

# Introduction

Book Week Scotland (BWS) is an annual celebration of books and reading that takes place across Scotland. The eighth BWS took place 18–24 November 2019. Over 75,000 people participated in more than 1,300 events across the country. The programme is run by Scottish Book Trust (SBT) and funded by Creative Scotland.

## Outcomes

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the effectiveness of BWS 2019 in delivering the programme outcomes. The outcomes for this project are:

Book Week Scotland Outcomes	
<b>Awareness</b>	People are aware of Book Week Scotland
<b>Participation</b>	People take part in Book Week Scotland
<b>Enjoyment</b>	People enjoy Book Week Scotland
<b>Benefit</b>	Taking part in Book Week Scotland is beneficial for individuals and organisations

## Book Week Scotland 2019

People could engage with 2019 BWS by:

Attending an event

- Events were held in all local authorities across Scotland

Holding a Reading Lunch

- Schools, businesses and individuals were encouraged to read or attend a reading event over lunch

Writing a *Blether* story

- People were encouraged to submit short personal stories, poems, letters, diary entries and comic strips for inclusion in the *Blether* book

Reading or gifting the free *Blether* book

- 100,000 copies of *Blether*, the finished book of short stories, were printed and distributed for free

Voting for an iconic Scots word

- 200 submitted nominations and almost 2,000 votes were cast before 'dreich' was declared the winner

Participating in the Digital Festival

- This could include watching Authors Live, joining in on social media, listening to author Conversation podcasts, and reading the What's Your Story magazine online

### Participating in the Big Book Swap

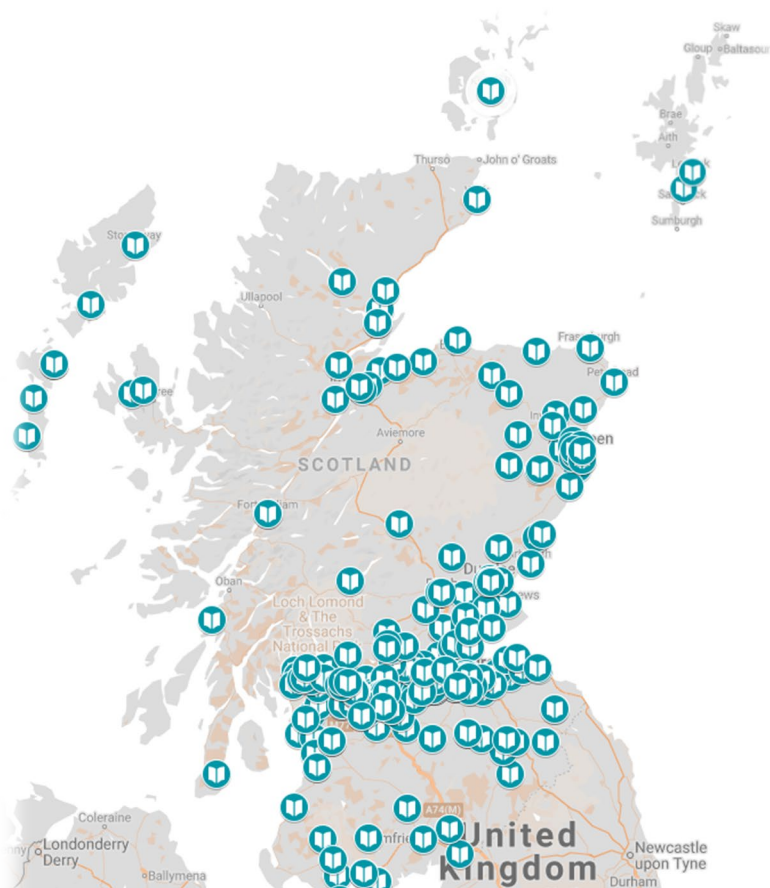
- Participants donated £1 to SBT and swapped books

### Receiving children's books

- Read, Write, Count and Bookbug bags are gifted to every child in Scotland at vital points in their development. Schools are encouraged to gift these during BWS to link in with the celebration of reading

## Evaluation

Last year SBT commissioned an independent evaluation from KSO Research. The 2019 evaluation was conducted in-house. Evidence of the project's performance against the outcomes was gathered in a number of ways.



BWS public events in 2019 1

### National survey

- As in previous years, an omnibus survey was commissioned from YouGov from a representative panel of approximately 1,000 people based in Scotland. The survey sought to gather information on awareness, participation, and reasons for non-participation.

### Audience survey

- The survey of individual audience members was cut last year in favour of a short mentimeter survey. As the mentimeter survey only gathered data from a small number of locations, the individual online survey was reinstated this year. Substantiative questions were asked to give evidence on all four outcomes. The survey was incentivised and returned 127 surveys, 123 of which were useable.

### Partner surveys

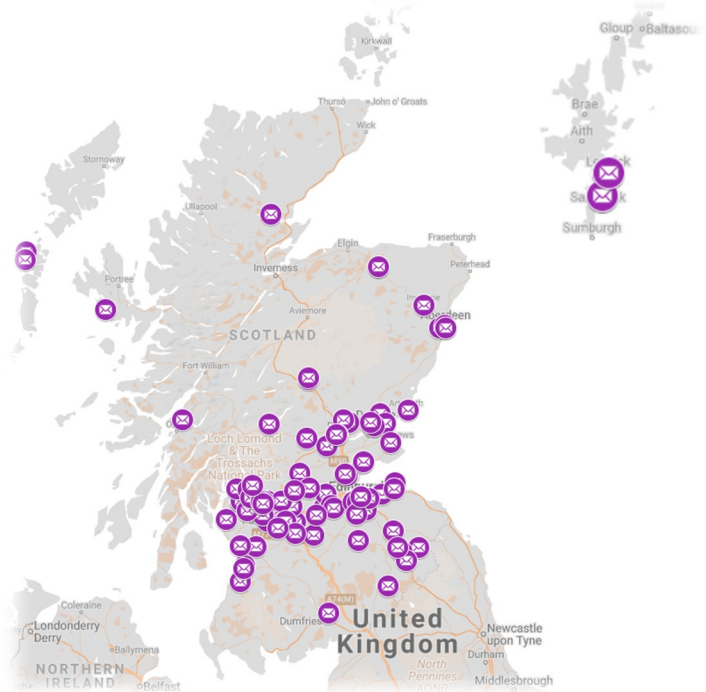
- Surveys were sent out to organisations involved in BWS. Three versions of the surveys were tailored to different groups: official partners, libraries, and schools. Data from the partners and libraries has been integrated into this evaluation. Initially the response rate from schools was too low to give a meaningful picture of school participation so it was incentivised and redistributed in February 2020. By the end of the evaluation we received a useful amount of responses from schools (188) as well as partners (71) and libraries (41 of which were useable).

### Case studies

- Three case studies were conducted by BWS staff. These involved desk research, visiting the partner venues involved, interviewing staff who programmed the events and other stakeholders. The other stakeholders included audience members and community partners.

#### Partner evaluation kits

- Postcards and posters were sent to all registered partners with instructions and ideas for gathering feedback and returning it to SBT. The kits were designed to capture ‘in the moment’ feedback from the audience and to encourage partners to engage with the evaluation. The posters solicited evidence of awareness and enjoyment. The postcards asked questions about participation and enjoyment (428 were returned).



