
NOTTINGHAM POETRY FESTIVAL

Rooted —
in
Nottingham

5th-14th June 2026

nottinghampoetryfestival.com



Welcome from the Nottingham Poetry Festival Team

We are thrilled to announce that, with the support of Arts Council England, Nottingham Poetry Festival returns this year with an exciting new programme.

Our 2026 theme, **Rooted in Nottingham**, is a ten-day celebration exploring how poetry can help reconnect our urban city with the natural world. Through words, stories, and shared experiences, the festival invites audiences to reflect on the landscapes, communities, and histories that shape Nottingham.

This year's programme combines acclaimed headline performances with an ambitious range of activities for all ages. Highlights include: events for children and young people; nature-inspired workshops; library sessions; school projects; refugee and migrant storytelling; and a wide variety of community-led activities. The festival is made possible through collaboration with our valued partners, including Castle Rock Brewery, Nottingham City of Literature, BBC Upload, Nottingham Libraries, ChalleNGe, Lakeside Arts, Broadway Cinema and other local cultural organisations, alongside many talented poets from across the city.

Together, we are creating an accessible, environmentally-conscious, city-wide celebration that reflects the creativity and diversity of Nottingham.

Alma and Tommy

on behalf of the
Nottingham Poetry Festival Team

Key for events:

- L** = Live
- H** = Hybrid
- N** = Online
- W** = Wheelchair accessible
- S** = Steps/not wheelchair accessible
- F** = Family friendly event
-  = British Sign Language (BSL) interpreted

Welcome to the Festival

It's festival time, and you're invited to the launch party! Get yourself down to the Fox and Grapes in Sneinton Market for an abundance of poetry fun. Want to watch? Then pull up a chair! Want to perform? Put your name down for the open mic! Fancy a sneak preview of the amazing talent on show at Nottingham Poetry Festival? You're gonna get one! Expect writing opportunities, live illustration and much more. Hosted by the Nottingham Poetry Festival team, this event will get you up to speed ahead of ten amazing days of words.

**Fox & Grapes, Thursday 4 June,
7pm-11pm, Free**

L W



Rooted in Nottingham Poem

Cara Thompson, Nottingham's Nature Poet Laureate, has written a beautiful poem to be screened at Broadway Cinema in celebration of this year's Nottingham Poetry Festival.

If you're heading to the cinema, keep an eye out for the short film, which will be shown before selected screenings.

Broadway Cinema, 2nd-14th June

L W

Henry Normal

Tour of Nottingham Libraries

Back once again for another tour of Nottinghamshire Libraries, Henry Normal and friends treat us to a tour of the book palaces of our city.

Henry is a writer, poet, television and film producer, founder of the Manchester Poetry Festival (now the Literature Festival) and co-founder of the Nottingham Poetry Festival. In 2017, he received a special BAFTA for services to television.

He co-wrote and script edited the multi-award-winning Mrs Merton Show and its spin-off Mrs Merton and Malcolm, and co-created and co-wrote the first series of The Royle Family. With Steve Coogan, he co-wrote Paul and Pauline Calf Video Diaries, Coogan's Run, Tony Ferrino, Doctor Terrible, Coogan's live tours, and the film The Parole Officer.

As co-founder and Managing Director of Baby Cow Productions, he executive produced and script edited numerous acclaimed projects, including Philomena,

Gavin and Stacey, Moone Boy, The Mighty Boosh, Red Dwarf, Nighty Night, and Alan Partridge.

Since retiring in 2016, he has written and performed a series of BBC Radio 4 shows combining comedy, poetry and family stories. His memoir A Normal Family (2018), co-written with Angela Pell, became an Amazon bestseller.

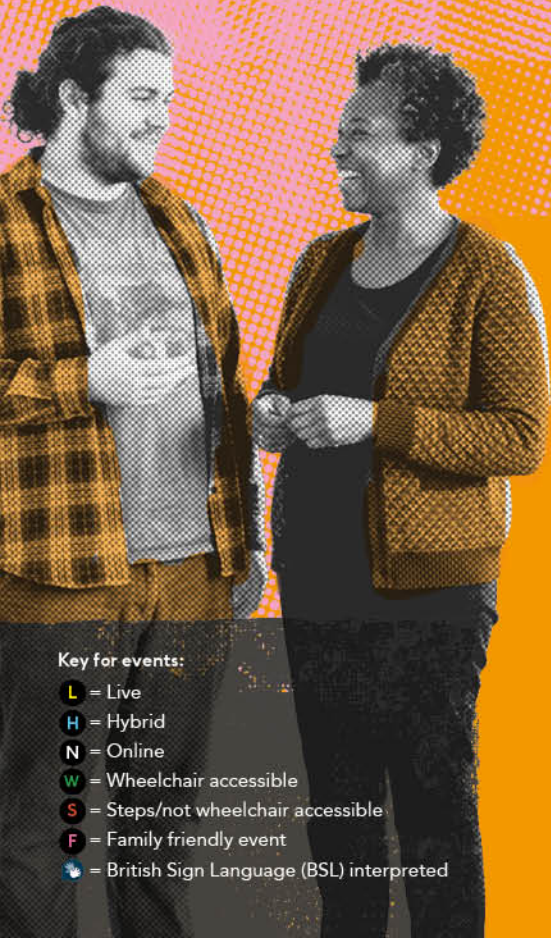
Henry will be accompanied on tour by eleven East Midlands poets:

