



# Deep River Public Library Community Survey Summary Report

June 17, 2022

## Introduction

In August 2021, the Deep River Library launched a community survey, inviting residents to help “write our next chapter” by evaluating current services, identifying community needs, and suggesting future directions. Part A of the survey was aimed at all residents, whether they use the library or not. Part B was a more detailed review of current services aimed at those familiar with the library. 283 or 7% of the population submitted the survey.

The complete survey results can be found via the staff shared drive or upon request.

This report includes feedback given via outreach at farmers' markets in September and October of 2021, online polls, in-library polls, and at outreach events like our August Library Fair, Town of Deep River recreation fair (September, 2021) and Christmas market (December, 2021). Demographic information from these outreach events was not collected.



*Figure 1: Library table at September Farmers' Market*

## Survey Respondents

Of the 283 respondents:

- 90% were Deep River Residents and 8.5% were from neighbouring townships of Laurentian Hills, Head, Clara and Maria, and Rapides des Joachims.
- The majority of survey respondents (75%) have lived in Deep River for more than 10 years.
  - 58% for 10+ years
  - 10% all their lives
  - Of the 7% who indicated “Other” most specified a term of 40+ years.
  - 5.6% of respondents moved within the year and an additional 12.2% have lived here for 1-4 years, suggesting that new residents are keen to engage in community services and provide feedback.
- Further demographics of survey respondents:
  - 75% women
  - 99.5% listed English as preferred language
  - 78.5% have post-secondary or higher education, and 10% have some post-secondary

- 41.6% are over 65 years of age, 38.6% are between 35-64, and 13.7% 19-34
- Figure 2 demonstrates respondent employment status.

What is your employment status?

Answered: 195 Skipped: 88

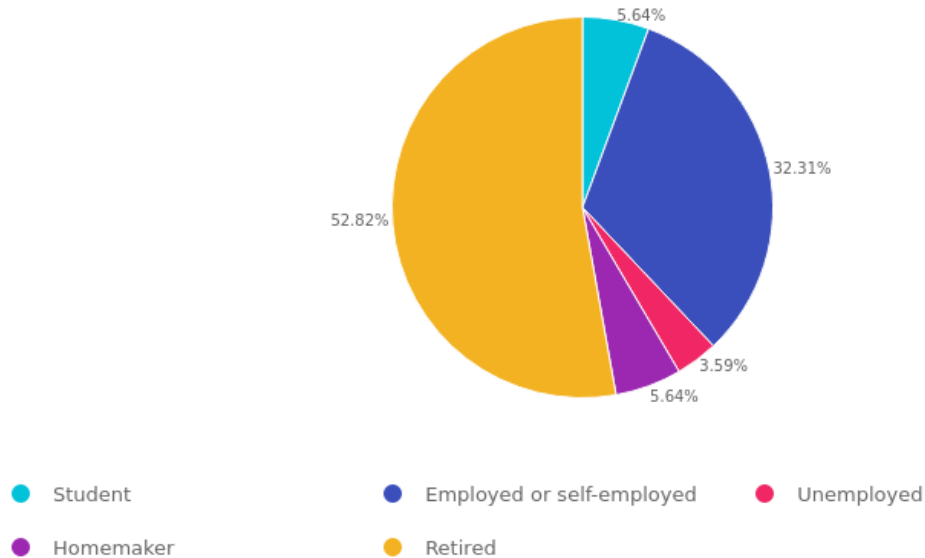


Figure 2: Employment Status

Although pleased with community response, especially during COVID when common outreach methods were less accessible, we are clearly missing the input of large demographic sections of our community and staff need to consciously seek the perspective of others, including: genders other than women, youth, minority language speakers, New Canadians, and those with varying education levels.

This effort is especially important given Deep River's unique demographics, with 18% of residents as first-generation immigrants, high education levels, and relatively high, if increasingly precarious, household income levels. It is important to ensure that we include all experiences in writing our next chapter.

## Library Usage

When asked to complete the sentence "The library is a place for ...", residents listed: happiness, community and connection, learning new things, learning new skills, teens, history of Deep River, Truth and Reconciliation, First Nations (books by Indigenous authors and a gathering place).





The majority of survey respondents were frequent library users. Only 27% rarely or never use the library. Figure 3 below shows frequency of use before COVID.

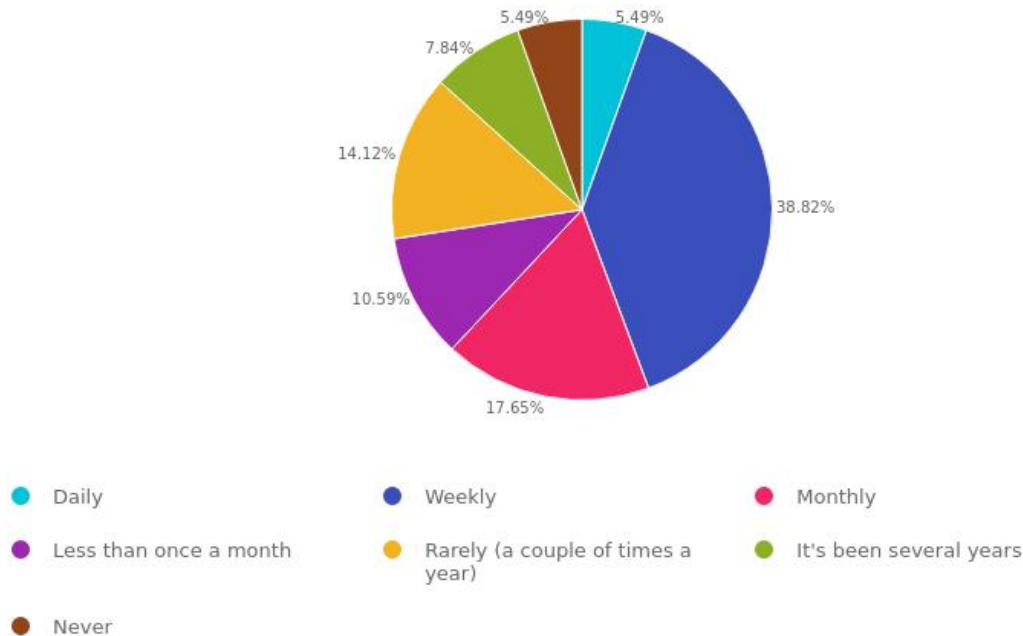


Figure 3: How often respondents used the library before COVID

Active cardholder is a typical library measurement of use, and in 2021 the Deep River Library had 1,477 active accounts, or 36% of the population. This compares well with libraries of similar size but is a significant decrease over time from 2,932 in 2017 (75%). This decrease is indicative of national patterns and may partially be due to COVID. We know that active accounts do not tell our whole story of use, however.

