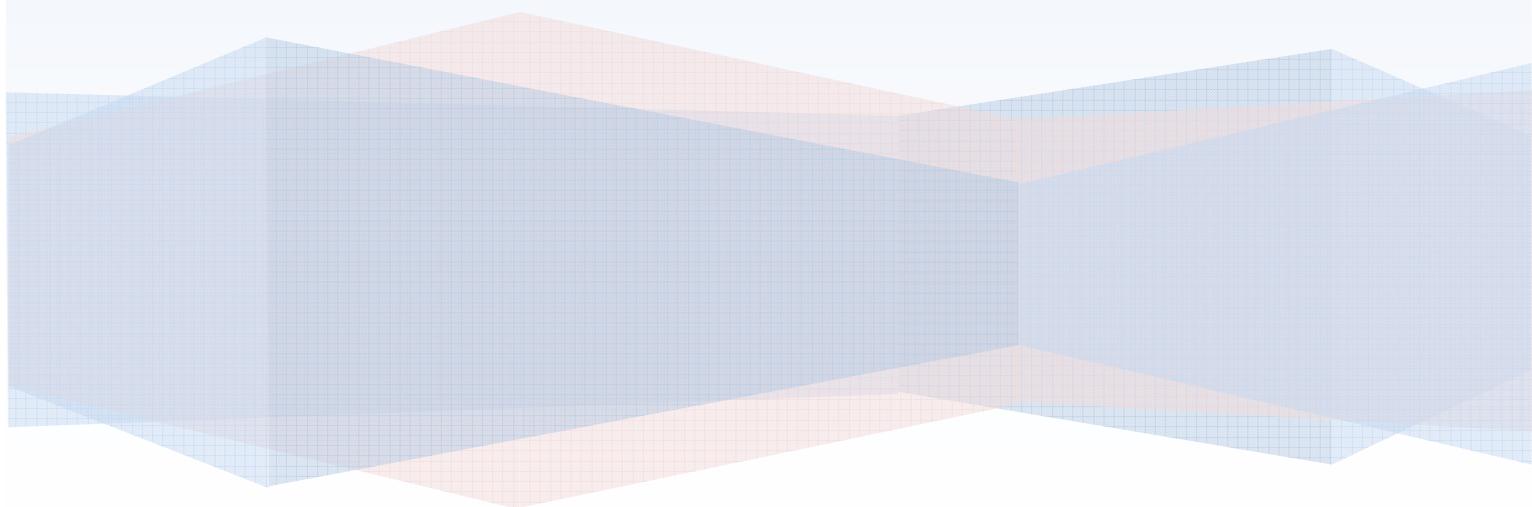


Community Survey

Coffs Harbour City Library

Summary Analysis



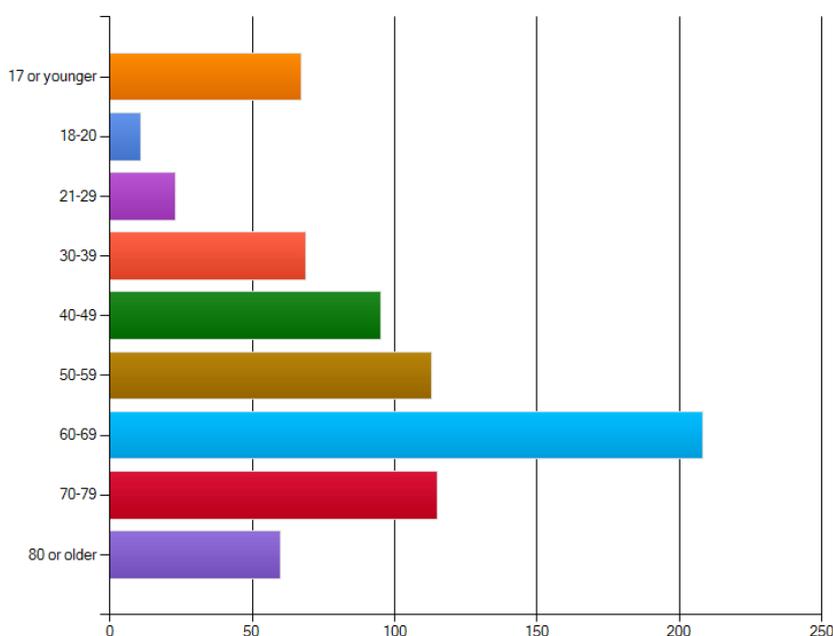
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THE SURVEY

The survey was undertaken in March / April 2012. A link was made to the online survey on the Library's website; and it was also available through the Library's public access computers in all branches. A paper version was made available to respondents with no access to the Internet. The survey was promoted in the local press, on the Library's website and in the Library branches.

761 people completed the survey (a representative sample of the local forecast population of 72,478¹), with 70% being female, and ages as shown below. The age ranges reflect the general demographics of the area.



