

NEWCASTLE WRITING CONFERENCE

NEW WRITING
NORTH

For release Wednesday 20 March

Janice Hallett to headline Newcastle Writing Conference 2024

Newcastle Writing Conference returns for the first time in five years on Saturday 18 May, as authors, editors, publishers, and literary agents visit the city to share the secrets of their trade.

Newcastle Writing Conference is produced by New Writing North, the award-winning team behind the Northern Writers' Awards, Gordon Burn Prize and Durham Book Festival. It is presented with support from the North of Tyne Combined Authority.

The day-long conference aims to help early-career writers find inspiration, get published, and build and sustain their writing careers.

The event begins with award-winning novelist Janice Hallett in conversation with Claire Malcolm, Chief Executive of New Writing North, about her writing, inspiring journey to publication, and what she has learned along the way.

Following a career in journalism and government communications, Janice was in her 50s when she published her debut novel, *The Appeal*. A fiendishly clever whodunit, it won the CWA New Blood Dagger, topped several Book of the Year lists, and was the standout debut of 2021.

Her subsequent books, *The Twyford Code*, *The Mysterious Case of the Alpertons Angels*, and *The Christmas Appeal* have all been Sunday Times Bestsellers – cementing her reputation as the 'Agatha Christie for the 21st Century' (The Times). Her fifth novel, *The Examiner*, will be published this summer.

Following this session, attendees will create their own timetable for the day, choosing from a mixture of panel events, small group workshops, and one-to-one sessions with literary agents. Highlights include:

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- Find inspiration with hour-long creative writing workshops including flash fiction, life writing, and a guided writing session with Arvon, “the UK’s home of creative writing”.
- Improve your writing with practical sessions on how to plan, structure, and edit your work with writers and editors, Kasim Ali and Jacob Ross.
- Meet literary agents and agency assistants, Rachel Conway (Georgina Capel Associates), Elliot Page, Grace Robinson and Olivia Bignold (Curtis Brown Associates). Find out how to identify and approach an agent, as well as what they are looking for on their own lists.
- Intrigued by audio? With a boom in audiobooks and podcasts, start thinking about how your writing could work beyond the page - with author Cathy Rentzenbrink and Head of Audio at Hachette, Dom Gribben.
- Lean in to self-promotion. Writer and marketer Lucy Nichol will show how to market yourself and your work – from achieving media coverage to blogging, influencer engagement, and digital advertising.
- Meet northern authors Eirinie Lapidaki, Tawseef Khan, and Karen Powell, whose novels are garnering serious attention and who will talk about their own experiences of the publishing industry.
- Connect with other writers. Small group sessions, coffee and lunch breaks, and a chance to network at the end of the day, allow plenty of opportunities for attendees to meet other writers.

Claire Malcolm, Chief Executive of New Writing North said:

“Newcastle Writing Conference is back, for the first time in five years.

The conference offers aspiring and emerging writers access to a wealth of knowledge from authors, agents and publishers. We're proud to be bringing writers together to inspire the next generation of Northern talent.’

“For the first time, writers can join us both in person and virtually, and we are offering free bursary places to those who need them most.”

Newcastle Writing Conference takes place on Saturday 18 May at The Common Room, near Newcastle Central Station. Can’t make it to Newcastle? A virtual pass gives attendees a selection of live-streamed events.

Tickets are on sale now priced £35 for a virtual ticket, £79 standard ticket. Free bursary tickets are available. <https://newwritingnorth.com/event/newcastle-writing-conference/>

Ends

For all media enquiries, contact Laura Fraine laurafraine@newwritingnorth.com

About New Writing North

New Writing North leads the development of creative writing and reading in the North of England. We believe that writing talent is everywhere, but that opportunities are not. We work hard to both identify talent and create fantastic career-changing opportunities for people from across society. We develop programmes and activities that inspire people to engage with creative writing and reading, whether this is to develop their skills and professional ambitions or for pleasure and wellbeing. We help excellent writing find local, regional, national and international audiences. We are based in Newcastle upon Tyne, where we have produced nationally significant work since 1996. We are proud to be a charity and an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation.

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