates relate to:

- the fair value of bookstock, and plant and equipment (refer to Note 6.1)
- the determination of depreciation for bookstock, and plant and equipment (refer to Note 6.1)
- the determination of employee provisions (refer to Note 5.4)

Notes to the Financial Report
for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

- the determination of whether performance obligations are sufficiently specific so as to determine whether an arrangement is within the scope of AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers* or AASB *1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities* (refer to Note 3)
- the determination, in accordance with AASB 16 *Leases* of the lease term, the estimation of the discount rate when not implicit in the lease and whether an arrangement is in substance short-term or low value (refer to Note 5.7)
- other areas requiring judgements

Unless otherwise stated, all accounting policies are consistent with those applied in the prior year. Where appropriate, comparative figures have been amended to accord with current presentation, and disclosure has been made of any material changes to comparatives.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Income and expenses are recognised net of the amount of associated GST. Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is included with other receivables or payables in the balance sheet.

Notes to the Financial Report
for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 2 Analysis of our results

2.1 Performance against budget

The performance against budget compares YPRL's financial plan, expressed through its annual budget, with actual performance. The *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014* requires explanation of any material variances. YPRL has adopted a materiality threshold of more than $30,000 where further explanation is warranted. Explanations have not been provided for variations below the materiality threshold unless the variance is considered to be material because of its nature.

These notes are prepared to meet the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1989* (as per the transitional provisions of the Local Government Act 2020)*,* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014*.

2.1.1 Income / Revenue and expenditure

	Budget 2022/2023 $	Actual 2022/2023 $	Variance $	Reference
Income				
Contributions - monetary	13,758,187	13,758,187	-	
Grants - Operating	2,883,139	2,961,243	78,104	(1)
Grants - Capital	-	87,629	87,629	(2)
User fees and charges	241,509	230,026	(11,483)	
Interest income	3,200	271,489	268,289	(3)
Other income	153,237	240,130	86,893	(4)
Total income / revenue	**17,039,272**	**17,548,704**	**509,432**	
Expenses				
Employee costs	10,903,613	11,488,893	(585,280)	(5)
Materials and services	3,968,741	4,264,534	(295,793)	(6)
Depreciation	1,681,910	1,680,730	1,180	
Amortisation – right of use assets	104,236	104,181	55	
Utilities charges	369,128	347,831	21,297	
Finance costs - leases	11,644	10,908	736	
Net loss on disposal/write-off of assets	-	188,813	(188,813)	(7)
Total expenses	**17,039,272**	**18,085,890**	**(1,046,618)**	
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	**-**	**(537,186)**	**(537,186)**	

Notes to the Financial Report
for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

(i) Explanation of material variations

(1) Awarded grants for specific 'one off' programs including Digital Literacy for Seniors, Healthy Body and Healthy Minds, and Indigenous Art.

(2) Awarded Living Library Infrastructure Grant to acquire a new outreach vehicle.

(3) Additional interest income as per cash rate increments favouring term deposit investments and the maximisation of the amount invested.

(4) Favourable variance due to workcover reimbursement income that offsets employee costs.

(5) Unfavourable variance because of changes in YPRL's organisational structure to provide a better service to the community.

(6) Additional expenses to complete the implementation of Office 365 SharePoint environment, including Microsoft Teams, new intranet, document management, and security. The unfavourable variance also includes the expenditures related to YPRL's head office and Eltham branch refurbishments that did not meet the capitalisation criteria.

(7) Wide area network (WAN) equipment (radio and antennas) was written-off as result of accessible internet connection at all branches. The WAN equipment was acquired in 2006 and the technology is now obsolete with no market value.

2.1.2 Capital Works

	Budget 2022/2023 $	Actual 2022/2023 $	Variance $	Reference
Bookstock	1,646,233	1,540,612	105,621	(1)
Plant and equipment	89,917	755,128	(665,211)	(2)
Total capital works expenditure	**1,736,150**	**2,295,740**	**(559,590)**	
Represented by:				
New	-	127,629	(127,629)	(1,2)
Renewal	1,736,150	2,168,111	(431,961)	(1,2)
Total capital works expenditure	**1,736,150**	**2,295,740**	**(559,590)**	

(i) **Explanation of material variations**

(1) Favourable variance due to unavailability of physical book collection that meets YPRL selection criteria.

(2) Unfavourable variance mainly explained by YPRL Board decision to refurbish YPRL's head office and Eltham branch. YPRL solid financial position allowed to fund these projects from accumulated surplus.

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Notes to the Financial Report
for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 2.2 Analysis of YPRL results by program
YPRL delivers its functions and activities through the following programs.

Administration and management
Administration and management provide efficient, effective, and proactive support services across the library service to enable the delivery of the library service vision and mission. The provision of these services includes finance services, digital information and technology, organisational development, procurement, strategy, and program delivery.

Collections
YPRL operates a regional library collection to take advantage of efficiencies in collection management, additional diversity of offering through enhanced collection size, and resource management due to enhanced buying power and economies of scale.

Branches
YPRL operates nine branches and the mobile library service across the three-member Councils. Branches are responsible for core service delivery including customer service and patron interactions, delivery of local programs, physical management, and local curation of collections.

2023	Income	Expenses	Surplus/(Deficit)	Grants (incl. in income)	Total assets
	$	$	$	$	$
Administration and Management	17,261,439	8,584,503	8,676,936	2,991,633	7,313,571
Collections	57,239	2,733,877	(2,676,638)	57,239	2,998,713
Branches	230,027	6,767,509	(6,537,482)	-	1,059,736
	17,548,705	**18,085,889**	**(537,184)**	**3,048,872**	**11,327,020**

2022	Income	Expenses	Surplus/(Deficit)	Grants (incl. in income)	Total assets
	$	$	$	$	$
Administration and Management	16,583,037	7,170,843	9,412,193	2,856,966	8,136,593
Collections	57,239	2,743,326	(2,686,087)	57,239	3,012,858
Branches	116,300	6,502,776	(6,386,475)	-	766,735
	16,756,575	**16,416,945**	**339,631**	**2,914,205**	**11,916,186**

Notes to the Financial Report
for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 3 Funding for the delivery of our services

3.1 Contributions - monetary

	2023	2022
	$	$
Member Council's contributions	13,758,187	13,488,419
Total Contributions - monetary	**13,758,187**	**13,488,419**

The following Member Council contributions were received during the year.

Shire of Nillumbik	3,022,440	2,999,166
City of Banyule	5,550,711	5,376,491
City of Whittlesea	5,185,036	5,112,762
Total contributions of Member Councils	**13,758,187**	**13,488,419**

Monetary contributions are recognised as revenue when YPRL obtains control over the contributed asset.

