



# Strategic Plan

**Fiscal Year 2023 through Fiscal Year 2027**





# Table of Contents

- 2 A Note from the Director**
- 3 Strategic Planning Process**
- 4 Our Story**
- 6 Our Town**
- 7 Our Mission Statement**
- 8 Our Priorities**
- 12 Thank You!**
- 14 Community and Library Data**



*“Continue to recognize that Weymouth is constantly changing...and the library will need to go out to their patrons, rather than wait for them to come into a building.”*

— Community Survey comment

Approved by the Weymouth Public Libraries Board of Trustees

Cathy Torrey, Chair

March 3, 2022

# A Note from the Director



These past five years have been a whirlwind of activity and adaptation at the Weymouth Public Libraries. In July 2017, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners awarded us a \$12 million grant to build a new 50,000-square-foot, \$33 million Tufts Library. After securing local funding that fall, we hired a design and project management team and general contractor in 2018. Once we had moved library operations into our branch libraries, the old Tufts Library was demolished and construction began. The new Tufts Library opened on October 1, 2020. During the end of the construction and in the first eighteen months of operation, we have adapted library services again and again to protect staff and patrons during the global COVID-19 pandemic.

What we've learned during this time—that we must focus on the fine details and the big picture at the same time; we need to include everyone; and we need to listen and be flexible—was incorporated into our approach for the Strategic Plan for FY2023-2027. What we heard resoundingly from our focus groups and survey respondents was a hunger for more community, collaboration, connection, communication, and culture. Just as important was the desire for Weymouth Public Libraries to be a welcoming place in all ways to support the growing diversity that is making our community stronger. We are confident this Plan matches the hopes and aspirations of Weymouth residents and that our next five years will be a whirlwind of activity and adaptation, too.

Handwritten signature of Robert MacLean in black ink.

Robert MacLean  
Director of Library Services



# Strategic Planning Process

Weymouth Public Libraries' strategic planning process was focused on community engagement. Activities were designed to seek broad input across Weymouth neighborhoods, demographics, and library users and non-users. Through these activities of looking outwards and bringing in the broader community, the Library identified key priorities focused on supporting wider and deeper community impact over the next five years. At the heart of the "looking outward" process is the input from individuals identifying their personal hopes and aspirations for the community, the obstacles to be overcome to achieve those hopes and aspirations, and, ultimately, ways in which the library could support the achievement of those hopes and aspirations through its community-focused strategic priorities.

Community conversations in October and November 2021 brought together people who, through a focus group process, identified their hopes and aspirations for Weymouth, the challenges they saw as barriers to meeting those hopes and aspirations, and their ideas for how the library could provide meaningful and strong support to achieving the community participants' wishes and hopes. Input came from five staff focus groups, a youth and "tween" focus group,

two working sessions with our thirteen-member community representative focus group, and a focus group for the Board of Library Trustees, Friends of the Weymouth Libraries, and the Weymouth Public Libraries Foundation.

In December 2021, further community-wide input was sought through a survey soliciting current information about how people use the library and patron priorities and needs. In addition, the survey served to validate the priorities emerging from the focus group input. 519 people responded to the survey, which was available in Vietnamese, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Arabic, and English.

The Library administration, with the assistance of the project consultant, drafted the Strategic Plan for review by the Board of Library Trustees at their February 2, 2022 meeting. The Weymouth Public Libraries Strategic Plan FY2023-FY2027 was adopted by the Board of Trustees on March 3, 2022.



# Our Story



Dr. Cotton Tufts was an original member and president of the Massachusetts Medical Society, a founder of the Academy of Arts and Sciences, a financial agent and adviser to John and Abigail Adams, and a state senator and supporter of the adoption of the U.S. Constitution.

In honor of his work and life, Dr. Cotton Tufts's grandchildren, Susannah Tufts and her brother, Quincy, donated money and land to the Town of Weymouth in 1879 for the establishment of a public library. Tufts Library opened in the heart of Weymouth Landing on January 1, 1880, led by Caroline Augusta Blanchard as its first librarian. The library soon outgrew its storefront building and a new Tufts Library was built across the street, opening on October 6, 1892. That three-story brick building located on the corner of Commercial and Washington streets served the community until 1965 when a 33,000-square-foot Tufts Library designed by Alderman & MacNeish opened on the edge of Weston Park on Broad Street. After 55 years of service from that building, a new, 50,000-square-foot Tufts Library opened in the same location on October 1, 2020. It features ten

study rooms, a digital media lab, five meeting rooms, a local history room, a Quiet Room, Teen Room, and a Story Time/Craft Room in the children's department.



