



HAC Report - Super Culture
30 November 2023

For information - no action required

Review of Summer/Autumn 2023 Festivals

Good Grief Weston (May 2023)

Featured in a recent Public Health Conference in Belfast, presented by Dr Lucy Selman, Associate Professor of Palliative and End of Life Care at Bristol University

Key points

- Festivals can play an important role in improving grief and death literacy and enabling members of the public to engage with this sensitive topic
- Delivery was led by Super Culture and co-designed and delivered with the community with WsM Community Network for Health Inequities

Approximately 3000 people attended the festival. Of 205 completed surveys, festival participants were entertained (73.2%), inspired (70.2%), felt part of a like-minded community (52.7%), talked to someone new (48.3%), learnt about grief/bereavement (35.1%), shared or expressed experiences (29.8%) and found out about local support (20.5%). 67.8% reported that through attending they felt more confident talking about grief.

Mean experience rating was 4.8 (SD 0.47) (possible range 1=poor to 5=excellent).

In free-text comments most participants expressed appreciation for the festival and described the benefits of attending.

Film of the festival [here](#).

Currently pending outcome of AHRC bid, submitted by Bristol University in collaboration with regional and national partners to sustain this work.

Whirligig Festival, Italian Gardens (plus seafront and high street) 9 + 10 September

Played to an estimated 18k. 37% of attendees were from outside North Somerset, 50% of

attendees visited Weston (or went in to town if they were a resident) specifically to attend Whirligig and 95% did other activities including visiting a restaurant/pub/cafe, shopping and visiting other cultural, heritage and entertainment venues during their visit.

Highlights included Climate Carnival (created and presented by local community following workshops across Summer); ‘SMOOSH!’ presented by Paraorchestra and involving Weston & Wind Worle Band, Weston College students and North Somerset Music Service; ‘We Agree to Disagree’ from Collectif Mallunes (Belgium).

Film and photos [here](#)

Weston Arts + Health Weekender

29 September-1 October

Co-produced by Super Culture and The Arts & Culture Programme, University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust (UHBW), the festival presented a diverse programme of events themed around 75 years of extraordinary stories in a special Happy Birthday homage to the NHS. Venues included Weston General Hospital, Weston Museum, The Sovereign, Weston Marine Lake, Super Wonder Shrine and Front Room. Something for everyone to enjoy – from swimming, rowing, singing, theatre, poetry, yoga, creative workshops and community artwork to a series of exhilarating coastal walks in partnership with Natural England to mark the launch of the new North Somerset stretch of the King Charles III Coastal Path. Illuminating the host of creative wellbeing opportunities that exist on the doorstep.

Highlights included SW!M75: Local NHS stories featured within a new audio commission and bespoke soundscape created for a live synchro inspired performance, co-produced with Diverse City. Taking place in and out of Weston’s Marine Lake, the performance involved Weston’s newly established Super Synchro group, alongside NHS workers and members of the public, with D’deaf, disabled and non-disabled performers welcomed equally.

Also a new commission for Luke Jerram’s Crossings to mark the start of Black History Month and the mutual 75th anniversaries of Windrush and NHS. Listen to May Tanner’s story of becoming UHBW’s first Black Ward Sister [here](#). ‘Crossings’ is an immersive artwork consisting of 9 rowing boats holding a selection of audio stories about different experiences of crossing water. It was presented at Marine Lake across three of our festival events in September-October, to great acclaim.

Super Culture’s Open Door Drama group presented Cabaret of Opportunity - self-devised and directed, this bravely and honestly shared personal experiences of healthcare through a creative prism.

Films of the Arts + Health festival and of SW!M75 [here](#). (Scroll down to Festival 2023 section)

Weston Literature Festival

5-8 October

See attached report. We very much hope that there will be support for the presentation of a

further Lit Fest in 2024.

Rural Touring Dance Initiative Programme

Two performances were enabled in Autumn 2023 through this national programme that brings outstanding professional dance to the town, with a further two performances scheduled for February and April. Hosted by Weston College and Front Room. Included in the package are wraparound dance/skills workshops for Weston College students and for nearby schools.

Looking ahead to 2024

Heritage Action Zone/ High Street HAZ Culture Programme finale exhibition 'All Together Now' (provisional title)

The Sovereign - Thursdays-Sundays, w/c 18 and 25 January, 1 and 8 February

Visitors will be able to explore images of the building enhancement work, as well as find out more about the cultural engagement programme over the past four years through which four professional artists have worked with local people and local creatives to produce four different shrine artworks/ experiences that inject vibrancy and colour into Weston's high street. A celebration of the identities and vitality of the local community.

GLOW - February 2024

Please note that GLOW 2024 is pending funding decision from Arts Council before any public announcement is made about dates.

Theme for GLOW 2024 – Play in Nature

GLOW is an ambitious 5-night light festival. It will transform public space with spectacular and enchanting illuminations with site-specific light and sound installations, projection mapping and live performance, showcasing artwork from renowned national and local artists and the community.

