



OPENING HOURS PROPOSAL: FINAL REPORT

/ JUNE 2020 /

This purpose of this report is to inform the community about the findings and results of the Opening Hours community consultation run by Geelong Regional Libraries and to share the final opening hours of those libraries.

Overview

Geelong Regional Libraries proposed changes to the opening hours of libraries located in the City of Greater Geelong and the community was invited to have their say on the proposal over a six week period (20 January to 29 February 2020). Geelong Regional Libraries staff from across the entire network also provided input.

The proposed opening hours were based on usage data demonstrating how and when people access their libraries, community feedback provided via the biennial Library Survey and the goals stated in our Library Plan (2017-2021). The opening hours proposal aimed to best respond to the needs of our communities, especially in areas where there is less access to technology and free resources.

Community feedback has significantly shaped the final opening hours; as outlined in this report, it resulted in changes to the original proposals in 10 of 13 library branches. Find out more in our [summary table](#) and [detailed descriptions of final opening hours](#). The new opening hours will come into effect from Monday 6 July 2020, apart from Barwon Heads Library, which will continue temporary opening hours until 26 June 2020. Opening hours during and after school holidays will be communicated when further advice is received from the school.

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

- [The community consultation process](#)
- [Summary of changes arising from the consultation process](#)
- [Community consultation report](#)

Final opening hours

- [Barwon Heads Library](#)
- [Belmont Library](#)
- [Chilwell Library](#)
- [Corio Library](#)
- [Drysdale Library](#)
- [Geelong Library & Heritage Centre](#)
- [Geelong West](#)
- [Highton Library](#)
- [Lara Library](#)
- [Leopold Library](#)
- [Newcomb Library](#)
- [Ocean Grove Library](#)
- [Waurin Ponds Library](#)

No changes were proposed for Bannockburn, Queenscliff, Torquay or Western Heights College libraries.

The community consultation process

Our dedicated [Have Your Say](#) page was the home of information about the community consultation and change process. No changes were proposed for our two mobile libraries or our branches at Bannockburn, Torquay, Queenscliff and Western Heights.

We created and promoted genuine opportunities for members of the community, as well as staff, to review the proposed changes and provide feedback. A suite of communications was created to let the community know about the opportunity, including: a brochure, posters outlining individual branch proposals, website promotion, social media posts and media opportunities. Feedback was invited via a community survey [available online and in hard copy from library branches].

SUMMARY OF CHANGES ARISING FROM THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

Opening hours proposals changed following community feedback		Opening hours proposals adopted without change	No changes to opening hours
Barwon Heads	Highton	Corio	Bannockburn
Belmont	Lara	GLHC	Queenscliff
Chilwell	Leopold	Waurm Ponds	Torquay
Drysdale	Newcomb		Western Heights
Geelong West	Ocean Grove		

Final change in branch hours

Branch	Barwon Heads	Belmont	Chilwell	Corio	Drysdale	Geelong West	GLHC*	Highton	Lara	Leopold	Newcomb	Ocean Grove	Waurm Ponds
Final change (hours)	+3	-6	0	+10	-0.5	+1	-5	0	+2	+1	+6.5	+0.5	-2

*Geelong Library & Heritage Centre

Community consultation report

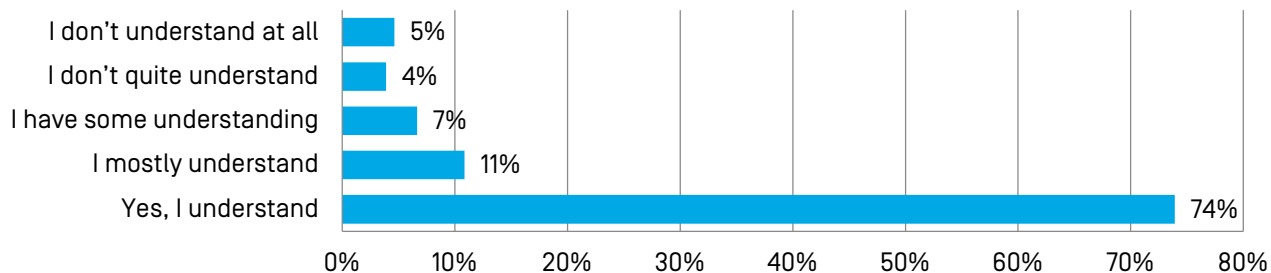
We received 718 responses to the community survey and many of the survey respondents provided comments about opening hours at more than one branch.

