

15 + FREE

online and
live events
for all
ages



15-17 October 2021

**Stories, poems, walks,
writing workshops,
The Big Read and more...**



Welcome to StoryTown! Our festival, celebrating Corsham's rich, artistic heritage and its love of stories and storytelling in all its forms, is now in its fourth year. We hope that, whatever your age, you will find something to enjoy, whether you want to write, read, be educated or entertained.

This year, most StoryTown events will be held in different Corsham venues but some will be online – and all except one are FREE! So be sure to check out the Corsham's StoryTown Facebook page, as well as Instagram and Twitter, for updates on events and what you have to look forward to. You'll find all the information you need to book below.

While 15-17 October is our main StoryTown event, there are also other StoryTown-linked activities and performances, before and after the weekend, so look out for the StoryTown logo throughout the year.

StoryTown is led by Corsham Town Council and supported by Paper Nations: a creative writing incubator, funded by Arts Council England, based at Bath Spa University. Paper Nations commissions writers throughout the south-west of England to create new work, nurturing local communities of support for writers, and creating multi-channel partnerships to showcase new writing internationally.

How to Book

Booking is open now.

All events are **FREE** (apart from Shakespeare Live's event) but you will still need to register in advance for most of them.

Each event or workshop listed has 'To Book' information, and most are via Eventbrite. This will enable you to register and get confirmation of your booking.

Online events will take place via Zoom. You will be emailed a link approximately 24 hours before the event is due to start.

Live face-to-face events will adhere to the government's Covid-19 guidance. There may have to be short notice cancellations if guidance changes, for which we apologise. Please read the information regarding attendance for each event.

If you have any problems with booking, please e-mail storytowncorsham@gmail.com or call Corsham Town Hall on 01249 702130.

And so... StoryTown!

Details of all StoryTown events are correct at time of going to press.

The Main Events

STORY TOWN

LAUNCH EVENT

THURSDAY 14 OCTOBER

VENUE AND TIME:

Live and online
The Barn,
Corsham Court
7-8pm
Age: 11+

WHAT'S ON:

Summer Lightning - Corsham's Big Read PG Wodehouse's *Summer Lightning* is this year's adult Big Read for Corsham (see page 12 for more details). Join Wodehouse enthusiast John Strachan, Professor of English Literature and Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Bath Spa University as well as Director of BSU's Corsham Court Campus, and perhaps a special guest, for an entertaining evening which will celebrate this 1920s-set novel and the world of PG Wodehouse. *Summer Lightning* is one of the Blandings Castle books. Did you know that Corsham Court allegedly played a part in the inspiration for this series?

TO BOOK: Via Eventbrite:

pgwodehousesummerlightning.eventbrite.co.uk. (29 tickets for the live performance, but it will also be streamed online.)



FRIDAY 15 OCTOBER

VENUE AND TIME: WHAT'S ON:

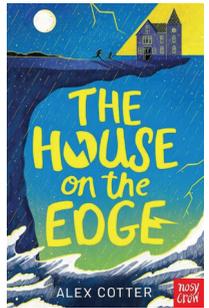
Live
Corsham Library,
Springfield Campus
4-5pm
Age: 8-12

Spooky House Story Join children's author Alex Cotter (alexcotter.co.uk) for a fun and active story-making session - creating your own Spooky House Story! Alex will share her inspiration for her debut children's book, *The House on the Edge*, which is out now and perfect for 8-12 year olds, before running an interactive activity full of mysterious people, objects and secrets. You'll leave with your very own spooky house story! Signed books will be available to purchase.

"Tense and gripping, *The House on the Edge* by Alex Cotter is a fabulous read full of twists and turns." - Daily Express

Twitter: @AlexFCotter
Instagram: @alexcotterwrites

TO BOOK: Via Eventbrite:
alexcotterthehouseontheedge.eventbrite.co.uk
(20 places) available.