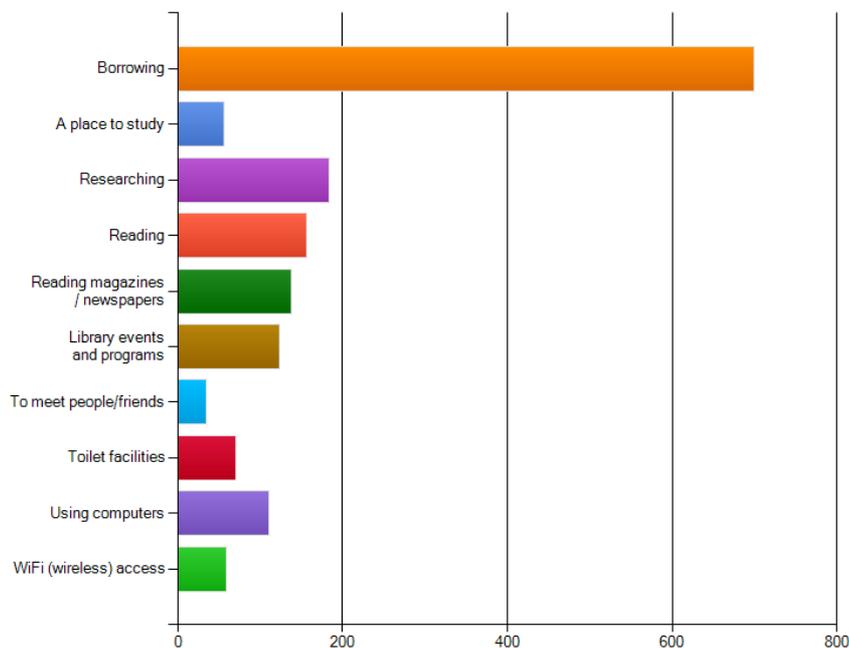
60% of respondents visit Coffs Harbour branch, 22% Woolgoolga and 18% Toormina, although some respondents use all three libraries.

63% of respondents visit the library frequently, either weekly (25%), fortnightly (21%) or more than once a week (17%). The remainder visited monthly (21%) or less frequently (14%).

Over 80% of respondents used a car/motorbike to visit the library as driver or passenger; 17% walked to the library and less than 3% of respondents used public transport.

The main reasons for visiting the library are shown in the following graph. As expected, 92% of library visitors came to browse the shelves, 17% visited to attend a specific program or event, and 15% to use the Library's computers.

¹ Coffs Harbour website, forecast.id



HOW IMPORTANT IS THE LIBRARY SERVICE TO YOU?

93% of respondents declared the library service as either very important (70%) or important (23%) to them. A number of common themes emerged in the respondents' comments, which indicate the library is important for the following reasons:

Community / Third place

- *The library is the centre of any town or city*
- *Could not survive without access to a library*
- *Every town should have a library*
- *Lost without it*
- *If the library was not around, I would not be able to communicate with anyone, or borrow books. I would become a very lonely old soul.*
- *It is a civilising influence, socially*
- *It is a crucial community resource and a wonderful tool for encouraging a love of reading in my children.*
- *I absolutely love the library!*
- *It has through years become a sanctuary*
- *I wouldn't live anywhere where there was no library*
- *The library is the best service provided by the council, the town would not be complete without the library.*
- *Actually, vital!*
- *The library service is important to me as it is a great place to study, research and get away from it all.*

- *Wonderful, wonderful service, in two meanings of the word: community and personal.*

Not everyone, however agreed!

- *Rather have lower council rates and no library*

Economic reasons

- *My primary source of reading materials as I can't afford to buy books unless they are second hand*
- *I read rather than watch TV and its adverts and the cost of second hand books is an extra cost for an OAP*
- *Believe that if public libraries aren't used they will die out. Restores faith in human nature that they are free. Can't afford to buy books (only rarely).*
- *It enables us to go on the internet and it saves us money*
- *Without this, my reading would probably be fairly limited in range, as I would only buy books that had a high probability of being something that I would read.*
- *As books are becoming more and more expensive being able to borrow from the library is very beneficial to myself as a pensioner on a limited income.*

Education / information

- *I appreciate the quiet space to study offered by the library.*
- *I have been a heavy user of libraries throughout my life as student, teacher & lecturer.*
- *Great place for learning without pressure, on any level e.g. peaceful, free and honest*
- *We are a homeschooling family and the library is one of our primary educational resources. We are very dedicated library users who value a high-quality library.*
- *I think libraries are very important for the whole community. It fosters and supports literacy and on going learning.*
- *I find that reading is the best way to 'get out of your own shadow' and to spread the wings of learning which at 65 I am still yearning for more and more.*

Social / Recreation

- *This is a very special place in Woolgoolga. It is peaceful & calming - it gives me a chance to have time out & "breathe" away from work, study & family on occasion - just the 'hecticness' of life!*
- *Being an avid reader, it is essential to my sanity*
- *I love books, my interests change, I can explore freely & learn, in a safe environment.*
- *Has proved an excellent resource for our book group with once a month use. Expanding the choice of titles (we have read most of them) would be vital to our continued use of the Library facilities.*

- *I'm the ultimate bookworm, without books I could not survive.*
- *It would be more important if I could borrow ebooks online*

STATEMENTS ABOUT THE LIBRARY

Respondents were given a number of statements about the library, and asked whether they agreed or disagreed.

Statement	Agree or strongly agree	Disagree or Somewhat agree
The library is a great place to find out about things	89%	
The library is a great place for people my age	80%	
The library is a great place to meet new people		71%
The library is a great place to meet friends and/or family		69%
The library is a great place to study	69%	
The library is a great place to relax	71%	
The library is a valuable community resource	93%	
The library is a useful community resource	94%	
The library is welcoming to everyone	94%	

It is interesting that the respondents did not see the library as a meeting place, though this may be a reflection of the age of respondents. Opportunities exist for the library to promote this role more.

The following themes emerged in the comments.

