

LIBRARY NEWS

ISLE OF WIGHT LIBRARIES

June 2026



Pop up libraries, prize givings and plenty of summer reads!

It's been a busy couple of months since our last issue, we've celebrated World Book Night and Libraries Week and held the prize giving ceremony for the young winners of our Small Story competition. We're now gearing up for the Biosphere Festival at the end of June and the start of the annual Summer Reading Challenge in July so there's plenty more good stuff on the way!

Two events definitely worth highlighting are workshops from New Carnival taking place at Lord Louis and Ryde Libraries on Saturday 27 June and Wednesday 1 July respectively. The workshop at Lord Louis is a beginners crochet session for young people aged 12 to 16 years and Ryde's workshop is a book making session for adults. Both of these sessions have been made possible by funding from The Reading Agency as part of The National Year of Reading and are completely free for participants. More details can be found on page 12 (this is a bumper edition!!) but we anticipate these workshops will book up quickly, so reserve your place now to avoid disappointment!

The library service will be continuing to pop up in different locations over the coming months, so do keep an eye out for us on your travels - we're attending the Ventnor Summer Festival on Sunday 28 June and we've got a stall at The Independent Living Show at the IW Steam Railway on Sunday 12 July. If you'd like to find out more about our services then do come over and say hello!

If events and workshops aren't your thing then don't worry - we've still got you covered! Head to the 'book bit' of this newsletter to get lots of summer reading recommendations from library staff that will keep you building your to-be-read piles and turning the pages over the coming weeks. Don't forget we'd love to hear your recommendations too - you can get in touch with us anytime using the email address on the back page. If we get enough we'll feature them in the August issue.

Until next time -

Your library team x

In this newsletter:

Library updates

The book bit

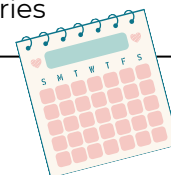
Summer reading recommendations

Staff spotlight

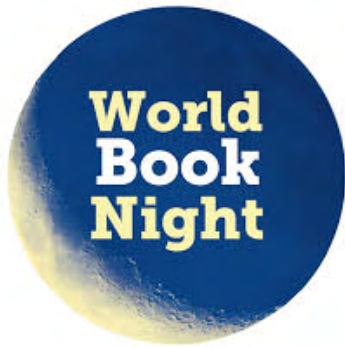
Read to the beat

Small Stories

Dates for your diaries



LIBRARY UPDATES...



Libraries across the Island celebrated World Book Night with book swaps, silent reading and lots of bookish conversations.



The national event takes place every year on 23 April and celebrates reading for pleasure for adults and young people. World Book Night brings people from all backgrounds together with the aim of inspiring people to read more and encourage those around them to do the same.

Our libraries held events both before, during and after World Book Night with book swaps, book chats and quizzes and participated in the official 'reading hour' between 7pm and 8pm giving attendees the opportunity to take some time for themselves and enjoy an hour of quiet reading whilst enjoying some refreshments in the library.

Isle of Wight Libraries were also lucky enough to receive copies of one of the official World Book Night 'Quick Read' titles. Quick Reads are short books and great stories by bestselling authors, written in an accessible and easy to read style and form part of the Reading Agency's initiative to help new and lapsed readers access the power of reading and get back in the habit. We were allocated 272 copies of 'The woman next door' by Louise Jensen which we distributed to St Mary's Hospital, The Adelaide and The Gouldings care homes, the prison library service, local Co-ops and Red Funnel for them to give out in their communities.

We really enjoyed ourselves and hope that everyone who came to our events did as well and, that the recipients of 'The woman next door' enjoyed a gripping read!

COMMUNITY **HEROES** at Ryde Library

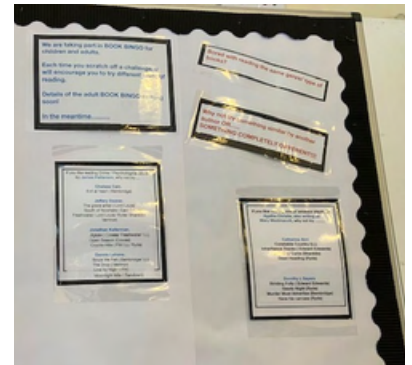


Over 30 children attended a very special story time at Ryde Library with firefighters from Ryde fire station. The visit was part of a community heroes series organised by the children's librarian at Ryde, which started with a visit from the RNLI.

