

2021

YEAR OF

WRITING

#LIVERPOOLWRITES



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Culture
LIVERPOOL



Liverpool
City Council

AIM OF 2021

The aim of *Liverpool's 2021 Year of Writing*, part of the city's three-year literacy cycle, was to celebrate Liverpool's writing heritage, discover and publish new diverse voices through a partnership of 50+ arts and cultural organisations, writers, artists, educators and businesses as part of an inclusive drive to raise awareness of writing as a form itself, improve literacy in the city, develop new partnerships, provide vital support to artists and freelancers, and support wellbeing, particularly among young people, and use creativity to support the sector and the population throughout the Covid-19 recovery period.

WRITERS DIRECTORY

The Liverpool Year of Writing: Edition 2

June 2021

Vol 2



IN THIS ISSUE

SECOND EDITION

Writer Directory

"Either write something worth
reading or do something worth
writing."

Benjamin Franklin

2021 YEAR OF WRITING

Liverpool City Region Arts Organisation of the Year, *Writing on the Wall*, were approached by Cllr Barbara Murray, to lead on co-ordinating the *2021 Liverpool Year of Writing* for Liverpool City Council.

The *Year of Writing* project is run by a core group and a steering group of partners, writers and artists who both contributed to and participated in the project.

Writing on the Wall Co-Director Mike Morris has Chaired the *Year of Writing*, with writer and arts freelancer John Maguire appointed to act as Coordinator for the *Year of Writing* events and activities.

FUNDING

Writing on the Wall, as the lead partner for the year, secured funding as below and have worked closely with a wide range of literary organisations, writers and performers on the coordination of events and activities throughout the year.

- £45,974 Arts Council England
- £12,064 from The Mayor's Fund
- £2,000 received from the Council for Education

REACH

Reach of 4.5m across the year on Culture Liverpool and Year of Writing Social Media platforms.



Writers Directory and The Writing Bus

EVENTS, ACTIVITIES & PROMOTION

YEAR IN REVIEW: 2021 TIMELINE

- The *Year of Writing* partnership held an online launch featuring *Winnie M Li* and *Yvonne Battle-felton*, a host of local writers, including *Levi Tafari* and *Cathy Cassidy*, and local people including school children.
- Launch of a week-long, *Write Here Write Now*, a ten-minute writing burst for adults and children, led by writers *Frank Cottrell-Boyce*, *Mandy Redvers-Rowe*, and *Winnie M Li* and a week of activities for early years led by children's authors *Natalie Reeves-Billing* and *Jude Lennon*.
- Coordination of a series of events around the *Liverpool Children's Festival of Reading* and *Children's Mental Health Week*, with writing related activities.
- In advance of 'International Mother Language Day' we coordinated a programme of readings and writing activities for young people, including a reading of 'The Gruffalo' written by *Julia Donaldson*, in Polish, and held events including a weekly 'Storytime in English and Somali'.
- We have generated an extensive reach in terms of those who are now aware of the YOW, built strong, new networks, and generated new writing from adults, young people and children.
- Drawn together an exciting and growing programme for the year that will be attractive to and engage diverse communities from across the Liverpool City Region.
- Created a network of 173 arts and cultural organisations, writers, educators and businesses improving literacy in the city and providing vital support to artists and freelancers.
- Creation of an online resource, with 15 writers in residence with *The Writers Bloc* to date.
- Held the first live event for YOW, *The Writers Bootcamp and Marketplace* in Liverpool Central library designed to assist writers in the Liverpool City region. This event hosted 32 interactive sessions, workshops, book launches and readings with 24 in-person 1:1s with publishers/agents, 20 market stalls (Independent booksellers/publishers) and a total of 922 people in attendance.

*"Word by word. sentence by sentence.
and story by story. the people of
Liverpool are coming together.
sharing experiences. to create new
stories."*

Angela Cheveau, New Writer.