- 11% of survey respondents did not have a library card. Those who explained, noted that they did not need library resources but are supportive of libraries. Cards are not needed to access our space, programs, or technology services.
- Some households share a card. 26% of respondents shared their card, for an average of 2.46 people/shared account and a high of 7/account.

#### Ontario Library Trends:

- Across Ontario there are fewer cardholders (50% of the population in 2002 declining to 33% in 2019), but they are borrowing more materials (19.7 items per active cardholder in 2002 to 26.6 in 2019).
- Total ratio of electronic materials expenditures to total materials expenditures is increasing: 6% in 2000 to 59% in 2018.
- eBook circulations rise from 4% of physical item circulation in 2011 to 23% in 2018
- Typical week visit trends: in-person stable, slight increase from 1,219,653 in 2000 to 1,459,492 in 2018. Electronic visits grow (238,214 in 2000 to 2,159,305 in 2018). Social media visits also grow for a resulting increase in library traffic.



- 39 or 18% of respondents visit neighbouring libraries; the majority (23) had dual membership at Laurentian Hills. For some, other libraries were closer to second homes, others sought variety in selection and availability, and others sought certain programs (like FEN in Point Alexander).

When asked how respondents use the library, the top ten answers were:

1. To borrow materials for pleasure or entertainment (89%)
2. To borrow materials for personal interests (70%)
3. Used book sales (57%)
4. Community space (program room) (33%)
5. To borrow materials for research or lifelong learning (29%)
6. To borrow 'experiences' like museum and Ontario Parks passes (25%)
7. Photocopier (25%)
8. To borrow eResources (24%)
9. Programs for children (23%)
10. Quiet/study space (22%)

"Walking into the library eases my anxiety instantly. I feel safe and calm."

You can see the complete list of possible responses below:



How do you use the library? Check all that apply.

Note: "Materials" refers to books, talking books, DVDs, music, magazines, kits, and games.

Answered: 225 Skipped: 58

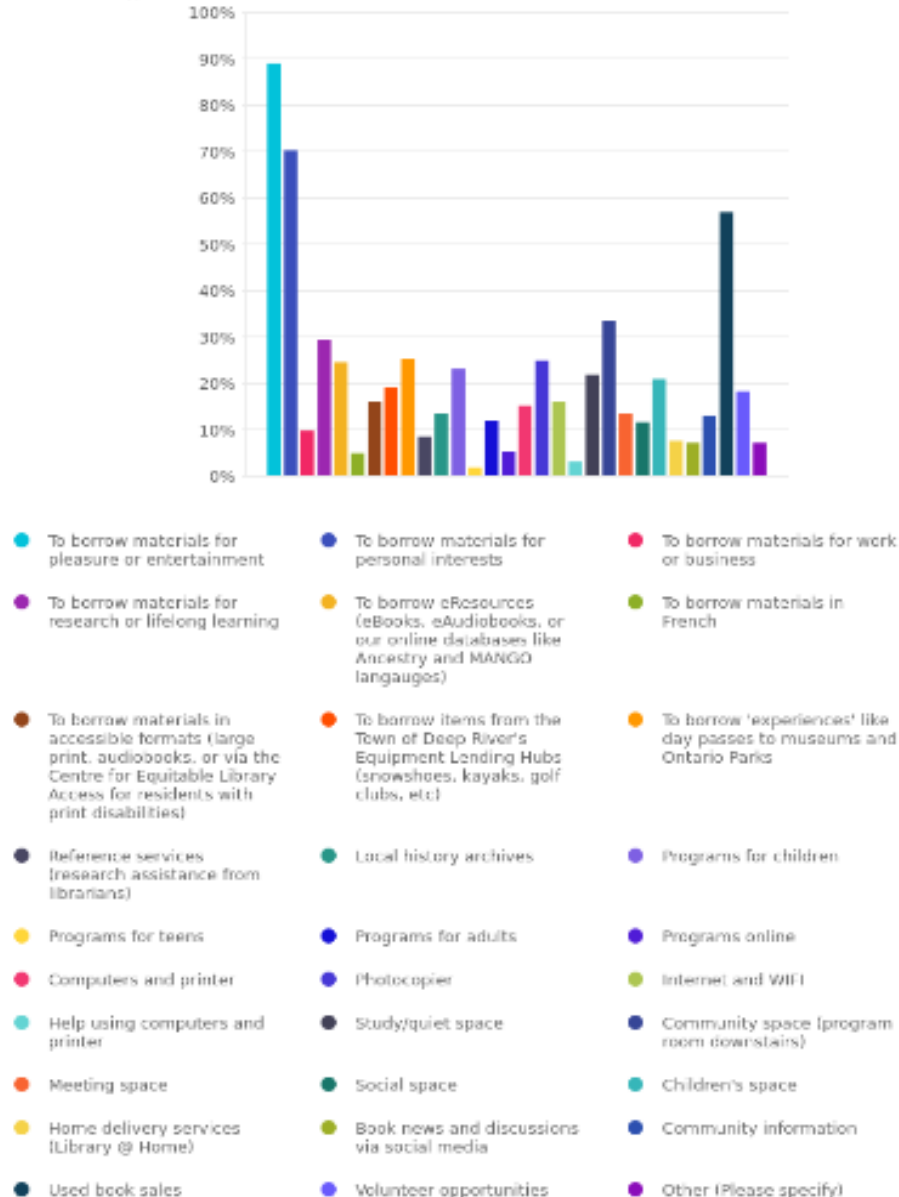


Figure 4: How patrons use the library

When asked why they rarely or never use the library, 91 respondents listed the top 5 reasons as:

1. Lack of personal time (48%)
2. Other (26%)
  - a. Specific explanations included new residency (5), preference for own materials (3), ability/accessibility during COVID (3), and some (6) noted that returns were an issue, concerns over fines, and/or they needed longer than a two-week loan.



- b. A few commented on the life cycle of library usage, for example ““Since Covid, I'm using the library much more. When I taught I used it much more often. When my kids were young we used it more often. So it's a season-of-life situation!”
  - c. “I love the Library and support it any way I can, but I don't actually borrow books (guilty face) because I have a slight book obsession and need to own books.”
  - d. “Hard to get quiet space most times. People speak loudly and socialize. Defeats the purpose of a reading area.”
3. Inconvenient hours (14%)
  4. Unaware of opportunities (14%)
  5. Prefer to use own materials (13%)

“One of the best libraries I've ever had membership in or visited on two continents.”