This year's theme is based around a celebration of the importance of play and engaging with the natural environment. Play is important for everyone - no matter your age. It encourages inquisitiveness, exploration and a sense of adventure. It is essential for wellbeing and happiness, as well as for healthy physical and emotional lifestyles. Research also shows that play in natural environments can strengthen our ecological identity, sense of connection to nature and lead to more environmentally responsible behaviours.

GLOW 2024 will embrace the theme of play in nature through a number of interactive artworks and pieces designed to encourage play and engagement with the natural environment. Alongside

bringing amazement and fun, we hope GLOW will spark conversations about play, encourage people to reimagine the possibilities of public spaces in Weston and make people stop and think about how incredible and important nature is to us all.

GLOW is aimed at local people and visitors from the West of England. An imaginative participation programme will draw together many of Weston's local communities to place community involvement, voices and stories at the heart of the festival.

Building on the creative ambition and participatory ethos of 2023 and learning from an expansion into the town centre last year, GLOW 2024 will revisit some town centre locations and try other new spaces to create a joined up programme and continue to establish itself as a flagship event in the town's cultural calendar.

The extension of GLOW to new include town centre locations aims to increase the impact of the festival – driving evening footfall and dwell time during the off-season, encouraging expenditure within the local economy.

Artworks will also highlight creative use of repurposing materials which aims to stimulate conversation and ideas around developing creative solutions and action on climate change.

Weston Wallz - Summer 2024

Super Culture are working with Upfest on plans for Weston Wallz in 2024 which is likely to be the first week of Summer holidays in July 2024. Alongside refreshed and new walls there will be a participation programme of activities for young people and a community Sprayjam with the popular hoardings returning to the Italian Gardens

Wider festivals

Whirligig and Weston Arts + Health Weekender will return in 2024. Good Grief Weston (2) is pending the outcome of a bid that has been submitted to AHRC.

Report on Weston Lit Fest - Words on the Edge
Bookish adventures across land, sea and identity
 Thursday 4-Sunday 8 October 2023

Produced by Super Culture and The Write Box, in partnership with Weston Town Council



1. Key Achievements
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6. Looking ahead
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1. Key Achievements

- * **19 separate events** for all ages profiling both national and local writers - readings, workshops, conversations, performance, rambles & rowing!
- * Over 1k reach: ticketed events reached 723 people (all events offered on a Pay What You Want basis for inclusivity); free drop-in and outdoor events reached approximately 300.
- * The timing of the Festival Launch involving town poets crying out their wares on the high street (Thursday 5 October) correlates with **October's highest town centre footfall** (+37% new visitors).
- * **15 published authors with national (and international) reputations**, from million copy best-sellers such as Raynor Winn (sell-out session) to Richard Milward who is shortlisted for the 2023 Goldsmiths Book Prize celebrating innovative fiction.
- * **Local Lit programme involving 37 local writers/poets**, from emerging talent to published authors
- * **6 workshop events** encouraging new writing and story-making for all ages from 5 years.
- * **Reflective of Town Council strategy** to *'make sure even the harder to reach community demographics get their voices heard'*.

Ethos of **Black History Month** reflected through programming that included Maggie Harris (winner of Guyana Prize for Literature), Zambian born writer Saili Katebe, Jen Reid - author of 'A Hero Like Me', 'I Am Bird', and Catherine Joy White - author of 'This Thread of Gold: A Celebration of Black Womanhood', 'Crossings'.

LGBTQIA+ representation through Radical Book Stall hosted by LGBT Forum, 'Stories in the Wilds', 'Man Eating Typewriter' by Richard Milward, 'A Flat Place' by Noreen Masud.

- * Maximising reach and accessibility through involving **11 indoor and outdoor venues** across the town: Lit Fest Hub (Sovereign), Waterstones, Can't Dance Coffee, Grand Pier, Weston Museum, Front Room Theatre, Loves Cafe, Weston Library, Grove Park, Super Wonder Shrine, Weston Marine Lake. Celebrating Weston's cultural assets
- * Link with University of Bristol English Literature department provided high calibre (in kind) interviewers and extra marketing reach.

2. Marketing Reach

Print material:

Weston Town Council's support credited both on an event specific flyer (print run 1,500), and on our general What's On brochure covering August-October (print run 4k, distributed throughout North Somerset and Bristol via Pear Communications network).

See addendum 2.

General PR:

BBC Radio Bristol interview; two x Super Culture newsletters (reach 1k+ per newsletter), Bristol Arts Marketing post. Plus support on socials from Grand Pier, Bristol University, Super Weston. Deep dive super news features on Super Culture website x 2.

Media coverage:

Super Culture FB - 25 posts shared 113 times, 1180 views of two live reels,.