Liverpool Central Library

2021 OVERVIEW



Young child enjoys taking part in Year of Writing Community Activities on the Writing Bus

- Creation of TWO writers directories to allow talent to upload their details and aid schools and community organisations to find suitable writers to engage with - all of whom are from the Liverpool City Region
- Amplified over 200 activities/workshops and writing projects. There have also been competitions for all ages with *Mersey Ferries* and the *Awesome Foundation*.



- Funding achieved through Arts Council England has enabled employment of a local Project Coordinator who has assisted in the generation of an online writing community with *#LiverpoolWrites* being widely used by all to showcase content and highlight all workshop and writing-based projects.
- Working closely with *Culture Liverpool* the project has achieved an online audience reach of 4.1 million.
- Monthly core and general partner groups combined with a weekly email communication on all writing activity, have fostered collaborative working and amplified *#LiverpoolWrites* to widespread diverse communities, through events including *Black Fest*, the *Liverpool Arab Festival*, *Liverpool Irish Festival* and the *BBC Write Across Liverpool* project to name a few.
- Diversity and inclusion are integral to activity programming, and this is reflected in the rich variety of diverse bodies who engage online and in person on the event including
 - Writers Day - Queer Bodies Poetry Collective
 - PAL, Collective Encounters
- Also creating meaningful activities that also appeal to the city's younger residents including a book created with East Prescott Rd, Nursery School and targeted high-profile culture events, such as *'Bridge'* in North Liverpool (381,034 Social Media Impressions).

2021 OVERVIEW

- Partnerships garnered with Liverpool Learning Partnership and LCEP, to recruit freelancers to support young people from Early Years to age 25 to engage in creative expression.
- £13,150, 8 commissions to deliver sessions and resources for schools and community groups in low literacy and socio-economic areas, L24, L8, L11, L6, L12, L7, L4.
- The constant changing Covid restrictions over the last few months have proved a problem, particularly whist planning for delivery. For example, the *Writers Bootcamp and Marketplace*, ideally would have had several months to plan and prepare but instead due to the unsurety of the pandemic, only ended up having a four-week turnaround. However, the timely and efficient response from the established network of partners and the core group allowed it to happen with excellent attendance and engagement, increasing Central Library footfall from 300 to 922.
- There have been three stand-alone events coordinated by the Core Group and Partners: *The Bootcamp/Writers Marketplace*, held in September 2021 at Liverpool Central Library, *The Writing Bus Tour* over 12 days in January/February 2022 and the *Finale /Handover* event held at Liverpool Central Library in February 2022.
- These events were full of performances from new and established writers, with activities and readings for children and young people, spoken word performances, with market places for independent publishers and arts organisations, and one-to-one support for new writers delivered by literary agents.
- All events drew new audiences and inspired people across the city to get involved in creativity and writing.
- *The Writing Bus* featured a team of writers, spoken word artists and volunteers who travelled together for 12 days to communities that often do not get into the city centre and, through socio-economic deprivation, do not engage in creative activities and cultural events. These areas were:
 - Tuebrook Market
 - Granby Street with the Adult Education Centre
 - Cullen Street with the Roma Community
 - Belle Vale Shopping Centre
 - Court Hey Park
 - Walton with the Life Rooms
 - Bootle Life Rooms
 - Liverpool City Centre
 - The Palm House in Sefton park.
- The level of engagement was tremendous, with people spending time on this bus in workshops, with one-to-one support led by the writers and spoken word artists and sitting down to create new writing. It was an inspired idea, and an inspiration to take part in, and a model for all future activities as a way to directly engage excluded communities.



