



## Calendar

April - August 2014

APRIL		
Saturday 12, 11am - 5pm	Birmingham Independent Book Fair	Free
Sunday 13, 5 - 8pm	Tell Me On A Sunday: By The Skin of My Teeth	Free
Wednesday 23, 7 - 9pm	World Book Night Quiz: Dudley	£2 each
MAY		
Tuesday 13, 6 - 8pm	Short Course: Towards a Poetry Collection	£99 for all six sessions
Wednesday 21, 2 - 4.30pm	Writing Workshop: Working with Museums and Archives	£28 / £23
JUNE		
Sunday 8, 1 - 6pm	Page Talk: Life As We Know It (Stratford-upon-Avon)	Free
JULY		
Saturday 5, 10.30am	Writer Networking Morning: Uttoxeter	Free
AUGUST		
Friday 1 August	Page Talk: Life As We Know It (Wolverhampton)	Free
Monday 4 - Friday 8 August	Write On! Young Writers Summer School	Price TBC
COMING SOON		
Saturday 13 September	Writer Networking Afternoon: Telford	Free

Thanks to all Friends, Supporters & Benefactors of Writing West Midlands.

If you would like more information about our Friends scheme, please visit the Support Us page on either of our websites.

[www.writingwestmidlands.org](http://www.writingwestmidlands.org) / [www.birminghamliteraturefestival.org](http://www.birminghamliteraturefestival.org)



Writing West Midlands, Unit 204, The Custard Factory,  
Gibb St, Birmingham B9 4AA. Tel: 0121 246 2770  
[www.writingwestmidlands.org](http://www.writingwestmidlands.org)

Company Registration Number: 6264124. Registered Charity Number: 1147710.  
The advertised programme is subject to change without notice where unavoidable.



## Programme of Activities

April - August 2014

**SUPPORTING**  
**CREATIVE WRITERS AND CREATIVE WRITING**  
**IN THE WEST MIDLANDS.**

[WWW.WRITINGWESTMIDLANDS.ORG](http://WWW.WRITINGWESTMIDLANDS.ORG)



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL**  
**ENGLAND**

# WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO

We are the region's literature development agency. We support the development of creative writing activities and participation across the West Midlands.

In this brochure you will find details of our public activities between April and August 2014. There are three main strands to our work. Look out for the symbols in this brochure.

## **W** WRITERS

We support writers as they develop their creative careers. We run training courses and workshops, networking events and industry conferences and a writer development programme. We also signpost people towards opportunities, projects and training.

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

## **Y** YOUNG WRITERS

We work with children and young people in and out of school to develop their interest in creative writing through our Write On! programme. This work has several strands: in-school writing workshop projects, out of school creative writing clubs (Write On! Young Writers' groups), and our online Write On! Magazine. Write On! works with Primary and Secondary ages and also involves teachers, parents and carers.

[www.writingwestmidlands.org/young-writers-schools](http://www.writingwestmidlands.org/young-writers-schools)

## STAY IN TOUCH

From time to time other events and activities may take place that we aren't able to include here. To stay in touch, join our mailing list. For more details about what we do, please visit [www.writingwestmidlands.org](http://www.writingwestmidlands.org).

  Tweet us @writingwestmids or find us on Facebook.

If you are a writer in the region, we'd love to hear from you.

# WELCOME

Welcome to Writing West Midlands' programme of events and activities for Spring and Summer 2014.

## Writers of the West Midlands, let's get together!

Creative writing may be a deeply personal experience but much good comes from writers and readers and audiences getting together. Over the last ten years I've seen the West Midlands gradually become a 'writing region', led by individual writers making things happen. We're playing our part, encouraging writers to share their skills and experiences and commending them to others. Spring and Summer 2014 is packed with some fabulous opportunities for writers and particularly for young writers who are our future.

