

World Book Night 2017: Programme review & evaluation

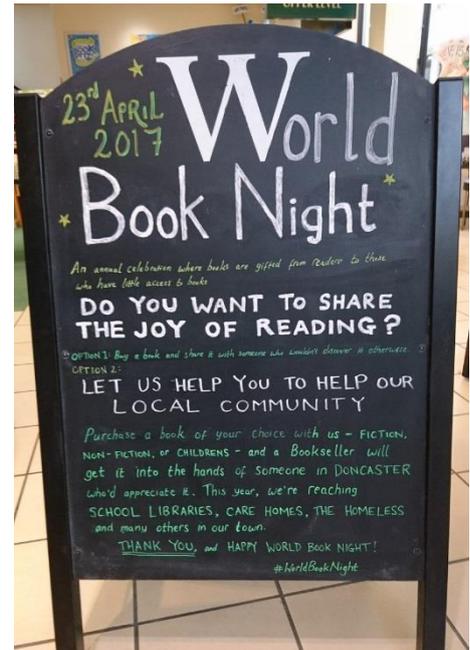
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1. Introduction

World Book Night is an annual celebration of reading and books which takes place on 23 April. In 2017, the programme's seventh year and its fourth at The Reading Agency, we launched our renewed, targeted model for the programme which saw 52,000 books donated by publishers given away in prisons, colleges, homeless shelters, care homes, public libraries and other organisations with the aim of more closely reaching and engaging people who don't regularly read. This report summarises World Book Night activities and gives an overview of its impact in participating organisations, with a spotlight focus on prisons.



World Book Night books at Waterstones Doncaster

2. Programme overview

Important facts and headlines for World Book Night 2017 include:

- 52,000 books were donated by publishers for World Book Night 2017, comprised of 2000 copies of 26 different titles from a range of genres including crime, fiction in translation, memoir, a graphic novel, a colouring book and a modern classic



- Books were chosen through careful discussions with publishers to establish which titles are best suited to reach key audiences

- Books were given away in prisons, colleges, homeless shelters, care homes, public libraries and other organisations
- Dozens of events took place up and down the country, including author readings, talks, book giveaways and even a silent book disco.

3. Participating organisations

Books were distributed to the following organisation types across the UK:



World Book Night 2017 events and initiatives took place across the country

- 3 Care homes
- 60 Colleges
- 1 Family learning project
- 12 Homeless centres or hostels
- 35 Hospitals or health centres
- 13 Literacy and learning support organisations
- 52 Prisons and Young Offenders Institutions
- 73 Public Libraries
- 10 Social and supporting housing projects
- 6 Youth centres
- 41 'Other' Including arts organisations or charities

306 organisations were selected to receive books after being invited to register their interest in taking part, from a mix of those who'd held particularly successful World Book

Night events in the past and had a good track record of being able to reach and engage non-regular readers, as well new organisations who had not previously taken part in World Book Night. Organisations each received between 166-200 copies of a single title to give to their users along with supporting resources and guidance.

4. Evaluation methodology

In May 2017, The Reading Agency circulated an online survey to the 306 organisations who took part in World Book Night 2017. The survey ran until 31 July 2017 and received 161 responses, a 53% response rate. The survey asked them to assess the impact of World Book Night in their organisation. Anyone who received a book was also encouraged, via social media and directly through these organisations, to complete a short survey about the impact of World Book Night on them, which received 118 responses. Throughout the following section percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

5. Impact of World Book Night

The headline findings are positive about the impact the new, more targeted model for World Book Night has in encouraging people to read. The findings also show that World Book Night plays an important role in improving attitudes and confidence in reading.

- 91% of participating organisations rated their experience of taking part in World Book Night as Excellent or Good
- 89% thought that the books donated by publishers in 2017 helped encourage people to read more often
- 88% said that World Book Night was very well or well received in their institution
- 90% reported giving all, most or some of their books to people who don't read for pleasure regularly

