



Todmorden Book Festival

6-15 November 2026

todmordenbookfestival.co.uk

**Landscapes,
people
and stories**

featuring
Lee Child
Frank Cottrell-Boyce
Naz Shah
Jeremy Hunt

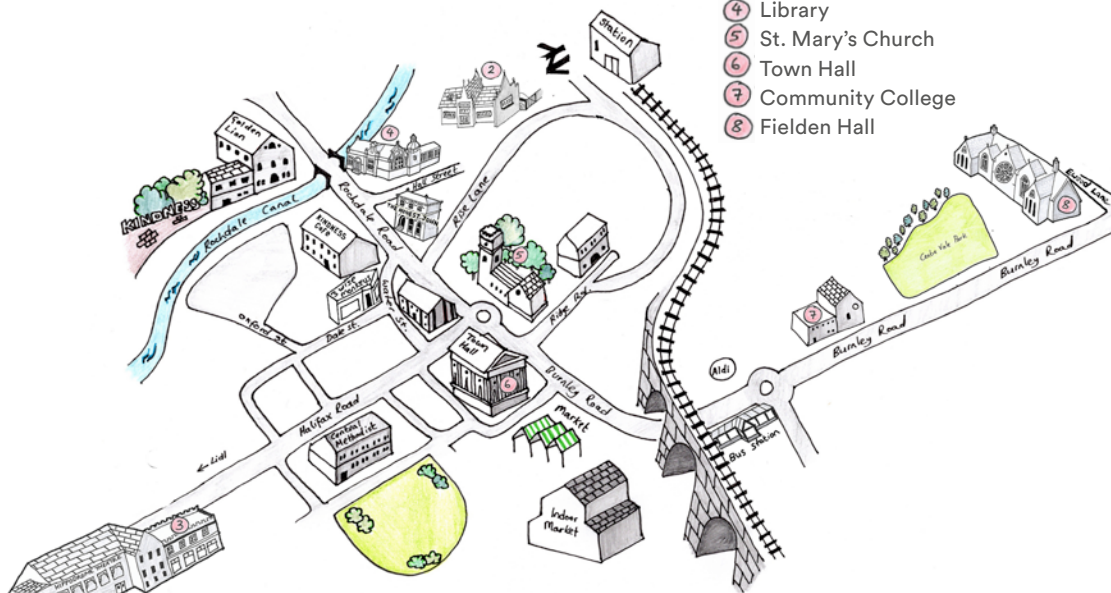
Where we are and how to book

Book online at todmordenbookfestival.co.uk (a booking fee of 7% plus VAT applies) or at Todmorden Information Centre, 15 Burnley Road, OL14 7BU, 01706 818181.

Under 16s are free.

Concessions are available for under 18s, students, pensioners, benefit recipients and people with disabilities.

- ① Hippodrome Theatre
- ② Natural Endings
- ③ Herald Buildings/Wholefood Café
- ④ Library
- ⑤ St. Mary's Church
- ⑥ Town Hall
- ⑦ Community College
- ⑧ Fielden Hall



How to find us by car: Todmorden can be reached from the M62, M1, M6 and M65. From the M62 eastbound, leave at junction 21 and junction 24 westbound. From the M65, leave at junctions 9, 10 or 11.

By train: There are regular train services from Manchester and Leeds. For train information, please visit northernrailway.co.uk

By bus: There are regular bus services from Halifax, Burnley and Rochdale. For bus information, please visit wymetro.com



Friday 6 Nov, 7.30-9pm, Hippodrome Theatre, Halifax Road, OL14 5BB

Lee Child In Conversation

Tickets
£10
Concessions
available

Lee Child is one of the world's leading thriller writers. He was born in Coventry, raised in Birmingham, and now lives in England's Lake District. It is said one of his novels featuring his hero Jack Reacher is sold somewhere in the world every nine seconds. *Killing Floor*, published in March 1997, was the first in the series. It won the mystery writers' Anthony Award and Barry Award for Best First Novel. Since then there have been 30 more Reacher novels and his books consistently achieve the number one slot on bestseller lists around the world, selling over one hundred million copies to date. Lee is the recipient of many awards including Author of the Year at the 2019 British Book Awards. He was appointed CBE in the 2019 Queen's Birthday Honours.