Community resource

- *The hub of a Community.*
- *A community without a library is very disadvantaged. As the population grows it is essential that library services are expanded so that the library is seen as an important community resource.*
- *Access to the library keeps our cultural inheritance alive*
- *The library is a fundamental element of the city, providing a service to the community that cannot be judged as a commodity.*
- *The library is a valuable community service, staffed by great people.*
- *Communities need libraries ... don't ever close them!!*

Educational / information resource

- *The Library should be the first point of call for any info.*
- *I have a disability and need to get information from a computer*
- *Where else would you get information or reading material if you do not have a computer at home?*
- *I find the library unsuitable for study due to the fact visitors do not respect the keep quiet situation as in other libraries*

- *It is important to me that the library is a quiet refuge in which to work.*

Recreational / social resource

- *Social life in Australia without the library is unimaginable*
- *My friends & I go there to study & meet up*
- *I do not go to library to meet people, but think the lounge area could be more accommodating and what happened to the water cooler?*
- *Never thought of it as a place to meet people!*
- *I long for an old-fashioned library, one without any aspirations to be an entertainment/or social science-orientated "people meeting place".*

Children's services

- *I would love the library to have more youth workshops and more magazines catered to teens.*
- *I commend the strategies for encouraging little children to use the library with their parent/s*
- *Children over 5 but under 12 are NOT catered for*

Staff

- *The staff are nice to everyone and helpful*
- *Staff are always very helpful and have a smile on their faces (as if they care about you as an individual and you're not just a number)*
- *I have appreciated the constant help in all sections; fiction, non fiction, newspapers, videos and especially computers*

Welcoming

- *I always feel excited about going to the library, I can use books I could not afford.*
- *I love the library, at least you can call into anyone of them to get something you want, couldn't live without it.*
- *The Library Service does an excellent job. It is a welcoming and inclusive local asset that provides services for all ages. It never sits on its laurels as the staff are always looking for new and innovative ways to help and entertain the community.*

Noise

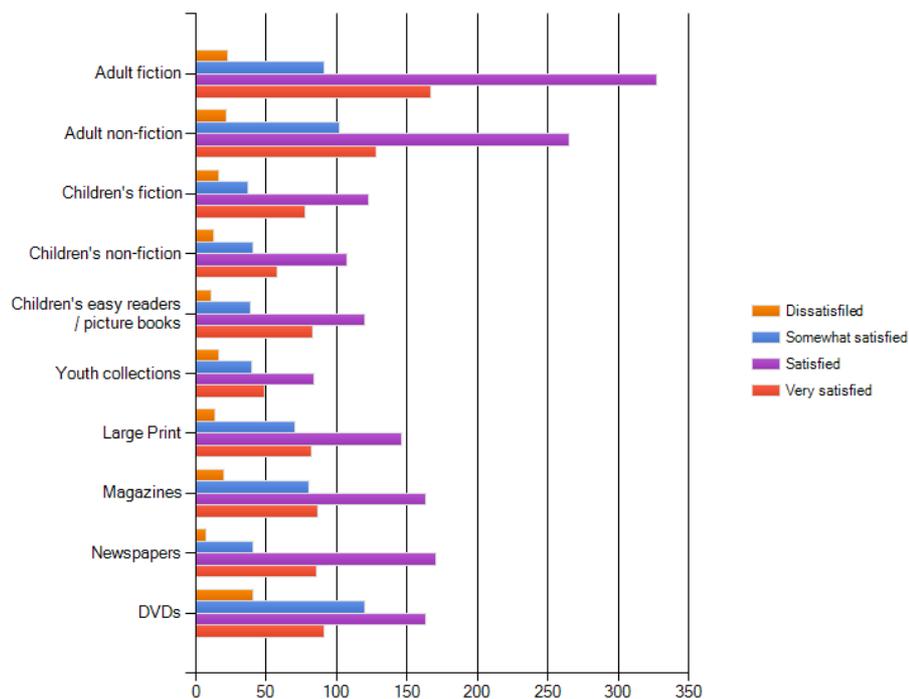
The issue of noise was raised by a number of respondents.

- *Disappointing that sometimes even the staff don't keep their voices down!*
- *Noise should be kept to an absolute minimum.*
- *Noisy young people should be prohibited from being in the library*
- *It's not the place to chat or play nor the place to play internet games*
- *I personally don't like talking to other people in a library and the modern "noisy kids is ok" attitude in a library actually annoys me, but other people like the inclusion, and more friendly attitude so I'm happy to put up with it (even if it's with gritted teeth).*

- *Great place. Problems at times re noise from PC users; mainly the groups of chatty/noisy/numerous young boys/teenagers. More staff intervention is needed - otherwise we have to be the ogre enforcers of library etiquette.*

LIBRARY COLLECTIONS

Overall, respondents were satisfied with the library's collections (see chart below).



