FAVERSHAM LITERARY FESTIVAL

16-25 February 2024



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:





Supported by:







Local partners:





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Tickets available via the website: www.favershamliteraryfestival.org





Friday 16 February

Rosemary Shraeger

Assembly Rooms 2–3pm, £10

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, £8



For word lovers and adventurists, 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, £8

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

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







Tickets available via the website: www.favershamliteraryfestival.org

Saturday 17 February

Sarah Marsh & Lesley McDowell

Assembly Rooms 11am-12noon, £8



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, £8

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, £8

Mark Cocker

Fascinated by swifts throughout his 50 years as a naturalist Mark Cocker shares what he knows about their habits and migration patterns, and what these birds can reveal to us about the profound interconnections of the whole biosphere.

Catherine Taylor & Jade Angeles Fitton

Assembly Rooms, 4.30-5.30pm, £8





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, £12

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, £7



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, £7

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, £7

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, £7

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, £7

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, Free

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, Free

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, £7

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, Free

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, Free

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, £14



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, £12

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, £10



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

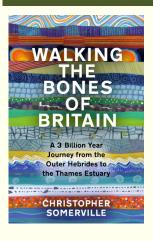
Single Membership £15 per year Joint Membership £25 per year

See website for details: www.favershamliteraryfestival.org

Thursday 22 February

Christopher Somerville

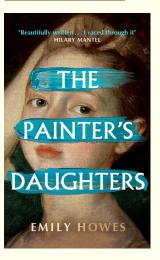
St Mary of Charity 12-1pm, £8





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, £8



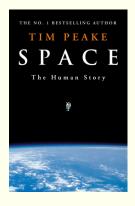
FIIOto © Ratilia Campbell

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, £30 (Book/ticket)







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.

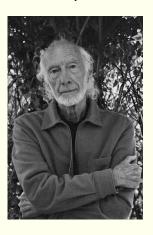
Roger McGough

St Mary of Charity 8–9.30pm, £13

Alive & Gigging

In his new show 'Alive and Gigging', 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.



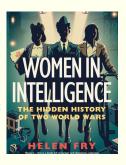
Tickets available via the website: www.favershamliteraryfestival.org

Friday 23 February

Helen Fry

Old Brewery Store, 1-2pm, £8

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, £8

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, £12

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...

Matt Chorley



Poetry Slam

Shepherd Neame Old Brewery Store, 7.45–11pm, £8

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

FRIDAY 16 FEB Assembly Rooms A 2–3pm Rosemary Shrager

SATURDAY 17 FEB Assembly Rooms

> 11am-12 noon Sarah Marsh & Lesley McDowell

1–2pm Glyn Brown

3–4pm Mark Cocker

4.30–5.30pm Catherine Taylor & lade Angeles Fitton

6–7pm Wendy Joseph KC

7.30-8.30pm Andy Capon

TUESDAY 20 FEB St Mary of Charity

Fiona Williams

Jacqueline Crooks &

WEDNESDAY 21 FEB St Mary of Charity

3–4pm Sheila Hancock

4-5pm

7-8pm

Kim Sherwood &

Sarah Ogilvie

5.30–6.30pm Henry Jeffreys

7–8pm Lemn Sissay 7-8pm Victoria Smith

SATURDAY 17 FEB Guildhall

10–11am Penny Chrimes

11.30am-12.30pm Rod Edmond

1–2pm Lesley Cookman & Linda Regan

3–4pm Jodie Chapman & Laura Pearson

4.30-5.30pm Geoff Nicholson

SUNDAY 18 FEB Guildhall

10-10.45am Tom Delahunt

11.15am–12.15pm Griselda Mussett

2–3pm Martin Latham

3.30–4.30pm Encounters, with Tessa Woodward, Patricia Mahoney & Jamie Moore

5–7pm Local author showcase

THURSDAY 22 FEB St Mary of Charity

12 noon – 1pm Christopher Somerville

2–3pm Emily Howes

5–6pm Tim Peake

8–9.30pm Roger McGough FRIDAY 23 FEB Old Brewery Store

> 1–2pm Helen Fry

6–7pm Joelle Taylor & Matt Lodder

7.45–11pm Poetry Slam

FRIDAY 23 FEB Alexander Centre

7–8pm Matt Chorley

SATURDAY 24 FEB

St Mary of Charity

10–11am Rob Biddulph

1–2pm Jeanette Winterson

3–4pm Alice Oseman

5–6pm Jeremy Deller

7–9pm Hollie McNish & Michael Pedersen

Alexander Centre

11am-12noon Roma Agrawal

1–2pm Elly Griffiths

3–4pm Polly Toynbee

5–6pm Steven Moffatt, Lucy Caldwell & Adam Marek

7–8pm Glen Matlock

SATURDAY 24 FEB Guildhall

Poetry Hub -

Check the website for rundown of timings and poets

SUNDAY 25 FEB Alexander Centre

11am-12noon Jamie Smart

1–2pm Kerry Brown & Peter Apps

3–4pm Dame Kelly Holmes

5–6pm Gavin Esler

7–8pm Kate Mosse

Old Brewery Store	The Arden
	10-11am
11am-12noon	Alexandra Stewart
AK Blakemore	
1 2	11.30am–12.30pm
1–2pm John Niven	Gareth Rees
JOHN NIVER	1 2000
3–4pm	1–2pm Marianne Brooker
Ed Gillett, Harry	Manarine brooker
Harrison & Seana Gavin	2.30-3.30pm
	Amy Key
5–6pm	, ,
Daniel Rachel &	4–5pm
Charlie Higson	Aniefiok Ekpoudom
7–8pm	Alexander Centre
Alexander McCall	1.30-2.30pm
Smith	Adam Marek &
	Gareth Rees
	3–4pm
	Iain M Banks Panel
The Arden	Alexander Centre
	10-10.40am Free
	children's event. Age 3+
	11am–12noon
	Storytelling from
12.30-1.30pm	Ukraine, with Simon Cole
Manjeet Mann	With Simon Cole
	12.30-1.30pm
2–3pm	Ann Morgan
Dave Haslam	· ·
3.30-4.30pm	2-3pm
Noel O'Regan	Lisa Brett

Saturday 24 February

Jeanette Winterson

St Mary of Charity, 1–2pm, Book/ticket £32

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, £12

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 wideranging discussion on his new book Art Is Magic, with author, journalist and DJ Dave Haslam.

