

# Launch Press Pack

From Surrey's Heart to Its Streets:  
Inspiring Connection Through Verse.



## Unveiling Surrey's Poetic Tapestry: Connecting Hearts, Minds, and Streets Through Verse

Welcome to the Surrey Poet Laureate initiative, a vibrant endeavour poised to illuminate the cultural landscape of Surrey through the power of poetry. Founded with a deep-rooted commitment to fostering creativity, community, and connection, this initiative stands as a beacon of artistic expression and inclusivity in our county.

Led by visionary poets and dedicated community leaders, the Surrey Poet Laureate initiative seeks to celebrate and elevate the art of poetry across our diverse communities. Spearheaded by esteemed founders Adam Gary, Howard Jameson, and Alix Bramwell, this initiative aims to cultivate a rich tapestry of poetic voices, reflecting the unique essence and spirit of Surrey. Through a myriad of outreach programmes, workshops, and events, we aspire to ignite a passion for poetry, foster creative expression, and nurture a sense of belonging among residents of all ages and backgrounds.

"Poetry has the remarkable ability to transcend boundaries and touch the deepest corners of our hearts. Through the Surrey Poet Laureate initiative, we endeavour to harness this transformative power to unite our community and celebrate the beauty of Surrey through verse." - Adam Gary, Founder

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## Background:

The Surrey Poet Laureate initiative emerged from a collective desire to enrich Surrey's cultural fabric with the transformative power of poetry. Founded in 2024, the initiative was spearheaded by local poet Adam Gary, and founding patrons, Howard Jameson, and Alix Bramwell, who sought to establish a platform that would celebrate and amplify the diverse voices of Surrey's literary community. Drawing inspiration from the county's rich heritage and vibrant arts scene, the Surrey Poet Laureate initiative embarks on a mission to elevate the craft of poetry, nurture emerging talent, and foster connections across communities.

**Goals and Objectives:** At its core, the Surrey Poet Laureate initiative is committed to promoting poetry as a dynamic and inclusive art form that resonates with people from all walks of life. Through a diverse range of programmes and initiatives, the initiative aims to achieve several key objectives:

- 1. Celebrating Surrey's Heritage:** By honouring Surrey's rich legacy and showcasing the talents of local poets, the initiative seeks to celebrate the county's unique identity and cultural heritage.
- 2. Engaging with Vulnerable Communities:** Recognising the therapeutic power of poetry, the initiative is dedicated to reaching out to vulnerable populations, including the elderly, prisoners, and teenagers, to provide support, encouragement, and creative outlets for self-expression.

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**3. Fostering Creative Expression:** Through workshops, readings, and events, the Surrey Poet Laureate initiative provides opportunities for individuals of all ages and backgrounds to explore their creativity, share their stories, and find their voice through poetry.

**4. Building Community Connections:** By bringing people together through the shared experience of poetry, the initiative aims to strengthen community bonds, promote dialogue, and foster a sense of belonging and connection across Surrey.

**5. Elevating Surrey's Cultural Profile:** Through collaborations with local organisations, educational institutions, and cultural venues, the Surrey Poet Laureate initiative aims to raise awareness of Surrey's vibrant arts scene, attract new audiences, and position the county as a hub of literary excellence.

In essence, the Surrey Poet Laureate initiative represents a collaborative effort to harness the power of poetry as a catalyst for positive change, cultural enrichment, and community building across Surrey.

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## Biographies

Adam Gary

Founder, Inaugural Laureate

Adam Gary is a luminary in the world of contemporary poetry. Hailing from the heart of Surrey, he is a celebrated poet, an influential YouTuber, and the founder of the thriving poetry platform, The Poetry Cove. As a leader in the literary community, Adam's vision for the Surrey Poet Laureateship is to foster a vibrant, inclusive space where poetry flourishes and connects people across the county. His commitment to this cause has established him as a pivotal figure in Surrey's cultural scene, inspiring a new generation of poets and poetry lovers.





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Howard Jameson  
Founding Patron

Howard is the Co-Founder and Chairman of the internationally acclaimed, award-winning Jermyn Street Theatre, which recently celebrated its 25-year anniversary. The theatre is a true jewel in London's theatrical scene and is highly respected, winning constant praise and glowing reviews from the industry. Howard brings a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to both the arts and charitable causes. A co-founder of two successful radio stations, Men's Radio and Women's Radio, Howard has consistently demonstrated his ability to connect and communicate with diverse audiences. His passion for the arts, especially poetry, shines through in his endeavors, enriching the cultural tapestry of the communities he engages with. Beyond his artistic pursuits, Howard is a staunch advocate for mental health. He leverages his platforms and influence to raise awareness and support for mental health initiatives, believing in the power of art and communication to heal and uplift. His dedication to these causes is not just professional; it's a reflection of his core values and commitment to making a positive impact in society. As a patron of the laureateship, Howard's blend of artistic passion and charitable dedication plays a vital role in shaping the initiative's outreach and impact, making poetry a force for good in the lives of individuals and the wider community.



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### Biographies

Alix Bramwell

Founding Patron

Alix Bramwell is a seasoned professional in the events industry, whose personal journey through mental health challenges led him to the holistic wellbeing space, inspiring the creation of the Wisdom on Wellness festival and The London Gem and Mineral Show. With over a decade of experience managing large-scale events and a deep commitment to promoting mental, physical, and spiritual health, Alix has found a unique intersection between his professional expertise and his passion for wellbeing. As a founding patron of the Surrey Poet Laureateship, his dedication to mental health advocacy and his experience in bringing people together make him an invaluable asset to our mission of using poetry to support vulnerable communities and elevate the presence of poetry across Surrey.





