A Mobile Outreach Library for a post COVID-19 Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland: Full report

COMMUNITY THINK

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

HIBISCUS & BAYS

RODNEY

UPPER HARBOUR

DEVONPORT & TAKAPUNA

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WAIHEKE

HENDERSON-MASSEY

WAITEMATĀ

DRŌKEI

ALBERT-EDEN

WAITĀKERE RANGES

WHAU

PUKETAPAPA

MAUNGAKIEKIE-TĀMAKI

HOWICK

ŌTARA-PAPATOETOE

MĀNGERE-ŌTAHUHU

MANU

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PAPATOETOE
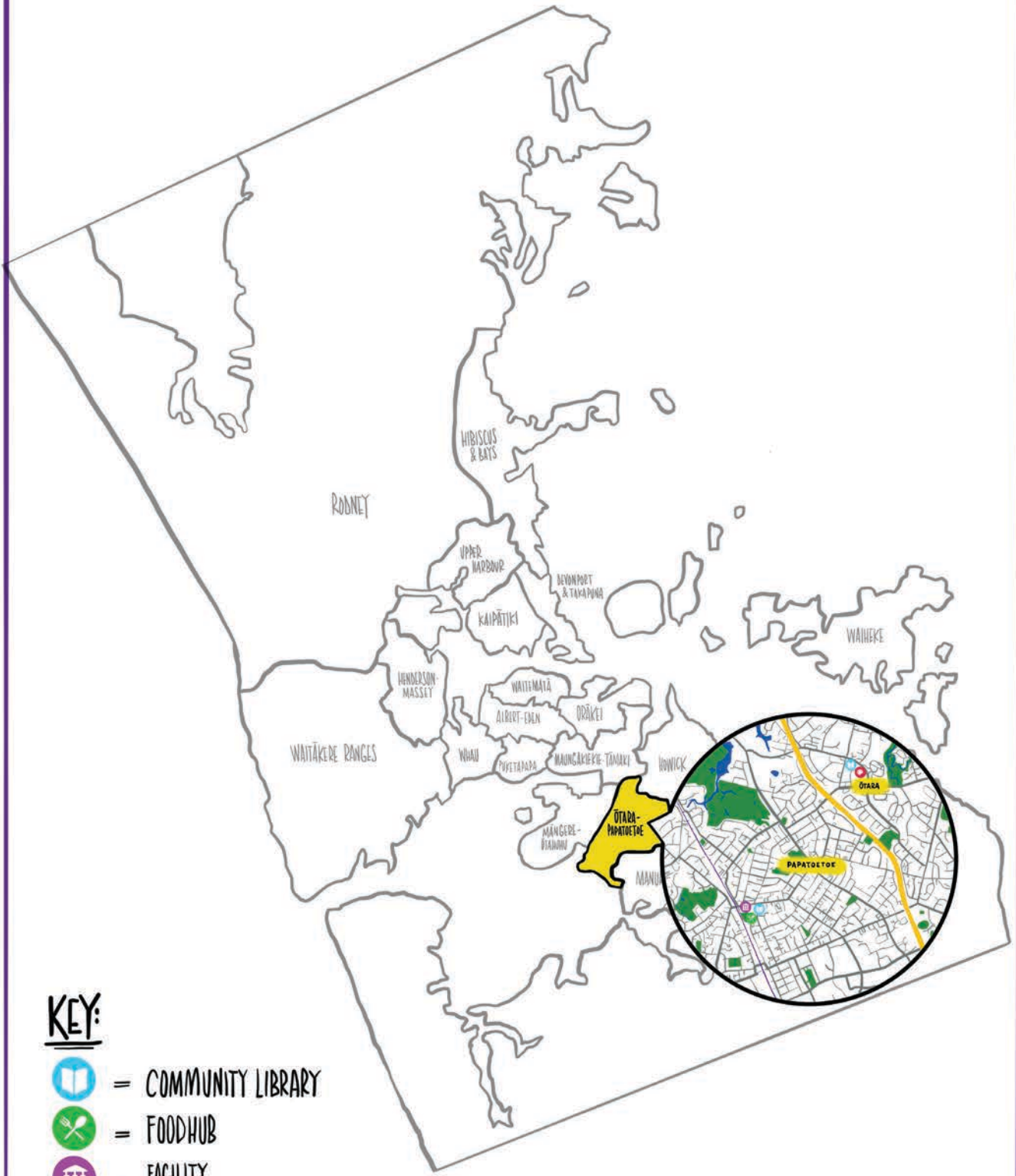
KEY:

🔵 = COMMUNITY LIBRARY

🟢 = FOODHUB

🟣 = FACILITY

🔴 = COMMUNITY-LED INITIATIVE

🔴 = ARTS + CULTURE

COMMUNITY THINK

Contents

Background

Community Think was asked to review the Mobile Library and Access Service (MAS). This review was particularly focussed on addressing the future of these services in response to the impacts and experiences of COVID-19 to help communities to recover.

This review comes at a time of many other shifts within Auckland Council including MAS moving into the Community Impact team, and the creation of a Connected Communities Department. These changes bring with them a mixture of regional and local, strategic and practical work. The review is therefore wide reaching to capture what is happening beyond the day-to-day work and how this might fit into Auckland Council's wider goals. It is focused on the function of the mobile outreach library but develops a framework to assess and filter these functions looking at current form and possible future form.

Outreach librarians internationally and locally provide library services to communities who are unable to visit traditional libraries because of access, income, racial, gender, and geographical barriers. They are navigating a context with rapid technological and social shifts where people are engaging in libraries in new ways beyond books – online work, meetings, playgroups, research, upskilling, referral and social connection. This shifting context requires outreach librarians to adapt their skills and programmes to ensure they are responding to the changing needs of communities.

The Mobile Library and Access Services have a vision to increase lifelong learning and a love of reading. The current services they provide includes:

- **A homebound service which provides library services to those who are at risk because of medical conditions, compromised immunity, people in aged care, etc.**

- **Support to the 11 rural libraries and their volunteers.**

- **Reading programmes and engagement with schools, Kura Kaupapa, Early Childhood Centres (ECE) and Kohanga Reo.**

- **North, and South and East mobile library buses and vans that provide books and audiobooks through timetabled stops.**

- **Pop-up libraries at parks, beaches and local and regional events around Tāmaki Makaurau.**

The ongoing impacts and experiences of COVID-19 continue to shape the lives of people in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. As this review is written up we are experiencing another lockdown. The inequalities that were present before the virus have worsened for many people; and for others it has created new pathways and opportunities to rethink the status quo. In any respect, it has shifted our social relations. Public services, such as Libraries, have a role in responding to this context through building future-proof systems that will address already existing inequalities, and create modern fit-for-purpose resources and services that people need and want.

This Mobile Library and Access Service review is informed by the wants and needs of Aucklanders in the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, as well as staff's aspirations for the future of the service, and best practice from across Aotearoa and Internationally.

How to use
this document

This document should be used to **spark creativity, provoke conversation and expand collective thinking** about what a mobile outreach library can be. It is intended to be a living document to be put into action so it is not another review that collects dust. It should be picked up and used with purpose and commitment.

While this document is aspirational, and staff have mentioned that there is no additional funding attached to this review process, and there are capacity issues, this report could be used to advocate for increased funding or redistribution of resources from other places within Auckland Council. Alongside the aspirational elements to this review, there are also practical steps that can be taken now, next and in the future with a visual road map to help people picture what this could look like.

There are different ways of reading this report. Read the summary document or the visual Road Map if you want a quick overview of the outcomes of this review. Check out the **Appendix** if you want details on the discovery and meaning making process that led to this report.

The Journey

Community Think has a praxis[1] (theory of change) which ensures that the outcomes of any project are rooted in the unique knowledge, analysis and aspirations of the community or organisation they are working alongside.

For this project, the journey involved **discovery, meaning making and testing**. These different stages engaged the voices of frontline staff who do the day-to-day work, their wider Libraries and Auckland Council networks and the communities they serve. See Appendix 1 for a detailed description of this journey and key insights from each part.

Discovery

This involved gathering information to understand how the Mobile and Access Services work currently and aspirations people had for it's future.

- Local and international best practice literature review
- Ride alongs with staff on the vans and buses
- Mobile Library and Access Service workshop
- Staff survey
- Auckland Voices: survey and face-to-face discussions with Aucklanders

Meaning making

This involved feeding some of the raw data and the lived experiences back to the MAS team, the Thinking Group and Connected Communities to make meaning of what was heard and seen during the discovery stage.

Testing

This stage involved testing some of the ideas with those that have been involved to see how they land with the conditions of success.

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1) *Praxis, according to Paulo Friere in Pedagogy of the Oppressed, encompasses reflection and action in order to transform systems and structures.*

A Framework For Current and Future Work Programmes

The Framework: The 4 C's

The current work being done by the Mobile Library and Access Service is expansive. The 4 C's Framework provides a way of assessing and filtering current and future work programmes to prioritise resources where it will make the most impact.

