

# FAVERSHAM LITERARY FESTIVAL

16–25 February 2024



[www.favershamliteraryfestival.org](http://www.favershamliteraryfestival.org)

# Welcome

Welcome to Faversham Literary Festival, the sixth to be held in this lovely market town on the north Kent coast. There are more than 60 events on the programme, aimed at inspiring book lovers, readers and writers of all ages and persuasions. Over ten days in February, Faversham will be buzzing with book talk, as we come together to listen, laugh, learn from each other, share ideas and celebrate all that books can offer.

Drop into one of the free events, sign up for a workshop, meet your favourite author and be inspired by writers you haven't come across before.

The festival organisers and crew, and our friendly team of volunteers, all look forward to offering you a very warm welcome.

I hope you enjoy the festival.

**Amanda Dackombe**

Festival Director

## Principal sponsors:



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## Local partners:



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Programme printed by Abbey Print, Faversham



Tickets available via the website:  
[www.favershamliteraryfestival.org](http://www.favershamliteraryfestival.org)



# Friday 16 February

Rosemary Shraeger

Assembly Rooms  
2–3pm,

Cosy crime with a foodie twist, as the exuberant TV chef talks to host Steven Gale about her latest fiction, *Too Many Cooks*, set in a Cornish boarding school among vanishing headmasters, illicit affairs and human bones under the hockey pitch.



Kim Sherwood &  
Sarah Ogilvie

Assembly Rooms  
4–5pm



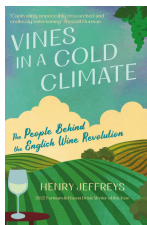
For word lovers and adventurers, an exciting conversation exploring the question of who gets to write history via explorers, suffragists, murderers, Dr Johnson, ordinary citizens... and more.



Henry Jeffreys

Assembly Rooms  
5.30–6.30pm

The wine industry in southeast England is blossoming. Join us for tales and tasters with Faversham-based connoisseur Henry Jeffreys, whose latest book *Vines in a Cold Climate* shares an insider's view of the people behind the English wine revolution.



Jacqueline Crooks &  
Fiona Williams

Assembly Rooms  
7–8pm

Two debuts full of beauty, musicality and feminist power, exploring inner-city and rural diversity, and the relationships between identity, belonging and place.



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# Saturday 17 February

**Sarah Marsh &  
Lesley McDowell**

**Assembly Rooms  
11am–12noon**



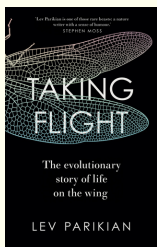
Literary fiction entwined with history, retelling the story of Lord Byron and the Shelleys, and the life and loves of inventor Alexander Graham Bell. Fully accessible for the Deaf, with BSL interpreter and captioning.



**Glyn Brown**

**Assembly Rooms,  
1–2pm,**

A frank, very funny memoir in which 17 working-class heroines from history gallop over the horizon to show the Whitstable-based author how life can change for the better... and even work out how she wants it to!



**Assembly Rooms,  
3–4pm**

**Lev Parikian**

Lev Parikian, who is fast becoming one of Britain's best loved nature writers, tells the awe-inspiring evolutionary story of flight. Lev has chosen fourteen species to chart and illustrate this remarkable history.

**Catherine Taylor &  
Jade Angeles Fitton**

**Assembly Rooms,  
4.30–5.30pm**



Two powerful, poetic memoirs combining inner reflection with the power of the landscape – how place defines us and has the potential to help us transform who we are.

**QC Wendy Joseph**

**Assembly Rooms,  
6–7pm**

Behind the scenes of the justice system with Wendy Joseph KC, who, from 2012 to her retirement in 2023 was the only female judge at the Old Bailey, and one of only a handful of judges qualified to preside over murder trials at the Court.

This event is kindly sponsored by Tassells Solicitors.



# Saturday 17 February

Assembly Rooms,  
7.30–8.30pm



Andy Capon

Andy Capon, chief writer and editor of *The Spire* – a satirical account of life in and around his 'semi-imaginary' home town of Faversham – talks about how humour has turned his life around and brought him back from the brink.



Guildhall  
11.30–12.30pm

Rod Edmond

Walking the East Kent coastline to explore its geography, its history of invasion and defence, and investigate how its fabled White Cliffs mark a border that has sometimes offered refuge and at other times refused entry.

