

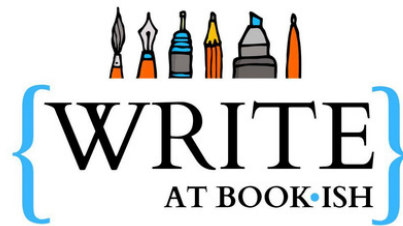
# {BOOK•ISH}

BOOKS, CONVERSATION & MORE



We are incredibly proud to say that the Book-ish team has continued to grow in 2023 with not only the addition of three new booksellers but a whole new shop, just 6 miles away in the market town of Abergavenny, which open in May!

One of our key focuses for 2023 was to do more to bring our community together by offering warm safe spaces for people to visit and gather, something that has been lacking since the pandemic. Alongside our regular event programme we host 4 book clubs, a packed writing group that's really flourishing, conversational Italian and latin groups, Knit and Natter, Blackgammon sessions and a monthly quiz. We're very proud of the new friendships and connections that have developed, especially amongst our event crowd as we've found some trepidation around attending book events solo.



The past year has not been without it's challenges and we've constantly been focusing on innovative ways to increase sales across all streams. Our online sales have continued to thrive thanks to our social media channels which enable us to connect with readers across the globe.

Part of our strategy was to offer bespoke, bookseller-selected gifts. We were particularly proud of the book advent calendars that we curated for Christmas, which offered customers three choices of surprise books, including a bookseller favourite list, that were individually wrapped and beautifully packaged. We used the same attention to detail for our bookseller curated 'Blind Date with a Book' packages which have flown off the shelf and introduce our customers to new writers and genres.

We feel that we're really contributing to our High Street as our reputation means that we're classed as a destination shop and attract people from far and wide which is a real boost to the local economy.



Our much-loved events programme thrived throughout the year. We hosted the likes of (deep breath!) Kae Tempest, John Niven and James Dean Bradfield, Elly Griffiths, Victoria Hislop, Ruth Jones, Val McDermid, Mark Billingham, Ross Kemp and Marina Hyde in jam-packed local venues. We were particularly proud to support and promote debut novelists such as Shelly Read and Steve Jones as we love being part of an emerging author's journey.

We were invited to be the partner bookshop for the first Abergavenny Pride in June which we supported with pride windows in each shop and bookstall on the day alongside events with LGBTQI+ writers and performers such as Rachel Dawson. We look forward to working with the Pride committee again in 2024.

It was our ninth year at **Green Man Festival** as the resident bookshop and we also returned to the **Abergavenny Food Festival** for the third year running. The festival was back to full capacity in 2023, so we increased our presence to four stalls. We were charged with running the library 'Meet the Author' space alongside chairing some events.

These festivals are integral to the local social calendar and economy, and we are proud to be regular fixtures.



During Independent Bookshop Week we collaborated with publishers Firefly for a week-long of promotion and giveaways. This was a successful partnership as we are keen to promote Welsh publishing and authors as much as possible. We also had guest booksellers all week with authors Lee Newbery, Jude Rogers, Jasper Fforde, Joanna Nadin, Claire Fayers and Rebecca F. John spending a day behind the Book-ish till and giving their recommendations!

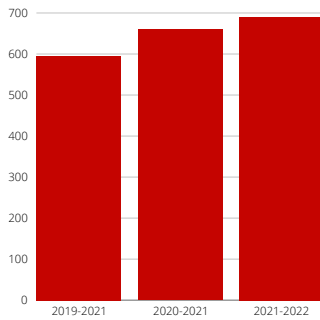
The Books Council of Wales **Schools Love Reading** programme continued in 2023 and helped us foster some excellent new relationships with schools. We have taken in an author to a school almost every week during term time thanks to Lindsey, our schools liason bookseller. We've welcomed pupils in to choose books as part of rewards schemes and have even helped curate a new school library alongside advising on diversifying libraries and books to encourage reading for pleasure, a key part of the Welsh curriculum.



## 2024 Bookshop statistics

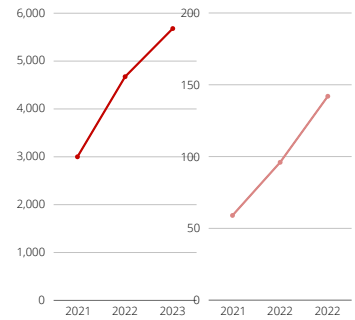
Social media followers: Twitter - 27k Facebook - 5k Instagram - 5.4k TikTok - 1.3k

Turnover increased for the 4th year running

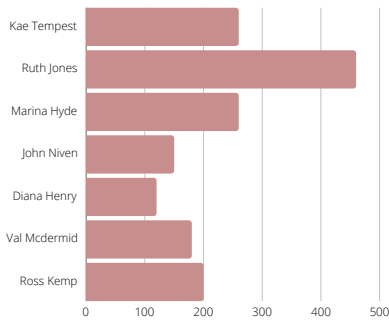


“  
 Emma and her brilliant team are seemingly unstoppable... A shining example of the very best of UK bookselling. I can't praise the whole team, with Emma at the helm, more highly.  
 ”  
 -Alison Barrow, Penguin Transworld

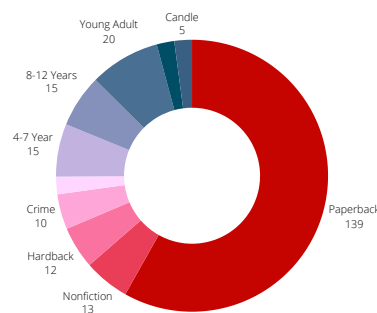
4674 people receive the bookish newsletter weekly and 96 schools receive our school newsletter monthly



Book-ish Autumn event audiences: 2300(ish)



12 separate genre subscription boxes sent out monthly to 219 people



36 school events with authors

Online school events

6700 books for curated school library

4200 books provided with Schools Love Reading Schemes

14 school book fairs

