

# LIBRARY NEWS

ISLE OF WIGHT LIBRARIES

July 2025



## Summertime and the reading is easy...

Summer is such a great time of year for getting in some extra reading, whether you're in the garden or at the beach and with lots of brilliant new books coming out in July and August (check some of them out on the next page) this summer could be your best reading season yet! We've asked our staff what their favourite 'beach books' are and there's plenty of great suggestions to keep you reading all summer long.

Summer is also the time when libraries across the UK host the annual Summer Reading Challenge for children, a fun, free challenge to keep your children reading over the school holidays - more about this on page 2.

Work at Cowes Library is still ongoing but the library is now open again and library staff are keen to welcome their customers back. Have a look at the photos above to see the new look library! Adam the Library Supervisor at Cowes is featured in our staff spotlight for July.

We have plenty of dates for your diary in this issue as the summer holidays always mean lots of free and low cost activities for children in our libraries, so do take a look and join in the fun.

We'll be back in September, but until then you can keep up to date with all the latest library news on our Facebook page and library website.

*Your library team x*

## Updates

**Cowes Library** - Is open! The library resumed its regular opening hours on Monday 2 June and the staff there are delighted to be back. Due to ongoing building works, they are unable to resume all of their usual activities quite yet, but currently their Rhyme time, Lego club, chess and games club sessions are all up and running again.

**Spydus Library app** - There is a new version of the Spydus Library app available to download from your app stores. It's completely free and all you need to sign in is your library card number and 4 digit PIN. From the app you can manage your account and browse and reserve books. There are still a few teething problems with it though, so do let us know if you experience any issues with it.

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# THE BOOK BIT

## Books hitting the shelves in July and August

Libraries take delivery of new books most weeks and if you want to be first in line for the latest from your favourite authors then you can reserve books in advance for just 80p each. You can do this in the library with a member of staff or via our online catalogue at [www.iow.gov.uk/thelibrary](http://www.iow.gov.uk/thelibrary). Look out for the monthly publication posters in libraries which show you more of the most popular titles coming out each month. Here are a few of the titles being published in July and August.



Story Garden logo artwork © The Reading Agency 2025



The Summer Reading Challenge has now started in all our libraries. This year's challenge is called Story Garden, so we're busy planning loads of activities about nature and gardens!

### What is the Summer Reading Challenge?

The Summer Reading Challenge challenges children to read six books in July and August. Anyone taking the challenge gets a colourful fold-out poster. As they read books over the summer, they collect stickers, along with other goodies. When they've read six books, they get a medal and a certificate.

### What are the benefits of the challenge?

Well, first of all, it's fun! But there's a serious reason behind it too. In 2024, only a third of children said that they enjoyed reading. Left to themselves, lots of children wouldn't touch a book over the holidays, and their reading abilities have dropped by September. The challenge keeps them reading and can help prevent this "summer dip."

A key principle is that children choose their own books. They can be any books they like. It doesn't matter if they're "too easy" or if they've read them before. They can be non-fiction or even audio books. This free choice can make such a difference to children. Every year we hear from delighted parents whose children have gone from hating books to loving them over the course of one summer.

### How do children join?

The challenge runs in all island libraries, including the community libraries. Children aged 4 and over can join the main challenge, but there's also a mini-challenge for children aged 3 and under, with age-appropriate rewards.

**The challenge starts on Saturday 5 July and runs until Saturday 6 September. It's free to join – just pop into any library and ask!**



### Tilt by Emma Pattee

This is a thrilling literary debut about survival, that manages to combine all the best elements of a thriller at the same time as examining a marriage and the prospect of motherhood.

When we meet Annie the protagonist of the novel, she is 37 weeks pregnant and belatedly shopping for a crib in IKEA. When an earthquake hits, everything is thrown into chaos and the only thing Annie can do to survive is walk - walk to find her husband and get herself and her unborn baby to safety.

As she walks, the narrative splits into alternating chapters of past and present and we learn the origins of her relationship with her husband and just how far she will go to survive.

At just under 250 pages, this is a short but impactful novel about love, life and and what we do when disaster strikes. **LE**





# STAFF SPOTLIGHT

## ... meet Adam

### Adam is the Library Supervisor at Cowes Library

#### When did you start working for the Library Service?

I started as a Saturday assistant back in July 2000, before becoming a relief library assistant (covering for annual leave or sickness) which I did while I was still at college and here I am many years later having gradually moved up the ranks!

#### What is your current role in the Library Service?

I'm the Supervisor of Cowes Library, a role I've recently taken over from Joyce Blizzard who showed me the ropes when I first began working for the library service. I work with an excellent team and whilst I have many parts to my working life and have been involved in various aspects of the service across the Island, Cowes Library feels like home.

#### What is your favourite part of the job?

For me, my favourite part of the job is helping people. Whether that's through using my own experience of having dyslexia as a way of helping people with their own, researching local history or coming up with something to inspire children and families to be creative and have fun.

#### What is one aspect of the Library Service that you think not enough people know about?

I'd say the main aspect of the library service that some people don't know about is the free computer use that we offer - this includes free internet access (over WiFi or on our public computers) and affordable printing (just 20p per side). This service could be useful for students, jobseekers, families, businesses and many other people for a variety of reasons.