## **The Neighborhood Branches**

The first North Library opened in 1922 in North Weymouth and was followed in 1954 by a new library on the corner of North and Shaw streets. Carl Koch & Associates of Cambridge designed the building and won a Citation Award from Progressive Architecture magazine for excellence in the class of public buildings. The first East Weymouth library opened in 1924 and, thanks to the generosity of Franklin N. Pratt, a new library building was erected at 1400 Pleasant Street in 1978. In the fall of 2020, due to the economic impact of COVID-19 on the library's operating budget, North and Pratt libraries were permanently closed.

In South Weymouth, John S. Fogg, a boot and shoe manufacturer and banker, left money in his will for the creation of a library. The Fogg Library was built in 1897 and opened in 1898. It was maintained as a private social library until 1975 when the Town of Weymouth took ownership and brought it into the Weymouth Public Libraries. Currently, Fogg Library is open sixteen hours per week.

*Top: Portrait of Cotton Tufts by Benjamin Greenleaf.*

*Middle: The second Tufts Library, which opened in 1892 in Weymouth Landing.*

*Bottom: The Fogg Library, built in 1897 with funding from John S. Fogg. Photo courtesy The Patriot Ledger.*



## ***2020-2022: The COVID-19 Years***

In mid-March 2020, the Weymouth Public Libraries, operating out of Fogg, North, and Pratt libraries during the construction of the new Tufts Library, closed as the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic grew. A few weeks later, we reopened and provided library services to patrons curbside. The planned opening of the new Tufts Library in June was pushed to October 2020. In August 2020, we closed Fogg, North, and Pratt libraries as staff transitioned towards moving into and preparing Tufts Library for its October 1st opening. In September 2020, the Board of Library Trustees approved a COVID-19 Policy, which was revised in April 2021, and rescinded in June 2021. Upon opening, we had limitations on the number of patrons who could be in Tufts Library at any one time and limitations on the length of time of patron visits. Per state requirements, face masks had to be worn and we encouraged patrons to practice social distancing and made hand sanitizer and cleansing wipes available. In December 2020, limitations on the number of patrons and how long they could stay in Tufts Library were lifted. Fogg Library reopened in September 2021.

While virtual programming began in spring 2020, we reintroduced in-person programming at Tufts Library in May 2021. In March 2022, we are still not at our pre-COVID figures for checkouts and program attendance, but usage is steadily increasing and our dedicated staff continue to work tirelessly to provide the library services Weymouth patrons need.

## ***The Board of Library Trustees***

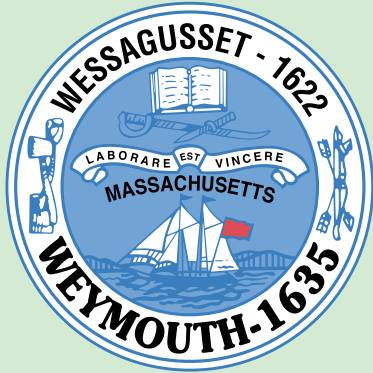
A seven-member advisory board appointed by the mayor, the trustees represent the interests, issues, and concerns of the Library to the mayor and other agencies of the town government and to the public.

## ***Our Supporters***

The Friends of the Weymouth Public Libraries is an independent charitable, not-for-profit organization that raises funds to support the operational needs of Weymouth Public Libraries. The Weymouth Libraries Foundation is a new independent charitable, not-for-profit organization that will raise funds to support the capital needs of Weymouth Public Libraries.



# Our Town



## Quick Facts

**Date Settled: 1622**

**Area: 16.8 sq miles**

**Coastline: 12.5 miles**

**Population: 57,437**

Rich in history, Weymouth is the second-oldest town in the Commonwealth, dating from 1622 when it was founded as the Wessagusset colony. The town was renamed “Weymouth” in 1635, when it incorporated and expanded with the arrival of 100 settlers from England. For almost 200 years, Weymouth was a fishing and agricultural community, evolving into a manufacturing hub for shoes in the late 19th century. Immigration helped to supply the workforce during and after the Industrial Revolution.

