



Brimbank
City Council



Library Strategy

2015-2020

Brimbank Libraries
Celebrating Learning



“Going to the library is an integral part of my life. It opens up a whole new world of information.”

Library customer, 2014

Introduction

Libraries are a universal free service available to all Victorian community members.

Libraries provide inclusive, accessible and welcoming spaces for people to learn, create, socialise and share ideas and resources. They play an important role in building social capital and enhancing community and individual wellbeing.

Brimbank City Council's libraries are highly utilised and valued by the community. With extensive collections, computer and study facilities, innovative programming and long opening hours, they foster a culture of reading and learning throughout life.

Brimbank Libraries are progressive and community focussed with custom IT services, a proactive customer service model and a strategic approach to program development. They collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to provide a diverse range of learning opportunities across all life stages. Lifelong learning is recognised as a driver for social and economic change, and Brimbank Libraries play a significant role in building Brimbank as a learning community.

The Library Strategy 2015–2020 was developed through a consultation process with the community, local service providers and council staff. It is underpinned by Council's strategic direction of *Creating a community of lifelong learners*.

Brimbank City Council's Libraries and Learning Department operates five libraries in Sunshine, Sydenham, St Albans, Keilor Village and Deer Park and an Online Library. A Home Library service delivers library resources to residents who cannot visit the library due to illness, frailty or disability.

Outreach programs occur in Brimbank's parks, shopping centres, community centres and street corners where library staff deliver storytime, demonstrate online learning resources, consult with the community and promote reading as an important life skill.

The new Brimbank Community and Civic Centre in the Sunshine Town Centre is scheduled to open in July 2016. It will include a state of the art library and learning centre over two levels. The community will benefit from the new library's facilities including study rooms, an outdoor recreation space, an IT training room and a spectacular reading room on the first floor.

The new Keilor Village Library will be relocated to the site of the former Keilor Office in late 2016. Facilities will include increased study and reading areas, an IT training room and dedicated program space.



Purpose of this Strategy

The role of public libraries continues to change. As community needs shift with social trends and rapid technological advancements, Brimbank's libraries need to be flexible and responsive.

The Library Strategy 2015–2020 provides a framework for the planning and development of collections, community engagement and online services to meet these changing community needs. The Strategy will guide the development of the Libraries & Learning Department's annual business plans.

A Vision for the City of Brimbank

“Brimbank will be the dynamic centre of Melbourne’s West. We will be a proud, diverse and connected community.”

Brimbank Libraries' Vision

Connect Learn Grow

Learning is a recognised driver for social and economic change...

Brimbank Community Learning Strategy 2014–2017

Brimbank City Council’s recognition of the central role of learning in life led to the development of the Brimbank Community Learning Strategy. Council, through its Community Learning Strategy and with its partner organisations, encourages and supports residents to participate in learning on a daily basis over their lifetime. Council’s Libraries and Learning Department oversees the implementation of the Community Learning Strategy.

Community Learning Strategy Vision

To foster a community of lifelong learners by working with partner organisations to empower people to take control of their lives, build aspirations, enhance employability and build active citizenship and quality of life in Brimbank.

Linked Plans

- Brimbank Community Plan (2009–2030, updated 2014)
- Brimbank Social Justice Charter (2012)
- Brimbank Community Strengthening Policy (2014)
- Brimbank Community Learning Strategy (2014–2017)
- Library Policy (2014)



Our Community

Brimbank is a city built on diverse cultural heritage.

- The estimated resident population of Brimbank as of June 2014 was 197,701, and is forecast to increase to 207,048 by 2024 (Profile.ID Brimbank Community Profile, June 2014)
- Brimbank is a culturally diverse community; in 2011, 46.1% of residents were born overseas, compared to 31.4% for Greater Melbourne (ABS, 2011)
- Brimbank is a community of bilingual and multilingual speakers; in 2011, 56.2% of residents spoke a language other than English at home, and there were over 160 languages spoken (ABS, 2011)
- The proportion of Brimbank residents who have completed Year 12 or equivalent is increasing; 2006 – 41.0% compared to 47.3% in 2011 (ABS, 2006 & 2011)
- In December 2015, Brimbank’s unemployment rate was 9.9%, compared to 6.2% for Greater Melbourne (ABS Labour Force Survey, June 2015)
- In 2011, children and young people (0–24 years), made up 33.9% of the total population in Brimbank, compared to 32.3% for Greater Melbourne (ABS, 2011)
- Between 2014 and 2024, the number of residents aged 65 years and over is forecast to increase by nearly 7,020 (Profile.ID Population & Household Forecast, February 2014)

Library services in Brimbank date back to 1908 when the first library in Sunshine was established as part of the Mechanics Institute in Corio Street. Keilor and St Albans libraries date back to the 1960s, while a mobile library operated in Deer Park from the 1970s until a much needed purpose built library opened in 1993. Brimbank’s newest library in Sydenham opened in 2006 as part of the Watergardens Town Centre, servicing residents in the north of the municipality.

