

October 2025

Bury St. Edmunds *Literature Festival*



www.burylitfest.co.uk



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Welcome!

Something for everyone...

For Bury St Edmunds Literature Festival's 7th year, we are delighted to be presenting the biggest and boldest Bury St Edmunds Literature Festival yet!

At the heart of the festival is a wide array of fabulous author events. There's fiction in every genre from fêted authors, bestselling authors, debut authors, local authors and authors who are appearing in the area for the first time. For those who prefer non-fiction we are excited to present riveting and rigorous author discussions that cover everything from the enduring spirit of Ukraine to an exploration of the impact reading can have on our happiness!

For children, we have *free* ticketed events for all age groups; there's sensory storytelling for babies and preschoolers, interactive storytelling workshops for kids and an exploration of expression through poetry, rap and verse for young people. All this to complement an expanded programme for local schools that covers all Key Stages, with brilliant author-led onsite school events presented as part of our creative writing competition.

This year, as has always been our goal, we're expanding beyond author events and forging new partnerships to deliver exciting new workshops and events. We're delighted to be working with **Gold Dust Writer Mentoring** to offer our first *Creative Writing Workshops*, **Wensum Trust**, **Usborne Books**, **Bury St Edmunds Library** and **Waterstones Bury St Edmunds Arc** to expand our children's programme, **Abbeygate Cinema** for film screenings and **Bury Tour Guides** who have curated a very special guided walk taking in sites of literary note across the town. In addition to this, we are delighted to be offering a half-day gardening workshop with author/gardeners **Sally Morgan** and **Becky Searle** which is the perfect practical accompaniment to their author talk on their books that tackle gardening for climate change.

We hope there is something for everyone.

Now it's over to you for the difficult bit...deciding what you're going to see at this year's Bury Lit Fest!

Kate Sawyer

Bury St Edmunds Literature Festival
Programme Curator



Bury St Edmunds
Literature Festival
Celebrating books and writing in the heart of East Angles

Welcome!

www.burylitfest.co.uk

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Julia Wakelam

A message from our Chair

I am so looking forward to this year's Festival!

Kate has put together a cornucopia of incredible authors, known & to be discovered, for us to enjoy.

This Festival would not be possible without the hard work and support of many people and organisations and it is my pleasure to take this chance to thank them.

Kate and the other members of our small and dedicated Committee: **Susan Pocklington, Jackie Burnett and Danielle Patrick**, you are all amazing! Our Honorary Patrons, **Nicola Upson and Margaret Meyer** and our Founding Patrons, **Mike & Judy Spenser-Morris**; your support has helped us grow this Festival to what it is today.

The **Trustees of the Unitarian Meeting House, Greene & Greene Solicitors, Harris & Harris Books and West Suffolk College**: thank you for your support throughout the years. Thanks to **Gina Long**, for her advice and support in seeking to grow our network. New sponsors **Martin & Co** and **Chassis Cab**: so good to have you on board.

We are grateful to **Pigeon Investment** who are sponsoring our event with **Sarah Perry**, to **SunEnviro** who are sponsoring our event with **Louis de Bernières**, to **St Edmundsbury Wealth Management** who are sponsoring our event with **Wendy Holden, Bury Developments** who are sponsoring our event with **Amy Jeffs, Ashtons Legal** who are sponsoring our event with **Jennifer Saint and Ferdia Lennon** and **Wensum Trust** for supporting our creative writing competition.

Thank you to the **Bury St Edmunds Town Council** for its grant support and to our partners **Gold Dust Writers, Bury St Edmunds Tour Guides, West Suffolk College, Bury St Edmunds Library, the Angel Hotel, Waterstones Bury St Edmunds Arc, Usborne Books, The Apex, Theatre Royal and Abbeygate Cinema**.

Thank you to our volunteers – you know who you are – your calm and committed support during the Festival is invaluable.

And finally, thank you to you, our community, for supporting this Festival and helping us spread the love of books and writing in East Anglia.

Julia Wakelam, Founder and Chair



Bury St Edmunds Literature Festival 2025



Sunday 5th October

Fundraising Event

7:30pm **An Evening with...
Harriet Walter**
Theatre Royal

TICKETS

www.burylitfest.co.uk

We advise booking all tickets in advance - including those that are free of charge. Tickets may be available to purchase on the door, according to availability, but it is **not guaranteed**.

Children under 14 years must be accompanied by a paying adult.

It is our goal to offer accessible ticket prices for events, whilst ensuring we pay speakers fairly.

Children's Events

CHILDREN'S EVENT

Our children's events are designed to encourage engagement with reading for pleasure while strengthening literacy and learning skills.

Child: FREE - but they must be accompanied by an adult
Accompanying Adults:

£2.50 or FREE if you buy a book for the child you attend with

That's Not My: £6.99 advance book purchase

Poppy & Sam: £14.99 advance book purchase

Ashley Hickson-Lovence (Wild East): £8.99 advance book purchase

Serena Patel (Pia's Pet Club): £7.99 advance book purchase

Author Events

Standard: £10 | Concession: £5 | Under 18: FREE
Concessions: students in full time education and those in receipt of benefits

Fundraisers, Workshops, Walks and Film Screenings

These events are run in partnership and are priced to reflect the expertise, expense and time involved in delivering these high-quality activities run by professionals. *Although our discount scheme does not apply to these tickets we may offer timelimited discounts which will be advertised on our social media.*

We can offer a limited number of bursary places to those experiencing financial hardship for our writing workshops. To find out more about applying for a bursary place, please contact us via our website www.burylitfest.co.uk

SPECIAL OFFERS

For select events we offer:

Drink Ticket which allows you to *pre-order a drink to collect on arrival* for a £2 discount on prices on the night.

Book Ticket which offers a *10% discount on the RRP of a featured author's book* if you pre-order to collect on arrival.

Thursday 9th October

Children's Events

10am Interactive Storytelling for Toddlers
That's Not My ... George Hoyle
Waterstones, Arc

1pm Interactive Storytelling for Toddlers
That's Not My ... George Hoyle
Waterstones, Arc

Author Events

3pm The Teacher of Auschwitz **Wendy Holden**
Abbeigate Cinema

6pm The Art of a Lie **Laura Shepherd-Robinson**
United Reformed Church

7.30pm All the Colours of the Dark **Chris Whitaker**
United Reformed Church

Film Screening

4:30pm Heaven in Auschwitz
Abbeigate Cinema

Friday 10th October

Author Events

4.30pm Silence of The Gods: The Untold History of Europe's Last Pagan Peoples **Francis Young**
Unitarian Meeting House

6pm An Evening with... **Louis De Bernières** 
Unitarian Meeting House

7:30pm Constructing a Witch **Helen Ivory**
followed by **Open Mic**
Unitarian Meeting House

Walks and Screenings

2.30pm Literary Bury St Edmunds **Walking Tour with Bury Tour Guides**
Angel Hill opposite Abbeigate

7.45pm Film Screening: **Captain Corelli's Mandolin**
Abbeigate Cinema



AUTHOR EVENT

Multi-Buy Discounts Our BRONZE, SILVER and GOLD TICKET discount scheme offers reduced ticket prices for those who attend multiple author events. The relevant discount will be automatically applied to eligible orders at the checkout.