Lesley Cookman  
& Linda Regan

Guildhall, 1–2pm

Cosy crime and police procedural, with Whitstable author Lesley Cookman in conversation with author and actor Linda Regan, perhaps best known for her role as Yellowcoat April in the British holiday camp sitcom *Hi-de-Hi!*



Guildhall,  
3–4pm

Jodie Chapman & Laura Pearson

Uplifting stories of hope over adversity, friendship and love, with a few twists and turns... in the company of Kent author Jodie Chapman and Kindle chart-topper Laura Pearson.



Guildhall,  
4.30–5.30pm

Geoff Nicholson

Reflections on the nature of walking, why we do it, how it benefits us and, in some cases, how it can damage and even destroy us. Geoff Nicholson talks to Kent author and psychogeographer Sonia Overall.

# Sunday 18 February

**Tom Delahunt**

**Guildhall**  
**10–10.45am**

A beautifully illustrated children's story about unconditional love and the search for acceptance. Fun and heartwarming for all ages!



**Griselda Mussett**

**Guildhall**  
**11.15am–12.15pm**

Local author Griselda Mussett delves into the past to investigate why the stories and achievements of women who have lived and worked in Faversham are mainly missing from the town's published histories, penned by men.



**Martin Latham**

**Guildhall**  
**2–3pm**

Fascinating, hilarious and, most importantly, true, author and bookseller Martin Latham shares his alternative guide to some of the county's best-kept secrets that date back thousands of years.



**Encounters**

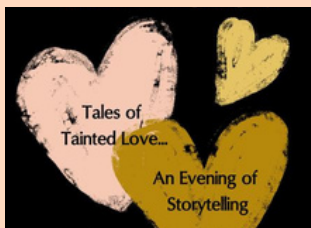
**Guildhall**  
**3.30–4.30pm**

Thanet writers Patricia Mahoney and Tessa Woodward, writers of poetry, short stories, plays and more, present 'Encounters', with musical accompaniment from guitarist Jamie Moore.

**Local author showcase**

**Guildhall, 5–7pm**

An evening of local storytelling on the theme of 'Tainted Love', in which local authors read their submissions up to a maximum of 500 words each. Presented by Angela Dye.



# Tuesday 20 February

## Sheila Hancock

St Mary of Charity  
3–4pm

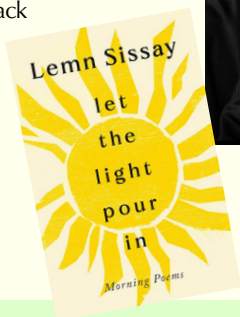


One of Britain's most popular and highly regarded actors, Sheila Hancock talks to host Steven Gale about reaching her nineties. Funny, feisty and candid, she asks why – despite a hugely successful career, devoted family life, a long and happy marriage with the late John Thaw, and so many reasons for joy – at age 89 she suddenly found herself furious, yelling at the TV and talking to the pigeons.

## Lemn Sissay

St Mary of Charity  
7–8pm

Lemn Sissay begins every day by writing a short poem as dawn breaks. Life-affirming, witty and a way of starting each day with an act of hope, he has collected some of these poems into one volume, going back 10 years.



With thanks to our  
event sponsor

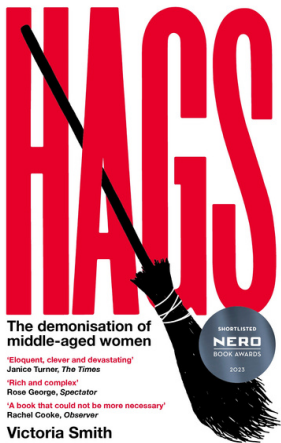




# Wednesday 21 February

St Mary of Charity,  
7–8pm

Victoria Smith



A rigorous defence of middle-aged women and a fight back against ways in which older women are demonised and discounted, Victoria Smith talks to Julia Wheeler about why this type of ageist misogyny is so very now – covering themes of care work, beauty, violence, political organization and sex, in relation to middle-aged women's beliefs, bodies, histories and choices.



