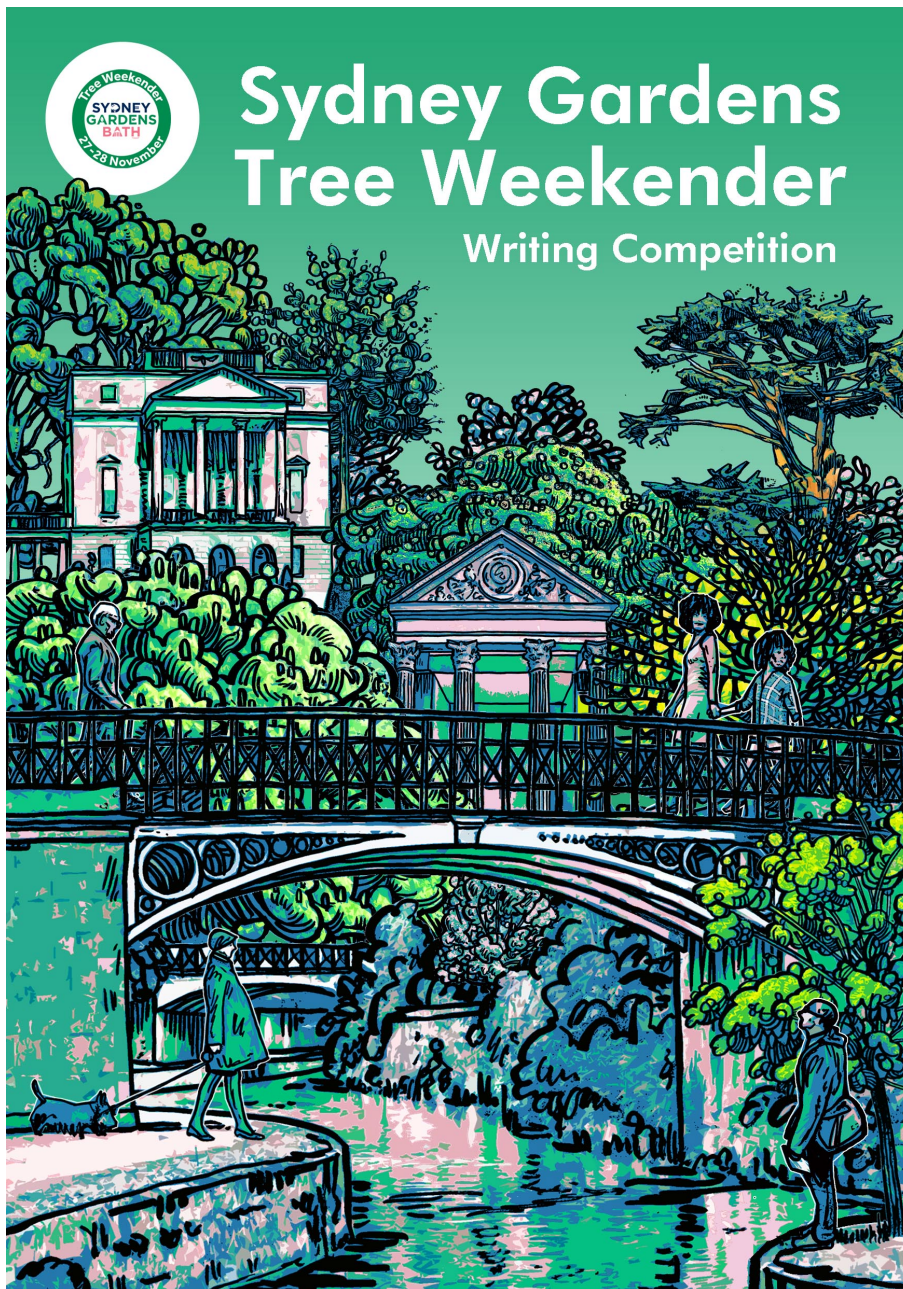


Sydney Gardens Tree Weekender Writing Competition

Trees in our local public gardens and parks have a special place in our hearts. They have boosted our spirits and willingly offered us something to hug! We want you to put your feelings about **trees in public gardens and parks** into just 250 words.

We invite you to write a flash story or poem of 250 words or under about trees in your local public garden or park.



Sydney Gardens, a public park for more than 100 years, is a popular destination for many Bath residents and visitors alike. As a former private Georgian pleasure garden, it is now a green jewel, within the World Heritage site of the City of Bath. Like other gardens of its time, it was a private speculative venture, to which access was limited to those who could afford a subscription, a pleasure garden, through which high society could amble, to 'see and be seen', landscaped with fine classical follies. Exotic plants and trees,

brought from all over the empire were planted for display and to enhance a managed connection with nature.

A recent recipient of Heritage Lottery funds, it has undergone a restoration that has been delayed by the pandemic but is now coming to fruition. However it's not just the park but the trees within it that we are celebrating with a **'TREE WEEKENDER'** on the weekend of **27 & 28th November** - a weekend packed full of activities and events, on-the-ground and on-line.

We invite you to write about the value of trees to you, and especially the value of trees in your local parks and public gardens. We want to know the stories from where those trees came from, how they've been managed, cared for and loved, and what they mean to you. If you can, put these stories about trees in your local public gardens and parks into 250 words of poetry or prose, and enter our current writing competition. On Sunday 28 November, we will showcase the winning poems and stories by inviting the winning authors and poets of our current writing competition to read their work as the finale of the TREE WEEKENDER. We will also geo-locate audio readings of those written pieces within and around Sydney Gardens in Bath.

