



PUBLIC LIBRARIES:

The heart of community
wellbeing >

A SUMMARY OF RESEARCH UNDERTAKEN
WITH FRANKADVICE ON LIBRARIES AS A
VEHICLE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY
//FEBRUARY 2023



Introduction



Modern libraries go far beyond a book lending service. They're community hubs, connections to the digital world, and places that contribute to the wellbeing and social cohesion of our communities. They're also an important vehicle for councils and central government agencies to deliver services locally.

In 2022 LGNZ began working with FrankAdvice to better understand the role of libraries in public service delivery, and how they might provide a model for a more joined-up approach to service delivery that enhances community wellbeing.

Community wellbeing and placemaking are at the heart of local government's purpose, and public libraries are well placed to enhance both.

They foster networks, provide spaces for people to gather and share their cultural knowledge, and are adapting their services to respond to the needs of their community and place.

This work is relevant to the Review into the Future for Local Government, but it's also broader. We encourage councils to consider how they can enable and resource public libraries to evolve their services and better enhance community wellbeing.

This work provides the evidence that libraries are already trusted providers of government services, extending well beyond their core services.



It gives an overview of relevant literature to show how libraries are evolving their services to enhance community wellbeing in Aotearoa and around the world.



It summarises the findings of our survey of 39 public libraries in New Zealand.



It presents a series of case studies highlighting best practice and innovative service delivery already happening.

WHAT THE EVIDENCE SHOWS US:

WE UNDERTOOK A SCAN OF RELEVANT LITERATURE TO UNDERSTAND HOW THE SERVICES BEING DELIVERED THROUGH PUBLIC LIBRARIES ARE PROVIDING VALUE TO THEIR COMMUNITIES IN AOTEAROA AND AROUND THE WORLD. IT PROVIDES AN OVERVIEW OF THE EVOLVING ROLE OF LIBRARIES AND THE SERVICES THEY DELIVER, HOW THEY ARE DELIVERED, AND HOW THEY CONTRIBUTE TO COMMUNITY WELLBEING.

SOME OF THE KEY FINDINGS INCLUDE:

// Libraries are trusted by communities, who use them to find information they know is reliable. They contribute to social cohesion as places people go to meet others and learn new things.

// One way that libraries deliver value is through the personal and institutional relationships (across community members and organisations) as well as the networks (both community and nationwide) they support.

// Libraries and museums are increasingly called on to fill gaps in service delivery left by depleted or absent public sector supports for education, public health and social services. They also act as a foundation for local and central government engagement with communities.

// The increased demand for service delivery through libraries has impacted the operational burden for individual libraries, particularly in terms of funding, capacity, and capability.



// The expanding role and responsibilities of public libraries are yet to be reflected in policy decisions and the allocation of central funding. It shows a discrepancy in the funding model, where public libraries are increasingly seen as part of the national infrastructure, but the funding sources remain almost entirely local.

// In many communities libraries have already emerged as the public institution taking responsibility for bridging the 'digital divide' by providing equitable access to information and the digital world through free internet access, use and loans of digital devices, classes to learn online skills and assistance with online tasks.

// During COVID-19 many libraries stepped in to bridge the digital gap in their communities through outdoor Wi-Fi, hotspot lending and technology support. There's potential for libraries to have a greater role in digital equity in the future.

// Libraries are trusted by communities who use them to find information they know is reliable. They operate as the access point for literacy of all types, including financial literacy, digital literacy, information literacy, and health and wellbeing literacy.

// The public trust in libraries can also offset the lack of confidence that many people have in other government institutions, and in the information accessed via the internet. As a result, libraries are increasingly operating as a vehicle for service delivery for online central and local government services.

// There's a significant gap in the literature about how central and local governments can take a joined-up approach to providing support to libraries.



SURVEY RESULTS

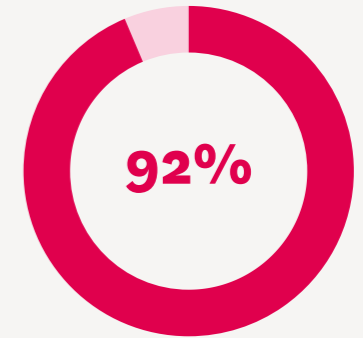
from public libraries >

WE UNDERTOOK A SURVEY OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES TO BETTER UNDERSTAND HOW THEY'RE DELIVERING SERVICES IN THEIR COMMUNITIES. 39 LIBRARIES ANSWERED THE SURVEY AND REPRESENTED A RANGE OF SIZES, LEVELS OF FUNDING AND GEOGRAPHIC DISTRICTS.

