

Wroughton Library Report October 2025

Four new cover staff

On October 8th Glenda from Swindon Library Services came to train three of our four excellent new library cover staff. They learned enough of the basic processes to be able to help on alternate Saturdays, once they have signed their contracts.

The new staff are a graphic designer who's an existing library volunteer, a governance manager, someone with a background in E-commerce, and a school librarian.

New flag, A frame, Shelves, and Stack Shelves

Hickmans came into the library on October 9th and we discussed the benefits of replacing some of the ceiling lights for ones which are brighter. It does get surprisingly dark in the library, and some of our borrowers struggle to read due to the poor lighting. We are waiting for Hickmans quote and will bring that to a future meeting for approval.

New slat shelves

Thanks to money from the Duck Race and some from the library budget, we were able to purchase two slat shelves which are positioned at the end of our bookshelves. They each take 15 books, and Paula has set one up as a "Recommended by You" section, which is working well. We will also be requesting to purchase a 3rd set of shelves for the remaining, 'bare' shelf end.

New puppet theatre donated by Michelle Lebby-Searl

We have been donated a really attractive wooden puppet theatre and two bags of puppet characters by a local mum. It has added to the attraction of the children's section and generates a lot of imaginative play, so we are delighted.

Christmas Lights switch- on and the Library Lantern Parade!

Yes, it's back! We had so much positive feedback last year that we are planning another procession with a moon and stars theme. We plan to make it easier and less craft intensive by purchasing round Chinese lanterns for children to decorate and carry with small electric tealights inside, while the more able bodied crafters make one moon and two big stars using 5' long bamboo canes with lengths of electric fairy lights inside. There will still be a lot of prep to do, but overall, less work and the results will be just as spectacular. I have prepared a report setting out the detail to request approval for the costs. We are also preparing for a Christmas craft for the children to do, with a better system to reduce queues.

Roxi Foundation visit Saturday 4th October

The Roxi Foundation is a charity that supports children and families impacted by Autism and ADHD. The morning was quiet, but they talked to enough families to make an impact. They also filmed the empty library and the route from the entrance into the community centre right through to the library before they left, to show families with neuro divergent children what to expect before they come. This helps reduce anxiety over somewhere they may never have visited before. We've already shared that film on our library fb page with local fb groups.

New library bookstock

The Swindon Borough Council librarian who orders books for our library explained that the reason we have been receiving so many new children's books but very few adult books is that children's books are cheaper (no VAT) so offer better value for money. I have asked that she flips the 60:40 ratio until next April so that we have more adult fiction and non-fiction. We have sent a list of the authors and sorts of stories our borrowers like, which she will hopefully bear in mind. This should improve the choice and stock available to adult readers. We will re-evaluate in April next year.

Citizens Advice and Swindon Borough Council Housing Officer drop-in sessions

These have both been busier during the last three months. This may be because people are getting used to it being here, and remembering we host it; or are more in need.

Swindon Borough Council Local Plan

Approximately 12 people have specifically asked to see the copy of the Local Plan, while about another 15 have stopped to look as they passed.

Creative writing course - feedback from Heather Hawkins

Heather and I devised a short questionnaire after her first 5 week writing course. It seems to have been a great success, with some attendees asking for another course to write poetry. We are hoping to have a display of their work in the library soon. This from Heather:

"The ladies also completed the feedback sheets. Their responses are positive and they are interested in future workshops. There is also considerable interest in crafting and repair workshops in the library too."

We will be discussing whether we could host a poetry writing course and will come back to Members for approval when we have a recommendation for you to consider.

Banner Workshop

Jo and Josie from Stitch Social Swindon were brilliant. I hope you spotted the photos on fb of the sold-out workshop and the amazing banners that were created. One lady drove from Stroud to be here, and one phoned from Sri Lanka to book her place. The exhibition itself created lots of interest, with many customers dismayed now that the banners have gone. Jo and Josie said it was one of the best workshops they had ever run and that there was a fantastic atmosphere. You can see the banner I made hanging up in the kitchen area. 😊

Ellendune 1200

I prepared 25 swords which were simple to put together, needing only tape and tinfoil. Interestingly, it was the parents who did most of the crafting, which makes me think there is an appetite for more! Either way, it was a very popular activity!

Lego Garden competition entries in the Wroughton Gardeners Autumn Show

Our lego club members won the lot and have the trophy to prove it!!

Canal Trust: Exhibition of maps and plans, and event on the evening of 23rd October

We have a Canal Extravaganza on the evening of 23rd October, here in the Library. Everything you always wanted to know about the canal, past, present and future. We'd love some of you to come and support this event. Tickets are only £5 from the library. There's also a really informative exhibition in the corridor of the canal in its heyday, compared to now. Please take a look and spread the word.

"Pick, Cook and Eat"

The amazing Nancy Lawson came to talk about her charity Pick, Cook and Eat on October 9th. We sold 48 tickets, and of the final two that were put by for Nancy's parents who could not attend, one was taken by her husband; so a packed house (our max is 50 seated in the library). Nancy had brought along an extra power point, so Zoe very kindly agreed to man the laptop to ensure there were no tech issues, my thanks to her. Nancy talked about the history of her family's farm, about the B&B business, her cookery courses, the experience of appearing in "Four In a Bed" and even made a cake! The event raised £330 for her charity including sales of her recipe book as well as raising money for the library. Nancy is going to speak to local farmers about the possibility of giving another presentation about the history of farming and horse racing around Wroughton. Watch this space!!