Overall, 78% of responses were in favour of the proposed changes to opening hours. Higher levels of support were given where the proposal was to increase opening hours, with lower levels of support where hours are proposed to reduce. However, even where a reduction in opening hours is proposed, around two-thirds of respondents were still in favour of the changes.

Non-survey feedback

In addition to the survey feedback, we received 29 feedback forms and 9 emails, and recorded three Letters to the Editor of the *Geelong Advertiser* about the opening hours proposal. This information has been recorded and helped inform the final opening hours.

SURVEY RESULTS: UNDERSTANDING THE REASONS FOR CHANGE



SURVEY RESULTS: SUMMARY OF OPINION OF PROPOSED CHANGES

Branch	I support the proposed change	I have an alternative suggestion
Corio	91%	9%
Leopold	91%	9%
Barwon Heads	86%	14%
Lara	86%	14%
Newcomb	83%	17%
Highton	82%	18%
Waurm Ponds	81%	19%
Geelong West	76%	24%
Ocean Grove	76%	24%
Geelong Library & Heritage Centre	76%	24%
Drysdale	73%	27%
Belmont	65%	35%
Chilwell	62%	38%
Total	78%	22%

Please note that many of the 718 survey respondents commented on opening hours at more than one branch. We have addressed the main feedback themes in the '[Final opening hours](#)' section on the next page.

SURVEY THEMES: ADDITIONAL COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, OR CONCERNS

303 people responded to the final request for any other comments, questions or concerns. 41% of these comments were branch specific; these have been included in the data for the branches they refer to.

- Many comments included appeals for specific groups to be considered [children, youth, families, older people, people with accessibility requirements, staff, full-time workers etc.].
- Support for the opening hours proposal overall.
- Support of libraries and library services [both Geelong Regional Libraries' services, and library services in general].
- Feedback on the objectives of the proposal, community consultation process and survey design.
- Feedback relating to library services in general [requests for changes/specific resources for the network or a branch etc.]
- Appreciation for the opportunity to provide feedback.

FINAL OPENING HOURS

Below are the final opening hours for the 13 libraries included in the opening hours project, accompanied by an explanation of how community input shaped the final opening hours. These opening hours will come into effect from **Monday 6 July**.

BANNOCKBURN LIBRARY

No changes were proposed for Bannockburn Library; however opening hours are scheduled for review as a part of future stages of the Bannockburn Heart project.

BARWON HEADS LIBRARY

Please note: Barwon Heads Library will continue temporary opening hours until 26 June 2020. Opening hours during and after school holidays will be communicated when further advice is received from the school. See our [Coronavirus page](#) for more information.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
CLOSED	2pm-6pm	2pm-6pm	CLOSED	9am-1pm	9am-1pm	CLOSED

What we heard & what we did

Barwon Heads Library will be open an additional three hours per week as the community feedback indicated this was a priority. Community feedback also resulted in an extra hour on Saturday as many survey respondents noted they have sporting commitments on Saturday mornings.

BELMONT LIBRARY

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9am-6pm	9am-8pm	9am-6pm	9am-8pm	9am-6pm	9am-5pm	CLOSED

What we heard & what we did

Community feedback consistently requested more late evening openings; in response to this, an additional late evening opening per week has been reinstated. The community has access to Waurnd Ponds Library (3.3km from Belmont Library) and the Geelong Library & Heritage Centre (3.6km from Belmont Library), both of which are open between 6-8pm on other evenings.

CHILWELL LIBRARY

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
10am-5pm	10am-5pm	CLOSED	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	9.30am-12pm	CLOSED

What we heard & what we did

There was significant dissent and disagreement from the Chilwell community about the proposed changes. Survey data indicated the main issue was early closing on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday (as respondents stated they would like the library open after school). The majority indicated support for no change to the current hours. As a result of this feedback, Chilwell Library's opening hours will remain unchanged.

CORIO LIBRARY

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9am-8pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-8pm	9am-6pm	9am-5pm	2pm-5pm

What we heard & what we did

The Corio Library opening hours proposal has been adopted without changes, as 91% of survey respondents were supportive of the proposed changes in opening hours at Corio.

Corio Library is the only library in a community experiencing high levels of disadvantage and the proposed changes are in accord with equity and access principles and expand opportunities for library use within the community and for local organisations. The final opening hours also provides important access to library resources on Sunday afternoon in the northern part of Geelong.

