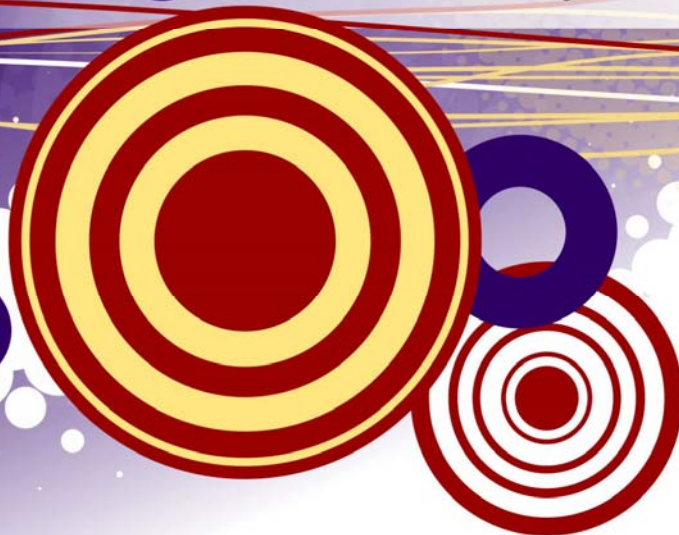




# Reading the Future

The next 5 years for Unley Libraries



## A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

*Reading the Future – the next 5 years for Unley Libraries* has emerged from work that colleagues, officers and the community undertook during the last 15 months.

This strategy will be delivered through our network of accessible sites across the City of Unley, further enhanced with improved online access. Our service will feature more self-service terminals, continued free WiFi, and internet computers with up to date software programs.

We acknowledge libraries should be open when people want them, so we will undertake a review of our opening hours as one of our key actions in this plan.

Libraries have always been about accessing information. We will boost resources to link people to the information they need. We will expand our literacy and learning programs to help people keep up with new technology and support them with self directed learning.

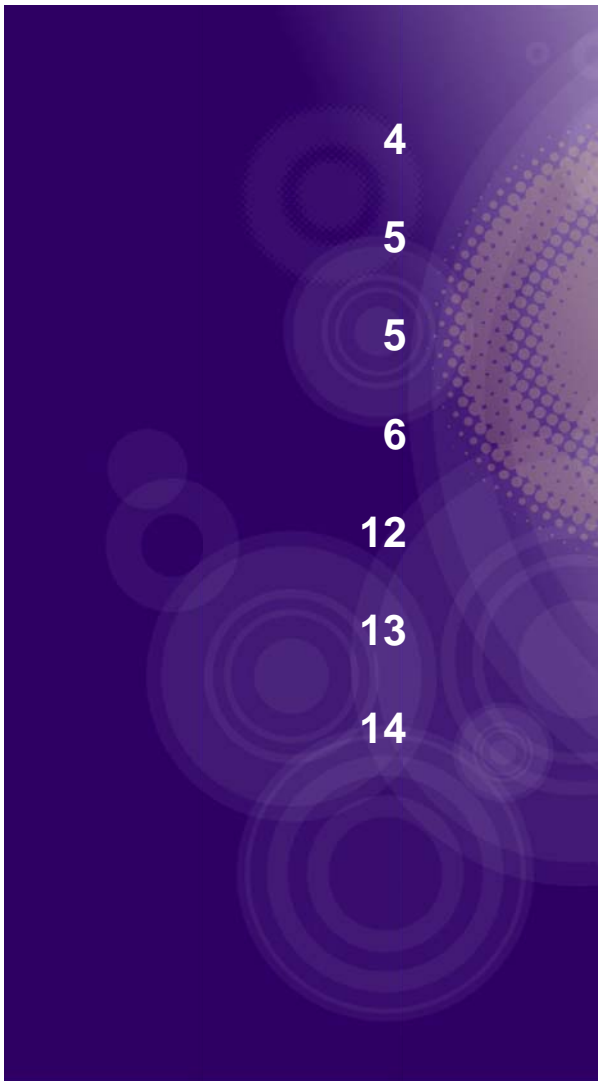
Our library service will provide an alternative environment to formal reading and learning, with easy accessible, welcoming programs catering for all ages. We are planning for well resourced spaces to study, meet or relax. Spaces where laptops are catered for, and informal group discussions will be welcomed.

In direct response to consultation, we will provide a wide range of events and activities to support the community's excitement for reading, personal growth and entertainment.

I would like to thank the community for their active participation in the development of this plan. We are committed to continue providing a best value service through Unley Libraries.

Lachlan Clyne  
Mayor – City of Unley

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# OUR STRATEGY

*Reading the Future* is *Unley Libraries'* Strategic Plan for 2012-2016.

