

YOUR LIBRARY



ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023



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Your Library (Eastern Regional Libraries) acknowledges the Aboriginal Traditional Owners of Country throughout our region, and pays respect to their cultures and Elders past, present and emerging.



Anne (Children's Services Officer)
with Storytime Ted at Realm Library

PART 1

YEAR IN REVIEW

Year in review



JULY '22

- Reader Pens launched



AUGUST '22

- First books covered with Bioguard 80
- Kinley visit for National Family History Month



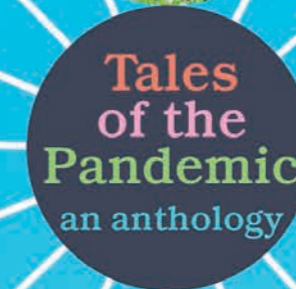
SEPTEMBER '22

- Leap into Literacy launched
- Adult Learners Week



OCTOBER '22

- Composting workshop
- Halloween – Yarra Junction



NOVEMBER '22

- Miller's Homestead tenancy extended
- Tales from the Pandemic launched



DECEMBER '22

- Bayswater Crochet + Christmas Tree



JANUARY '23

- Yarra Ranges Flexi van back on the road
- Summer music series (Miller's Homestead)



FEBRUARY '23

- Children's newsletter launched
- Reader's Choice winners announced



MARCH '23

- Harmony Week (postcards)
- Cultural Diversity Week (events at Miller's)



APRIL '23

- Global Astronomy Month (blow-up planetarium)
- Hakha Chin Storytimes commence



MAY '23

- Croydon opening hours extended to 8pm, Mon-Thu



JUNE '23

- Warm Winter Read launched

REFLECTIONS

Message from the Chair - Cr Marcia Timmers-Leitch



On behalf of the Board, I am delighted to present the 2022–23 Your Library Annual Report.

The theme of this year's National Library and Information Week was 'Rewrite, Renew, Reimagine' and the Board is proud that *Your Library's* activities and achievements in 2022–23 helped our members and our staff do exactly that in many varied and innovative ways.

We have embraced the new world of digital access through our *Your Library* App. It's simple, free and allows you to manage your account, browse the extensive catalogue, check out items straight from your device or place a hold on coveted titles. We already have 6,000 regular users, and the community is growing.

Our online space also offers free, age-appropriate, educational and entertaining material for children. Libby for Kids, Story Box Library and Kanopy Kids let your little ones to discover a world of knowledge – as well as giving you a chance to recharge without any guilt or hassle.

We reimagined book coverings this year with approximately 20,000 of our books now wrapped in Bioguard 80, the world's first fully biodegradable and truly compostable covering. It has no toxic microplastics and can even be eaten by worms!

Library visits were up 90% this year, and the Board is confident that we are on track to return to pre-pandemic visitor levels soon. Memberships rose by 52%, checkouts increased by 27% and PC sessions were up 120%. We did see a drop of 2.5% in reservations, but this tells us that our members are returning to their local branch to browse the collection in person and engage with our staff and each other.

The Board has been hard at work refining our internal processes and improving our governance. Significant work has been achieved by our Member Councils, Board and Management to facilitate the transition from Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation to *Your Library* Limited, a company limited by guarantee. The board used this opportunity to revisit the Constitution and Regional Library Agreement, formerly established in 1996.

By becoming a company limited by guarantee, *Your Library* are now also a registered charity which opens up new opportunities including philanthropic funding.

The Board, with the assistance of its Corporate Management Team, has adopted 'Convene', a specific software designed to enable access to all relevant board documents electronically, making meetings more efficient and reducing the need for paper copies – another small step on the way to meeting our sustainability goals.

I am confident that we have established a sustainable governance, financial and environmental foundation that will continue to deliver excellent library services in the future.

Congratulations to the *Your Library* team!

From the Branches to the Administration and Corporate Management Team, to our volunteers and partners, as well as to our Member Councils and to my fellow Board Members, your commitment and hard work have made all these achievements possible, and enriched and strengthened the communities we work in.

Message from the CEO – Joseph Cullen

Celebrated author Neil Gaiman wrote ‘Libraries are about freedom. Freedom to read, freedom of ideas, freedom of communication. They are about education... about entertainment, about making safe spaces, and about access to information.’



At *Your Library*, we couldn't agree more.

We have formalised these ideas in the seven key directions identified in the Library Plan 2021–2025, each of which relate directly to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. In this Annual Report, our progress in these key directions is discussed in detail. We describe what we have achieved this year and explain the steps we are taking so we can do even better in the future.

But to borrow Neil Gaiman's far more poetic description of the role of libraries, and celebrate a year in which all our branches were open and our in-person events and programs ran without restrictions, I'd like to acknowledge some of our 2022–23 activities and achievements through the lens of freedom and access.

The return of our innovative Conversation Café and the launch of the new Leap into Literacy program exemplify our commitment to providing a space for people to form genuine connections and learn with and from each other. We embraced new technology, such as scanning pens to help overcome literacy barriers, and introduced our older members to the wonders of virtual reality – in the process, providing one of them with a profoundly moving experience.

We embraced the idea of 'reading for fun' through our Big Summer Read, which encouraged children to discover the joy of reading during the downtime of the summer holidays, and Reader's Choice, where we asked our members what books they enjoyed reading this year.

Our Storytime program was as popular as ever, this year reaching 68,000 young people and their carers. We realised that some children find regular Storytime sessions very overwhelming, so we created a quieter version for them. We also offered bilingual Storytimes that were attended by Chinese and non-Chinese speaking families, helping to forge new connections and relationships and understanding.

Adults weren't forgotten – 30,000 of them took part in 7,500 activities on topics as varied as local history, sharing a community meal or visiting a library made from felt. And alongside our regular program of author talks, where we celebrate the authors we admire and introduce them and their work to our members, we flipped the switch and published our first anthology of writing from our own community, *Tales from the Pandemic*.

Some of our community members are unable to visit a branch, so our Home Library Service delivers library materials to their doorstep. And, for all our members, the *Your Library App* is a simple and free way to explore the library and manage your account from your own mobile device.

Our library spaces were enhanced by the addition of a wonderful mural at Boronia, a vibrant revamp of the courtyard at Rowville, and a Christmas tree at Bayswater that embraced the spirit of community giving in a very unexpected and practical way. The plans for the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct, which will include a new library, are taking shape after extensive community consultation. In the virtual space, we made great progress in safeguarding our information and data, prioritising the digital privacy of all our members.

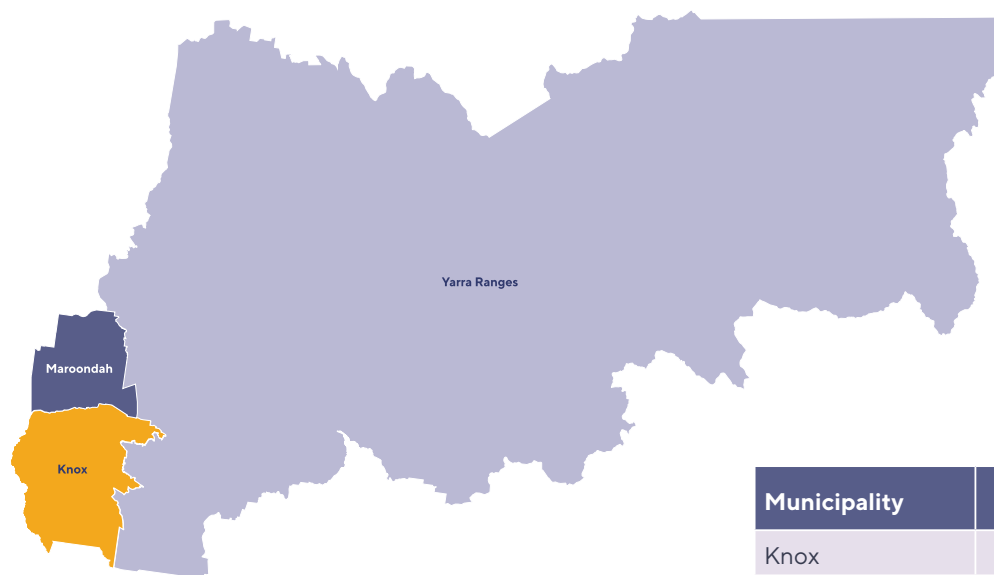
Your Library is committed to providing everyone in our community with opportunities to access education, entertainment and information in safe and supportive spaces. This year has been filled with innovation, collaboration and unwavering commitment from our wonderful staff, supporters, partners, volunteers and community members. I am profoundly grateful to them all. Together, we achieve so much for our community.

GOVERNANCE

Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation

Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation (ERLC), known as Your Library, provides library services to Knox City Council, Maroondah City Council and Yarra Ranges Council.

Together, the three municipalities cover a large geographic area in the outer metropolitan area of Melbourne, on the land of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation.



Municipality	Population	Area (km ²)
Knox	159,404	114
Maroondah	115,645	61
Yarra Ranges	157,339	2,500
Total	432,388	2,675

There is a diverse range of communities with a combined population of 432 388, according to the ABS 2022 Estimated Residential Population.

The Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation was established in 1996 by the Member Councils in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989, section 196. The Board governs the Corporation in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Local Government Act, the Regional Library Agreement and other adopted policies and procedures.

The day-to-day management of the Corporation is the responsibility of the Chief Executive, supported by the Corporate Management Team and Council officers with responsibility for library services.







Statutory compliance





























Summary

This section provides details of Eastern Regional Libraries' (ERL) compliance with its statutory and fiduciary requirements and responsibilities.

Status & Risk Summary

Commentary is provided together with Traffic Lights to show compliance and risks.

Compliance		Risk	
Traffic light	Definition	Traffic light	Definition
	Complies		Low Risk Rating
	The issue has an unresolved matter but action is being taken to resolve this		Medium Risk Rating
	Issue requires remedial action		High Risk Rating

Legislation	Compliance	Compliance	Risk
Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)	ERL did not receive any FOI requests for the year.		
Freedom of Information 1982 (Cth)	ERL did not receive any FOI requests for the year.		
Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)	ERL did not receive any privacy and data protection requests for the year.		
Gender Equality Act 2022 (Vic)	<i>Your Library</i> will still pursue the objectives of the Act, although we do not have to report formally on our outcomes to the Victorian Government. We will report on our actions and outcomes on gender equality through our quarterly reports and annual report to the Board.		
Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)	ERL did not receive any privacy requests for the year.		
Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)	ERL did not receive any health records requests for the year.		
Protected Disclosure Act 2012	ERL has not received any disclosures directly nor has it received any referrals from the Ombudsman or IBAC for the year.		
Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005	ERLC has not had to respond to, or report, any allegations of child abuse in the year.		
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006	No complaints received in the year.		
Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013	1 WorkCover Claim.		
Equal Opportunity Act 2010	No complaints received in the year date.		
Audit Act 1994 (Vic)	Working with HLB Mann Judd and VAGO Auditor (BDO).		
ACNC Act 2012	First report due 31 December 2024.		
Corporations Act 2001	Company registered and Directors appointed. First accounts are due 30 June 2024.		

Your Library Board

ERLC is very fortunate to have a highly skilled and supportive Board at the helm. The Board is committed to environmental, social and governance (ESG) and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and uses these to set *Your Library's* Corporate Plan and strategies.

Board members

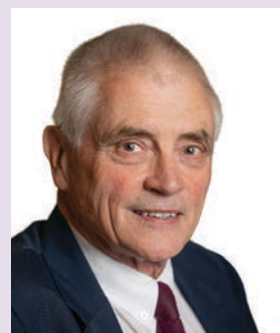
The Board is made up of two nominated Councillors from each of the Member Councils.



Cr Susan Laukens
Knox City Council



Cr Linda Hancock
Maroondah City Council



Cr Jim Child, Mayor
Yarra Ranges Council



**Cr Marcia Timmers-Leitch,
Mayor (Chair)**
Knox City Council



Cr Kylie Spears
Maroondah City Council



**Cr Andrew Fullagar
(Deputy Chair)**
Yarra Ranges Council

Council	Board membership changes in 2022-23
Knox	Cr Laukens joined the Board Cr Allred resigned from the Board
Maroondah	Cr Hancock joined the Board Cr Damante resigned from the Board
Yarra Ranges	Cr Cox resigned from the Board Cr McAllister resigned from the Board Cr Child joined the Board Cr Fullagar joined the Board

Board meetings

The Board met six times during 2022–23, and with the assistance of its Corporate Management Team met all of its statutory deadlines.

Council	Councillor	Number of meetings	Number of meetings attended
Knox	Cr Laukens	4	4
	Cr Timmers-Leitch	6	6
Maroondah	Cr Hancock	4	4
	Cr Spears	6	5
Yarra Ranges	Cr Child	4	3
	Cr Fullagar	4	3

Board achievements

The Board has achieved the following:

Regional Library Agreement & Statutory Requirements (Local Government Act 2019) Reports Policies and strategies Board actions	Quarterly meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 2022 • October 2022 • February 2023 • April 2023 • May 2023 Special Meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 2023
	Adopted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Financial Report 2021-22 • Annual Report 2021-22 • Budget 2023-24
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resolved to review all Board policies • Prioritised policies for review; Child Safe policy assigned first priority • Adopted Omnibus policy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Your Library Ltd</i> Constitution adopted by Member Councils • <i>Your Library</i> Agreement adopted by Member Councils • <i>Your Library Ltd</i> registered and Directors appointed; first accounts due 30 June 2024 • <i>Your Library Ltd</i> registered as a charity; first report due 31 December 2024 • Board planner/calendar adopted • Board portal initiated online

Audit and Risk Advisory Committee

The Audit & Risk Advisory Committee (ARAC) is an independent committee that assists the Board in fulfilling its corporate governance and oversight responsibilities in relation to corporate reporting processes, including the financial reporting process, risk management and internal control, external audit, internal audit and compliance. ARAC has been instrumental to managing the transition of the Regional Library Corporation to a Beneficial Enterprise limited by guarantee. ARAC is made up of one Board member from each Council and one second level Council employee from one of the Member Councils.

Council	ARAC Membership 2022-2023
Knox	Cr Laukens
Maroondah	Cr Spears - Chair Marianne Di Giallonardo (Director People and Places)
Yarra Ranges	Cr Child

About Your Library

The role of libraries

Libraries are more than books. They contribute to social cohesion and connections within our communities.

Your Library has a huge front door, both physically and virtually. We provide valuable services to the wide range of our community members, at all ages and stages of their life. From storytime for babies and their caregivers to homework clubs for teenagers, job search services for adults and delivery services to older residents in aged care, we cater to everyone.

Our vision

Literacy and access for all – no one left behind!

Our mission

To provide something indispensable or enriching every day – for free – to everyone in the community.

Our partners

Your Library achieves our vision, mission and key directions by working in partnership with our Member Councils, other levels of governments, businesses, educators, charities, neighbourhood houses, learning centres and other not-for-profit organisations to progress our shared interest in achieving a better future for our communities.

Collaborations and partnerships are important enablers. They are a means to an end not an end in themselves.

Our values

Our plans, decisions and actions are informed and guided by our values:

Fairness and equity: We are committed to advancing fairness and equity for all.

Social responsibility: We contribute to our community and demonstrate corporate and social responsibility.

Diversity and inclusion: We respect and celebrate the diversity of our communities. Acceptance and inclusion are at the core of what we do.

Sustainability: We build the four pillars of sustainability into everything we do.

Agility and innovation: We are agile and responsive to changing community needs. We provide opportunities for people to be innovative through our services, spaces and collections.

Library Plan 2021–2025

The *Library Plan 2021–2025* is the key component in *Your Library's* strategic planning framework. It outlines the key directions that the library undertakes each year and determines the aims and objectives of every aspect of the library service.

It is made up of seven key directions, each of which relate to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals:

- **Key Direction 1:** Literacy for all, reading for pleasure
- **Key Direction 2:** Connecting people to knowledge and each other
- **Key Direction 3:** Creative learning – a rehearsal for life
- **Key Direction 4:** All for one and one for all, working with our partners
- **Key Direction 5:** Practice sustainability and protect our environment
- **Key Direction 6:** Measure the impact and continually improve
- **Key Direction 7:** Recruiting and retaining highly motivated staff

Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are at the core of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They are an urgent call for action to end poverty, improve health and education, reduce inequality and foster economic growth. They also highlight the importance of addressing climate change and protecting the environment.

Your Library uses the SDGs to guide the planning of our services, programs, collections, collaborations and partnerships. We address each goal directly and practically through our actions, and also provide our users with the information and resources they need to act themselves.

Throughout this report, the SDGs relevant to each business activity are indicated using the following key:





Healeville Library's very successful 'Hot soup kitchen' initiative

CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

“Our libraries are way more than just books. They are a place where strong community connections are nurtured.”

- Cr Susan Laukens

Highlights

We continued to deliver resources, programs and services that support our key strategic directions.



- Our Reader’s Choice activity uncovered the book that our members enjoyed the most: *Ten Steps to Nanette* by Hannah Gadsby.

KEY DIRECTION 1
Literacy for all, reading for pleasure



- Conversation Café returned and five new Conversation Circles introduced.

KEY DIRECTION 2
Connecting people to knowledge and each other



- 2,600 Storytimes were attended by 68,000 children and their parents or teachers, and 7,500 activities for adults were attended by 30,000 people.

KEY DIRECTION 3
Creative learning – a rehearsal for life



- Our anthology, *Tales from the Pandemic*, was launched with the support of IngramSpark.

KEY DIRECTION 4
All for one and one for all, working with our partners



- The first books covered in Bioguard 80 arrived in September 2022. Approximately 20,000 books have now been covered in covered in this compostable material.

KEY DIRECTION 5
Practice sustainability and protect our environment



- Checkouts up 27% and new memberships up 52%
- We launched Convene and Explorer, cloud based solutions to streamline document management for the Board and our staff.

