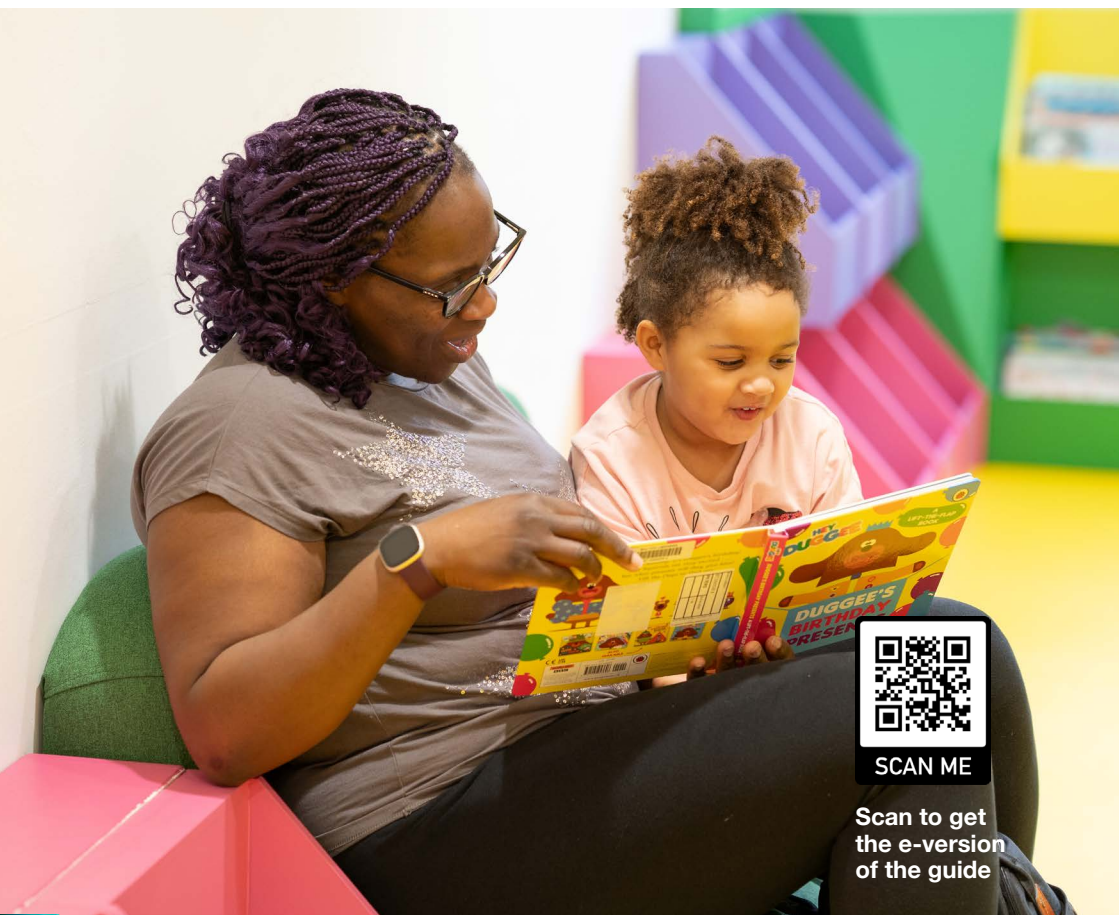


Bolton Library and Museum Services

What's On

January to June 2026



SCAN ME

Scan to get
the e-version
of the guide



Bolton
Council

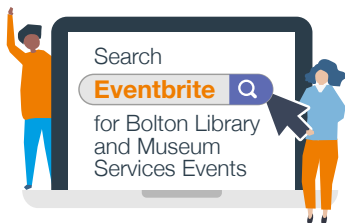


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10
libraries across
the borough for
residents, visitors,
students and
workers.

For a fun
family day out
and inspiration
for all, Bolton's
Museums and
Libraries are
the places
to go





Come along
and see your
new-look
library, hope
to see you
soon!

Welcome

Bolton Central Library, Museum, Aquarium and Archive is housed in a Grade II listed building on Le Mans Crescent, at the heart of Bolton town centre's cultural quarter. It also holds an internationally acclaimed Egyptology Collection, comprising thousands of objects and a full-sized recreation of the tomb of Thutmose III.




The library, redeveloped and re-opened in 2024, has been designed to reflect the changing way in which communities use their local libraries, with an added emphasis on reading, creativity, and digital inclusion.

