



Cambridge Public
Library



2025 Year in Review

From the Board Chair and CEO

Your Library, Your Story: and our Promise. The 2025 Year in Review celebrates how Cambridge Public Library delivers on our commitment to members through award-winning library services that spark awe in the everyday, while demonstrating care and dedication to our community. Our expanded collections and services speak to our evolution, not just as a library system, but as a community builder. Programming continues to excel for all age groups, and the continued success of our gallery exhibitions and in-library art installations surprise, delight, and inspire.

We've increased our focus on accessible technologies and services to teens and older adults, while continuing to expand our reach to families, schools, and community groups. We continue to look for new sources of innovation and ways to bring Cambridge together and our outstanding team is committed to providing the welcoming spaces you have come to love.

Over the following pages, you will find a selection of highlights from 2025 and how we are working to make our community a better place.

– Chrissy Hodgins, CEO and Thomas Sandor, Board Chair

Board of Trustees

Colleen Bulla

Adam Cooper

Yasmine Kashefi

Jose de Lima

Robert Oswald

Thomas Sandor

Helen Shwery

Sara Wilbur-Collins

Janice Woynarski



2024–2027 Strategic Plan: Year Two

We're delighted to share that our team accomplished all year-two strategic actions. Here's how we meaningfully evolved and added to our services to better meet the needs of our community in 2025.

Inspire Through Experience

Creating opportunities to explore and learn together.

- Implemented location aesthetics assessment recommendations throughout our five locations.
- Conducted a facility asset management plan.
- Expanded Connections 50+, a new speaker series modelled after Cambridge Third Age Learning.

Connect Through Community

Inviting people and partners to create positive change.

- Examined and completed a Library and Gallery outreach strategy.
- Expanded volunteer positions to include library ambassadors.
- Launched our new logo and CPL brand to the public.
- Conducted a Social Return on Investment study for Cambridge.
- Completed a pop-up library and gallery exposure report to improve our exposure beyond our walls.

Empower Through Learning

Embracing knowledge that inspires people to unlock their potential.

- Completed a cost analysis for piloting an after-hours study hours expansion.
- Hosted all staff recognition events.



Mission

Cambridge Public Library supports and inspires our community in the exploration of reading, arts, innovation, and learning.

Vision

We will create an environment of curiosity and discovery through the exploration of the arts and new technologies. This will foster creativity, spark innovation, develop human capital, and support lifelong learning.

Values

Personalized service: Serving people with care.

Respect: Our members' needs and rights matter.

Accessibility: Open to everyone.

Intellectual Freedom: Opening the world to our members.

We Are Accessible



Kids Sensory Collection

A new Sensory Collection was launched in 2025. Available for in-library use, the collection supports children and families during their visit. The resources in the collection help neurodiverse members feel more comfortable, regulated, and engaged. Families have responded very positively, noting that the collection makes the library feel more welcoming, inclusive, and easier to enjoy together.

AuraLoop

Library service desks can be busy places and sometimes it isn't easy to make out every word in a conversation, especially for those who are hard of hearing. As part of our ongoing commitment to accessible services for all, we now offer the AuraLoop+ Counter System at each library location. The AuraLoop connects to telecoil-enabled hearing devices, Auracast-enabled devices or its own amplified earpiece.

New Memberships

Each year we welcome new members to the library – from babies to older adults. This year **7,420** people signed up for a new library membership.

We Are Welcoming

Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre

In 2025, Cambridge Public Library joined other libraries in Waterloo region who work directly with the Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre (KWMC) for their Library Settlement Partnerships (LSP) program. This change has provided a greater experience for those new to Cambridge, as many move between the different municipalities in their first years of settlement. As part of their work with CPL, KWMC monitors languages of interest and places LSP workers based on language need. Thanks to this, CPL now offers LSP service in seven languages, an increase from previous years. KWMC offers a broad range of services and programs for those new to our community and we are inspired by the future of this partnership.

Art + Wellness Program Expansion

The expansion of the Art + Wellness program has created a positive atmosphere of wellbeing and community connections. Participants in the program explored a variety of barrier-free art activities while focusing on mindfulness and wellness in a safe and supportive environment.



Keith and Winifred
Shantz Fund for
the Arts



A woman with dark hair and sunglasses on her head is sitting on the floor in a library, reading a book to a young girl with blonde hair in a ponytail. They are surrounded by bookshelves filled with books. The woman is wearing a green patterned shirt, and the girl is wearing a grey dress. The scene is brightly lit, and the atmosphere is calm and focused on reading.

