FOOD VILLAGE · BOOKSHOPS · BARS · LIVE MUSIC · ARTISAN MARKET

BordersBook Festival

where words come alive!

11-14 JUNE · 2026

HARMONY GARDEN · MELROSE · SCOTTISH BORDERS

INCLUDING *The* FAMILY BOOK FESTIVAL
Supported by JJ's Foundation
FRI, SAT & SUN



WWW.BORDERSBOOKFESTIVAL.ORG

BordersBook Festival

where words come alive!

11-14 JUNE · 2026

HARMONY GARDEN · MELROSE · SCOTTISH BORDERS

BOOKING INFORMATION

Tickets available online, by phone, or in person.

ONLINE

www.bordersbookfestival.org

TELEPHONE

Citizen Ticket: 0131 290 2112

Lines open Monday - Friday, 10am - 4pm
(closed on bank holidays)

This is a callback service. Just leave your name and number, and we'll get back to you.
For general festival enquiries, call 01896 822644.

IN PERSON

Our on-site **box office** will be open during the festival (11-14 June): Harmony Garden, St Mary's Road, Melrose, TD6 9LJ

Concession tickets (C) are available for students, under-16s, Young Scot cardholders, registered disabled (plus one companion), and those registered unemployed. Please bring proof of entitlement.

Companion tickets are free for those who require a support person – see accessibility info on page 14.

Eco-conscious ticketing

We're proud to run a paperless ticketing system in partnership with Citizen Ticket. Each ticket sold supports reforestation; for every ticket purchased, a donation will go towards planting a tree right here in the UK.

Learn more at: www.citizenticket.co.uk/trees

EVENT INFORMATION

Events last one hour unless otherwise stated. Seating is unreserved.

Arrive on time: Events begin promptly. Late arrivals may not be admitted.

Event listings are accurate at the time of print, but changes can happen. We reserve the right to amend or cancel events. Tickets are non-refundable unless the event is cancelled. Check our website for updates and additions.

Accessibility info is on page 14.

Dogs: Well-behaved dogs on leads are welcome in the Orchard and Harmony Garden, but not in the fruit and vegetable garden (clearly signposted).

Please clean up after your dog. Only **assistance dogs** are allowed inside event venues.

GETTING TO THE FESTIVAL

As part of Scotland's Green Arts Initiative, we're working with others across the cultural sector to reduce our environmental impact. When planning your visit, please consider travelling by public transport, cycling or car sharing where possible.

By Car

Melrose is just minutes from the A68 and A7. For directions and parking info, see page 3.

Car Charging

Rapid chargers are at Buccleuch Street car park. Additional points are nearby at Tweedbank Service Station (TD1 3DJ). Check national sites for more locations.

Cycling

Bike racks are available at the festival. More info on our website.

By Train or Bus

Trains from Edinburgh Waverley to Tweedbank take under an hour, running every 30 minutes at peak times.

From Tweedbank, it's a 1.5-mile walk to the site (festival signs will guide you), or hop on a local bus to Melrose.

Full travel info and timetables can be found under 'Festival Info' on our website.



COVER ILLUSTRATION

This year's festival artwork has been created by artist and printmaker Caroline Convey. Look out for her work in our programme, on posters, across our social media channels and various branded materials. To see more on her amazing work visit: **www.carolineconvey.com**

Borders Book Festival is a Company Limited by Guarantee Registered in Scotland Reg. No. SC296476 Scottish Charity No. SC037347

FESTIVAL 2026 SITE PLAN



HARMONY GARDEN

- **A** Harmony Marquee
- **B** Cullen Kllshaw Marquee
- **C** Bucchleuch Marquee
- **D** Harmony Garden Bookshop
- **E** Harmony Bar
- ▲ Luckie Beans Coffee
- ▲ Over Langshaw Farmhouse Ice Cream

THE ORCHARD

- **F** JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee
- **G** Tweed Marquee
- **H** Creative Hub
- **I** Orchard Bookshop
- **J** Orchard Bar
- **K** Story Space

Food Village includes:

- ▲ With a Cherry on Top
- ▲ Alandas Sea Food
- ▲ Wild at Heart Street Food
- ▲ Pizza Geeks
- ▲ Greek Street Food
- ▲ Screaming Peacock Burgers
- ▲ Overlangshaw Ice Cream
- ▲ Luckie Beans Coffee

ST MARY'S ROAD

- ▭ The Heartland Market (Sat & Sun only)

PARKING: Visitors are advised to park in Melrose town centre where the parking is in easy reach of the festival venues. There is also very limited parking for festivalgoers at the edge of the rugby pitch at Annay Road. This parking is weather dependent.

Although we do have some limited, disabled parking for Blue Badge holders only, we highly recommend using the drop-off point on Annay Road, where assistance from a member of the book festival team will be available. Restrictions will be in place on St Mary's Road from Monday 8 June to Monday 15 June and a diversion route from Abbey Street to Newstead will be in operation.

Welcome to the Borders Book Festival 2026

Superlatives can be overwrought, overworked and made threadbare cliches by careless use. But not here. You have in your hands the very best ever programme for the Borders Book Festival. And that is saying something.

With unique political analysis, Gordon Brown will open the festival and Rory Bremner will close it with analysis of another sort, and a smile. Between them Sam Heughan, Lorraine Kelly, Prue Leith, Alan Titchmarsh, Pam Ayres, Sandy McCall Smith, Sophie Raworth, Penny Mordaunt, Nicola Sturgeon, Jeremy Hunt, Jim Naughtie, Tom Hunter, Chris O'Shea and Kate Forbes will tell stories, offer insights and sparkle which will light up a summer weekend in Melrose.

And there is plenty for younger readers and families too. Our vibrant **Family Book Festival**, thanks to the support of **JJ's Foundation**, brings a joyful bumper weekend of storytelling, discovery and activities for all ages, where firm family favourites sit alongside a host of new highlights.

We couldn't begin to put together our programme without the names on the page opposite. Our funders, sponsors, benefactors, supporters and partners are essential. Their resources and encouragement are behind all that we do. So, our thanks to funders **Scottish Borders Council**, **Creative Scotland**, **EventScotland** and the **Hawthornden Foundation**, a warm welcome to new sponsors, including new Major Sponsor **Irwin Mitchell**, as well as thanks to the continued support of **Canaccord Wealth**, formerly Adam & Company, **JRW Hogg & Thorburn** and **Cullen Kilshaw**, to name a few.

This programme is the moment of handover, when what we have put together becomes your festival, what you make of it all. Because without you, and your joyful participation, it would not exist. Enjoy!

Paula Ogilvie & Alistair Moffat
Directors, Borders Book Festival



Lights, camera…festival!

Photography & Video
TV crews and microphones might be spotted on site - you could end up on the news! Our media team will also be capturing the action throughout the weekend.

Bloom Media Project
We're thrilled to continue this initiative for age 16+ creatives keen to explore media production and storytelling. Look out for our youth production team at the festival.

Special thanks to: The Duke of Buccleuch, Catherine Hamilton, Rory Bremner, Vivian French, James Naughtie, Eleanor Updale
Benefactors: Paul and Clare Rooney, The Blackport Family, Richard and Catherine Burns, The Marquis of Stafford Charitable Trust, Scott and Lucy Nisbet **Patrons:** The De Gier Family, Fiona and Ian Russell, Alistair and Debbie Hall
Supporters: Sue and Rob Moffat, Ann and Maurice White, Catherine Spark, Marion Livingston, Marjie Moffat

MAJOR SPONSOR

irwinmitchell

Wright, Johnston & Mackenzie

GROWING TOGETHER

FAMILY BOOK FESTIVAL SUPPORTER

JJ's Foundation

FUNDERS

LOTTERY FUNDED

EventScotland

Hawthornden Foundation

Scottish Borders Council

CULTURE & BUSINESS FUND SCOTLAND

turtleton CHARITABLE TRUST

TRANSPORT PARTNER

Clelands VOLVO

LOCAL MEDIA PARTNERS

Border Telegraph & Peeblesshire News

Radio 106.5FM

TD9 Radio

MAIN SPONSORS

THE BORDERS DISTILLERY

The Borders Forest Trust

BOWHILL

Canaccord WEALTH

CULLEN KILSHAW SOLICITORS & ESTATE AGENTS

GRAHAM + SIBBALD Chartered Surveyors and Property Consultants

JRW HOGG & THORBURN

Knight Frank

LOCHCARRON MADE in SCOTLAND

SALTIRE SOCIETY SCOTLAND

COMANN CRANN NA H-ALBA

SOUTH OF SCOTLAND DESTINATION ALLIANCE

TRC THOMSON RODDICK CALLAN

Turner & Townsend

SPONSORS, SUPPORTERS AND PARTNERS

Abbey Fine Wines

ABBOTSFORD

CRABTREE & CRABTREE

EILDON

GALASHIELS MOBILITY

Gall Robertson CA inc. Charles Gray and Co

HISTORIC SCOTLAND ALBA AOSMHOR

inspire LEARNING

LIVE BORDERS LIBRARIES

MitchellGlass SUPERIOR HOME LIVING SINCE 1875

NATIONAL TRUST for SCOTLAND

SPG

THOMSON GRAY

xigxag

Thanks also to: Bright Green Nature, Craig & Tania Paterson, Dr David Summers Charitable Trust, Dynamite Initiatives, Fauhope Country House, Hugh Fraser Foundation, Johnston Montgomery, Lloyd Smith Photography & Video, The Mainstreet Trading Company, St Mary's School, Scottish Book Trust, StonehillSalt PR, Super Power Agency and all our amazing festival volunteers.

Harmony Garden

Harmony Garden Bookshop

Browse, buy and have your books signed!

Our children's titles have moved to the Orchard Bookshop, where you'll also find a cosy corner for young readers to settle in and explore.

Every purchase supports the festival and our year-round outreach work.

Open hours:
- Thursday 2.00pm & Friday 12.30pm
- Saturday 9.00am & Sunday 10.00am

Late closing each evening.

Author Signings
Authors appearing in the Harmony Garden venues - Harmony Marquee, Cullen Kilshaw Marquee and Buccleuch Marquee - will be signing books after their events in the **Harmony Garden Bookshop**.

No booking required; simply join the queue. A full range of titles will be available to purchase on site.

Any Family Book Festival authors in the above venues will be signing in the Orchard Bookshop.



Scan code to join our mailing list

Drinking Water

Stay refreshed with our **free refill station** in Harmony Garden - just bring a reusable bottle and top up throughout the day.

Many shops in Melrose display "Free Tap Water Available Here" refill stickers – keep an eye out!

All the Fun of the Festival

Entry to Harmony Garden and the Orchard is completely free - come and enjoy the festival atmosphere at your own pace.

Events for All Ages

- Thanks to **JJ's Foundation**, our **Family Book Festival** is packed with brilliant events for children and teens.
- You'll also find a selection of adult events suitable for younger audiences - please check the programme for guidance.





The Orchard

The Orchard Bookshop

Our children's titles have a new home in the Orchard - come and explore a wonderful range of books for all ages.

Open hours:
- Thursday 2.00pm & Friday 12.30pm
- Saturday 9.00am & Sunday 10.00am

Late closing each evening.

Author Signings
All authors for adult and children's events appearing in Orchard venues - JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee, Tweed Marquee and the Creative Hub - will sign books in the **Orchard Bookshop** after their events. The books will be available to purchase here for the signings.

And more good news!
Sunshine has been firmly booked for the weekend - but if the weather has other plans, our expanded transparent canopy has you covered (along with your food and drink).



Explore Melrose Abbey

This year, we bring three special events to Melrose Abbey - **The Scribble & Scrawl Abbey Crawl** for families, and **two storytelling sessions** within the adult lineup.

See the programme for full details.

You can also explore the Abbey grounds free of charge on festival Saturday, with a lively programme of living history re-enactments, family activities, guided tours and talks.

Find out more at: hes.scot/melrose-abbey

The team from **Historic Environment Scotland** will also have a stand in the **Orchard** on Saturday. Drop by, say hello and enjoy some free activities for both adults and children.

Food and Drink

From local producers to global street food, our food and drink lineup has something for every appetite.

Sips Events returns under our giant stretch tent, serving superb wines, craft gins and beers - the perfect spot to relax and watch the festival world go by.

This year's food offering covers all the bases: enjoy the finest Scottish seafood from **Alanda's Scottish Seafood Grill**, gourmet burgers, hot dogs and loaded fries from **Screaming Peacock**, artisan pizzas from **Pizza Geeks** and sweet treats from **With a Cherry on Top**. For something further afield, W**ild at Heart Street Food** brings bold, globally inspired toasties, while **Greek Street** serves authentic Greek favourites - chicken gyros, pork souvlaki, halloumi fries and fresh feta salad - from their eye-catching French van.

For something sweet, treat yourself to ice cream from **Over Langshaw Farm**, with specialty coffee and refreshments from **Luckie Beans** keeping you going between events.

Whether you're grabbing a quick bite or settling in for a leisurely drink, there's plenty to savour across the festival site.

Check the website for the full list of delicious options. **www.bordersbookfestival.org**



The HEARTLAND MARKET

Back with us on Saturday and Sunday during the festival. Established to celebrate the artisan makers and shakers of Galashiels and the surrounding area and it offers shoppers a unique experience to buy directly from local creative artisan producers.

www.theheartlandmarket.uk

BBC at Borders Book Festival

We're thrilled to welcome the **BBC** to the festival with two special free events taking place in the JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee.

Join the team from BBC Radio 4 **Loose Ends** on Thursday for their much-loved mix of conversation, comedy and live performance, recorded in front of a festival audience.

Then, on Friday, BBC Radio 4 **Bookclub** brings readers closer to the books they love, with the chance to hear directly from a featured author and be part of the discussion.

Tickets are **free** but must be booked through the BBC Shows & Tours website when released in May. Guest details will also be announced there. Don't miss this exciting new addition to the festival programme!

If you would like to be in the audience for either of these shows, go to: bbc.co.uk/showsandtours/shows

BBC

NEW FOR 2026

Watch Online!

If you cannot attend an event or the festival, why not choose to watch the following events online.



Stuart Maconie, Jamie Bartlett, Prue Leith, Sophie Raworth, Steph McGovern, Claudia Hammond, Peter Ricketts, Alexander McCall Smith Murrayfield, Lorraine Kelly, Chris Brookmyre and Doug Johnstone, Andrew Lownie, Helene von Bismarck, Larry Lamb, Steve Brusatte & David Farrier

THURSDAY 11 JUNE

6.45pm Stuart Maconie: With a Little Help from their Friends

8.30pm Jamie Bartlett: How to Talk to AI (and How Not To)

FRIDAY 12 JUNE

5.00pm Prue Leith

6.45pm Sophie Raworth: Running on Air

8.30pm Steph McGovern

SATURDAY 13 JUNE

12.15pm Claudia Hammond: Overwhelmed

2.00pm Peter Ricketts: Peace Makers

3.45pm Alexander McCall Smith

5.30pm Murrayfield: 100 Years of History in 100 Matches

7.15pm Lorraine Kelly

9.00pm Chris Brookmyre & Doug Johnstone

SUNDAY 14 JUNE

12.45pm Andrew Lownie: Entitled - The Rise and Fall of the House of York

2.15pm Helene von Bismarck

4.00pm Larry Lamb

5.45pm Steve Brusatte & David Farrier: Evolution, Adaptation and the Living World

Single Event: £6
All Events: £60

To get your online pass:
BBF-LINKS.ORG/VIEW
or scan QR Code

You can watch these events live at the advertised times plus your pass will give you access to catch up until the end of June.

Festival at a Glance

FAMILY EVENTS

THURSDAY 11 JUNE

Time	Event	Location	Page
2.45pm - 4.00pm	BBC Radio 4 Loose Ends with Stuart Maconie	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	15
5.00pm	Gordon Brown	Harmony Marquee	15
5.00pm	The Walter Scott Prize 2026	Cullen Kilshaw Marquee	15
5.00pm	Eve Muirhead: Ice Queen	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	16
5.00pm	Helen Watson: Tea & Grit – a Bicycle Journey Along the Silk Road	Buccleuch Marquee	16
5.00pm	Neil Francis: Resilience, Reinvention & the Writing Life	Tweed Marquee	16
6.45pm	Build Britain Better	Harmony Marquee	17
6.45pm	Stuart Maconie: With a Little Help from their Friends	Cullen Kilshaw Marquee	17
6.45pm	Firebrand Theatre: Ungetatable	Buccleuch Marquee	18
6.45pm	Anne Sebba: The Women's Orchestra of Auschwitz	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	18
6.45pm	Borders Writers' Forum: New Beginnings	Tweed Marquee	18
8.30pm	Kate Forbes	Harmony Marquee	19
8.30pm	Jamie Bartlett: How to Talk to AI (and How Not To)	Cullen Kilshaw Marquee	19
8.30pm - 10.00pm	Horse - Trio	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	20
8.30pm	Dan Richards: Journeys, Conversations & Stories After Dark	Buccleuch Marquee	20

FRIDAY 12 JUNE

Time	Event	Location	Page
1.30pm	BBC Radio 4 Bookclub with James Naughtie	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	21
1.30pm	Louise Gooding: Wonderfully Wired Brains	Buccleuch Marquee	49
1.30pm	Create Your Own Creature with Kate McLelland!	Creative Hub	50
1.30pm - 4.00pm	Guided Walk - Discover Melrose	Around Melrose	21
3.00pm	Somatic Yogic Energy	Cullen Kilshaw Marquee	21
3.15pm	Judy Murray	Harmony Marquee	22
3.15pm	Peaceful Poetry with Vivian French	Buccleuch Marquee	50
3.15pm	Fiona Carswell: Sensory Adventures in Storytelling	Tweed Marquee	50
4.30pm - 6.00pm	Breathing Life into Scotland's Forgotten Women: Fiction Workshop	Creative Hub	23
5.00pm	Prue Leith: Being Old & Learning to Love It!	Harmony Marquee	23
5.00pm	Jeremy Hunt: Can We Be Rich Again?	Cullen Kilshaw Marquee	23
5.00pm	Andrew O'Hagan: On Friendship	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	24
5.00pm	Shona MacLean	Buccleuch Marquee	24

FRIDAY 12 JUNE **continued**

5.00pm	**Tom Pow: Encounters with Simone Weil**	Tweed Marquee	24
6.45pm	**Sophie Raworth: Running on Air**	Harmony Marquee	25
6.45pm	**Tom Kitchin**	Cullen Kilshaw Marquee	25
6.45pm	**Bolder Not Older with Nicky Hambleton-Jones**	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	26
6.45pm	**Len Pennie: Poyums Annaw**	Buccleuch Marquee	26
6.45pm	**MC Fox: Perfectly Woven Lies**	Tweed Marquee	26
6.45pm	**Shelley Klein: My Husband & Other Rats**	Creative Hub	27
8.30pm	**Alan Titchmarsh**	Harmony Marquee	27
8.30pm	**Steph McGovern: Deadline**	Cullen Kilshaw Marquee	28
8.30pm-10.00pm	**Jaywalkers**	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	28
8.30pm	**Shelley Klein: The See-Through House**	Buccleuch Marquee	28