KEY DIRECTION 6
Measure the impact and continually improve



- A new role focussed on digital literacy for seniors was created in response to a Victorian Government initiative, and 13 staff gained experience by acting in temporary roles.
- Connecting with adults.

KEY DIRECTION 7
Recruiting and retaining highly motivated staff

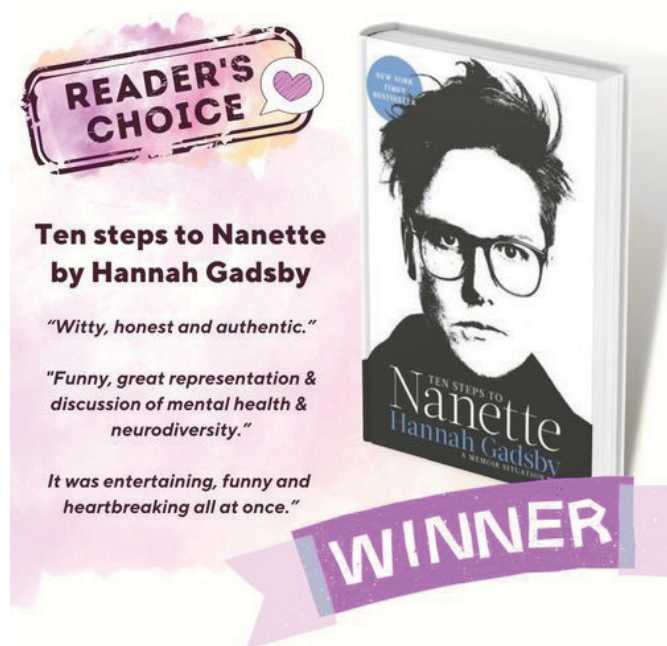
Reader's Choice

We collect a lot of information about the books you borrowed the most, but that doesn't tell us which ones you enjoyed the most. Reader's Choice was designed to find out what our members enjoyed reading from the long list of books published in 2022.

We collected responses over summer and announced the winner on Library Lover's Day – 14 February 2023. A wide range of titles captured people's imaginations, sparked their curiosity or otherwise satisfied their reading itch – 160 readers nominated 104 books.

The clear winner was Hannah Gadsby's *Ten Steps to Nanette*, followed by the worldwide bestseller *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus. It was great to see an Australian author (and a non-fiction book) take out top place.

Readers' Choice will be an annual event.



Jess Brown (Boronia Team Leader) with her Reader's Choice, *The Blood Traitor* by Lynette Noni.



Chelsea Sanders (Knox Express Children's Librarian) with her Reader's Choice, *Bitter Sweet* by Susan Cain.

"On a personal level, I have learned so much of the inside workings of the Eastern Regional Libraries association. It is indeed a Community and Council success story, run by a wonderful team of committed staff and volunteers. I thank my fellow Board members and ERL Management for their patience and guidance, and now look forward to the next exciting chapter. I encourage all members of our communities to visit, enjoy and make valuable use of these popular community assets."

- Cr Andrew Fullagar

CONNECTING WITH ADULTS

Adult literacy

Conversation Café and Conversation Circles

Conversation Café ran at Realm for many years before the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks to the efforts of Realm team member Candice Zaviska and our Literacy Coordinator, Lizzie James, it is back and more popular than ever.

Conversation Café is a program for adults who have English as a second language. They often have high levels of written English and a good understanding of grammar and vocabulary, which they have learned in their home country, but they may lack confidence speaking aloud and are not familiar with Australian colloquialisms or common conversational topics. The group meets weekly for a lively chat, which must be in English!

This year our conversational English program has expanded significantly, and we now have six English conversation groups meeting each week. While the Conversation Café is facilitated by volunteers, we have also introduced new English conversation practice sessions called Conversation Circles. The Conversation Circles at Knox, Mooroolbark and Lilydale are run by *Your Library* staff members with coordination from our Literacy Coordinator, Lizzie. At Bayswater and Rowville they are run in partnership with Mountain District Learning Centre.

Participants enjoy the casual opportunity to practise their English speaking and listening skills with the guidance of a facilitator who can provide gentle corrections, explanations or alternatives to the language being used. These are light-hearted sessions that are guided by the interest of the participants, who all have different skill levels and cultural backgrounds. They enjoy learning about Australian culture and customs, and there is often a lot of laughter when trying to explain idioms. Facilitators and participants always love discussing their favourite food, which often leads to great restaurant recommendations!

“We talked about interesting things in previous week, then we discussed some idiom, such as ‘method to my madness’, ‘pass the buck’, ‘over my dead body’ and ‘drive someone up to the wall’ – very funny. Different country with different language but the meaning is the same.”

- Conversation Café participant

Leap into Literacy

Nearly half (44%) of Australian adults do not have enough reading and writing skills to cope with everyday life. There are many reasons for this, but there is also a lot of shame and stigma surrounding those who struggle with literacy. People often hide it from their friends, family and colleagues, and there are limited options for help.

Many adults in this situation have experienced trauma at school, so classroom-based learning is not going to help. The best support is one-on-one tutoring. After extensive research on adult literacy tutoring initiatives worldwide, we developed our own program, Leap into Literacy, in partnership with Mountain District Learning Centre.

Our first step was to ensure we had a high-quality pool of volunteers ready to match to our potential students. This involved a careful recruitment and training process. We are also registered with the Reading Writing Hotline, which refers potential students and volunteers.

We were excited to be approached by a literacy expert who was developing an adult literacy tutor training program especially for libraries and neighbourhood houses. Our first group of five volunteers were trained using her pilot program. Volunteers learn about adult learning, reading, writing, numeracy, digital literacy, goals-based learning, learning differences and trauma. Once they are trained, they are matched with a student based on interests and availability. They arrange to meet weekly, for one hour at a time, at a mutually convenient public location. We highly recommend they use one of our libraries.



We currently have eight students working with a volunteer tutor. Most of our matches began early in 2023 and so far, they have clocked up just over 70 hours of teaching and learning. We receive a quarterly progress report from each tutor and student.

The backgrounds and experiences of our students vary. For some, English is not their first language, while others have learning difficulties, interrupted schooling, neurodiversity or traumatic experiences that made literacy learning significantly challenging.

Our students have different goals, including reading a menu, recognising punctuation, getting a job or a volunteer role and improving their spelling or handwriting.

"I am enjoying it and now I have applied for a job."

- Leap into Literacy participant

"Using a GPS is easier - I can spell the names of places, makes it easier."

- Leap into Literacy participant



Our first Leap into Literacy tutors with Barb Buxton (Mountain District Learning Centre).

Adult Learners Week

The first week of September each year is Adult Learners Week – a week to celebrate lifelong learning. In 2022, we ran 34 Adult Learners Week events, showcasing the wide range of learning opportunities that are available in our community, from circus skills and woodwork to Auslan and cooking. We received a grant that allowed us to distribute showbags, which included a few goodies along with flyers to promote the incredible learning providers in our communities.

We also used some of the grant money to randomly award three participants a \$100 voucher for a course at their local Community House. These were much appreciated by both the winners and the community houses, who gained some extra enrolments.

Pictured right: Lizzie James (Literacy Officer) with our Adults Learners Week showbags.

The week was an overwhelming success, with many 5-star reviews.

"Great class."

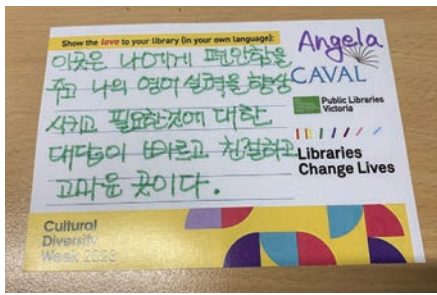
"Thank you for providing opportunities for adult learning."

"Very interacting and teacher was great."

"Absolutely loved it."

"What a joy this was."





Love your library

In celebration of Harmony Week, Public Libraries Victoria encouraged all speakers of a language other than English to create a postcard saying why they loved their library.

“My English has improved, the staff are kind and helpful and they answer any questions I have. It’s a very comfortable place.”

-Angela (Korean) Pictured above left

“I like to go to the local library, there are many interesting events at the local library. The staff are really helpful and I improve my skills at the library.” - Eve (Mandarin)

Pictured above right



Pictured left to right: Sarah Hopkins, Lizzie James (Literacy Officer), David Campbell (Scanner Pens), Cr Marcia Timmers-Leitch, Cr Andrew Fullagar, Joseph Cullen (Your Library CEO) and Premal Niranjana at the ReaderPen launch.

Try before you buy

What can you do when you are faced with a slab of text you are unable to read? A scanning pen like the ReaderPen can help. You simply run it over the words and it reads them out to you in your chosen accent. This adaptive device is suitable for people with reading difficulties, language processing issues or any of the many other causes of low literacy. It can also be used by people who are learning English.

Your Library has purchased several ReaderPens so that our members can try them out before deciding to purchase. The ReaderPen has won a number of awards in the education and disability sectors, including, most recently, the 2023 Edtech Cool Tool award. All our Tech Support Officers have had detailed training on how to use these scanning pens and they have been well-received by the community.

Our first book: *Tales from the Pandemic*

In November 2022 we published our first book! *Tales from the Pandemic* is an anthology collated from more than 280 entries to our 2021–22 writing competition. The book contains 45 stories, including ten that were shortlisted for final judging. The stories are a mixture of fiction, non-fiction, auto-fiction, poetry and reportage. All the published authors were invited to the launch and many of the prize winners were able to attend. Our sponsor, IngramSpark, helped to make the evening a success and our authors and their families took time to mingle and enjoy seeing their names in print.



Pictured left to right: Prize winners and highly commended authors Zoe Clark, Laura Jayne, Mandy Mancuri, Jessica Pritchard and Maria Joseph at the *Tales from the Pandemic* launch.

Good Reading magazine recently reviewed the book, with Jennifer Somerville concluding 'There is plenty of introspection in this collection, and celebration of small things. But take it in small doses or, like the pandemic, this anthology could be overwhelming.'

Since the launch, Yarra Valley FM and Radio Eastern have recorded five of the stories that were written and read by local authors. These are now available via podcast from Yarra Valley FM 99.1. *Tales from the Pandemic* is available from IngramSpark in both print and ebook format. It can be purchased through book shops, ebook retailers and direct from the library. Of course, you can always borrow it from your local library!

"A big thank you to the Eastern Regional Library network and IngramSpark for creating an authentic opportunity for creative writers. It's so interesting to dip in and out of the resulting anthology. The breadth and diversity of pandemic experience captured makes it a really interesting artefact. Thanks for supporting local writing!" – Kelly Simpson, author

Warm Winter Read

Warm Winter Read is a statewide program coordinated by Public Libraries Victoria's Reader Development group. Reader development programs are designed to encourage people to read more, to read more widely and to feel they are part of a supportive community of readers. Warm Winter Read uses software that allows participants to record their reading, review the books they liked or disliked, and share other fun, reading-related observations, such as their favourite place to read.

Your Library members have responded enthusiastically – we have more Warm Winter Read participants than any library in Victoria.





Ajne (Ferntree Gully Team Leader (with Meadow) enjoys a gripping read by local author Sandi Wallace.



Staff member Cath reading in the 'Cave' at Realm Library.

Author highlights

Chris Hammer, Croydon

Thanks to Allen & Unwin, we hosted Australian crime writer Chris Hammer to promote his fifth book, *The Tilt*, at Croydon. With a crowd of over 70, the event space at Croydon was straining, but people just kept booking. This was our biggest event since the COVID-19 pandemic and people were clearly ready to get out and meet in person again. Croydon manager, Sue Pitt, kept Chris on his toes with her extensive knowledge of his back list, and the lively conversation between them was enjoyed by an appreciative audience. Croydon Collins did a booming trade in book sales and Chris was kept busing signing for over an hour after his talk had finished.

A heartfelt message from his publisher showed that our members are not the only ones who relish getting out and about to talk about books again.



"We have just wrapped on 40 days of touring and can finally take a breath! Sending the BIGGEST thank you from Chris Hammer and, to the entire team there who helped make it all possible. Thank you for hosting Chris and making him feel so welcomed. Thank you for all the effort you went to - the set-up, the promotion and championing his book, 'The Tilt', to your community. The whole tour felt really special and we couldn't have done it without your support and enthusiasm."

- Allen & Unwin

"Great turn up. Chris gave such a good intro/teaser to his book, I bought three of them!"



Sue Pitt (Croydon Manager) with author Chris Hammer

Kylie Moore-Gilbert, Belgrave

Sometimes an opportunity arises that you just have to grab. When our Belgrave Team Leader learned that Kylie Moore-Gilbert, the Australian academic who was imprisoned in Iran for nearly three years, lived locally and was writing a book about her ordeal, she had to invite her to visit the library. The talk booked out quickly after just one Facebook post and word of mouth in the branch. The audience were mesmerised by Kylie's story, as told in *The Uncaged Sky: My 804 Days in an Iranian Prison*, and an in-depth question and answer session followed. We are very grateful that Kylie managed to spend some time with us between producing her first book and her first baby.

“Excellent speaker with an enthralling story to tell. High calibre event!”



Pictured left to right: Noah (Belgrave staff member) with Federica Mastrangelo (Team Leader) and Dr. Moore-Gilbert.



Kylie Moore-Gilbert

Will Kostakis, Rowville and Bayswater

When we found out that young adult author Will Kostakis would be visiting from Sydney during the school holidays, two of our libraries banded together to offer his fans and budding writers in the area opportunities to engage with him. In the morning, Will delivered an author talk at Rowville and in the afternoon he ran a writing workshop at Bayswater. This was a welcome success in our ongoing quest to get teenagers to visit the library.



Pictured right: Will Kostakis with Meghan Calf, who runs the young adult book club at Bayswater



Bringing local history to life...

Sometimes history may seem a little dry, but our local and family history librarians have come up with ways to make it come alive.



Kinley visit

Not all our history events happen in a library. As part of National Family History Month, we organised a 'behind the scenes' visit to the Kinley site to see the lime kilns, cheese factory, bacon factory and other buildings that made up David Mitchell's amazing empire in Lilydale. Delivered in partnership with the Kinley developers, the first tour quickly booked out and another was hurriedly arranged. Over 60 people toured the site, and many more were disappointed not to secure a place. The visitors experienced a slice of Lilydale history that few get to see. The entire area is officially a building site, so it was hard hats, closed shoes and high-vis all around.



Healesville's famous guest houses

A packed-out crowd enjoyed local historian Bryn Jones talking about the booming guest house scene in Healesville during the 1920s and beyond. This event was held in partnership with the Healesville Historical Society and, among the many enthusiastic comments, were cries for more history talks at Healesville.

"Absolutely enthralled with the stories that Bryn shared plus the added bonus of some participants sharing snippets of their personal involvement with the guest houses. Thanks so much for this event."

Croydon: then and now

To celebrate Local History Month in October, Croydon hosted an exhibition of old and current photos of local landmarks, streets and houses. From scrubby bushland to bustling modern suburbia, the buildings, roads and parks that have come, gone, significantly changed or stayed the same provided a talking point for the many visitors to the library. Incorporating over 700 photographs and associated information that showcased the changes to Croydon from the time it was settled in 1868 through to today, the exhibition drew large numbers of visitors, including ex-Croydon residents who travelled all the way from Western Australia! Many people commented on how wonderful it was that the photos instigated so much discussion and reminiscing.



Safeway Croydon 1967



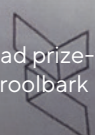
Civic Square 2023



100,000+ free eBooks,
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Local Big Summer Read prize-winner Isla,
with her mum at Mooroolbark Library

 **YOUR LIBRARY**
EASTERN REGIONAL LIBRARIES

CONNECTING WITH CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES



Big Summer Read

How to keep children reading across the summer holidays is a question faced by parents and teachers at the end of each school year. Victorian public libraries have tackled the problem by banding together to offer the Big Summer Read. This year, over 11,500 children from libraries across the state participated to set a new summer reading record. Every child who read 10 books could enter our local prize pool. There were 281 entrants from *Your Library* and they read a whopping 2,412 books, making *Your Library* the seventh busiest Big Summer Read participant across the state.

“My daughter is loving this and has read over 40 books since the end of December.”

Picture This!

The Picture This! comic book competition started during the summer school holidays and continued until the end of the first term of school. The children who came to the workshops run by artists Dean Rankine and our own Sabina Wills got a chance to finish their stories and schools were encouraged to enter. Finally, it was time to draw the competition to a close.

After ...

- 17 comic book workshops at 14 libraries (most booked out with waiting lists)
- 400 children participating
- 92 amazing entries
- shortlisting by Your Library judges – such a difficult job!
- judging by five external judges, including comic book artists, editors and library specialists

PICTURE THIS! COMIC BOOK COMP

Kids and teens...create your own comic stories and submit them to Your Library to win amazing art prizes!

ENTER NOW UNTIL 31 MARCH 2023

YOUR LIBRARY
VICTORIAN REGIONAL LIBRARIES

Knox City Council

Arondah City Council

Yarra Ranges Council



Winners and Highly Commended participants with their certificates at Belgrave Library.

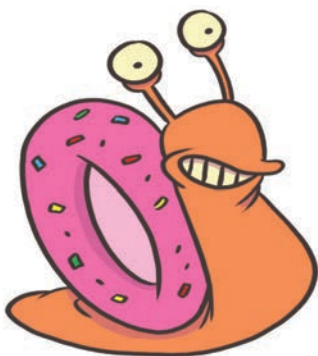
The winners and highly commended entrants received their prizes and certificates at a celebratory party. They also had another opportunity to work with Dean on a wet afternoon at the Belgrave Library. One of our motivations behind Picture This! was to promote our graphic novel collection. Many children enjoy reading graphic novels, which tell stories through text, images, dialogue and background information. However, many parents do not regard reading graphic novels as 'real reading'.