Weston Mercury

<https://www.thewestonmercury.co.uk/news/23727087.raynor-winn-headline-years-weston-lit-fest/>

Somerset Live

<https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.somersetlive.co.uk/whats-on/famous-faces-head-festival-somerset-8689085.amp>

Visit Weston

<https://www.visit-westonsupermare.com/whats-on/weston-literary-festival-p3389673>

Visit Somerset

https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://www.visitsomerset.co.uk/news/october-2023/weston-grand-pier-to-host-best-selling-author-rayn&ved=2ahUKEwiWsu3l9rGCAXUc_7sIHbKhArEQFnoECBMQAQ&usg=AOvVaw1ibqUOTrx1jToE4zaoiyX9

Visit Bristol

<https://visitbristol.co.uk/whats-on/weston-lit-fest-p3367973>

<https://wsm-tc.gov.uk/news-events/weston-literary-festival/>

<https://wsm-tc.gov.uk/event/weston-lit-fest/>

<https://www.grandpier.co.uk/weston-lit-fest-2023/>

Online sites:

<https://bristolparent.co.uk/event/weston-lit-fest-2023/>

<https://allevents.in/weston-super-mare/weston-lit-fest-super-wonder-festival-launch/200025509426711?ref=eventlist-cat>

<https://bristolmumsgroup.co.uk/weston-lit-fest/>

<https://www.datathistle.com/event/2201828-weston-lit-fest-stories-in-the-wilds-with-emma-bettridge/>

3. Sample feedback from Audiences

Via FB and from questionnaires:

"Loved it. Thanks for another great series of events"

"We could only make two of the events though I look forward to catching MANY more than that the next time around. Well done to everyone who made Weston hum in these new and interesting ways."

"It was brilliant and great for Weston"

"It's been a fabulous few days and everybody involved in the organisation and facilitation of this event deserves a massive found of applause!"

"Absolutely brilliant! Thank you so much to al of you that make amazing events like this happen. I've been so inspired by the talk and workshops I went to"

"Can't wait for next year"

"The Talks were amazing. Everyone was very friendly. Made me proud of our town."

"Well organised and an affordable price."

"At all events I attended the welcome was friendly. They all left me feeling happy. Very worthwhile."

"I Am Bird. Amazing."

"Excellent speaker and hosts. Very engaging. And a lovely venue in grand pier with a great view"

"Very interesting and informative. Made me feel proud of Weston."

"It was uplifting for the area. I am very pleased events like this happen in our town!"

'Fantastic. A really lovely vibe with great hosting and ambience'

Sample feedback from Authors

"Thanks again for having us over at Weston - I loved doing the event, and really hope the lit fest goes from strength to strength." Richard Milward

"Thank YOU for organising such an incredible day. It totally restored me and I left feeling renewed and inspired." Catherine Joy White

"The event was an absolute pleasure." Ella Foote

"Thank you for including me in the festival. Very much enjoyed my visit. It was a lovely audience." Madeleine Bunting

"Thanks so much for inviting me to take part in the WSM Lit Fest. I just love engaging with the little ones. It's a real treat." Jen Reid

"What a lovely lovely festival." Emma Bettridge

"Folks seemed very happy with my workshop session. I hope they feel inspired and that we can do it again" Paula Bowles (illustrator)

4. The Programme - a summary

Thursday 5 October

Launch - Half a dozen **Poetry Town Cryers** walked the streets of the town centre announcing National Poetry Day and Weston Lit Fest. They read poems to passers-by and cafe dwellers. The official "opening" of Weston LitFest at Super Wonder Shrine involved 12 local poets, with an attentive crowd. The concept of a group of poetry town cryers is almost certainly a first ever in the UK! It coincided with the highest footfall figure for the town centre for October.

Local Lit - a platform for 3 local published authors to read their works and chat with the audience at **Lit Fest Hub**, a formerly empty shop in Sovereign Centre.. This space was reimagined with poetry posters created by local writers (including a new poem jointly created by Weston's community with poet Beth Calverley - see appendix 1), audio installations including 'Speak for the Trees' by local young people, interactive art installation, free tea and coffee, deckchairs..



National Poetry Day Speakeasy Poetry Night held at Front Room showcased internationally renowned Guyanan poet, Maggie Harris (winner of the Guyana Award for Literature and the Commonwealth Caribbean Short Story Prize), alongside 12 poets from Weston and North Somerset. The event was hosted by Weston-based creative writing duo, The Write Box.

Friday 6 October

Publication of **'Words on the Wire'** was launched in the Lit Fest Hub in The Sovereign to an audience of about 40 people. 'Words on the Wire' is an 80 page book of creative writing - stories, poems, memoir, monologues - by 18 members of Chapter One Creative Writing Group. 15 members of the





group live in Weston and North Somerset, one (born and brought up in Weston) lives in Connecticut USA, one lives in Malaysia and one in New South Wales, Australia. Eleven members of the group gave inspirational readings of their poems and stories which were hugely enjoyed by the audience. The event was hosted by The Write Box who have been facilitating Chapter One online for the past four and a half years.

At Front Room theatre, 10 people (fully booked session) gathered together with Reader Leader Adam Fuller in shared reading. **The Reader** is a national programme that brings people together through great stories and poems.