Become a Friend of the Festival and enjoy Friend benefits:



- Early access ticket booking
- Entry into prize draws, book giveaways, ticket offers
- An invitation to a Friends' Reception at the festival

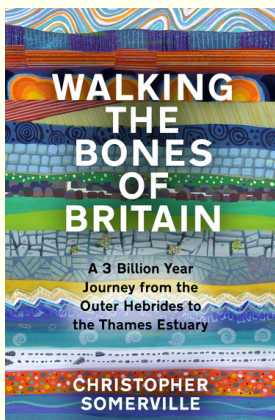
See website for details:

[www.favershamliteraryfestival.org](http://www.favershamliteraryfestival.org)

# Thursday 22 February

Christopher Somerville

St Mary of Charity  
12–1pm



Walking correspondent of The Times, Christopher Somerville talks to Julia Wheeler about how geology can help us to understand and potentially mitigate the effects of climate change.

Emily Howes

St Mary of Charity  
2–3pm

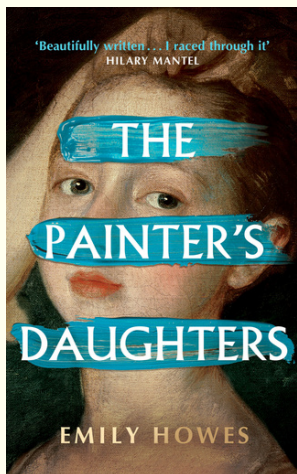


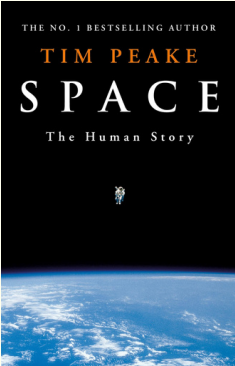
Photo © Katrina Campbell

Historical fiction at its finest...

An award-winning debut that evokes the world of polite Regency English society to bring us the story of renowned artist Thomas Gainsborough's two daughters, exploring family dynamics, mental illness, sisterly love, and asking whether one person can truly change the fate of another.

St Mary of Charity  
5–6pm

Tim Peake



Astronaut and bestselling author Tim Peake is one of only 628 people to have left Earth to explore Space, and was the first British astronaut to visit the International Space Station. He talks to Julia Wheeler about the realities of space exploration as revealed in his book *Space: The Human Story*.

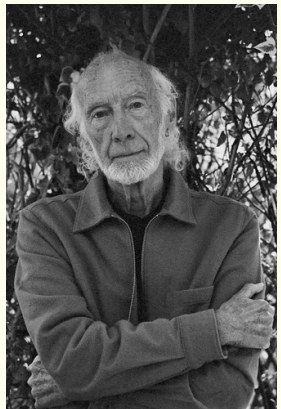
Roger McGough

St Mary of Charity  
8–9.30pm

*Alive & Giggling*

In his new show 'Alive and Giggling', eighty-five year old Roger McGough, the 'living proof of himself', takes to the stage with a show featuring new poems as well as old favourites, and recalling key moments of his life.

This show will include a 20-minute interval.



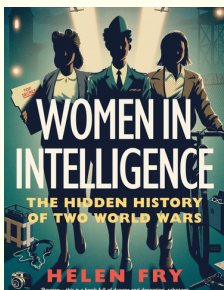
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# Friday 23 February

Helen Fry

Old Brewery Store, 1–2pm

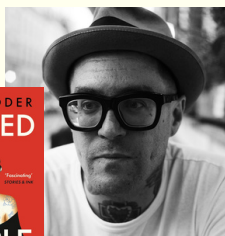
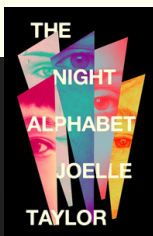
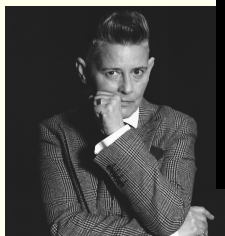
Renowned historian Dr Helen Fry talks to Maggie Butt about the often overlooked contribution that women have made to both civilian and military intelligence since the Great War. From the women of Bletchley Park to secret agents operating behind enemy lines – stories of bravery, leadership and heroism.



Joelle Taylor & Matt Lodder

Old Brewery Store,  
6–7pm

An intimate look at untold histories through body tattoos, poet Joelle Taylor and art historian Matt Lodder discuss what tattoos reveal about humanity across time, cultures and continents – set in the context of Joelle's deeply personal debut novel and Matt's acutely researched history.