Saturday 11th October

Children's Events

10am **Poppy & Sam with Liz Fost**
Storytelling for Children 4-8
Bury St Edmunds Library

10:30am Wild East **Ashley Hickson-Lovence**
Unitarian Meeting House

11.45am **Poppy & Sam with Liz Fost**
Storytelling for Children 4-8
Bury St Edmunds Library

Author Events

12pm An Antique Hunter's Guide to Murder
CL Miller
Unitarian Meeting House

1.15pm East Anglian Voices **Ashley Hickson-Lovence, Emily Buchanan & Katie Ward**
Bury St Edmunds Library

1.30pm Strong Roots; Bread & War
Olia Hercules & Felicity Spector
chaired by **Nic Miller**
Unitarian Meeting House

3pm The King's Mother **Annie Garthwaite**
Unitarian Meeting House

4.30pm How To Get Published
Jill Dawson, Emma Shercliff & Phoebe Morgan
Unitarian Meeting House

6pm A Bird In Winter **Louise Doughty** 
Unitarian Meeting House

7.30pm Ancient Greece, Today
Ferdia Lennon & Jennifer Saint
Unitarian Meeting House

Creative Writing Workshops

10am Do You Have A Novel in You? **Jill Dawson**
United Reformed Church (Hall 1)

11.45am How To Write Memoir **Midge Gillies**
United Reformed Church (Hall 1)

2.30pm Structuring Your Novel **Louise Doughty**
United Reformed Church (Hall 1)

4.30pm How To Get Published ~ **Jill Dawson, Emma Shercliff & Phoebe Morgan**
Unitarian Meeting House

Gardening Workshop

2.30pm Boosting Biodiversity in the Garden
Becky Searle & Sally Morgan
Quaker Meeting House

Sunday 12th October

Children's Events

1pm **Pia's Pet Club** for Children 5-12
Serena Patel
Bury St Edmunds Library

Author Events

10.30pm Renaturing **James Canton**
Unitarian Meeting House

12pm Gardening For Climate Change
Sally Morgan & Becky Searle
in conversation with **Sue Boase**
Unitarian Meeting House

1.30pm Read Yourself Happy
Daisy Buchanan, Nikki May & Isabelle Broom
Unitarian Meeting House

1.30pm Blythe Spirit
Ian Collins in conversation
with **Nicola Upson**
Abbeigate Cinema

3pm No Fury - Women Getting Even
Emma Healey & Marie O'Hare
Unitarian Meeting House

4.30pm A Mind To Murder - Celebrating PD James
Nicola Upson & Mandy Morton
Unitarian Meeting House

6pm Saints **Amy Jeffs**
Unitarian Meeting House

7.30pm An evening with...
Sarah Perry
St Mary's Church

Walks and Screenings

11.45am Literary Bury St Edmunds **Walking Tour with Bury Tour Guides**
Angel Hill opposite Abbeigate

3pm Literary Bury St Edmunds **Walking Tour with Bury Tour Guides**
Angel Hill opposite Abbeigate

3pm **Akenfield** Film Screening
Abbeigate Cinema

Sunday 18th October

Fundraising Event

3pm **An afternoon with...
Philippa Gregory**
Theatre Royal

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7.30pm Theatre Royal An Evening with... Harriet Walter

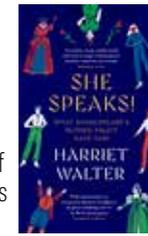


PHOTO CREDIT: Sim Canetti-Clarke

Dame Harriet Walter DBE is a British actress and winner of a **Laurence Olivier Award** as well as numerous nominations including a *Tony Award*, three *Primetime Emmy Awards*, and a *Screen Actors Guild Award*. In 2011, she appointed Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE) for services to drama.

Renowned for her star-studded portrayals in *Succession*, *Killing Eve* and *Ted Lasso*, Dame Harriet Walter is also one of Britain's most esteemed Shakespearean actors. Dame Harriet will read from her book **She Speaks! What Shakespeare's Women Might Have Said**, intertwined with tales of her stage and screen work.

Harriet will be taking questions from the audience and there will be a book sale and signing after the show.

This is a fundraising event for Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds (Charity Number 242977)

Tickets: £12/£24. Tickets for this event must be booked via the Theatre Royal Box Office: www.theatreroyal.org

Please note that this event is a fundraising event and therefore no discounts or offers apply to ticket purchases

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Sunday 5th October

10am & 1pm

CHILDREN'S EVENT

Waterstones Bury St Edmunds Arc

THAT'S NOT MY... with George Hoyle

Interactive Storytelling for Toddlers

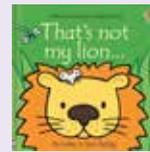
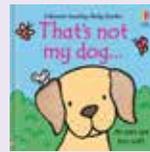
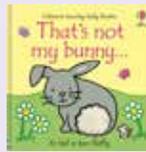
An interactive, sensory storytelling session for the very youngest readers.

Pre-school children and babies will love exploring eye-catching illustrations, discovering different touchy-feely textures, and hunting for the familiar little white mouse as storyteller **George Hoyle** shares characters of the popular **That's Not My...** book series.

Books: **That's Not My...** book series (Usborne)

Suitability: babies and children 6m+ and their grown-ups

Timing: 30 mins, plus 15 mins to take photos [See page 6 for pricing information]



3pm

Abbeygate Cinema



The Teacher of Auschwitz
Wendy Holden

AUTHOR EVENT



Drawn from archives and survivor testimonies, historian and biographer **Wendy Holden** tells the inspirational and uplifting true story of **Fredy Hirsch: The Teacher of Auschwitz**.

At the dark heart of the Holocaust, there was a wooden hut whose walls were painted with cartoons; a place where children sang, staged plays and wrote poetry. Safely inside, but still in the shadow of the chimneys, they were given better food, kept free of vermin, and were even taught meditation to imagine full stomachs and a day without fear. The man who became their guiding light was a young Jewish prisoner named Fredy Hirsch. But being a teacher in such a brutal concentration camp was no mean feat. Whether it was begging the SS for better provisions, or hiding his homosexuality from his persecutors, he risked his life every day for one thing: to protect the children from the mortal danger they all faced.