Criteria
The way we assess our current and future work programmes to figure out the most equitable way of doing things that reduces inequalities and structural barriers to participation.

Community connection
To build relationships with people in local communities to know what matters, to find out what is already happening that could have value added, and to create spaces for people to connect to each other.

Collaboration:
Working with community organisations, community libraries, hubs and wider Auckland Council to add value to what is already happening and to seek opportunities for innovation and new ideas.

Customisation:
Shifting the current work programmes and infrastructure to better respond to local communities needs and wants.

Criteria

Community connection

Collaboration

Customisation

Applying the 4 C's

This section applies the 4 C's to the current and future work programme to provide some practical ways of thinking about criteria, community connection, collaboration and customisation. The recommendations, comments and new ideas in this report are here to help the reader think through how best to use the current resources that are available to reduce inequalities and barriers to access, and to lift the imagination of what could be possible in the future.

This is not about stopping the current programmes or devaluing any of the work that is being done by the MAS team. It was clear from the time spent with the team that the work is appreciated and valued by the communities they interact with it. This is about providing some tools for change, but it is up to Council to decide how these tools are used.

Current work programme

The 4 C's can be seen as a tool to assess and filter the current work programme to see if it is reaching communities experiencing inequalities and barriers to participation in an effective way. Below are some questions you could ask yourself when filtering the current work programmes through the waterfall, thinking about **criteria, community connection, collaboration and customisation,** and in particular prioritising resources to reduce inequalities.

Waka to Schools and Early Childhood Centre

- Are there barriers for whānau in accessing their community library? (thinking about economic barriers such as income and social barriers such as whakamā around literacy).

- Are there ways to include the wider whānau of children and young people? If so, are there ways other than school visits to make this happen? (e.g. community library open days; parking outside of other community venues).

- Are there ways of collaborating with National Libraries to provide a mobile school service?

- Is the ECE commercially driven or in a higher income area? Does the ECE have the resources to take the service to the local community library? Could community libraries provide books on long term loans?

- Are there spaces other than schools where parents and children gather (particularly those experiencing barriers to participation – sole parents, shift workers etc).

- If there are only a small percentage of ECE and schools being supported, is the current programme the best way to equitably support these communities?

Possible actions:

- Transition away from commercial ECE and focus on those who do not have a lot of resources. As part of this transition, engage in some collaborative work to ensure that young people are accessing their community library.

- Focus on services and schools in underserved communities which are poorly resourced and geographically isolated. Come up with innovative ways to do this where schools are unable to facilitate these visits.

- Work in collaboration with ECE, kohanga and kura to find ways to engage with the wider families in a place-based way.

Aged care / Homebound

- If we think about communities experiencing inequity and barriers to participation, would this change which aged care facilities are chosen?

- Does the aged care facility have its own stock of resources in a library at the facility? Are there ways of collaborating with the aged care facilities to set up an on-site library or provide bulk loans?

- Is the aged care facility commercial? If so, does the aged care facility have the resources to bring people to the community library? Are those currently living in aged care still able to access community libraries independently? (either through public transport or their own personal transportation).

- Does relationship building and community connection happen with the drop off services? If not, is there a way of collaborating with the community library and other organisations to make this happen? Are there creative ways to support social connections between people during the outreach library stops?

- Is there a more effective way of doing drop off and pick ups that do not take away staff time from other activities? (ie. courier service where volunteers do not have the capacity).

Possible actions:

- Build partnerships with community libraries. In some places this could look like strengthening existing volunteer programmes to support these communities and provide social connection.

- Transition away from aged care facilities which are commercially driven and instead support these groups through bulk loans or semi annual visits. Transition to a place-based aged care and homebound strategy with staff connected to local areas.

- In aged care and pensioner housing which supports low income residents, work in partnership with wider Auckland Council to remove barriers of access to community libraries. This could also involve collaborating with community libraries and hubs to create innovative ways to facilitate social connection or bring digital services to these residents.

- Get a courier service to do some of the drop off and pick ups instead of librarians.

Rural libraries

- Is there a community library nearby that could better support the rural library than Mobile Library and Access Services (MAS)?

- Could the mobile outreach service connect with other parts of the community on days when the rural library is open?

- Could rural librarians facilitate connections between the rural library and the nearest community library or hub?

Possible actions:

- Build a sister relationship between rural libraries and their closest community library or hub so that they can work collaboratively.

- Redirect MAS resources to areas which are under-resourced, geographically isolated and do not have access to any library services nearby.

Timetabled stops

- What is the criteria for where MAS stop? If we apply a criteria for communities experiencing inequity and barriers to participation, are we reaching them? And would this change where the stops are?

- Are these timetabled stops within a reasonable distance to the community library?

Possible actions:

- Transition from timetabled stops to having a locally based MAS service in particular geographical areas that build relationships with the local community and collaborate with local groups and organisations to prioritise resources where it will make the most impact.

Example from the current work programme that reduces inequalities and breaks down barriers to participation:

The prison visits where parents are recorded reading stories to their children is a great example of the mobile library services working with a community experiencing inequality and barriers to participation. Incarcerated people are often experiencing intersectional forms of oppression and are excluded from accessing traditional libraries. While there were challenges in making this programme happen, something like this could be expanded through further collaboration with local community organisations who are already working with parents in prison or through refocusing resources from elsewhere into this work.

Future work programme

Criteria

It is clear that there needs to be a set of criteria used to assess and filter the current and future work of the Mobile Library and Access Service. One of the most important criteria is equity to ensure that the work that is being done is reducing inequalities and barriers to participation. Here, Community Think has identified two different frameworks for thinking about criteria for future work programmes: **Auckland Voices** and **Communities of the Greatest Need Practice Note**.

Auckland Voices

It is important that any criteria developed for future work programmes includes the experiences and needs of Aucklanders. In the discovery and meaning making stages, Community Think spoke with Aucklanders about their needs and wants in the context of COVID-19. The themes that emerged from these conversations were:

- Increased mental stress and health anxiety: people feel that their mental health has been impacted by COVID-19 and others have had increased health anxiety about going to public spaces leading to isolation.

- Amplified poverty: people are struggling to afford their essential needs such as food and rent which have become more expensive.

- Changing work and study conditions (including technology): people have experienced an increase in the use of technology, and remote work and learning. Others have felt the impacts of a digital divide, and the way that not having access to technology has impacted their ability to participate.

- Personal transformation: for some people COVID-19 led to epiphanies about their lives; thinking about who they are and what they really want.

- Local community connection: people are yearning for more connection to their neighbours and community because of being isolated during lockdowns. People expressed wanting more local events where people do not have to travel far to access social connections.

- Increased marginalisation: some communities have experienced increased racism as a result of COVID-19. It is clear that our institutions, including the media, have contributed to this. South Auckland, and in particular Pacific communities, have been targeted, as well as Asian communities.

See **Appendix 2** for a visual representation of Auckland Voices.

Developing a criteria based on the themes that emerged from Auckland Voices could lead to:

- Working with a local community hall or another Auckland Council venue to provide WIFI and printing in spaces other than the library for people to work and study.

- Provide digital, WIFI and printing services through the mobile outreach service. Working with beneficiary advocacy groups to provide printing and WIFI services so people can access their entitlements such as food grants from Work and Income.

- Have a van go directly to local neighbourhoods customised for a regional event in order to provide social connection and experiences to those who cannot attend larger events because of health anxiety or access issues.

- Provide resources and information for marginalised communities to have their voices heard. This could include providing tools for creating alternative media or spaces for community groups to come together to talk about issues that matter to them the most.

Communities of the greatest need: A practical application

The Communities of the Greatest Need Practice Note provides a set of questions (see Appendix 3) to think about equity in relation to the work programmes of Auckland Council. This can be used to help figure out whether a programme or service is reaching those in the most need with a focus on equity.

Auckland Council defines communities of the greatest need as:

> **"Communities who have limited capability to access social and economic resources and opportunities compared to the general population. This restricts their ability to fully participate in society and in activities that have meaning and value to them."[2]**

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2) 'Communities of Greatest Need Practice Note', p. 6

Libraries are important as they provide a service to everyone no matter who they are. While people have equal access to the library, we live in a world where there are barriers that prevent people from accessing these equally.