Workshop in Chinese Writing at Culture Liverpool's
Chinese New Year Celebrations

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR



PILOT EVENTS: SPRING 2021

- Amplified 240 activities/workshops/events and writing projects in Liverpool
- Established a network of 192 partner organisations
- Arts organisation, *Writing On the Wall* have published several books and provided access to their extensive resources, free courses, workshops and events
- 18 Writers have participated in WOW's *The Writer's Bloc: Community and Creativity*, a virtual centre dedicated to writing in all its forms across the Liverpool City Region
- There have also been 6 writing competitions for all ages with *Food for Thought*, *Primary School Poetry*, *Mersey Ferries*, *Liverpool Irish Festival*, *Writing over Time* with *Hope Uni/U.O.L*, *The Magic Bench* - *St Vincents School* and *Boat of Hope*
- *Liverpool Year of Writing* partnered with *Liverpool Learning Partnership* and *Liverpool Cultural Education Partnership* to offer 8 commissions. To recruit freelance artists from Liverpool's cultural and creative community to support children and young people from Early Years to age 25 to engage in writing. £13,150 was given out in commissions to assist schools and community groups in L4, L6, L7, L8, L11, L12 and L24
- Collaboration with the *Awesome Foundation* to offer a micro-grant of £500
- We have created TWO writers directories to allow talent in the Liverpool City region to upload their details and aid schools, community organizations find suitable writers to engage with

2021 OVERVIEW

- Through our social media platforms and those of Culture Liverpool, we have been able to develop an online audience reach of over 4.5 million.

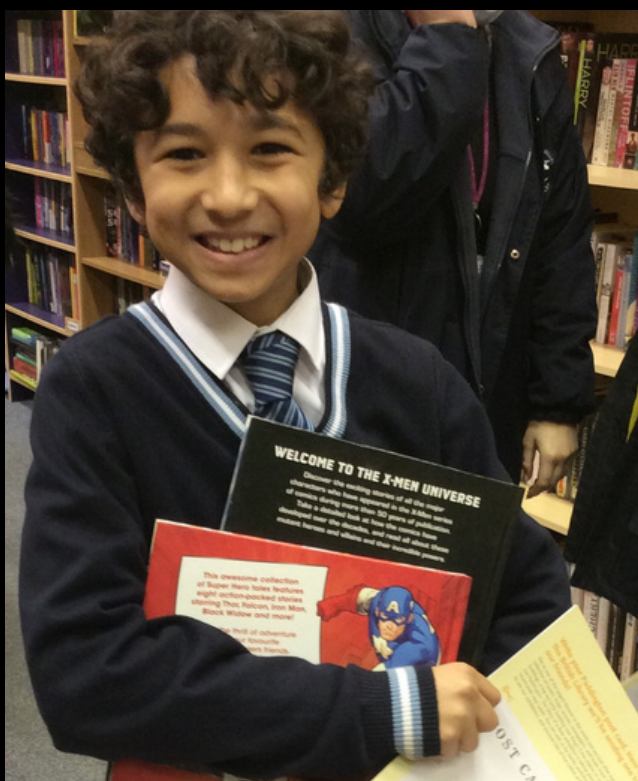
WRITERS BOOTCAMP AND MARKETPLACE

The *Writers Bootcamp and Marketplace* was a resounding success. A free day packed with activities to assist writers in the Liverpool City Region.

What was achieved on the day?

- 32 interactive sessions, workshops, book launches and readings.
- 24 in-person 1:1 with publishers/agents.
- 20 market stalls and a total of 922 people in attendance.

It was an absolute joy to see our beautiful library, a hive of activity, all spaces being used with people engaging in all things writing-related. The day brought diverse groups and participants together to celebrate the talent in the city.



WRITING BUS

- In January 2022 the *Writers Bus* travelled to 12 areas over 12 days.
- A vintage double-decker bus provided access to creative workshops directly to local communities, bringing an array of activities designed to get people writing more. It brought together so many people of all ages and backgrounds, and communities who do not normally get this type of activity on their doorstep.
- 674 participants took part in workshops, 1,447 interactions/audience visited
- 1,359 Postcards
- 416 Writing Prompt Booklets
- 154 Kids Activity Packs (donated by Central Library/The British Library) were given out
- 40 people had a meeting with a literary agent
- Twelve days, from Bootle to Knowsley, Granby to Tuebrook, Walton, to Belle Vale etc, and a very special day with young people and children from the Roma community on Cullen Street, ending with over 1,000 people coming to the Palm House in Sefton Park, for a really amazing day of performances, which included some people who performed work they had created that week from taking part in workshops on the bus.
- Outreach to neglected communities, diversity, a range of workshops and activities, a great example of partnership working and developing new artists, while also working with more established ones, many of whom have developed through our work.

