

# Community Engagement Summary

## A New Library for Ballan (Phase One)

Engagement period:

September 2021 –  
October 2021



### Introduction

In 2021 Moorabool Shire Council undertook community engagement to understand the usage patterns of our existing Ballan Library patrons and their priorities for a new library. A new library in Ballan has been on Council's advocacy list for several years and is a key priority for the Ballan community. On 27 January 2022 it was announced that Moorabool Shire Council had secured \$5 million in State Government funding to build a new Library and Community Hub at 127 Inglis Street, Ballan. This funding consists of \$3.5 million from the Growing Suburbs Fund and \$1.5 million from the Living Libraries Infrastructure Program. Council is also contributing \$2 million towards the \$7 million overall project. Council have now reviewed the data from phase one of the community engagement and are again checking in with the community to gain a greater understanding of their priorities for the new Ballan Library and Community Hub.

To read the full media release please visit: [Funding boost for Ballan Library and Community Hub](#).



Pictured (L-R):

MSC Mayor Tom  
Sullivan, Michaela  
Settle MP and Shaun  
Leane MP at the  
Ballan funding  
announcement.



Draft concept designs for the new Ballan Library & Community Hub including a Library, Maternal Child Health Centre, Art Exhibition space, Visitor Information Centre and community meeting rooms.

## Community Engagement (Phase One) review

Council received 88 survey responses from community members during the phase one “A New Library for Ballan” engagement in September – October 2021.

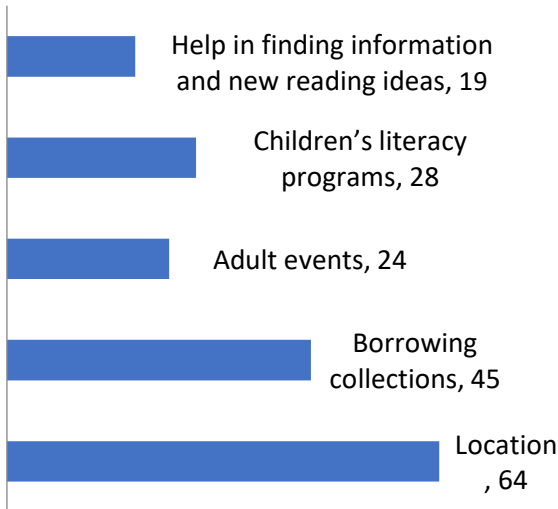
This section will cover the key themes and results from the survey.

### Patron Snapshot

The typical Ballan Library patron visits the library alone (47%) or with their children (31%) and either drives (63%) or walks (33%) to the library. Users acknowledge the location (35%) and borrowing collection (25%) as the best aspects of the library. Most patrons visit the existing library either monthly (33%) or weekly (31%). Most patrons use the physical Ballan library, however some also use the library via the website or e-library.

It should be noted that making generalisations based on 88 survey responses is cautioned. These responses elicit helpful themes but are not representative of all Ballan Library patrons. Council’s data reveals that there are approximately 700 Ballan patrons in total.

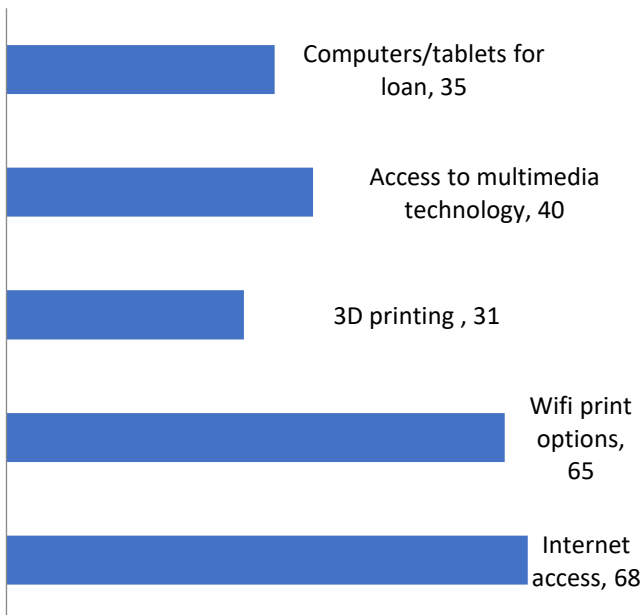
## Question: What do you like most about the Ballan Library?



The location of the existing library was identified as a favourite feature. Luckily, the new Ballan Library will be located just down the street at the former Commonwealth Bank building at 127 Inglis Street, retaining its prominent position.

Furthermore, 33% of those surveyed walk to the library and 63% drive, meaning a central location is important for patron access.