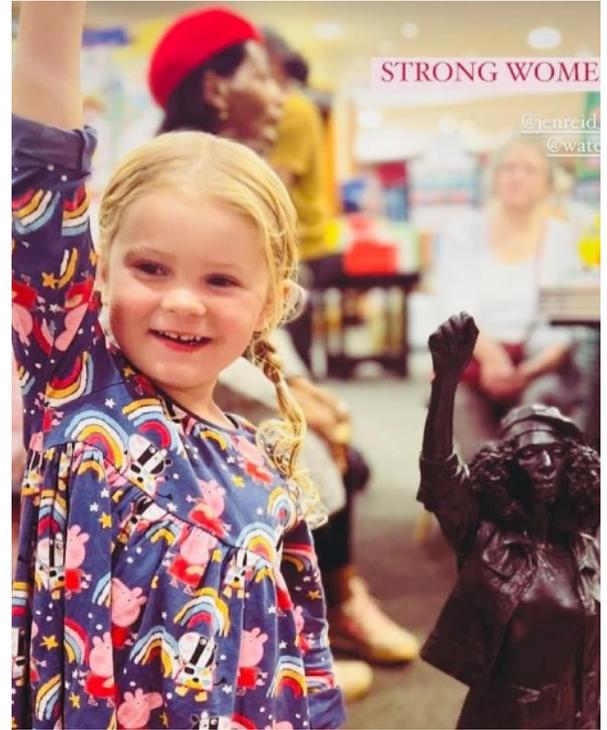
Friday night at Loves Cafe saw Zambian-born poet **Saili Katebe** joining local voices to present a

Rhyme Against the Tide evening of performance poetry, with supper cooked by 'Global Kitchen', members of the town's refugee community. Fully booked event (61).

Saturday 7 and 8 October



In one of the final sunny weekends of the season, Weston's Marine Lake came to the fore as the setting for **Luke Jerram's 'Crossings'** an immersive artwork from this internationally acclaimed artist. 9 rowing boats with a menu of audio stories about water-crossings from around the world... bookable in advance and also open to drop-ins. Hugely popular with over 100 rowing boat trips across 2 days. 'Crossings' featured a special story specially commissioned for Weston for Black History Month - Bristol's first Black ward sister May Tanner recounting her journey from Barbados to become Bristol's first black ward sister.



Saturday's line-up also included plenty for younger audiences to enjoy.

Emma Bettridge led a story-making walk in the grounds of Grove Park, culminating in a reading of her illustrated picture book **'Red is Home'** (released Oct 2023). Inside at Waterstones, **Jen Reid** - whose profile soared when she jumped upon Colston's empty plinth, and who is about to release a Ted Talk on the subject - discussed her new children's book **'A Hero**

Like Me', an empowering assertion that everyone can stand up for their beliefs however young.



Over in the library, you could don a headset and follow a beautifully crafted audio and art trail through the bookshelves to explore a story of migration with **'I am Bird'** by **Marie Klimis**. Also in the library, visitors were able to delve into the pop-up **Radical Book Stall** or sign up for **'Rainbow Readers'**, Weston's first queer book club.

The Museum's Myths and Monsters exhibition was promoted as a Saturday highlight, with the theme of children's illustration and writing being followed through in two workshops led by Weston based illustrator **Paula Bowles**, and Weston based theatre-writer **Adam Fuller**.

At Can't Dance Coffee.... local crime writer **Brian Price** delved into the science behind crime writing over morning coffee. Early evening, **Richard Milward**, one of the 6 shortlisted authors whose spirit of creative daring is celebrated through the prestigious **2023**

Goldsmiths Prize, discussed his book **'Man Eating Typewriter'** with BBC New Generation



Thinker Noreen Masud, whose novel **'A Flat Place'** has also received rave reviews.

Saturday was rounded off in musical style with an afternoon musical pop-up on the Super Wonder Shrine and a sold-out evening performance at Front Room from **Olivier Award Winners Little Bulb** exploring

stories of musical migration across borders in **'Country Music'**.



On Sunday, the focus panned out to land and sea with a trilogy of sessions on Weston's Grand Pier.

Kicking off **'Why Women Swim'** was stellar line up of female writers and swimmers: Ella Foote, editor of 'Outdoor Swimmer' magazine and author of forthcoming publication **'How to Wild Swim'** lead the conversation with Freya Bromley (**'The Tidal Year'**, a story about healing from grief through swimming), Jenny Landreth (whose **'SWELL: A Waterbiography'** is a winner of the Sunday Times Sport Book of the Year - a joyful hymn to our swimming foremothers), and Catherine Joy White, recently named on Forbes 30 under 30 list, and a writer (**'The Thread of Gold: A Celebration of Black Womanhood'**), actor, filmmaker, gender advisor to the UN as well as an ardent swimmer.

Next up was Raynor Winn, million copy international best-seller and prize-winning author of **'The Salt Path'**, **'The Wild Silence'** and **'Landlines'**, reflecting on her incredible walking journeys with Dr Lesel Dawson. This follows the launch of the **North Somerset stretch of the King Charles III England Coast Path** on 30 September. Raynor's event played to a sold out audience of 220.

