

Farnham Literary Festival

farnhamliteraryfestival.co.uk



Reeta
Chakrabarti
Alexander
Armstrong
Ruth Ware
Lord Heseltine
Louis de
Bernières
Oti Mabuse
Joel Dommett
Merlin
Crossingham



5 - 15 March 2026

@farnhamlitfest



Principal sponsor

**FRENHAM
HEIGHTS** 100

Coordinated by



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Farnham Literary Festival 2026

Welcome to the fifth annual Farnham Literary Festival, a vibrant celebration of literature in all its forms.

Farnham Town Council, in collaboration with its festival partners, has programmed over 60 events featuring more than 100 writers, performers and presenters across the 11 days.

From 5- 15 March, dive into the world of books, novels, poetry, theatre, film, spoken word, creative writing, music, illustration and more. Engage in interactive workshops, listen to fascinating author talks and panel discussions and immerse yourself in captivating performances. With such a

varied lineup, there truly is something for everyone.

The festival also shines a spotlight on Farnham itself, from its welcoming community spaces and distinctive buildings to the many venues and organisations that bring the town to life.

We are equally delighted to once again invite young people to connect with inspiring authors and creative voices to inspire confidence, curiosity and a lifelong connection to books with this year's schools programme initiative, run in partnership with the Blue Bear Bookshop.

This year sees the introduction of a film element to the festival

programme, featuring a lineup of film-based workshops and talks, with an emphasis on storytelling through different mediums.

There is so much to uncover. Use this brochure and visit www.farnhamliteraryfestival.co.uk for full details and keep up to date on the latest festival news by following @farnhamlitfest on Instagram and Facebook.

Prepare to be inspired, informed and thoroughly entertained.

Councillor Kika Mirylees

Lead Member for Community and Culture



Thank you to our principal sponsor:



Silver Sponsors:





Exhibition: Farnham's Literary Landscapes

Museum of Farnham | 10am - 4pm | Free (recommended £3 donation)

An exhibition celebrating Farnham's rich literary history. Explore the town's contribution to the cultural landscape in both word and illustration, from travel writing and historical novels, to fiction, fantasy and more.

Wednesday 25 February - Saturday 31 October



Thursday 05 March



Author Talk: Digital Overload: Dr Martha Deiros Collado in conversation with TJ Power

St Andrew's Church | 7.30pm - 8.30pm | £10

Digital Overload brings authors Dr Martha Deiros Collado (*The Smartphone Solution*) and TJ Power (*The DOSE Effect*) together to explore how constant connectivity is reshaping children's attention, wellbeing and relationships. Drawing on psychology and neuroscience, they will unpack when and how to give your child a smartphone, reducing screentime, balancing connection and boundaries in modern childhood and the science behind our addiction.



Comedy: Joel Dommett: Happy Idiot

Great Hall, Farnham Maltings | 7.30pm - 9.10pm | £25

Joel returns to his stand-up roots with a brand-new show. With glamorous tales from behind the camera and less glamorous anecdotes of first-time fatherhood, Joel remains a charming, exhausted, happy idiot. For ages 14+



Thursday 06 March



Author Talk: From Acorns to Oaks: An evening with Lord Heseltine

St Andrew's Church | 6.30pm - 7.30pm | £11

Join us for an evening with Lord Heseltine, a figure who has played a defining role in British politics for more than sixty years. As one of the country's most prominent statesmen, he reflects on his remarkable political career, sharing new revelations about his time in Margaret Thatcher's cabinet, his role in John Major's administration in the 1990s and his later return to the centre of power when David Cameron invited him back as an adviser. This promises to be a comprehensive and thought-provoking evening with a statesman whose influence has shaped national debate for decades.

Friday 06 March



Performance: Trouble, Struggle, Bubble and Squeak

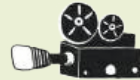
Great Hall, Farnham Maltings | 7.30pm - 8.30pm | £5 - £20

Award-winning theatre maker Victoria Melody joined a historical re-enactment society...because we all deal with divorce in different ways! Spending weekends as a Musketeer trying to get her head straight, she uncovered the story of 17th-century radicals - The Diggers. What started out as a personal search for happiness turned into a quest to find the Diggers of today. Directed by Mark Thomas, this show celebrates the ordinary people still shaping history. For ages 14+

Saturday 07 March

Workshop: Filmmaking with Sparks Film School (5 - 18)

All Hallows Catholic School | 9am - 11am | Free (booking required)



Over the session, crews will explore powerful cinematography techniques and storytelling strategies before putting everything into practice by creating their own short film. Get hands-on experience with storytelling through film with Sparks Film School's experienced instructors.
For ages 5 - 18



Independent Book Fair:

Discover Indie Stories and Hidden Gems

Graphics Studio, University for the Creative Arts | 11am - 4pm | Free

Step into a world of fresh voices and fearless storytelling at the Indie Book Fair. Meet passionate authors, explore unique reads, and celebrate creativity beyond the mainstream. This is the perfect opportunity to discover local authors and their books. Every book has a story, and it's waiting for you to discover it.



Exhibition: Farnham's Literary Landscapes: Curator's Tour

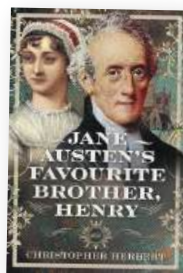
Museum of Farnham | 11am | Free (recommended £3 donation)

Join us for a 30-minute conversation-led tour of the Farnham's Literary Landscapes exhibition with the museum's curator. Tours will also take place on Saturday 2 May and Saturday 4 July. Please note that due to the size of the room, a maximum of 12 people can be accommodated on this tour. Spaces will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Author Talk: Henry Austen with Bishop Christopher Herbert

St Andrew's Church | 11am | Free (booking required)

Bishop Christopher Herbert will be sharing the story behind his latest book, a vivid exploration of the life and times of the Revd Henry Austen who is widely considered Jane Austen's favourite brother. For eight years, Henry served as curate at St Andrew's Church in Farnham, where he appears to have shouldered all of the hard work.