Aggregate contributions of Member Councils

The percentage aggregate contributions of Member Councils making up the Yarra Plenty Regional Library Service is as follows:

	2023	2022
	%	%
Shire of Nillumbik	21.38	21.35
City of Banyule	40.81	40.84
City of Whittlesea	37.81	37.81
Total aggregate contribution of Member Councils	**100.00**	**100.00**

3.2 Grants

Grants were received in respect of the following:

	2023	2022
Summary of Grants	$	$
State Government grants	3,028,872	2,882,405
Other grants	20,000	31,800
Total grants received	**3,048,872**	**2,914,205**

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Notes to the Financial Report
for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

(a) Operating Grants

	2023	2022
	$	$
Recurrent Grants		
Recurrent - State Government		
Regional Library Service grant (i)	2,782,788	2,742,342
Premiers Reading grant	57,239	57,239
Total recurrent operating grants	**2,840,027**	**2,799,581**

(i) The Regional Library Service State Government grant was apportioned on the following basis:

	2023	2022
Shire of Nillumbik	465,684	458,919
City of Banyule	880,866	868,063
City of Whittlesea	1,436,238	1,415,360
Total Regional Library Service State Government grant	**2,782,788**	**2,742,342**

Non-recurrent Grants

Non-recurrent – State Government	2023	2022
Senior Digital Literacy grant	91,216	-
Healthy Bodies Healthy Minds grant	10,000	-
Health & Wellbeing Innovation grant	-	77,960
Libraries Change Lives grant	-	1,364
Vaccine Ambassadors Community Engagement grant	-	3,500
No-recurrent – Other grants		
Indigenous Art project grant	5,000	-
Watsonia Library After Dark grant	15,000	30,000
Online Story Time grant	-	1,800
Total non-recurrent operating grants	**121,216**	**114,624**
Total operating grants	**2,961,243**	**2,914,205**

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Notes to the Financial Report

for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

(b) Capital Grants

Non-recurrent – State Government

Living Library Infrastructure grant	87,629	-
Total non-recurrent capital grants	**87,629**	-
Total capital grants	**87,629**	-

(c) Recognition of grant income

Before recognising funding from government grants as revenue YPRL assesses whether there is a contract that is enforceable and has sufficiently specific performance obligations in accordance with AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*. When both these conditions are satisfied, YPRL:

- identifies each performance obligation relating to revenue under the contract/agreement
- determines the transaction price
- recognises a contract liability for its obligations under the agreement
- recognises revenue as it satisfies its performance obligations, at the time or over time when services are rendered.

Where the contract is not enforceable and/or does not have sufficiently specific performance obligations, YPRL applies AASB 1058 *Income for Not-for-Profit Entities*.

Grant revenue with sufficiently specific performance obligations is recognised over time as the performance obligations specified in the underlying agreement are met. Where performance obligations are not sufficiently specific, grants are recognised on the earlier of receipt or when an unconditional right to receipt has been established. Grants relating to capital projects are generally recognised progressively as the capital project is completed. The following table provides a summary of the accounting framework under which grants are recognised.

	2023	2022
	$	$
Income recognised under AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities		
General purpose	2,961,243	2,914,205
Other specific purpose grants	87,629	-
Revenue recognised under AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers		
Specific purpose grants	-	-
	3,048,872	**2,914,205**

(d) Unspent grants received on condition that they be spent in a specific manner

Capital

Balance at start of year	-	-
Received during the financial year and remained unspent at balance date	**62,371**	-
Received in prior years and spent during the financial year	-	-
Balance at year end	**62,371**	-

Unspent grants are determined and disclosed on a cash basis.

Notes to the Financial Report

for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

3.3 User fees and charges

	2023	2022
	$	$
Community room venue hire	111,596	58,478
Photocopy fees	89,185	43,910
Other fees and charges	29,245	18,664
Total other revenue	**230,026**	**121,051**

User fees and charges are recognised as revenue at a point in time, or over time, when (or as) the performance obligation is satisfied. Recognition is based on the underlying contractual terms.

3.4 Interest income

	2023	2022
Interest on investments	271,489	12,933
Total interest income	**271,489**	**12,933**

Interest income is recognised as they are earned.

3.5 Other revenue

	2023	2022
Sale of library services	153,185	177,813
Workcover reimbursements	70,257	32,808
Other revenue	16,688	9,346
Total other revenue	**240,130**	**219,967**

Other revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and is recognised when YPRL gains control over the right to receive the income.

Notes to the Financial Report
for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 4 The cost of delivering services

4.1 (a) Employee costs

The following items are included as employee costs:

	2023	2022
	$	$
Salaries	9,336,601	8,609,215
Superannuation	1,012,932	912,352
Workcover	56,620	38,889
Annual leave/Long service leave	1,082,740	992,992
Total Employee Costs	**11,488,893**	**10,553,448**

4.1 (b) Superannuation contributions

Contributions by YPRL to the following superannuation plans are detailed below:

Scheme	Type of scheme		
Vision Super	Defined benefit	66,810	76,808
Vision Super (Employer) %	Accumulation	486,531	506,595
Australian Super (Employer) %	Accumulation	93,501	65,068
REST Super (Employer) %	Accumulation	56,334	30,968
Uni Super (Employer) %	Accumulation	50,898	57,027
Hostplus (Employer) %	Accumulation	38,049	25,917
VIC Super (Employer) %	Accumulation	21,417	12,690
Q Super (Employer) %	Accumulation	20,482	19,086
Other funds	Accumulation	178,910	118,193
Total employer contributions		**1,012,932**	**912,352**

Defined benefit fund:

Employer contributions payable at the reporting date (Vision Super)		-	-

Accumulation funds:

Employer contributions payable at the reporting date		-	-

Notes to the Financial Report
for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

4.2 Materials and services

Audit Fees

- Auditors' remuneration - VAGO - audit of the financial statements	17,500	21,300
- Auditors' remuneration - Internal Audit	9,000	9,150
Bank charges	13,523	9,559
Building maintenance costs	137,238	115,917
Cleaning costs	507,144	475,652
Collection content & processing costs	1,193,131	1,166,561
Consultancy costs	268,083	107,223
Courier and postage costs	159,047	136,866
Equipment and motor vehicle maintenance costs	610,863	498,040
Initiatives costs	128,031	132,866
Insurances	55,862	45,928
IT service, system communication, and license costs	573,322	495,294
Other material and service costs	90,309	114,673
Staff Training and OHS	172,298	135,906
Printing Stationary & external communications	150,671	106,147
Program costs	178,512	129,580
Total material and services	**4,264,534**	**3,700,662**

Expenses are recognised as they are incurred and reported in the financial year to which they relate.

4.3 Depreciation and amortisation expense

Depreciation expense for the year was charged in respect of:

	2023	2022
	$	$
Plant and equipment	140,118	163,554
Bookstock	1,540,612	1,576,300
Total depreciation expense	**1,680,730**	**1,739,854**

Amortisation expense for the year was charged in respect of:

Right-of-use assets	104,181	108,427
Total amortisation expense	**104,181**	**108,427**

Notes to the Financial Report
for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

4.4 Utility charges

Gas, electricity, and water	347,831	300,208
Total utility charges	**347,831**	**300,208**

4.5 Finance costs – Leases

Interest – lease liabilities	10,908	14,166
Total finance costs - leases	**10,908**	**14,166**

4.6 Net loss on disposal/write-off of assets

Written down value of assets disposed/written-off (i)	188,813	180
Total net loss on disposal of assets	**188,813**	**180**

(i) In the financial year 2022/2023, as a result of accessible internet connection at all branches, the Wide area network (WAN) equipment (radio and antennas) was written-off. The WAN equipment, with a net value of $188,813, was acquired in 2006 and the technology is now obsolete with no market value.