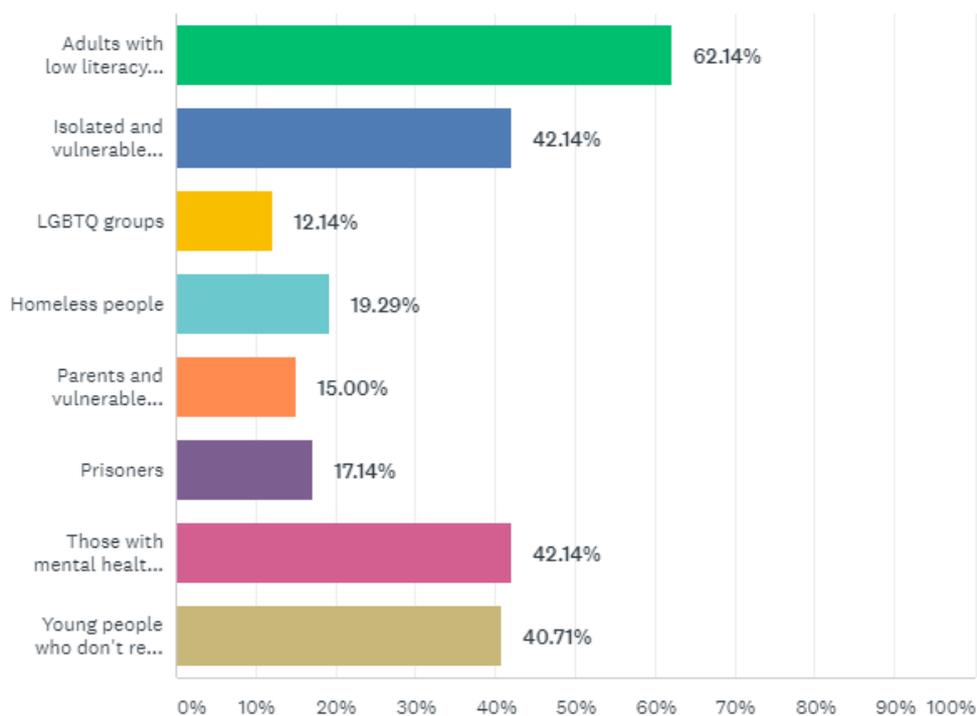


Figure 1; Organisations reported giving their books to these groups (respondents ticked all that applied). Full category names: Adults with low literacy levels or who don't read for pleasure; Isolated and vulnerable older people; LGBTQ groups who don't read for pleasure; Homeless people; Parents and vulnerable pregnant women; Prisoners; Those with mental health needs; Young people who don't read for pleasure

- 97% of people who received a book agreed that they were pleased to receive that book, with 80% of respondents strongly agreeing with this statement
- 86% said that they were interested in the book, and 74% had enjoyed or were enjoying reading it
- 54% said that they had read more since receiving the book

