



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES

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Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into ACT Libraries

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SUBMISSION TO THE INQUIRY INTO THE ACT LIBRARIES

Role of libraries within the ACT community

I believe the ACT Library plays a very important role in the ACT community. It contributes to residents' education and well being at every stage of life.

ACT Libraries have enhanced the life of my family in the following ways:

- Pre-schoolers – my children borrowed picture books and enjoyed story time at the Library
- Primary and high school age – my children borrowed children's and young adult fiction and non-fiction to assist with their studies.
- Adulthood – I use the Library's non-digital and digital resources extensively. I currently have on loan travel books, books on history and art, a novel and several copies of the New Statesman. I am also listening to an audio book through BorrowBox. The Library has also given me the opportunity to volunteer by delivering books to housebound people through the Home Library Service. The people I have delivered to have had limited sight and the Library has been able to assist them through the provision of large print books and audio books. These are particularly important for older adults who do not have access to the internet and who aren't able to access the Library's eResources.

Strategic planning

I am very happy with the current practice of ACT Libraries and I feel confident that if sufficient funding is provided it will continue to respond to developments in Library practices. The Library seems to adopt advances in cataloguing, reserving and borrowing very quickly. It is very convenient to be able to check the catalogue and reserve or extend books from home and to receive emails advising that books are available or should be returned or extended.

Community demands for library services

Non-digital offerings

I would like to see ACT Libraries maintain their current policy of buying a range of fiction and non-fiction hard copy books. I have been impressed by the speed in which well reviewed books can often arrive in the Library. On at least two occasions, I have read a good book review in a current overseas newspaper, such as the New

York Times, and have checked the Library catalogue and discovered that the book has already been purchased and is available.

Digital offerings

I value the range of eResources which are available. I regularly use Borrowbox and Libby for audio and ebooks, RBdigital for magazines and Freegal for music. I have also used Mango for language learning before travelling and I sometimes use eResources when I want to research something. I hope that the Library will be able to continue to maintain these facilities and also to add to them if new resources become available.

Education and training

As noted above, the Library supplemented school resources when my children were attending primary and high school.

Facilities available for public use

Belconnen Library provides a central and convenient meeting space for the Belconnen Community Council.

Social inclusion

I tend to visit Belconnen Library about once a week and I have noticed that the computer facilities are nearly always in demand. I assume that the people using the computers don't have internet access at home. Students and older adults, in particular, seem to be making use of seating and tables where they can use their laptops and read newspapers. I find Library staff friendly and welcoming.

Ability to respond to current and future needs

I believe that lack of funding would be the only reason why the current leadership of the Library would be unable to continue to meet community needs.

Access

Living in Belconnen, I find it easy to access Belconnen Library which is in a convenient location and is open 7 days a week. Parking is usually available immediately outside