The keen-eyed will have spotted that our logo features a map of the West Midlands. It's a curious shape, bounded on the west by Offa's Dyke and on the east by the Roman Watling Street, but it is important for us as we want to support writers wherever in the region they live. In the next few months we'll be in Uttoxeter, Stratford-upon-Avon, Wolverhampton and Dudley with various events.



The details are all in this brochure. If we are in your neck of the forest it would be lovely to see you. If we haven't come quite near enough yet do let me know and we'll see what we can be done in the future. And of course do join our mailing list via the website and follow us on Twitter and Facebook to keep up to date with all our news.

Jonathan Davidson, Chief Executive, Writing West Midlands.

## THE WRITING WEST MIDLANDS TEAM

Jonathan Davidson  
Chief Executive

Abigail Campbell  
Acting Programmes Director

Joanne Penn  
Projects Manager

Sian Buckley  
Marketing Co-Ordinator

Sara Beadle  
Programmes Director

Chris Swann  
Events Manager

Hayley Frances  
Project Fieldworker

Emma Boniwell  
Friends Scheme Manager

Cover Image: Delph Locks, Brierley Hill, West Midlands

# NEWS FROM US

From a new Friends scheme to a Summer School and one-day festivals for young people, 2014 promises to be a busy and varied year. Here's a selection of our news...

## WRITING WEST MIDLANDS' FRIENDS SCHEME

This season, we've freshened up our Friends scheme and teamed up with various organisations to bring our Friends extra benefits.

For just £30 a year (or £50 for joint friendship\*), you can receive a Friends card which will give discounts at regional Loch Fyne restaurants, Café Opus at Ikon and tickets for the viewing tower at the RSC in Stratford-upon-Avon.

We are also pleased to offer a 10% discount on tickets at the Birmingham Literature Festival (2-11 October 2014), excluding workshops. Local publishers Nine Arches Press are also offering a 25% discount on publications bought through their website.

Your support can make a real contribution to creative writing and literature activities in our region.

\*Joint friendship is available to two people sharing an address.



**For more details:**

[www.writingwestmidlands.org/support-us](http://www.writingwestmidlands.org/support-us)

## BIRMINGHAM LITERATURE FESTIVAL 2014 UPDATE

The Birmingham Literature Festival runs from 2 to 11 October this year, with the rich mix of good writing and challenging ideas our audiences have come to expect. Our main venue will once again be the splendid new Library of Birmingham.

Look forward to a stimulating line-up of writers and thinkers from the Midlands and beyond, including Meera

Syal and Costa winner Nathan Filer. The programme also features Peaky Blinders, The Wife of Bath, and the Man Booker Prize.

Heart breakfast presenter Rachel New will be back for a new writing challenge, and we're weaving in lots of participatory events and activities in and around the Library – flash mob Shakespeare, anyone?



**More details about this year's Festival will appear soon on:**

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

# NEWS FROM OUR PARTNERS

Writing West Midlands is proud to work with partner organisations and individuals across the region and nationally. Here are a few of their upcoming projects...

## ARVON - THE HURST

After years of planning and nine months of closure, The Hurst - the Arvon's centre in Shropshire and the former home of playwright John Osborne, reopens this spring.

Set in the Shropshire Hills, the beautiful 26 acre site has been completely renovated. The

**For more information:**

[www.arvon.org/centres/the-hurst](http://www.arvon.org/centres/the-hurst)

fully accessible building has seen its IT facilities upgraded and the building has improved environment sustainability.

To see a list of courses taking place at The Hurst and other Arvon centres, please visit their website.



## e-x-p-a-n-d-i-n-g: THE HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSE IN 45 MINUTES

After receiving guidance from Writing West Midlands, one of our Room 204 writers has been awarded Arts Council England funding for a project which will take place at the Birmingham Literature Festival 2014 and at various festivals and venues throughout 2015. Poet Nadia Kingsley will be working with fellow

poet, Emma Purshouse, musician, Giancarlo Facchinetti, and an astrophysicist from the University of Birmingham, Professor Trevor Ponman. They will be creating a 45 minute performance about the history of the Universe to be performed within a mobile planetarium dome.