Kindly sponsored by **St Edmundsbury Wealth Management**



Book: **The Teacher of Auschwitz** (Bonnier Books)

Suitability: 16+ Some content might be sensitive for younger audience members.

Timing: 1 hour, followed by book signing



4.30pm

Abbeygate Cinema

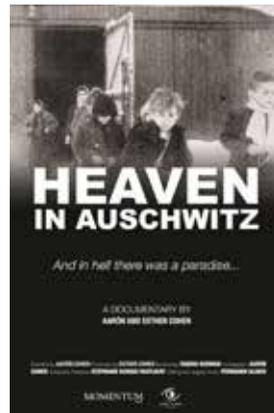


Heaven in Auschwitz
Film Screening

A screening of **Heaven in Auschwitz** has been scheduled by **Abbeygate Cinema** to complement our event 'The Teacher of Auschwitz - Wendy Holden'.

Heaven in Auschwitz is a documentary film that tells the fascinating and incredible story of 13 Jewish survivors of the Holocaust in former Czechoslovakia, during the II World War. These men and women, that back then were children, were taught by Fredy Hirsch, who changed their lives forever.

Tickets: £7.50 or £4.50 with code 'BURYLIT' Must be booked direct with **Abbeygate Cinema** abbeygatecinema.co.uk



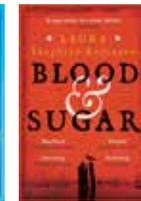
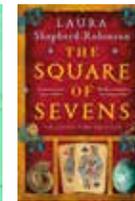
6pm

United Reformed Church

AUTHOR EVENT

The Art of a Lie

Laura Shepherd-Robinson



Award-winning, Sunday Times and USA Today bestselling author **Laura Shepherd-Robinson** talks to Bury St Edmunds Literature Founder **Julia Wakelam** about her fourth novel, **The Art of a Lie**.

London, 1749. Following the murder of her husband in a violent street robbery, Hannah Cole is struggling to keep her head above water. When she learns that her husband had a large sum of money in his bank account that she knew nothing about, the surprise is extremely welcome. But her husband's unexpected windfall attracts the attention of author-turned-magistrate Henry Fielding, who suspects the money was illicitly acquired. Unless Hannah can prove otherwise, her inheritance will be confiscated. As she and Devereux work to uncover the secrets of her husband's double life, their friendship opens Hannah to speculation and gossip, locking her into a battle of wits more devastating than anything, even her husband's murder.

Kindly sponsored by **Martin & Co**



Books: **The Art of the Lie, The Square of Sevens, Daughters of the Night, Blood & Sugar** (Pan Macmillan)

Suitability: 12+ Timing: 50 minutes, followed by book signing



7.30pm

United Reformed Church

AUTHOR EVENT

All the Colours of the Dark
Chris Whitaker

The author of the New York Times and Sunday Times bestselling author **Chris Whitaker** will be in conversation with local author **Kate Sawyer** about his most recent novel, the million copy bestselling **All The Colours Of The Dark**.

A sweeping coming-of-age tale, an epic love story and a searing thriller, all unfolding on a vast canvas. There is a moment when childhood ends. For Joseph 'Patch' Macauley and Saint Brown, it comes late one summer as Patch is abducted from their hometown. Devastated, Saint devotes her days to finding her best friend. Held in total darkness, Patch is hopeless and alone - until he feels a hand in his. Though he never sees the girl, they fall in love. When he escapes, he's left with only her voice and name - and promises to spend the rest of his life searching for her. Over a lifetime driven by obsession, Patch and Saint must sacrifice everything for redemption, justice, and, ultimately, love - even if that means losing each other forever ...

Kindly sponsored by **Martin & Co**



Books: **All The Colours Of The Dark** (Orion), **We Begin At The End**, **All The Wicked Girls** (Zaffre), **Tall Oaks** (twenty7), **The Forevers** (Hot Key Books)

Suitability: 12+ Timing: 1 hour, followed by book signing



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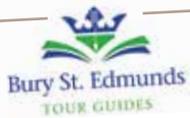
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2.30pm Angel Hill opposite the Abbeygate
Literary Bury St Edmunds Walking Tour with Bury Tour Guides

Across the centuries since the mighty Abbey of St Edmund was founded, a surprising number of writers have been inspired by the town in which it sits. From a medieval cellarer right up to a 21st century gothic-rock star, Bury St Edmunds has been the subject matter for novels, poems, songs, plays and occasionally a rip-roaring insult!

This town-centre walk will last around 90 minutes and be illustrated with recorded extracts of some of the works featured.

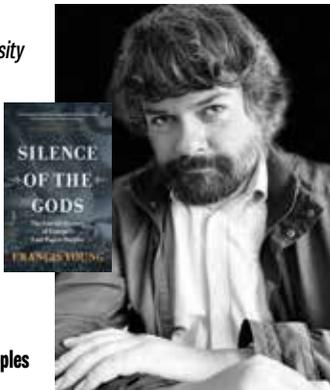
During the summer months, **Bury Tour Guides** offer regular daily town tours by trained and experienced guides telling the amazing history of Bury St Edmunds. Throughout the rest of the year they also offer specialist tours such as the **Ghostly & Macabre** tour; **Masters of the Air** tour; **Foodie** tours and many others. www.burystedmundstourguides.org

Suitability: 12+ Timing: 90 minutes **Tickets: Standard: £15, Concession: £12, U18: FREE**

4.30pm Unitarian Meeting House
Silence of The Gods: The Untold History of Europe's Last Pagan Peoples
 Francis Young

Francis Young will be in conversation with Alex Wright, his publisher at **Cambridge University Press**, about his most recent book, **Silence of the Gods**.

The formal conversion to Christianity in 1387 of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania seemingly marked the end of Europe's last 'pagan' peoples. But the reality was different. Pre-Christian religions endured and indeed continued to flourish for an astonishing five centuries. **Silence of the Gods** tells the remarkable story of these forgotten people, who responded creatively to Christianity's challenge but for centuries stopped short of embracing it, uncovering stories of fierce resistance, unlikely survival and considerable ingenuity.



Kindly sponsored by **Martin & Co**



Books: **Silence Of The Gods: The Untold History Of Europe's Last Pagan Peoples**
 Suitability: 12+ Timing: 50 minutes, followed by book signing

AUTHOR EVENT

6pm Unitarian Meeting House
An Evening with... Louis De Bernières

Join us for an evening of conversation with **Louis de Bernières**, author of one of the nation's best loved novels, **Captain Corelli's Mandolin**. Louis will discuss his life and work, giving readings as part of an evening that focus on his poetry and his latest novel, **Light Over Liskeard**, an entertaining and heart-warming narrative that focuses on central protagonist Q, a quantum cryptographer concerned about an imminent crisis for civilisation, who begins to build his own self-sufficient haven, and meets a colourful cast of eccentric characters in the process.

