

Libraries Working with Radio on Reading

"The potential in this partnership for increasing people's enjoyment and consumption of books is enormous and I'm very pleased that Radio 4 and BBC7 will be playing their part in this." Mark Damazer, Controller, Radio 4 and BBC7.

Miranda McKearney, Director of The Reading Agency says: "A partnership between public libraries and BBC Radio has huge potential to feed the nation's reading habit. Putting our two public sector networks together creates a potent mix of broadcast and community based reading opportunities".

The BBC Radio 4 and BBC 7 Library Partnership aims to combine two powerful networks to create excitement about reading and serve readers better.

Year two of the partnership will build on the successes of the first phase to explore creative ways to link library users and resources with BBC Radio 4 and BBC 7 book-related programmes. This work will be driven by the creation of a post of BBC Radio and Libraries Co-ordinator.

The project is building a long term vision for the way that radio and libraries can work together to give readers and listeners new and richer reading experiences, and bring reading to a wider audience.

Led by The Reading Agency, the partnership is supported by the Arts Council of England and the BBC.

Aims for the 2006-7 BBC Radio 4 and BBC 7 pilot

1. Build a long term partnership

- Developing awareness of the pilot with stakeholders
- Evidencing the value of joint working
- Exploring links with other library BBC partnerships
- Changing working practices
- Identifying funding opportunities

2. Open up new opportunities for joint activity

- Discussing new library/reader focused ideas with BBC producers
- Creating library and reader links with existing radio output
- Developing new online reader content linked to programming
- Rolling out library listening posts for BBC radio programmes
- Developing the children's radio club model
- Distributing programme support material to libraries

- Building audiences
- Increasing the profile of libraries in relevant BBC radio output
- Linking library/BBC web pages
- Working to build a shared audience for key programmes
- Building a radio presence in libraries

3. Advocacy

- Creating new networks and contacts for each partner
- Raising the profile of the partnership in trade press and with stakeholders

Work so far...

- A national Listening Posts pilot established with support from Pure including 30 posts with access to digital radio and archived Radio 4 book programmes.
- ACE/BBC7 library radio clubs pilot up and running in the North East of England
- Woman's Hour's Women's Watershed Fiction - 2244 libraries taking part in 86% of the UK's 208 library authorities; outside broadcast from The Millennium Library, Norwich
- 118 library authorities sign up to Best of the Best - A Woman's Hour programme on 10 years of the Orange Prize for Fiction.
- Open Book Library Special broadcast July 05
- Link up between BBC 7's Big Toe programme and libraries' Summer Reading Challenge website
- Radio partnership profiled as part of broader BBC/Libraries partnership launch featuring Mark Thompson and David Lammy
- BBC Radio 4 Arts website contains 5 links to the UK library catalogues
- Promotional resources and weekly information on Radio 4 & BBC7 books programming sent to libraries
- Advance programming information included on TRA library calendar
- Meeting with Controller of Radio 4 and Creative Director of BBC Learning
- Joint TRA/BBC presentation at London Book Fair
- Library presentation to BBC Radio arts producers
- Guidelines supporting joint working produced for both partners
- A downloadable library reading group information page
- Creative brainstorm exploring potential for closer links libraries and readers with radio output with libraries and the BBC staff
- Link between library web pages and a specially designated Radio 4 books page.
- A forward planner of library events for BBC producers used to inform dedicated library special radio programme
- Increased marketing support for programming material in libraries

To come...

- Appointment of a second phase Radio Partnership Co-ordinator
- Development of key projects including national listening posts pilot and children's radio clubs