"Equity is like a liquid. You could pour it onto a map, but because the ground is uneven, some areas need more liquid."
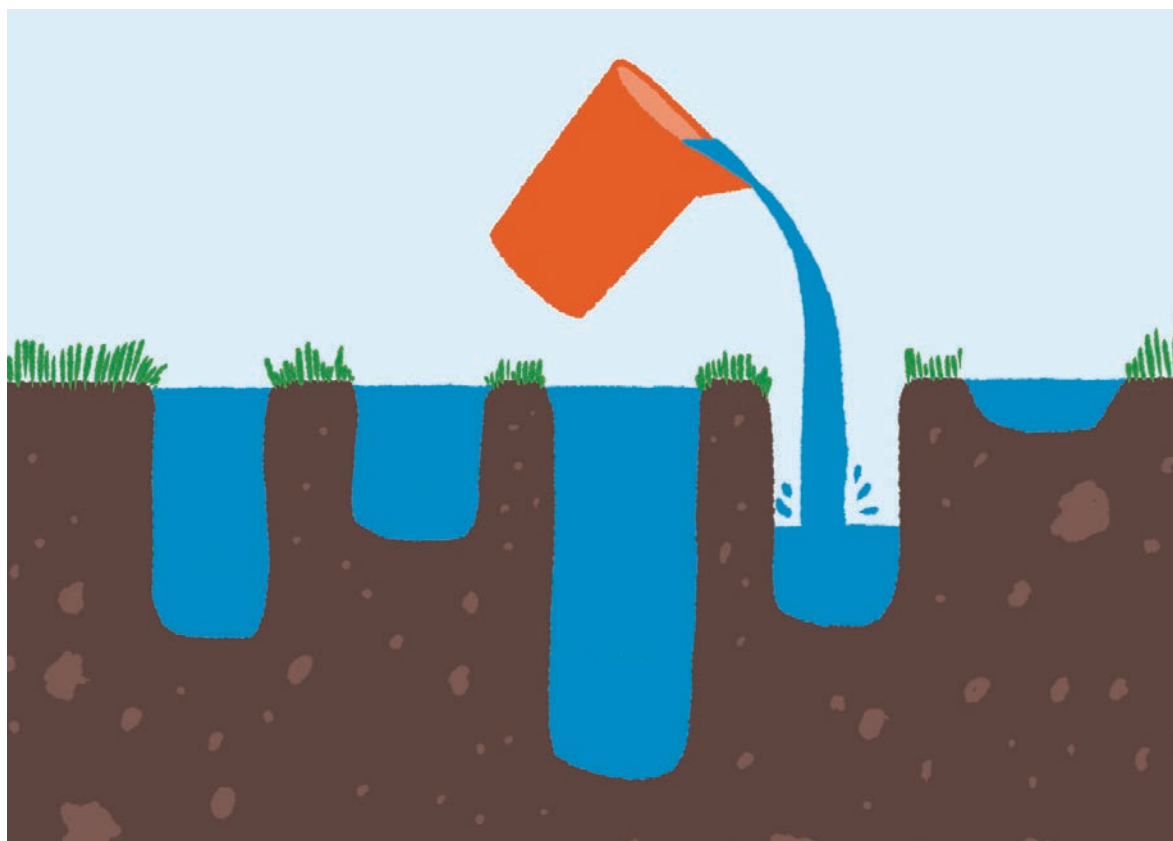
Communities who are already resourced (financially and socially) find it easier to access further resources and services. Thinking about communities who are experiencing inequity and barriers to participation involves thinking about the systemic barriers that prevent people from accessing libraries even if they are free for all. It's thinking about how:

- Ongoing colonisation prevents Māori from accessing tino rangatiratanga over their lands, resources and their own systems of knowledge and learning.

- Racism in our public institutions means some communities are treated worse or are made to feel unsafe when trying to access public services.

- A low wage economy, and a welfare system with low benefits means many people are struggling to afford basic necessities like public transport to get to services.

- A housing crisis where high rents and a lack of public housing means many people and families are living in emergency shelters isolated from their networks and services.

For many local communities, multiple structural barriers are happening at the same time.

It is important to note that all the current work programmes could be seen as reaching communities experiencing inequity but there is some more work needed to identify those with **the greatest barriers to participation and where the most significant impact can be made.**

Through the discovery and meaning making stages, MAS and Auckland Council staff already started to think about communities they wanted to connect and build relationships with, this included:

- People living in emergency housing who may be moving around a lot. The housing crisis impacts on people's connection to place, and therefore the ability to connect to a local community library.

- People staying at rehabilitation residential services who may not be close to a community library or have barriers to accessing it.

- Pasifika communities and churches.

- New migrant and refugee communities who may be experiencing isolation and may not know what is available to them.

Questions to ask when thinking about Criteria:

- If we apply the communities of the greatest need framework – would this change the current work programme? Looking particularly at the intersecting inequalities that people are experiencing.

- Is there a community library near the place where MAS are stopping or going?

- What are the barriers to participation (beyond age and disability) preventing people from accessing their community library? Are these barriers able to be addressed by the MAS team? How might they be addressed?

Practice scenarios

Scenario 1: An elderly woman in the North Shore who lives alone in Haumaru Housing but has a bus stop outside of their home, and a community library close by.

Scenario 2: A sole parent living in a motel (emergency housing) with no public transport and is far away from a community library. Their children are not in ECE.

Both people are experiencing inequalities, but if we think about those with the greatest barriers to participation, the person in Scenario 1 can ultimately access their local library, and with some collaborative work with their housing provider there could be creative solutions to addressing social isolation. Scenario 2 represents a community who have many barriers to participation and access.

How could a mobile outreach library reach the community represented in Scenario 2?

Community connection

Our discovery work talking with Aucklanders about their needs and wants shows that residents want a local place-based service. MAS already engages in building community connection through the current work programme. There could be, however, more coordinated relationship building embedded in the role of staff. This will require the service being place-based, and thinking about the quality of interactions rather than reaching as many places as possible.

Relationship building in local communities involves understanding that they have the ability to decide for themselves what they need and want. It involves facilitating spaces where people can build connections with each other in place. This may involve MAS staff identifying formal and informal leadership within a local area and tapping into already established networks in the community. There are already many different services and programmes happening in local communities, connecting to people in place will help MAS to identify the gaps and how a mobile and flexible service might add value to what is already happening.

Relationship building involves working alongside people to develop a service that works for their community. Barriers to participation look different for different communities – what works in Wellsford will not be the same as what works for Māngere or Glenfield. This means any service that is being developed needs to be locally responsive. When relationships are made with local communities in local places, people themselves get to shape and influence the things that are important to them.

Questions to ask when thinking about community relationship building:

· What level of connection already exists between people in the community? Is there a sense of belonging and how might this be enhanced through a mobile outreach service?

· Which people are deeply involved in the community and who is left out? What are the talents, assets, and energies in the community?

· Are there communities experiencing inequity and barriers to participation that are not currently being reached by other place-based services? What kind of relationship building would need to happen to find out how a mobile outreach service might best reach these communities?

· How might a mobile outreach service help to facilitate spaces where residents can be in place with each other?

Practice scenario:

You are a local mobile outreach librarian for Henderson-Massey and have been asked to build relationships with the local community and co-design an outreach van and work programme for the area.

Thinking about the questions above, here are some first steps for building community connection:

· Have staff workshops on community development and co-design to enhance skills strengthening in this space.

· Identify who are the formal and informal (natural) leaders in the area. Identify what programmes and community organisations already exist. Build relationships with them and their networks to find out how a mobile outreach service could add value to the work already being done.

· Use Council resources (hubs, halls etc.) to provide spaces for the community to come together and connect with each other.

· Once relationships are established: get the community involved in designing a mobile outreach library service.

Collaboration

Building relationships in a local community requires collaboration. This could involve working with the local community library, community centres and hubs, local community organisations and wider Auckland Council departments and programmes.

There are some activities that MAS currently engage in which could be better supported through collaboration, and there are new activities which could uplift and support work already being done in the community.

This might involve mapping connections between different parts of Auckland Council and finding out where collaboration opportunities could strengthen the work.

This collaboration happens alongside community relationship building to determine where a mobile outreach service could add value and how this might be delivered. This also involves asking ourselves where do library services stop and a different kind of outreach service come in?

Questions to ask yourself when thinking about collaboration:

- Can collaboration happen with community libraries and hubs to support the work already being done?

- Are there new ways of promoting the services and programmes already available? E.g. social media, flyers, marketing campaign

- What local community groups are already working with communities experiencing inequalities and barriers to access that MAS could collaborate with?

- Are there ways of collaborating with other parts of Auckland Council to ensure barriers of access to community libraries are removed? Are there other parts of the Auckland Council better suited to work with these groups of people?

Future collaborations could look like...

- Collaborating with a local food hub to bring cooking and growing resources to an event.

- Collaborating with a local community hub and Haumaru Housing to bring digital literacy to older residents, involving the whole whānau.

- Working with a community organisation to bring expertise, WIFI and printing service so they can learn to make posters for an event.

- Collaborating with a local social justice or advocacy organisation to bring reading and resources to communities on topics that matter to them.