Finally, Madeleine Bunting, author and former associate editor of The Guardian discussed her latest book **'The Seaside, England's Love Affair'**, a trip around the country's coast that considers the enduring love that residents and visitors have for seaside towns, whilst also discussing the social and economic challenges that are faced.

Back on land, a workshop with poet **Craft-D** created space for teenage voices to express their hopes for the future.



5. Income/ Expenditure & Budget Request

TICKET INCOME	3317
Artists fees	4320
Artists accommodation	475
Artists travel	462.69
Production costs	520.41
Admin costs	1960
(staffing/expenses/marketing)	
TOTAL COST OF SALES	5778.10
OPERATING PROFIT	(4421.74)
Pledged monies from WTC	2500.00
Deficit	1921.74

The final budget has a deficit of £1,921 after earned income and pledged support from WTC. There is a request to the Town Council to consider splitting this difference with Super Culture and increasing their contribution to £3460.

6. Looking ahead

There is clearly an appetite for a Weston Lit Fest, and given sufficient notice, it would be excellent to co-programme with a steering group representing different voices and 'writing related partners' from the town eg Write Box, RENS, LGBT Forum, Library, Waterstones, and maximise tie-ins with other regional festivals whilst retaining distinctiveness of place. Retain mix of venues - The Grand Pier was an excellent setting for the headliner. Maintain synchronicity with other recent happenings in the town eg) launch of the North Somerset Coastal Path, Black History Month. The mix of local voices and well-known authors worked well. There were requests for 'more workshops out of hours and on the weekends.' *Super Culture would welcome an opportunity to build on this collaboration with WTC.*

7. Addendum 1 + 2

Poem created by 10 Weston residents with poet Beth Calverley on a beach poetry walk at Weston Arts + Health Fest, premiered at Weston Lit Fest 2023

Here is what I hear

Today we've sung about the light.
Today I was torn between the sound of the sea
and the beat of the drum.

Today we have walked across water
and rediscovered Weston.
Funnel down with me into almost silence.

By an instant magic, a causeway of Pride.

Today we have reclaimed time,
put automatic pilot on standby.
My voice is a pencil on paper - back and forth –

scritch scratch, stumble trips, fwoop dot shwoop.

Today we have taken time to slow down,
to notice, to be, and connect.
I notice the sound of everything and nothing.

You're a body of water, I'm a body of water.
My voice can be distant like the far out tide
but can come in rushing and urgent.

Mud flat, high gulls, air.
Today on the beach I heard the sound
of the wind in my hearing aids.
Today I felt light and wind and music
fill the space left by the receding tide.



Weston
Lit Fest:
Words on
the Edge

Bookish adventures across land, sea and identity
Thursday 5 - Sunday 8 October 2023

Produced in partnership with Weston Town Council



THE GRUFFALO: DESIGNER ABOON MAL STAMP OJUA DOORADJUSON AND AXEL SCHEFFLER 1995 - ILLUSTRATION: LANCE HERRIS 2005

Myths & Monsters
Exhibition

Saturday 7 October
Courtyard of Weston Museum

Free, and drop-in within Museum opening times

Explore the wild worlds of Myths and Monsters in a new exhibition, created with Events of Wonder, featuring original artwork from some of our best loved children's stories. Monsters have been around since the earliest myths and legends, keeping us terrified and captivated for millennia. The imaginations of some of the world's most celebrated illustrators and artists bring them to life.

See over 70 artworks by 17 celebrated children's book illustrators, including **Axel Scheffler** (*The Gruffalo*), **Jim Kay** (*A Monster Calls*), **Chris Mould** (*The Iron Man*), **Kristina Stephenson** (*The Museum of Mysterious Things*) and **Chris Riddell** (*The Cloud Horse Chronicles*).



Super Wonder
Festival Launch

Thursday 5 October | 12pm, Super
Wonder Shrine, High Street, BS23 1HA

Town poets cry out their wares amidst the hustle and bustle of the high street to launch the 2023 Literature Festival around the town. Pause for a minute to listen to their words and inspiration. Then go on to enjoy a poetry installation from young people from Off the Record at Unit 27 of The Sovereign.



National Poetry
Day Speakeasy
featuring Maggie Harris

Thursday 5 October | 7.30pm,
Front Room Theatre, Central Walk, BS23 1FF
EB recommended / Pay what you decide

Join us for Weston's wonderful celebration of National Poetry Day with the magical poetry of multi-award winning Guyanese writer, Maggie Harris, and perhaps take part by reading a poem of your own in the open mic.

Maggie Harris's awards include the Guyana Prize for Literature, the Commonwealth (Caribbean) Short Story Prize and the Wales Poetry Award. Her haunting poems sing of oceans, the fruit of the land, myths, traditions and identity.

"The room is filled with a sense of wholesomeness, love, and family, when Maggie reads them. Her words also evoke the overwhelming pressure that nature, life, and decisions can have... It is elegant, beautiful, emotional, and touching."

Kirsty Louise Farley

Chapter One Book
Launch and Readings

Friday 6 October | 11am-12pm,
Lit Fest Hub, Unit 27 of The Sovereign, BS23 1HL
Free, no booking necessary

A relaxed celebration of local voices and talents with the Chapter One writing group, launching an anthology of some of the short stories, poems, monologues and memoirs they've written in their meetings, facilitated by The Write Box.



