

The Kiama Library Strategic Plan outlines clear goals and actions to improve services over the next four years. It also explores new ways to deliver services that meet the needs of our changing community.

The plan focuses on five key areas:

- Spaces
- People
- Collections
- Connections
- Programs.

To create this Plan the library gathered input from members, staff and the wider community. It also considered industry trends and feedback from customers and programs.

Public exhibition period

Monday 24 February till Sunday 27 April 2025

How community got involved



132
website
visitors



15
pop-up
participants



16
submission
received

What we heard

Most submissions highlighted community satisfaction with current library services and recognised the contribute made by passionate and dedicated staff. The community is excited to see the plans for the future and opportunities to explore further collaboration with other community partners in order to expand library program offerings. Additional suggestions, provided by the community, that complement the strategy have been incorporated into the Plan.

Some submissions reiterated the importance of the research services provided by the Family History Centre and recognised the opportunities to combine the Local History and Family History resources to develop a more comprehensive collection. This collection will continue to preserve and make accessible the unique stories and cultural heritage of our community.

Outcome

The strategy developed provides actions that are realistic, achievable and sustainable, while fostering growth and engagement in Kiama's community. The draft has been updated where applicable to include the feedback provided by the community. Please refer to the summary table for more details.

Additionally, Council is currently operating under a [Performance Improvement Order](#) which requires strict financial accountability and adherence to budget constraints for Council to ensure it delivers core services.

Summary table of feedback received and staff responses

Feedback received	Response	Outcome
Three survey submissions highlighted the important work undertaken by the Family History Centre called for more.	Recognise the importance of family history research and investigate opportunities in combining local and family history information as part of contemporary library service offerings.	Implement best practice guidelines for family history research into library operations in line with current budget constraints as outlined in the Strategic Plan.
Several surveys responses happy with the strategy and recognised library staff for going a good job. Issues highlighted included the difficulty accessing parking at both libraries, the desire for more and varied programs and marketing library services to other community members.	Parking issues have been recognised and their impact on the community access to library services.	Continue to monitor parking situation at both libraries and increase community knowledge of vital services provided by our libraries.
Feedback provided by Kiama Community College (KCC) highlighting the alignment between libraries and the KCC and potential partnership opportunities.	Formally recognise Kiama Community College in the Plan and strengthen partnerships that provide high-quality learning opportunities for the community.	Kiama Community College recognised as an important community partner in the Plan.
A proposal to hold a Kiama Small Group Volunteer Expo was provided as feedback on our Strategic Plan.	Proposal aligns with Pillar 2, and 5 – People, Connection and Programs.	Program will be considered as part of our planning process for 2026 and in conjunction with other Council teams.
Explore alternative models of services Demonstrate multi-actor governance structures beyond the existing South Coast Cooperative Library Services. New collaborations will serve to enhance innovation and build real-world connection for various target groups and reduce loneliness.	Partnerships and collaborations with community groups and organisations has been recognised in Pillar 3 – Connections.	Addressed in Pillar 3.
Acknowledge and highlight libraries as Third Spaces – Education the community and Council on the role of libraries in urban democracy and socialisation.	Libraries have long been recognised as ‘third places’ within the community and they underpin Pillar 1- Spaces, Pillar 2 – People and Pillar 3 – Connections within our Plan.	Addressed in Pillars 1,2 and 3.

Create welcoming and trusted environments for Indigenous Peoples both within and outside of library spaces – Build deep respect for the indigenous world views of the Dharawal people via the South Coast Collaboration – Support pathways that can practically build understanding of indigenous world views extending to the more-than-the-human world and hold sessions for this information to be shared.	Connection with the Wodi Wodi people an action in Pillar 1 – Spaces.	Work with the local Aboriginal Reference Group to collaborate on projects that promote cultural understanding and respect.
Increase Membership and engagement – Demonstrate how libraries can become leaders and promoters of essential information for communities to thrive – Library community building initiatives are tested and codesigned with relevant community experts to address local complex information needs and engagement challenges. i.e. the distracted digital world and adolescents.	Included in Strategic Plan and State Library NSW assessment report.	Included in the strategies and actions related to Pillar 2 - People.
Explore and enhance collaborative opportunities – Expand the library roles as a free educational resources for all residents with initiative targeting non-traditional library users, operating as the great equalizer of society. Offer programs for retirees on fixed incomes and young families unable to afford or access health and wellness. i.e. Information on Headspace services from Headspace counsellor or digital Legacy Planning etc.	Include in current and future collaboration opportunities using the FAMOUS principles designed by the State Library NSW.	Included in Pillar 2 - People strategies and actions.
Access for disabled users to be improved. Ensure access pathways and parking for disabled persons five future reduction of parking spaces. Walkability and access plans developed. Highlight the location of Kiama Library next to the railway station and improve walkability.	Addressed in Pillar 1 – Spaces.	Ensure webpages highlights access pathways and parking for disabled users.
Community Living Libraries project. Develop access and programs for people and groups with limited voices. Support a growing and diverse community by offering a range of programs and collaborations to building community engagement.	Included in current and future collaboration opportunities using the FAMOUS principles designed by the State Library NSW.	Included in Pillar 2 – People strategies and actions.

Include LGBTQIA+in Target groups and include references for including and increasing stories and experiences of LGBTQIA+ communities within the history and culture within the community	Update target groups to include LGBTQIA+.	Updated target groups.
References to Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP).	The South Coast Cooperative Libraries Collection Development policy highlights the importance of the inclusion of a diverse range of library resources that support community members accessibility.	No change as this is covered in the Collection Development Policy. For more information, see Policies and reports Shoalhaven Libraries .
Story Time opportunities to include engagement with Elders both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, the LGBTQIA+ community and prominent community members into helping deliver story time programs.	Library story time programs often feature members of the community in their professional role e.g. Lifeguards and Councillors. Engagement with local Elders will be pursued in consultation with Aboriginal Reference group.	Include Yarning circles in Early Literacy and other library programs.
Improving literacy skills and opportunities. Recognise and increase opportunities for developing literacy and digital literacy skills in library programs.	Our vision which underpins our Plan recognises the importance of supporting lifelong learning and a love of literacy.	A key component of library programs and services is to develop literacy, including digital literacy, as demonstrated in our Early Literacy programs and Tech Savy Seniors programs.
Recognize the opportunities that AI provide and monitor for inclusion the library environment.	Identified in Pillar 3 – Connections.	Include AI discussions and information in library programs.

What's next

Once endorsed by Council, the library can move forward with full implementation of the Strategy.