



**ACT**  
Government

# WODEN LIBRARY UPGRADE

## CODESIGN ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

AUGUST 2020



## PROJECT OVERVIEW

Woden Library opened to the public in 1977 and is the busiest of the nine public library branches in the ACT. When the ACT Heritage Library moved location in 2019, space was made available on the top floor of the Woden Library to provide an upgraded community area.

The community was invited to share their ideas for the space to inform the architectural brief for the upgrade.

Libraries are so much more than books. They are places to gather and engage with other locals, use new technology, relax and explore the facilities, share knowledge and learn important skills. The great ideas the community shared with us as part of this engagement will allow the upgraded space to reflect this. The aim is to improve the overall library experience and to encourage collaborative places and active learning spaces.

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## THE CONVERSATION

We spoke with the community on the upgraded space at the Woden Library from 11 October to 15 November 2019.

The consultation encouraged members of the community to think about how the space could be used and what experiences they want easy access to. This was also an opportunity for current library members and those who do not use the library's services to provide feedback on the useability of the Woden Library.

Over the five weeks, we spoke to people in the Woden Library, on the concourse, at the Woden bus interchange, as part of the Woden Community Services youth outreach program and the Woden Community Council.

An online survey was also available for people to complete. The survey asked people to name their idea, describe it as well as what it looks and feels like, and explain who it was for.

Three workshops were held at the Woden Library in November 2019. Similar to the survey, these workshops allowed people to discuss the look and feel of their ideas for the space.

Our conversations touched on issues including accessibility including access to toilets and lifts, heritage, architectural capability and budget provision.

Some of the key themes in the community's feedback were the need for:



Separate relaxing areas,  
personal spaces and quiet  
places



Technology-enabled,  
computer training,  
creative and digital hubs



Community life skills and  
learning exchanges



Performance, exhibition  
and cultural arts  
environments



## KEY INSIGHTS

### The Life Lab

A flexible space for learning activities, speakers, programs, dance, art, craft, and community interests.

### The Haven

A quiet space for relaxation and reflection, study, silent reading and private personal pursuits.

### The Gathering Space

A space for quiet collaboration and discussion, a meeting place for select community interest groups.

### The Hive

A space for digital exploration, podcasts, recordings, virtual reality, technological skills learning and development.

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It would be great to have a no-cost (or very low cost) space for community organisations and micro-businesses to hold meetings, workshops, presentations for other community members and micro-businesses, particularly available in the evenings.

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A kitchen area with hot water for tea/coffee and chilled water for drinking.

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...It would be excellent to have an area where students could demonstrate some of the things which are typical of their countries, whether cooking, craft or something quite else.

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Please ensure that...there is still a quiet study/writing space in the library.

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Accessible experience of contemporary games where cost and available location can be a barrier for engagement.

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We'd like to incorporate mindfulness activities and/or sustainable crafting activities as a way to gain a feeling of accomplishment as well as enjoying an uplifting and social experience.

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I would like to come up to the second floor and be able to browse around at projects that people in the community are working on as well as ones that are completed. The projects on display could be many things: a drawing or painting that I could look at, a short story that I could sit down and read, a musical recording that I could listen to, a short film or video that I could watch or even an interactive electronic or mechanical device.