By bringing attention to the work required to convey a story in comic book form, the fun children can have engaging with graphic novels, and the high-quality storytelling that is being published in graphic form, we wanted to highlight the legitimacy of graphic novels as a literary form and an important milestone on children's reading journey.

We were very pleased to see an increase in the percentage of junior graphic novels on loan between January and March, while the competition was under way. The impact was reflected in a passing comment from the Croydon children's librarian in February: 'Our junior graphic novel shelves continue to be quite empty.'



Cr Andrew Fullagar, Cr Johanna Skelton, James Baker (convenor, ALIA Graphic Novels and Comics special interest group), Sabina Wills (Team Leader, Healesville), Dean Rankine (comic book artist) and Joseph Cullen (Your Library CEO) hand out the Picture This! prizes.



It was absolute pleasure to read a Book Week book at storytime - it was on my bucket list! Thank you Boronia Library for the opportunity and amazing experience."

- Cr Susan Laukens

Chinese adventures

We continue to expand our Chinese language children’s programming through our work with A Little Chinese Adventure.

Lunar New Year, Croydon

To celebrate the launch of the collection of Chinese language books and DVDs collection at Croydon, we held a Lunar New Year event as part of the summer school holiday program. Despite poor weather, a number of families turned up to hear English and Chinese stories and songs and work together to decorate a long zodiac colouring sheet. Many people didn’t realise there were now a Chinese language collection at Croydon. There are over 7,000 items in the Chinese collection which moves between the Bayswater, Croydon, Knox, Realm and Rowville libraries.

“We love the space at Croydon. It perfectly fits our long zodiac colouring sheet.”

- Jingjing, A Little Chinese Adventure



Kathleen and Jingjing from A Little Chinese Adventure.



Bilingual Storytimes

- Bayswater, Knox, Rowville and Realm

We have been running Chinese language Storytimes at all the branches that have a Chinese collection for many years. This year we extended the program by offering bilingual Storytimes as a regular school holiday activity, which were attended by both Chinese speaking and non-Chinese speaking families.

Children’s librarians Chelsea from Knox (below left), Michelle from Rowville (above left) and Sarah from Realm (below) presenting *Where is the green sheep?* and *Rosie’s walk* in English and Mandarin with Jenny, Sylvia and Jingjing from A Little Chinese adventure



Gently, Gently

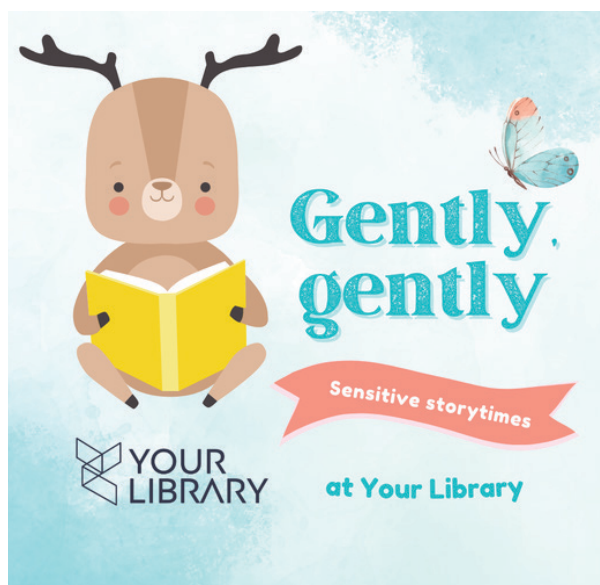
We have been experimenting with a 'Gently, Gently' quiet Storytime for a number of years. Many children find the usual Storytime experience very overwhelming or distracting. It has become clear, however, from attempts to run a short-term program at multiple locations and feedback from parents who want a more subdued Storytime experience for their child, that it needs to run each week. Regularity is the key to getting families to commit to attending each session.

This year we tried again, using one of the new community rooms at Belgrave. Having a room with a door means that we can control noise and distractions and give the children an opportunity to find their way into the Storytime experience. We set a maximum limit of 12 participants – six children and six adults. After a slow start, we quickly reached capacity and there are no longer any issues with commitment.

We have a few very shy children and one quite boisterous boy and they are all benefiting from the smaller group! The visual schedule is working well, with the children being able to easily predict what is coming next. We've had two groups coming regularly since the start of the year and I can really see the two shy little girls in particular starting to come out of their shells and participate. One of the adults has commented to me on several occasions that her granddaughter loves coming to the session and always talks about it.

From my perspective, I think it's working really well. Because the group is so small, and the same children are coming pretty consistently, they are really getting to know each other and are very happy to play together for a long time after the formal part of the session is over. The same could be said for the adults, with a lot of conversation and connections happening! Even though it is by far my smallest session, it always goes for longer than the others because the children and parents are enjoying it so much that they don't want to leave!

- Christine Nugent, Belgrave Children's Librarian



Zine workshops with Cora Zon

Local zine expert Cora Zon has been running regular workshops at Healesville Library for both adults and children. During the summer holidays, Cora used a community grant from Yarra Ranges Council to run workshops in all the libraries across Yarra Ranges.

Everyone had fun making tiny magazines that told their own special stories. The old-fashioned typewriter was a hit and people got creative with images, text, prose and illustrations.



Healesville Library's spooktacular Halloween Party!

Planetarium, Realm

It looked like an alien had landed on the ground floor of Realm, but no, it was a blow-up planetarium! As part of Global Astronomy Month, the Realm team brought the stars to earth during the school holiday program in a partnership event with Maroondah Council (those stars don't come cheap). The queue extended to the door as families walking past wanted to come in and see what was going on in that big grey dome. After a hectic day of crowd management, the attraction was packed down and bundled away in less than 15 minutes, leaving the exhausted Realm team thanking their lucky stars that their very successful day was all over.



What is in there? Shani, Candice, Deb, Mel and James from Realm want to find out.

“My three girls and I absolutely loved this event. They loved the dome and the show. The guy running the show was very knowledgeable and we learnt a lot. The duration was perfect. I hope you run more events like these in the future, maybe even some adults only ones.”

“Fantastic event. Great to have an event that caters for teens. Session was really interesting. Great content and presented in an amazing way.”

KNOX CITY COUNCIL

First year at Miller's Homestead

This year saw the end of our trial tenancy at Miller's Homestead. *Your Library* was awarded a four-year licence to continue to deliver programming with an arts and history flavour to the community. There were many highlights during the last year, as we easily sailed past our goals for visits and activations.



Cat Rabbit's soft Library

Can you imagine a library made of felt? Staffed by life-sized bears, or 'libearians' surrounded by felt books, felt portraits of famous authors, felt date-due stamps and a selection of titles 'recently translated into felt', this soft library was a wonderful immersive experience. And it looked right at home in the charming atmosphere of Miller's, which has its own note of nostalgia and whimsy. Children decorated the walls of the scullery with drawings of the writers they admired – as bears! The library continued to grow for the duration of the exhibition.

Cat returned to Miller's to run a brooch making workshop during the school holidays, where children made their brooches from felt.



Summer music series

The beautiful gardens at Miller's Homestead are a delightful setting for outdoor musical performances. Three events were scheduled in January, and the weather was perfect for each one! People were invited to bring a picnic, do a drawing or just relax and listen in the shade. There were African beats from Super Mande Percussion, classical flute from Ensemble 451 and Vinod Prassana on an Indian bansuri (classical flute). The response was so encouraging we scheduled a winter program.



"It was brilliant. Michelle's manner in set-up and liaising with attendees ensured a relaxed, friendly ambience where our needs were catered for. Musicians excellent with the gift for offering something wonderful to different ages present in audience. Setting is fabulous. I loved this event and will certainly return to Miller's. Next week if possible...and then, often!"



Cultural Diversity Week joy at Miller's Homestead

Cultural Diversity Week

In 2022, Cultural Diversity Week marked our first nervous steps into running events at Miller's Homestead. One year later, we were again working with Knox Council to offer another vibrant program celebrating Cultural Diversity Week and the rich offerings in our community. No longer nervous, we drew on the amazing community contacts we had developed over the preceding year to present the 2023 program, which included dance, music, performance, art, yoga, calligraphy, food and First Nations conversations on offer all over the homestead.



Uplifting Voices and Words Aloud

Two new programs have really found their audience at Millers: Uplifting Voices and Words Aloud. The parlour is the perfect setting for both events.

Uplifting Voices, a community singing group lead by local music teacher Barb Shearer-Jones, combines the opportunity for a creative outlet with the benefits to wellbeing that come from singing in a group.

Words Aloud is an open-mic session for poets, spoken word artists and short story writers. It begins with an invited guest poet and is followed by writers and performers of all descriptions. It is a great place for sharing stories and gives beginner performers a chance to try out their material to a respectful and inclusive audience.

“As a first-time [Words Aloud] attendee, I was impressed by the inclusivity of this event which allowed participants to share their work in an environment which was non-threatening and supportive.”

The poster for 'Words Aloud' features a typewriter icon at the top left. The title 'Words Aloud' is written in a large, bold, serif font, with the subtitle 'Storytime for grown-ups' in a smaller, red, cursive font below it. The main text reads: 'Bring your own poems, stories, spoken word or writing to share with others or just come along, and enjoy the work of guest wordsmiths in the parlour each month.' Below this, it says '1st Wed of the Month, 6-8pm'. At the bottom, there are three small photos of people speaking at a microphone. The location is listed as 'Miller's Homestead, 30 Dorrigo Dve (Cnr Melrose Crt), Boronia'. Logos for Miller's Homestead, Knox Council, and Knox City Council are also present. At the very bottom, it says 'Bookings essential: events.yourlibrary.com.au or call 0438 284 989'.



Beautification projects

Murals, Boronia

As part of the 'Beautify Boronia' project grant, artist Carla McCrae was selected to decorate the exterior of Boronia Library. Carla is an established muralist with iconic work all over Australia and beyond. She created colourful, contemporary and relatable images for the library that celebrate community and nature. The murals (pictured right) will improve the library's discoverability, visibility, connection to place and safety perceptions and contribute to its overall beauty. They have certainly made the library stand out in the landscape.



Courtyard, Rowville

Street artist Ghostpatrol brightened up the courtyard at Rowville with his vibrant design that included elements suggested by library staff. The work was facilitated by Knox Council's Arts and Culture team and we look forward to extending some of the design motifs to the interior of the library next year.

Christmas crochet

The clever crafters at Bayswater spent all year crocheting squares to make into blankets for people in need. By Christmas, more than 3,000 squares had been made. They made eye-catching decorations for an over-sized Christmas tree at the entrance to the library. More than 70 people contributed 'granny squares', which local charity Champion then distributed as blankets. The tree was a not just a symbol of community giving in Bayswater, it also drew people into the library. One visitor said that he didn't know the library existed until the Christmas tree drew him in, despite having lived in Bayswater for ten years!



The tree even got its own opening with Knox Mayor Cr Marcia Timmers-Leitch.

Pictured above: Martina Eaton (Champion), Jane Ward (Bayswater Team Leader), Cr Marcia Timmers-Leitch and crafter extraordinaire Kay Hanley (Bayswater staff member).



Rusty Arnold is perfect for the Chill Out Zone.



Living history among the shelves



Tired library staff, Ajne, Melissa and Laura, relax with Rusty and other bears at the end of a long day.

Knox Festival

The staff at Ferntree Gully library provided free activities for visitors to the ever-popular Knox Festival. Despite the number of rides and stalls outside, there were plenty of visitors to the library. It was a very busy and successful day.

Knox Festival was both a huge success and a huge day of fun! The weather was sunny and hot. We enjoyed and utilised both the indoor and outdoor spaces at the library. We had lots of activities on offer throughout the day, as well as a space set up for rest and relaxation inside the air-conditioned comfort. There was a dreamcatcher crafting station outside on the deck and another one (run by our Tech Support Officer, Laura) inside for creating kites. There were also 'help-yourself' stations with colouring sheets, crosswords and dot to-dot activities. Our Digital Literacy Officers Jack and Tanisha demonstrated basic coding and kids had lots of fun operating the Blue-Bots across mats covered with road maps.

"Paul the Music Man put on two performances on the outside deck, which saw families dancing, singing and creating music along with him. Even our famous lovable Rusty Arnold was there with all his Beary pals, enjoying cuddles and dancing with the children and adults. In the afternoon it was time to slow down the pace a little with a yoga fun Storytime outside. Throughout the day, families were relaxing and recharging with our books, while some were just chilling on a couch!" - Ferntree Gully Children's Officer, Melissa Bilston

VR for seniors

Our virtual reality (VR) headsets are very popular with kids and teens, but lately we have been introducing our older members to the VR experience. A session delivered at Knox Express had some unexpected benefits.

"Knox Express held a VR for Seniors event as part of Knox Council's Senior Month in October 2022. We targeted our marketing specifically for people over 55 and advertised it on the Senior's Month promotional platforms. Nine brave seniors turned up and each spent 15 minutes experiencing the world through a VR headset.

The event went well, and feedback from the participants was very positive. However, the most dramatic success concerned a regular library patron who wasn't even booked into the session.

Rob, a regular at the library, suffered a heart attack a number of years ago. While he has recovered physically, some brain damage has affected his memory. He can recall highlights of his prestigious career as a computer programmer, including meeting Bill Gates and working on projects in the US, but forgets the names of his grandchildren, to his visible frustration.

Rob participated industriously in the library's weekly brain training sessions as part of his recovery, and was very curious about the VR event he was observing from the sidelines. When he asked to give it a go, staff were happy to oblige, and he had a chance to wander the Scottish Highlands via YouTube VR. While other participants enjoyed trying something new, this particular experience was profound for Rob. It unlocked a forgotten memory of a family holiday many years ago. He was astounded and astonished and the moment was clearly joyous to him.

The purpose of the VR event was for people to try something new. But for Rob it was something much more. The impact of his experience is hard for us to measure, and it won't show up in our statistics, but for Rob, VR for Seniors led to a moment of profound happiness. - Alan Sewell, Knox Manager

MAROONDAH CITY COUNCIL



Maroondah Children's Week

The weather was not promising, but Emma from Croydon and Tanisha from the Digital Literacy team stepped into Maroondah's first outdoor Children's Week event since 2019 with enthusiasm, flexibility and a few robots...

Tanisha and I ran a stall at the Maroondah Children's Week event in the park. Unfortunately, the morning was initially very wet, and we began the day standing in a large puddle in our tent. This meant we needed to adjust our original plans and abandon Storytimes but we were still able to offer colouring and playing with the Ozobot robots. Just after the event began, the rain stopped, and we were kept busy with a constant stream of children waiting patiently for a turn with the Ozobots. We had lots of Storytime regulars visit us and we were able to chat with new families about Storytimes and other services the library provides.

- Emma Covey, Croydon Children's Librarian

Harry Potter month at Realm

August was Harry Potter month at Realm. Children, youth and adults donned their wizarding robes for a month of Potter-themed events. Participants made magical potions and incantations, created wands that revealed their Patronus, explored the wizarding world in virtual reality, were treated to a reading of the first chapter of the Harry Potter series and battled it out for the Triwizard Cup in the inaugural Harry Potter trivia night.

Throughout the month, enthusiasts also rolled up their sleeves and sharpened their quills, submitting numerous entries into an online fan fiction competition. For those with a culinary disposition, there was a Harry Potter-inspired cooking competition where young chefs posted a photo of their creations.

With more than 27 000 visitors through the doors, Harry Potter month was pure magic!



Junior Fanfiction winner Anna with Realm staff member, Candice (above left), and Junior Cooking Competition winner, Lucas (above right).

Neurodiversity Celebration Week

Running from 13–19 March, Neurodiversity Celebration Week is a global initiative aimed at challenging stereotypes and misconceptions about the neurodivergent community. Croydon Library hosted a series of events to raise awareness about neurodiversity and to provide opportunities for members of the local community to engage with autism support services.

Croydon Library hosted author, academic, and advocate Sandra Thom-Jones to talk about her book *Growing into Autism*. Drawing on her own experiences as well as her academic research, Sandra delivered an enlightening and heart-warming presentation in which she broke down myths and stereotypes about people with autism, and celebrated the many strengths of the neurodiverse community.

We also partnered with Different Journeys, a local charity that celebrates and empowers autistic people to live independent and fulfilling lives by facilitating events and connecting them to support services. Different Journeys ran a number of information sessions throughout the week. Although the attendance at these sessions was low, the impact was significant.

“Emily told us this event was the first time she left the house in three months. She was really nervous, but the small group made her feel safe and gave her room to ask lots of questions.”

- Mel Spencer (CEO, Different Journeys)



Above left: Sandra Thom-Jones and Janet Laws (Croydon Acting Manager) with Sandra’s book *Growing into Autism*. Above right: Janet Laws and Mel Spencer (CEO, Different Journeys) receive the proceeds of Croydon’s book sales as part of Neurodiversity Celebration Week.



Richard Joseph (Active and Healthy Ageing), Professor Szoeka and Realm staff member, Anne

Secrets of women’s healthy ageing at Realm

Professor Cassandra Szoeka talked about her new book, *Secrets of Women’s Healthy Ageing*, in a session presented jointly by the library and Maroondah’s Department of Active and Healthy Ageing. It seems there are many women who would like the secrets to be more widely shared.

“If I could give this event more stars I would! The presenter was excellent .. and the venue was great. Can we please have Professor Szoeka come again and talk all things hormones and sleep and life ... absolutely fabulous! Thank you so much.”

“Absolutely wonderful. So informative, so inspiring! Please ask Professor Szoeka again ... apparently, she could give a talk on hormones and other factors affecting women’s health. I learned so much. Thank you.”



Hakha Chin Storytime

We began hosting regular bilingual Storytimes in late April 2023. The sessions are co-presented by Croydon’s Children’s Services Librarian, Emma, and Maroondah City Council’s Supported Playgroup worker, Zing Tha Thluai. Songs and books are shared in both English and Hakha Chin, and the sessions finish with a craft activity and the opportunity for families to socialise.