Interviewed by Cheryl Taylor.

For more information, follow us on socials or check our website



@todbookfest

todmordenbookfestival.co.uk

Special thanks to



Todmorden
Town Council



Bookcase
Hebden Bridge

Naz Shah

Survival, Strength and My Path to Politics

Naz Shah has been the Labour MP for Bradford West since her election in 2015, when in a bruising battle with George Galloway's Respect Party she won a resounding 49.6% of the vote and a majority of 11,420. She was born in Bradford but sent to Pakistan by her mother at the age of 12 to escape the attentions of her mother's abuser. There, she was forced into a marriage at the age of 15. When she was 20, her mother was convicted of the murder of her abuser and served 14 years in prison after receiving a 20-year sentence. Naz was instrumental in campaigning for and securing a reduction of her mother's tariff. Honoured is her first book.

Interviewed by Yvette Huddleston, Yorkshire Post.



Tickets
£10
Concessions
available



HONoured
NAZ SHAH

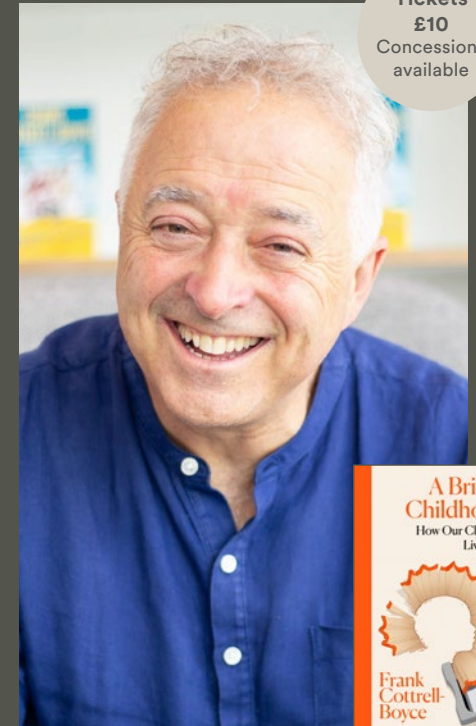
Saturday 7 Nov, 7.30-9pm, St Mary's Church, Burnley Road, OL14 7BD

Frank Cottrell-Boyce

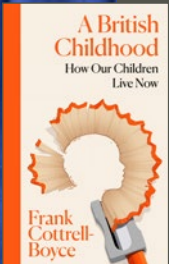
In Conversation

Frank Cottrell-Boyce, Waterstones Children's Laureate 2024-2026, is an award-winning children's author and screenwriter. Millions, his debut children's novel, won the CILIP Carnegie Medal. His other books include The Astounding Broccoli Boy, Noah's Gold and The Wonder Brothers. He has enjoyed a long-standing collaboration with illustrator Steven Lenton. His books have been shortlisted for a multitude of prizes, including the Guardian Children's Fiction Prize and Whitbread Children's Fiction Award. Frank is also a successful screenwriter. He has written for Dr Who and along with Danny Boyle, devised the Opening Ceremony for the London 2012 Olympics. His podcast with Nadia Shireen, The Island of Brilliant! celebrates writing and illustration for children of all ages. He lives in Merseyside with his family.

Interviewed by Frankie Mullen.



Tickets
£10
Concessions
available



Sunday 8 Nov, 7.30-8.30pm, Hippodrome Theatre, Halifax Road, OL14 5BB

Jeremy Hunt

Can We Be Rich Again?

The Rt Hon Sir Jeremy Hunt MP was elected Conservative MP for South West Surrey in 2005. He was first appointed Secretary of State for Health in September 2012, then served as Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs from July 2018 to July 2019, and Chancellor of the Exchequer from October 2022 to July 2024. Before his election as an MP, Jeremy ran his own educational publishing business, Hotcourses. He also set up a charity to help AIDS orphans in Africa in which he continues to play an active role. Jeremy lives in Godalming and London with his wife, son and two daughters.

Interviewed by Ben Jancovich.