In today's changing environment the library must strive to be modern, relevant and exceed community expectations for accessible information and learning.

It plays a fundamental role as a centre of knowledge available to all in our community. Our democratic society depends on all citizens having access to information and therefore our libraries contribute to the wellbeing of our community. This strengthens our commitment to provide the broadest range of information and ideas in a variety of traditional and electronic formats.



Our free facilities and wireless access will continue to influence the quest for seamless access to information and knowledge. It is anticipated that over the next five years *Unley Libraries* will become a powerful place for enabling an informed society driven by lifelong learning, reading and fun.

However, this plan does not foresee all the changes and opportunities that may occur in future. It is a flexible document that will continue to respond to the changing expectations of our community and opportunities to improve our services.

Critical to the success of this plan is the continuing support of users, support groups, business and community leaders and staff.

## VISION 2016

*Unley Libraries* is known for its vital resources, services and spaces that support and nurture the hearts and minds of our community. We will:

Make information accessible

Add value to community life

Provide reading, learning and entertainment opportunities

Respond to changing expectations

## PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE SERVICE

**Equal opportunity** - We provide a place where anyone can access information and participate in community life. **Life skills** - We actively create opportunities for individuals to learn, grow, discover and enjoy. **Responsive** - We are steadfast in our commitment to improve user experiences. We invest in our staff, technology and infrastructure to achieve the best outcomes for our community. **Quality service** - We take responsibility for delivering timely, accurate and relevant library services.

## CURRENT OFFERING


The *Unley Libraries* consists of the Unley Civic Library, Goodwood Library, Fullarton Park Library and the Unley Toy Library. We also provide a homebound service and an online presence to complete our six customer service points. The Goodwood Library was refurbished in 2000 at a cost of \$1.8m and the Unley Civic Library was refurbished in 2003/04 at a cost of \$3.5m.

These refurbishments and the integration of new technology, growing collections and innovative programs have made the service more popular than ever. In 2011, more than 330 000 people visited our libraries with over half a million loans recorded.

The *Unley Libraries* has transformed itself through deliberate leadership and planning. Our services have gained widespread support from the community. The library is now a place where people can meet, learn and be empowered. There are special areas to meet individual needs, such as quiet study areas, spaces for young people, and meeting rooms to encourage social gatherings.

**With free WiFi and computer access and low cost computer courses, we have become a community hub where everyone can bridge the digital divide.**

We offer a diverse range of educational and social programs each year. In 2011, more than 13 000 people participated in programs. **Programs for families** are growing in popularity with over 600 babies and their caregivers participating monthly in BabyTime (an early literacy program).



**Our traditional and electronic resources connect people with the information they want and help individuals succeed.**

# STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

The *Unley Libraries*' strengths and weaknesses are based on the research undertaken and the feedback received from the community. This provides an important context for determining goals which will help fully realise the vision for the service.

## Easily accessible and convenient community places

**Weakness:** There is duplication of cost and effort in maintaining 3 branches located less than 2 km from each other.

**Strength:** The close proximity of the 3 branches makes the library a valuable community and social hub for people of all ages. The Unley and Goodwood buildings are reasonably new and attractive and are well supported and appreciated by the community.

## Staff expertise and knowledge

**Weakness:** It is a challenge for library staff to keep up with fast changing technological advancements.

**Strength:** We have a reputation for excellent customer service. The community places a high value on the human touch, and they want the City of Unley to retain well-qualified, experienced, knowledgeable and welcoming staff to assist them with their information and learning needs.

## Strong volunteer support

**Weakness:** There is great reliance on volunteers to assist within specific sectors of the library service.

**Strength:** Over 100 people volunteer more than 5,000 hours per year at the libraries. Volunteering at the library connects people with the world of literacy, cultural diversity, and learning.

## Well positioned to play a key role in life-long learning

**Weakness:** There is not enough flexible spaces/zones/resources in our libraries to encourage learning opportunities.

**Strength:** We play a vital role in lifelong learning with resources skillfully developed to be multi-format, multi-lingual and multi-interest. Low cost community computing courses, free literacy and business enterprise programs help to establish the library as "a street-corner university" and provide access to a variety of resources.

## Library technologies

**Weakness:** Technology changes constantly, but the library is slow to take up new technologies.

**Strength:** We support our community with a wide range of technologies. Our Unley and Goodwood library branches offer free access to over 22 computers. In addition to this, free Wi-Fi access is available to anyone with a portable device.

# OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

Our research and interviews with stakeholders identified a range of opportunities and threats. Changing conditions and feedback from our community indicate the following are important opportunities, which will assist the library to achieve its goals:

## Establish the library as a preferred destination

**Threat:** With the advent of broadband and the internet, there might not be a need to visit the library.

**Opportunity:** Our users demand an increase in the range of information, learning and socialisation opportunities, programs, activities and events. Meeting this demand will further establish the library as the community's preferred destination to meet, interact and learn.

## Use new technologies to meet current and future community needs

**Threat:** The pervasiveness of the internet, increased computer literacy and online social networking are changing the way we deliver traditional library services.

**Opportunity:** The shift to an information driven society places a premium on access to information resources and the ability to use technology. Technology adds value to the library's traditional offerings and provides us with the prospect to change the way the library communicates and engages with our customers.

## Add value

**Threat:** The social benefit role of public libraries is generally accepted; however, their economic value is not.

**Opportunity:** Public libraries today operate in a complex environment, one dimension of which is a climate of accountability and transparency. In this climate of accountability, *Unley Libraries* has the opportunity to communicate the critical role we play in supporting our community with the provision of literacy, information, and life long learning resources.

## Develop partnerships

**Threat:** Traditional library structures are not set up for a partnership approach. The challenge is to develop common goals that will encourage collaboration and integration.

**Opportunity:** There is an opportunity to collaborate and work innovatively with private and government organisations to increase rich and engaging experiences for our community.



# GOALS, STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

## GOAL 1: Make information accessible

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	TIMING	FUNDING
1.1 Expand the Digital Literacy Program to help the community keep up with new technology.	1.1.1 Provide access to resources and devices in the library, such as computers, online catalogues, tablets and mobile technologies such as SMS.	2012-2016	Operating
	1.1.2 Continue to provide training opportunities in basic computer use.	2012-2016	Operating
	1.1.3 Expand community computing courses to provide training in new technologies and software programs as required.	2012-2016	Operating
	1.1.4 Provide dedicated tablets such as I-Pads in the library for reading online newspapers and magazines.	2012	External Funding
1.2 Expand access to state-wide collections and information resources and reinforce the library as a one-stop-shop for access to information.	1.2.1 Join the State-wide Library Management System to give access to millions of books, DVDs and CDs held in libraries across SA along with digital content from a range of sources.	2013	Capital Replacement
1.3 Simplify access to information for older people and people living with a disability.	1.3.1 Develop a separate page on the City of Unley's website focusing on information for seniors that will include links to local health, financial and support networks.	2012-13	Operating
	1.3.2 Continue to invest in devices and technology for people living with a disability.	2012-2016	External Funding
1.4 Increase staff capacity as professional information providers.	1.4.1 Implement Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology to replace barcode technology and the ageing infrastructure.	2013-14	Capital
1.5 Improve access to program information and registration.	1.5.1 Implement an online program booking system, which will allow customers to access program information from their mobile phones, tablets and computers.	2012	Operating
1.6 Provide the opportunity for customers to access their library account and pay fees online.	1.6.1 Utilise technologies such as Pay Pal to enable online payment of overdue and program fees.	2014	Operating

## GOAL 2: Provide reading, learning and entertainment opportunities

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	TIMING	FUNDING
2.1 Develop an electronic collection.	2.1.1 Introduce a high quality, easily accessible e-book and e-audio book collection.	2014-15	New Initiative
	2.1.2 Evaluate and maintain the online database collection and promotion of digital databases, to make them more accessible and applicable for use in everyday life.	2013-14	Operating
	2.1.3 Investigate expanding the online music collection.	2014-15	Operating
2.2 Provide lifelong learning opportunities for seniors.	2.2.1 Provide information talks, lectures and workshops on topics relevant to seniors such as transition to retirement, health awareness, etc.	2012-2016	Operating
	2.2.2 Provide opportunities for volunteers to share their expertise and knowledge.	2012-2016	Operating
	2.2.3 Implement the “Photo Frames” project to assist people living in aged care facilities to connect with their community and family, using photos as conversation starters.	2012	External Funding
2.3 Continue to support reading as a key element fundamental to the library.	2.3.1 Offer new and popular material in various formats.	2012-2016	Operating
	2.3.2 Review the collection policies and layout of Unley Civic Library collections to accommodate growing collections.	2015-16	New Initiative
	2.3.3 Empower homebound patrons by providing them with new book lists to enable selection of their own materials.	2012-13	Operating
	2.3.4 Expand reading resources for visually and mobility-impaired patrons.	2012	External Funding
	2.3.5 Support book clubs by providing resources and spaces to encourage reading.	2012-2016	Operating
2.4 Review and expand how children’s literacy needs are delivered.	2.4.1 Set up a Baby Book Club, which teaches carers how to play and read to their child, and encourage use of early literacy kits.	2014-15	Fee for Service

