



words @ work

A one night/two day intensive writing retreat

10th - 11th November 2025

Hensol Castle • Near Cardiff • Wales

With acclaimed published writers as course tutors, set in an historic castle
with modern creative spaces, away from daily distractions.



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THE PITCH

The **Words @ Work** business writing retreat will help participants unlock their creative potential, improve communication skills, and cultivate innovative thinking through the power of storytelling and poetry.

This immersive experience blends writing workshops with activities that challenge participants to think imaginatively, engage with their colleagues in fresh ways, and develop new narratives for their businesses.

In a world where AI is deadening creativity and flattening brands, we run workshops to spark new ideas and develop original voices.

All workshops are led by published novelists and poets.

THE AIM

- **Foster creativity and innovation**, using storytelling and poetry to make you look differently at your work, whether it's product development, marketing, PR, speech writing or just emails.
- **Improve communication**, by enhancing participants' ability to craft clear, compelling narratives that resonate with audiences, both inside and outside of their department, organisation or business.
- **Develop leadership and teambuilding**, by strengthening collaboration, empathy, and understanding through shared writing and reflection, encouraging authentic written voices that create excitement.

TARGET AUDIENCE

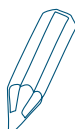
Business leaders and their teams: Ideal for start-ups, creative agencies, marketing teams, legal firms, and those in all sectors looking to improve internal communications, tap into their employees' imaginations, and sharpen their skill with words.

Facilitators:

Published writers – novelists and poets – who are also experienced creative writing tutors.

Outcomes:

Practical tools for crafting compelling business narratives; fresh ideas for driving innovation and leadership strategies; better writing skills.



This creative writing retreat takes the art of creative writing into the workplace. By the end of the course, participants will leave feeling inspired, connected, and equipped with new tools to think more imaginatively and communicate more effectively in their world of work.



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OVERVIEW

Everyone has ideas, experience to draw from, something to say. Our workshops help unlock your creativity. We give you the impetus to unpack dreams, play with ideas, build worlds, tell your stories.

VENUE

Hensol Castle near Cardiff. The castle will be dedicated to the Words @ Work workshop* giving you plenty of space to be inspired and write. You will stay in a private ensuite room and have access to the grounds, a packed creative programme, and time to think. All food and soft drinks are included.

AGENDA

DAY ONE

12:00pm Check in

12:30pm: Relaxed Lunch

2.00pm - 3.20pm: Writing Workshop 1

Led by a tutor, to fire up imaginations and develop your voice.

3.20pm - 3.40pm: Tea/Coffee Break

3.40pm - 5pm: Writing Workshop 2

Led by a novelist, to help you learn the art of storytelling. Where do ideas come from? How do you start? What is plot? How do you develop character?

5:00pm - 7:00pm: Exploration, Writing Time & Tutor Consultations.

7:00pm - 8:00pm: Dinner

8.30pm - 9.30pm Reading and Q&A

Tutors read from their published work, followed by a Q&A session.

DAY TWO

7:30 - 8:30am Breakfast

8:30 Check out

9.00am - 10.20am – Writing Workshop 3

Focussing on poetry, with examples, exercises and feedback to sharpen your writing.

10.20am - 10.40am: Tea/Coffee Break

10.40am - 1.00pm – Writing Workshop 4

Experimenting with further aspects of storytelling. What makes dialogue convincing? How do you create suspense? How do you end and polish a tale?

1:00pm Lunch

Free afternoon to roam the grounds of Hensol Castle, play a round of golf, use all the leisure facilities at the Vale Resort and write some more.

Depart

* Excluding Hensol Castle Distillery and Atrium

This retreat is all inclusive – just bring your preferred writing tools and your imagination.



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WHY CREATIVE WRITING?

We are all story-tellers and poets. We shape narratives every time we tell someone about our weekend, write an email, a speech, a powerpoint, share gossip, or relay a funny anecdote we heard in the pub. We all use words.



Creative writing is a natural medium for professionals. By reexamining it through a new lens, we aim to deepen your engagement with language and narrative form.

The process of shaping your ideas as words on a page can be exciting, intellectually stimulating, therapeutic, addictive, energising, creatively fulfilling, and profoundly liberating.

Words @ Work's approach is firmly practical: We lead workshops which involve actual writing and honest feedback.

Participants may not end up with a finished piece, but they'll make a start. By the end of the workshop, they'll better understand how to carry on and use the skills they've developed in all their writing, at work or at home.

WRITERS IN RESIDENCE - YOUR COURSE TUTORS

CHRISTOPHER WAKLING is the author of seven acclaimed novels, including *What I Did*, *The Devil's Mask*, and *Escape and Evasion*. He has published travel writing, short stories, and adventures for children, too.

A former city lawyer, Christopher has held Royal Literary Fund Fellowships at the Universities of Bristol and Exeter, and has tutored numerous creative-writing courses for The Arvon Foundation and Curtis Brown Creative.



MONA ARSHI is a British poet, novelist, and former human rights lawyer. Mona practiced civil liberties law for a decade, working on landmark cases, including Diane Pretty's right-to-die case. She turned to poetry in 2008, completing an MA at the University of East Anglia. Her debut collection *Small Hands* (2015) won the Forward Prize for Best First Collection, followed by *Dear Big Gods* (2019) and *Mouth* (2025). Her first novel, *Somebody Loves You* (2021), was shortlisted for the Goldsmiths and Jhalak Prizes. Arshi's work explores themes of identity, loss, and belonging through innovative poetic forms. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and Honorary Professor at the University of Liverpool. Her poetry has appeared in *The Guardian*, *Granta*, and on BBC Radio 4. Arshi continues to shape UK literature with her powerful, lyrical voice bridging law and art.