This new program has been established in response to an identified need in the community. More than one-quarter of all Hakha Chin language speakers in Victoria live in the Maroondah area. We have already seen a great uptake for this program, with at least five families from the local Chin community attending each week, as well as groups from Maroondah Occasional Care.



Zing Tha Thluai and Emma (Croydon Children's Services Librarian).

Discover geocaching

Since Realm became home to a geocache hidden in the collection, there has been a steady stream of cache-hunting visitors, most of whom had never been to the library before. In order to spread the word about this fun, free, brain-stimulating activity, we invited Mister Doctor from Geocaching Victoria to give an overview of the world's largest treasure hunt and lead some enthusiastic sleuths to find caches in and around the library. Geocaching is suitable for participants of all ages.

Discover Geocaching at Realm

Want to try out Geocaching?
You are invited to join the world's largest treasure hunt!

Saturday 24 June 10.30am
All ages!

Bookings required
Call 9800 6430 or visit events.yourlibrary.com.au

Realm Library
Ringwood Town Square
179 Maroondah Hwy
Ringwood 3134

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REALM

“Really nicely presented, factual and practical. Loved the examples of real caches. Highly recommended to sleuths of all ages, but also to anyone with active and inquisitive young people.”

“Just like hunting for treasure, maps, compasses and all!”

“The information was brilliant. Mister Doctor definitely knew what he was talking about. My 10-year-old daughter loved finding the caches around the library. The older children loved getting outside, even with the wind.”

Composting

In October 2022 we partnered with Maroondah City Council to deliver a series of workshops on worm farming, composting and digestion composting to an audience of 65 people, all of whom were very happy to learn how they could reduce their waste at home.

Composting + Worm Farming Workshops
at Croydon Library

WED 5 OCTOBER

10am
Worm Farming

11:15am
Composting

12:30pm
Digestion composting

COMPOST

Bookings events.yourlibrary.com.au

“I have decided to commence composting at home after the session.”



Realm's pop-up butterfly enclosure during the April school holidays was a big hit!



Healesville Library's youngest volunteer lends a hand in the kitchen before a community meal.

YARRA RANGES COUNCIL

From Hot Soup Kitchen to Dine and Shine – Community meals at Healesville

“Build a longer table, not a higher fence.”
The commercial kitchen at Healesville Library has been put to good use through a series of programs offering free meals with a side serving of conversation and information. Hot Soup Kitchen started with donations of vegetables, and some enthusiastic volunteers who got together once a month to dish up a bowl of soup and a slice of bread to a dozen participants.



A year later, the program has been renamed Dine and Shine and we need three long tables to accommodate all the diners. A community grant has been used to purchase ingredients and a caterer has been engaged to bring a professional level of efficiency and expertise to our food preparation. Staff energy has been put into organising speakers on relevant topics, including food security with Yarra Ranges Council, legal advice from Eastern Community Legal Service and disaster preparedness with the CFA.

Other regular service providers who visit the library, such as the Jobs Advocates and the NDIS Connection Desk staff, regularly attend Healesville on Dine and Shine’ days too. Long-term residents and new arrivals appreciate the opportunity to connect with each other.

Libraries are so much more these days, than places to quietly read and borrow books. They are such important safe spaces, open to anyone in the community to meet, share and enjoy. Activity abounds, with community members enthusiastically connecting, learning new skills, and making friends. - Cr Andrew Fullagar



Healesville Library Team Leader, Sabina Wills and staff member Sharni

“Met nice people – new people, we are new here, been here about a year.”

“Good to meet a lot of people, been here 20 years (in Yarra Glen) and don’t meet many people.”

Halloween extravaganza

When Cire Services asked community partners to help them run a town-wide Halloween event in Yarra Junction, we were excited to work with the CFA, the Bowling Club, the Yarra Junction branch of the Red Cross, U3A Upper Yarra, Belgravia Leisure and a number of local retailers. Nobody could have predicted that 31 October 2022 would be plagued with wild weather and unexpected power cuts!



But the townsfolk of Yarra Junction were not deterred. They came out in their hundreds to parade the streets and visit the library in an impressive array of clever costumes. We hastily gathered a skeleton staff (pun intended) and ran our program as originally planned. From tiny babies to puppy dogs, the library was filled with ghosts and ghouls and scary kids with their equally spooky parents.



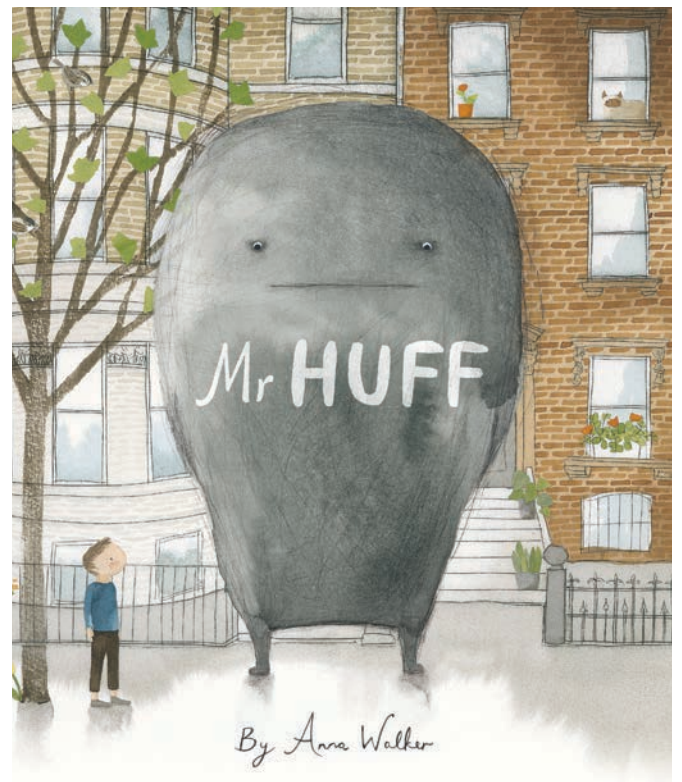
Japara Neighbourhood House

Our partnership with Japara Neighbourhood House has given library members the opportunity to try a range of activities while showcasing some of the great classes and workshops run by Japara and giving people an insight into the work of other local community houses.

At Lilydale, adults tried out sessions on mindfulness, tai chi and yoga and how to practice more sustainable living by learning how to compost.



For families, the fun and educational school holiday activity Building an Insect Hotel was an introduction to a program on sustainable gardening, and the Sensory Space event showcased a music and movement class.



Mr Huff

When Yarra Ranges Council asked if we wanted to partner in presenting a theatrical performance of the children's book *Mr Huff* by Anna Walker, we were delighted to participate. The auditorium at Montrose was filled for two sessions and more than 100 people followed the adventures of a young boy dealing with a bad mood that just won't go away.

Most of the audience stayed on to make a beautiful sunshine hat and left with an at-home activity pack on the topic of 'What to do when I am in a huff'.

Vinyl swap meet

Belgrave Library hosted *Your Library's* first vinyl swap meet on Saturday 25 March 2023. Vinyl enthusiasts came from far and wide to hunt for their favourite albums or uncover forgotten treasures. The library was packed, and the most common questions was 'When can you do this again?'



Author highlight: Peter Hodkinson

There was a great turnout for the launch of *Inside the Notebook* by first-time author and Mooroolbark resident Peter Hodkinson. A large and enthusiastic audience came along to hear about Peter's writing journey and listen to the first few chapters of his book. Peter describes *Inside the Notebook* as perfect for kids who are starting to read independently but aren't quite ready for novels like the Harry Potter series. Filled with illustrations, the book is also wonderful for parents to read with younger children.

"Mooroolbark Library is my safe outlet where I always feel welcome and safe as with my PTSD I am very selective where I go. It's become a meeting place where I have met people and formed friendships and I can have a chat, read papers, books and use the wi-fi for learning. A very peaceful place of enjoyment to be at."



Emma Jahn (Mooroolbark Acting Team Leader), Peter Hodkinson and Hanna Condon (Mooroolbark Children's Officer).



Deborah Lee - Senior Manager Content Acquisition & Business Development (IngramSpark) with Sarah Hopkins - Corporate Manager Customer Experience (Your Library) and Joseph Cullen - CEO (Your Library) at the *Tales from the Pandemic* launch

PART 2

CORPORATE MATTERS

REGIONAL STATISTICS

No longer affected by lockdowns, our libraries saw massive recovery from the 2021–22 period. The biggest indicator was library visits, which were up an extraordinary 90%! This year's figure of 1,263,008 visits was almost double last year's. We are well on our way to pre-pandemic visitor levels (1,729,743 visits in 2018–19).

What are our visitors doing?



Checkouts
up **27%**



Our visitors are gradually reverting to the insatiable readers they always were.



New memberships
up **52%**



Our libraries are attracting more and more community members, particularly families with young children who were born during lockdowns making their first visit to the library.



PC sessions
up **120%**



This figure is still lower than pre-pandemic levels, with our PCs being used approximately 20.9% of the time, but the trend is positive.



Wi-fi users
up **249%**



This is a huge jump! It reflects the inestimable value of our free wi-fi services to our community.

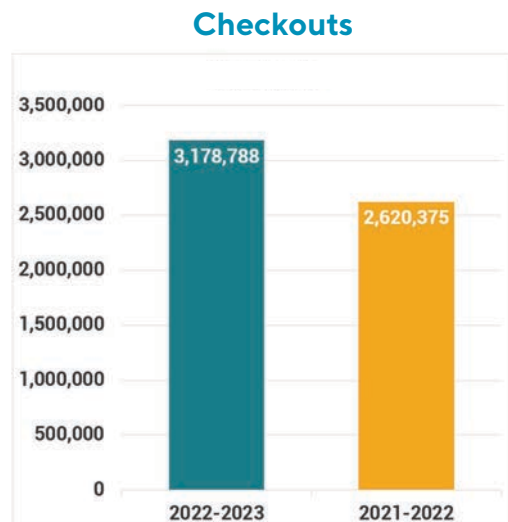
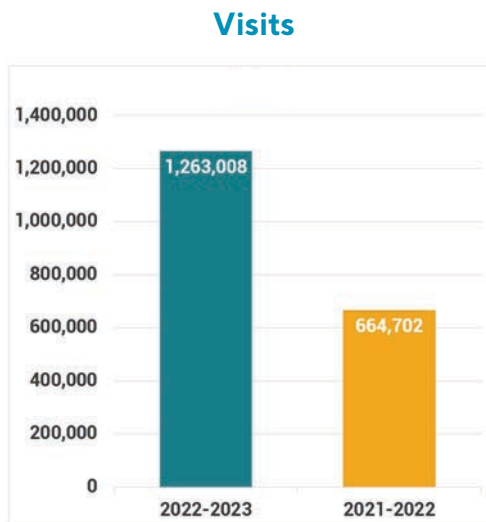
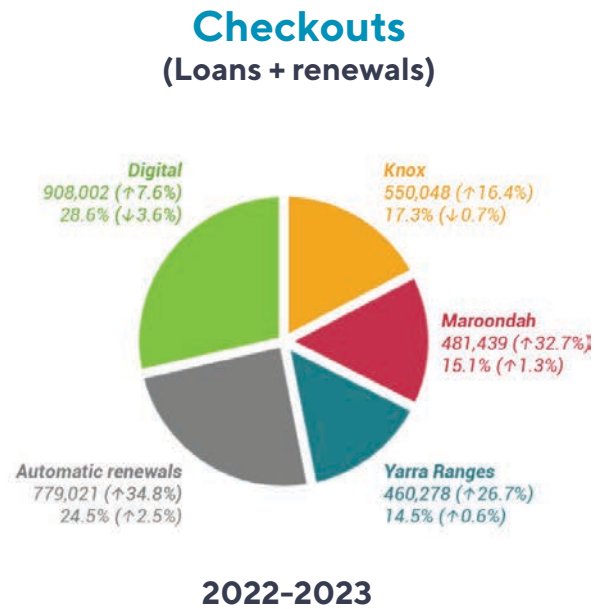
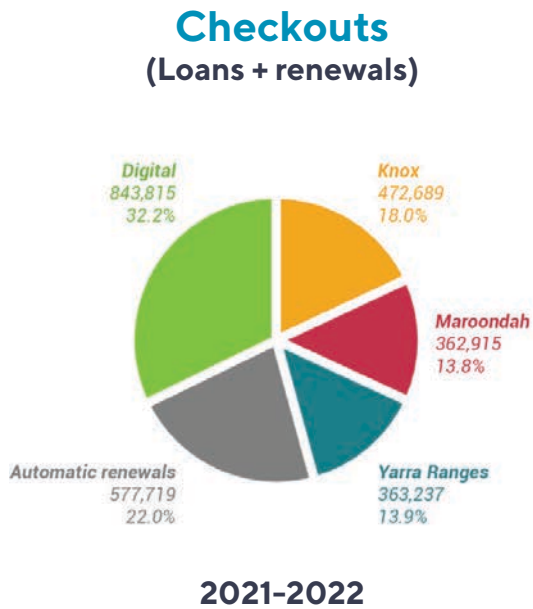


Reservations
down **2.5%**

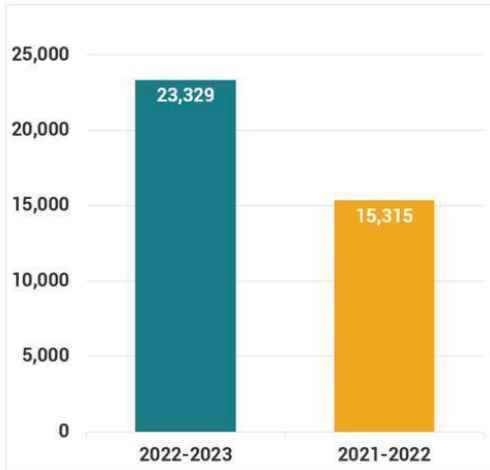


Our members are choosing to browse for their next read now that they are able to visit the branch at (and for) their leisure.

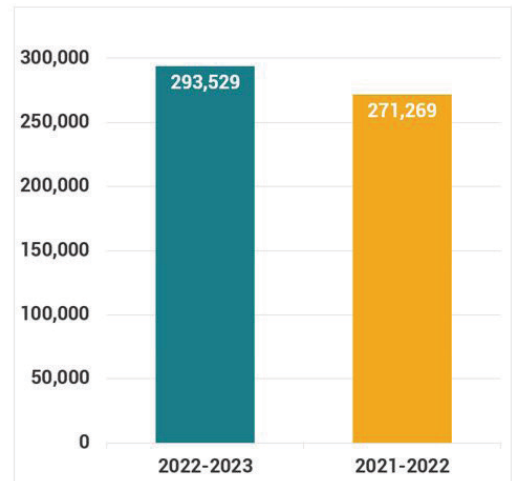
The digital domain remains our single biggest region for checkouts. However, as our branches were open for a full 12-month period, digital's slice of the pie has shrunk.