	2.4.2 Evaluate and adapt the current BabyTime Program, with input from participants.	2012-13	Operating
	2.4.3 Create free for loan early literacy kits, which incorporate books and relevant toys covering popular early childhood subjects/material to highlight the connection between play and learning.	2012-13	Operating
	2.4.4 Simplify and improve access to children's Non Fiction collections.	2012-13	Operating

### GOAL 3: Add value to community life

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	TIMING	FUNDING
3.1 Utilise social networking technologies to communicate and connect with our customers.	3.1.1 Implement the use of e-mail, SMS and pod casting as communication tools	2012-2016	Operating
	3.1.2 Develop a Facebook and Twitter page for Unley Libraries.	2012	Operating
	3.1.3 Develop and implement an electronic newsletter for Unley Libraries.	2012	Operating
3.2 Provide flexible spaces to support diverse needs.	3.2.1 Create an outside seating area to cater for customers to make use of our free internet access after hours.	2014-15	Capital
	3.2.2 Create a “green space” in the Goodwood Library for further community engagement, reading and learning opportunities.	2013-14	Operating
	3.2.3 Improve the combination of self-service and customer service at the Unley Library.	2013-14	Capital
	3.2.4 Create different zones in the library to meet different needs – eg. quiet spaces, meeting spaces, group study, socialising, informal learning and fun activities.	2012-2016	Operating
	3.2.5 Provide additional power points and tables for the use of personal devices such as laptops.	2012-13	Operating
3.3 Investigate the potential for a library café in the Unley Civic Library.	3.3.1 Investigate introducing a café type service in the Unley Civic Library in partnership with local businesses.	2015-16	New Initiative
3.4 Promote Unley Libraries as an essential service that adds value to the Unley community.	3.4.1 Develop an awareness campaign targeting non-users.	2013-14	Operating
	3.4.2 Form a Library Advisory group that will support the implementation of the strategic plan.	2012	Operating
	3.4.3 Regularly consult with our community to ensure we meet their needs, and offer hard copy and online feedback forms to improve communication.	2012-2016	Operating
	3.4.4 Participate in state-wide and national initiatives to promote libraries, such as the National Year of Reading 2012.	2012-2016	Operating

## GOAL 4: Respond to changing expectations

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	TIMING	FUNDING
4.1 Improve customers' ability to return and borrow library items.	4.1.1 Replace and increase the number of patron self- checkouts to address issues such as waiting time and privacy.	2013-14	Capital Replacement
	4.1.2 Review the location of the after hours return bins at Unley Library and Fullarton Park Library.	2013-14	Operating
4.2 Review the library service model (opening hours, branches) to ensure the library continues to be accessible for the community.	4.2.1 Review the opening hours of the Unley Libraries, including the Unley Toy Library.	2015-16	New Initiative
	4.2.2 Investigate the sustainability of 3 libraries in Unley in consultation with the community with emphasis on access for each region of Unley, including depot/kiosk type services.	2015-16	Operating
4.3 Conduct a service review of Unley Libraries to ensure we can meet the emerging needs of the community.	4.3.1 Evaluate current services and establish benchmarks for future developments and improvements based on community needs.	2012-2016	Operating
	4.3.2 Examine the library staffing structure to ensure the existing human resources can effectively meet the critical customer demographics and needs.	2015-16	Operating
4.4 Continue to provide opportunities for staff development	4.4.1 Provide staff with regular opportunities to attend workshops, seminars, lectures and conferences to update and learn new skills.	2012-2016	Operating
	4.4.2 Actively participate in local, national and international opportunities where topics applicable to libraries cover innovation and creative thought.	2012-2016	Operating
	4.4.3 Provide staff with regular opportunities to visit libraries in South Australia for benchmarking and learning opportunities.	2012-2016	Operating

## GOAL 5: Build and develop partnerships

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	TIMING	FUNDING
5.1 Seek out and develop suitable partnerships to enhance service delivery.	5.1.1 Create opportunities to collaborate with government and non-government agencies, not-for-profits and community groups to benefit residents.	2012-2016	Operating External Funding
	5.1.2 Further develop partnerships with Council departments to enhance services to our community and avoid duplication of cost.	2012-2016	Operating
	5.1.3 Investigate and develop partnerships with private residential care facilities, nursing homes and retirement villages to increase Home Library Service benefits.	2015-16	Operating
	5.1.4 Investigate partnership opportunities with Unley businesses.	2012-2016	External Funding
	5.1.5 Actively participate in initiatives by the Eastern Region Alliance Library group. (Burnside, Campbelltown, Norwood, Payneham & St Peters, Prospect, Tea Tree Gully and Walkerville)	2012-2016	Operating and ERA budget