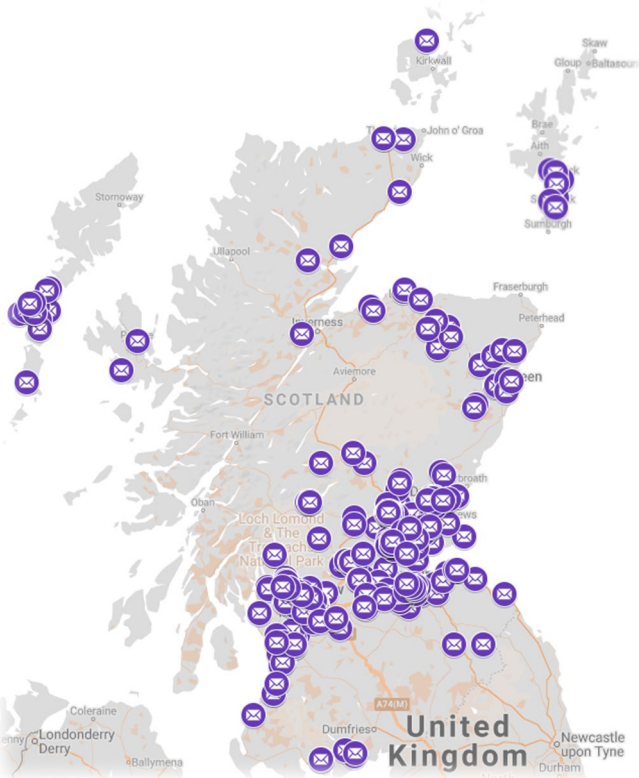
Online survey respondents 1

This year’s evaluation also makes use of administrative and monitoring data gathered by SBT during BWS. This includes event listings, media clippings, and statistics from the Digital Festival.

#### Audience location

BWS funds a wide range of activities across the country through a diverse range of partners. We ask partners to report back on the numbers of attendees. This year we also used an online survey and a postcard survey to gain insight into who attended BWS events in 2019. The analysis produced only reflects audience members who voluntarily completed one of these surveys.

We combined the postcode data from our online and postcard audience surveys to map where our responses were coming from.

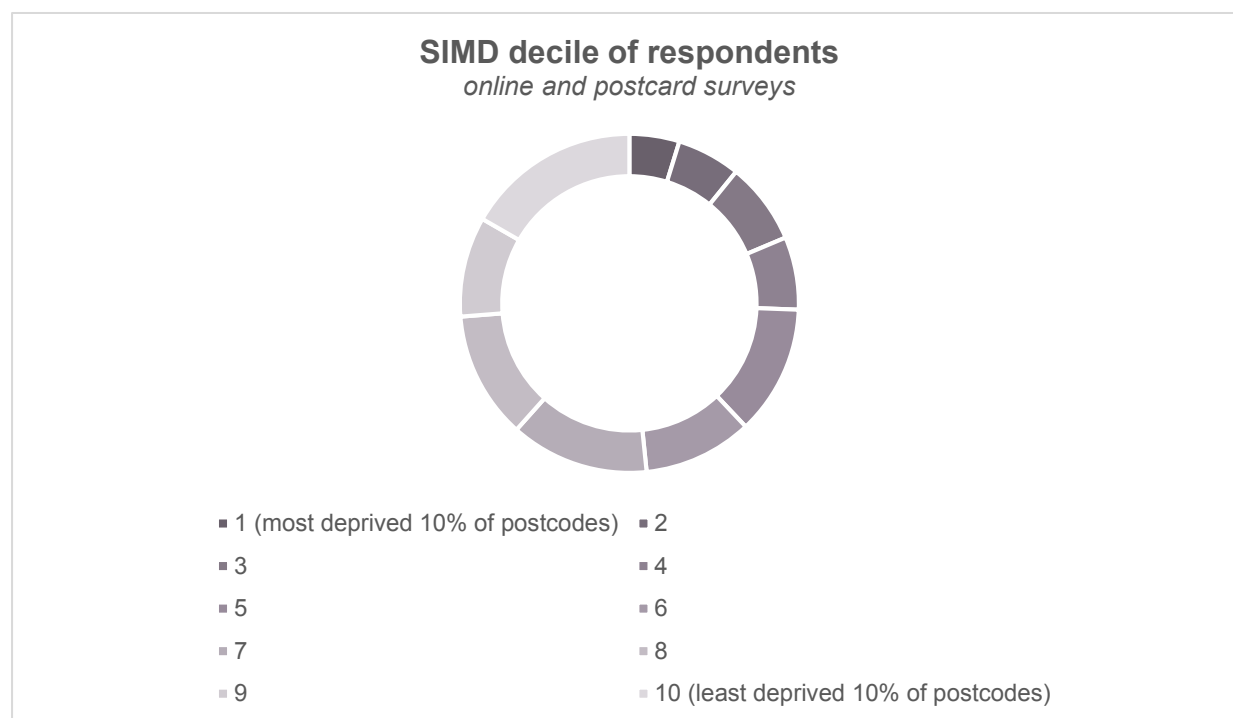


Postcard survey respondents 1

This gave us 461 valid postcodes (348 from postcards and 113 from individual online surveys). Where only a partial postcode or town name was given, the largest settlement within the postcode district was entered to return an approximate location. By mapping the postcodes of survey respondents against the location of event venues, we can see that the events are spread across the country and that this is mirrored by our survey respondents. Some areas are overrepresented compared to the number of events held. Perth and North Uist, produced a high number of responses for a small number of events. Other locations, such as Aberdeen and Inverness (and their immediate surroundings), produced comparatively few responses for a large number of events. The findings in this section should therefore not be regarded as entirely representative of the 2019 audience.

## 2019 Book Week Scotland audience

The online survey of individual attendees was circulated through SBT platforms. It therefore attracted respondents who were already invested in SBT. Unsurprisingly, readers were the group that responded to our survey. 57% reported reading for pleasure every day and 32% several times a week.



461 audience member postcodes were gathered from postcards and the online survey and mapped to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016. This gave us an indication of our audience demographics. Every vigintile (unit of 5%) of the postcodes were represented by our audience, from the least to the most deprived. People who lived in more affluent areas were better represented than others. 26% of respondents lived in the 20% least deprived areas, and 11% of respondents lived in the 20% most deprived areas.

As in previous BWS evaluations, women were significantly overrepresented in the

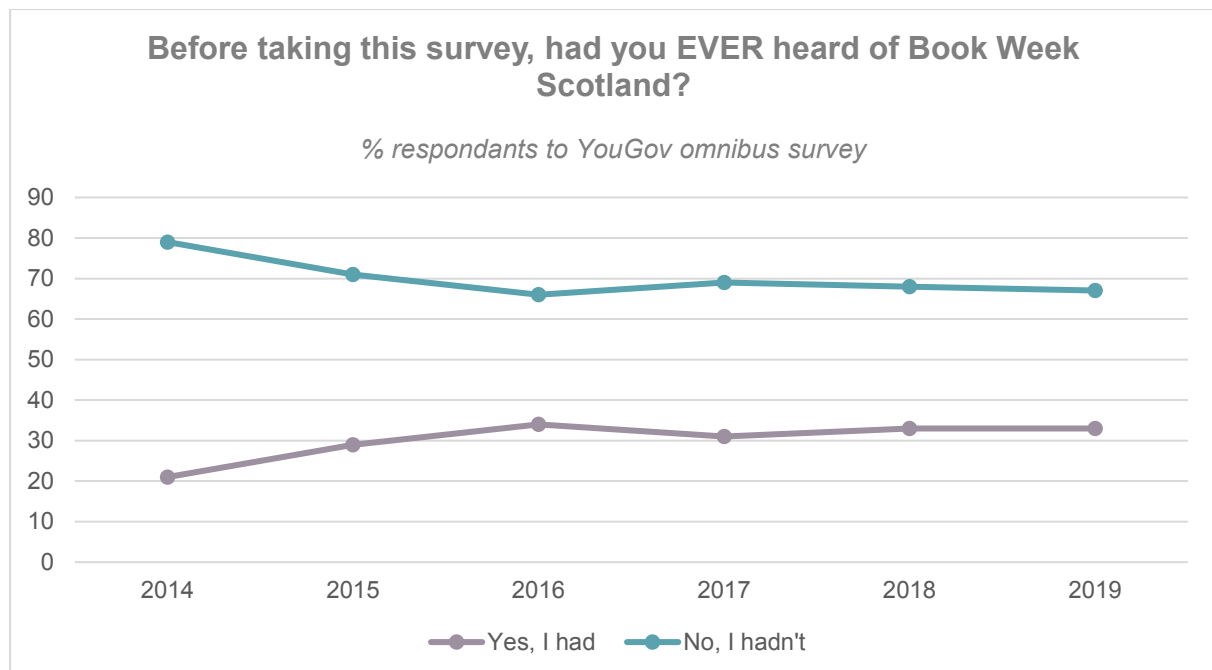
feedback collected. 72% of the postcards and 78% of the online surveys were returned by women.