Workshop: Serious Lego Play Screenwriting

University for the Creative Arts | 11am - 3pm | £10



Using a 'hands-on' process, Lego Serious Play activates parts of the brain that encourage creativity and new thinking. Exploring ideas through metaphor and visual aids, participants will access fresh ideas and avoid negative mindsets. Ted Wilkes has used the methodology to great success in a screenwriting context, and this workshop will allow participants to explore their ideas through a novel medium and have them find solutions to plot holes, character arcs and missing acts through the power of play.

Workshop: From Page to Screen Short Film Story for Creative Writers with Paul Usher

University for the Creative Arts | 11am - 3pm | Free (booking required)



Do you have an idea for a film? Learn how to turn it into an award-winning short. This workshop helps writers transform short stories or ideas into competition-ready short film screen stories. Learn what makes short films succeed at festivals, gain visibility on social media, and create powerful calling cards for your writing and future projects.

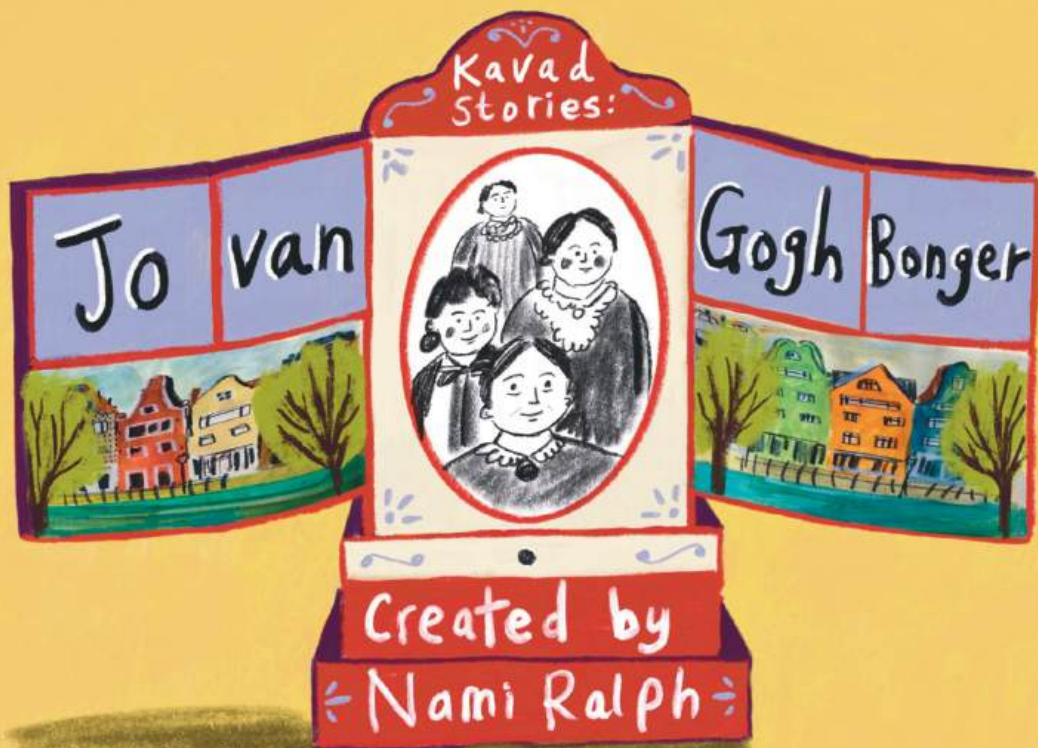
Workshop: Virtual Production Studio Filmmaking

University for the Creative Arts | 11am - 4pm | £65



Experience how today's filmmakers create impossible worlds. This half-day interactive workshop brings a hands-on Virtual Production experience to you. UCA Farnham's Virtual Production Studio reveals how LED volumes, game engines, and on-set techniques blend to shape modern storytelling. Step inside the tech behind *The Mandalorian* and *Fallout*, and discover the skills and roles powering the future of screen narratives.

AN INTIMATE STORYTELLING
EXPERIENCE EXPLORING THE
WOMAN THAT SHAPED AN
ARTISTIC LEGACY



SATURDAY 14TH MARCH 2026
11AM to 12PM & 2PM to 3PM

£5.00

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Book via <https://namiralph.eventbrite.com>

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Workshop: Create Your Own Comic

University for the Creative Arts | 11am - 4pm | Free

Have you ever wanted to create your own comic? Join the Comic and Concept Art course at the UCA for a fun, hands-on workshop led by staff and students. Learn the essentials of zine making, from paper folding to drawing techniques and even storytelling. By the end, you'll have the tools to keep creating and sharing stories through comics.



Performance and Author Talk: LGBTQ+ Stories through Movement and Words

Farnham Library | 12pm - 1.30pm | Free (booking required)

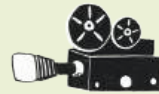
An inspiring double bill: Matthew Bourne's New Adventures presents a unique movement performance, drawing on themes from the New Adventures acclaimed touring production of *The Red Shoes*. This will be followed by an author talk with Stephen Daly, an emerging voice in contemporary fiction. Stephen's work explores the social and cultural challenges faced by young people.