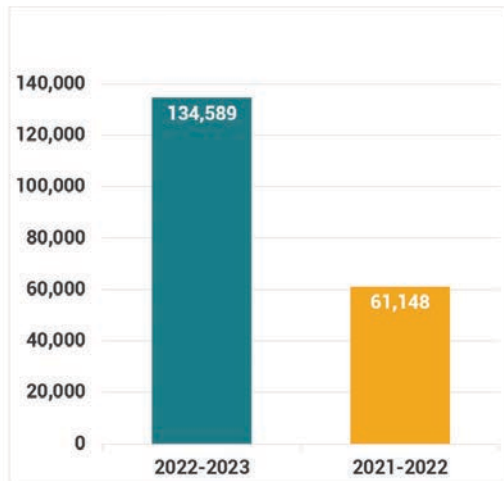
New members



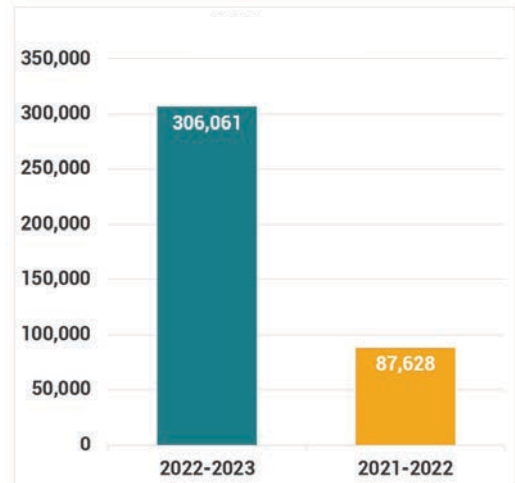
Total members



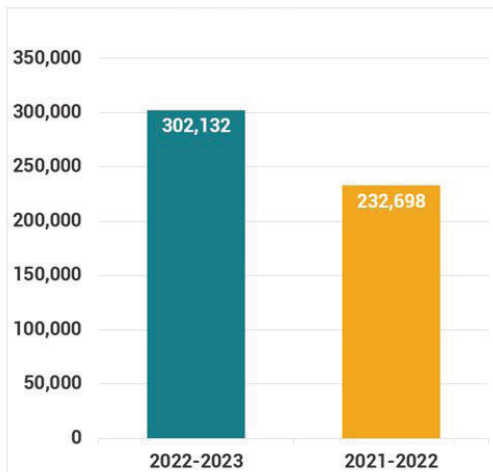
PC sessions



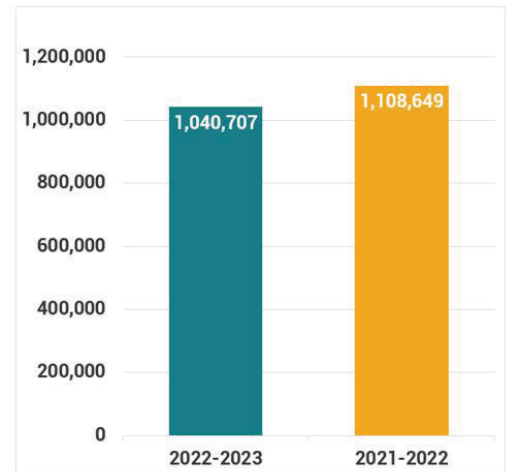
WiFi users



App launches



Website page views





Staff member Michelle at Croydon Library

Regional Statistical Summary

	Members		Visits		Loans		PC sessions	
	2021-22	2022-23	2021-22	2022-23	2021-22	2022-23	2021-22	2022-23
Bayswater	9,242	10,412	43,791	88,782	58,029	74,599	3,662	4,216
Boronia	13,439	14,481	37,237	63,301	87,072	106,139	3,760	4,680
Ferntree Gully	11,385	12,414	41,979	75,868	92,143	102,736	2,715	3,899
Knox/Knox Express	36,698	39,834	45,055	88,224	118,972	119,241	5,633	5,340
Knox Outreach	1,004	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Miller's Homestead	23	67	-	-	659	3,939	120	239
Rowville	23,999	26,053	60,527	118,110	115,814	143,394	6,525	10,485
Knox total	95,790	103,261	228,589	434,285	472,689	550,048	22,415	28,859
Croydon	33,511	35,811	86,033	157,369	222,095	293,326	6,920	9,625
Realm	62,950	68,521	139,936	320,284	140,820	188,113	17,234	28,205
Maroondah total	96,461	104,332	225,969	477,653	362,915	481,439	20,408	37,830
Belgrave/Belgrave Express	16,165	17,604	56,320	79,474	60,796	89,094	3,176	4,802
Flexi Van	2,386	2,631	-	-	840	3,084	-	-
Healesville	8,405	9,149	33,542	55,605	39,994	47,458	1,933	1,921
Lilydale	18,371	19,629	35,570	69,567	71,145	86,036	3,145	3,594
Monbulk (CCR)	833	976	-	-	6,919	11,190	-	-
Montrose	4,845	5,212	14,980	24,969	27,720	33,077	462	346
Mooroolbark	13,010	14,083	34,153	64,663	85,083	102,913	3,422	4,110
Mount Evelyn (CCR)	2,167	2,340	-	-	8,492	15,911	-	-
Yarra Glen (CCR)	208	517	-	-	2,602	3,316	-	-
Yarra Junction	11,209	11,978	35,579	56,792	59,646	68,199	2,064	2,061
Yarra Ranges total	77,599	84,119	210,144	351,070	363,237	460,278	14,472	16,834
Admin	562	1,559	-	-	1,366	1,165	-	-
Digital Library	-	-	-	-	843,815	908,002	-	-
Web	-	-	-	-	576,353	777,856	-	-
Other total	562	1,559	-	-	1,421,534	1,687,023	-	-
Regional total	270,412	293,271	664,702	1,263,008	2,620,375	3,178,788	57,295	83,523

BUSINESS + TECHNOLOGY

Network and information security

Cybersecurity has been a key focus for *Your Library* over the last year. This section describes our work in network security and innovation.



Australian Cyber Security Centre

Your Library is a registered business partner of the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC).

We also participate in the ACSC Cyber Hygiene Improvement Programs (CHIPs), which aims to provide insights into known vulnerabilities and recommends improvements.

CHIPs provides a quarterly report of *Your Library's* performance against the hygiene indicators as assessed by the ACSC.

Essential Eight Maturity Model

Your Library uses the ACSC's Essential Eight Maturity Model as the baseline of our cybersecurity maturity. While no set of mitigation strategies is guaranteed to protect against all cyberthreats, implementing the ACSC's Strategies to Mitigate Cyber Security Incidents makes it much harder for malicious actors to compromise our systems.

The Essential Eight Maturity Model prioritises the implementation of all eight mitigation strategies as a package, due to their complementary nature, and focuses on various cyberthreats. *Your Library* strives to achieve high maturity level across all eight mitigation strategies.

Our commitment to restricting administrative privileges, implementing application control across the domain, utilising the Australian Protected Domain Name Service, firewall upgrades, and other initiatives are all pillars of *Your Library's* cyber defence strategies.

The substantial financial and staff hours investment over the last 12 months reflects our unwavering dedication to safeguarding our digital realm, irrespective of location or scale.

CAPTCHA

Your Library has introduced CAPTCHA (Completely Automated Public Turing test to tell Computers and Humans Apart), an additional security feature to ensure that our online services are being accessed by a human and not a bot. A bot is a software application that is programmed to do specific tasks. Bots are automated, which means they run according to their instructions without a human user needing to manually start them up every time. Bots often imitate or replace a human user's behaviour. Typically, they do repetitive tasks, and they can do them much faster than human users could.

This security feature vastly reduces DDoS attacks and protects our services.



AWS Web Instance upgrade

AWS Web Instances Upgrade was undertaken to upgrade *Your Library's* PHP-powered platforms to the latest version. PHP is a widely used, open source, general-purpose scripting language that is especially suited for web development and can be embedded into HTML.

The upgrade bolsters security and secures support for the next three years. These steps are not mere upgrades; they are building blocks of a digital future that is both robust and user centric.

Spydus Library Management System upgrade

Your Library enhanced our Spydus Library Management System with version V10.9. This upgrade is a nod to the future—a future brimming with new functionalities, fortified privacy and heightened security, leading to a library management system that is attuned to the dynamic needs of a modern library service.



Governance, efficiency and audit

Your Library introduced three cloud-managed systems, each designed to improve its landscape of governance and efficiency.

Convene Board Portal

Your Library's commitment to empowering our Board is reflected in the introduction of the Convene Board Portal. A restricted Board portal provides an intuitive space for the *Your Library* Board to access crucial information, enhancing accessibility and security.

ApprovalMax

With the introduction of ApprovalMax, *Your Library* has embraced a certified approval system that is harmonised with procurement and accounts policies. Compliance and governance were enhanced with a full audit record of approvals that fully integrates with our financial solution, Xero.

Pro-Master

Pro-Master was acquired as *Your Library's* expense management solution. It offers a two-step approval process, coupled with monthly data importation into Xero, streamlined expense claims and credit card reconciliation. These industry-leading solutions not only improved *Your Library's* governance but also resonated with the practices of our Member Councils and leading private entities.

Digital privacy

With every upgrade, every integration, and every stride toward excellence, *Your Library* charts a course toward a digital future that is fortified, agile and resilient. Two projects in particular are designed to protect our patron's privacy.

Patron information

Your Library has determined that once a patron has proved their identity, our system will only retain the following basic information about them:

- first and last name
- year of birth
- email
- borrowing history

In the event of a security attack, there will be little information of value to the malicious actors.

Borrowing history

Patrons will be able to opt to have their borrowing history deidentified. The borrowing history only, without the borrower's details, will be stored for statistical purposes.

My family LOVE the Your Library App! From booking a reservation for a new read, to renewing a title not yet completed or booking an on-site event, it's so convenient and easy to use. The kids and I organise our own books on the App and we pick up using the Click and Collect service. We are all reading so much more and loving how quickly we can get access to our favourite authors and new titles. - Cr Marcia Timmers-Leitch

OPERATIONS

Employees

Employees	2021-22	2022-23
Number of staff members (including CE)	122	126
EFT (Including CE)	87	91
Gender (as disclosed by staff)		
Female	107 (87.8%)	107 (84.9%)
Male	15 (12.3%)	19 (15.1%)
Average length of employment (years)	14.2	11
Longest length of employment (years)	45	42
Average age (years)	44.1	46
Average retirement age (years)	63.5	64.6
Age of oldest staff member (years)	67	69
Age of youngest staff member (years)	19	21
Age 40 to 75	68	85
Age 20 to 39	54	41

Staff movement

Category	Number of staff
Resignations	13 (inc. 7 retirements)
Appointments	23
Secondments	12
Supported pre-retirement arrangements	3
Study leave	6
Long-term leave (6 months)	1
Long-term leave (12 months)	1
Parental leave	1

Years of service recognition

Your Library recognises employees' years of accumulated service each year. Years of service are calculated on continuous years of service.

Congratulations to the 19 staff who reached a service milestone during 2022.

Continuous service	Number of staff
45 years	1
35 years	1
25 years	5
20 years	4
15 years	5
10 years	3

Farewell Christine Smith – Corporate Manager Operations

In January 2023, Your Library said farewell to Christine Smith, Corporate Manager Operations. Christine spent 27 years as a Corporate Manager and she was passionate about her work. She saw the organisation through many changes and supported countless staff throughout their careers.

Staff attended a lovely farewell held at Millers Homestead. Many staff attended to share stories and say goodbye and, most importantly, to thank Christine for her work and support over the years.



Christine Smith

Staff development and training

Internal opportunities have created many opportunities for staff development and learning. Mentoring and buddy programs featuring some of our more experienced staff has been a very productive way to teach new skills.

Staff continue to access training both in person and online to continually improve our standards of service delivery. Your Library recognises the importance of staff development and supports our staff in all aspects of learning.

Each staff member can set specific goals for their development and interests for the coming 12 months that will assist them in their current roles or future ambitions.

Human relations

Our staff continue to provide genuine care, patience and empathy in their service to the community. Their willingness to go the extra mile, to listen without judgement and to offer a helping hand ensures that our community members feel heard, valued and supported. Every interaction, every word of encouragement and every problem solved makes a meaningful difference. We provide a haven, space, advice and community connection to all.

Your Library is an inclusive workplace that is committed to fostering an environment where every individual, regardless of their background, identity or abilities, feels valued, respected and empowered to contribute their unique perspectives and talents.

Twelve casual staff joined Your Library in 2022-23, and about half quickly moved to permanent part-time roles. We are committed to cultivating growth in our teams and giving our staff opportunities to gain experience and skills in areas they are interested in.

The retirement of four people in leadership positions this year created opportunities that were filled by two external staff and the promotion of another two candidates.

Long-term leave by two Branch Managers gave existing staff the opportunity to gain experience and learn new skills in temporary roles. This helps us work towards our staff succession planning goals.

Training type	Title	No. of staff completed
Human relations	VISION Super – defined benefits	12
	Managers and Team Leaders branch action planning sessions (2)	20
	New employees – induction and training	23
	Performance conversation leader training	21
	ASU delegation training	4
	Workplace health and wellbeing	Ongoing (all)
	Bullying and diversity in the workplace	Ongoing (all)
Child safety	Children left unattended in the library	26 Ongoing (all)
	Child Safety Officer refresher	12
	Introduction to Child Safety Level 1 (provided by Child Safe Australia) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introductory module specifically for child-facing roles • suitable for all staff • supports organisation child safety policies, procedures and reporting processes 	All staff
	Child Safety Level 2 (provided by Child Safe Australia) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • roles and responsibilities • why child safety management • screening incident • critical incident response • abuse disclosure • reporting to authorities risk • analysing and evaluating safety risks 	Managers and Team Leaders (25)
Promotional/ Professional	Executive Certificate in Event Management	1
	PLV conference	10
	Whole person librarianship	5
	Emerging minds learning	3
OH&S	Lifting techniques	Ongoing (all)
	Burnout and stress	Ongoing (all)
	5-day HSR OH&S course	16
	First Aid Level 1 (provided by St John)	16
	Manual handling	Ongoing

WorkSafe

There were no visits from WorkSafe in 2022–23.

Policy compliance

Policy	Comments
Gender composition	Female - 107; male - 19
Employee grievances	Two employee grievances were actioned. No further action was required.
Employee education	See staff development and training (above)
Child safety cases actioned	No reports
Employee certification	All employees hold a current Working with Children Check. All police checks are updated.
COVID-19 vaccination	All employees and volunteers have received COVID-19 vaccinations.

OH&S

- 5-day HSR course held at admin with a representative from each service point location
- Workplace inspections - completed January 2023
- Key registers - audit and signed January 2023
- Branch emergency evacuation procedures and fire drills undertaken - January 2023
- Electrical tagging testing - completed April 2023
- Power interruptions and general closures

Date	Location	Reason
28 August 2022	Croydon	AUSNET power upgrade
12 September 2022	Miller's Homestead	Power upgrade
23 March 2023	Rowville	AUSNET power outage
16 & 17 May 2023	Healesville	New battery installed

Opening hours

Croydon Library has recommenced opening until 8pm Thursday nights (previously 5.30pm). Montrose Library is trialling longer opening hours on one Saturday a month, instead of opening for two hours every Saturday morning.

Location	Previous hours	Current hours
Croydon Library	Monday: 9am-8pm Tuesday: 9am-8pm Wednesday: 9am-8pm Thursday: 9am-5.30pm Friday: 9am-5.30pm Saturday: 10am-5pm Sunday: 12pm-5pm	Monday: 9am-8pm Tuesday: 9am-8pm Wednesday: 9am-8pm Thursday: 9am-8.00pm Friday: 9am-5.30pm Saturday: 10am-5pm Sunday: 12pm-5pm
Montrose Library	Monday: 9am-1pm & 2pm-5pm Tuesday: 9am-1pm & 2pm-5pm Wednesday: 9am-1pm & 2pm-5pm Thursday: 9am-1pm & 2pm-5pm Friday: 9am-1pm & 2pm-5pm Saturday: 10am-12pm Sunday: Closed	Monday: 9am-1pm & 2pm-5pm Tuesday: 9am-1pm & 2pm-5pm Wednesday: 9am-1pm & 2pm-5pm Thursday: 9am-1pm & 2pm-5pm Friday: 9am-1pm & 2pm-5pm Saturday: 10am-1pm (3rd Saturday of each month only) Sunday: Closed

MARKETING + PROMOTIONS



Facebook

10,529 followers (+762)



Instagram

2,921 followers (+290)



TikTok

1059 followers (+413)



Twitter

1,539 followers (0)



eNewsletter

Our eNewsletter is currently delivered to 107,600 subscribers each month (+12,600)



Children's eNewsletter

Our opt-in Children's eNewsletter launched in Term 1 of 2023 with 498 subscribers, increasing to 1,100 by the start of Term 3.



Facebook Highlights

Post impressions: 5.4k
Reach: 5.2k
Engagement: 400



Boronia Library beautification

Post impressions: 7.4k
Reach: 7.4k
Engagement: 300



1000 Books Before School achievement

Community Crochet Project at Bayswater



Post impressions: 8.3k
Reach: 7.2k
Engagement: 1.2k

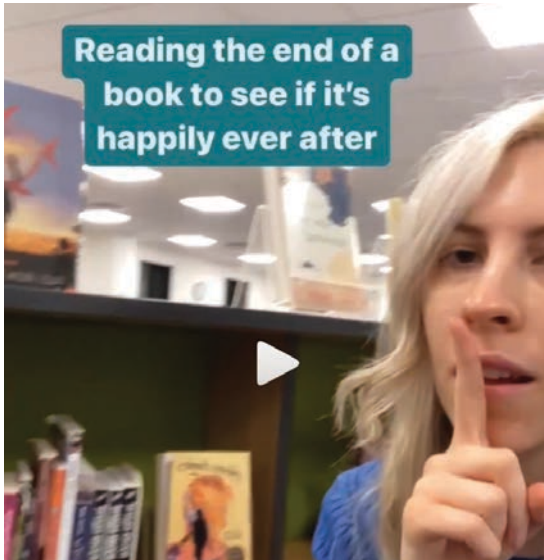
Extended hours announcement at Croydon



Post impressions: 7k
Reach: 6.4k
Engagement: 300

Instagram Reels Highlights

Reach: 10.1k
Plays: 10.3k
Engagement: 1.8%



The dark side of reading

Reach: 13.9k
Plays: 13.9k
Engagement: 2.9%



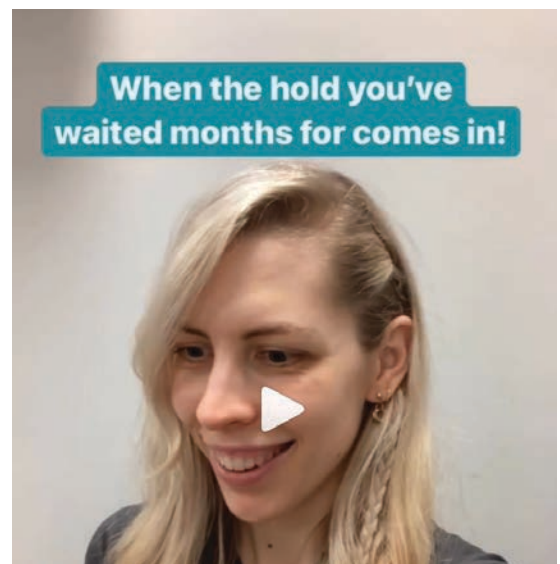
Just five more minutes...

