



# Cessnock City Library

## Strategic Plan 2014 - 2024 Overview

Welcoming | Engaging | Inspiring | Innovative | Relevant | Inclusive | Accessible | Flexible |  
Adaptive | Responsive | Cohesive | Connected | Supportive | Enabling

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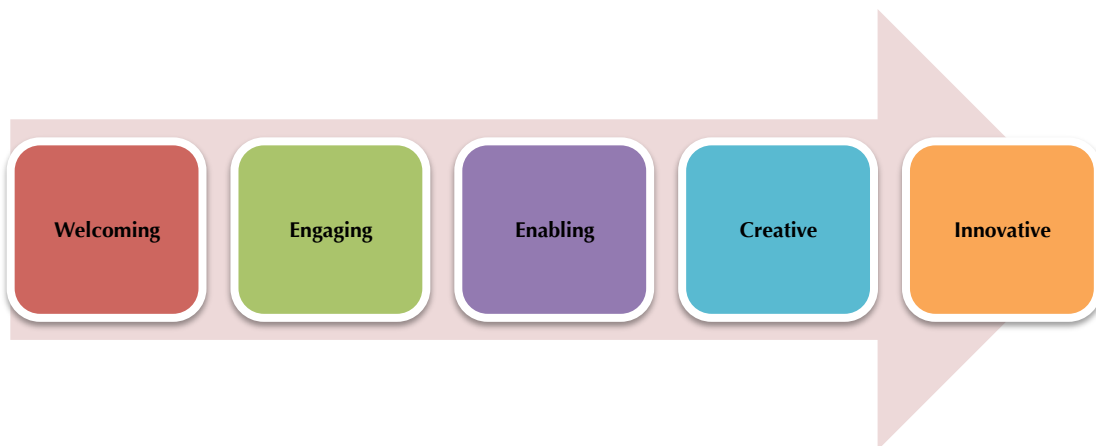
*Start here, go anywhere*

## Background

The library's strategy provides a framework for the future design, development and delivery of services. While it is impossible to fully predict the future of public library services, it is clear that there is a growing focus on programming, digital delivery and the important role the library plays in equitable access (bridging the digital divide), and the importance of community partnerships and collaborations. There is also an increasing focus on how libraries will be resourced into the future.

## Our Vision

*Cessnock City Library Service is a welcoming, engaging and enabling place; providing opportunities for creativity and innovation; and relevant and responsive to the needs of the local community.*



The library will be a welcoming, creative and enabling place where people can meet, connect, access information, use and explore new technology, and enjoy learning and recreational activities; and a place to keep and share our history, stories and culture.

What our libraries could look like...

















## Our Statement of Purpose

### A Meeting Place

A neutral space open to all, where people (no matter their cultural background, beliefs etc.) can meet together informally and formally for purposes as diverse as talking to friends, educational programs and activities, recreational programs and activities, or a place to discuss and consider public issues.

### A Keeping Place

A place that recognises the importance of all our stories and histories, and records and documents those stories and histories so they are not lost to current and future generations.

### A Sharing Place

A place where everyone can share his or her stories, histories and ideas; and a place that helps us remember; a place that showcases our creativity e.g. art, music, stories and histories.

### Catalyst

Cessnock City Library will act as a catalyst for the local community to access Information, explore new technology, enjoy learning opportunities and recreational activities. It will also facilitate the creation of content that will enhance community knowledge, and the ongoing discovery of our past, present and future

### Connecting the Community

Cessnock City Library will act as a connection and anchor point for the local community through the delivery of targeted and interactive programs, activities and events; and through the provision of multi-functional spaces, access to innovative technology, reputable information sources and the Internet.

### Flexible and Adaptive

Cessnock City Library will provide **flexible** and **adaptive** services, staff, spaces (buildings / infrastructure) and technology to support the diverse needs of the local community

## Our Goals and Strategic Actions

*A good local library is not just about borrowing books or storing physical artefacts. It is where individuals become card-carrying members of a local community. They are places where people give as well as receive. Public libraries are keystones delivering the building blocks of social cohesion, especially for the very young and the very old. They are where individuals come to sit quietly and think, free from the distractions of our digital age. They are where people come to ask for help in finding things, especially themselves.<sup>1</sup>*



<sup>1</sup> <http://toptrends.nowandnext.com/2011/12/28/in-praise-of-libraries-and-librarians> [accessed July 2013]

## Infrastructure (Library Buildings)

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The current library facilities no longer meet contemporary standards and are inadequate for projected future use – especially in the context of expected population growth in the Greta-Branxton-North Rothbury and Kurri Kurri and Surrounds areas; and an ageing population. To inform future planning, it will be crucial for the library to develop a visioning brief and gather and develop functional and other design brief data.

