

**If you don't have time to read another newsletter, here's a potted version in 102 words...**

Reading Partners gets positive messages about libraries to key book world players. Info about recent successful events, promotions and reading group activity. A plea for evidence and your ideas for future work with publishers. Skill Sharing between libraries and publishers delivers some great models. A new author database on the TRA website. News of other databases being updated. Love Libraries – so far. Communicating better with Scotland and Northern Ireland. The Reading Partners book is having a positive impact. Recent research on book sales at libraries provides food for thought. And... advice to those who have not benefited from Reading Partners – directly – yet.

If you are reading this on-screen click on the link below to go straight to the section that interests you:

What is Reading Partners?.....	1
Positive Exposure for Libraries.....	1
Library successes across the UK .....	1
We Need Evidence .....	2
Your Ideas .....	2
Skills Shared.....	2
Authors in Your Region.....	2
Venue database .....	2
Authors, proofs and other goodies.....	2
love libs.....	2
scotland & Northern Ireland.....	3
The Reading Partners book.....	3
Book research .....	3
A Message from Tom .....	3
For those reading this newsletter for the first time... What is Reading Partners?....	3
Contact details.....	4

**WHAT IS READING PARTNERS?**

If this is the first time you've seen this newsletter and you'd like a quick introduction to Reading Partners, please scroll to the bottom to find out more.

**POSITIVE EXPOSURE FOR LIBRARIES**

With recent conferences at Penguin and a slot and lunch at the Booksellers' Association conference, Reading Partners has been putting the case for libraries in the book trade. The response among key players in bookshops, publishers, government agencies and the trade media has been excellent. We hope this work will help us drive forward what we are doing and will create more openings for libraries and publishers to work in partnership.

**LIBRARY SUCCESSES ACROSS THE UK**

Reading Partners has been striving to direct publishers to all parts of the UK with events, reading group consultation and promotional material. Here's some proof we have already:

**Northern Ireland's** first readers day took place in June 2006 in Lisburn. Bloomsbury brought three authors, including Joanna Trollope. The second Northern Ireland readers day will be held with Random House in Omagh this autumn.

Nick Hornby toured three libraries in April: **Coventry, Scarborough and Bristol**. The average audience was 165. Publishers worked with regional forums in the **North West** and **South East** to expand what were intended to be partnerships with one authority, printing over 70,000 flyers and 5,000 posters to support promotions aimed at men and reading groups.

Faber is planning a **northern** poetry festival with the three northern most English regions.

Little Brown took senior publicity, design and marketing officers to **Shetland** to talk to a reading group about book covers. They also travelled to

## **Sunderland, Kent and Northern Ireland.**

Hachette will be running a tour of **Scottish** based authors round the country, starting with a wine reception to meet librarians and discuss ideas.

**Case studies of all the Reading Partners publisher projects are now available on the Reading Agency website. They're worth a look for ideas and contacts.**

### **WE NEED EVIDENCE**

But we need even more proof.

One of the things Reading Partners has not done well is gather evidence. We know dozens of libraries have run events through Tom direct or through the rolling calendar, but we don't have the evidence from enough of you.

With that evidence we can add to the weight of the argument that libraries are where reading is at.

Please – if you have not already – can you talk to your regional rep (listed at the end of this newsletter) and get that evidence to Tom. It will be enormously useful in making sure people know what things libraries are capable of.

### **YOUR IDEAS**

Many of the above projects have come from each publisher taking up 4 days of Tom's time to develop new ideas.

It is nearly time to start a third round of those publisher projects.

Do you have any good ideas? What would you like to work on with a publisher – be it in your authority or across the UK?

Can you email any ideas to [tom.palmer@readingagency.org.uk](mailto:tom.palmer@readingagency.org.uk)

### **SKILLS SHARED**

The Arts & Business funded Skill Sharing projects – where a library worker from each of the 12 UK regions worked with a publisher – have ended.

30 library workers met with 30 publishers (and others) to celebrate the results – and to learn from them at a conference in May. There was a definite shift at the meeting from librarians

queuing up to talk to publishers to publishers asking to be introduced to this or that librarian.

Full reports on the sharing will be available in the autumn, so that the skills shared can be shared further.

### **AUTHORS IN YOUR REGION**

An author database is now on the Reading Agency website. It lists which authors are available to do events in which region. This is a prototype that will grow – with your help. Please email any comments – or successes – you have with it. Then we can make it better.

### **VENUE DATABASE**

We are upgrading the venue database, which allows publishers to see what are the most appropriate venues in libraries for their events, be they small audiences or large.

If you need a form to fill in for the database please contact Tom at the email address below.

### **AUTHORS, PROOFS AND OTHER GOODIES**

Tom is building the next rolling calendar of authors, proofs and other goodies available from publishers. It will cover the autumn and will be published in early July.