Comments on the collections

Fiction

- *Adult books are largely lowbrow fiction. Adult non-fiction similar.*
- *Vintage classics (Dickens, Blackmore, Flaubert) are disappearing from shelves.*
- *New good fiction and literature was in much better supply there (Manly Library).*
- *I'm sad that classics like Dickens and the Bronte Sisters aren't available*
- *More contemporary fiction and nonfiction needed for increasing no. of users*
- *I'm probably being too critical, but I look to libraries to have the latest books, especially prize winning books*
- *Would love a wider range of more modern literature - in print, DVD and talking books. However, I do appreciate the cost constraints.*
- *Fiction books are old + in general bad condition*
- *I stopped looking for adult fiction as I could never find anything new - no doubt too many borrowers, not enough new books. In contrast Toormina library has a more up to date collection.*
- *Mills & Boon may be very popular. But doesn't excuse the poor literary/ film taste of your book & DVD selectors*

Non-fiction

- *Where are the Art books? There are virtually none on female artists.*
- *Non-fiction needs updating*
- *Some books are old & the info is now wrong/ irrelevant/ dangerous e.g. baby advice from 15years ago.*
- *Some non-fiction items are dated and need to be replaced with up-to-date material.*
- *Would like to see more new release memoirs, biographies, travel non fiction collection*
- *Scientific books are few and by far not up to date*

Children's

- *I would like to see more children books, (picture, fiction and non-fiction)*
- *Collections, especially in kids' section, could be better organised.*
- *I would like to see more easy readers for my son*

Audio-Visual (AV)

- *DVDs should have subtitles for the hearing impaired and ESL users.*
- *The Audio/ MP3 books have been a great addition - hope the collection continues!*
- *I would like a larger selection but am conscious of the under-resourcing*
- *I know you don't need to become a video/cd place but it would be nice to have a bit bigger selection.*
- *Found a not-currently available DVD in your collection the other day. I've been trying to buy it... great to be able to watch it from your collection. Also love that there is a good lot of music videos, ABC series and SBS series.*
- *Would love more foreign language and more serious English language films from the last 15 years or so*
- *DVD collection could have much more variety. Video stores only allow 5 or 7 days to watch a whole TV season on DVD (this is not realistic). Could be a great selling point for library over the stores.*
- *I would like to see the library buy better quality classical CDs. I can afford to buy the cheaper discs myself and would like to see the library give me access to better artists/recordings.*

Large print / talking books

- *I would like to see more large print*
- *90% of large print have women authors not suitable for men*
- *My mother needs large print books as her eyes are going but I have trouble finding books she hasn't read. Can you please get some more?*

Community languages

- *Please provide Woolgoolga library staff with Coffs Harbour community language book catalogue!! That way Woolgoolga library visitors from non-English speaking background (e.g. Spanish, German French etc.) can order in the items from Coffs Harbour and return them in Woolgoolga !!*

- *Would always appreciate overseas newspapers but realise funds might prohibit that*

Reference

- *I often use the reference books encyclopedia science texts etc.*
- *Database collection is great*
- *I am employed in a specialist scientific field - would like Internet access to scientific journals/university library long-distance loans*
- *Ref section limited*

Range / quality

- *Choice Magazine should be available at all branches*
- *Very appreciative of choices, picking the new trends, anticipating, well maintained*
- *Compared to other libraries I have visited, this seems under-resourced. Perhaps Councillors don't realise the value of this facility.*
- *The books are old and smelly*
- *Too few books for the population of Coffs*
- *The variety of magazines available in Woolgoolga could be*
- *The library has come a long way over the past five years.*
- *More is better in a library*
- *Collections are limited and generally unsatisfactory. Series have gaps, favourite authors are largely absent.*
- *I think the library has a great range*
- *Same books - never any new books*
- *Increased no. of Australian Indigenous books - fiction, non-fiction, children's*

WHAT OTHER COLLECTION RESOURCES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE?

143 respondents commented on this question, generally with quite specific author or series requests. However, there were a number of comments regarding ebooks and magazines / journals.

Ebooks

- *Being able to download ebooks for the 1 month loan instead of a physical book*
- *The ability to use the library with my Kindle*
- *Ereaders*
- *Perhaps some sort of loan scheme for ereaders?*
- *Access to digital resources is important.*
- *Books/music/movies etc. on USB stick. Can play in car on long distances without need to change. Also to have books delivered electronically to a Kindle etc.*

Magazines /journals

- *Super food ideas magazine country life mag*
- *Hobbies magazines*
- *Wider range of art and craft and teenager magazines (frankie etc.)*
- *Uncut Magazine, Mojo Magazine, Rhythms Magazine*
- *More copies of magazines to allow for borrowing of current issues, more informative magazines, choice magazine, women's interest magazines, health magazines, travel magazines.*

