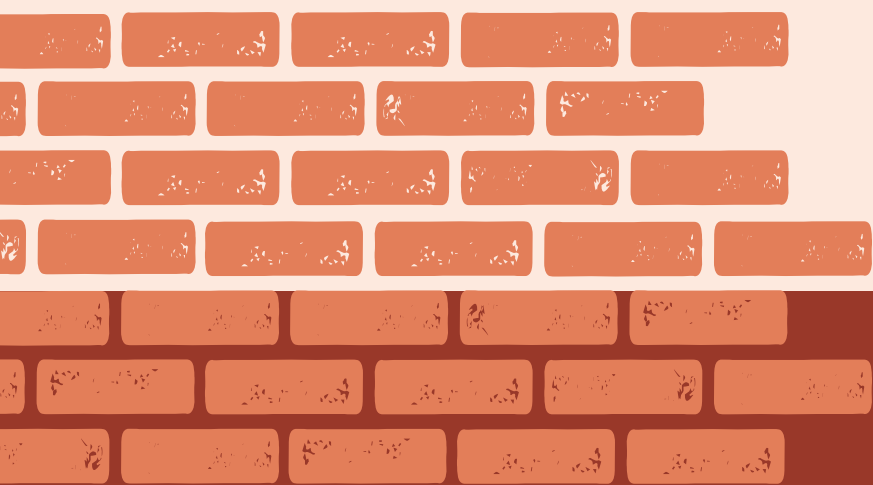
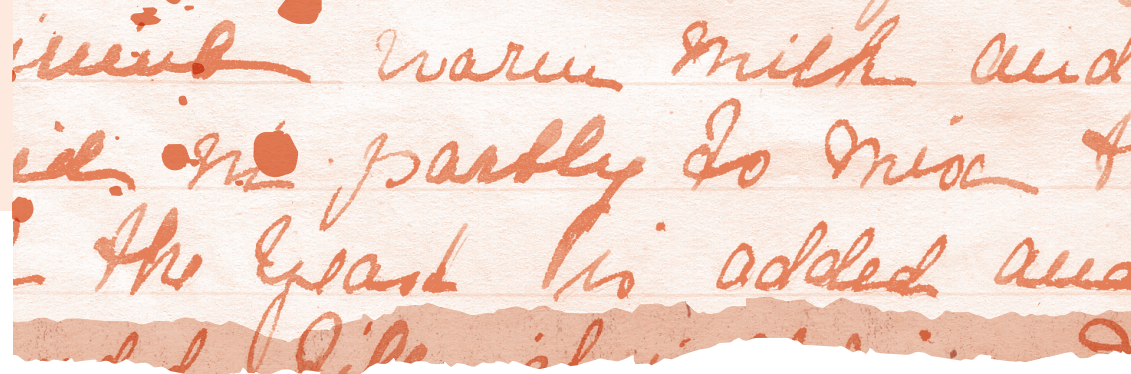
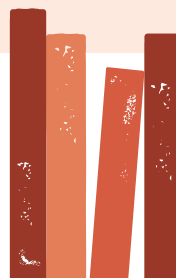




Talks are free to attend but spaces are limited and booking is essential. To reserve a seat, scan the QR code to visit our website [better.org.uk/dudleywritersfest](https://better.org.uk/dudleywritersfest)



# FESTIVAL GUIDE

In partnership with



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# Introduction

Escape into the worlds of your favourite West Midlands authors at the Dudley Writers' Festival. Meet authors across a wide range of genres, from Sunday Times bestsellers to up and coming debuts, and learn what inspired your favourite characters and the plot twists they'll be facing next at a library near you this June.

FREE TO  
ATTEND

RESERVE YOUR  
SEAT TODAY



## As Part of the National Year of Reading

If you're into watching detective dramas on TV, are captivated by thinking about times gone by, or you're fascinated by other worlds, this year we're partnering with the National Year of Reading to help you go all in and read deeper into what you love.