Firefighter's James and Lewis read a story and then gave a presentation about fire safety and the importance of ringing 999. Children were shown various bits of kit and were allowed to try on a fire helmet and hold the hose branch and then were taken outside to see the fire engine and have their photos taken.

All the children that attended were given colouring sheets and puzzles and were awarded a Firefighter in training certificate by the library. Children's librarian Diane said 'It was such a great event, the children all really enjoyed themselves and we want to thank James, Lewis and Nick from Ryde Fire Station for making it such a success.

Brighstone Community Library goes all in for the National Year of Reading!



Brighstone Community Library is one of 5 volunteer-run libraries on the Island and this is the first year they have had the opportunity to join in with our Book Bingo reading challenge. We're delighted to hear from them in their update below - it sounds like the challenge is going really well.

We now have many readers taking part. They tell us how they love the excitement of scratching off the next challenge but mostly trying different authors and discovering stories they might never have chosen before!

It's been fun searching the shelves for a book with a verb in the title. Or finding a book set in a different decade. It's stimulating and enlightening! Have a go! Suggestions on display around the walls and folders of ideas, help readers make choices.

As a self funding library, recent community events have supported our committee's aim to provide new books. A quiz night, a raffle at a local cafe, and an upcoming Book and Cake event on 20th June at The Wilberforce Hall, all help to boost our donations.

All of the above is made possible by the ongoing loyal and dedicated support of our happy band of volunteers. Thank you!!

LIBRARIES WEEK 2026

We celebrated Libraries Week at the beginning of June, a national initiative led by the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) which aims to shine a spotlight on the vital role library services play in their communities across the UK. As 2026 is the National Year of Reading, the theme for this year was 'Libraries change lives through literacy and reading'.

Library staff across all libraries have been chatting to customers about how libraries have changed their lives and these stories were shared on our Facebook pages throughout libraries week. Development Librarian Jo Cooke said the response from users had been overwhelmingly positive 'It's been lovely to hear how much our libraries mean to customers and we hope their enthusiasm will encourage more people to come and see the wide range of services we offer.'

We were also out and about during the week with 'pop-up' libraries being held at Morrisons in Lake and at St Mary's Hospital. These sessions gave people who are unfamiliar with library services the chance to find out more about our offerings and we joined up a lot of new members as well.

The week-long celebrations ended with a prize-giving ceremony at Lord Louis Library for the winners and runners up of our Small Story competition which ran through March and April. Head to page 8 to read all about it and enjoy the winning stories!



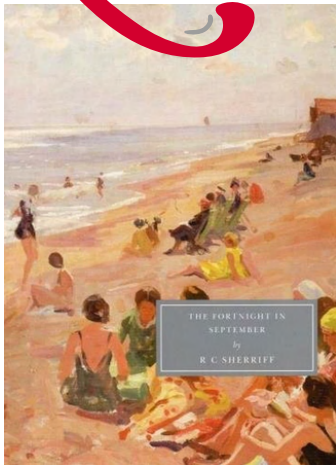
THE BOOK BIT

Books hitting the shelves in June and July

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. 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 June and July



Review



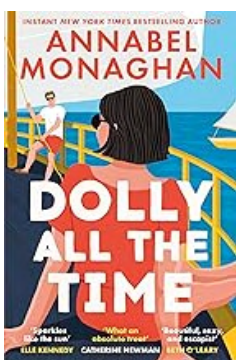
The fortnight in September by R.C. Sheriff

This is the story of the Stevens family. Mr Stevens, an office clerk, Mrs Stevens a housewife and mother, Mary their daughter, their oldest son Dick who is now working and their youngest son Ernie, who is still at school.

Each year in September the family leave their home in Dulwich for a fortnight in Bognor Regis, where they always stay in the same guesthouse. This novel opens on the evening before their holiday and closes as they leave to go home.

I cannot deny that this is a very ordinary story, with little drama or action but 'The Fortnight in September' has a tremendous sense of place. The guest house, the beach, the walks. Although this is not exactly the sort of holiday many of us would recognise today, there is much about it that will be familiar and evoke some summer childhood memories. **Jenny, Sandown Library**

STAFF SUMMER READING RECS FOR A GREAT SEASON OF READS IN THE SUN



'Dolly all the time' is a fake-dating romance that's a cut above the rest. Pick it up for the summer setting and stay for the improbable love story and warm-hearted characters. Then go and read the **The Shippers** by Katherine Centre for more summer shenanigans! **Lou, Sandown Library**