Day	Date	Time	Library	Poet
Tues	9th June	11am–12pm	Strelley	Keith Ford
Tues	9th June	1:30–2:30pm	Wollaton	Neal Pike
Tues	9th June	4–5pm	St Ann's	Robbie Hood
Wed	10th June	12:30–1:30pm	Hyson Green	Naomi Woods
Wed	10th June	3:30–4:30pm	Radford Lenton	Dan Webber
Wed	10th June	8–10pm	Central (Evening Gig)	Pete Ramskill
Thurs	11th June	3–4pm	Southglade	Rebecca "Bep" Summerscales
Fri	12th June	11am–12pm	Dales Centre	Jake Wildhall
Fri	12th June	1:30–2:30pm	Clifton	Sophie Diver
Fri	12th June	4–5pm	The Meadows	Gabrielle Cracknell
Sat	13th June	11–12pm	Sherwood Library	Johnny Hughes



Workshops and Panel discussions

Workshops are all about developing skills, honing or discussing craft, and understanding how poetry can bring about positive change, perhaps comfort, perhaps hope. For anyone interested in pushing themselves – whether that's on the page, the stage, or in leading a writing session, if you've been at your poetry career for a while or are just getting started – come along to see what you might be able to stick in your back pocket.



Making it Work: Poetry Workshop

Join poet Leanne Moden for a fun and friendly writing workshop, using images and objects from the National Justice Museum to write about work. Does the work we do define us as people? How can we tell engaging and creative stories about work?

National Justice Museum, Fri 5 June, 10am - 12pm, Free.

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Writing Through Time

Join writer Ben Macpherson to explore the artworks from our Drawn Through Time exhibition.

Through writing prompts and storytelling, this workshop will introduce the idea of ekphrasis (the use of art works in poetry and literature) to encourage taking inspiration from art in your creative writing. Thinking about moments from your own life, how we capture memory, and read into the details of these pictures. Writing materials will be provided, so just bring your imagination. No experience required.

Lakeside Arts, Sat 6 June, 11am - 1pm, £16-£20.

L W



Youth Panel: Taking Root

The youth panel discussion is a chance to talk about finding yourself as a young writer in Nottingham. Featuring poets and event organisers from groups like Nottingham UNESCO City of Literature Youth Board, Nottingham Trent University and more, this panel will be a perfect opportunity to hear how young writers establish themselves in Nottingham, find opportunities and build lasting connections that help you grow your skills as a poet.

The Carousel, Sat 6 June, 1pm - 2pm, £5 Refundable Deposit.

F L W

**POETS
OFF
THE
ENDZ**

Poets Off The Endz - Taster Session

Led by Grime artist and poet, Jah Digga, Poets Off The Endz are one of the city's most dynamic and exciting poetry collectives. Are you new to poetry, ever wondered what being a part of a collective is like, want to try your hand at writing? Come and join this free and informal drop-in session led by POTE Facilitators and group members.

Fisher Gate Point, Sat 6 June, 11am - 3pm, Free.

L W



Artful Voice Within: Where Mindfulness Meets Poetry

This 2-hour online gathering invites you to slow down, breathe, and reconnect with the quieter places inside you where expression begins. It's designed for those moments when words feel stuck, fragile, or far away, but you know words are still there.

Online, Sat 6 June,
12pm - 2pm, Free.



Page to Performance

An in-person masterclass in performing your work with confidence, hosted by local voice actor and storyteller Charlie Sanderson. A mixture of teaching and active learning, with professional tips and individual feedback.

Nottingham Central Library, Sat 6 June,
1pm - 3pm, £15-£6. Sliding scale.



Meanderers and Green Hustle Poetry Walk

Join the Meanderers for a nature-inspired walk through the city. This walk-shop will include a guided walk with live poetry readings, creative activities and prompts to write your own nature-inspired writing and create text based artworks. Also included is the opportunity to see work by Robert Montgomery at Nottingham Castle, input from a member of the Green Hustle team and an optional social dinner and sharing event at The Foragers' Kitchen in Sneinton Market.

Nottingham Castle, Tues 9 June,
4:30pm - 7:30pm, £0-£10.



Writing for Wellbeing

Join us online for a fun and relaxed workshop designed to explore mindfulness and creative writing as tools for wellbeing. During the workshop, we will explore and practise mindfulness, delve into contemporary poetry, and discover how our senses can ground us whilst encouraging us to create delicious poems. So get cozy, grab your favourite notebook, and meet us online.

Online, Tues 9 June,
5:30pm - 7pm, £3.96. Register online



Poetry Writing Workshop: Personalised Mythologies | With Naomi Wood

Craft the moments that shape us! In this relaxed writing session, you'll transform everyday images into personalised mythologies. Naomi is a writer, theatre-maker and spoken-word performer with a Master's in Creative and Critical Writing from Sussex University. Suitable for 12+

Visual Arts Studio, Nottingham Lakeside Arts, Tues 9 June, 6pm, £8/£5.



Write Into Nature - A Heartwood Poetry Writing Event

A relaxed creative writing session inspired by the outdoors, whether that's a roadside verge, weeds in the pavement, your local park, gardens, riverside walks, or wilder landscapes. Led by Gail Webb, this session draws on her work with Heartwood Poetry, a bi-monthly nature and eco-poetry night. Participants will also have the option to share their writing at a future open mic event, if they'd like to.

Nottingham Central Library,
Wed 10 June, 11am - 1pm,
£3.50 - £7. Register via website.





Nott Another Writing Room

No pressure. No judgement. No “right way” to write. Just a calm space where people come together to put words on the page (or screen). Maybe you’re deep into a novel, jotting down a poem, journaling, or starting something you can’t quite name yet. However it looks, it’s welcome here. Grab a seat, open your laptop or notebook, and write – or just sit and think (that counts, too). Some days the words flow, some days they don’t, and that’s all part of it. There’s no need to share, speak, or even interact. Just show up.

Nottingham Central Library,
Sat 13 June,
10:30am - 2pm, Free.



Break the Page: How else can a poem speak?

Break the page. Explore storytelling in poetry beyond the written word through voice, performance, and other art forms. Join Dream17 in this playful, interactive workshop that’s open to writers, creatives, and anyone curious, with sharing optional.