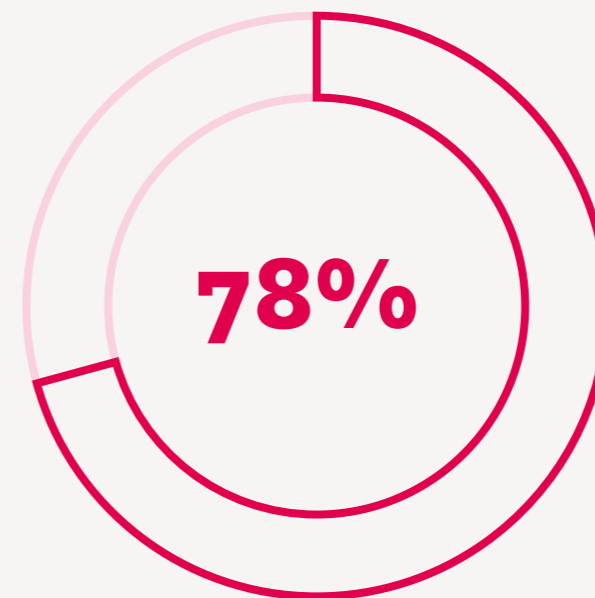
OVERALL, THE SURVEY SHOWED THAT IN ADDITION TO THEIR CORE SERVICES, LIBRARIES DELIVER A WIDE RANGE OF SERVICES ON BEHALF OF LOCAL AND CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. MOST AGREE THAT THESE ADDITIONAL SERVICES ADD VALUE TO THEIR COMMUNITIES, AND THAT LIBRARIES ARE A GOOD VEHICLE FOR DELIVERING ADDITIONAL LOCAL AND CENTRAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES. HOWEVER, MORE RESOURCES ARE NEEDED TO DELIVER THESE ADDITIONAL SERVICES.

SOME OF THE KEY FINDINGS INCLUDE:

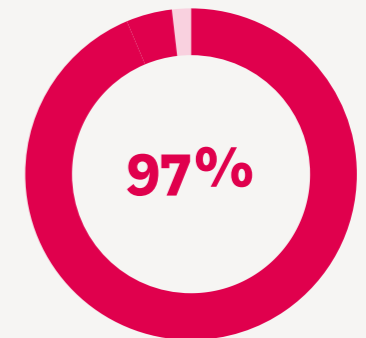
Most libraries deliver additional services on behalf of local and central government.



92% of respondent libraries said they deliver services on **behalf of local government**. This included having ballot boxes for local elections, hosting a council service centre, and civil defence/emergency preparedness services.



78% of respondent libraries indicated that incorporating te ao Māori was "extremely important" or "very important" to them when designing and delivering their services. This has included developing bicultural strategies, upskilling staff in their understanding of te reo, mātauranga Māori, tikanga and Te Tiriti, offering services and support that specifically relates to te ao Māori, and having relationships with their local iwi. 80% of respondent libraries had a relationship with their local iwi.



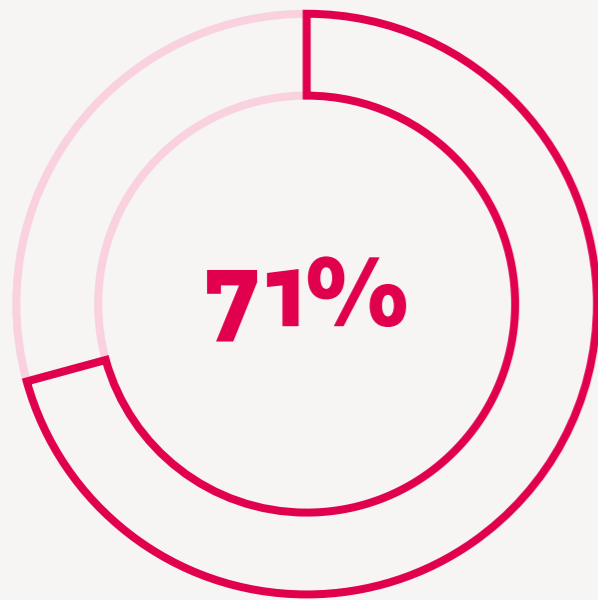
97% of respondent libraries said they deliver services on **behalf of central government**. This included helping patrons to access government services online, jobseeker support, and hosting digital equity programmes.