YA Bookclub promo



Reach: 2.2k
Plays: 2.3k
Engagement: 3.8%

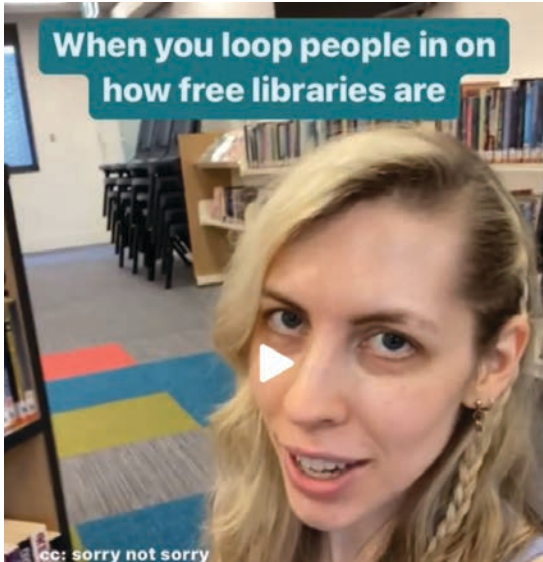
When your hold finally arrives



Reach: 7k
Plays: 7.3k
Engagement: 1.7%

TikTok Highlights

Reach: 479
Plays: 511
Likes: 31



Money saving hack

Reach: 453
Plays: 477
Likes: 12



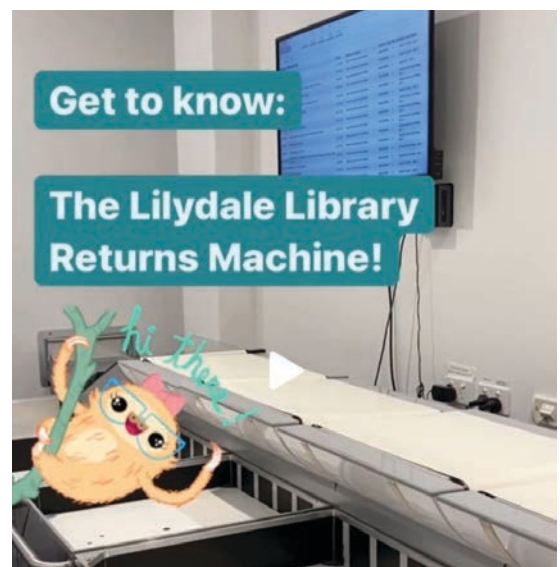
Christmas outtakes

Amy's favourite reads of 2022



Reach: 1.4k
Plays: 1.4k
Likes: 92

Get to know Lilydale's returns machine

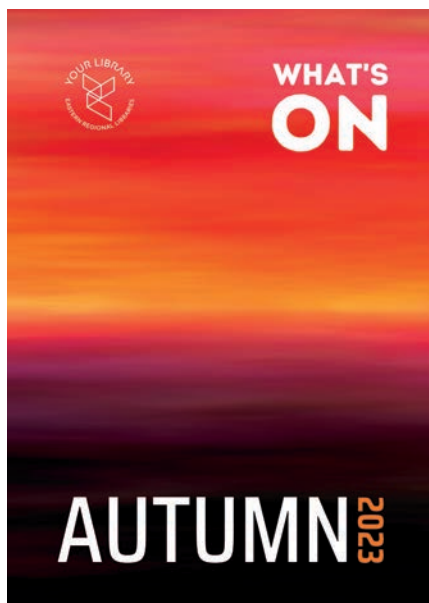


Reach: 541
Plays: 546
Likes: 48

In print

What's On

Our seasonal 'What's On' events guide continues to be enthusiastically received by our community with 7,000 copies of each issue distributed at the branches.



Other publications

We are regular contributors to the 'what's on' sections in the Boronia and Basin Community News, Studfield Wantirna Community News and often featured in Star Mails newspapers throughout the year.

On the airwaves

Hear readings from
Tales from the Pandemic
on local radio!

Tune into Radio Eastern FM 98.1 and Yarra Valley FM 99.1 to listen to selected stories narrated in full by the authors throughout May 2023.

Radio **EASTERN FM 98.1**

99.1
YARRA VALLEY FM

Tales from the Pandemic
an anthology

***Tales from the Pandemic* on local radio and podcast**

Throughout May 2023, listeners of Radio Eastern FM 98.1 & Yarra Valley FM 99.1 could tune in to listen to *Tales from the Pandemic* stories narrated in full by the authors, including:

- Zoe Clark - *2020-2021*
- Olwyn Backhouse - *Against All Odds*
- Laura Jayne - *Isolation*
- Mandy Mercuri - *The Numbers*
- Jessica Pritchard - *COVID Baby*

From June, our *Tales from the Pandemic* narrations became available to listen/download via Yarra Valley FM 99.1's podcast.



PART 3

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

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Certification of the Financial Statements

In my opinion, the accompanying financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989*, the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014*, the Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.

DocuSigned by:

BEE2ED921F5641B...
Premal Niranjana
Principal Accounting Officer

Dated: 10/20/2023 | 9:25 AM AEDT
Scoresby

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly the financial transactions of the Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation ("the Corporation" or "ERLC") for the year ended 30 June 2023 and the financial position of the ERLC as at that date.

At the date of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances that would render any particulars in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.

We have been authorised by the Corporation and by the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014 to certify the financial statements in their final form.

DocuSigned by:

A7BBA1A08501431...
CR Marcia Timmers-Leitch
Councillor

Dated: 10/20/2023 | 9:47 AM AEDT
Scoresby

DocuSigned by:

F3B81D541C91435...
CR Andrew Fullagar
Councillor

Dated: 10/20/2023 | 9:54 AM AEDT
Scoresby

DocuSigned by:

4F03EE52DFDC4D1...
Joseph P Cullen
Chief Executive Officer

Dated: 10/20/2023 | 2:22 PM AEDT
Scoresby

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Board members of Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation

<p>Opinion</p>	<p>I have audited the financial report of Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation (the corporation) which comprises the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • balance sheet as at 30 June 2023 • comprehensive income statement for the year then ended • statement of changes in equity for the year then ended • statement of cash flows for the year then ended • statement of capital works • notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies • certification of the financial statements. <p>In my opinion the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the corporation as at 30 June 2023 and their financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the <i>Local Government Act 1989</i>, the <i>Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014</i> and applicable Australian Accounting Standards.</p>
<p>Basis for Opinion</p>	<p>I have conducted my audit in accordance with the <i>Audit Act 1994</i> which incorporates the Australian Auditing Standards. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the <i>Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report</i> section of my report.</p> <p>My independence is established by the <i>Constitution Act 1975</i>. My staff and I are independent of the corporation in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's <i>APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants</i> (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.</p> <p>I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.</p>
<p>Board members' responsibilities for the financial report</p>	<p>The Board members of the corporation are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the <i>Local Government Act 1989</i>, the <i>Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014</i> and for such internal control as the Board members determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.</p> <p>In preparing the financial report, the Board members are responsible for assessing the corporation's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is inappropriate to do so.</p>

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the corporation's internal control
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Board members
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Board members' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the corporation's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the corporation to cease to continue as a going concern.
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Board members regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

MELBOURNE
31 October 2023



Travis Derricott
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

Comprehensive Income Statement for the year ended 30 June 2023

	Note	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Income			
User charges, fees, and fines	3.1	63	59
Grants - operating	3.2	3,149	2,970
Contributions - monetary	3.3	11,199	11,033
Net loss on disposal of plant, furniture, equipment, and library materials	3.4	(6)	(99)
Other income	3.5	95	100
Total income		14,500	14,063
Expenses			
Employee costs	4.1	10,024	8,700
Materials and services	4.2	2,046	2,188
Depreciation	4.3	2,129	1,898
Amortisation - intangible assets	4.4	4	4
Amortisation - right of use assets	4.5	147	119
Assets written off	4.6	264	-
Finance costs - leases	4.7	23	3
Other expenses	4.8	43	67
Total expenses		14,680	12,979
Net surplus/(deficit)		(180)	1,084
Total comprehensive result		(180)	1,084

The above comprehensive income statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Balance Sheet

as at 30 June 2023

	Note	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	5.1	2,770	5,281
Trade and other receivables	5.1	113	8
Other assets	5.2	347	-
Assets held for distribution to owners			
Right-of-use assets	5.5	611	61
Intangible assets	5.2	26	30
Plant, furniture, equipment, and library materials	6.1	6,000	6,176
Total current assets		9,867	11,556
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	5.3	346	504
Provisions	5.4	2,078	2,049
Lease liabilities	5.5	627	71
Total current liabilities		3,051	2,624
Net assets		6,816	8,932
Equity			
Members' equity based on initial contributions	5.6	3,689	3,689
Accumulated surplus	5.7	3,127	5,243
Total Equity		6,816	8,932

The above balance sheet should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Change in Equity for the year ended 30 June 2023

	Note	Total \$'000	Accumulated Surplus \$'000	Members' Equity Total \$'000
2023		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Balance at the beginning of the financial year	5.6	8,932	5,242	3,689
Deficit for the year		(180)	(180)	
Distributions to Member Councils	5.7	(1,936)	(1936)	
Balance at the end of the financial year		6,816	3,126	3,689

		Total \$'000	Accumulated Surplus \$'000	Members' Equity Total \$'000
2022		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Balance at the beginning of the financial year	5.6	13,947	10,258	3,689
Surplus for the year		1,085	1,085	
Distributions to Member Councils	5.7	(6,100)	(6,100)	
Balance at the end of the financial year		8,932	5,243	3,689

The above statement of change in equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 30 June 2023

	Note	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Cash flows from operating activities			
User charges, fees, and fines	3.1	63	65
Grants - operating	3.2	3,149	2,967
Contributions - monetary	3.3	11,199	12,136
Interest received	3.5	25	21
Other receipts	3.5	64	86
Net GST refund/payment	5.3	(216)	(729)
Employee costs	4.1	(10,024)	(8,700)
Materials and services	4.2	(2,038)	(2,718)
Other payments	4.8	(412)	(23)
Net cash provided by operating activities	9.1	1,810	3,105
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payments for plant, furniture, equipment, and library materials	6.1	(2,242)	(2,073)
Proceeds from plant, furniture, equipment, and library materials	6.1	21	-
Proceeds from disposal of financial assets		-	4,600
Net cash used in (provided by) investing activities		(2,221)	2,527
Cash flows from financing activities			
Distribution to Member Councils	5.7	(1,936)	(6,100)
Interest paid - lease liability		-	(3)
Repayment of lease liabilities	5.5	(164)	(115)
Net cash used in financing activities		(2,100)	(6,218)
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents	5.1	(2,511)	(586)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	5.1	5,281	5,867
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	5.1(a)	2,770	5,281

The above statement of cash flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Capital Works for the year ended 30 June 2023

	Note	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Plant and equipment			
Library materials		1,815	1,728
Furniture and equipment		428	272
Work in progress			74
Total plant and equipment		2,243	2,074
<hr/>			
Total capital works expenditure	6.1	2,243	2,074
<hr/>			
Represented by:			
New asset expenditure		428	346
Asset renewal expenditure		1,815	1,728
Total capital works expenditure	6.1	2,243	2,074

The above statement of capital works should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Notes to the Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 1 OVERVIEW

Introduction

The Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation (ERLC) was established by an Order of the Governor in Council on the 14th of June 1996 and is a body corporate.

The Corporation's main office is located at 10 Caribbean Drive, Scoresby, Victoria, 3179. The Corporation moved from its previous headquarters at 1350 Ferntree Gully Roda, Scoresby, 3179, in January 2023.

The purpose of the Corporation is to:

- provide resources and programs aimed at meeting the information, recreation, educational and cultural needs of the diverse communities of Knox, Maroondah, and Yarra Ranges in an equitable, effective, efficient, responsive and forward-looking manner in accordance with the values and objectives of the Library Plan;
- provide or ensure the provision of, subject to any conditions attached to any State government library subsidies and grants to the Regional Library or the Member Councils, a regional library service for the Member Councils' municipal districts as determined by the Board; and
- make Local Laws relating to the Regional Library; perform any other functions which are conferred on the Regional Library under this Agreement or the Act, including defining overall policy objectives, developing strategic policy, letting tenders for the provision of services, monitoring contracts under which services are provided, and approving a corporate plan and an annual service plan.

Statement of compliance

These financial statements are a general-purpose financial report that consists of a Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows, Statement of Capital Works and Notes accompanying these financial statements. The general-purpose financial report complies with the Australian Accounting Standards (AAS), other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board, Local Government Act 1989 (as per the transitional provisions of the Local Government Act 2020), and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014.

The Corporation is a not-for-profit entity and therefore applies the additional AUS paragraphs applicable to a not-for-profit entity under the Australian Accounting Standards.

Significant accounting policies

1.1 Basis of accounting

(a) Basis of Preparation and Presentation of Financial Statements

The Board members, having regard for their intention to wind up the Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation within twelve months of year end and transition the operations, assets, and liabilities from Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation to a new entity called Your Library Limited (effective 01 July 2023), have prepared the financial statements on a basis other than as a going concern. The financial statements have been prepared by adopting 'wind-up basis' as the net assets will be distributed back to the Member Councils who will gift them to a newly formed company limited by guarantee within twelve months of year end.

Under wind-up basis, all liabilities and commitments have been classified as current, on the basis that the Corporation will be wound up before the end of December 2023, being less than 12 months from the preparation of these financial statements. Non-current assets have been reclassified to held for distribution to owners and carried at the lower of their carrying amount and fair value less costs of disposal. As the carrying value approximates fair value, no adjustments have been made because of the reclassifications or ceasing to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis.

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, ERLC is to be wound up within 10 years from the commencement of the Act. Consequently, the Member Councils have resolved to establish Your Library Limited during the 2022-23 financial year, as a continuation of the existing ERLC business.

On 27 June 2022, Knox City Council, Maroondah City Council and Yarra Ranges Council resolved, pursuant to section 110(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, to participate in the formation of, and become a founding member of, Your Library Limited (a public company limited by guarantee) on the terms of the Your Library Limited Constitution. To facilitate the transition to the new corporation, ERLC established a public company limited by guarantee, Your Library Limited, on 3 October 2022.

The Member Councils have resolved that Your Library will continue to provide library services under the current model, reflected in the Your Library Agreement between the Member Councils. The Your Library Agreement has been adopted by the Member Councils.

The Your Library Agreement reflects the Regional Library Agreement currently in place and deals with the equity to be introduced into the new entity subsequent to the Members' distributions made during the 2022-23 financial year (refer to Note 7.2(a)(ii)), the transfer of assets and liabilities, budgets, contributions and other matters.

The three Member Councils will contribute in the same proportion as before in accordance with the Your Library Agreement and the operations of the library will continue as before with the objective of serving the local community with library and other services.

The Board Members are satisfied that ERLC has sufficient resources to meet the expected costs of the transition and satisfy any liabilities as and when they fall due. ERLC remains in a strong financial position and the transition is not a result of financial concerns, rather the transition being imposed on the Corporation by changes to the *Local Government Act 2020*.

(b) Basis of accounting

Accounting policies are selected and applied in a manner which ensures that the resulting financial information satisfies the concepts of relevance and reliability, thereby ensuring that the substance of the underlying transactions or other events is reported. Accounting policies applied are disclosed in sections where the related balance or financial statement matter is disclosed.

The accrual basis of accounting has been used in the preparation of these financial statements, except for the cash flow information, whereby assets, liabilities, equity, income, and expenses are recognised in the reporting period to which they relate, regardless of when cash is received or paid.

The financial statements are based on the historical cost convention unless a different measurement basis is specifically disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared on a wind-up basis (as detailed in Note 1.1(a)). The financial statements are in Australian dollars. The amounts presented in the financial statements have been rounded to the nearest thousand dollars unless otherwise specified.

Judgements, estimates, and assumptions are required to be made about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated judgements are based on professional judgement derived from historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and in future periods that are affected by the revision. Judgements and assumptions made by management in the application of AAS's that have significant effects on the financial statements and estimates relate to:

- the determination of depreciation for plant, furniture, equipment, and library materials (refer to Note 6.1)
- the determination of employee provisions (refer to Note 5.4(a))
- the determination, in accordance with AASB 16 Leases, of the lease term, the estimation of the discount rate when not implicit in the lease and whether an arrangement is in substance short-term or low value (refer to Note 5.5)

Unless otherwise stated, all accounting policies are consistent with those applied in the prior year. Where appropriate, comparative figures have been amended to accord with current presentation, and disclosure has been made of any material changes to comparatives.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Income and expenses are recognised net of the amount of associated GST. Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is included with other receivables or payables in the Balance Sheet.

1.2 Impact of Protected Industrial Action

During the year, the Corporation was subject to Protected Industrial Action. This included the non-collection of photocopying charges and other fees.

Note 2 ANALYSIS OF OUR RESULTS

2.1. Income and expenditure

	Budget	Actual	Variance	Variance	Ref
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	%	
Income					
User charges, fees, and fines	93	63	(30)	-32.26%	1
Grants - operating	2,947	3,149	202	6.85%	2
Contributions - monetary	11,199	11,199	-	-	
Net loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant, and equipment	-	(6)	(6)	100.00%	
Other income	68	95	27	39.71%	3
Total income	14,307	14,500	193		
Expenses					
Employee costs	9,420	10,024	(604)	-6.41%	4
Materials and services	2,477	2,046	431	17.36%	5
Depreciation	1,900	2,129	(229)	-12.03%	6
Amortisation - intangible assets	-	4	(4)	100.00%	
Amortisation - right of use assets	-	147	(147)	100.00%	7
Assets written off {shown in Budget (Expenses) as Nett loss on P&E}	250	265	(15)	-6.00%	8
Finance costs - leases	-	23	(23)	100.00%	7
Other expenses	231	43	(189)	81.82%	9
Total expenses	14,278	14,680	(470)		
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	29	(180)			

**Budget
Variance
Ref**

1	User charges, fees, and fines	<p>In 2020/21 ERLC made the decision to stop issuing fines for overdue items, to reduce financial barriers to library access. Patrons were only billed for lost, damaged or stolen items. This continued in 2022/23.</p> <p>During the year, the Corporation was subject to Protected Industrial Action. This included the non-collection of photocopying charges and other fees.</p>
2	Grants - operating	Variance due to State Government Grant increase and Federal Government Grant of \$140,000.
3	Other income	Investment income returns better than anticipated as interest rates improved during the year.
4	Employee costs	<p>Employees costs were impacted by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filing COVID vacancies to restore customer service levels. • Enterprise Agreement increase of 2%. • Reintroducing weekend opening hours. • Increase in Annual and LSL Leave use.
5	Materials and services	Less than budgeted because of a slower than expected recovery from COVID-19.
6	Depreciation	Increase due to purchase of extra library materials demand post COVID-19 and fit out for new head office.
7	Amortisation - right of use assets Finance cost - leases	The 2022/23 Budget included Other expenses of \$177k for office rental (see Note 9). This expense is captured in 'Amortisation - right of use assets' and 'Finance costs – leases' in the Comprehensive Income Statement
8	Assets written off	A detailed review of the Asset Register disclosed assets that were no longer in the possession of the Corporation. It was resolved to write off these assets to ensure the Asset Register is up to date when the assets are transferred from 1 July 2023. The write off is shown at 'Assets written off' in the Comprehensive Income Statement (see page 5). The 2022/23 Budget included an expense of \$250k as a 'Nett loss on P&E'.
9	Other Expenses	The 2022/23 Budget included Other expenses \$177k for office rental. This expense is captured in 'Amortisation - right of use assets' and 'Finance costs – leases' in the Comprehensive Income Statement

Note 3 FUNDING FOR THE DELIVERY OF OUR SERVICES

	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
3.1 User charges, fees, and fines		
Library charges, fees, and fines	63	59
Total user charges, fees, and fines	63	59

User charges, fees, and fines by timing of revenue recognition

User fees recognised at a point in time	63	59
Total user charges, fees, and fines	63	59

User charges, fees and fines are recognised as revenue at a point in time, when (or as) the performance obligation is satisfied. Recognition is based on the underlying contractual terms.

