Shrewsbury Public Library

STAFF SURVEY RESULTS REPORT 2022

SURVEY CONDUCTED 10/24/22 – 10/31/22

TOTAL RESPONSES = 27

Q1: Please share three words that describe your job.

WORDS

- Adequate
- Always Learning (2)
- Busy (6)
- Challenging (4)
- Collaborative
- Communication
- Community (2)
- Competency
- Complex
- Courteous
- Databases
- Diverse
- Dynamic
- Efficiency
- Electronic Resources
- Engaging (4)
- Enjoyable
- Enjoyable (2)
- Fast-paced
- Fine
- Friendly (2)
- Friendly Atmosphere
- Fulfilling (2)
- Full-Time
- Fun
- Grateful
- Gratifying
- Helpful (3)
- Hub
- Important
- Inclusivity
- Information
- Innovative
- Interested
- Interesting
- Meaningful (3)
- Potential
- Problem-Solving
- Proud
- Resources (2)
- Rewarding (3)
- Satisfying (4)
- Stressful (2)
- Supportive (2)
- Technology (2)
- Under Valued
- Variety
- Welcoming

Q2: What do you like the BEST about working at this Library? (Page 1 of 2)

1. COLLABORATIVE, SUPPORTIVE CO-WORKERS/STAFF TEAM (20/50%)

- **General Comments (13):** Collaborating with co-workers || Colleagues || Friendly co-workers || Great staff || My coworkers || My great coworkers || Staff || Staff and volunteers || Staff relationships || Supportive colleagues and managers || Supportive staff || The diverse staff || The great team that I work with

- *"Department level, I feel my opinion and ideas are valued and allowed to be creative in my position."*

- *"I like being part of a strong, smart, kind, supportive team that works diligently and creatively to meet the literary, entertainment, informational, and social needs of this vibrant community."*

- *"I like the communication from upper management the best. I have worked in libraries where the directors were MIA more often than not, and it's nice to know that Mike and Priya are available and willing to be so."*

- *"I love our team; we have wonderful, talented, knowledgeable staff who work well together and prioritize customer service...we're always trying to think outside the box to better meet our community's needs."*

- *"That it is a positive and impactful institution located in a supportive, diverse, and evolving community; and staffed by a caring, intelligent, customer-service-oriented group of employees I am proud to be a part of."*

- *"The collaborative and supportive community among the staff."*

- *"Working with other staff members who care about their jobs (good attendance, enjoy where they are)."*

2. POSITIVE PATRON INTERACTIONS (9/22.5%)

- **General Comments (9):** Collaborating with patrons || Enjoy helping people || Friendly patrons || Helping others || Patrons || Patrons and community || Satisfying work (helping patrons) || Seeing and helping my patrons || The diverse patrons

NOTE: # of responses presented may exceed the # of responses tallied in the survey because some responses address multiple topics/ideas.

Q2: What do you like the BEST about working at this Library? (Page 2 of 2)

3. FULFILLING JOB TASKS/RESPONSIBILITIES (6/15%)

- *"Flexibility...sense of achievement."*
- *"Great hours, great environment...All positive."*
- *"Planning for the future - innovative programs and services"*
- *"The library as a whole (serving the community in the best possible ways)"*
- *"The many opportunities provided to try out new things."*
- *"We have a thriving, busy library where every day is different and challenging and interesting. We offer a huge variety of collections, services, and programs."*

4. PLEASANT WORK ENVIRONMENT AND BUILDING (5/12.5%)

- *"Environment - books and materials, peers and physical building"*
- *"Having a really nice building."*
- *"Lovely new building"*
- *"The pleasant environment and the decent wages (relative to other public libraries)"*
- *"The warm, welcoming, and friendly environment created by staff and patrons. Patrons are happy to come into the library, and staff are happy to work there."*

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Q3: What do you like the LEAST about working at this Library? (Page 1 of 3)

1. INADEQUATE STAFFING LEVEL (6/18.2%)

- *"A lot of demands and not enough resources or time"*
- *"I really like everything about this Library. I do wish that sometimes there were more staff."*
- *"I think that the traffic we see regarding technology assistance/computer usage/notaries at the reference desk would be better served if we had another Reference staff member; we have 2 computers at the desk and having 2 people there most times would be beneficial for patrons and ease staff workloads at the desk."*
- *"It often feels like we're working with a skeleton crew, and therefore absences or, worse, staff turnover, are extremely disruptive."*
- *"Not enough staff"*
- *"There is nothing I like least, but I will say that staffing numbers can sometimes be challenging when it's very busy."*