Fisher Gate Point, Sat 13 June,
4pm - 5:30pm, Pay as you feel.
Register via website.



What My Home Town Means To Me

Notts Poetry is currently working on a project to look at how people across the East Midlands feel about their local community and how it has changed over the past decade. We are looking for poems, short stories or artwork. We want to know what makes your city special?

The Cock and Hoop,
Sun 14 June, 2pm - 4pm, Free.
Register via website.



Rooted Voices: A Refugee Week 15th-21st June

We all have roots, and we’re proud to be collaborating with Refugee Roots on a special project this year.

Nottingham Playhouse,
Monday 15th June,
7pm - 10pm,
Free.



Participants have worked closely with the Nottingham Poetry Festival team, Alma and Jay, alongside David ‘Stickman’ Higgins and Lux Gagos to create original work. This will be showcased during Refugee Week 2026, launching at a special event on 15th June.

Refugee Week 2026 runs from 15th to 21st June, with this year’s theme, Courage. As a designated City of Sanctuary UK city, Nottingham will host a wide range of events celebrating the contributions, creativity, and resilience of refugees and people seeking sanctuary.



Events

The Nottingham Poetry Festival programme offers opportunities for everyone to contribute to events happening throughout the festival.

Friday 5th June



Typewriter Poetry with Skye Lilly

Have you ever had a poem personally written for you before? Come and find poet Skye Lilly in Nottingham Central Library Cafe where they will be writing custom poetry all afternoon for you to take away on her vintage typewriter. Have a conversation and discover what they make from it.

Nottingham Central Library
12pm - 5pm , Donations.

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Adoption East Midlands: Book of Belonging Launch

What makes a home, and how do we belong? These questions inspired young writers across the region to contribute to a creative project led by Adoption East Midlands, exploring themes of home and belonging.

Working with local author Jay Sandhu, the organisation has created *The Book of Belonging*, a powerful collection of poems and short pieces reflecting on identity, family, connection, and the meaning of 'home'. The book launches at Nottingham Poetry Festival. Featuring diverse voices and perspectives, the collection spans heartfelt poetry and reflective prose, offering personal insights into lived experiences of belonging. Join us at the festival for selected readings and to celebrate this community project. The event is free, and copies of *The Book of Belonging* will be available to purchase on the night.

Fisher Gate Point,
5pm - 6:30pm, Free.

L W



Loud Poets x Fluent in Both

Nottingham's Fluent in Both join Edinburgh's Loud Poets for a dynamic night of spoken word. This collaboration brings together local and national voices, celebrating poetry in all its forms.

Fluent in Both, a cult Nottingham event, showcases poets who speak English as a second language, blending poetry and music to explore identity, diversity and cultural exchange. Edinburgh's Loud Poets, led by Katie Ailes, Mark Gallie, and Kevin Mclean with musician Jack Hinks, deliver an electrifying mix of original poetry, live music, and visuals. Expect bold, funny and moving performances. A powerful, high-energy evening that will excite poetry lovers and win over newcomers alike.

New Art Exchange,
7pm - 9:30pm, £10/£6.

L W



Speech Therapy

Speech Therapy is Nottingham's longest running, often rambling, never still, somehow still standing, spoken word night. Join them for featured poets DK from Accessibility Arts, Robert Punton from Poets Against Racism and Heather Moulson, whose set we loved at Morecambe Poetry Festival 2025.

**Fisher Gate Point,
7pm - 11pm, Donations.**



Saturday 6th June



Ear Buds Collective x NPF - Poets in Your Ears

Poets, now is the time to talk about your work! Join Lucy and her team of local podcasters from the Ear Buds Collective to record a deep dive into your work and craft. Bring a favourite piece and your best speaking voice to the top floor of Nottingham Central Library for a chance to talk about your process and share your work with a new audience. Make sure you book your slot in advance as places are highly limited.

**Nottingham Central Library ,
10:30am - 3:30pm,
Free. Register on website.**



Poetry Salon: Dialect Press

The Dialect Poetry Salon comes to Nottingham on 6th June for a collection of readings, conversation and independent publishing. Featuring Elvire Roberts, JLM Morton and Charlie Sanderson, alongside others from Dialect Press and eco-poetry imprint DIRT.

**Nottingham Central Library,
11am - 12:30pm, £5.
Register on website.**



Poetraits

Oi, poets, quick question: is your headshot a bit blurry, poorly lit... or just not doing you justice? If you're in need of a professional, high-quality photo for your website, social media, press features, or event promos, this is your chance to sort it out. Lux Gagos, former Photography Editor at LeftLion Magazine and resident shutterbug for Nottingham Poetry Festival, is setting up a one-day-only pop-up studio. Book a time slot

with Lux via the NPF website, swing by, and Lux will take a set of professional portraits of your lovely face for you to use however you like – completely free. All we ask in return is simple: please credit Lux if you use the photos. Due to previous no-shows, a refundable deposit is required to secure your slot.

**Fisher Gate Point, 12pm - 5pm,
£10 refundable deposit.
Register on website.**



Loud Poets Slam, Nottingham Heat

The prestigious Loud Poets Slam Series comes to Nottingham for the first time! Watch Nottingham's top poets compete in one of ten heats taking place across Scotland, England and Northern Ireland for the biggest prize in UK slam poetry. The winner will take home £200 and qualify for the 2026 Grand Slam Final in Edinburgh, with a £3,000 cash prize! Featuring Henry Madd as sacrificial poet, this slam heat will be an electric celebration of the very best of spoken word. Supported by Creative Scotland.