13% of the Scottish population is age 55-64 and 19% is over 65.<sup>1</sup> Respondents to SBT's requests for feedback were significantly more likely to be older. The majority of postcard respondents were aged 65+ (38%) or 55-64 (20%). Respondents to the online audience survey were slightly younger (26% 55-64 and 17% 65+).

SBT's online survey of individuals included further optional information on protected characteristics. Only 76 of the respondents were willing to provide additional personal information. 8% of these identified as having a disability, a low figure when taken in conjunction with the age of the respondents. The ethnic origin of respondents was overwhelmingly white (89% White Scottish/White British). 7% identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual.

## Outcome 1: Awareness

The results from YouGov's 2019 representative sample of Scottish adults suggests that one third of the population is aware of BWS (33%). As the survey is commissioned annually to judge awareness, we can compare the 2019 results with those from previous years. Awareness is slightly higher than in 2018, slightly lower than the 2016 high of 34%, and a significant improvement on the 2014 rate of 21%.



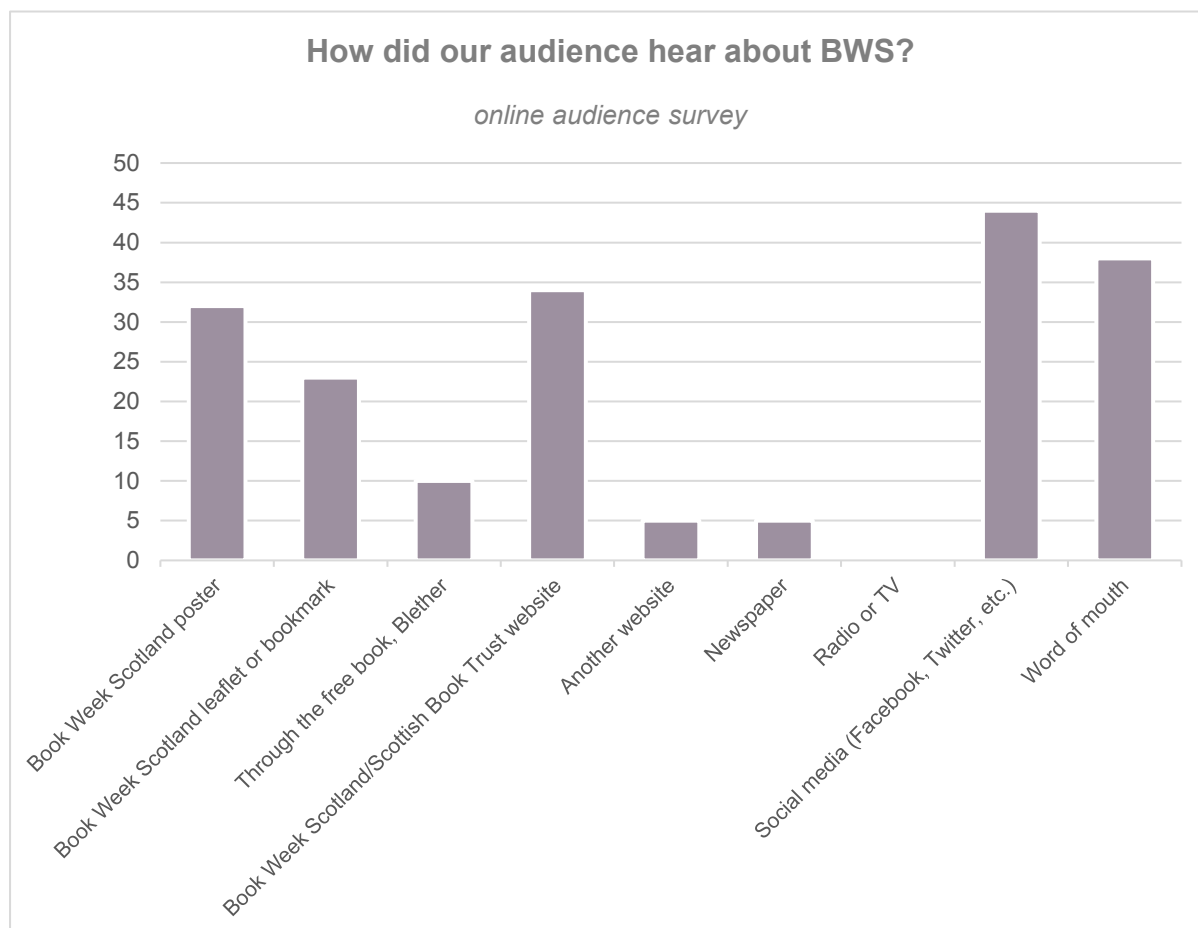
<sup>1</sup> Population estimates by administrative area, Scotland, mid-2018. National Records of Scotland, 2019.

## Public awareness

As BWS is delivered with partners, and in locations, across Scotland we also used poster and survey data from event attendees to see if they were aware of BWS. SBT provided partners with posters where their audience could report their awareness and enjoyment of the event. Data gathered by partners via the posters showed that 76% of their audience was aware that the event they attended was part of BWS. Out of the 25 school respondents who elaborated on the reasons for not participating in BWS, 24% cited lack of awareness that it was happening.

Respondents to our audience survey were most likely to have found out about BWS from social media (23%), followed by word of mouth (20%), through our websites (18%), or from a poster (17%).

Some respondents to the individual survey suggested that they had not been aware of BWS, or that they became aware of it by chance. Feedback from a minority of libraries requested the marketing materials further in advance to assist with raising awareness.



## Media awareness

In total, 810 pieces of press coverage were secured for BWS 2019 over the period of November to December, compared to 597 in 2018. The combined reach was 36.1 million (compared to 29.1 million the previous year).