2021 OVERVIEW

IT'S MY LIFE WRITING COMMISSION

- We gave 4 young people between the ages of 16- 25 years of age, a commission of £1000. This opportunity was to develop an idea for a piece of work, a spoken word performance, a piece of poetry, zine, a short story collection.
- Each writer had a mentor to assist with the process.
- All presented at the Liverpool Writes end of year event in Liverpool Central Library.



Some of the core team members at Liverpool Central Library

WRITE ACROSS LIVERPOOL

- Partnership project between Culture Liverpool's Liverpool Film Office and BBC Writers Room.
- Opening up writing opportunities for residents and creatives in Liverpool to write for the BBC.



FINALE CELEBRATION / HANDOVER

Final Celebration Event at central Library, Saturday 26th February 2022.

- The finale of the Year of Writing was a fitting testament to the work that had been done to inspire creativity and build community, with many of the creatives, communities, and participants who engaged in activities over the course of the 2021 *Year of Writing* coming together to deliver an amazing array of activities throughout the day at Central Library, which included book launches, children's story telling and puppetry shows, literary agents giving one-to-one advice, book stalls, poetry games, workshops, and new writers delivering work from commissions created by the *Year of Writing*.
- Over 1500 people took part in the event throughout the day.
- The ground floor of Liverpool Central Library was taken over with poetry games and writing workshops at the heart of the library in the Atrium. There were FREE resource giveaways. Market stalls by the entrance flooded into the Discover Area (children's section of the library), with 18 local authors, arts organisations, and partners showcasing their work.
- An outdoor spoken word tent and stage in the Discovery Area allowed for sixteen live book readings, performances, spoken word pieces, and choir recitals to take place - from the launch of Angela Holden's memoir, *'Angels in the Mist'* to Arts Groupie's puppetry shows, poetry from Queer Poetry Collective, plus four young writers each delivering their new work – poetry, performance and video, which they created after receiving commissions from the *Year of Writing*.

2021 OVERVIEW

FINALE / HANDOVER CONT.

- The performance schedule for the day reflected the diverse talent highlighted in the year, award-winning novelist Yvonne Battle Felton introduced new work from the *Write What's Next*, Writing on the Wall course as well as reading exclusively from her new Young Adults novel.
- The day also saw first glimpses of the *It's My Life* commissions, including a short film and a striking piece on disability queer art.
- There were 8 FREE workshops throughout the day focusing on subjects to help writers, including '*Building a Creative Network*,' and '*Sustaining a creative life as an artist*.'
- The Liverpool Literary Agency provided 44 agent slots offering 1:1 advice for local writers.
- We opened the day with the *SING ME* choir and ended the day in song too, as the handover ceremony began with *The Liverpool Signing Choir*.
- Lord Mayor Councillor Mary Rasmussen officially declared the beginning of the 2022 *Liverpool Year of Spoken Word* after speeches from Mike Morris (Co-Director of Writing on the Wall), Councillor Barbara Murray and John Maguire (Project Coordinator), followed by the first performance for the *Year of Spoken Word* by Liverpool rapper, songwriter and artist, Blue Saint.

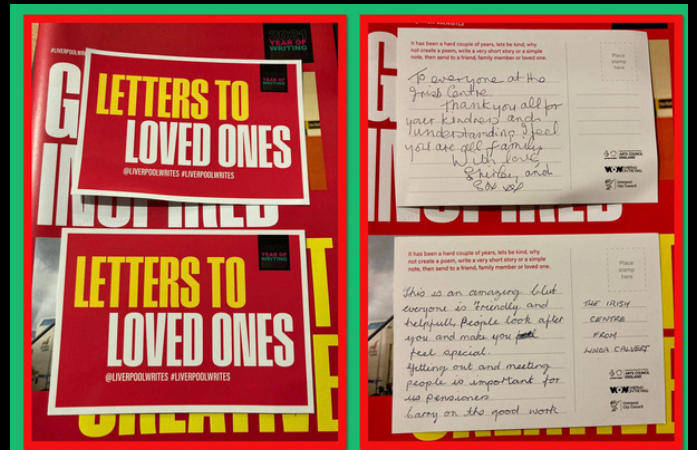
Authors and partners at Liverpool Central Library; Children enjoying writing activities at school



2021 - IN FIGURES

FINALE / HANDOVER CONT.