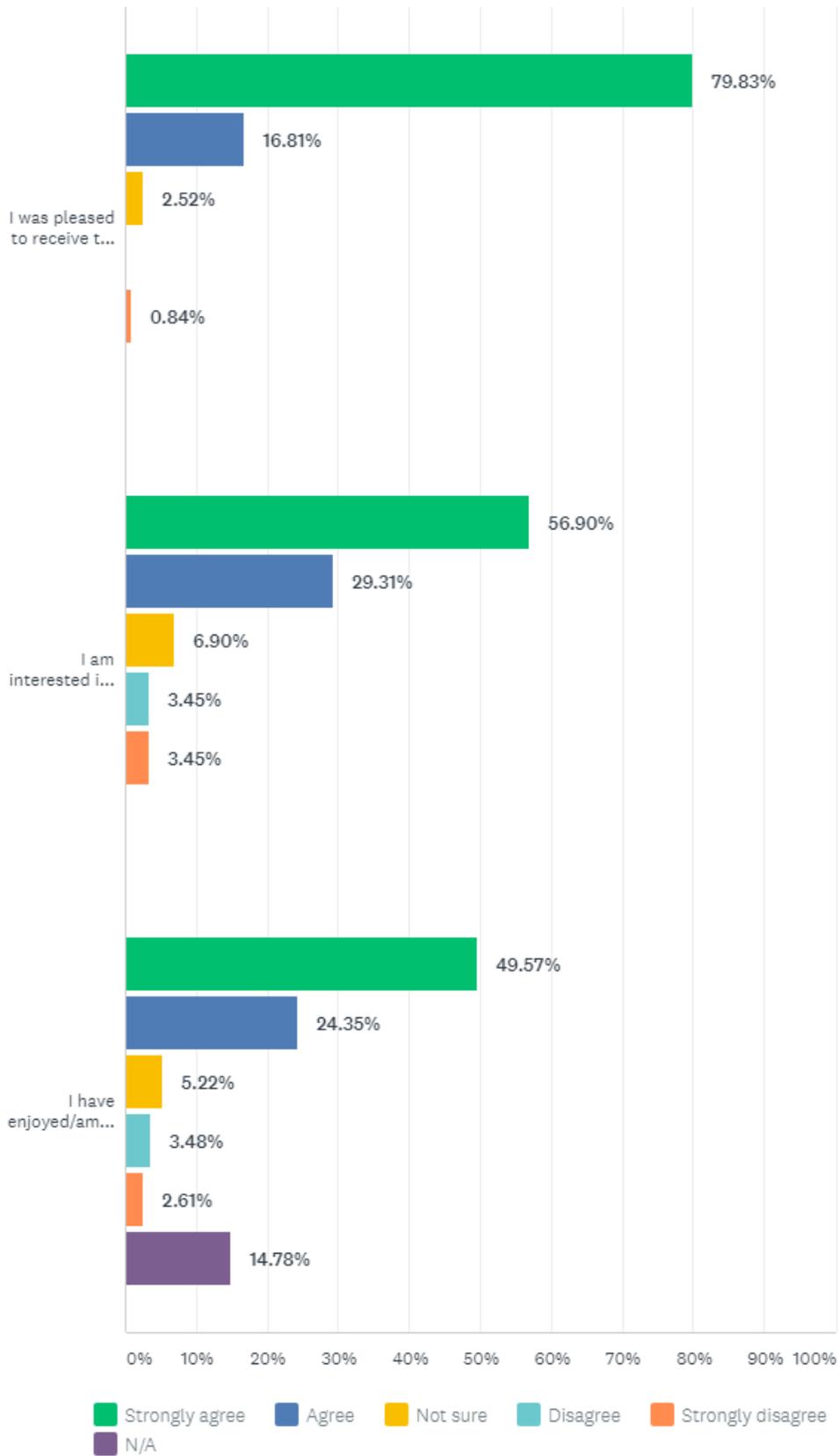


Figure 2; Recipients were asked whether they were pleased to receive their book, whether they were interested in the book and whether they had enjoyed or were enjoying reading it

Many organisational givers as well as recipients shared positive feedback with us about taking part in World Book Night:

*"I think that world book night is an extremely good idea as it as it helps people become more interested in reading. **Being given a book helped me feel relaxed** as i didn't feel compelled to read it, I ended up picking up the book willingly and being drawn more into the story than i would've been had i of been told i had to read it."* – World Book Night 2017 recipient, received *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi

"Good to receive something free especially whilst in prison as it passes the time. It is a good book" – World Book Night 2017 recipient, received *A Very Distant Shore* by Jenny Colgan

*"As well as the display in the Library, we publicized the event inviting students to come and receive their free copies during the week 24th - 29th April. More importantly, myself and colleagues took copies out and about around the College Campus. **This gave us an opportunity to encourage those students who would not usually use the library to read for pleasure.** Students were intrigued by the idea of a Muslim Bridget Jones and the books were gratefully received."* – Chichester College, gave *Sofia Khan is Not Obligated* by Ayisha Malik

"In Folkestone my colleague worked in partnership with the Reading for Wellbeing co-ordinator who facilitates a book group at the Home Start centre. Please see her comments below.

*So far I have given 8 copies to Home Start Shepway and we used the book for our group. **The participants really engaged with the book** and had some great discussions about living in an isolated small community and how that can be challenging and also really comforting at times. My memorable/favourite quote from the sessions was from one of the participants who is currently living in a refuge and she asked what a refugee was. After explaining she made the connection with her own situation and said "we are both escaping something". We then went on to talk about the challenges of that and how starting over was difficult but rewarding. A really great moment!"* – Kent Libraries, gave *A Very Distant Shore* by Jenny Colgan

*"This was one of the best World Book Night events I had been part of. **It was completely inclusive and really encapsulated what World Book Night is all about** – the love of reading – in some cases the forgotten love of reading.*

*The members of the groups have many issues such as looking after partners who are unwell, being unable to go outdoors because they are too frail, living with dementia and generally being anxious going outdoors and therefore reading and use of the library is not a priority. However, **being able to enthuse the members about what the library has to offer was priceless.** I told Ron about the fact he can learn how to use his tablet in the library, told Christine that there are crafts groups in libraries and chatted to a lady at Latton Hall about her favourite childhood book and how she could reserve it from Mark Hall Library. That Essex Libraries were welcoming and friendly places that would be better if they visited them (This made them smile!)." – Essex Libraries, gave *The Secret Diary of Henrik Groen* aged 83 ¼*