Alexander Centre,  
7–8pm

Matt Chorley

The political journalist and stand-up takes a swipe at the hilarious history of how politics actually happens, not in the cloisters of parliament or Downing Street's corridors of power, but in car parks, village halls and seaside resorts...



# Poetry Slam

Shepherd Neame Old Brewery Store,  
7.45–11pm

With feature poet  
Joelle Taylor



Joelle's most recent collection C+NTO & Othered Poems won the 2021 TS Eliot Prize, the 2022 Polari Book Prize for LGBT authors, and is currently being adapted for the theatre. Joelle has just released her debut novel The Night Alphabet.

Ten poets battle it out with word play and top-notch performance. Not to be missed!

Hosted by Angela Dye

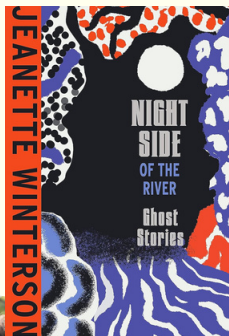
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# Saturday 24 February

## Jeanette Winterson

St Mary of Charity,  
1–2pm

Dynamic, erudite and spine-tingling, best-selling author Jeanette Winterson shares her short stories and experimental pieces based on her real-life encounters with the occult. Have ghosts adapted to the digital age? Have they found new ways to connect and haunt us?



St Mary of Charity  
5–6pm

## Jeremy Deller

Artist Jeremy Deller has collaborated with everyone from brass bands to scarecrows, fellow artists and filmmakers. He has won the Turner Prize, spent time with Andy Warhol at his New York studio, represented Britain in the Venice Biennale, and has been pushing the boundaries of art for more than 30 years. Join him in a wide-ranging discussion on his new book *Art Is Magic*, with author, journalist and DJ Dave Haslam.



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## Hollie McNish – The Lobster Tour

St Mary of Charity  
7–9pm



with Michael Pedersen



After a run of sold out shows up and down the UK, we are thrilled that Hollie McNish returns to Faversham for the launch of her brand new book, *Lobster and other things I'm learning to love*. A Sunday Times best-selling writer whose live readings are not to be missed, expect strong language and adult content, gift-wrapped in gorgeously crafted poetry.

Holly is joined by prize-winning poet and author Michael Pedersen, also making a joyous return to Faversham to perform from his latest collection *The Cat Prince*.

## Poetry Hub

**Guildhall, 11am–6.30pm**

A full day of poetry from 11am onwards – see the website for a full rundown of poets taking part, including lots of local poets

Plus OPEN MIC, 5.15–6.30pm

If you have a poem to share just turn up and put your name on the list

# Saturday 24 February

Roma Agrawal

Alexander Centre

11am–12 noon

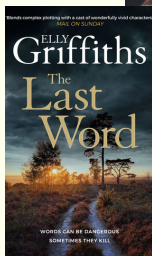
A structural engineer whose designs include the London Shard, Roma Agrawal deconstructs seven small but highly significant inventions, and shares the stories of the remarkable, often unknown scientists who made them possible.



Elly Griffiths

Alexander Centre, 1–2pm

The queen of crime fiction talks to fellow crime writer and festival favourite, William Shaw, about her latest twisty mystery that reintroduces the glorious characters from The Postscript Murders, shortlisted for the Gold Dagger.



Adam Marek  
& Gareth Rees

Alexander Centre  
1.30–2.30pm

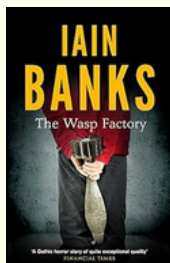


Two collections of short stories that invite us to enter strange and startling new worlds seen from the margins, technology and holograms.

Iain M Banks  
panel

Alexander Centre  
3–4pm

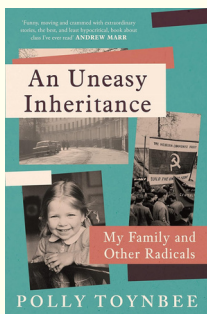
Writer Iain Banks (1954–2013) lived in Faversham as his career was taking off with *The Wasp Factory*, originally published in 1984 and celebrating its 40th anniversary with a new edition. Three Banks specialists discuss his work and contribution to literature.