Live
Corsham Town
Hall
8-10pm (approx),
including interval.
Age: 11+

Shakespeare Live: Hamlet Act Six Imagine if Shakespeare's famous tragedy, Hamlet, didn't end in tragedy? Suppose a new version of the play added a sixth act in which not all those dead bodies strewn about the stage were actually dead? After a shortened version of Shakespeare's Act V, we find the actors arguing how to give the play a happy ending - and then see the newly written Act VI. Cleverly written in blank verse by Dennis Harkness, with additions by Gill Morrell, this play shows how even the most well-known stories can be transformed into something new and very funny!

Shakespeare Live are a well-known local company who have been performing plays by, and based on, Shakespeare for over 30 years.

TO BOOK: Via www.shakespearelive.com
(48 tickets). Tickets cost £12.



SATURDAY 16 OCTOBER

VENUE AND TIME: WHAT'S ON:

Live
Corsham Library,
Springfield Campus
10am-12pm
Age: 16+

How to Create Believable Characters The aim with writing fiction is to create characters that are both believable and credible and for readers to want to know what happens to them. This can only be done if the characters are fully fleshed out and the reader believes in them and cares about what happens to them whether they appear in a short story or a novel. Join novelist and creative writing tutor Carolyn Lewis in a workshop on how to create believable characters.

TO BOOK: Via Eventbrite

carolynlewishowtocreatebelievablecharacters.eventbrite.co.uk
(15 places)



Live
15 Martingate,
High Street
(John Parker
Gallery)
10am-12pm or
12.30-2.30pm
Age: All

(Similar content will be delivered at both sessions. Please be aware that if the morning session is busy, you may be asked to return in the afternoon.)

Peahen's Book Lab – Bringing Stories to Life

Join Peahen Publishing (peahenpublishing.com) and a team of children's writers and illustrators for an immersive experience into children's publishing. Sarah Surgey is welcoming you to come and chat, with the opportunity to submit your manuscript ideas to her. Three will be chosen by InterSaga Literary Agency to receive personal feedback and guidance. If you want to get into the world of illustrating children's books, or pursuing a career in art and illustration, best-selling children's writer and illustrator Julia Seal will be on hand to offer advice. Explore writing in rhyme and creating characters with *Elvis* author Helen Brian (see page 10) and meet the author of the Nurdle series, Claire Vowell. There will be stories, a book talk and Q&As with Peahen founder Carly Corlett, finding out about the authors' own journeys into publishing, along with fun activities for all – and even some scary monsters to create!

Suitable for ALL ages and ALL aspiring children's writers and illustrators. We'd love to meet you!

E-mail: info@peahenpublishing.com for further information.

TO BOOK: This is a drop-in event but you can prebook via Eventbrite peahenbooklabbringingstorieslifelife1.eventbrite.co.uk (am) or peahenbooklabbringingstorieslifelife2.eventbrite.co.uk (pm).



VENUE AND TIME: **WHAT'S ON:**

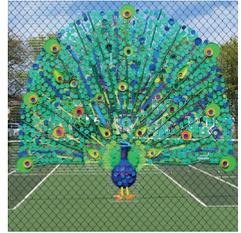
Live
Pound Arts
Centre
11am-1pm
Age: All

Inspirational Corsham – An Arty Walk around

Corsham Join artist Anya Beaumont on a walk around Corsham as she tells the stories of her artwork and some of the places that have been sources of inspiration for her. There will also be opportunities, for those who are interested, to ask further questions about Anya's practice, including how to go about developing ideas into projects.

Please wear suitable outdoor clothing.
Meet at The Pound.

TO BOOK: Via Eventbrite:
anartywalkaroundcorsham.eventbrite.co.uk
(15 places)



Live
No 19, High
Street
11am-6pm daily,
until 31 October
Age: All

Feather and Fin Artist Celia Smith and antique dealer/interior designer Willow Bicknell have joined forces in an exhibition that tells the story of their inspirations and favourite things. Willow's 100 glass 'end of day' fish - so called because they were made, in Murano, Italy, by using up what was left over at the end of the day - will be on display alongside Celia's wire sculptures and prints of birdlife. All will be available to buy. Feather and Fin runs until the end of October.



Live
Corsham Town
Hall
1-4pm
Age: 10+

Writing for Children for Fun or Funds

Join award-winning children's author Sharon Tregenza (sharontregenza.com) for a workshop for beginners aged 10-100. Expect a fun-filled afternoon with exercises and games in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere where you can learn the rudiments of writing for children – books, stories and verse.