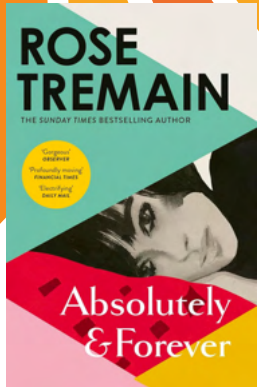


I'm currently working my way through Jodi Taylor's **The Chronicles of St Mary's** series. The books are about a group of modern day, accident prone, time travelling historians who observe and chronicle historical events. So far they have travelled back to prehistoric times, the siege of Troy and visited the court of Mary Queen of Scots. The books are action packed, chaotic, fun, with little bit of romance and are very witty. Easy reads for hot sunny days spent at the beach or lounging by the pool. **Jackie, Ventnor Library**





HELLO SUMMER



Rose Tremain, *Always and Forever*

Loved this little book. The story of a young woman's first love and how she never quite gets over the loss of it. Keeps you gripped throughout.

Catherine Newman, *We all want impossible things*. I really enjoyed *Sandwich* by the same author but this is even better! Although the story is absolutely heartbreaking and had me in tears at times Catherine Newman still manages to include a lot of humour and makes the characters very real and likeable. **Delph, relief library assistant.**



Hot chocolate on Thursday / Michiko Aoyama ; translated from the Japanese by E. Madison Shimoda

A wonderful, heartwarming piece of Japanese fiction, with many smaller stories that all intertwine throughout. I read this book in a day flat, so would be perfect for a quick, summer read in the garden. **Natalie, Cowes Library**

This graphic Novel series is a beautifully action packed science fiction series with heart, linked to the new transformers comics it is a fun read.

I would say it is a read that you could easily digest whilst commuting to work, lazing on the beach or sitting under the shade of a tree in a park.

Adam, Cowes Library



His Diaries 2016–2024 feel like something you can slip into gently rather than read all at once. Alan Bennett has the ability to be quietly funny on one page and deeply moving on the next. He records his physical decline—his deafness, his growing immobility—it is handled without self-pity. He observes it almost as if he's writing about a character, which makes it both poignant and strangely comforting. His mind stays sharp: curious, gently sceptical, and always alert to human absurdity. If you're looking for a different type of read this summer, I highly recommend this!

Jo, Ryde Library.



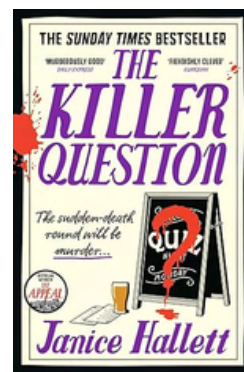
The Barbecue at No.9 by Jennie Godfrey.

I found this very engaging. It is set in the 1980's so the cultural references were very nostalgic for me. I found the book to be witty with relatable characters and there was a good mystery to keep you hooked. **Faith, Library HQ**

The Mistake by MJ Arlidge and Lisa Hall.

Mum of two Natalie has a surprise baby and it throws her family life into disarray. Everyone's lives slowly unravel and then one evening at a party, the baby disappears. Who has taken her and why? All in all a great thriller, there's no murder so it's not grizzly, but it is gripping and a very easy read for summer days by the pool!

Jo, Lord Louis Library



So Thrilled for You by Holly Bourne. It's a captivating novel about four old friends, once inseparable at university but currently living very different lives. Now in their thirties, they meet up again for a baby shower, but the celebrations turn into a disaster as old and new tensions boil over. I enjoyed this exploration of the complexities of friendships and the different paths we can take in life.

Maria, Lord Louis Library

I recommend **The killer question** by Janice Hallett and **Everyone in my family has killed someone** by Benjamin Stevenson. Both are cosier crime but very clever. They make you think and have some great humour in them. Also not to sound like a salesperson but they're great if you enjoy playing cluedo! **Amy, Ryde/Sandown Library**

STAFF SPOTLIGHT ... meet Jenny



Jenny is the Library Supervisor at Sandown Library

When did you start working for the Library Service?

I started working at Lord Louis Library part time in 2002, and soon after I made my hours up to full time by working at Niton library as well. In 2012 Niton Library became a community volunteer-run library and I started working at Sandown Library as the Library Supervisor, where I still work now.

What is your favourite part of the job?

Being able to chat and laugh with our regular customers about a whole variety of subjects.

Strangest/funniest customer enquiry?

At Sandown Library we get a lot of holiday visitors asking us for directions to hotels as they've got lost, bus timetable enquiries when they have a bus timetable in their hands, and we've even been asked to book hotels for people!!