Brimbank Libraries was formed in 1994 following the amalgamation of the former cities of Sunshine and Keilor.



A Day in the Life of Brimbank Libraries

-  **3.30am** Thanh, a shift worker logs onto the Online Library to renew his children’s library books. He also downloads an e-book to his mobile device to read during his meal break.
-  **7.00am** Chi is at home in Albion and has just finished her research paper due that day. She does not have a printer, so she emails the document to the library’s Mobile Print service to collect from Sunshine Library when it opens at 9:30am.
-  **9.30am** Customers are already gathered outside when St Albans Library opens its doors. They come to read newspapers in English and community languages, to return and borrow books through the self-service kiosks and to ask staff to recommend a good book to read.
-  **10.00am** At Keilor Village Library a Council volunteer selects books to deliver to Mary, an 89 year old Keilor resident who is too frail to visit.
-  **10.30am** A group of eager children and their parents are seated and ready for toddler storytime at Sydenham Library. The stories, songs and rhymes will help their language and literacy development.
-  **10.35am** At the Sunshine Marketplace Shopping Centre, storytime is underway at the monthly outreach program. Staff use these sessions to promote Council’s libraries and the importance of parents reading to their children every day.
-  **10.45am** Kim and her son Ethan love borrowing from the Toy Library at Deer Park. Ethan learns through playing with educational toys.
-  **10.55am** In Sunshine, Nasiri and Hadi love going to their local library because it has bilingual picture books in their native language of Farsi. Frances visits the library to borrow Maltese DVDs and books.
-  **11.00am** A group of older adults are learning how to use a mouse and keyboard for the first time in a Basic Computer Skills class at Sydenham Library. They can continue learning at their own pace through the library’s online learning programs.
-  **11.15am** Amal is a 19 year old TAFE student looking for part time work. She uses one of the self-service kiosks at Deer Park Library to book a computer to work on her resume.
-  **12.00pm** Ryan is planning a holiday to Vietnam and wants to learn some key words and phrases. He downloads a language learning app from the Online Library to his tablet and reserves some travel guides.

-  **12.15pm** Local workers go to the Sydenham Library during their lunch break to relax and read digital magazines on a library iPad.
-  **1.00pm** Six pre-service teachers from Victorian University are ready to run their weekly Kinda Kinder program at the Deer Park Library. The students get valuable experience working with families and the program forms part of their assessment.
-  **2.00pm** Keilor Library is hosting its monthly book group. Ada, a stay at home mum and avid reader, enjoys the social aspect of the program where she discusses new books and old favourites over coffee.
-  **2.30pm** The private study rooms at Deer Park Library are all in use. Customers scan their visa immigration documents using the PC scanners.
-  **3.00pm** English language students are at St Albans Library using language learning software. When their English classes end, they can continue to learn using the library's online learning programs.
-  **4.00pm** The Children's Corner after school program at Sunshine Library is in full swing with children working together to solve fun puzzles that test their numeracy and problem solving skills. Older students are busy studying at every available table.
-  **4.15pm** Young people are playing a game of FIFA16 on the Xbox at Deer Park Library, while pre-schoolers play educational games on the touchscreen computers nearby.
-  **4.30pm** The St Albans Library is buzzing and at capacity with every table and chair occupied by students studying and using the wifi. Younger children are on the floor playing chess and every public access computer is booked out until closing time.
-  **6.30pm** The weekly Practice Your English program at Sunshine brings people together to practice their conversation and listening skills. After the session, they borrow books and DVDs from the English as an Additional Language collection.
-  **8.05pm** Brimbank's physical libraries have closed for the day, so customers visit the Online Library to renew items, book library programs, post a review on the Brimbank Bookshelf blog, request a book for the library to purchase, download an e-book...

Looking Ahead

Libraries will continue to face new challenges as technology and social trends rapidly change.

In order to meet the changing needs of the community, Brimbank Libraries will continue to be responsive, flexible and innovative through addressing the following challenges:

Access

A substantial number of Brimbank residents who are not library members are socially isolated or unemployed. Improving library access for our most vulnerable community members is an ongoing priority. To support this, library services need to remain free, well-resourced and accessible to all community members.

English Literacy

English proficiency is crucial for employment and citizenship. Supporting the significant number of Brimbank residents who have little or no English language skills creates both opportunities and challenges for our community engagement, programming and collections.

Digital Literacy

As more information and services go online, digital literacy is increasingly necessary for communication, social connection and access to consumer services. Libraries provide a unique environment for the public to use computers and seek assistance doing so. As state and federal governments shift services online, the demand for staff support by customers to navigate these services is increasing significantly.

