

# 1<sup>ST</sup> SUTTON LITERARY FESTIVAL

12-13 October 2024

Carshalton & Wallington

**PROGRAMME** 



### **VENUES**

Sutton Ecology Centre
Wallington Library
EcoLocal
Nickel Support (Studio)

Contact: jacqueline@sharp-raiser.com















Thank you for joining us for the first-ever Sutton Literary Festival, organised by the charity Place at My Table. Our festival's mission is to bring the community together through the transformative power of books, while celebrating Sutton's lush green spaces.

In this debut year, we are thrilled to present a diverse lineup of award-winning authors in conversation with leading artists and cultural critics. Our team of volunteer set designers has carefully curated beautiful spaces for authors and readers to gather for readings, discussions, and audience Q&As.

We are grateful for the support of Sutton Council, which has provided us with Wallington Library and the historic Honeywood Museum as our main festival venue. Additionally, we are excited to host events at EcoLocal and the Ecology Centre, where festival-goers can explore sensory gardens, wild trails, and wildlife habitats between sessions. Enjoy a serene walk through these outdoor spaces as you move from one inspiring event to the next.

Our festival is designed to inspire, entertain, and foster a sense of belonging within Sutton's friendly community. We hope you relish not only the incredible insights from our award-winning writers but also the welcoming environment we have created for all attendees.





Inclusivity and accessibility are at the heart of our festival. We are delighted to introduce the Imaginarium—a specially curated venue where neurodivergent individuals can engage with authors and literature in a calm and supportive environment. The Imaginarium also offers a quiet space for those who need a break during the festival. It is located at Nickel Support, 16 The Parade, Beynon Road, Carshalton, close to Honeywood Museum.

Before you dive into this year's fantastic lineup, we'd like to share a bit about our origins. The festival was created by award-winning writer Jacqueline Crooks whose novel Fire Rush was shortlisted for the Women's Prize for Fiction in 2023. Jacqueline has been working with and for Joseph Jeffers of Place at My Table charity and their steering group, the Sutton Women Writers Network—a group of passionate older writers dedicated to creating inclusive spaces for literary

exploration in Sutton.

The Sutton Literary Festival is entirely volunteer-led, with a dedicated team of thirty-five volunteers working tirelessly under the leadership of Jacqueline Crooks and Suchi Majumdar. We are incredibly proud of what we've accomplished and excited to share it with you.

We hope you enjoy every moment of this celebration of literature, community, and creativity.



Join us for our author in-conversation events, featuring captivating readings, insightful discussions, and interactive Q&A sessions.

After each event, don't miss the great opportunity to meet our award-winning authors and get your books signed at the venue's bookshop

## **EVENTS & LOCATIONS**

## **Honeywood Museum**



#### Location:

Honeywood Museum, Saturday 12 October, 12:00 pm - 12:15 pm

#### **Event Title:**

Festival Opening: Stand-Up Comedy with Sheba Montserrat

#### **Event Description:**

Get ready to laugh out loud as we kick off the festival with a short stand-up comedy routine by **Sheba Montserrat** who will set the tone for a fun, vibrant and entertaining festival.



#### Location:

Honeywood Museum, Saturday 12 October, 12:15 pm - 1:00 pm

#### **Event Title:**

In Conversation Event: Xiaolu Guo and Shani Akilah

#### **Event Description:**

Join us for our first author talk of the day, an engaging discussion as acclaimed author Shani Akilah talks to Xiaolu Guo about her memoir Radical: A Life of My Own - an introspective journey through the streets of New York City, where she navigates solitude and cultural dislocation and the nuanced spaced in between Eastern and Western cultures.

**Xiaolu Guo** is a Chinese-born British novelist, memoirist and film-maker. Her novels have been translated into 28 languages. She was a jury member for the Man Booker Prize 2019.