Customisation

Creating a shift in the infrastructure needed for a future outreach service will require having:

- A clear criteria to assess the work programmes.
- Working with local communities to identify what they need and want.
- Collaborating with community organisations, community libraries and Auckland Council to make this happen.
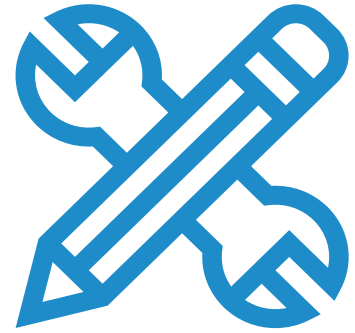
This may also involve:

- Changing the size, shape and purpose of the current vans and buses.
- Co-designing this with the community.
- Creating modular set-ups so that the vehicles can be easily changed for different purposes.
- Changing the work programmes depending on what comes from the community relationship building and collaboration.
- Working with local communities in place to grow a unique service that looks different depending on where it is.

Questions to ask yourself when thinking about customisation:

- How would a mobile outreach service be customised as a result of community relationship building and collaboration?

- What work programmes would emerge if the service was place-based?

- What customisation could be done with the current buses and vans to add value to work already being done in the communities and reduce barriers to participation?

Scenario:

You are a local mobile outreach librarian for the Manurewa/ Papakura (Franklin) area. After attending a local network meeting it became clear there was a need to work with a new Kāinga Ora development in the area. The mobile library team develop a programme that reflects the makeup of the new tenants and sees this as a short term intervention as tenants become more comfortable with using the local community library.

This section discusses some of the possible customisations of the current vans and buses and imagining possibilities for future infrastructure which:

· Serve a clear criteria around communities experiencing inequity and barriers to participation.

· Is created through community relationship building and is place-based.

· Helps support collaboration between community libraries, halls, hubs and other organisations.

In our view 20% of infrastructure (buses) could be used to serve regional needs, and 80% of the infrastructure (vans) could be used for place-based work in local communities.
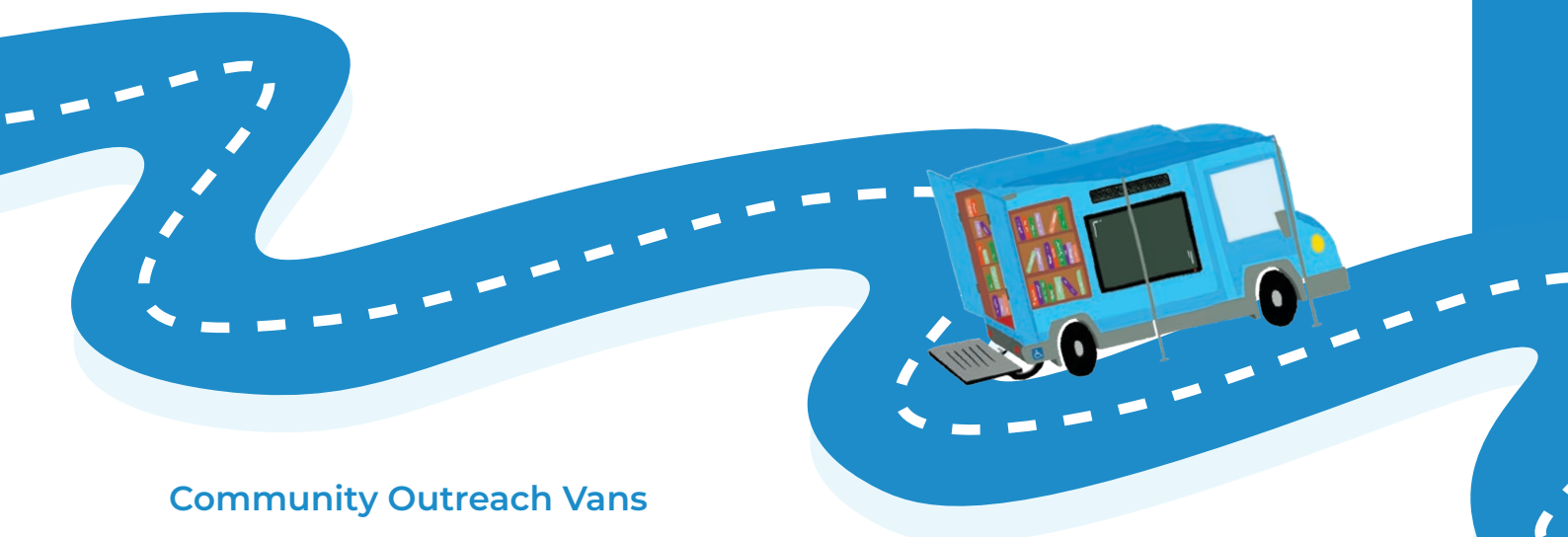
Community Outreach Vans

Imagine there was funding for 10 vans for each of the recently formed local board area clusters: Whau/ Waitākere Ranges; Henderson-Massey; Rodney/Hibiscus & Bays/Upper Harbour; Devonport-Takapuna/ Kaipātiki; Albert-Eden/Puketāpapa/ Waiheke/Aotea; Waitematā-Ōrākei; Maungakiekie-Tāmaki/ Howick; Māngere-Ōtāhuhu; Ōtara-Papatoetoe; Manurewa/ Papakura (Franklin).

This has come from the idea that Aucklanders want more community connection in local places. It also comes from the concerns from staff around buses being hard to park and the travel times being too long.

In our view this could start with a trial in 2-3 areas to assess the outcomes. The current infrastructure of vans and buses could be repurposed to fit in with a new criteria. For example, the aged care van and the two smaller buses could be redesigned into three prototype vans/buses for three different local board area clusters. Any work programmes such as Homebound and Rural Libraries activities outside of these local board area clusters can be supported through normal council vehicles.

These vans could be a local mobile outreach service with a focus on community connection and collaboration. These vans could:

- Be decked out with chairs, awning, mats and a pop up library.

- Provide promotion for the local community libraries and events.

- Provide WIFI, printing and digital services.

- Bring different Auckland Council services for a chat to local areas.

- Work directly with local community organisations to support work already happening.

- Co-designed for the particular area (people mentioned the excitement around Mr Whippy, so they could even have music/sounds).

Using modular fit out of the vans allows for quick and easy changes from an aged care bus to a job training centre, to general or specialised book collections. The way this could work is the outreach librarian can start to build relationships with local communities to find out what is happening on the ground, and then start to collaborate with the community library, hubs, local community organisations and wider Auckland Council to act as a bridge and connector to the library.

If a particular geographical area has a prison, or has lots of emergency accommodation services, then there could be collaborative work done to bring a mobile outreach service to these communities. If an area has lots of pensioner housing in a close geographical space the vans could help to connect people up to each other and work with the community libraries and hubs nearby to provide digital literacy services or to help create social connection.

Buses

Another idea which has grown out of this process is repurposing the buses. This could mean transitioning away from the North and South buses being used for timetabled stops (to be replaced by place-based vans) and instead having regional buses which are centred on particular purposes or themes.

The current infrastructure is three larger buses. Though one of these buses is about to retire and be replaced, the idea is to repurpose this infrastructure to be a digital discovery, Te Ao Māori, and bespoke bus (a modular bus that can be easily changed for different regional events or themes).


Some of the ideas that have been floated have been:

- **A digital discovery bus:** it is clear that people need access to WIFI and printing, as well as digital literacy. If a bus was fitted out for these purposes it could be parked outside of community centres, hubs, parks or other places where people need access to these services.

- **Te ao Māori bus:** this will build on what is already happening in this space with the dedicated van going to marae, kohanga and kura kaupapa. In collaboration with hapū, iwi and mātāwaka Māori there could be a bus which helps support any mahi happening in this space. This could involve connecting Māori tamariki, rangatahi and their whānau to their local community libraries, programmes, marae and hubs. This needs to be designed by Māori, for Māori.

- **A bespoke bus** which can be changed depending on the context. This could involve having a modular set up which can easily be customised:

  ▸ **Sensory bus:** this could involve the bus being decked out with fairy lights and bean bags which support different ways of learning.

  ▸ **Local stories bus:** bringing the library archivist or the oral histories specialist on board and working with communities to record local stories. This could involve collaboration with mana whenua, different ethnic communities and local historians.

  ▸ **Event themed buses and vans:** when there are event weeks or months, the buses or vans can be changed to suit the theme, including having books that are relating to that particular week e.g. Matariki. This could also support successful activities currently undertaken by the Pop-Up Library service.

