

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
WRITERS AND GROUPS
Annual Festival of Writing

NAWGFest 2020

Yarnfield Park Conference Centre
Friday 4 to Sunday 6 September

I knew nothing of NAWG, I'd never heard of it and I didn't even really take in what it was when I asked a friend going to a writing festival if she'd object if I tagged along.

I shall never forget the moment we stepped through the door and straight into a warm and friendly welcome. It was a welcome that lasted all weekend. Members of the committee sought us out, asked about our writing and told us about NAWG.

That was well over a decade ago and I haven't missed a single NAWG event since. I shall never tire of the stimulating workshops, friendly faces and happy smiles. It doesn't matter who you have lunch with or sit next to in a tutorial, you'll have a new and interesting friend.

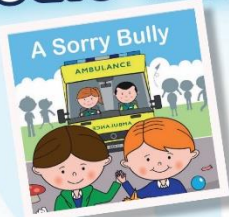
I little realised then that I'd end up first as secretary then as chairman – asked to fill both roles because I happened to be available!

I'll be at Yarnfield in September to welcome you as an old friend or a new one to our twenty-fifth annual Festival of Writing.

Chris Huck, Chairman

Paramedic Chris **Children's Book**

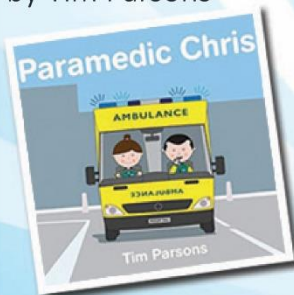
A Sorry Bully
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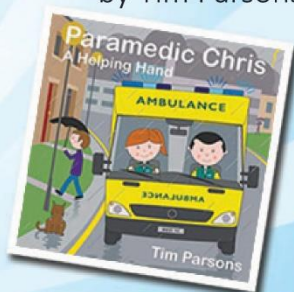
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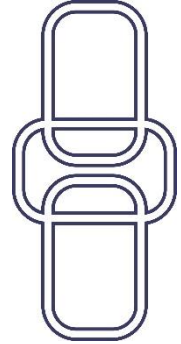
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The National Association of Writers' Groups



We are a non-profit making association established in 1995 to help writing groups and individual writers. Members include people just beginning to explore writing for pleasure, bestselling authors, and a huge range of people in between. Our members work in all sorts of genres, styles and areas. All of them are entitled to a variety of benefits including support to run writing groups, regular news and advice, access to critiques and other services at preferential rates, free entry to members-only competitions and, of course, discounts on attendance at our events – including this one.

People join a writers' group because they want to share their work and ideas in a supportive atmosphere. NAWG provides just that environment for writers across the country.

NAWGFest is our annual conference and the culmination of our writing year and we hope this brochure gives you a good idea of what is on offer. If you would like to attend, please see the form in the centre of this booklet.

You will be made very welcome whether or not you are a member and no matter where you are on your writing journey.

To find out more about us, or to join, visit our website: www.nawg.co.uk

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Chairman: Chris Huck

Registered Office: Old Vicarage, Scammonden, Huddersfield HD3 3FT

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Conference Location – Yarnfield Park

Yarnfield, Stone ST15 0NL

In 2020 we are moving to Yarnfield Park – a training and conference centre in Staffordshire.

The campus is easy to access from the motorway network with plenty of free parking. For those using public transport, the nearest railway station is Stone, but we would suggest using Stoke or Stafford as trains are more frequent. As it is a rural location, there are not many buses from the station but, once the summer 2020 train timetables have been published, we will suggest appropriate trains so people can share taxis.

Accommodation is in en-suite double rooms which have all the usual facilities: tea- & coffee-making facilities, TV, hairdryer, toiletries and towels. There is no additional charge for single occupancy.



Talks, workshops and other sessions are in the main building. This takes only a minute or two to walk to from the accommodation along a flat path, most of which is covered.

