

THE CRIME WRITERS' ASSOCIATION PRESENTS



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



CRIMEREADING.COM

EVENT PLANNING IDEAS AND TIPS

National Crime Reading Month is an initiative developed and run by the Crime Writers' Association, this year in collaboration with The Reading Agency, that takes place throughout June.

It promotes crime reading right across the genre through bookshops, libraries and organisations such as museums and theatre, around the UK and Ireland as well as online. We want to get people talking about books, whether they are cosy crime, or crime in space.

National Crime Reading Month aims to bring new books to existing readers and new readers to one the world's best-selling genres.

'Crime' isn't just the police procedural or traditional mystery many people think of. It covers everything from psychological suspense to spy thrillers, historical to sci-fi, cosy to noir, encompassing some of the world's best-known characters and authors – from Jack Reacher to Vera Stanhope, from Ian Rankin to Robin Stevens. Crime writing and true crime spawns TV, game and film adaptations across the globe with a huge following.

Now turn over for great tips and ideas on how you can run a fantastic National Crime Reading Month event!

EVENT IDEAS

Many of you will have organised successful events already, but for anyone who is new to them, or looking for ideas, we've gathered some tips to help. We'd love to hear about your events, and your tips and suggestions for making them run smoothly, on the **National Crime Reading Month blog!** Email a short piece to NCRM@thecwa.co.uk and we'll publish as many as we can.

There are many different types of event you can organise – focus on who you want to attend, whether the event is aimed at children or adults for instance, and tailor accordingly.

Consider a panel with up to three guests and a chair/moderator (it's very hard to give time to everyone if you have more than three guests) or an 'in conversation' chat between one writer and an interviewer. Try giving the panel or interview a theme – if it's a panel, think of something that connects the authors and will be interesting to the audience. If it's an interview, think what area of the author's work you want to focus on.

Here are some popular event ideas:

- One or more writers talking about how they write, on a practical level, and/or what it's really like to be a writer. Every writer works differently, so this subject can make for a fun panel.
- Workshops (virtual or in person) with practical tips for new writers. If you can't find a local author, someone from a local writers' circle may be able to run this.
- Readings can be in person or virtual. Read a classic Agatha Christie or Sherlock Holmes, or ask a local author to read from their book. Options include reading first chapters from a range of books, to hook readers; or looking at opening pages and discussing how effective they are.

Be aware of copyright: if you record an extensive reading and make it available online, you may infringe the author's copyright and make it harder for them to sell the book (this is particularly true of shorter work such as children's or YA). Authors are always thrilled that you're excited by their books, but they need to sell them in order to write more!

- If you're part of a book club, consider reading a crime novel for June. You could even [find a local author](#), read one of their books, and then invite them to answer questions.
- Mystery book packages: wrap books in brown paper or newspaper, and write clues to what they're about on labels without giving away the author or title. Allow people to choose one each for a giveaway, or sell them as a lucky dip.
- Create a community reading hour once a week during June, encouraging everyone to set aside time to dedicate to reading. This could be reading alone, reading to children at bedtime, or listening to an audiobook as you prepare your dinner.
- Treasure hunts and quizzes are always fun – you'll find lots of ideas online, and you could give them a crime-themed twist.

Themed exhibition ideas:

- [Find a local writer](#) and ask them to help make an exhibition about their books. This could feature locations, their notes/storyboards, or early draft pages so library users can see the editing process.
- Does your area feature in a crime novel? Very few parts of the UK haven't been used as a setting by now! Think about showcasing books set in your area.

- If you're in a bookshop or library, create a recommendation wall with your staff's favourite crime books, and ask them to write a few lines on a card to highlight what they love about the book. If you have particularly engaged customers, ask them to join in and recommend their favourites too.
- Create an exhibition around a theme: historical covers, the most borrowed or bought in your area, books set locally, modern non-fiction/true crime, etc

Whatever you choose to organise, make sure to [add your event to crimereading.com](https://www.crimereading.com) so we can help you publicise it!

DATE AND TIME

Consider when your audience will be most receptive to an event. Monday evenings are a hard sell for most people. Tuesday and Thursdays are popular book event nights, and Sunday afternoons can also be popular in smaller communities.

If you're planning a workshop, whether virtual or in person, Saturdays tend to be popular.

Check to see what else is going on in your area (or on TV!) so you don't clash with a big event that will steal your crowd.

If your audience is mostly families or students, host events in the afternoons or evenings. Tailor the events to your age group, like special story times for younger children or a café atmosphere for the secondary level.

YOU know best who visits your library or bookshop, and when, and who will be the most enthusiastic about your event. Consider what will appeal to them.

MAKE IT EASY TO BOOK

You may decide a drop-in event is perfect for your location. But even if your event is free to attend, consider asking people to book a ticket. It helps you gauge numbers, especially if your event is taking place in a small space.