243

Total Volunteers

5,791

Total Volunteer Hours

111

**Average Weekly
Volunteer Hours**

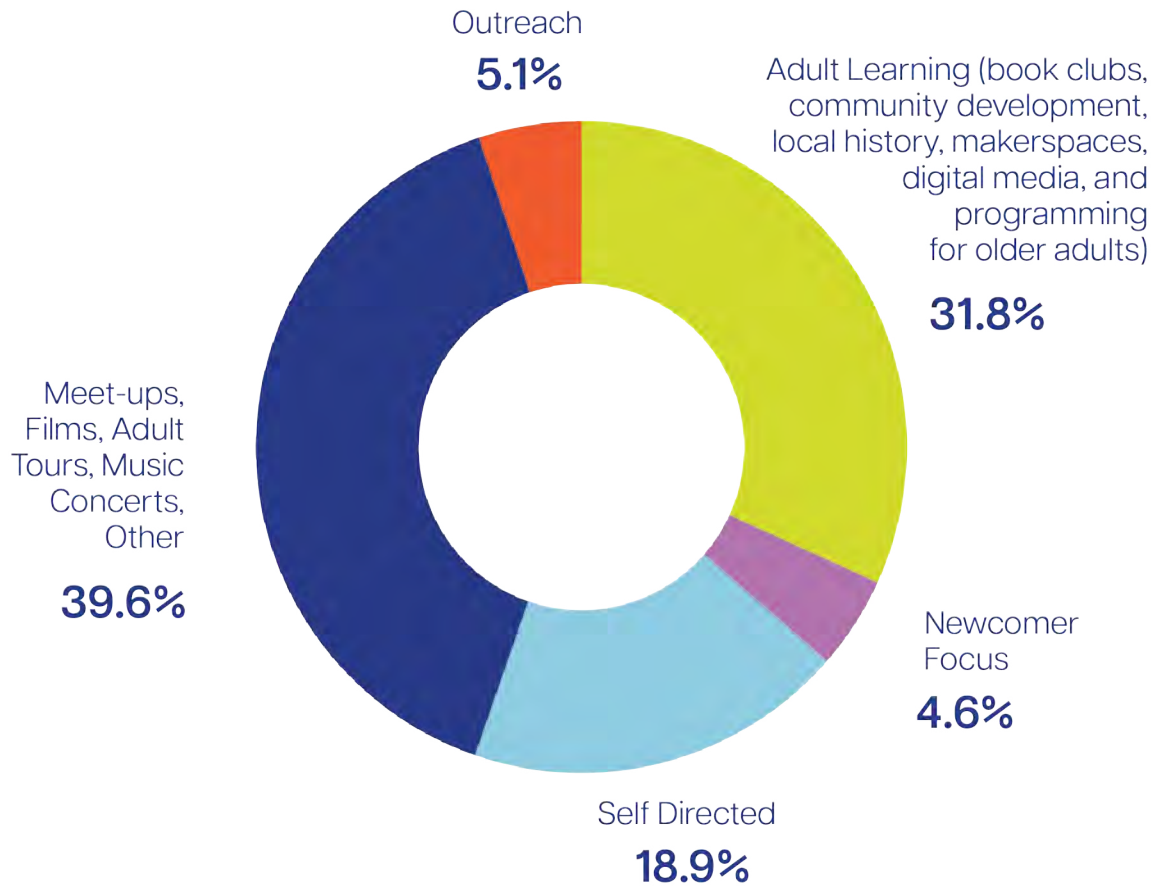
Volunteering at Cambridge Public Library

"I always feel really proud/fulfilled as a volunteer, I remember feeling so proud listening to kids read, knowing that I was being a part of their reading journey. I also remember feeling like a community among the other volunteers. There is something very special about knowing that you are supporting another child's reading growth because it is genuinely such a rewarding feeling knowing that you are making an impact on your community in such a positive way."

- Cambridge Public Library volunteer

We Are **Connectors**

Adult program attendance by category.
17,745 attendees and over 1,400 programs.



In May and June, we visited or provided in-library tours to 34 Cambridge elementary schools. Through these fun gatherings, we introduced more than 7,500 kids to the Summer Reading Club and the library.