All meals, apart from the Gala dinner, are served in the main building restaurant – the committee members who visited were very

impressed by the catering! – and tea and coffee are available outside our session rooms throughout the days of the conference. The bar will be open in the evenings, and there is a Costa coffee shop that is open on weekdays for anyone arriving a little early for check in.



For more details, see the Yarnfield Park website: yarnfield park.com

Outline Programme

For more details, see page(s)

Friday

Registration (from 3 PM)	
Bonus workshop	6
Welcome, followed by dinner	
Open mic	6

Saturday

Workshops – Session 1	15–22
NAWG AGM	7
Lunch	
Workshops – Session 2	15–22
Workshops – Session 3	15–22
Author readings/private writing time	7
Prizewinners' reception	
Gala Dinner with guest speaker Samantha Tonge	8
Awards ceremony	9

Sunday

Workshops – Session 4	15–22
Talk – speaker to be confirmed	
Lunch	
Plenary session	10
Raffle draw	10
Farewell and departures (3:15 PM)	

Of course, there will also be breaks – giving you plenty of time to chat with other delegates, our tutors, speakers and the NAWG committee and so compare notes with other writers.

Please do bring along copies of your books to sell.

We will send details of how to do this, along with a detailed timetable, to all delegates in the summer. In the meantime, keep an eye on our website for news on the Sunday speaker and news of other things we are hoping to squeeze in!

Dice Journey

Bonus workshop (Friday afternoon)

A one-hour workshop with **Steve Bowkett** on how randomness can aid creative thinking and help you to develop plot, characters and settings. No need to book, just turn up with your imagination and a pen.

Steve is editor of our magazine, *Link*. He has published over fifty-five titles including children's fiction and poetry; educational books on creativity, thinking skills, creative writing, emotional resourcefulness and spirituality; and, writing as Ben Leech, three horror novels.

Open mic night

Five minutes of stardom (Friday evening)

Have you a story you want to tell, a poem you want to read, a song you want to sing or a sketch you want to perform? Friday evening is the time to shine – simply sign up at Reception when you arrive.



MENTORING WRITERS

A variety of services aimed at helping new and existing writers of all ages in the art and craft of writing. Our services include:

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www.mentoringwriters.co.uk**

NAWG Annual General Meeting

(Saturday morning)

The official notice of the 2020 NAWG AGM will be published in *Link* in advance of the meeting. As well as the usual reports from officers and presentation of accounts, the agenda is likely to include approval of revisions to the constitution to ensure we stay up-to-date with best practice for charities. As this is a major item, we are aiming to keep this meeting to official business only and would encourage as many members as possible to attend.

Who can attend and take part

- If your group holds NAWG membership, anyone in your group may attend and contribute. Your group is entitled to two votes.
- Individual members have their own vote.

Non-members are welcome as observers.

If you cannot come, but have points that you would like to be considered by the AGM or the committee, do please get in touch with the secretary.

We would also love to hear from members who have specific skills and ideas about how they might offer them to benefit the Association. You can contact any member of the committee (see page 2) at any time. If you are not sure who is the most appropriate person, use the contact form on our website.

Author readings

Showcase your writing (Saturday afternoon)

An opportunity for people who have published work – traditionally or independently – to give a four-minute reading. Sign up when you arrive and don't forget to make sure you have brought plenty of copies to sell once you have piqued interest! (If demand is high, NAWG members will have priority.)

Gala Dinner

(Saturday evening)

The NAWG Gala Dinner is always a well-attended and fun-filled evening. Dress code is semi-formal: black tie is not expected but feel free to get your seldom-worn dinner jacket out if the fancy takes you. Otherwise, wear something smart, slip into a cocktail dress, or go for glitz – it's up to you!

The catering team will create a celebratory menu for everyone, so please let us know your dietary requirements when you book so they can prepare something scrumptious that meets your needs. You can choose to sit with people you know or make new friends – just tell us which you would prefer. Either way, you can be sure of interesting conversation.