2. INSUFFICIENT PAY AND BENEFITS (5/15.2%)

- **General Comments (3):** Low pay || My pay || Pay
- *"Health benefits aren't as desirable as neighboring towns for full-time staff."*
- *"The fact that most of the library assistant jobs are part-time, many without any benefits...No guaranteed pay increases over time."*

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Q3: What do you like the LEAST about working at this Library? (Page 2 of 3)

3. UNDESIRABLE JOB TASKS/RESPONSIBILITIES (5/15.2%)

- **Schedule Issues (2):** Evening shift || My schedule
- **Tasks (2):** Doing reports || Repetitive, unfulfilling tasks
- *"Sometimes it is so busy getting the day-to-day things done, and there is no time to work on other projects that still have to be accomplished."*

4. DIFFICULT PATRON INTERACTIONS (5/12.5%)

- **General (2):** Difficult, grumpy patrons || Some patrons who are rude
- *"When a patron is upset about his/her service. Many times, it can be resolved, but sometimes it can't, and in those more rare instances, it's stressful."*
- *"It's hard to think of something other than the situations in which I don't know exactly how to address/resolve a patron's request or issue. Almost always though, a co-worker has come to my aid. This is a really good place to work."*

5. LACK OF PROFESSIONAL GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES (3/9.1%)

- *"I really like everything about this Library. I do wish that sometimes there were more opportunities and incentives for growth."*
- *"Opportunity to grow professionally"*
- *"There is very rarely a chance to move to a full-time job."*

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6. MISC. UNIQUE ISSUES (7/21.2%)

- *"A desire to see some positions reorganized to see them meeting the new and diverse needs of the community."*
- *"At times, the physical space can be an issue (too small/not enough space at times)"*
- *"The quantities of materials vs. demand (like at every library) can sometimes be challenging (long wait times, not enough copies, etc.)."*
- *"Feeling division between floors."*
- *"Huge lack of privacy."*
- *"I think we have room to grow as far as what we offer, how we support/retain/encourage/grow staff, and what we offer and how we support our patrons (programs, types of offerings, etc.)."*
- *"This is probably because of the pandemic, but I feel the departments have become more insular. We have quite a few new staff members, and I don't feel that I know them at all. We need more team-building activities."*

NOTES:
- NULL Responses = 3 (Nothing they liked least)
- # of responses presented may exceed the # of responses tallied in the survey because some responses address multiple topics/ideas.

Q4: We are considering ways to improve the Library's physical space. Name one change—the single most important change—you think we should make to the Library's interior or exterior space. Please be specific. (Page 1 of 3)

1. **INTERIOR IMPROVEMENT IDEAS** (18/52.9%)

   - **Add Space (5):** More multi-purpose group spaces. We need more areas where small groups can work/collaborate without disturbing the rest of the library || More study rooms indoors || I think obtaining some Nooks (or a similar product) to provide a few more private workspaces would be appreciated by the community and well-loved. || More space (for both staff and patrons)! || We could use more spaces for staff to do programs

   - **Add Tables (2):** More tables! At the far end of the 2nd floor for 4 or more people and in the community commons on the 1st floor we should have tables for families of children to eat at (not child size, but just regular height). || On the lower level in the children's room, two round tables for toys, puzzles, and reading.

   - **Aesthetics/Environment Enhancements (2):** A quiet room that does not reverberate with the constant thrum of the air ducts/heating system. || The ability to decorate more seasonally and whimsically to create a more inviting space.

   - **Children's Space Improvements (2):** A place for middle schoolers where they can enjoy each other without disturbing others in the library. || Love to have a fish tank in the children's room

   - **Improve Restrooms (2):** Install family restrooms on the main level || The first-floor restrooms are not ideal because (at least in the women's restroom) some of the stalls are very small and difficult to move around in. You have to practically step in the toilet to close the door. If you had a coat and a bag to maneuver in there, it would be pretty inconvenient.