Our nine other Libraries across Bolton remain anchors in their communities, and they too offer a wide range of services, support, activities and events – details of which you can find more on our website.

As you may already be aware, 2026 has been marked as the “National Year of Reading”. To celebrate, we really want to put Bolton Libraries on the map and already have exciting plans underway for some wonderful literary events and activities for all ages.

For more updates, visit **www.boltonlams.co.uk**
or follow Bolton Library and Museum Services on socials.



-  Bolton Library and Museum Services
-  Bolton_Library_Museum
-  BoltonLMS

Smithills Hall

Smithills Hall is one of Bolton's original family homes. It is **free** to visit and is open Wednesday to Friday from 10am to 4pm, and Sunday from 12pm to 4pm.

National Storytelling Week

Smithills Ghost and History Tour

Thurs 5 February, 7pm – 9pm

As part of National Storytelling Week, hear the ghostly tales of the Historic Hall. Led by an experienced guide, let's see if you experience any spooky happenings of your own.



[www|eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com)

£10

16+

Come along for a fun-themed craft session

11am – 12.30pm on the following Fridays

20 Feb

10 Apr

17 Apr

29 May

Suitable for ages 4 to 11

[www.eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com)

Costs apply

George Marsh Room Tour

Friday 24 April

On the anniversary of George Marsh's death, join us to find out more about Bolton's famous martyr and see the room in which he was interrogated before being taken to Chester to be tried.

[www.eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com)

Costs apply



Smithills Hall Fun Dog Show

Sun 10 May, 12pm – 4pm

We're back with a bang (or a bark!) Join us for our annual fun Dog Show.

The show will have many classes, and there'll be lots of doggy-related stalls and refreshments for everyone. Admission is free for visitors to the show. Charges apply to enter your pooch in a class.

Dog Show registration details will be available on Eventbrite from 13 March.



[www.eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com)

Costs apply

Exhibitions

As well as permanent museum galleries, we also have temporary exhibitions throughout the year.



© Humphrey Spender

Holidaytown:

Mass Observation in Blackpool
Sat 3 January to Sat 31 October

In the summer of 1937, researchers from Mass Observation joined the annual exodus of holidaymakers to Blackpool. They were not there, though, to sample the many attractions on offer along Blackpool's Golden Mile, but to observe Bolton's mill workers at play.

Featuring photographs by Humphrey Spender and Julian Trevelyan, their images capture a time when Blackpool was the main holiday destination for many local people.



© Humphrey Spender

OPEN

Art Exhibition

Sat 14 February to Sun 17 May

Bolton's popular open-submission art exhibition is returning, offering local artists the opportunity to exhibit and sell their work. Combining work by both professional and non-professional artists, the exhibition is a fantastic showcase of local creative talent.

Visitors have the chance to vote for their favourite artwork – the winner of the Visitors' Choice Award will be announced at the end of the exhibition.



"Light and Weight" by Alicja Ostrowska



In the Temple of the Female Pharaoh: Hatshepsut and Howard Carter

Until Sun 22 February

Extended for two months, this popular exhibition showcases the largest watercolour painted by archaeologist Howard Carter - famous for discovering Tutankhamun in 1922 - on loan from the Egypt Exploration Society in London.

Connected Futures: New Creative Work by Tutors from the University of Greater Manchester

Sat 7 March to Sat 26 April

Discover how art and innovation come together to explore the ways we see, sense, and shape our world. This exhibition brings together research undertaken by university staff whose work connects creativity with care, community, and technology. From adaptive fashion that rethinks inclusivity to robotic systems that interpret their surroundings, these projects show how imagination and research can help us build more connected and compassionate futures.

Family events

We offer a variety of activities and events at weekends and school holidays, and the Museum can get very busy at these times. If you would prefer to visit us during **quieter times**, we don't hold events between **9am and 10am on a Saturday** or between **10am and 11am on a Sunday**. If you want to visit and have any specific access needs, please get in touch and we will do our best to accommodate you.

Fish Feeds

During the school holidays, there will be fish feeds on **Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 1pm**.

Join our Aquarium experts to find out more about our freshwater fish collection.



Sensory Stories

Mon 9 February, 11.30am and 2pm

As part of National Storytelling Week, join us for a Sensory Story Session, perfect for children aged 3 to 8 years!

Enjoy some of our favourite stories brought to life through touch, sound, and movement.

School's out!