Our speaker

Samantha Tonge lives in Manchester and is an award-winning top ten Amazon contemporary women's fiction novelist. Her bestselling debut, *Doubling Abbey*, was shortlisted for the Festival of Romantic Fiction best ebook award. In 2015, her summer novel, *Game of Scones*, hit #5 in the UK Kindle chart and won the Love Stories Awards Best Romantic ebook category. In 2018, *Forgive Me Not* heralded a new direction into darker women's fiction with publisher Canelo. In 2019 she was shortlisted for the Romantic Novelists' Association (RNA) Romantic Comedy award and her novel *Knowing You* has been shortlisted for the RNA's Jackie Collins Romantic Thriller award in 2020. She is represented by the Darley Anderson literary agency.



Awards ceremony

Celebrating NAWG's creative writers (Saturday evening)

Every year we run a series of writing competitions for NAWG members and the younger members of their families. This year categories include poetry, short stories, fiction in a range of genres, travel writing and memoir as well as our annual group anthology competition judged by last year's winners. If you're a member and have not got your entry/entries in yet, there may still be time – closing date is 30 April!

All those shortlisted and highly commended by our judges will be invited to a reception with our guests prior to the dinner. Our speaker will announce the winners and present trophies and certificates on the night.

There will also be a prize for the best **100-word mini tale** submitted by a person attending NAWGFest 2020. We will send details of how to enter this popular competition to you after you have booked.



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Plenary session

(Sunday afternoon)

It's often difficult to choose between workshops running at the same time, so we're giving you a way to get a taste of what was going on while you were busy doing something else. As well as feedback from each workshop strand, this session will give you an opportunity to share your thoughts on our new venue and include an open forum for members to offer the committee suggestions and ideas to take the Association forward.



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Raffle

(Drawn on Sunday afternoon)

Lots of useful and interesting prizes! In the past these have included places on Writers' Bureau courses, subscriptions to *mslexia*, and, of course, lots of lovely books. Tickets will be on sale throughout the weekend, so do bring some cash!

If you know anyone who would be willing to provide a prize that fellow writers would value, or who would be prepared to offer sponsorship, do put them in touch with us!

The National Association of Writers' Groups

NAWGFest 2020

Yarnfield Park, 4–6 September 2020

Booking Form



MAKING YOUR BOOKING

Please complete one form per person.

Make your payment – in full or a deposit – and send your form to membership@nawg.co.uk or by post to Catherine Fitzsimons
NAWG Festival Bookings, 106 Melbourne Road, Coventry CV5 6JH
Bookings must be received by 5 August 2020.

Any questions? Please contact Catherine as above or on 0794 004 9188.
*If your call is not answered, send a text message or email (NOT voicemail):
include your name and number.*

YOUR DETAILS

Name	
Address	
Tel or/& Mob	
email	
NAWG members, please give the name of your writing group or write 'Individual' if you are an individual member	

YOUR ATTENDANCE See table on back page for what is included in each package.

Main festival package	
Short festival package	
Saturday, day only	
Sunday, day only	

Gala dinner plus bed and breakfast	
Gala dinner only	
Additional night dinner, bed and breakfast	
(please state which night/s)	

YOUR WORKSHOPS See pages 15–22 for workshop details.

Please write your first and second choice tutor for each session in the grid.

WORKSHOPS	First choice	Second choice
Session 1 – Saturday AM		
Session 2 – Saturday PM		
Session 3 – Saturday PM		
Session 4 – Sunday AM		

We will make every effort to allocate you your first choice of workshop but places in each session are restricted to keep groups to a workable size, so early booking is advisable. In the event of unforeseen circumstances, NAWG reserves the right to change tutors or/and workshops.

YOUR SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Have you any dietary requirements?	Vegetarian		Vegan		Diabetic		Other	
	Please give details if 'other'.							

Would you like to sit with your writing group for the Gala dinner?		
Would you like to sit with specific individuals? If so, please give name(s) here – but check with them first.		