## General Satisfaction

The following graphs show responses to our questions about satisfaction levels.

Figure 5: Satisfaction level for age group

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with library services for the following **age groups**.

Answered: 153 Skipped: 130



Comments include:

- “As a volunteer I have seen children younger than 5 years come to use the computer, listen to stories and participate in various programs with great enjoyment. I've also seen teens and adults make great use of library facilities with great satisfaction. The library is a gathering place for those that love it.”





- “There are few programs for adults. It was nice to see the book clubs start up, but they were not well advertised.”

Please indicate your level of **satisfaction** with library resources, programs, and services.

Answered: 155 Skipped: 128

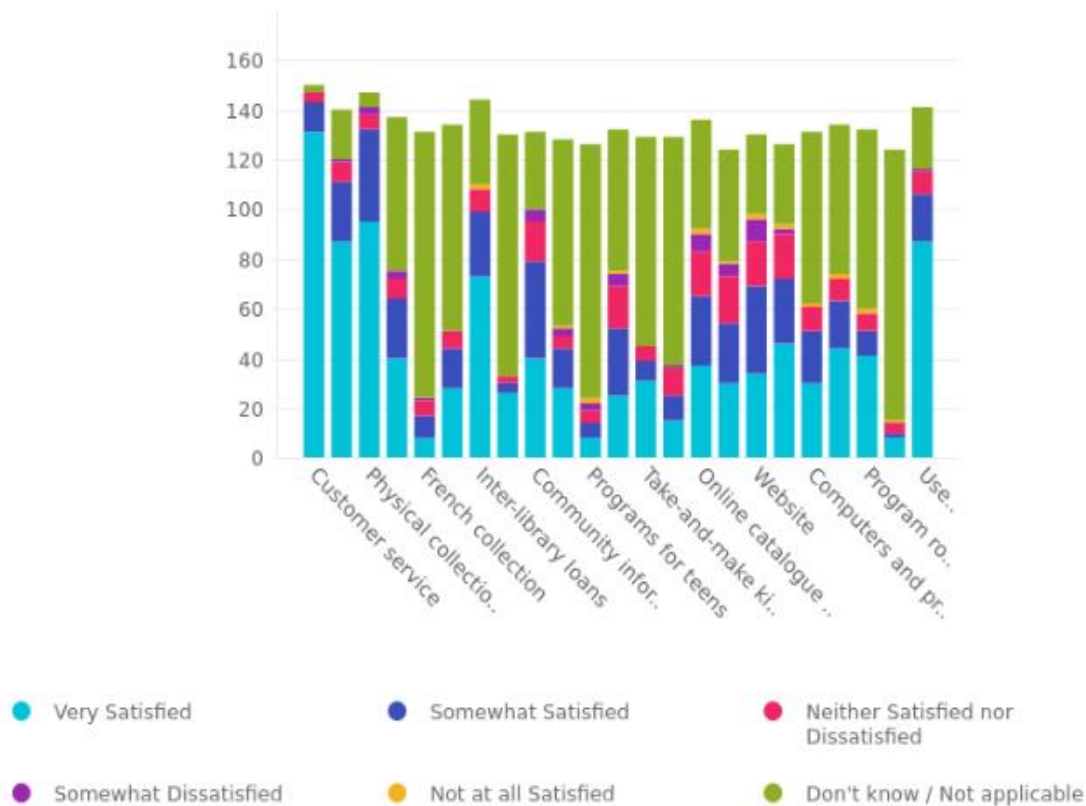


Figure 6: Satisfaction level with specific services

Columns from left to right are: customer service, reference/information services, physical collection, electronic collection, French collection, accessible collection, inter-library loans, home delivery services, community information, programs for children, programs for teens, programs for adults, take-and-make kits, programs online, online catalogue, online library account, website, social media, computers and printer, internet and WIFI, program room rentals, exam proctoring, used book sales.



The following two charts and selected comments suggest that most respondents are satisfied with our physical materials overall, but that there is always work to ensure that our titles are wide-ranging

Do you find the library's lending material to be...?

Answered: 152 Skipped: 131

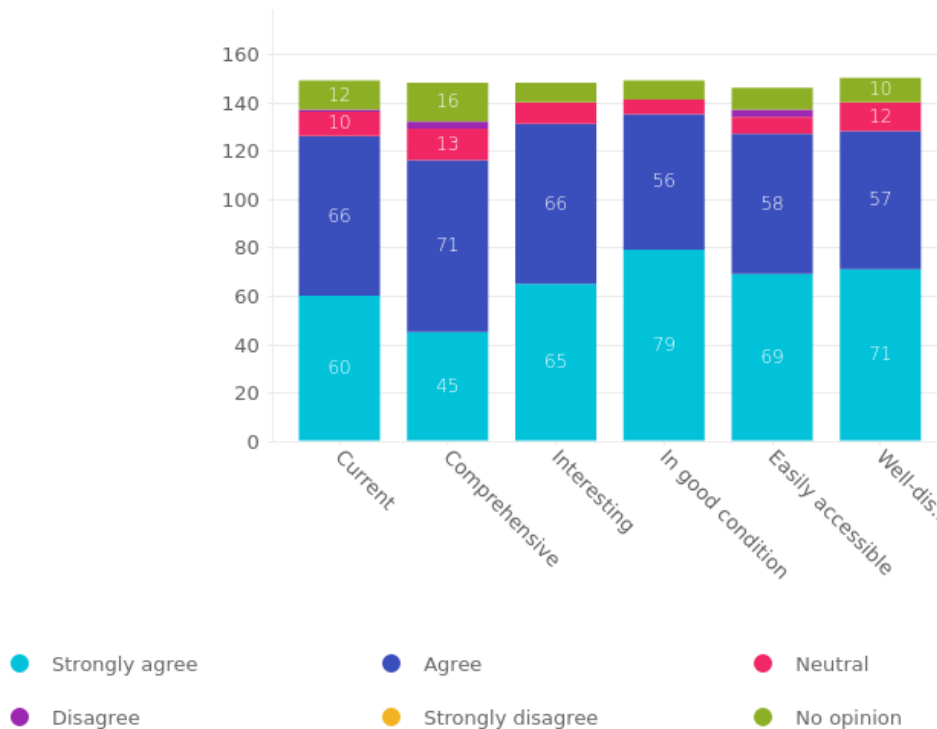


Figure 7: Evaluation of physical collection

and accessible. In addition, marketing is needed to promote use of our electronic resources.