Bolton Central Library and Museum,

**10.30am – 12pm and
1pm – 3.30pm**

(every day except Sunday)

Join us during the school holidays for fun activities, storytelling, trails and film screenings.

Myths, Legends and Tall Tales

Sat 14 February to Sat 21 February

Operation "Outer Space"

Sat 4 April to Sat 18 April

Mini Makers

Sat 23 May to Sat 30 May



Free

No booking
unless otherwise stated

Booster Cushion Theatre presents:

Hansel, Gretal and You... Who?

Mon 16 February, 11am and 2pm, Central Library Lecture Theatre

Hansel and Gretal have been turned into oven gloves and don't know what to do! They decide to go on a journey around the world looking for food and some friends. They bump into some woodland animals who just want to play sports all the time, luckily, they know the best way out of the forest is with an audience-wide relay race.

But while taking part, the siblings get trapped by the Witch. Luckily, the Gingerbread Man has a great idea to save them, he'll just need some help.

This is a fast funny show for families with children aged 3+

[www|eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com)

Costs apply

World Book Day Bedtime Stories

**Thurs 5 March, 6pm – 7pm,
Central Library**

Round off your World Book Day dressed in your pyjamas with classic stories told by our storytellers, featuring a special guest appearance from our Library Bear.

**Don't forget
your own
teddy!**



World Book Day Early Years Special

**Sat 7 March, 10am – 12pm,
Central Library**

Join us for a World Book Day event for children aged 2-5. Children and parents can discover engaging, low-cost literacy activities to nurture their little ones' love for reading, nursery rhymes and more. Celebrate the joy of storytelling and have the chance to dress up in your World Book Day costumes. This is part of the Raising Early Achievement in Literacy programme.

**Free
drop-in**

Family events

Family Fun: Play Make Create!

Join us every Saturday at community libraries for Family Fun: Play Make Create! Read stories, make a craft, play board games, build and create! Activities for you and your little ones to enjoy together.

School Holiday Crafts

There will be crafts and activities during all school holidays, to tie in with the main themes outlined on page 6 – please ask in branch for further details.



Celebrate Great Big Green Week at Little Lever's Plant & Seed Swap

Digital Family Fun



Digital Saturdays

at Central Library, 2pm – 4pm

Join us for Digital Saturday - a fun, hands-on session where children can explore coding, creative tech and digital play! Suitable for children aged 7-12.

31
Jan

28
Mar

25
Apr

9
May

6
Jun

Digital Discovery Days

**Fri 20 February, 1pm – 4pm,
Central Library**

**Tues 7 April, 1pm – 4pm,
Brompton Library**

Free
drop-in

Step into a world of digital fun at our Digital Discovery Day where children and families can explore virtual reality, Minecraft, coding, and more hands-on tech adventures!



Eid event at Bolton Central Library Saturday 21 March, 11am – 4pm

Join us for an Eid Celebration with a day of activities for the whole family. Look out for more details closer to the date.

High Street Library Family Film Club

Join us on the first Saturday of every month for our Family Film Club. Vote for your favourite film a week in advance and we'll show the film with the most votes! You can even bring cold snacks and juice for the full film club experience. All films will be rated U or PG.

3
Jan

7
Feb

7
Mar

4
Apr

2
May

6
Jun

Book on the day at High Street Library

Wildlife in Bolton (Library Series)

Join the Natural History Curator from Bolton Museum to learn about why recording wildlife is important and how to do it.

19 February, 1pm – 2pm

Westhoughton Library

8 April, 11am – 12pm

Brightmet Library

18 April, 1pm – 2pm

Little Lever Library

No booking

7+

Bedtime Stories at the Community Libraries

Tues 3 March, 6pm – 6.30pm

- Brightmet
- Bromley Cross
- Farnworth
- Harwood
- High Street
- Horwich
- Little Lever
- Westhoughton

Thurs 5 March, 6pm – 6.30pm

- Blackrod Library

To celebrate World Book Day, come along for a bedtime-story session. Dress up in your pyjamas if you wish.

Free

No booking

2+

Great Big Green Plant Swap

Tues 9 June, 1.30pm – 2.30pm

Celebrate Great Big Green Week at Little Lever's Plant & Seed Swap. Meet others, swap plants & have a brew. Our Garden Brew & Nature Club meet every Tuesday 1.30-2.30pm over the summer months.