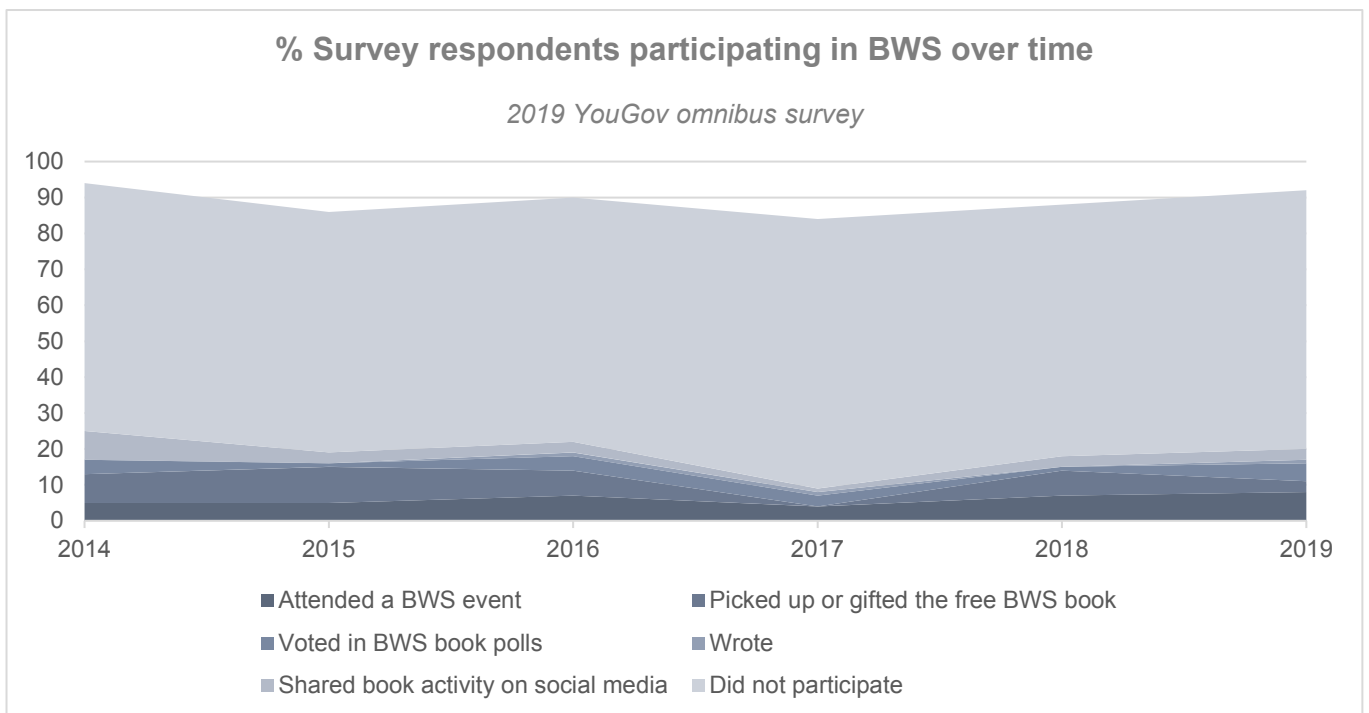
Broadcast coverage rose by 201% since 2018, with a total of 214 pieces (compared to 71 pieces the previous year).

During BWS itself there were 532 items of coverage, compared to 286 in 2018. Highlights included the results of the iconic Scots word vote being covered on *The Nine* and by *The Scotsman*.

## Outcome 2: Participation

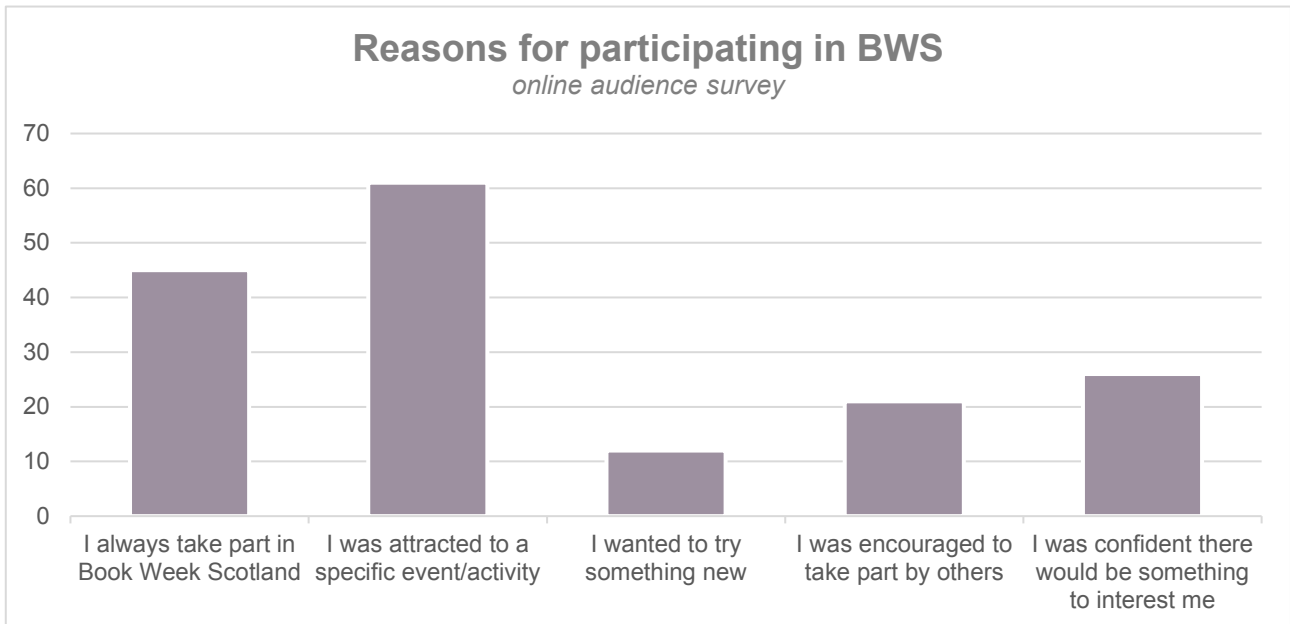
In 2019 more than 40,000 people attended over 1,300 public events, with 35,000 school pupils taking part in additional activities across the country.

Data collected from our audience postcards suggests that 66% of respondents attended BWS for the first time in 2019. This evaluation method appears to have captured more first-time attendees than our online audience survey (where 41% of the respondents were first time attendees).



The YouGov survey shows that from the respondents who were aware of BWS, 27% also participated. Top reasons cited for not participating included being too busy/not having time (35%), not knowing what events/activities were available (24%) and not knowing the dates (18%).

The data on survey respondents who were aware of BWS suggest an increase in those who were aware of the programme but did not participate. However, those who participate do so in diverse ways as new activities (for example, Pitch It or the Digital Festival) have been added to the overall programme.

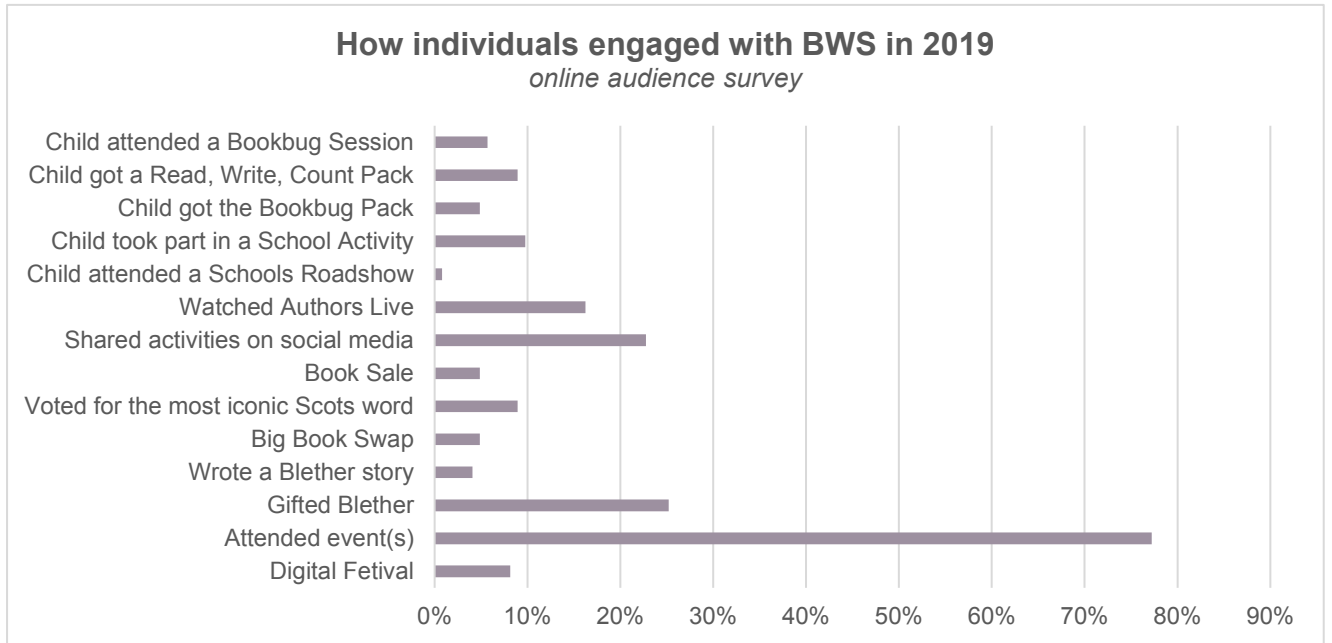


### **Audience Participation**

The respondents to our 2019 audience survey had mainly participated in BWS by attending an event (77%), gifting a copy of *Blether* (25%), or shared their activities on social media (23%).