What is one aspect of the library service that you think not enough people know about?

I think the Spydus app (called Spydus Library) is one of the most useful tools provided by the library service. It's easy to install, keeps you logged-in and is always available at the touch of a screen to quickly check if we have a particular title in stock that has been recommended either online, on tv or by word of mouth. You can manage your whole library account through the app - it's brilliant.

2026 is the National Year of Reading – can you recommend a book that would be good for people who want to get back into reading?

One title I would recommend for people who want to get back into reading is Sipsworth by Simon Van Booy. It's a very gentle story about a friendship between a woman and a mouse, and it has a happy ending!

Tell us something we don't know about Sandown Library

Lots of people think Sandown Library is haunted - previous staff who have worked here have found it a bit spooky on dark winter afternoons and we've even been visited by ghost-hunting groups! There is a very dark, creepy cellar under the library apparently haunted by the ghost of a bad man and his dog!



Jenny's Desert Island reads...

Went to London, took the dog by Nina Stibbe

The funny diary of author Nina Stibbe, who returns to London after 20 years and lodges at the home of fellow author Deborah Moggach.

Tilt by Emma Pattee

A short book that is full of action right from the start, when a sudden earthquake completely changes the life of a pregnant woman shopping in Ikea.

On the calculation of volume by Solvej Balle

Tara Selter keeps waking up on November 18th while everyone she meets is unaware that the day has repeated itself. Stuck in time, Tara's only hope is to count the days of the year until November 18th comes round again. This book is very cleverly written, and in some ways Tara has a lot of freedom to do what she wants without upsetting anyone else.





READ to the BEAT



READ to the BEAT



Read to the Beat logo artwork © The Reading Agency 2026

We're busy gearing up for this year's Summer Reading Challenge, which starts in all island libraries on Saturday 4 July. This year's challenge – Read to the Beat - is all about celebrating the joy of music and its power to move, inspire, and connect us - all through the magic of reading.

What is the Summer Reading Challenge?

The Summer Reading Challenge challenges children to read six books (or complete six personalised reading goals – see below) in July and August. Anyone taking the challenge gets a colourful fold-out poster, a bookmark and a free copy of Storytime magazine. As they read books over the summer, they collect stickers, along with other goodies. When they've read six books or completed six goals (or a combination of the two), they get a medal and a certificate.

“Make the challenge your own”

This year, for the first time, children can opt to complete personalised goals to help them make the Challenge their own. These goals help reflect children's different levels of reading confidence and ensure that the Challenge feels achievable.

What are the benefits of the challenge?

Well, first of all, it's fun! But there's a serious reason behind it too. Recent research shows that only 1 in 3 children now enjoy reading and 1 in 4 children can't read well by the age of 11. 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. It doesn't matter if they're “too easy” or if they've read them before. They can be non-fiction, comic books 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 4 July and runs until Saturday 5 September. It's free to join – just pop into any library and ask!



BIG IMAGINATIONS INSPIRED OUTSTANDING SMALL STORIES FROM CHILDREN ACROSS THE ISLAND



Back in March we ran a small story competition for children under 16 years to write a story in just 10 words! The competition was the idea of Lord Louis Library's children's librarian who was inspired by the works of Joseph Coelho and his 'Ten word tiny tales'. We asked children to write a 10-word story accompanied by a picture and we were overwhelmed by the quality and quantity of the entries.

As there were so many fantastic stories, we decided to split the entries into under 10s and over 10s and select 3 runners up and 3 winners in each category. It was no easy task as all of the entries were brilliant.

The prize giving ceremony was held at the end of Libraries Week to help highlight how libraries change lives and make the event extra special! We invited the runners up and winners and their families to join us at Lord Louis Library to celebrate and were delighted that most of them were able to attend. Refreshments were served and then all of the children were given the chance to read their story out loud when they collected their prize.

Winners received a book token and a family pass to Dinosaur Isle (kindly donated by the museum) as well as a library pencil and eraser and a certificate. Runners up also received a Dinosaur Isle family pass, a library pencil and eraser and certificate as well as a notebook.