Have you any accommodation requirements (e.g. downstairs room, adapted room, sharing with a particular person)? If so, please give details. <i>All rooms have double beds there is no single supplement.</i>	
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If you require a **disabled car-parking space** please give:

Car make & model		Blue badge issuer
Registration number		

YOUR PAYMENT See next page for prices.

Did you pay an **early deposit** of £20 at last year’s Festival?

If so, tick here and deduct £40 from your total if you have booked a full package (or £20 otherwise)

The total cost of my NAWGFest 2020 is £_____

I am paying a deposit of £100 now (available until 1/6/20 – balance due by 31/7/20).

I am paying the full amount now.

Please indicate how you have made your payment

I am sending a cheque made payable to NAWG to the Booking secretary.

I have made a payment using PayPal through the NAWG website.

You can use combinations of the ‘NAWGFest 2020 Deposit Option’ buttons to pay amounts not shown as deposit, instalment or final payment.

I have made a BACS transfer to NatWest 60-22-52 account 80275877.

Date paid		Reference used (e.g. FESTIVALYOURNAME)	
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We strongly advise you to purchase personal holiday insurance.

The venue will charge NAWG for all cancellations and therefore we will be unable to offer more than a token refund for cancellations before 5 August 2020, and no refunds for cancellations after this date.

However, should you need to cancel, we are happy for you to transfer your booking to someone else.

NAWGFest 2020 Options and pricing	Members	Non-members	Non-writing partner (see notes below)
Main festival package Includes accommodation Friday and Saturday, 4 bookable workshops and all meals (Friday dinner to Sunday lunch), including Gala dinner	£330.00	£350.00	£210.00
Short festival package Includes accommodation Saturday, 2 bookable workshops (Sessions 2 & 3 or 3 & 4), Gala dinner, Sunday breakfast and lunch on Saturday or Sunday	£180.00	£190.00	£120.00
Saturday or Sunday, day only Includes 2 workshops, lunch and refreshments	£100.00	£110.00	—
Gala dinner plus bed and breakfast	£97.00	£105.00	
Gala dinner only	£45.00	£50.00	
Dinner, bed and breakfast For an additional night	£77.00	£78.00	

Partners who do not wish to take part in the activities each day are welcome.

The non-writing partner packages include accommodation and meals but not bookable workshops or other daytime activities.
They may only be booked in conjunction with a booking from a full delegate at either member or non-member rate.

Workshops

This year, our experienced tutors are offering workshops on writing novels, short stories, memoirs, drama and poetry. You can choose to follow one theme through the whole weekend, or mix and match working with a different tutor on each day or for each session. Whatever you choose to do, you are sure to find help and inspiration. Just indicate your choices on the booking form.

Memoir – Alison Chisholm

Alison Chisholm has published eleven poetry collections, written short stories and humorous articles, and is a columnist for *Writing Magazine*. She's also the author of *Writing a Mini-Memoir*.



<p>Where to start (Session 1 – Sat AM)</p> <p>The joys of writing memoirs, personal and commercial. Choosing the parameters and planning the route of your memoir.</p>	<p>Information gathering (Session 2 – Sat PM)</p> <p>How to tease half-forgotten memories into focussed recall for autobiographical writing.</p>
<p>Mini-memoirs and celebration books (Session 3 – Sat PM)</p> <p>The style, approach and options for writing a collage-style mini-memoir or celebration book.</p>	<p>Spreading the word (Session 4 – Sun AM)</p> <p>Spreading the word. How to self-publish and sell your memoirs, including advice on turning your book into a talk.</p>

Poetry – Jean Atkin

Jean Atkin is a poet, writer and educator, based in Shropshire. She's had residencies in England and Scotland, and provided workshops and readings for schools, festivals and community organisations. She's currently Troubadour of the Hills for Ledbury Poetry Festival, and Poet in Residence for Hargate Primary, West Bromwich. She was also 2019 National Poetry Day's BBC Poet for Shropshire. Every two months, she



organises The Poetry Lounge, Ludlow's spoken-word night. She mentors emerging poets and works regularly with children and young people, often through Writing West Midlands, and is a professional member of NAWE. Her second poetry collection, *How Time is in Fields* was published in April 2019 by Indigo Dreams Publishing and launched at the Cheltenham Poetry Festival. Previous publications include *Not Lost Since Last Time* (Oversteps Books, 2013), pamphlets with Roncadora Press, Ravenglass Press and Biscuit Tin Press, and a children's novel, *The Crow House*.