### **LOVE LIBS**

The launch week for the transformed libraries in Coldharbour, Richmond and New Quay is w/b 3 July. There is a growing number of library champions (including Phillip Pullman, JK Rowling, Irvine Welsh, and Salman Rushdie) , plus the new drive to find 10 top libraries and ten Young Librarians of the future as part of the PR campaign.

We're currently taking orders for a range of Love Libraries merchandise, including plastic bags, mugs and tee shirts. See [www.readingagency.org.uk](http://www.readingagency.org.uk)

For the latest news see the love libraries website : [www.lovelibraries.co.uk](http://www.lovelibraries.co.uk)

## SCOTLAND & NORTHERN IRELAND

We are currently working with libraries in Scotland to set up a network of reps to help make Reading Partners more effective in Scotland. The model has worked well in Northern Ireland. More news to follow soon.

## THE READING PARTNERS BOOK

Each library authority should have had two copies of the Reading Partners book, *More Readers Reading More*.

The book is full of ideas for library-publisher collaboration based on what we have learned from the first two years of the project. It also has contacts for publishers, advice and lots of other helpful info.

Publishers have each had 20 copies each and are using it to contact libraries direct.

If you need more copies you can buy them at £9.99 from The Reading Agency website.

## BOOK RESEARCH

Arts and Business funded Reading Partners to carry out some first stage auditing work to find out about whether and how libraries sell books. 83% of respondents to our survey said they did and many of the sales were at author events. The practices around selling the books were disparate and the research findings showed the need for a second stage of development work to build the evidence base, raise the profile, develop the partnerships and enhance the practice of bookselling in libraries. More news to follow soon...

## A MESSAGE FROM TOM

In the first two years of Reading Partners we have not managed to deliver authors to every library authority. It is a pity, but inevitable that some libraries have not had direct benefit from the project. Here's a breakdown of what we've done so far:

- 83 of the UK's 211 library authorities have had an event through Reading Partners

- 94 have worked direct with publishers on reading group projects
- and all 211 have had some involvement in promotions through publishers or PLR

And, of course, there are hundreds of activities going on directly between libraries and publishers that have no link to Reading Partners.

The good news is we have two more years funding from the publishers to keep Reading Partners going – and reach more authorities.

The principle of the project has been to get as many activities to as many regions and authorities within those regions, so that in time each library authority will have had some joy from Reading Partners.

If you want to get more involved you can:

Put your venue on the venue database  
See the author database on the TRA website

Read advice on approaching publishers in the Reading Partners book  
Hopefully the next two years will allow us to spread the activity further afield.

## FOR THOSE READING THIS NEWSLETTER FOR THE FIRST TIME... WHAT IS READING PARTNERS?

**Reading Partners** is a partnership consortium which aims to revolutionize the way public libraries and adult publishers work together. A two year pilot is being led by The Reading Agency and nine publishers: Bloomsbury, Faber, Hachette Livre, HarperCollins, Harlequin Mills & Boon, Pan Macmillan, Penguin, Random House and Time Warner. The Public Lending Right is another partner.

Reading Partners is setting out to build a new public/private sector interface to expand the market for reading, influenced by what readers say and with partnerships between publishers and libraries at its heart.

The consortium wants to create a buzz about books beyond the high street, developing the audience for reading by cross-fertilising library and retail markets. Its aims are to change the working practices of publishers and

libraries; to influence the way books are marketed; to create a more vibrant library experience for readers and to explore changes in publishing to draw new readers into the market.

The 2004-6 pilot is supported by a grant from the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council as part of government's modernising library strategy, Framework for the Future.

A full record of previous newsletter and documents about Reading Partners is available at [www.readingagency.org.uk](http://www.readingagency.org.uk) under Projects, Reading Partners.

## CONTACT DETAILS

For more information about Reading Partners please visit the Reading Partners project pages on [www.readingagency.org.uk](http://www.readingagency.org.uk) or contact [tom.palmer@readingagency.org.uk](mailto:tom.palmer@readingagency.org.uk)

Each region of the UK has a Reading Partners contact. If you want to feed ideas into the project feel free to get in touch with the contact in your region:

- East Midlands, Lynn Hodgkins, [lynn.hodgkins@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:lynn.hodgkins@derbyshire.gov.uk)
- East of England, Sylvia Voaden, [sylvia.voaden@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:sylvia.voaden@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)
- London, Rupert Colley, [rupert.colley@enfield.gov.uk](mailto:rupert.colley@enfield.gov.uk)
- North East, Joanne Parkinson, [joanne.parkinson@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:joanne.parkinson@sunderland.gov.uk)
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- Anne McCart, Northern Ireland [anne.mccart@NI-libraries.net](mailto:anne.mccart@NI-libraries.net)

To sign up for (or to cancel) this newsletter please email [resources@readingagency.org.uk](mailto:resources@readingagency.org.uk).

The next e-newsletter is due in September 2006. Thank you for reading this one.