Most libraries said they offer these additional services in response to requests from the community, particularly to fill gaps created by central government. However some felt they had no choice in what services they offered but were expected by local and central government to provide these services.

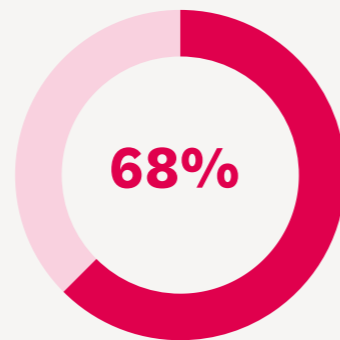


More funding is needed for libraries to sustainably provide these services.

The additional services libraries provide on behalf of local government are generally better funded than the additional services libraries provide on behalf of central government. On average 81% of the additional services they provided on behalf of local government had enough funding, but only 33% of the additional services they provided on behalf of central government had enough funding. For 16% of the services delivered on behalf of local government and 45% of the services delivered on behalf of central government libraries received no funding.



71% of libraries indicated there was additional demand for more services that they weren't able to meet. The most common areas were additional skill classes, more staff to assist library patrons with accessing central government services, more physical spaces for community groups to use, and expanded outreach services for rural communities or speakers of other languages.

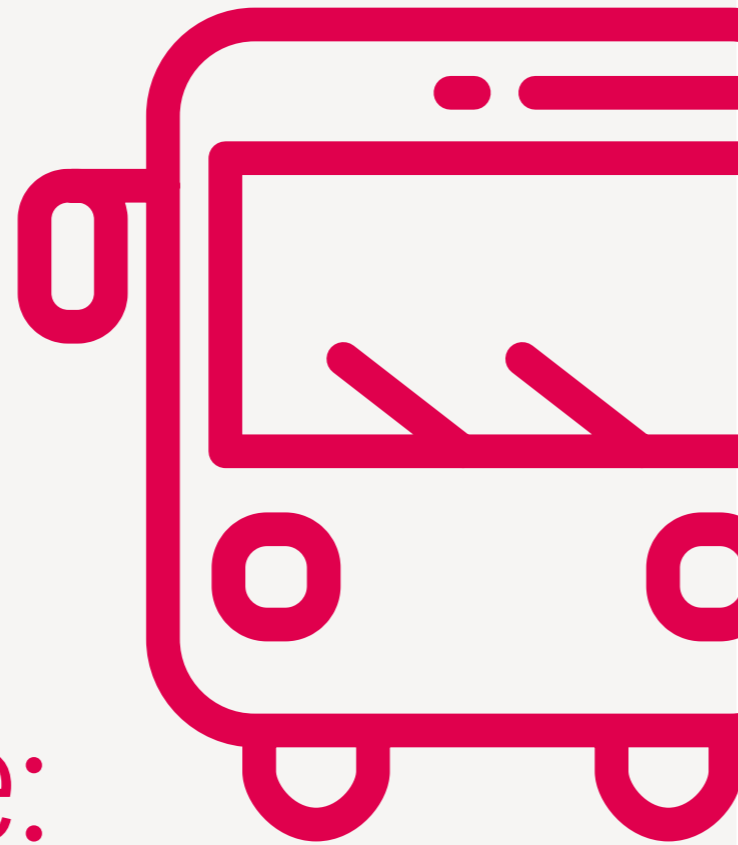


68% of respondents agreed that libraries are a good vehicle for delivering additional local and central government services. Many pointed out that since libraries are trusted and inclusive spaces used by a wide cross-section of the community, they are well placed to deliver services on behalf of central and local government. However additional resources and funding are essential to deliver these government services.

Overall libraries agreed that the additional services they offer are valuable to the community. They improved knowledge and skills, provided leisure and play opportunities to support community wellbeing, and supported community voice, cultural capability and a sense of belonging.



Delivery models and the future state:



DURING A WORKSHOP WITH LIBRARY MANAGERS FROM ACROSS THE MOTU, WE DISCUSSED THE SURVEY FINDINGS AND SPOKE ABOUT DIFFERENT MODELS OF INTEGRATED DELIVERY THAT CAN BE ADOPTED BY LOCAL AND CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, AND WHAT LIBRARIES NEED TO BE AT THE HEART OF THIS INTEGRATED MODEL IN THE FUTURE.

