



Youth Friendly Spaces Audit Report

Shirley Library

WEDNESDAY 21st JULY



Team Leader

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1. Executive Summary

This report is based on data gathered on the 7th of July 2021 and 10th July 2021 at Shirley Library. Using the Youth Relevant Design Check Card and Youth Friendly Spaces Audit, young people audited the Shirley Library on its safety, appeal, accessibility, resourcing, and youth-friendliness.

The Shirley Library performed below average, in the Youth Friendly Spaces Audit, scoring a total of 64.5% and producing a Net Promoter Score of -50.

The youth auditors really liked how the space was calm and somewhere they could come and relax in. The young people also liked how friendly the staff were. The areas young people thought could be improved and gave feedback on was the vibrancy and appeal of the space, the youth corner itself, how they felt generally in the space, and the resourcing.

The youth space was a key area the young people identified as needing change. Specifically, they wanted to see this space moved to a different area of the library. They felt like the youth space was an afterthought lacking youth input. Some other suggestions were implementing comfier chairs and beanbags. They wanted to see more artwork, colour, culture and vibrancy around the library. Young people wanted to feel included in decision making on clubs and activities for them and suggested providing different avenues for them to continue to do this. With this, they also wished to see a greater circulation of young adult books and the Shirley Library to be better resourced with activities and clubs for them.

Overall, the recommendations on behalf of the youth auditors are:

- Rethink the location of the current Youth Space
- Increase resourcing (clubs, books and activities)
- Make the space more vibrant
- Include young people in processes and decisions
- Increase safety



2. Introduction

Spaces that are youth-friendly are important, if you get a space right for young people often you have it right for everyone. This Youth Friendly Spaces Audit report is an appraisal of the Shirley Library's youth-friendliness, with data gathered over two audits. This has been completed by an independent youth audit team leader and covers the five factors of Youth Relevant Design including safety, appeal, accessible, well-resourced and youth friendly. Robust engagement has taken place with a team of young people, also referred to in this report as youth auditors, who have developed a range of feedback and recommendations for this space. On 7 July 2021 and 10 July 2021, a team of youth auditors, led by team leader Beth Walters, completed a Youth Friendly Spaces Audit on the Shirley Library.

The audit was completed by 6 diverse auditors ranging in age from 12 to 18. The feedback in this report was collated across two audits in the evening on Wednesday 7 July 2021 and mid-day on Saturday 10 July). The two audits are completed at distinctly different times to capture a more robust sense of how youth-friendly the space is, for instance, daytime compared to at night, or when it's busy and when it's quiet.

This report will tell you how youth-friendly a space is and provides a Net Promoter Score of youth-friendliness. It also includes detailed feedback from young people about what they like about the space, what changes they would like to see, general feedback, and recommendations.

3. Methodology

The Youth Friendly Spaces Audit was conducted by a team leader who led a team of young people through the Shirley Library and audited the space against a set of Youth Relevant Design Principles.

The audits were conducted at:

- Wednesday 7th July, 4pm- 6pm
- Saturday 10th July, 11am – 12pm

3.1 Quantitative Feedback

During both audits, each youth auditor completed a Youth Friendly Spaces Scorecard. As they assessed the space, the young people were asked to think about the facility under the following banners:

- **Transport Options**
This looks at whether there are bike stands, a bus stop within 100 metres, bus links to other key spaces young people use, and whether the bikes stand, the path to the road and car park are well-lit.
- **Location**
This is assessing whether the space is close to other places the young person already hangs out, whether the entrance is well-lit and well sign-posted, and if there are accessibility ramps (where required).
- **Atmosphere**
This looks at things that make an appealing atmosphere such as music playing, soft spaces to relax that aren't 'in the way', colour, art, plant life, safe spaces to leave belongings, charging ports, and friendly staff greeting you on arrival.
- **Cost**
This refers to whether there is free admission and discounts with student ID, discounted admission on certain days or times, and free WIFI.



- **Bathrooms**
Spaces are scored on whether there are gender-neutral bathrooms, showers, disability bathrooms and disability showers (if applicable).
- **Support**
This looks at whether there are bike stands, a bus stop within 100 metres, bus links to other key spaces young people use, and whether the bikes stand, the path to the road and car park are well-lit.

Each of these banners includes questions that require either a yes, no, or not applicable answer. As the auditors walk into the space, they keep an eye out for the things suggested on the scorecard and record whether they are provided (if applicable). The results for each section look at how many 'yes' answers there are for each section out of all of the 'yes' and 'no' answers, thus producing a percentage for how well that area scored.