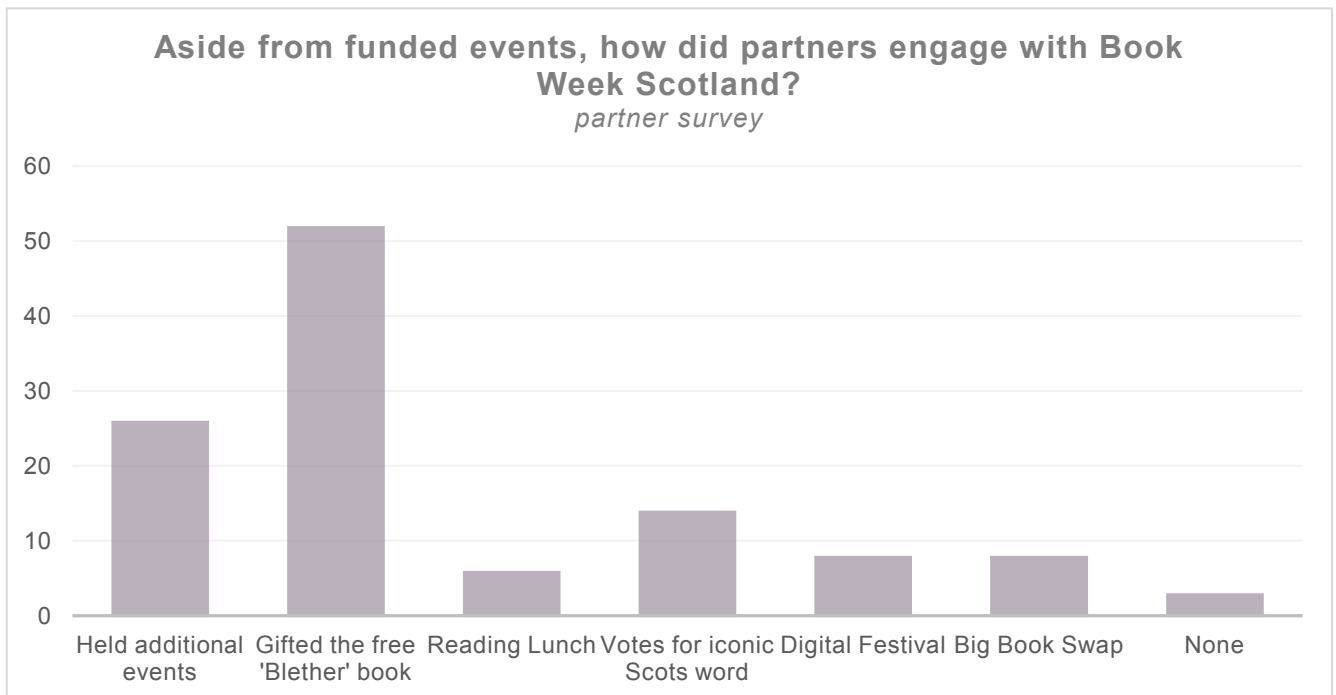
Individuals who responded to this survey were often regular or repeat attendees of BWS. 27% of them said that they always take part in BWS. Their most common reason for participating was an interest in a specific event (37%).





## Partner participation

'We were delighted to have 45 people attend the Book Week Scotland event as we only have 160 residents on the island and a proportion of these have main homes elsewhere and were away. Our event launched Sue Lawrence's new Food from Scottish Islands book. In the evening of the event the Luing Home Bakers hosted a meal for Sue Lawrence at one of their homes and held a competition for the worst baking disaster as judged by Sue.' (Isle of Luing Community Trust)



This year, through the annual partner survey, 28% of respondents reported they were participating in BWS for the first time. Out of the additional (unfunded) activities partners could participate in, the free *Blether* book was by far the most popular (53% rated it as excellent). The next most popular additional event was voting for the iconic Scots word (16% rated it as excellent).

Two partners participating in the case study mentioned being unsure about whether or not to charge for events. The majority of BWS events are free to attend for participants with all author and event costs being covered by the partners or SBT. Some events reported free tickets selling out with large waiting lists in place, but that on the day nearly half of the free ticket holders did not attend. It might be useful to offer guidance for partners on how to maximise attendance for events without resorting to financial barriers.

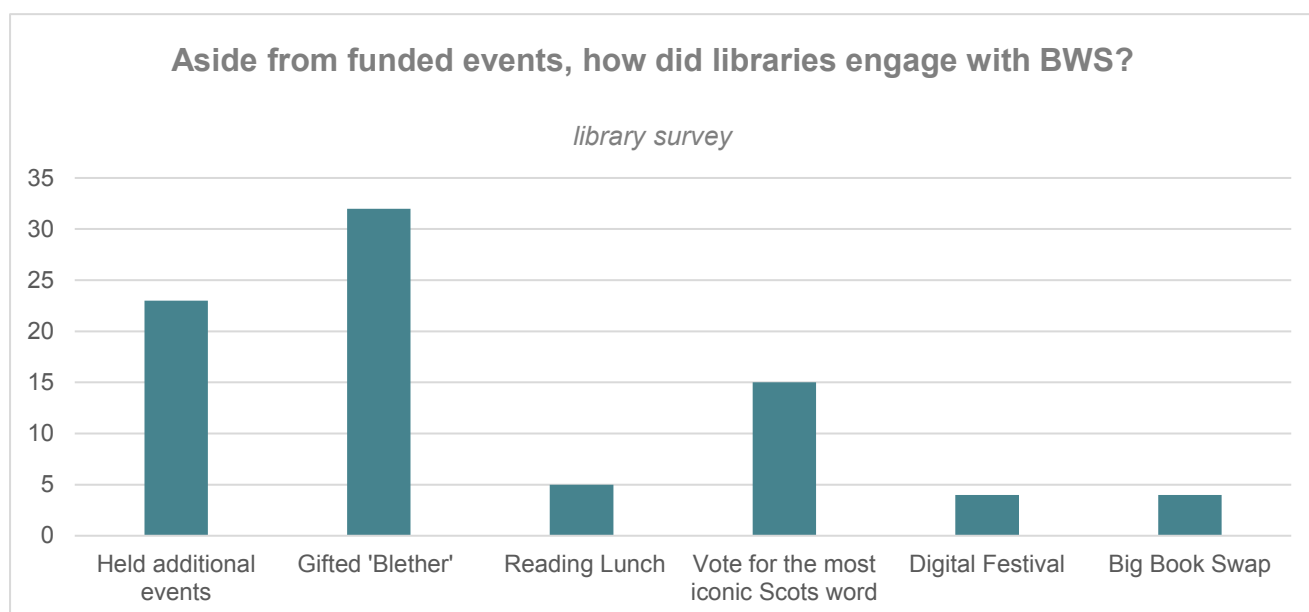
## Library participation

'We don't always manage to participate in, or promote, every strand but the overall offer for BWS is always interesting, surprising and comprehensive: there's something for everyone. Book Week Scotland is seen as a very positive initiative by library service staff and the week is definitely becoming widely/publicly recognised.' (Library partner)

Libraries responding to our survey reported:

- Holding 126 SLIC-funded events with an audience of 4,155
- Holding 563 additional events with an audience of 18,049
- Hosting 514 Bookbug sessions for a total of 13,075 carers and children

This is a total of over 1,200 events for over 35,000 attendees of all ages. Libraries are highly engaged in BWS and hold a significant proportion of the events.