Kindly sponsored by **SunEnviro**

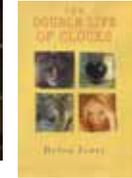
Books: **Light Over Liskeard, The Autumn of the Ace, So Much Life Left Over, Blue Dog, The Dust That Falls from Dreams, A Partisan's Daughter, Birds Without Wings, Red Dog, Captain Corelli's Mandolin, The Troublesome Offspring of Cardinal Guzman, Señor Vivo and the Coca Lord, The War of Don Emmanuel's Nether Parts** Suitability: 12+ Timing: 50 minutes, followed by book signing



AUTHOR EVENT



Accessible Event: This event will be live-captioned for D/deaf and Hard of Hearing



AUTHOR EVENT

7.30pm
 Unitarian Meeting House

Constructing a Witch Helen Ivory

followed by **Open Mic** in association with **Poetry Aloud**



Helen Ivory's sixth collection **Constructing a Witch** fixes on the monsterring and the scapegoating of women and on the fear of ageing femininity. The witch appears as the barren, child-eating hag; she is a lustful seductress luring men to a path of corruption; she is a powerful or cantankerous woman whose cursing must be silenced by force.

These bewitching poems explore the witch archetype and the witch as human woman and investigate witch tourism, the witch as outsider, cultural representations of the witch, female power and disempowerment, the menopause, and how the female body has been used and misunderstood for centuries.

Following Helen's performance both the bar and the stage will be open for our annual **Open-Mic** where the audience will be able to read their own poetry and share their spoken word and works in progress. Please book your slot on arrival: spaces are limited and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Suitability: 12+ Timing: 1 hour, followed by book signing



PHOTO CREDIT: Martin Figura

7.45pm
 Abbegate Cinema



Captain Corelli's Mandolin
 Film Screening

A special screening of **Captain Corelli's Mandolin**, which has been specially scheduled by Abbegate Cinema to complement our event *An Evening with Louis de Bernières*.

This screening will be introduced by **Louis de Bernières**.

Tickets: £7.50 or £4.50 with code 'BURYLIT'
 Must be booked direct with Abbegate Cinema abbegatecinema.co.uk



PHOTO CREDIT: Ivo Bartholomew



Every great novel begins with a well-crafted plan - just like your financial future.

St Edmundsbury Wealth Management is proud to support the Bury St Edmunds Literature Festival.



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CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOPS

It has always been the Bury Lit Fest's goal to offer events for writers as well as readers; this year, we're achieving that dream!

We're delighted to be able to offer a full day of creative writing workshops, brought to you by the fabulous **Gold Dust mentoring team**, founded by novelist **Jill Dawson**.

Suitability: All writers 16+ with any level of experience and at any stage in their writing journey

Full day ticket (£130) includes:

Three practical sessions full of advice from professionals, focusing on the inspiration and determination that goes into a book and the nuts and bolts of writing it

10 am **Do You Have A Novel In You** with Jill Dawson

11.45am **How To Write Memoir** with Midge Gillies

2.30pm **Structuring Your Novel** with Louise Doughty

A delicious lunch delivered to the workshop venue provided by FOLK CAFE (served at 1pm)

A panel seminar event with industry professionals that seeks to lift the curtain on the mysteries of publication and answers your questions on the options open to those who want to see their writing turned into a book

4.30pm **How To Get Published** with Gold Dust Writers, Laxfield Literary Agency & Hodder & Stoughton

Two Bury Lit Fest 2025 Author Events of your choice (add to cart at time of booking)

Workshops are also available to book separately at £40 per session

GOLD DUST

MENTORING WRITERS



FOLK

GOLD DUST

MENTORING WRITERS

'Being taught by Jill Dawson changed my life.'

– Rosie Nixon, author of *The Stylist*

Gold Dust is the original and best writers' mentoring scheme. Founded by novelist Jill Dawson, it offers new writers the rare opportunity to receive one-to-one mentoring from award-winning published authors such as Monique Roffey, Kate Sawyer, Louise Doughty, Lesley Glaister, Romesh Gunesequera, Jane Rogers, Liz Jensen, Andrew Miller, Tim Pears, Shelley Weiner, Kate Pullinger, Sarah May and more. Many published authors are graduates of the Gold Dust mentoring experience.

Interested? Email us on webenquiry@gold-dust.org.uk or apply at gold-dust.org.uk  [@golddust.writersmentoring](https://www.instagram.com/golddust.writersmentoring)



JILL DAWSON
PHOTO CREDIT: Joanne Coates

10am

United Reformed Church (Hall 1)

Do You Have A Novel in You? with Jill Dawson

It is said that 'everyone has at least one novel in them', but how does one go about getting it out? Novelist **Jill Dawson** talks you through what it takes to write a novel and helps you form a plan to make your dreams of being published, a reality.

Jill Dawson is the author of twelve novels, one poetry collection and the editor of six anthologies of poetry and stories. She is a *Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature* and has been a *Costa Judge*, and taught creative writing in many different settings. Jill is the founder of **Gold Dust Writer Mentoring**.

11.45am

United Reformed Church (Hall 1)

How To Write Memoir with Midge Gillies

How to tell the story of a life? Is it best to start at the beginning, middle or end? What are the advantages – or not – of a prologue? Memoirist and creative writing teacher **Midge Gillies** will look at structure and the many options for writing narrative nonfiction when it comes to memoir.

Midge Gillies specialises in mentoring and teaching memoir and creative non-fiction. She also teaches for *Cambridge University* and on a memoir course she designed for *Granta*. She has written ten books; her most recent, *Atlantic Furies* is about the pilots who raced to be the first woman to cross the Atlantic by air.



MIDGE GILLIES



LOUISE DOUGHTY

2.30pm

United Reformed Church (Hall 1)

Structuring Your Novel with Louise Doughty

Plot and narrative structure are the subjects that most often baffle new writers - with good reason. In this practical workshop, **Louise Doughty** talks you through story construction, screenwriting models - and how to fix a plot that's going wrong.

Louise Doughty is the author of ten novels, most recently *A Bird in Winter*. Her previous books include *Platform Seven*, filmed for *ITVX*; *Black Water*, a *New York Times Notable Book of the Year*; the bestseller *Apple Tree Yard*, adapted as a hit miniseries for *BBC One*; and *Whatever You Love*, nominated for the *Costa Novel Award* and the *Women's Prize for fiction*.

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We are very pleased to support the 2025 Bury St Edmunds Literature Festival and wish them every success.