Alongside a score in each of these areas, the audit will also produce a Net Promoter Score. For this, every young person provides a rating for 'how likely would you be to recommend this space to a friend?'. The scale is from 0, not very likely, to 10, extremely likely. Scores between 0-6 are called 'detractors', while scores of 9-10 are called "promoters". Any rating that is 7 and 8 are neutral and not taken into consideration. The percentage of detractors are deducted from the percentage of promoters providing a number that is your net promoter score. Any number over 0 is a good Net Promoter Score because it means there were more promoters than detractors.

3.2 Qualitative Feedback

As well as providing youth-friendly scores, the Youth Friendly Spaces Audit also gathers qualitative feedback in the form of recommendations and anecdotal feedback. At the end of the audit, the audit team leader runs a small focus group with all of the auditors, asking them for feedback about the space against the 5 Factors of Youth Relevant Design which are:

- **Safety**
Any space that young people frequent should be safe, and when you get it right for them, you've probably got it right for everyone.
- **Appeal**
A space is going to be more appealing and successful when people want to use it for its intended



purpose.

- **Accessible**
Any space needs to be accessible – all young people should be able to use it, even if their circumstances are different.
- **Well-Resourced**
A space that is well-resourced with young people in mind is one that will be well-used.
- **Youth-Friendly**
You can tell a youth-friendly space by the feeling you get when you walk in – young people are wanted here.

This focus group produces a lot of valuable feedback straight from the mouth of young people, which informs our recommendations later in the report. As well as the focus group, young people also have the option to give their own feedback through the scorecard which asks:

- What do you like about this space?
- Do you think this space is designed to be used by young people?
- What would you change about this space that is easy to do?
- What would you change about this space if you could do anything?

4. Findings

4.1 Audit Scorecards

AUDIT #1: Wednesday 7th July, 4pm – 6pm

SECTIONS:

SCORES:

Transport Options	50%
Location	75%
Atmosphere	68%
Cost	67%
Bathroom	35%
Support	93%
TOTAL	65%
NET PROMOTER SCORE	-50



AUDIT#2: Saturday 10th July, 11am - 12pm

SECTIONS:

SCORES:

Transport Options	43%
Location	90%
Atmosphere	60%
Cost	67%
Bathroom	40%
Support	87%
TOTAL	64%
NET PROMOTER SCORE	-50

TOTAL: **64.5%**

NET PROMOTOR SCORE: **-50**

4.2 Scorecard Feedback

Each youth auditor completes a scorecard twice at two distinctly different times. During the audits, they are asked to write down what they like about the space, if they thought the space was designed to be used by young people, what they would change that is easy to do, and what they would change if they could change anything at all. Below is a summary of their feedback.

4.2.1 What do you like about this space?

The most common theme that came through the scorecard regarding what people liked was that the Shirley Library was a space that was a quiet and calm place to spend time in.

“It has safe places and a place to sit and talk” - Youth Auditor, aged 15

Rangatahi also appreciated that they could come and choose to read from a range of books and that the library offered different places to sit. The youth auditors felt that the staff were friendly and that they had the option to relax by themselves or with the staff and/or friends.

4.2.2 Do you think this space is designed to be used by young people?

There was not a consensus between the auditors as to whether they thought this space was designed to be used by young people. Some of the auditors thought it was because of its simplicity and inclusion of a kid's section. However, one common theme that the auditors mentioned was that there were more options for kids such as kids' books and games, that were not also available for youth. A couple of auditors both said that they couldn't decide as it felt like it was designed for both adults and kids, not youth. One auditor on their scorecard wrote,

“I don't because it feels like the space was built for adults and it was an afterthought to add space for youth” - Youth Auditor, age 12.

4.2.3 What would you change about this space that is easy to do?



Almost all of the youth auditors thought that the Shirley Library, which they feel is currently a blank canvas, would be more youth-friendly if there was more artwork on the walls and around the place. This was by far the most common change that the auditors wanted to see. One auditor even suggested artwork on the outside of the building, which you would be able to see as you approach the Shirley Library. They felt that this would be an easy change to make and suggested engaging with local youth to collaborate with famous artists to create new pieces for the Library. Another young person acknowledged that relaxing music could make the environment more ambient. Some other simple changes suggested were, free water, more charging ports, an Xbox in the youth space and a little garden. One auditor said that these changes would create an overall “better vibe.” These things should be considered to make the space more youth friendly.

4.2.4 What would you change about this space if you could change anything?

While the above feedback focuses on what young people would want to change that is easy, the below feedback is based on what the young people would change if they could change anything at all.

A common theme was that young people would really love to see some more activities for youth. Young people don't want to have a space that is at the back corner of the library. A young person suggested that they would change the layout to be more obvious where the youth space was and would make it larger. Another auditor really wanted to have a space that was at the heart of the library and was slightly removed at the same time. Young people were also perplexed as to why the PlayStation was right next to the children's books and felt that the PlayStation along with the accompanying bean bags should be moved into the young adult area. Another common recommendation that young people felt would make the place livelier would be to add more plants and greenery. Not only would this create a “better vibe” as one auditor said, but the young people felt that it would make the Shirley Library feel even more homely.