Scenario:

Imagine it is Tongan Language Week. The bespoke bus has a modular fit out so that it can be easily changed depending on the context. It is fitted out with digital services and book shelves which can be swapped out easily. The mobile outreach librarian has already collaborated with the community libraries to get Tongan language and cultural books on the bus, and with community organisations and schools who are running events. On the bus are promotional details about where to access Tongan language classes and information on different services in the community.
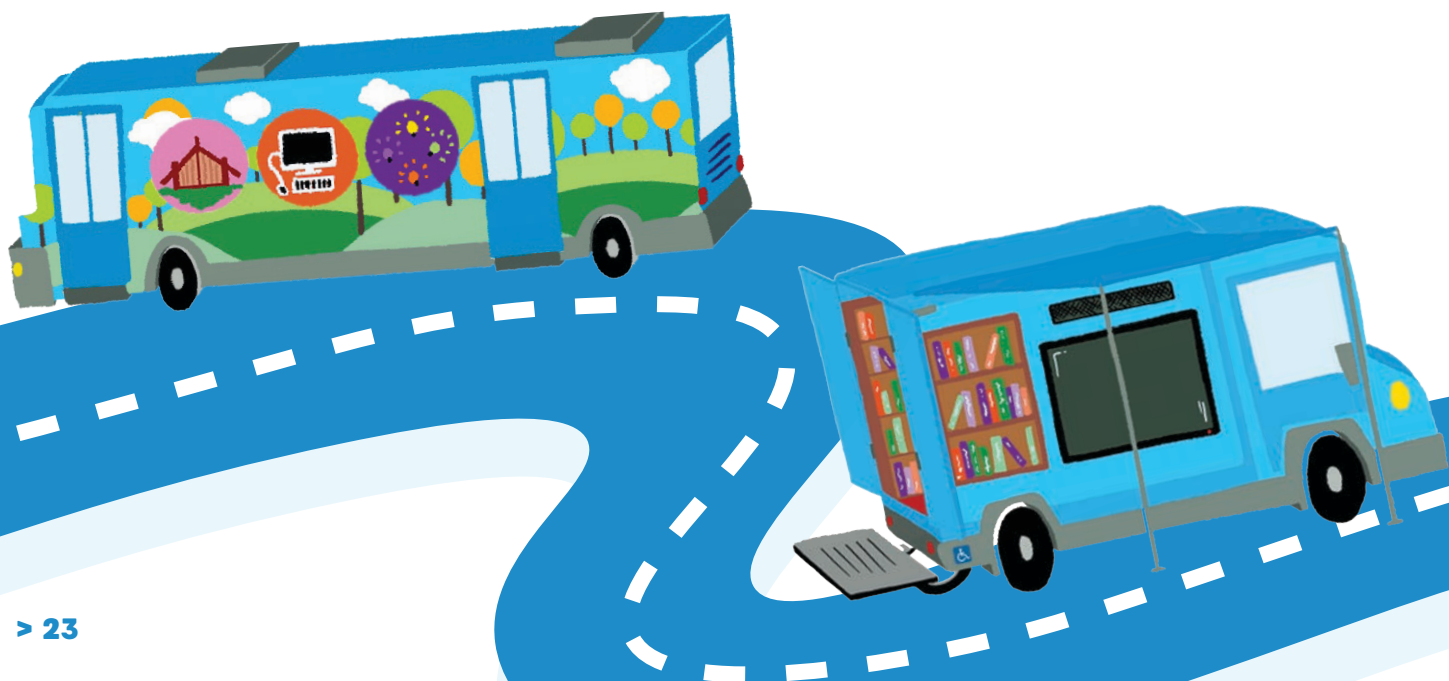
Work Programmes

Through our discovery stage, Aucklanders made it clear that they wanted to have local services which were connected in place. A lot of the services and information people said they wanted were actually already available at local libraries, community hubs or other organisations but people did not seem to be aware of them. This has made it clear that MAS definitely have a role as:

- Promoters of the community libraries and other services who could run campaigns to link communities with existing services.

- Connectors to build relationships with people in local communities and to provide space for people to connect to each other.

- Collaborators to work with others in the community to create a locally specific service.

Community Think engaged with staff from Connected Communities to think deeply about a mobile outreach library service which is place-based, fits into an equity criteria, and is in collaboration with local communities and Auckland Council. Through these discussions a set of scenarios have been created to demonstrate the ways criteria, community connection, collaboration and customisation could work together 'in place'. Below is a visual representation of these discussions:

Street-based storytelling

The local mobile outreach van goes down the streets in one of the neighbourhoods in their area on a Saturday or during the school holidays. Music is playing and children and their whānau run out. The van stops at a cul-de-sac and waits for people to arrive. Cones are placed out to protect people and mats are placed on the ground. On the van is a librarian from the local community library who will read to the children and also issue library cards. There will also be digital services available and another local librarian to help any of the parents with referral or information.

Hub collaboration:

The local outreach van is parked outside of a community hub. The outreach librarian has collaborated with aged care facilities and pensioner housing in the local area, as well as some local schools to promote a digital skills day where older and younger residents come together to share knowledge and skills.

Council collaboration:

The local mobile outreach librarian has connected with the grants people as part of Auckland Council and with a local youth centre. They have parked outside the youth centre and brought young people out to discuss with them opportunities for funding projects.

Community Partner:

The local mobile outreach van is parked outside a caravan park used as emergency accommodation to issue library cards and to be the bridge between the people and their local community library. The outreach librarian has also collaborated with a local beneficiary advocacy organisation, and have brought with them an advocate to talk to the people about their entitlements when in emergency housing.

Modern day outreach librarian

Figuring out what is needed for the Mobile Library and Access Service also involves reflecting on who it is that will be delivering the service. This involves thinking about what a modern day librarian is, and what resources and skills they need. In this report Community Think has framed a future service as a 'mobile library outreach service' and staff as 'modern day outreach librarians' but you may want to frame this role as a 'mobile community connector' or something else.

It is clear that MAS staff want to maintain their core role in facilitating a lifelong love for reading and access to information. They also acknowledge the technological, economic and social shifts which are changing the way people use the library and the experiences of communities they serve.

Libraries are more than books, they are spaces where people connect and access information and referral. Libraries are some of the last remaining public indoor spaces which are universal and free to all. There aren't many truly public places left. Most shared spaces require money or a certain social status to access. Libraries are places where people can be themselves, free of judgement.

Librarians are often already acting as community workers in their frontline work – whether it is assisting people with filling out forms for Work and Income, or connecting people with other organisations – librarians are community navigators.

A modern day librarian:

- Exists in the time we live in: a person that doesn't hold onto outdated ideas of what libraries were, a person who is prepared to fully meet their community of users' information needs, and to meet them where they are at.

- Strives to address structural barriers to using the library.

- Understands the power that libraries have in the cultural context, and uses that power for the benefit and enrichment of all members of society.

- Has a commitment to inclusivity of all people and understands the structural barriers to participation and access.

- Open to change – things are moving and changing fast in this area and librarians need to adapt quickly.

Books will always remain important, but a library is more than books – they are:

- Spaces for digital access, a place to meet people and a place to access information in many forms.

- A place to join groups, engage in school holiday programmes, robotics for kids and adults, accessing a JP or help with CV's. Some libraries do seed swaps, and other forms of lending such as appliances, tools etc.

- Community hubs are becoming important spaces for after school homework help, running programmes that are needed in the local community e.g. digital or vocational training.

- Photocopying, printing, WIFI access. People who do not have access to computers come to libraries to use these to fill out forms, and to do work and study. Some people run projects on the library's free WIFI.

- Spaces where community groups meet and where collaboration takes place.

Outreach librarians:

- Engage with communities underserved by traditional libraries, including low income and homeless people, Indigenous, ethnically diverse people, older adults, adult new and non-readers, incarcerated and previously incarcerated people, disabled people, LGBTQIA+ populations, and rural and geographically isolated communities.

- Develop new and innovative services that match communities' needs. They work in dynamic and changing environments.

- Generally very people-focused, social, and passionate. They are committed to spreading the message of the library to new audiences.

- Strong communication and collaboration skills to help reach new groups and work with various organisations.

- Skilled at quickly assessing their environment and identifying the strengths of their library and the opportunities to improve their service.

Qualities of the modern outreach librarian...

Flexibility

Community Development

Strong collaborative working skills

Resilience

Knowledge of local area

Ability to communicate clearly - strong communication & collaboration skills

Inquisitiveness & curiosity

Open-mindedness

People focused - creative and social people who can think outside the box

Analytical

Empathy

A road map for a future mobile outreach library

Some of the journey Community Think and the team have done together has been imaginative and outside of what many would see as possible in our current context. This was a part of expanding our horizons in order to move beyond the now. This work is evident in this report but there is also a set of practical goals that take us from now to where MAS could be in the future. This road map is a combination of all of our collective thinking, meaning making and the conversations Community Think had with Aucklanders about what they need and want in a COVID-19 context.

The vision

A modern mobile outreach service has flourished in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. It has 10 place-based vans which were co-created through community connection and relationship building between MAS staff and local communities. The service provides communities experiencing inequality and barriers to access the things you'd find in a community library, and works directly with communities to find out where it could be of best use. They are a service that breaks down barriers for people to access their community library, and collaborates with the wider Auckland Council and local community organisations. New innovative ideas have grown through working directly with communities in a place-based way. People are excited when they see and hear the outreach vans coming.