**Shani Akilah** is a Black British Caribbean writer and screenwriter from South London. She is a book influencer, co-founder of the Nyah Network, a book club for Black women, and was a literary judge for the Nota Bene Prize 2023. For Such a Time as This is her debut short story collection.



Honeywood Museum, Saturday 12 October, 1:15 pm - 2:00 pm

#### **Event Title:**

In Conversation: Karen McCarthy Woolf and Shani Akilah

#### **Event Description:**

Immerse yourself in a captivating discussion as poet Karen McCarthy Woolf joins Shani Akilah to discuss her highly anticipated debut novel, Top Doll - a witty and irreverent exploration of love, betrayal, and the complexities of being human.

**Karen McCarthy Woolf FRSL** is celebrated for her poetry. Her debut collection, An Aviary of Small Birds, was shortlisted for prestigious awards and was an Observer Book of the Year. Her second collection, Seasonal Disturbances, won the Laurel Prize for ecological poetry.

In this conversation, **Shani Akilah** will engage with Woolf about her transition from poetry to prose, the inspiration behind Top Doll, and the intricate ways in which Woolf's poetic sensibilities infuse her novel. Expect an evening of insightful reflections from two compelling voices in contemporary literature.



#### Location:

Honeywood Museum, Saturday 12 October, 2:15 pm - 3:00 pm

#### **Event Title:**

In Conversation:

Louise Minchin and Vaseem Khan with Richard Skinner

#### **Event Description:**

Step into the intriguing world of thrillers and crime novels as Louise Minchin and Vaseem Khan join Richard Skinner for an electrifying conversation about the unseen forces that shape the human experience.



Louise Minchin is a renowned journalist, broadcaster, and podcaster with two decades of experience presenting BBC Breakfast. In 2023, she chaired the prestigious Women's Prize for Fiction. Her book, Fearless: Adventures with Extraordinary Women, celebrates women's achievements in sport and beyond. Her thrilling debut novel, Isolation Island, delves into the dark and suspenseful world of a reality television show set on a Scottish island, where isolation becomes the ultimate test.

Vaseem Khan is the award-winning author behind two captivating crime series set in India—the Baby Ganesh Agency series, set in the bustling metropolis of Mumbai, and the Malabar House historical crime novels. Khan's work has been translated into 16 languages. His novel Midnight at Malabar House won the prestigious Crime Writers Association Historical Dagger.

Moderated by **Richard Skinner**, this conversation promises to delve deep into the craft of storytelling, exploring how these authors weave complex characters, intricate plots. Whether you're a fan of gripping thrillers, historical mysteries, or simply love a good story, this event is a must-attend for any literary enthusiast.



#### Location:

Honeywood Museum, Saturday 12 October, 3:15 pm - 4:00 pm

#### **Event Title:**

In Conversation Event: Noreen Masud and Jacqueline Crooks in conversation with Aditi Jaganathan.

#### **Event Description:**

Join us for a captivating discussion as Noreen Masud, author of A Flat Place, and Jacqueline Crooks, author of Fire Rush, come together to explore the profound themes of identity, belonging, and the landscapes that shape our lives.

Both books were shortlisted for the Women's Prize for Fiction.



In A Flat Place, **Noreen Masud's** memoir takes readers on a personal journey across the flatlands of the Cambridgeshire fens, Orford Ness, Morecambe Bay, Newcastle Moor and Orkney UK, reflecting on trauma and displacement.

**Jacqueline Crooks**' debut, Fire Rush, delves into the vibrant and tumultuous life of a young woman navigating London's reggae scene in the 1970s. Crooks explores the transformative power of music against the backdrop of a city and a community in flux.

Moderated by **Aditi Jaganathan**, a cultural critic and writer, Masud and Crooks will discuss the intersections of place, memory, and identity in their work, offering insights into how the physical and cultural landscapes we inhabit influence our sense of self and belonging. Don't miss this opportunity to hear from these compelling voices in contemporary literature.