Weymouth’s population exploded after World War II, increasing by 21,000 residents between 1945 and 1960 as the town’s proximity to the newly created Route 3 made it an attractive bedroom community for those who commuted to other locations for work. As of the 2020 federal Census, as Weymouth prepared to celebrate its 400th anniversary in 2022, the town had a population of 57,437 people.

Today, Weymouth has a strong residential feel with a mix of traditional neighborhoods, new developments, and some large apartment complexes. In contrast to other communities in the region, Weymouth does not have a central downtown area. Rather, the town comprises four village centers — East Weymouth, North Weymouth, South Weymouth, and Weymouth Landing — each of which has its own distinct character.

The town has seen increased development recently. From 2010 to 2020 housing stock increased by 8.3%, compared to a 6.8% increase in Massachusetts overall.

Weymouth has been called the “South Shore’s medical Mecca” due to its abundance of medical facilities, including South Shore Hospital and the Stetson Medical Center.

Local landmarks include the birthplace of Abigail Adams, the Town Civic Center District and the architecturally significant Fogg Library, Jefferson School, and Washington School, as well as a variety of parks and recreation areas.

The Town of Weymouth is a suburban community covering 21.6 square miles (land area of 16.8 sq. mi.), with 12.5 miles of coastline, about 12 miles southeast of Boston. It is situated near the crossroads of US Route 3 and interstate highways I-93 and I-95, and has three MBTA commuter rail stations, allowing for easy access to both Cape Cod and Greater Boston.

*“I’d like to see a community that celebrates both its rich history and its new arriving diversity. I’d love to see ‘old Weymouth’ and ‘new Weymouth’ families find a way to connect through the libraries.”*



# Our Mission Statement

**Weymouth Public Libraries celebrates and sustains the growth of community, collaboration, and culture through traditions of reading, learning, and sharing.**



# Our Priorities

*“If you hang out at Tufts and observe all the people who use this facility, you will see the library is a welcoming and inviting place to an enormous community.”*



## **A Hub for Reading, Learning, and Culture**

Weymouth Public Libraries reaffirms its commitment to support and celebrate reading and learning for enjoyment, personal growth, and discovery. We promote literacy in all forms, including civic, cultural, media, technology, financial, and health literacies. We provide informal education and lifelong learning opportunities for all ages.

We advocate for and promote books, reading, and greater understanding of our diverse community, country, and world.

We actively engage with community organizations to welcome and foster new readers and provide cultural and educational opportunities.

We prioritize collection resources in response to residents' needs and ensure that our collection and our shared access to other library collections reflect and support our community.

We prioritize enrichment opportunities through library presentations and programs, cultural events, and access to outside cultural experiences through the library.





## A Place for Everyone

The library provides a welcoming, inclusive, and safe community space, where ideas and thoughts are embraced. We reach out into the community to promote library use and to encourage all to seek out opportunities to improve their lives through the Weymouth Public Libraries.

We look outward into the community for creative and equitable ways to serve the underserved, and to identify and address barriers to use.

We strive to be a trusted resource; we advocate for and support the tenets of intellectual freedom.

We seek out community partners to build opportunities to embrace diversity and to promote the library as a valuable and respectful community resource for all.

We recognize the current need to reach community members where they are, and commit to using a variety of communication methods as much as practicable.

*“I am grateful beyond words that Weymouth is lucky enough to have such an incredible core library staff.. and to now have this beautiful building is a blessing to boot. Thank you all! You impact this community in positive ways more than you know!”*



*“We just moved to Weymouth in November and are still getting to know the community. We love the library, getting a library card was the first thing on our to-do list.”*

## **Community Connections and Engagement**

The Library strives to be at the heart of Weymouth, supporting and strengthening our community by fostering social cohesion and cultivating opportunities for Weymouth residents to come together through shared spaces, resources, and events.

We maintain and develop existing community relationships and actively seek out opportunities to connect with new partners, to develop and promote services and resources for the benefit of the community.

We leverage our public spaces, staff knowledge and skills, and community relationships to provide opportunities for common experiences that build community by bringing people together.

We are the go-to place for both new and long-term residents to access information about their community.

We are a leader in the preservation and sharing of Weymouth’s long and rich history.





