



Libraries and Information Report

2023/2024

christchurchcitylibraries.com

Christchurch
City Council 

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Executive summary

Our latest Libraries and Information Report provides an update on Christchurch City Libraries' recent work.

The information is a mix of data from the last quarter (1 July to 30 September), the first five months of operation for our newest library at Matatiki Hornby Centre, and some performance data from the 2023/24 financial year.

Future reports will be twice a year, covering October to March and April to September.

We saw a significant milestone in the last quarter, with the removal of holds charges from 1 July. We're also anticipating several new exhibitions and events, including Days of Ice to mark the opening of the Antarctic season, and the demolition of the earthquake-damaged South Library in early 2025 to make way for the new Ōmōkihi South Library and Customer Service Hub.



More detailed Libraries and Information project and financial information is available in reports from the Project Management Office, Finance and the Health and Safety Committee.

By the numbers

1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024


 **23,855**
new members

Total membership
191,669



 **238,134**
enquiries


 **78,896** images
in the Canterbury Stories photo archive
as at 30 June 2024.


95% customer satisfaction 
Residents Survey 2024

 **3.73 million**
physical visits
an 8.3% increase from last year

 **4.57 million**
virtual visits

9.7
million
touches
on the
Tūranga
Discovery
Wall 

 **3.42 million**
physical issues

 **1.33 million**
digital issues
a 25% increase from last year

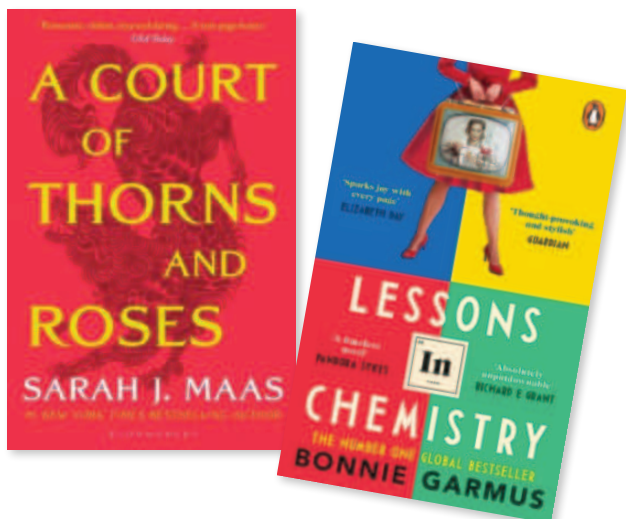
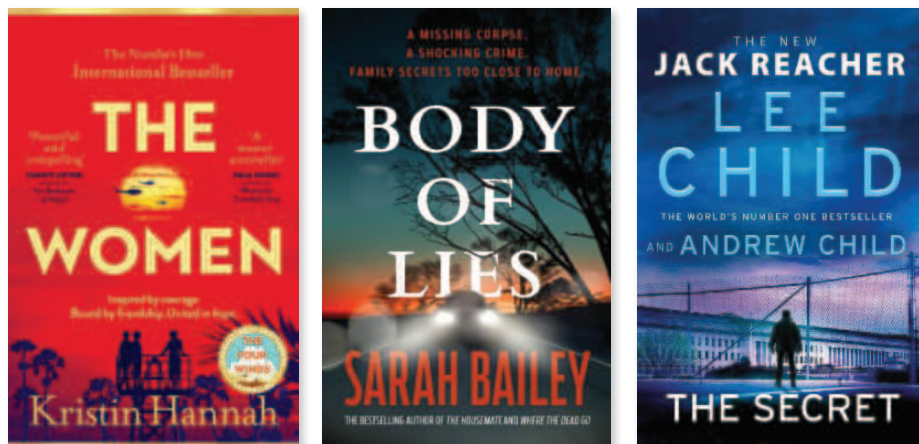
Total issues
4.75 million
a 5.4% increase from last year



Most popular books

July to September 2024

Fiction



Non-fiction




Spotlight on Matatiki

Matatiki Hornby Centre opened on 19 April 2024. Here's a snapshot of how the library's first five months have been, and how the figures compare to the old Hornby Library.

 **43,071**
visits to the library

156 programming sessions attended by **3419** people



This compares to more than 130 programmes attended by 1998 people at the old Hornby Library for the same period last year. This year's results represent a 71% increase in attendance. Programming sessions have included preschool programming, a knitting group, a mahjong group, an English conversation group, Reading to Dogs, Coffee and Korero, afterschool programming, and school holiday programming.

61,284 
physical items issued

This represents a 58% increase over the old Hornby Library for the same period last year, where 41,337 items were issued.

