

A Novel Way to Network

Reading List October 2026



Books shared at our inaugural event on 15 October 2026, in partnership with Cheltenham Festivals and Cheltenham BID. Thank you to everyone who brought a book and shared what it meant to them.

From favourite novels to fresh perspectives on life and business, we hope you find something here for your next read.

Book	Author	Why it was recommended
A Little Life	Hanya Yanagihara	A beautiful book: laughter, tears and life.
Claxton	Mark Cocker	A reminder to be curious, enjoy the countryside and be creative.
Clear	Carys Davies	A perfect short story about a fascinating episode in history.
Eleven Minutes	Paulo Coelho	Love, sex and passion, following a young prostitute in Geneva. A holistic view of human emotions.
Essentialism	Greg McKeown	Life tips on focusing on what is essential and doing life with greater ease.
Far from the Madding Crowd	Thomas Hardy	A great author, with many interesting characters and a great ending.
Four Thousand Weeks	Oliver Burkeman	How to feel less overwhelmed.
Guide to the Management Gurus	Carol Kennedy	Inspired a reader to pursue a career in leadership.
Ikigai	Héctor García and Francesc Miralles	A book about living life with purpose.

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Recommendations from our community

Book	Author	Why it was recommended
Influence	Robert B. Cialdini	A reader's favourite marketing book: why things go viral, why we use our phones and how we are encouraged to buy or sign up.
Lessons in Chemistry	Bonnie Garmus	An uplifting and empowering story about a woman who unknowingly does her own thing.
Normal People	Sally Rooney	Coming of age, the power of communication and the heartbreak that follows when we do not say how we truly feel. A reminder to avoid "what if".
One Day	David Nicholls	A tragic love story that transcends time and really pulls you in.
Prisoners of Geography	Tim Marshall	Geopolitics and the way geography shapes our world. Very relevant today.
Psycho-Cybernetics	Maxwell Maltz	How changing our self-image can affect our lives, with connections to psychology and behaviour.
S.U.M.O. (Shut Up, Move On)	Paul McGee	Problem solving.
The Five Minute Journal	Alex Ikonn and UJ Ramdas	Helps reshape a reader's daily mindset, replacing doomscrolling with reading books again.

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The Left and the Lucky	Willy Vlautin	A beautiful and tender exploration of two people saving each other.
The Line of Beauty	Alan Hollinghurst	The early 1980s, evoking the era of Thatcherism, the emerging AIDS crisis and privilege.
The Midnight Library	Matt Haig	A fictional book that captivated a reader and makes you reflect on life's opportunities and adventures.
The Ministry for the Future	Kim Stanley Robinson	A terrifying start, but hopeful and creative about how society can respond to the climate crisis.
The Power of Now	Eckhart Tolle	How to enjoy life now, let go of irrelevant concerns and be at peace with yourself.
The Psychology of Money	Morgan Housel	A preconception-shattering study of how people think about money. Inspirational insights into people and society.
Ward D	Freida McFadden	An easy-reading thriller with short chapters, a good plot and a twist. A good holiday read.
Wool	Hugh Howey	Great, immersive science fiction.

Recommendations have been lightly edited for clarity. Where a book was chosen more than once, the comments have been combined.