SATURDAY 13 JUNE

Time	Event	Location	Page
9.45am	**Circus Mayhem with Tweedy the Clown**	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	51
9.45am	**Alan Windram: The Catventures of Sparky & George**	Buccleuch Marquee	51
9.45am	**Jude Reid: The Nightkeeper's Apprentice**	Tweed Marquee	52
9.45am - 10.10am	**Bookbug Rhyme Session**	Creative Hub	52
10.15am	**Guided Meditation**	Cullen Kilshaw Marquee	29
10.30am - 10.55am	**Bookbug Rhyme Session**	Creative Hub	52
10.30am - 3.30pm	**Nature Unleashed: Stories & Rewilding Outdoor Activities**	Story Space & Orchard	52
10.30am - 3.30pm	**Magical Creatures of Abbotsford: A Drop-In Adventure**	Abbotsford Tent	53
11.15am	**Nick Sharratt's 'Hair-larious Hairstyles' Drawalong**	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	53
11.15am	**300 Words Story Writing Competition Awards**	Buccleuch Marquee	54
11.15am	**Alistair & Grace Moffat: Molly Mason the Pet Detective**	Tweed Marquee	54
11.30am	**Lego Club**	Creative Hub	54
12.15pm	**Penny Mordaunt: Pomp & Circumstance**	Harmony Marquee	29
12.15pm	**Claudia Hammond: Overwhelmed**	Cullen Kilshaw Marquee	29
12.45pm	**Jim Smith: Genius Kid Goes Viral**	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	55
12.45pm	**Dougie Payne & Rachel Seago: Poochie Pete & His Very Big Feet**	Buccleuch Marquee	55
12.45pm	**Yasmin Hanif: Abdullah's Bear Needs a Name!**	Tweed Marquee	55
1.15pm	**Teen Writing Workshop with Bruna De Luca**	Creative Hub	56
2.00pm	**Sam Heughan**	Harmony Marquee	30
2.00pm	**Peter Ricketts: Peace Makers**	Cullen Kilshaw Marquee	31
2.15pm	**The New Famous Five with Chris Smith**	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	56
2.15pm	**Monster Draw-Along with Tom Morgan-Jones**	Buccleuch Marquee	56

SATURDAY 13 JUNE continued			
2.15pm	**Louise Gooding: Minna's Masks**	Tweed Marquee	56
2.15pm	**Tales for the Present**	Melrose Abbey	31
3.00pm - 4.30pm	**ILLUSTRATOR ALERT!!! A Workshop with Vivian French**	Creative Hub	31
3.45pm	**Alexander McCall Smith**	Harmony Marquee	32
3.45pm	**Justine Picardie**	Cullen Kilshaw Marquee	32
3.45pm	**Martin Frizell: Remember When - Fiona Phillips' Story**	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	33
3.45pm	**Art & the Age of the Earth: A Meeting Point**	Buccleuch Marquee	33
3.45pm	**Retelling Scotland's Stories**	Tweed Marquee	33
5.30pm	**Pam Ayres**	Harmony Marquee	34
5.30pm	**Murrayfield: 100 Years of History in 100 Matches**	Cullen Kilshaw Marquee	34
5.30pm	**Sally Magnusson**	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	35
5.30pm	**Linda McDonald: All the Women**	Buccleuch Marquee	35
5.30pm	**Henry Borthwick: Tales from Oxton to Fala**	Tweed Marquee	35
5.30pm	**The Reality of Fiction**	Creative Hub	36
7.15pm	**Lorraine Kelly**	Harmony Marquee	36
7.15pm	**Tim Willasey-Wilsey: The Spy & the Devil**	Cullen Kilshaw Marquee	37
7.15pm	**Dr Emily Leeming: Fibre Power**	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	37
7.15pm	**From Aotearoa to the Borders: Tina Makereti in Conversation**	Buccleuch Marquee	37
7.15pm	**Borders Poets in Conversation**	Tweed Marquee	38
9.00pm	**Rory Bremner**	Harmony Marquee	38
9.00pm	**Chris Brookmyre & Doug Johnstone: 50 Years of Thrilling Fiction**	Cullen Kilshaw Marquee	39
9.00pm	**Natalie Haynes: No Friend to this House - One-Woman Show**	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	39
9.00pm	**Paul Harris: The Warrior Walker**	Buccleuch Marquee	39

SUNDAY 14 JUNE

Time	Event	Location	Page
10.45am -12.00pm	**Qi Gong: Introducing Five Animal Frolic**	Cullen Kilshaw Marquee	40
11.00am	**Supertato Silliness with Sue Hendra**	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	57
11.00am	**Peter Burns: Dare You Step into the Shadows?**	Buccleuch Marquee	57
11.00am	**Becoming a Book Lover with Michaela Morgan**	Tweed Marquee	57
11.00am – 1.45pm	**Drop in and Draw**	Creative Hub	58
11.00am - 3.30pm	**Magical Creatures of Abbotsford: A Drop-In Adventure**	Abbotsford Tent	58
12.45pm	**James Naughtie**	Harmony Marquee	40
12.45pm	**Andrew Lownie: Entitled - The Rise & Fall of the House of York**	Cullen Kilshaw Marquee	40
12.45pm	**Anne & Steve Brusatte: My Grandparents were Dinosaurs**	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	58
12.45pm	**Justin Davies: Have You Seen a Jellyfish?**	Buccleuch Marquee	59

SUNDAY 14 JUNE **continued**

12.45pm	**Jill Calder: I Love You Every Colour**	Tweed Marquee	59
12.45pm	**Dougie Strang: Border Tales**	Melrose Abbey	41
2.15pm	**Melrose Mastermind**	Harmony Marquee	41
2.15pm	**Helene von Bismarck**	Cullen Kilshaw Marquee	41
2.15pm	**Beano Celebrates Dennis 75 & The Year of Mischief**	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	60
2.15pm	**Jonathan Mullard: Forgotten Forests**	Buccleuch Marquee	42
2.15pm	**Vivian French: Bumps & Bruises - & Lots of Fun!**	Tweed Marquee	60
2.35pm – 3.00pm	**Scots Bookbug**	Creative Hub	60
3.00pm - 4.30pm	**The Scribble & Scrawl Abbey Crawl**	Melrose Abbey	61
3.30pm	**Squeak, Squish, Rattle! Sensory Stories for All**	Creative Hub	61
4.00pm	**Larry Lamb**	Harmony Marquee	42
4.00pm	**Alistair Moffat**	Cullen Kilshaw Marquee	42
4.00pm	**Tom Service: A History of the World in 50 Pieces**	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	43
4.00pm	**Gill Arbuthnott: All in the Mind**	Buccleuch Marquee	61
4.00pm	**Ross MacKay: Tractors in Space**	Tweed Marquee	61
5.45pm	**Nicola Sturgeon: Frankly**	Harmony Marquee	43
5.45pm	**Steve Brusatte & David Farrier: Evolution, Adaptation & the Living World**	Cullen Kilshaw Marquee	44
5.45pm	**Supermarket Wine Secrets with Helen McGinn**	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	44
5.45pm	**Peter Fiennes**	Buccleuch Marquee	44
5.45pm	**Mairi Kidd: An Introduction to Gaelic Literature**	Tweed Marquee	45
7.30pm	**Rory Bremner in conversation with Alistair Moffat**	Harmony Marquee	45
7.30pm	**Denise Mina & Heidi Amsinck: Lies, Secrets & Deadly Truths**	Cullen Kilshaw Marquee	45
7.30pm - 9.00pm	**Down in Laurel Canyon**	JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee	46
7.30pm	**Dougie Strang: The Bone Cave**	Buccleuch Marquee	46



Accessibility Information

From seating to parking - all the accessibility info you need in one place.



Sound enhancement in venues
We have a hearing loop system in our three largest venues: Harmony Marquee, Cullen Kilshaw Marquee and JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee. Simply set your hearing aid to 'T' for access.

Wheelchair access
All venues have wheelchair access. There is also extensive tracking across the festival site to ensure access is as smooth and level as possible.

Seating requests
If you have a wheelchair, or you need to sit in a specific area (aisle, etc), we can reserve seats for you. At least two days in advance, please complete and submit the request form which can be found in the seating requests section of the accessibility page on our website. Due to limited space and high demand, we are unable to reserve seats for others in your group – we want to ensure our accessible seats are available for those who most need them.

Companion tickets
If you need a support person or aide to attend events, they are entitled to a free companion ticket. These tickets should be booked at the same time you buy your own tickets.

BSL interpreted events
A selection of events will have a BSL interpreter. Look out for the BSL icon under events in the programme or online. If you are a deaf person and find your chosen BSL event has sold out, please email us at info@bordersbookfestival.org to enquire about ticket availability.

Toilets
We have toilets for everyone, including gender neutral and wheelchair accessible toilets plus baby changing facilities.

Assistance dogs
Assistance dogs are welcome to attend events. If you do need an assistance dog, please complete the request form in the assistance dog section of the accessibility page on our website at least two days before your event so that we can reserve appropriate seating.

Hidden Disabilities Sunflower
Wearing the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower lanyard discreetly indicates to our trained staff that you may need additional support or help as you navigate the festival site and attend events. Lanyards are available at the box office.

Accessibility parking
Although we do have some limited disabled parking for Blue Badge holders, we highly recommend using the drop-off point on Annay Road, where assistance from a member of the festival team will be available.

Mobility scooters
A small number of mobility scooters will be available to borrow on a first come, first served basis. The collection point is located next to the box office. If you wish to book these in advance, please complete the request form which can be found in the mobility scooters section of the accessibility page on our website at least two days before your planned visit.

THURSDAY 11 JUNE

WWW.BORDERSBOOKFESTIVAL.ORG



BBC Radio 4 Loose Ends with Stuart Maconie

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee
2.45pm - 4.00pm | Free

The BBC brings Radio 4 Loose Ends to the festival for a special live recording hosted by Stuart Maconie. Expect a lively mix of conversation, wit, music and surprise guests as one of Radio 4's best-loved programmes comes to the Borders. Smart, funny and full of energy, this is a rare chance to experience the magic of a national broadcast being made in front of a live audience.

Tickets are free but must be booked through the BBC Shows & Tours website when released. Guest details will also be announced there.



Gordon Brown

Harmony Marquee
5.00pm | £16, £14

In a world torn by turmoil and wracked by uncertainty answers are difficult to come by. But informed analysis is essential in the search for them. Having met and talked with Vladimir Putin, Xi Jinping and other world leaders and having been at the centre of a solution to the last great global crisis, the financial crash of 2008/09, few are better qualified than Gordon Brown to offer an analysis of current affairs and a sense of what options the future holds. An event unique to the Borders Book Festival.

The Walter Scott Prize 2026

Cullen Kilshaw Marquee | 5.00pm | £10, £8

Presented by Abbotsford, the home of great historical fiction, the Walter Scott Prize stands as one of the top accolades in the literary world. Join us for an unforgettable celebration of fiction set in the past as we welcome the five shortlisted authors vying for this year's £25,000 prize and see the winner announced live by the Duke of Buccleuch and Matthew Maxwell Scott, Sir Walter's direct descendant. With only five authors on this year's shortlist, you'll have plenty of time to meet:

Jo Harkin, whose novel *The Pretender* is heralded as "a bold and brilliant comedy of royal intrigue"; **Alice Jolly**, author of *The Matchbox Girl*, a novel that has drawn comparisons to *The Bell Jar* and *Beloved*; **Graeme Macrae Burnet**, whose gripping narrative *Benbecula* relates a terrible real event on a remote Hebridean island; **Rachel Seiffert**, whose powerful novel *Once the Deed is Done* explores the lives of displaced persons in the aftermath of the Second World War and **Benjamin Wood**, whose Booker long-listed work *Seascraper* chronicles the life of a shanker earning a living from the sea.



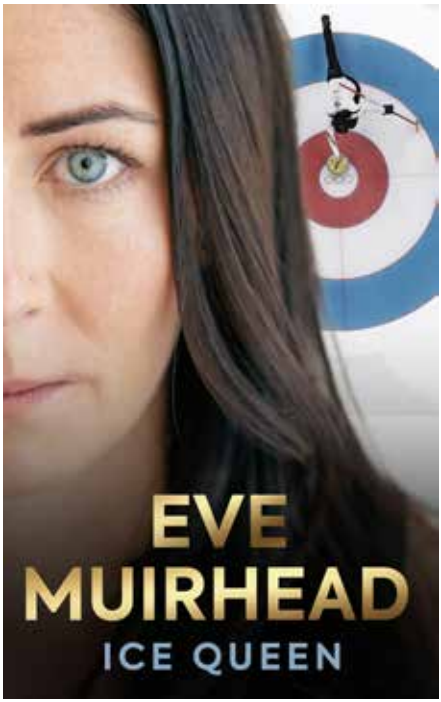
Jo Harkin, Alice Jolly, Graeme Macrae Burnet, Rachel Seiffert, Benjamin Wood

ABBOTSFORD
THE HOME OF Sir Walter Scott

THE WALTER SCOTT PRIZE FOR HISTORICAL FICTION







Eve Muirhead: Ice Queen

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee | 5.00pm | £14, £12

Fairy tales such as the Ice Queen do sometimes come true. At the Winter Olympic Games in 2022 in Beijing, Eve led the British Women's Curling Team to the gold medal. It was the culmination of a lifetime in the sport for the Perthshire farmer's daughter. But in 'the roaring game' her journey from child prodigy to the best in the world was not a straight line. With Eric Nicolson, Eve tells a story of hidden adversity, inner doubt and external pressure on the journey to becoming a national icon and one of Scotland's greatest athletes.



Neil Francis: Resilience, Reinvention & the Writing Life

Tweed Marquee | 5.00pm | £10, £8



From East Lothian to the global business stage, Neil Francis brings a remarkable story of reinvention. A former CEO whose career was abruptly halted by a catastrophic stroke at 41, Neil rebuilt his life - and found a powerful new voice as a writer. He reflects on the journey behind his six books – from *Changing Course*, first published in 2013, to his latest work, *The Leadership Book* - exploring themes of leadership, personal development, psychology and entrepreneurship. With honesty and humour, Neil shares lessons drawn from recovery, resilience and starting again, alongside the realities of writing, publishing and self-doubt. This is an inspiring conversation about adapting, learning and finding purpose after life takes an unexpected turn.





Helen Watson: Tea and Grit – a Bicycle Journey Along the Silk Road

Buccleuch Marquee | 5.00pm | £10, £8

15,000 kilometres. Two bikes. One extraordinary journey. In 2010, Helen Watson and her husband set off from Glasgow to China, cycling the Silk Road through Turkey, Syria and Central Asia. Crossing mountains, minefields and borders, this is adventure at its most gripping—but it's the people they meet that truly define the journey. From sharing tea with strangers to moments of unexpected kindness, Helen reveals a world far richer and more connected than the headlines suggest. Bold, moving and often surprising, this is a story of endurance, curiosity and the ties that bind us all.

Build Britain Better

Harmony Marquee | 6.45pm | £16, £14

In 1992 James Carville coined the deathless phrase, "It's the economy, stupid" in Bill Clinton's successful presidential campaign. He was right then and even more right now. So rather than rely on politicians who often have experience only of politics, why not ask those who have driven the economy forward for their analysis of what needs to be done to build Britain better? Sir Tom Hunter, businessman and philanthropist, joins Chris O' Shea, the Chief Executive of the energy giant, Centrica, owner of Scottish Gas, to talk to Stephen Jardine about how business and philanthropy can bring about positive change.

Sponsored by Irwin Mitchell



Sir Tom Hunter and Chris O' Shea

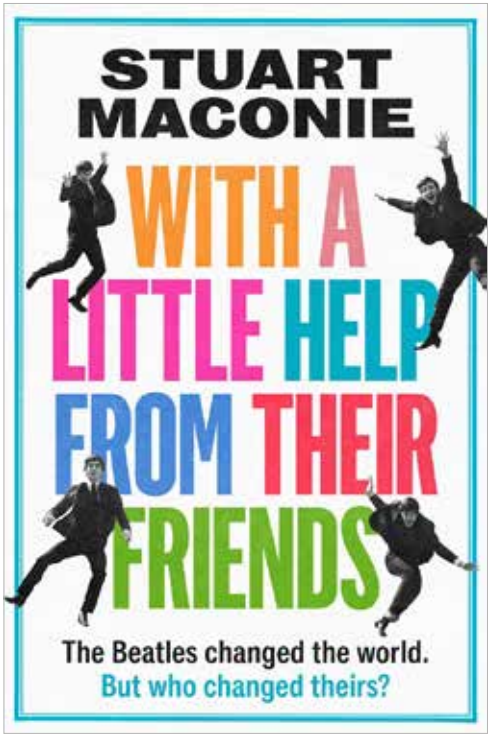




Image: Andrew Fox

Stuart Maconie: With a Little Help from their Friends

Cullen Kilshaw Marquee
6.45pm | £14, £12

Not only is Stuart a gifted broadcaster, he writes bestsellers. With a *Little Help From Their Friends, The Beatles Changed the World* is another. But who changed theirs? This is a brilliant, wholly original take on the group (nobody called them bands in the Sixties) who were Britain's most famous and influential cultural export, bar none, not even William Shakespeare. Split into three sections: Before the Beatles, With the Beatles and Beyond the Beatles, the fascinating tale revolves around the people who made the group who made Britain and Stuart salts it with his own experiences, encounters and conversations. Superb cultural history that rattles along with great lyrics and a snappy beat.

To watch this event online see page 9 for details.



Firebrand Theatre: Ungetatable

Buccleuch Marquee | 6.45pm | £14, £12

Firebrand, in association with Live Borders Arts & Creativity, presents new radio play Ungetatable: George Orwell's nickname for Barnhill, his cottage on the island of Jura. Inspired by the brilliant woman, writer and academic, Eileen O'Shaughnessy, who married Orwell and edited a significant number of his works, Ungetatable is a haunting narrative of global threat, spoken by a mysterious woman determined to discover and set down the truth - as she knows it.