**Metronome, 3:30 - 5:30pm,
£10/£7.50,
Tickets on the NPF website.**





European Poetry Festival

The 2026 European Poetry Festival visits Nottingham for the first time! In partnership with Nottingham City of Literature, we present an evening celebrating poetry, performance and the potentials of collaboration. Pairing some of the most dynamic and innovative poets of the thriving Nottingham poetry scene alongside writers from Czechia, Norway, Austria, Slovakia, Poland and all across Europe, over a dozen poets will present new works made for the night, spanning languages, literatures and the European continent.

Nottingham Contemporary,
7pm - 10pm, Free.



NPF Present: Brian Bilston, hosted by Keith Ford, supported by Annie Cross

With over 500,000 followers on social media and a host of sell-out shows across the country, Brian Bilston is one of the UK's most popular poets. He has published several bestselling collections of poetry, including *You Took the Last Bus Home*, *Alexa, what is there to know about love?* and *Days Like These*. His novel, *Diary of a Somebody*, was shortlisted for the Costa First Novel Award, and he has also written collections of poetry for younger readers. In 2025, he released an album of his poetry set to music, *Sounds Made by Humans*, in collaboration with The Catenary Wires. Brian returns to the stage with his latest book, *How to Lay an Egg with a Horse Inside*. Get ready for an evening of comedy and laughter, as he takes us through the hows, whys and whats of reading, writing and enjoying poetry every day. Hosted by Speech Therapy frontman Keith Ford and supported by the wonderful Annie Cross.

Metronome, 7pm - 10pm,
£20/£15, BSL interpreted.



Sunday 7th June



NPF and Lakeside Present | Elements of Nature | Children's Poetry Festival

From 10am till 3pm, enjoy our inside-outside, free **drop-in** festival workshops for children and families exploring the 'four elements' (earth, water, air and fire) through hands-on, interactive activities inspired by nature. Make sculptural poems inspired by nature. Create kites to send words dancing through the air. Add your voice to a growing waterfall of words. Or share your favourite ideas to help us craft a nature poem together. The day also features roar-some family adventures from acclaimed children's poet Dommy B, bringing his trademark energy, humour and storytelling to Lakeside in 'The Dinosaurs Are Back' (ticketed separately). Plus, find favourite stories, old and new, in the Wallner gallery surrounded by an extraordinary, recycled cardboard cityscape. Ages 5+. Please note, tickets must be purchased for the Dommy B show.

Lakeside Arts, 10am - 3pm, Free.



Lakeside Present | Dommy B | The Dinosaurs are Back!

Award-winning rhythmic rhymer Dommy B (Glastonbury Festival Poet in Residence, BBC *Rhyme Rocket*) brings a roar-some mix of poetry, rap, and dance. Follow Proto, the smallest dino, as he meets a cast of prehistoric personalities: Cheeky T-Rex, Gentle Argentinosaurus, and Mysterious Spinosaurus. But, when troublesome Allosaurus cause chaos, can friendship survive? Suitable for ages 5+

Lakeside Arts,
11:30am (Relaxed Performance) &
2:30pm, £9.50-£11
(Multibuy available).





Four Violins Meet One Day

As a part of Sherwood Art week, hear a mix of poetry and music played on the unique Kintsugi violins created at The Secret Violin Shop Nottingham. Lytisha will be performing Four Violins Meet One Day, a commissioned poem, alongside four of Nottingham's finest violin players – Beth Danks, Belinda Burnard, Martin Gallimore and Rob Jourdain – all playing these uniquely-restored violins. There will be a chance to talk to the violin restorer, Mike Sutton, as well as the players and poet after the performance.

The Place Activity Centre (upstairs),
2pm-3pm, Free.



Open Jam: Music & Poetry Night

Experience creativity up close with poetry, music, and relaxed networking while celebrating Nottingham Poetry Festival and the city's creative scene.

Whether you're a musician, poet, or just love good vibes, come solo or with friends – perform or simply enjoy, and bring your instrument if you'd like to join the open mic. Expect poetry and spoken word performances, themed DJ sets, live music from emerging acts and freestyles, plus relaxed networking with fellow creatives.

Movers, 6pm - 10pm, Donations,
Register via website.



Dandelions Poetry Greatest Hits

Come along to celebrate Nottingham Poetry Festival with the Dandelions poets. Dandelions is a warm and welcoming poetry community open to experienced poets and anyone taking the big step to read in public for the first time, too.

Anyone can book a five minute space to read their poems and one favourite poem by another author. Let's share some familiar poems we love and discover new ones.

The Barley Twist, 5pm - 7pm, Free.
Register via website.



Poetry is Shit! (until it saves your life)

Join local poets Diane Horsley and Sue Allen (Diane's mentor and chief heckler) as Diane leads you on her journey from poetry hater and sceptic to poet scribbler. This event is for all whether you love, loathe or are indifferent to poetry. And it's especially for people where poetry saved or changed your life. There will also be an open mic for poets and non poets to share a poem that saved or changed their life. All proceeds from ticket sales will go to Refugee Roots (www.refugeeroots.org.uk).

Fisher Gate Point,
6:30pm - 8:30pm, £5. Register via website.



Monday 8th June

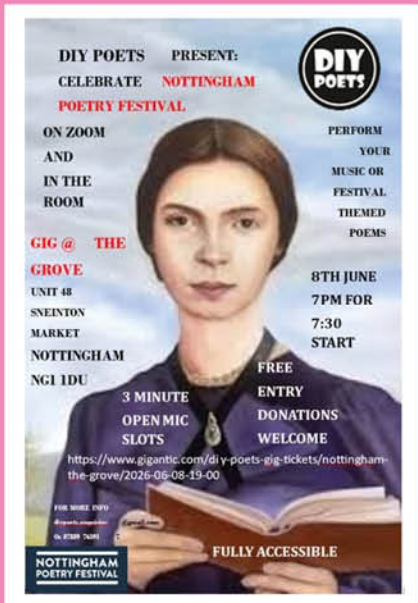


Pints n' Poets

Pints n' Poets is back in the Barley Twist basement for an evening of epic verse and groovy tunes! Local legends and creative geniuses from far and wide will come together to share their poetic sorceries and musical spectacularisms! The existential, the therapeutic and the absurd shall gather! Open mic spaces galore!