Space

Limited space presents challenges for programming, access to collections and independent study, often creating a compression of activities into one communal area. The St Albans Library is at capacity and unable to meet customer demand for seating, computer access or study space. Investigating opportunities to increase library capacity in St Albans is ongoing.

Collections

Our libraries celebrate the rich cultural life of Brimbank through collections in English and fifteen community languages. Libraries will need to maintain their physical collections while building digital collections into the future as customers enjoy using both formats.

Promoting Reading

Reading is fundamental to learning and integral to economic, civic and social participation. Libraries play an important role in promoting a culture of reading and supporting literacy development in a changing environment.

Digital Content

Making digital content available requires adequate bandwidth to deliver more media-rich content to meet community demand.

Connecting to the Past

The library service can help new generations discover Brimbank's rich past. However, digitising collections requires significant resourcing.

Library Staff

To meet changing community needs the library workforce needs to be flexible, collaborative, have exceptional digital literacy skills and embrace change.

“The library provides a different environment than home. Home has distractions, limitations, etc, so I often find my time on the library internet more productive. Also, if I don't understand how to do something, there is someone in person whom I can ask for assistance”.

Library customer, 2014



Strategic Directions

The Strategic Directions will address the challenges facing libraries and inform the development of the Libraries and Learning Department’s annual business plans over the next five years. The annual business plans will detail activities and initiatives to address the priority areas.

Library staff will work collaboratively with community, industry and Council partners to achieve the outcomes in the Strategy. Implementation of the Strategy will have no additional financial impact for Council.

Strategic Direction 1: A community of lifelong learners

- 1.1 Responsive services and programs
- 1.2 Welcoming and flexible library spaces
- 1.3 A strong online presence

Strategic Direction 2: Skilled and proactive staff

“I come here to use the internet for job search because I love the environment around the library, because not only can you stay focussed but you can also stay motivated and stay on track without getting distracted”.

Library customer, 2014





Strategic Direction 1: A community of lifelong learners

1.1 Responsive services, collections and programs

Priority areas

- Plan and develop library services, collections and programs that are customer directed and evidence based
- Provide services, collections and programs that support the learning needs of the community and have a strong focus on English literacy and digital literacy skills
- Work in collaboration with community and Council partners to increase the capacity for more learning programs and services to be delivered
- Provide customers with quality physical and digital collections to encourage increased borrowing and access
- Provide customers with access to accurate information in a timely manner
- Review and assess emerging technologies to drive continual innovation

Outcomes

- Services, collections and programs are relevant, responsive and community directed
- Strong and sustainable partnerships with internal and external partners deliver programs to support the learning needs of the community
- Community members can access services, collections and programs to learn English, gain digital literacy skills and continue learning throughout their lives
- New technology benefits customers and provides efficiencies for Council

