LIBRARIES
STRATEGIC PLAN
2018-21
VISION
Our libraries - enriching and strengthening lives by connecting people to resources and activities in welcoming and inclusive places.
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Introduction

Public libraries are places in which ‘people can engage, learn, participate and be introduced to new ideas and technologies in a safe and supportive environment’\(^1\).

The City of Onkaparinga’s libraries are strongly valued by our communities, providing a highly utilised collection for borrowing, well attended activities and programs, and a safe and welcoming space to meet, study and work.

Community members of all ages and socio-economic circumstances seek support, information and social connection from their local library across six locations in Aberfoyle Park, Aldinga, Seaford, Noarlunga, Willunga and Woodcroft. As well as providing library services to our communities, three of our libraries (The Hub library at Aberfoyle Park and the Noarlunga and Seaford libraries) deliver services to students and teachers of the Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) and Technical and Further Education (TAFE) through joint use agreements.

An outreach service delivers library resources to residents who are unable to visit the library due to long term illness, frailty or disability.

Our library service is supported by a large number of volunteers who assist staff and library users in a variety of ways.

Council makes a significant investment in libraries and is supported by funding from the state government through the Libraries Board of South Australia.

Onkaparinga libraries are members of the statewide ‘One Card’ network which allows users to borrow and return items to any library across South Australia.

We are guided by the objectives of the Libraries Act South Australia 1982 and by a range of national standards for public libraries established and maintained by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) - the national professional organisation for the Australian library services sector.

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\(^1\) Tomorrow’s Libraries, State Government publication (pg. 5)
What our libraries offer

Onkaparinga libraries provide a range of learning, cultural, literacy support and social connection opportunities for our communities. These include:

- A diverse range of physical and digital collections that support lifelong learning and recreation
- Activities which provide new experiences and ways of connecting with others such as making and doing in a makerspace activity with other likeminded community members
- Activities which provide language, literacy, learning and digital literacy support from the earliest stages of literacy and language development at our baby-time sessions through to author events for all ages, poetry slams and digital literacy support
- Spaces designed to accommodate a range of needs that include anything from quiet study to interactive learning and children’s story time
- Technology responsive to changing community needs, which is relevant, accessible and supported by library staff
- Access to local history in a range of formats
- Staff who are trained to support learning and literacy needs and interests, as well as maximising the use of digital and other technologies by library users
- A range of complementary services such as Justices of the Peace and tax help.

In 2017 Onkaparinga Libraries:

- Had 54,525 registered library members
- Recorded 972,213 visits
- Made 1,315,571 physical loans
- Made 76,231 electronic loans
- Hosted 21,384 WiFi sessions
- Offered 2503 programs
- Delivered activities attended by 42,554 people.

Our communities: a snapshot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POPULATION 2018</th>
<th>172,694</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHILDREN &amp; YOUNG PEOPLE (aged 0 to 17)</td>
<td>39,267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENIORS 65+</td>
<td>29,729</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| EDUCATION              | 44.3%   |
| TERTIARY QUALIFICATION | 48.3%   |

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<tr>
<th>2018-28 FORECASTS</th>
<th></th>
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<tr>
<td>SENIORS 65+</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARENTS &amp; HOMEBUILDERS (aged 35 to 49)</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHILDREN &amp; YOUNG PEOPLE (aged 0 to 17)</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| EMPLOYED PART TIME     | 38.5% |
| UNEMPLOYMENT RATE       | 8.4%  |

1. FORECAST ID
2. PROFILE ID
3. DEPARTMENT OF JOBS, SMALL BUSINESS, SMALL AREA LABOUR MARKET DECEMBER 2017
Libraries Strategic Plan

Onkaparinga Community Facilities Map (including the six libraries)
The Libraries Strategic Plan

In February 2018, Council approved the outcomes of the library service review, one of which was to develop a Strategic Management Plan to set the direction for our libraries.

The review highlighted libraries’ role as a community service that must evolve to keep pace with the rate of change across digital, social and demographic trends. We need to be flexible and responsive to make sure libraries provide the best value to our community by delivering services that are relevant and contemporary within our available budgets.