Community Library Celebration Days

Sat 21 March, Westhoughton Library 120th Anniversary

Sat 28 March, High Street Library Robot Craft Day

Thurs 28 May, Bromley Cross Library Big Games Day

Sat 6 June, Farnworth Library Great Big Green Event

Sat 27 June, Blackrod Library Scarecrow Festival



Museum events

Dug It - Archaeology ID Days

Found something in the flower bed? Discovered something on a dig?

Show what you have uncovered to our expert archaeologist for identification.



**Drop in from
12pm – 2pm on:**

7
Jan

4
Feb

4
Mar

1
Apr

6
May

3
Jun

**Bolton's Egypt Tours
11am and 2pm**

Free
No need
to book

7
Jan

4
Feb

4
Mar

1
Apr

6
May

3
Jun

Bolton's Egypt Talks

(Daily Life Series)

1pm on the following dates

Free
No need
to book

20
Jan

17
Feb

17
Mar

19
May

16
Jun

**Question Time with
the Aquarium
Tues 21 April, 1pm**

Free
No need
to book

British Countryside Animals

(with Natural History Curator)

1pm on the following Saturdays:

10 January, Badgers

7 February, Hedgehogs

4 April, Owls

2 May, Foxes

13 June, Deer

Archives Tours

**Tues 3 February, 10am – 11.30am
and 1pm – 2.30pm**

Join our Archivists as they take you on a tour of Bolton Archives with a chance to look at selected material.

[www|eventbrite](http://www.eventbrite)

Free
Booking
essential

Drop In and Draw

1pm – 3pm on the following dates:

5
Feb

5
Mar

2
Apr

7
May

3
Jun

Free
No need
to book

Drop in on the first Thursday of the month for an afternoon of drawing and conversation. The sessions are open to everyone, and some materials will be provided. However, you are encouraged to bring your own sketchbook or iPad.

Young Naturalists Club at Bolton Museum

Tues 17 February, 11am – 12.30pm



Come along for an engaging and interactive event to explore the fascinating natural world - from bugs and plants to wild animals and the nature we can see all around us. We'll even get up close with the museum collections!

[www|eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com)

Costs
apply

Art and Social History Talks 1pm on the following dates

Tues 3 March, Paint the North: A Brief History of Art in Bolton

Tues 5 May, Holidaytown: Mass Observation in Blackpool



Free
No need
to book

Natural History Talks 1pm on the following dates:

7 April Wildlife in Bolton

2 June Recording Wildlife in Bolton

Free
No need
to book



Bolton's Egypt

Spring Study Day

Our sell-out Study Days return with a range of experts that allow you to get hands-on with ancient Egypt through interactive workshops, talks and tours. See specific advertisements for details. **Book in advance either on Eventbrite or directly with the Museum.**

[www|eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com)

Costs
apply

13+

Hieroglyphs for beginners

Join hieroglyphics expert Hazel McGuinness as she introduces you to the ancient Egyptian language in this short course. Suitable for complete beginners or those with limited knowledge of hieroglyphs. See specific advertisements for details. Book on Eventbrite or directly with the Museum.

[www|eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com)

Costs
apply

16+

Hieroglyphs for children

Join our Curator of Egyptology, Ian Trumble, and learn to read and write like an ancient Egyptian in this short course for children. See specific advertisements for details. Book on Eventbrite or directly with the Museum.

[www|eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com)

Costs
apply

12-16

Library events and activities

Our venues offer a wide range of events and regular weekly activities for all ages.

Regular sessions are free and there is no need to book – special events may require booking in advance.

Please also check at your local branch as not all events are listed in this guide.

Get into Reading Marketplace
Fri 16 January, 11am – 2pm,
Central Library

Free
No need to book

Dive into the world of books at our Get into Reading Marketplace! Meet fellow book enthusiasts, discover reading groups, and learn how to inspire a love for reading in your children. Plus, find out how you can make a difference by supporting community literacy programmes.



Book Speed Dating
Thurs 12 February and
Thurs 23 April, 6.15pm

Fall in love with a story at our Book Speed Dating event. Can our book lovers persuade you of the charms of their favourite book in four minutes? Booking required on Eventbrite or directly with the Museum.

[www|eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com)

Free



Free
No need
to book

Start with Chapter One
Mon 16 March to Fri 20 March,
1pm (every day)

Each day, staff will delve into a different literary genre by reading the first chapter of a book aloud. It's your chance to get out of your reading rut and to discover new favourites.

World Refugee Week
Mon 15 June to Sun 21 June

Join us for a series of events to celebrate World Refugee Week. Please keep an eye on our social media and website for further details closer to the time.