Email: sharontregenza@gmail.com for further information.

TO BOOK: Via Eventbrite
writingforchildrenforfunorfunds.eventbrite.co.uk
(15 places)



VENUE AND TIME: WHAT'S ON:

Live
Corsham Library,
Springfield Campus
2-3pm
Age: 16+

Foolish Heroines, Good Books and Puddings!

A character in June Wentland's novel *Foolish Heroines* says that a good story can sweep you off your feet. Come and hear about the story world of *Foolish Heroines* and, if you like, also share with us the novels that almost swept you away and the desserts you would recommend to weigh you down and prevent readers being borne off forever! You can also submit your book and pudding recommendations to: booksandpuddings@aol.com.



TO BOOK: Via Eventbrite: foolishheroinesgood-bookspuddings.eventbrite.co.uk (15 places)

Live
Corsham Court
2-3.30pm (approx)
Age: All

If Trees Could Speak: Meetings with Trees in the Gardens of Corsham Court* Join us for an immersive walk in the delightful gardens and arboretum of Corsham Court with Peter Harper (peterharper.org) in the guise of tree shaman. You will be re-orientated into a tree-centric world, with stories that combine folklore, science and history and the sensual delights of trees.



Travelling from pre-history to the present, we will celebrate the gift-giving qualities of trees and their life-supporting ecology as a force to awaken creative and magical thinking. The journey will encourage us to travel further in living a life cultured by and interwoven with trees as companions and key figures in our community.

Please wear suitable outdoor clothing. Meet at the entrance to Corsham Court.

Tea, coffee and cake at St Bart's Church afterwards (£2.50 or a donation). All welcome.

With thanks to James Methuen-Campbell and Corsham Court. Costume and map artwork by Claire Todd. Supported by Transcoco Corsham (transcoco.org.uk).

***Also on Sunday 17 October at 2pm**

TO BOOK: Via Eventbrite: iftreescouldspeak.eventbrite.co.uk (20 places)

SUNDAY 17 OCTOBER

VENUE AND TIME: WHAT'S ON:

Online via Zoom
10-11am
Age: 16+

Evoking a Sense of Place and Space

This workshop by yoga teacher and writer Kate Prince from The Peaceful Body Yoga will connect to the space in the breath and the space in the body, using mindful movement, meditation and yoga. Attendees will be encouraged to think of a place that they know, a setting they have created, or somewhere they dream about to evoke a sense of place for their poetry, novel, short stories or journal. The workshop will include free writing, free drawing and the creation of a 'messy map'.

Kate writes for the Canal Cafe Theatre's NewsRevue, the world's longest running comedy revue; a current affairs parody song and sketch show in Maida Vale, London. Her darkly comic play in one act was included in Her Inside, a collection of writings in response to lockdown.

Please contact Kate at kate@thepeacefulbodyyoga.co.uk with any questions or information about health issues you have.

TO BOOK: Via Eventbrite: [evokingasenseofplace.eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/evoking-a-sense-of-place-and-space) (15 places)



Online via Zoom
11-11.40am
Age: 7-12+

The Wilderness War – Meet Julia Green

The Wilderness War by Julia Green is StoryTown's children's Big Read (see page 12) and this is your chance to hear about the real life inspiration behind the story. Find out more about some of the creatures that live in the real 'wilderness'. Julia will talk about her writing process and share some tips for creating characters and writing your own stories.

Julia Green (julia-green.co.uk) is the author of more than 20 books for young people. She was course director for the MA Writing for Young People at Bath Spa University until 2019 and has helped launch the careers of many published children's authors.

Suitable for children 7-12-years old, plus parents, carers, teachers and anyone else who is interested.

TO BOOK: Via Eventbrite: [thewildernesswar.eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-wilderness-war)



VENUE AND TIME: WHAT'S ON:

Live
Corsham Town
Hall
11am-1pm
Age: 16+

Telling Stories Poetry Writing Workshop

Join well-known poet, poetry workshop leader and mentor Dawn Gorman (dawn.gorman.co.uk) to explore how to bring stories to life as fresh, read-me poems! Working with examples for inspiration, you will write two new poems capturing personal anecdotes, treasured memories or made-up tales in new and exciting ways. For beginners to experienced writers. Dawn is also running the StoryTown 2021 Poetry Competition – see page 13 for details.