Workshop: Filmmaking with Sparks Film School (5 - 18)

All Hallows Catholic School | 1pm - 3pm | Free (booking required)

Over the session, crews will explore powerful cinematography techniques and storytelling strategies before putting everything into practice by creating their own short film. Get hands-on experience with storytelling through film with Sparks Film School's experienced instructors. For ages 5- 18



Performance: An audience with Charles Dickens

Farnham Town Hall | 1.30pm - 3.05pm (incl. interval) | £8.50

Jonathan Jones will be performing dramatised readings of Charles Dickens' *Sikes and Nancy* and *Doctor Marigold*. Two contrasting readings. One, the most brutal and violent and the other, the most poignant and tearful. Jonathan does full justice to both of these in his dramatised readings.

Panel: When is Crime Cosy?

Farnham Town Hall | 4.30pm - 5.30pm | £11

Cosy crime at its very best. Discover how bestselling authors write murders that won't give you nightmares and stories where the pages seem to turn themselves. But when is crime, cosy? Join Jamie West (*Murder at the Matinee*), Tom Hindle (*A Killer in Paradise*), and Greg Mosse (*the Maisie Cooper series*) or an insightful conversation, hosted by podcaster Frankie Pellatt, as they explore the gentle art of cosy crime.



Interactive Trail: Stories in Shadow

Meet in Waggon Yard Car Park | 7pm - 9.30pm | Free

Bring your torches and join the Farnham Folklore Society for a lamplit walk around town, with shadow puppet folklore storytelling along the way. Every walker will receive a free zine, full of folklore stories and art.

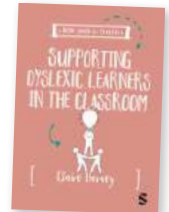


Sunday 08 March

Author Talk: Supporting Dyslexic Learners in the Classroom and at Home

Helen Arkell Dyslexia Charity | 10.30am - 12pm | £15

With an estimated 10% of the population believed to be dyslexic, all teachers are teachers of learners with dyslexia. This talk will touch on some of the reasons why dyslexic learners struggle with aspects of learning, and most importantly provide attendees with some simple and practical suggestions, tips, resources and activities that could be used to help support dyslexic learners in the classroom and at home. Suitable for both educators and parents.



Panel: A Writer's Life

Oxfam Books & Music | 3pm - 4pm | £7

Three bestselling authors share their tips on surviving rejection, reviews and rewrites. Gill Thompson, Louise Morrish and Suzanne Goldring will encourage aspiring writers with honest tales of their experiences. Writer Libby Morgan will compère and direct questions from the audience in an entertaining presentation that reveals the truth about the life of a full-time author.





Author Talk / Children's Reading: Special Storytime with Michael Parkin

Farnham Library | 10.30am - 11.30am | £3

Join author Michael Parkin for a fun and creative workshop inspired by his book *Wrong Time Rooster*. Children will dive into an imaginative crafting session where they can design animals, vehicles, and fantastical creatures before watching their creations come to life as part of a shared countryside scene. From a mud-loving pig to a flying jellyfish, the possibilities are endless! This workshop is the perfect chance for young minds to let their creativity soar. Accompanying adults do not need to purchase a ticket.



Talk: An evening with Merlin Crossingham

University for the Creative Arts | 7pm - 9pm | £10

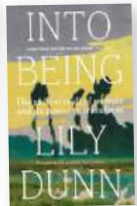


Join us for a rare and unmissable evening with Merlin Crossingham, BAFTA-winning Art Director at Aardman Animations, the studio behind *Wallace & Gromit*, *Chicken Run*, *Morph* and *Shaun the Sheep*. Merlin will take the audience behind-the-scenes of one of the world's most celebrated animation studios, sharing his creative journey, the realities of collaborative filmmaking, and what it really takes to build iconic animated worlds.

Panel: The Art of Memoir: When Truth is More Gripping than Fiction

Farnham Town Hall | 7.30pm - 8.30pm | £11

What makes a perfect memoir? Join three inspiring, fearless women as they share their astonishing personal stories - and what it was like turning them into compelling reads. An unforgettable journey with Lily Dunn, Amelia Dalton and Kika Myrilees.



Tuesday 10 March



Exhibition on Screen: Turner & Constable

Great Hall, Farnham Maltings | 2.30pm [subtitled] and 7.30pm | £12 - £15

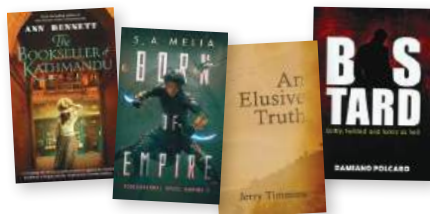
Two of Britain's greatest painters, J.M.W. Turner and John Constable were also the greatest of rivals. Born within a year of each other, both used landscape painting to reflect the changing world around them. Celebrating the 250th anniversary of their births, this unmissable new documentary explores Turner and Constable's intertwined lives and legacies alongside the groundbreaking Tate Britain exhibition.

Tuesday 10 March

Author Talks: Celebrating Local Authors

Farnham Library | 7.30pm - 8.30pm | £5

Come along and meet four local authors, Ann Bennett, Damiano Polcaro, Jerry Timmins and Sally Ann Melia, as they share their journey and books with you. Moving around to listen to each author give a short talk, you will discover some new books and support local authors. There will also be an opportunity to talk to the authors and buy their books.



Live Podcast Recording:

Old Tales, New Voices: The Three Ravens Live

Farnham Town Hall | 7.30pm - 9.30pm | £8.50

Join award-winning writers Eleanor Conlon and Martin Vaux for a special live recording of *The Three Ravens* podcast. Expect an evening steeped in mystery, myth and imagination, with atmospheric storytelling and an audience Q&A.