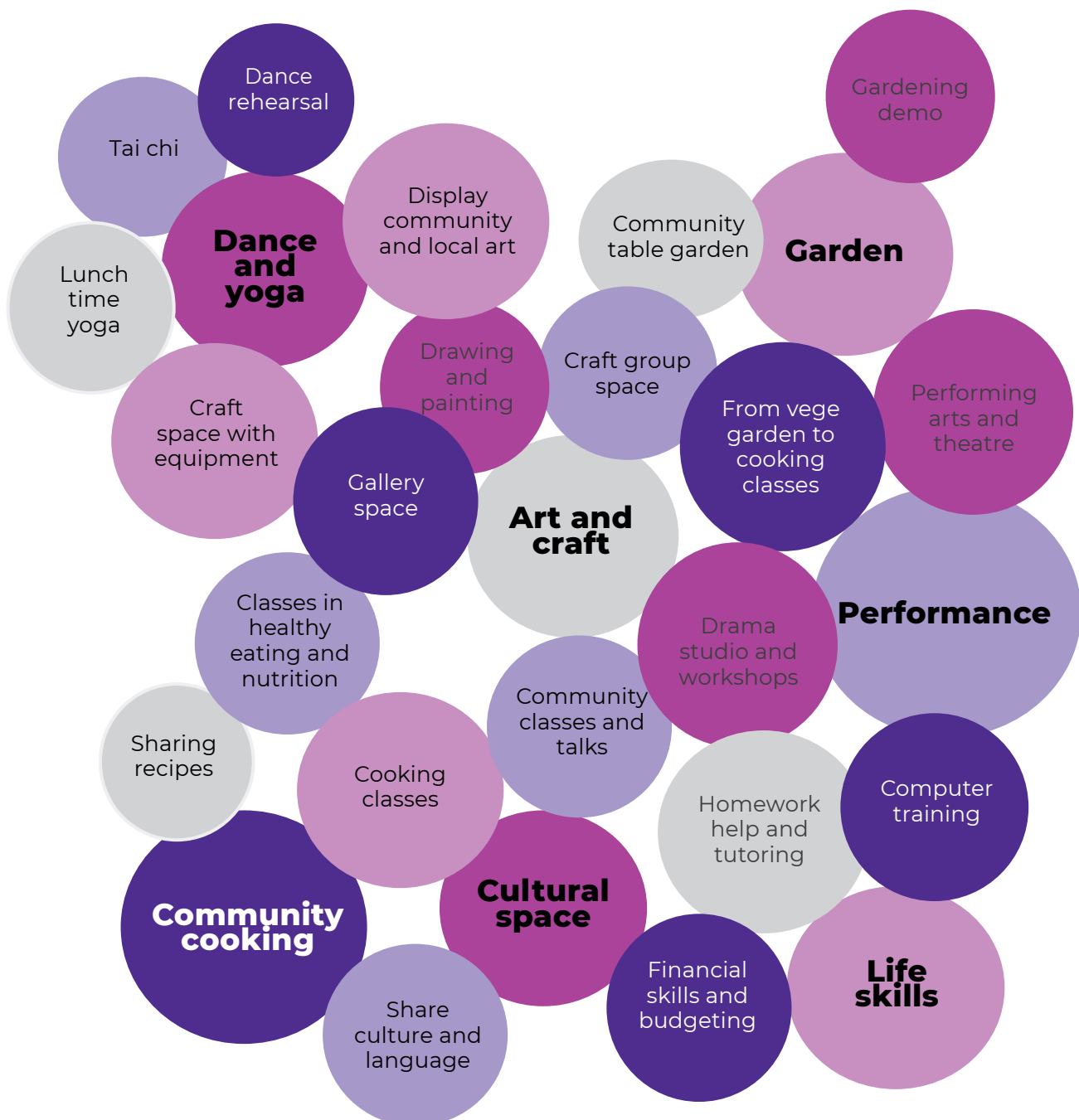
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A space for all people from different age groups and different backgrounds to engage in soul relaxing, mind and body awareness yoga and dance lessons.

# THE LIFE LAB

## COMMUNITY IDEAS

- The community see this as a large space with some sprung floor, and moveable divisions, that can be used for a variety of purposes such as yoga, dance, meditation, prayer, performance, or drama classes.
- Furnishings and equipment for life and learning classes and workshops that are flexible to cater to a wide variety of activities.
- The balcony space could be converted into an art and craft space inside and a green/garden space that could be used as part of a kitchen-to-table experience, or for gardening demonstrations.
- The learning spaces would be enlivening, vibrant and welcoming with resilient fixtures.
- A mobile kitchen on wheels, or the re-design of the existing downstairs kitchen (former Access Canberra kitchen) into a community kitchen should be considered.
- Equipment and furniture could be stored off the main floor, but easily bumped in and out.





# THE GATHERING SPACE & THE HAVEN

## COMMUNITY IDEAS

- The two spaces need to be flexible for a variety of groups, both with safe and relaxing chill out zones with beanbags and moveable chairs/high backs.
- The Gathering Place should be suitable for medium noise, with a mix of small and large tables, as well as contained spaces for group study, youth hang out zones, or professional co-working spaces with access to office amenities.
- The Gathering Place should include areas for lounging and a relaxed zone, possibly with surrounding shelving as walls.
- The Haven should have individual quiet spaces (nooks).
- There could be glass partitioning to sound proof the different areas for group and individual study.
- Book club resources should be relocated.