The Libraries Strategic Plan 2018-21 (SP) has been developed to ensure we achieve this aspiration. It is underpinned by Council’s community plan, Onkaparinga 2035, and will contribute to its objectives and desired outcomes. The SP has been developed following extensive consultation with our community and library staff.

The Libraries SP sets direction for how we provide library services, ensuring we meet community needs and prepare for the changing nature of library service offerings. This will be done with regard to the overall provision of community facilities and services being managed through the community facilities coordination project which is based on the direction set with our Community Facilities Guidelines.

The Libraries SP is aligned with Onkaparinga 2035 (our community plan) across three themes of people, place and prosperity. It provides a framework for planning and developing library services in a broader organisational context.

“I have found somewhere to belong where I am accepted and appreciated for whom I am and for my skills. I no longer feel lonely or a failure.”
Looking ahead: challenges and opportunities

Looking ahead, our libraries must position themselves to meet the growing needs of library users who utilise and value their services, as well as the broader community who could benefit from what they provide.

This will take place in an environment of rapidly changing technology usage, demographic shifts, and expectations that all council services provide the best value for money.

The key challenges our libraries face include:

**Increasing user expectations of library services**

There is an increasing diversity of library users who use the space for multiple purposes far beyond the perceived ‘standard’ library services. It is a challenge to meet this diversity of needs, while maintaining the ‘core’ library services.

**Digital literacy support**

There is a growing and constantly evolving demand for libraries to provide support across the gamut of digital literacy needs. This ranges from those who need one-on-one support to understand and use devices and platforms, to the ‘digital natives’ requiring more advanced guidance to connect with and discern the value of quality digital content.

**Access to technology**

Access to free, reliable technology such as computers and WiFi is vital to social inclusion – particularly for those who are unable to afford their own internet connection. Increasing numbers of government and other providers offer online options only for access to their services, and people are more and more being referred to libraries for this purpose.

**Non-library user perceptions**

For those who haven’t visited a library in recent years, there remains a perception that the physical collection – i.e. borrowing books – constitutes the entirety of what libraries provide. This misconception may be contributing to under-utilisation by particular non-user groups, who might otherwise become library users.

**Diversity of expectations for physical space**

While some library users visit for quiet spaces to study, others bring noise, colour and social interaction. The reality is that we want to encourage users of all kinds but need to find ways to accommodate everyone in a manner that supports positive library experiences.

**Funding constraints**

In an environment of increased cost pressure for local government, there is little opportunity to seek additional internal funding for library services to meet increasing demand.

**Falling literacy rates amongst children, youth and adults**

Australia’s national and international rankings on literacy across language, literacy and critical STEAM skills (e.g. Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) are falling. At a local level, there are pockets within Onkaparinga where children fall below the national standards for literacy established by the Australian Early Development Census (AECD). Libraries need to find ways to help turn this trend around by partnering with government and non-government agencies (such as the Smith Family, local kindergartens and childcare centres) and employing informal learning techniques to meet the needs of those who need literacy support.

**Our ageing communities**

As our communities age, there will be increasing demand for the kinds of support our older residents require. This is likely to include a particular focus on keeping pace with the rate of technological change, which is becoming an essential component of remaining a functional contributor to the community.

“Having been a library user as a parent, teacher, retired person, and now as a nanna – the library is a wonderful institution for all age groups.”
Roles and guiding principles

These statements define Council’s role in providing library services. They also outline our aspirations and priorities. They will underpin significant decision making.

Role Statements

We are a **direct service provider** of libraries. We receive part funding from state government to fulfil this service.

**Information provider/promoter**

We promote the critical importance of learning and literacy, and provide information and resources to support these.

**Owner/custodian**

We develop and manage community facilities that we own or lease, and work with our joint-use partners and our facilities maintenance staff to ensure our library buildings are fit for purpose.

Policy Principles

**Putting people first**

We champion the development of a literate community, support informal learning opportunities and provide for social inclusion. We encourage creativity and the use of imagination within both the physical and virtual library.

**Enabling equity**

We work to ensure that our communities have equitable access to information, resources, opportunities and services.

**Promoting strengths**

We recognise and promote our strengths including dedicated and skilled staff, relevant collections, and quality facilities which enable us to deliver library services.

**Seeking to understand**

Our decisions are informed by available evidence, expert advice and participation in industry bodies such as Public Library Service working parties and decision making groups.

