

Turn Up the Volume on Reading This Summer!

Children across Herefordshire are invited to discover amazing books, collect rewards and enjoy a summer packed with stories, creativity and fun by taking part in the Summer Reading Challenge 2026.

This year's theme, "Read to the Beat", celebrates the connection between music and reading, encouraging children to stay curious, creative and engaged throughout the school holidays.

Taking part is simple and completely free!

Families can visit any Herefordshire library to sign up and collect a challenge pack. Children can set their own reading goals and enjoy books of their choice, including eBooks and eAudiobooks. As they progress through the challenge, they will collect stickers and rewards before earning a certificate and medal when they complete it.

There is also a special bonus for early participants, with the first 1,000 children to sign up receiving an exclusive Read to the Beat bag.

The Summer Reading Challenge has inspired children to read for pleasure through libraries since 1999 and helps more than half a million children each year enjoy reading outside the classroom.

A Summer Packed with Family Fun!

Alongside the reading challenge, Herefordshire Libraries has launched an exciting programme of activities for children and families throughout the summer holidays. Events include:

- Creative craft workshops
- Puppet theatre performances
- Sewing sessions
- Interactive Fizz Pop Science workshops
- A special model-making workshop with world-famous Aardman
- Free craft activities available in every library across the county

Parents and carers are encouraged to book early, as places for some activities are expected to be popular.

For details of the Summer Reading Challenge and the full programme of events, pop along to your local Herefordshire library or visit the online [Herefordshire Libraries Eventbrite page](#).

CLlr Elissa Swinglehurst, Cabinet Member for Culture and Environment, said: “We know that children’s reading can dip during the summer holidays without regular access to books and encouragement to read. The Summer Reading Challenge is a fun way for children to stay motivated and continue to discover the joys of reading while earning rewards.

“In addition to the reading challenge, our libraries have an exciting programme of activities throughout the holidays, including a special model-making workshop, delivered in partnership with world-famous animation studio Aardman, the creators of beloved characters including Wallace & Gromit and Shaun the Sheep. The workshop provides the opportunity to learn creative modelling techniques from an internationally renowned studio, making this a unique experience for our children and families.”

Join your Local Library for Free

Residents who are not already library members can sign up free of charge. Membership is open to all ages and can be arranged at any library or online by visiting the [council website](#).

The 2026 Summer Reading Challenge theme, Read to the Beat, has been created by The Reading Agency in partnership with Universal Music Group UK and features illustrations by award-winning author and illustrator Harry Woodgate. As part of the Government’s National Year of Reading, the challenge celebrates how stories and music can inspire creativity, confidence and a lifelong love of reading.