#### Location:

Honeywood Museum, Sunday 13 October, 12:15 pm - 1:00 pm

#### **Event Title:**

In Conversation: Pascale Petit and Sam Mills with Kate Wakeling

#### **Event Description:**

Join us for an intimate and illuminating conversation as celebrated poet Pascale Petit and novelist Sam Mills sit down with award-winning poet Kate Wakeling to discuss their latest works and the profound themes they explore.

Pascale Petit will be launching her much-anticipated debut novel, My Hummingbird Father, a lyrical and evocative exploration of repressed memories and the need for romantic



Photo credit: Sophie Davidson

and familial love, identity, and the natural world. The book is in dialogue with Pascale's Ondaatje and Laurel Prize-winning poetry collection, Mama Amazonica.

**Sam Mills** will be discussing her novel The Fragments of my Father, a powerful and poignant literary biography and memoir about families, freedom, creativity and what it means to be a carer.

Moderated by **Kate Wakeling**, an award-winning poet, this conversation will delve into the creative processes of these two accomplished authors, exploring how their works intersect with themes of memory, identity, and the intricate connections between past and present.



#### Location:

Honeywood Museum, Sunday 13 October, 1:30 pm - 2:15 pm

#### **Event Title:**

In Conversation: Raymond Antrobus with Kate Wakeling

#### **Event Description:**

Join us for an afternoon of profound literary and musical exploration as the award-winning poet Raymond Antrobus discusses his latest collection, Signs, Music, in conversation with acclaimed poet Kate Wakeling.

**Raymond Antrobus** has garnered widespread acclaim for his ability to merge the musicality of language with the raw power of lived experience. In Signs, Music, Antrobus delves into the intersections of sound, silence, and the spoken word,



Photo credit: Sophie Davidson

drawing on his own experiences with deafness and the rich tradition of music and poetry. His work challenges readers to listen beyond the surface, uncovering the rhythms that connect us all.

**Kate Wakeling**, an award-winning poet known for her insightful and lyrical approach to both adult and children's poetry, will lead the conversation, guiding the audience through the intricate layers of Antrobus's work. Together, they will explore the themes of sound, identity, and the power of poetry as a form of communication that transcends traditional boundaries.

Expect an evening of thoughtful discussion, where words and music intertwine, and where the essence of sound in poetry is celebrated in its most resonant forms.



#### Location:

Honeywood Museum, Sunday 13 October, 2:45 pm - 3:30 pm

#### **Event Title:**

In Conversation: Viktoria Lloyd Barlow with Aditi Jaganathan

#### **Event Description:**

Step into a world of intricate emotions and delicate storytelling as Viktoria Lloyd Barlow discusses her debut novel, All the Little Bird Hearts, in conversation with writer and cultural critic Aditi Jaganathan.

Viktoria Lloyd Barlow's All the Little Bird Hearts was longlisted for the Booker Prize for Ficfion 2023 and won the Authors' Club Best First Novel Award 2024. It is a beautifully crafted exploration of motherhood and memory. Through the eyes of an unforgettable protagonist, Barlow weaves a poignant narrative that delves into the complexities of love, loss, and the quiet struggles that often go unnoticed.



Aditi Jaganathan, a respected writer and critic known for her insightful literary commentary, will lead the discussion, drawing out the deeper themes of Barlow's work. Together, they will explore the inspiration behind All the Little Bird Hearts.



## WALLINGTON LIBRARY



## **EVENTS & LOCATIONS**

## Wallington Library



#### Location:

Wallington Library, Saturday 12 October, 12:15 pm - 1:00 pm

#### **Event Title:**

Children's Event - Terrible Horses: An Interactive Adventure with Raymond Antrobus

Age Range: 3-7, but all children are welcome.

Children must be accompanied by a parent or carer.