#### What's the funniest/strangest thing that's happened at work?

There are too many moments, comments and situations to list, but the animal moments we seem

to get frequently at Cowes library stick in my head the most - when a tiny Goldcrest got stuck up in the roof and I called it down with a whistling/squeaking sound, the time we had lots of hummingbird hawkmoths out the front and everyone thought we had hummingbirds, and the ginger cat that sneaks in every winter to hide in the non-fiction section and the complaining nooooooo when I carry him outside!!

#### Do you have a favourite place to read?

Being dyslexic I read mostly with my ears, so wherever I am with headphones in, but if I'm reading a graphic novel then I would most likely be doing so under a tree near the sea, or on my friend's sofa on the day they get their comics.

#### What is your favourite thing about Cowes Library?

Other than the great team I get to work with and the varied community that use the library, I would say that my favourite thing is the library's connection to the Island's sailing and shipbuilding history. From the balcony of maritime related books (including my favourite books on lighthouse construction), the fantastic museum area to the various enquiries we receive in person, over the phone or via email about Cowes history.



#### Adams' desert Island reads

##### The Hitchhiker's guide to the galaxy by Douglas Adams

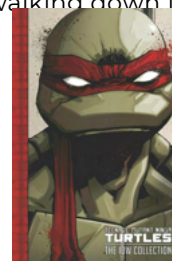
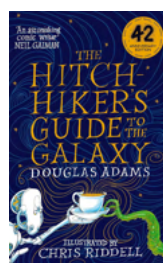
This is a trilogy in five parts - because all five books are technically one aren't they?! You can buy them as one...

##### The IDW Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles comics

This series started in August 2011 and is still going strong...tales of friendship, love and family, plus ninjas, aliens and so much more!

##### And away by Bob Mortimer

This autobiography is brilliant. It's really interesting but makes me laugh very loudly in public when I'm listening to it while walking down the High Street!





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# Monthly quiz nights at Freshwater Library

If you need something to look forward to and get your brain ticking over at the start of the week, then the Freshwater library monthly quiz could be for you!

The quiz was started by Freshwater library volunteer Pat Burge when restrictions were lifted at the end of lock down, with the idea of getting people together again in a safely controlled environment. Despite the need for face masks and hand sanitiser, the evenings proved to be really good fun and offered a much needed chance to socialise again.

The quiz has since established itself as a regular fixture at the library. Held on the first Monday of every month (even on Bank Holidays), there is now a 'bank' of regular teams and new people joining in all the time. Entry is cheap - just £1 per person and you can book through the Friends of Freshwater Library website <https://www.fofl.co.uk/>. For anyone wishing to go solo or in a team of two, there is a separate contact email provided. On quiz night you can take along refreshments to enjoy whilst taking part and if you're on the winning team you might win your snacks for the next month's quiz, as the prize for the winners is usually something along the lines of a box of biscuits.



If this friendly, fun quiz sounds like something you would enjoy then head to Friends of the Library website or email quiz organiser Pat to find out more. her email is [patsymburge@gmail.com](mailto:patsymburge@gmail.com) and she'll be happy to provide more information.

# Big tasty read



Follow us on Facebook for posts about library staff's favourite food-based books!

The **Big Tasty Read** is a collaboration between The Reading Agency and BBC Arts and is a new national celebration using the universal appeal of food to inspire reading and bring communities together. It recognises the powerful connection between food, culture and storytelling and the campaign aims to highlight books that explore the role of food in our lives, whether that's through novels that tantalise your tastebuds or non-fiction cookery books and memoirs.

Here at the library service we're always happy to talk and read about food and we'll be celebrating the Big Tasty Read with food-themed book displays, and some special events! Sandown Library is hosting a Big Tasty Bake-off at the beginning of September (see their webpage for more information) and the library service will have a **'pop-up' library at the Garlic Farm on Saturday 9 August when the Garlic Farm are kindly offering 10% off items purchased in their shop that day to anyone who shows their library card.** We will be able to sign you up to the library on the day, so if you haven't got a library card yet this will be a good opportunity to get one and some bargains in the shop!

## Jane Austen at Lord Louis Library



Fans of Jane Austen enjoyed a fascinating talk by Helen Howe at Lord Louis Library on 25 June.

Helen is a member of the Jane Austen society and a committee member of the Hampshire branch and with a BSc Hons in English and Drama and an MA in Literary Studies she is well qualified to do justice to the life of Jane Austen. The event was sold out and Helen entertained the audience with the story of Jane Austen's life focussing especially on her naval connections and her love of seaside holidays. With fascinating insights into the author's family life and writing career, the talk was a hit with everyone who came along and the Q&A at the end gave people a chance to find out even more.

If you missed out on this talk, don't worry! Helen is coming back in November to do a talk at Ryde Library about Jane Austen at Christmas. Keep an eye out nearer the time for details and how to get tickets. In the meantime, you can enjoy free monthly screenings of Jane Austen adaptations at Sandown Library. See the dates for your diary section for more details.