The Trustees of the Unitarian Meeting House are proud to sponsor Bury St. Edmunds Literature Festival



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Unitarian Meeting House
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CHILDREN'S EVENT

10.00am & 11.45am
Bury St Edmunds Library



Poppy & Sam with Liz Fost
Storytelling for Children 4-8

Can you help Poppy and Sam find all the animals on Apple Tree Farm? Where's Curly the Pig? Oink oink! Where's Woolly the Sheep? Baa baa! But most important of all... can you help us find the Little Yellow Duck?

Join storyteller **Liz Fost** for a fun-filled interactive event as we celebrate 40 years of Farmyard fun with *Poppy and Sam*, in partnership with *Usborne Books*. Discover a delightful collection of all twenty of the enduringly popular Farmyard Tales stories. A beautiful, hardback gift that will be read again and again.



PHOTO CREDIT: Georgia Allen



Books **Poppy & Sam Complete Book of Farmyard Tales** (*Usborne*)
Suitability: Age 4-8 and their grown-ups
Timing: 45 mins
[See page 6 for pricing information]

CARA MILLER



ASHLEY HICKSON-LOVENCE



EMILY BUCHANAN
PHOTO CREDIT: Priya Dadas/Lisa Gooding



KATIE WARD
PHOTO CREDIT: Ali Smith



OLIA HERCULES
PHOTO CREDIT: Joe Woodhouse



FELICITY SPECTOR



10.30am

CHILDREN'S EVENT

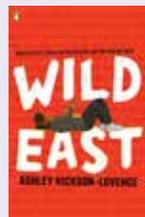
Unitarian Meeting House

Wild East: Writing in Verse
for Young People 9-17
Ashley Hickson-Lovence

Join *East Anglian Book Award* winning author **Ashley Hickson-Lovence**, novelist, university lecturer and former school teacher, as he leads this interactive workshop on writing in verse for young people. Ashley will be inspiring us by discussing his YA novel *Wild East* which focuses on 14-year-old Ronny whose family moves to East Anglia from London, following a tragedy. In his new city, as a black teenager in a mostly white school, Ronny feels like a complete outsider and struggles to balance keeping his head down with his ambition of becoming a rapper. But when a local poet comes into class, Ronny discovers a world he's never considered before.

Please bring your own notebook and pen to this event

Books: **Wild East** (*Penguin*)
Suitability: 9+
Timing: 50 minutes followed by book signing
[See page 6 for pricing information]



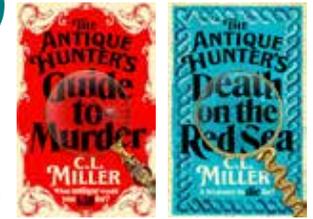
12pm Unitarian Meeting House

AUTHOR EVENT

An Antique Hunter's Guide to Murder CL Miller

Join local author **Cara Miller**, daughter of **Judith and Martin Miller**, authors of the *Miller's Antique Price Guide*, as she talks to Bury St Edmunds Literature Festival founder **Susan Pocklington** about her best-selling cosy crime series **The Antique Hunter's Guide to Murder**.

Books: **The Antique Hunter's Guide To Murder**, **The Antique Hunter's Death on the Red Sea**
Suitability: 12+ Timing: 50 minutes followed by book signing



1.15pm Bury St Edmunds Library



East Anglian Voices

Ashley Hickson-Lovence, Emily Buchanan & Katie Ward

Q: What do a moving and musical debut collection of poetry exploring grief, love and the power of community, an unputdownable eco-feminist debut that examines the climate crisis and a compelling original novel that explores the philosophical issue of the mind-body problem have in common? A: All of their authors live, work and are inspired by our region!

Join **Lisa Brennan** from *Suffolk Community Libraries* as she sits down and chats to East Anglian based authors **Ashley Hickson-Lovence**, **Emily Buchanan** and **Katie Ward** about their brilliant books and what being a writer in the region means with regards to networks, opportunities and inspiration.

AUTHOR EVENT

Books: Ashley Hickson Lovence: **Why I Am Not A Bus Driver** (*Bad Betty Press*), **Wild East** (*Penguin*), **Your Show** (*Faber*), **The 392** (*Own It!*), Emily Buchanan: **Send Flowers** (*Verve*), Katie Ward: **Pathways**, **Girl Reading** (*Little, Brown*)
Suitability: 12+ Timing: 1 hour, followed by book signing

Tickets: Standard: £10, Concession: £5, U18: FREE

SPECIAL OFFER

Pre-order a book and save 10% on RRP



1.30pm Unitarian Meeting House

AUTHOR EVENT

Strong Roots; Bread & War -The Enduring Spirit of Ukraine
Olia Hercules & Felicity Spector chaired by Nic Miller

When Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 Ukrainian chef **Olia Hercules** decided it was finally time to tell her family's history. **Strong Roots** is the story of a century in Ukraine told through four generations of one extraordinary family. It lays bare the compromises and betrayals of generations struggling and surviving through war, peace, invasion and exile, and is an uplifting reminder of how much the human spirit can endure.

Olia will be in conversation with TV producer and journalist **Felicity Spector**, whose new book **Food and War** asks how you source, cook and take joy in food in the midst of war and loss?

Books: Olia Hercules: **Strong Roots**, **Home Food**, **Summer Kitchens** (*Bloomsbury*), **Kaukasis**, **Mamushka** (*Octopus*), Felicity Spector: **Bread & War** (*Duckworth Books*)

Suitability: 12+ Timing: 50 minutes, followed by book signing



AUTHOR EVENT

3pm Unitarian Meeting House
The King's Mother Annie Garthwaite

Following her hugely popular appearance at Bury St Edmunds Literature Festival 2023 with her debut novel, author and historian **Annie Garthwaite** returns with **The King's Mother**, the follow up to **Cecily**.

Through blood and battle Edward has gained England's throne - king by right and conquest - eighteen years old and unstoppable. Cecily, having piloted her family's rise to power, stands beside him as England's first King's Mother. But to win a throne is not to keep it, and war is come again. As brother betrays brother, and trusted cousins turn treacherous, other mothers rise up to fight for other sons. Cecily must focus her will to defeat every challenge. Wherever they come from. Whatever the cost. For there can only be one King, and only one King's Mother. From the Wars of the Roses to the dawn of the Tudor age, this is a story of mothers and sons, of maternal ferocity and female ambition - of all they can build and all they can destroy.

Books: **The Kings Mother, Cecily (Viking)**
 Suitability: 12+ Timing: 50 minutes, followed by book signing



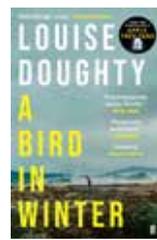
AUTHOR EVENT

6pm Unitarian Meeting House

A Bird In Winter Louise Doughty

Best-selling, award-winning author **Louise Doughty**, talks to Bury St Edmunds Honorary Patron, **Margaret Meyer** about her most recent novel **A Bird in Winter**, about a woman on the run from her job in the secret service. It's a day she thought might come, one she's prepared for. But nothing can prepare her for what will happen next. As Bird tries to work out who exactly is on her trail, she must also decide who - if anyone - she can trust. Is her greatest fear that she will be hunted down, or that she will never be found?