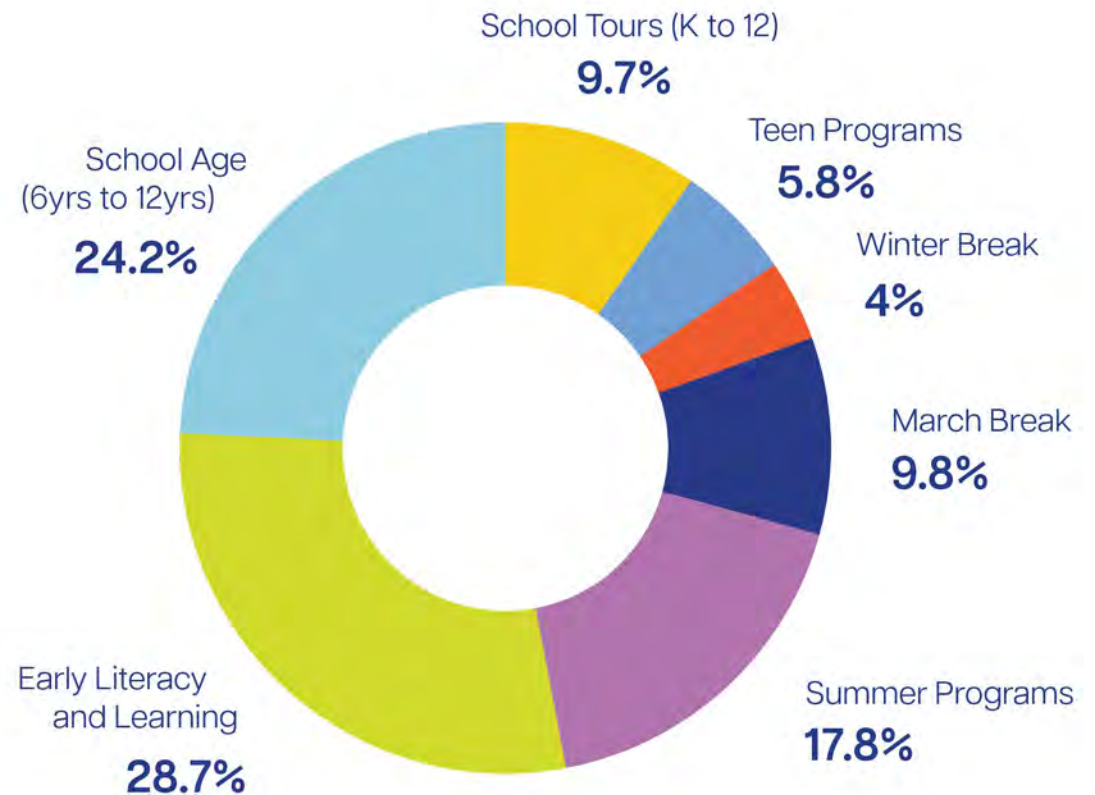
Since 2023, we have been taking the Summer Reading Club (SRC) into the community, offering many of the same fun games, prizes, and programming visitors would experience in the library spaces. In July and August, the SRC Mobile team took SRC to those who may not have had a chance to visit the library and participate in the club.

“ Summer Reading Club is incredible. It encourages not only reading but also helping build self-esteem, and consistency by coming to the program. The workers provide encouragement. This program has provided a lifelong experience that benefits into adulthood. I BELIEVE in this program!

”

– Cambridge Public Library member

Youth program attendance by category. 113,800 attendees and 2,272 programs.