Literary Pub Quiz

The Wheatsheaf | 7.30pm | £7 (booking required)

Do you know your *Lee Childs* from your *Le Carrés*, your *Beatrix* from your *Beowulf*? If so, come along to our literary-themed pub quiz at The Wheatsheaf. All in aid of BookTrust the UK's largest children's reading charity. Book tickets in advance, £7 a head in cash (maximum 6 participants per team, minimum 3 participants per team), available from Waterstones (11 Lion & Lamb Yard, Farnham) with all money going direct to BookTrust. But hurry, because tickets sell out very quickly!

Waterstones



Open Mic Night

Cellar Bar, Farnham Maltings | 8.30pm | £2 - £8

A relaxed and inclusive open mic night for both new and established acts to share their poetry, spoken word and comedy.
For ages 16+

Wednesday 11 March

Workshop: Memoir Writing for Wellness

St Mark's Church | 10.30am - 12.30pm | £15

Have you ever wanted to write about your own life but didn't know where to start? This interactive workshop with local author, Samantha Jayne Hunt Stacey, will teach you the fundamentals of writing a memoir, exercises to help you put pen to paper and prompts to inspire your ongoing writing.



500 FLASH FICTION

Readings: Flash Fiction: Big Stories, Small Spaces

Farnham Library | 2.30pm - 4pm | £3

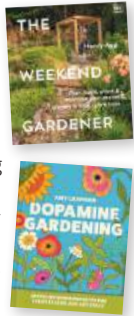
Celebrate the power of short fiction with readings from the award-winning Farnham Flash Fiction competition pieces, running annually since 2017. Enjoy fast, funny and surprising stories of 500 words or less, meet local writers, and discover the joy of concise storytelling.



Author Talk: The Roots of Wellbeing: Henry Agg in conversation with Amy Chapman

Farnham Town Hall | 7.30pm - 8.30pm | £10

Time spent in the garden is never wasted. Join authors Henry Agg and Amy Chapman for a refreshing conversation exploring how gardening can transform mental health and wellbeing. Henry and Amy will draw on their personal experiences, research, and writing to uncover why tending to plants can also mean tending to ourselves. Sharing knowledge for busy gardeners who don't know where to begin in the pursuit of happiness through practical, outdoor activities.



Author Talk: An evening with Oti Mabuse

St Andrew's Church | 7.30pm - 8.30pm | £11

Join us for an evening of romance and dance with Strictly Come Dancing star Oti Mabuse. An internationally acclaimed dancer with championship titles across the globe, Oti remains the only professional in Strictly history to win two consecutive series. Oti will be sharing insights into her debut novel, reflecting on her writing journey, and exploring the fiery allure of Latin Ballroom.



Talk and Performance: Cast, The La's, and Me: An Intimate Evening with John Power

Great Hall, Farnham Maltings | 8pm - 9.50pm | £30 - £75

John Power had the best rock 'n' roll apprenticeship ever – playing bass as an 18-year-old in The La's. Forming Cast in 1991, he sang, wrote songs, and played guitar for one of Britpop's pre-eminent bands – securing two platinum-selling records before returning to the charts in 2024 with the magnificent Love Is The Call. Power's solo career produced some of his best work – and now it's time to reflect on Britpop, in this intimate show that mixes John's best-loved songs with wild, funny, and tender stories.

Author Talk: Faeries and Fantasy: An author talk with Bex Hogan

Farnham Library | 6.30pm - 7.30pm | £5

Join bestselling YA fantasy author Bex Hogan for an enchanting evening. Hear the stories behind her novels in an exclusive interview and ask your burning questions in a live Q&A. Perfect for fantasy fans and newcomers alike. Don't miss this spellbinding event!

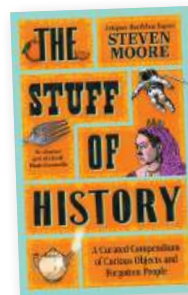


Author Talk: Antiques Uncovered:

An evening with Steven Moore

Farnham Town Hall | 7.30pm - 8.30pm | £8.50

BBC *Antiques Roadshow* presenter turned Instagram influencer, Steven Moore,, brings his trademark wit and charm to Farnham! Dubbed the 'David Attenborough of teacups', Steven joins author-filmmaker Jack Jewers in conversation to discuss his wildly entertaining new book, *The Stuff of History: A Curated Compendium of Curious Objects and Forgotten People*.



Workshop: How to Write a Chilling Ghost Story

Garden Gallery, Museum of Farnham | 7.30pm - 9/9.30pm | £15

Ever wanted to write a spine-chilling ghost story but not sure how to conjure genuine fear? It takes more than tortured groans and rattling chains to create something truly frightening. Led by Sara Starbuck and Ted Gooda, this workshop will explore where terror truly lies in a narrative and how to evoke an emotional response that lingers with readers long after they have turned the final page.



Performance: An evening with Louis de Bernières and Emily Rose Smith

Great Hall, Farnham Maltings | 7.30pm - 9.20pm | £22.50

An evening with bestselling author Louis de Bernières (*Captain Correlli's Mandolin*) and actress-singer Emily Rose Smith. The pair will perform Louis's original folk songs and readings from his novels and collections of poetry.