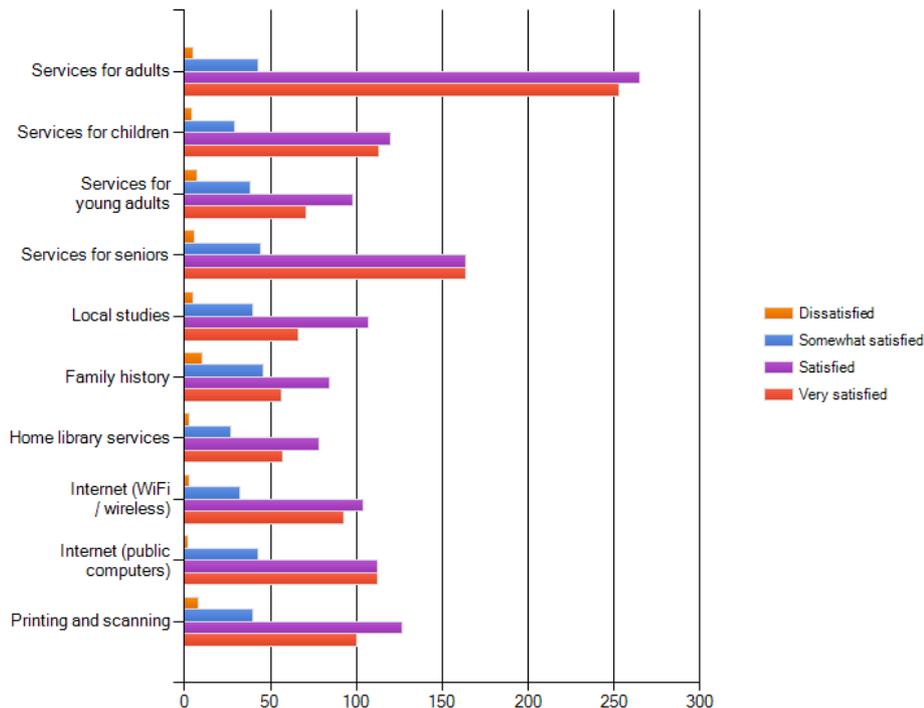
Other

- *More family history resources i.e. Ancestry.com*
- *I believe that the library should cater for SCU and TAFE students.*
- *The library should automatically purchase any new series, documentary or special category film that is shown on either the ABC or SBS as these sources are reliable and worthwhile.*
- *A lot more anime and manga*
- *In WA the library has a small engraving kit that can be borrowed to mark your name on items that can be stolen.*
- *More toys for young children!*
- *The other day I was looking for a World Globe*
- *The ability to borrow computer games e.g. Wii and PlayStation*
- *Would you like to take over Coffs Toy Library?*
- *Would toys that can be loaned be too much of an ask?*
- *Weekly audits for buying new authors, reference sources etc. driven by users.*
- *Perhaps some of the common University subjects like Teaching, Nursing, maybe hospitality texts*

SATISFACTION WITH SERVICE

When asked about their level of satisfaction with a range of library services, respondents were generally satisfied or very satisfied (see below). The higher levels of satisfaction for adult and seniors' services may be attributable to the age of respondents.

A number of respondents commented that they did not use any of the services; and many of the comments related to specific issues / incidents. The online catalogues and public access computers generated a number of comments.



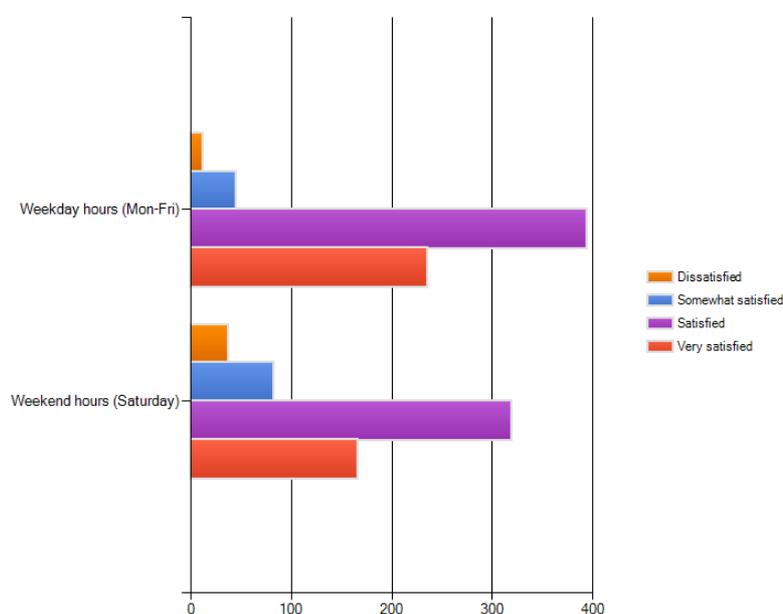
Internet and OPACs

- *The online catalogue could do with an upgrade*
- *Online catalogue and request books is great*
- *I don't have much success using the catalogue from home - my lack of computer expertise*
- *Usually get librarian to help when searching. Would like to learn about this*
- *Online catalogue is clunky and you have to have the exact spelling*
- *I would like to be able to arrange my list of books I have read under, say, author heading so I can easily check if I have read a particular book*
- *Online catalogue at home very useful to see what is available & to reserve books from other Libraries*
- *The free Internet service is a marvelous and highly appreciated facility.*
- *I would like a change to the set out of computers. People do quite private things on there, and no-one wants people to be able to just walk past and be able to view these*
- *Need to be able to pay for printing on library card*
- *Printing and photocopying are a pain. A new system?*
- *Quality of photocopying not consistent*
- *We need access to colour printing from the computers at Coffs Harbour*
- *Essentially the equipment used in the library is not quite what it should be. At least one more microfilm/fiche reader is needed (ideally one that has digital output)*
- *The new photocopiers have a great range of capabilities, however, they are very complicated to use*
- *I would love to be able to reserve more than three books on the library catalogue*

- *Have had to request items a number of times that were put on hold/reserved for me, but then 'dropped off'. Perhaps a recurring software problem?*
- *Love the fact that you can order/suggest new titles*

OPENING HOURS

Overall, respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the Library's opening hours. Comments mainly related to earlier opening, and to weekend hours. The library may wish to canvas options for some changes to its opening hours.



- *Need to cater more for working families, students. i.e. later opening, later closing, increased Saturday hours.*
- *No need to be open Sunday.*
- *Maybe trial a Sunday arvo.*
- *I would like to see library open earlier say 8.30 to enable people access to resources for working people and others with volunteer/ other commitments*
- *Please open longer on Saturdays! It's the only indoor free service for families in Woolgoolga*
- *I think it would be good to have library open in the evening.*
- *The main library should be open later than 6pm some evenings to allow improved access for full-time workers, students and families*
- *I think the library should be open from 9am on weekdays and maybe stay open later one day a week (Thurs?). I also think the Coffs Harbour library should be open for a half day on Sunday.*

- *The weekend hours SHOULD be LONGER!!! People sleep in on weekends and by the time they are ready to get out of the house, the library is already CLOSED!!!*
- *Can't comment as I am not aware of the hours*
- *I did not know it was open Saturday*

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Those respondents who attended events and programs were, in general, satisfied with them. The main issue appears to be a lack of awareness of the programs.