Across this year's programme you'll discover stories that'll keep you on the edge of your seat; authors who can transport you into the past and have you hanging on every word even though you know how it'll end; authors who will make your heart flutter with joy at a fledgling romance, and who will transport you through the pages into new worlds and the space beyond our own. Reading expands your mind, builds confidence and fuels creativity in a way that no other activity can, and is proven to help you feel better too.

“Adults who read for just  
30 minutes a week are  
20% more likely to report  
greater life satisfaction”

The Reading Agency

So whatever you're into, read into  
it at your local Dudley library.

GO  
ALL  
IN.

Reading Checklist






## Mike Brooks

 **Saturday 27th June • 1pm**  
 **Brierley Hill Library**

Mike Brooks is the author of The God-King Chronicles epic fantasy trilogy (which opened with his 2015 debut Dark Run) and the Keiko space-opera trilogy. He has also penned a number of Intellectual Property works for the Black Library Imprint, some of which have become cult classics.



## Susan Fletcher

 **Tuesday 2nd June • 6pm**  
 **Dudley Library**

Susan's first novel, Eve Green, won the 2004 Whitbread First Novel Award, the Betty Trask Prize, the Author's Club Best First Novel Award and the Richard and Judy Summer Read in 2005. Later novels include Oystercatchers, longlisted for the Romantic Novel of the Year Award and the Dylan Thomas Prize, and Witch Light, shortlisted for the John Llewellyn-Rhys Award and the Writers' Guild Best Fiction Award. The Night in Question is her eighth novel. **This talk is supported by the West Midlands Readers Network.**



# Discover the Dudley Writers Festival Collection.

Whether you're looking forward to meeting an author or have enjoyed the festival events, you can keep the conversation going by reading their stories.



Scan the QR code to find the latest releases available by each author as well as their older titles too.

Reserve your favourites and collect them from your nearest Dudley Library

*...and many stars at this point  
 desserts pompful of salt is well  
 said with three of a high sounds*



## Shirley Mann

 **Wednesday 3rd June • 2pm**  
 **Long Lane Library**

Having worked across newspapers, TV and Radio as a Journalist Shirley Mann published her first book, Lily's War, in 2019. This was followed by Bobby's War which won Romantic Saga Novel of the Year in 2021. Three more romance books focusing on the role of women in WW2 followed as part of her 'Memory Lane' saga. A sixth, Faith's War, is due for publication in 2026.



## Miranda Dickinson aka. M J White

 **Friday 5th June • 11am**  
 **Brierley Hill Library**

Miranda Dickinson, who also writes as M J White, is a renowned Black Country based author of Romance and Crime & Thriller novels. She is a six-times Sunday Times Bestselling author and has been shortlisted three times for Romantic Novelist Association awards. Since 2022 she has been writing crime and thriller novels under the name M J White, starting with The Secret Voices.



Saga Fiction



Star Author

## Rosie Goodwin

Saturday 6th June • 2pm  
 Halesowen Library

Rosie Goodwin's first novel, *The Bad Apple*, was released in 2005. Since then she has gone on to become a prolific Sunday Times Bestselling author, having now written over forty titles. Her books have sold over four million copies, making her a titan of the genre, and she continues to be one of the most borrowed authors from UK Libraries. She is also the only author who has been allowed to write sequels to trilogies by Dame Catherine Cookson.



Romance Fiction



## Christie Barlow & Melanie Taylor

Tuesday 9th June • 6.30pm  
 Stourbridge Library

Christie Barlow is a bestselling author of over 20 Romantic Comedies - achieving bestseller levels in the UK, USA, Canada and Australia. Originally self-publishing her first book *A Year in the Life of a Playground Mother* her talent was soon recognised with a publishing deal. In 2026 she is releasing two new books and is also helping new authors through mentoring services.

A self-proclaimed Romance nerd, Melanie Taylor's debut novel, *Love, Digitally*, was published in 2025 - the first book in a three book series.