Written by and featuring Ellie Zeegen as Eileen and Janet Coulson as Eve with sound design by Jason Moyes. 'A masterpiece' - Richard Demarco

Created with support from Creative Scotland, Duns PlayFest and Live Borders Arts & Creativity





Image: Serena Bolton Photography

In association with Melrose Literary Society

Anne Sebba: The Women's Orchestra of Auschwitz

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee | 6.45pm | £10, £8

What would you do to survive? In this powerful and deeply moving event, acclaimed historian Anne Sebba tells the extraordinary story of the only all-female orchestra in Auschwitz. Nearly fifty women from across Europe were forced to play music in the shadow of unimaginable horror - yet, for many, it became their only chance of survival. Drawing on meticulous research and haunting first-hand accounts, Sebba brings their voices, choices and courage vividly to life. This is a gripping, thought-provoking exploration of resilience, moral complexity and the enduring power of music in the darkest of times. An unforgettable and vital story that demands to be heard.

BORDERS WRITERS' FORUM

Borders Writers' Forum: New Beginnings - Fresh Writing from The Scottish Borders

Tweed Marquee | 6.45pm | £10, £8



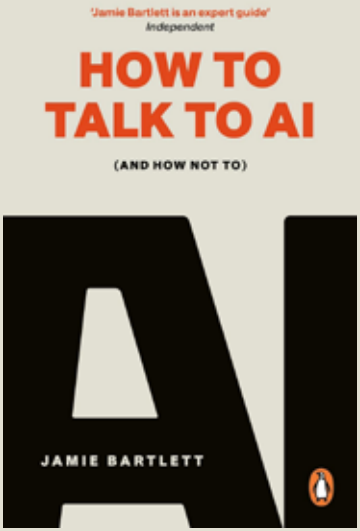
Featuring an eclectic mix of stories, prose, and poetry, the Borders Writers' Forum invites you to this celebration to launch our ninth anthology. Hear selected readings from an engaging and entertaining collection of local writers' work, ranging from tragedy to romance, dark histories to dystopian futures, the human condition, social commentary, and the glories of the natural world around us. There's something here for everyone – come along and be inspired to write… to read… to live!

Kate Forbes

Harmony Marquee | 8.30pm | £16, £14

By the time the festival comes around, Kate will have left behind a brilliant, meteoric career in politics. Elected as an MSP at only 26, she became Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy two years later and then Deputy First Minister in 2024. In August 2025, Kate wrote to John Swinney, the First Minister, to say that she planned to resign so as not to 'miss more of the precious early years of family life' with her husband and their four children. Kate will reflect on her career in the Scottish Parliament, talk to Michael Moore about the books that shaped her views and guided what she did in life, and she will talk about the future. And perhaps she might reflect on Scottish politics in her new role as an observer rather than a participant.







Jamie Bartlett: How to Talk to AI (and How Not To)

Cullen Kilshaw Marquee
8.30pm | £14, £12

Artificial intelligence is already reshaping how we work, learn, shop, communicate and make decisions - but do we really understand it? Award-winning technology writer Jamie Bartlett explores the extraordinary rise of AI and what it means for us all. Drawing on his acclaimed new book, he explains how these systems think, why they can be so powerful, where the risks lie and how to use them wisely. Clear, accessible and thought-provoking, this is an essential event for anyone curious about one of the fastest and most profound technological shifts of our time.

To watch this event online see page 9 for details.



Horse - Trio

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee | 8.30pm - 10.00pm | £16

A very special performance with a smattering of songs and tales from the legendary and iconic Scottish singer-songwriter Horse. From many years of performing, touring and recording, this is an opportunity to hear stripped back versions from her vast back catalogue and rare B sides - songs that don't always make the band shows. As she is now writing towards her next album (her 13th) there will also be an introduction to some of the new songs.



"A natural wonder with a voice as big as an ocean"
Attitude mag

"Where McDonald really sets herself apart is her showmanship. She has a wonderful ability to engage her audience with a perfect mix of humour and emotive storytelling"
the wee review

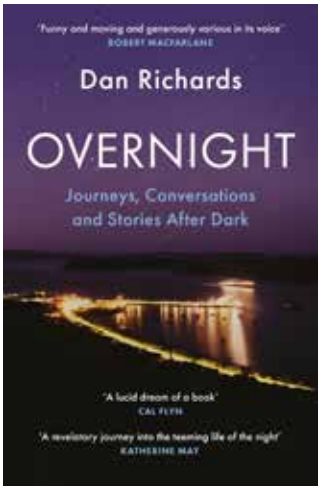




Image: Steve Gullick

Dan Richards: Journeys, Conversations & Stories After Dark

Buccleuch Marquee | 8.30pm | £10, £8

What really happens while the rest of us sleep? In *Overnight*, Dan Richards explores the hidden world of the night and the lives lived after dark. From bakers, broadcasters and emergency workers to sailors, drivers and wildlife experts, he reveals the unseen labour that keeps society moving through the small hours. Atmospheric, surprising and full of wonder, this is also a journey into insomnia, darkness, creativity and the magic of the nocturnal world. A fascinating conversation about the hours we rarely notice - but could never do without.

FRIDAY 12 JUNE

WWW.BORDERSBOOKFESTIVAL.ORG

BBC Radio 4 Bookclub with James Naughtie

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee | 1.30pm | Free



We are delighted to welcome BBC Radio 4 Bookclub to the festival. Join acclaimed broadcaster **James Naughtie** and best-selling historian **Anne Sebba** for a special live recording to discuss her book *That Woman: The Life of Wallis Simpson, Duchess of Windsor*. This popular programme offers audiences the chance to hear fascinating insights, stories behind the pages and thoughtful discussion from the heart of the festival.

Tickets are free but must be booked through the BBC Shows & Tours website



Image: SSDA

Guided Walk: Discover Melrose

1.30pm - 4.00pm approx | £6

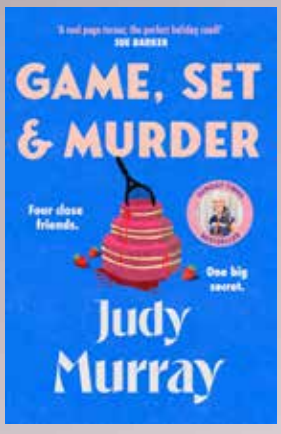
Join our local guides to stretch your legs and see a different side of the festival with this relaxed walk around beautiful Melrose and its surroundings. Setting off from Harmony Garden, we'll explore the historic streets, hidden corners and fascinating stories that make this Borders town so special. Along the way, enjoy wonderful views, local history and plenty of fresh air in good company. This is a friendly, easy-paced walk lasting around two hours – more stroll than serious hike – so no special rambling gear is needed, just comfortable shoes and curiosity. A great way to experience the charm of Melrose beyond the festival site.

This session is an outdoor event, so please dress appropriately for the weather. Meet at the Festival Box Office.

Somatic Yogic Energy

Cullen Kilshaw Marquee
3.00pm | £15

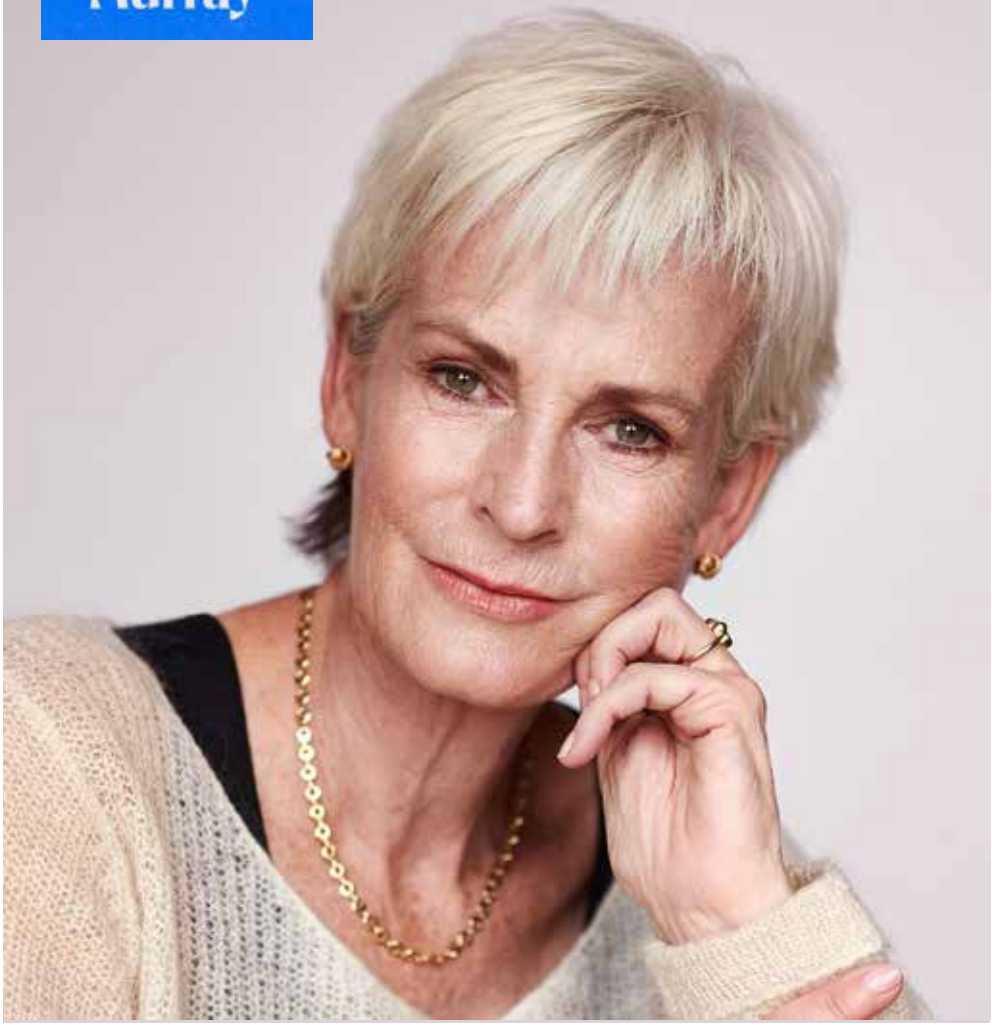
Led by Braxton, this session encompasses flowing somatic and yogic movements, with a focus on the prana breath. Although it will be a relatively slow-paced practice, there will be elements of energised, rhythmic swaying & gentle twisting as we immerse within, through and into our free, flow yogic energies. Suitable for all levels. Mat, water and suitable loose clothing required.



Judy Murray

Harmony Marquee | 3.15pm | £16, £14

National tennis champion, acclaimed coach, champion of women in sport and mother of Jamie and Andy, Judy Murray returns to the festival after her sell-out appearance in 2023. Having revealed a flair for fiction with *The Wild Card*, Judy is back with *Game, Set & Murder* - a deliciously entertaining crime novel set in an exclusive tennis club where victory celebrations end in sudden death. With secrets, rivalries and plenty of twists, this clever whodunnit proves Judy has once again served up a real page-turner. Alongside her new book, Judy will also reflect on her remarkable career in tennis and life at the heart of one of Britain's most famous sporting families.



Breathing Life into Scotland's Forgotten Women: A Historical Fiction Workshop

Creative Hub
4.30pm – 6.00pm | £12

Join authors Lucy Ribchester and Mairi Kidd for a workshop exploring the role of historical fiction in bringing Scotland's forgotten women into the light. Official historical narratives frequently focus on the deeds of men, from The Battle of Stirling Bridge to the Enlightenment, ignoring the less visible acts of rebellion, strength and wisdom with which women have always contributed to the growth of Scotland. Using a range of historical sources, from burgh records to ledgers, diaries, paintings, folk tales and ballads, participants will gain practical tools and methods to help them tell their own stories.

Please note participants will not be expected to share their work and no writing experience is required – beginners welcome!





Above: Lucy Ribchester, below: Mairi Kidd



Image: Nicky Johnston

To watch this event online see page 9 for details.



Prue Leith: Being Old - and Learning to Love It!

Harmony Marquee | 5.00pm | £16, £14

Prue Leith brings her trademark wit, wisdom and no-nonsense charm to a gloriously candid take on ageing. From Bake Off fame to a lifetime in food, writing and television, she shares the joys, surprises and occasional absurdities of getting older- with humour, honesty and a healthy disregard for convention. Nothing is off limits, from friendship and family to staying curious, stylish and just a little bit rebellious. Wise, funny and refreshingly outspoken, this is Prue at her most entertaining, proof that getting older might just be the best bit yet.





Image: Johnny Piper

Jeremy Hunt: Can We Be Rich Again?

Cullen Kilshaw Marquee | 5.00pm | £14, £12

Can We Be Rich Again? The Surprising Potential of Britain's Economy is a cure for doom-loop pessimism. Andy Haldane, former Chief Economist of the Bank of England, wrote that Jeremy's new book is 'An optimistic can-do compelling account of how Britain's vast potential can be uncorked, from someone who knows better than anyone how power is most effectively deployed.' Jeremy pulled Britain back from the fiscal abyss at the end of the disastrous premiership of Liz Truss in October, 2022. Using all his experience, in this new book the former Chancellor offers not just assertions but solutions and plans that politicians can actually deliver in a democratic system that the majority of the electorate can get behind. In conversation with Michael Moore.

Andrew O'Hagan: On Friendship

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee | 5.00pm | £14, £12

On Friendship, Andrew's new book, is warming, wonderful and intelligent. If we are lucky in our lives, our friendships will be rich and varied. They will be shared with those with two legs, four legs, with whiskers or clean faces; they will come dressed in the simplicity of childhood or the professional attire of adult life; some will span decades and some will be only fleeting. But the thing they will all have in common is that life is not only unimaginable – but unimagined – without them. In these fascinating personal reflections, Andrew explores friendship through music and poetry, memory and history, illuminating the many ways and reasons that people come together - and how our lives are all the better because we do.

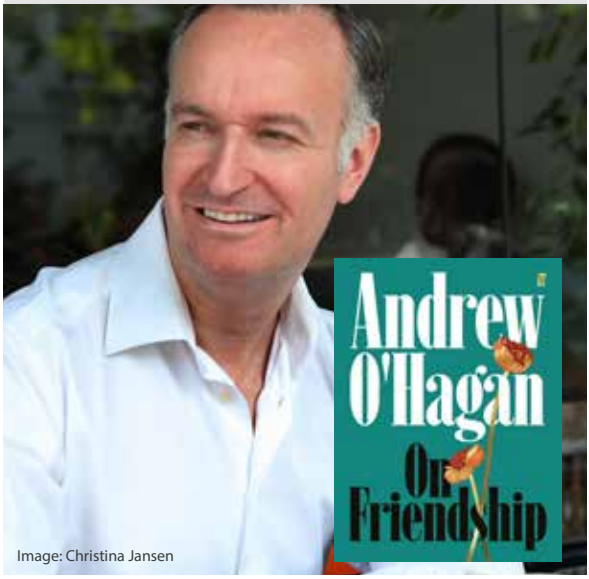
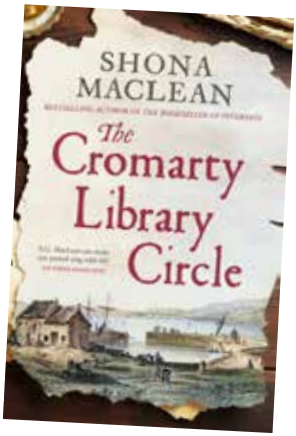


Image: Christina Jansen



Shona MacLean

Buccleuch Marquee
5.00pm | £10, £8



Image: Ewen Weatherspoon

The Cromarty Library Circle is the brilliant new novel from the author of the bestselling *The Bookseller of Inverness*. It is an unforgettable story of a Scottish town on the cusp of change and of the group of townspeople whose lives will be irrevocably altered in the course of one tumultuous year. In Cromarty on the Black Isle in 1831, a circulating library meets for the first time – an apparently innocuous event that sets in motion an extraordinary story.

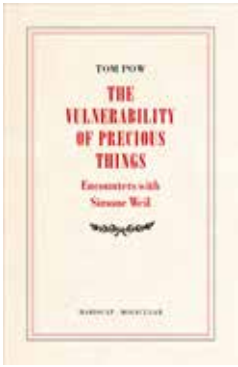


Image: Paige McCaleb

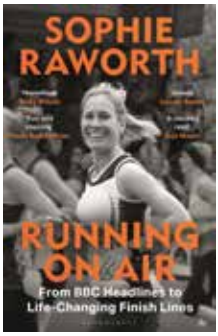
Tom Pow: Encounters with Simone Weil

Tweed Marquee | 5.00pm | £10, £8



Simone Weil (1909 - 1943) was one of the 20th century's most significant thinkers. She died of tuberculosis and self-induced starvation, as she refused to eat more than those in Occupied France. Albert Camus called her 'the greatest mind of the age'. She has continued to inspire such figures as Patti Smith and, most recently, Rosalía, for her ideas on affliction, attention and force are as vital now as they were when she described them. Tom Pow's poems (or 'encounters') engage with her short life and times. The resulting work *The Vulnerability of Precious Things* - varied, thought-provoking and moving - is a work of imaginative empathy that makes clear Weil's relevance to the world today.


To watch this event online see page 9 for details.



Sophie Raworth: Running on Air

Harmony Marquee
6.45pm | £16, £14

BBC news presenter Sophie Raworth is used to reporting on the world's biggest stories - but her own is just as compelling. Starting to run at 40, and after a first marathon that ended in collapse, she refused to give up, going on to complete all seven World Marathon Majors and the gruelling Marathon des Sables across the Sahara. Honest, funny and hugely inspiring, this is about far more than running: it's about resilience, friendship and discovering strength you never knew you had. Join Sophie for a candid and uplifting conversation that might just have you reaching for your trainers.

Sponsored by Irwin Mitchell

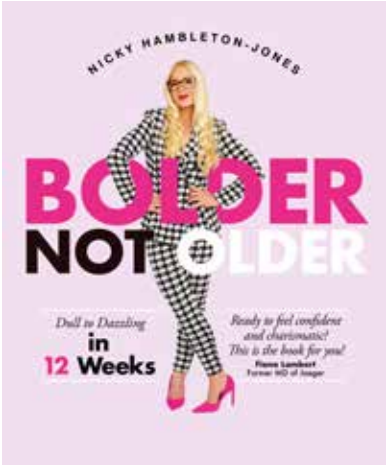


Tom Kitchin

Cullen Kilshaw Marquee
6.45pm | £14, £12

Could a chef ever have been so appropriately named? And not only a chef either, but a storyteller. Tom weaves a warming family tale around the creation of one of Scotland's leading gastropubs, the Scran & Scallie in Edinburgh's Stockbridge. Alongside recipes that reimagine Scottish classics such as Cullen skink, cock-a-leekie and ham, egg & chips, are the stories of the people who make the pub so special. These are dedicated farmers, gamekeepers, foragers and fishermen who bring the best of Scotland's coast and countryside to the table every day. "Sit ye doon" and enjoy stories of wonderful food and those who cook it.
Chaired by Stephen Jardine.





