



WROUGHTON & WICHELSTOWE PARISH COUNCIL

Report to the Full Council meeting on 23rd July 2025

Proposal to purchase sensory items for the Library and accept the offer from the Roxi Foundation to run a sensory area for the Christmas Lights Switch-on to enhance accessibility for neurodiverse residents

Introduction

The Roxi Foundation are working with a few parish councils in Swindon and asked to meet to discuss whether they could offer any outreach in Wroughton. When they visited, they were able to offer advice on how to make the library more accessible for neurodiverse people, thereby making it more inclusive.

Advice provided by and offers of help made by the Roxi Foundation following their visit:

Sensory Processing Difficulties are a common challenge for many neurodivergent people, and adapting spaces to meet these needs can significantly improve comfort, accessibility, and overall experience. The main sensory factors they advised to be considered are sound, lighting, smell, texture, and temperature.

Noise

The space was quite loud today, even with only a few people present. To help manage auditory overwhelm, you might consider:

- Providing [ear defenders](#) for library users. These could be cleaned between uses with fragrance-free antiseptic wipes to avoid further sensory triggers.
- Introducing a [sensory egg chair](#). These enclosed chairs offer both auditory and visual shielding, creating a calming, private space within a busy room—ideal for anyone who needs a sensory break.

Lighting

The current lighting is quite bright, which can be overstimulating for some. If the lights can be dimmed or turned off in sections, consider creating a sensory-friendly area with lower lighting. This would also enhance features such as [bubble lights](#) or [galaxy projectors](#), which can be highly calming in a dim environment.

Temperature

While the temperature felt fine today, it's worth monitoring over time. Spaces that are too warm or cold can quickly become overwhelming. [Weighted blankets](#) could be a helpful addition. They provide deep pressure input, which can calm the nervous system and help individuals feel grounded and secure.

Smell

Strong smells from events like cooking, painting, cleaning, or animal handling can be difficult for some to tolerate. Consider posting advance notices on social media or signage in the library when such events are scheduled. This helps families plan visits accordingly and avoid sensory overwhelm.

Fidget Library

We discussed the idea of a "[Fidget Library](#)"—sensory tools that could be borrowed like books. These are great for helping individuals self-regulate and stay engaged.

Even having a few fidget toys available in communal areas can make a big difference. John will speak with our contact at SEND Families Voice to see if we can get a starter set of general-use fidgets for the library.

Fear of the Unknown

For many neurodivergent families, unfamiliarity with a space can be a significant barrier. Creating videos that walk through the space can help reduce anxiety. For example:

- A video showing the route from the car park into the building, down the corridor, and into the library.
- Introduce friendly staff, show where to pick up and return books, where to sit and read, and even where the toilets are.

This not only helps individuals feel more prepared but also provides a wonderful opportunity to promote the great work WPC is doing. I'd be happy to support creating something like this when the time is right—here's an [example](#) of a video we produced for our Sensory Film Showing in March.

Sensory Tent for Christmas Light Switch-On

We'd love to support the Christmas event by providing a sensory tent in the courtyard. We have all the necessary equipment; the main thing to consider will be how to keep the space warm and inviting, particularly for those sensitive to the cold. We can explore safe, portable heating options closer to the time.

Summer Drop-In Sessions

We'll take a look at our diaries and suggest a few dates/times for summer drop-in sessions—let us know if there's anything specific you'd like us to keep in mind.

Reasonable adjustments made to date to make the library more inclusive for neurodiverse people

- The Library Supervisor had already posted comms with the times when the library is generally quieter.
- Coloured paper over the window in the children's area to reduce the glare through the window.

Reasonable adjustments which are work in progress:

- The sensory egg chair is a considered purchase at £800+. The library is often hired out to other user groups which move library furniture, some of whom have not been considerate. The Library Supervisor is investigating the possibility of setting up a bespoke covered area within the library.
- Providing information about eg: cooking smells requires an understanding of the use of the kitchen and other areas of the community centre. This is something staff will need to look into further.
- Fidget Library: Staff will work with The Roxi Foundation to try to bring this into the library, either for people to borrow whilst using the library, or to borrow and take home, similar way to borrowing a book.
- Video: we will work with The Roxi Foundation to try to provide a film of the library/ Community Centre.
- The Roxi Foundation will provide some dates to for an outreach/ summer drop-in session.

Recommendations:

1. **Order 2 pairs of ear defenders: £12.46 + VAT x 2 = £24.92 + VAT**
2. **Order a star projector at £9.99 + VAT. This would be positioned so no-one can look into the light source.**
https://www.amazon.co.uk/AIBEAU-Astronaut-Projector-Christmas-Valentines/dp/B0DD6ZWWJ4/ref=sr_1_17?crid=HUBP6VE7KJS&dib=eyJ2IjojMSJ9.DW2s5nk8BKX_6CLx4oP_xnPgu_fKcU7wygV-PAP3IMkgsQaZvc-oHIDrn_bi-lo9nMHD-QVHxpL-VHsO965oqMA-hRJv_99Ni2-Lpk_ewKQZZ3yx-gv7ALxA8I2OUfWuyBS4RWj4RX9hbrxmCI3BN4cGzkPkbllXvgODQXXulYISRx8ugU_23A-HEjxdeA2HKbO4T7FljA3B_uey3wESpuS897S5w37_QrKclZza0ZpzTlv67hhE5J--aBh-7jskVSFTzZlyPRDvT6T_XD51M3spHyTmDkIn9diQk-chf5c.SPNohkQShS3AyCjgScQ1oNACKrWtkUyUdVaoMFASv8M&dib_tag=se&keywords=star+projector&qid=1750075077&sprefix=star+projector%2Caps%2C115&sr=8-17

3. **Purchase a washable, weighted blanket suitable for a child – £19.99 + VAT.**

https://www.amazon.co.uk/viceroy-bedding-Weighted-Blanket-Material/dp/B0F6NW1ZLS/ref=sr_1_4_sspa?dib=eyJ2IjoiMSJ9.n-uK94uysuDSJlmd9Cy3qG1JTg4iDHTxoO0nK4Z0uYc9ZXpThsvQyY6Mte6FoUjZZifos7zQLOVmgRB4632zTZuSJRwQ-hRB7q29Q969TXeQjnEnQJTTnsWrddnFtfD7ZWfO1oEXq3EHApH0w0tWf90q221W0zQkH84s3CwHaQWn2MwJnu7fZRExgcNG3xZQMtvCoTseBq6TvOiQxoaLKxVEl3SsD8EdY4PguVbMHDIIQBhEEEntN62lp2niN6T_tlaIGRh33-kDAQ9cc5_d7oeJsUKoBB-uuZ4vMVyWBA.I9bJtSJ1ZfJnGuon2B-DaNm-14mvmkRPOiFRYE8hAEo8&dib_tag=se&keywords=washable%2Bweighted%2Bblanket&qid=1750074693&sr=8-4-spons&sp_csd=d2lkZ2V0TmFtZT1zcF9hdGY&th=1

4. **Accept the offer from The Roxi Foundation to run a sensory tent in the garden at the Christmas Lights switch-on and agree to purchase or hire a couple of outdoor heaters suitable for use in a large tent to a maximum of £350. (Hire costs range from £25 to £170 per heater.)**