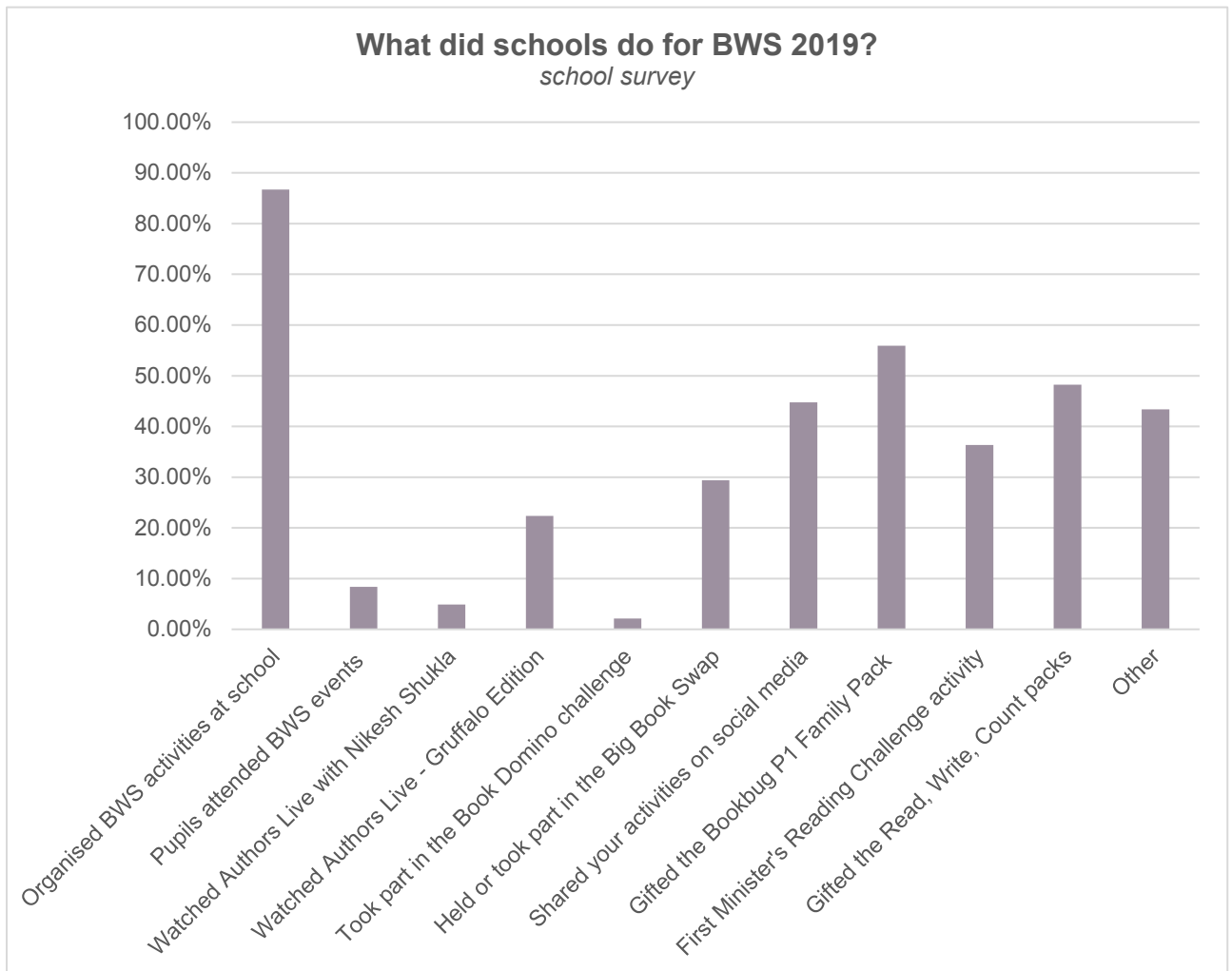


## School participation

Respondents to our school survey reported 35,000 people taking part in school activities across the country. Some schools gifted P1 Bookbug and Read, Write,

Count P2/3 bags as part of the celebrations. SBT livestreamed two Authors Live events during BWS. This included a session with YA author Nikesh Shukla (1,200 views) for teenagers and *The Gruffalo* in Scots and Gaelic (23,948 views) for younger readers. Other schools organised their own author visit or participated in the school tour with scriptwriter Cat Hepburn (10 events with an audience of 240). Other schools organised their own events to tie in with BWS.

'We held a Bedtime Stories event, where the whole school changed into their pyjamas and went to the hall for hot chocolate and a story read by the head teacher.' (School)



## **Impact Study: West Dunbartonshire Libraries**

In 2019 West Dunbartonshire Libraries ran a number of events including five sessions for adults and two for children. They invited a variety of authors into their libraries, from local authors to writers like Kerry Hudson who were touring the whole country. The library service also applied to Pitch It, a SBT initiative that invites libraries and communities to pitch their dream event to win a fully-funded event by a high-profile writer. This allowed them to run a full day of events with the food writer Jack Monroe.

'There was a palpable enthusiasm and people were expressing it. They were looking for additional opportunities to get involved with reading culture, the authors and the libraries providing events of this nature along similar lines or similar themes.'

Workshops and talks with local high schools, an additional support needs school, and youth groups took place in community centres and the mobile library. Jack Monroe's popularity as a writer and journalist appealed to a younger audience and their openness about being LGBT and non-binary made the events particularly engaging for LGBT youth. These are groups that the library service has found difficult to engage with in the past so they are keen to build on the excitement generated by the event.

'As well as the intrinsic merit of the event (people will often ask for books to borrow after, either by the author or on the same theme) it will also deepen their relationships with topics and they will read more widely. We hope it will encourage people to attend more activity, hope it will engender a lifelong relationship with library and community.'

The style of the events were accessible, informal and friendly which staff felt helped to deepen the experience for the audience and the author. The young people who attended were confident, asking questions during the event and queuing to speak to the author afterwards. The hope is that some audience members who attended an event for the first time in November have now become regular library users. It has reached people who may not have otherwise used public libraries.

'It has provided a portal into other events at the library and other services that the library can provide.'

Staff report that participating in BWS has influenced the rest of the programme as it allowed them to take risks, attract new audiences, assess their weaknesses and to find out what resonates with their communities. The library service hopes that the success of their Pitch It events will act as an entry point for building new audiences within the communities that attended. They are especially keen to keep the relationship with the younger audience, encouraging them to become lifelong readers.

'We believe these events have an intrinsic worth and we want to use them to foster a lifelong love of reading. That's what Book Week Scotland is for us... It's all about that desire to build a love of the written word with people.'

## Outcome 3: Enjoyment

### Partners

'A great theme, amazing ideas...we're so grateful for the grant and all resources.' (Library Partner)

Overall, feedback gathered from partners through surveys and case studies was positive. In both the general partners and the libraries surveys, respondents reported that BWS staff were supportive and easy to work with. They also reported that they were happy with the quantity and quality of the *Blether* book and the marketing materials.