   - **Teen/YA Space Improvements (2):** Larger young adult area to accommodate the town's large population of middle schoolers || Maybe more space for teens to hangout

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Q4: We are considering ways to improve the Library's physical space. Name one change—the single most important change—you think we should make to the Library's interior or exterior space. Please be specific. (Page 2 of 3)

1. **INTERIOR IMPROVEMENT IDEAS** (18/52.9%) (cont.)
   - **Misc. Unique Ideas (3):** Not having book sale items right in front. EVERYTHING else we have and offer looks better than old books in a sloppy display that no one is responsible for. We should have a "welcome display" with bold labeling to answer basic library and town questions. || SIGNAGE! We need dynamic and accessible signage all over the library. || There seems to be high usage of the community hallway where people can gather and eat - expanding that opportunity into the community rooms on a more regular basis, esp. for students.

2. **EXTERIOR IMPROVEMENT IDEAS** (12/35.3%)
   - **Add Exterior Seating (4):** Adult sitting area outside || If there were a bench or two, maybe Adirondack chairs to enjoy the sunshine. || More seating areas outdoors || Use outside area for middle schoolers to hang out—places to sit and work, e.g., picnic tables, hammocks, etc.
   - **Enhance Plants/Garden (2):** Garden outside || I wish there was a nice outside garden area that staff and patrons could enjoy. There is a great patio for children but nothing for adults...Some beautiful flowers, hydrangea bushes etc.
   - **Improve Parking (2):** More outside parking || Paint brighter lines in parking lot
   - **Misc. Unique Ideas (4):** Add an overhang/awning to the main entrance, so patrons waiting to enter or waiting for rides are protected from the elements. || I think we need to build a convenient way of accessing the courtyard outside and open it up to more events than just Youth events. || Our library is situated at the corner of the center of town where are traffic seems to pass. Prime real estate!!! If it's possible, we should utilize the outside space for marketing (HUGE electronic sign at the corner featuring the library's happenings) || Use outside space for fundraising (like a sidewalk book sale in the summer)

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Q4: We are considering ways to improve the Library's physical space. Name one change—the single most important change—you think we should make to the Library's interior or exterior space. Please be specific. (Page 3 of 3)

UNRELATED IDEA - OPERATIONS

"More control of teens"

UNRELATED IDEA - PROGRAM

"For outside events perhaps utilizing the Town Common across the street"

COMMENT

"I think that the building is great, overall."

NOTES:
- NULL Response = 1
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Q5: Please share up to three (3) ideas for new Library programs, materials, resources, or services that you believe the community would find valuable/interesting. (Page 1 of 4)

1. **PROGRAM IDEAS** (28/39.4%)

   - **Teen/YA Ideas (5):** Help teens set up a volunteer tutoring program to work with younger children || Life skills geared towards youth || Program to teach young adults basic finance education || School and career success programs || Teen life skills classes offered by outside resources

   - **ESL and Foreign Language Learning Ideas (4):** ESL classes || Foreign Language Learning || Story hour in other languages (or, for adults, book discussion group in other languages) || Targeted programming (e.g., multi-language, LGBTQ+, hearing/visually impaired, etc.)

   - **Arts and Crafts Ideas (2):** Arts and crafts classes for adults (knitting club, crocheting, painting, etc.) || Crafts for everyone, not just children

   - **LGBTQ+ Ideas (2):** Drag Queen Storytime || LGBTQ+ Community Education

   - **Writing-Related Ideas (2):** Monthly Poetry Workshop—leader or procedure/interested writers || Regular writing workshops

   - **Misc. Unique Ideas (13):** A program for new residents to introduce them to some key town departments such as the Senior Center, School Dept., and Town Hall. It would be nice to have this personnel in one place to meet face to face and get to know them. || Bring more awareness of climate issues || Election voting programs to help community members be informed || Field Trip/s to the area/New England author homes-sites || Fun/interactive programs for adults || Increase the number of attendees to adult art classes for more participation || Job fair/Informational employment classes || Learn some of our Library of Things (i.e., the Cricut) || Mixers for people in their 20s-30s || Podcast live shows || Podcasting || Teach people more strategies to handle ADHD

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Q5: Please share up to three (3) ideas for new Library programs, materials, resources, or services that you believe the community would find valuable/interesting. (Page 2 of 4)