*"The Disability Foundation handed out copies of the book 'Wonder' to patients and adolescents on the wards at the RNOH and the feedback has been brilliant. **We also handed out copies to parents and carers of children and adolescents on the autism scale at a regular session we hold with a sports foundation.** World Book Night is a great initiative and TDF hopes that we have helped to spread the good work that the Reading Agency does."* – The Disability Foundation, gave *Wonder* by R. J. Palacio

*"The event was promoted across the South West Yorkshire Mental health trust and we split our allocation of books across 3 sites within Kirklees - the event received very positive feedback with service users, health professionals and family and carers all having access to the books. [Feedback was] very positive- especially on the secure hospital ward as often these can be over looked. **It was a pleasure being able to take copies in for both service users and staff** and received feedback that following the event - the staff / service users were able to talk about the book that they had been reading together."* – Recovery College, Kirklees, gave *The Missing* by C. L. Taylor

*"World Book Night was a huge success in our school. We hosted a book themed disco with book related activities. Pupils were really engaged and enjoyed winning the books as a prize. **We gave away a lot of books to our vulnerable pupils and have seen an increase in the amount of students reading.** Thank you very much!"* Campsmount Academy, gave *Lies We Tell Ourselves* by Robin Talley

Spotlight on: Prisons and Young Offenders' Institutions

Literacy levels are shockingly low in UK prisons; in 2017, 57% of people entering prison were assessed as having literacy skills expected of an 11 year old, over three times higher than in the general adult population (Source: Bromley Briefings Summer 2017). World Book Night gave over 9000 books to 52 prisons and YOIs in 2017, helping to encourage a positive reading culture among prisoners and staff. 22 prison staff members responded to the survey, with 95% of those reporting that World Book Night was very well or well received in their prison. Many held events and celebrated with reading groups and staff, including an author visit by Cathy Rentzenbrink at HMP Downview in Surrey.

"It's always received very well - prisoners love the chance to have a new book, and it's a great novelty for them to be able to keep it!" – HMP Forest Bank, gave *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck

"The library team is passionate about promoting and encouraging reading and World Book Night provides a great opportunity to do this. The book we received suited our population really well and it was lovely to have a visit from the author." – HMP Downview, gave *The Last Act of Love* by Cathy Rentzenbrink

"It's a good feeling to be able to give out free books to the men in the prison, and to be able to leave a small number of books for men on the units who probably do not use the library."

"Really enjoyed the idea that everyone around the country was participating. I think the concept is excellent and it is gratefully received and used." – HMP Highpoint, gave *Payback* by Kimberley Chambers

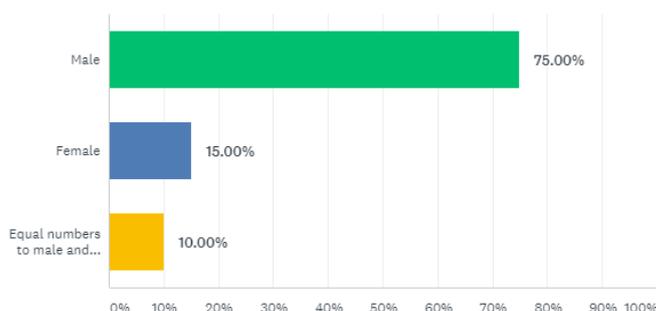
"[We held] a World Book Night event with Peer Tutors to identify prisoners who would benefit from the gift of a book. Peer Tutors are prisoners who work with other prisoners across all prison populations, supporting them to improve their reading and writing, working within the prison halls and in the Education Centre. Over 100 books were handed out to the Peer Tutors at the World Book Night event and these books were then gifted to prisoners by their Peer Tutors." – HMP Edinburgh, gave *A Very Distant Shore* by Jenny Colgan

"We had a really successful World book night! Students, teachers and officers all joined in in taking the books, reading them and passing them on. Some of the cleaners on the units left a book on the bed for lads that were coming in for the first time and we thought that was a really nice touch!" – HMP YOI Feltham, gave *One False Move* by Dreda Say Mitchell

"This year, for HMP Berwyn's first celebration, staff shared a book they have enjoyed, which was given to the men in custody. Book collection boxes were placed in various staff areas around HMP Berwyn earlier in the month. The event was a great success with donated books given out to the men, who will also share them as part of 'Reading Ahead'" - HMP Berwyn, gave books donated by staff

What was the gender of the people you gave most of your books to?