The Barley Twist,
6:30pm - 9:30pm, Free.





DIY Poets

DIY Poets are celebrating Nottingham Poetry Festival with a gig at The Grove, a brilliant live music venue in Sneinton Market. Come along for three-minute open mic slots, whether you want to perform live on stage or join in via Zoom on the big screen. Sign-up is available at the event. There's a bar serving both alcoholic and soft drinks, and the venue is welcoming and accessible, with step-free access and a mix of seated and standing options.

The Grove, 7pm - 10pm,
Donations, but booking essential as space is limited, please book via the website.



Kavya Rang Poetry Evening

A traditional Indian poetry recital with a strong emphasis on audience interaction, expect a lively, engaging atmosphere that always leads to a joyful occasion – and is well worth attending if you haven't experienced it before. Kavya Rang is a multilingual poetry collective that nurtures creative writing across cultures. Its members come from a wide range of backgrounds, meeting four times a year to share original work and take part in recitals.

Ramgarhia Sabha Nottingham,
5pm - 8pm, Free.



Tuesday 9th June



The Fighting Nightingales and Their More Talented Friends

Join The Fighting Nightingales and their More Talented Friends – Will Jackdaw, Ross Johnston and a mystery guest – for a world of comically tall tales set to strange music, deadpan musical comedy, wild poetry about astronaut monkeys and so much more.

The Barley Twist,
7pm - 9:30pm, Free.



Monster | Presented by Naomi Wood

Following her acclaimed 2025 show *Gobbess*, Naomi Wood returns with a powerful spoken word performance. A bold, deeply personal story about fear, exposure, and transformation, *Monster* explores what it means to embrace the wild, untamed parts of ourselves. A show about diving into the deep end, and learning to love what you find there. Suitable for 14+

Performing Arts Studio,
Nottingham Lakeside Arts,
8pm, £16/£12/£5.



Wednesday
10th
June _____



Mic Drop!

With this second instalment of our Nottingham Poetry Festival events, Mic Drop! at The Barrel Drop is back! Hosted by Davina Songbird, we welcome an open mic night of poetry of every genre, style and theme. Pop in early to sign up, and share your words in a cosy pub.

The Barrel Drop,
7pm - 9pm, Free.



Free Minds

Free minds is a space to express all those thoughts, feelings and worries that have been zipping around your head to a room of like-minded individuals. At almost three-years strong, Free Minds is a staple of Nottingham's poetic tapestry. A space for poets (and listeners) of all skill levels, we just want to free our minds.

The King Billy, 7:30pm - 9:30pm, Free.
Register via website.



NPF Present: Henry Normal & Pete Ramskill

Expect wit, warmth, laughter and tears. Festival founder and all round top gent Henry Normal treats us to an evening of story telling and poetry, accompanied by his friend, poet and sculptor Pete Ramskill.

Nottingham Central Library,
8pm - 10pm, Free.
Register via website,
BSL interpreted.



Thursday
11th
June _____

NPF present: Yomi Şode in collaboration with Rewyld

Yomi Şode is a multi-award-winning Nigerian-British writer who recently performed at the BBC Proms 2025. His debut collection, *Manorism*, was shortlisted for the T.S. Eliot Prize.

For this performance, created in collaboration with DJ and sound artist Rewyld, Yomi will offer a rare exploration of the third section of *Manorism*, following the staggeringly emotional glimpse audiences witnessed at his last Nottingham performance. This work delves into the guilt, shame, and acts of remembrance that can surface in the wake of losing a loved one.

Support comes from Mohan Mohammed, a Birmingham-based poet whose work often centres

around being queer and British Indian, as well as estrangement and survival. Alongside anger and grief, they write about creating freedom and taking joy into your own hands.

After the show, Yomi will be interviewed by Jake Wildhall of Bad Betty Press.

Lakeside Arts,
7pm - 10pm,
£18/£12.



Friday 12th June _____

NPF Present: John Hegley, hosted by Georgina Wilding.

John Hegley began his career busking outside Westminster tube station, beside the toilets, burning incense sticks to sweeten this experience. He graduated to street entertaining in Covent Garden with the spectacular Popticians, who recorded two sessions for John Peel. Then came a Perrier comedy nomination, a residency at Keats House, twelve books, one mug, an honorary doctorate, an Arts Council funded project taking ten-year-olds into art galleries, and radio appearances across the BBC network, including the one-off special: 'All you ever needed to know about busking.'

The poet Adrian Mitchell said of him 'just because he is one of the funniest men alive, don't underestimate his dedicated gentleness'.

The Independent described him as 'awesomely mundane'.

Please note that this event takes place in the function room on the first floor. There is disabled access via the main bar. Venue and NPF staff will be on hand to help.

**The Canalhouse,
7pm - 10pm, £15/£12.**



L S



BBC Upload x NPF featuring Mr Shay

In the run-up to NPF, we handpicked eight local poets in collaboration with BBC Upload and filmed exclusive performances with them. You'll be able to watch these videos across BBC and NPF social channels.

Join us as we celebrate these incredible poets and their work at a special BBC Upload & NPF collaboration event, headlined by Leicester's Poet Laureate, Mr Shay.

**Rough Trade,
7pm - 10pm, Free.
Register via the website.**

L W

Saturday 13th June _____



BBC Upload x We, The Poets

In collaboration with We, The Poets, BBC Upload and Dean Jackson, join us for an afternoon of panel chats, podcasting, performance and fun.