Twitter: @dawn.gorman.poet Facebook: dawn.gorman.5

TO BOOK: Via Eventbrite:
dawn.gormantellingstoriespoetryworkshop.eventbrite.co.uk
(20 places)

Live
Corsham Court
2-3.30pm (approx.)
Age: All

If Trees Could Speak: Meetings with Trees in the Gardens of Corsham Court* Join us for an immersive walk in the delightful gardens and arboretum of Corsham Court with Peter Harper (peterharper.org) in the guise of tree shaman. You will be re-orientated into a tree-centric world, with stories that combine folklore, science and history and the sensual delights of trees.



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Please wear suitable outdoor clothing. Meet at the entrance to Corsham Court.

Tea, coffee and cake at St Bart's Church afterwards (£2.50 or a donation). All welcome.

With thanks to James Methuen-Campbell and Corsham Court. Costume and map artwork by Claire Todd. Supported by Transcoco Corsham (transcoco.org.uk).

***Also on Saturday 16 October at 2pm**

TO BOOK: Via Eventbrite: iftreescouldspeak2.eventbrite.co.uk
(20 places)

AND THERE'S MORE

As well as the events taking place over the StoryTown weekend, there are more stories to be told and activities to enjoy before and after the festival...

TUESDAY 12 OCTOBER

All Sorts of People: A Poetry Reading Based on Community and Stories

Deborah Tyler-Bennett's poetry and short fictions have always been character-based and, during her career, she has written poems about all sorts of people. This year, and prior to it, Deborah had anthologised poems and lines published on gypsies, Dylan Thomas, her family history and the town where she grew up, the Glasgow artist, Joan Eardley, communal ghosts and characters... This reading celebrates people and places, their triumphs and tragedies... their loves, losses, and, ultimately, their strengths and survival.

Online via Zoom

7.30-8.30pm

Age: 16+

TO BOOK: Via Eventbrite: allsortsofpeople.eventbrite.co.uk



SATURDAY 23 OCTOBER

Elvis - the Elephant Making a Difference "It doesn't matter how big and strong we are, we all need a little help sometimes."

Join children's author Helen Brian for a reading of her debut book, *Elvis*. Listen to Helen talk about why she wrote the book, how she created the characters and the meaning behind the story.

Joining Helen at her event will be Julian House (julianhouse.org.uk) one of the charities supported by the book. Meet the fundraisers and listen to them talk about the organisation's work supporting vulnerable people, then spend some time with Helen and Julian House on some fun and informative activities and maybe even come up with a fundraising idea or two!

We'd love to see you there!

Email helenmaybrian@gmail.com for further information.

Helen will also be at Peahen's Book Lab on 16 October (see page 5)

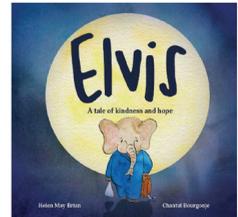
Live

Corsham Library, Springfield Campus

10-11am

Age: 5+

TO BOOK: Via Eventbrite: elvistheelephantmakingadifference.eventbrite.co.uk. (15 places)



THURSDAY 11 NOVEMBER

Lyric Writing: Creative Inspiration and Practice Join singer and songwriter Tracey Kelly as she shares techniques and tips to inspire your best song lyric ideas; methods to enhance your language and lyric-writing skills; setting up the ideal conditions for creativity to flow, and more. This info-packed webinar will finish with a lively Q&A session.

Twitter: @TraceyMusician

Online via Zoom
7.30-8.30pm
Age: 16+

TO BOOK: Via Eventbrite:
creativeinspirationandpractice.eventbrite.co.uk (30 places)



SCHOOLS AND STORYTOWN

Futures 2021 Local schoolchildren have been working with writer and teacher Marnie Forbes Eldridge and creative writing incubator Paper Nations, based at Bath Spa University, on Storytelling for their Future, which is linked to Futures2021 (futuresnight.co.uk). The children have been taking part in inspired workshops connected to Corsham and the history of Pickwick. They have worked on projects inspired by Lucy Christopher's *Shadow* and Julia Green's *The Wilderness War* and their own storytelling will be available both digitally and displayed in Corsham Library, at Springfield Campus, for everyone to enjoy during StoryTown.

