



## British Land Young Readers Programme reaches nearly 8,000 children in its 11th year

8<sup>th</sup> September 2022

On International Literacy Day, British Land is pleased to announce that it has partnered with the National Literacy Trust for an 11<sup>th</sup> year to support the charity's Young Readers Programme, the largest and longest partnership between a business and charity to improve literacy in the UK.

The programme works with schools and areas around British Land sites, encouraging children aged 11 and under to read for fun and develop their literacy skills through events run by British Land volunteers, in collaboration with the National Literacy Trust.

The programme prioritises inclusivity. Children are encouraged to enjoy reading and discover new authors and books reflecting a variety of experiences and participate in memorable activities run in partnership with British Land's customers.

During 2021/22 the partnership has:

- reached nearly 8,000 primary school children with reading-for-enjoyment events;
- provided 90 teachers with training and resources to help them deliver the programme, including book recommendations and ideas for activities to run themselves;
- worked with 86 schools to deliver events across the UK, targeting schools with a higher-than-average percentage of pupils in receipt of free school meals; and
- hosted events across 29 British Land sites, introducing a new flexible model, comprising of site events, in-school events, or online.

Over 11 years, the British Land Young Readers Programme has:

- supported over 63,000 primary school children to read for enjoyment; and
- gifted over 190,000 high quality books.

**Fiona Evans, Director of School Programmes at National Literacy Trust, commented:** "This year has seen us reach our 60,000<sup>th</sup> child through the British Land Young Readers Programme, an incredible achievement after eleven years. The new flexible model has allowed us to increase participation numbers from 2021, as well as surpass our 2022 target. We are grateful to British Land for their continued support of the Young Readers Programme, helping us reach more children across the UK when they need it most."

**Anna Devlet, Head of Social Sustainability at British Land, commented:** "Literacy and reading for enjoyment can have a meaningful impact on social mobility, which we have seen first-hand through our partnership with the National Literacy Trust. We focus our efforts collaboratively with our partners to make a positive impact in the communities around our places and are delighted to see local schools participating in these events at our places once again."

"We are proud to have extended our reach in the partnership's eleventh year, helping even more children across the UK develop skills for the future and a love of reading."

In their 2021 [The Power of Reading for Pleasure report](#), British Land and the National Literacy Trust found that if all children read for pleasure almost daily, the number of children getting five good GCSE grades could increase by 1.1 million over a generation. According to the report, gaining these grades would boost the average lifetime earnings of those individuals by £57,000, which could grow GDP by £4.6 billion within a generation.

British Land was presented with the Award for Leadership by Dame Julia Cleverdon CBE DCVO at the National Literacy Trust Business Awards 2022 as recognition for the long-term strategic partnership.

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#### **Appendix: Teaching the importance of diversity, representation, and inclusion in literature**

The following initiatives were delivered to ensure the Young Readers Programme was inclusive for pupils from a diverse range of backgrounds:

- British Land Young Readers Programme project managers participated in diversity and inclusion training, including training in unconscious bias and in 'decolonising the curriculum'.
- Teacher training included a redesigned diversity and inclusion section, including guidance on where to find diverse books, and information on intersectionality, disability, gender, and family types.
- All booklists were audited to measure diversity, inclusion and representation, and new targeted booklists were created, including: 'LGBTQIA+ Stories' and 'Refugee and Migrant Stories'. Support was provided to individual schools to deliver events that will be most beneficial for their pupils.
- In Sheffield, the partnership worked with a school with a high proportion of pupils with a traveller background to ensure they all received books by Richard O'Neil, children's author and storyteller from the Romany tradition, as part of his visit to the school.

#### **Notes to editors**

##### **About British Land**

Our portfolio of high quality UK commercial property is focused on London Campuses and Retail & Fulfilment assets throughout the UK. We own or manage a portfolio valued at £14.3bn (British Land share: £10.5bn) as at 31 March 2022 making us one of Europe's largest listed real estate investment companies.

We create Places People Prefer, delivering the best, most sustainable places for our customers and communities. Our strategy is to leverage our best in class platform and proven expertise in development, repositioning and active management, investing behind two key themes: Campuses and Retail & Fulfilment.

Our three Campuses at Broadgate, Paddington Central and Regent's Place are dynamic neighbourhoods, attracting growth customers and sectors, and offering some of the best connected, highest quality and most sustainable space in London. We are delivering our fourth Campus at Canada Water, where we have planning consent to deliver 5m sq ft of residential, commercial, retail and community space over 53 acres. Our Campuses account for 67% of our portfolio.

Retail & Fulfilment accounts for 33% of the portfolio and is focused on retail parks which are aligned to the growth of convenience, online and last mile fulfilment. We are complementing this with urban logistics primarily in London, focused on development-led opportunities.

Sustainability is embedded throughout our business. In 2020, we set out our sustainability strategy which focuses on two time-critical areas where British Land can create the most benefit: making our whole portfolio net zero carbon by 2030, and partnering to grow social value and wellbeing in the communities where we operate.

Further details can be found on the British Land website at [www.britishland.com](http://www.britishland.com)



### **About the National Literacy Trust**

Our mission is to improve the reading, writing, speaking and listening skills of those who need it most, giving them the best possible chance of success in school, work and life. We run Literacy Hubs and campaigns in communities where low levels of literacy and social mobility are seriously impacting people's lives. We support schools and early years settings to deliver outstanding literacy provision, and we campaign to make literacy a priority for politicians, businesses and parents.

Our research and analysis make us the leading authority on literacy and drive our interventions. Literacy is a vital element of action against poverty and our work changes children and young people's life stories. Our new site Words for Life provides simple, fun and educational activities for children and young people aged 0-24 to support learning at home and help them feel more confident.

Visit [literacytrust.org.uk](http://literacytrust.org.uk) to find out more, donate or sign up for our free email newsletter. You can also find us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

The National Literacy Trust is a registered charity no. 1116260 and a company limited by guarantee no. 5836486 registered in England and Wales and a registered charity in Scotland no. SC042944. Registered address: 68 South Lambeth Road, London SW8 1RL.