**Being resourceful**

We will work to ensure that our library service is ‘fit for purpose’ – meeting community needs in a resourceful, efficient and effective manner.

**Encouraging investment**

We will build on our existing partnerships to help us deliver our library services, as well as seeking new opportunities through external funding, grants and philanthropic relationships.

**Working strategically towards our vision**

Our library service will help us achieve Onkaparinga 2035, specifically those objectives that support lifelong learning, creativity and active community participation.

“The library is a special place and a very necessary one for many people. It can be a meeting place, a quiet place and a place for lonely people to find some company and friendship.”
Our libraries' service model and processes are guided by a number of state and federal bodies and initiatives. These are outlined below.

**Public Libraries Services**
Steers the establishment and continued delivery of a co-ordinated public library network in South Australia under our One Card libraries banner.

**ALIA (Australian Library and Information Association)**
The national professional organisation for the Australian library services sector. ALIA is an information and advocacy body which has produced a benchmarking tool - Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries.

**One Card library system**
Led by the Public Library Services (South Australia) One Card Library User Group and supported by various working parties.

**Public Libraries Association of SA (PLSA)**
The association representing all public libraries in SA.

**The Libraries Board of South Australia**
A statutory body responsible for library policy and administration of the State Library of South Australia and the Public Library Network.

Our library service is also guided and informed by key documents produced specifically for the public libraries sector in Australia. These include:

**Tomorrow's Libraries**
A strategic and long-term view for the future directions of public libraries and a joint initiative of the Libraries Board of South Australia, the Local Government Association of SA and Public Libraries SA (PLSA), the association representing all public libraries in SA.

[Click here for a copy](#)

**Standards and guidelines**
For Australian public libraries produced by ALIA.

[Click here for a copy](#)

**National Welfare & Economic Contributions of Public Libraries**
A report produced by ALIA that estimates the contributions that public libraries make to Australian community welfare and Australian economic activity.

[Click here for a copy](#)

“Libraries are a fantastic resource and play a vital role in the community both as a learning tool and as a focal point for the public.”
Strategic Directions

Onkaparinga 2035 vision

Strong, vibrant communities

Libraries' vision

Enriching and strengthening lives by connecting people to library resources and activities in welcoming and inclusive places.

Strategic Directions

The Strategic Directions establish a pathway for libraries to achieve our communities' vision, paving the way for staff to plan and deliver initiatives best placed to get to those results.

The Strategic Directions are built on the findings of extensive engagement with our community and library staff.

This engagement told us that the services, activities and spaces we’re currently providing are highly valued throughout the community, and that demand for what libraries deliver is most likely to grow into the future.

It also told us that there is a need to innovate and change, in order to meet the challenges our libraries face and attract more non-users to the service.

Based on these insights, we must build on our achievement and maximising our strengths by being clear on what we will continue providing over the next three years, and what we will change.

We have developed a strategic directions framework which:

• aligns the libraries' strategic direction with Onkaparinga 2035, our community plan
• incorporates the priority areas of focus drawn from community and staff engagement
• articulates what we will maintain, what will change, and the outcome we expect to see as a result.

The framework is made up of the following components.

Themes - People, Place, Prosperity:

The themes are taken directly from Onkaparinga 2035, and provide a way to organise the libraries' strategic direction with the same balance of focus.

Purpose statement

Each theme is supported by a purpose statement which describes how our library service resolves to meet community needs over the coming three years.

Supported by two Key Result Areas

Each theme has two Key Result Areas, based on the priorities articulated by the community and library staff engagement. They provide the building blocks on which the library service can base its planning ensuring the community’s voice translates into action on the ground.

What we will maintain, what we will do differently, what outcome we’ll see

Against each Key Result Area, we have outlined what will be maintained, what will change, and the ultimate outcomes that will be proof that the work to bring about this change has been meaningful.

The strategic directions are detailed over the next three pages by theme.