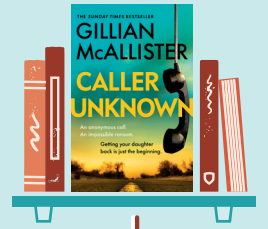
Crime & Thriller Fiction



## Gillian McAllister

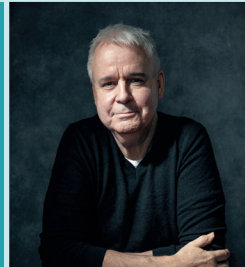
Thursday 25th June • 6.30pm  
 Stourbridge Library

Gillian McAllister is the author of the New York Times bestseller, *Wrong Place, Wrong Time*, and multiple Sunday Times Bestsellers. Many of her works have been optioned for television and films and she has been nominated for two writing awards.



Star Author

Crime & Thriller Fiction

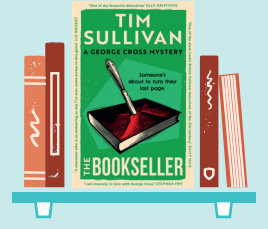


## Tim Sullivan & Simon McCleave

Friday 26th June • 7pm  
 Dudley Library

Tim Sullivan is a film director, screenwriter and novelist. He has directed multiple Granada, ITV and BBC TV productions and as a screenwriter has worked with film companies such as New Line, Universal and DreamWorks. He published his first crime novel, *The Dentist*, in 2020 - which introduced the world to DS George Cross, a Bristol based socially awkward but brilliant detective with a high conviction rate. Following this up with seven more DS Cross mysteries and four short stories in the DS Cross chronicles. In 2025 he was longlisted for the Crime Writers Association Dagger in the Library Award.

Simon McCleave is a multi-million-selling crime novelist who previously worked in script editing and production for the BBC and Channel 4 before becoming a story analyst in Los Angeles. Film and television credits include *The Full Monty*, *Silent Witness* and the critically acclaimed *Out of the Game*. His first novel, *The Snowdonia Killings* was published in 2020 and introduced us to DI Ruth Hunter - a veteran police officer wrestling with the unsolved disappearance of her husband. There are now 23 books in the DI Ruth Hunter series and 4 books in a prequel series set in London. He has also penned six thrillers set on Anglesey and five in the Frank Marshall thriller series.



Star Authors

...ed in a warm place till the year  
...s to the top, it is then ready for  
...s being well served. The business

Crime & Thriller Fiction



## Mark Edwards

Monday 22nd June • 2pm  
 Netherton Library



Mark Edwards has topped the bestseller list multiple times with his psychological thrillers. He has written seven books with another author and a further twenty-one alone, including the Magpie trilogy. In 2021 he was nominated for the ITW Best Original Paperback award for No Place to Run. In 2026 he has released his latest work One of the Family.

Archive Research



## Ned Williams

Tuesday 9th June • 2pm  
 Archives and Local History Centre

Ned Williams presents 'Stage and Screen in Dudley', a look back at the world of cinema and theatre in our borough through his extensive research into the subject. For anyone interested in cinema, theatre and local history this is a talk not to be missed!

Romance Fiction



## Kim Nash

Tuesday 23rd June • 7pm  
 Sedgley Library



Kim Nash is the author of uplifting, heartwarming and feel good romantic fiction. Her debut, Amazing Grace, was released in 2019 and has been followed by four more novels. Kim won the Romantic Novelists Association's Media Star of the Year award in 2016.

Crime & Thriller



## Angela Marsons (Virtual Session)

Wednesday 10th June • 6pm  
 Gornal Library & Lye Library



Angela Marsons is a local author whose Black Country set DI Kim Stone series has sold more than 5 million copies, has been translated into 30 languages and has been optioned by the BBC for television. Her latest novel, Little Children, was released in 2025. In this session, with Kim Nash asking the questions, Angela will share all about her writing, journey to publication, inspirations and more. Please note that Angela Marsons will be appearing via video link and will not be at either library in person.

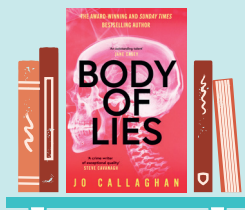
Star Author

Crime & Thriller Fiction



## Jo Callaghan

Wednesday 24th June • 6.30pm  
 Halesowen Library



Jo Callaghan's debut novel In the Blink of an Eye was a Sunday Times bestseller, featured on the BBC's 'Between the Covers' and won her the 2024 Theakston Old Peculiar Crime Novel of the Year and the ILP John Creasey First Novel award. She has since followed up this novel with three sequels that follow the duo of DCS Kat Frank and her AI partner Lock and explore many themes about humanity and our relationship with AI, including her latest release, Body of Lies.