Bolder Not Older with Nicky Hambleton-Jones

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee | 6.45pm | £14, £12

Come and spend an inspiring evening with renowned stylist and TV presenter Nicky Hambleton-Jones, sharing her expert secrets on how to look and feel fabulous at any age. On a mission to help women reclaim their confidence, revamp their wardrobes and come into their own, Nicky brings her signature warmth, wit and straight-talking advice to the stage. In her empowering new book *Bolder Not Older*, she champions a bold new mindset: midlife isn't a time to fade into the background - it's your prime time to shine. Forget outdated fashion rules and the pressure to look younger and learn how to embrace your age and style with confidence and pride.

Len Pennie: Poyums Annaw

Buccleuch Marquee | 6.45pm | £10, £8

Poet, performer and BBC Radio Scotland presenter of The Arts Mix, Len Pennie is one of the most exciting voices in contemporary Scots writing. Her new collection *Poyums Annaw*, is bold, defiant and deeply moving - tackling patriarchy, injustice and survival with razor-sharp wit, tenderness and unmistakable fire. With a huge online following and a gift for bringing poetry to new audiences, Len's work is as powerful on the page as it is live. Expect an electric, thought-provoking event that is by turns funny, fierce and full of heart - poetry that speaks directly to now, and refuses to be ignored.

Image: Katherine Anne Rose





Image: Guy Gumm

MC Fox: Perfectly Woven Lies

Tweed Marquee | 6.45pm | £10, £8

Set against the quiet backdrop of the Scottish Borders, MC Fox's gripping debut thriller introduces Isla - a woman living in fear, trapped in a controlling marriage with her young daughter at her side. But Isla is done being powerless. As she begins to plan her escape, secrets unravel and the tension tightens in this dark, emotionally charged story of survival and resilience. Blending domestic suspense with a powerful sense of place, *Perfectly Woven Lies* explores what it takes to break free and rebuild a life. Join MC Fox to hear about the inspiration behind this compelling debut and the forces that shape its unforgettable heroine.

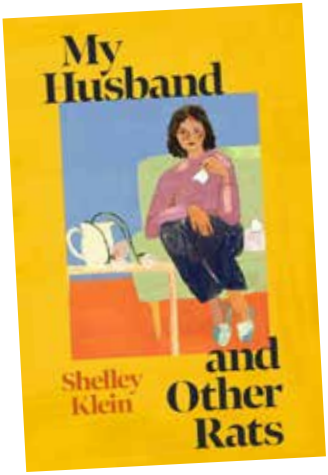


Shelley Klein: My Husband and Other Rats

Creative Hub | 6.45pm | £10, £8



When life starts unravelling all at once, Alison Solomon finds herself facing a catalogue of midlife crises - an unfaithful husband, a revolving door of questionable therapists, a mysterious woman lurking outside… and possibly a rat in the kitchen. In *My Husband and Other Rats*, Shelley Klein delivers a sharp, tender and laugh-out-loud funny novel about navigating chaos with resilience and wit. Packed with brilliantly drawn characters - from an artisanal rat catcher to fiercely honest friends - this is comic writing at its finest. Join Shelley for a lively conversation about midlife, mishaps and finding humour in the messiest moments of life.



Alan Titchmarsh

Harmony Marquee | 8.30pm | £16, £14

Gifted, with talent – and hard work – to burn in several directions, Alan has compiled a unique career as a gardener, a TV and radio presenter and a writer of no fewer than 43 gardening books, 4 memoirs, 12 novels and a collection of poetry. And he has played the part of a writer, Kenneth Grahame, in the Royal Ballet's production of Wind in the Willows. Alan is also a passionate advocate of responsible stewardship of the landscape and sustainable farming. And all these glittering achievements have been accompanied by unfailing kindness, grace and wit. Join Alan to reflect on life, books, gardens and everything.



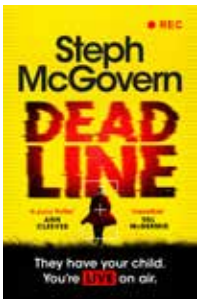


Image: Carolyn Mendelsohn

To watch this event online see page 9 for details.

Steph McGovern: Deadline

Cullen Kilshaw Marquee | 8.30pm | £14, £12



Steph McGovern is one of Britain's best-known broadcast journalists - a BBC Breakfast veteran of eight years, former host of Channel 4's Steph's Packed Lunch, regular face on Have I Got News for You and co-host of The Rest Is Money podcast alongside Robert Peston. Now she's turned her insider knowledge of the TV world into a gripping debut crime novel. *Deadline* puts reporter Rose live on air - and at the mercy of someone who has kidnapped her family. It's a thriller only a broadcaster could have written, drawing on twenty years of experience in newsrooms and studios to deliver something utterly authentic. Steph joins us to discuss her move from news desk to crime fiction.

Jaywalkers

LIVE MUSIC

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee
8.30pm – 10.00pm | £16

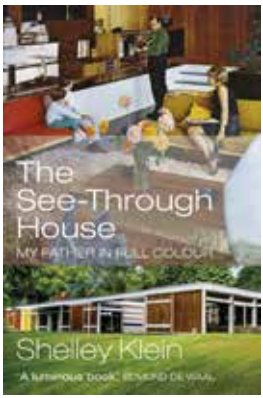
Round off Friday night with Jaywalkers - a powerhouse acoustic trio blending bluegrass, folk and Americana with stunning musicianship and three-part harmony.

With blistering fiddle, mandolin and driving bass, their live shows are packed with energy, humour and heart. Fresh from their acclaimed album Move On, and following appearances at Celtic Connections, they bring a vibrant, feel-good set that's perfect for the festival - uplifting, foot-stomping and impossible to sit still through.



Shelley Klein: The See-Through House

Buccleuch Marquee | 8.30pm | £10, £8



Returning to the Scottish Borders home of her childhood, Shelley Klein steps once more into a remarkable modernist house of coloured glass, open-plan spaces and woodland light. It was here she grew up with her father, pioneering textile designer Bernat Klein, whose bold colours and textures helped shape the iconic fashions of the 1960s and 70s. Thirty years later, Shelley comes back to High Sunderland to care for him in his final years, discovering that neither the house nor his fiercely independent spirit has changed.

Nearby stands his celebrated design studio, also created by architect Peter Womersley, now the focus of an exciting campaign for restoration and renewed creative life. Tender, funny and deeply moving, *The See-Through House* is a powerful reflection on family, creativity, grief and the meaning of home.

SATURDAY 13 JUNE

WWW.BORDERSBOOKFESTIVAL.ORG

Guided Meditation

Cullen Kilshaw Marquee
10.15am | £15

Led by Braxton this guided meditation holds the space for stillness and silence, as you're taken on an awareness journey inward. Past your body, past your mind, beyond your feelings and emotions. We delve deep into your inner space - between spiritual connection and conscious awareness. Suitable for all levels. Mat, water, eye mask and thick cosy blanket or sleeping bag required.

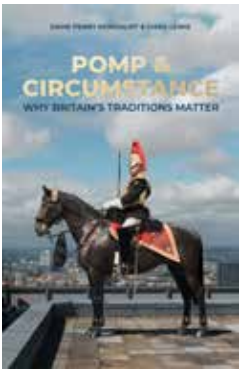
Claudia Hammond: Overwhelmed

Cullen Kilshaw Marquee
12.15pm | £14, £12



Overwhelmed: Ways to Take the Pressure Off is a liberating new book by Claudia, presenter of BBC Radio Four's All in the Mind. She has compiled a psychological toolkit that is both practical and based on evidence of what works. Each chapter deals with a common problem, the sort of thing that can make us feel trapped and helpless: procrastination, fear of regret, imposter syndrome, perfection and other issues. Calmly, clearly and in a convincing way, Claudia explains how *Overwhelmed* can act as a manual, giving you the tools to take everything life can throw at any of us.

To watch this event online see page 9 for details.



Penny Mordaunt: Pomp & Circumstance

Harmony Marquee
12.15pm | £16, £14

Penny knows more than most about pomp and circumstance. As Lord President of the Council, she held aloft the Sword of State at King Charles III's coronation – for a very long time. In this superb new book, written with Chris Lewis, Penny celebrates the traditions and values that underpin British life. Her achievement is to show how important pomp and circumstance are. Far from being solely symbolic or ceremonial, the book shows how a country often thought of as old-fashioned actually uses its historical conventions to navigate the future. Chaired by Gavin Esler.



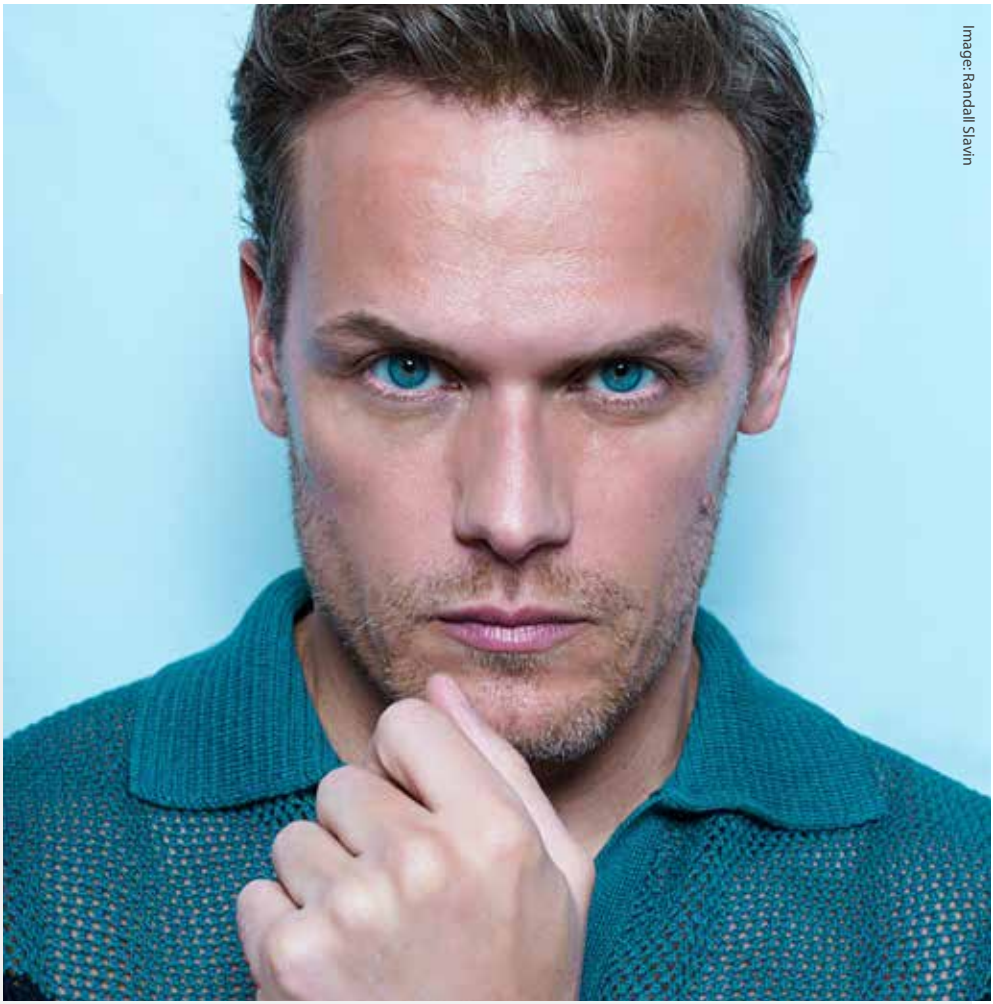
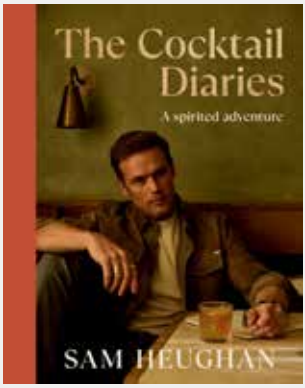


Image: Randall Slavin

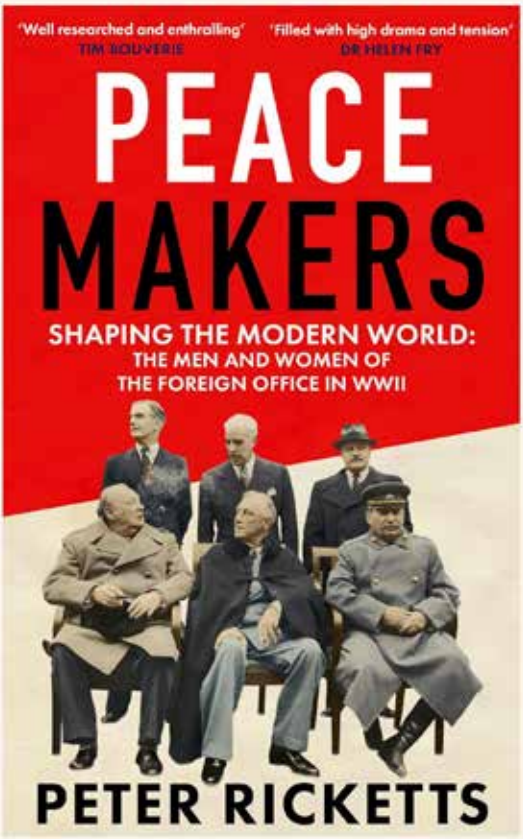


Sam Heughan

Harmony Marquee | 2.00pm | £16, £14

Despite being catapulted to global fame in the leading role of Jamie Fraser in the spectacularly successful TV series, Outlander, Sam has never forgotten his roots. Born in Balmaclellan in the Galloway Hills, he does all he can to promote the South of Scotland, including launching the Galloway Distillery in Newton Stewart, distiller of the award-winning Sassenach Spirits. Alongside his screen success, Sam is also a bestselling author, exploring Scotland's landscapes, stories and flavours, with his most recent book *Cocktail Diaries* sharing his ten all-time favourite blends. Join Sam as he talks to Sally Magnusson about his life, his love of craft spirits and his love of Scotland.

With thanks to South of Scotland Destination Alliance



Peter Ricketts: Peace Makers

Cullen Kilshaw Marquee | 2.00pm | £14, £12



Image: House of Lords

What really shaped the outcome of the Second World War? Not just battles and leaders, but the diplomats working behind the scenes. Former Head of the Diplomatic Service, Peter Ricketts, uncovers the gripping, little-known story of the Foreign Office at war - where alliances were forged, resistance supported and the foundations of the modern world laid. From Whitehall to embassies under siege, this is a tale of ingenuity, courage and quiet influence. Rich in human stories, it also reveals how the war opened doors for pioneering women in diplomacy. A fascinating and fresh perspective on a pivotal moment in history. Chaired by Gavin Esler.

To watch this event online see page 9 for details.

Tales for the Present

Melrose Abbey | 2.15pm | £10, £8

Join storyteller Nicola Toneri within the atmospheric setting of Melrose Abbey, in the shadow of the enchanting Eildon Hills, for a retelling of the Borders' own *Thomas the Rhymer* and other tales. Let the centuries roll away and ponder the wisdom of these legends.

This is an outdoor event so please dress appropriately for the weather. Meet outside the Box Office Tent.

ILLUSTRATOR ALERT!!! A Workshop with Vivian French

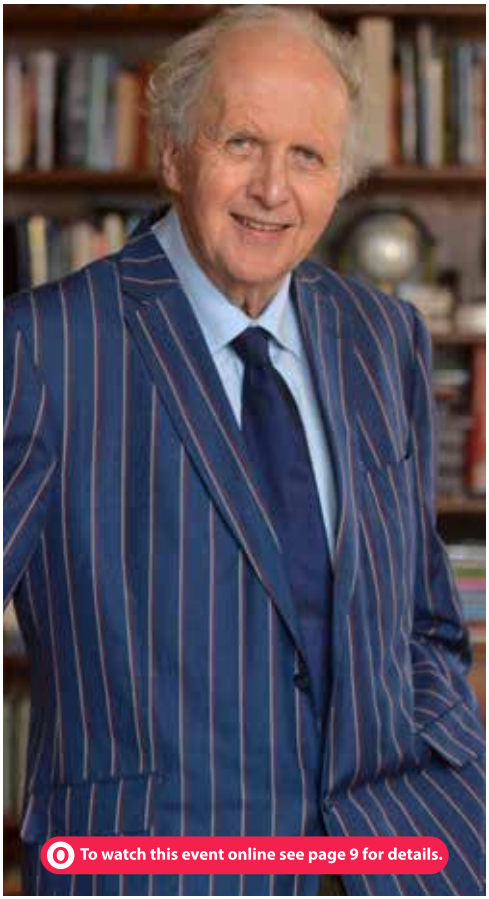
Creative Hub
3.00pm – 4.30pm | £12

Have you always wanted to draw the pictures in children's books? Do you want to know how picture books work? Come to a participatory workshop and find out about the wonderful world of illustration. All you need to bring is your imagination - and any questions you'd like answered! Vivian French was a tutor in the illustration department of Edinburgh College of Art for over 15 years and is the co-founder of Picture Hooks - a highly successful project that supports emerging illustrators. She is the author of over 300 books... all illustrated!

Paper, pens and pencils will be provided. Age 16 upwards



Image: Kirsty Anderson



To watch this event online see page 9 for details.

Alexander McCall Smith

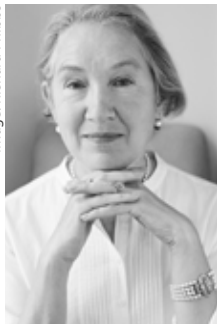
Harmony Marquee | 3.45pm | £16, £14

One of the world's most beloved storytellers, Alexander McCall Smith returns with his trademark warmth, wit and wisdom. With more than 40 million books sold, his novels continue to delight readers across the globe. This year sees the publication of *The Subtle Pleasures of Indiscretion*, the latest in his much-loved Isabel Dalhousie series, alongside *The Private Side of Friendship*, set against the backdrop of the 1984–85 miners' strike, and *Looking for You*, a new Perfect Passion Company novel. Join Sandy for an uplifting and entertaining conversation with a true master of storytelling.