MODELS FOR INTEGRATED DELIVERY INCLUDE:

// Partnership model, where libraries partner with central and local government service providers to provide complementary services for their community (eg, Rotorua Library |Te Aka Mauri – Children’s Health Hub).

// Integrated delivery model, where central government technically offers and is accountable for the service (and owns the benefits), but some people need the resources of the library and perhaps help of a librarian to access it (eg, a Ministry of Social Development counter at the local library).

// Proscriptive model, where libraries may be expected to deliver additional services, whether local government or central government services (eg, driver licensing). These services may or may not be closely related to libraries’ main service provision, and libraries may end up sharing accountability for service delivery.

// Spaces, where libraries lease out/host spaces for additional services to be delivered.

// New builds, where new library community infrastructure are designed and built with integrated service delivery in mind (eg, Te Ara Ātea in Rolleston).

WHEN THINKING ABOUT THE IDEAL FUTURE STATE, WHERE LIBRARIES COULD BE POSITIONED AT THE HEART OF A JOINED-UP APPROACH TO PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY, KEY FEATURES WOULD INCLUDE:

// Libraries are represented at the decision-making table (for both central and local government).

// Partnership is prioritised at all levels and reflected consistently by decision makers. Libraries are consistently supported to uphold these commitments.

// There is national-level support either from central government or libraries collaborating across the country, to fund consistent library services (e.g., IT systems, background support) that all libraries deliver. This will ensure that people can access the same services across the motu, but libraries still have the autonomy to develop and finetune their services to what each community needs.

// Libraries have adequate physical space to offer additional services beyond their current scope.

// Above all else, participants agreed that libraries need to remain neutral, safe spaces that anyone in their local community can access.

EXAMPLES OF **BEST PRACTICE IN SERVICE DELIVERY**

WE IDENTIFIED SIX CASE STUDIES TO HIGHLIGHT SOME OF THE MODELS FOR SERVICE DELIVERY USED BY LIBRARIES, AND EXAMPLES OF WHERE LIBRARIES HAVE EVOLVED THEIR SERVICES TO DELIVER TO THE NEEDS OF THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND DELIVER WELLBEING OUTCOMES.



01



TE PAATAKA KOORERO O TAKAANINI IN TĀMAKI MAKĀURAU

Te Paataka Koorero o Takaanini is an example of a bilingual integrated library and community hub that provides much more than the core services of a library. It features a community kitchen, three community spaces, a dedicated play area for tamariki and a parent room. The Library and Community Hub's mixture of community facilities together in one place ensures good service and connection to the local community and exceptional value for money for ratepayers.

Kaimahi at the Library and Community Hub partner with mana whenua and continuously engage with community to enable the whānau centric kaupapa. Te Paataka Koorero o Takaanini (completed March 2021) has succeeded in filling gaps in community provision and is also proving to be a focal point for the community in satisfying work, play and cultural needs for all. The Hub is in a leased building to enable more sustainable provision of Council's asset-based services in the future. The new leasing approach enables a condensed delivery timeline and exceptional value for money compared to the traditional model of land acquisition and new build.



02

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HAMILTON CITY LIBRARIES – TE UU KI TE TIKANGA RUA BICULTURAL COMMITMENT

To better serve the changing needs of their communities, Hamilton City Libraries has a Bicultural Commitment that establishes the strategic framework for the ongoing bicultural engagement of the libraries and outlines the principles that will guide its implementation. Biculturalism at Hamilton City Libraries is manifested in their engagement and partnership with te iwi Waikato. It acknowledges the unique position of Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand and the need to secure their participation in all aspects of the libraries. Hamilton City Libraries bases its Bicultural Commitment on five key principles: manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, kaitiakitanga, puukengatanga, and te reo Māori.

One of the outcomes of embedding the strategic framework is the formation of Te Puna Awhina, a dedicated libraries working group to support observation of key days of significance for Māori across the library branches. The rōpu is focused on working collaboratively to further educate both customers and staff. Another outcome was conducting a Māori collections review in consultation with mana whenua to integrate the Māori collection at branch libraries and provide better wayfaring signage to help people navigate these collections.