1.2 Welcoming and flexible library spaces

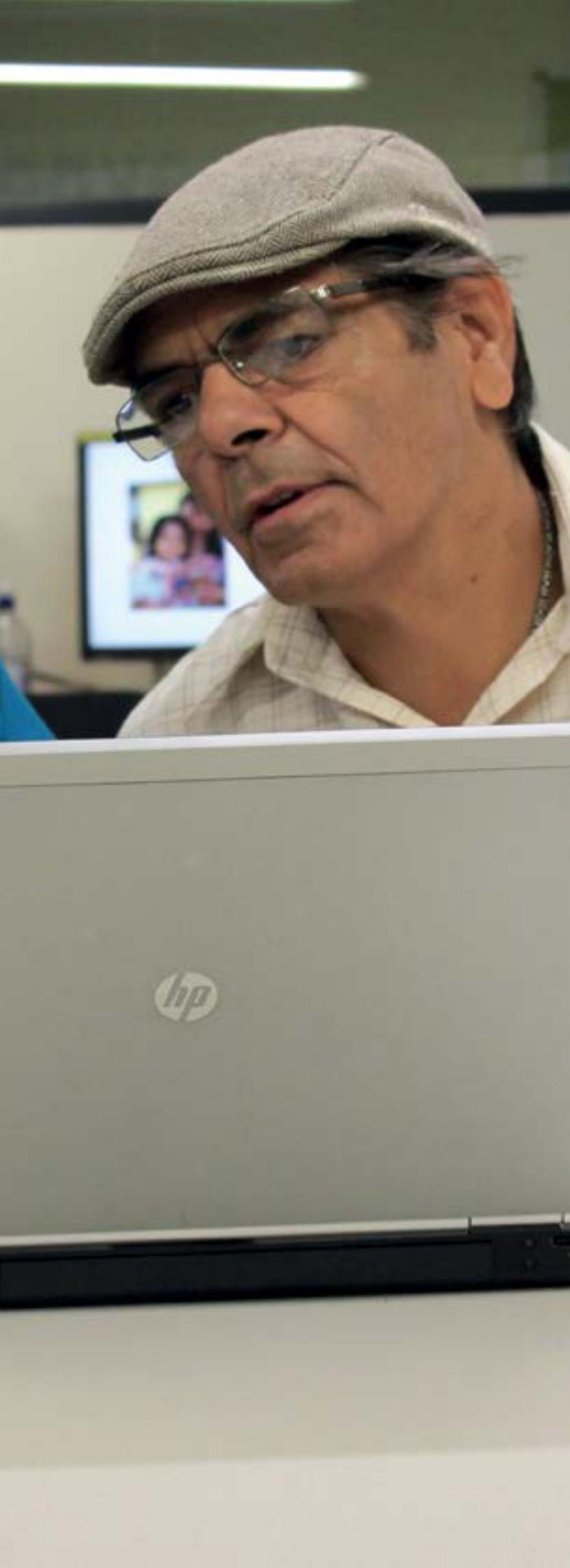
Priority areas

- Deliver proactive customer support
- Support library customers to become independent learners
- Provide spaces for people to meet, read, create and study
- Create supportive environments for students and lifelong learners
- Provide customers with access to technology that facilitates self-service and supports their interest and learning needs
- Develop and maintain library interiors that are flexible, fit for purpose and adapt to changing customer needs and usage patterns
- Explore opportunities for Council departments to partner with libraries to improve customer access to community services
- Continually review library infrastructure based on customer use and feedback
- Investigate opportunities to increase the capacity of St Albans Library to meet community needs

Outcomes

- Customers are independent users of library technology, systems and collections
- Staff support is available to customers using library collections, services and facilities
- Shared library space is enjoyed by all community members for study, recreation or program attendance
- Library technology is easy to use, facilitates self-service and meets community needs and expectations
- Library customers have improved access to Council community services
- Opportunities to expand St Albans Library through external funding are sought and developed





1.3 A strong online presence

Priority areas

- Continue to build a vibrant online presence
- Create opportunities for customers to engage with library services through social media
- Promote awareness of local historical societies through the Local History portal
- Promote diverse and high quality online learning opportunities

Outcomes

- Increased usage of the Online Library
- Library social media provides opportunities for customers to engage with library staff and other community members
- Greater awareness of local historical societies' work, collections and services through the Local History portal
- Customers can easily access quality online library resources and services

“Council’s libraries are the most family friendly service in Brimbank.”

2014 Communities for Children survey

Strategic Direction 2: Highly skilled and proactive staff

Priority areas

- Foster staff skills and behaviour to match service delivery requirements, standards and Council's values
- Support library teams and individual staff to lead the ongoing improvement of services and programs through community consultation, innovation and best practice
- Promote the benefit of library membership to non-members
- Develop and maintain communication between staff and the community that is clear, proactive and timely
- Develop and maintain processes and systems to support excellent customer service
- Participate in state-wide industry networks and collaborations to build staff knowledge, improve customer service and explore opportunities for resource and systems sharing

Outcomes:

- The library workforce is community focussed, skilled and reflective of the Brimbank community
- Library services continue to evolve through community consultation, innovation and ongoing review
- The provision of library collections, services and systems is seamless, timely and meets customer needs
- Community members are informed and provide feedback to staff through multiple channels
- The library service actively participates in industry collaborative projects that provide benefits to customers and efficiencies to Council





In 2014–15 Brimbank Libraries had:

- 81,194 library members
- 1,098,897 visits to the five physical library branches
- 838,014 visits to the Online Library
- 1,434,977 physical and electronic loans
- 270,586 computer bookings;
460,991 wifi sessions
- 130,420 information requests satisfied
- 3,333 programs held with 66,951 people attending
- 226,191 physical and electronic collection items including resources in 15 community languages

Deer Park Library

4 Neale Road, Deer Park

T 9249 4660

Keilor Village Library

Kennedy Street, Keilor

T 9249 4670

St Albans Library

71A Alfrieda Street, St Albans

T 9249 4650

Sunshine Library

301 Hampshire Road, Sunshine
(from August 2016)

T 9249 4640

Sydenham Library

1 Station Street, Taylors Lakes

T 9249 4680



www.brimbanklibraries.vic.gov.au

Brimbank
Language link 

 **9209 0140**

Local call costs apply

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www.brimbanklibraries.vic.gov.au

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Brimbank City Council

Customer Service Centres

Sunshine: 301 Hampshire Road, Sunshine
Keilor: 704B Old Calder Highway, Keilor
Sydenham: Station Street, Taylors Lakes

Contact us

Telephone: 9249 4000
Email: info@brimbank.vic.gov.au
Post: PO Box 70 Sunshine VIC 3020
Website: brimbank.vic.gov.au

TTY dial 133 677 or Speak & Listen 1300 555 727 or www.iprelay.com.au, then enter 03 9249 4000