Sponsored by Canaccord Wealth

Canaccord WEALTH

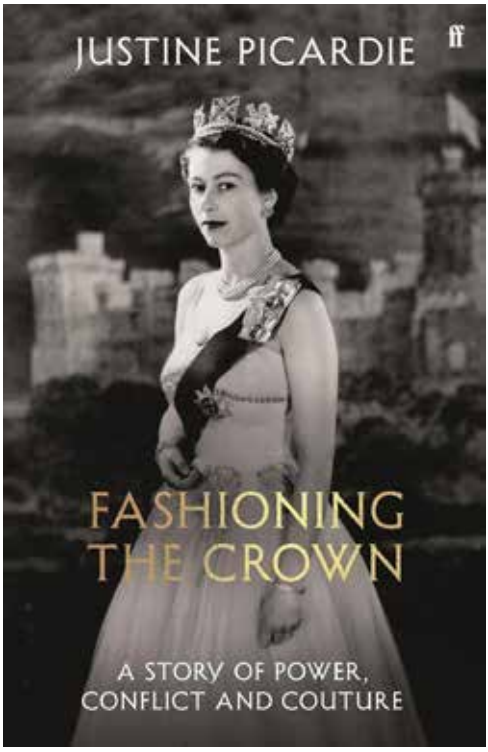
Image: Richard Phibbs

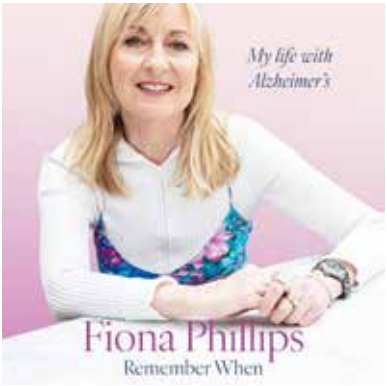


Justine Picardie

Cullen Kilshaw Marquee
3.45pm | £14, £12

Fashioning the Crown: A Story of Power, Conflict and Culture is the sparkling new book from the author of *Miss Dior* and *Coco Chanel*. "I have to be seen to be believed," said the late Queen, understanding perfectly the power of imagery. Told through the medium of royal fashion, with more than a hundred beautiful photographs, this is the story of the leading women of the House of Windsor: Queen Mary, the Queen Mother, the Duchess of Windsor and Queen Elizabeth II, and also the lives of the creators of those images, including Hardy Amies, Cecil Beaton, Norman Hartnell and Edward Molyneux. Even when reigns seemed to be hanging by a thread, this brilliant book shows how iconography, the power of appearances, safeguarded the monarchy.





Martin Frizell: Remember When - Fiona Phillips' Story

BSL

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee | 3.45pm | £14, £12

Broadcaster and journalist Martin Frizell joins us to share the deeply personal story behind *Remember When*, his wife Fiona Phillips' powerful account of living with early-onset Alzheimer's. Known and loved by millions from breakfast television, Fiona was just 61 when she was diagnosed - having already cared for both her parents through the disease. Together, they chose to document the experience with honesty and courage, offering insight, understanding and hope to others facing similar challenges. In this moving and important conversation, Martin reflects on love, resilience and navigating life with Alzheimer's. In conversation with Stephen Jardine.

Art and the Age of the Earth: A Meeting Point

Buccleuch Marquee | 3.45pm | £10, £8

Over a period of two years sculptor Jake Harvey and book artist Helen Douglas undertook research in the Lewisian gneiss complex of North Uist and Berneray. Their collaboration resulted in a major 2025 exhibition and the beautifully illustrated publication *Meeting Point: Within the Lewisian*. Their work arrives at a fitting moment. 2026 sees the 300th anniversary of the birth of James Hutton, the great Scottish scientist who farmed in Berwickshire. In essence, he invented the science of geology and was the first to understand the immense age of the Earth. Jake and Helen will be joined by Alan McKirdy, the distinguished geologist and writer, to set their work in a historical context.









Above: Helen Douglas, below: Jake Harvey, Alan McKirdy



Above: Shona Kinsella, below: R M Brown

Retelling Scotland's Stories

Tweed Marquee | 3.45pm | £10, £8

Join Shona Kinsella and RM Brown as they bring Scotland's past vividly to life through history, folklore and imagination. In *Daughters of Nicnevin*, Kinsella sets witchcraft and myth against the backdrop of the 1745 Jacobite uprising, as two women summon dark forces to protect their village. In *Song of the Stag*, Brown's debut follows Cait as she leaves her rural home for the capital, where her loyalties are tested as she is drawn into a growing political conflict. In conversation with Ann Landmann, Festival Director of Cymera: Scotland's Festival of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Writing.



Pam Ayres

Harmony Marquee | 5.30pm | £16, £14

Doggedly Onward is Pam's career-defining collected works, and is between two covers the reason she became a much-loved national treasure and Britain's best-selling poet with 7.5m books sold. "When I look over the poems in this book, I can trace the course of my life. The various stages are all here: the young woman juggling various boyfriends, the wife adrift amid the joy and terror of new motherhood and the astounded, adoring granny." Both hilarious and profound, Pam's unique insights into daily life spark both smiles and tears as audiences recognise themselves in her poems.

Murrayfield: 100 Years of History in 100 Matches

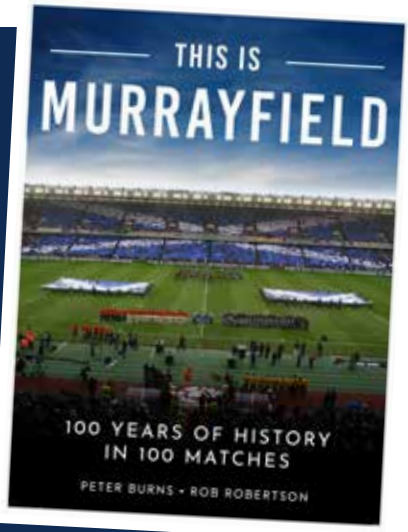
Cullen Kilshaw Marquee | 5.30pm | £14, £12







Join rugby writer Peter Burns to celebrate a century of unforgettable moments at Murrayfield Stadium. Drawing on his book *This is Murrayfield*, co-authored with Rob Robertson, Peter revisits 100 of the most iconic, dramatic and occasionally quirky fixtures ever played on Scotland's national stage. From the famous 1925 Grand Slam-clinching victory to modern-day classics, this is a richly illustrated journey through triumph, heartbreak and sporting folklore. Peter is joined by Scottish rugby legends Gavin Hastings, Andy Irvine and Greig Laidlaw, bringing first-hand insight, humour and memories to a lively celebration of one of the world's great rugby arenas.



To watch this event online see page 9 for details.

Image: Derek Prescott





Sally Magnusson

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee | 5.30pm | £14, £12

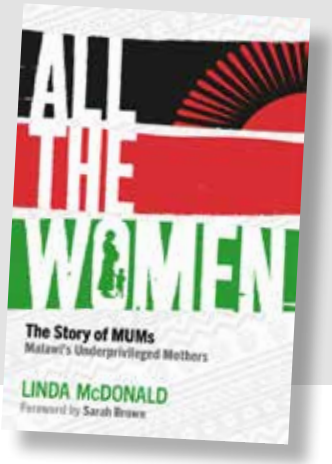
Sally's new novel *The Shapeshifter's Daughter* is a powerful reimagining of the myth of the Goddess Hel of the Underworld and how the supernatural Norse past collides with the present. Faced with a terminal cancer diagnosis, Helen Firth makes the impulsive decision to return to Orkney after forty years to make peace with her own past. Under the wintering solstice sun, she reconnects with the ungainly but affable Thorfinn Coffin, who helps her with the real reason she has returned to the islands: to die. Watching events unfold, the Goddess Hel is intrigued and becomes involved. A beautifully written new novel from the outrageously gifted writer and broadcaster.



Linda McDonald: All the Women

Buccleuch Marquee 5.30pm | £10, £8

Linda McDonald OBE, an experienced Edinburgh midwife, dismayed by conditions for mothers and babies in a maternity unit in Malawi, thought she might sell a few recipe books to raise money to improve their lives. The first *MUMs (Malawi Underprivileged Mothers)* recipe book was published for Christmas 2005. Its unforeseen success (over 55,000 books were sold in 12 years) drew Linda and her team of family, friends and contacts ever closer into women's lives in Malawi. *All The Women* is an inspirational story of how, from Scotland to Malawi, ordinary people strove to make a positive difference to the lives of women and children in most need. It is honest about the challenges faced, but also about the unforeseen joys.





Henry Borthwick: Tales from Oxton to Fala

Tweed Marquee | 5.30pm | £10, £8

Tales about a Hollywood actor, the witch on Soutra, a ploughing champion from Oxton and the US president who named his dog after a Falahill outlaw can all be found in Henry Borthwick's latest book *A Journey from Oxton to Fala*. Many of the stories have remained dormant or unprinted until now. Henry's family has lived in the parishes of Channelkirk and Fala since 1458. True to his farming and Borders roots, he sums his work up well, like a sheepdog rounding up stray stories before they disappear. Join Henry in conversation with his son Malcolm to learn more about the heroes and villains who lived in these Borders parishes.



Maura Kennedy Fair, Iona Carroll, Oliver Eade.

The Reality of Fiction

Creative Hub | 5.30pm | £10, £8

Are YOU in someone's novel? Join three Borders Society of Authors writers, Maura Kennedy Fair, Iona Carroll and Oliver Eade, for an illustrated talk on how real life dictates the world of fiction…



Image: Nicky Johnston

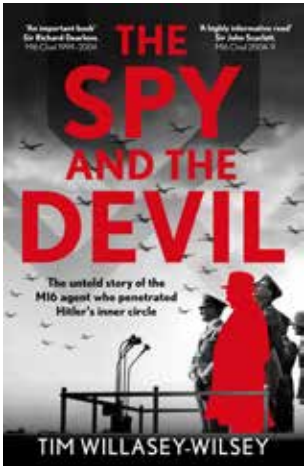
To watch this event online see page 9 for details.

Lorraine Kelly

BSL

Harmony Marquee | 7.15pm | £16, £14

One of Britain's most loved broadcasters, Lorraine Kelly has spent decades bringing warmth, wit and straight-talking charm to our screens. From early mornings on GMTV to her long-running ITV show, she's a familiar and trusted voice in households across the country - and a natural storyteller. Lorraine joins us to reflect on her remarkable career, the stories that have stayed with her, and her move into fiction writing. Her latest novel *The Island Secret*, set in Orkney, is a compelling tale of family, identity and hidden truths. Expect warmth, humour and plenty of behind-the-scenes insight from a true national treasure.





Tim Willasey-Wilsey: The Spy and the Devil

Cullen Kilshaw Marquee | 7.15pm | £14, £12

Berlin. The 1930s. As the Nazi regime tightens its grip, one man moves in the shadows at the very heart of power. Historian and former diplomat Tim Willasey-Wilsey reveals the astonishing true story of Baron William de Ropp - MI6's secret agent inside Hitler's inner circle. With direct access to the regime, de Ropp uncovered vital intelligence on Nazi ambitions and the gathering storm of war, shaping Britain's response at a critical moment in history. Drawing on newly uncovered evidence, this is a gripping tale of espionage, intrigue and high-stakes diplomacy - where the fate of nations hung in the balance. Chaired by James Naughtie.

From Aotearoa to the Borders: Tina Makereti in Conversation

Buccleuch Marquee | 7.15pm | £10, £8

Acclaimed novelist Tina Makereti joins us all the way from New Zealand for a special event exploring her powerful new novel *The Mires*. Set in a near-future Aotearoa, the story brings together three women whose lives intertwine against a backdrop of environmental change, migration and belonging. Both lyrical and propulsive, this gripping novel blends social realism with a haunting sense of the natural world, where danger simmers just beneath the surface. A finalist for the Ockham New Zealand Book Awards and nominated for the Dublin Literary Award.

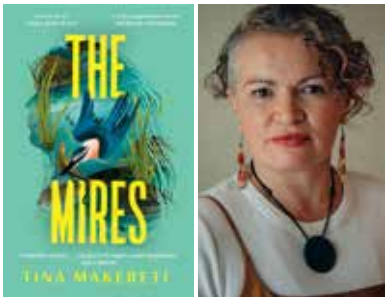


Image: Ebony Lamb

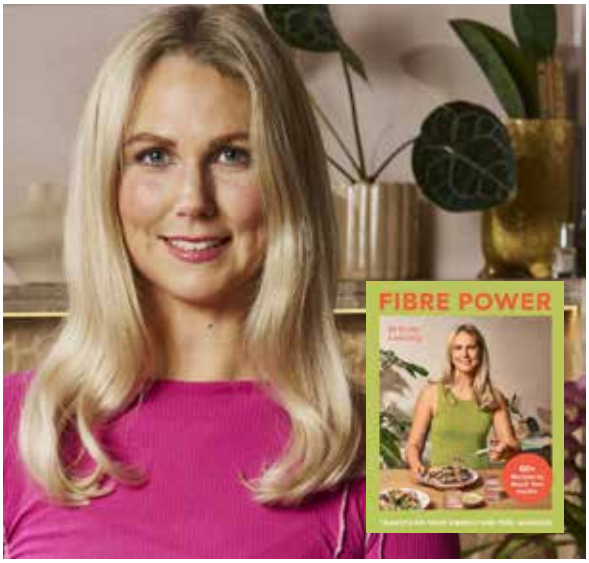


Image: Haarala Hamilton

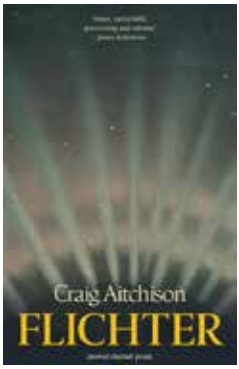
Dr Emily Leeming: Fibre Power

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee
7.15pm | £14, £12

Back by popular demand after her sell-out event at last year's festival with *Genius Gut*, Dr Emily Leeming returns with *Fibre Power* - a fresh, science-led guide to eating well and feeling better. Combining cutting-edge research with 60 delicious, fibre-rich recipes, Emily shows how boosting fibre can transform not just digestion, but mood, energy and overall health. With warmth, clarity and plenty of practical tips, she makes healthy eating feel simple - and enjoyable. Expect inspiring ideas, myth-busting insights and recipes you'll actually want to cook. An uplifting and accessible event from one of the most exciting voices in nutrition.









Borders Poets in Conversation

Tweed Marquee | 7.15pm | £10, £8

Bridget Khursheed is a novelist and poet whose most recent poetry collection *Exact Colour of Snow* was long listed for The Saltires: Scotland's National Book Awards poetry award. Craig Aitchison is an award-winning poet who has just released a collection of poetry in Scots, *Flichter*, which James Robertson has praised as "brave, vulnerable, questioning and vibrant". Together, they will discuss themes of environment, family and language itself, demonstrating how poetry rooted in the Borders reaches far beyond the local to illuminate the universal. Expect wit, humour and a delight in the spoken word from these two talented poets.





Rory Bremner

Harmony Marquee
9.00pm | £20

He's back! Part of the life and soul of the Borders Book Festival, Rory Bremner returns to close Saturday in the Harmony Marquee with his trademark wit, energy and razor-sharp impressions. As ever, he will conjure up a cast of familiar voices from the world of politics and public life who find themselves saying things they never imagined would come out of their mouths.

Welcome back Big Man!

Sponsored by Knight Frank

Chris Brookmyre & Doug Johnstone: 50 Years of Thrilling Fiction

Cullen Kilshaw Marquee
9.00pm | £14, £12

Two writing legends and fellow Fun Lovin' Crime Writers bandmates come together to mark major publishing milestones in this special joint anniversary event. Chris Brookmyre celebrates thirty years of Jack Parlabane with *Quite Ugly One Evening,* a brilliantly twisty locked-room mystery set aboard an Atlantic cruise. Meanwhile, Doug Johnstone marks two decades in print with new work alongside the reissue of his cult classic *The Ossians* - a raw, darkly funny tale of a Scottish indie band on the edge. A fast-paced, joyous and irreverent hour of conversation with two of our favourite authors.



Image: Bob McDevitt Photography & Duncan McGlynn

To watch this event online see page 9 for details.



Image: James Betts

Natalie Haynes: No Friend to this House - One-Woman Show

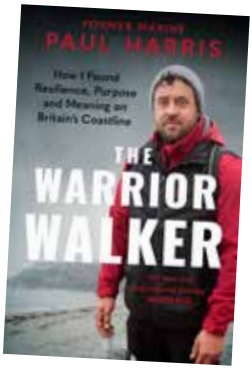
JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee | 9.00pm | £14, £12

Natalie Haynes brings the myth of Medea vividly to life in this brilliant one-woman performance. As Jason quests for the Golden Fleece, Medea holds the power to save him - but at what cost? In Haynes' gripping retelling, this ancient story becomes urgent, human and darkly compelling. Expect drama, wit and razor-sharp insight from broadcaster, classics author and comedian Haynes – known for her BBC Radio 4 series Natalie Haynes Stands Up for the Classics.

Paul Harris: The Warrior Walker

Buccleuch Marquee | 9.00pm | £10, £8

Former Royal Marine Paul Harris shares the extraordinary true story behind *The Warrior Walker* – a journey of survival, resilience and hope. After hitting rock bottom, Paul set out with just £300, a heavy rucksack and a life-changing question: why not walk the entire British coastline? What followed was an epic adventure through wild landscapes, harsh weather and moments of remarkable human kindness. Twice completing the UK's coastal paths, Paul discovered healing, purpose and connection along the way, while raising thousands for charity. This is a powerful story about second chances, mental strength and the restorative power of nature.



SUNDAY 14 JUNE

WWW.BORDERSBOOKFESTIVAL.ORG

Qi Gong: Introducing Five Animal Frolic



Cullen Kilshaw Marquee
10.45am – 12.00pm | £15

Join Nicola Toneri in a movement workshop introducing a routine developed over 1000 years ago by doctor Hua Tuo to promote health and longevity. Expect slow, relaxing movement and an energising boost. Enjoy Chinese tea and chat at the end of the session.

Wear comfortable clothing and flat, flexible shoes.



James Naughtie

Harmony Marquee | 12.45pm | £16, £14

"What will you talk about this year, Jim?" A pause, an uncharacteristic moment of hesitation. "I'll tell you the day before, or maybe on the day." Jim's grasp of American politics is unmatched but predicting where the world will be on June 14th, 2026, is impossible. Commentators have been bemused and confused by the torrent of chaotic self-contradiction that comes out of the mouth of President Donald J Trump – every hour of most days, it seems, and sometimes nights when he's posting online, OFTEN IN CAPITAL LETTERS. But if anyone can look behind the Punch and Judy façade of presidential pronouncements and offer some perspective, it is Jim Naughtie.



Image: Nick Gregan

Andrew Lownie: Entitled - The Rise and Fall of the House of York

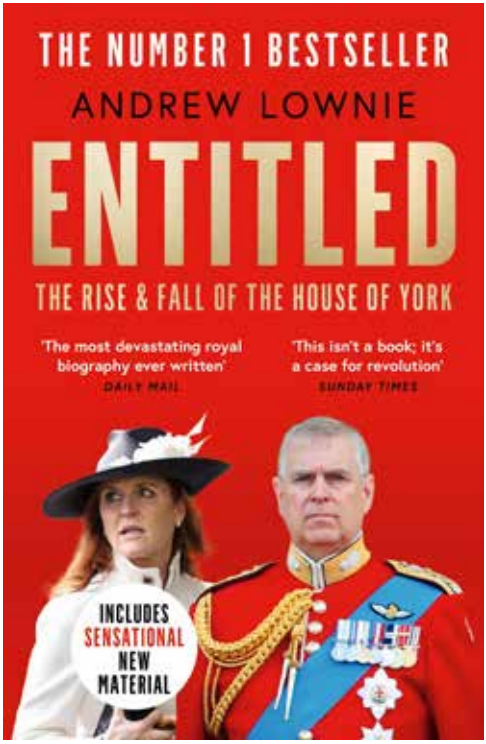
Cullen Kilshaw Marquee
12.45pm | £14, £12

BSL

Andrew Lownie has written an explosive royal expose that felled a prince. With sensational new material, he traces the lives of the man now known as Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor and his ex-wife, Sarah Ferguson, through their childhoods, courtship, marriage, divorce, careers, charitable activities and ultimate downfall.

