

Western Counties Regional Library

Library Accessibility Committee - Report on 2024-25 Activities

Introduction

Western Counties Regional Library works on accessibility projects every year. We choose the projects from the activities that are described in the Western Counties Regional Library Accessibility Plan. Some projects will take more than one year to complete. Other projects will be added in the future.

Collections

- We added more Playaways to the collection.
- We buy materials that persons with disabilities create.
- We train staff on how to use the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA) and the National Network for Equitable Library Service (NNELS).

Employment

- We added closed captioning to our staff training videos.
- We added accessibility features to our new online staff manual.

Information and Communications

- We hired People First Canada to translate our public policies into plain language.
- We trained staff on how to create posters that are easier to see and read. We follow the accessibility guidelines for posters and notices.
- We created accessibility standards for our social media posts. Our social media posts are at a grade 5 to 7 reading level. The images have alt text descriptions. The text is in accessible fonts.

Programs and Services

- We offered workshops on how to access Western Counties Regional Library's digital collections. We gave tips on how to use the accessibility features that were available with these resources.

Built Environment

- We hired a Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certified Professional to perform the accessibility audits for our ten branches and library headquarters. We were able to pay someone for this work through the Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage's Library Development Fund Grant. We received 11 audit reports in March. Our goal is to be able to work with building owners on facilities improvement plans for all 11 facilities. We want to remove barriers within our library spaces.
- We adjusted the shelf heights in the Yarmouth branch based on the recommendations from the accessibility audits. We reduced the size of the collections to follow the new height requirements.
- We applied for and received a grant from the Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage's Library Development Fund Grant to upgrade our service desks.