

MK
LIT FEST

Milton Keynes' fabulous festival of books, words, writers and ideas

22-26 April
2026

MK Lit Fest

**Aki Schilz Ash Bond Caroline Davies Daria Chernysheva David Wilson
Derek Owusu Geoff Andrews Harriet Tyce Isabelle Baafi
James McDermott John Grindrod John McCullough Johnny Ball
Jonn Elledge Madeleine Dunnigan Matty Long Natalie Bennett
Nizrana Farook Ruth Mancini Sarah Pinborough Simon Maddrell
Solitaire Townsend Toby Litt**



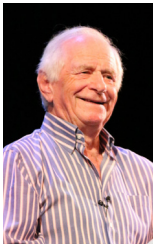
mklitfest.org

A part of the
Arts Gateway MK
family

@mklitfest

Buy Tickets!





JOHNNY BALL: STORIES THAT MUST BE TOLD!

WEDNESDAY 22 APRIL

7-8.15PM • WATERSTONES MK • £10/£7 • £5 ON ZOOM

Legendary educator, presenter and entertainer **Johnny Ball** has led a roller-coaster life encountering everything from Butlins and The Beatles to engineering and big business. After 87 years of laugh-a-minute adventure, it's been a lifetime full of **Stories That Must Be Told!**

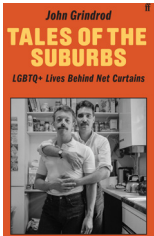


MINK#6 CREATIVE WRITING AWARDS

THURSDAY 23 APRIL

6:30-7:15PM • THE BOX ARTS CLUB, KILN FARM • FREE (ALSO ON ZOOM)

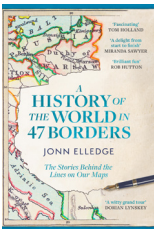
Join us as we announce the prize-winners of our 2026 Creative Writing Competition, and launch our fabulous **#MinK** anthology of the best local creative writing, exploring the theme of **The Trees**.



JOHN GRINDROD: TALES OF THE SUBURBS - LGBTQ+ LIVES BEHIND NET CURTAINS

8-9PM • THE BOX ARTS CLUB, KILN FARM • £10/£7 • £5 ON ZOOM

Social historian **John Grindrod** reveals the messy, moving, dark, funny, uplifting, extraordinary – and above all true – stories of queer people growing up and living among the twitching curtains and pebble-dash of suburban towns and villages.

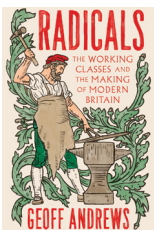


BORDERS: JONN ELLEDGE - A HISTORY OF THE WORLD IN 47 BORDERS

FRIDAY 24 APRIL

6-7PM • WATERSTONES MK • £10/£7 • FREE ON ZOOM

In a witty, surprising look at world history as told through its borders, **Jonn Elledge** explores their fascinating stories with The Open University's **Daria Chernysheva**: what they reveal about how countries' identities are shaped, why the world looks as it does – and about human folly.



GEOFF ANDREWS: RADICALS - LABOUR'S HIDDEN HISTORIES

8-9PM • WATERSTONES MK • £10/£7 • £5 ON ZOOM

The political Left in Britain rose out of the Industrial Revolution, when the working classes emerged as a leading force in movements for social change. Join **Geoff Andrews** to explore Labour's hidden history and radicalisms through the ideas of its leading thinkers.

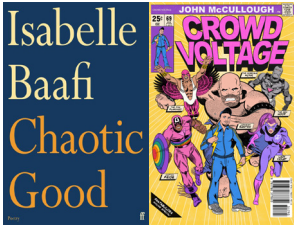


SATURDAY 25 APRIL

INSIDE THE CRIMINAL MIND: RUTH MANCINI AND DAVID WILSON

12.30-1.30PM • MK CENTRAL LIBRARY • £10/£7 • £5 ON ZOOM

What makes someone cross a moral line into crime? Bestselling crime novelist **Ruth Mancini** and award-winning criminologist **Prof David Wilson** take a fascinating deep dive into the criminal mind, where true crime meets gripping fiction.



POETRY SPOTLIGHT: ISABELLE BAAFI AND JOHN MCCULLOUGH

2-3PM • MK CENTRAL LIBRARY • £10/£7 • £5 ON ZOOM

Two award-winning poets explore identity, togetherness and separation, and the human search for joy, in two of the year's most feted poetry collections. Hosted by poet **Caroline Davies**.