This is eye-watering biography at its best, a book that has changed the monarchy forever. The Daily Express wrote: '…a jaw-dropping account of arrogance, financial incontinence, greed, and indeed, entitlement'. In conversation with Rory Bremner.

To watch this event online see page 9 for details.



Dougie Strang: Border Tales

Melrose Abbey
12.45pm | £10, £8

Dougie Strang is a writer and storyteller based near Duns. Join him in the atmospheric setting of Melrose Abbey, beneath the shadow of the Eildon Hills, for a sharing of traditional tales that celebrate the unique culture, history and landscape of the Scottish Borders. Later in the day, you can also hear Dougie discuss his acclaimed book *The Bone Cave*.

This storytelling session is an outdoor event so please dress appropriately for the weather.

Meet outside the Box Office Tent.





Melrose Mastermind

Harmony Marquee | 2.15pm | £16, £14

The black chair returns to Melrose for a special festival showdown. Question master **Sally Magnusson** takes charge as four brave contestants face the pressure of the spotlight, testing their nerve on general knowledge and specialist subjects alike. In the hot seat are **Rory Bremner**, **Larry Lamb**, **Helen McGinn** and **Denise Mina**. Who will keep their cool, who will crumble under pressure, and who will emerge victorious? Expect wit, tension, laughter and plenty of friendly torture in this lively festival quiz event.

Image: Petra Herbert



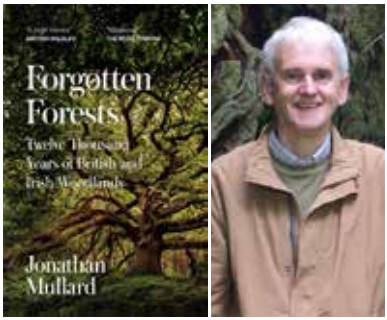


Helene von Bismarck

Cullen Kilshaw Marquee
2.15pm | £14, £12

Fantastic Kingdom: A Stranger's Notes on a Contrary Country is a brilliant analysis of the chasm between how the British see themselves and how they are actually seen abroad. Based in Germany, Helene offers an impartial analysis of why Britain evokes strong opinions and frequently escapes rigorous definition. It is famous for its pageantry but selective about recalling the imperial past, proud of its pragmatism but sentimental about its history. This beautifully written book encourages readers to leave the comfort of their echo chambers and look anew at this complex and sometimes bewildering country. In conversation with Gavin Esler.

To watch this event online see page 9 for details.

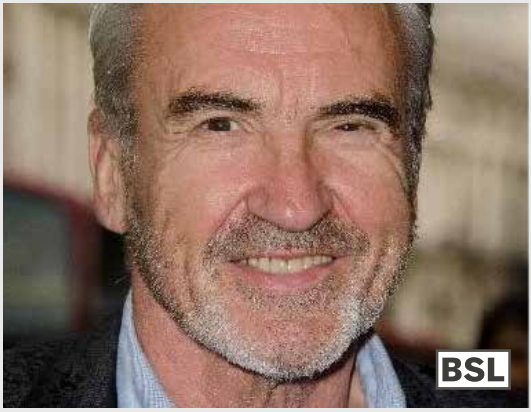


Jonathan Mullard: Forgotten Forests

Buccleuch Marquee | 2.15pm | £10, £8

What if Britain's history could be told through its trees? Jonathan Mullard begins close to home, with the ancient Capon Tree near Jedburgh - a lone survivor of the vast Jed Forest that once covered the Borders. In *Forgotten Forests*, he traces 12,000 years of woodland history across Britain and Ireland, revealing how forests shaped human life, fuelled civilisation and were, in turn, transformed by it. Blending science, archaeology and vivid storytelling, this is a journey into a lost world that still echoes in our landscape. A fascinating new perspective on the deep history of the places we know so well.

Sponsored by Borders Forest Trust

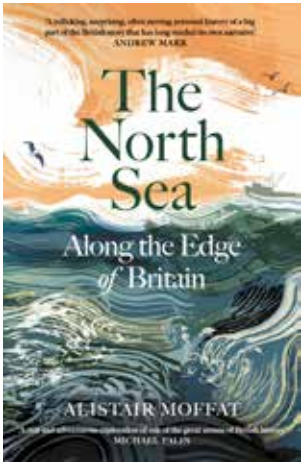


Larry Lamb

Harmony Marquee | 4.00pm | £16, £14

We're delighted to welcome back Larry Lamb for what promises to be a truly personal and unexpected event. Best known for his roles in EastEnders and Gavin & Stacey, the actor and presenter reveals a different side of himself as he shares his own poetry alongside stories from a career spanning several decades. Larry began writing poetry in 1983 - then put down his pen for over forty years. Rediscovering a forgotten file in the attic during lockdown, and encouraged by a poet friend, he started writing again. The result is a warm, candid journey from the womb to the tomb - reflecting on the highs and lows, joys and sorrows of life, love, and everything in between. Expect to laugh - and quite possibly cry.

To watch this event online see page 9 for details.



Alistair Moffat

Cullen Kilshaw Marquee | 4.00pm | £14, £12

The North Sea: Along the Edge of Britain is Alistair Moffat's record of a journey from Kent to Shetland and many points between. Andrew Marr wrote: " A rollicking, surprising, often moving personal history of a big part of the British story that has long needed its own narrative. Page-turningly entertaining". And Professor David Abulafia said, "…this is a marvellously readable and highly original account of the role of the North Sea in the making of England and Scotland." And Jon Gower added: "In prose as sparkling as summer wavelets, often zingily tanged with ozone and seaweed, the (veteran) traveller-historian brings the past to vivid life, painting a portrait of sea-edge and coastal land, trawling through the bountiful blessings of the sea's fishy harvests and charting the wild terrors of its gathering storms."

Sponsored by the Saltire Society

Tom Service: A History of the World in 50 Pieces

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee
4.00pm | £10, £8

In A *History of the World in 50 Pieces*, BBC Radio 3's Tom Service brings music vividly to life. He reveals how music - from Bach and Beethoven to unexpected sounds from across the globe - has shaped the way we think, feel and live. Blending storytelling, insight and infectious enthusiasm, Tom shows how music connects cultures, reflects great moments in history and even challenges what we think music is. Whether you're a lifelong listener or simply curious, this is a joyful, surprising journey through the soundtrack of our lives.

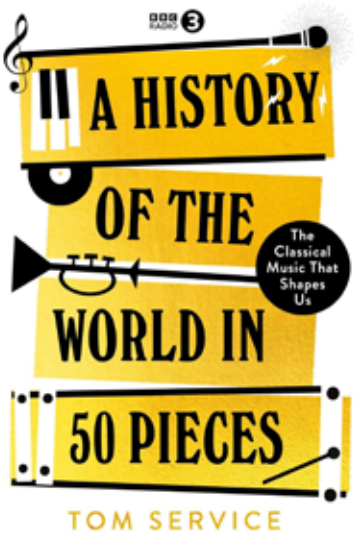






Image: Charlotte Hadden



Nicola Sturgeon: Frankly

Harmony Marquee
5.45pm | £16, £14

Nicola Sturgeon, Scotland's first female and longest-serving First Minister, reflects on a life at the very centre of political change. In *Frankly*, she charts her journey from Ayrshire to the forefront of Scottish and UK politics, offering an insider's view of defining moments - from the rise of the Scottish Parliament to the independence referendum, Brexit and the Covid pandemic. With candour and insight, she explores the realities of leadership, the pressures of public life and the personal experiences behind the headlines. This is a rare opportunity to hear directly from one of the most significant political figures of our time. In conversation with Gavin Esler.



Steve Brusatte & David Farrier: Evolution, Adaptation and the Living World

Cullen Kilshaw Marquee | 5.45pm | £14, £12

From dinosaurs to tomorrow, two brilliant science writers explore how life on Earth is shaped - and reshaped - over time. Palaeontologist Steve Brusatte *(The Story of Birds)* reveals the epic story of birds as living dinosaurs, while David Farrier *(Nature's Genius)* examines how nature is adapting in a rapidly changing world and what that means for us. Fast-paced, vivid and full of big ideas, this is a journey through deep time to the present day - uncovering the forces that have shaped the natural world for millions of years and will continue to shape it for millions more.

To watch this event online see page 9 for details.



Image: David Loftus

Supermarket Wine Secrets with Helen McGinn

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee | 5.45pm | £25

Join author and TV wine expert Helen McGinn as she returns once again to the Borders Book Festival for an evening of strictly jargon-free wine chat as she shares a selection of top supermarket wine picks from her latest book *The Supermarket Wine Guide*. Learn how to spot the gems on the shelves (and how to avoid the shockers!) along with everything you need to know when it comes to picking the perfect wine whatever the mood, food or occasion. Spittoons will be provided but she doesn't expect you to use them...

Ticket includes wine samples.

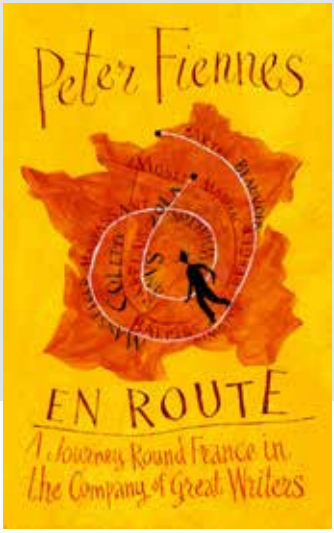
Peter Fiennes

Buccleuch Marquee
5.45pm | £10, £8



Image: Anna Fiennes

En Route: A Journey Round France in the Company of Great Writers is the ultimate literary tour, from the Normandy coast to the Cote d'Azur, along the banks of the Seine to the Alps. Peter drinks with Sartre and de Beauvoir in the bars of Rouen and Le Havre, travels to the home of George Sand, Guy de Maupassant and more, and lingers in the Loire Valley with Emile Zola by the waters of the Seine. Along the way, Peter engages the writers in a rolling conversation about their work and the country that inspired them: its beauty, its sense of belonging and nationalism, the perfect omelette, cars and hiking, holy places and war. This is a brilliant, generous and fascinating book.

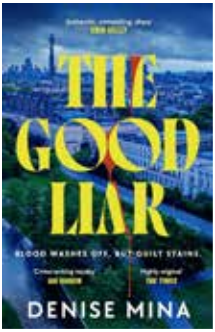


Mairi Kidd: An Introduction to Gaelic Literature

Tweed Marquee | 5.45pm | £10, £8



Scotland's Gaelic literature tradition is a long and rich one - but its gems are not always accessible to readers without Gaelic. Join writer Mairi Kidd for a lively introduction to a fascinating world of poetry, prose and song, from centuries-old love poems to modern verse via clan propaganda, women's work traditions and the occasional racy number. A fun and fascinating session to please the eye and ear. No prior experience of Gaelic necessary.









Above: Denise Mina, below: Heidi Amsinck

Denise Mina & Heidi Amsinck: Lies, Secrets and Deadly Truths

Cullen Kilshaw Marquee | 7.30pm | £14, £12

Two outstanding crime writers join forces for a gripping event of secrets, lies and deadly consequences. Denise Mina returns with *The Good Liar*, a tense and intelligent thriller in which forensic expert Claudia O'Shiel must decide whether to protect the life she has built - or expose a devastating miscarriage of justice. Denise is also Guest Programmer for the 2026 Bloody Scotland International Crime Writing Festival. Joining her is Danish author Heidi Amsinck, whose acclaimed Jensen series continues with *The Woman in the Wall*, where a gruesome discovery in Copenhagen uncovers dark family secrets and a killer hiding in plain sight. Together they discuss suspense, moral choices and why crime fiction remains one of the sharpest ways to explore power, class and human nature.

Rory Bremner in conversation with Alistair Moffat

Harmony Marquee | 7.30pm | £16, £14

Friends for more than forty years, Moffat first meeting Bremner at the Festival Fringe in 1981, these two have seen enormous change in entertainment, television, comedy and drama. They reflect on the big personalities and their influence. Alistair recalls his invention of the Perrier Award in 1981 and the first winners, Cambridge Footlights with Hugh Lawrie, Stephen Fry, Emma Thompson and Tony Slattery, directed by Jan Ravens. Amazingly, Rory's first national foray was in the pop charts with his hit single, N-N-Nineteen Not Out using impressions of cricket commentators. On Channel Four, Rory Bremner – Who Else was followed by Bremner, Bird and Fortune. Meanwhile Alistair was Director of Programmes at Scottish Television when TV began to change radically. In 2006, the old friends worked together again when Rory first appeared at the Borders Book Festival. And the rest is a version of history.

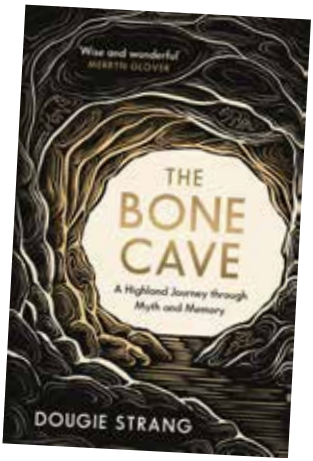




Down in Laurel Canyon

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee | 7.30pm – 9.00pm | £16

Close Sunday night on a high with Down in Laurel Canyon and a joyous celebration of one of music's most influential eras. Featuring some of the UK's finest live musicians, this Liverpool-based band brings to life the golden age of West Coast songwriting, when artists like The Mamas & the Papas, Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young, Carole King, Joni Mitchell and James Taylor defined a generation. With rich harmonies, timeless songs and an easy, feel-good groove, it's music made for summer evenings, shared moments and a crowd not quite ready for the festival to end.



Dougie Strang: The Bone Cave

Buccleuch Marquee
7.30pm | £10, £8

As the sun sets on another Borders Book Festival, step into the stories of the Highlands with writer and storyteller Dougie Strang. In *The Bone Cave*, he journeys on foot through wild landscapes, following ancient myths and folktales back to their roots. With the eerie soundtrack of the red deer rut echoing through the hills, this is a deeply atmospheric exploration of place, memory and the more-than-human world. Thoughtful, lyrical and quietly spellbinding, this event with Dougie is an invitation to slow down, listen closely and see the landscape in a new light.



This festival doesn't happen without you.

Every conversation. Every standing ovation. Every child discovering a love of reading. It all exists because people choose to support it.

Borders Book Festival is a place where stories are shared, ideas spark, and community comes alive in Harmony Garden and Orchard.

But ticket sales alone don't make this possible.

Your support helps us...

- **Bring world-class writers to the Borders**
- **Keep events accessible**
- **Inspire children and young people**
- **Reach communities beyond the festival**



You can make a lasting impact

Friend
Be part of our community

Supporter
Help the festival grow and reach more people

Patron
Play a deeper role in supporting the festival

Benefactor
Help shape its future

BordersBook Festival where words come alive!
HARMONY GARDEN · MELROSE · SCOTTISH BORDERS
WWW.BORDERSBOOKFESTIVAL.ORG

Join us for a fun-filled weekend for all ages...

The FAMILY BOOK FESTIVAL

Supported by JJ's Foundation

FRI, SAT & SUN / 12-14 JUNE



Illustration: Tom Morgan-Jones

Come and explore around the Orchard, it's a beautiful family-friendly area to relax and have fun in. There's space to play and free activities too!

There is NO entry charge for adults accompanying children to our family events. Please note, however, that our events are ticketed, so remember to put your FREE adult ticket in the basket at the time of booking.

TICKETS MUST BE BOOKED IN ADVANCE FOR ALL EVENTS

Box Office: 0131 290 2112
www.bordersbookfestival.org

All accompanying adults go FREE!

Accompanying Children to Events
Children under ten must be accompanied to all events and everyone attending needs a ticket. Space is limited so we can admit ticket holders only.

Age Suitability
Ages in listings are for guidance only.

Photography & Video
Official photography and videos may be taken throughout the festival and used in further publicity. No unofficial photography or filming is permitted, and our official media team will be wearing book festival identification.

The FAMILY BOOK FESTIVAL
Supported by JJ's Foundation
FRIDAY 12 JUNE

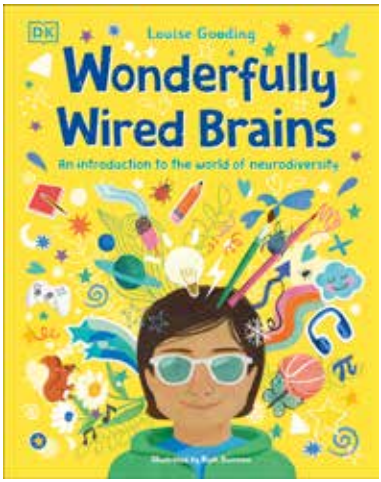
Family Friday: A Calm and Welcoming Space

For the first time this year, we're opening on Friday afternoon for a series of special family sessions planned with neurodivergent children and their families in mind. The Orchard offers a calm, safe and welcoming space where youngsters can relax, explore and have fun at their own pace, in whatever way they choose.

Come along to one of our events, specially designed for young people and their families who might find it more difficult to access our programme, or simply enjoy spending time in the Orchard - listen to the birds, read together, explore the garden, smell the flowers, watch the clouds passing, or get creative with our free colouring-in and activity sheets.

There's plenty of room to settle at the picnic benches beneath the clearspan tent or find a quieter corner in our Story Space. Returnable sensory packs are available from the Orchard Bookshop and free activity sheets can also be collected. Festival staff will be on hand if your family needs assistance or support to access this very special new Friday afternoon space.

Our event sessions are relaxed and open to all, including neurodivergent families who might find some other events harder to access.



Louise Gooding: Wonderfully Wired Brains

Buccleuch Marquee
1.30pm | £6 | Age 7+

Join Louise Gooding for an informative and inclusive event that introduces young minds to the world of neurodiversity, inspired by her incredible children's book *Wonderfully Wired Brains*. We are all neurodiverse, we all have our own likes, dislikes, fears, passions, abilities and lived experiences. This workshop gives the opportunity to celebrate how unique we are, but also to explore the things we may also have in common. Discover The Brain's Building Blocks - and find out what makes you YOU!