# STAFF SELECTIONS FOR SUMMER READING

Elsbeth at Library HQ- **Swallows and Amazons by Arthur Ransome** - *I love the Lake District, and whenever I holiday there, I like to reread these old childhood favourites while visiting the places that inspired them.*

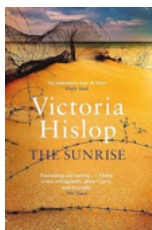
Patrick at Lord Louis Library - **Thin air by Michelle Paver** *Is a masterclass in atmospheric horror that grips and chills long after the final page - perfect for a hot summer night.*



Adam at Cowes Library - **The satsuma complex by Bob Mortimer** *It makes me physically laugh, solid, joyful belly laughs, whilst also being rather intriguing.*

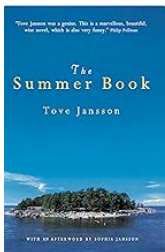


Sharon at Ryde Library - **One girl, one summer by Isabel Ashdown** *A book about a family disaster set on their camp site and the repercussions it brings.*



Wilma at Ventnor Library- **The sunrise by Victoria Hislop** - *It covers a troubled time in the history of the island of Cyprus but it shows even in divided times love and family bonds, despite being severely tested, can still survive.*

Eleanor at Freshwater Library - **The summer book by Tove Jansson** - *This is a very gentle story set on a small island in the Gulf of Finland. A six year old spends the summer with her grandmother at her summer house- a traditional wooden cabin. It evokes the peace and beauty of summer in the north and explores how the grandmother and granddaughter learn to get along with each other. I don't know anyone who hasn't enjoyed this book!*

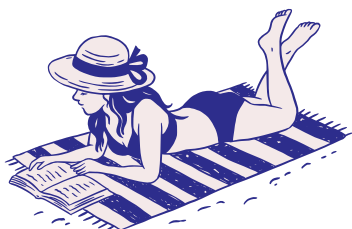
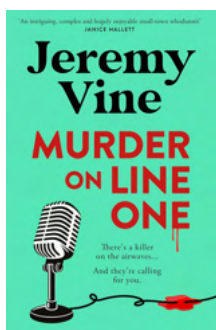


Jo at Lord Louis Library - **The Heatwave by Katerina Diamond** - *a brilliant summer set thriller with a great twist.*

Lou at Sandown Library - **Nora goes off script by Annabel Monaghan** - *This is a charming summer romance that's a perfect combination of heart, humour and drama!*



Faith at Library HQ - **Murder on line one by Jeremy Vine** - *It was a funny but quite complex cosy crime with intriguing characters.*





## Dates for your diary

- **July 15 - Volunteer opportunities with Children's Services** at Lord Louis Library 9.30am to 2.30pm. Drop in to find out how you can volunteer with children's services.
- **July 19 - Crocodile themed story and crafts** at Ryde Library 11.00am. Suitable for children aged 4+
- **July 26 - FREE cinema screening of Emma** at Sandown Library 1.45pm. Tickets available in advance from Sandown Library.
- **July 31 - Painting rock owls** at Lord Louis Library 2.30pm to 3.30pm. Suitable for children aged 5+ Booking essential.
- **August 2 - Creating folding butterflies** at Lord Louis Library 2.30pm to 3.30pm. Suitable for children aged 5+ Booking essential.
- **August 5 - Junk modelling** at Sandown Library. 10.30am to 12.00pm. Suitable for children aged 3+ no need to book.
- **August 7 - Make 3D hand -print tree blossoms** at Lord Louis Library 2.30pm to 3.30pm. Suitable for children aged 3+ Booking essential.
- **August 9 - Pop-up library at the Garlic Farm** 9.30am to 4.30pm. Get 10% off purchases in the Garlic Farm shop when you show your library card. Don't have one yet? Join on the day to get your discount.
- **August 11 - Create a fairy garden in a teacup at Lord Louis Library** 2.15pm to 3.30pm. Suitable for children aged 7+ Booking essential.
- **August 13 - Grow a story craft** at Ventnor Library 10.30am to 11.30am. Suitable for children aged 5+ Booking essential.
- **August 15 - Plant pot decorating** Sandown Library 10.30am suitable for children aged 5+ Booking essential.
- **August 18 - Make garden wind chimes** at Lord Louis Library 2.30pm to 3.30pm. Suitable for children aged 5+ Booking essential.
- **August 19 -Drop-in summer crafts** Sandown Library 10.30am to 12.00pm. Suitable for children aged 4+
- **August 23 - Make wriggly caterpillars** at Ventnor Library 10.30am to 11.30am. Suitable for children aged 5+ No need to book.
- **August 23 - Make clay mini beasts** at Lord Louis Library 2.00pm to 3.30pm. Suitable for children aged 5+ Booking is essential.
- **August 30 - FREE cinema screening of Mansfield Park** at Sandown Library 1.45pm. Tickets available in advance from Sandown Library.
- **September 3 - Big Tasty Read Bake-off competition** at Sandown Library.

For more information on these and any of our other events and activities check out our library web and Facebook pages.

*Keep in touch*

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