170,214

WiFi sign-ons



3,699,825

cambridgepl.ca
page views



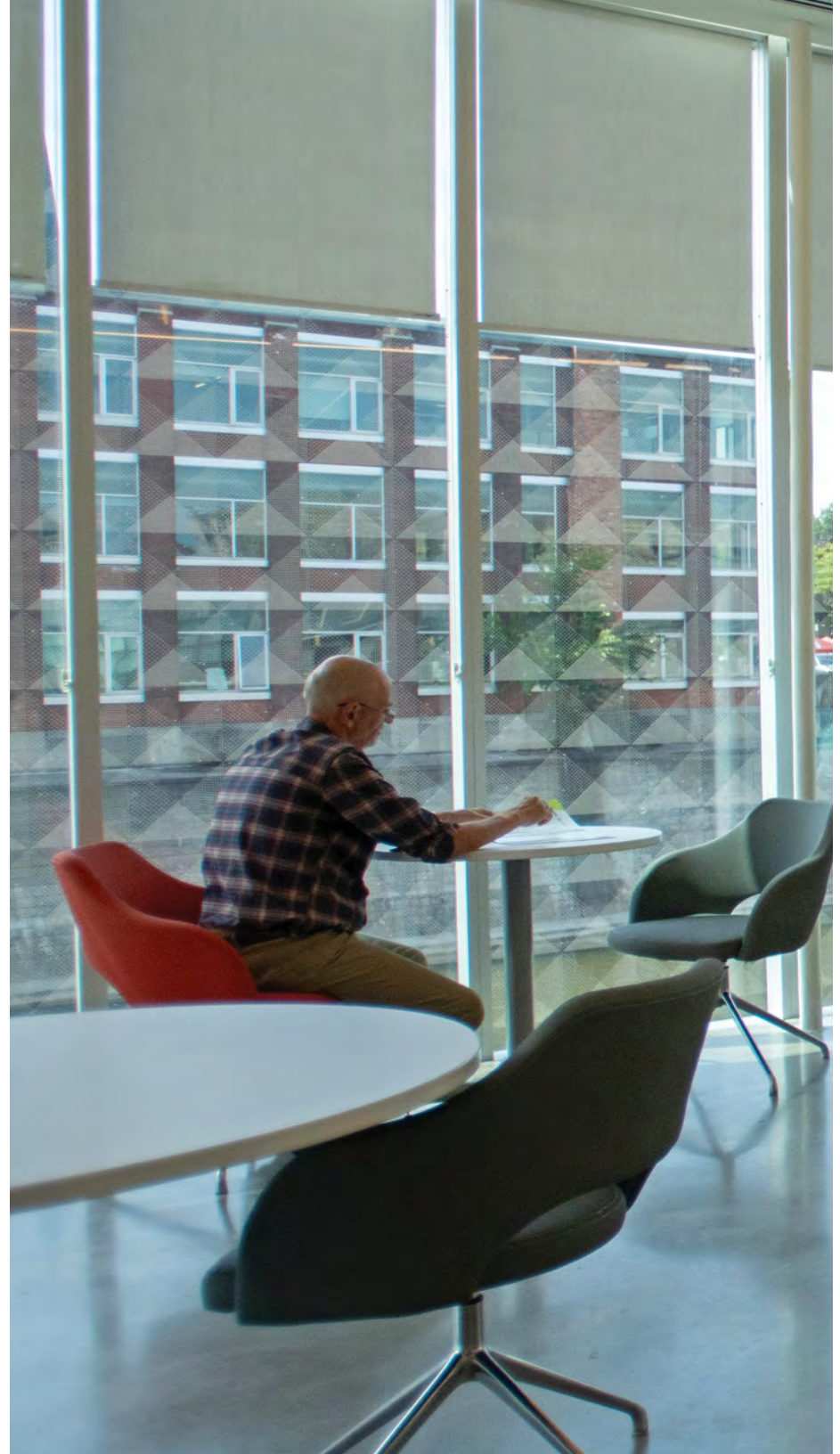
22,267

Cambridge PL
app sessions



28,292

Public computers and
laptop sessions





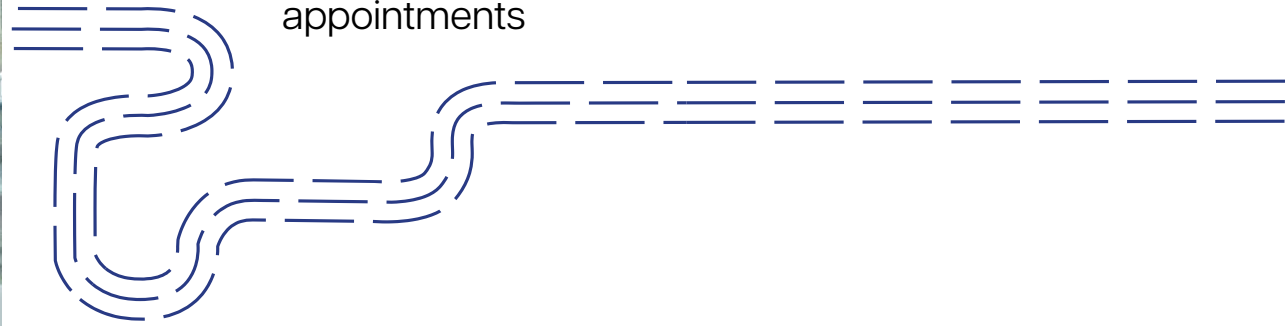
8,877

OPO Makerspace and
Creative Studio
appointments



164,126

Pages printed



3,445

Hours of 3D printing



2,509

Tech help
appointments

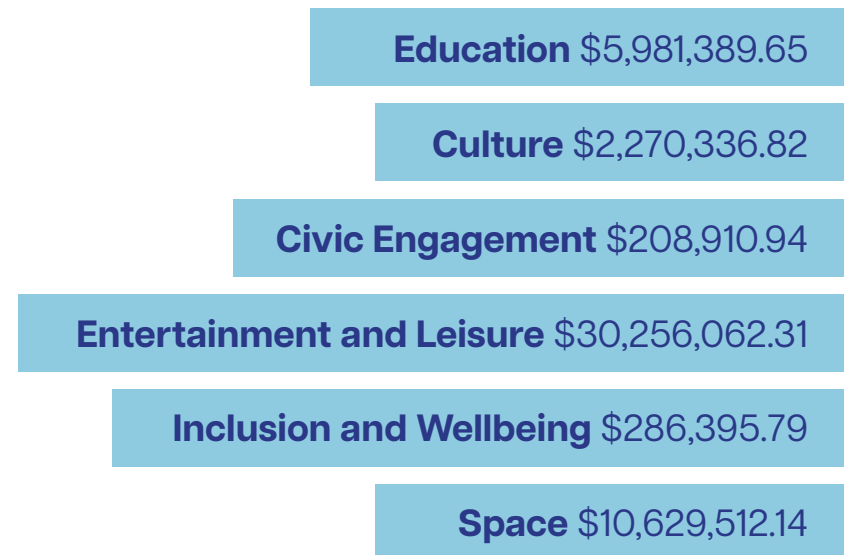
We Are **Resourceful**

Public libraries build social, economic, and community capacity through their programs, services, collections, and spaces. The social return on investment of library services measures the value that has been created by the library in/for the community and quantifies it in a dollar amount.

For **every dollar** invested in Cambridge Public Library, the social return on investment is:

\$8.79

Return



54,104

Active Memberships



888,598

Checkouts in 2025.



603,057

Checkouts were made in person.



285,541

Checkouts were made online.



“

I never cease being impressed by the **resourcefulness** and just plain kindly helpfulness of everyone associated with the Library.

”

– Cambridge Public Library member





787,712 People came through our doors last year.
That's enough people to fill Galt Arena Gardens **684** times.



28,034 Seeds were planted from our Seed Library.
That's enough plants to fill the **entire field** of Dickson Park.



44,458 Courses enrolled.
This could have produced **947** four-year post secondary degrees.