“Every staff member who I have worked with over the years has contributed to who I am now! (Volunteer)
### People

**Purpose Statement**

**Take a flexible, adaptive approach to meet the changing needs of our community**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key result area</th>
<th>What we will maintain</th>
<th>What we will do differently</th>
<th>What outcome we’ll see</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Provide information and guidance**   | • Our collections - ensuring they meet local and service-wide needs, are current and include investment in digital collections  
• Our current service offer  
• The support provided by our team of volunteers                                                                 | • Promote use of library services to underrepresented groups, and those who experience literacy disadvantage  
• Adjust opening hours by library to meet demand patterns  
• Broaden the range of opportunities for volunteers to support our library services, in line with organisational policies and procedures                                                                 | • Increased use of library services by identified target groups  
• Adjusted opening hours which maximize use of our libraries at peak demand times  
• Improved targeting of collections to meet the needs of identified user groups                                                                                                                                     |
| **Foster social connections and wellbeing** | • Our digital enablers – free access to WiFi, public computers, one-on-one digital support, digital drop-ins, etc.  
• Our current service levels for one-to-one customer support  
• Invest in digital literacy developments to ensure we stay ‘ahead of the technology curve’  
• Expand collections to meet diverse language, learning and experiential needs (e.g. for those experiencing brain injury or dementia)                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | • Extended community access to new and emerging technologies  
• Increased support for digital learning across the spectrum of capability  
• Increased responsiveness to the different social needs and experiences of users                                                                                                                            |
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key result area</th>
<th>What we will maintain</th>
<th>What we will do differently</th>
<th>What outcome we’ll see</th>
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| **Enhance use of library spaces and places** | - Our current physical spaces - six library locations, plus our outreach service  
- The provision of a range of spaces within our libraries designed to meet expressed community needs  
- Our commitment to identifying preserving and digitizing our local history | - Improve the perception and understanding of the role of our libraries through promotion and education  
- Co-ordinate service delivery to align with the Community Facilities Co-ordination model [Community Facilities Guidelines](#)  
- Participate in the district co-ordination reference groups to better align service delivery with local needs | - Cross-organisational collaborative projects to engage people in their local area  
- Co-ordinated, complementary spread of activities and services across our community facilities  
- Improved community access to quality local history material |
| **Activate community knowledge and learning** | - Our major emphasis on children’s literacy and learning activities, from baby and toddler time to after school and holiday learning activities  
- Our alignment with broader education trends such as STEAM, through the use of makerspaces  
- Our activities for older library users including informal social groups facilitated by community members | - Increase emphasis on supporting critical thinking for library users undertaking research in our libraries  
- Develop our collections to include support materials for parents and carers of children with special needs  
- Further enhance programming activities based on ‘continuous feedback’ loop from participants | - Increased number of participants in library programs and activities (physical and online)  
- Improved capability of library users to discern the quality of information  
- Increased ‘community led’ interest groups using libraries to connect and learn  
- Library staff prepared to meet changing learning styles  
- Services and programs that clearly reflect the needs and interests of our communities |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key result area</th>
<th>What we will maintain</th>
<th>What we will do differently</th>
<th>What outcome we’ll see</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Build on positive partnerships</strong></td>
<td>• Our current relationships with key stakeholders, such as DECD and TAFE SA, the Smith Family, Anglicare, etc.</td>
<td>• Strengthen connections with agencies across multiple sectors to enable integrated program planning</td>
<td>• Increased number and range of service and planning partners</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Our documented approach to developing partnerships with like services and organisations to extend the range of learning experiences for library users</td>
<td>• Identify potential funding streams matched to library KRAs (e.g. grants, sponsorships, donations, fee for service)</td>
<td>• Increased funding from external sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Increased number of partnerships that extend the range of learning experiences for library users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support the local economy</strong></td>
<td>• Provision of free Wi-Fi on user-owned devices</td>
<td>• Explore opportunities to work with ON Business to support local businesses to co-work, research and network</td>
<td>• An increase in the number of local small businesses maximizing use of our library facilities, seeking information and connecting with council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Access to printers and photocopiers</td>
<td>• Further explore opportunities for in-house businesses such as coffee shops and book shops</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Flexible open spaces with desks and informal meeting spaces for public use</td>
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Timeline

This SP is intended to be reviewed again in three years (approximately 2021).

During this time we will monitor the progress of our library service and the direction of this SP against the described outcomes on an annual basis.

The sequencing and detail of the actions that underpin these outcomes will be worked through in more detail at a service wide and library-by-library level to ensure our services meet local needs and demands.