Tickets
£10
Concessions
available



Can We
Be Rich
Again?
The Surprising Potential
of Britain's Economy
Jeremy Hunt

Thursday 12 Nov, 7.30-9pm, Hippodrome Theatre, Halifax Road, OL14 5BB

Horatio Clare

We Came By Sea

Horatio Clare's acclaimed memoirs, travel and children's books include Running for the Hills (Somerset Maugham Award), A Single Swallow, Down to the Sea in Ships (Stanford Dolman Award), and Heavy Light, charting his experiences with psychiatric treatment and recovery. Your Journey Your Way – the recovery guide to mental health, is a Sunday Times self-help book of the year. Horatio presents 'Is Psychiatry Working?' on Radio 4. His new book, We Came By Sea: stories of a greater Britain, tells the story of the small boat crisis. Horatio delivers training to NHS intervention teams and lectures at the University of Manchester. He lives in West Yorkshire.

Tickets
£5



Monday 9 Nov, 7.30-8.30pm, Town Hall, Bridge Street, OL14 5AA

Celebrating our Friendship with Ukraine

A Free Community Event for Everyone

Saturday 14 Nov, 1-4pm

Todmorden Community College, 44 Burnley Road, OL14 7BX

Join us for songs, dance and storytelling from the Huddersfield Ukrainian Singing Troupe and Zolota Kalyna Dance Ensemble - British born Ukrainians and refugees showcasing the country's culture and traditions in solidarity with families and friends still bravely resisting the Putin regime. Plus traditional food, and a presentation from Michael Drapan, whose book *Home From Home* tells the story of the emigre Ukrainian community in Huddersfield, which was mirrored across many towns in the North and Midlands.



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| 12.30-1.30pm | Free lunch including traditional Ukrainian savouries and sweets. |
| 1.30pm | Home from Home with Michael Drapan |
| 2pm | Huddersfield Ukrainian Troupe sing traditional folk songs |
| 2.15pm | Zolota Kalyna Seniors perform 1 folk dance |
| 2.30pm | Poetry and stories with Olena Bezlepkina |
| Tea break | |
| 3pm | Huddersfield Ukrainian Troupe return |
| 3.15pm | Zolota Kalyna dance ensemble (Seniors and Juniors) perform dances from Ukraine |
| 3.30pm | Music for the Many perform Ukrainian folk songs with Stasia Chalova |
| 4pm | Close |



Schools and Storytelling

Ian Douglas

Tuesday 10 Nov 2.30-3.30pm, Wednesday 11 Nov 10am-11am, 2-3pm, Thursday 12 Nov 10am-12pm, 2pm-3pm

Ian Douglas is a story teller who likes to tell tales that are fun, inviting and light-hearted. His extensive experience shows him that story-telling has a unique ability to connect children to past, future and immediate worlds. He gets invited back to schools across the British Isles again and again.



Ursula Holden-Gill

Monday 9 Nov 10-11am, 2-3pm

Ursula Holden-Gill is a unique force in story-telling, using music, movement and real life observation alongside traditional folk heritage to connect people of all ages with their own creativity.



Full details at
todmordenbookfestival.co.uk

Masterclasses

Novel Writing

Stephen May

Saturday 7 Nov, 10am-12 pm, Todmorden Library, 8 Rochdale Road, OL14 5AA

What makes a writer's voice unique? Join novelist Stephen May for this stimulating workshop which will explore how to depict fictional worlds, characters, relationships and situations so that they seem real.

Writing at Durham University and author of the novel *raw content*, *Exit Management* and *Sealed*, and the short-story collection, *Animals at Night*. Her folk horror story, 'Sour Hall', is set in the Calder Valley, and it has been adapted into an Audible Originals drama series. Her forthcoming novel, *A Thousand Ghosts*, is set on the York ghost-tour circuit.

Haunted Locations & Writing Ghost Stories

Naomi Booth

Sunday 8 Nov 10am-12pm, Herald Buildings/The Wholefood Café, Halifax Road, OL14 5BB

Join award-winning writer Naomi Booth to experiment with different approaches to the macabre. Naomi Booth is Professor of Creative

Writing Poems

Amanda Dalton

Sunday 8 Nov 12.30-2.30pm, Herald Buildings/The Wholefood Café, Halifax Road, OL14 5BB

Whether you're an absolute beginner or seasoned writer, this practical workshop led by poet and playwright Amanda Dalton is for you. For everyone aged 16-plus. Amanda's collections *How To Disappear* and *Fantastic Voyage* are published by Bloodaxe. She is also a theatre and BBC Radio playwright and visiting lecturer at Manchester University.



