

READING FRIENDS Reading Friends Impact 2021-22

[Reading Friends](#) is The Reading Agency's social reading and befriending programme delivered with libraries and other partners. It uses all kinds of reading to start conversations and connect people socially around shared stories, interests and passions.

From 2021 to 2022, the programme worked with 72 public libraries to make a positive difference to people's lives - supporting wellbeing, creating meaningful connections, reducing loneliness and engaging more people in reading together for pleasure. Reading Friends had a powerful impact on communities - building social support networks, creating long-lasting connections and friendships.

Participation and Engagement

Reading Friends made a difference to people's lives and strengthened communities.

3,728 People took part in groups and one-to-ones

44,054 Social connections took place

[Participants](#) told us that taking part in Reading Friends...

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| 87% helped me feel more connected to others | 78% added purpose to my week | 75% increased my satisfaction with my life | 71% helped me feel less lonely | 70% increased my confidence to try new things |
|--|--|---|---|--|

[Befrienders](#) told us that taking part in Reading Friends...

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| 74% added purpose to my week | 72% helped me feel more connected to others | 63% increased my satisfaction with my life | 53% increased my confidence to try new things | 30% helped me feel less lonely |
|--|--|---|--|---|

"The project certainly helped alleviate my feelings of isolation and those that led the groups seemed to be caring and kind people."
Participant, Kingston Libraries

"Dementia group has been life changing..." Participant, Hillingdon Libraries

"It has enhanced my life..."
Participant, Portsmouth Library Service