

Library Plan

2026 - 2031



Contents

Message from the Shire President	2	Our plan	5
Introduction	3	Our priorities	6
Our library	3	Assessment against APLA/ALIA Standards	10
Why libraries matter	4	Resourcing the plan	11
What we heard	5		

Acknowledgement of Country

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale acknowledges that the land of the district is the traditional country of the Noongar people. We recognise their cultural heritage, beliefs, and continuing relationship with the land, and pay our respects to Elders past present and emerging.



Message from the Shire President



The SJ Library Service is a much-loved and integral part of our community, providing a safe and welcoming space to meet and connect with others, and ensuring access to information and resources that support lifelong learning and personal development.

In 2023, our Library Service transitioned from its long-standing home in Mundijong to Byford, reflecting the significant population growth within that centre. Since this move, we have seen a substantial increase in engagement, with more residents visiting our branch and mobile library van, participating in programs, and accessing our collections.

This growth shows no sign of slowing. As our community continues to expand across our suburbs and town centres, its needs are also evolving. It is essential that our Library Service continues to adapt, ensuring we maintain high service standards while providing equitable access for all members of our community.

This Library Plan supports the Shire's vision of a thriving, liveable and connected community, and reflects our mission of fostering a welcoming community where everyone feels at home. Through our Library Service, we contribute directly to these pillars by supporting lifelong learning and wellbeing, creating inclusive and accessible spaces, and strengthening the connections that bring our community together.

The plan establishes clear priorities for the next five years, ensuring the service remains responsive to community needs. It focuses on strengthening partnerships, enhancing collections and programs, and laying the groundwork to address longer-term resourcing, infrastructure and accessibility requirements.

I look forward to the implementation of this Library Plan and to the continued evolution of our Library Service, delivering even greater value to our growing community across the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.

Introduction

Set against the picturesque backdrop of the Darling Scarp and spanning 900 square kilometres, the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale comprises both unique rural and peri-urban areas and is home to over 40,000 residents.

As one of the fastest growing local governments in the state, our population is set to reach 95,000 people by 2046. Our community is growing in size and diversity, with 25% of residents born overseas and increasing proportion of young families moving to the Shire.



Our library



Why libraries matter

Libraries are at the heart of our community, a place where everyone is welcome.

Libraries are essential to supporting a thriving, connected and empowered community and society. Whether attending a free activity, researching and studying, accessing online resources, joining a community gathering, or enjoying leisurely read, libraries are a safe haven offering a place to learn, connect or relax.

The APLA/ALIA Standards for Public Libraries 2021, identifies six core community outcomes for libraries.



Literacy and lifelong learning

Supporting formal and informal education and learning across all age groups and interests. Libraries provide essential resources, information, programs and spaces to support literacy and learning – from story-time to study groups, adult literacy programs and more.



Digital inclusion

In an increasingly digital world, access to computers, the internet, email and online services is becoming central to our everyday lives, however access is not universal. Libraries facilitate access to the online world, ensuring people can connect with others online, access information, as well social and business services.



Personal development and wellbeing

Libraries are places with no barriers to entry and support personal growth, connection and wellbeing. Libraries have long supported those most vulnerable in our community, providing a haven for people seeking a safe space and, increasingly, access to essential services and support through programs and partnerships with service providers and community groups.



Economic and workforce development

Libraries support job search and employment opportunities by providing learning programs, skills development, access to computers and internet, coworking spaces for small businesses and start-ups, and partnerships with education providers and schools to deliver initiatives and training opportunities.



Stronger and more creative communities

Modern libraries are places that nurture creativity, innovation and expression. They provide a welcoming and inclusive environment for all people to engage with cultural history, participate in creative programs and engage with new technology.



Informed and connected citizens

Libraries are places where people can come together to connect with others in their community, join interest groups and access reliable information about their local news, community and other critical services.



What we heard

As our community evolves, so must our Library Service.

Our library is well-loved and valued for providing a welcoming and safe space and delivering a range of programs, however is undersized and has limited capacity to meet the needs of a growing population.

“ Make it bigger and more accessible. Our library services so many people across a huge area. Make it an inviting and useful and a vital part of our community by increasing the space, and thereby the number of diverse pods and zones that can be used to meet the needs of a larger range of people”.

– Library Survey respondent

“ We enjoy the library and come often, however it would do well to be bigger and be able to offer more programs and events and have the space for this”.

– Children and Families Plan Engagement feedback.

Our community would like to see growth in the collection and diversity in driving new object collections and ability to borrow other items (e.g. Library of Things).

More programming for both children and adults is also a key theme, reflecting a need to continue to build the range of programs and events across all age groups. Feedback also highlighted considerations such as diversifying program days, times and locations to enable more people to attend, and working more closely with community groups to expand programming.