Answered: 20 Skipped: 2



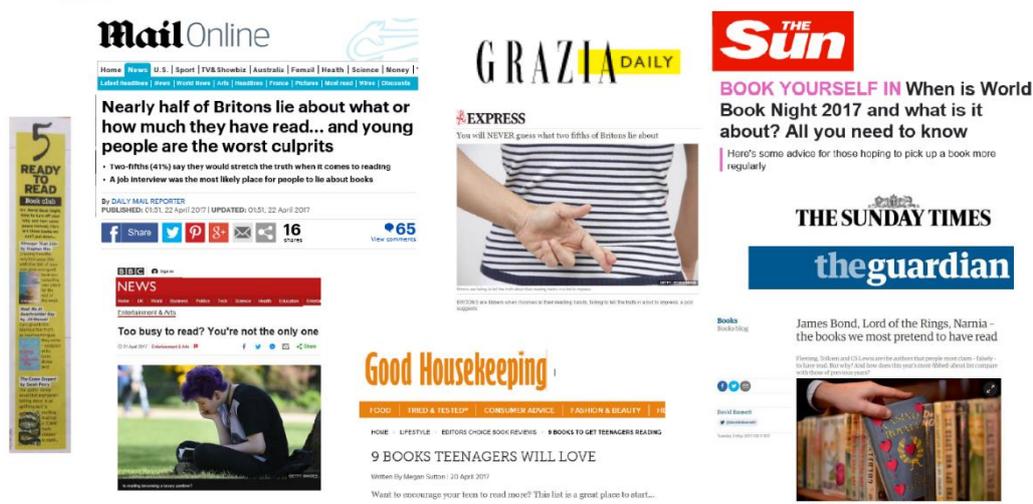
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Male	75.00% 15
Female	15.00% 3
Equal numbers to male and female	10.00% 2
Total	20

Figure 3; World Book Night took place across men's and women's prisons

6. Press coverage

Press coverage from our successful consumer campaign with our PR agency, Stand, included pieces in [the Sun](#), [MailOnline](#), [the Sunday Times](#), the [Guardian](#) and [BBC News Online](#), positioning World Book Night as the go-to national celebration of reading for adults, reaching new audiences and encouraging passionate readers to give books to those who don't regularly read. We conducted a consumer poll about British people's reading habits was particularly successful, generating coverage in a range of outlets from the Daily Express to Good Housekeeping.

MEDIA COVERAGE HIGHLIGHTS

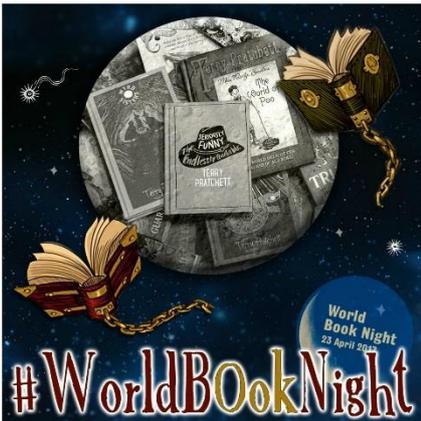
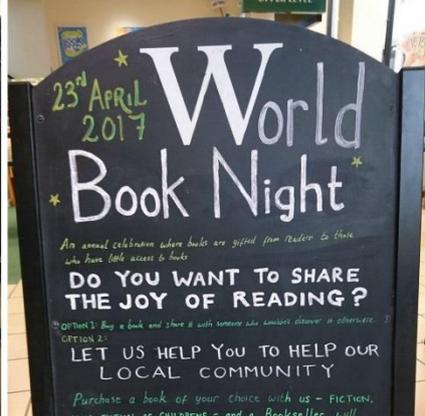


7. World Book Night 2018

Our new, targeted model for World Book Night proved hugely successful in 2017, and will continue as our operational approach in 2018. World Book Night continues to impact positively the recipients of the books and the communities within and around the organisations who give them out. The programme is able to achieve a broad reach as well as target interventions across groups with specific needs through this renewed approach, such as those in prison, isolated older people, those engaged in literacy learning and with health needs. Next year areas for improvement will focus on the quantities of books and title selection for organisations, giving them more choice in both categories during the application process.

Key objectives for the future will include:

- To build on our successful PR campaign and further broaden the celebrations to include more general reading promotion
- To embed fundraising activity into the programme, and promote this in our communications
- To encourage more engagement from businesses, charities, plus libraries, bookshops and other community reading hubs, unlocking access to even more local activists
- To further extend our reach to those whose life chances we can help by inspiring them to become readers.



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