Mindsets:

These roads are about reflecting on the work that is currently being done and why it is being done. It's also about having a reflective practice and encouraging innovation and new ideas.

Now

Create a shared vision for what a modern day mobile outreach service is and identify gaps in knowledge.

Next

Have upskilling training and workshops for staff specifically on community development and co-design.

Have workshops and peer group reflective spaces to develop skills such as perspective-taking, empathy etc, and to raise self-awareness.

Future

A team of modern outreach librarians who are empathetic, open-minded, curious, resilient, self-reflective, innovative and have strong relationships with communities in their local area.

Now

Firm up a criteria to filter the current work programme based on communities who are experiencing inequity and barriers to participation, taking into consideration the needs and wants of Aucklanders in a COVID-19 context.

Next

Using this criteria, select the stops and places that will continue to be visited and start to transition away from the ones that do not fit the criteria.

Future

Have a work programme that reaches communities experiencing inequity, that is adaptable to local communities needs and wants.

Now

Develop an evaluation tool that can measure the effectiveness of the work programme.

Next

Embed an evaluation tool into the work programme including reflective practice and feedback from communities accessing services to know what is working and what isn't.

Future

Have a work programme which is evaluated by the communities that use it to allow the service to be adaptable to change where the community needs it the most.

Approach:

This road is about how to reach the vision. This involves a focus on criteria, community connection in place, and working in collaboration with others.

Now

Start to think in a place-based way. Organise yourselves into local areas and start forming networks.

Next

Building relationships with the community you are working in through identifying community leaders and networks, and working with them to identify communities.

Future

Have a place-based co-designed mobile outreach service that works collaboratively with communities on the ground.

Now

Get MAS staff and other key Auckland Council staff (Connected Communities, Southern Initiative etc.) into a room to discuss this report and the next steps.

Next

Build relationships with the community halls, community libraries and hubs in the area. Work together to figure out how MAS could best provide a bridge to add value to these spaces, collaborate on projects, and how resources can be shared.

Future

Have an outreach service which is linked up in collaboration with Auckland Council and a pool of shared resources and a common strategy to provide the best public services to communities in place.

Programmes:

This road is about the specific work programmes that could be transitioned in and out according to changing mindsets and approach.

Now

Where volunteers are not in place use couriers for drop off and pick ups for some homebound services.

Next

Collaborate with community libraries to figure out the best way for homebound services to build social connection. Work with volunteers where suitable to enhance work already being done.

Future

Those who cannot access their community libraries have access to reading, information and digital services. Collaboration takes place with community libraries and local organisations to enhance social connection.

Now

Transition away from commercial aged care facilities.

Next

Transition to a place-based aged care and homebound strategy with staff connected to local areas. Start providing bulk loans for commercial aged care facilities. Work in collaboration with Haumaru Housing and wider Auckland Council to break down barriers to accessing community libraries and collaborate on projects to support social connection and digital literacy.

Future

The mobile outreach service acts as a bridge to the community library and collaborates with community hubs and organisations in place to ensure older residents have access to books, digital upskilling and social connection.

Now

Transition away from commercial ECEs and filter schools through the criteria.

Next

Collaborate with community libraries and ECE, schools and kohanga to bring the wider whānau to open days at the community library. Collaborate with National Libraries to ensure under-resourced schools have access to library resources.

Future

A Mobile Outreach librarian working collaboratively with schools in a particular area in a joined up way with a clear strategy for what a library journey looks like from preschool to adulthood.

Now

MAS team to work with the rural library to create a bridge to another community library.

Next

Form a sister network between rural libraries and the nearest community library with the MAS team acting as a bridge and collaborating on programmes to better reach remote communities.

Future

People are able to access Auckland Libraries resources through Rural Libraries.

Systems

This road is about the systems and infrastructure that needs to shift to enable the new work programmes to flourish.

Now

Repurpose the vans and smaller buses

Next

Prototype 3 modular vans which will be run out of 3 local board area clusters providing a local mobile outreach library which is place-based and responsive to the community's needs and wants.

Future

Have 10 large vans working in the 10 local board area clusters. They are co-designed by the communities they serve and provide a bridge to the community library, and a vessel for collaboration.

Now

Transition away from timetabled stops to a place-based model.

Next

Building on existing work in this space, prototype a te ao Māori bus, a digital discovery bus and a bespoke modular bus (which can be changed for different Auckland Council or Libraries events).

Future

Working in collaboration across communities the regional buses are well known. Mana whenua, hapū and mātāwaka are supported to come up with their own work programmes using the te ao Māori bus.
The digital discovery bus is helping to connect up people of all ages to learn together. The bespoke bus is helping to support and promote events.

Now

Be aware of devolving responsibility to local communities without resources.

Next

Make sure all parts of the Auckland Council are working together so that resources can be distributed.

Future

There are sustainable resources dedicated to collaboration and community relationship building across Council.

Now

Have a centralised role that can ensure that all the day-to-day operations are organised e.g. WoF.

Next

Have a centralised role that organises the team to meet regularly to plan and ensure they are working towards the same strategic goals.

Future

The mobile outreach team works cohesively towards collective goals, learning from each other.

Now

Have social media and promotion coordination so that communities are aware of what MAS provides, and for MAS to promote community libraries.

Next

Be posting regularly on MAS social media accounts about upcoming events. Have printed bookmarks to promote the service and community libraries.

Future

Communities know about their local mobile outreach service. Each mobile outreach service has social media and communities are sharing the content.

Conclusion

Community Think engaged in a process of discovery and meaning making with the Mobile Library and Access Service team, a wider Thinking Group from Auckland Council and people who live in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland to help understand how a future mobile outreach library could best serve communities in the context of COVID-19. The MAS team are currently doing a lot of different work programmes that are valued and appreciated by the communities that access them. This process involved working together to find out how the current resources could best be distributed to reach communities experiencing barriers to participation and make the most impact.

This involved coming up with a framework to assist with assessment and filtering of the current and future work programmes. There are suggestions throughout this report to help guide the thinking around what kind of criteria would be needed. This included looking at the Auckland Council 'Communities of the Greatest Need Practice Note', the Auckland Voices project, and international best practice on modern day outreach libraries. These different ways of thinking would ideally be filtered through an equity criteria to decide which work programmes should continue as they are and what new programmes could be introduced.

This report has highlighted the importance of place-based community relationship building. Through talking with Aucklanders it was made clear there was a need for more local connections specific to local places. This will require working across Auckland Council, community organisations and with communities in a collaborative way. Alongside this place-based work on the ground, there is a need for customisation of the current infrastructure (vans and buses). This report suggests prototyping three vans in three of the local board area clusters, eventually working towards a van for each of the ten areas. Only through community relationship building and collaboration will the MAS team know what an area needs and wants, and who communities experiencing inequality and barriers to participation are. Having local vans will assist with this work.

The roadmap at the end of this report is to help visualise changes that could happen now, next and in the future. In order for new work programmes to emerge, mindsets need to shift. This starts with understanding what is happening in communities and how best to respond through a mobile outreach service. This means letting go of what has always been done and having an open mind to new and innovative ways to serve the communities that need us most. This also involves working in collaboration across Auckland Council so that the work is not siloed and so that resources can be shared.

Community Think hopes that through engaging with this report a modern mobile outreach service can flourish with the staff and the communities they work with at the heart of it.