Agatha Christie Day
Sat 27 June, 10am – 4pm,
Central Library

Join us in celebrating National Crime Reading Month as we honour Agatha Christie, Queen of Crime, and the 50th anniversary of her death. We will be hosting a series of talks delving into the connections of her novels with Egypt, botany, and archaeology. Full programme to be announced in Spring 2026.



Dementia Action Week
5 Ways to Wellbeing
Fri 15 May, 1pm – 3pm,
Bolton Central Library

A 2-hour interactive and engaging workshop exploring the 5 Ways to Wellbeing. Look at the differences between physical health and mental health & wellbeing. Plus, look at 5 different ways you can begin to support your own wellbeing.

Down Memory Lane

Free
No need
to book

As part of Dementia Action Week, join us for a trip down Memory Lane. We'll be looking at bygone objects and reminiscing about memories of growing up.

Farnworth Library, Fri 22 May, 11am – 12pm
Westhoughton Library, Fri 22 May, 2pm – 3pm



Library events and activities

Bolton's libraries host free regular activities for adults and families, including reading groups, art classes, writing groups, Toddler Tales, parent and baby groups, crafts and more.

For more information about these activities, contact:

askboltonlibraries@bolton.gov.uk

01204 332853

www.boltonlams.co.uk

Bolton Central Library regular events

Baby Time

Tuesdays, 10.30am

Mah Jong

Tuesdays, 1pm – 3pm

Spilt Ink Writing group

Tuesdays, 3pm – 5pm

Singing for Health

Tuesdays, 2pm

City of Sanctuary Writing group

Wednesdays, 9.30am – 11.30am

Precious Gems - arts and crafts

Wednesdays, 12pm – 2pm

Scrabble group

Thursdays, 1pm – 3pm

Poetry Appreciation group

Third Thursday of each month, 11am



Reading group
Third Thursday of each month,
6.15pm

Reading Friends
Second Friday of each month,
2pm – 3pm

Carrom Club
Saturdays, 2pm – 4pm

Graphic Novel group
Fourth Saturday of each month,
3.30pm

Cinema Screenings

**Lecture Theatre,
 Bolton Central Library**



We hold a variety of Cinema Screenings throughout the year:

- **Family Film Screenings**
- **Dementia-friendly Screenings**
- **Silver Screenings**

For dates and times, please see separate leaflets available at all libraries. Keep your eye on our Facebook page or email:

askboltonlibraries@bolton.gov.uk



Toddler Tales

Free storytelling sessions for young children and their mums, dads and carers, ideal for toddlers.

Sessions take place at all Bolton libraries throughout the week. See below for details:

Blackrod Library Thurs, 10.30am
 Brightmet Library Wed, 10.30am
 Bromley Cross Library Thurs, 10.45am
 Central Library Wed & Fri, 11.30am
 Farnworth Library Tues, 11am
 Harwood Library Mon, 10.30am
 High Street Library Mon, 12pm
 Horwich Library Thurs, 10.30am
 Little Lever Library Fri, 10.30am
 Westhoughton Library Fri, 10.30am

**Contact
 any Bolton
 library
 for further
 details.**

Digital, Employment and Skills



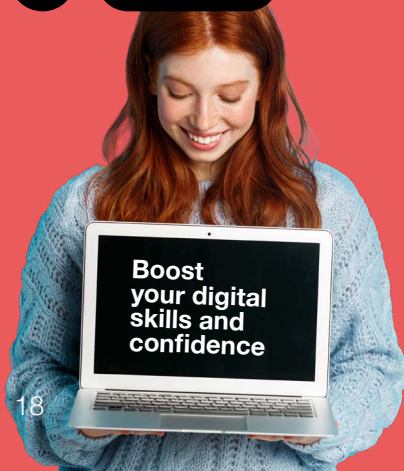
A way of life...
Just a click away

Digital Skills Job Club at Bolton Central Library

Come along every Thursday from 10am to 12pm to the Job Club and you can...

- Get help with digital skills to search and apply for jobs
- Learn how to update and upload your CV
- Find training and learning opportunities online
- Access basic digital skills to get started on your journey

Free **No booking**



Digital skills one-to-ones

Various days and times, including Saturdays at libraries across Bolton.