## Polly Toynbee

Alexander Centre,  
3–4pm

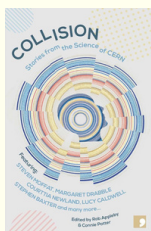


Razor-sharp journalist Polly Toynbee talks to Tatton Spiller about her memoir, examining her family history and how their left-wing ideals invite a truly honest conversation about class in Britain today.



Alexander Centre,  
5–6pm

Steven Moffat,  
Lucy Caldwell & Adam Marek

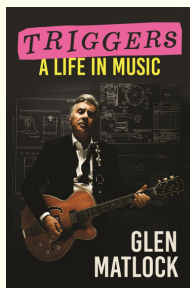


The writer of Dr Who and Sherlock joins two other renowned writers from this anthology that brings together science and storytelling, emerging out of a collaboration to unite literary luminaries with physicists working on projects conducted at CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research.

## Glen Matlock

Alexander Centre,  
7–8pm

The Sex Pistols original bassist Glen Matlock shares insider tales of the band's earliest gigs and stormiest reunions, as well as giving an insight into the personal dynamics of the ultimate icons of punk.



# Saturday 24 February

AK Blakemore

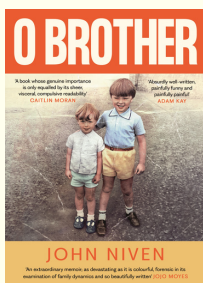
**Old Brewery Store 11am–12 noon**

The celebrated author of *The Manningtree Witches* talks to Steven Gale about her new historical fiction based on real-life events, a tale of desire and destruction in Revolutionary France and of one man with an insatiable hunger.



John Niven

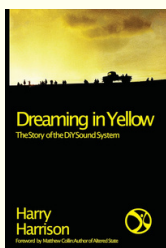
**Old Brewery Store,  
1–2pm**



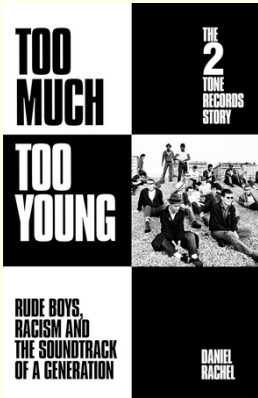
Scottish screenwriter and funnyman John Niven talks to journalist Siân Pattenden about his moving yet hilarious memoir that examines the life of himself and his brother, and the impact of suicide on a family. Blackly comic and heart-breaking.

Ed Gillett, Harry Harrison  
& Seana Gavin

**Old Brewery Store,  
3–4pm**



A deep dive into the history of UK dance music, exploring its roots in the anarchic free festival scene, and subsequent pivotal role in the social, political and economic shifts on which modern Britain has been built.

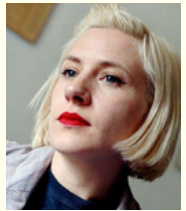


## Daniel Rachel & Charlie Higson

Old Brewery Store,  
5–6pm



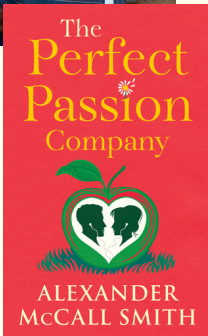
In 1979, 2 Tone exploded into the national consciousness, as The Specials, The Selecter, Madness and The Bodysnatchers burst onto the charts and the post-punk youth movement was born. Daniel Rachel and Charlie Higson – who fronted a band on the label – chat to journalist Siân Pattenden about the political and social backdrop to the music, covering racism, class and gender struggles.



## Alexander McCall Smith

Old Brewery Store,  
7–8pm

An hour of romance, humour and escapism with Scotland's most charming Alexander McCall Smith, much-loved author of the No 1 Ladies' Detective Agency series, which has sold over 25 million copies. He talks to Steven Gale about his delightful new novel set around the Perfect Passion Company, a dating agency based in Edinburgh's historic New Town. Full of the mysterious spark of attraction that can, at times, catch hold of us all.



# Saturday 24 February

**Gareth Rees**

**The Arden,  
11.30am–12.30pm**

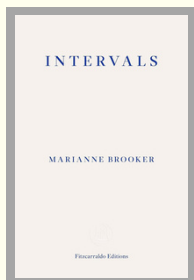
Psychogeographer Gareth Rees journeys through flooded kingdoms and lost worlds, exploring the pervasive mythology and emotional resonance of flooded places, at a time when the waters are rising once more. He will be talking to Caroline Millar.