Notes to the Financial Report
for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 5 Our financial position

5.1 Financial assets

	2023	2022
	$	$
(a) Cash and cash equivalent assets		
Cash on hand and at bank	411,986	551,250
Term deposits	3,000,000	3,800,000
Total cash and cash equivalent assets	**3,411,986**	**4,351,250**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits at call, and other highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

(b) Other financial assets		
Term deposits - current	3,000,000	3,000,000
Total other financial assets	**3,000,000**	**3,000,000**
Total financial assets	**6,411,986**	**7,351,250**

Other financial assets are valued at fair value, at balance date. Term deposits are measured at original cost. Any unrealised gains and losses on holdings at balance date are recognised as either a revenue or expense.

Other financial assets include term deposits and those with original maturity dates of three to 12 months are classified as current.

YPRL's cash and cash equivalents are subject to several external restrictions that limit amounts available for discretionary use. These include:

Trust deposits (refer Note 5.3)	4,350	4,650
Total restricted funds	**4,350**	**4,650**
Total unrestricted cash and cash equivalents	**3,407,636**	**4,346,600**

Intended allocations

Although not externally restricted, the following amounts have been allocated for specific purposes by YPRL:

Provisions	2,300,813	2,247,125
Asset replacement reserve	1,374,505	1,374,505
	3,675,318	**3,621,630**

Users of the financial report should refer to Notes 5.6 and 5.7 for details of existing commitments.

Notes to the Financial Report
for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

(c) Trade and other receivables

Non-statutory receivable

	2023	2022
	$	$
Community organisations and financial organisations	88,959	56,387
Provision for doubtful debts	-	-
Total trade and other receivables	**88,959**	**56,387**

Short term receivables are carried at invoice amount. A provision for doubtful debts is recognised when there is objective evidence that an impairment has occurred. Long term receivables are carried at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

(d) Ageing of receivables

The ageing of collectable trade and other receivables per provision matrix:

Current (not yet due)	88,959	56,387
Past due by up to 30 days	-	-
Past due between 31 and 180 days	-	-
Past due between 181 and 365 days	-	-
Past due by more than 1 year	-	-
Total trade and other receivables	**88,959**	**56,387**

5.2 Other assets

Prepayments	42,110	46,601
Total other assets	**42,110**	**46,601**

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Notes to the Financial Report
for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

5.3 Payables, trust funds and deposits and unearned income/revenue

(a) Trade and other payables

Current	2023 $	2022 $
Non-statutory payables		
Payables and accruals	463,964	430,684
Trust deposits	4,350	4,650
Statutory payables		
Net GST	203,368	212,250
Total trade and other payables	**671,682**	**647,584**

Amounts received as deposits controlled by YPRL are recognised as trust funds until they are returned, transferred in accordance with the purpose of the receipt, or forfeited. Trust funds that are forfeited, resulting in YPRL gaining control of the funds, are to be recognised as revenue at the time of forfeit.

(b) Unearned income/revenue

Current		
Grants received in advance - capital	62,371	-
Total current unearned income/revenue	**62,371**	**-**

5.4 Provisions

2023	Annual Leave $	Long Service Leave $	Total $
Balance at beginning of financial year	894,847	1,455,872	2,350,719
Additional provisions	861,488	240,203	1,101,691
Amounts used	(851,549)	(300,048)	(1,151,597)
Balance at the end of the financial year	**904,786**	**1,396,027**	**2,300,813**

2022	Annual Leave $	Long Service Leave $	Total $
Balance at beginning of financial year	736,043	1,354,492	2,090,535
Additional provisions	695,892	215,804	911,696
Amounts used	(537,088)	(114,424)	(651,512)
Balance at the end of the financial year	**894,847**	**1,455,872**	**2,350,719**

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Notes to the Financial Report
for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

	2023	2022
	$	$
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled within 12 months		
Annual leave	736,962	778,517
Long service leave	380,991	405,683
	1,117,953	**1,184,200**
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled after 12 months		
Annual leave	167,825	116,330
Long service leave	916,450	946,595
	1,084,275	**1,062,925**
Total current employee provisions	**2,202,228**	**2,247,125**
Non-current		
Long service leave	98,585	103,594
Total non-current employee provisions	**98,585**	**103,594**
Aggregate carrying amount of employee provisions:		
Current	2,202,228	2,247,125
Non-current	98,585	103,594
Total aggregate carrying amount of employee provisions	**2,300,813**	**2,350,719**

The calculation of employee costs and benefits includes all relevant on-costs and are calculated as follows at reporting date.

Annual leave

A liability for annual leave is recognised in the provision for employee benefits as a current liability because YPRL does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability. Liabilities for annual leave are measured at:

- nominal value if YPRL expects to wholly settle the liability within 12 months

- present value if YPRL does not expect to wholly settle within 12 months.

Long service leave

Liability for long service leave (LSL) is recognised in the provision for employee benefits. Unconditional LSL is disclosed as a current liability as YPRL does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement. Unconditional LSL is measured at nominal value if expected to be settled within 12 months or at present value if not expected to be settled within 12 months. Conditional LSL that has been accrued, where an employee is yet to reach a qualifying term of employment, is disclosed as a non-current liability and measured at present value.

Key assumptions:

– discount rate (4.063%) as per Department of Treasury and Finance Victoria 30/06/2023

– inflation rate (4.350%) as per Department of Treasury and Finance Victoria 30/06/2023

Notes to the Financial Report

for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

5.5 Financing Facilities

YPRL does not have any credit standby arrangements, unused loan, or credit card facilities.

5.6 Commitments

YPRL has entered into the following commitments. Commitments are not recognised in the Balance Sheet. Commitments are disclosed at their nominal value and presented inclusive of the GST payable.

	2023	2022
	$	$
Cleaning Contract Expenditure	295,750	995,547
	295,750	**995,547**

The periods expected to elapse from the reporting date to the expected date of payments are as follows:

Not later than one year	295,750	557,340
Greater than one year but not later than five years	-	438,207
	295,750	**995,547**

5.7 Leases

YPRL has applied AASB 16 Leases. At inception of a contract, YPRL assesses whether a contract is, or contains, a lease. A contract is, or contains, a lease if the contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period in exchange for consideration. To identify whether a contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset, it is necessary to assess whether:

– The contract involves the use of an identified asset;

– The customer has the right to obtain substantially all the economic benefits from use of the asset throughout the period of use; and

– The customer has the right to direct the use of the asset.

This policy is applied to contracts entered into, or changed, on or after 1 July 2019.

As a lessee, YPRL recognises a right-of-use asset and a lease liability at the lease commencement date. The right-of-use asset is initially measured at cost which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability adjusted for:

– any lease payments made at or before the commencement date less any lease incentives received; plus

– any initial direct costs incurred; and

– an estimate of costs to dismantle and remove the underlying asset or to restore the underlying asset or the site on which it is located.