## Focus on the Future

Weymouth Public Libraries recognizes that the Weymouth community, our society, and technology are continually changing. The library commits to expanding and improving its ability to provide a wide range of evolving services that will sustain and enhance the quality of life in Weymouth.

We solicit and incorporate feedback from the community as we continually work to improve library services, advocating for prudent investment of new resources from the Town or other funding as needed.

We provide inclusive opportunities for people to come together to explore and adapt to our evolving community.

We recruit and employ service-oriented, skilled, and knowledgeable staff who ensure first-rate public service, reflect our community, and are active participants in developing new services.

We recognize the critical need to focus on technology and its ongoing changes to effectively communicate, share information and resources, and keep the library relevant.



*“Continue to strive to be great. Keep growing and learning and progressing.”*



# Thank You!

Mayor Robert L. Hedlund  
Chief of Staff Ted Langill

## **Weymouth Public Libraries Board of Trustees**

Cathy Torrey, Chair  
Matthew Tallon, Vice Chair  
Christa Dunn, Clerk  
Vicki Kaufman, Trustee  
Lisa Kimball, Trustee  
Tracy Muñiz-Gately, Trustee  
Casey Tocchio, Trustee

## **Strategic Planning Team**

Robert MacLean, Director of Library Services  
Heather Backman, Assistant Director of Library Services  
Ruth Kowal, Library Consultant

## **Volunteer Survey Translators**

Chinese: Emily Lasso  
Haitian Creole: Jen George  
Portuguese: Heloisa Cohelo  
Spanish: Paloma Fernandes

## **Community Focus Group Participants**

Lisa Braxton  
Dennis Corcoran  
Pam Denholm  
Paloma Fernandes  
Lisa Kimball  
Kathy Lehmann  
Yoshie Picciotto  
Geoff Potter  
Louis Rizzo  
Rebecca Sherlock-Shangraw  
Matthew Tallon  
Diana Walker  
Paul Watanabe

*“The library should be a place that promotes education, learning, personal growth, and development.”*

Our hard-working and dedicated library staff, as well as our Friends and Foundation members, for their support and for sharing their thoughts as focus group members  
...and everyone who filled out the community survey!



*“Keep up the good work with kind staff  
and quality customer service.”*





# Community & Library Data



## An Increasingly Diverse Community

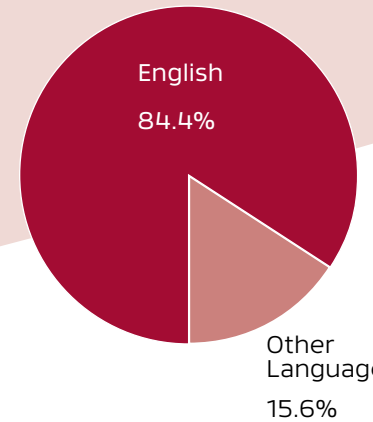
In 10 years, the diversity of Weymouth residents increased dramatically. Though the overall population grew by 7%, the town saw a 126% increase in the non-white and multiracial populations to nearly 12,500 people. The Hispanic and Latino population increased by 82%, to nearly 2,600 people.

WEYMOUTH POPULATION	2010 CENSUS	2020 CENSUS	% CHANGE	% POPULATION 2010	% POPULATION 2020
Total Population	53,743	57,437	+7%		
White	48,230	44,958	-7%	89.7%	78.3%
African American	1,651	2,789	+69%	3.1%	4.9%
Asian American	1,720	4,006	+133%	3.2%	7.0%
Other one race	1,058	1,716	+62%	2.0%	3.0%
Native American / Alaska Native	96	107	+1%	0.2%	0.2%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	12	13	+8%	0.0%	0.0%
Multiracial	976	3,848	+294%	1.8%	6.7%
Total non-white / multiracial	5,513	12,479	+126%	10.3%	21.7%
Hispanic / Latino	1,412	2,564	+82%	2.6%	4.5%

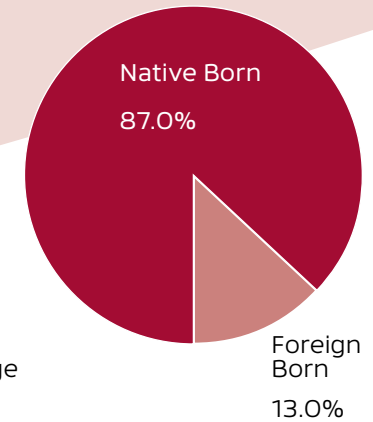


*"I so love the high energy in this library; children, toddlers, seniors, teens are all using and enjoying just being there, checking out books, reading, talking with friends. The staff is friendly, helpful and knowledgeable and approachable. It could not be better!"*