BBC Upload helps emerging poets and spoken word artists share recordings with local BBC radio, with the chance to be broadcast, featured and supported by producers.

Led by Mark Grist, with Jay Sandhu, Leanne Moden, Charley Genever and Keely Mills, We, The Poets brings fast-paced interviews to Nottingham Poetry Festival, exploring the real, human side of writing.

**Rough Trade,
12pm - 5pm, Free.
Register via the website.**

L W

NPF Present: John Hegley, I AM A POETato

John Hegley, the star of radio, TV and school assemblies unleashes a wild alphabetic menagerie in a live show full of daft and deft wordplay, sing-along numbers and, against all advice, a selection of 'drawings'. Inspired by his A-to-Z of creatures, people, pets and their peculiarities, this performance is packed with Hegley's humour and warmth. From Alligator to Zombie – via dogs, deckchairs and guillemots – expect audio and visual stimulation, entertainment, and thought provocation.

Suitable for anyone who has ever been six years old.

"Family life would be a lot easier if you could just open the cupboard and pull out your Hegley every time things got fractious, heated or miserable" - The List

**The Carousel, 1pm - 3pm,
£8/£5 - Family tickets available.**



F L W



Poets Off the Endz: Showcase

After multiple sell-out shows and an acclaimed stage production, Poets Off The Endz return in 2026 with fresh momentum. As they develop a brand-new stage show, the collective continues to sharpen their craft and push boundaries, cementing their place as one of Nottingham's most dynamic and vital creative forces.

Join them for an evening of hard-hitting poetry, Notts style.

**New Art Exchange,
7pm-10pm, Free.
Register via website.**

L W

Sunday 14th June _____



PGN presents: A Political Bottoms Up!

Poetry Global Network invites you to join readers from TDS 2026, Trump Derangement Syndrome Anthology, and add your own political poems to the event during the international Open Mic at PGN's politically-themed Bottoms Up! event as part of Nottingham Poetry Festival. We all have views on the current political situations at home and abroad, so bring your poems and register for one of the limited open mic slots at the event.

**Online, 4pm - 6pm,
Pay what you feel.
Register via website.**

N



Poets Against Racism: Back to our Roots

Poets Against Racism celebrates its 10th year by going back to its roots: challenging racism, bigotry and discrimination through the power of poetry. We plan to have a live link to poets in the USA, an open mic and some great performers from across the Midlands.

**The Malt Cross,
4pm - 7pm,
Free.**

L W

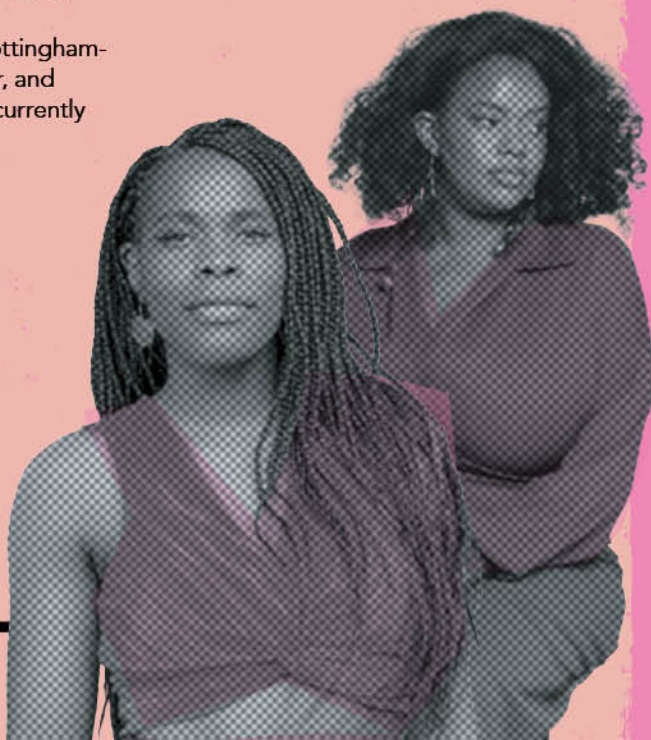
**NPF Present:
Vanessa Kisuule
Cara Thompson
GOBS Collective**

We're delighted to present this joint headline show, with support from the mighty GOBS Collective. Vanessa Kisuule is a Bristol-based writer, performer, and former City Poet (2018-2020). A multi-award-winning slam poet, she has performed internationally and worked with organisations including the BBC, Tate and Glastonbury Festival. Her poem Hollow, responding to the toppling of Edward Colston's statue, has reached over 700,000 views and is widely used in education. She is also the author of two poetry collections and the nonfiction book Neverland. Cara Thompson is a Nottingham-based writer, performer, and interdisciplinary artist, currently serving as Nature Poet Laureate and Writer in Residence at Wasafiri. Her work explores Caribbean-British heritage through poetry, sound, textiles and oral history. She has been commissioned by organisations

including Penguin Random House, UNESCO and Oxfam, and won UNESCO Cities of Literature's Slamovision in 2021. Cara is also a director of Nottingham Poetry Festival and a founding member of the Nottingham Black Creatives Network.

GOBS Collective is a Nottingham-based spoken word group known for bold voices, big energy, and a welcoming creative community. Since 2020, they've built a space for poets of all levels through open mics, workshops, and performances that are as playful as they are powerful.