Eventbrite (<https://eventbrite.com>) is free to register and use for free events, and makes it easy to share your event's booking details online and on social media. Eventbrite's system also sends out a series of reminder emails to everyone who books a ticket, which helps ensure they remember to come!

Be prepared: if your event is free, as a rule of thumb around a third of people who book a ticket won't turn up on the day. It's the same everywhere!

Not everyone is comfortable with the internet, or booking online. If you can, provide a telephone number for bookings as well. Be sure to merge that information with your online system, so you don't accidentally sell tickets you can't accommodate.

If you plan to sell tickets to your event, it pays to look around at ticket providers. Eventbrite is one, but there are others such as Ticket Source (<http://www.ticketsource.co.uk>) who may be better suited to your needs. Check before signing up!

SHOULD YOU PAY AUTHOR GUESTS?

Where possible, we encourage all event organisers to offer a fee, no matter how small, to authors taking part. Paying authors shows recognition of their professional status, skills and experience, and the time they're taking out of their schedule for your event.

Some authors will decline payment, and be delighted to help out for free – particularly for libraries and independent bookstores. But it should be the author's choice.

If you intend to make a profit on your event, then author guests should be paid as a matter of course. After all, they are what will bring in the audience that makes you a profit!

The Society of Authors recommend fees around £100-£150 per panel member, with £150-£200 for a chair. For a one-to-one in-conversation event, a guideline fee for the invited author is £300 with the interviewer paid £200. Think about where your guests are based and if they will need travel costs and overnight accommodation. [Our list of CWA members details their location](#) to make planning easier and to reduce costs.

Authors love their books to be available to purchase at an event, and are always delighted to sign them. Ask a local bookseller to attend and sell books by the authors involved.

PUBLICISE YOUR EVENT

First, remember to [upload your event info to the National Crime Reading Month website](#) so we can help you get the word out.

Then visit our [Get Involved page](#) for some more useful downloads:

- Use our **event poster template** (included with this pack) to create a poster for your event. Put it on your own noticeboard, but ask local shops and businesses if you can display it on theirs too, or even in their window. Many are very happy to help publicise community events.
- Fill in our **press release template** (included with this pack) and send it to your local newspaper so they can run a feature on your **National Crime Reading Month** plans. Take a photograph of your staff holding their favourite crime reads and send it alongside the press release – the paper may even send a photographer to re-take the pic professionally.
- Send the same press release to your local radio station. They love talking to local people and may organise a slot to interview you about the event, your venue or organisation, the difference reading makes to people's lives, or about your guest authors.

If you need help with getting in touch with local press, contact NCRM@thecwa.co.uk

- Use social media to promote your activities. Make sure to use the [#PickUpAPageTurner](#) hashtag so people following NCRM will see it.
- Ask author guests to publicise the event in their newsletters, or on social media, with a link to [the event listing](#) on the NCRM website.
- Take a photo of your event or exhibition (or your staff holding their favourite books, as above) and share what you're doing on social media! Don't forget the [#PickUpAPageTurner](#) hashtag, to join in the national celebration.

CILIP's Code of Conduct

NCRM expects the CILIP Code of Conduct to apply to all events, wherever they are held. There is more detail on their website:

<https://www.cilip.org.uk/general/custom.asp?page=CILIPCodeofConductcontentandactivities>

but these points are a reminder:

Code of conduct for in-person events

These points are written in no particular order of priority.

- Be kind, considerate and respectful to, and look out for the wellbeing of your fellow participants.
- Demeaning, discriminatory behaviour, content and commentary based on ethnicity, sex, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion or belief (or lack thereof), social class, political views, physical appearance and body size is strictly prohibited.
- Harassment, bullying or intimidation of any form will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to; deliberate intimidation; stalking; harassing photography or recording; sustained disruption of talks or other events; inappropriate physical contact; and unwelcome sexual attention.
- Sexual language and imagery are not appropriate at any part of an event, including but not limited to talks, meetings, exhibition stands, conference social events, and any online media.
- All communication should be appropriate for a professional audience including people of many different backgrounds.
- All contributions made during a session should relate to the subject matter of that session. Discussion should be framed as openly and inclusively as possible. Be sensitive to a diverse range of experiences and perspectives.
- Other people's property should be respected at all times.
- Venue rules and regulations should be adhered to.

Expectations for speakers when developing and/or delivering content:

- Celebrate the diversity of our sector and wider society by proactively using case studies or examples (text, images, film clips etc.) that reflect this diversity.
- Avoid language, content and actions that perpetuate stereotypes (negative or positive).
- Avoid jargon as it can be exclusionary.
- Plagiarism will not be tolerated.
- Speakers touching on or dealing with sensitive issues must ensure that a fundamental respect for the rights, dignity, and value of all persons is observed and upheld.

ABOVE ALL – HAVE A GREAT EVENT!

Visit us at crimereading.com
& thecwa.co.uk