We Are Knowledgeable

Top Non-Fiction Titles Borrowed In 2025



Top Unusual Things Borrowed In 2025

Your library gives you access to books and more! Borrow an iPad to learn online, plan a no-tech night with board games, or enjoy beautiful outdoor spaces with a park pass.

Most popular items from the Unusual Things to Borrow collection in 2025:

1. **Basketballs, Soccer Balls, and Footballs**
2. **Splatoon 3 (video game)**
3. **Super Mario 3D World: Bowser's Fury (video game)**
4. **Pole Trimmer**
5. **Bike Locks**

Top Fiction Titles Borrowed In 2025



“

I have only had good experiences in this library. The staff are **unfailingly helpful**. The hold system is a great help to avoid trips to pick up a book that was checked out since I searched it. I am very grateful to have a library like this available in my community.

”

– Cambridge Public Library member





We Are Knowledgeable

Express Tools

This year, the Garden Tool Collection at Preston expanded to include Express Tools. We selected some of our most in-demand tools and made them available for immediate borrowing, allowing members to skip the holds line and access these popular items whenever they were available.

Jr. Rapid Reads

Jr. Rapid Reads are beloved chapter books and graphic novels, offered with a seven-day loan, no renewals or holds. Similar to Adult Rapid Reads, this new collection gives young readers faster access to high demand titles that otherwise have long wait times.