**The Poppy and Pint,
7pm-10pm,
£10/£8.**



Event listings

Thursday 4th June

Festival Launch	Fox and Grapes 21 Southwell Road, Nottingham, NG1 1DL	7pm - 11pm	Free	L W
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Friday 5th June

Making it Work: Poetry Workshop	National Justice Museum High Pavement, Nottingham NG1 1HN	10am - 12pm	Free	L W
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Typewriter Poetry with Skye Lilly	Nottingham Central Library 1 Carrington St., Nottingham NG1 7FH	12pm - 5pm	Donations	L W
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Adoption East Midlands: Book of Belonging Launch	Fisher Gate Point 1 Fisher Gate, Nottingham NG1 1GD	5pm - 6.30pm	Free	L W
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Loud Poets x Fluent in Both	New Art Exchange 39-41 Gregory Blvd, Nottingham NG7 6BE	7pm - 9.30pm	£10/£6	L W
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Speech Therapy	Fisher Gate Point 1 Fisher Gate, Nottingham NG1 1GD	7pm - 11pm	Donations	L W
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Key: L=Live, H=Hybrid, N=Online, W=Wheelchair accessible, S=Steps/not wheelchair accessible, F=Family friendly event, BSL=British Sign Language interpreted.

Saturday 6th June

Ear Buds Collective x NPF - Poets in Your Ears	Nottingham Central Library 1 Carrington St., Nottingham NG1 7FH	10.30am - 3.30pm	Free Register via website	L	W
Poetry Salon: Dialect Press	Nottingham Central Library 1 Carrington St., Nottingham NG1 7FH	11am - 12.30pm	£5 Register via website	L	W
Writing Through Time	Lakeside Arts University Park, Lakeside Arts, Nottingham NG7 2RD	11am - 1pm	£16-£20	L	W
Poets Off The Endz - Taster Session	Fisher Gate Point 1 Fisher Gate, Nottingham NG1 1GD	11am - 3pm	Free	L	W
Artful Voice Within: Where Mindfulness Meets Poetry	Online	12pm - 2pm	Free	L	N
Poetraits	Fisher Gate Point 1 Fisher Gate, Nottingham NG1 1GD	12pm - 5pm	Free (£10 deposit)	L	S
Youth Panel: Taking Root	The Carousel 25 Hockley, Nottingham NG1 1FH	1pm - 2pm	Free (£5 Refundable Deposit)	L	W F
Page to Performance	Nottingham Central Library 1 Carrington St., Nottingham NG1 7FH	1pm - 3pm	£15-£6 (sliding scale)	L	W
Loud Poets Slam: Nottingham Heat	Metronome Marco Island, Huntingdon St, NG1 1AP	3.30pm - 5.30pm	£10/£7.50	L	W
European Poetry Festival	Nottingham Contemporary Weekday Cross, Nottingham NG1 2GB	7pm - 10pm	Free	L	W
NPF Present: Brian Bilston, hosted by Keith Ford, supported by Annie Cross	Metronome Marco Island, Huntingdon St, NG1 1AP	7pm - 10pm	£20/£15	L	W BSL

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Sunday 7th June

NPF and Lakeside Present: Elements of Nature: Children's Poetry Festival	Lakeside Arts University Park, Lakeside Arts, Nottingham NG7 2RD	10am - 3pm	Free, drop in.	L	W F
Lakeside Present: Dommy B, The Dinosaurs are Back!	Lakeside Arts University Park, Lakeside Arts, Nottingham NG7 2RD	11.30am and 2.30pm	£9.50-£11 (Multibuy available)	L	W F
Four Violins Meet One Day	The Place (upstairs) 2A Melrose St, Sherwood, Nottingham NG5 2JP	2pm - 3pm	Free	L	S
Dandelions Poetry Greatest Hits	The Barley Twist 91 Carrington St., Nottingham NG1 7FE	5pm - 7pm	Free Register via website	L	S
Open Jam: Music & Poetry Night	Movers 15 Hockley, Nottingham NG1 1FH	6pm - 10pm	Donations Register via website	L	W
Poetry is Shit! (until it saves your life)	Fisher Gate Point 1 Fisher Gate, Nottingham NG1 1GD	6.30pm - 8.30pm	£5 Register via website	L	W

Monday 8th June

Pints n' Poets	Barley Twist 91 Carrington St Nottingham, NG1 7FE	6.30am - 9.30pm	Free	L	S
Kavya Rang Poetry Evening	Ramgarhia Sabha Nottingham 31 Percy Road, Old Basford, Nottingham NG6 0GF	5pm - 8pm	Free	L	W
DIY Poets	The Grove Unit 48, Sneinton Market, Freckingham St, Nottingham, United Kingdom, Ng1 1DQ	7pm - 10pm	Donations	H	W

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Tuesday 9th June

Henry Normal Library Tour: Strelley	Strelley Library Strelley Road, Nottingham, NG8 3BJ	11am - 12pm	Free	L	W
Henry Normal Library Tour: Wollaton	Wollaton Library Bramcote Lane, Wollaton, Nottingham, NG8 2NA	1:30pm - 2:30pm	Free	L	W
Henry Normal Library Tour: St Ann's	St Ann's Library St Ann's Valley Centre, 2 Livingstone Road, Nottingham, NG3 3GG	4pm - 5pm	Free	L	W
Meanderers and Green Hustle Poetry Walk	Nottingham Castle Lenton Rd, Nottingham NG1 6EL	4:30pm - 7:30pm	£0-£10	L	W
Writing for Wellbeing	Online	5:30pm - 7pm	£3.96	N	N
Personalised Mythologies With Naomi Wood	Lakeside Arts University Park, Lakeside Arts, Nottingham, NG7 2RD	6pm	£8/£5	L	W
The Fighting Nightingales and Their More Talented Friends	The Barley Twist 91 Carrington Street, Nottingham, NG1 7FE	7pm - 9.30pm	Free	L	S
Monster - Presented by Naomi Wood	Lakeside Arts University Park, Lakeside Arts, Nottingham, NG7 2RD	8pm	£16/£12/£5	L	W