03

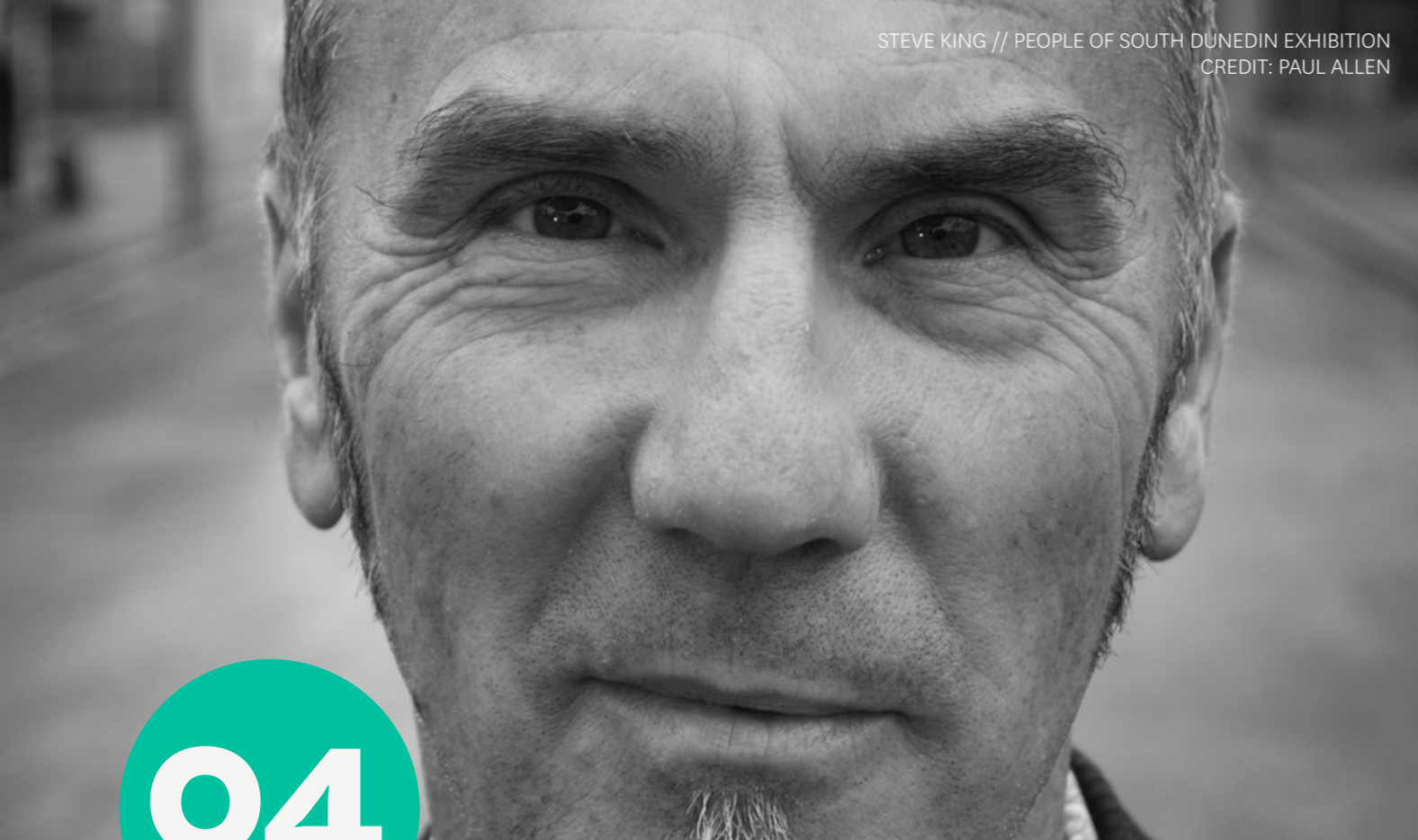
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TAURANGA CITY LIBRARIES INCORPORATION OF MĀTAURANGA MĀORI THROUGH THE WAKA HOURUA MODEL

To better preserve Māori history, Tauranga City Libraries' Heritage and Research Team endeavours to incorporate Mātauranga Māori into Pae Korokī (the Tauranga archives online) and into their collection and preservation practices. The team initially developed a Kaitiakitanga Framework to understand how Pākehā and Māori approaches to heritage material are different before launching the Waka Hourua Model in 2021. Through the Waka Hourua Model, Tauranga City Libraries has developed four tools that reimagine how to collect or receive content, recognise

rangatiratanga, incorporate Māori information seeking and organising needs, and communicate respect and good heart across all material in their collection. The four tools are a Memorandum of Understanding (Taonga Māori), Cultural/Ethical Status, Whakapapa Fields, and a Kaitiakitanga Statement.