The right-of-use asset is subsequently depreciated using the straight-line method from the commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right-of-use asset or the end of the lease term. The estimated useful lives of right-of-use assets are determined on the same basis as those of property, plant and equipment. In addition, the right-of-use asset is periodically reduced by impairment losses, if any, and adjusted for certain measurements of the lease liability.

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments that are not paid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease or, if that rate cannot be readily determined, an appropriate incremental borrowing rate. Generally, YPRL uses an appropriate incremental borrowing rate as the discount rate.

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Notes to the Financial Report

for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability comprise the following:

– Fixed payments

– Variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate, initially measured using the index or rate as at the commencement date;

– Amounts expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee; and

– The exercise price under a purchase option that YPRL is reasonably certain to exercise, lease payments in an optional renewal period if YPRL is reasonably certain to exercise an extension option, and penalties for early termination of a lease unless YPRL is reasonably certain not to terminate early.

When the lease liability is remeasured in this way, a corresponding adjustment is made to the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset or is recorded in profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset has been reduced to zero.

Right-of-use Assets	Information and Communication Technology $	Buildings $	Total $
Balance at 1 July 2022	21,584	660,772	682,356
Additions	-	-	-
Amortisation charge	21,584	82,597	104,181
Balance at 30 June 2023	**-**	**578,175**	**578,175**

Lease Liabilities	2023 $	2022 $
Maturity analysis – undiscounted cash flows		
Less than one year	95,112	106,556
One to five years	379,243	368,197
More than five years	206,852	305,907
Total undiscounted lease liabilities at 30 June:	**681,207**	**780,660**

Lease liabilities included in Balance Sheet 30 June:

	2023	2022
Current	84,076	94,728
Non-current	556,179	634,072
Total lease liabilities	**640,255**	**728,800**

Short-term and low value leases

YPRL has elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for short-term leases which have a lease term of 12 months or less and leases of low-value assets (individual assets worth less than $10,000), including ICT equipment. YPRL recognises the lease payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Expense relating to:	2023	2022
Leases of low value assets	329,822	312,119
Total short-term and low value leases	**329,822**	**312,119**

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Notes to the Financial Report

for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Non-cancellable lease commitments – Short-term and low-value leases

Commitments for minimum lease payments for short-term and low-value leases are payable as follows:

Payable:	2023	2022
	$	$
Within one year	90,140	277,457
Later than one year but not later than five years	85,782	150,733
Total non-cancellable lease commitments – short-term and low-value leases	**175,922**	**428,191**

Notes to the Financial Report

for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 6 Assets we manage

6.1 Bookstock, and plant and equipment

Movement in the carrying amounts for each class of asset between the beginning and the end of the financial year.

2022/2023	Bookstock $	Plant & Equip. $	Total $
At valuation 1 July 2022	7,623,852	3,551,772	11,175,624
Accumulated depreciation 1 July 2022	(4,610,994)	(2,785,037)	(7,396,031)
	3,012,858	**766,735**	**3,779,593**
Movements in carrying value			
Acquisition of assets at cost	1,540,612	755,128	2,295,740
Cost value of assets disposed/written-off	(1,593,079)	(407,016)	(2,000,095)
	(52,467)	**348,112**	**295,645**
Movements in accumulated depreciation			
Depreciation expense	(1,554,757)	(125,973)	(1,680,730)
Accumulated depreciation of assets disposed/written-off	1,593,079	218,203	1,811,282
	38,322	**92,230**	**130,552**
At valuation 30 June 2023	7,571,386	3,899,884	11,471,270
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2023	(4,572,673)	(2,692,807)	(7,265,480)
Carrying amount at 30 June 2023	**2,998,713**	**1,207,077**	**4,205,790**

2021/2022	Bookstock $	Plant & Equip. $	Total $
At valuation 1 July 2021	7,678,741	3,512,773	11,191,514
Accumulated depreciation 1 July 2021	(4,697,760)	(2,629,011)	(7,326,771)
	2,980,981	**883,762**	**3,864,743**
Movements in carrying value			
Acquisition of assets at cost	1,608,177	46,707	1,654,884
Cost value of assets disposed	(1,663,066)	(7,708)	(1,670,774)
	(54,889)	**38,999**	**(15,890)**
Movements in accumulated depreciation			
Depreciation expense	(1,576,300)	(163,554)	(1,739,854)
Accumulated depreciation of assets disposed	1,663,066	7,528	1,670,594
	86,766	**(156,026)**	**(69,260)**
At valuation 30 June 2022	7,623,852	3,551,772	11,175,624
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2022	(4,610,994)	(2,785,037)	(7,396,031)
Carrying amount at 30 June 2022	**3,012,858**	**766,735**	**3,779,593**

Notes to the Financial Report

for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

6.2 Recognition and measurement of bookstock, and plant and equipment

Acquisition

The purchase method of accounting is used for all acquisitions of assets, being the fair value of assets provided as consideration at the date of acquisition plus any incidental costs attributable to the acquisition. Fair value is the amount that would be received to sell an asset (or paid to transfer a liability) in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement value.

In accordance with YPRL's policy, the threshold limits detailed in Note 6.3 have applied when recognising assets within an applicable asset class and unless otherwise stated are consistent with the prior year.

6.3 Depreciation

Collection assets and plant and equipment having limited useful lives are systematically depreciated over their useful lives to YPRL in a manner which reflects consumption of the service potential embodied in those assets. Estimates of useful lives within each major asset classes are reassessed annually. Depreciation rates and methods are reviewed annually.

Where assets have separate identifiable components that are subject to regular replacement, these components are assigned distinct useful lives and residual values and a separate depreciation rate is determined for each component.

Straight line depreciation is charged based on the useful life for each asset.

Depreciation periods used are listed below and are consistent with the prior year unless otherwise stated.

	Depreciation Periods	Threshold Limits
Plant & Equipment	3 to 30 years	$1,000
Bookstock collection	3 to 5 years	$0

Repairs and maintenance

Routine maintenance, repair costs, and minor renewal costs are expensed as incurred. Where the repair relates to the replacement of a component of an asset and the cost exceeds the capitalisation threshold the cost is capitalised and depreciated. The carrying value of the replaced asset is expensed.

6.4 Impairment of Assets

At each reporting date, YPRL reviews the carrying value of its assets to determine whether there is any indication that these assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use, is compared to the assets carrying value. Any excess of the assets carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the comprehensive income statement, unless the asset is carried at the revalued amount in which case, the impairment loss is recognised directly against the revaluation surplus in respect of the same class of asset to the extent that the impairment loss does not exceed the amount in the revaluation surplus for that same class of asset.

Notes to the Financial Report

for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 7 People and relationships

7.1 YPRL and key management remuneration

(a) Key Management Personnel

Key management personnel (KMP) are those people with the authority and responsibility for planning, directing, and controlling the activities of YPRL. The Councillors, Chief Executive Officer and Executive Managers are deemed KMP.