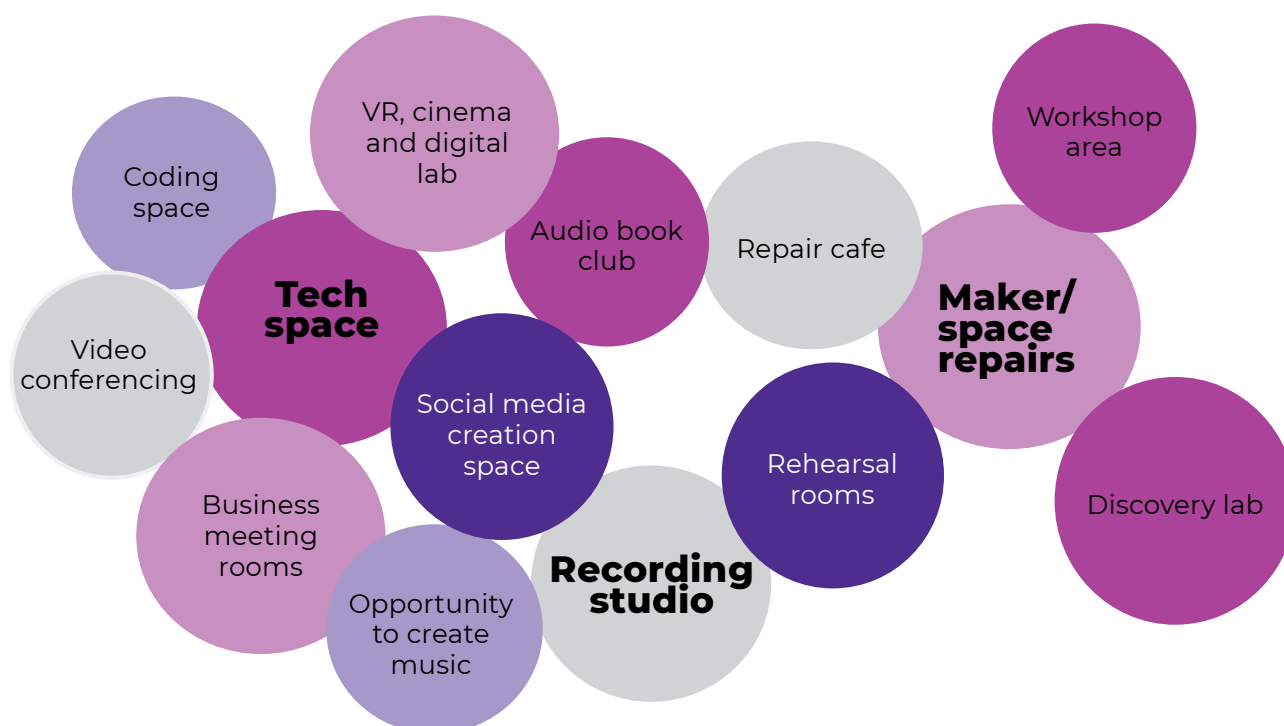




## THE HIVE

### COMMUNITY IDEAS

- This space should bring together contemporary technologies and tools into an accessible space.
- Fun, exciting, modern, collaborative, relaxed, engaged atmosphere that will appeal to youth.
- A space for medium noise, knowledge sharing and learning exchanges.
- Suitable for skill sharing between individuals or groups.
- The space could have a variety of functions such as a youth content space (to create social media posts with props), an audio book club, photography hub or a broadcasting booth.



### WHAT'S NEXT

Community feedback and ideas from the co-design process have informed the final designs for the upgrade of the Woden Library which are available on the next page. Work is expected to get underway on the refurbishment in September 2020.

On the ground floor, the existing community space and back of house areas will be transformed into two new community spaces with after-hours public access, a community kitchen and upgraded toilet facilities.

On the top floor, four new community spaces – the Haven, the Gathering, the Hive and the Life Lab – will provide for a range of activities from quiet study and collaborative meeting places to shared spaces that can be booked by community groups for skill sharing such as dance or art classes.



# UPGRADE OVERVIEW

## FLOOR PLAN - WODEN LIBRARY UPPER FLOOR



## FLOOR PLAN - WODEN LIBRARY LOWER FLOOR





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[cityservices.act.gov.au](https://cityservices.act.gov.au)

[yoursay.act.gov.au/new-community-space-woden-library](https://yoursay.act.gov.au/new-community-space-woden-library)