



Bridge House Publishing How to plan your Book Launch

The preparation for your book launch should begin as soon as possible. You are one of the lucky few who has something accepted for publication and you want to enjoy the success by sharing it with as many people as you can. So think about how you would like to do this? In a pub, a coffee shop, book shop, at home? And then make sure the planning is fun!!! Don't make it a chore- enjoy the experience!

Venue: 2-3 months before planned launch

Check that the book will definitely be available- if you do it on the same day as the book is launched make sure you can get hold of the book in plenty of time! You can usually obtain it from Bridge House a week before the release date.

The choice of venue really depends on what type of affair you have in mind and how many people you plan to invite. It is worth finding out if there are other local writers that also have stories in the same anthology, then you are more likely to attract a larger number and this may be a deciding factor when it comes to venue.

Ideas: a coffee shop, a book shop (independents might be more receptive) library, museum, university...? Consider your target audience as well, especially for children's books; you might consider contacting your local school. For bible stories what about Sunday schools?



When you have an idea of how many people you think you can bring along (think of family, friends, colleagues, your writing group, book clubs, university creative writing students...) then you will have a better idea of the size and type of venue you want and then approach them.

For each group of people you invite, e.g. through writers groups, work, friends etc expect a few from each group to turn up. Expect about 10% of the total number of invites through group email strings!

We found in Bangor that to have the launch at the coffee shop where we have our writing group was going to be too expensive to lay on a buffet and drinks. So we approached the local museum who were happy to let us have the use of some of the rooms for free. The trick is to avoid charging people to come, to the contrary, a free glass of wine/juice, nibbles and that way they only have to BUY THE BOOK!!!

Make sure there is a meet and greet area as people will want to meet the authors, space for people to sit for readings from the book, somewhere to sell books. See if you can recruit someone willing to sell books for you.

Consider if you might want to associate the launch with a charity fund raiser, perhaps donate a percentage of book sales and use this as part of the advertising plan.

Then find out if they have any special requirements for advertising– do they have notice boards, a web site, any objections to it being in the paper etc.

In Bangor, for example, we were asked to ensure that all publicity posters were bilingual.

Also make sure they are happy for alcohol and food to be served and make arrangements of you need plates, glasses etc.

In Bangor the museum was happy to provide glasses.

Try to see the venue and discuss how you will arrange it– visualise the lay out and see yourself there!



Dates

Set your date and start planning. If there are a few of you, delegate responsibilities to ensure you have everything you need. Maybe have someone happy to shop for the beverages, someone happy to handle publicising the event, someone to deal with how the evening will be, who will read, ordering the books, etc.

Publicity

Please see the information about how to write a press release and how to approach the papers. Make sure you think about the timing and don't do it too soon but don't miss the boat for publicising the event. Also consider emailing local writing groups, book clubs, universities etc.

Use the templates (coming soon) to design your flyers and posters and distribute in libraries, book shops, local places of interest, coffee shops etc. Wherever you think you might have a target audience. Also talk to everyone you know!!! Make sure they know about it in plenty of time and remind them as it looms.

Email or phone your local radio station.

Local magazines that might be happy to give you a plug.

Be sure to make people aware that the book will be available for sale, tell them how much so they bring along enough cash and that authors will be happy to sign! **Don't forget the pens!!!**

We actively encourage authors to get involved with generating local interest in your books but how much or little you do is entirely up to you. We are always happy to assist and support in whatever you need. Once we have the Product Information Sheets detailing the book, and posters etc I am happy to provide this information to venues or you should be able to download it from the website.