Star Author

Crime, Thriller, Historical & Comedy



## William Stafford

Thursday 11th June • 7pm  
 Coseley Library



William Stafford lives and writes in the Black Country. After working in libraries and teaching Drama in schools and colleges, he now devotes much of his time to his novels, which blend his irrepressible sense of humour with science fiction, historical fantasy, or whodunits. He is also a freelance playwright and theatre reviewer.

He lists his influences as Stephen King, PG Wodehouse, Terry Pratchett, Talbot Rothwell, and Edgar Rice Burroughs.

Romance Fiction



## Sally Jenkins

Monday 15th June • 11.30am  
Wordsley Library



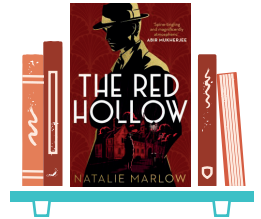
Sally Jenkins is the author of five books (three the Romance genre), two collections of stories and one non-fiction book about publishing. Her novels often have hopeful themes about mature characters and the struggles they face in life. In this talk she'll be talking to the audience about how she is connected to a world famous author and about her writing career.

Historical, Crime & Thriller Fiction



## Natalie Marlow

Thursday 18th June • 6.30pm  
Stourbridge Library



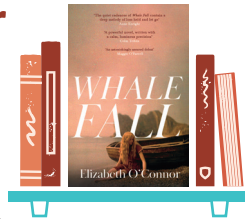
Natalie Marlow is the author of 2023's Financial Times Best Summer Thriller, *Needless Alley*, and was Val McDermid's *New Blood* Pick at the Theakston Old Peculiar Crime Writing Festival. Set in Birmingham in the 1930s this critically acclaimed novel was followed by 2024's *The Red Hollow* which continued to follow Private Enquiry Agent William Garrett. A third book in the series, *Death Comes as a Shadow*, is due to be published in 2026.

Historical Fiction



## Elizabeth O'Connor

Monday 15th June • 6pm  
Halesowen Library



Elizabeth O'Connor's debut novel *Whale Fall* won the Chautauqua Prize and a Betty Trask Award and was a BBC 'Between the Covers' book club pick. Her short stories have appeared in *Granta* and she was the winner of 'The White Review Short Story Prize' in 2020. She lives in Birmingham. **This talk is supported by the West Midlands Readers Network**

Poetry



## Imaginary Landscapes - Chris Tutton & Lucy Nolan

Friday 19th June • 6.30pm  
Dudley Library

*Imaginary Landscapes* is a special event featuring the hugely popular collaboration of leading poet, author and raconteur, Chris Tutton with award-winning international Harpist, Lucy Nolan in a magical and spellbinding programme of words by Chris and semi-improvised music by Lucy.

Science Fiction & Fantasy



## Laverick and Lawton

Tuesday 16th June • 6pm  
Cradley Library



NJ Lawton has lived in the Black Country all her life. After studying for her masters in touring theatre and taking Edinburgh fringe by storm, Nic is hungrier than ever to write tales of the weird and wonderful. I.I. Laverick has been writing about adventures in other worlds since she could hold a pen. She holds a degree in costume design and practice for theatre, and hopes to one day write books that make people feel seen.

Crime & Thriller Fiction



## Caz Freer

Saturday 20th June • 12pm  
Kingswinford Library



Caz Freer's 2018 debut *Sweet Little Lies* won the Richard and Judy 'Search For A Bestseller' competition and went on to be a number one bestseller whilst introducing the world to DC Cat Kinsella. Since then she's penned two more Cat Kinsella novels and the standalone *Five Bad Deeds* - which was nominated for the 2025 Twisted Dagger award.

*Westerly journey at of salt to water  
side with three of a half pounds*