'The overall offer for BWS is always interesting, surprising and comprehensive: there's something for everyone.' (Partner)

The majority of partners (70%) said they would definitely participate in BWS again. Those who were unsure whether or not they would participate in the future cited a number of dependencies and challenges to their continued participation. These included the timing of the week, understaffing, business, and organisational priorities changing. A few commented that they were waiting for the announcement of the 2020 theme before deciding.

#### We asked our partners to rate elements of BWS 2019:

*On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent, how would you rate each of the following events/activities that you engaged with?*

Activity	Library partners (average score out of 5)	Other partners (average score out of 5)
The free <i>Blether</i> book	4.41	4.53
Reading Lunch	4	2.75
Vote for the most iconic Scots word of the 21st century	4.38	4.18
Digital Festival	3.6	3.82
Big Book Swap	4	3.8

### Audiences

'It was brilliant. Don't know how you can top that next year.' (Audience member)

In addition to asking partners if their audiences enjoyed their events, SBT asked for audience feedback. We provided partners with posters where their audience could report their awareness and enjoyment of the event. 98% of the audience to general BWS events rated the event they attended at 4 or 5 (on a scale of 1–5). Positive feedback from audiences was even higher in the case of libraries. 91% of audiences who attended an event at a library rated their event as 5/5 and 8% rated their event as 4/5.

'Found it stimulating, broadens reading experience.' (Audience member)

The postcards sent back to the SBT suggested this number might be even higher as 99% of respondents reported enjoying their event.

'Loved it that Gaelic and Scots were highlighted and promoted in the Author's Live event.' (Audience member)

The individual survey also sought to gather information on enjoyment of the Digital Festival but the response rate to this question was too low to report on. The majority of audience feedback was positive. An open question on the BWS audience survey provided respondents with the opportunity to comment. Suggestions for improvements mainly centred on more marketing of BWS and more events on offer in the respondent's immediate area.

'We ran a Story Cafe Special, on the theme of Blether, with Scottish Asian comedian Lubna Kerr, and this included bilingual readings and chat in English and Urdu, over shared food, which was hugely successful. Lots of women commented on how great it was to have a fully integrated event, and to have the opportunity to chat and hear readings and comedy in their first language of Urdu – and also just having a chance to blether and laugh together!' (Glasgow Women's Library)

## **Schools**

'Book Week is a fabulous celebration of books.' (School)

Schools responding to our survey expressed their focus on reading for pleasure during BWS. The learning professionals who described their activities had implemented a range of fun and imaginative alternatives to their pupils' regular timetable. 95% of schools reported that taking part in BWS increased pupil enjoyment of reading and writing. Schools, partners, and libraries were all happy with the quality of the free resources provided by SBT, with schools in particular requesting more free resources. Examples given were pins, bookmarks, posters, and books for different age groups.

'The enjoyment of reading was evident – many are now hooked on reading!' (School)

## Impact Study: Forth Valley College's Alloa Campus

As part of BWS, Forth Valley College ran two events, including an event with Kerry Hudson at their campus in Stirling. They also held an event at their Alloa campus. Alan Bisset read from his books and discussed his experiences as an author before taking questions from the audience. About 60 people attended the author talk and discussion. This was a higher number than normal for a cultural event in Alloa campus and the audience was a mixture of staff and students of all ages. This included students who would not normally attend a book reading. The event was free, removing any financial barriers.

It was a lively event. Staff who organised the event thought that what made it so successful was matching the audience with an author who was talented at keeping their interest.

'The audience was visibly engaged throughout the entire event and the author was able to establish a good connection, keeping people engaged and entertained throughout the event.'

The author was accessible and inspiring. Alan Bisset speaks and writes in his local dialect of Scots which helped him connect with the audience. The staff were particularly encouraged by the enthusiastic response to the speaker from students who would not normally attend an author event, including students from an Adverse Childhood Experience group. The author's style and his message that any person can write if they have a story to tell, and that their story is important, struck a chord with them.

At the end of the event, attendees gave positive feedback on their experience. Over a third bought a book to read and many more took a free copy of *Blether* home with them. Some attendees also expressed an interest in coming back to more events and asked for more information.

'Normally reluctant students were really engaged while Alan was talking. A group of boys sitting in the front row, who wouldn't always be very interested by a typical book event, really enjoyed themselves and had lots of back and forth with Alan, who was able to keep them entertained and focused.'

The successful event has encouraged Forth Valley College to participate in BWS again to build on the momentum for this year. They plan to encourage their students to use the library space and develop a reading culture. For future events they aim to work collaboratively with other local authors.

'Made writing is something that everyone can do as long as there is a story to tell!' (Audience member)

## Outcome 4: Benefit

### Partners

'This BWS we concentrated on our Mobile Libraries and our smaller/rural communities. We had two events in village halls at mobile library stops. We have never done this before as we have concentrated on our larger static libraries within our towns and city. The feedback we got was amazing. The local community really appreciate "real life authors" talking to them in their local village hall.' (Partner)

Case studies and survey data from partners revealed that BWS was a useful initiative to draw attention to the importance of reading. Some partners commented that they were not always able to engage with all the strands of BWS so appreciated the flexibility of the programme. As in previous years, organisations felt it was beneficial to be part of a national initiative.

'Working with Scottish Book Trust has given us given us a different outlook on how we do our job and has given us encouragement to invest in writing.'  
(Partner)

Diversity and inclusion are key to BWS's ethos and this is evident from the sheer variety of the events that took place. Partners commented that the funding and support from BWS allowed them to take risks with their programming and to subsidise events for marginalised groups. This audience development work allowed some partners to reach new audiences that they hope to retain in the future.

'The young people were clamouring to speak to her at the end and ask her questions both about her fiction and non-fiction work... Dyslexia can be a barrier to reading and dyslexic young people are understandably reluctant to read – it was good to let them see the books especially written for them in terms of font, spacing and so on but which were still great reads.' (Partner)

### Audiences

'The entire week has been fantastic. It's wonderful seeing all the children across the country enjoying books and getting excited about reading. I love how inclusive this initiative and how it allows all children to get involved.'  
(Audience member)

Audience members reported enjoyment and enthusiasm for BWS. Some commented on the accessibility of the free *Blether* book. Others highlighted the diversity and inclusiveness of events. Negative comments from the audience surveys focused on feelings of exclusion from the benefits of BWS (e.g. being unaware of an event or wanting more events in their local area).

Some audience members reported reading a bit (28%) or a lot (9%) more during BWS. Others tapped into the communal and social aspects of the celebration. 84% indicated they had encouraged friends or family to participate in BWS. 64% reported attending events with friends, family or colleagues. 33% gave or shared a book with someone during BWS.



'The various versions of the book to download (including the audio version) were very popular with learners and accessibility options.' (Partner)

## **Benefit to schools**

'We made a huge deal about it this year and the children were so engaged in books, which was a total joy to see.'" (School)

Learning professionals who responded to the school survey were asked directly if participation was beneficial to their pupils or their school. 95% said that it was beneficial as an opportunity to promote reading for pleasure. 76% found it beneficial as a whole school celebration of books. Other beneficial opportunities provided by BWS were: including families and the wider community in school activities (54%), celebrating a school library (50%), celebrating reading achievements (45%) and building on the school's existing curriculum (44%). A minority (19%) even used BWS as a chance to start a new project or piece of work.

'The school became obsessed with books and reading, children who hadn't shown much interest were suddenly gripped by a book, families joined in and came to read with their children. The bedtime stories were a huge hit and really well received by all families, but helped a lot where families have low literacy levels in parents and also with our EAL families.' (School)

## **Impact Study: Nil by Mouth**

'It's trying to reach people at a level they feel comfortable with and not condescending to them.'