Selected comments:

"Whoever is doing your themed displays like the recent witch one and then the day of the dead, is amazing. It made me laugh and feel like someone there knew just what I was looking for. I love that section."

"I find the new books have less of a range than they used to, especially in non-fiction."

"Those with mobility issues cannot easily access top or bottom shelves for books, DVD's. - There's no solution to this that I can think of."

"I find it frustrating and difficult to access non-fiction materials-books"





How would you rate the library's online collection?

Answered: 143 Skipped: 140

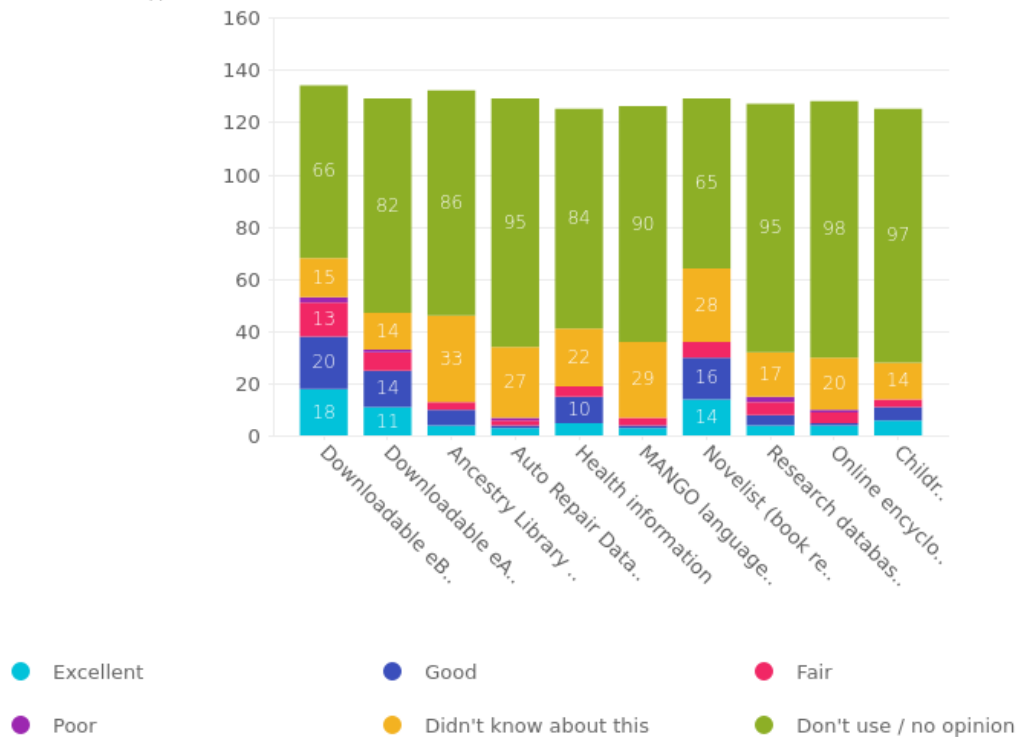


Figure 8: Evaluation of electronic collection

## Value:

We asked respondents to tell us three things that are important to them in a library, and 177 provided responses. Responses fit within the following categories:

1. **The collection** (142)
  - a. Access to new, timely material (33)
  - b. Books (23)
  - c. Variety of materials (18). Some comments were broad in their priorities, such as "wide range of top-quality reading material for all ages" where others were more specific with "novels and short stories in English and French as well as poetry in English and translation."
  - d. Ease of finding/accessing the collection (12)
  - e. Magazines, newspapers and journals (14)
  - f. Audiovisual resources (audiobooks - 9, DVDs - 8)
  - g. eBooks and online resources: "As a person in a wheelchair, getting to the library is not always possible. The E-library is an invaluable service for me"
2. **Space** (62): Some spoke about specific spaces within the library, such as community meeting space (11) or the children's section (7). Others valued a welcoming environment, quiet space, accessible, inclusive, safe and engaging spaces. "I think libraries are evolving



to be community centres and I heartily endorse this plan”, wrote one respondent. Another valued “a place to learn and grow with my children” and yet another expanded on this idea with “I love libraries because they provide a space for community and sharing and generation of knowledge”.

3. **Staff** (26): Friendly, helpful and knowledgeable staff were important qualifiers to many. A few also mentioned the value of volunteering.
4. **Community identity** and community connections (2): “Deep River has a deep history, and the library displays it well.”
5. **Programs** (41): 24 of 41 listed programs for children as important. Apart from new, timely material, children’s programs were the second most stated priority. Additional comments included:
  - a. “Programs to encourage a love of reading/learning.”
  - b. “Programs to get together for both kids and adults.”
  - c. “Programs outside of typical daytime hours.”
6. **Technology** (15), including computer use, photocopier/printing services, internet access.



Figure 9: Word cloud to represent valued services

## Improvements

We asked residents to tell us two ways that we could improve our library to make our services and facility more accessible and 107 people responded. Three major themes emerged:

1. Many comments centered around the **collection**, especially a need for more eBooks to reduce wait times, subscriptions to additional periodicals (business newspapers, academic

journals, new magazines), and longer loan periods. Individual responses were wide-ranging, and staff will look at specific suggestions, such as the addition of Spanish books or religious titles.

2. **Hours of operation** could be expanded, with 30 specific comments in this section and further commentary in our question specific to hours of operation. Most were looking for additional evening and weekend hours. Eleven noted the challenges of closing over supper hours and 10 specifically requested Sunday hours.
3. **Improved marketing or communication** whether via social media, information sessions on our new services, monthly newsletters, or the suggestion to post library Board minutes and policies on our website. Others commented on ways to display titles, and one noted that although impossible, they would like to return to the card catalogue system so that they could know who else took out the book.

Comments about our **space** included:

- "It's hard to reach the top and bottom shelves for people with mobility issues. Some are embarrassed to ask a staff member to fetch and carry for them. Perhaps some sort of signage to let people know that help is available."
- The need to address youth in the front entrance.
- Importance of providing a meeting place for various age groups, and requests for additional comfortable seating.

Comments about programs highlighted interest in increased programming, especially adult programming, as well as a need to continue both online and in-person options.

## Going Forward

**Collections:**

We asked if respondents could borrow anything from their library, what would it be?