**For more details:**

[www.facebook.com/poetsmusicianastrophysicistdome](http://www.facebook.com/poetsmusicianastrophysicistdome)

## ACTON SCOTT FARM POET IN RESIDENCE

Jean Atkin, Shropshire-based poet in education and community, has received a grant award from Arts Council England which will see her installed as Poet in Residence at Acton Scott Historic Working Farm, Shropshire this summer. Jean, one of our Room 204 writers,

plans to engage with visitors to the Farm, encouraging them to hear and write poetry in playful, informal settings. Instances of poetry will sprout around the farm buildings and Jean will be running workshops for regionally-based poets and for school visits.

**More information can be found on the blog:**

[www.actonscottfarmpoet.wordpress.com](http://www.actonscottfarmpoet.wordpress.com)



# APRIL EVENTS

## BIRMINGHAM INDEPENDENT BOOK FAIR

**Saturday 12 April, 11am - 5pm**

**Ikon Gallery, 1 Oozells Square, Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2HS**

Browse, buy and discover new books, many of which are not available on the high street.

This day-long event will feature independent publishers from the West Midlands and beyond, offering you the chance to buy books directly from the publishers, who will be on hand to answer questions and introduce you to new writing. From poetry pamphlets to prose fiction, graphic novels to science fiction and fantasy, a wide range of forms and genres will be represented. There will also be a programme of events running throughout the day. Please visit our website for more details.

The Birmingham Independent Book Fair is a project of the West Midlands Independent Publishers' Network which is convened by Writing West Midlands.

This event is organised in collaboration with Ikon.

[www.writingwestmidlands.org](http://www.writingwestmidlands.org) / [www.ikon-gallery.org](http://www.ikon-gallery.org)

**FREE**, drop in



**IKON**

## TELL ME ON A SUNDAY: BY THE SKIN OF MY TEETH

**Sunday 13 April, 5 - 8pm**

**Ikon Gallery, 1 Oozells Square, Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2HS**

Tell Me On A Sunday is our true-life storytelling project, organised in collaboration with Ikon and one of Europe's leading performance storytellers, Cat Weatherill. Eight storytellers each perform a seven minute story, based on a specially selected theme and all with truth at their heart. This month's theme is 'By the Skin of My Teeth'.

The event begins with a Story Supper at 5pm in Café Opus at Ikon followed by the performances running from 6 – 8pm in the main gallery upstairs.

[www.writingwestmidlands.org](http://www.writingwestmidlands.org) / [www.ikon-gallery.org](http://www.ikon-gallery.org)

**FREE**

**BOOK: 0121 248 0708**



**IKON**

# APRIL

## WORLD BOOK NIGHT QUIZ

**Wednesday 23 April, 7 - 9pm**

**Dudley Library, Reading Room, St. James' Road, Dudley, DY1 1HR**

Writing West Midlands, Dudley Libraries and West Midlands Readers' Network are working together to celebrate World Book Night 2014. As thousands of books are given away across the region and the UK, we invite you to join us to pit your knowledge about those, and other, great books against other discerning readers of the West Midlands. With rounds of questions ranging from the ridiculous to the pedantic, this fun night out is suitable for anyone who knows their way around their local library and has a competitive spirit! We will be giving away sets of books on the night as well as other prizes.

Bring a team or join one on the night to compete for fabulous prizes. Drinks will be available.

There is a nominal charge of £2 per person, payable on the night, in cash.

[www.writingwestmidlands.org](http://www.writingwestmidlands.org) / [www.dudley.gov.uk](http://www.dudley.gov.uk)

[www.wmreadersnetwork.co.uk](http://www.wmreadersnetwork.co.uk)

**£2 PER PERSON**

**BOOK: [sian@writingwestmidlands.org](mailto:sian@writingwestmidlands.org)**



**Dudley**  
Metropolitan Borough Council

West Midlands Readers' Network

## CALLING ALL YOUNG WRITERS AGED 12 - 16!

Writing West Midlands presents 'Page Talk', a series of creative writing festivals created by young people.