Writing poetry playfully (Session 1 – Sat AM)

A workshop which will show you ways to write that harness both imagination and joy! We'll consider the importance of surprise in a poem. And confidence. And decision-making. Explore, experiment, write new poems and be happy.

Writing the outdoors in (Session 2 – Sat PM)

A workshop which will show you ways to make writing about nature and the outdoors immediate and full of wonder.

Photographs are refugees (Session 3 – Sat PM)

Photographs are refugees from that moment'
(Halla Beloff)

Jean will provide prompts, ideas and discussion for successful writing from a photographic image.

How to be confident with a mic, and perform your poem excellently (Session 4 – Sun AM)

Jean will bring in the mic, and we'll look at what to do, and not do, and practise for good performance, ending with a reading.

The novel – Alison May

Alison May is a published novelist and short-story writer who also writes in collaboration, as Juliet Bell. She completed a BA (Hons) degree in Creative Writing with the University of Birmingham in 2008, and is also a qualified teacher, specialising in teaching adults. Since 2009, she has been teaching creative writing to community groups and in one-off workshops, adult education courses, and a University of Worcester undergraduate module. She also offers a manuscript critique service and individual mentoring for developing authors.



Past students have gone on to achieve agent representation, publication with traditional publishers – including Avon, Headline, Bookouture and Head of Zeus – and to self-publish successfully. Her own writing ranges from romantic comedy to book-club fiction. Her most recent novels are, *All That Was Lost* (Legend Press) and *The Other Wife* (as Juliet Bell with Harper Collins HQ). She is currently Chair of the Romantic Novelists' Association.

<p style="text-align: center;">Plot and character (Session 1 – Sat AM)</p> <p>How do you structure a novel? How do you balance internal character arc with external story? How do you develop engaging characters who drive the plot and engage your reader?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Character and voice (Session 2 – Sat PM)</p> <p>How do you write different points of view? And what are the pros and cons? How do you create believable exciting dialogue? What is authorial voice and how do you find and develop yours?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Genre and setting (Session 3 – Sat PM)</p> <p>How do you create a world on the page? What are the expectations of your genre? How can you use (or subvert) them? Show, don't tell: and why writing tutors just can't get over repeating that.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Editing and revising (Session 4 – Sun AM)</p> <p>How to tackle a messy first draft. Dealing with a saggy middle. Structural and line editing techniques. Next steps to take away.</p>

Short stories– Christopher Fielden

Chris is an award-winning and Amazon bestselling author. His work has featured in books published by independent press, established magazines and renowned competition anthologies.

In November 2019, Victorina Press (an independent UK publisher) published Chris's first short story collection, *Book of the Bloodless Volume 1: Alternative Afterlives*. The book was an award-winning finalist in the Fiction: Short Story category of the International Book Awards.

Chris has performed and spoken at many events, including the Bath Fringe Festival, the Bristol Festival of Literature, Chip LitFest, Flash Fiction Festival, New College LitFest, Small Stories and Talking Tales. He's also undertaken presentations for many schools and colleges.

He runs a popular fiction writing blog that attracts over 300,000 visitors each year. He judges the To Hull And Back short story competition and publishes thousands of writers' stories in support of charity via his flash fiction writing challenges. He also offers a critique and editing service that has helped many authors see their stories in print.

His book, *How to Write a Short Story, Get Published and Make Money*, has sold thousands of copies. It uses an honest teaching style that has been very well received. In the book, Chris uses his own published short stories as case studies, clearly showing how any advice given has been used in practice to achieve publishing success. Due to the popularity of the book, Chris has started developing online writing courses that use a similar teaching style.