4.3 Focus Group Feedback

Auditors also had the opportunity to discuss the five key youth relevant design ideas; safety, appeal, accessibility, resourcing and whether they thought the Shirley Library was youth friendly. This conversation was facilitated by the Team Leader and the answers were transcribed.



4.3.1 Safety

The crux of this point is that any space that young people frequent should be safe, and when you get it right for them you've probably got it right for everyone.

The first audit took place in the evening between the hours of 4pm and 6pm. The youth arrived when it was still light and left when it was dark. When asked whether the Shirley Library felt like a safe place, one young person said, "it can be a safe place if you need to get away from stuff and read a book." Another young person mentioned that they felt safer in the space when there were less people around. When asked how they felt on arrival, one young person highlighted how they felt like they weren't meant to be there as they couldn't see anyone their age.

Young people generally felt safe arriving at the Shirley Library as many were familiar with the route to get there; it was only when they had to leave when it was dark that they felt unsafe. One young person expressed that they felt safe as a whole because they had a car and a license and had done army training so didn't really have a problem with safety. However, everyone else who left either by public transport or foot/bike expressed feeling unsafe. A couple of young people highlighted how dark the mall and library car park were and this increased how unsafe they felt leaving the Library.

A suggestion made to make the space feel safer was to increase lighting outside the Shirley Library and in the surrounding car parks. On a positive note though, the young people highlighted that the librarians were always very friendly and that they felt comfortable to approach them if they ever felt unsafe and/or needed to express concern.

4.3.2 Appeal

A space is more appealing when young people are able to be engaged in the space.

During the focus groups, the young people expressed that they liked coming to the library as it was close to places that they were familiar with and usually went to such as the Palms Mall, school and home. Another thing that the young people expressed was that it was a great place to come and experience some peace and downtime. One young person said that they liked to come to the Shirley Library as they didn't have many friends to hang out with on the weekend and it was close to their house.

Although some young people expressed positive things about the appeal of the Library, some auditors felt that the youth area was uninviting and made them feel closed off from others in the



Library. One young person stated that “the only vibrant thing about the library was the book covers.

Young people said to improve this the Library could provide a more vibrant space, with art on the walls, more colour, comfier chairs, more clubs for the youth, plants to make it feel homely and for the PlayStation and beanbags to be moved into the youth space away from the children’s areas. Young people wanted a space that felt like it was designed by youth and for youth and for it to feel connected to the Library and rather than being “put into the back of the corner.”. However, they also stated the importance of having a separate space as well. One young person said that “they didn’t even know the magazine room existed until they did the audit” and suggested that they would prefer to have the magazine space as the youth space as they felt safer there.

The appeal of the Library to young people could significantly and easily change with some of these ideas.

4.3.3 Accessibility

Any space needs to be accessible, which includes disability access, physical movement to and around the space, and affordability to engage with the space.

Any space needs to be accessible, which includes disability access, physical movement to and around the space, and affordability to engage with the space. The young people expressed that getting to and from the library by public transport was relatively easy. However, they felt that the Library could be better sign posted. The young people commented that it was in close proximity to places they usually accessed such as the mall, bus routes and school.

For those that biked, the consensus was that there weren’t enough bike stands (only one) and the bike stands that were present were not modern bike stands that ensure your bike is safer. They expressed that the round arch ones that are currently located at the entrance of the library, make it easier to steal bikes. They suggested simply updating these bike stands.

The young people felt that there could be more toilets available for users in the library and also some gender neutral options that weren’t the disabled toilets. They would recommend providing more toilets and more inclusive options like at Tūranga Library. They also highlighted that there were no showers to use and therefore adding showers to the library could be considered.



4.3.4 Well-Resourced

A space that is well-resourced with young people in mind is a space that will be well-used.

A space that is well-resourced with young people in mind is a space that will be well-used. Young people expressed that they felt that there was good information about other services, however, felt that information about the 'youth clubs' could be better advertised and more easily accessible.

The young people said that the staff were friendly, nice and that they are "not scary and won't bite". They specifically expressed that some of the staff felt more relatable as they were closer in age.

Young people liked that there were computers available and that there was a PlayStation that anyone could use. However, they suggested that there needed to be a greater choice of video games. Some of the young people suggested that there could be more activities for young people, such as, colouring, crafts, sing star, board games, and more events. Some of the young people expressed that they would like to see a drawing/sketching club, a colouring club and a LGBTQ club. To promote this, young people felt that there needed to be better advertising and posters so that it was easier to access these resources. A simple suggestion was to make a registration form, so if you wanted to create a club or join one you could register to be involved.

The suggestion of more chairs and comfy places to sit such as more bean bags etc. was also raised again within this discussion around resourcing. This highlights a strong consensus that the Shirley Library should have more places for both young people and all library users to sit.