This master plan will focus on equitable access, a strong technology backbone, and flexible and adaptive spaces. It will also facilitate future resourcing strategies e.g. grant applications, Council's capital and operational budget commitment, and federal regional and local community infrastructure funding bids. Commercial partnerships will also need to be considered.

### Our Goal

To provide welcoming and inclusive community spaces that are well used and accessible to all members of our community.

### Our Strategic Actions

- We will develop a visioning brief for Cessnock, Kurri Kurri and the proposed Huntlee town branch libraries
- We will identify possible sites, which may need to be acquired.
- We will develop a library design brief for each current and proposed library site
- We will develop draft plans for costing and resourcing purposes

## Services and Programs

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The range of services and programs offered by a modern public library continues to expand and change. It is vital that Cessnock City Library Service future planning includes strategies that:

- Facilitate lifelong learning, including literacy
- Support children's education
- Support recreation, local culture and the arts
- Foster social cohesion

### Our Goal

Relevant and inclusive, outcomes-based, quality services, programs and events that meet the needs of the community

## Our Strategic Actions

- We will encourage and support a culture of reading within the community
- We will support and encourage the development of literacy skills in the community (including digital literacy)
- We will support and encourage life long learning (flexible and adaptive to meet local needs)
- We will facilitate access to reputable information and online content for all community members
- We will re-align existing roles to ensure that the Library's services and programs meet the needs of the community
- We will support the provision of quality service by the selection, development and support of skilled library staff
- We will develop library systems and policies that support customer service

## Information Technology

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Libraries have been at the forefront of public technology access for well over a decade. However the exponential growth in technological innovations e.g. mobile access, web-based services and social media, is creating a higher expectation of access and service by the community and staff. The library must ensure that its technology services are clearly and regularly defined, and, wherever possible improved and updated to meet current and contemporary expectations.

### Our Goal

Customer focused and relevant information technology and support services

### Our Strategic Actions

- We will keep an ongoing and evaluative watch on Information technology that will enhance our services
- We will develop digital services, including those available in the library, and remotely via the web and smart technology
- We will develop an information technology plan to support the ongoing development and management of library technology
- We will ensure our staff are appropriately trained, aware and up-to-date in relevant Information technology
- We will ensure that our members and the community have access to relevant Information technology learning and information opportunities
- We will investigate the development of apps (applications) for smart devices and a mobile website



- We will investigate the collection and publishing of local content i.e. local studies, family history, and other locally produced materials, including music, art and writing

## Marketing

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Community and staff feedback indicated the need to better communicate and market the breadth and depth of the Library's services, collections and programming to its customers and the community. The development of library marketing strategies will help achieve this.

### Our Goal

Targeted and effective marketing strategies that build community recognition, knowledge, and usage of services, programs and facilities

### Our Strategic Actions

- We will ensure key library staff are trained in marketing planning
- We will undertake an analysis of our current situation to inform the development of our marketing strategies
- We will seek, and engage with, key community and Council partners when developing our marketing plan and strategies
- We will develop and adopt a targeted library marketing plan

## Partnerships

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Creating a range of partnerships (with sponsors, volunteers, library supporters and advocates) is essential if the Library wishes to continue to be relevant and viable into the future

### Our Goal

Collaborative partnerships that benefit the library service, its customers, Council and the community

### Our Strategic Actions

- We will formalise our existing, and any potential, networks, particularly in the education sector (school and TAFE)
- We will investigate shared service arrangements with our current or new library premises e.g. opportunities such as a cafe, a bookshop, gallery, community centre, Council services etc.
- We will investigate commercial opportunities and partnership that would enhance and / or support the ongoing delivery of library services and programs

- We will establish clear, transparent and ethical partnership and collaboration guidelines
- We will establish library sponsorship guidelines
- We will optimise the use and support of volunteers

## Collections

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With electronic collections set to increasingly replace some hard copy collections, the Library will need the ability to effectively manage and promote these eCollections to customers. Presentation of library collections is increasingly important as customers expect both physical and online spaces to be attractive, welcoming, well set out and easy to use.

### Our Goal

Maintain balanced, current, well-organised and managed collections that meet and reflect the needs of customers and the community

### Our Strategic Actions

- We will undertake a comprehensive and focused collection development planning process
- We will develop a collection management plan to help us better manage our collections
- We will investigate the creation of eBrowsing areas in our branches
- We will develop an online Readers' Advisory service to provide suggestions and guidance for our users
- We will re-allocate any spaces no longer required for collections to other purposes including study, programming and technology (i.e. pending take up of eResources)
- We will investigate the purchase of eReaders for loan
- We will investigate the development of eServices for the house bound to complement existing services