



Programme overview

The Pentlands Book Festival returns with an eclectic mix of voices.

Kate Atkinson, three-time Whitbread/Costa winner, and creator of *Life After Life* and the Jackson Brodie novels, makes a rare appearance. While **Jenni Fagan**, novelist, poet, screenwriter, artist, brings her distinctive literary voice to discuss *The Delusions*, which imagines an afterlife run by cosmic and comic bureaucracy.

For readers drawn to history and social memory, **Alistair Moffat**, founder of the Borders Book Festival, has decades of expertise in Scottish history and journalism; **Brian McGeachan** discusses his book on trade unionist Jimmy Reid; **Kate Stephenson** explores clothing and social history, and **Helen Graham** brings her historical fiction set in the world of theatrical artists.

Crime and mystery take centre stage with **Elaine Thomson**, whose historical crime fiction includes her recent ghost story *Saltwater*, and **James Oswald**, known for his Inspector McLean and Constance Fairchild series.

Debut and local talent gets a spotlight too: **Mark Baillie** presents his novel *Salvage*, exploring Scotland's Gypsy Traveller history through a missing person mystery, while **Kate Mayor** and **Jonathan Findlay** share a session showcasing local authorship.

The festival also welcomes writers working in poetry, memoir, and travel and adventure: **Esa Aldegheri**, author of *Free to Go*, and **Anne Pia**, with poems that capture the renegade spirit of French troubadour George Brassens.

Adding a lighter, curious, note, **Pete Lamont** explores magic, psychic phenomena, and critical thinking.

Beyond author talks, **Pentlands Open Studios** presents an artists' talks event, giving local visual artists a platform to share their work. The festival closes in contemplative mood at the **Library of Mistakes**, reflecting on lessons from history.

Across the villages of the upper valley of the Water of Leith, PBF2026 offers something to every reader.

Welcome

Thank you for picking up the Pentlands Book Festival 2026 flyer!

Now in its twelfth year, each autumn PBF brings author talks to Currie and Colinton Libraries and other local venues. PBF is run by local volunteers in partnership with the libraries.

Each hour-long event is a relaxed chance to meet the author and hear about their work. Books are often available to buy on the night, sometimes discounted, and usually the author is happy to sign them (and we can give you an exclusive PBF stamp).

Full details on our website:

pentlandsbookfestival.org

Events are free but tickets are essential — book online or by phone or in person at the libraries:

- Currie Library: 0131 529 5609
- Colinton Library: 0131 529 5603

Venue locations

This year you'll find us at the following addresses:

- | | |
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| 1. Colinton Library , 14 Thorburn Rd, EH13 0BQ | 5. Tanners Bar , 459 Lanark Rd, EH14 5BA |
| 2. Currie Library , 210 Lanark Rd, EH14 5NX | 6. Baberton Golf Club , 55 Baberton Ave, EH14 5DU |
| 3. Colinton Episcopal Church , 6 Westgarth Ave, EH13 0BB | 7. Porteous , 589 Lanark Rd, EH14 5DA |
| 4. Juniper Green Bowling Club , 600 Lanark Rd, EH14 5EN | 8. Balerno Parish Church , 2 Main St, Balerno, EH14 7EH |

With special thanks to our funders and supporters who have helped make PBF2026 possible:

- C&B News
- Scotmid
- Scottish Book Trust



Pentlands Book Festival



COLINTON • BALERNO
JUNIPER GREEN • CURRIE

26 OCT–25 NOV 2026

Our aim is simple: to bring artists and audiences together in a warm, friendly space — and to build community through a shared love of books and the arts.

Events at a glance



Mon, 26 Oct 6pm **Elaine Thomson**
Scottish Landscapes and the Supernatural
Colinton Library

Thu, 29 Oct 7pm **Kate Atkinson**
Behind the Scenes
Colinton Episcopal Church

Mon, 2 Nov 7.30pm **Peter Lamont**
Radical Thinking: How to See the Bigger Picture
Juniper Green Bowling Club

Wed, 4 Nov 7.30pm **Brian McGeachan**
Jimmy Reid and Me
Tanners Bar

Thu, 5 Nov 7.30pm **Alistair Moffat**
Assassins and Secret Listeners
Baberton Golf Club

Sat, 7 Nov 11am **Helen Graham**
Bringing the Theatrical to Family History
Colinton Library

Sat, 7 Nov 1pm **Local authors**
Kate Mayor & Jonathan Findlay
Colinton Library

Mon, 9 Nov 6pm **Mark Baillie**
Salvage – A mystery exploring the tragic history of Scotland's Gypsy-Travellers
Colinton Library

Wed, 11 Nov 7.30pm **Kate Stephenson**
Edinburgh's Literary Heritage
Porteous

Thu, 12 Nov 7.30pm **James Oswald**
Murder, Mystery and a dash of Mysticism
Porteous

Wed, 18 Nov 7.30pm **Jenni Fagan**
The Patron Saint of Literary Street Urchins
Balerno Parish Church

Thu, 19 Nov 7.30pm **Pentlands Open Studios Artist Talks**
Martha Ellis, Anne Gatherar, Marianne Hazlewood & Sue Shields
Baberton Golf Club

Sat, 21 Nov 11am **Esa Aldegheri**
Free to Go – Journeys that Transform
Colinton Library

Mon, 23 Nov 6pm **Anne Pia**
A Month O Muins
Colinton Library

Wed, 25 Nov 2pm **Library of Mistakes**
Learn From Others' Mistakes
33A Melville Street Lane, EH3 7QB



Get involved in PBF 2027

We're seeking volunteers to help plan and run PBF. Especially welcome: fundraising, IT, marketing, social media, or website skills. Young people interested in event management, marketing, or hospitality also welcome — a great way to gain practical experience.

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Number of committee members sought

£2k
Cost of running PBF for a year.

Support us

Enjoyed the festival? Help us keep it going. Your donation helps PBF bring authors to the Pentlands. Give using cash or card at events, or donate via Crowdfunder: www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/pbf2026. Scan here >>>

£750
Amount we are seeking to raise this year



Stay connected

Message us via the Contact Form on our website, or sign up for our newsletter to be first to hear our plans. Scan here >>> Follow us on Instagram and Facebook: @pentlandsbookfestival

180
Number of events delivered in PBFs since 2015



pentlandsbookfestival.org