- *I don't know about any of these, so promotion is probably poor*
- *I am dissatisfied only because I have not been made aware of what services are provided specifically for seniors. The library needs to promote its services and their availability more widely*
- *I haven't attended any library events but will investigate them in the future*
- *I have appreciated all the personal invites to library events over the years*
- *Don't know what events they hold*
- *Seniors programs: unaware of any*
- *I don't know much about the youth programs and events.*

And while most respondents (86%) were satisfied with the programs offered for children: *Storytime - great to see it happening. Kids and books and libraries = a vital combination; and I have been to the library on story days and it is a delight to hear the ladies reading to the children and make a book come to life, and tell some many adventures to so many young kids. Their little faces are just fascinated with the stories. This is a must for all young children (keep this running); one library user was NOT! Too intrusive on library users who are most interested in BOOKS not NOISE !!!*

Some suggestions for future programs

- *Would be good to have more speakers/social events for adults. Would then improve the ability for socialising too.*
- *Would like more computer training and regular events as in Legal Week.*
- *Council staff from various sections should give talks on council operations.*
- *Council should be promoting current events and cultural happenings.*
- *Music - sharing, learning to play instruments, theatre*

LIBRARY WEBSITE

When asked about the library's website, 56% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied, but 35% replied they do not use the website. Other issues raised were mainly in relation to navigation and content.

Navigation

- *Once you spend time on it, it becomes more user-friendly. Recently improved*
- *It's a little 'clunky' to navigate, refining and sorting searches isn't easy*
- *The new resource section and kids' section could be much better*
- *No matter how many times I use it I forget where the search catalogue button is. I do not see it on the top blue header*
- *Navigating the website is confusing. To reserve a book, why not have a link to do that, instead of using other names for the page, which are not related to reserving a book!*
- *I find the library's website very easy to use and is much better than websites of other libraries*
- *Could be more friendly e.g. it took some searching to find this survey. Search engine SPYDUS helpful but clunky and has no ability to handle misspelt authors or title names when searching. Needs to adopt a more encompassing predictive search system*

Content

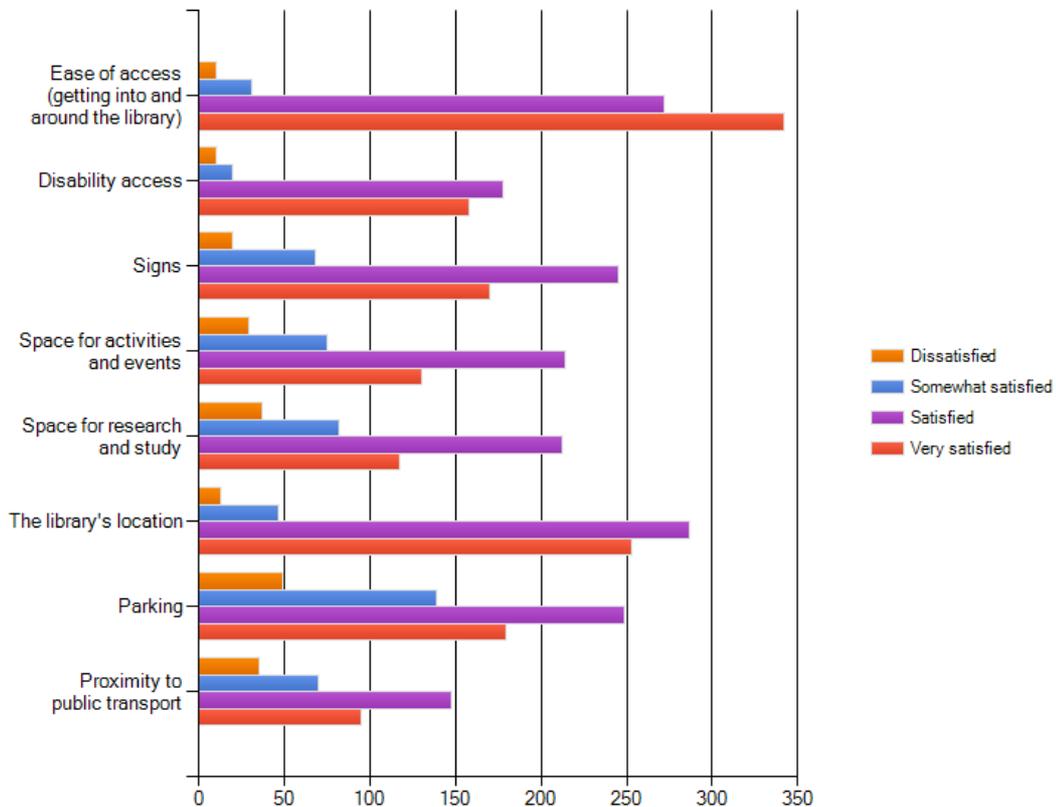
- *Would like borrowing history to be able to be sorted by AUTHOR. Would save borrowing books already read*
- *I find it good for checking things that are happening like different events etc.*
- *The photo collection is brilliant, great for anyone wanting to see what Coffs was like historically*
- *Great if you need to reserve books or renew loans*
- *Really helpful to be able to reserve books, extend loan times, and search the catalogue: would be grand to be able to record what I've searched for (rather than emailing to myself)*
- *Not easy to find out about things going on*

Overall

- *I like that I can access the catalogue from home*
- *It is an attractive website which is updated regularly*
- *The website is fairly intuitive to use and well laid out. It could be extended further with links to resources but is generally quite good*
- *I don't often use the Library Website - mostly don't think about it - probably should start to use it more often*
- *Very plain and boring, in this day and age more can be done to make the website more appealing and vibrant, more intuitive and interactive*

LIBRARY BUILDINGS

Respondents were given a number of features of the library and asked to rate their satisfaction. Results are shown below.