FRESH VOICES: DEREK OWUSU AND MADELEINE DUNNIGAN

3:30-4:30PM • MK CENTRAL LIBRARY • £10/£7 • £5 ON ZOOM

Hear acclaimed authors **Derek Owusu** and **Madeleine Dunnigan** bring fresh takes to the coming of age novel as they follow the lives of very different young men searching for love and authenticity.



NATALIE BENNETT AND SOLITAIRE TOWNSEND: THE CLIMATE STORIES WE NEED TO TELL

6-7PM • WATERSTONES MK • £10/£7 • £5 ON ZOOM

Green Party peer **Natalie Bennett** joins novelist and sustainability advisor **Solitaire Townsend** to discuss how stories about climate change – fiction or otherwise – can help us create a better future.



CRIME NIGHT: HARRIET TYCE AND SARAH PINBOROUGH

8-9PM • WATERSTONES MK • £10/£7 • £5 ON ZOOM

Join *Sunday Times* bestseller and *Traitors* star **Harriet Tyce** for an entertaining evening with international bestseller **Sarah Pinborough**, discussing her compulsive new book and turning criminal law experience into crime writing success.



VOICES OF MILTON KEYNES

SUNDAY 26 APRIL

6:30-8PM • THE BOX ARTS CLUB, KILN FARM • FREE (ALSO ON ZOOM)

The **Raising Voices Project** curates writing inspired by places in Milton Keynes in our online, interactive **StoryMap**. Hear live readings of some of our favourite recent pieces by writers from across the city. Pay bar available.

DEMYSTIFYING DIALOGUE: WORKSHOP WITH TOBY LITT

SATURDAY 25 APRIL

11AM-1PM • CMK LIBRARY • £20/ £15 (PLACES LIMITED)

Does your dialogue seem clunky or embarrassing to you? Do you avoid writing it altogether? In this workshop, experienced Creative Writing tutor **Toby Litt** will give you advice, ideas, and even some tricks for writing better dialogue, and writing it with greater ease and confidence.

WRITING A SYNOPSIS: WORKSHOP WITH AKI SCHILZ

SUNDAY 26 APRIL

10AM-12PM • THE BOX ARTS CLUB, KILN FARM • £20/ £15 (PLACES LIMITED)

Written a book? Learn how to write the perfect summary for sending to agents and publishers with writer and editor **Aki Schilz**.

WRITING FOR BROADCAST: WORKSHOP WITH JAMES MCDERMOTT

12:30PM-2:30PM • THE BOX ARTS CLUB, KILN FARM • £20/ £15 (PLACES LIMITED)

Learn the different tools and techniques of writing stories, characters and dialogue for TV, film and radio with acclaimed stage and radio playwright, *EastEnders* scriptwriter, Creative Writing lecturer and poet **James McDermott**.

MINING OUR MEMORIES: WORKSHOP WITH SIMON MADRELL

3:30PM-5:30PM • THE BOX ARTS CLUB, KILN FARM • £20/ £15 (PLACES LIMITED)

A two-hour writing workshop with poet, editor and wellbeing facilitator **Simon Maddrell**, helping you to mine personal memories to create new poems and stories, and showing you ways to elevate your narratives. Suitable for writers at all levels

CHILDREN'S LIT FEST

SUPPORTED BY CENTRE:MK



MATTY LONG: DRAW ALONG WITH CROAKY!

SATURDAY 25 APRIL

12-1PM • CMK LIBRARY • £5 (PLUS £3 PER ACCOMPANYING ADULT) (AGE 5+)

Join **Matty Long** for a fun drawing workshop and discover how to draw characters from his brilliant **Croaky** books! You'll design your own hero, and learn how to start creating all sorts of exciting stories.



ASH BOND: PEREGRINE QUINN AND THE BATTLE FOR OLYMPUS

1:30-2:30PM • CMK LIBRARY • £5 (PLUS £3 PER ACCOMPANYING ADULT) (AGE 7+)

In **Ash Bond's** magical, mythical event from the cosmic **Peregrine Quinn** series, you'll discover the legends, literature and ancient history that inspired this electrifying series, along with creative activities based on the books!



NIZRANA FAROOK: ADVENTURES IN THE WILD

3-4PM • CMK LIBRARY • £5 (PLUS £3 PER ACCOMPANYING ADULT) (AGE 9+)

Nizrana Farook, bestselling author of *The Boy Who Saved a Bear* and *The Girl Who Stole an Elephant*, writes stories of courage, daring escape and hidden treasure inspired by her Sri Lankan childhood. Discover her exciting, imaginative tales!