

The Listening Posts project aims to add an extra dimension to the reading experience and to introduce readers of all ages to new books and authors and to book related broadcast material.

WHAT LISTENING POSTS ARE

The Listening Posts are PURE Digital Radios. Libraries are using the Legato 1 – aimed at adults – and the Bug, for children. Simple user guides for these models are available to download from www.readingagency.org.uk/bbc-partnership. If you have recently joined the project you may have chosen a different radio for your library.

WHAT THEY CAN BE USED FOR

Libraries can use the Listening Posts to listen to Radio 4 book programmes and BBC7 children’s book programmes, as part of the reading service offered to library users. In addition, we are beginning to extend the partnership base for the project to include new BBC Network Radio partners and BBC Audio Books. We will be posting information about new partners and book and book related programme schedules and archive material, as soon as it’s available at www.readingagency.org.uk/adults/bbc-partnership/.

You can

- Use your listening post in the library, on the mobile (signal permitting) and in work with partners
- Use your listening post with reading groups for background info on books they are reading or on favourite authors.
- Let readers listen individually, either to recordings or to live radio

- Use them in outreach work with, for example, housebound readers, visually impaired readers or in schools, youth clubs, care homes or other community venues
- Play BBC7 children's programmes in the children's section of the library, or have a 'morning story' slot in the fiction section
- Use the Radio 4 and BBC7 schedules available to download from The Reading Agency website - www.readingagency.org.uk/projects/organisations/bbc_radio.htm - to find out the best times to have the Listening Post playing.
- Develop children's and young people's radio clubs – see Nick Stopforth's presentation (download from www.readingagency.org.uk/adults/bbc-partnership/) for ideas
- Contact The Reading Agency with suggestions for BBC Radio discussions and debates in or about libraries

HOW TO JOIN IN

1. Check that you can get a good digital signal in your library. The easiest way to do this is for you or a colleague to bring a digital radio into work and see if it works. Otherwise call the BBC helpline on 08700 10 10 10.

2. Once you know the signal is strong enough and have decided to buy a radio, contact Kathleen Keaney at The Reading Agency – kathleen.keaney@readingagency.co.uk – so we can keep track of which libraries have listening posts and keep you informed of new material as it becomes available.

3. With credit card in hand, log on to <http://www.pureservicecentre.co.uk/rilogin.htm> using the following username and password

Username: Industry
 Password: marconi

This will entitle you to an industry discount when buying your radio. At the time of writing, radios that can play CDs or SD cards cost from around £80 - £300: as with all new technology, prices can change quite rapidly, so do check!

4. To use the archive recordings, you will need to be able to download files from the internet onto a computer, and then copy these onto either a blank CD (if you're using a Legato, Legato 2, Chronos CD Clock Radio,) or an SD (Secure Data) card (if you have a Bug, a Bug Too, an Evoke-3 DAB/FM Radio recorder R60767, a DMX-60, DMX-25 Micro System R60803). Which means you will need access to either a CD burner or an SD card Reader and an SD card. Your IT department will probably have a CD burner and some blank disks, but not necessarily an SD card or card reader. www.ebuyer.com offers excellent value card readers. At the time of writing they are offering an 'extra value' usb card reader for £5.87 (inc VAT) and www.memorybits.co.uk are offering a 2GB SD card for £6.48 (inc VAT), but your IT department may have a preferred supplier, so do check with them first.

5. Think about all the different ways you can use and promote your Listening Post (see above for inspiration)). Contact Kathleen Keaney Kathleen.keaney@readingagency.org.uk for posters and leaflets to help publicise your Listening Post and for assistance from trained staff.

WHAT TO LISTEN TO

BBC Radio 4 broadcasts a wide range of book programmes from readings and dramatisations – such as the Classic Serial, Book of the Week, Book at Bedtime, Poetry Please, Afternoon Reading and the Woman's Hour Drama – to discussion and feature programmes like Open Book, Book Club and A Good Read. It's also worth checking out whether authors are guesting on programmes like Woman's Hour, Start the Week, Midweek and Loose Ends. For children, there's Radio 4's Go4it with stories,

features, news items – and the opportunity for children’s book groups to appear on the programme and BBC7’s Big Toe – which features a selection of stories aimed at 6 – 12-year-olds.

Radio schedules and archive recordings are available to download from The Reading Agency Website at

<http://www.readingagency.org.uk/adults/bbc-partnership/>

and podcasts from

www.bbc.co.uk/radio/podcasts/directory/genre/artsdrama/

These can be attached to empty bellied posters available from Kathleen Keaney at The Reading Agency for display in the library.

EVALUATION

The Reading Agency will be carrying out a simple evaluation of Listening Post use in December 2008. As with the previous evaluation, we’ll be using an online form to investigate level and nature of use as well as issues and challenges faced by staff using the Listening Posts. We will also want to find out how the Listening Posts are being used in partnership and outreach work, and to hear your success stories.

LIBRARIES WITH LISTENING POSTS

There are 31 libraries in the current pilot, picked from the hundreds that originally applied. A further nine are buying Listening Posts in the current roll out and we hope more of you will join after April 2008. With this information pack is a list of current participants. Do get in touch with each other to share best practice, stories, or ideas.

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