Create Your Own Creature with Kate McLelland!

Creative Hub | 1.30pm | £6 | Age 3 - 6

Ever wondered how a story goes from a doodle to a book? Meet author and illustrator Kate McLelland for a hands-on lunchtime of animal adventures! We'll be drawing, sticking and creating our very own creatures. Come ready to get messy, get creative and take home your very own wild masterpiece!





Peaceful Poetry with Vivian French

Buccleuch Marquee
3.15pm | £6 | Age 8 – 12

Join Vivian French as she takes you on a gentle journey to the sun, the moon and the stars. Peaceful poetry, music, pencils and paper will help you on your way to making up your own poem... or maybe you'll doodle a picture? Feel free to drop in and out as you wish...



Fiona Carswell: Sensory Adventures in Storytelling

Tweed Marquee | 3.15pm | £6 | Age 3 - 7

Join Fiona Carswell, author of Carnegie-nominated *The Boy Who Loves to Lick the Wind*, for a relaxed, sensory storytelling session and exploration of the way our astonishing brains work to make each and every one of us unique. Paint your very own beach pebble to take home to remind you of just how individual we are and how beautifully we can all work together.

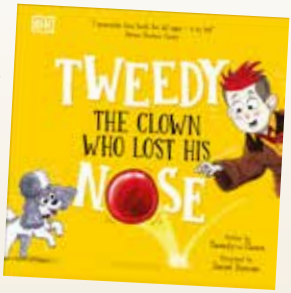
The FAMILY BOOK FESTIVAL
Supported by JJ's Foundation
SATURDAY 13 JUNE



Image: Paul Reid

Circus Mayhem with Tweedy the Clown

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee | 9.45am
£6 | Age 3 - 6



The circus is sold out, the big top is packed, the ringleader is about to introduce the first act but… oh no! Tweedy the Clown has lost something very important! Join the famous real-life clown Tweedy in this laugh-out-loud event based on his book *Tweedy the Clown Who Lost His Nose*. A laughter-filled performance where the magic of the circus comes to the festival!

Alan Windram: The Catventures of Sparky and George

Buccleuch Marquee | 9.45am | £6 | Age 6- 9



This is the debut chapter book from Alan Windram, the award-winning author of the One Button Benny series. Alan's fast-paced, laugh-out-loud story is full of feline frolics, with rucksacks made from animal-print underpants, friendly (and not so friendly) forest encounters, tasty treats and some explosive poo.

In this highly interactive event Alan shares this exuberantly funny story of the imagined adventures of his two cats, Sparky and George, as they journey out through the cat flap and into the big bad world. There will be sing-along songs, some dress-up games, quizzes and lots of fun.



Jude Reid: The Nightkeeper's Apprentice

Tweed Marquee | 9.45am | £6 | Age 10 - 14

Would you have what it takes to become a night-keeper's apprentice? Sent to a remote Scottish island she's never heard of, and to family she's never met, twelve-year-old evacuee Eilidh Flett feels lost and lonely. But she soon discovers that there's much more to this place than meets the eye... Dive in with Jude Reid to unravel the secrets of the strange lighthouse and the dark, ancient magic that lies beneath the sea.



Bookbug Rhyme Sessions

Creative Hub
9.45am - 10.10am & 10.30am - 10.55am
Free | Babies & under 3s

Join Live Borders Libraries for a fun-packed session of interactive songs and stories for babies and toddlers.

No ticket required.

Bookbug

LIVE BORDERS LIBRARIES

Nature Unleashed: Stories & Rewilding Outdoor Activities

Story Space and the Orchard | 10.30am - 3.30pm | Free | Age 3 - 18

Join **Bright Green Nature** for a series of free, drop-in activities designed to spark a love of nature and reading. With storytelling, puppet shows and imaginative play for younger children, alongside outdoor adventures, creative challenges and rewilding-themed sessions for older ages, there's something for everyone to explore. Blending nature books from the festival with hands-on discovery, these lively sessions invite children and young adults to connect with the natural world - and leave inspired to make a difference. These are outdoor activities - dress for the weather.



Magical Creatures of Abbotsford: A Drop-In Adventure

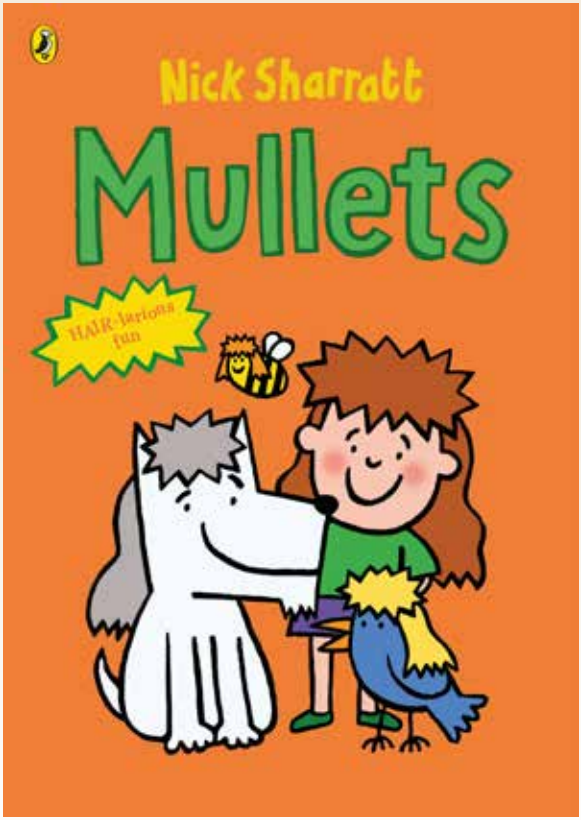
Abbotsford Tent | 10.30am – 3.30pm
Free | All Ages

Sir Walter Scott's books tell us stories of brave adventurers, magical creatures, frightful foes and life changing quests. Legend has it that many of these magical creatures still live at Abbotsford's Witch Corner.

Meet shy goblins, befriend cheeky fairies and get together with crafty dwarfs. Join the Abbotsford team to begin your own fantastical journey and create your own magical companion to take on your adventures.

Drop-in session. Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times.





Nick Sharratt's 'Hair-larious Hairstyles' Drawalong

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee
11.15am | £6 | Age 3+ and Families

Join children's author and illustrator Nick Sharratt for this utterly hair-larious event! Nick will be sharing his brand new picture book *Mullets* and taking a look at the fab hairstyles of characters in other favourite picture books such as *Shark in the Park* and *You Choose*. Come prepared for lots of laughter, plenty of drawing activity and some comb-pletely terrible puns!

Bring paper, drawing things and something to lean on.





300 Words Story Writing Competition Awards

Buccleuch Marquee | 11.15am
Free - ticketed | All Ages and Families

We are thrilled to announce the return of the 300 Words Creative Writing Competition, inspired by the Great Tapestry of Scotland. New for 2026, the competition is now open to pupils across Scotland, inviting young writers to explore the nation's history, heritage and legends through their own original stories. Inspired by the tapestry's 160 embroidered panels, the initiative encourages creativity, imagination and bold storytelling in just 300 words. Having already inspired hundreds of young writers, the competition continues to showcase the incredible talent and unique voices of Scotland's next generation. This year's winners will be celebrated at the Borders Book Festival, with prizes presented by acclaimed children's author Vivian French.

This event is FREE but a ticket is required.



Alistair & Grace Moffat: Molly Mason the Pet Detective

Tweed Marquee
11.15am | £6
Age 8 - 12

Join Alistair Moffat and his ten-year-old granddaughter Grace for a lively event celebrating their debut story collection *Molly Mason: The Pet Detective*. Set around Windygates Farm, each tale follows Molly, her sister Kelsey and their canine companions – the Valley Pack – as they solve mysteries, outwit dognappers and track down missing pets. Packed with adventure and humour, this book champions teamwork, bravery and a love of animals. Get set to help Alistair and Grace create the next Molly Mason mystery – bringing your own ideas and characters to life in a fun, imaginative workshop.



Image: Lloyd Smith Photography

Lego Club

Creative Hub | 11.30am | Free
Age 4-11

Join the fun at Live Borders Libraries Lego Club where you can create your own next art masterpiece with the LEGO bricks (or just build a castle…). Activity lasts one hour and is run on a drop-in basis.

No ticket required.



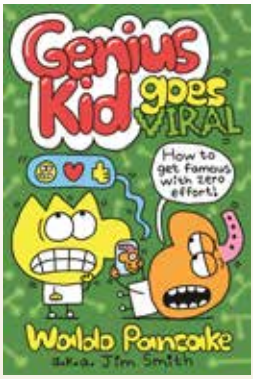
Jim Smith: Genius Kid Goes Viral

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee
12.45pm | £6 | Age 7 - 9

Get super smart with zero effort thanks to Waldo Pancake, aka Jim Smith, the author behind the brilliant graphic novel series that makes science easy! This lively, laugh-out-loud event will be packed with top cartooning tips, brain-boosting facts and a fun drawalong!

Bring paper, drawing things and something to lean on.









Dougie Payne & Rachel Seago: Poochie Pete and His Very Big Feet

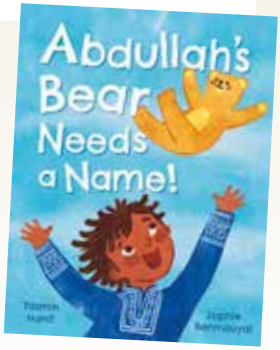
Buccleuch Marquee
12.45pm | £6 | Age 3 - 6

Join Dougie Payne, the bass player with multi-platinum-selling Scottish indie band, Travis, as he brings his debut picture book *Poochie Pete and his Very Big Feet* to this year's festival. Despite his good intentions, Poochie Pete's feet are always causing chaos wherever he goes. He longs to find his place in the world, somewhere he belongs. But it's not until he discovers a music shop and its helpful owner, Henry Large, that he finds his own song and the place where his heart truly feels at home. Get set for stories, specially written songs and live drawing by talented illustrator Rachel Seago.

Yasmin Hanif: Abdullah's Bear Needs a Name!

Tweed Marquee | 12.45pm | £6 | Age 4 - 7

Abdullah has been given a new teddy for Eid, and he needs your help to figure out its name! Join author Yasmin Hanif for interactive storytelling and games based on her debut picture book *Abdullah's Bear Needs a Name!* Come and learn how important names are, and that while there are thousands of names across different cultures and languages all over the world, each one is very special.



SATURDAY 13 JUNE



Turn Ideas into Stories: A Teen Writing Workshop with Bruna De Luca

Creative Hub
1.15pm | £6
Age 12 -15

Write the story only you can tell. In this fun, fast-paced workshop for teens, *Livia in Rome* and *Evie in Venice* author Bruna De Luca shows you how to use real moments and feelings from your own life as the starting point for fiction. Through creative prompts and quick-fire exercises, you'll turn those sparks into characters and stories that feel vivid and real. It's a relaxed space to try things out, take risks and see what happens on the page. Whether you love writing or are just curious, come and give it a go.



The New Famous Five with Chris Smith

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee | 2.15pm
£6 | Age 8 - 12

Join best-selling author Chris Smith for an interactive storytelling adventure. Chris is the co-author of *The Twits Next Door* and *Kid Normal* and he's now brought back Enid Blyton's beloved team of adventurers in a brand new series. Discover what happened to Julian, Dick, Anne and George when they grew up - and meet the New Famous Five, as well as discovering some facts about the original series that you probably never knew. This fun-filled event is suitable for all kids and there's plenty for the grown ups to enjoy too!





Tom Morgan-Jones: Monster Draw-Along

With top tips to help give your own pictures extra 'grrr' and 'oomph'!

Buccleuch Marquee
2.15pm | £6 | Age 7 - 9

Join illustrator Tom Morgan-Jones for a monster-filled draw-along packed with fun, creativity and brilliant illustration tips. Create your own brand-new monster, dream up a wild monster story and discover how to make your drawings burst with character. A lively, hands-on session for all the family – and grown-ups are very welcome to join in too!

Louise Gooding: Minna's Masks

Tweed Marquee | 2.15pm | £6 | Age 3 - 6



Meet Minna. She uses masks to feel brave and navigate the world. On her first day at a new school, she forgets them and feels overwhelmed by the noise and nerves. However, a new friend reveals his own mask, teaching Minna that she isn't alone and that true inclusion means being accepted - with or without a mask. Masking is a tool people can use to help them adjust to situations where they may otherwise feel insecure or unsure. Through Minna's story, readers will learn about masking as well as important lessons about empathy and compassion. Learn to create your own mask to wear when you need to feel as brave as a knight or as fearless as a superhero in this fun and interactive event with author Louise Gooding.

The FAMILY BOOK FESTIVAL
Supported by JJ's Foundation
SUNDAY 14 JUNE



Peter Burns: Dare You Step into the Shadows?

Buccleuch Marquee | 11.00am | £6 | Age 8 - 12

Join New York Times best-selling author Peter Burns in this highly interactive, fun-filled event as he takes you on a journey into the criminal underworld of the Shadow League and a secret boarding school for thieves. Peter will discuss his debut novel *Shadow Thieves* and its sequel *The Island of Skulls* - there will be puzzles to be solved, crimes to commit and treasures to be found!



Supertato Silliness with Sue Hendra

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee
11.00am | £6 | Age 4+

Sue Hendra, co-creator of the best-selling *Supertato* picture books, returns to Melrose to celebrate the latest adventures of everyone's favourite supermarket superhero. If you're looking for fun and giggles galore, this veggie adventure-fest is the family show for you. There will be stories, silliness and everyone will get a chance to make their own veggie superhero to take home!





Becoming a Book Lover with Michaela Morgan

Tweed Marquee
11.00am | £6 | Age 5 - 8

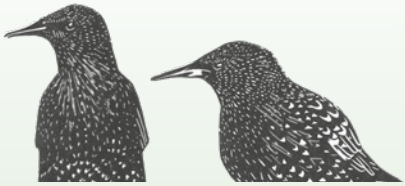
2026 is the National Year of Reading and this lively event with award-winning author Michaela Morgan takes young audiences on a journey through the tales, poems and characters loved by generations of readers. From folk and fairy tales to Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, Paddington Bear and books from the present day, Michaela offers a scamper through the children's classics that inspired her to read and then to write. With performance, pictures and plenty of chances to join in, this is a fun-filled celebration of reading for all ages. Michaela's latest book is *All Together Now*, illustrated by Nick Sharratt.



Drop-in and Draw

Creative Hub | 11.00am – 1.45pm
Free | All Ages

Looking for a relaxed space to get creative between today's events? Then drop into the Creative Hub for some nature-inspired colouring and drawing fun. Resources kindly supplied by Bright Green Nature.



Magical Creatures of Abbotsford: A Drop-In Adventure

Abbotsford Tent | 11.00am - 3.30pm
Free | All Ages

Sir Walter Scott's books tell us stories of brave adventurers, magical creatures, frightful foes and life changing quests. Legend has it that many of these magical creatures still live at Abbotsford's Witch Corner. Meet shy goblins, befriend cheeky fairies and get together with crafty dwarfs. Join the Abbotsford team to begin your own fantastical journey and create your own magical companion to take on your adventures.

Drop-in session. Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times.



Anne & Steve Brusatte: My Grandparents were Dinosaurs

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee
12.45pm | £6 | Age 5 - 7



Did you know that the sparrow at your bird feeder and the robin perched on your fence are actually dinosaurs? It's true! Join children's author Anne Brusatte and palaeontologist Steve Brusatte with new children's book *My Grandparents Were Dinosaurs*, which tells the story of how some dinosaurs grew feathers and wings, took to the skies and ultimately survived as today's birds. There will be a hands' on demonstration with real fossils and plenty of time to ask a real palaeontologist any questions about dinosaurs or birds.



Justin Davies: Have You Seen a Jellyfish?

Buccleuch Marquee | 12.45pm | £6 | Age 7 - 12

It's time for Stormcliff's annual jellyfish festival but there's a problem…the jellies haven't arrived. Voyage with award-winning author Justin Davies through the pages of his latest book *Firebloom* and discover how Tally Smuck seeks out the missing jellyfish. On the way, learn some jelly-tastic jellyfish facts, sing a sea shanty and try your hand at telling fortunes the Stormcliff way. What future will you see in the shells?



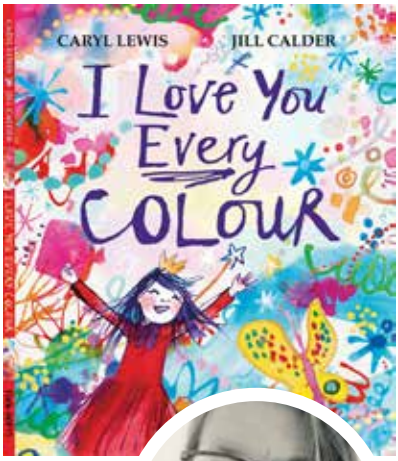
Image: Bob McDevitt Photography

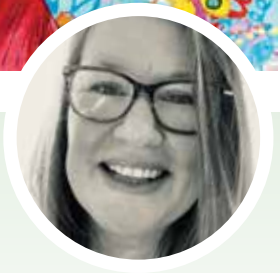
Jill Calder: I Love You Every Colour

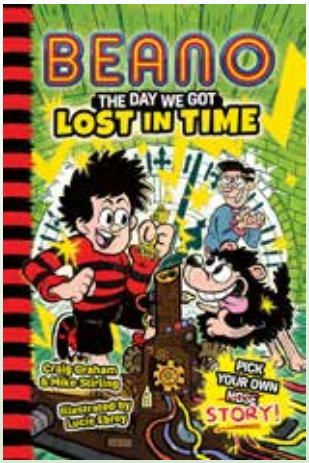
Tweed Marquee | 12.45pm | £6 | Age 4+

Leap into the marvellous multi-coloured world of *I Love You Every Colour* written by Caryl Lewis and illustrated by award-winning local artist Jill Calder! After introducing you to this beautiful book, Jill will lead fun drawing and writing activities inspired by brilliant blues, gorgeous golds and roaring reds - and all your favourite colours too - helping you create your own quirky illustrated poetry book that can be taken away at the end of the event!

Families welcome.









Beano Celebrates Dennis 75 & The Year of Mischief with The Funniest Dennis the Menace Story EVER (Created by YOU!)

JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee | 2.15pm | £6
Age 6+ and Families

Dennis the Menace has a special birthday wish – he wants to break the rules of reading! Beano's Directors of Mischief and Mayhem, Mike Stirling and Craig Graham, help him, revealing their top-secret tips for creating the laugh-out-loud stories and comic strips in Beano, where Dennis has starred since 1951. PLUS they reveal insider info on how they've reinvented reading with their smash-hit latest Beano Boomic *The Day We Got Lost in Time!* Join their Mischief Squad, as you help co-create the funniest Dennis the Menace comic strip of ALL-TIME! It's the cheekiest, funniest, most creative show ever!