Seeking Mea Allan

Felicity Goodall

Tickets
£5

War correspondent Mea Allan worked for the Glasgow Herald throughout WW2. An accredited journalist serving with the British Forces, she was the only woman to report on Belsen in 1945. The first woman news editor in Fleet Street and a novelist, she was once so famous her name was used to advertise Horlicks - yet her story is almost forgotten. Seeking Mea Allan, the first biography from Radio 4 broadcaster and writer Felicity Goodall, aims to change that. Goodall was inspired to look further into her fascinating life after reading archive letters Allan wrote in 1940 during the London Blitz.

Saturday 7 Nov, 2-3.30pm, Fielden Hall, Ewood Lane, OL14 7DD



Clinging to the Craggs

Katharine Grant

Tickets
£5

Katharine Grant was born into a family described by Lord Burghley, Treasurer to Elizabeth 1st, as of 'more than usual perversity'. Her five times removed great uncle, Francis Towneley, was the last person in the UK to be hanged, drawn and quartered. A former newspaper columnist, she is currently Consultant Fellow of the Royal Literary Fund. Sedition, her first novel for adults, was published to rave reviews. Clinging To The Craggs is her memoir of a 'Towneley childhood that wasn't a childhood at Towneley'.

Saturday 7 Nov, 4-5pm, Fielden Hall, Ewood Lane, OL14 7DD



The Nine Lives of Muriel Spark

James Bailey

Tickets
£5

James Bailey is a writer and researcher from Manchester. He is a Doctor of Literature, his previous publications include Muriel Spark's Early Fiction and he is co-editor of British Women Short Story Writers. His day job involves working to support the development of other writers, as well as independent publishers, bookshops and literature festivals. Interviewed by Bec Evans.

Sunday 8 Nov, 4.30-5.50pm, Town Hall, Bridge Street, OL14 5AA

Two Novelists in Conversation

Tickets
£5

Simon Crump

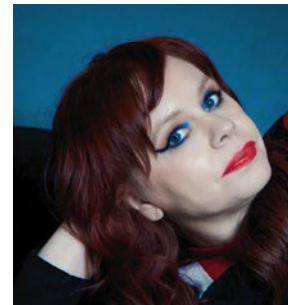
Simon Crump is an author of experimental fiction including composite novel My Elvis Blackout. Other books include historical non-fiction work They Call it U-Boat Hotel. He lived in Sheffield for 40 years and in 2017 received a suspended sentence for environmental activism. Simon's latest book, Post It Notes from Underground, was published by Bluemoose Books in 2026.

Sheena Kalayil

Sheena Kalayil's third novel The Wild Wind is based on her childhood, split between Zambia, Zimbabwe and Kerala, India. She arrived in the UK aged 18 and has worked as a teacher all over the world. She teaches at the University of Manchester. Her debut novel, The Bureau of Second Chances, won Writers' Guild Award for Best First Novel. The Others is her fourth novel and was long-listed for the Women's Prize for Fiction 2026.

Interviewed by Bec Evans.

Friday 13 Nov, 7.30-9pm, St Mary's Church, Burnley Road, OL14 7BD



From Punk to the Proms

Two Music Writers Tell All

Tickets
£5

Janine Warren

Janine Warren has championed some of the most influential artists of the past two decades, working for Johnny Marr, Marianne Faithfull and many others. She edited Punk Fiction: An Anthology of Short Stories Inspired by Punk. She regularly hosts events and co-curates the Cult Music Film Club at Hebden Bridge's Trades Club.

Elizabeth Alker

Elizabeth Alker is a journalist and broadcaster. Born in Rochdale to music teacher parents, she studied Communications & Politics and English Literature at the University of Leeds, joining the BBC in 2003. In 2025 she published 'Everything We Do Is Music', about connections between popular and classical music. She lives in Hebden Bridge.