2. **COLLECTIONS IDEAS** (12/16.9%)
   - **Multi-Cultural/Language Materials (6):** Adapt the collection development policy regarding foreign languages to the current demographics of the town || Foreign films || Foreign language material || Increase multi-cultural/multi-language materials || Materials in languages other than English || Multi-language materials
   - **Grow the Library of Things (3):** Additions to the items in the library of things. || Current collections (e.g., Library of Things) || More additions to the Library of Things: There is a list that has already been compiled and voted on by staff, but items are not being acquired.
   - **Misc. Unique Ideas (3):** Focus on LGBTQ+ material for adults, esp. in fiction || Focus on materials/services for those living with chronic illnesses and disabilities; need for updated non-fiction materials and fiction that reflects their lives || Mental health help resources

3. **FACILITY IDEAS** (9/12.7%)
   - **Makerspace (4):** Dedicated maker space with a variety of workshops where patrons can learn new skills || Maker lab for community members || Makerspace - Charlie Cart || Makerspace - Little Bits Wall"
   - **Community Garden (2):** A community garden || Community garden
   - **Misc. Unique Ideas (3):** Better/cleaner signage inside and out || Expanded location for teen patrons || Private study booths

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Q5: Please share up to three (3) ideas for new Library programs, materials, resources, or services that you believe the community would find valuable/interesting. (Page 3 of 4)

4. SERVICES IDEAS (8/11.3%)

- **Bookmobile (2):** Bookmobile that serves whole population || Bringing back the bookmobile
- **Misc. Unique Ideas (6):** 3 days for outreach delivery every week || A public fax machine || Communications in multiple languages || Connecting businesses/companies to the people seeking employment opportunities || Help with job searching, resume writing, career counseling || Targeted services (e.g., multi-language, LGBTQ+, hearing/visually impaired, etc.)

5. TECHNOLOGY IDEAS (7/9.9%)

- **Technology Collection/Devices (4):** Current collections (e.g., technology) || Chromebook & Hotspot combo to check out || Glowforge [3D printer] || Laser cutter/etcher
- **Technology Instruction/Support (3):** More tech classes, e.g., how to use my cellphone, fix my device, etc. || One-on-one tech help sign-ups (people who don't understand tech well may be uncomfortable being in a class) || Tech help sessions for seniors

6. MARKETING IDEAS (4/5.5%)

- **Outreach (3):** Increased community outreach (e.g., bookmobile in addition to Outreach van, etc.) || Listen to what the community has to say || Partnerships with local businesses/medical facilities/faith organizations we already do schools
- **Misc. Unique Idea (1):** Signage and handouts in multiple languages

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Q5: Please share up to three (3) ideas for new Library programs, materials, resources, or services that you believe the community would find valuable/interesting. (Page 4 of 4)

7. MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS IDEAS (3/4.2%)

- **Misc. Unique Ideas (3):** Expanded library use protocols for teen patrons || Find volunteers to keep the bookstore open more hours, possibly in the early evening, to capture the families who are coming to the library from 5-7p || One person responsible for increased marketing of all depts

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Q6: Please share any additional feedback or suggestions you have for the Library and how it can better serve the community over the next five years.

- **Diversify the Collections (2):** In general, I love this library and its diverse staff and patrons, but I do find it appalling that we have so few books in languages other than English. Surely our patrons (and residents of the entire state) would enjoy being able to read in their first languages. || Review the collection ordering process, and continue to add and encourage diverse perspectives in the choosing of the materials

- *"Create a new outdoor space for teens and adults - even if it's just more picnic tables and chairs on the front lawn."*

- *"Continue the excellent service by only implementing more services as staff is increased to handle the workload to prevent burnout at all levels of the staff."*

- *"I think that room to grow is always a good thing and shows that the library is thinking ahead and moving forward. Our brainstorming sessions produced many valuable ideas, and I think a unifying theme is meeting the needs of everyone associated with the library—e.g., offering vast/targeted collections/programs/services for patrons while providing opportunities for staff that increase retention, support, and growth—and designating our library as a fun, welcoming, vital community hub. Hopefully, the changes/actions produced through our future strategic plan will add up to big results!"*

- *"More input from the community of what they'd like to see."*

- *"My first two ideas are my big-ticket wish list items…the Little Bits wall collection with all the pieces you could need and the lesson plans to help with program planning, and the Charlie Cart to do cooking classes. I also think it could be useful to have a Chromebook/Hotspot pair that we can loan to patrons."*

- *"We have a fantastic library with a phenomenal staff. We just need to make sure we do a good job of supporting them physically, emotionally, and financially."*

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