**PRIMARY LANGUAGE**

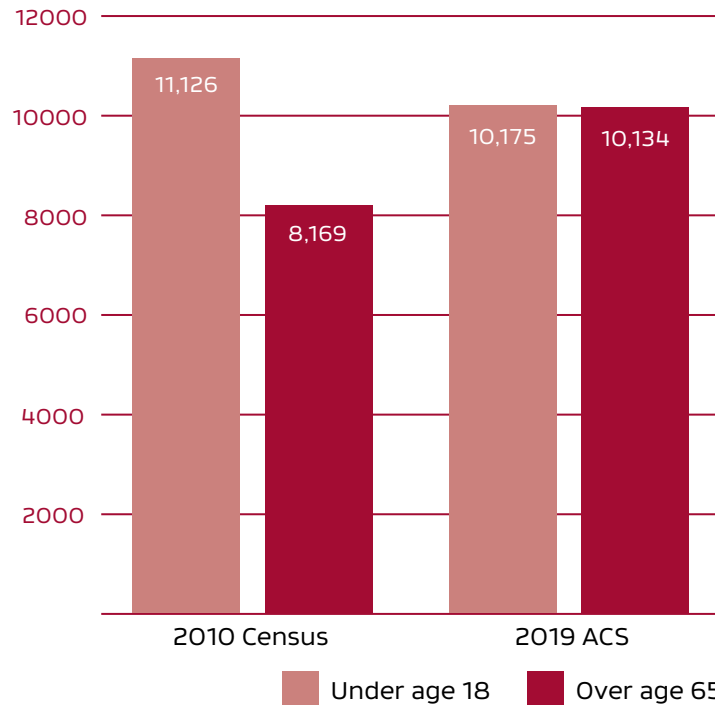


**PLACE OF BIRTH**



**THE COMMUNITY IS AGING.**

Between 2010 and 2019 the number of residents aged 18 and under dropped 8.5% while the number of residents over age 65 increased 24%.



**Residents with disabilities**

Over 6,000 people (more than 11% of the population) with at least one disability were estimated to live in Weymouth in 2019.



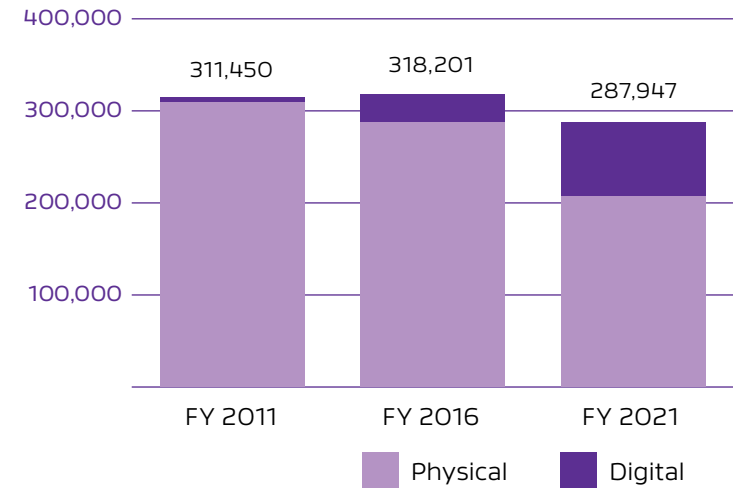
**Veterans in the community**

Over 7.4% of Weymouth's population are military veterans. This is higher than the Massachusetts average.