This document is the product of a process that generated new relationships and new ways of being for participants, allowing people to discuss ideas and imagine alternatives. It is a collective expression of the wisdom, insights, commitment and contributions of the community people who attended hui, the Council working group and their colleagues that paved an understanding of different pieces of this road. Thank you to all who participated.
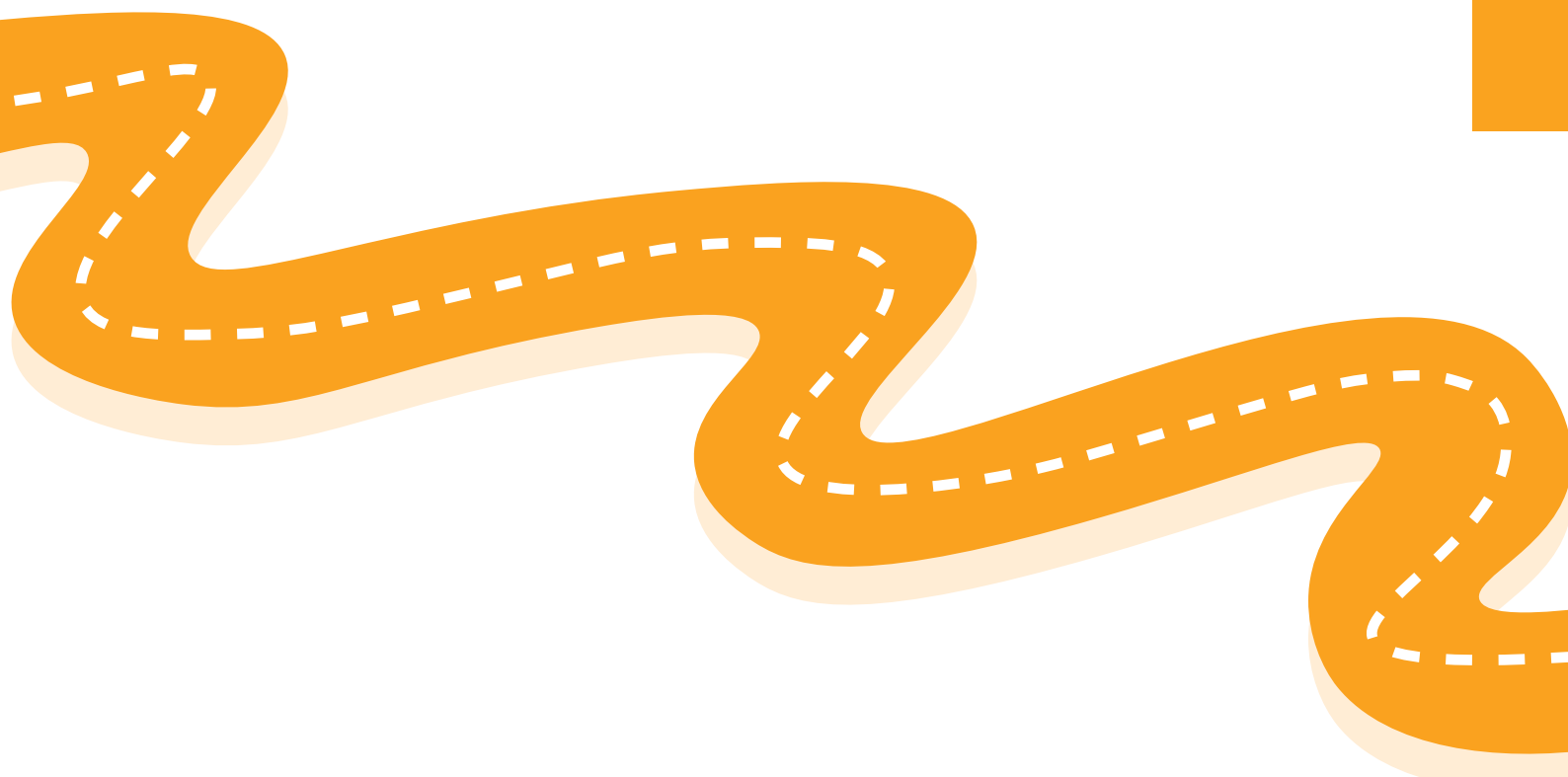
Appendix 1: Detailed outline of the process

It is important to have the voices of those who experience the service and those who create the service at the center of this review. This enables people to have a sense of collective ownership over the ideas and suggestions made here and the ability to influence action.

The process of discovery and meaning making is outlined in this appendix because it is just as important as the outcomes. The roadmap is a result of the collective thinking at the centre of this process.

The process involved three main parts:

- **Mobile Library and Auckland Council staff:** This section discusses the discovery and meaning making that happened with the Mobile Library and Access Service team and wider Auckland Council staff.

- **Auckland Voices:** This section discusses our time talking with Auckland residents about their needs and wants in the context of COVID-19 and the meaning making with staff to connect this with the current work programme.

- **Best Practice:** This section covers the literature on mobile outreach from Aotearoa and the international best practice literature around what a modern outreach library service could be.

Mobile Library and Auckland Council Staff

The Mobile Library and Access Service engages in many programmes in communities that have a wide impact. The staff have a shared passion for providing a service which reaches many different communities and inspires a lifelong love for reading and learning. They engage with many different communities, including coming up with innovative new ideas for reaching communities in need, such as the prison initiative.

Everything that MAS do is valued by the communities that use the service. During our time with the team and through engaging in Ride Alongs in the community it is clear that the team has a passion for the work they do and the communities they serve appreciate the service and interactions they have.

Discovery

Our discovery with Mobile Library and Access staff and Auckland Council involved surveys, workshops and Ride Alongs to gather insight into the current work programme and aspirations staff had for its future. During this stage a Thinking Group was formed which involved MAS staff and people from across Auckland Council.

Community Think had an initial workshop with those involved with the MAS team to see what would be useful for us to understand. A set of questions were used to explore together the current work programmes. There was also an anonymous staff survey created to help with this discovery process.

A significant part of our process were the Ride Alongs Community Think undertook with the MAS staff. This gave us hands-on knowledge and experience about how these services operated and how they were received out in the community. Community Think did Ride Alongs to Aged Care Facilities, Homebound patrons, Haumaru housing, the North and the South/West bus journeys, Waka2Schools, a kohanga visit, and a preschool visit.

Key insights from discovery

- Size of the vehicles: big buses are hard to park but they give a library feel, and have potential to be designed in different ways. Smaller vehicles like station wagons or an external party (like couriers or a volunteer group that provides support from the local community library/or other community groups) could be used for activities that don't require larger collections of books or equipment, and couriers can save valuable librarian time when only a drop off is required and no relationship building is possible.

- Criteria: there seems to be a lack of clear criteria about where the buses stop. The stops are based on being approached by people or where they have been asked to go. There could be stronger equity criteria to decide where to stop. For example, commercial for-profit ECE and Aged Care facilities already have resources to connect people to their local libraries. People said the timetabled stops were convenient and appreciated, but some of these people could access their local community library.

- Programmes: the purpose of going to ECE is to increase children's exposure to libraries and grow a lifelong love for reading. There were a lot of conversations around the quantity of schools versus the quality of visits. There is a desire, particularly at kohanga reo, to connect the children's wider whānau with the libraries. There are also equity questions around which schools get access to this programme. It was clear that people enjoyed the Waka2Schools but this programme worked best in schools where there was already a librarian and resources available. This means in under-resourced schools it is less effective even if these are the schools that need the service the most. There needs to be a way of engaging with the wider families of students beyond school visits.

- WIFI and digital services: there were a lot of discussions on wanting to bring WIFI, printing and digital discovery to communities through a mobile outreach service. This was particularly in the context of COVID-19 and an increased reliance on technology, as well as the visibility of a digital divide preventing communities of the greatest need from participating. While some of the vehicles have WIFI, there was a desire to expand this and improve reliability.

- Local connection: sometimes there is a need for more relationship building and social connection during the visits. The journeys were often time consuming because of traffic. With stronger local community relationships, MAS will better understand the needs of the community and suitable ways to meet those needs. There also seems to be a disconnect between MAS and the local community library which could be more joined up in a common strategy.

- Resistance to change: people feel connected to what has always been done and so there is some resistance to change. This is partly due to public resistance including people lobbying local councillors and Boards to keep historical services going to their areas due to convenience. This is dependent on who has the loudest voices rather than who might need the service the most.

- Innovation: the prison initiative was an innovative idea created by the staff to record parents reading books for their children to listen to. This is an example of an initiative which reaches communities in the greatest need and is at the heart of what an outreach service should be.

Meaning making

The meaning making stage involved bringing what had been discovered so far and making sense of it together. Community Think believes it is important that meaning making and collective analysis happens with those who are directly impacted by decisions made from this process.

A meaning making session was held with the MAS team; the group went through the Auckland Council 'Communities of the Greatest Need' practice notes together and discussed what this meant in relation to the current work programmes. This demonstrated that there needs to be more work done to build links between existing policies and what they mean in practice.

While it is important to work with what is currently possible, it is also important to think beyond this so that new ways of thinking and doing can form. This led us to having an imagination session with the MAS team centred around a future without buses and a future with buses. This was not suggesting that there should not be buses but instead a way of thinking about the other forms that a mobile outreach service could take.

A future without buses looked like:

- Couriers dropping off and picking up books.

- Activating local community halls through parking outside.

- Information booths at markets to engage with communities.

- Using the vans to attend local events and have them designed to have an easy event kit to set up.

- A shuttle bus to bring people to their local community library.

- Electric vehicle fleets, boats and cycle.

The future of buses looked like this:

- Different types of customisation such as an audio-sensory bus with bean bags and fairy lights.

- WIFI and printing bus that can be located outside existing community facilities.

- Buses with different zones such as a chill zone, a digital zone, an information zone.

- Themed buses that have a central place the bus can go are decked out with different themes (such as Matariki).

A meaning making session also took place with some of the newly formed Connected Communities' Leads and Coaches. This team is overseeing Connected Communities staff in 10 place-based areas in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. Community Think thought it was important for Connected Communities to be included in this review as they will have an influential role in the communities that MAS serve. This involved a mapping session with some of the Connected Communities Lead and Coaches to map out what was available in order to link up the work already being done and identify gaps.