We Are Creative

Gallery Exhibitions

Community is at the heart of what we do. We wanted to create access to more exhibition space for you. A space to highlight the creative and talented individuals who make up our community. That was the inspiration behind Belonging - Juried Community Art Exhibition. Programmed through an open call for submission, the exhibition brought together local artists exploring the concept of belonging. We look forward to collaborating with you again on the next chapter of Belonging.

Access to culture in all its forms facilitates engagement, dialogue, and wellbeing. It increases a neighbourhood's livability, creating a sense of connection and belonging. We believe in presenting artwork in non-traditional spaces to not only encourage the idea that art is for everyone, but to push the boundaries of what defines art and where it can be found. In 2025 we hosted Lauren Wright Vartanian, Mads Brimble, Natalie Hunter, and Sofia Eleni Escobar around Cambridge Public Library locations.

Installation view, Natalie Hunter, *You might as well try and hold the sun*, Cambridge Public Library, Queen's Square. Photography by Joseph Hartman, 2025

This Year's Gallery Exhibitions

Hitoko Okada: **Setsubun: sacred offerings to the divine divide** (Nov. 20, 2024 – Feb. 23, 2025)

Belonging – Juried Community Art Exhibition (Dec. 14, 2024 – March 9, 2025)

Keeping Time (March 15 – May 31, 2025)

Stephen Altena: **Everything Was So Pretty** (March 29 – June 14, 2025)

Meera Margaret Singh: **What We Hold** (June 21 – Sept. 14, 2025)

Behnaz Fatemi: **Sumâq / Sumac / قامس** (Sept. 13 – Dec. 7, 2025)

Parallèles: Unseen Feminine Forces (Oct. 4 to Dec. 21, 2025)

Satellite Exhibitions

Sofia Eleni Escobar: **Cast Shadow** [Hespeler] (July 15, 2025 – July 11, 2026)

Natalie Hunter: **You might as well try and hold the sun** [Queen's Square] (Aug. 29, 2025 to Aug. 29, 2026)

Mads Brimble: **The Keepers** [Artist Garden at QS] (Nov. 21, 2025 – April 13, 2026)

We Are Creative

15 artists from **Waterloo Region** (Cambridge, Kitchener, and Waterloo)

15 artists from **Ontario** (Guelph, Hamilton, and Toronto)

3 artists from **Québec** (Montréal and Montmagny)

33 artists exhibited in 2025



We Are Innovative

Clemens Mill KineStudy Room

Located at Clemens Mill, the KineStudy Room is a dynamic space where movement meets learning. Designed to boost focus and creativity, it features active furniture including bike desks, wobble stools, and other kinesthetic study accessories. Since its February 2025 launch, the room has recorded 1,158 bookings, proving its immense value to the Cambridge community. By blending physical activity with study, the innovative space effectively supports diverse learning styles and encourages healthier long-term academic habits. This unique approach was recognized provincially with the 2025 Minister's Award for Innovation from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming.

New Sublimation Printing

We are always seeking new ways for our community to make and create. In 2025 the Old Post Office Makerspace introduced the opportunity to permanently fuse designs onto compatible materials including tumblers, clothing, and so much more with the addition of sublimation printing.

Your library. Your story.

Share Your Library Story!

Write your library story, or favourite library memory, on this postcard and drop it off at any Cambridge Public Library location. We can't wait to share your stories with the community.



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... ents.
... cross
... and

Couldn't ask for
a better library
to visit!

Many of the young people
in our group had never considered
a place they might enjoy - but as
you saw, they were fully engaged
and enthusiastic throughout their visit.
Several have already expressed their
intention to return. Thank you again
for your time and hospitality!

I
♥
The Cambridge
public
library

#MyCbridgeLibrary
cambridgepl.ca



I had lots of fun with this
event. It's an amazing
opportunity to spend time with
others and connect with
community.

To the Wonderful Staff at Clemens Mill Library,

Please accept this small token of appreciation for all that
you do. You have created a warm welcome and inviting space for
families, and have helped my children to see libraries as an
exciting place to be, a gateway to countless worlds. You have
also been integral in helping to provide an education for my
children, something that cannot be done without you. We are
truly grateful to have such caring individuals in our neighbourhood
that go above and beyond expectations everyday.



Queen's Square 1 North Square

Clemens Mill 50 Saginaw Parkway

Hespeler 5 Tannery Street East

Old Post Office 12 Water Street South

Preston 435 King Street East

Southeast Galt... Coming Soon