## WEYMOUTH PUBLIC LIBRARIES

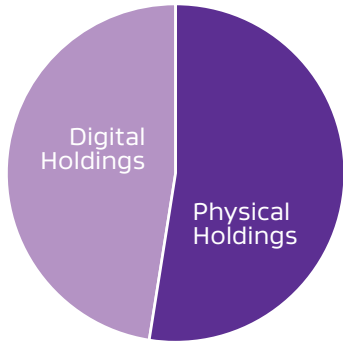
Residents with active Weymouth Public Libraries card as of July 2022	13,848
Number of Staff (FY22)	32
Items received from other libraries (FY22)	19,865
Items sent to other libraries (FY22)	26,135
Foot traffic (FY21)	64,114
Foot traffic (FY22)	189,056
Average Tufts Library visits per day open (FY22)	665
Programs (FY22)	499
Program attendance (FY22)	9,511

## LIBRARY CIRCULATION





**LIBRARY HOLDINGS**



Total library holdings (FY21)  
203,196

**WEYMOUTH PUBLIC LIBRARIES COMPARED TO OTHER NETWORK LIBRARIES (FY21)**

Town	Total Spending per Capita	Percent of Residents with Town Library Card
Weymouth	\$4.36	21.63%
Abington	\$5.77	29.55%
Braintree	\$6.12	27.97%
Brockton	\$3.80	14.57%
Hingham	\$8.87	35.43%
Holbrook	\$6.15	22.49%
Milton	\$11.46	43.66%
Plymouth	\$5.28	28.40%
Quincy	\$4.55	29.18%
Rockland	\$5.97	20.48%

Weymouth Public Libraries has substantial room for growth in the areas of financial support and resident engagement. In comparison to nine other Old Colony Library Network libraries that are similar in size and/or located nearby, Weymouth ranks second to last in materials spending per capita and third lowest in the percentage of residents who have library cards.



*“Get into the school system and get children reading. Let them understand the joy of the feeling of a real book in their hands. Explain the amazing adventures they will encounter while reading.”*

## Community Survey Responses

These pages share some of the data from our community survey. 519 people responded. Percentages for each response are percentages of people who answered the question—not percentage of all survey respondents.

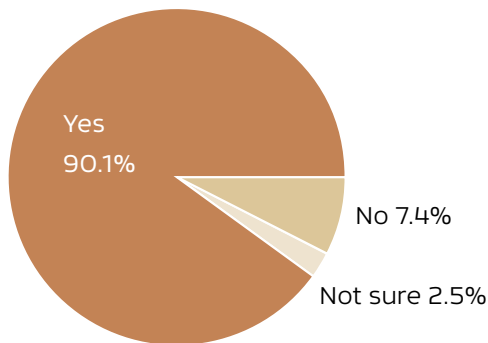
### WHAT LIBRARY AREAS DO YOU USE?

Town playground and park	44.5%
Seating areas upstairs or in the cafe	42.2%
Children's room	39.8%
Outside seating area	35.3%
Friends bookstore	30.1%
Meeting rooms	27.1%
Computer areas	15.3%
Study rooms	12.3%
Teen room	9.2%
I don't visit in person	8.0%

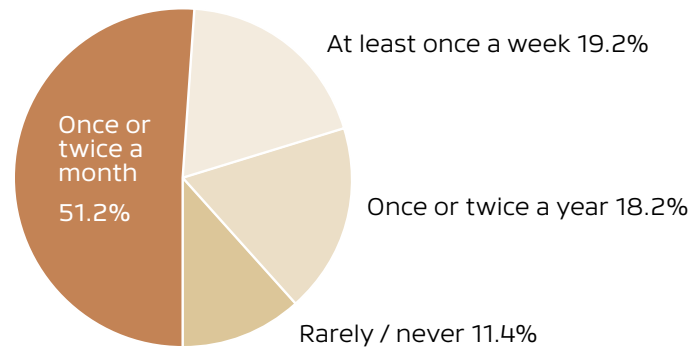
### WHY DO YOU VISIT THE LIBRARY?

Check out books or materials	75.0%
Attend library events	45.9%
Read or browse	33.9%
Attend non-library events	17.2%
Work or study	14.9%
Use technology (computers/wifi)	14.1%
Visit with friends or family	11.8%
Other	11.8%
Do research	11.4%
Get help from staff	9.9%
I don't visit in person	5.2%

### DO YOU HAVE A LIBRARY CARD?



### HOW OFTEN DO YOU VISIT?







## What are the top priorities you told us we should be focusing on?

We received 492 responses on this community survey question. 27 chose not to respond.