Chris is a member of Stokes Croft Writers, the British Fantasy Society and an honorary member of Clockhouse London Writers. He's also a member of ASCAP and plays drums in rock bands that regularly tour all over the world.



<p>The art of short story writing (Session 1 – Sat AM)</p> <p>A presentation detailing key pieces of short story writing advice. An example story will be read, showing how the advice given has been used in practice to achieve publishing success. Chris will then discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the example story with the audience.</p>	<p>Using humour in short story writing (Session 2 – Sat PM)</p> <p>Chris will share the To Hull And Back humorous short story competition judging criteria to help illustrate the art of writing humorous stories. The presentation will include some writing exercises, to get the creative juices flowing.</p>
<p>Short story performance (Session 3 – Sat PM)</p> <p>A presentation about the art of performing a short story to an audience, including a couple of examples. We'll then undertake a writing exercise, so participants can write and perform their work as part of the workshop, if they would like to (I promise not to make people do this if they don't want to). If attendees wish to bring along a piece of their work to read (fiction, non-fiction or poetry) they can do so. 200 words maximum please.</p>	<p>Writing flash fiction (Session 4 – Sun AM)</p> <p>A presentation about the art of writing very short fiction. The workshop will include some writing time, so attendees can write a short piece (under 200 words). They will be given the opportunity to have their work published in a professional anthology (in both print and ebook formats) in support of charity.</p>

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Drama – Marvin Close

Marvin has written and storylined well over 100 hours of broadcast TV for shows such as *Coronation Street*, *Emmerdale*, *Tracey Beaker*, *24/7* and *Doctors*. He is a former writer-in-residence at Manchester's Library Theatre and has written seven plays for the stage. With Professor Chuck Korr, he wrote the critically acclaimed, *More Than Just A Game: Football vs Apartheid*, and *Hope*, the life story of women's football manager, Hope Powell.



He has written drama, comedy and documentaries for BBC Radio, and bedtime stories for the One Billion African literacy project. Marvin has delivered numerous writing workshops in schools, colleges, festivals and universities, including previous appearances at NAWGFest. He is currently writing, *Liberation 75* for Jersey Heritage – a short film that will mark the 75th anniversary of the end of Nazi occupation in the Channel Islands.

Creating dramatic tension (Session 1 – Sat AM)

Do you sometimes feel that your writing is falling flat? This session will explore ways to ensure your story or drama has effective narrative tension, as well as tension between your characters. We'll look at how to create engaging characters with different aims and goals; how to raise the dramatic stakes; and to absorb your reader so that they continue to ask questions about where the plot is going. Perhaps most importantly, the best and most effective ways of seeding and then developing explosive ideas.

The art of writing dialogue (Session 2 – Sat PM)

Most of the novels you read contain around 66 per cent dialogue, based on word count. So how as writers do we go about writing it well? This practical workshop will explore how dialogue can advance the plot; develop character; reveal backstory and information; and create conflict and drama. The session will also take a look at writing dialogue for theatre, TV, film and radio drama.

**Plotting, planning and storylining
(Session 3 – Sat PM)**

Imagine taking a car journey from London to Edinburgh for the first time. How would you plan the trip? The quickest way from A to B? A more scenic route, with a few stop- offs in between? Or would you set off with no idea of where you're going? The latter strategy would appear to be the one that could lead to the most frustration, rage and confusion. And so it is for writers who enthusiastically start a piece of work, inspired and full of ideas – but ultimately, with no real idea of how to arrive at their destination. This workshop will introduce you to the fundamentals of plotting your journey through a novel, a play, a film, to keep your confidence on track, whether it be from A to B or taking the more scenic route.

**Building character
(Session 4 – Sun AM)**

How do you build layered, three dimensional characters? This workshop will give you numerous pointers, all aimed at making your audience care about the characters you create – or hate their guts. How to draw up a 'cast list' of characters to serve what you're writing; and how then to get to know them. We'll look too, at that old 'red herring', plot vs character.

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