“ Perhaps some activities/ workshops for Pre Teens. There are lots of programs and activities for babies to 6/7/8 year olds and we have the Youth space and programmes but there is nothing for 8-12 year olds”.

– Library Survey respondent

“ Events like art classes or genealogy, but not just in day time for retired or non working adults, please include evening and weekend event options...”.

– Library Survey respondent

“ Activate places external to the library and this could be done in conjunction with other shire teams like community development, youth and health. Or other community groups such as SJCRC, history groups, art and craft groups, service groups.

– Library Survey respondent

Our plan

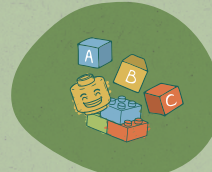
Our plan focuses on four key priority areas:



Places and spaces



Community engagement



Programs and events



Collections

Actions will be delivered over a five-year period and will complement, integrate with or build on existing core services.

Our priorities



1. Places and spaces

Our library is welcoming, accessible, and meets the needs of a growing and changing population. Library spaces and locations will support a range of uses and programs – for learning, relaxation, play, and connecting with others. As our population increases, we will work on short and longer-term strategies to enable access to our library spaces and services across the Shire inform future library infrastructure.

What we will do:	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5
1.1 Review hiring arrangements for bookable spaces, including options for after-hours bookings, to optimise use for community, while enabling delivery of library programs.	●				
1.2 Assess current library layout and amenities to improve access and maximise use of space for existing services.		●			
1.3 Ensure onsite technology is reviewed and evolved where required to support digital access and enable more effective and efficient delivery of library services.				●	●
1.4 Review Mobile Library Van schedule to ensure broad access across locations and facilitate greater engagement opportunities outside of the main Library branch, such as place-based library programs and events.	●		●		●
1.5 Explore options for satellite library spaces in town centre developments and under-served areas.	●	●	●	●	●
1.6 Undertake research, feasibility study and business case for the Byford Library Building.	●	●	●	●	●
1.7 Assess community requirements for expanded service provision and library branches in southern suburbs of the Shire.		●	●		



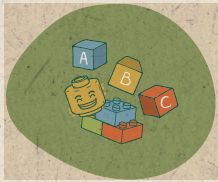


2. Community engagement

Community is at the centre of everything we do. We will work with all our community groups, organisations, schools and partners to continuously strengthen our connection to community, support community identity and connection and evolve our service in response to our community's needs.

What we will do:

	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5
2.1 Strengthen relationships with schools, kindergartens, playgroups and home education networks to identify and implement joint programs and outreach activities.	●	●	●	●	●
2.2 Develop a Library Marketing Strategy (in collaboration with Shire Communications Team) to drive awareness and engagement with Library services and activities, including review and update of communication methods and channels such as newsletters and the website.		●			
2.3 Explore options to provide more volunteer opportunities for community members via Library services, programs and events.		●			
2.4 Build Library presence at Shire-wide community events to promote Library services and programs and engage directly with local community.	●	●	●	●	●
2.5 Explore new partnership opportunities with local community groups and organisations to co-develop and deliver programs and services.			●		
2.6 Investigate options for a bespoke SJ Library App, enabling community to connect easily with the Library remotely, navigate and utilise services and catalogue online manage memberships.				●	



3. Programs and events

Library programs facilitate lifelong learning across all ages and life stages. Our programs and events drive creativity, connection with others, learning and skill development in engaging and original formats. We will continuously assess and evolve our programs and events in response to community feedback and needs and seek to extend our programming beyond our Library building.

What we will do:	Yr1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5
3.1 Pilot expanded and varied children's programs that reach under-represented localities (including outdoors), times and groups, ensuring inclusive access for children with additional needs (including those living with mental health challenges and neurodiversity) and for families with older children.	●	●			
3.2 Co-deliver new outreach and interactive learning programs with schools, playgroups, community groups and organisations to extend reach beyond the main library building.			●	●	●
3.3 Review weekend programming, including type, frequency and timing of programs to maximise attendance and engagement.	●				
3.4 Develop targeted approach to programming for adults considering community needs and supporting lifelong literacy, learning and skills development.		●	●		
3.5 Explore and develop opportunities to more effectively utilise existing and new technology and equipment for program delivery, including Makerspace programs and activities.				●	





4. Collections

Physical and digital collections are central to its service and underpin many of our programs. We will work to drive strong collection planning and management, including for our Community History Collection, to support strong community access and use.

What we will do:	Yr1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5
4.1 Increase resourcing, including qualified librarian and library technician roles, to facilitate a greater focus on collection management and development.	●	●			
4.2 Continue to assess and develop the collection to ensure content reflects community use and needs and supports ease of navigation and access.	●	●	●	●	●
4.3 Explore options to increase storage, preservation, access and use of the Community History Collection, including consideration of a significance assessment.				●	●
4.4 Explore need and options for additional object collections, such as equipment, toys or other items for loan to the community.			●		
4.5 Strengthen promotion of e-Resources to build awareness and use of digital collections.		●			



Assessment against APLA/ALIA Standards

The APLA/ALIA Standards provide targets to inform and guide services, however it is important to consider the standards and targets within the specific local government context. The standards provide an approach for benchmarking with similar size local governments as well as a means for providing goals for service improvement, quality and reach.