Details of persons holding the position of key management personnel, at any time during the year are:

Board Members	2023 No.	2022 No.
Karen Egan (Nillumbik Shire Council)	1	1
Alison Champion (Banyule City Council)	1	1
Rick Garotti (Banyule City Council) – Appointed 7 November 2022	1	-
Lydia Wilson (City of Whittlesea)	1	1
Kate McCaughey (City of Whittlesea) – Resigned 3 February 2023	1	1
Natalie Duffy (Nillumbik Shire Council) – Re-appointed 23 November 2022	1	1
Agata Chmielewski (City of Whittlesea) – Appointed 18 April 2023	1	-
Frances Eyre (Nillumbik Shire Council) – Up to 23 November 2022	-	1
Elizabeth Nealy (Banyule City Council) – Up to 7 November 2022	-	1
Total Board Members	**7**	**7**

Council Delegates		
Corrienne Nichols	1	1
Kath Brackett	1	1
Ben Waterhouse – Resigned 1 September 2021	-	1
Anthony Traill – Appointed 1 March 2022	1	1
Total Council Delegates	**3**	**4**

Executive Management Personnel		
Chief Executive Officer – Jane Cowell	1	1
Executive Manager – Corporate Services – Kate Karrasch	1	1
Executive Manager – Corporate Services – Robert Green	1	-
Executive Manager - Public Participation - Robyn Ellard	1	1
Executive Manager – Technology & Assets – Sajeeva Tennekoon	1	1
Executive Manager - Corporate Services - Claire Tootell (Resigned January 2022)	-	1
Total Executive Management Personnel	**5**	**5**

Total Key Management Personnel	**15**	**16**

Notes to the Financial Report

for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

(b) Remuneration of Key Management Personnel

Remuneration comprises employee benefits including all forms of consideration paid, payable or provided by YPRL, or on behalf of the YPRL, in exchange for services rendered. Remuneration of Key Management Personnel and Other senior staff is disclosed in the following categories.

Short-term employee benefits include amounts such as wages, salaries, annual leave or sick leave that are usually paid or payable on a regular basis, as well as non-monetary benefits such as allowances and free or subsidised goods or services.

Other long-term employee benefits include long service leave, other long service benefits or deferred compensation.

Post-employment benefits include pensions, and other retirement benefits paid or payable on a discrete basis when employment has ceased.

Termination benefits include termination of employment payments, such as severance packages.

Total remuneration of key management personnel was as follows:

	2023	2022
	$	$
Short-term employee benefits	731,583	694,011
Other long-term employee benefits	29,490	14,600
Post-employment benefits	68,947	62,612
Termination benefits	-	-
Total	**830,020**	**771,223**

The numbers of key management personnel whose total remuneration from the YPRL, fall within the following bands:

	2023	2022
	No.	No.
NIL	10	11
$60,001 – $69,999	1	1
$120,000 – $129,999	-	1
$160,000 – $169,999	1	1
$170,000 – $179,999	2	1
$220,000 – $229,999	-	1
$230,000 – $239,999	1	-
	15	**16**

(c) Remuneration of other senior staff

Other senior staff are officers of YPRL, other than Key Management Personnel, whose total remuneration exceeds $160,000 and who report directly to a member of the KMP.

At YPRL, there were no other senior staff who met the above criteria for the financial year 2022/2023.

Notes to the Financial Report

for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

(d) Transactions with related parties

During the period YPRL entered into the following transactions (Excl GST) with related parties.

	2023	2022
Expenditure	$	$
Fuel, MV Repairs, Training & Other paid to City of Whittlesea	20,080	13,048
Branch utilities (Ivanhoe, Rosanna, Watsonia) paid to Banyule City Council	111,931	86,887
Vehicle Running Cost & Other paid to Banyule City Council	12,260	9,852
Eltham Electricity paid to Nillumbik Shire Council	57,629	53,211
Contribution for Diamond Valley refurb. paid to Nillumbik Shire Council	-	45,000
Room hires paid to City of Whittlesea	10,777	-
Other Expenses paid to Nillumbik Shire Council	85	-
Total Related Party Expenditure	**212,762**	**207,997**

Revenue		
Council Library Contribution received from City of Whittlesea	5,185,036	5,112,762
Lalor Community Room contribution received from City of Whittlesea	12,000	12,000
Lalor Toy Library contribution received from City of Whittlesea	5,400	5,400
Other monies received from City of Whittlesea	1,973	-
Council Library Contribution received from Banyule City Council	5,550,711	5,376,461
Ivanhoe cleaning cost reimbursement received from Banyule City Council	99,358	83,306
Watsonia Library After Dark contribution received from Banyule City Council	15,000	30,000
Other monies received from Banyule City Council	2,931	13,944
Council Library Contribution received from Nillumbik Shire Council	3,022,440	2,999,166
Diamond Valley Indigenous Art project Grant received from Nillumbik Shire Council	5,000	-
Other monies received from Nillumbik Shire Council	6,268	908
Total Related Party Revenue	**13,906,117**	**13,633,947**

(e) Outstanding balances with related parties

	2023	2022
	$	$
Monies owed to Banyule City Council	621	12,167
Monies owed by Banyule City Council	19,884	21,245
Monies owed to City of Whittlesea	660	-
Monies owed by City of Whittlesea	500	-

(f) Loans to/from related parties
There are no outstanding loans to/from related parties.

(g) Commitments to/from related parties
There are no outstanding commitments to/from related parties.

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Notes to the Financial Report

for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 8 Managing uncertainties

8.1 Contingent assets and liabilities

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Balance Sheet, but are disclosed and if quantifiable, are measured at nominal value. Contingent assets and liabilities are presented inclusive of GST receivable or payable, respectively.

(a) Contingent assets

Contingent assets are possible assets that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of YPRL.

As at 30 June 2023, YPRL is not aware of any contingent assets.

(b) Contingent liabilities

Contingent liabilities are:

   - possible obligations that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of YPRL; or

   - present obligations that arise from past events but are not recognised because:

   - it is not probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation; or

   - the amount of the obligation cannot be measured with sufficient reliability.

As at 30 June 2023, YPRL is are not aware of any contingent liabilities.

(c) Superannuation

YPRL has obligations under a defined benefit superannuation scheme that may result in the need to make additional contributions to the scheme, matters relating to this potential obligation are outlined below. As a result of the volatility in financial markets the likelihood of making such contributions in future periods exists.

(d) Liability Mutual Insurance

YPRL is a participant of the MAV Liability Mutual Insurance (LMI) Scheme. The LMI scheme provides public liability and professional indemnity insurance cover. The LMI scheme states that each participant will remain liable to make further contributions to the scheme in respect of any insurance year in which it was a participant to the extent of its participant's share of any shortfall in the provision set aside in respect of that insurance year, and such liability will continue whether or not the participant remains a participant in future insurance years.

8.2 Financial instruments

(a) Objectives and policies

YPRL's principal financial instruments comprise cash assets, term deposits, receivables (excluding statutory receivables), and payables (excluding statutory payables). Details of the significant accounting policies and methods adopted, including the criteria for recognition, the basis of measurement and the basis on which income and expenses are recognised, in respect of each class of financial asset, financial liability and equity instrument is disclosed in the notes of the financial statements. Risk management is carried out by senior management under policies approved by YPRL. These policies include identification and analysis of the risk exposure to YPRL and appropriate procedures, controls and risk minimisation.