- 240 Activities, workshops, events and writing projects amplified throughout the year
- 192 Partner organisations on an established writing network
- Writing on the Wall published several books
- 18 Writers participated in Writers Bloc
- 6 Writing Competitions
- 8 Commissions for free-lance artists providing £13,500 to schools and community groups
- £500.00 of micro grants awarded
- 2 Writers Directories produced featuring Liverpool City Region writers
- 1 Writing Bus visiting 12 communities in Liverpool
- 2 Live writers events at Liverpool Central Library
- 3,096 Attendees at 3 Year of Writing dedicated events – not including partner events
- 154 Childrens Activity Packs distributed and completed
- 1,359 Writing postcards distributed and completed by members of the public
- 1,447 Interactions with community-based writing bus
- 416 Writing Prompt Books completed on community sessions
- 108 1-1 FREE writing support workshops with dedicated mentors and literary agents
- 62 Author and retail workshops over two writing days
- Reach of 4.5m across the year on Culture Liverpool and Year of Writing Social Media platforms
- 808,578 Direct impressions and 9,025 engagements via Culture Liverpool social media
- 345,659 Direct impressions and 6,137 engagements on Liverpool Writes social media



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Images used within this document have been provided by the Year of Writing Project with the approval of schools, communities and partners.

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Cultureliverpool@liverpool.gov.uk

Get Social

www.liverpoolwrites.co.uk

Twitter: [@LiverpoolWrites](https://twitter.com/LiverpoolWrites)

Facebook: [2021 Liverpool Year of Writing](https://www.facebook.com/2021LiverpoolYearofWriting)

The 2021 Year of Writing has been supported by the following partners and project teams, in alphabetical order:

- 20 Stories High
- A Lovely Word
- Ali Harwood - Liver Bards
- Amina Atiq
- Andy Kenwright
- Arts Council England
- Arts Groupie CIC
- Awesome Foundation
- BBC Radio Merseyside
- Blue Saint
- Bluecoat Arts
- Centre of New and International Writing University of Liverpool
- Collective Encounters
- Comic Youth
- Comma Press
- Councillor Barbara Murray
- Culture Liverpool
- Edge Hill University
- Everyman and Playhouse Theatre
- Food for Thought
- Gateacre School
- Ginni Manning
- Homotopia
- Incredible Edible Knowsley
- Irish Centre
- Jude Lennon
- Judy Mazonowicz
- Kingsley and Co
- LIFE Rooms
- Liverpool Arab Arts Festival
- Liverpool Film Office
- Liverpool Central Library and Libraries Services
- Liverpool Irish Festival
- Liverpool John Moores University School of Writing
- Liverpool Learning Partnership
- Liverpool Literary Agency
- Lord Mayor Councillor Mary Rasmussen
- LUMA Creations
- Mayor of Liverpool
- Metal Liverpool
- Natalie Reeves Billing
- National Museums Liverpool
- Open Eye Gallery
- Palm House
- Queer Bodies Poetry Collective
- Read Now Write now
- Rise Up CIC
- Rotunda
- Royal Court Theatre
- Shakespeare North
- SIL Literacy
- Sing Me Choir
- Sky Writers /Natalie Denny
- Southport Writers
- Tate Liverpool
- Team Author UK
- The Boat of Hope
- The Bookworm Players
- The Liverpool Signing Choir
- The Windows Project
- Tuebrook Market
- Unity Theatre
- University of Liverpool Institute of Irish Studies and Department of English
- Writing On The Wall
- YKids

Follow our journey in 2022 - #LiverpoolSpeaks