An assessment of SJ Library Shire against the APLA/ALIA Standards in 2025 indicates the Shire is tracking well below the target standards as demonstrated in the table below.

# Standard		SJ Shire	APLA / ALIA Standard	SJ Shire & APLA/ALIA Variance
S1	Library Expenditure per capita	\$23	\$48	-52%
S2A	Total number of staff (FTE) per 3,000 population	0.51	1.25	-59%
		6.77 total FTE	16.5 total FTE	
S2B	Total number of qualified staff (FTE) per 10,000 population	0.12	1.0	-88%
		0.46 total FTE	3.9 total FTE	
S3	Total opening hours	50	48	4%
S4	Expenditure on library materials per capita	\$0.43	\$6.06	-92%
S5	Number of collection items per capita	0.54	1.6	-67%
S6	% of physical items purchased in the last 5 years	69%	40%	73%
S7	Number of public access internet devices per 2,500 population	0.25	1.0	-75%
S8	% of resident population who are registered library members	12%	35%	-66%
S9	Total number of visits to library service points per member of population (inc. MLV)	1.33	3.5	-62%
S10	Number of loans per capita (physical and digital)	3.0	5.0	-40%
S11	Number of loans per physical collection item	4.5	2.0	125%
S12	Number of visits to library website per capita	0.09	2.1	-96%
	Number of hours use of public access devices per capita	0.04	0.3	-87%
	Number of Wi-Fi sessions in the library per capita	0.024	0.5	-96%
S13	Attendance at library programs per capita	0.12	0.3	-60%
S14	% of library customers who rate the library as good or very good	N/A	90%	N/A

Of note are:

- S2A and S2B – Total number of staff and in particular total number of qualified staff are well below the standard. Qualified staff refers to people who are engaged in roles that are utilising a minimum library qualification (i.e. people who possess formal library and information science qualifications at undergraduate or postgraduate level that are recognised by ALIA; and ii) are employed in a role requiring librarian qualifications). At present the Shire's Library structure has 0.46FTE total roles utilising a library qualification.
- S6 – Number of physical collection items purchased in last 5 years. Turnover of collection items is high and exceeds the standard. This high result is largely due to the limited space for the physical collection at present, meaning that stock is being turned over more frequently than is needed due to space restrictions to accommodate both existing and new items.
- S4 – Expenditure on library materials per capita. While expenditure on library materials has increased over recent years and stock turnover is high, overall expenditure on library materials is well below the standard target.

Resourcing the plan

To support the successful implementation of the plan, the following resources are required:

- Continued annual operational budget for the Library Service, increasing annually in line with service delivery requirements
- New Librarian position in 2026/27
- Increase in Library Programming and Events budget and annual Community History budget in 2026/27 to support expanded programming and additional collection development.
- Increase FTE for Library Technician Officer position in 2027/28.

Implementation of the Library Plan 2026 – 2031 and associated resourcing would result in a change in the Shire's position for standards S1-S2 as follows:

# Standard		SJ Shire 2025	APLA / ALIA Standard	SJ Sire & APLA / ALIA Variance 2025	SJ Shire with Library Plan 2026–2031	SJ Sire & APLA / ALIA Variance Updated
S1	Library Expenditure per capita	\$23	\$48	-52%	\$26 (Draft 2026/27 budget)	-45%
S2A	Total number of staff (FTE) per 3,000 population	0.51	1.25	-59%	0.63	-50%
		6.77 total FTE	16.5 total FTE		8.31 total FTE	
S2B	Total number of qualified staff (FTE) per 10,000 population	0.12	1.0	-88%	0.51	-49%
		0.46 total FTE	3.9 total FTE		2.0 total FTE	

* Updates calculated using Library Service Review methodology 2025; Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale population = estimates 2025 population (.idcommunity Profile).

The impact of the Library Plan 2026 – 2031 on remaining standards would be determined following implementation when measurement could occur.

Reporting and evaluation

Reporting of the plan will occur quarterly though the Shire's Corporate Business Plan reporting, which is presented to Council each quarter and published on the Shire's website.

Assumptions and risks

The plan has been developed on the assumption resources identified above are supported by through the Budget setting process. If the are not supported, or there are changes to resources, this will impact the Shire's ability to implement the actions identified within the Plan.





6 Paterson Street, Mundijong
Western Australia 6123

t: (08) 9526 1111 | **e:** info@sjshire.wa.gov.au
w: www.sjshire.wa.gov.au