(b) Market risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of YPRL's financial instruments will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. YPRL's exposure to market risk is primarily through interest rate risk with only insignificant exposure to other price risks and no exposure to foreign currency risk.

Notes to the Financial Report

for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

(c) Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk refers to the risk that the value of a financial instrument or cash flows associated with the instrument will fluctuate due to changes in market interest rates. YPRL does not hold any interest-bearing financial instruments that are measured at fair value, and therefore has no exposure to fair value interest rate risk. Cash flow interest rate risk is the risk that the future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. YPRL has minimal exposure to cash flow interest rate risk through its cash and deposits that are at floating rates.

Investment of surplus funds is made with approved financial institutions under the *Local Government Act 1989 (as per the transitional provisions of the Local Government Act 2020)*.

There has been no significant change in YPRL's exposure, or its objectives, policies, and processes for managing interest rate risk or the methods used to measure this risk from the previous reporting period.

Interest rate movements have not been sufficiently significant during the year to have an impact on YPRL's year end result.

(d) Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that a contracting entity will not complete its obligations under a financial instrument and cause YPRL to make a financial loss. YPRL has exposure to credit risk on some financial assets included in the balance sheet.

Receivables consist of a large number of customers.

There are no material financial assets which are individually determined to be impaired.

(e) Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk includes the risk that, as a result of our operational liquidity requirements or we will not have sufficient funds to settle a transaction when required, we will be forced to sell a financial asset at below value or may be unable to settle or recover a financial asset.

To help reduce these risks, YPRL:

– have a liquidity portfolio structure that requires surplus funds to be invested within various bands of liquid instruments; and

– monitor budget to actual performance on a regular basis.

With the exception of borrowings, all financial liabilities are expected to be settled within normal terms of trade.

Unless otherwise stated, the carrying amounts of financial instruments reflect their fair value.

(f) Sensitivity disclosure analysis

Taking into account past performance, future expectations, economic forecasts, and management's knowledge and experience of the financial markets, YPRL believes the following movements are 'reasonably possible' over the next 12 months:

– A shift of up to + 2% to -0% in market interest rates (AUD) from year-end rates of 0.85%.

These movements will not have a material impact on the valuation of YPRL's financial assets and liabilities, nor will they have a material impact on the results of YPRL's operations.

8.3 Fair value hierarchy

YPRL financial assets and liabilities are measured at amortised cost.

YPRL measures certain assets and liabilities at fair value where required or permitted by Australian Accounting Standards. AASB 13 *Fair Value Measurement*, aims to improve consistency and reduce complexity by providing a definition of fair value and a single source of fair value measurement and disclosure requirements for use across Australian Accounting Standards.

8.4 Events occurring after balance date

No matters have occurred after balance date that require disclosure in the financial report.

Notes to the Financial Report

for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 9 Other matters
Note 9.1 Relevant financial ratios

	2023	2022
Working capital ratio assess YPRL's ability to meet current commitments		
Current assets/Current liabilities	2.17	2.49
Capital replacement ratio assess YPRL's expenditure against depreciation		
Capital spend/Depreciation	1.37	0.90

9.2 Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities to surplus/(deficit)

	2023	2022
	$	$
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(537,184)	339,631
Depreciation/amortisation	1,784,911	1,848,281
(Profit)/Loss on disposal/written-off of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	188,813	180
Interest expense on financing activities	10,908	14,166
Change in assets and liabilities:		
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	(32,572)	(27,857)
(Increase)/decrease in prepayments	4,491	(1,999)
Increase/(decrease) in unearned income /revenue	62,371	-
Increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	24,098	(503,761)
Increase/(decrease) in provisions	(49,906)	260,184
Net cash provided by operating activities	**1,455,929**	**1,928,825**

9.3 Superannuation

YPRL makes the majority of its employer superannuation contributions in respect of its employees to the Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (the Fund). This Fund has two categories of membership, accumulation and defined benefit, each of which is funded differently. Obligations for contributions to the Fund are recognised as an expense in the Comprehensive Income Statement when they are made or due.

Accumulation

The Fund's accumulation category, Vision MySuper/Vision Super Saver, receives both employer and employee contributions on a progressive basis. Employer contributions are normally based on a fixed percentage of employee earnings (for the year ended 30 June 2023, this was 10.5% as required under Superannuation Guarantee (SG) legislation (2022: 10%).

Defined Benefit

YPRL does not use defined benefit accounting for its defined benefit obligations under the Fund's Defined Benefit category. This is because the Fund's Defined Benefit category is a pooled multi-employer sponsored plan.

There is no proportional split of the defined benefit liabilities, assets, or costs between the participating employers as the defined benefit obligation is a floating obligation between the participating employers and the only time that the aggregate obligation is allocated to specific employers is when a call is made. As a result, the level of participation of Yarra Plenty Regional Library Service in the Fund cannot be measured as a percentage compared with other participating employers. Therefore, the Fund Actuary is unable to allocate benefit liabilities, assets, and costs between employers for the purposes of AASB 119.

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Notes to the Financial Report

for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Funding arrangements

YPRL makes employer contributions to the Defined Benefit category of the Fund at rates determined by the Trustee on the advice of the Fund Actuary.

A triennial actuarial investigation is currently underway for the Defined Benefit category which is expected to be completed by 31 December 2023. YPRL was notified of the 30 June 2023 VBI during August 2023 (2022: August 2022). The financial assumptions used to calculate the 30 June 2023 VBI were:

Net investment returns 5.7% pa

Salary information 3.5% pa

Price inflation (CPI) 2.8% pa

As at 30 June 2022, an interim actuarial investigation was held as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category. The vested benefit index (VBI) of the Defined Benefit category of which YPRL is a contributing employer was 102.2%. The financial assumptions used to calculate the VBI were:

Net investment returns 5.5% pa

Salary information 2.5%pa to 30 June 2023, and 3.5%pa thereafter

 Price inflation (CPI) 3.0% pa.

YPRL was notified of the 30 June 2022 VBI during August 2022 (2021: August 2021). Vision Super has advised that the estimated VBI at June 2023 was 104.1%.

The VBI is used as the primary funding indicator. Because the VBI was above 100%, the 30 June 2022 actuarial investigation determined the Defined Benefit category was in a satisfactory financial position and that no change was necessary to the Defined Benefit category's funding arrangements from prior years.

Employer contributions

    (a)   Regular contributions

    On the basis of the results of the 2022 interim actuarial investigation conducted by the Fund Actuary, YPRL makes employer contributions to the Fund's Defined Benefit category at rates determined by the Fund's Trustee. For the year ended 30 June 2023, this rate was 10.5% of members' salaries (10% in 2021/22). This rate is expected to increase in line with any increases in the SG contribution rate and was reviewed as part of the 30 June 2022 interim valuation. AASB 119 148 (a) In addition, YPRL reimburses the Fund to cover the excess of the benefits paid as a consequence of retrenchment above the funded resignation or retirement benefit.