Get tailored support to use a smartphone, tablet or laptop from our friendly Digital Helpers. Learn basic digital skills, including:

- Registering and using the NHS app
- Searching and applying for jobs
- Microsoft Word and Excel
- Setting up and using emails
- Using social media
- Buying and selling online

Booking required - speak to a member of staff at your local library, call **01204 332853** or email **des@bolton.gov.uk**

Digital Lending Library

We can loan laptops and tablets to groups and individuals who cannot afford their own devices.

Email **des@bolton.gov.uk** to find out more.



Call in to one of our monthly drop-in sessions at your local library to get help with your digital device.

Join us for a free cuppa and get support to use your smartphone, tablet or laptop from one of our friendly Digital Helpers.

Bolton Central Library, every Thursday

Farnworth Library, third Monday of the month

Harwood Library, second Tuesday of the month

Horwich Library, last Monday of the month

Little Lever Library, last Thursday of the month

Westhoughton Library, last Friday of the month

No need to book,
just turn up!
2pm-4pm

Greater Manchester Databank Free Drop-in

Weekly at the following libraries:

Bolton Central Library, Fri, 2pm-4pm

Brightmet Library, Tues, 2pm -4pm

Farnworth Library, Fri, 2pm-4pm

High Street Library, Tues, 4pm-6pm

Horwich Library, Mon, 2pm-4pm

If you're 18+ and on a low income, you could be eligible for a free data, calls and texts SIM card from the National Databank.



Call in with your smartphone to find out more.

Do more with the NHS App!



Did you know you can order repeat prescriptions at the touch of a button? We've teamed up with Bolton NHS to provide support to help you register and use it, saving you time and money.



Drop-in or book a one-to-one at your local library.

Digital, Employment and Skills



A way of life...
Just a click away

More than just digital

The Digital, Employment and Skills team can support you to find work, training and learning opportunities.

Our ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) Advice Service can help you to access learning and support.

Ask for information at your local library or email **DES@bolton.gov.uk**

Visit **www.boltondes.org.uk** for more information.

Build A Business in GM Libraries



Start or grow your business with us.

Whether you're dreaming of starting your own business, or need support to grow an existing one, Build A Business is here for you.



One-to-One Support

Arrange an appointment with an Enterprise Officer.

Scan the QR code, fill in the form, and we will get back to you to schedule an appointment.

Your Enterprise Officer will work with you to determine the next steps, locate the right information, and help you develop an action plan.



Free Accounts Clinics

Advice on tax, accounts, and business.

Scan the QR code to book a free 30-minute consultation with a qualified accountant.

Available on the following dates:

- Thurs 15 January
- Thurs 12 February
- Thurs 12 March
- Thurs 9 April
- Thurs 7 May
- Thurs 4 June



Business Support Hub

- Business Services
- Business Start-up
- Business Growth

**Every Wednesday,
10am – 12 noon**

Drop in and chat over a coffee, meet people from the business support community, and find out how we can help.

**Business Centre,
Bolton Central Library,
BL1 1SE**



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Find out more at
www.boltonlams.co.uk



Libraries

Museums

Archives

Aquarium



Visitor Information

Bolton Central Library and Museum

Le Mans Crescent, BL1 1SE
01204 333173

Smithills Hall

Smithills Dean Road, BL1 7NP
01204 332370

Blackrod Library

Church St, Blackrod, BL6 5EQ
01204 332380

Brightmet Library

Brightmet Fold Lane, BL2 6NT
01204 332352

Bromley Cross Library

The Crescent, Toppings Estate
BL7 9JU 01204 332354

Farnworth Library

Market St, Farnworth, BL4 7PG
01204 332344

Harwood Library

Gate Fold, Harwood, BL2 3HN
01204 332340

High Street Library

High St, Bolton, BL3 6SZ
01204 332358

Horwich Library

Jones St, Horwich, BL6 7AJ
01204 332347

Little Lever Library

Market Street, Little Lever, BL3 1LP
01204 332360

Westhoughton Library

Library St, Westhoughton, BL5 3AU
01942 634640

Please see www.boltonlams.co.uk for opening times, email addresses, events, and activities.

Group visits: If your group is planning to visit us, we would love to see you, so please let us know when you intend to come by contacting:

Ask Bolton Libraries

01204 332853
askboltonlibraries@bolton.gov.uk

Stay in touch! Follow us on socials to keep updated on all our exhibitions and events:

 **Bolton Library and Museum Services**

 **Smithills Hall Museum**

 **Bolton_Library_Museum**

 **BoltonLMS**



Bolton
Library and
Museum Services

www.boltonlams.co.uk