Suitability: 12+ Timing: 50 minutes, followed by book signing



CC Accessible Event: This event will be live-captioned for D/deaf and Hard of Hearing

FOLK

2.30pm Quakers Meeting House

Boosting Biodiversity in the Garden
 Gardening Workshop with Becky Searle and Sally Morgan

Join author-gardeners **Becky Searle** and **Sally Morgan** for this ½ day workshop in which you will learn how to boost the diversity in your garden, no matter its size.

During this four hour workshop you will

- ➔ Discover **the secrets of soil** as you explore the complexity of its life and how to protect your soil from harmful chemicals by gardening organically.
- ➔ Learn about **diversity in planting** and **how to attract pollinators and predators**. You will discuss food plants, flower structure, mini habitats, life cycle stages of beneficial insects and being able to identify them.
- ➔ Find out about **the role of water in the garden** to boost biodiversity (micro and full ponds), the role of dead wood in managing water and creating a resilient garden.

And, as an additional practical element, you will **make a small minibeast habitat** to take away.

The workshop will include a break for afternoon tea delivered to the workshop venue provided by **FOLK CAFE**. Menu: selection of sandwiches, sausage roll, scone with cream & folk compote, a cake bite, tea and filter coffee.

Suitability: Age 16+
 Timing: 4 hours with 30 mins break for afternoon tea
 Tickets: £75 including afternoon tea provided by FOLK cafe



Sally Morgan has a background in botany and ecology. She has always gardened naturally but is increasingly interested in how climate change is affecting our gardens and exploring ways that we can make our growing spaces more climate-resilient. Sally writes regularly for gardening and smallholding magazines and is the former editor of *Organic Farming* magazine for the *Soil Association*.



Becky Searle is a freelance gardening writer and kitchen gardener. She has a regular feature in *Kitchen Garden Magazine* and writes for *Gardeners World Magazine*, *Homes and Gardens Magazine* and *Telegraph Recommends*. Her own garden has been featured in *The Guardian* and *Modern Gardens Magazine*. In 2022 and 2023, Becky was shortlisted for the *Garden Media Guild's Environmental Journalist of the Year*.



7.30pm

Unitarian Meeting House



Ancient Greece, Today Ferdia Lennon & Jennifer Saint

Any bookseller would tell you that the popularity of fiction inspired by the stories and plays of Ancient Greece shows no abating. Join us for a conversation with two celebrated authors whose novels have both been inspired by Hellenic history, in very different ways, as they discuss the opportunities and challenges that comes with bringing stories set in the past to a modern audience and why the themes and ideas of Ancient Greece have such resonance and popularity today.



Ferdia Lennon was born and raised in Dublin. He holds a BA in History and Classics from *University College Dublin* and an MA in Prose Fiction from the *University of East Anglia*. **Glorious Exploits** is his first novel. A *Sunday Times* bestseller, it was adapted for BBC Radio 4 and was the winner of the *Waterstones Debut Fiction Prize 2024* and the **Bollinger Everyman Wodehouse Prize for Comic Fiction**.

Books: **Glorious Exploits** (Penguin)



Jennifer Saint grew up reading Greek mythology and was always drawn to the untold stories hidden within the myths. She read Classical Studies at *King's College, London* where she is now a Visiting Research Fellow in the Classics department. After thirteen years as a high school English teacher, she wrote **Ariadne** which was shortlisted for *Waterstones Book of the Year in 2021* and was a *Waterstones Book of the Month*, as well as being a *Sunday Times* bestseller. Her second novel, **Elektra**, and third novel, **Atalanta**, were number one *Sunday Times* bestsellers.

Books: **Hera, Atalanta, Elektra, Ariadne** (Headline)



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Suitability: 12+

Timing: 1 hour, followed by book signing



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CHILDREN'S EVENT

1pm *Bury St Edmunds Library*
Pia's Pet Club for Children 5-12
 Serena Patel



Author **Serena Patel** joins us to talk about her new book *Pia's Pet Club*. Serena will introduce you to Pia, a girl who loves pets, but isn't allowed one of her own! She will test your pet-based knowledge with a PAWesome quiz (do you know what percentage of the time cats spend sleeping?) and you'll get the chance to create your own pet story character!

Pia's Pet Club is a brand-new laugh-out-loud series of funny animal adventures packed with hilarious illustrations, from bestselling **Serena Patel**, author of the **Anisha, Accidental Detective** series which has won the *Sainsbury's Children's Book Award*, *The Week Junior Book Award* and the *Crimefest Best Novel for Children*.

Books: **Pia's Pet Club, Anisha Accidental Detective Series (Usborne)**
 Suitability: Age 5+ and their grown-ups
 Timing: 50 minutes followed by book signing
 [See page 6 for pricing information]



PHOTO CREDIT:
Anastasia Jobson



1.30pm
Unitarian Meeting House

AUTHOR EVENT

Read Yourself Happy
 Daisy Buchanan, Nikki May & Isabelle Broom

Forget 'self-help' and embrace 'shelf-help' by discovering the healing power of books and reading to inspire, comfort and fortify.

Join authors **Daisy Buchanan** and **Nikki May** as they talk to local author **Isabelle Broom** and they discuss the power of reading for pure pleasure. Put aside preconceived ideas about genre and prepare to leave with a list of reading recommendations the length of your arm, following a joyful conversation that will leave the idea of any book being a 'guilty pleasure' in the dust.

Books: Daisy Buchanan: **Read Yourself Happy (DK)**, **Pity Party**, **Limelight**, **Careering**, **Insatiable (Little Brown)** Nikki May: **This Motherless Land**, **Wahala (Transworld)**, Isabelle Broom: **The Orange House**, **The Getaway**, **The Summer Trip (Hodder & Stoughton)**
 Suitability: 12+
 Timing: 50 minutes followed by book signing



DAISY BUCHANAN



NIKKI MAY



ISABELLE BROOM

10.30am
Unitarian Meeting House

AUTHOR EVENT

Renaturing James Canton

Twenty years ago, **James Canton** moved from London to the English countryside. Behind his farm labourer's cottage was a small, abandoned field with a 'for sale' sign. James knew that the two-acre patch of earth held more potential – as a place for nature to return and flourish. Even on the smallest of scales we can create habitats to support a greater diversity of nature. A single window box planted with pollinator-friendly flowers can provide a mini-habitat to support honeybees; a tower block with a window box on every balcony becomes an acre of bee-friendly ecosystem. **Renaturing** shows how the concept of rewilding can be adopted by us all.