 **748**
new members enrolled at Matatiki

This represents a 107% increase over the old Hornby Library for the same period last year, where they had 387 new memberships.

Matatiki is open 
57 hours
a week

compared to 48 hours a week at the old Hornby Library – an increase of 19%.



A world without holds fees

On 1 July 2024, we removed the \$2 fee for placing a hold on physical items for adult members.

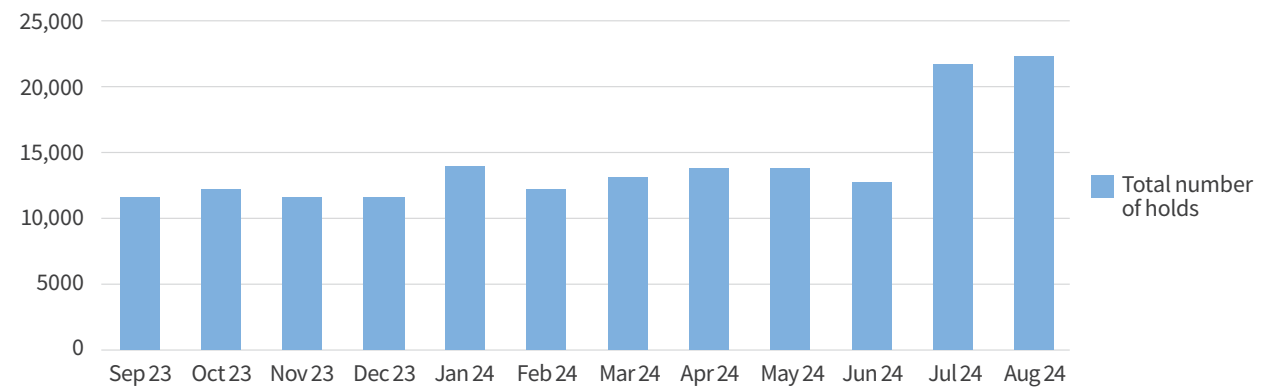
The effect was instant: in August, we saw a 93% increase in the number of holds placed by adult members compared to August 2023. These holds haven't necessarily all been placed on the more popular material – we've noticed a 52% increase in the holds placed on older books held in our off-site storage area compared to the year before.

Having access to free holds has supported a change in how customers select what they want to read – they can now plan ahead and choose specific titles, rather than simply choosing from what's on the shelf at the time. We're monitoring the holds-per-copy ratio to ensure waiting times remain manageable.

What one customer had to say...

I just wanted to say how amazing it is to hear that the library has gotten rid of hold fees! That is fantastic news, especially with prescription costs going back on, this is really going to help this old reader keep up with his book habit.

Impact of free holds from July 2024



Programmes, events, exhibitions and outreach

Snapshot

1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024

11,187 programme sessions

Total programme attendance
215,621

64,237 reading/literacy programme attendance

Māori and Multicultural Services

481 sessions

a 13.85% increase from last year



14,149 attendees

a 19.12% increase from last year

Exhibitions

Tūranga's **Women of the Wheel Exhibition** (24 August – 24 November) highlights the history of women's cycling in Ōtautahi Christchurch from 1890 to the present day. It includes images from our Canterbury Stories archive, and related events drew more than 300 participants.

Tūranga was also home to our **Somali Cultural Exhibition** (17 August – 13 September) in collaboration with the Canterbury Somali Association. The exhibition was part of a wider public programme of events celebrating Somali Heritage Month, which aimed to foster understanding and unity, and showcase Somali culture as an integral part of our Ōtautahi community. The exhibition featured oral histories from four members of the Somali community, which were recorded by our Outreach team as part of the So Many Stories project with Plains FM.

We also hosted part of the **Picture Me festival** – a celebration of children's book illustration (18–29 September). On the final weekend, three European illustrators visited Tūranga for a lively festival of art and ideas.



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Public programme and outreach highlights

1 July 2024 to 30 September 2024

We offered more than 3292 programmes, attended by more than 57,340 people.

- Our ‘intergalactic heroes’ the Bookbots engaged with more than 4300 participants in a free, entertaining and educational event over the July school holidays.
- Christchurch Symphony Orchestra performed at 3 libraries to 660 people.
- Tree planting at Horseshoe Lake in collaboration with the Parks Unit as part of KidsFest.
- Between 5–10 ‘Book a creative’ sessions every week since 1 July across the four Auahatanga Creative Spaces.
- Sustainable September saw all libraries participating with the Seed Swap.
- An innovative collaboration between Māori Services and Speech Therapy Awareness has introduced Trilingual Storytime sessions at Tūranga – Māori, English and Sign.
- Our Libraries stand at the Innovation Expo at Te Pae engaged with more than 1200 people directly and promoted the technology available in our spaces.