Responses included **traditional** collection items, such as Spanish books, classic audiobooks, and maps. They included physical items that some other libraries carry but Deep River does not, such as video games or items that we have since added, like Kanopy for streaming movies and the Great Courses.



There were several requests for our **Library of Things**.

- [illegible]

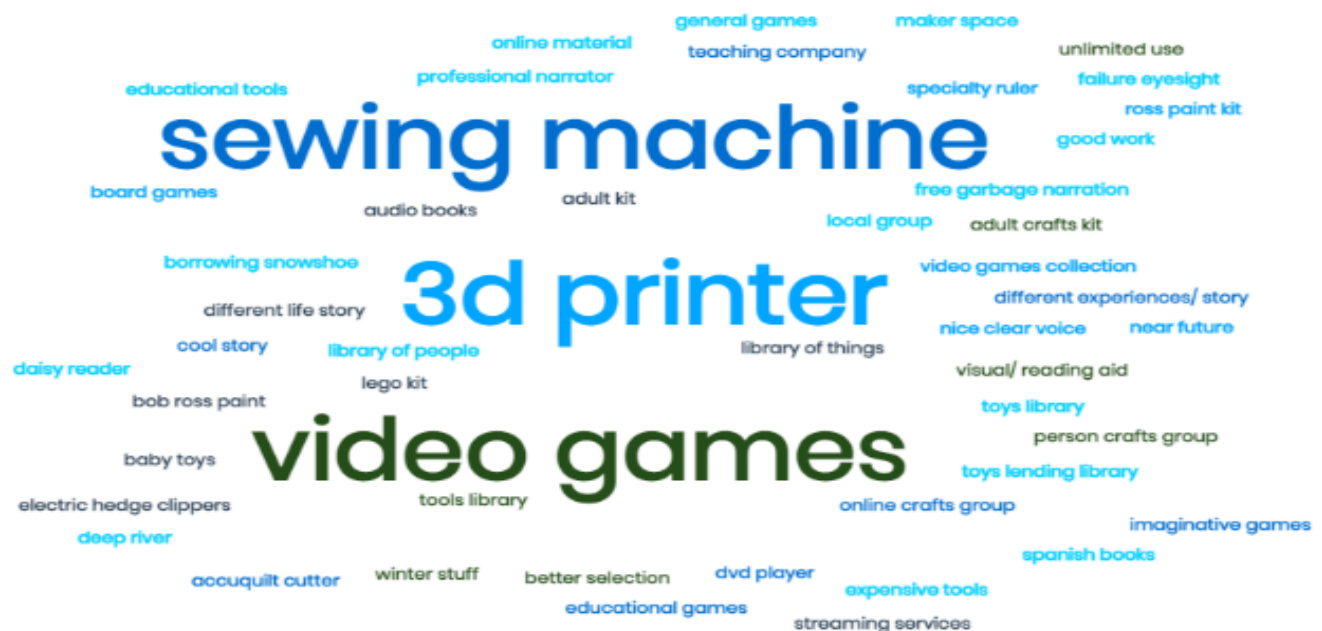


Figure 10: Patrons would like to borrow ...

Many noted specific technologies, which will be discussed in the technology section below.



**In future, we will:**

- Further diversify our collections beyond books to include learning items, items that inspire experimentation, and people.
- Maintain both physical items and online resources.
- Maintain a comprehensive and wide-ranging physical collection for all ages and interests.
- Increase online collections, growing eBook titles and adding new resources like digital newspapers.
- Create tutorials and materials so that patrons can easily find items in our catalogue, on our website, and learn how to use online resources.
- Better market the availability of new items.
- Ensure that collections are accessible, whether physically on our shelves or via discovery tools.

**Global Collection Development Trends**

- The pandemic has accelerated increased digital use. New cardholders are most likely to use digital resources, and older adults and teens show most rapid increase in usage. (27 and 22% increase)
- With digitization, less emphasis on local and more on universal resources. Bringing together smaller collections into wider pools will increase use of unique materials.
- Seamless access expected; this supports footloose users who are less tied to geographic location.
- Increasing requirements for collaboration, system integration, and changes to platform design.
- Diversifying collections to represent our communities; this includes changing subject headings (Library of Congress recently changed “illegal aliens” with “illegal immigration”)
- Access to e-book publishing is still limited. eBooks have limited shelf life and sell above-retail rates. Libraries often pay \$55 for one copy expires after 2 years. Consumer will pay \$15 for perpetual access. Libraries continue to fight, with some legislative support. Amazon announced deal to start licensing Ebooks through the Digital Public Library.
- We want to be mindful, as our commitment to intellectual freedom is limited. Curtailing freedom of speech and association is fine, some say, if done in the service of protecting vulnerable minority groups. Be considerate that everyone on the political spectrum is still served at our libraries.





## Programs:

### Global Trends for Library Skills Development

Library staff must be adaptable and innovative; attuned to pop culture.

- Ability to learn/re-train across all professions will be increasingly important; professional development as a priority.
- Soft skills are increasingly important for staff, i.e. resilience, flexibility, building community confidence, partnership-building, problem-solving, ability to respond positively to unexpected, creativity, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence to support patron wellbeing and help develop meta-literacies needed for info age.
- Need to build a culture of lifelong learners to meet rapid technological /economic changes.
  - New types of jobs.
  - First need basic literacy skills, and core digital skills
  - Sustainability literacy
- Libraries as learning centres; librarians as educators. Need the training and support for this.
- Information literacy valued: long-term response to rise of misinformation. In an “infodemic”, libraries are trusted institutions, but there is declining trust in public institutions.

When discussing what programs respondents would like to see, there was an overlap with technology needs, skills development, and collections. Still, several common examples emerged:

- More adult programs, such as writers’ club or trivia nights
- More kids’ programs or events, such as Lego, board games, anything to connect with other kids
- Children’s programming on weekends so that working parents can attend
- Sunday afternoon readings for families; poetry readings
- French day camp for kids (March break or summertime)
- Programs for teens, such as computer game competitions, teams of Pokemon, geocaching
- Restart coffee/scones mornings
- Book clubs by library staff (online and in-person)
- Knitting club
- Monthly meet and greet for anyone new to town
- Home delivery services

**“I wanna learn everything! Can we try everything?”**

We asked respondents to tell us what skills they would like to learn, topics of interest, and suggested presenters. The answers were wide-ranging and inspiring.