    (b) Funding calls

    If the Defined Benefit category is in an unsatisfactory financial position at an actuarial investigation or the Defined Benefit category's VBI is below its shortfall limit at any time other than the date of the actuarial investigation, the Defined Benefit category has a shortfall for the purposes of SPS 160 and the Fund is required to put a plan in place so that the shortfall is fully funded within three years of the shortfall occurring. The Fund monitors its VBI on a quarterly basis and the Fund has set its shortfall limit at 97%.

    In the event that the Fund Actuary determines that there is a shortfall based on the above requirement, the Fund's participating employers (including YPRL) are required to make an employer contribution to cover the shortfall.

    Using the agreed methodology, the shortfall amount is apportioned between the participating employers based on the pre-1 July 1993 and post-30 June 1993 service liabilities of the Fund's Defined Benefit category, together with the employer's payroll at 30 June 1993 and at the date the shortfall has been calculated.

    Due to the nature of the contractual obligations between the participating employers and the Fund, and that the Fund includes lifetime pensioners and their reversionary beneficiaries, it is unlikely that the Fund will be wound up. If there is a surplus in the Fund, the surplus cannot be returned to the participating employers. In the event that a participating employer is wound-up, the defined benefit obligations of that employer will be transferred to that employer's successor.

Notes to the Financial Report

for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

The 2022 interim actuarial investigation surplus amounts

An actuarial investigation is conducted annually for the Defined Benefit category of which YPRL is a contributing employer. Generally, a full actuarial investigation is conducted every three years and interim actuarial investigations are conducted for each intervening year. An interim investigation was conducted as at 30 June 2022 and the last full investigation was conducted as at 30 June 2020.

The Fund's actuarial investigation identified the following for the Defined Benefit category of which YPRL is a contributing employer:

	2022 (Interim) $m	2021 (Interim) $m
A VBI surplus	$44.6	$214.7
A total service liability surplus	$105.8	$270.3
A discounted accrued benefits surplus	$111.9	$285.2

The VBI surplus means that the market value of the fund's assets supporting the defined benefit obligations exceed the vested benefits that the defined benefit members would have been entitled to if they had all exited on 30 June 2022.

The total service liability surplus means that the current value of the assets in the Fund's Defined Benefit category plus expected future contributions exceeds the value of expected future benefits and expenses as at 30 June 2022. The discounted accrued benefit surplus means that the current value of the assets in the Fund's Defined Benefit category exceeds the value of benefits payable in the future but accrued in respect of service to 30 June 2022.

The 2023 triennial actuarial investigation

A triennial actuarial investigation is being conducted for the Fund's position as at 30 June 2023. It is anticipated that this actuarial investigation will be completed by 31 December 2023. The financial assumptions for the purposes of this investigation are:

	2023 Triennial investigation	2020 Triennial investigation
Net investment return	5.7% pa	5.6% pa
Salary inflation	3.50% pa	2.50% pa for the first two years and 2.75% pa thereafter
Price inflation	2.8% pa	5.7% pa

Superannuation contributions

Contributions by YPRL (excluding any unfunded liability payments) to the above superannuation plans for the financial year ended 30 June 2023 are detailed below:

Contributions by YPRL to the above superannuation plans for the financial year ended 30 June 2021 are detailed below:

Scheme	Type of Scheme	Rate	2023 $	2021 $
Vision Super	Defined Benefit	2023 10.5% 2022 10.0%	66,810	76,808
Super funds	Accumulation Fund	2023 10.5% 2022 10.0%	946,122	835,544

There were no contributions outstanding, and no loans issued from or to the above schemes as at 30 June 2023.

The expected contributions to be paid to the Defined Benefit category of Vision Super for the year ended 30 June 2024 is $61,600.

Notes to the Financial Report

for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

9.4 Accumulated surplus

	Balance at Beginning of Period $	Increment/ (Decrement) $	Balance at End of Period $
Members Contributions (i)	3,770,080	-	3,770,080
Surplus from previous years	3,044,498	(537,184)	2,507,314
Asset replacement reserve (ii)	1,374,505	-	1,374,505
Total Contributions	**8,189,083**	**(537,184)**	**7,651,899**

(i) This represents the value of the initial contribution of net assets made by the Member Councils when it was established in 1996.

(ii) Reserve established for addressing renewal and replacement of capital assets.

Note 10 Change in accounting policy

There have been no changes to accounting policies in the 2022-23 year.

YPRL highlights

Embedding recognition into our School Holiday Programs

How we're Talking Together

Visiting home in virtual reality

Embedding recognition into our School Holiday Programs

Yarra Plenty Regional Library (YPRL) recognises the vital role public libraries play in fostering understanding of and engagement with First Nations culture. In mid-2022, our codesign work with local First Nations communities resulted in calls for stronger representation of First Nations history and culture within our library spaces and programs. In response to this, YPRL made a commitment to embed First Nations cultural experiences in all of our School Holiday Programs.

This pledge reflected our Library Plan, which highlights that creating ongoing opportunities for children and young people to connect with First Nations people increases meaningful engagement and learning. So, we worked with a range of First Nations artists, presenters and organisations to design and deliver a suite of traditional and contemporary activities acknowledging and celebrating the significance of First Nations culture and history throughout the region.

Our staff have also been supported to learn from and deliver First Nation activities in the library setting. In late-2022, staff members attended the City of Whittlesea Early Years and Conservation Conference, strengthening community connection, collaboration and inclusion. This conference fostered knowledge sharing and skill development in traditional play-based practices. At this time, local First Nations facilitator Aunty Sharon Hughes encouraged our staff to learn about and deliver a Possum Skin Painting inspired event at Lalor Library. In this session, children and families engaged with the practice through

discussion, film demonstration, learning resources, and experimentation with natural paint on calico.

Community response to our First Nation programming has been very positive. At the Possum Skin Painting session, children were excited to tell their own stories through painting, and were able to talk about their own families and what they thought was important to share in their artwork. Parents commented that they had never heard about the artform before and thought it was wonderful to see their children exploring it.

Mill Park Library and Thomastown Library also introduced digital experiences of First Nations culture during School Holiday Programs in 2022, including *Dhinawan in the Sky* and *Thalu: Dreamtime is Now*. Created by Tess Reading, a Gomeroi woman from Tamworth for Code Club Australia, *Dhinawan in the Sky* engages children in

coding and animation activities, inspired by traditional knowledge of the Dark Emu Dhinawan, star tracing stories, and time. Directed by Tyson Mowarin, *Thalu: Dreamtime is Now* immerses participants in ground-breaking virtual reality experiences, exploring stories, cultural heritage and contemporary issues of the Ngarluma Aboriginal people of northern Western Australia.

Children have participated in boomerang throwing, traditional games, performance and music making at their local library, while parents and carers increasingly report positively of these experiences. Moving forward, all YPRL branches will continue to offer a range of opportunities to engage with First Nations culture during our School Holiday Programs and beyond.

'Will you be doing more of these? He had such a good time and it's so good for them to be learning from Elders.'