**Marianne Brooker**

**The Arden,  
1–2pm**

In 2009, Marianne Brooker's mother was diagnosed with progressive multiple sclerosis, and so began her determination to continue to live a creative, full life and die in her own home. She talks to writer Lucy Caldwell about her memoir, exploring memory and heartbreak alongside social, hospice and funeral care.



**Amy Key**

**The Arden, 2.30–3.30pm**

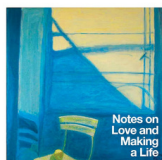
An intimate discussion on the theme of romantic love with writers Amy Key and AK Blakemore – and a musical backdrop provided by the lyrics of Joni Mitchell.



**ARRANGEMENTS  
IN BLUE**

'Beautiful'  
Olivio Lating

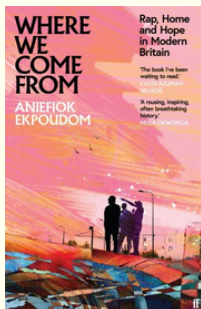
'I love Amy Key'  
Laurin Lavigne



**AMY KEY**

**Aniefiok 'Neef' Ekpoudom**

**The Arden, 4–5pm**



Aniefiok talks to journalist Todd Dedman about his landmark social history of British rap and grime, weaving together intimate stories of resilience as well as a shared music culture that gave refuge and purpose to those in search of belonging.

# Sunday 25 February

## The Arden 2–3pm

Author and DJ legend Dave Haslam takes us to hedonistic 1900s Paris, a city steeped in music, art, sex, drugs and revolutionary new ideas. Picasso's relationships – and debts – to poets and other artists are described; his misogyny is addressed; and no bar, cabaret club or dance hall is left unvisited in this vivid and intriguing account of how significant nightlife was in Picasso's Paris, and how central in his art. With Siân Pattenden.

## Dave Haslam



## Noel O'Regan



An exciting new voice in Irish fiction, Noel O'Regan talks to Alex Preston about his powerful novel set on a clifftop in Co Kerry, a stunning place with a darker side: for generations it has been a suicide black spot.

## The Arden 3.30–4.30pm



## Storytelling from Ukraine

With Simon Cole

Sunday 25 February  
Alexander Centre  
11am–12noon

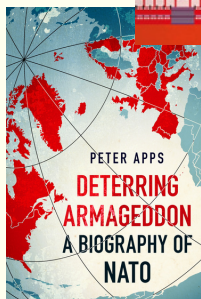
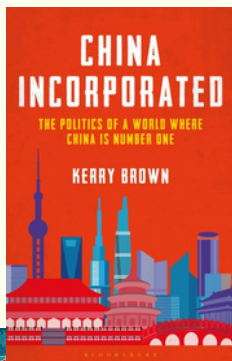


# Sunday 25 February

Kerry Brown  
& Peter Apps

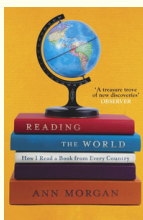
## Alexander Centre, 1–2pm

Kerry Brown and Peter Apps offer their perspectives on the current political landscape, exploring China's rise as a global superpower alongside NATO's historical and contemporary significance, to provide a view of today's geopolitical challenges and the power dynamics and strategic alliances that define our world. With Mike Sanders.



Ann Morgan

## Alexander Centre, 12.30–1.30pm

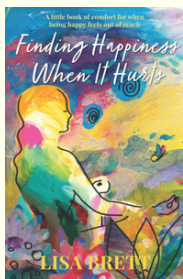


Ann Morgan talks to Maggie Butt about her lifelong endeavour to champion the sharing of stories from across the globe.



## Alexander Centre, 2–3pm

Lisa Brett



Featuring real-life stories from around the world, a journey of storytelling, nuggets of wisdom and beautiful illustrations to gently but profoundly lead you along a hopeful path to happiness.

Alexander Centre,  
3–4pm

Dame Kelly Holmes

Dame Kelly Holmes tells the true story behind her extraordinary life, from growing up on a council estate in Kent, to army recruit to Olympic hero and much-loved TV personality, and speaks openly about her life-changing decision in 2022 to come out publicly as a gay woman. With Marg Mayne.