The Reader

Friday 6 October
10am-11.30am, Front Room Theatre,
Central Walk, BS23 1FF
Free, but please book your place online

Shared Reading groups bring people together through great stories and poems to talk, laugh and share. How does it work? A group of people, one of them a trained Reader Leader, reads a short story or poem aloud. Then we talk about it in any way we want to. There is no need for group members to read aloud or speak - it's fine to just listen.

Shared Reading is part of The Reader, a national arts charity. Hundreds of Shared Reading groups meet across the country.

"The Reader is the best thing I have ever belonged to as a group member and a volunteer!"

Joyce, Liverpool



Rhyme Against the Tide
with Saliil Katebe

Friday 6 October
Loves Cafe, 9 West Street, BS23 1JR

From 7pm, two supper options designed by Global Kitchen, members of the town's refugee community, reflecting memories and tastes of home that they'd like to share

Poetry slam from 8pm

EB recommended / Pay what you decide,
plus optional supper an additional EB

Please book for event and supper online

Join us in Loves Café for an extra special slam instalment of Rhyme Against the Tide featuring poetry sets from Weston's current slam winner Jaidah McMill and guest poet Saliil Katebe.

Marvel at the local talent as a line-up of spoken word super slammers take to the stage in the hopes of impressing the audience and becoming the tenth 'Rhyme against the Tide' Slam Winner!

Saliil Katebe is a Zambian-born writer and performer based in the South West. Often writing under the pen name of The Blissful Nomad, he uses poetry and theatre to exercise his curiosity and perfect the art of recklessness, challenging his language and its hidden music.



Crossings Luke Jerram

Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 October
Weston Marine Lake - for full details see pages 14 & 15

Ten stories to lap up across the weekend.

Radical Book Stall hosted by LGBT Forum at Weston Library

Saturday 7 October | 9.30am-1pm
Weston Library, Town Hall, BS23 1UJ

Delve into a range of donated books across a variety of subjects including women's studies, sexuality, feminism and gender.

Presented by North Somerset LGBT+ Forum

Saturday 7 October, 7.30pm
Little Bulb Theatre present

Mountain Music at Front Room Theatre.

For more information please see page 31.

Crime on the Edge with Brian Price

Saturday 7 October 10.30am
Can't Dance Coffee, The Sovereign, BS23 1HL
Free and drop in. No booking necessary.

A crime writer's journey
Discover the science behind crime writing with local author Brian Price, whose third novel *Fatal Dose* was published in 2023. Brian will offer his top tips on how to write a compelling crime story and recount his experiences of writing fiction. His website for crime-writers www.crimewritersscience.co.uk is required reading for any serial plotter.



NEL MARGIS-WERT

I am Bird by Marie Klimis

Saturday 7 October | 1-4pm
Weston Library, Town Hall, BS23 1UJ

Free, 45 minute slots bookable in advance (see website for link) or spaces in person on the day, subject to availability

I Am Bird is an immersive experience where, using their own headphones and mobile phones, audiences are transported on an adventure across the library, following the extraordinary story of a young bird migrating from West Africa to the UK. Using a series of hidden clues, audiences are led to miniature paper worlds and invited to reflect on migration through stories and art.

Accessibility notes: Transcripts provided. Bring your own mobile phone and headphones (spare headphones and splitters available for families). This is equally suitable for young people and adults, age guide 7 years+



PAULA BOWLES

Always
YOUNG AT
HEART ...

Creativity on the Cusp the art of writing and illustrating for children

Saturday 7 October
Lit Fest Hub, Unit 27 of The Sovereign, BS23 1HL

EB recommended/ Pay what you decide
Age recommendation: 16 years+

12.30-2pm, pick up your pop-a-point pencil and join children's playwright Adam Fuller in a workshop designed to excite imaginations.

2.30pm-4pm, felt tips to the fore in this taster session of illustrating for children's books led by acclaimed children's illustrator Paula Bowles.

All materials provided, though you are welcome to bring your own if you wish.

Award-winning Weston-based illustrator Paula Bowles' extensive credits include books from Simon & Schuster, Nosy Crow, OUP, Little Tiger Press, Barrington Stoke and The National Trust. She is also the illustrator of the new *Mozy the Movie Star* picture book series written by Hollywood star Isla Fisher.

Adam is a writer and theatre maker with twenty years of experience writing and making nationally acclaimed theatre for families and young people. Adam has delivered numerous creative projects with children aimed at generating exciting stories from young imaginations. Adam is also currently studying for an MA in Creative Writing for Young People at Bath Spa University.