Inspired by a theme, young people will participate in 5 half-day writing workshops led by professional writers. The project will culminate in one-day festivals produced by the young people involved.

The first will take place in Stratford-upon-Avon throughout May with the one-day festival on Sunday 8 June 2014 and the second in Wolverhampton from Monday 28 July - Friday 1 August.



If you are aged 12 - 16 with a passion for creative writing, we want to hear from you!

For more information please visit

[www.writingwestmidlands.org/page-talk](http://www.writingwestmidlands.org/page-talk)

# MAY EVENTS

## SHORT COURSE: TOWARDS A POETRY COLLECTION

Tuesday 13 May - Tuesday 24 June (excl. 27 May), 6 - 8pm

Writing West Midlands, Unit 204, The Custard Factory, Gibb Street, Birmingham, B9 4AA

Jane Commane (poet, tutor and editor at Nine Arches Press) will guide you through the process of curating and creating a collection of poetry. Discover the different ways to get into print, find the right shape and form for your collection and right sort of publisher for you. Whether it's a pamphlet, book collection or mini-epic, discover how best to refine, hone and polish your poems so they can shine and show your writing at its best. Also, get plenty of practical tips on how to build up your reputation and profile as a poet, how to submit your collection, and how to structure, order and develop your collection of poems.

Though the workshops won't result in the actual publication of your collection, they will equip you with all the know-how, techniques and best practices to help you make the important first steps through what can seem a daunting process.

[www.ninearchespress.com](http://www.ninearchespress.com)

£99 for six sessions BOOK: 0121 245 4455 / [www.writingwestmidlands.org](http://www.writingwestmidlands.org)



## WRITING WORKSHOP: WORKING WITH MUSEUMS AND ARCHIVES

Wednesday 21 May, 2 - 4.30pm

The Pen Museum, Unit 3, The Argent Centre, 60 Frederick Street, Birmingham, B1 3HS

This one-off workshop is an opportunity to explore how working with museums and archives can stimulate your writing in the stimulating environment of Birmingham's Pen Museum.

During the 19th Century, it is said that 75 per cent of everything written in the world was with a 'Birmingham' pen. In this World War 1 centenary year, the workshop will draw on materials in the museum relating to the war, and in particular the impact it had on women's lives.

The workshop will be led by Fiona Joseph. Fiona is a teacher, publisher and writer. She has written a biography of Beatrice Cadbury, the radical daughter of the famous chocolate manufacturer, and is currently working on a novel based on Cadbury women employees in WW1.

[www.penroom.co.uk](http://www.penroom.co.uk)

£28 / £23 BOOK: 0121 245 4455 / [www.writingwestmidlands.org](http://www.writingwestmidlands.org)



# JUNE / JULY EVENTS

## PAGE TALK: LIFE AS WE KNOW IT (STRATFORD-UPON-AVON)

Sunday 8 June, 1 - 6pm

RSC, Waterside, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 6BB

Inspired by the theme of happiness, young writers aged 12 - 16 will participate in weekly half-day creative writing workshops led by professional writers throughout May to produce writing and literature events in response.

Designed and organised by the young people involved, the culmination of the workshops is this free one-day festival which will also include some special guests. Events will take place across the afternoon throughout the main RSC theatre building. If you are aged between 12 - 16, are free each Saturday in May and Sunday 8 June, and would like to get involved; please visit our website for more details.

[www.writingwestmidlands.org/page-talk](http://www.writingwestmidlands.org/page-talk)

FREE, drop in



## WRITER NETWORKING MORNING: UTTOXETER

Saturday 5 July, 10.30am - 12.30pm

Uttoxeter Library, 57 High Street, Uttoxeter, Staffordshire, ST14 7JQ

Join us for a free afternoon of discussion and networking for emerging and established writers. This is a great opportunity to meet one another, share ideas and initiatives and hear from industry professionals.

