

WIRRAL POETRY FESTIVAL

Check our website for details of the
Poetry Festival events including
workshops, poetry picnics, readings,
open mic opportunities
and other surprises!

Open Poetry Competition

Closing Date: 29 May 2026

1st Prize £250

Plus 4 runner up prizes of £25

Liverpool City Region

1st Prize £100

Plus 2 runner up prizes of £25



**Entry: £4 per poem; £10 for 3 poems;
or £15 for 5 poems**



**Enter via our website:
wirralpoetryfestival.org.uk**

Wirral Poetry Festival

Open Poetry Competition 2026

Open Poetry Prizes Adjudicators: Helen Ivory and Martin Figura

Helen Ivory is a poet and visual artist. She edits Ink Sweat & Tears and teaches for Arvon and online for the National Centre for Writing Academy. Her latest book is *Constructing a Witch* (Bloodaxe, Oct 2024) focusing on the monstering and othering of women and fear of ageing.

Martin Figura is an accountant, poet and portrait and social documentary photographer. He has published several poetry collections, the latest of which is *The Remaining Men* (Cinnamon, 2024).

Liverpool City Region Adjudicator Anna Saunders

Anna Saunders is the author of eight books: *Communion*, *Kissing the She Bear* (Wild Conversations Press), *Struck* (Pindrop Press), *Burne Jones and the Fox*, *Ghosting for Beginners*, *Feverfew*, *The Prohibition of Touch*, and *Eurydice in the Ruined House* (all Indigo Dreams). Anna has been widely published in journals and holds four Arts Council Awards. She is the co-editor, with Ronnie Goodyer, of the anthology *Dear Dylan* (Indigo Dreams). She is the Founding Director of Cheltenham Poetry Festival.

Competition rules:

All entries where eligible will be considered for the Liverpool City Region Prizes. Do not make any separate entries!

- The competition is open to all entrants from anywhere in the world.
- Poems must be in English, unpublished, and no more than 40 lines in length.
- Poems must be the original, unpublished work of the entrant. If the competition organisers or adjudicators detect, at any stage, that your submission has been plagiarised or composed using AI, or that it has already been published, it will be disqualified.
- Competition entries must take the format given below in the How to enter section - each poem on a separate page with the title at the top and anonymous.
- There is an entry charge of £4 per poem or £10 for 3 poems or £15 for 5 poems
- You can enter as many poems as you wish.
- We do not offer refunds if a poem is withdrawn by the author.
- We cannot waive the entry fee to individuals.
- The judge's decisions are final, and no correspondence can be entered into regarding the competition results (or a decision to disqualify).
- The deadline for entering the competition is 11.59pm (UK BST) on Friday 29 May 2026. Any entries received after that time will not be included in the competition.
- **Winners will be notified in July 2026**
- Open Prizes are: 1st Prize: £250; 4 runner-up prizes of £25 each. Liverpool City Region (LCR) prizes are: £100 with two LCR runner-up prizes of £25 each.
- To be considered for one of the LCR prizes, the postcode in your address must be from one of the following LCR boroughs: Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral
- A competition award ceremony and reading "Celebrating the Winners" will take place during the 2026 Wirral Poetry Festival in October 2026, when the First Prize Winner will be invited to read a selection of their poetry and other prize-winners invited to read their winning poems.
- Winning poems will be published on the Wirral Poetry Festival website. By entering the competition, it will be assumed that you have given permission for your poems to be displayed in this way.
- **Data Protection:** Names, addresses, email and telephone contact details of those entering the competition will be stored securely for up to 12 months and will be used for communications relating to Wirral Poetry Festival unless permission has been given to remain on our mailing list.

How to enter:

- The competition organisers can accept online submissions only through our website www.wirralpoetryfestival.org.uk
- Decide how many poems in total you wish to submit
- Click the Book Now Button Below: The options are: One Poem, Two Poems, Three Poems, Five Poems.
- This takes you to the payment page
- Once you have paid, you will be taken to the booking confirmation page with the booking confirmation number (you will also receive a confirmation email from Ticket Source with the same information) Keep a record of the booking confirmation number.
- Prepare your poems for submission. Each poem should be in a separate document – please use either MS Word or PDF formats if possible.
- Do not put any identification on any of your poems.
- Attach your poems to an email with "OPEN POETRY" in the subject line to poetrycomp@wirralpoetryfestival.org.uk
- Remember to put a title for each poem at the top of the page.
- Do not include a poem that might be recognised by the judges through workshops, mentoring or public readings.
- Do not include a poem that has already been published.
- Important! In the body of your email please put the following information:
 1. Your booking confirmation number from Ticket Source
 2. Your name
 3. Your postal address including your postcode
 4. Your email address
 5. A contact telephone number - mobile or landline
 6. A list of the titles of the poems attached to your email

Coming Soon!
**A New Liverpool City
Region
Poetry Competition
for young people**
wirralpoetryfestival.org.uk