

Hello and welcome to Skoob. We've been booksellers in Bloomsbury for over 40 years, but this is our first pandemic.

The shops as you see them today are not typical of what we do. We're working hard to consolidate our position as one of the world's leading secondhand bookshops and appreciate your support.

Before March 2020 we had a thriving trade in the basement shop next to the back of Waitrose, Unit 66. However, we decided to close earlier than ordered and not re-open in the Summer as we had remedial work to do to the layout and the airflow.

In the interim we were offered the use of the vacant Unit 10, opposite Starbucks, and built a temporary bookshop, offering only a sample of what Skoob normally has, but still, over 20,000 books. That shop opened in August 2020 but had to close again both in November and December, re-opening on April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

In Unit 66 we removed over 20% of our shelves and cleared all books from the floor and aisles. We put door and floor space controls in as well as extensive daily cleaning routines. On the advice of our ventilation engineer we massively increased the air exchange in the basement, to the extent that it's permanently audible, quite chilly for the staff, but delivers enough clean air for 40 people. It's not safe to have that number as the space is limited, but we hope to gradually improve the quantity and quality of the stock over coming months.

That shop reopened again on 12<sup>th</sup> April, having briefly operated in December.

So, until the late summer we'll have TWO shops open in the Brunswick, one in the basement we've been in since 2006, and the other in the shop we were in from 2000 to when the Centre was re-developed.

Our team in Oxfordshire managed internet sales over the whole of the closure periods and worked hard buying and sorting books ready to offer them for sale as soon as we could.

We've continued to improve stock. In 2020 we bought over 70,000 top-quality used books, including from several closed bookshops, the estates of internationally renowned academics, and private collectors. We also bought a number of prominent auction collections.

The staff you see are serving customers, maintaining tidiness and safety for visitors, and enforcing the guidance recommended by WHO and the Government. They can only have limited interaction with customers due to social distancing requirements but will help as much as possible.

The staff you don't see are sorting boxes, cleaning and pricing books, preparing for more shelving after we close each day, as well as supporting the internet and set-hire parts of the business.

The internet stock is about 100,000 books, in our Oxfordshire warehouse and more are added daily. Anything you see [here](#) can be delivered for inspection and/or purchase within a week, due to pandemic travel restrictions. (It's normally a couple of days).

Since 1979 Skoob has been a place for Londoners, academics, tourists, students and booklovers to meet and browse a wide selection of quality secondhand books. It's normally a lively crowded place.

We're a bit more library-ish at the moment but we hope you'll enjoy what we have, and support our recovery over the coming months and years.

Chris Edwards

Owner, Skoob Books