Major areas of interest include:

- Writing (resume writing, poetry, creative) (7)



- Art classes (40), including fibre arts, pottery, watercolour, flower arranging, jewelry making, and more!
- Information presentations, including town history, Indigenous history, tree identification, foraging, geology, virtual vacations, LGBTQ2S, health (dementia, mental health), finance and budgeting, and more.
- Workshops, including outdoor skills, governance practices, parenting, specialty cooking from around the world, home repair, car repair, self-defense, genealogy, and more.

See also the section on technology below.

Staff have begun a writers' group and are planning fall workshops, an authors' series, and Lego and table top gaming gatherings. Staff will review the survey results closely, consider community

#### **Global Trends for Service Provision and Community Spaces:**

- Virtual is here to stay. Remote access will continue to be a preference for some.
  - Digital tools offer new possibilities for more personalized services.
  - Improved access to wider range of content and diverse needs.
  - Virtual could help libraries shift to centres of knowledge creation, rather than just management.
  - Careful of digital divide: both hardware and skills necessary!
  - Increased competition for online services. Librarians will need to pay attention to trends.
  - Privacy issues.
  - Still need brick and mortar.
- Some happy to return to community spaces: need to connect after social isolation of pandemic.
- Trend towards smaller, individual housing ... importance for opportunity to meet others.
- Careful for staff/volunteer health.
- Place of libraries in relation to other community stakeholders, i.e. businesses, active engagement with local issues.
- Physical spaces + technology:
  - Sandpit for experimenting
  - As collections move online, free-up space for other activities
- Keep useful and accessible to all
- Think deeply about effective use of spaces, i.e. beyond space for WIFI and storytimes (still essential) to facilitate positive community outcomes.
- Risk management will be important re climate change, in terms of buildings and health and safety policies





partnerships for facilitation, draft a budget, and connect with suggested presenters.





## Technology:

### Global Technology Trends

- Tech can provide new opportunities for libraries to serve:
  - For people with disabilities
  - To preserve and access to diverse heritage
  - Don't exclude unconnected.
  - Social media = more effective way to reach impatient user
  - Lending hardware, WIFI hotspots
  - Streaming services
- Analogue backlash: rediscovery of physical resources and experiences as antidote/escape. Physical collections still important.
  - Help dealing with speed, shallow interactions.
  - Safe places for mental balance, community spirit.
  - Decline of attention span: lose ability to focus on longer pieces of info, smart phones interrupt important process of being bored (when creative thinking and problem-solving take place)
- Speed:
  - The Impatient User. Young users especially will not tolerate slow, confusing processes. We will need simpler, more unified platforms.
  - Universal access to high-capacity broadband is a basic human right
- Expense: Hardware/services are rapidly outdated. Ongoing costs of licensing fees and updates.
  - Need for staff training.
  - Need to keep accessible for smaller institutions.
  - New drive to work in networks; consortiums.
  - Need to ensure connectivity.
- Rise of open access movement. Libraries will play a role in supporting discoverability, ensuring preservation, providing the skills to navigate open resources, managing data repositories, and advocating to governments and also authors about the importance of free access to information.
- Data literacy is increasingly important; artificial intelligence adds a new dimension.
  - AI = more individualized services, and search transformed, but only as accurate as machine learning design.
  - Respect privacy, risk of bias. New data protection laws are only effective if people apply their rights.
  - Staff skills development needed to support patrons.
- Aging population; increasing need for accessible services and assistive



We asked Deep River residents what digital skills we could help with. Of the 66 who answered, 22 said “none” or “I feel confident in my digital literacy right now, but love to know that you’re there if I need you!”

- Other respondents indicated a vast range of skill levels and interests, from a need for basic computer support to requests for Raspberry Pi programming and digital art.
- As one resident noted, “Technology is ever-changing. I would like to think I could learn to be somewhat updated, but how can this happen with devices offering many different options?”
- Technology lends itself to issues of space usage, (maker space interest, 3D printers, and the comment: “To use online meeting platforms requires a sound absorbing room; can such a place be set up at the library to use?”),
- Technology also requires ongoing staff professional development and an ability to teach to different learning styles.

Some comments on technology:

- “Deep River is a pretty tech savvy town. Resources to help others not so technically inclined may be of use, i.e. basic computer programs (self-directed).”
- “A large portion of our community are from an older generation. Perhaps they would find it useful to be able to come in and be shown how to use the technology that they are having to use in their lives. This would also be a fantastic opportunity for the youth of the town to give back and perhaps earn community service hours.”
- “Maybe having specific banks or financial people come to help people learn the basics of doing online banking? I know for some using things like this seems scary and hard to learn”.
- “Richard Boor, former owner of Ready Set Make did a lot of work with 3D printers. ... a lot of libraries do work with 3D printers and Maker Spaces. Maybe the Library could team up with Richard on this?”
- “I would feel more comfortable using the computers at the library if their memory was wiped at the end of each day. What’s the best practice for ensuring privacy with shared technology?”
- “Could the archives be put online?”
- “There is so much on twitter like police updates and weather updates, but I have no idea how to use it.”



Residents would like to borrow the following technologies:



To implement the services listed above, the library will need:

- Improved internet access. Note: the library will receive Connectivity funds through the Province of Ontario to upgrade our bandwidth.
- Current hardware and software to equip the meeting room for hybrid gatherings (and a projector that doesn't require VGA cables).
- A technology plan to upgrade our current hardware, patron software, and networking.
- Ongoing staff training.

When the library completed Edge Benchmarking Assessments (Appendix A) in the fall of 2021, we were below our peers with similar budgets and serving similar population sizes for benchmarks of: digital skills, economic opportunity, civic engagement, planning, policies, and staff digital expertise.

## Facilities

When asked to evaluate the library building, respondents were positive. Teen areas and group study areas garnered the least opinion.



The graph below lists, left to right: building layout, building accessibility, interior décor, furniture, lighting (interior), lighting (exterior), parking, noise level, areas for quiet study, areas for group study, areas for socializing, computer area, meeting space, presentation space, exhibit space, program and event space, children's space, teen space, adult space, washrooms, front desk, outdoor space, overall atmosphere.