Books: **Renaturing, The Oak Papers, Grounded (Canongate)**
 Suitability: 12+ Timing: 50 minutes, followed by book signing



12pm
Unitarian Meeting House



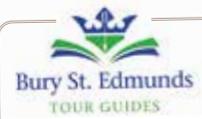
AUTHOR EVENT

Gardening For Climate Change
 Sally Morgan & Becky Searle
 in conversation with Sue Boase

It's no longer gardening as usual. Heat waves, droughts, flooding, violent storms...the long-predicted extremes of weather caused by climate change are now on our doorstep. We need to learn how to protect the garden against climate extremes, exotic pests, invasive weeds, and more. Climate and weather patterns are changing fast, and our gardening practices need to catch up.

This conversation between author/gardeners **Becky Searle** and **Sally Morgan** and **Sue Boase** from local charity **Climate Change Gardening** will set you on the right track to future-proof your garden by giving it everything it needs to adapt and succeed, whatever the climate challenge.

Books: Becky Searle: **Grow A New Garden (Chelsea Green)**, **Allotment Planner**
 Sally Morgan: **The Resilient Garden and Allotment Handbook (Chelsea Green)**, **The Climate Change Garden (Green Rocket)**
 Suitability: 12+ Timing: 50 minutes followed by book signing



11.45am and 3pm *Angel Hill opposite the Abbeygate*
Literary Bury St Edmunds Walking Tour with Bury Tour Guides

Across the centuries since the mighty Abbey of St Edmund was founded, a surprising number of writers have been inspired by the town in which it sits. From a medieval cellarer right up to a 21st century gothic-rock star, Bury St Edmunds has been the subject matter for novels, poems, songs, plays and occasionally a rip-roaring insult!

This town-centre walk will last around 90 minutes and be illustrated with recorded extracts of some of the works featured.

During the summer months, **Bury Tour Guides** offer regular daily town tours by trained and experienced guides telling the amazing history of Bury St Edmunds. Throughout the rest of the year they also offer specialist tours such as the **Ghostly & Macabre** tour; **Masters of the Air** tour; **Foodie** tours and many others. www.burystedmundstourguides.org

Suitability: 12+ Timing: 90 minutes **Tickets: Standard: £15, Concession: £12, U18: FREE**

1.30pm
Abbeygate Cinema



AUTHOR
EVENT

Blythe Spirit: The Remarkable Life of Ronald Blythe

Ian Collins in conversation with Nicola Upson

Ronald Blythe (1922-2023), author of the inimitable **Akenfield**, was a prolific and poetic chronicler of rural and spiritual life, nature and literature. He spent a joyful century close to his Suffolk roots, time travelling in his imagination and publishing forty books and thousands of essays.

Drawing on unparalleled access to letters, notebooks, published works, drafts, and conversations from decades of friendship, **Ian Collins** tells the full story of Ronald Blythe for the first time. The result is a sensitive, revelatory portrait which celebrates a fascinating, complex man and casts new light on one of our greatest writers.

A conversation with Bury St Edmunds Literary Festival Honorary Patron **Nicola Upson**

Books: **Blythe Spirit: The Remarkable Life of Ronald Blythe** (John Murray Press)

Suitability: 12+ Timing: 1 hour, followed by book signing

Tickets: Standard: £10, Concession: £5, U18: FREE



PHOTO CREDIT: Keith Roberts



4.30pm Unitarian Meeting House

A Mind To Murder - Celebrating PD James

Nicola Upson & Mandy Morton

Bury Literature Festival Honorary Patron **Nicola Upson** and author **Mandy Morton** look back on the late **PD James**'s extraordinary life and work, often inspired by the Suffolk landscape that she loved.

Originally curated for a sell-out run at *Cambridge University Library*, this talk will be illustrated by exclusive audio recordings from Mandy's personal archive, in which PD James discusses her writing and reads from some of her most popular novels. Both Nicola and Mandy enjoyed a long friendship with the author, and this very special event – marking Faber's reissue of the complete *Adam Dalgliesh series* – will give a unique insight into her creative process and legacy.

Suitability: 12+ Timing: 50 minutes followed by book signing

AUTHOR
EVENT



PHOTO CREDIT: Roberto Ricciuti



3pm Abbeygate Cinema

Akenfield Film Screening



A screening of the 1974 Peter Hall classic, **Akenfield**, based on Ronald Blythe's book **Akenfield: Portrait of an English Village**, has been specially scheduled by Abbeygate Cinema to complement our 1.30pm author event **Blythe Spirit - Ian Collins**.

Tickets: £7.50 or £4.50 with code 'BURLIT'

Must be booked direct with Abbeygate Cinema abbeygatecinema.co.uk



3pm Unitarian Meeting House

No Fury - Women Getting Even

Emma Healey & Marie O'Hare

AUTHOR
EVENT

Join **Emma Healey** author of million-copy bestselling **Elizabeth is Missing** and local debut author **Marie O'Hare**, in conversation with **Megan Reynard**, as they discuss their novels **Sweat** and **I Know Where You Buried Your Husband** – two pulse-racing novels that centre 'difficult' women in very tricky situations and explore themes of physical and psychological power, revenge, self-discipline, and what happens when women decide to stand up for themselves.

Books: Emma Healey: **Sweat**, **Whistle In The Dark**, **Elizabeth Is Missing** (Penguin), Marie O'Hare: **I Know Where You Buried Your Husband** (Transworld)

Suitability: 12+

Timing: 50 minutes followed by book signing



PHOTO CREDIT: Lucy McGrath

6pm Unitarian Meeting House

Saints Amy Jeffs

AUTHOR
EVENT

Saints' legends suffused medieval European culture. Their heroes' suffering and wonder-working shaped landscapes, rituals and folk beliefs. Their tales spoke of men raised by wolves, women communing with flocks of birds and severed heads calling from between bristling paws.

In **Saints**, *Sunday Times* bestselling author of **Storyland** and **Wild**, **Amy Jeffs** retells legends born of the medieval cult of saints, including our own King Edmund. She draws on 'official' lives, vernacular romances, artworks and obscene poetry, all spanning from the fourth to the sixteenth centuries. The commentaries following the stories offer a history of each saint, and trace the rise and fall of the medieval cult of saints from the first martyrs to the Protestant Reformation.