Respondents' comments related mainly to the location of Coffs Harbour branch, including its proximity to parking and public transport.

- *Much as I love having the library close to my workplace, I don't think the current building is the place for the library and the gallery... when will the council purpose build a cultural centre?*
- *Branches are well organised and roomy but Coffs Harbour is crowded and not in a very good location. A new larger library is needed as a matter of urgency.*
- *Car transport makes the library quite easy to access - but public transport is not accessible could deter potential members from getting full value from library and services available*
- *Parking is becoming difficult on Wednesdays at storytime.*
- *Parking is sometimes an issue - can the council extend the carpark into the grounds opposite?*
- *As the distance to public transport is rather extensive, users need to rely on private vehicles. This creates a lack of parking space for users and staff*
- *Would rather library moved to CBD rather than Brelsford Park or other location*

- *Coffs library is not really close to the bus stops which means you need a car to visit especially for people who are not very mobile e.g. disabled/ elderly*
- *At present the current locality seems the best possible unless the current Council building becomes available*

Internal space at Coffs branch, and signage, were also commented upon

- *Love the back room for U3A. What a shame CH & Toormina have not a separate room for groups. We are so lucky in Woolgoolga*
- *The layout of the building is certainly cramped and becomes a problem when events are held while the library is open to the public. Noise interferes when people are reading and studying, and space to move is decidedly limited*
- *The Library is so small and without quiet work or study areas. I think it is very bad for a big, growing centre like Coffs*
- *The library is cramped, and there isn't enough space for activities*
- *In non-fiction it is difficult to find the subject you need as the various sections are not labeled*
- *Signs have gone in non-fiction area directing you to correct aisles*
- *You can't see what is in an aisle from the back, there are no signs*
- *The signs in Large Print section could be larger*
- *The staff are very good, but the actual counters where the customers must wait to be served is totally inadequate. There are 2 outlets with no directions where to queue*
- *Need catalogue numbers & subject guide on the end of each bookshelf of non-fiction*
- *More clocks would be helpful - especially one near the computer booking desk*

STAFF

Satisfaction with the staff's helpfulness, knowledge and overall customer service was very high, with over 95% of all respondents rating them as Good or Very Good.

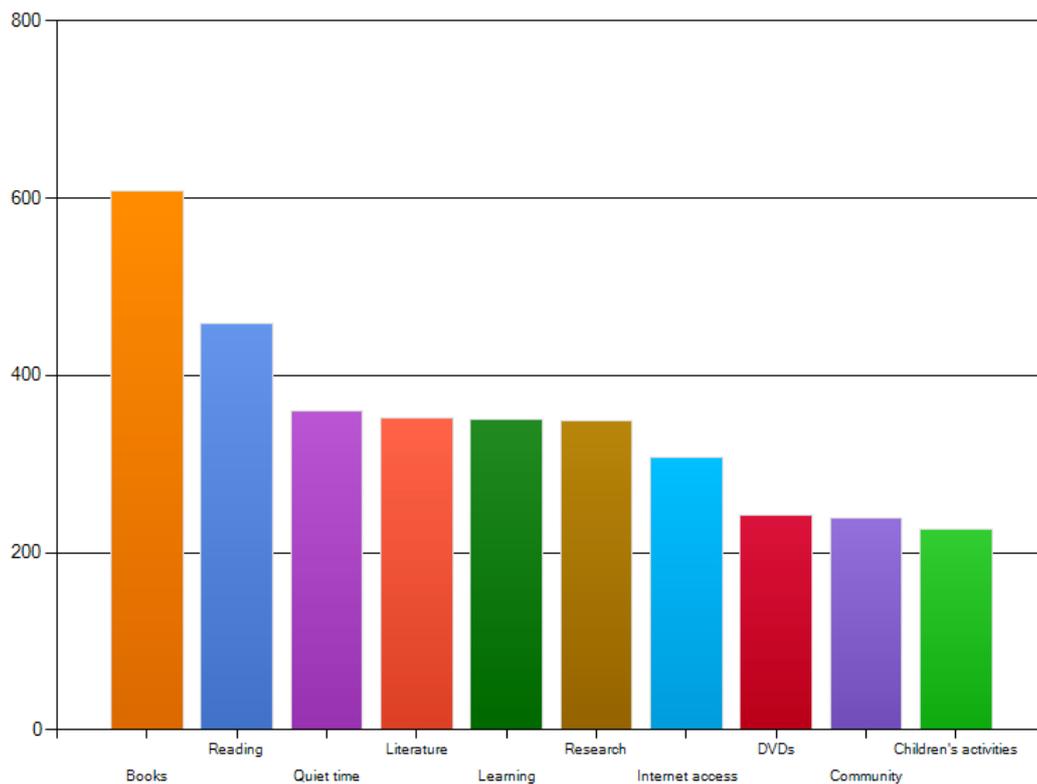
- *Coffs libraries boast the most helpful, cheerful and knowledgeable I have met in over 40 years of using libraries in NSW and ACT!!*
- *The staff are one of the biggest assets, they seem to genuinely like their jobs and are very helpful*
- *There seems to be a culture of helpfulness and service-improvement amongst the staff*
- *Library staff sensational - truly! So helpful and kind and very community minded. Best staff ever!*
- *Additional staff would be helpful and make the library more efficient*
- *A wonderful group of people that show a lot of patience and understanding*

Some respondents raised issues of staff training (and customer service).