On Friday 15 October, Lucy Christopher (lucychristopher.com) will join in with the StoryTown schools' work. Lucy is an international award-winning writer for young people, whose first novel *Stolen* won the Branford Boase Award, a Michael L. Printz Honor Book and the USBBY Outstanding International Book Award. Lucy has written many books for young people, including two picture books for early years. She was the Creative Director of the MA in Writing for Young People at Bath Spa University and is now a Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing at the University of Tasmania. In between writing, reading and teaching, she walks a lot and daydreams even more. She lives in Bath and is currently working on her first adult book as well as her next picture book.

Julia Green (julia-green.co.uk), has written over 20 books for children and young adults and is Emeritus Professor of Writing for Young People at Bath Spa University. Julia will be discussing *The Wilderness War*, her writing and inspirations in an online chat on Sunday 17 October (see page 8). Julia's favourite things include the sea, especially off the Northumberland coast and the Outer Hebrides, the colour blue and lemon and almond cake.



THE BIG READ

Let's turn Corsham into one big book club and all read together! This year we have two Big Reads, one for adults and one for children. For adults, Janet at The Corsham Bookshop has chosen *Summer Lightning* by PG Wodehouse for Wodehouse's links with Corsham (see our StoryTown Launch Event on page 3). A comic masterpiece, this is the funniest of Wodehouse's novels set around Blandings Castle (which may, or may not, have been inspired by Corsham Court) and features a tell-all memoir, a stolen prize-winning sow and a crazy ex-secretary.

And, for younger readers, it's Julia Green's *The Wilderness War*. A tale of friendship, bravery and hope, in which Noah and his friends stand up to adults and machines to protect their special hideaway. (See details of Julia's online event on page 8.)

Copies of both books are available to buy at The Corsham Bookshop (corshambookshop.co.uk) or to borrow from Corsham Library, based at Springfield Campus.

If you decide to join in the Big Read, why not get sponsored and help raise funds for our StoryTown charity. Read Easy (readeasy.org.uk) helps adults to have the literacy skills they need to fulfil their potential and live life to the full. You will find Read Easy's Just Giving page at justgiving.com/crowdfunding/readeasy-nwwiltshire.



BOOK COVER TRAIL

Pupils at The Corsham School have been busy creating their versions of our favourite book covers, which will all be hiding in the windows of our town centre shops and businesses during October's school holiday. Why not see if you can find them – there are prizes to be won!

Download a copy of the entry form at corsham.gov.uk or pick one up from the Town Hall (open to the public 10am-4pm each week day, except Wednesdays).

Entry forms will also be available at The Corsham Bookshop, Automattic Comics and Corsham Library.



STORYTOWN 2021 POETRY COMPETITION

- TELLING STORIES

Win the chance to read your poem on the radio, plus book token prizes!

StoryTown Corsham is an annual celebration of storytelling, which is – and always has been – a fundamental part of human communication. The sharing of stories binds people and communities together. When we share our experiences with friends, we are telling them a story; when we listen to older people telling us stories about their past, we are learning about their history and can often see parallels in our own lives too. Storytelling is also, of course, about making things up, and can feature embellishment of the truth, improvisation, theatrics and, of course, downright lies, misinformation and fake news!

So, for the StoryTown 2021 Poetry Competition, we would like you to write a poem on the theme of Telling Stories. This can be interpreted however you wish – you might write a poem recalling a true story about yourself or someone else; you might re-interpret a traditional story or one you read or heard as a child; or you could make something up! You could explore the idea of how stories change as they are passed on (as in Chinese Whispers) or how stories (including those in newspapers) affect our lives. You could use your poem to explore stories of place (such as Corsham!) or those from your own or other cultures, or you might delve into thoughts about truth and lies.