#### **Event Description:**

This event is perfect for young readers and their families who love to dive into imaginative worlds filled with wonder and excitement. Terrible Horses is an evocative picture book on brother-sister dynamics and how storytelling can help resolve conflict and enable better understanding. This is an event not to be missed for children who love stories and want to meet one of the most exciting voices in children's literature today. Come ready to play, imagine, and discover the magic of Terrible Horses.





Families can follow this up with a walk through the wonderful Ecology Centre to look at the trees and the other flora. The Ecology Centre is a magical outdoors space which is part of the festival this week-end. Please see the festival map for directions.







Wallington Library, Saturday 12 October, 2:00 pm - 2:45 pm

#### **Event Title:**

The Tree of Hope:

A Journey of Resilience with Anna Orenstein-Cardona.

Age Range: 4-8 but all children are welcome.

Children must be accompanied by a parent or carer.

#### **Event Description:**

Join us for a heartwarming and interactive event with children's book author **Anna Orenstein-Cardona** as she takes young readers on a journey of courage, resilience, and the power of nature with her beautifully illustrated book The Tree of Hope. This award-winning book tells the true story of a beloved banyan tree on the tropical island of Puerto Rico and a community that fought to save it in the wake of Hurricane Maria.



Families can follow this up with a walk through the wonderful Ecology Centre to look at the trees and the other flora. The Ecology Centre is a magical outdoors space which is part of the festival this week-end. Please see the festival map for directions.





Wallington Library, Saturday 12 October, 3:00 pm - 3:45 pm

#### **Event Title:**

Women, Writing, and Well-being: A Conversation with the Sutton Women's Network Writing Group

#### **Event Description:**

Join us for an inspiring discussion as three members of the Sutton Women's Network Writing Group, who played a key role in developing our literary festival, come together to explore the powerful intersection of women, writing, and well-being. Discover how the act of writing can foster resilience, create community, and support mental and emotional well-being. Whether you are a seasoned writer or just beginning to explore your own creative voice, this event promises to offer valuable insights and inspiration.



Beverley Dixon qualified as a teacher in 1975 from Goldsmith's University of London and taught in mainstream and SEN becoming Head teacher in 2005 of the Link Primary School. Beverley contributes to the Fairness Commission and community projects. As a member of the Sutton Women's Network Creative Writing Group, Beverley finds writing poetry inspired by life experiences particularly enjoyable. Beverley is published in 14 Magazine and has a Podcast called Tapestry.



**Elizabeth Mudyiwa** is a Zimbabwean-born writer. She travelled to Britain in 1969 to train as a nurse. She worked in Britain and Zimbabwe retiring in 2014 after a nursing career spanning over 37 years. Elizabeth is writing her life story exploring the life between Britain and Zimbabwe.



**Luna Dhir** is a Consultant Ophthalmologist. She is a writer and artist, her artwork has been exhibited widely, including the prestigious Saatchi Gallery. Her poetry has been published online and in print.

The event will be chaired by **Lucy Furlong**, a local teacher, writer, and walking artist and a member of Sutton Writers, another local writing group.



Wallington Library, Sunday 13 October, 12:00 pm - 12:15 pm

#### **Event Title:**

Festival Opening: Stand-Up Comedy with Sheba Montserrat

#### **Event Description:**

Get ready to laugh out loud as we start the day with a short stand-up comedy set by Sheba Montserrat who will set the tone for a vibrant day of events.



#### Location:

Wallington Library, Sunday 13 October, 12:15 pm - 1:00 pm

#### **Event Title:**

**Amy Twigg in conversation with Jacqueline Crooks** 

#### **Event Description:**

Join us for an exhilarating event as author Amy Twigg joins Jacqueline Crooks to delve into her debut novel, the Spoilt Creatures. An Observer Best Debut of 2024, it is a haunting and intoxicating story. Set in a women's commune the book explores female rage.