	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
3.2 Funding from other levels of government		
Commonwealth funded grants	145	4
State funded grants	3,004	2,966
Total grants received	3,149	2,970

(a) Operating Grants

Recurrent - State Government

Public Libraries Grant Program	2,946	2,903
Premier's Reading Challenge	58	59
Total recurrent operating grants	3,004	2,962

Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government

Get Online Grant	145	4
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Non-recurrent - State Government

Royal Society Grant	-	4
Total non-recurrent operating grants	145	8
Total operating grants	3,149	2,970

	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000

(b) Unspent grants received on condition that they be spent in a specific manner

Operating

Balance at the start of year	-	4
Received in prior years and spent during the financial year	-	(4)
Balance at the year end	-	-

Grant income is recognised at the point in time when ERLC satisfies its performance obligations as specified in the underlying agreement.

Note 3 FUNDING FOR THE DELIVERY OF OUR SERVICES (CONT.)

	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
3.3 Contributions		
Monetary (refer to Note 7.2(a)(1))	11,199	11,033
Total contributions	11,199	11,033

Monetary contributions are recognised as revenue when ERLC obtains control over the contributed asset.

	\$'000	\$'000
3.4 Net (loss) on disposal of plant, furniture, equipment, and library materials		
Written down value of assets disposed	(6)	(99)
Total (loss) on disposal of plant, furniture, equipment, and library materials	(6)	(99)

The profit or loss on sale of an asset is determined when control of the asset has passed to the buyer.

3.5 Other income

Interest	25	18
Other	70	82
Total other income	95	100

3.6 Interest and other income

Interest is recognised as it is earned.

Other income is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and is recognised when ERLC gains control over the right to receive the income.

Note 4 THE COST OF DELIVERING SERVICES

	2023	2022
4.1 (a) Employee costs	\$'000	\$'000
Wages and salaries	8,090	7,164
WorkCover	37	55
Superannuation	893	758
Fringe benefits tax	34	25
Annual leave	699	666
Long service leave	152	32
Other leave	119	-
Total employee costs	10,024	8,700

4.1 (b) Superannuation

ERLC made contributions to the following funds:

Defined benefit fund

Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	112	126
	112	126

Employer contributions payable at the reporting date.	22	-
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Accumulation funds

Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	528	501
Employer contributions - other funds	250	131
	778	632

Employer contributions payable at the reporting date.	-	52
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Refer to Note 9.2 for further information relating to ERLC's superannuation obligations.

4.2 Materials and services

Office administration	703	689
Information technology	557	638
Library consumables	418	533
Contract payments	201	173
Insurance	79	52
Repairs and maintenance	14	74
Consultants	66	19
Utilities	8	10
Total materials and services	2,046	2,188

Expenses are recognised as they are incurred and reported in the financial year to which they relate.

	2023	2022
4.3 Depreciation	\$'000	\$'000
Library materials	1,800	1,604
Furniture and equipment	320	287
Plant	9	7
Total depreciation	2,129	1,898

Refer to Note 5.2(b), 5.5 and 6.1 for a more detailed breakdown of depreciation and amortisation charges and the accounting policy.

4.4 Amortisation - Intangible assets

Software	4	4
Total Amortisation - Intangible assets	4	4

4.5 Amortisation - Right of use assets

Property	147	119
Total Amortisation - Right of use assets	147	119

4.6 Assets written off

Refer to Note 2.1, Budget Variations (9) for a more detailed explanation of Assets written off. The write off is shown at 'Assets written off' in the Comprehensive Income Statement (see page 5).

	264	-
Total write off	264	-

4.7 Finance Costs - Leases

Interest - Lease Liabilities	23	3
Total finance costs	23	3

4.8 Other expenses

Auditors' remuneration - VAGO - audit of the financial statements	47	15
Lease outgoings/(adjustments)	(4)	52
Total other expenses	43	67

Note 5 OUR FINANCIAL POSITION	2023	2022
5.1 Financial assets	\$'000	\$'000
(a) Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash at bank	2,770	5,281
Total cash and cash equivalents	2,770	5,281

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits at call, and other highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, net of outstanding bank overdrafts.

	2023	2022
(b) Trade and other receivables	\$'000	\$'000
Current		
<i>Statutory receivables</i>		
Net GST receivable	105	-
<i>Non statutory receivables</i>		
Security deposit	8	8
Total current trade and other receivables	113	8

Short term receivables are carried at the invoice amount. A provision for doubtful debts is recognised when there is objective evidence that an impairment has occurred. Long term receivables are carried at the amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

No provision has been made for doubtful debts.

Note 5 OUR FINANCIAL POSITION (CONT.)

5.2 Non-financial assets

	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
(a) Other assets		
Prepayments	347	-
Total other assets	347	-

(b) Intangible assets		
Corporate software	26	30
Total intangible assets	26	30

Corporate Software

	\$'000
Gross carrying amount	
Balance as at 1 July 2022	62
Additions from internal developments	-
Corporate software write off	(25)
Balance as at 30 June 2023	37

Accumulated amortisation and impairment

Balance as at 1 July 2022	32
Amortisation expense	4
Adjustments	(26)
Balance as at 30 June 2023	10

Net book value as at 30 June 2022	30
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Net book value as at 30 June 2023	27
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Intangible assets with finite lives are amortised as an expense on a systematic basis over the asset's useful life. Amortisation is generally calculated on a straight-line basis, at a rate that allocates the asset value, less any estimated residual value over its estimated useful life.

Estimates of the remaining useful lives and amortisation method are reviewed at least annually, and adjustments made where appropriate.

5.3 Payables

	\$'000	\$'000
Trade and other payables		
<i>Non-statutory payables</i>		
Trade payables	98	6
Accrued expenses	7	121
Salary accruals	219	267
Superannuation payable - defined benefits	22	-
<i>Statutory payables</i>		
Net GST payable	-	111
Total current trade and other payables	346	505

Note 5 OUR FINANCIAL POSITION (CONT.)

5.4 Provisions

	Annual Leave	Long Service Leave	Total
2023	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000
Balance at the beginning of the financial year	763	1,286	2,049
Additional provisions	673	259	932
Amounts used	(668)	(134)	(802)
Change in the discounted amount arising because of time and the effect of any change in the discount rate	(2)	(99)	(101)
Balance at the end of the financial year	766	1,312	2,078
2022			
Balance at the beginning of the financial year	739	1,364	2,103
Additional provisions	98	227	325
Amounts used	(52)	(114)	(166)
Change in the discounted amount arising because of time and the effect of any change in the discount rate	(22)	(191)	(213)
Balance at the end of the financial year	763	1,286	2,049

(a) Employee provisions

Current provisions expected to be wholly settled within 12 months

	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled after 12 months		
Annual leave	401	343
Long service leave	146	101
	547	444
Annual leave	365	420
Long service leave	1,166	1,185
	1,531	1,605
Total current employee provisions	2,078	2,049

Aggregate carrying amount of employee provisions:

Current	2,078	2,049
Total aggregate carrying amount of employee provisions	2,078	2,049

Note 5 OUR FINANCIAL POSITION (CONT.)

5.4 Provisions (cont.)

Annual leave

A liability for annual leave is recognised in the provision for employee benefits as a current liability because ERLC does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability. Liabilities for annual leave are measured at:

- nominal value if ERLC expects to wholly settle the liability within 12 months.
- present value if ERLC does not expect to wholly settle within 12 months.

Liabilities that are not expected to be wholly settled within 12 months of the reporting date are recognised in the provision for employee benefits as current liabilities, measured at the present value of the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled using the remuneration rate expected to apply at the time of settlement.

Long service leave

Liability for long service leave (LSL) is recognised in the provision for employee benefits. Unconditional LSL is disclosed as a current liability as ERLC does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement. Unconditional LSL is measured at nominal value if expected to be settled within 12 months or at present value if not expected to be settled within 12 months.

Conditional LSL that has been accrued, where an employee is yet to reach a qualifying term of employment, is disclosed as a non-current liability and measured at present value.

Key assumptions - Annual leave:

- Weighted average discount rate	2.07%	1.39%
- Weighted average index rate	2.49%	2.41%

Key assumptions - Long service leave:

- Weighted average discount rate - current	3.51%	3.17%
- Weighted average discount rate - non-current	4.07%	3.10%
- Weighted average index rate - current	2.50%	2.04%
- Weighted average index rate - non-current	2.50%	2.23%

Note 5 OUR FINANCIAL POSITION (CONT.)

5.5 Leases

At inception of a contract, ERLC assesses whether a contract is, or contains, a lease. A contract is, or contains, a lease if the contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period in exchange for consideration. To identify whether a contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset, it is necessary to assess whether:

- The contract involves the use of an identified asset.
- ERLC has the right to obtain substantially all the economic benefits from use of the asset throughout the period of use.
- ERLC has the right to direct the use of the asset.

This policy is applied to contracts entered into, or changed, on or after 1 July 2019.

As a lessee, ERLC recognises a right-of-use asset and a lease liability at the lease commencement date. The right-of-use asset is initially measured at cost which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability adjusted for:

- any lease payments made at or before the commencement date less any lease incentives received; plus
- any initial direct costs incurred; and
- an estimate of costs to dismantle and remove the underlying asset or to restore the underlying asset or the site on which it is located.

The right-of-use asset is subsequently depreciated using the straight-line method from the commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right-of-use asset or the end of the lease term. The estimated useful lives of right-of-use assets are determined on the same basis as those of property, plant and equipment. In addition, the right-of-use asset is periodically reduced by impairment losses, if any, and adjusted for certain measurements of the lease liability.

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments that are not paid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease or, if that rate cannot be readily determined, an appropriate incremental borrowing rate. Generally, ERLC uses an appropriate incremental borrowing rate as the discount rate.

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability comprise the following:

- Fixed payments.
- Variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate, initially measured using the index or rate at the commencement date.
- Amounts expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee; and
- The exercise price under a purchase option that ERLC is reasonably certain to exercise, lease payments in an optional renewal period if ERLC is reasonably certain to exercise an extension option, and penalties for early termination of a lease unless ERLC is reasonably certain not to terminate early

When the lease liability is remeasured in this way, a corresponding adjustment is made to the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset or is recorded in profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset has been reduced to zero.

Under *AASB 16 Leases*, ERLC as a not-for-profit entity has elected not to measure right-of-use assets at initial recognition at fair value in respect of leases that have significantly below-market terms.

Note 5 OUR FINANCIAL POSITION (CONT.)

5.5 Leases (cont.)

Right-of-Use Assets	Property	
	\$'000	
Balance as at 1 July 2022	61	
Additions	697	
Amortisation charge	(147)	
Balance as at 30 June 2023	611	
Balance as at 1 July 2021	176	
Additions	-	
Adjustments to right-of-use assets due to re-measurement of lease liability	4	
Amortisation charge	(119)	
Balance as at 30 June 2022	61	
Lease liabilities	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
Maturity analysis - contractual undiscounted cash flows		
Less than one year	143	71
One to five years	565	-
More than five years	-	-
Total undiscounted lease liabilities as at 30 June:	708	71
Current lease liabilities included in the Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2023	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
Current	627	71
Total lease liabilities	627	71

Short Term and low value leases

ERLC does not currently have any non-cancellable lease commitments which are short-term or low value leases

5.6 Members' equity (ownership interest)	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
The net assets of the joint venture:	3,689	3,689
<hr/>		
<i>The percentage equity shares of making up this joint venture is as follows:</i>	%	%
Yarra Ranges Council	38.72	38.72
Knox City Council	36.39	36.39
Maroondah City Council	24.89	24.89
	100.00	100.00

	2023	2022
5.7 Accumulated surplus	\$'000	\$'000
Balance at the beginning of the financial year	5,242	10,258
Surplus / (Deficit) for the year	(180)	1,084
Distributions to Member Councils	(1,936)	(6,100)
Balance at the end of the financial year	3,126	5,242

Note 6 ASSETS WE MANAGE

6.1 Plant, furniture, equipment, and library materials

Summary of property, infrastructure, plant, and equipment

	Carrying amount 30 June 2022	Additions	Depreciation	Disposal	Adjustment	Carrying amount 30 June 2023
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Library materials	5,081	1,815	(1,800)	(22)	(220)	4,854
Furniture and equipment	985	428	(319)	(50)	(5)	1,039
Plant	36	-	(9)	(34)	37	33
Work in progress	74	-	-	-	-	74
	6,176	2,243	2,128	(106)	(188)	6,000

	Carrying amount 30 June 2021	Additions	Depreciation	Disposal	Adjustment	Carrying amount 30 June 2022
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Library materials	5,042	1,728	(1,604)	(85)	-	5,081
Furniture and equipment	1,014	272	(287)	(14)	-	985
Plant	43	-	(7)	-	-	36
Work in progress	-	74	-	-	-	74
	6,099	2,074	(1,898)	(99)	-	6,176

Note 6 ASSETS WE MANAGE (cont.)

Detailed breakdown of plant, furniture, equipment, library materials and work in progress	\$'000
(a) Library materials	
At cost 1 July 2022	12,520
Accumulated depreciation as at 1 July 2022	(7,439)
	5,081
Movements in cost	
Acquisition of assets at cost	1,815
Cost of assets disposed	(1,314)
	501
Movements in accumulated depreciation	
Depreciation and amortisation	(1,800)
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	1,292
Adjustment	(220)
	(728)
At cost 30 June 2023	13,021
Accumulated depreciation as at 30 June 2023	(8,166)
Carrying amount	4,855
(b) Furniture and equipment	
At cost 1 July 2022	2,820
Accumulated depreciation as at 1 July 2022	(1,835)
	985
Movements in cost	
Acquisition of assets at cost	428
Cost of Assets Disposed	(144)
	284
Movements in accumulated depreciation	
Depreciation and amortisation	(319)
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	94
Adjustment	(5)
	(230)
At cost 30 June 2023	3,100
Accumulated depreciation as at 30 June 2023	(2,062)
Carrying amount	1,038

Note 6 ASSETS WE MANAGE (cont.)**(c) Plant**

At cost 1 July 2022	69
Accumulated depreciation as at 1 July 2022	(30)
	39
Movements in cost	
Cost of assets disposed	(69)
Adjustment	49
	(20)
Movements in accumulated depreciation	
Depreciation and amortisation	(9)
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	35
Adjustment	(12)
	14
At cost 30 June 2023	49
Accumulated depreciation as at 30 June 2023	(17)
Carrying amount	32
(d) Work in progress	
At cost 1 July 2022	74
At cost 30 June 2023	74
Carrying amount	74
Total carrying amount of plant, furniture, equipment, library materials, and work in progress	5,999

Note 6 ASSETS WE MANAGE (cont.)

Acquisition

The purchase method of accounting is used for all acquisitions of assets, being the fair value of assets provided as consideration as at the date of acquisition plus any incidental costs attributable to the acquisition. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset (or paid to transfer a liability) in an orderly transaction between market participants as at the measurement date.

In accordance with ERLC's policy, the threshold limits have applied when recognising assets within an applicable asset class and unless otherwise stated are consistent with the prior year.

	Depreciation Period	Threshold Limit
		\$'000
<i>Asset recognition thresholds and depreciation periods</i>		
<u>Plant, furniture, and equipment</u>		
Furniture and equipment	3 - 10 years	5,000
Plant	6 - 10 years	5,000
 <u>Library materials</u>		
Paperbacks	3 years	
Audio cassettes	3 years	
eBooks	3 years	
Audio books	4 years	
Games	4 years	
CD rom	4 years	
Videos and DVDs	6 years	
Library books and other hardbacks	8 years	
Adult and junior reference	10 years	

Library books

Library books and other assets withdrawn from circulation and consequently disposed are written back against accumulated depreciation and cost based on an average cost of books.

Assets contributed by Member Councils

Assets contributed by Member Councils on formation of ERLC were valued at fair value being the value assigned to the assets by those Councils.

Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation periods used are listed above and are consistent with the prior year unless otherwise stated.

Repairs and maintenance

Where the repair relates to the replacement of a component of an asset and the cost exceeds the capitalisation threshold the cost is capitalised and depreciated. The carrying value of the replaced asset is expensed.

Note 7 PEOPLE AND RELATIONSHIPS

7.1 ERLC and key management remuneration

(a) Key Management Personnel

Key management personnel (KMP) are those people with the authority and responsibility for planning, directing, and controlling the activities of ERLC.