* Subject to change depending on availability, but will be an equally qualified and extraordinary writer

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The workshop will be hosted in the magnificent seventeenth-century Hensol Castle, situated just outside Cardiff. **Words @ Work** will have exclusive use of the castle (excluding Hensol Castle Distillery and Atrium) for the course. The castle boasts a myriad of rooms to work in and comes complete with gin distillery, botanical gin-making school and beautiful grounds to explore.

Included in your stay is access to The Vale Resort Health Club* and a round of golf* on one of our championship courses. These are both just a 10 minute walk from the castle. If you want a more relaxed experience, you can book a spa treatment†. These activities can be enjoyed at the completion of the course on the second day.



The castle is conveniently located, just 5 minutes from J34 of the M4, with plenty of on-site parking.
Nearest rail station is just 10 minutes by taxi. Use postcode CF72 8JX



COSTS AND HOW TO BOOK

Our large Signature Rooms are all ensuite. All en-suites are larger than average in size and boast a free-standing bath and separate walk-in shower. The Prestige Rooms are all slightly different, some have dressing rooms and separate lounges, while many have stunning views across the castle parkland and serpentine lake.

Signature Room

£900 + VAT

Prestige Room

£1,000 + VAT

To book, simply click on the link. This will open a new browser window on the Hensol Castle Website. Simply follow the instructions to the booking and payment form.

BOOK NOW

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can anyone come on this course?

Yes. It is designed for anyone who is in business, anyone who wants to be in business or just wants to unlock their creative writing skills to enhance their communication.

What age group is the course designed for?

The course is open to anyone aged over 18.

Can companies block book?

Yes. However, any block bookings must be paid in full at time of booking.

What is the deposit?

We require a 50% deposit of the booking to ensure your place on the course. The remaining balance must be paid two weeks before the course commences. **All deposits are non-refundable.**

Can I park at Hensol Castle?

Yes. There is ample free parking on site.

What is included in my course fee?

All accommodation, course tuition, food and soft drinks are included. A complimentary round of golf at the Vale Resort is also included, plus access to the Health and Racquets Club. Any alcoholic drinks must be paid for when ordering. All spa treatments and access to spa relax zones are charged at full rate.

Is there any shuttle service from the train stations?

No. However there are taxis at Cardiff station should you need them. If you are arriving at Pontyclun station you will need to call a local taxi firm as there is no taxi rank. All transfers are at your own expense.

I have limited mobility. Are you able to accommodate this?

Yes. There are ground floor rooms at the castle if easy access is required. Please mention this at time of booking.

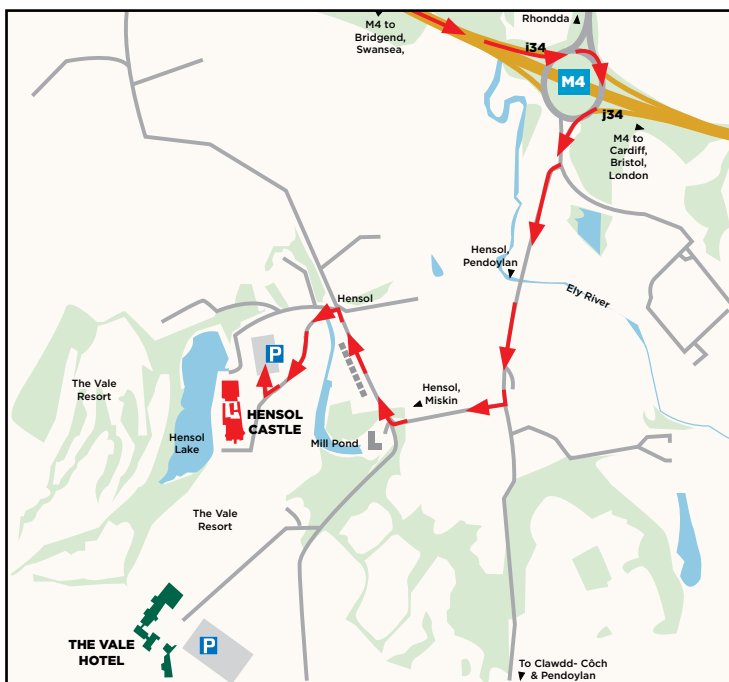


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For more information, contact Tanya Sheasby | 07879 636343

HOW TO FIND US



For Satnavs use Postcode **CF72 8JX** or search for Hensol Castle

FROM LONDON

Take the M4 westbound, exit at junction 34 in South Wales.

FROM MIDLANDS & THE NORTH

Take the M5, then the M50/A449 to Newport and then M4 to junction 34.

FROM THE SOUTH WEST

Take the M5 north and exit onto the M49 or the M5/M4 interchange. Follow the M4 west into Wales and exit at junction 34.

FROM WEST WALES

Take the M4 east and exit at J34.

FROM JUNCTION 34

Take the exit signposted for Pendoylan and Hensol.

Take 1st right, following signs for Pendoylan, Hensol and Vale Resort

Continue down the road, then take 1st right, signposted Hensol, Miskin and Vale Resort.

Carry on around the bend, past all the houses on your left. Take a left turn and approach the gates, which will automatically open. Head straight on to Hensol Castle. The car park is on the right.



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Hensol Castle Park, Hensol, Vale of Glamorgan, CF72 8JX

www.hensolcastle.com