Event Listings

<i>Event</i>	<i>More details</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Venue</i>	<i>Cost</i>
All of March				
Exhibition	Farnham's Literary Landscapes	10am-4pm	Museum of Farnham	Free/£3
Thu 05 Mar				
Author Talk	Digital Overload	7.30pm	St Andrew's Church	£10
Comedy	Joel Dommett: Happy Idiot	7.30pm	Farnham Maltings	£25
Fri 06 Mar				
Author Talk	An evening with Lord Heseltine	6.30pm	St Andrew's Church	£11
Performance	Trouble, Struggle, Bubble and Squeak	7.30pm	Farnham Maltings	£5/£20
Sat 07 Mar				
Workshop	Filmmaking with Sparks Film School	9am	All Hallows Catholic Sch	Free
Independent Book Fair	Discover Indie Stories	11am	UCA	Free
Exhibition	Farnham's Literary Landscapes Tour	11am	Museum of Farnham	Free
Author Talk	Henry Austen with Bishop Herbert	11am	St Andrew's Church	Free
Workshop	Serious Lego Play Screenwriting	11am	UCA	£10
Workshop	From Page to Screen	11am	UCA	Free
Workshop	Virtual Production Studio Workshop	11am	UCA	£65
Workshop	Create Your Own Comic	11am	UCA	Free
Performance/Author Talk	Matthew Bourne's New Adventures	12pm	Farnham Library	Free
Workshop	Filmmaking with Sparks Film School	1pm	All Hallows Catholic Sch	Free
Performance	An audience with Charles Dickens	1.30pm	Farnham Town Hall	£8.50
Panel	When is Crime Cosy?	4.30pm	Farnham Town Hall	£11
Interactive Trail	Stories in Shadow	7pm	Waggon Yard Car Park	Free
Sun 08 Mar				
Author Talk	Supporting Dyslexic Learners	10.30am	Helen Arkell Dyslexia	£15
Panel	A Writer's Life	3pm	Oxfam Books & Music	£7
Mon 09 Mar				
Author Talk/Reading	Special Storytime with Michael Parkin	10.30am	Farnham Library	£3
Workshop	An evening with Merlin Crossingham	7pm	UCA	£10
Panel	The Art of Memoir	7.30pm	Farnham Town Hall	£11
Tue 10 Mar				
Exhibition	On Screen: Turner & Constable	2.30pm/7:30pm	Farnham Maltings	£12/£13
Author Talk	Celebrating Local Authors	7.30pm	Farnham Library	£5
Live Podcast Recording	Old Tales, New Voices	7.30pm	Farnham Town Hall	£8.50
Literary Pub Quiz	Literary Pub Quiz	7.30pm	The Wheatsheaf	£7
Open Mic Night	Open Mic Night	8.30pm	Farnham Maltings	£2/£8
Wed 11 Mar				
Workshop	Memoir Writing for Wellness	10.30am	St Mark's Church	£15

All authors and events are confirmed at the time of going to print. The organisers reserve the right to make changes.

Event	More details	Time	Venue	Cost
Wed 11 Mar				
Readings	Flash Fiction: Big Stories, Small Spaces	2.30pm	Farnham Library	£3
Author Talk	The Roots of Wellbeing	7.30pm	Farnham Town Hall	£10
Author Talk	An evening with Oti Mabuse	7.30pm	St Andrew's Church	£11
Talk and Performance	Cast, The La's, and Me: John Power	8pm	Farnham Maltings	£30/£75
Thu 12 Mar				
Author Talk	Faeries and Fantasy: Bex Hogan	6.30pm	Farnham Library	£5
Author Talk	Antiques Unconvered: Steven Moore	7.30pm	Farnham Town Hall	£8.50
Workshop	How to Write a Chilling Ghost Story	7.30pm	Museum of Farnham	£15
Performance	Louis de Bernières & Emily Rose Smith	7.30pm	Farnham Maltings	£22.50
Fri 13 Mar				
Film Screening	Hamnet	11am/3pm/8pm	Farnham Maltings	£5/£7
Author Talk	Reeta Chakrabarti with Rebecca Jones	7.30pm	St Andrew's Church	£11
Performance	Looking For Me Friend	7.30pm	Farnham Maltings	£20
Sat 14 Mar				
Workshop	Filmmaking with Sparks Film School	9am	All Hallows Catholic Sch	Free
Workshop	Write it Fast, Make it Spark	10am	St Mark's Church	£5
Immersive Storytelling	Kavad Stories: Jo van Gogh-Bonger	11am	Farnham Library	£5
Author Talk	Ultimate Football with Matt Oldfield	11am	Farnham Library	£5
Workshop	Young Writers	11am	Museum of Farnham	£5
Workshop	Filmmaking with Sparks Film School	1pm	All Hallows Catholic Sch	Free
Workshop	Writing Colourful Characters	1pm	Museum of Farnham	£15
Panel	Rewriting Time: Historical Fiction	2pm	Farnham Town Hall	£11
Immersive Storytelling	Kavad Stories: Jo van Gogh-Bonger	2pm	Farnham Library	£5
Author Talk	Alexander Armstrong	2pm	Farnham Maltings	£10/£6
Panel	Killer Thrillers	4.30pm	Farnham Town Hall	£11
Awards Ceremony	Farnham Poetry Competition	5.30pm	St Mark's Church	Free
Panel	Crime Fiction Unconvered	7pm	Farnham Town Hall	£11
Performance	Hannah James and Toby Kuhn	8pm	Farnham Maltings	£16
Sun 15 Mar				
Workshop	Writing Poetry of Heritage and Identity	10am	Museum of Farnham	£15
Performance	Megson Family Folk Show	11.30am	Farnham Maltings	£10/£36
Workshop	How to Get Published	2pm	Museum of Farnham	£15
Author Talk	Sir Vince Cable and Sir Jeremy Hunt	3pm	St Andrew's Church	£11
Panel	Neither Here nor There	4.30pm	Farnham Town Hall	£11
Performance	Stoppard on the Radio	6pm	Brightwells Creative	£10
Awards Ceremony	Farnham's First Five Pages	7.30pm	Farnham Town Hall	Free



Film Screening: *Hamnet*



Great Hall, Farnham Maltings | 11am [subtitled], 3pm and 8pm | £5 - £7

From Academy Award winning director Chloé Zhao, *Hamnet* follows the relationship of Agnes Shakespeare (Jessie Buckley) and William Shakespeare (Paul Mescal), and the impact of the devastating loss of their 11-year-old son. Based on the bestselling novel by Maggie O'Farrell.