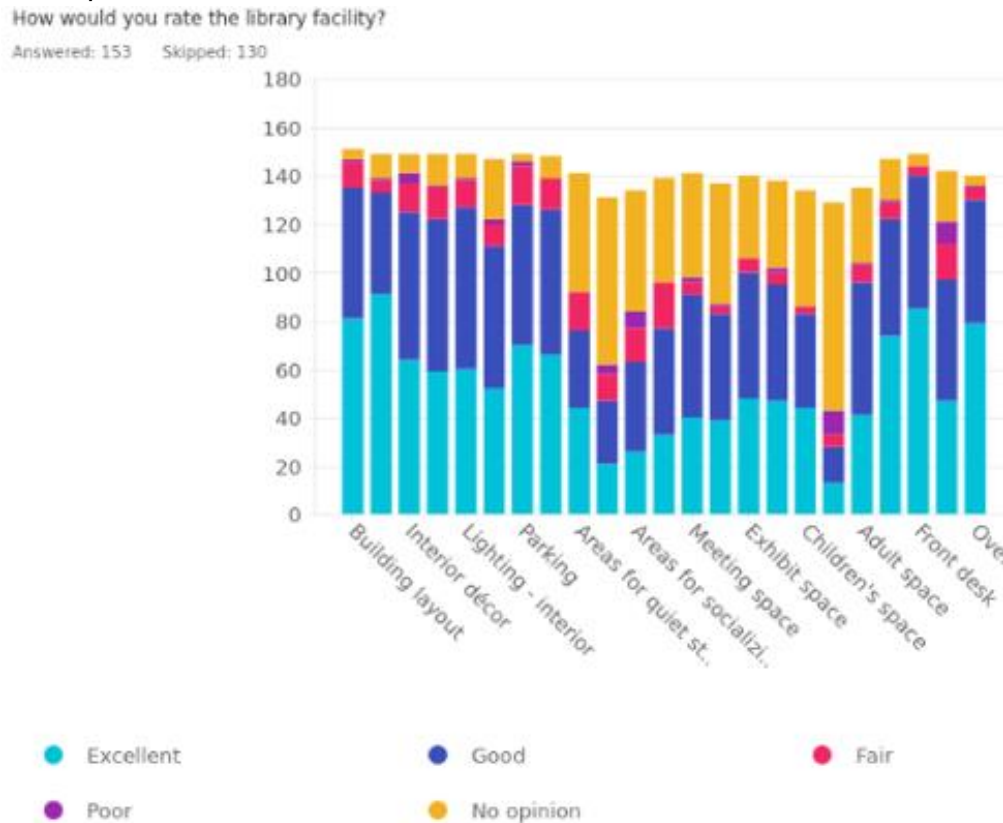


Figure 11: Library facility

Additional comments include:

- "Because the space is so small, voices carry quite prominently. So it's very difficult to have a space for quiet study vs a space for socializing and group collaboration. Because of the size, I also think it is difficult to have a dedicated space for teens. But perhaps the question is not so much age but thinking of how to design the spaces where certain areas are natural for collaboration and others are natural spaces for quiet study. Maybe dividing certain areas using plants and movable screens to create sound buffers?"
- "Perhaps some more lamps for cozy reading would be nice because sometimes the overhead fluorescent lighting can hurt eyes. The computer area is great but I think that sometimes people want more privacy from prying eyes. But perhaps that is just to ensure no one is doing anything unsavory on the computers! Lol. The garden is incredible, I would love an outside area to sit and read. Maybe with a nice, covered tent or gazebo."

Accessibility improvements are in consideration, as per the Town of Deep River's accessibility [plan](#).



## Staff:

Comments about staff were very positive. "We can see an openness for new ideas. Keep it up!"

Do you find library staff to be:

Answered: 156 Skipped: 127

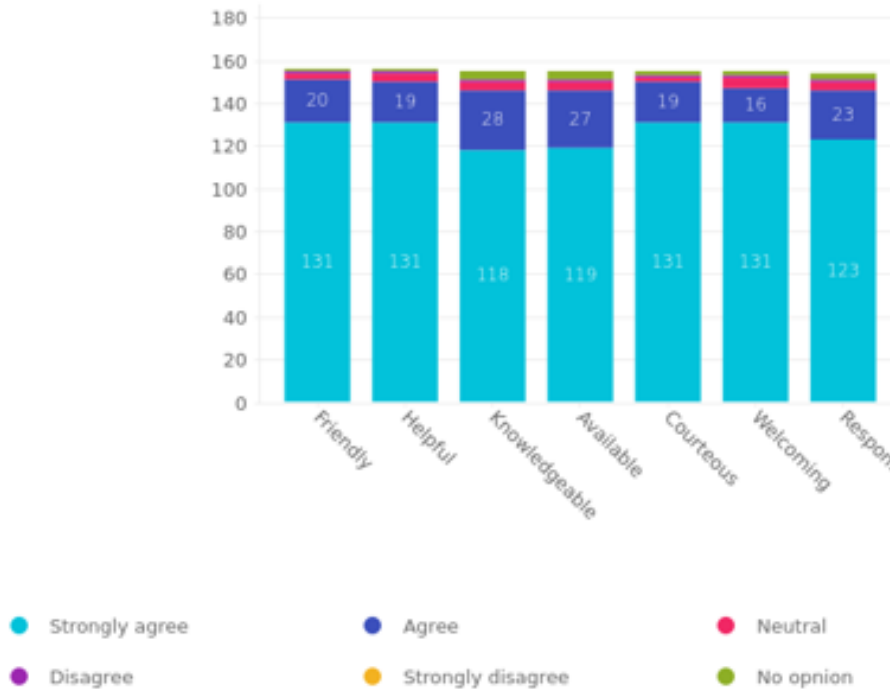


Figure 12: Feedback on staff

## Outreach:

Throughout the survey, the need for improved marketing of library services and resources was identifiable.