### TOP PRIORITIES

Being a cultural hub: offering museum passes, hosting cultural events/performances, highlighting local history

Supporting education and lifelong learning

Offering a broad collection (physical and digital materials)

### MIDDLE PRIORITIES

Welcoming everyone: celebrating the community's diversity, supporting people who are new to town

Connecting the community: Providing opportunities to gather with other people; collaborating with other Town departments and organizations

### LOWER PRIORITIES

Being a technology hub

Providing community leadership: helping Weymouth identify and address important issues, being a central source for community information

Having staff who can help with research, technology, and finding things to read

*“Continue to be a culturally centered institution with emphasis on helping people keep up with ever changing technology to stay informed.”*

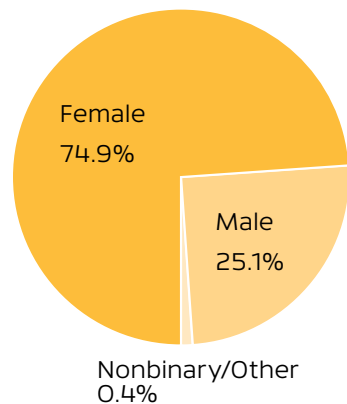
## What You Told Us About You

Percentages for each response are percentages of people who answered the question — not percentage of all survey respondents. Some percentages may add to more than 100% for questions where people could select more than one option..

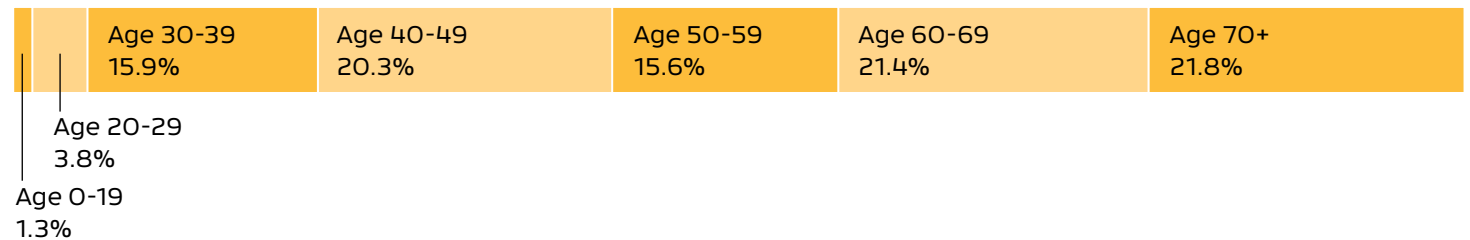
### WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU USE THE LIBRARY MORE?

More social/fun events (movies, music, etc.)	51.5%
Offer more big events (festivals, etc.)	40.5%
Participation in community events	36.4%
Open more hours	34.2%
Knowing more about library offerings	30.1%
More evening/weekend events for kids and teens	29.2%
More physical items to check out	28.2%
More digital items to check out	24.1%
More technology classes	22.7%
More events highlighting diversity	20.4%

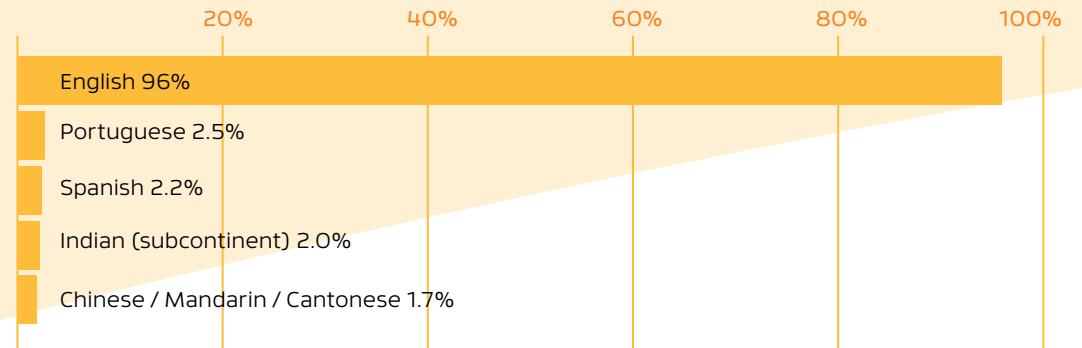
### WHAT IS YOUR GENDER?



### WHAT IS YOUR AGE?



### WHAT LANGUAGES ARE SPOKEN IN YOUR HOME? (TOP 5 RESPONSES)



### WHAT IS YOUR RACE / ETHNICITY?