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### Laureate's Vision:

Adam Gary envisions a Surrey where poetry thrives as a vibrant and integral part of community life. With a commitment to inclusivity and accessibility, the Laureate aims to cultivate an abundance of poetry events across the county, providing opportunities for residents of all backgrounds to come together, connect, and celebrate the power of verse.

Integral to this vision is the documentation of Surrey's rich history through the publication of poems that capture the essence of the county's landscapes, people, and cultural heritage. By amplifying Surrey's unique stories and voices, the Poet Laureate seeks to foster a deeper appreciation for the county's past while inspiring creativity and dialogue in the present.

Furthermore, Adam is dedicated to supporting those who can benefit from poetry writing and reading, including vulnerable communities such as the elderly, prisoners, and teenagers.

Through outreach programmes and therapeutic initiatives, poetry will serve as a tool for healing, self-expression, and personal growth, empowering individuals to find solace, connection, and hope through verse.

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### Outreach Programme:

**Care Homes:** Our poetry workshops in care homes are crafted with joy and ease at their core, steering clear of heavy theory and complex poetry writing techniques. These sessions are all about fun, offering a gentle pace that suits everyone. They aim to illuminate the benefits of poetry writing as a form of expression, providing a delightful escape for those who might be facing loneliness or seeking a break from the monotony. Through engaging activities and shared storytelling, our workshops foster a sense of community and personal achievement, all while celebrating the simple pleasures of poetry.

**Schools:** Our school workshops, tailored for students in years 5-6 and 7-11, emphasise the power of expression through the art of poetry. We approach poetry not merely as an academic subject but as a vibrant form of self-expression that liberates and empowers. These sessions are designed to inspire students to explore their feelings and thoughts freely, using poetry as a tool to

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navigate and articulate their experiences. By fostering a creative and supportive environment, our workshops aim to reveal the joy and therapeutic benefits of poetry, encouraging young minds to find their voice and use it confidently.

**Prisons:** Our prison workshops place a significant emphasis on the reading and writing of poetry. They are designed to help participants find solace and connection in the writings of others, discovering relatable pieces that offer comfort and understanding. These sessions aim to highlight the therapeutic benefits of writing, providing a constructive outlet for the expression of feelings and experiences. By engaging with both the works of established poets and creating their own verses, inmates are encouraged to explore poetry as a means of reflection, personal growth, and emotional release. Through these workshops, we strive to foster a sense of hope and community, emphasising the power of poetry to transcend barriers and bring people together.

**Through Therapy:** We maintain an active dialogue with therapists across the county, advocating for the integration of poetry writing into their therapeutic practices for clients who might find solace and expression through this medium. Our commitment extends to regularly updating and distributing information pamphlets, which therapists can then share with their clients. These pamphlets are designed to illuminate the benefits of poetry writing as a therapeutic tool, offering guidance on how to begin, prompts to

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inspire creativity, and examples of how poetry can serve as a powerful conduit for healing and personal exploration. By collaborating closely with mental health professionals, we aim to widen the reach of poetry as a form of emotional expression and recovery, making it an accessible and valuable resource for those on a journey towards well-being.

**Laureate's Lounge:** "Laureate's Lounge" is our series of open mic nights, held regularly across Surrey, designed to celebrate and amplify the voices and stories of its residents. These events, championed by our Poet Laureate and featuring special guests, offer a welcoming platform for poets of all levels to share their work, from deeply personal narratives to reflections on our community and environment. Beyond showcasing Surrey's poetic talent, "Laureate's Lounge" aims to foster confidence and connection among participants, creating a supportive atmosphere where everyone's story can be heard. Join us for an inspiring evening of poetry and community, and let "Laureate's Lounge" be where your voice finds its strength and resonance. Keep an eye on our website and social media for details on the next event.

**Annual Anthology:** Our annual anthology, "Surrey Poetry," serves as a vibrant tapestry of our county's diverse voices and experiences, showcasing the talent and creativity of our residents. Through this publication, we celebrate the richness of Surrey's cultural heritage and its ongoing evolution. Each poem within the anthology captures a unique perspective, offering readers a glimpse into the essence of our community and the stories that define it. "Surrey Poetry" stands as a testament to the power of words to connect, inspire, and unite us all.

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### Upcoming Events:

**Launch Gala:** Join us for our highly anticipated Launch Gala, marking the official inauguration of the Surrey Poet Laureate initiative. This celebratory event will feature special guests, captivating readings, and an evening filled with poetic inspiration.

**Poetry Hub:** May 13th - Staines Library - The Poetry Hub is our weekly gathering, designed to be a haven for adults seeking connection and creativity through the power of poetry. Held every week, our morning sessions offer a warm and welcoming environment where participants can engage in various activities centred around verse. From writing challenges to a cosy book club atmosphere, each session is a chance to explore the beauty of language and share stories in a supportive community. With limited time but endless possibilities, join us at your local Poetry Hub for enriching conversations, inspiring challenges, and the joy of discovering the poet within.

**Laureate's Lounge:** May 14th - Join us for an enchanting evening of spoken word and poetry at "The Laureates Lounge," Surrey's freshest poetry open mic event, hosted by the Surrey Poet Laureate initiative.

Immerse yourself in the vibrant literary scene of Surrey as we gather at the rocking Thames Side Brewery in Staines Upon Thames. Every second Tuesday of the month, our stage comes alive with captivating performances from talented poets across the county.



Surrey  
Poet Laureateship

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### **Socials:**

instagram: @surreypoetlaureateship

facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/surreypoetlaureate>

[www.surreypoetlaureateship.org](http://www.surreypoetlaureateship.org)