Wānanga about the framework has deepened understanding and discussion in the national galleries, libraries, archives and museums (GLAM) sector, within the Tauranga City Council and with local kaumatua groups. It has also been used to deepen the understanding of the project team and architects to create a world leading architectural interpretation of the archive concept in the central city community hub to be built on the Te Papa block site in the city centre.



04

05



DUNEDIN PUBLIC LIBRARIES - IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE DUNEDIN LEBANESE COMMUNITY

RECOLLECT/SCATTERED SEEDS

In 2015, the Dunedin Lebanese Community donated a gift to the Dunedin Public Libraries to establish a Digitisation Centre at the City Library and develop an archive: 'Scattered Seeds – He Purapura Marara'. The website collects the memories, mementos, and stories of the people – individuals, whānau and hapū, ethnic groups and cultures – that have landed in Dunedin from all over the world and call Dunedin home. The archive will continue to develop and grow.

The Scattered Seeds archive has been welcomed by members of the Dunedin Lebanese community in Dunedin and beyond, including people living internationally, who use it to reconnect with their roots. To date, the site has allowed the preservation of over 9,000 pieces of history including photographs, videos, manuscripts, and biographies. Without the existence of the archive, it is likely that many of these items would be lost to time. The archive will live in perpetuity and year on year the range of content will increase to create a rich interrelated tapestry of Dunedin and Otago's heritage.



CENTRAL HAWKE'S BAY DISTRICT LIBRARIES - TE HUIंगा WAI KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING HUB

Te Huinga Wai, the Knowledge and Learning Hub is home to Central Hawke's Bay District Libraries and has become a hub for the local community to utilise a range of services such as hiring a book, attending a meeting, renewing a driver license, finding employment, participating in a programme or spending some quiet time reading the paper. This repurposed building has been turned into a multi-use facility which acts as a hub for the whole community.

The name Te Huinga Wai was gifted to the building, and signifies confluence, the mixing of ideas and letting ideas and learning flow. The facility offers so much opportunity for the community as it allows for collaboration with local service providers resulting in services not being offered in isolation. A community member can be exposed to a wide range of services they would not normally be exposed to by attending this facility. Te Huinga Wai has allowed Central Hawke's Bay District Libraries to test new ideas and shape what library services can look like in the future, taking into consideration the huge growth Central Hawke's Bay is experiencing.



06



UPPER HUTT LIBRARIES OUTREACH AND MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICES

The purpose of Upper Hutt Libraries' Mobile and Outreach services is to try and overcome barriers to accessing libraries services in order to promote reading and equitable access to information for all ages in the Upper Hutt communities, both now and into the future. Upper Hutt Libraries serve over 100,000 visitors every year, but there are many residents who are unable to visit the library buildings. Reasons can include physical impediments, social isolation (particularly for the elderly), lack of transportation, language and/or cultural issues. In response to this, Upper Hutt Libraries offer several Mobile and Outreach services including mobile libraries, delivery services and online access to digital content.

Feedback from customers of the Mobile and Outreach sections has been excellent, particularly from the elderly or disabled who are unable to regularly visit a library in person. Many front-line services have been disrupted by COVID-19 in the last three years. Despite these obstacles, Upper Hutt Libraries still managed to connect with over 4,000 residents and issue over 7,000 items in the 2021-22 financial year using their Mobile Libraries. During the Omicron outbreak in early 2022 Upper Hutt Libraries worked closely with Council's COVID-19 Connector service to support families who were isolating at home, by providing free Click & deliver services, as well as Grab bags (of books and activities) for tamariki, leveraging the existing mobile and outreach services to continue to meet the needs of the community.

CONCLUSION

WE'LL CONTINUE TO DEVELOP THIS PROJECT TO EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIBRARIES TO BE PLACED AT THE HEART OF A MORE INTEGRATED PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL. IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS RESEARCH OR WOULD LIKE TO KNOW MORE, PLEASE CONTACT LGNZ'S LIBRARIES ADVISOR MARION READ AT:

//
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Ko Tātou
LGNZ.