Speakers include Lisa Blower (fiction writer, short-listed for the BBC Short Story Competition 2013 and winner of The Guardian's National Short Story Competition, 2009) and David Calcutt, poet, dramatist and novelist specialising in writing for young people. Lisa will talk about working with short fiction and David will talk about opportunities for writers to develop their own literature projects as well as his writing career.

Supported by the Authors' Licensing and Collection Society.

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

FREE

BOOK: [joanne@writingwestmidlands.org](mailto:joanne@writingwestmidlands.org)



# AUGUST EVENTS

## PAGE TALK: LIFE AS WE KNOW IT (WOLVERHAMPTON)

Friday 1 August, Time TBC

Arena Theatre, Wulfruna Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1SE

The second in our Page Talk series is hosted by the Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton. Young Writers aged 12 - 16 will participate in half-day workshops across the week of Monday 28 July - Thursday 31 July led by professional writers to produce writing and literature events in response to a theme. The culmination of the week will be this free one-day festival which will also include some special guests from the writing industry.

If you are aged between 12 - 16, are free to take part in the workshops and the festival from Monday 28 July - Friday 1 August, and would like to get involved; please visit our website for more details.

[www.writingwestmidlands.org/page-talk](http://www.writingwestmidlands.org/page-talk)

FREE, drop in



## WRITE ON! YOUNG WRITERS SUMMER SCHOOL

Monday 4 - Friday 8 August, Time TBC

University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 7AL

In partnership with The Writing Centre – part of the Warwick Writing Programme at the University of Warwick – we are delighted to announce our first creative writing summer school for young writers.

We will be offering forty young writers across two age groups, 12 – 16 and 16 – 19, the chance to spend a full week developing their creative writing talents with professional writers.

This will be particularly valuable for any young writer taking the new A Level in Creative Writing, but also suitable for anyone who loves writing in whatever form.

Bookings will be open from May 2014. More details will be available in late April.

To register your interest, please go to:

[www.writingwestmidlands.org/write-on-young-writers-summer-school-2014](http://www.writingwestmidlands.org/write-on-young-writers-summer-school-2014)

PRICE TBC



# COMING SOON

## WRITER NETWORKING AFTERNOON: TELFORD

Saturday 13 September, 2 - 4pm

Wellington Library, Wellington Civic and Leisure Centre, Larkin Way, Telford TF1 1LX

Join Writing West Midlands for an afternoon of discussion and networking. This is a great opportunity for writers to meet one another, share ideas and initiatives and hear from industry professionals.

Speakers include Simon Thirsk, joint-founder and Chairman of Bloodaxe Books. Simon will offer a unique insight into the contemporary poetry publishing scene, drawing on his many years of working with poets and the publishing world. An additional speaker will be confirmed soon. The afternoon will be hosted by Jonathan Davidson, Chief Executive of Writing West Midlands.

Supported by the Authors' Licensing and Collection Society.

[www.alcs.co.uk](http://www.alcs.co.uk)

FREE

BOOK: [joanne@writingwestmidlands.org](mailto:joanne@writingwestmidlands.org)



## Want to get more out of Writing West Midlands?

Become a Friend and see how much more you can get!

Benefits include:

- 10% off tickets for all Birmingham Literature Festival events (excluding workshops)
- Invitations to special events
- Exclusive quarterly newsletter
- 25% off Nine Arches Press books
- 25% off a la carte menu at Loch Fyne (not Saturday evenings)
- 10% discount off total bill at Café Opus at Ikon
- 2 for 1 offer on tickets for the RSC viewing tower
- 10% off lunch menu at Searcy's at The REP



Join!

£30 Friend

£50 Joint Friend

Want to do more?

£80 Supporter

£150 Patron

Visit [www.writingwestmidlands.org/support-us](http://www.writingwestmidlands.org/support-us) or  
call 0121 246 3083 to be sent an application form