DRYSDALE LIBRARY

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-2pm	CLOSED

What we heard & what we did

There was significant community comment and concern about the proposed midday closing on a Saturdays; in response to this feedback, this has been extended to 2pm. Appreciation was expressed for the later closing time of 6pm on four evenings per week compared to the previous closing time of 5pm. Drysdale Library opening hours will be further reviewed as part of the new Drysdale Library development.

GEELONG LIBRARY & HERITAGE CENTRE

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9am-8pm	9am-8pm	9am-8pm	9am-8pm	9am-8pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm

What we heard & what we did

The Geelong Library & Heritage Centre opening hours proposal has been adopted without changes. While there was some feedback opposing the change to opening at 9am on weekdays, this feedback was not in majority [76% of survey respondents indicated they support the change] and visitation between 8-9am is not sufficient to remain open.

The Geelong Library & Heritage Centre has the highest number of weekly opening hours of all libraries in the network and is open seven days per week.

GEELONG WEST LIBRARY

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-2pm	CLOSED

What we heard & what we did

Community feedback around the opening hours proposal for Geelong West Library included two strong themes: keep a late evening opening and remain open Saturday afternoons. Due to this feedback, we have extended hours on Saturday from the proposal (closing at midday on a Saturday), to 2pm.

Feedback regarding late evening opening was unable to be implemented due to demonstrated low rates of visitation on weekday late evenings (6-8pm).

HIGHTON LIBRARY

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9am-1pm	1pm- 6pm	9am-1pm	1pm-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-12pm	CLOSED

What we heard & what we did

Community feedback included concern about the two days where the library closed at 1pm being at the beginning of the week, meaning those working full time would not be able to access the library until the Wednesday – in response to this, we have rearranged them. Otherwise the hours remain as per the opening hours proposal.

LARA LIBRARY

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-1pm	CLOSED

What we heard & what we did

The most significant change proposed for Lara Library was earlier opening (9am) six days per week, which comments and survey feedback suggest is supported by the community. Community feedback indicated a lack of support for the slightly earlier (midday) close on Saturdays; in response to this feedback, the 1pm closing has been retained.

Lara survey respondents indicated they would like to retain one late evening opening (8pm), however this request has been unable to be facilitated due to data demonstrating low community visitation rates to the library between 6pm and 8pm.

LEOPOLD LIBRARY

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-8pm	9am-6pm	9am-1pm	CLOSED

What we heard & what we did

Leopold survey respondents were very supportive of the proposed changes, and although an extension of Saturday afternoon service was supported, the appeal from neighbouring communities to retain some of their local libraries' Saturday hours was significant and consistent. One of the non-negotiable points of the opening hours project was to be 'budget-neutral' (not to result in an increase in operational costs), so one extra hour on Saturdays has been retained for Leopold.

NEWCOMB LIBRARY

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-1pm	CLOSED

What we heard & what we did

The proposed 9am opening was favourably received by people who provided feedback about Newcomb Library, as parents are keen to head to the library straight after school drop off. This request has been incorporated into the final hours.

Newcomb respondents also asked to retain a late evening (until 8pm) opening and additional hours on Saturday afternoons, however these requests were unable to be facilitated due to operating costs; Newcomb Library's hours have increased by 6.5 hours per week, which is the second highest increase within the library network.

OCEAN GROVE LIBRARY

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-2pm	CLOSED

What we heard & what we did

There was significant community feedback about the proposed midday closing on Saturdays; in response to this feedback, this has been extended to 2pm. The Ocean Grove community expressed substantial support for the moving opening forward to 9am, so this has been retained.

WAURN PONDS LIBRARY

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-8pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-5pm	2pm-5pm

What we heard & what we did

While the community has expressed a wish for Waurm Ponds Library to retain three late evening openings, the amount of visits declines significantly between 6-8pm, making this feedback unable to be implemented. Waurm Ponds Library is one of only three in the library network that is open on Sundays.

QUEENSCLIFF, TORQUAY AND WESTERN HEIGHTS COLLEGE LIBRARIES

No changes were proposed for Queenscliff, Torquay or Western Heights College libraries.

Thank you & next steps

New opening hours will commence from Monday 6 July 2020. We would like to thank everyone who took the time to provide their thoughts and feedback as part of our community consultation. It is clear that our communities love, value and enjoy their libraries, and we were delighted to see many positive comments about our services and staff.

If you have any questions, please get in touch by emailing us at info@grlc.vic.gov.au or calling [03] 4201 0600.