The Outreach team has also been busy:

- Our mobile outreach van engaged with 5033 tamariki.
- We delivered school sessions to 360 pupils across the four Auahatanga Creative Spaces – Matatiki, Te Hāpua, South, Tūranga.



Connecting with the community during South Library’s closure

With the earthquake-damaged South Library and Customer Service Hub building set to be demolished soon to make way for the new Ōmōkihi facility, we’re planning our outreach to help the local community stay connected with our library services during the wait.

- We’re extending the hours at the nearby Spreydon Library to seven days, and boosting their collection with stock from South Library.
- Our Outreach team will provide a targeted service in the South area with our new mobile library vans, visiting local retirement complexes, schools and community hubs where possible.
- We’ll establish a pop-up library at The Colombo. More details on page 11.

Partnerships

- We welcomed the WORD literary festival back into Tūranga, hosting a wide range of events from 27 August to 1 September. It drew an additional 2000 visitors to the library.
- A collaboration with Canterbury University's OUSA on two Esports tournaments attracted more than 100 people to each, including enthusiasts and competitors from throughout the South Island. We also facilitated and supported Auckland University of Technology's first Esports case study, led by distinguished academic Maria Bellringer PhD. Using this research, Sport Canterbury are now developing a 'Healthy Esports Charter', which we are also involved with.
- We're developing an ongoing collaboration with Canterbury Museum for touring displays, and contributions to our exhibitions – for instance, their familiar penny-farthing is currently on loan to support the Women of the Wheel exhibition.
- Our Outreach team is working with VEX Robotics to educate and provide access to STEM technology for students.
- We partnered with Environment Canterbury to launch Speaking 4 the Planet. It was followed by an exhibition in Tūranga which then toured community libraries.
- We've continued our series of monthly drop-in clinics, held jointly with the Māori Land Court, to help customers with enquiries relating to Māori land.
- We've joined forces with Huia Publishers to offer discounted titles to attendees of Te Kāhui Ōhūa: Māori Book Club. Held monthly on the last Friday of the month, the club encourages attendees to read a title from our Māori collection, while Huia supplies the group with a discount code on a selected title.



The period ahead (October 2024 to March 2025)

- Our ongoing partnership with University of Canterbury's Confucius Institute has led to multiple collaborative projects and events, such as the upcoming Lunar New Year celebrations and Chinese Language Week events. Teachers and experts in Chinese traditional art and practices contribute to multiple events and programmes delivered across a wide range of libraries.
- In mid-December we will welcome an exhibition on Chinese Heritage to explore some Chinese cultural traditions linked to New Year celebrations. The exhibition will include shadow puppets, New Year paintings and Chinese clay figures.
- Days of Ice will celebrate the opening of the Antarctic science season in October, and Ōtautahi Christchurch's connection to Antarctica. It will feature interactive activities, speakers, film and more.
- The Summer Reading Challenge will engage tamariki across the city from December to February, and not just in libraries – our Outreach service will be going to where customers are, attending community events, pool parties and the Santa Parade. The Summer Reading Challenge's focus is to reduce the 'summer slide' of reading loss, which has a significant and long-lasting impact on literacy levels.

Our facilities

The cultural story of Ōmōkihi, the new South Library

Throughout the project to rebuild the earthquake-damaged South Library building, appropriate and respectful consultation has been vital. To make sure the final product represents the aspirations of both mana whenua and the Council, we've engaged with mana whenua through Whitiōra Centre Limited.

Since this engagement began in mid 2022, their guidance on aspects of the design has been invaluable, particularly through Maatakiwi Wakefield as Lead Advisor and Paula Rigby-Hira as Arts Advisor. One principal source of guidance has been through the gifting of a cultural context and design narrative for the facility, which also led to the new gifted name – Ōmōkihi. This narrative reflects the library's river environment, and its history as a place of significance for Ngāi Tahu over the years.

Artists will work with the project team to bring the stories and design intentions of Ōmōkihi to life.



The period ahead (October 2024 to March 2025)

Refurbishments

Fendalton Library is closed for eight weeks (23 September to 17 November) while we complete planned refurbishment. Some further external works and interior refurbishment will be done outside of the closure, including resurfacing of the carpark and the staff bathrooms.

We'll replace the exterior cladding at **Parklands Library** early in 2025.