Kindly sponsored by **Bury Developments**

Books: **Saints**, **Wild**, **Storyland** (Quercus) Suitability: 12+ Timing: 50 mins followed by book signing



7.30pm St Marys Church

An evening with... Sarah Perry

Join us for an evening with internationally bestselling and award-winning author **Sarah Perry** as we introduce her brand-new work of non-fiction **Death of an Ordinary Man**, on the weekend following its release. We will also discuss her most recent novel, the luminous, *Booker Prize* long-listed, **Enlightenment** and reflect on the success of her body of work to date.

Sarah Perry's father-in-law, David, died at home nine days after a cancer diagnosis and having previously been in good health. The speed of his illness outstripped that of the NHS and social care, so the majority of nursing fell to Sarah and her husband. Unflinching and profoundly moving, **Sarah Perry** confronts the taboo surrounding death and shows us how to confront all of the terror and beauty that comes with the end of life - and how the saddest thing she has ever seen is also the best thing she's ever done.

Kindly sponsored by **Pigeon**



AUTHOR
EVENT

Books: **Death Of An Ordinary Man**, **Enlightenment** (Vintage), **Essex Girls**, **Melmoth**, **The Essex Serpent**, **After Me Comes The Flood** (Profile)

Suitability: 12+ Timing: 50 minutes followed by book signing



PHOTO CREDIT: Sophie Davidson

Sunday 19th October

3pm Theatre Royal

FUNDRAISER

An evening with... Philippa Gregory



Join **Philippa Gregory**, one of the world's foremost historical novelists, whose books include **The Other Boleyn Girl** and **The White Queen**, as she brings the **Boleyn Traitor** out of the shadows in an explosive story of one woman's survival in the deadly dance of the Tudor Court.

Over two decades, **Philippa Gregory** has proved herself an extraordinary chronicler of the forgotten women in history whose lives have been misrecorded and obscured - most recently in her *Sunday Times* bestselling non-fiction title, **Normal Women**. Now, she returns to the Tudor court armed with groundbreaking new research, and reframes a woman famously branded as a traitor, but whose real story was far more complex.

Philippa will talk to us about her new novel **Boleyn Traitor** (publishing 8th October) and take questions from the audience.

There will be a post-show reception including a book signing.

This is a fundraising event for Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds (Charity Number 242977) and Bury St Edmunds Literature Festival (CIO Charity Number 1209140)

Tickets: £12/£24

Tickets must be booked via the Theatre Royal Box Office: theatreroyal.org

Please note that this event is a fundraising event and therefore no discounts or offers apply to ticket purchases



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100th

Birthday Party

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Saturday 20 September 10am - 3pm

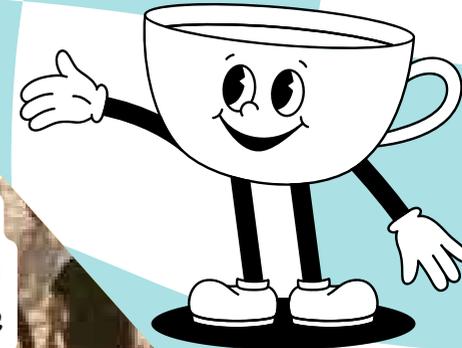
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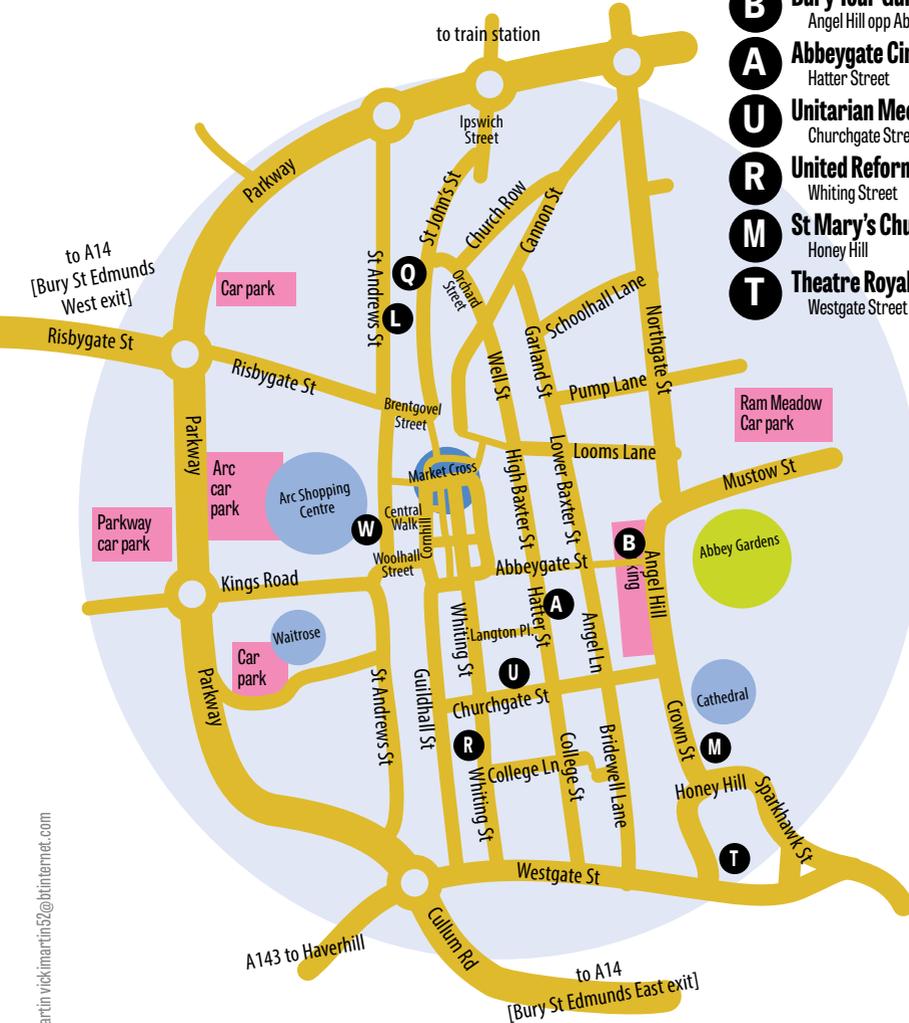
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to improve their biking skills. Over the
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VENUES

- Q** **Quaker's Meeting House**
St John's Street
- L** **Bury St Edmunds Library** 
St Andrew's Street
- W** **Waterstones** 
Arc Shopping Centre
- B** **Bury Tour Guides** 
Angel Hill opp Abbeygate
- A** **Abbeygate Cinema** 
Hatter Street
- U** **Unitarian Meeting House**
Churchgate Street
- R** **United Reformed Church**
Whiting Street
- M** **St Mary's Church**
Honey Hill
- T** **Theatre Royal** 
Westgate Street



Design: Vicki Martin vickimartin52@btinternet.com



Bury St. Edmunds
Literature Festival
Celebrating books and writing in the heart of East Anglia