Young
people's
DOUBLE BILL

Stories in the Wilds

with Emma Bettridge

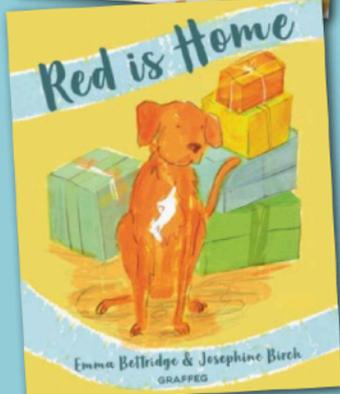
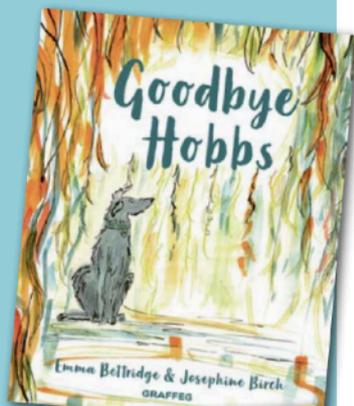
Saturday 7 October | 11am-12pm
Meet outside Sprout Cafe, Grove Park, BS23 2AE

Free but booking required

Story-making workshop and walk around the park for 5-7 year olds and their carers, led by Somerset author Emma (Goodbye Hobbs) and her beloved dog Nell.

You can also enjoy a reading of Emma's latest book *Red is Home* (published by Graffeg on 5th October) whilst tucking into vegan cookies from Sprout Cafe. Dog biscuits will be available for canine treats. For more information on the workshop see emmabettridge.com/stories-in-the-wilds/

To avoid canine clashes, please don't bring any of your own beloved animals with you on the book walk - thank you!



LEIRE SALABERRIA

A Hero Like Me with Jen Reid

Reading, conversation and book signing

Saturday 7 October | 2pm
Waterstones, The Sovereign, BS23 1HL

Free and drop in

Empower children to stand up for what is right with this picture book inspired by the real-life events around the statue of a slave trader, its toppling and heroic replacement.

They call him 'HERO', but he's no HERO - not to me.

A Hero Like Me is inspired by the events of 7 June 2020, when a statue of seventeenth-century slave trader Edward Colston was pulled down and thrown into Bristol

Harbour during an anti-racism protest. Co-author Jen Reid was one of the protesters that day, and despite being afraid of heights, she spontaneously climbed onto the empty plinth and raised her fist high above her head - a moment that was captured on camera and shared around the world.

This inspiring picture book tells the story of these events through the eyes of a little girl who, every day, on her way to school, sees a towering statue. A statue of a man who sold freedom for cotton and tea. But she knows he's not a hero - not a real one.

A Hero Like Me empowers children to have courage to stand up for what is right and be their own hero. It shows every child that they have a voice in their community and a say in who is on their streets. That they too have power, just like Jen.

Authors

Noreen Masud & Richard Milward in conversation

Saturday 7 October | 5pm,
Can't Dance Coffee, The Sovereign, BS23 1HL
£10 recommended / Pay what you decide

A Flat Place

Noreen Masud

Raw and radical, strange and beguiling - a love letter to Britain's breathtaking flatlands, from Orford Ness to Dinkley, and a reckoning with the painful, hidden histories they contain.



Noreen Masud has always loved flatlands. Her earliest memory is of a wide, flat field glimpsed from the back seat of her father's car in Lahore. As an adult in Britain she has discovered many more flat landscapes to love. Bare, haunted expanses that remind her of the flat place inside herself: the place created by trauma.

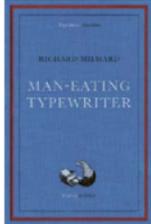
"Expansive, arresting, with sly humour... Masud establishes herself as a significant chronicler of personal and national experience"
Financial Times

"Noreen Masud fathoms the depths of flat landscapes - sharp, subtle and very moving"
Robert Macfarlane

Man Eating Typewriter

Richard Milward

'We're all in the gutter but some of us are ogling the sparkles.'



Set at the fag-end of the 1960s and framed as a novel within a novel published by a seedy London purveyor of pulp fiction, *Man-eating Typewriter* is a homage to the avant-garde counterculture of the 20th century. Told in Polar, it is the story of an anarchist named Raymond Novak and his plan to commit a 'fantabulosa crime' in 276 days that will revolt the world.

Constructed like a hallucinogenic cocktail of *A Clockwork Orange*, *Pale Fire* and Jean Genet's jailbird fantasies, *Man-eating Typewriter* is an act of seductive section by a writer with unfathomable literary talent and boldness.

"A major talent:"
Irvine Welsh on Richard Milward

"Remarkable, beautiful, magic. Like Odysseus for those who can't cope with reading Odysseus:"
Paolo Hewitt on *Man Eating Typewriter*

SINK INTO BOOKS OVER GREAT COFFEE AND A LOCALLY SOURCED BAR

Why Women Swim

Ella Foote in conversation with Freya Bromley, Jenny Landreth and Cat White



Sunday 8 October | 11am-12.30pm, Regency Suite, The Grand Pier, BS23 1AL

£10 recommended / Pay what you decide

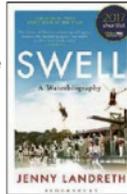
Join **Ella Foote**, editor of *Outdoor Swimmer* magazine, instigator of Dip Advisor, and author of forthcoming publication *How to Wild Swim*, in conversation with fellow writer-swimmers **Freya Bromley**, **Jenny Landreth** and **Cat White**



Freya Bromley decided to swim every tidal pool in Britain as a way to fill the empty space her brother's death left behind. *The Tidal Year* is a true story about the healing power of wild swimming and the space it creates for reflection, rewilding and hope.

"Immersive and compelling. I read in a single day! Everyone should take a plunge into this book:"
Cathy Renzenbrink on *The Tidal Year*.

Jenny Landreth's SWELL: A Waterbiography, winner of the Sunday Times Sport Book of the Year in 2017, is a funny and bold account, part social history and part memoir, of how women fought their way into the water and what they did once they got there. A joyful hymn to our swimming foremothers.

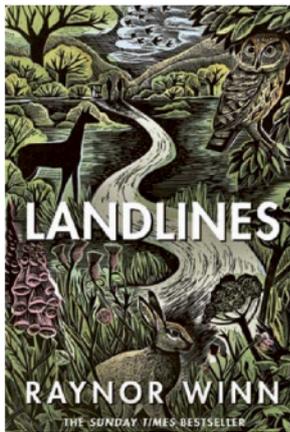


"...blissful... a instructive history of a tide not simply turning, but being forced to turn:"
The Times on *SWELL: A Waterbiography*.

Catherine Joy White, who was recently named on Forbes 30 Under 30 list, is a writer, actor, film maker, gender advisor for the United Nations and founder of Kusni Productions. Her first book *This Thread of Gold: A Celebration of Black Womanhood* published in June 2023 to high acclaim. Cat's film *Fifty-Four Days* follows the journey of a girl who starts swimming in the wake of losing her father to suicide, echoing elements of Cat's own experience and her love of the 'holy place' of wild swimming.

"Catherine Joy White is an extraordinary writer, the kind who turns non-fiction into poetry... It's a stunning debut from a young author, and yet feels, and reads, like it has been decades in the making."
Afua Hirsch, author of bestseller *Britt(ish): On Race, Identity and Belonging*

Raynor Winn on Landlines



Sunday 8 October | 2.30pm
Regency Suite, The Grand Pier, BS23 1AL

£10 recommended / Pay what you decide

Million-copy international bestseller and prize-winning author of three Sunday Times bestsellers - *The Salt Path*, *The Wild Swans* and her most recent book published in 2022, *Landlines* - Raynor Winn is also an inspirational speaker. Since travelling the South West Coastal Path, she has become a regular long-distance walker and writes about nature, homelessness and the health benefits of walking. She won the Royal Society of Literature Christopher Bland Prize in 2019 and has been shortlisted for numerous other awards including the Costa, the Warwright and the Stanfords Travel Writing Awards. Since its publication *The Salt Path* paperback has spent an incredible ninety weeks in the Sunday Times Top Ten.

Raynor is interviewed by Dr Lesel Dawson, Associate Professor in Literature and Culture at the University of Bristol, whose specialisms include the relationship between grief and creativity, and the history of the emotions. Raynor Winn and Dr Dawson will be discussing Raynor's newest book, *Landlines*.

"A tale of triumph: of hope over despair; of love over everything"
Sunday Times on *The Salt Path*

"Heartfelt and heartening ... a full-throated paean to the fundamental importance of nature in all its glory, fury and impermanence."
Wall Street Journal on *The Wild Swans*

"A soaring lament and a tub-thumping tirade - for all that is being lost, for all that may yet be saved"
Daily Telegraph on *Landlines*

The Seaside: England's Love Affair

Author Madeleine Bunting in conversation with Tamsin Badcoe



Sunday 8 October | 4pm
Regency Suite, The Grand Pier, BS23 1AL

£10 recommended / Pay what you decide

A vivid journey around England's great seaside resorts, exploring what they reveal about England, from the award-winning author of *Love of Country*.

England's seaside is made up of a striking variety of coastlines including cliffs, coves, pebbled shores, wide sandy beaches, salt marshes, and estuaries cutting deep inland. On these coastal edges, England's great holiday resorts grew up, developed in the early eighteenth century originally as spas for medicinal bathing but soon morphing into places of pleasure, entertainment, fantasy and adventure.

Acclaimed writer Madeleine Bunting journeyed clockwise around England from Scarborough to Weston to Blackpool to understand the enduring appeal of seaside towns and what has happened to the golden sands, cold seas and donkey rides of childhood memory.

About Madeleine Bunting: for twenty five years, Madeleine was a journalist and Associate Editor on the Guardian. She wrote on a wide range of subjects including politics, social affairs, faith and global development. Her books have won several awards and listings for major prizes.

"A poignant picture of life on the edge of England... Bunting snoops around where most of us don't bother to look!" Spectator

"Eloquent and detailed... Britain's island story has never seemed so pertinent:"
Financial Times

"[A] remarkable book, as bracing as a smack in the face by a stiff sea breeze, Madeleine Bunting tours the English coastline to discover what it reveals about the state of the nation today:"
Guardian