- *Please provide more training so all librarians can help customers on the computers. Please employ more staff members on Saturdays and during school holidays !!!*
- *If they are unable to help they do their best to find someone who can*

- *There [are some staff] who could use a crash course in customer service. It is not acceptable to be snappy and rude*
- *I long to see again the again the marvelous old librarians who are interested in books and reading. Is it too much to ask*

WHEN I HEAR THE WORD LIBRARY I THINK OF...



Most respondents listed books (92%) and reading (70%) and a large number (55%) included quiet time as well, though usually with a longing for the return of the quiet library!

- *I enjoyed the library of yesterday where silence was respected and enforced*
- *No mobile phones or idle chit chat*
- *Thankfully our trained librarians only allow "noisy" youth a short tolerance Why they aren't taught, as us "oldies" were, to be quiet I don't know!*
- *I suggest that mobile phone use INSIDE be banned. Libraries ought to be quiet places*

For most respondents the library represented many things – information, recreation and inspiration.

- *Libraries can be my refuge - satisfy my where and how to. Always my first place to start - helps with the sense of settling and belonging*
- *I'm pretty broke so the great pile of books, magazines, DVDs I get is actually my entertainment. And that libraries are free is very heartening*
- *The library is an essential part of my life*

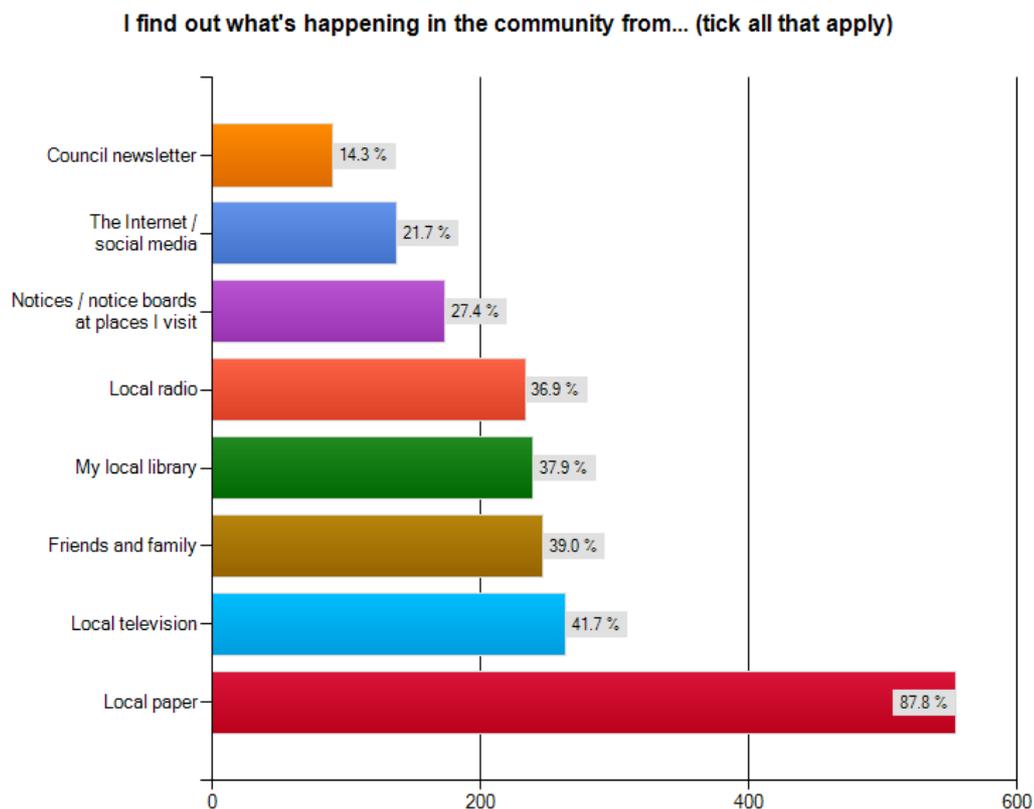
- *It is a wonderful service to the community and essential for alot of families*
- *Libraries should cater to as broad a range of community members as possible Minority groups who may not be catered for elsewhere in the community should feel welcome and have their needs identified and catered for. This is a challenge in a multi-cultural community but it is a worthy aim for the library*

And for one person, the library just did too much!

- *I think it ridiculous that modern libraries have to be "all things" for everyone*

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

When asked how they found out about what is happening locally, 38% of respondents nominated the library, although the local paper (88%) and television (42%) are more commonly used. Use of social media to find out what's on was quite low (22%) although 83% of respondents reported having online access at home or work.²



Opportunities exist for the library to play a greater role in disseminating community information.

- *There needs to be a one-stop shop calendar where every event is listed, without advertising!*

² Q. 21 Only 608 respondents answered this question.