Vivian French: Bumps and Bruises - and Lots of Fun!



Tweed Marquee
2.15pm | £6 | Age 4 - 7

OUCH!! Nikki's dinosaur has crashed into the train station... but luckily Enzo's mum knows how to make the train driver feel better. Vivian French will tell you all about Nikki and Enzo's day of accidents - and find out what to do if you get bumps or bruises, or if Grandpa can't stop sneezing! You too can be a first-aider!

Scots Bookbug

Creative Hub
2.35pm - 3.00pm | Free
Babies & under 3s

Bring yer wee yins alang fir a Scots Bookbug wi sangs, rhymes, an stories. Abody's welcome, whither ye're a gallus Scots speaker or a wee feartie!

No ticket required.

Scots Language Centre







The Scribble and Scrawl Abbey Crawl

Melrose Abbey
3.00pm - 4.30pm | £6 | Age 7+

Award-winning duo, Illustrator Jill Calder and children's author Justin Davies, are back at Melrose's awesome abbey with their popular drawing and writing workshop.

Be inspired by the abbey's sights, sounds and centuries-old secrets and flex your creative muscles with Jill and Justin. This fun medieval meander around the beating heart of Melrose's historic past is perfect for budding young illustrators, writers and history heroes.

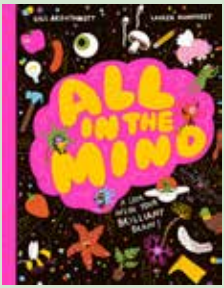
This is an outdoor event - dress for the weather (or like a monk).
Quills and parchment will be provided.
Meet outside the Box Office Tent.

Squeak, Squish, Rattle! Sensory Stories for All

Creative Hub | 3.30pm | £6 | All Ages

Join storyteller Ailie Finlay from My Kind of Book as we head off on a sensory story adventure with funny noises, intriguing tactile props and inclusive games. Lots of joining-in fun! The stories will be followed by a calming session with play dough. For everyone, but particularly suitable for children with additional needs and their families and friends.





Gill Arbuthnott: All in the Mind

Buccleuch Marquee
4.00pm | £6 | Age 8 - 12

Our brains are amazing! They control how we think and act and let us do everything from telling jokes or running marathons to making scientific discoveries. But how do they do it? Come along to find out about your incredible brain and put it to the test with puzzles, brain teasers and illusions.

Ross MacKay: Tractors in Space

Tweed Marquee | 4.00pm | £6 | Age 3 - 6



Calling all little dreamers and tractor fans! Scottish author, Ross MacKay is bringing the magic of his newest book *Tractors in Space*, to life. This isn't just a storytime - it's a creative mission. Following a delightful reading, children are invited to an interactive session where they can dream up, draw and build their own space-faring tractors.



JJ's Foundation

Enabling access to reading, music and nature – for EVERY child

Contact: karen@jjsfoundation.co.uk

JJ's Foundation is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC055089


FIND YOUR RHYTHM
SCOTLAND
VISITSCOTLAND.COM/EVENTS



CLELANDS VOLVO

Clelands Volvo are proud to be transport partner of the 2026 Borders Book Festival

For generations we have been supported by our local community so to be involved in the event is a fantastic opportunity for us to further showcase our business and Volvo.

Celebrating our many accolades including National Volvo Retailer of the Year 2025, there is no better place to buy and service your Volvo than Clelands.

For 2026, together with the festival, Clelands have put together a fleet of our striking electric Volvos aiming to reduce our C02 impact. Watch out for them around the festival and our team on the entry of Harmony Gardens will be happy to show you around our Volvos and answer all your questions.

Clelands Volvo

Melrose Road, Galashiels, TD1 2UH
www.clelands.co.uk 01896 757575

"The will to do, the soul to dare"
Sir Walter Scott

START YOUR NEXT DARING ADVENTURE WITH US...
THE PERFECT BORDERS LOCATIONS
RELAXING ACCOMMODATION | GREAT FOOD & DRINK





www.burtshotel.co.uk
T: 01896 822285
E: enquiries@burtshotel.co.uk

www.thetownhousemelrose.co.uk
T: 01896 822645
E: enquiries@thetownhousemelrose.co.uk



Proud to host the JRW Hogg & Thorburn Marquee

JRW HOGG & THORBURN
chartered accountants



See you in the Orchard

From business start-ups to succession planning and complex tax challenges to renewables. Whatever the situation, our team of highly experienced specialists are here to put your financial needs first.

We work with every size and type of business and our individual clients have direct access to the same team of experts.

Growing business together

Get in touch to arrange a FREE consultation

www.jrwht.co.uk

BIGGAR EDINBURGH GALASHIELS HAWICK LANGHOLM PEEBLES



THE BORDERS DISTILLERY

PROUD SPONSORS OF THE BORDERS BOOK FESTIVAL

Every great story has a beginning – ours started with bringing whisky back to the Scottish Borders for the first time since 1837.

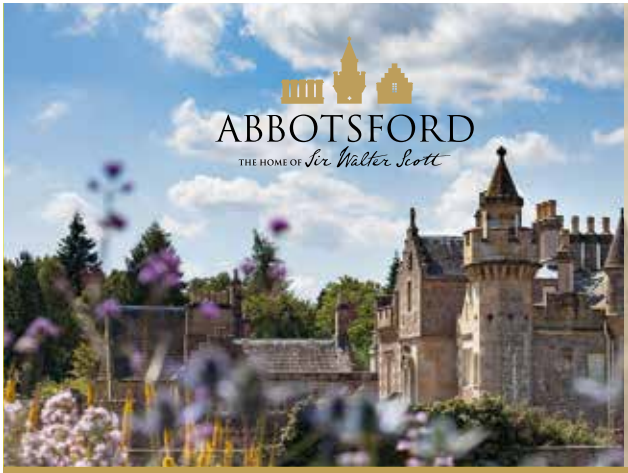
Find **the spirit of the Borders** behind the bar at the Borders Book Festival all weekend, serving up local Scotch whisky, gin, vodka, and **cocktails** made right here in the Scottish Borders.

We're open for **tours all weekend** during the festival. Step inside, follow the journey of our Borders spirits, discover the story first-hand from the people who make it, at the first Scotch whisky distillery in the Scottish Borders since 1837.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO **BOOK YOUR DISTILLERY TOUR** AND DISCOVER THE SPIRIT OF THE BORDERS THIS WEEKEND

thebordersdistillery.com | @thebordersdistillery | Hawick, TD9 7AQ

Please drink responsibly. Visit drinkaware.co.uk for the facts.



ABBOTSFORD UNLIMITED

Enjoy a whole year of access to Abbotsford's historic house, gardens and Witch Corner with our Abbotsford Unlimited ticket. Visit time and time again to enjoy seasonal experiences and activities- from Spring and Summer in the walled gardens to Christmas in the historic house and seasonal family activities at Witch Corner.

SAVE 20%

HOUSE | GARDEN | ESTATE | WITCH CORNER | GIFT SHOP | EXHIBITION | CAFÉ | STAY AT ABBOTSFORD

Visit Abbotsford, the extraordinary home of Scottish and local legend Sir Walter Scott, the man who gave us the historical novel, popularised tartan and rediscovered Scotland's Crown Jewels. Explore Scott's wonderful home and gardens, enjoy riverside and woodland walks, indulge in our gift shop or relax in Ochiltree's café.

Support us and become part of the Abbotsford story. As an independent Scottish charity, we rely on your generosity to help safeguard Abbotsford and Sir Walter Scott's legacy for future generations.

The Abbotsford Trust is an independent Scottish charity, No SC037425



Knight Frank

When it matters most, put your next move in safe hands.

Knight Frank Scotland
0131 222 9600
scotland@knightframk.com

Knight Frank Borders & Northumberland
01890 230 445
edward.douglas-home@knightframk.com

Your partners in property

BOWHILL

DALKEITH
COUNTRY PARK

DRUMLANRIG
CASTLE







Buccleuch are proud to support the Borders Book Festival

Explore three of Scotland's historic estates, where you can stay, play, enjoy the outdoors and immerse yourself in art and history.

Bowhill House
Selkirk Scottish Borders TD7 5ET
T: 01750 22204
E: info@bowhillhouse.co.uk
www.bowhillhouse.co.uk

Dalkeith Country Park
Dalkeith Edinburgh EH22 1ST
T: 0131 654 1666
E: info@dalkeithcountrypark.co.uk
www.dalkeithcountrypark.co.uk

Drumlanrig Castle
Dumfries & Galloway DG3 4AQ
T: 01848 331 555
E: info@drumlanrigcastle.co.uk
www.drumlanrigcastle.co.uk



TRY BEFORE YOU BUY!

Visit our Galashiels showroom and stroll through our complete range at your leisure. We'll be there to answer any of your questions when you need us.

MitchellGlass
SUPERIOR HOME LIVING SINCE 1875

SHOWROOM (by appointment)
Currie Road Galashiels TD1 2BP
T. 0800 220415
W. mitchellglass.co.uk

SIMPLY DELICIOUS
MELROSE
ICE CREAMERY
& CHOCOLATIER



SCOTTISH BORDERS
ICE CREAM
HANDCRAFTED CHOCOLATES
HANDMADE TABLET

13 Morow Gardens
Melrose TD6 9LA

Serving Delight

GRAHAM + SIBBALD

Chartered Surveyors and Property Consultants

As one of the UK's leading property consultancy services, our success is built upon how we deliver our service; it is a unique combination of being both professional and personable.

Our services include:

- Residential
- Valuations
- Commercial Agency
- Building Surveying
- Architecture
- Planning + Development
- Business Rates
- Hotel + Leisure
- Asset Services
- Lease Consultancy

01896 800 863
g-s.co.uk





Experts in escapes to the North of England & South of Scotland

Set within some of the most distinctive and unspoilt parts of the British Isles, our holiday homes are the finest places to make memories with friends and family.

crabtreeandcrabtree.com

Be Kind, *Unwind!*

Restorative Sound Baths & Seasonal Yoga in the heart of the Scottish Borders.



seasonalyogawithtamsin.com

A **FAMILY-RUN** AUCTION BUSINESS

With salerooms in **Dumfries, Carlisle, Edinburgh** and **Ayr,** we specialise in collectable books, antiques, fine art, gold and silver, jewellery, clocks and watches, militaria and medals, and everything in between.

TRC
THOMSON RODDICK CALLAN
Auctioneers & Valuers



Get in touch at
dumfries@thomsonroddick.com or 01387 721635

www.thomsonroddick.com

THOMSON GRAY



Jim Clark Motorsport Museum

Proud sponsors of
Borders Book Festival

thomsongray.com

marmions brasserie

MON-SAT
9AM - 9PM

SERVING FOOD ALL DAY

5 BUCCLEUCH STREET
MELROSE TD6 9LB
01896 822245

WWW.MARMIONSBRASSERIE.CO.UK
INFO@MARMIONSBRASSERIE.CO.UK

Abbey Fine Wines

Bottle Shop & Cafe Bar

Exquisite Wines & Small Plates
In The Heart Of Melrose

Explore A Curated Selection Of
The Finest Wines & Spirits
In Our Bottle Shop

Join Us For Drinks, Snacks & Coffee
In Our Cafe Bar

Open Until 8pm
Throughout the Book Festival

www.abbeyfinewines.com

BORDER SAFEGUARD

Experts in security and fire detection
Specialists in the installation of:
Intruder Alarm Systems
Fire Detection Systems
Door Access Systems
CCTV Systems
Security Lighting Systems
Monitoring Systems
For your business and home.
24 hour service support

CONTACT US

Engine House, Ettrick Riverside
Dunsdale Road, Selkirk, TD7 5EB
01750 20985
info@bordersafeguard.co.uk
www.bordersafeguard.co.uk

Find us on social media:



YOUR **LOCAL** MOBILITY SCOOTER
WHEELCHAIR & POWERCHAIR **SPECIALIST**
GALASHIELS MOBILITY
INFO@GALASHIELSMOBILITY.CO.UK | WWW.GALASHIELSMOBILITY.CO.UK
8 THE HIGH STREET GALASHIELS SELKIRKSHIRE TD1 1SD



Real Wood STUDIOS

Bespoke Furniture Workshop & Showroom

From tree to table, kitchen, chair...

Specialists in beautiful Scottish Hardwoods, we supply timber and create original, bespoke furniture and interiors for clients across the Borders and beyond.

Come in for a chat and browse our showroom
Open Mon to Fri 9-5pm & Sat 10-4pm

Monteviot Nurseries, Nr Ancrum, Jedburgh TD8 6TU Tel: 01835 830 767 www.realwoodstudios.com



Become a member

Enjoy amazing experiences at over 100 places across Scotland, while helping us to protect them.

Share it all. Join today.

nts.org.uk

JOIN TODAY

The National Trust for Scotland is a Scottish charity, SC007410

EILDON GROUP
Caring, Committed, Connected, Creative

We're really proud to have been supporting our communities in the Scottish Borders for over fifty years.

As a leading housing and care provider and the main provider of new homes of any tenure in the region, we do more than just provide homes – we support our communities.



Supporting and Strengthening our Communities

The Borders Forest Trust
1996-2026

Celebrating 30 Years

of community-based ecological restoration

2 MILLION trees planted - equivalent to 17 trees for every person living in the Scottish Borders.

3,250 hectares of land under restoration; an area larger than the city of Inverness.

32,500 young people engaged in woodland education.

Donate • Join • Volunteer
be part of the next thirty years!
www.bordersforesttrust.org
Scottish Charity No. SC024358

Gall Robertson CA
inc. Charles Gray and Co
Chartered Accountants & Business Advisers

FOR ACCOUNTANCY, TAXATION AND BUSINESS ADVICE

OFFICES IN TWEEDBANK AND PEEBLES

"MAKE SURE YOUR ADVISER IS A CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT"

PROUD TO SUPPORT THE BORDERS BOOK FESTIVAL

01896 751050 / 01721 723366
www.gallrobertsonca.co.uk

LOCHCARRON

MADE in SCOTLAND

TAKE A GUIDED MILL TOUR | SHOP FOR HIGHLAND WEAR













Discover more with a visit to the Lochcarron Visitor Centre.
Join a guided tour for exclusive access inside our working weaving mill, where you'll see Scotland's finest tartans and textiles being woven by skilled craftspeople and learn how traditional techniques blend with modern design. Afterwards, explore our shop showcasing locally made gifts, accessories, and exclusive Lochcarron products. A wonderful way to experience the rich heritage of the Scottish Borders.

VISITOR CENTRE & SHOP | MILL TOURS
Waverley Mill, Rogers Road, Selkirk TD7 5DX
visit@lochcarron.com | 01750 726100

OPENING HOURS
Monday - Thursday 9.30am - 4.30pm
Friday 9.30am - 2pm. Closed Sat & Sun

www.lochcarron.com

The World's Leading Designer and Manufacturer of Authentic Tartan

LOCHCARRON
MADE in SCOTLAND



For 90 years, the Saltire Society has helped preserve and champion Scottish culture. We are a membership organisation, open to all, offering a chance to connect with culture and other people who care about its future. We publish, platform and support writers, creatives and other thinkers, and we are the home of **The Saltires: Scotland's National Book Awards**. Join the ranks of thousands of supporters today at:

www.saltiresociety.org.uk

SALTIRE SOCIETY SCOTLAND

COMANN CRANN NA H-ALBA

HISTORIC SCOTLAND
ALBA AOSMHOR

Melrose Abbey



Make a weekend of it! Join us on Saturday 13 June for a Time Travellers Fun Day, in partnership with the Trimontium Trust. Then, on Sunday 14 June, were hosting a range of exciting events celebrating the Borders Book Festival.

Free entry on Sat 13 June

hes.scot/melrose-abbey

CULLEN KILSHAW
~ IN THE ~
COMMUNITY



CULLEN KILSHAW
SOLICITORS & ESTATE AGENTS

Your trusted Legal and Property Experts

With over 40 years of experience, Cullen Kilshaw offers expert guidance for life's most important decisions. With offices across the south of Scotland, our dedicated team is here to support you wherever you are.

- Residential property sales and lettings
- Commercial property services
- Family law advice and support
- Wills, Powers of Attorney, and estate planning

Wherever life takes you, we're with you every step of the way.

A member of OnTheMarket espc bspc rightmove

E: waverleychambers@cullenkilshaw.com
T: 01896 800 800 **www.cullenkilshaw.com**

Travel in time

with the Young Walter Scott Prize!

If you're aged between 11 and 19 and interested in writing and history, then the Young Walter Scott Prize is here to take you on an adventure! We are the UK's only creative-writing prize specifically for budding writers of historical fiction. Enter a short story of between 800 and 2000 words, and you could win a £500 travel grant, tickets to next year's Borders Book Festival, and the chance to see your story in print. **The closing date for the competition is 31st October 2026.**

Find out how to enter at **www.ywsp.co.uk**



@waltscottprize @walterscottprize @walterscottprize

THE YOUNG WALTER SCOTT PRIZE



Hop on over to SCOTLAND'S FASTEST GROWING BROADBAND PROVIDER



Your broadband



GoFibre

Check your postcode

Go Fibre





Protecting your wealth for future generations.

Our specialist team is always here to help you enjoy your wealth, in whatever way matters most to you. From succession planning to investment management, we can support you.

Discover more at **canaccord-wealth.com**

Canaccord WEALTH

Investment involves risk

Canaccord Wealth is the trading name of Canaccord Genuity Wealth Limited (CGWL) and CG Wealth Planning Limited (CGWPL). They are both subsidiaries of Canaccord Genuity Group Inc.



Prepare for every chapter.

It's all about being ready for life's twists and turns.

We provide deep legal expertise across the areas that matter to you, from rural and corporate to family, property, future planning and more.

With local understanding and national reach, our trusted advisors are here to guide and support you.

Contact us today and tell us your story.

wjm.co.uk

LEADING FIRM
Legal500
UNITED KINGDOM
2026

Chambers
RANKED IN
UK
2026
Wright, Johnston & Mackenzie LLP

IM irwinmitchell

WJM Wright, Johnston & Mackenzie

GROWING TOGETHER

PRIVATE CLIENT
CORPORATE
CONFLICT RESOLUTION
COMMERCIAL PROPERTY

EDINBURGH	GLASGOW	INVERNESS	DUNBLANE	ABERDEEN	GALASHIELS
0131 524 1500	0141 248 3434	01463 234445	01786 822296	01224 092990	01896 550 991

WRIGHT, JOHNSTON & MACKENZIE LLP IS AUTHORISED AND REGULATED BY THE FINANCIAL CONDUCT AUTHORITY. FCA REFERENCE NUMBER 231170.