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PRESS INFORMATION

For immediate release

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Sarum College Bookshop Nomination Highlights Christian Bookselling Potential

Sarum College Bookshop's nomination to the South-West regional shortlist for the Independent Bookseller of the Year Award is a bright spot in the sometimes gloomy outlook of Christian bookselling.

"As a Christian bookseller, we are especially delighted to have reached the regional shortlist for this national award to find the best all-round independent bookshop in Britain," says Jenny Monds, Sarum College Bookshop Manager. "With the recent demise of the two largest Christian bookselling chains in the UK dominating headlines in some media, we're proud to showcase how Christian bookshops can thrive."

Monds has taken a number of steps to improve customer service at the Sarum College Bookshop, located in Salisbury's Cathedral Close.

"Our shop now has a welcoming atmosphere, where customers are encouraged to linger in armchairs with coffee," she explains. "Our success reflects eighteen months of hard work, with improved stock, layout and displays, and our willingness to go out of our way to help our customers. We even deliver to the homes of customers who live on staff routes home, and offer people who live further west the option to collect their books from my house."

Formerly the bookshop for the Sarum and Wells Theological College which was initially run out of a cupboard in the library, Sarum College Bookshop has been operating since 1995. It is now a one-stop shop for its customers, specialising in Christian books but sourcing general and hard-to-find titles as well.

The national shortlist will be announced at an event on 20 April during The London Book Fair, the global publishing community's leading spring forum for booksellers, publishers and librarians worldwide.

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The winner of the award will be announced at an awards ceremony at the Royal Courts of Justice in London on 17 May. As well as being crowned Britain's best independent bookseller, the winner will receive a £5,000 cash prize from award sponsors Gardners Books to promote and market their store.

The entries have been divided into four regions across the UK – the North and Scotland; the Midlands and Wales; the South West; and London and the South East. The next stage of the competition sees one winner from each region go forward to the national shortlist for overall UK Independent Bookseller of the Year.

The Independent Bookseller of the Year Award forms part of the new Bookseller Industry Awards which span retail and publishing, recognising excellence and achievement within the industry. The judging criteria covers a whole range of bookselling disciplines including operational excellence – from the range of stock available, helpfulness and knowledge of staff, web innovation and premises, to promotions and opening hours; customer service – evidence of 'going the extra mile' for their customers, and community – how the bookshops fit in to the local area, from the range of events programmed to working with local libraries and colleges.

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Notes for editors

Contact

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Photos:

- 1) Jenny Monds, Sarum College Bookshop Manager
- 2) Customers in Sarum College Bookshop

Captions:

- 1) Sarum College Bookshop's nomination to the South-West regional shortlist for the Independent Bookseller of the Year Award is a bright spot in the sometimes gloomy outlook of Christian bookselling. Pictured is bookshop manager Jenny Monds, who says: "As a Christian bookseller, we are especially delighted to have reached the regional shortlist for this national award to find the best all-round independent bookshop in Britain. With the recent demise of the two largest Christian bookselling chains in the UK dominating headlines in some media, we're proud to showcase how Christian bookshops can thrive."
- 2) Sarum College Bookshop customers enjoy a browse.

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The **Sarum College Bookshop** is part of **Sarum College**, an independent ecumenical centre for Christian study and research based at 19 The Close, Salisbury, SP1 2EE. Neither the bookshop nor the college receives regular funding from churches or other public bodies. Sarum College is a registered charity (no. 309501).