Details of persons holding the position of Councillor or other members of the KMP at any time during the year are:

		2023 No.	2022 No.
Councillors	Councillor Yvonne Allred (Knox City Council) (resigned 17 November 2022)		
	Councillor Susan Laukens (Knox City Council) (commenced 17 November 2022)		
	Councillor Marcia Timmers-Leitch (Knox City Council)		
	Councillor Tasa Damante (Maroondah City Council) (resigned 21 November 2022)		
	Councillor Linda Hancock (Maroondah City Council) (commenced 21 November 2022)		
	Councillor Kylie Spears (Maroondah City Council)		
	Councillor Jim Child (Yarra Ranges Council) (commenced 13 December 2022)		
	Councillor Len Cox (Yarra Ranges Council) (resigned 13 December 2022)		
	Councillor Andrew Fullagar (Yarra Ranges Council) (commenced 13 December 2022)		
	Councillor Fiona McAllister (Yarra Ranges Council) (resigned 13 December 2022)		
Chief Executive Officer	Joseph Cullen		
Total Number of Councillors		8	7
Total of Chief Executive Officer and other Key Management Personnel		1	1
Total Number of Key Management Personnel		<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>

(b) Remuneration of Key Management Personnel

Remuneration comprises employee benefits including all forms of consideration paid, payable or provided by ERLC, or on behalf of ERLC, in exchange for services rendered. Remuneration of Key Management Personnel and Other senior staff is disclosed in the following categories.

Short-term employee benefits include amounts such as wages, salaries, annual leave, or sick leave that are usually paid or payable on a regular basis, as well as non-monetary benefits such as allowances and free or subsidised goods or services.

Other long-term employee benefits include long service leave, other long service benefits or deferred compensation.

Post-employment benefits include pensions, and other retirement benefits paid or payable on a discrete basis when employment has ceased.

Termination benefits include termination of employment payments, such as severance packages.

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Total remuneration of key management personnel was as follows:		
Short-term employee benefits	223	219
Other long-term employee benefits	-	-
Post-employment benefits	-	-
Termination benefits	-	-
Total	<u>223</u>	<u>219</u>

The numbers of key management personnel whose total remuneration from ERLC and any related entities, fall within the following bands:

	2023 No.	2022 No.
\$210,000 - \$219,999	-	1
\$220,000 - \$229,999	1	-
Total	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

Note 7 PEOPLE AND RELATIONSHIPS (CONT.)

(c) Remuneration of Senior Officers

Senior Officers are officers of ERLC, other than Key Management Personnel, whose total remuneration exceeds \$160,000 (\$151,000 in 2021-22), has management responsibilities, and who report directly to a member of the KMP. *

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Total remuneration of Senior Officers was as follows:		
Short-term employee benefits	341	483
Other long-term employee benefits	-	-
Post-employment benefits	-	-
Termination benefits	-	-
Total	341	483

The number of Senior Officers are shown below in their relevant income bands:

Income Range:	2023	2022
	No.	No.
\$160,000 - \$169,999	-	1
\$170,000 - \$179,999	2	2
	2	3

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Total remuneration for the reporting year for Senior Officers included above, amounted to:	341	483

* Due to a definitional change the comparative figures in this note may not align with the previous year's annual report, which included disclosure of senior officers as defined in the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Note 7 PEOPLE AND RELATIONSHIPS (CONT.)	2023	2022
7.2 Related party disclosure	\$'000	\$'000

(a) Transactions with related parties

During the period, ERLC entered into the following transactions with related parties.

(i) Contributions

Monetary contributions

Knox City Council	4,500	4,433
Yarra Ranges Council	3,900	3,842
Maroondah City Council	2,799	2,758
Total monetary contributions	11,199	11,033

Contributions from the above three Member Councils are received in approximately equal quarterly instalments throughout the year. Contributions are received during the months of July, October, January, and April.

Monetary and non-monetary contributions are recognised as revenue when ERLC obtains control over the contributed asset.

(ii) Distributions

Monetary distributions

Knox City Council	924	2,000
Yarra Ranges Council	1,012	2,100
Maroondah City Council	-	2,000
Total monetary distributions	1,936	6,100

The above distributions were made during the year to Member Councils as resolved by the Board. Please refer to Note 5.7 for further details.

(iii) Financial and payroll services

Accounting services	76	118
Payroll services	-	54
Total monetary distributions	76	172

Financial and Payroll Services were delivered inhouse from 1 July 2022.

(b) Outstanding balances with related parties

There were no reportable balances outstanding at the end of the reporting period in relation to transactions with related parties.

(c) Loans to/from related parties

No loans have been made, guaranteed, or secured by ERLC to a related party during the reporting year.

(d) Commitments to/from related parties

No transactions other than the Council contributions, remuneration payments or the reimbursement of approved expenses were entered into by ERLC with related parties during the reporting year.

Note 8 MANAGING UNCERTAINTIES

8.1 Contingent assets and liabilities

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Balance Sheet, but are disclosed and if quantifiable, are measured at nominal value. Contingent assets and liabilities are presented inclusive of GST receivable or payable, respectively.

(a) Contingent liabilities

Contingent liabilities are:

- possible obligations that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Corporation; or
- present obligations that arise from past events but are not recognised because:
 - it is not probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation.
 - the amount of the obligation cannot be measured with sufficient reliability.

Defined benefit superannuation scheme

ERLC has obligations under a defined benefit superannuation scheme that may result in the need to make additional contributions to the scheme, matters relating to this potential obligation are outlined below in Note 9.2. As a result of the volatility in financial markets the likelihood of making such contributions in future periods exists. At this point in time, it is not known if additional contributions will be required, their timing or potential amount.

Contingent liabilities arising from public liability

ERLC is occasionally met with claims and demands allegedly arising from incidents that occur on premises used by the ERLC. The ERLC carries \$600 million of public liability insurance and has an excess of \$2,500 per claim on this policy. Therefore, the maximum liability of the ERLC in any single claim is the extent of the excess. The primary insurer is MAV insurance. There are no claims that ERLC is aware of which would fall outside the terms of the ERLC's policy.

ERLC is not aware of other contingent liabilities or contingent assets as at 30 June 2022 and 30 June 2023.

8.2 Change in accounting standards

Certain new Australian Accounting Standards and interpretations have been published that are not mandatory for the 30 June 2023 reporting period. ERLC assesses the impact of these new standards. As at 30 June 2023 there were no new accounting standards or interpretations issued by the AASB which are applicable for the year ending 30 June 2023 that are expected to impact ERLC.

8.3 Financial instruments

(a) Objectives and policies

ERLC's principal financial instruments comprise cash assets, term deposits, receivables (excluding statutory receivables), payables (excluding statutory payables) and bank. Details of the significant accounting policies and methods adopted, including the criteria for recognition, the basis of measurement and the basis on which income and expenses are recognised, in respect of each class of financial asset, financial liability and equity instrument is disclosed in Note 1 of the financial statements. Risk management is carried out by senior management under policies approved by ERLC. These policies include identification and analysis of the risk exposure to ERLC and appropriate procedures, controls, and risk minimisation.

(b) Market risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of ERLC financial instruments will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. ERLC's exposure to market risk is primarily through interest rate risk with only insignificant exposure to other price risks and no exposure to foreign currency risk.

Note 8 MANAGING UNCERTAINTIES CONT.)

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk refers to the risk that the value of a financial instrument or cash flows associated with the instrument will fluctuate due to changes in market interest rates. ERLC does not hold any interest-bearing financial instruments that are measured at fair value, and therefore has no exposure to fair value interest rate risk. Cash flow interest rate risk is the risk that the future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. ERLC has minimal exposure to cash flow interest rate risk through its cash and deposits that are at floating rates.

Investment of surplus funds is made with approved financial institutions under the *Local Government Act 1989*. ERLC manages interest rate risk by adopting an investment policy that ensures:

- diversification of investment product;
- monitoring of return on investment; and
- benchmarking of returns and comparison with budget.

There has been no significant change in ERLC's exposure, or its objectives, policies, and processes for managing interest rate risk or the methods used to measure this risk from the previous reporting period.

Interest rate movements have not been sufficiently significant during the year to have an impact on ERLC's year end result.

(c) Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that a contracting entity will not complete its obligations under a financial instrument and cause ERLC to make a financial loss. ERLC have exposure to credit risk on some financial assets included in the Balance Sheet. To help manage this risk:

- ERLC only invests surplus funds with financial institutions which have a recognised credit rating specified in ERLC's investment policy.

There are no material financial assets which are individually determined to be impaired.

The maximum exposure to credit risk at the reporting date to recognised financial assets is the carrying amount, net of any provisions for impairment of those assets, as disclosed in the Balance Sheet and notes to the financial statements. ERLC does not hold any collateral.

(d) Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk includes the risk that, as a result of ERLC's operational liquidity requirements it will not have sufficient funds to settle a transaction when required or will be forced to sell a financial asset at below value or may be unable to settle or recover a financial asset.

To help reduce these risks, ERLC:

- have a liquidity policy which targets a minimum and average level of cash and cash equivalents to be maintained;
- follows an investment policy which specifies the need to meet ERLC's daily cash flow requirements;
- have readily accessible standby facilities and other funding arrangements in place;
- have a liquidity portfolio structure that requires surplus funds to be invested within various bands of liquid instruments; and
- monitor budget to actual performance on a regular basis.

ERLC's maximum exposure to liquidity risk is the carrying amounts of financial liabilities as disclosed on the face of the Balance Sheet and is deemed insignificant based on prior periods' data and current assessment of risk.

There has been no significant change in ERLC's exposure, or its objectives, policies, and processes for managing liquidity risk or the methods used to measure this risk from the previous reporting period.

Unless otherwise stated, the carrying amounts of financial instruments reflect their fair value.

Note 8 MANAGING UNCERTAINTIES CONT.)

(e) Sensitivity disclosure analysis

Considering past performance, future expectations, economic forecasts, and management's knowledge and experience of the financial markets, ERLC believes the following movements are 'reasonably possible' over the next 12 months:

- A parallel shift of + 1% and -1% in market interest rates (AUD) from a rate of 2.5% which is ERLC's weighted average interest rate for investments for the financial year.

These movements will not have a material impact on the valuation of ERLC's financial assets and liabilities, nor will they have a material impact on the results of ERLC's operations.

8.4 Fair value measurement

Fair value hierarchy

ERLC does not have any financial assets that are measured at fair value subsequent to initial recognition.

Impairment of assets

At each reporting date, ERLC reviews the carrying value of its assets to determine whether there is any indication that these assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs of disposal and value in use, is compared to the assets carrying value. Any excess of the assets carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the Comprehensive Income Statement.

8.5 Events occurring after balance date

Other than the matter identified in Note 1(a) Basis of preparation and presentation, no matters have occurred after balance date that requires disclosure in the financial report.

Note 9 OTHER MATTERS

	2023	2022
9.1 Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities to surplus/(deficit)	\$'000	\$'000
Surplus / (Deficit) for the year	(180)	1,084
Items not involving cash		
Loss on disposal of plant and equipment	6	99
Depreciation/amortisation	2,280	2,021
Finance costs - leases	23	3
Assets written-off	265	-
Change in assets and liabilities:		
(Increase) / decrease in trade and other receivables	(105)	19
Increase / (decrease) in prepayments	(347)	186
Decrease in accrued income	-	(3)
Decrease in trade and other payables	(159)	(250)
Decrease / (Increase) in provisions	29	(54)
Net cash provided by operating activities	1,812	3,105

9.2 Superannuation

ERLC makes most of its employer superannuation contributions in respect of its employees to the Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (the Fund). This Fund has two categories of membership, accumulation, and defined benefit, each of which is funded differently. Obligations for contributions to the Fund are recognised as an expense in the Comprehensive Operating Statement when they are made or due.

Accumulation

The Fund's accumulation category, Vision MySuper/Vision Super Saver, receives both employer and employee contributions on a progressive basis. Employer contributions are normally based on a fixed percentage of employee earnings (for the year ended 30 June 2023, this was 10.5% as required under Superannuation Guarantee (SG) legislation (2022: 10%)).

Defined Benefit

ERLC does not use defined benefit accounting for its defined benefit obligations under the Fund's Defined Benefit category. This is because the Fund's Defined Benefit category is a pooled multi-employer sponsored plan.

There is no proportional split of the defined benefit liabilities, assets, or costs between the participating employers as the defined benefit obligation is a floating obligation between the participating employers and the only time that the aggregate obligation is allocated to specific employers is when a call is made.

As a result, the level of participation of ERLC in the Fund cannot be measured as a percentage compared with other participating employers. Therefore, the Fund Actuary is unable to allocate benefit liabilities, assets, and costs between employers for the purposes of AASB 119.

Funding arrangements

ERLC makes employer contributions to the Defined Benefit category of the Fund at rates determined by the Trustee on the advice of the Fund Actuary. A triennial actuarial investigation is currently underway for the Defined Benefit category which is expected to be completed by 31 December 2023. ERLC was notified of the 30 June 2023 VBI during August 2023 (2022: August 2022). The financial assumptions used to calculate the 30 June 2023 VBI were:

Net investment returns:	5.7% pa
Salary information:	3.5% pa
Price inflation (CPI):	2.8% pa

As at 30 June 2022, an interim actuarial investigation was held as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category. The vested benefit index (VBI) of the Defined Benefit category of which ERLC is a contributing employer was 102.2%. The financial assumptions used to calculate the VBI were:

Net investment returns:	5.5% pa
Salary information:	2.5%pa to 30 June 2023, and 3.5%pa thereafter
Price inflation (CPI):	3.0% pa

Note 9 OTHER MATTERS (CONT.)

Funding arrangements (cont.)

ERLC was notified of the 30 June 2022 VBI during August 2022 (2021: August 2021). Vision Super has advised that the estimated VBI as at June 2023 was 104.1%. The VBI is used as the primary funding indicator. Because the VBI was above 100%, the 30 June 2022 actuarial investigation determined the Defined Benefit category was in a satisfactory financial position and that no change was necessary to the Defined Benefit category's funding arrangements from prior years.

Employer contributions

(a) Regular contributions

On the basis of the results of the 2022 interim actuarial investigation conducted by the Fund Actuary, ERLC makes employer contributions to the Fund's Defined Benefit category at rates determined by the Fund's Trustee. For the year ended 30 June 2023, this rate was 10.5% of members' salaries (10% in 2021/22).

This rate is expected to increase in line with any increases in the SG contribution rate and was reviewed as part of the 30 June 2022 interim valuation. AASB 119 148 (a) In addition, ERLC reimburses the Fund to cover the excess of the benefits paid as a consequence of retrenchment above the funded resignation or retirement benefit.

(b) Funding calls

If the Defined Benefit category is in an unsatisfactory financial position at an actuarial investigation or the Defined Benefit category's VBI is below its shortfall limit at any time other than the date of the actuarial investigation, the Defined Benefit category has a shortfall for the purposes of SPS 160 and the Fund is required to put a plan in place so that the shortfall is fully funded within three years of the shortfall occurring.

The Fund monitors its VBI on a quarterly basis and the Fund has set its shortfall limit at 97%. AASB 119 148(d)(iv) In the event that the Fund Actuary determines that there is a shortfall based on the above requirement, the Fund's participating employers (including ERLC) are required to make an employer contribution to cover the shortfall.

Using the agreed methodology, the shortfall amount is apportioned between the participating employers based on the pre-1 July 1993 and post-30 June 1993 service liabilities of the Fund's Defined Benefit category, together with the employer's payroll as at 30 June 1993 and at the date the shortfall has been calculated. AASB 119, AASB 119 148 (b) 148 (d)(v).

Due to the nature of the contractual obligations between the participating employers and the Fund, and that the Fund includes lifetime pensioners and their reversionary beneficiaries, it is unlikely that the Fund will be wound up. If there is a surplus in the Fund, the surplus cannot be returned to the participating employers. In the event that a participating employer is wound-up, the defined benefit obligations of that employer will be transferred to that employer's successor.

The 2022 interim actuarial investigation surplus amounts

An actuarial investigation is conducted annually for the Defined Benefit category of which ERLC is a contributing employer. Generally, a full actuarial investigation is conducted every three years and interim actuarial investigations are conducted for each intervening year. An interim investigation was conducted as at 30 June 2022 and the last full investigation was conducted as at 30 June 2020.

The Fund's actuarial investigation identified the following for the DB category of which ERLC is a contributing employer:

	2022 (Interim)	2021 (Interim)
	\$m	\$m
- A VBI Surplus	44.6	214.7
- A total service liability surplus	105.8	270.3
- A discounted accrued benefits surplus	11.9	285.2

The VBI surplus means that the market value of the Fund's assets supporting the defined benefit obligations exceed the vested benefits that the defined benefit members would have been entitled to if they had all exited on 30 June 2022.

The total service liability surplus means that the current value of the assets in the Fund's Defined Benefit category plus expected future contributions exceeds the value of expected future benefits and expenses as at 30 June 2022.

The discounted accrued benefits surplus means that the current value of the assets in the Fund's Defined Benefit category exceeds the value of benefits payable in the future but accrued in respect of service to 30 June 2022.

Note 9 OTHER MATTERS (CONT.)

The 2023 triennial actuarial investigation

A triennial actuarial investigation is being conducted for the Fund's position as at 30 June 2023. It is anticipated that this actuarial investigation will be completed by 31 December 2023. The financial assumptions for the purposes of this investigation are:

	2023	2022
Net investment returns:	5.7% pa	5.6%
Salary information:	3.5%pa	2.5%
Price inflation (CPI):	2.8% pa	2.0%

Superannuation contributions

Contributions by ERLC (excluding any unfunded liability payments) to the above superannuation plans for the financial year ended 30 June 2023 are detailed below:

Scheme	Type of Scheme	Rate	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Vision super	Defined benefits	10.5% (2022:10.0%)	112	126
Vision super	Accumulation	10.5% (2022:10.0%)	528	501
Other funds	Accumulation	10.5% (2022:10.0%)	250	131

There were no contributions outstanding, and no loans issued from or to the above schemes as at 30 June 2022.

The expected contributions to be paid to the Defined Benefit category of Vision Super for the year ending 30 June 2024 is \$0.12m.

Note 10 CHANGE IN ACCOUNTING POLICY

There have been no changes to accounting policies in the 2022-23 year.

There are no pending accounting standards that are likely to have a material impact on ERLC.

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Ferntree Gully

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Mount Evelyn

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21 Main Road, Monbulk

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