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Wednesday 10th June

Write Into Nature - A Heartwood Poetry Writing Event	Nottingham Central Library 1 Carrington St. Nottingham NG1 7FH	3.30pm - 5.30pm	£10/£7.50	L	W
Henry Normal Library Tour: Hyson Green	Hyson Green Library The Mary Potter Centre, 76 Gregory Boulevard, Nottingham, NG7 5HY	12:30pm - 1:30pm	Free	L	W
Henry Normal Library Tour: Radford/Lenton	Radford/Lenton Library Lenton Boulevard, Nottingham, NG7 2BY	3:30pm - 4:30pm	Free	L	W
Mic Drop!	The Barrel Drop 7 Hurts Yard Nottingham, NG1 6JD	7pm - 9pm	Free	L	S
Free Minds	The King Billy 6 Eyre Street, Nottingham, NG2 4RG	7:30pm - 9:30pm	Free	L	S
NPF Present: Henry Normal & Pete Ramskill	Nottingham Central Library 1 Carrington St., Nottingham NG1 7FH	8pm - 10pm	Free Register via website	L	W BSL

Thursday 11th June

Henry Normal Library Tour: Southglade	Southglade Library Southglade Road, Bestwood, Nottingham, NG5 5GU	3pm - 4pm	Free	L	W
NPF present: Yomi Sode in collaboration with Rewyld	Lakeside Arts University Park, Lakeside Arts, Nottingham NG7 2RD	7pm - 10pm	£18/£12	L	W

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Friday 12th June

Henry Normal Library Tour: Dales Centre	Dales Centre 206 Sneinton Dale, Nottingham, NG2 4HJ	11am - 12pm	Free	L	W
Henry Normal Library Tour: Clifton	Clifton Library Southchurch Drive, Clifton, Nottingham, NG11 8AB	1:30pm - 2:30pm	Free	L	W
Henry Normal Library Tour: The Meadows	The Meadows Library Wilford Grove, Nottingham NG2 2DR	4pm - 5pm	Free	L	W
NPF Present: John Hegley hosted by Georgina Wilding	The Canalhouse 48-52 Canal St, Nottingham NG1 7EH	7pm - 10pm	£15/£12	L	S
BBC Upload x NPF: Featuring Mr Shay	Rough Trade 5 Broad St, Nottingham NG1 3AJ	7pm - 10pm	Free	L	W

Saturday 13th June

Nott Another Writing Room	Nottingham Central Library 1 Carrington St., Nottingham NG1 7FH	10:30am - 2pm	Free	L	W
Henry Normal Library Tour: Sherwood	Sherwood Library Spondon Street, Sherwood, Nottingham, NG5 4AB	11am - 12pm	Free	L	W
BBC Upload x We, The Poets	Rough Trade 5 Broad St, Nottingham NG1 3AJ	12pm - 5pm	Free	L	W
NPF Present: John Hegley I AM A POETato	The Carousel 25 Hockley, Nottingham NG1 1FH	1pm - 3pm	£8/£5	L	W F

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Break the Page: How else can a poem speak?	Fisher Gate Point 1-3 Fisher Gate, Nottingham, NG1 1GD	4pm - 5:30pm	PWYC (Pay what you can)	L	S
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Poets Off The Endz: Showcase	New Art Exchange 39-41 Gregory Blvd, Nottingham, NG7 6BE	7pm - 10pm	Free	L	W
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Sunday 14th June

What My Hometown Means To Me	The Cock and Hoop 25 High Pavement, Nottingham, NG1 1HF	2pm - 4pm	Free	L	S
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PGN presents: A Political Bottoms Up!	Online	4pm - 6pm	Pay what you feel	N	N
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Poets Against Racism	The Malt Cross 16 St James's St, Nottingham, NG1 6FG	4pm - 7pm	Free	L	W
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NPF presents Vanessa Kisuule, Cara Thompson & GOBS	Poppy and Pint Pierrepoint Rd, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5DX	7pm - 10pm	£10/£8	L	W
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Monday 15th June

Rooted Voices: A Refugee Week Showcase	Nottingham Playhouse Wellington Circus, Nottingham. NG1 5AF	7pm - 10pm	Free	L	W
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Thursday 18th June

Heartwood Poetry Special: Safety In Numbers	Nottingham Playhouse Lounge Bar Wellington Circus, Nottingham. NG1 5AF	6:30pm - 8:30pm	£5	L	W
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Multiday events

2nd-14th June

Rooted in Nottingham Poem	Broadway Cinema 14-18 Broad St, Nottingham, NG1 3AL	See cinema schedule	As a part of cinema ticket	L	W
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Now - 6th September

Robert Montgomery: The People You Love Become Ghosts Inside of You	Nottingham Castle Lenton Rd, Nottingham, NG1 6EL	See Castle schedule	As a part of Castle ticket	L	W
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NOTTINGHAM POETRY FESTIVAL

Rooted in Nottingham

Thursday 11th June Yomi Sode

in collaboration with Rewyld



Supported by
Mohan Mohammed

Venue Lakeside Arts

Price £18/£12

Time 8pm

Includes:
After-show
Q&A with
Jake Wildhall
of Bad Betty
Press

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NOTTINGHAM POETRY FESTIVAL

Rooted in Nottingham

Saturday 6th June Brian Bilston



Hosted by Keith Ford
Venue — Metronome
Price — £20/£15
Time — 7pm

Book now at
nottinghampoetryfestival.com

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Castle Rock Discounts

Our Nottingham Poetry Festival sponsors, Castle Rock Brewery, have decided to treat you all to 10% off at Castle Rock Pubs throughout the festival, to use as many times as you like.

All you need to do is download their free app to your phone from your mobile provider's app store. Enter the promo code NPF26, head to your chosen Castle Rock pub, and choose your food or beverage. Huzzah!

Discounted treats all festival-long! Not only that, anyone who uses the code above will automatically be granted a one-time 20% off

discount their next purchase in Castle Rock pubs after the festival, to be redeemed by the end of July.

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