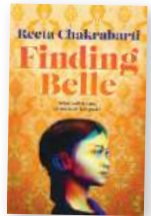
12A



Author Talk: Reeta Chakrabarti in conversation with Rebecca Jones

St Andrew's Church | 7.30pm - 8.30pm | £11

As chief presenter for BBC News, Reeta Chakrabarti is one of the most recognisable faces in British broadcasting. In conversation with former BBC arts correspondent Rebecca Jones, Reeta will discuss her remarkable career and her debut novel *Finding Belle*, a moving tale of mothers, daughters, betrayal, and madness set against the vibrant streets of Kolkata.



Performance: Looking For Me Friend: The Music of Victoria Wood

Tindle Studio, Farnham Maltings | 7.30pm - 9.50pm | £20

2026 marks 10 years since the death of the beloved Victoria Wood, so be amongst friends and join Paulus and Michael for a celebration of her life and music. A relatable story of a 1970's childhood and what it really means to find your tribe.

For ages 10+

Workshop: Filmmaking with Sparks Film School (5 - 18)

All Hallows Catholic School | 9am - 11am | Free (booking required)



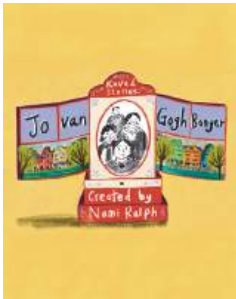
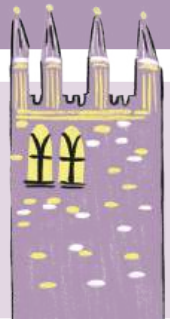
Over the session, crews will explore powerful cinematography techniques and storytelling strategies before putting everything into practice by creating their own short film. Get hands-on experience with storytelling through film with Sparks Film School's experienced instructors.

For ages 5- 18

Workshop: Write it Fast, Make it Spark

St Mark's Church | 10am - 12pm | £5

Dive into the thrill of storytelling at a hands-on flash fiction workshop. In just a few lines, you'll craft bold, brilliant tales. Perfect for all writing levels, come ready to write, play, and surprise yourself with how powerful short stories can be.



Immersive Storytelling: Kavad Stories: Jo van Gogh-Bonger

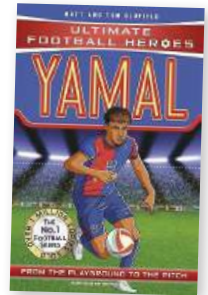
Culver Room, Farnham Library | 11am - 12pm | £5

This intimate, immersive storytelling experience brings to life the remarkable story of Jo van Gogh-Bonger, the woman whose dedication ensured Vincent van Gogh's work was seen, valued, and remembered. Using a hand-painted kavad storytelling box (a traditional Indian narrative device originating from Rajasthan), the performance unfolds like a moving book, inviting audiences to step into Jo's world. As each panel opens, Jo's story reveals moments of resolve, loss, and belief. Nami Ralph presents this project for the first time at the Farnham Literary Festival. Suitable for young people aged 12+ and adults.

Author Talk: Ultimate Football with Matt Oldfield: How to Write about Football Legends

Farnham Library | 11am - 12pm | £5

What is it like to write about football legends? Join bestselling children's author Matt Oldfield, co-creator of the *Ultimate Football Heroes* and *Unbelievable Football*, for a fun-filled, lively event. Matt will share his writing journey, the inspiration behind his books and perform live readings from his most popular titles before opening up the floor to a Q&A, giving young readers the chance to ask their burning questions.



Workshop: Young Writers

Garden Gallery, Museum of Farnham | 11am - 12pm | £5 per child

Take part in a creative writing workshop using museum objects to inspire your own stories. Led by Ally Sherrick, author of *Rebel Heart* and winner of the Young Quills Award for Historical Fiction, you'll finish the session with a short, creative piece about your object and its owner - the start of your very own story.
Ages 8-12



Workshop: Filmmaking with Sparks Film School (5 - 18)

All Hallows Catholic School | 1pm - 3pm | Free (booking required)



Over the session, crews will explore powerful cinematography techniques and storytelling strategies before putting everything into practice by creating their own short film. Get hands-on experience with storytelling through film with Sparks Film School's experienced instructors.
For ages 5- 18

Workshop: Writing Colourful Characters

Garden Gallery, Museum of Farnham | 1pm - 3.30pm | £15

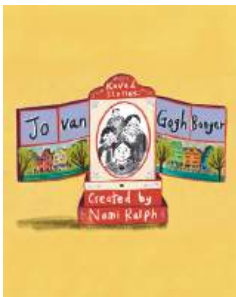
Join award-winning author Ally Sherrick for a fun creative writing workshop using items from the museum's collection to bring Farnham's most colourful characters to life. Suitable for beginners and more experienced writers.
For ages 18+



Panel: Rewriting Time: The Art of Historical Fiction

Farnham Town Hall | 2pm - 3pm | £11

Some of the most compelling crime thrillers of this century have transported readers into the past. Join three leading voices in historical fiction as they discuss why the genre continues to captivate readers. Hosted by Jack Jewers, this panel brings together bestselling authors S.J. Parris, Matthew Sweet and Anna Mazzola for a lively discussion.



Immersive Storytelling: Kavadi Stories: Jo van Gogh-Bonger

Culver Room, Farnham Library | 2pm - 3pm | £5

This intimate, immersive storytelling experience brings to life the remarkable story of Jo van Gogh-Bonger, the woman whose dedication ensured Vincent van Gogh's work was seen, valued, and remembered. Using a hand-painted kavadi storytelling box (a traditional Indian narrative device originating from Rajasthan), the performance unfolds like a moving book, inviting audiences to step into Jo's world. As each panel opens, Jo's story reveals moments of resolve, loss, and belief. Nami Ralph presents this project for the first time at the Farnham Literary Festival. Suitable for young people aged 12+ and adults.