We've finalised the lease for a **pop-up South Library** at The Colombo. We have access to the site from early December, and will set the library up in early 2025, soon after the South Library building closes. The temporary library will offer a collection of around 5000 items, an area for children's programming and spaces for people to relax and study. The familiar team from South will run the pop-up library.

What people are telling us

Our wellbeing survey

In late 2023, we partnered with QWB Lab to create a methodology for measuring and articulating Christchurch City Libraries' value to community wellbeing.

Our pilot project focused on Tūranga, and in May 2024, we invited visitors to participate in a survey covering their reasons for visiting, what they liked, suggestions for improvement, and their happiness levels before and after the visit.

We found that Tūranga excels in all 12 of the 'dimensions' from the OECD Wellbeing Framework and New Zealand's Living Standards Framework – it's valued highly and serves as a community hub that fosters pride and a sense of belonging in Christchurch.

The results show that Tūranga plays a crucial role in generating wellbeing and mitigating the negative economic effects of poor mental health in the local economy. Of special note is the wellbeing generated by the environment – in other words, the building and surrounds, with visitors praising the variety and peacefulness of its spaces.

What visitors had to say

After a really busy, stressful day at work, I appreciate having a space where I can decompress and have some introvert time without needing to go all the way home to get it. It isn't always practical to go home before my evening activities, and Tūranga is a great place to just be.

All libraries are good for me, but Tūranga – which I can bike to with my kids easily – is my happy place. My Turanga-wai-wai, really. That the kids can play while I browse and we can connect every now and then over books, stop for something to eat in the café, go up to sit in the gardens on the top floor and look out over the city...
All of this feeds my soul.

Getting lots of writing done; reconnecting with the city centre; the satisfaction of using an accessible space where I am reminded of others who are different to me.

I try to make it to Tūranga at least once a week – it's my mental health base. When I'm doing well, I get there once on my own and once with my kids. I think, for me, visiting Tūranga is like how other people feel about going to church on Sunday.

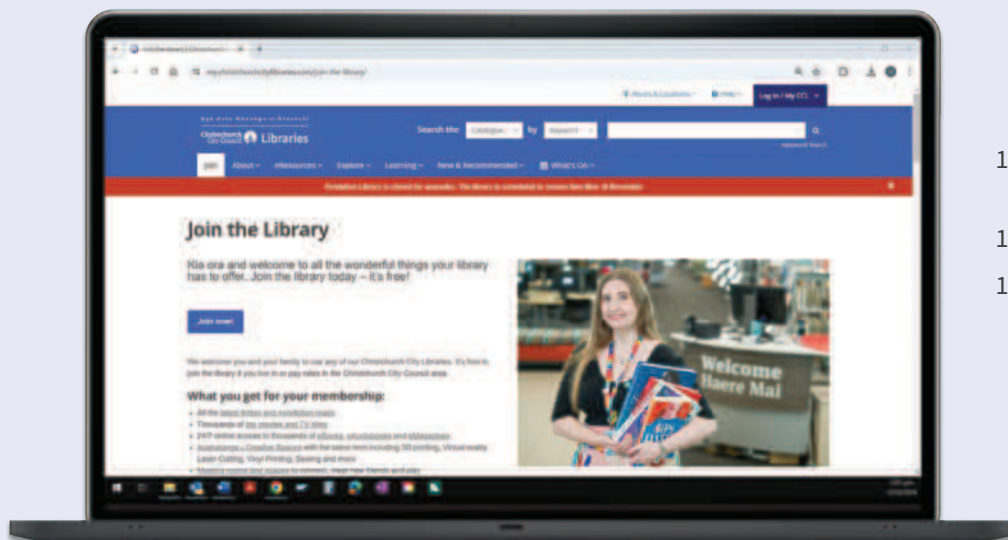
Reaching our communities

Over the past six months we've:

Had **1,760,886** views of **christchcitylibraries.com** (not including the catalogue).

The top five pages were:

1. Justices of the Peace
2. Learn Philippine Greetings
3. Matariki for Kids
4. About Tūranga
5. Join the Library



Published **12** Newsline stories related to Libraries activity.

The stories covered were:

1. Stitchwork and knitting on display
2. Matatiki Hornby Centre goes solar
3. Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori 2024
4. Update for Fendalton Library
5. Matatiki a hit with the community
6. Library holds now free
7. Kiwi comedian turns over a new page
8. Aotearoa's bugs are the bees knees
9. Volunteer's lifelong passion for books
10. Celebrate Matariki and Puaka at Christchurch City Libraries
11. The history of Christchurch streets
12. Library exhibition spotlights iconic pre-quake buildings