Key insights from meaning making

The importance of collaboration: The hubs that combine libraries with community centres are catalysts for innovation. There are opportunities for more collaboration on projects between MAS and these hubs. There are other existing spaces such as community halls and art centres where buses or vans could park up to add value. There is a desire to make community venues more open and accessible like libraries and MAS could help with this. It is important for Connected Communities to have a collaborative approach so they are not siloed but also to have a local focus to enhance a sense of place.

Encouraging innovation: There were ideas floated that a MAS could bring other Auckland Council services to communities e.g. bringing someone from youth funding or dog registration. There were some new ideas floated by the MAS team which identified communities that are not currently being reached including Pasifika communities and churches; refugee and migrant groups; and children who are not at ECE – grandparents, parents and caregivers who are at home.

Assessment and criteria for service delivery: The criteria for the service needs to be centred on questions of equity and redistribution of resources when thinking about what access means to our communities. This involves being aware of what is meant by 'communities of the greatest need' and having a clear and collective understanding of equity. To do this there needs to be recognition of our own value judgments and how we filter the work we do through our own world view. There is a need for clarity around who is using the library's service and why. It is important to think beyond numbers when doing this to think about the communities that need the services the most.

Building local connections: There is a need for community connection, relationship building and bringing joy. A mobile outreach service should create a buzz in the communities they go to; like 'Mr Whippy' does when it comes to your street.

Auckland Voices

COVID-19 has had profound impacts on people, whānau and communities. Community Think wanted to capture the wants and needs of Aucklanders. It was clear from this experience that COVID-19, even in times where we are not in lockdown, is still impactful for people. This is particularly the case for those who have experienced increased financial hardship, racism and mental stress as a result. Having people who live in Tāmaki Makaurau input into this review was important and these voices should be centred in any outcomes that are decided from this review.

Discovery

Community Think conducted a survey and had face-to-face conversations with groups of residents to delve in deeper to their experiences, needs and wants. We asked people questions about their experiences of COVID-19 and then some specific questions around the Mobile Library and Access Service:

1. What have you noticed about how your life has changed, or is different after COVID-19? What do you need or want as a result?

2. What would you like to see being offered in the community near you to help with these wants and needs? Or, what is missing in your community?

3. What do you think the overall impact of Covid-19 has been for the wider community across Auckland?

4. If there was a service that could travel around Auckland to connect people, help people find different services and develop skills, how do you think it could be offered?

5. What do you think a future modern day mobile or pop-up library (providing access to community information and digital services) could offer?

Key insights from Auckland Voices discovery:

- People and whānau are still feeling the ongoing impacts of COVID-19. Some people are financially struggling while others are feeling increased mental stress and health anxiety.

- Some people had epiphaniess around their lives due to the lockdowns – thinking about the future and what they really want to be doing.

- There were conversations about our changing relationship to technology, work and study; some positive about working from home and others about the struggles of access to technology.

Meaning making

Community Think used the voices of residents of Auckland who engaged in the survey as a basis for a session of meaning making online and another in person. An invite for this session was sent to anyone who had participated in a survey or face-to-face discussion. This involved theming and making sense of the COVID-19 survey.

This process has helped to identify communities experiencing barriers to access and can be used to determine what current and new programmes could address some of the key themes that surfaced.

Key insights (last two questions of the survey)

- Aucklanders wanted access to information and services that were already available or provided by community libraries and hubs that they were not aware of. People did not know what was currently available to them. More promotion is needed so that people know where and how to access already existing services.

- There needs to be more partnership with other community organisations and greater connection between the mobile services and the community libraries and hubs. People discussed that it would be good to create a space to connect over a cup of coffee or tea alongside MAS which could involve using community halls and other spaces.

- Marginalised communities wanted access to spaces where their voices could be heard and amplified, and MAS could be involved in enabling this.

- People wanted advocacy and navigators to facilitate access to social services and support.
-
- People showed a clear desire for more community connection and opportunities in local places.

- People expressed a desire for more WIFI, printing and internet services being available.

Best Practice

It is important to look beyond the day-to-day work programme of the MAS team. This involved looking at local and international best practice literature, and then making sense of what a modern outreach library service looks like in this context.

Literature review

Community Think started this journey by doing a review of previous reviews of the Mobile Library and Access Services. This was to determine what has been done before and how the service got to where it is today.

Key insights

- Māori librarians need more support to deliver programmes, as they are often stretched and dispersed. Te reo Māori needs to be lifted.

- There has been a growth in MAS working with Early Childhood Centres, schools, kura kaupapa and kohanga reo. There are limits to the time spent with each school visit, geographic reach and questions over quantity vs. quality of these visits.

- There is a desire to work more closely with National Libraries in connection to work with schools.

- Changes in focus at a strategic level are often not filtered down to staff in a way where they can easily implement these changes.

- Measuring the quality of the service based on the numbers of people and whānau using the services is not the only measure. For example, the Waka2Kura programme visited 9 kura and kohanga, but the outcomes from this were broad reaching – such as building relationships with the wider community and whānau. It also assisted relationship building within the Council and increased the mātauranga of staff.

- Changing roles of staff and their connection to traditions: from a book bus to a community outreach service. There are some issues relating to staff buy-in and readiness to change.

Appendix 2: Auckland Voices

COMMUNITY THINK

"AUCKLAND VOICES"

Community Think talked with people in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland about their experiences of Covid-19. These are the key themes that emerged from these conversations.

AMPLIFIED POVERTY

"I stopped eating so much because food is really expensive and it is stressful to meet the rent."

"Community gardens for sustainable food sources would be good."

"Jobs are increasingly harder to secure, food prices have gone up, my community is in turmoil since the homeless and needy have been housed in local motels, there is a lot more police presence in the community."

"Safe spaces facilitated by women of colour to share our experiences and our voices to be heard by the government and the public"

INCREASED MARGINALISATION

"I have never been so hyper aware of my 'race'. Hyper vigilant around public spaces, avoiding eye contact and making sure I never cough in fear of being called a 'China Virus' or to go back to your country."

CHANGING WORK + STUDY CONDITIONS & VIEWS ON WORK LIFE BALANCE

"Financial hardship, market instability brings to light the need to be flexible in how and when we operate, in work or study"

"For students the world changed quickly and it wasn't always possible to do work if there was no device, internet or a power outage."

"A place away from home that could enable remote study or work."

"Somehow there is less pressure from work now, maybe we realised we worked too hard before, for what?"

"My life has changed in terms of relationships, with my family and friends, what I think of the future, what I want to do in the future, my goals, my expectations, as well as my relationship with myself. I place a higher importance on my mental health."

"I would like to see more support for my South Auckland community and to discard the stigma in which we have had to endure of being criminalised and deemed uneducated. There are people here in low socio-economic living standards who have to sacrifice their education in order to work and make up for the financial situations that COVID-19 has amplified"

INCREASED MENTAL STRESS & HEALTH ANXIETY

"More mental health services! ...online webinars around managing wellbeing."

"I continue to feel a level of anxiety/tension within our communities due to the number of lockdowns we have had, the loss of employment, the negative impact on relationships, loss of supports, accommodation, inability to cope & negative impact on mental health."

"I am very wary of others around me if they are sick or show signs of being sick, I keep myself at home as much as I can in fear of contracting the virus."

LOCAL COMMUNITY CONNECTION

"Events where people can meet and share stories, skills and knowledge. It would be great to have events where you didn't have to travel long distances."

"My community feels a bit disjointed and disconnected ... but now everyone is back to their own lives. Neighbours are not supporting neighbours anymore."

Appendix 3: Auckland Council 'Communities of the Greatest Need': Practice Note, p. 9

QUESTIONS TO HELP GUIDE THINKING

Thinking about equity means considering the distribution of impacts (positive and negative) across society, taking particular account of vulnerable groups or people in vulnerable situations.

Looking at the spatial and non-spatial distribution of outcomes provides insight into where inequities exist and how to reduce disparity between different groups of communities (e.g. disparities in life expectancy or educational performance between low and high-income groups or different ethnic groups).

Key questions

☐ Will an initiative improve the opportunity of communities most in need to participate in society? (i.e. socially, culturally, economically, also civic participation)

☐ Will an initiative build the capability of communities most in need to make the most of opportunities?

☐ Will an initiative build more resilience?

☐ Does the initiative address specific barriers to participation? E.g. affordability

☐ Will an initiative negatively impact particular (disadvantaged) groups? E.g. reduce their chance to participate?

☐ If so, can the initiative be improved in a way that minimises or mitigates any negative impacts on particular groups?

☐ What are the short and long-term impacts of an initiative on particular groups?

☐ Will the initiative address existing inequalities?

☐ Will the initiative reinforce existing inequalities?

☐ Will the initiative create new inequalities?

9

Auckland Council
Te Kaunihera o Tāmaki Makaurau

COMMUNITY THINK