In terms of books, young people were in agreement that there needed to be more new books circulating in from other libraries and more books for them as young adults.

4.3.5 Youth-Friendly

You can tell a youth-friendly space by the feeling you get when you walk in – young people feel wanted here.

Young people found that the Shirley Library did not feel youth friendly or youthful. One young person said that "it feels like an adult space and the youth space feels like an afterthought". Whereas another young person explained that after school it sometimes felt youthful with all the students from schools however it didn't on the weekend as there were far fewer young people.



When asked if the space reflected their culture many of the young people said that it doesn't feel multicultural and that they would love to see more Te Ao Māori and Te Reo Māori around the space. One person stated that they feel comfortable in the space, but not valued.

How then can the Library make young people feel valued?

Some suggested that young people should be included in the decisions more and that there should be more of a youth voice present. One person suggested that the Library should ask some of the young people to be on a team to help with the design of the library. Overall, they wanted to be able to continue to give feedback, make suggestions on the space and have their voice heard.

Some practical suggestions were to make a young librarian club and to create a day where young people can learn how to be a librarian. Something similar to an event run for Kidsfest but for older young people. To increase the vibrancy and youth friendliness of the space the young people suggested that there be more artwork on the walls. They felt that a short-term art club could be formulated to help design and think about what to put on the walls. They thought that using New Zealand artists to collaborate with the young people could be a great idea as well.

4.3.6 General Feedback

At the end of the focus group the youth auditors were asked some final questions about what else they liked about the space, if there is anything they didn't like, or any other final suggestions or recommendations.

Overall, the young people that came along to the audits were either regular users of the Shirley Library or hadn't been many times before. Some final and general feedback that they gave was that they thought the library could provide free water for all users. They wanted to see some of the suggestions they've made be implemented and a feedback box or process put in place so that they could continue to have their say on the library.

5. Recommendations

The average net promoter score is low and suggested that young people would not recommend the space to others. Some of the below recommendations we believe would significantly improve the space. Although we have summarised five key recommendations, the young people who audited the Shirley Library have made many achievable recommendations throughout this report and therefore we would recommend considering everything within this report to make the Shirley Library better for all users, not just youth.

5.1 Rethink the location of the current youth space

The average net promoter score is low and suggested that young people would not recommend the space to others. Some of the below recommendations we believe would significantly improve the space. Although we have summarised five key recommendations, the young people who audited the Shirley Library have made many achievable recommendations throughout this report and therefore we would recommend considering everything within this report to make the Shirley Library better for all users, not just youth.

5.2 Increase resourcing (clubs, books, activities)

We would recommend that the library considers increasing the resources that they currently offer. The rangatahi would like to see an increase in the circulation of young adult books. The recommendation, therefore, is that the Shirley Library increase the number of Young Adults books available or provide clearer information on how to request books.

Rangatahi also wanted to see a more diverse range of clubs available and to be included in the running of these clubs. Recommendations to achieve this includes implementing a colouring, LGBTQ and a drawing/sketching club. It is also recommended that there are opportunities for young people to easily make new suggestions of clubs they would like to see offered or run themselves.

5.3 Make the space more vibrant



Young people want to feel connected and valued in the Shirley Library. They currently feel that the library is lacking colour and vibrancy.

We recommend considering the idea that was raised about young people collaborating with local artists to create artwork for the library. Young people also wanted to see more colour in general on the walls and suggested re-painting some of the walls a different colour. Plants and greenery would also brighten up the space and make it more homely and comfortable which is an easy implementation.

5.4 Include young people in processes and decisions

A key thing that was raised was young people felt like they didn't know how to have their say on the youth space, activities and the library in general. The first time they felt like they were able to do this was through the audit.

We recommend including young people in decisions made about the library right from conception. When young people are included in processes, they feel valued and are more likely to use the space they have had their say on. Young people expressed that they wanted to be able to continue to give their feedback and have influence.

We recommend setting up different avenues so that young people can give feedback and be involved.

5.5 Increase safety

We recommend considering how to provide better lighting options in the carpark and surrounding areas of the library so that young people and users feel safe leaving and entering the library.

Another recommendation would be providing new bike stands and better signage on the carpark and road facing fronts of the Library.



5. Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to read this Youth Friendly Spaces report and considering the above recommendations to make Shirley Library more youth friendly.

We appreciate you allowing us into your space and showing us around and answering any questions we had. From here, we are happy to meet with you to discuss any of the feedback or recommendations in this report and how you might like to act on any of the above.

Following best practice youth engagement, it is important for us to feedback to the young people who participated in the audit how their voices have been used and taken on board by the audited space. We will follow up with you three months from the date this report is sent to you to ask about how this report has been received and if there is any action to report back to the youth auditors.



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