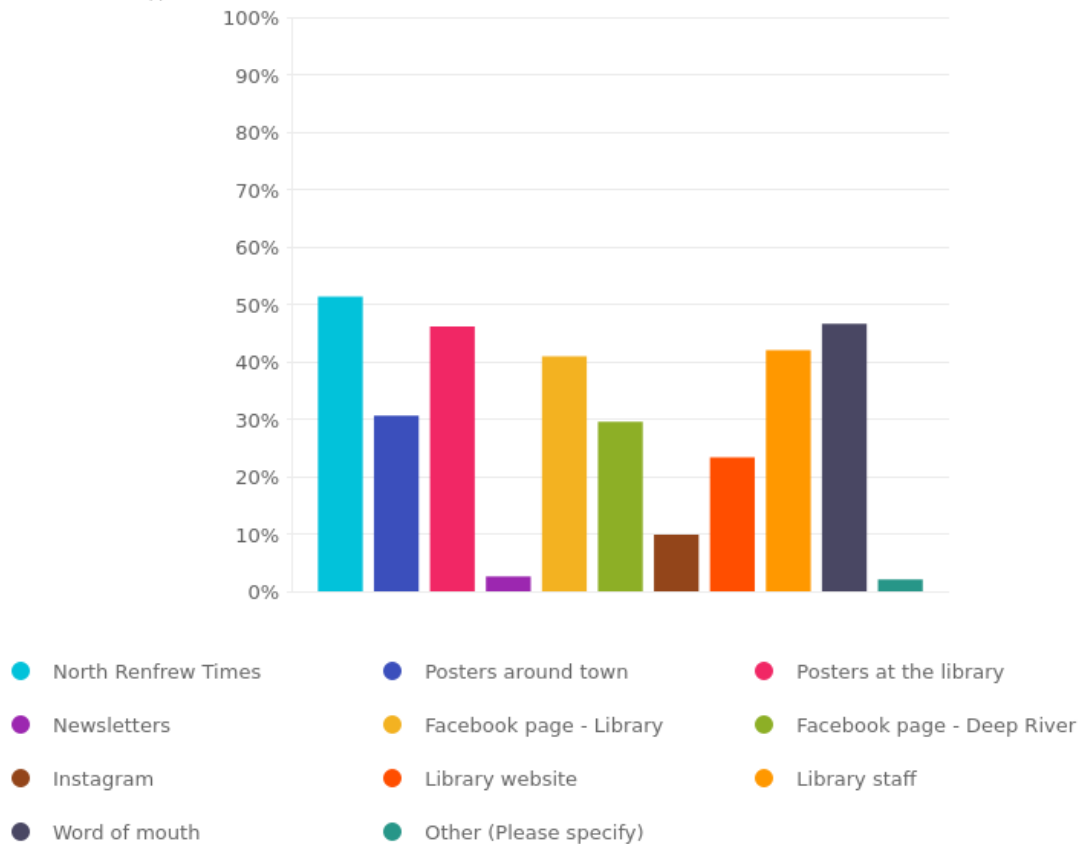
- Less than 50% of respondents knew about borrowing play kits, board games, accessible technology, and seeds.
- More than 90% of respondents knew about borrowing eBooks and DVDs and CDs.
- Interestingly, 76% knew about the Town Hub, perhaps due to joint cross-marketing and high interest?

The following chart illustrates how residents discover library news and events,



How do you typically find out about library services? Check all that apply.

Answered: 193 Skipped: 90



Most respondents use our website for access to the catalogue and their account, rather than for program and service information. The website has been upgraded, and we plan to launch July, 2022.

When asked if there was a better way to reach respondents, 20/49 who answered said email. The library may want to investigate newsletters and email distribution.

## Conclusion:

In their strategic plan, the Town of Deep River identified the following outcomes:

1. Engaged population, enjoying diverse opportunities
2. Vibrant commercial, business and tourism sectors
3. Quality, reliable & sustainable infrastructure
4. Strong collaboration between community, businesses & neighbours
5. Transparent, fair & effective governance





## 6. Increased population

In their survey of residents on recreational usage and future needs, the Town noted a need for future expansion and further investment to maintain, renovate or redevelop current Town facilities. The Town will develop a Recreation and Culture Plan, broadening its scope to include recreation and culture within the community. Their survey noted:

- Need for more teen recreational opportunities
- Residents are active:
  - More than 90% walk, hike, or go to the beach
  - More than 86% enjoy parks and open spaces
  - More than 76% canoe/kayak/sail
  - 54% cross country ski, 39% downhill ski
- 30% said no barriers to participate in activities, 36% lack of desired facilities or programs
- Very high levels of satisfaction with facilities; facilities important.
- Generally satisfied per age group. Less so for teens (13-18) at 37%
- Top 3 to invest in: splash pad, sidewalks/roads, open spaces. Library as 7th on list.
- Suggested improvements include: better use of existing areas (i.e. library basement), timing of children's programs to accommodate parent's working hours, importance of working with community organizations, accessibility.

Library survey respondents put forth ideas for ways that the library can support an engaged population, vibrant business and tourism sectors, and strong collaboration between stakeholders.

Although an ongoing feedback cycle is essential, and the library must develop methods to engage input from non-library users, the survey and outreach can suggest our starting directions. The needs and interests of our community are diverse and evolving, as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic. We will look to consider global trends for our local population, and create opportunities to listen.

Please peruse Appendix B to hear the last words from our survey respondents. We appreciate each one.



### **Library Services in Global Social Context:**

- Increased awareness of impact of discrimination = reform of collections, services, and practices.
- Truth and Reconciliation for Indigenous Canada:
  - Encourage implementation of the calls to Action, several which have impact on libraries and archives.
  - Make sure programs and materials are accessible to all Canadians
  - Decolonize access and classifications. Commit to integrate Indigenous epistemologies in cataloging praxis and knowledge management.
  - First Steps:
    - Educate ourselves. Learn about our community and its history.
    - Establish a partnership with local First Nations. Make connections and build a network.
    - Connect with local First Nation Public Library.
    - Be an ally. See print out for points.
    - Land acknowledgements.
    - Collection Development: weed, consider subject headings
- Inequalities deepen:
  - Pandemic highlighted digital divide, economic impact for jobs.
  - Increasing cost of living.
  - Where inequalities reduce access to health, education and other forms of social participation, represent attack on fundamental rights
  - Inequalities between libraries. Need core service levels across Canada.
  - Disappearing middle class. Pew demonstrated in 2015 that middle class are no longer the majority and between 1970 and 2014, aggregate income going to upper class households increased from 29-49%.
- Increased polarization of society:
  - Dismissive of views of people we disagree with, rather than seek to engage and understand.
  - Declining trust in professions like journalists, researchers, doctors.
  - Weakened sense of shared community, which libraries built upon
  - Risk of increasing populism
  - Libraries as antidote to polarization ... Klineberg "Building places where all kinds of people can gather is the best way to repair the fractured societies we live in today" (Klinenberg 2018, 11)
- Unprecedented uptick in book challenges; library professionals losing their jobs to protect fundamental right. 2021 had 729 challenges via ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom to 1597 books.
- Decline in reading. Readers play a more active and involved role in their communities. Decline in reading parallels retreat from civic and cultural life.
- Climate change:
  - Promote empowerment and behaviour change
  - Need to support reskilling for green industries



## Appendices as attachments:

- A. Edge Benchmark Comparison Reports
- B. Respondents' last words
- C. PEST Analysis
- D. Board Evaluation

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