Author Talk: An afternoon with Alexander Armstrong

Farnham Maltings | 2pm - 3pm | Adults £10 / Children £6

Embark on an interactive quest with actor, comedian, television presenter and singer Alexander Armstrong as he unveils his epic second children's book, *Evenfall: The Tempest Stone*.
Ages 9+



Panel: Killer Thrillers

Farnham Town Hall | 4.30pm - 5.30pm | £11

These three international bestselling authors, Ruth Ware, Ava Glass and Elly Griffiths, are masters of writing books you can't put down, creating plots and characters that stay with you long after the final page. What draws them to such dark, twisting plots? With host Frankie Pellatt, they will discuss how they build believable, pulse-pounding narratives, in this event packed with thrills, insights and the occasional plot twist.



Awards Ceremony and Open Mic: Farnham Poetry Competition

St Mark's Church | 5.30pm | Free

The winners and runners-up of the Farnham Poetry Competition will be announced at a warm and welcoming awards ceremony, where prize-winners are encouraged to read their poems. An open-mic session will follow for anyone who wishes to share their work. After the 17-and-under awards are announced, there will be a short interval so children may leave before the over-18 category is announced.

Panel: Murder They Wrote: Crime Fiction Uncovered

Farnham Town Hall | 7pm - 8pm | £11

Two bestselling authors, Louise Candlish and Ellie Levenson, reveal how they craft their fast-paced, fast-faced plots, uncover murder in unexpected places and discover what draws them to explore the darkest acts committed by desperate people. Hosted by the "queen of spy fiction" Ava Glass, this gripping panel promises to be an enthralling journey into some dark, shadowy and suspenseful places.

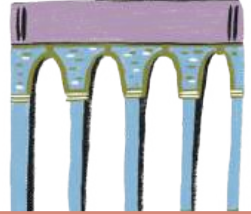




Performance: Hannah James and Toby Kuhn

Great Hall, Farnham Maltings | 8pm - 9.45pm | £16

In a journey through sound, texture, emotion and rhythm, Hannah and Toby navigate the paths of growth, discovery, darkness and light, exploring the dialogue of cello, voice, accordion and foot percussion in new and unexpected ways.



Workshop: Writing Poetry of Heritage and Identity

Garden Gallery, Museum of Farnham | 10am - 12pm | £15

Join Mslexia prize-winning poet Nia Broomhall to create poetry that explores the unique story of who you are. In this practical two hour session, we will read and discuss poems to inspire your own writing in a warm and supportive environment, and you'll leave with three or four first drafts. Beginners and seasoned poets all welcome.



Performance: Megson Family Folk Show

Great Hall, Farnham Maltings | 11.30am - 12.30pm | £10 - £36

Award-winning folk duo, Megson, perform a gentle, entertaining concert specifically for younger children, blending their infectious mix of heavenly vocals and lush harmonies. Featuring folk songs old and new from their albums *When I Was a Lad* and *Little Bird*.
For ages 0-8

Workshop: How to Get Published

Garden Gallery, Museum of Farnham | 2pm - 3.30pm | £15

Learn about the different routes into publication, and the realities of each, in *How to Get Published*, a practical workshop covering both traditional publishing and self-publishing with a clear-eyed look at what each path really involves, from submissions and deals to rights and revenue. Led by award-winning freelance marketing consultant and author Eleanor Pilcher.





Author Talk: Vince Cable in conversation with Jeremy Hunt

St Andrew's Church | 3pm - 4pm | £11

Two former Cabinet heavyweights meet for a wide-ranging conversation on Britain's future. Drawing on *Can Britain Be Great Again?*, Sir Jeremy Hunt sets out a case for national renewal at home and abroad. Sir Vince Cable, author of *Eclipsing the West*, offers a global perspective shaped by shifting power beyond the West. Moderated by Georgina Godwin, together they debate decline, opportunity and Britain's place in a rapidly changing world, with audience questions and lively, unscripted exchange throughout.



Panel: Neither Here nor There: Epic Journeys From History

Farnham Town Hall | 4.30pm - 5.30pm | £11

Step aboard for an epic voyage of discovery. From the globetrotting adventures of Charles Dickens, as told by his great-great-great granddaughter, to the compelling story of the aviators who fought to be the first women to fly across the Atlantic, via a gazetteer of the world's shadowy corners, where legends live rooted in memory.



Performance: Stoppard on the Radio

Brightwells Creative Space | 6pm – 7pm | £10



Farnham Theatre Association and the Farnham Rep present a tribute to the late Sir Tom Stoppard (*Arcadia*, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* and *Shakespeare in Love*). One of the most performed and admired playwrights of his generation, Stoppard captivated audiences worldwide with his wit, imagination, and intense attention to language. A cast of professional actors celebrates Stoppard's genius in a rehearsed reading of one of his rarely heard plays written for BBC Radio.

Awards Ceremony: Farnham's First Five Pages

Farnham Town Hall | 7.30pm - 8.30pm | Free
(please confirm attendance in advance)

All longlisted and shortlisted entrants are invited to attend this ceremony to celebrate the winners of the 2026 Farnham's First Five Pages writing competition. Meet the judges, discover this year's winners and listen to readings of their work. First place, The Paris Prize for Fiction, is sponsored by The New York Times and Sunday Times bestselling author, B.A. Paris.





Celebrating 5 years

This year marks a proud milestone for Farnham Literary Festival as it celebrates its fifth year. What began as an ambitious local initiative has rapidly grown into one of the South's most vibrant literary events, firmly placing Farnham on the cultural map.

