



Friday 22nd March

Maisie Chan at Colgrain Primary



Maisie Chan's debut novel *Danny Chung Does Not Do Maths* won the Jhalak Prize and the Branford Boase Award in 2022. Her latest novel *Keep Dancing, Lizzie Chu* is out now and was longlisted for the Diverse Book Awards 2023.

Victoria Williamson at Hermitage Academy



Victoria Williamson is an award-winning author from Glasgow who has juggled her own real-life adventures teaching in Cameroon, Malawi and China with writing 9 novels for children and young people.



The Reading Minds book festival was born out of conversations between book groups and volunteers at the Book Nook at Helensburgh Community Hub, Jean's Bothy and Helensburgh & Lomond Carers Centre.

We recognise from the benefits to our own wellbeing that reading is good for us - whether it's better understanding ourselves, each other and the world we live in... or just going on a wonderful adventure from the comfort of our own sofa.

We wanted to put together a community book festival that's inclusive and accessible to get more folk reading. Connection is at the heart of our festival, which is why the sessions also involve time for a chat over a cuppa or a glass of something. We hope you enjoy the festival, meet people and chat about books and more.

Thank you to:

- Scottish Book Trust - Live Literature Funding
- The Scandinavian Shop
- Cove Park
- Bruichladdich
- Rymour Publishing

Finally a very special thank you to the Reading Minds 2024 planning team without whom this just would not be possible.

Front cover photo of Helensburgh:
Kathryn Polley Photography

Reading Minds



Helensburgh's Book Festival

READING MINDS

A WEEKEND OF WELLBEING THROUGH BOOKS

Friday 22 March 2024 - Sunday 24 March 2024

HELENSBURGH'S BOOK FESTIVAL



Events can be booked through Eventbrite search READING MINDS or use this QR code. *Events are approximately 1hr

Donations are very welcome and will go towards the future of reading minds.

A free bus service will operate between venues



Programme - Public Events

Friday 22 March

6.30pm - Festival launch welcome drinks at Helensburgh Community Hub

7.30pm - Roger Hutchinson at Helensburgh Community Hub - Ticket £5 (includes a wee dram or soft drink)

Award-winning writer and journalist Roger Hutchinson reveals what really happened when the SS Politician and her 260,000 bottles of whisky hit the rocks, with extracts from his new book *Polly, The True Story Behind Whisky Galore*.



Saturday 23 March

10:30am - What's Hot for 2024 at Helensburgh Community Hub - Free Event with tea and cake.

Book sellers, librarians, authors and book lovers come together for a lively and interactive session about books to get excited about this year! Chaired by local author Robin Scott-Elliott.

12pm - Judge a book by its publisher? Helensburgh Community Hub - Free Event with tea and cake

Our panel of experts including Unbound crowdfunded author Alan Gillespie, publisher Ian Spring of Rymour Books, and successful ebook author Daniel Sellers share their experiences of both non-traditional and traditional publishing.



1.30pm - Fancy getting your writing out there?

A (friendly!) Dragon's Den style pitching session so you can get some constructive feedback from a panel of experts including published authors, publisher Ian Spring and arts charity Cove Park who regularly select authors for their residency programmes. For more information about pitching your work on the day contact manager@helensburghcommunityhub.org.uk

2-3.30pm - Poetry workshop with Shane Strachan at Helensburgh & Lomond Carers Centre - Tickets £3 with tea and cake provided

This workshop is led by Shane Strachan who was awarded Scots Champion at the 2023 Scots Language Awards. Shane will explore being inspired by artwork relating to place and read from his new collection DWAMS ahead of its publication in April.



5pm - Karen Campbell (venue Helensburgh tbc) - Tickets £5

Paper Cup is the eighth novel written by ex-police officer Karen Campbell and tells the story of homeless woman Kelly and her journey back to her past. Full of compassion and hope, *Paper Cup* is a novel about how easy it can be to fall through the cracks - and what it takes to turn around a life that has run off course.



7pm - Callum McSorley at Helensburgh Community Hub - Tickets £5 (includes wine or soft drinks and nibbles)

Callum McSorley became the youngest ever winner of the McIlvanney Prize for Scottish Crime Novel of the Year in September last year. His debut novel, *Squeaky Clean*, was inspired by his years working at a car wash in Glasgow's East End. A dark tale full of great characters and buckets of humour.



Sunday 24 March

10am - Breakfast at the Bothy with "An Open Book" - Free Event and no booking required

Join us for a breakfast roll and a chance to meet members of Jean's Bothy who have written a 3rd book called "An Open Book". It features a range of writing styles and includes photography & artwork too. A wonderful celebration of the power of words, and the importance of community.

11am - This Wild and Precious Life workshop with Victoria Bennett at Jean's Bothy - Tickets £3

Alongside an intimate sharing from her debut memoir *All My Wild Mothers*, Victoria's workshop explores the healing language of wild weeds that grow under our feet, offering an opportunity to seed our own stories, poems and incantations for hope and healing.



12pm - Heather Parry and Kirsty Logan at Helensburgh Community Hub - Free Event

Kirsty Logan and Heather Parry are both award-winning, Glasgow-based writers. Heather and Kirsty co-hosted the Teenage Scream podcast, revisiting the best (and worst) of 90s teen horror, so we're getting them together again in the Hub for some great book chat about horror, bodies, and all things weird fiction.



12pm - Life writing workshop with Emily Utter at Helensburgh & Lomond Carers - Tickets £3

Emily Utter is the Writer in Residence at Aberdeen's specialist palliative care hospital, Roxburghe House. It is this work that has inspired her novel-in-progress, *The Night Room*, which was shortlisted for the Discoveries Prize in 2023.



2pm - Kirstin Innes, Rachele Atalla and Eleanor Thom at Helensburgh Community Hub - Tickets £5 includes tea and cake

Come along to hear from three of Scotland's most exciting writers about their work to date and what's in store for the future. Kirstin Innes, Rachele Atalla and Eleanor Thom will discuss their novels and what inspires them in what is sure to be a fascinating chat!