Parent of participant

By offering unique and meaningful engagement with First Nations culture beyond what children might encounter in the classroom, YPRL's School Holiday Program activities continue to support increased community awareness and respect for First Nation histories, languages, traditions and contributions.

In the spirit of reconciliation and truth-telling, events and activities also amplify local First Nations voices and stories, inspired by and reflecting YPRL's emerging Deadly Collection and endorsement of the *Uluru Statement from* the *Heart.*

Kate Hansen
Programs Manager
Yarra Plenty Regional Library

Debra Fothergill
Coordinator, Programs & Engagement
Lalor Library
Yarra Plenty Regional Library

How we're Talking Together

At Yarra Plenty Regional Library (YPRL) we work hard to make our libraries welcoming, inviting, and inclusive spaces for the whole community. In early 2022, we found out through feedback to council that the local Somali Australian community in West Heidelberg did not feel welcome in library spaces and didn't think that libraries were there for them.

We know that using libraries connects people not just to books and education but also to their local communities and the people around them, leading to improved social, mental, and physical health outcomes. We started planning how we could make our library spaces more welcoming to the local Somali Australian community.

In April 2022, we learned that we had been successful in our application for a Libraries for Health and Wellbeing Innovation Grant to the value of just under $80,000, to engage with the Somali community, create a deliberate welcome, codesign programming to bring people into the library, and promote better health and wellbeing for the community through library engagement.

This project was driven by our Community Program Officers, Mahamed Hassan Awl and Aisha Ahmed, who were both employed under the grant. Mahamed and Aisha are both local Somali Australians and brought with them strong networks and a rich understanding of the community. Having the program led by members of the community we were trying to engage meant that we were able to jump straight into meaningful conversations and connections.

Throughout the year, Aisha and Mahamed built connections with community and partners including Himilo Community Connect. An outreach program was also established where staff from Rosanna Library visited the Himilo Community Connect Playgroup once a month for a Storytime session. These sessions were very well received, with families enjoying the interaction with the Storytime presenter and learning new songs.

Aisha and Mahamed also identified that a gap for the Somali Australian community was career development. Young Somali Australians are highly educated, more so than the broader Australian population, but they are less likely to be in employment and often lack role models that look like them in their desired fields. With this in mind Aisha and Mahamed decided that a CALD Careers Expo in the library would be a good way to support the community, promote connection, and ultimately lead to better health and wellbeing outcomes.

The expo took place in December 2022 at Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub, in partnership with Himilo Community Connect and Jobs Victoria. Over 250 people attended, with many connecting with employers and even getting jobs on the day. Exhibitors included employers, education services, councils, and legal services, and sessions ran through the day.

The grant culminated in an art installation in the gallery space at the library in partnership with Banyule City Council and a Somali Cultural Festival on Sunday 5 March 2023.

The vibrant exhibition drew crowds from across Melbourne and attracted social media attention globally. Somali poets performed at the exhibition launch and there was a ceremonial unwrapping and sharing of a traditional wedding meat dish. The exhibition itself featured a striking vinyl wall wrap replicating a Somali landscape, a woven replica of a traditional Somali hut, lots of hand weaving and artifacts, and a series of proverbs (important in Somali culture) matched with photos of Somalia. Other events during that period included Baati Night, a special evening for women with games and dancing; a weaving workshop with one of the exhibition artists; a FIFA competition; and a Somali Storytime.

Talking Together aimed to bring the Somali Australian community into the library and foster stronger community connection with an increased sense of community belonging. The results have been highly successful, thanks to having community members at the heart of the project, both through a codesign approach and through employing Somali Australian staff. There has been a significant and sustained increase in the Somali Australian community using the library, leading to further positive social and mental health outcomes.

Kate Ferguson
Senior Manager
Engagement & Operations
Mill Park Library
Yarra Plenty Regional Library

Jane Petryszyn
Coordinator, Programs & Engagement
Rosanna Library
Yarra Plenty Regional Library

Visiting home in virtual reality

At Yarra Plenty Regional Library (YPRL) we recognise the value of play and gaming as an opportunity for education, socialisation, fun, and engagement across a range of demographic groups. At our libraries you are never too young, or too old, to engage in play! In partnership with a range of council and health services, Diamond Valley Library delivered an innovative digital activity that incorporates gaming and virtual reality into our services.

Following on from the Be Connected program, staff identified an opportunity for further digital inclusion programs for older people. Our Armchair Travels program is designed for older people that are interested in exploring virtual reality, gaming, and augmented reality. It highlights the broad outcomes of lifelong learning, health and wellbeing, and social connection. Virtual reality is much more than simple entertainment, it's a way to reinvigorate the mind, stimulate imagination, strengthen social connections, and – for most of our participants – boldly try something they have never attempted before! Armchair Travels has impacted the lives of our participants through meaningful and shared experiences in virtual reality that stimulate memories, drive social engagement, and bring joy. It offers opportunities for patrons to drive their own experience. They might choose an adventure, or a location to visit, and can even lead explorations of virtual environments with others.

In one Armchair Travels session library users travel through an online tour of a destination of their choice, all while sitting in the safety of a comfy chair in

the library. Many of the patrons have used this technology to travel back to their hometowns, cities they have visited, or countries their families migrated from and relived memories or stories of yesteryear and traversed through the area and rediscovered their past. This is otherwise impossible for many of them, due to health or financial barriers making physical travel to these places impossible. By using virtual reality, they are able to reconnect with their past, share with their family and friends the similarities or differences of their favourite places or experiences.

Through the virtual world, our users are immersed in a brand-new experience alongside their friends and family. But the real magic of virtual reality happens when the headsets come off, after a virtual reality experience, patrons are often eager to talk about what they have seen, where they have been, and are often keen to share some long-forgotten stories of their own past or hometowns. These memories then unlock conversations

about food, family, friends, and fears. The discussions afterward are always engaging for the entire group who usually have lots of questions about the virtual visits. One community member, John (78) used the opportunity to visit Thailand and experience some of their history and culture, without leaving his seat. He said that the experience was so real that he felt like he was actually there.

Whilst there are many clinical and health benefits to group virtual reality sessions, sharing joyful moments and experiencing joy is what these sessions are all about. Armchair Travels is delivered as a monthly program increasing digital literacy for older people. The success of this program has been a highlight for staff and partners and the community, and we have received requests for more sessions across the library service.

We have also leveraged this engagement to increase our opportunities for collaboration on other digital literacy programs that explore the curiosity of our users, resulting in brain training games, scam awareness training, tech help, intergenerational storytime, and more. These codesign opportunities have enabled our staff to design future meaningful programming and collaboration with older people throughout the local communities. We have continued to deliver Armchair Travels in a variety of branches and expos and are looking forward to future opportunities to explore the virtual world with many others through public play in our library services.

'They absolutely loved it, was all the talk on the bus back, over lunch and transport home. Thank you so much.'

Cristopher Pizarro
Coordinator, Programs & Engagement
Lalor Library
Yarra Plenty Regional Library

Teresa Dober
Coordinator, Programs & Engagement
Diamond Valley Library
Yarra Plenty Regional Library

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES