

Abergavenny Writing Festival is an event for anyone who loves writing and the written word. The festival's aim is to bring people of all ages and backgrounds together to get writing.

ABER*Writing*FEST



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April 21st - 23rd 2016

**Kings Arms Hotel
Abergavenny**





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We take great pride in our local community and are delighted to sponsor the inaugural **ABERWritingFEST**

Introduction

Welcome to the first Aber Writing Fest

The ethos of the festival is that it doesn't matter who you write for or why you write, if you enjoy it, or feel you might, just do it! We're proud to have so many talented local writers, poets and journalists involved; hosting events and sharing their work, their experiences, hints and tips. The festival includes workshops for adults and children, talks, performances, discussions about books and writing, a poetry open-mic session, readings and lots of chances for people to take part, put pen to paper and exchange feedback and ideas. The event is designed to appeal to anyone with an interest in writing and words, whether professional or personal. We hope to be able to grow the event over the coming years and welcome involvement from all sections of our community. Thank you to those who made it possible.

First and foremost enormous thanks to all the writers and organisations who have agreed to give their time and take part. In our first year we are well on our way to achieving our aim: an amazing eclectic mix of writers sharing their work, creativity and ideas.

I would like to express particular thanks to **Christie Residential** and **The Kings Arms Hotel**. Without whose support this event simply would not have happened. The Kings Arms generously agreed to give over their wonderful function room to host the festival and Christie Residential came on board with endless enthusiasm and support as our founding sponsor.

Special thanks goes to

Branding and design	Kirsty Jones
Website	Emma Driscoll
Ticketing	Jacq Sobocinski
Media partner	The Abergavenny Chronicle
Press and promotion	Jo O Driscoll, Parkin Whitman
Bookselling partner	Book-ish
Inspiration	Andrea Mason, the Literary Kitchen & Literary Kitchen Festival

Abergavenny is a very special place, bursting with friendliness and creativity in equal measure. Thank you all and I hope you enjoy the festival!

Lucie Parkin, festival founder and organiser

Thursday 21st April daytime



Tyler Keevil: The Writer's Habit & Finding Your Muse

In this workshop, award-winning author and Creative Writing lecturer Tyler Keevil will guide participants through the initial stages of the creative process. How important is a writing space? Where do writers get their ideas from? And once you have an idea, what ways can you develop it? This interactive session will use writing exercises and lively discussion to examine these areas and more. It is aimed at beginning and aspiring writers looking to find out more about the craft, and have some fun while doing so.

10-11am, Kings Arms Hotel, £6

Rhys Milsom: Poetry Workshop

Personal moments combined with the ongoing evolution or de-evolution of nature (whatever your mindset may be), are the focal points of Rhys' poetry and he will be using these themes in this workshop. Each participant will craft a poem of their own mindset and experiences, that is unique to them. This workshop will focus on enjambment and free verse style with participants using stimuli to spark ideas/creativity. Using stimuli, each participant will build a poem of delicate precision and personal experience, leaving the poem open, honest and extricated to the poet's eye.



11.30am-12.30pm, Kings Arms Hotel, £6

Simon Lancaster: Speak like a leader speechwriting workshop

Shh... Did you know there's a secret language of leadership: an ancient set of cues and signals that has determined who's risen to the top in politics and business since the dawn of time. In his new book, *Winning Minds: Secrets from the Language of Leadership*, top speechwriter Simon Lancaster combines ancient rhetoric and neuroscience to create the ultimate user's guide to that secret language. In this workshop, you will learn the secret tricks you can use to sound like a great leader, from Obama to Malala, Branson to Bevan, Cameron to Corbyn. You will never think about language the same again.

1-3pm Kings Arms Hotel, £15



Writing Family Stories & Memoir workshop

Remember Granny's button jar? Grandad's paper knife? What Aunt Miranda did in 1948...Bring along an object as inspiration for a workshop on capturing family stories and writing memoir. Suitable for all writing levels beginner or old hand. A taster session facilitated by Pat and Anna from Writing for Fun. Writing for Fun (W4F) is a facilitated, fortnightly, friendly writing group that meets in Abergavenny and Monmouth. New members welcome.



3.30-5pm, Kings Arms Hotel, £6.50

Thursday 21st April evening

Opening night with Paul Henry, Charles Way, Patrick Hannay D. D. Johnston and Eddie Butler



An entertaining and inspiring evening of writers reading their work, sharing insights and singing! The fabulous and eclectic line-up includes: the much respected poet's poet Paul Henry; novelist and creative writing teacher D.D. Johnston, highly esteemed playwright Charles Way, journalist and editor Patrick Hannay and sports commentator and former Welsh rugby union player Eddie Butler.

Paul Henry is poet and songwriter based in Crickhowell. Described by the late U.A. Fanthorpe as "a poet's poet" who combines "a sense of the music of words with an endlessly inventive imagination", he is the author of ten books including *The Brittle Sea: New & Selected Poems*, recently reprinted by Seren. A Writing Fellow at the University of South Wales, his latest collection of poems is *Boy Running*.

Charles Way has spent all his working life in the professional theatre and believes in its power to affect not only individual lives but also, and perhaps as a consequence of changing individuals, the very nature of our world.

Patrick Hannay is an environmental journalist, and Editor of *Touchstone* the magazine for Architecture in Wales. He was for ten years an international award winning architectural journalist and Buildings Editor at the weekly *Architect's Journal* in London.

D. D. Johnston is author of 3 best-selling novels: *The Secret Baby Room*, *Peace, Love & Petrol Bombs* and *The Deconstruction of Professor Thrub* was a... (continued next page)



(continued) *Morning Star* book of the year in 2013 and was longlisted for the Goldsmith's Prize. Today he is a Dr of literature, a senior lecturer in Creative Writing, and the founder of onlinewritingtips.com.

Eddie Butler is a journalist, sports commentator, and former Welsh rugby union player, who won 16 caps for the Wales team between 1980 and 1984. Butler has written a weekly column in the Rugby Union section of *The Observer Sport* since 1991 and also writes for *The Guardian*.

7-11pm, Kings Arms Hotel, £8

Bookshops Confidential at Broadleaf Books: Jack Thurston, Jane Blank, Joanna Chambers

A good bookshop is a secret weapon in the writer's armoury: as a source of inspiration and ideas, a resource for research and a place of refuge. Poet and novelist Jane Blank and travel writer Jack Thurston share their love of bookshops with Joanna Chambers, owner of Broadleaf Books, possibly the best little bookshop you are likely to find. Join Broadleaf Books for a relaxed evening of chat about bookshops over a glass of wine. Broadleaf Books is the only second hand bookshop in the market town of Abergavenny, South Wales. Broadleaf Books offers an eclectic range of books, with over 35 sections in stock. From natural history to photography and from country ways to railways, you're sure to find something to suit your interests.

6-7pm, Broadleaf Books, £5



Friday 22nd April daytime



Fergus Collins, editor of BBC Countryfile Magazine: Secrets on how to get published

If you're a writer who would like to see your work published in magazines, this one's for you! Fergus Collins, editor of BBC Countryfile Magazine will share his insights on: Easy ways to get a head-start over most other writers; What editors are looking for from YOU; How to write the perfect pitch – and get it noticed; How to follow up a pitch and get commissioned (and paid!); How to write articles for the web that people want to read and a discussion about how to generate great, original copy.

10-11am, Kings Arms Hotel, £6.50

Foraging walk with bestselling author Adele Nozedar

Adele Nozedar is the author of best selling books The Hedgerow Handbooks and The Garden Forager. She also runs Brecon Beacons Foraging, which offers day courses and workshops in all sorts of thrilling food and plant related subjects from the village of Llanfrynach. Join her in a taster forage around Abergavenny, taking in both wild plants and 'tame' ones. The walk will take approximately an hour, starting and finishing from The Kings Arms.

**11.30am-12.30pm, starting and finishing at
Kings Arms Hotel, £6**



Abergavenny Chronicle: How to write effective press releases & get them noticed

If you are acting as a press or marketing officer for your club or society get tips from the experts in this hour-long workshop session with Abergavenny Chronicle editor Liz Davies and the Borough Theatre's communications manager Lynsey Wheeler. The introduction to press and marketing will include tips on how to write effective press releases and how to get your information noticed.



1-2pm, Abergavenny Chronicle offices, £3



Rob Yorke walk & talk on the art of pithy prose

'I haven't the time to write a short letter!' How to fit more into less; from Letters to The Times to pithy tweets, Rob Yorke discusses the art of communicating pithy prose. Join Rob, an independent commentator on rural affairs, for a walk and talk around The Meadows. Starting and finishing at the Kings Arms Hotel, Abergavenny. Rob's passion is communicating unfashionably gritty environmental issues to a wider audience via Nature Notebooks in The Times, guest blogs for the RSPB, opinion pieces on shooting,

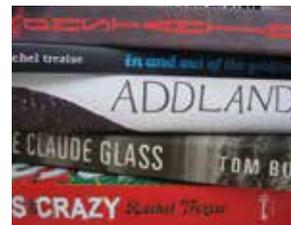
chairing debates at the Hay Festival and leading walk'n'talks. While trying to resist tweeting too much @blackgull, he is only one of five to have had over 100 letters published in The Times.'

2-3pm, start and finish at The Kings Arms Hotel, £6

Meet the Professionals: Editing & Publishing with Arts Alive Wales

Hosted by the Creative Network this event will provide a professional insight into getting your work published. If you want to learn more about the publishing process and how to expand your readership join us for an informative panel discussion with leading authors Tom Bullough and Rachel Trezise, Seren editor Penny Thomas and publisher Simon Hicks.

4-5.30pm, The Kings Arms Hotel, £7



Saturday 23rd April daytime



Wild Tots: Wild Mapping

Run by Wild Tots this event is inspired by the 'Childish' chapter in Robert MacFarlane's book 'Landmarks'. A chance for children to explore and enjoy outdoor spaces together. The event will be free flowing and unstructured, experimenting with novel ideas to capture children's perception of the space and how they interpret and interact with it. We also plan to compile the children's drawings and anecdotes to produce a child's view of the ways and spaces within the park and make this into a magical signpost to inspire subsequent families. For 0-7 year olds and their families, all children must be accompanied by an adult.

10-30am to midday, Linda Vista Gardens, £4

Imaginary Monsters with Naomi Doyle

In this fun and fearsome workshop we will imagine, describe and make monsters in person and on paper. Classic beasts such as the Jabberwocky, the Spotted Atrocious, the Gruffalo and Humbaba will help us to invent our own. Through writing and rhyming, performing and improvising, we will bring our creatures to life and scare ourselves silly! The session will be run by Abergavenny based theatre practitioner Naomi Doyle. For 7-11 year olds, all children should be accompanied by an adult

10-11am The Kings Arms Hotel, £3



Percy the Pom Pom Bear book launch

Come and meet Welsh writer Mari Ellis Dunning reading from her new book 'Percy the Pom Pom Bear.' Percy came to her late one night while she was still studying for her undergraduate degree at Aberystwyth University. He sat in dusty silence for a few years, until Mari happened to meet Jodie, the fantastic artist who readily agreed to illustrate Percy and his adventures through the woods, bringing him and the

other woodland creatures to life. Mari writes everything from adult fiction to poetry and children's rhymes, and has several publications and awards to her name. The book is aimed at 3-6 year olds. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

11.15-11.45am, The Kings Arms Hotel, FREE

Children's Poetry Workshop with Sophie McKeand

Led by the new Young People's Laureate for Wales Sophie McKeand: "Working together our group will be masters of invention, dreaming up new words and language inspired by Roald Dahl's writings. We'll climb inside words, chew them up, garble them through translation systems, draw them huge, tear them up and stick them together again as we then focus on how to shape all this on the page. Finally we'll work on some performance techniques before reading our poetry at the end of the session." Aimed at children aged 8-11, all children should be accompanied by an adult.

2-3pm, The Kings Arms Hotel, £3



Helen O'Sullivan: Reading of 'The Magic Piano'

Helen O'Sullivan will be reading from her first children's book, The Magic Piano, written for her little boy, Finn – "for your love, light and sparkle." Come and listen to Helen read the enchanting adventures of Freddie and Poco: who are magically transported by Magic Piano to exciting foreign locations. In this adventure they discover the wonders of Paris, the eternal city of light. With its famous buildings and works of art, its chic fashion scene and its modern literary, artistic, and intellectual ideals. Freddie and Poco are enthralled by the tree-lined Avenue des Champs Elysees, Arc de Triomphe, Montparnasse, and all the wonderful museums, shops and restaurants. Join our intrepid explorers in their latest adventure.

3.30-4pm, Kings Arms Hotel, FREE

Creative Ways to Write with Matthew James Dicken

Matthew James Dicken, Welsh-medium primary school teacher at Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni and successful author, will be giving a reading and workshop 'Creative Ways to Write: Building Settings and Characters.' The session is aimed at children (aged around 9-14), their parents and aspiring children's writers. In this session, writer Matthew will give you an opportunity to try out some of the ways he uses to inspire writing and description. This interactive session will include a special sneak-peak reading of Matthew's new trilogy due to be published next year.

4.30-5.30pm, Kings Arms Hotel, £3



Saturday 23rd April evening

Word fuelled Saturday night shindig with Robert Penn, Mark Blayney, Jonathan Edwards, Matthew Plumb and Sophie McKeand



Saturday night – our grand finale – promises to be a fun and inspiring evening of performance, readings and dialogue.

Robert Penn, writer and broadcaster will give a talk and compere the evening. Writer and performer Mark Blayney, will perform his hilarious solo show: 'Be your own Life Coach with Abba.'



Rob Penn is an author, journalist, TV presenter, cyclist and woodsman. Rob writes for the Financial Times, Guardian and Observer. He has written and presented TV documentary series for the BBC and Sky. Author of It's All About the Bike: the Pursuit of Happiness on Two Wheels and The Man Who Made Things Out of Trees. Costa poetry prize winner Jonathan Edwards and "Tree Surgeon Poet" Matthew Plumb will read some of their own poems. And Sophie McKeand (young people's Laureate, Wales) will host an open-mic poetry session.



Mark Blayney is an award-winning writer and performer based in Cardiff. He's a National Poetry Slam Finalist, a John Tripp Award Finalist and longlisted for the National Poetry Competition. He won the Somerset Maugham Prize for his book Two Kinds of Silence and his new book Doppelgangers is published by Parthian.

Jonathan Edwards is a contemporary Welsh poet. He won the Terry Hetherington Award in 2010, prizes at the Cardiff International Poetry Competition and the Basil Bunting award in 2012. His first book, the poetry collection My Family and Other Superheroes, won the Ledbury Poetry Festival's International Competition in 2014, and the Costa Book Award for Poetry in 2014.



Sophie McKeand, young people's Laureate Wales, is a poet and educator from Y Gogledd Cymru whose work explores Community Artistry: engaging with The Arts to build stronger communities. She won the Out Spoken Innovation in Poetry Award in 2015, was longlisted for the Poetry Society's National Poetry Competition in 2014 and will be the Poet in Residence at Focus Wales Festival in 2016.

Matthew Plumb is a poet and tree surgeon. He believes in the power of the spoken word and the limitless potential words have to convey. Matthew is the founder of Poetry Pulse, a democratic, on-line poetry competition.

The Kings Arms Hotel, 7-11pm £7.50





Bookish is proud to be bookselling partner
for the first Abergavenny Writing Festival

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Information

Locations

Kings Arms Hotel, 29 Nevill Street, Abergavenny NP7 5AA
Broadleaf Books, 16 Monk Street, Abergavenny NP7 5NP
Abergavenny Chronicle, Tindle House, 13 Nevill Street, Abergavenny NP7 5AA
Linda Vista Gardens, Tudor Street, Abergavenny NP7 5AA

Where to buy tickets

Online via the festival website www.abergavennywritingfestival.com
In person at Borough Theatre, Abergavenny Town Hall, Cross St, Abergavenny NP7 5HD
In person (cash only) at Book-ish, 23 High Street, Crickhowell NP8 1BD

Parking

Free parking is available in the nearby Byefield Lane carpark, off Tudor Lane, Abergavenny NP7 5YL

Contacts

Lucie Parkin www.abergavennywritingfestival.com

Kirsty Jones www.facebook.com/designandalsopictures

Partners



Parkin | Whitman
communications and marketing

