



Press Release

NIELSEN BOOK ANNOUNCES RICHARD OSMAN'S *THE THURSDAY MURDER CLUB* AS THE OFFICIAL UK CHRISTMAS #1 BESTSELLER

LONDON, 22 December 2020

TV personality Richard Osman's debut novel, *The Thursday Murder Club*, is the UK's official Christmas Number One bestseller.

The *Pointless* quiz whizz's tale of a retirement village's amateur sleuths teaming up to solve a murder on their doorstep sold 134,514 copies in the week ending 19 December 2020—more than twice as many copies as the next bestselling book of the week, former US president Barack Obama's *A Promised Land*.

The Thursday Murder Club has become the first debut novel to take the Christmas Number One crown since official sales records began in the late 1990s, and the first adult novel to top the Christmas list since Dan Brown's *The Lost Symbol* in 2009.

Barack Obama's *A Promised Land*, the first volume of the former US president's memoirs of his time in office, has missed out on taking the UK Christmas Number One spot won by his wife Michelle, with *Becoming*, in 2018. David Walliams had scored three of the previous four Christmas number ones, but his WWII-set children's novel, *Code Name Bananas*, has to settle for third place in the Christmas chart—ahead of last week's number one bestseller, Kate Allinson and Kay Featherstone's *Pinch of Nom: Quick and Easy*.

Charlie Mackesy's *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse*, one of the bestselling books in the run-up to Christmas last year, proved a festive hit again in 2020. The main edition of the £20 hardback sold 52,099 copies in the UK last week, while a special "limited edition" version of the book sold an additional 15,527 copies.

UK Top 10 bestsellers: week ending 19 December 2020

1. *The Thursday Murder Club* (Richard Osman) 134,514
2. *A Promised Land* (Barack Obama) 66,531
3. *Code Name Bananas* (David Walliams) 55,129
4. *Pinch of Nom: Quick & Easy* (Kay Featherstone & Kate Allinson) 52,955
5. *The Boy, The Mole, The Fox and The Horse* (Charlie Mackesy) 52,099
6. *Guinness World Records 2021* (Guinness World Records) 35,229
7. *Shuggie Bain* (Douglas Stuart) 31,218



8. *The Ickabog* (JK Rowling) 31,159
9. *A Del of a Life* (David Jason) 23,973
10. *A Life on Our Planet* (David Attenborough) 23,686

Christmas Number Ones of the 2010s: United Kingdom

2010: Jamie Oliver: *Jamie's 30-Minute Meals*

2011: Jamie Oliver: *Jamie's Great Britain*

2012: Jamie Oliver: *Jamie's 15-Minute Meals*

2013: Alex Ferguson: *My Autobiography*

2014: *Guinness World Records*

2015: *How it Works: The Husband*

2016: David Walliams: *The Midnight Gang*

2017: David Walliams: *Bad Dad*

2018: Michelle Obama: *Becoming*

2019: David Walliams: *The Beast of Buckingham Palace*

Hazel Kenyon, Nielsen Book Research director, said: "Congratulations to Richard Osman on scoring the Christmas number one crown. I very much look forward to seeing him now appear as an answer on *Pointless* to a question on Christmas number one bestsellers."

A grand total of £90.0m was spent on 9.6m printed books in the UK last week—up 1.4% versus the comparative week last year in value terms, and up 0.4% in volume terms.

2020 has been a challenging year for the book trade in face of the ongoing pandemic. Nielsen BookScan Total Consumer Market data reveals that physical book sales were relatively flat this year before the first lockdown in March. However, spending was up +12% year on year in the four-month July-October period which followed the easing of the first lockdown in June. Nielsen Books & Consumers consumer research data reveals that during the first lockdown, overall book sales were relatively flat year on year in value terms with a 5% decline in spending on printed books offset by growth within the ebook (+23%) and audiobook (+14%) sectors.

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In Ireland, John Breslin & Sarah-Anne Buckley's ***Old Ireland in Colour*** has beaten Mark Tighe and Paul Rowan's ***Champagne Football*** to the Christmas Number One crown. Graham Norton's ***Home Stretch*** proved the bestselling adult fiction title in Ireland last week and takes third place in the overall chart ahead of the bestselling children's book of the week, David Walliams' ***Code Name Bananas***.



Ireland Top 10 bestsellers: week ending 19 December 2020

1. *Old Ireland in Colour* (John Breslin & Sarah-Anne Buckley) 9,036
2. *Champagne Football* (Mark Tighe & Paul Rowan) 7,385
3. *Home Stretch* (Graham Norton) 5,883
4. *Code Name Bananas* (David Walliams) 5,772
5. *Never Mind the B#!l*cks, Here's the Science* (Luke O'Neill) 5,489
6. *Beyond the Tape* (Marie Cassidy) 5,276
7. *A Promised Land* (Barack Obama) 4,995
8. *The Thursday Murder Club* (Richard Osman) 4,189
9. *Guinness World Records 2021* (Guinness World Records) 3,929
10. *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Deep End* (Jeff Kinney) 3,898

Christmas Number Ones of the 2010s: Ireland

2010: Jamie Oliver: *Jamie's 30-Minute Meals*
2011: Walter Isaacson: *Steve Jobs: The Exclusive Biography*
2012: Maeve Binchy: *A Week in Winter*
2013: Alex Ferguson: *My Autobiography*
2014: Brian O'Driscoll: *The Test*
2015: David Walliams: *Grandma's Great Escape*
2016: Paul O'Connell: *The Battle*
2017: David Walliams: *Bad Dad*
2018: David Walliams: *The Ice Monster*
2019: Joe Schmidt: *Ordinary Joe*

NOTES FOR EDITORS

Data should be sourced to Nielsen Book Research. Printed book sales data comes from the Nielsen BookScan UK Total Consumer Market panel of more than 7,000 book retail outlets in the UK. Please contact mediabookresearch@nielsen.com with any queries. Audiobook and ebook data is extrapolated from the Nielsen Books & Consumers panel of a nationally-representative sample of book-buyers in the UK.

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