Wallington Library, Sunday 13 October, 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

#### **Event Title:**

Pitch Your Story - One-on-One Sessions with Richard Skinner

#### **Event Description:**

Seize this unique opportunity to present your novel, poem, or life writing project to acclaimed author and literary mentor Richard Skinner. In these focused 8-minute one-on-one sessions, you'll not only have the chance to share your work but also ask up to five questions to gain personalised advice and insights.

Whether you're looking to refine your manuscript, explore new ideas, or seek guidance on your writing journey, this session is designed to provide you with invaluable feedback from a seasoned expert. Spaces are limited, so secure your spot for this exclusive opportunity.

**Richard Skinner** has published three novels, eight books of poetry, three essay collections, a writers' handbook and a biography. He is Director of the Fiction Programme at Faber Academy, where he teaches a variety of courses on fiction & life writing.



## **ECOLOGY CENTRE**



## **EVENTS & LOCATIONS**

## **EcoLocal - Cicely Room**



#### Location:

EcoLocal, Cicely Room, Sunday 13 October, 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

#### **Event Title:**

Writing Workshop: Reflecting Autumn -A Seasonal Writing for Wellbeing Workshop

#### **Event Description:**

A workshop facilitated by Lucy Furlong. We will begin this workshop by taking a gentle walk through the grounds of the Sutton Ecology Centre, paying close attention to the nature we find around us. After the walk, through a series of writing exercises and discussion, we will reflect on what the season of Autumn can teach us. There will be a chance to write using different techniques, to share your work if you would like to, in a supportive space. We will consider how writing itself can be a form of sustenance as we move into the darker months of the year.

Whether you're a seasoned writer or a beginner, this event is a perfect opportunity to nurture your creativity in a peaceful, natural setting. Come ready to explore, write, and be inspired by the world around you.



**Lucy Furlong** is a writer, poet and walking artist, whose work has been widely published and exhibited, and featured in The Guardian and on BBC Radio 4. Her poems have been nominated for the Forward Prize and The Pushcart Prize and her work is taught as part of the Open University's MA in Creative Writing.

Please meet at the entrance to the Ecology Centre fifteen minutes ahead of the event.

The paths are uneven, please wear appropriate walking shoes.





EcoLocal, Cicely Room, Sunday 13 October, 1:45 pm - 2:30 pm

#### **Event Title:**

Discovering Urban Nature: A Talk with Lev Parikian

#### **Event Description:**

Explore the hidden wonders of the city's natural world with acclaimed author and nature writer Lev Parikian as he delves into the fascinating subject of urban nature. In this engaging talk, Lev will share insights from his book Light Rains Sometimes Fall, a beautifully observed chronicle of the ordinary yet extraordinary nature that surrounds us in urban environments.

Lev Parikian's keen eye and lyrical prose invite us to reconsider the everyday landscapes of our cities, revealing the subtle beauty and intricate ecosystems often overlooked in our busy lives. Whether you're a seasoned naturalist or simply curious about the world around you, this talk will inspire you to discover and appreciate the rich tapestry of urban nature.

Lev is the author of six books. He writes for the Guardian's Country Diary, and has reviewed for the Times Literary Supplement and written features for Bird Watching magazine.





Ecology Centre, Cicely Room, Sunday 13 October, 2:45 pm - 3:30 pm

#### **Event Title:**

Houseplants and Well-Being: A Talk with Horticulturalist Sarah Foss

#### **Event Description:**

Discover the transformative power of houseplants with expert horticulturalist Sarah Foss as she explores the vital connection between greenery and well-being. In this insightful talk, Sarah will share her extensive knowledge of houseplants.

Whether you're a seasoned plant enthusiast or just beginning your green journey, this event will provide valuable tips on selecting, caring for, and maximizing the benefits of houseplants in your home.

Sarah teaches at EcoLocal, Sutton Parks Department, and Walworth Garden.