Nil by Mouth is a Scottish charity that works to challenge sectarianism. They have been participating in BWS for a number of years, using sport and reading to bring people together. They ran three events with BWS 2019 for different audiences: a Football Memories event, a Junior Football event and a schools event. They teamed up with a local radio host, Robert Burns, who had previously attended their events before getting involved.

They hold their events in community spaces like schools or football clubs to reach people who don't see themselves as readers. This year they ran an event with Irvine Meadow FC as part of the local Football Memories project, which uses sport to support people with Alzheimer's disease and other memory-related conditions, as well as their families and carers.

'All of these football clubs are in the community. Majority of the people that were there have spent their lives going to this place. It's second nature to go to the football ground. They feel at ease.' (Robert Burns)

The event took place on a Sunday afternoon and involved sports writer Daniel Gray. It started with a reading with the author drawing on memories of the game over the decades. Then the author hosted an informal chat with the audience about their memories of players, matches, goals and songs.

'We try to give people a night out as well as the book stuff – it becomes a social occasion for people.'

The social side of the event tapped into the communal element of football. The audience stayed back and chatted for over an hour once the event officially ended. The event appealed to older men from the local area who attended alone or in groups from care homes. Some of the audience were quite isolated in their day-to-day life so the event was a real opportunity to create a sense of community.

'It was hugely successful in getting a demographic that wouldn't normally come to a book event to come.'

In the future, the charity aim to continue using BWS as an opportunity to try new things. They are also working to produce their own anthology of football writing to combine the community-building power of sport with the benefits of reading.

'It's very softly, softly. They are coming in to be entertained by someone talking about football, not sectarianism.'

## **Additional Findings**

### **Theme**

'Held a "Blether Café" in each of our 12 libraries. Either targeted groups or the general public were invited to come along and enjoy a blether with staff about the library. In some instances a local author or historian led the sessions.'  
(Library partner)

The reaction to the Blether theme was positive. Last year's feedback showed some strong feelings for and against the Rebel theme. All mentions of the Blether theme from libraries, and the majority from partners, were positive.

'We found the theme of Blether/Conversation to be ideal for Book Week Scotland. There were many opportunities to highlight it in our programme and it was a very useful focus for partner organisations to incorporate it into their work as well. The artwork on your publicity was very striking. It was also much appreciated that you could continue to produce a paper copy of the Blether book as a free give away. The generous supply of publicity materials is also much appreciated.' (Library partner)

The theme was generally popular with the audience as well as the partners, though a few voices were less keen on it compared to previous themes. Feedback from schools showed that the Rebel theme was easier to engage with for young people, though one respondent mentioned that this theme was unpopular with parents.

'The "blether" thing is a bit twee and Glasgow centric.' (Audience member)

## **Blether book**

'"Blether" has been the best theme yet – provides lots of scope to engage at a local level.' (Library partner)

Feedback on the *Blether* book was overwhelmingly positive. The audio version was mentioned on a couple of occasions as accessible and positive. Other partners took the initiative to improve the text's accessibility. SBT could look at whether it would be possible to incorporate these measures (or instructions on how to do this) into future publications.

Respondents who did not enjoy the *Blether* book were mainly members of the public expressing disappointment that the book was not for children. Three partners also mentioned they would prefer the book to be aimed at, or suitable for, children. One partner mentioned that the text was too small, limiting the book's accessibility.

'We distributed the "Blether" book and ran sessions/workshops to established Adult Learning Groups on how to download and adapt the reading materials for personal use on mobile phones, tablets, Kindles and laptops. This included large print for visual impairments and dyslexia and coloured backgrounds and text for learners with Scotopic Sensitivity.' (Partner)

## **Variety of events**

In 2019, BWS worked with partners to deliver a diverse range of events.

'Book themed Intergenerational Lego Clubs: Children were invited to bring along their grown ups to fun, creative sessions based on favourite books, stories and characters.'

(Live Borders Libraries)

'A collaborative all ages event BLETHER, CUT N PASTE that used our collections of books & zines to inspire conversation & creative activity. We hosted paper, zine and badge making during the event with a free lunch. The event was aimed at local families in Govanhill... We are grateful to Book Week for giving us the opportunity and impetus to bring our two grassroots organisations together for the first time' (Banshee Books and Glasgow Zine Library).

'We launched a new Picture Book "My Little Star" as part of our Memory Boxes for bereaved families affected by baby loss. Heather Lawrence, our Trustee, talked about her own baby loss experience and of reading My Little Star to her rainbow baby (baby that arrived after first loss)'

(SiMBA)

'In addition to the discussions and readings from the book our venue was in the heart of the Galway Forest Dark Sky Park. This meant that we could add to the atmosphere of the event by including real stargazing and also just being out in the intimacy of the darkness. During the event the outdoor poetry readings were amazingly atmospheric in the dark they had real power and also at one point at the end of a poem Rab was declaiming to the skies and the cloud opened to let us see the stars. It was a really special moment.'

(Freelance Ranger 'Oor Big Braw Cosmos' event)

## **Notes for future evaluations**

### Evaluator

- In previous years an independent evaluation of BWS was commissioned. While this is ideal, budget restraints in 2019–20 restricted SBT access to outside evaluators. If an independent evaluator is not an option for any future years the risk of bias in in-house evaluations should be acknowledged.

### Methods

- The 2018 BWS evaluation noted that partners preferred using paper feedback methods. However, there has been mixed feedback from partners on paper methods this year. A few respondents to the partner survey mentioned that it was tricky to get feedback from the audience at the event itself. One partner noted that they struggled to get the audience to give feedback on the public poster as the poster was near the speaker. Despite this, on-the-spot feedback from audiences collected in a consistent way across all events is essential.
- The 2019 postcard survey achieved a better return rate than the 2018 mentimeter survey (438 as opposed to 231). However, it primarily achieved responses from an older demographic. This suggests that BWS should continue to use a mixed-methods approach to gather feedback from different audiences in the medium they are most comfortable using.

### Case studies

- Information for the case studies was gathered by BWS colleagues through observation and semi-structured interviews with programmers and attendees. In 2019, as in previous years, interviewees were reimbursed for their time. This risks skewing the data and undermining their feedback. This year, one partner asked for edits to their case study before giving permission for it to be

included in this evaluation. In order to improve the quality of the case studies, payments and partner editing might be avoided in future evaluations.

#### Digital Festival

- Only seven people responded to questions about the Digital Festival in the audience survey. This data is not included in this evaluation as they are of limited value. It is possible that respondents did not understand what was being asked of them, or were not aware that they were participating in a separate strand of activity known as a digital festival. For example, only three people said they voted for an iconic Scots word as part of the Digital Festival but 11 people said they voted for an iconic Scots word in an earlier question. Integrating questions about the Digital Festival into the main survey would produce better results.

#### Amendments to library survey

- In previous years, the library survey has included a compulsory request for borrowing numbers and other statistics. There were no comments (positive or negative) on the removal of the library statistics from the library survey. SBT suspected that this request represented a barrier to libraries participating in the evaluation, but this may not be the case. However, this information is not essential to the evaluation and does not need to be collected.

#### Amendments to the school survey

- In the course of this evaluation, we learnt that the majority of responses to our school survey are achieved through our monthly school newsletter. The 2019 survey was not included in the newsletter until January resulting in a poor initial response rate. Inclusion in the February and March newsletters improved the response. However, respondents filling out the survey in March were doing so several months after BWS. The timing of the March newsletter meant that some respondents may have replied about World Book Day. In future evaluations early promotion in the school newsletter is key.

'My favourite event of the year is working with Scottish Book Trust because for me, it's so easy. You can bring other people in. All the support is there. All the resources can be downloaded. It's an absolute joy (and you can quote me on that until the cows come home).'

(Book Week Scotland Partner)