Alexander Centre,  
5–6pm

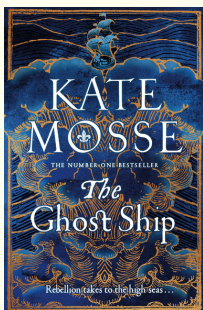
Gavin Esler

In this timely exploration of Britain's core institutions, broadcaster and commentator Gavin Esler sheds light on the failures at the heart of our political system, and asks what we can do to save it. With author and journalist Tatton Spiller.



Kate Mosse

Alexander Centre,  
7–8pm



Kate Mosse talks to Alex Preston about her new historical novel, an epic love story of concealed identity, piracy and revenge – inspired by the real-life story of 18th-century pirates Anne Bonny and Mary Read.



# Teen and young adult

Alice Oseman

**Saturday 24 February,  
St Mary of Charity,  
3–4pm**



Don't miss this incredible chance to meet Alice Oseman, creator of the global smash hit coming-of-age romance Heartstopper, as she comes to Faversham for a very special in-conversation about her writing and characters, and is joined on stage by poet and author Michael Pedersen.



With thanks to our event sponsor



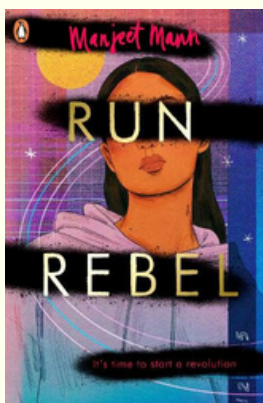
**Canterbury  
Christ Church  
University**



**Sunday 25 February,  
The Arden Theatre,  
12.30–1.30pm**

**Manjeet Mann**

Join Manjeet Mann for an interactive spoken word event, hear about how she addresses themes such as fear and bullying in her writing, and how her explosive verse novel *Run Rebel* was turned into a stage play.



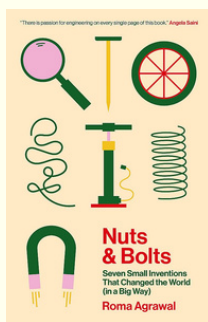
**Other events you might like:**



The history of rap and grime:  
Sat 24 Feb



Talking science with the writer of Dr Who:  
Sat 24 Feb



Engineering and design ideas:  
Sat 24 Feb

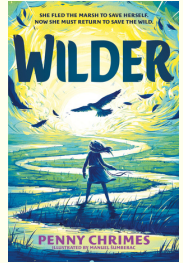
# CHILDREN'S

## Penny Crimes

Join Kent author Penny Crimes for a gorgeous fable-like story of otherness, wild magic and the power of nature, about a girl who emerges from the marshy wilderness.

Age 8–12

Saturday 17 February  
Guildhall, 10–11am

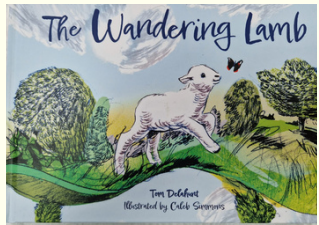


## Tom Delahunt

A beautifully illustrated children's story about unconditional love and the search for acceptance.

Fun, philosophical and heartwarming for all ages!

Sunday 18 February  
Guildhall, 10–10.45am



## Alexandra Stewart

Join storyteller Alexandra Stewart in this fun, interactive workshop in which she introduces real-life heroes and heroines who discover the amazing power of kindness!

Age 8–12

Saturday 24 February  
The Arden Theatre  
10–11am



# EVENTS

Saturday 24 February  
St Mary of Charity  
10–11am

Rob Biddulph



Don't miss this fun-packed story-telling and drawing event with author and illustrator Rob Biddulph! This time get ready to be propelled into a whole new creative universe: Draw With Rob In Space. Age 4+

Nicola Lewis

Sunday 25 Feb, Alexander Centre,  
10–10.40am

Join local children's author Nicola Lewis for fun and exciting tales about a tortoise, a tired butterfly, a fairy, and a mischievous raccoon. Age 3+



Sunday 25 Feb, Alexander Centre  
11am–12 noon

Jamie Smart

Meet the comic-book creator as he invites you to join a live draw-along session – and then get ready to ask any questions you like about Jamie's books and his characters... the wilder the better!

Age 7–11





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