## FESTIVAL AT A GLANCE

## Saturday 12 October

Time	Wallington Library	Times for Honeywood Museum	Honeywood Museum	Times for Cicely Room	EcoLocal Cicely Room (Ecology Centre)
		12 - 12.15pm	Sheba Montserrat Standup Comedy		
12.15 - 1pm	Raymond Antrobus - Terrible Horses - Interactive children's event	12.15 - 1pm	Xialou Guo in conversation with Shani Akilah		
		1.15 - 2pm	Karen McCarthy Woolf in conversation with Shani Akilah		
2 - 2.45pm	Anna Orenstein - The Tree of Hope - Interactive children's event with arts activity and giveaways	2.15 - 3pm	Louise Minchin and Vaseem Khan in conversation with Richard Skinner		
3 - 3.45pm	Beverley, Elizabeth, Emerald and Luna: Sutton Women's Network Writers Talk: Women, wellbeing and writing, hosted by Lucy Furlong	3.15 - 4pm	Noreen Masud and Jacqueline Crooks in conversation with Aditi Jaganathan		

## **Sunday 13 October**

Time	Wallington Library	Times for Honeywood Museum	Honeywood Museum	Times for Cicely Room	EcoLocal Cicely Room (Ecology Centre)
12 - 12.15pm	Sheba Montserrat Standup Comedy	12.15 - 1pm	Pascale Petite and Sam Mills in conversation with Kate Wakeling	12 - 1.30pm	Wellbeing Writing workshop hosted by <b>Lucy Furlong</b>
12.15 - 1pm	Amy Twigg in conversation with Jacqueline Crooks	1.30 - 2.15pm	Raymond Antrobus in conversation with Kate Wakeling	1.45 - 2.30pm	Talk by <b>Lev Parikan</b> . Discovering urban nature and his book Light Rains Sometimes Fall
2.00 - 3.30pm	Richard Skinner one-to-one support for writers - Ideas to Page, 5 Questions	2.45 - 3.30pm	Viktoria Lloyd-Barlow in conversation with Aditi Jaganathan	2.45 - 3.30pm	Ecolocal talk on house plants and well-being led by Sarah Foss. Mini indoor plants give-away

#### **How To Book**

Tickets are free to this festival, however, we are keen to ensure that everyone has access. Each purchase is limited to two tickets per email address.

Upon completion of booking, you will be emailed your tickets. If you would like additional tickets please email us and we will put you on a waiting list for additional tickets.

Please ensure you bring a copy/proof of the QR code sent with you on the day, so that one of our wonderful stewards may scan your ticket. Should you have any issues with this process, please email: Jacqueline@sharp-raiser.com

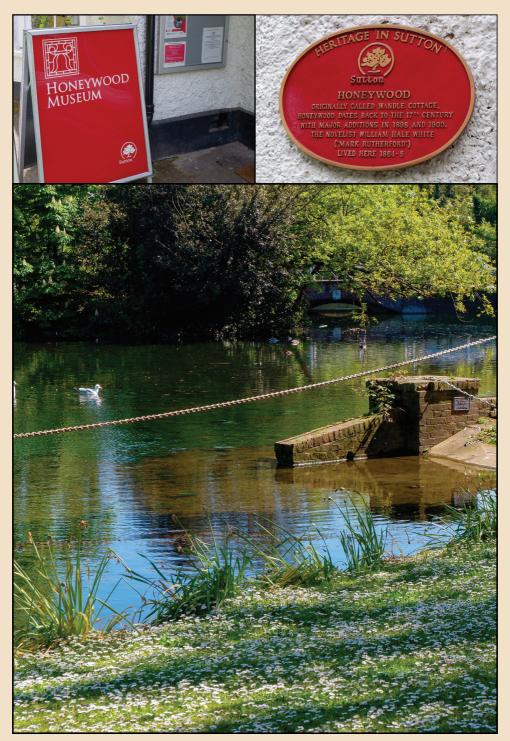
## **Safety**

Should you on the day of any events feel unsafe or the need to raise any concerns surrounding safety, please let one of our steward volunteers or members of staff know. We have first aiders on site at Wallington Library and Honeywood Museum.