## Question: What sort of technology would you like to see available to use at the Ballan Library and Community Spaces?



The most important technology identified for inclusion at the new Ballan Library included Internet access and wifi print options. The new library will include wifi, wifi print options and public computers as a minimum.

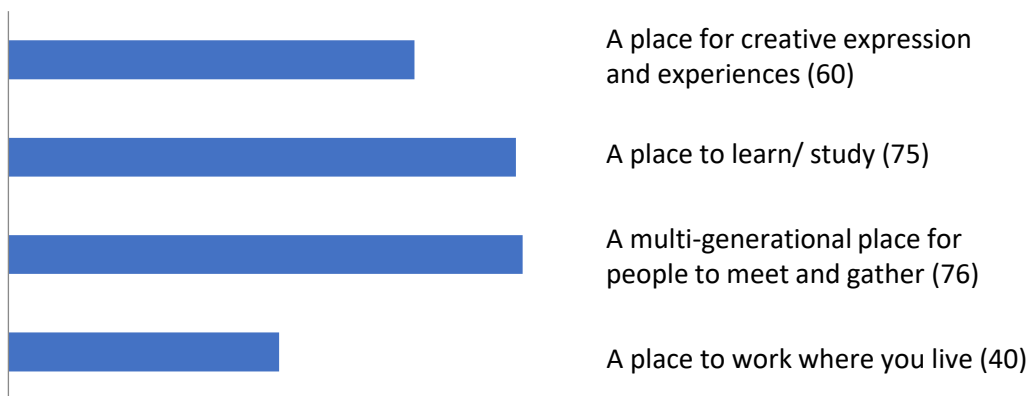
## Question: Besides the borrowing collection, what are the most important facilities for you in a community library facility?

### Rated in importance:

1. Comfortable Seating
2. Children's Area
3. Dedicated quiet study spaces
4. Open space
5. Meeting rooms to book
6. Art exhibition spaces
7. Outdoor courtyard
8. Activity tables and chairs

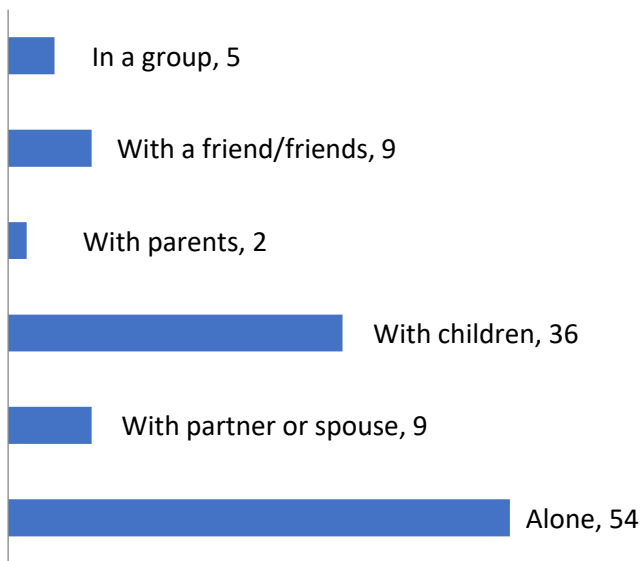
These themes will be the focus of further community engagement in order to elicit more detail about the functionality of these spaces for library users.

## Question: How do you imagine the new Ballan Library and Community Space being used?



The two key themes are reflective of the importance of modern day libraries to not only encourage learning but also provide a community asset for people of all backgrounds and life stages to gather.

## Question: Who do you generally visit the Ballan Library with?



These responses may demonstrate that there are limitations in the use of the space by groups due to the existing library infrastructure.

These results also demonstrate a notable demand for a new library space that caters to the needs of families and children.

## Other themes

Phase one of the community engagement also highlighted other themes for the new Ballan Library. These included:

- Disability access to all spaces
- Extended opening hours on weekdays and weekends
- Good parking options
- Increased collection of borrowing materials
- Modern technology
- Safe and diverse spaces for community use
- Youth gaming or technology spaces

A special mention to the fantastic Ballan Library staff who were consistently recognised throughout the engagement feedback responses. Great work team!

## Where to from here?

### Phase Two Community Engagement

The data collected through the Phase 1 community engagement captured information about how the Ballan Library is currently used. The following Phase 2 community engagement will gather more information about intended usage patterns and the needs of the community to inform the design of the new Ballan Library and Community Hub.

This engagement will not just focus on the library, but also capture information to inform the design of the meeting rooms, Maternal Child Health Centre, Visitor Information Centre and outdoor courtyard space.