Jeremy Deller



Tickets available via the website: www.favershamliteraryfestival.org

Hollie McNish – The Lobster Tour

St Mary of Charity 7-9pm, £12.50



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

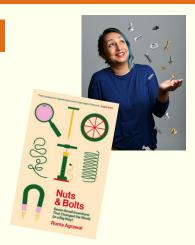
Plus OPEN MIC, 5.15–6.30pm If you have a poem to share just turn up and put your name on the list

Saturday 24 February

Roma Agrawal

Alexander Centre 11am-12 noon, £8

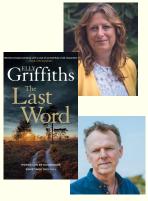
A structural engineer whose designs include the London Shard, Roma Agrawal deconstructs seven small but highly significant inventions, and shares the stories of the remarkable, often unknown scientists who made them possible.



Elly Griffiths

Alexander Centre, 1-2pm, £8

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, £6

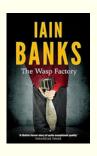


Two collections of short stories that invite us to enter strange and startling new worlds seen from the margins, technology and holograms.

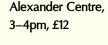
Iain M Banks panel

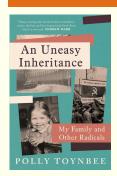
Alexander Centre 3-4pm, £6

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





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, £12 Steven Moffat, Lucy Caldwell & Adam Marek





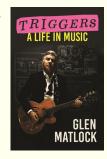


The writer of Dr Who and Sherlock joins two other renowned writers from this anthology that brings together science and storytelling, emerging out of a collaboration to unite literary luminaries with physicists working on projects conducted at CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research.

Glen Matlock

Alexander Centre, 7–8pm, £12

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, £8

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



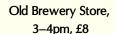
Old Brewery Store, 1–2pm, £8





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









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

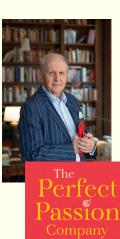
Old Brewery Store, 5–6pm, £12





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

Alexander McCall Smith

Old Brewery Store, 7–8pm, £12

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, £8

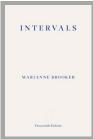
Psychogeographer Gareth Rees journeys through flooded kingdoms and lost worlds, exploring the pervasive mythology and emotional resonance of flooded places, at a time when the waters are rising once more. He will be talking to Caroline Millar.



Marianne Brooker

The Arden, 1–2pm, £8

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, £7

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.



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AMY KEY

Aniefiok 'Neef' Ekpoudom

The Arden, 4-5pm, £7





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, £8

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

The Arden 3.30–4.30pm, £8



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.



Storytelling from Ukraine

With Simon Cole

Sunday 25 February Alexander Centre 11am-12noon FREE ENTRY



Sunday 25 February

Kerry Brown & Peter Apps

Alexander Centre, 1-2pm, £10

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, Free



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



Alexander Centre, 2–3pm, Free



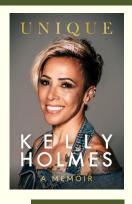
Lisa Brett

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, £12

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.



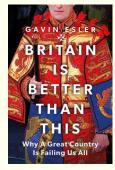
Alexander Centre, 5-6pm, £12

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.

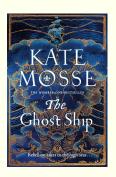






Kate Mosse

Alexander Centre, 7–8pm, £12



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 £10

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

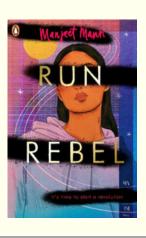




With thanks to our event sponsor



Sunday 25 February, The Arden Theatre, 12.30–1.30pm Free event



Manjeet Mann

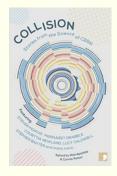
Join Manjeet Mann for an interactive spoken word event, hear about how she addresses themes such as fear and bullying in her writing, and how her explosive verse novel Run Rebel was turned into a stage play.



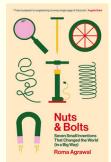
Other events you might like:



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 Chrimes

Join Kent author Penny Chrimes 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, £7



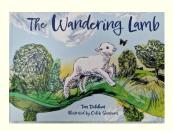


Tom Delahunt

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, Free event



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, Free event



EVENTS

Saturday 24 February St Mary of Charity 10–11am, £8

Rob Biddulph

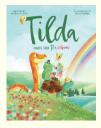


Don't miss this fun-packed story-telling and drawing event with author and illustrator Rob Biddulph! This time get ready to be propelled into a whole new creative universe: Draw With Rob In Space. Age 4+

Nicola Lewis

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, 10-10.40am, Free event





Sunday 25 Feb, Alexander Centre 11am-12 noon, £8

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

Jamie Smart





BRITAIN'S OLDEST BREWER







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