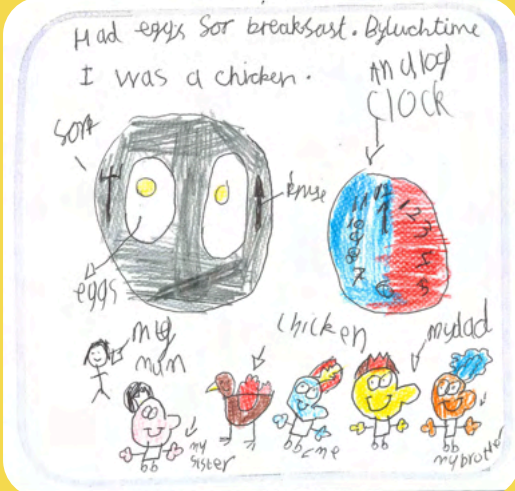
With the permission of the young authors, their stories and pictures have been included here for you to enjoy.



UNDER 10 RUNNERS UP

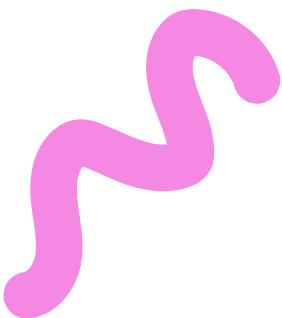


UNDER 10 WINNERS

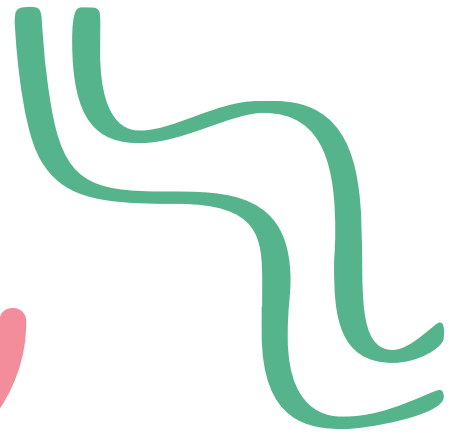




OVER 10 RUNNERS UP



OVER 10 WINNERS



Thank you to all the children who entered our competition and to all the families who came along to the prize giving.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- **June 20 - Father's day story time and craft** - Ryde Library 10.30am to 12.00pm
- **June 20 - Book and cake event at Wilberforce Hall** raising funds for Brighstone Community Library.
- **June 25 - Wessex Cancer Support information evening** at Lord Louis Library 6.00pm
- **June 27 - Crochet for beginners workshop for 12 to 16 year olds** at Lord Louis Library run by New Carnival. Book a FREE place now by telephoning Lord Louis Library on 823823 or pop in and speak to staff.
- **June 27 - Biosphere Festival - Fossil making** - Louis Louis Library 2.30pm to 4.00pm. Suitable for children aged 4+ Booking essential.
- **June 27 - July 4 - Biosphere Festival - Nature scavenger hunt** at Ventnor Library. Pick up an entry form from Ventnor Library
- **June 28 - Ventnor summer festival** 12.00pm to 4.00pm. Visit the library stand at Ventnor Park and find out more about our services
- **July 1 - Book making workshop at Ryde Library** run by New Carnival. Book a FREE place now by telephoning Ryde Library on 823825
- **July 4 - Biosphere Festival - Island creature crafts** at Cowes library 2.00pm to 4.00pm suitable for children aged 5+
- **July 4 - Biosphere Festival - Potting sunflower seeds** at Freshwater Library 10.00am to 12.00pm suitable for children aged 4+
- **July 4 - Biosphere Festival - Weaving craft** for adults at Ryde Library 10.00am to 4.00pm. Drop-in.
- **July 4 - Biosphere Festival - Ocean story time and jellyfish craft** at Ryde Library 10.30am to 12.00pm. Suitable for children aged 3+
- **July 4 - Biosphere Festival - Leaf printing** at Sandown Library 2.00pm to 3.00pm suitable for children aged 4+
- **July 4 - Start of The Reading Agency's Summer Reading Challenge - Read to the beat.** Children can sign up in any Island library.
- **July 12 - Independent living show at IW Steam Railway** 10.00am to 3.00pm. Come and find out more about our Home Library Service

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



CROCHET FOR BEGINNERS

A workshop for 12 to 16 year olds by New Carnival.



SATURDAY 27 JUNE
11.00AM TO 1.00PM
LORD LOUIS LIBRARY

BOOK NOW Telephone Lord Louis Library on 823823 or pop in and speak to a member of staff







BOOK MAKING CRAFTS

A workshop by New Carnival.



WEDNESDAY 1 JULY
2.30PM TO 4.30PM
RYDE LIBRARY

BOOK NOW Telephone Ryde Library on 823825 or pop in and speak to a member of staff





Keep in touch

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