Saturday 14 Nov, 7.30-9pm, St Mary's Church, Burnley Road, OL14 7BD

Chance Encounters in the Valley of Lights

Rik Moran

Photographer and writer Rik Moran grew up near Todmorden. His new book, *Chance Encounters in the Valley of Lights*, looks into the famous tale of PC Alan Godfrey, whose UFO sighting in the skies above Burnley Road and possible abduction by aliens in November 1980 has never been properly explained. Rik's book combines original photography with never-seen-before archive material, including newspaper clippings, police reports, transcripts of interviews and letters from the Ministry of Defence. What really happened? Was it all a government cover-up? Is there anyone out there? Come along and find out.

Tickets
£5



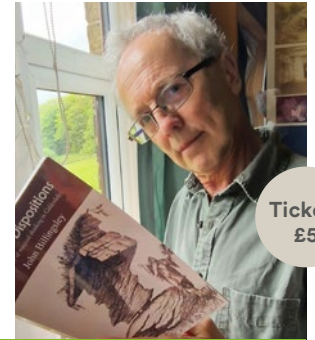
Sunday 15 Nov, 2-3pm, Todmorden Community College, 44 Burnley Road, OL14 7BX

Magical Dispositions

John Billingsley

John Billingsley is a local historian specialising in the folklore and less regarded aspects of the area's community heritage. His 12 books, drawn from 50 years' residence in the Upper Calder Valley, deal with an eclectic range of subjects including folk tales, protective carvings, corpseways, magical culture and Ted Hughes.

Tickets
£5



Sunday 8 Nov, 3-4pm, Herald Buildings/The Wholefood Café, 65 Halifax Road, OL14 5BB

Folk Tales from the Canal Side

Ian Douglas

Ian Douglas has been telling stories at festivals, schools, libraries and on street corners both nationally and internationally for over 30 years. Originally a street theatre performer, Ian has founded two story-based theatre companies. He has also worked as a theatre practitioner in residence for organisations across the North including Northern Stage in Newcastle and Theatre by the Lake in Keswick.

Tickets
£5



Wednesday 11 Nov, 7-8.30pm, Todmorden Library, 8 Rochdale Road, OL14 5AA

Lives Ruined: Why Miscarriages of Justice Matter

Campbell Malone

Campbell Malone was born in 1944 in the Scottish Borders but moved to the North of England aged two. In his book he describes how in a legal career extending over 40 years he dealt with some of the most high-profile miscarriages of justice cases of the day including Stefan Kiszko, Ricky Tomlinson and the leading Court of Appeal case including the controversy of Shaken Babies. He lives with his wife Judith in Todmorden and was made an Honorary Citizen in 2005.

Tickets
£5



Tuesday 10th Nov, 7-8.30pm, Todmorden Library, 8 Rochdale Road, OL14 5AA



All our beers are from independent breweries



Come and see us at The Fox, Water Street, Todmorden, OL14 5AB
Open Wed - Sun from 1pm. Train stn 2 mins. Car park at rear.

- 6 cask hand pulls - inc White Rat, 2 pale/IPA, mild, bitter and stout
- 15 keg lines - 2 cider, 3 lager, 6 ale/IPA etc inc our exclusive collaboration with Trail Brew, cherry beer, stout, sour, alcohol free
- Fully stocked fridge with cans and bottles
- Wines, spirits and soft drinks. Snacks from Filberts and Serious Pig
- No loud music or TVs!

The Holistic Approach



to Wellness

PHYSIOTHERAPY
PILATES
MASSAGE
CHIROPODY
ACUPUNCTURE
EAR MICROSUCTION
CRANIO-SACRAL THERAPY

REIKI
REFLEXOLOGY
SPORTS MASSAGE
BOWEN TECHNIQUE
HYPNOTHERAPY
ECO THERAPY
SHOCKWAVE THERAPY

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Keep the Story Going at Todmorden Library

✦ Welcoming ✦ Free ✦ Inspiring ✦
✦ Open to Everyone ✦

- Thousands of books, eBooks and audiobooks
- Free Wi-Fi, computers and digital support
- Storytimes, Rhymetimes and family activities
- Events and community programmes
- Reading groups and local history resources



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Awarded Funeral Director of the Year 2024
by The AGFD - Good Funeral Awards





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