Launched in 2022 as an initiative led by Farnham Town Council, the festival was born from a passion for the arts. Since its inauguration, the festival has gone from strength to strength, attracting acclaimed authors, enthusiastic audiences and widespread recognition. Over the years, Farnham has welcomed hundreds of authors, illustrators and performers including Sandi Toksvig, Dame Jacqueline Wilson, Mick Herron, B.A. Paris, Hugh Bonneville, Nick Sharratt, Michelle Paver, Robert Thorogood, Santa Montefiore, Damien Lewis and Dr Alison Weir.

Farnham has a rich literary heritage from the influential journalism and political activism of William Cobbett to J.M. Barrie's magical Peter Pan taking flight, to being home to both Edgar Mittelholzer, the most prolific novelist produced by the Caribbean, and to Victor Ambrus, distinctive storybook illustrations.

The festival thrives thanks to the invaluable enthusiasm, contributions and collaborations of partners, organisations, community groups, volunteers, venues and sponsors. Their commitment helps to create a welcoming atmosphere and ensures the festival continues to grow and prosper.

The 2025 festival was the biggest yet, with over 50 events taking place across 11 venues over 11 days. An estimated 3,000 tickets were sold, marking record attendance that saw audiences enjoy engaging discussions, inspiring talks and memorable moments with renowned authors. In a fitting

celebration of four years, the festival welcomed four headline authors, all-round entertainer Reverend Richard Coles, fresh from the jungle, bestselling novelist Louis de Bernières, beloved television presenter Lorraine Kelly and the UK's biggest-selling children's author, David Walliams.

With its strong foundations, literary legacy and passionate community, Farnham Literary Festival continues to write an inspiring story of its own and this is just the beginning.



"I'm delighted to have just been at the Farnham Literary Festival in a fantastic venue selling heaps and heaps of books to the nicest audience I've ever had. It's been just wonderful... I'm going home very joyful." - Dame Jacqueline Wilson



Eat and Drink in Farnham

Farnham is home to an abundance of fabulous places to eat and drink, from beloved independents to popular chain restaurants and cafés.

Whether you're after a coffee and a sweet treat in a cosy café, a comforting meal in a historic pub or flavours from around the world, Farnham is your go-to destination.



BUSH

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The Bush is an independent hotel that has been welcoming guests through its doors since 1618.

Steeped in history but embracing contemporary design, the Bush is the perfect blend of the old world and the new and prides itself on being a friendly, family owned hotel.

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For reservations please contact reception via reception@farnhambush.com or the telephone number below

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FARNHAMBUSH.COM - 01252 715237 - @FARNHAM_BUSH_HOTEL

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www.Farnhamu3a.org.uk/groups

Registered charity number 1019078

Welcome to the 2026 Farnham Literary Festival Schools' Programme!

Farnham Town Council is delighted to announce our 2026 Schools' Programme, a celebration of imagination, storytelling and the joy of reading. In partnership with The Blue Bear Bookshop, and with the generous support of sponsors and the local community the Farnham Literary Festival once again invites young people to connect with inspiring local talent, bestselling authors and creative voices from across the literary world.

At a time when literacy and a love of reading are being championed nationally more than ever, this programme aims to inspire confidence, curiosity and a lifelong connection to books. Through author talks, workshops and interactive sessions, students will be encouraged to explore language, stories and their own creative potential in meaningful and exciting ways.

The Schools' Programme is made possible by the continued support of Farnham Town Council, our valued sponsors, local businesses, dedicated volunteers and the talented authors who so generously share their time and expertise. Together, we are proud to create opportunities that support literacy development while sparking imagination and a passion for learning.

Join us in 2026 for another inspiring celebration of stories, creativity and community at the Farnham Literary Festival Schools Programme.



Becky Blake



Ben Davis



Ian Brown



Jack Noel



Nat Harrison



Robert Tregoning



Steve Williams



Festival Booking Information

Tickets are available online, please visit the festival website www.farnhamliteraryfestival.co.uk to buy tickets. Please note that each event must be booked individually; there is no basket option available for booking multiple events.

Tickets are available to buy in person from Farnham Town Hall on South Street (Monday - Friday, 10am - 4.30pm) where Farnham Town Council staff will be happy to help. Booking fees will be applied to all bookings. Books will be available to purchase at most author events.

If you have any queries, please contact literaryfestival@farnham.gov.uk or call 01252 712667.






List of Venues:

- 01** Brightwells Creative Space
Brightwells, GU9 7UA
.....
- 02** Farnham Library
28 West Street, GU9 7DR
.....
- 03** Farnham Maltings
Bridge Square, GU9 7QR
.....
- 04** Farnham Town Hall
South Street, GU9 7RN
.....
- 05** Helen Arkell Dyslexia Charity
24 West Street, GU9 7DR
.....
- 06** Museum of Farnham
38 West Street, GU9 7DX
.....
- 07** Oxfam Books & Music
18-19 The Borough, GU9 7NF
.....
- 08** St Andrew's Church
Upper Church Lane, GU9 7PW
.....
- 09** The Wheatsheaf
19 West Street, GU9 7DR
.....
- 10** University for the Creative Arts
Falkner Road, GU9 7DS

Further Afield:

All Hallows Catholic School
Weybourne Rd, GU9 9HF
.....


St Mark's Church
Alma Lane, GU9 0LT
.....


 farnhamliteraryfestival.co.uk


  @farnhamlitfest






Brought to you by
Farnham Town Council

 Farnham Town Hall,
South Street, Farnham,
Surrey, GU9 7RN

 01252 712667

 www.farnham.gov.uk

 events@farnham.gov.uk

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Gym.**

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