If in case of an emergency or fire, our stewards will guide all guests to the safe assembly points around the venues.







## **Getting to Sutton Literary Festival & Access**

Public parking spaces around the festival site are limited.

If you are travelling from outside Sutton, we recommend arriving by train at Carshalton station, which is a leisurely 10-minute walk from the main festival site at Honeywood Museum. We recommend taking a slight detour through the stunning Grove public garden and park on your way.

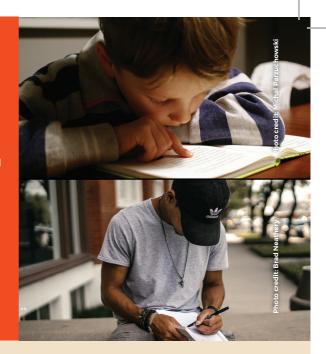
If you are travelling from within Sutton, buses 127, 157, and 407 stop near Honeywood Museum. The buses that stop near Wallington Library include: Buses 127,151, 157, 154, and 410.



Should you need any help or have any questions, especially any particular accessibility requirements that we need to be aware of, please contact at <a href="mailto:Jacqueline@sharp-raiser.com">Jacqueline@sharp-raiser.com</a>.

## Support Sutton Literary Festival

As a not-for-profit organisation, Place at my Table charity relies on funding and in-kind support from volunteers and local organisations to organise Sutton Literary Festival. All our festival events are free thanks to funding from Arts Council England. However, as a volunteer-led charity we would welcome donations to support our charitable work with older people in Sutton.



#### **Feedback**

As this is our first festival in Sutton, we are putting a great deal of time into reviewing feedback from our festival gooers. Our dedicated community engagement team will be on site at the Billiards Room in Honeywood Museum where they would love to meet you and hear about your experience at the festival and gather feedback. We will use this to understand what people have liked about the festival, but more importantly, what we can do better to facilitate an environment that encourages dialogue and engagement in an inclusive way. If you do not get a chance to speak with a member of our team during the festival, please feel free to write to us at Jacqueline@sharp-raiser.com

#### Refreshements

Nestled within the historic Honeywood Museum, **Honeywood Café** is the perfect spot for festival-goers to take a break and enjoy a selection of delicious refreshments. Whether you're looking for a quick coffee between sessions or a leisurely lunch to savour the festival atmosphere, Honeywood Café offers a welcoming space to relax and recharge. Indulge in a variety of freshly brewed coffees, teas, pastries, sandwiches, and light bites. The café's serene setting, with views over the picturesque Carshalton Ponds, provides a tranquil escape where you can reflect on the inspiring talks and discussions you've experienced during the festival.





## Festival Bookshop: Round Table Books

We are thrilled to have Round Table Books as our official festival bookshop, bringing their diverse and inclusive selection of books to Sutton Literary Festival. Round Table Books is dedicated to showcasing stories that reflect the richness of our world, focusing on works by underrepresented voices.

Throughout the festival, Round Table Books will be selling books by our featured authors, giving you the perfect opportunity to purchase a copy of your favorite title. After each author event, don't miss the chance to have your books signed by the authors themselves at the Round Table Books shops situated in the Garden Hall within the Ecology Centre grounds, next door to Honeywood Museum and within Wallington Library.

Round Table Books will be open throughout the festival and is the place to explore new reads, engage with literature that resonates, and connect with the authors who bring these stories to life. Whether you're looking for something familiar or hoping to discover a new favorite, Round Table Books offers a carefully curated selection that celebrates the power of stories to connect and inspire us all.

Thank you for joining us for the first-ever Sutton Literary Festival, organised by the charity Place at My Table.

Our festival's mission is to bring the community together through the transformative power of books, while celebrating Sutton's lush green spaces.

We hope you enjoy every moment of this celebration of literature, community, and creativity.