There are four age categories: Under 11s, 11-17, 18 and over, and, new for this year, over-70s.

The competition judge is award-winning poet, broadcaster, creative writing tutor and mentor Dawn Gorman (dawngorman.co.uk – and see page 9 for details of Dawn's StoryTown workshop). Dawn will read all the entries and adjudicate at the prize-giving event.



Prizes The winners in all four age categories will be invited to read their work on The Poetry Place, a monthly poetry magazine programme on West Wilts Radio (westwiltsradio.com), hosted by Dawn. They will also each win a £20 book token, with one runner up in each category receiving a £10 book token.

There will also be a Local Poet's Prize, awarded to one poet (of any age) from the Corsham postcode area (SN13 9-- and SN13 0-- postcodes). This poet will receive a £20 book token.

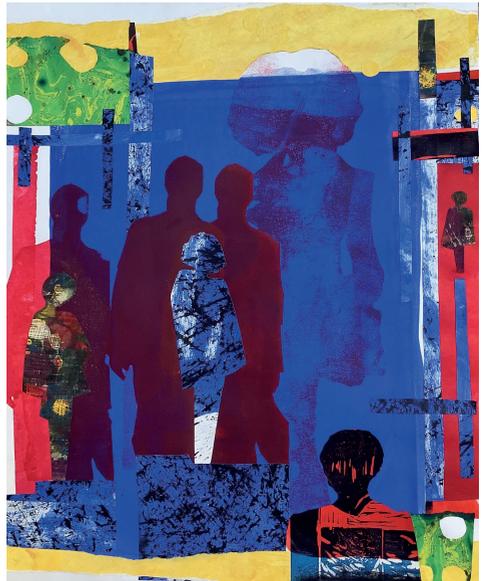


Prize Giving and Performance Event All shortlisted poets in all four age categories, and the Local Poet's Prize, will be invited to attend a prize-giving event in Corsham in 2022 to read their poems and share their brief thoughts on the writing of their stories, and what this meant to them. This event will be either face-to-face or via Zoom, depending on guidelines at the time.

There is a limit of three entries per person; poems should not exceed 40 lines and must not have been previously published or won a prize elsewhere. Email your poems on a Word document (one per page) to: poetrycompstorytown@gmail.com. Do not include your name or any other form of identification on your poems; all other information - name, phone number (parent/carer number for under-18s), postcode (for Local Poet's Prize), title of poem(s) and the age category you are entering - should be entered in the body of your email.

Full submission details and rules can be found at www.corsham.gov.uk.

**Closing date: Midnight,
Friday 31 December 2021**



Stories (mixed media collage, 2020)
by Jane Eaton –
janeaton1947.wordpress.com

Corsham Library

Springfield Campus, Beechfield Road, SN13 9DN



Things to know about Corsham Community Library...

- The library is FREE to join.
- It holds regular events and exhibitions – Rhyme Time, for little ones, will be back soon.
- Your library card gives you access to books as well as eBooks, eAudiobooks and eMagazines.
- There are places to study with access to free wi-fi.
- You can book a computer to use.
- For family historians, your library card lets you use Ancestry.co.uk.
- There's a whole range of parenting books to choose from.
- You can access free online public resources – practice for your Theory Test, for example.
- You can access the Reading Well – Books on Prescription for your physical and mental health, and there's a dementia section too.
- Photocopying is available (both black and white and colour).
- There's help and advice for Book Club and Reading Group members.
- Enquire about the Wiltshire Home Library Service – bringing the library to you.

01249 468490

www.wiltshire.gov.uk/libraries
libraryenquiries@wiltshire.gov.uk



@CorshamLibrary

Book & DVD Sale

Corsham Library has a second-hand book sale on now and, early October, grab a bargain from their DVD sale!

A HUGE THANK YOU TO:

	 	
 MARTINGATE	 The Corsham Bookshop	 Peahen Publishing
 Supported using public funding by ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND	CORSHAM COURT	transcoco. <i>Action for a sustainable Corsham</i> 



StoryTown is brought to you by



towncouncil@corsham.gov.uk 01249 702130

www.corsham.gov.uk

#corshamstorytown



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