Our current competition opens on Saturday 25 September and runs until midnight (GMT) on Monday 1 November

Our volunteer judges will draw up a long list - all poems and stories on the list will be published on the TREE WEEKENDER web pages during November. Shortlisted poems and stories will be chosen, audio recorded and geo-located within and around Sydney Gardens to be available over the TREE WEEKENDER. Shortlisted authors will be invited to join an exclusive nature writing on-line roundtable on Saturday 27 November, and will be invited to read their work at the TREE WEEKENDER Showcase on-line finale on Sunday 28 November.

The judges will be asked to choose their winner and runner up in both the poetry and prose categories, for which the winners will receive a Book Token to the value of £50. They and the runners up, will each receive an artwork that illustrates their poem or story, created by **Alban Low**. There will also be special prizes of artwork for the best poem and story submitted by a resident living with-in Bath & North East Somerset.

The competition closes **midnight GMT Monday 1 November**, and the 'long list' and 'shortlist' will be announced no later than **Monday 22 November**. **It is free to enter** - entrants are limited to 2 entries only - you may submit a poem and a flash story, two poems or two stories.

We are delighted to announce that poet **Samantha Walton & Charlotte Smith** from the B&NES Parks and Trees Service have volunteered to act as judges for the poetry competition. They join **Nigel Bristow** and **Andrew Stuck**, who are the judges for the flash pieces. Samantha Walton will also edit the long list, and it will be illustrated by **Alban Low**. The Sydney Gardens Tree Weekender writing competition is run by Rethinking Cities Ltd / Museum of Walking on behalf Bath & North East Somerset Council.

If you wish to enter please read the guidelines below before submitting your entry:

Terms and Conditions

Submissions as PDFs or Word documents only attached to an e mail sent to: sydneygardenstreeweekender@gmail.com

The Theme

We want to read poems and stories about trees in a park or public garden close to you. The stories or poems can be fact or fiction but must be no more than 250 words in length. We also want you to tell us the name and location of the public garden or park. Judges' decisions on this matter are final.

Judges

Poetry

Samantha Walton is a poet and non-fiction writer, whose books include *Self Heal* (2018), a collection of poems about nature and the self, and *The Living World* (2020), the first literary study of the Scottish nature writer Nan Shepherd. Her most recent book is about the deep history of the 'nature cure' *Everybody Needs Beauty* (Bloomsbury, July 2021) exploring the science and stories behind this relationship, and considering how the climate crisis will affect our mental health. Samantha is a lecturer at Bath Spa University.

Charlotte Smith is an Administrative Assistant in the B&NES Parks and Trees Service and also works on the SydneyGardens Project.

Prose

Nigel Bristow - NG Bristow is a screen writer, director and visual artist. He is rooted at Goldsmiths University of London, where he runs the MA in Directing Fiction.

Andrew Stuck - is a co-producer of the Urban Tree Festival and Event co-ordinator of the Sydney Gardens Tree Weekender. He worked in book publishing for 10 years and has experience as a literary agent.

Editor

Samantha Walton

Artist

Alban Low

Eligibility

1. Entrants must be 16 years or over.
2. Entry is open to everyone; locally, nationally and internationally.
3. An entry can only be made by the work's individual author.
4. Entries must not have been previously published in print or online, been broadcast or won a prize.
5. Entries must not include any defamatory language.
6. Entries must clearly respond to the Sydney Gardens Tree Weekender theme, be original and written in English. They must also be for adult or young adult readers. Non-fiction and fiction written for children under 13 years is not eligible.
7. Simultaneous submission is permitted. Should your writing piece win a prize or be published elsewhere, please let us know so that we may remove your entry from the current competition.
8. Authors retain full worldwide copyright throughout.

Format

1. Maximum length is **250 words excluding title (that mustn't exceed 8 words)**.
2. Entries can be either fiction or non-fiction
3. Entries should be typed in a plain legible font. A sans 12pt font is suggested.
4. Entries will be read and judged anonymously so do not put your name, full address, email, telephone number or any personally identifying information on any page.
5. If you live within the Bath & North East Somerset council boundary, please provide your home postcode.

6. If the piece has no title, then its first five words must be used as the title.
7. Add the name and location of the public garden or park from where the trees of which inspired your piece.
8. Acceptable file type is as a pdf or Word doc.
9. The file name must be the title of your piece, punctuation removed. If your piece does not have a title, then the file name must be its first five words, punctuation removed.

Submitting

Entry is online via email to sydneygardenstreeweekender@gmail.com

We do not accept postal entries.

1. Entries will not be returned so please keep a copy.
2. No corrections or alterations can be made after entries have been received.
3. Entrants are limited to 2 entries each.
4. Entries will be acknowledged by email.
5. Deadline for submissions **midnight GMT Monday 1 November or when 125 entries have been received (whichever is the sooner)**

Prizes

1. One winner in each category: poetry and prose will receive a Book Token to the value of £50 and an artwork illustration by Alban Low
The runner up in each category will receive an illustration by Alban Low.
All the authors of shortlisted entries will be invited to an exclusive nature writing on-line roundtable on Saturday 27 November, and be invited to read their work at a live on-line showcase event on the final day of the Sydney Gardens Tree Weekender on Sunday 28 November. They will be invited to read their work for audio recording, and have these recordings geo-located within and surrounding Sydney Gardens in Bath.
Long listed entries will be published on the Sydney Gardens Tree Weekender web pages from Monday 22 November. There will also be special prizes of artwork by Alban Low, for the best poem and story submitted by a resident living within Bath & North East Somerset.
2. The results of the competition will be announced on the Sydney Gardens Tree Weekender and *Museum of Walking* web pages.
3. Entrants retain copyright.

Entry constitutes acceptance of all Rethinking Cities / *Museum of Walking* Rules. Entries that fail to comply with the rules will be disqualified. No correspondence can be entered into, Judges' decisions are final.

Rethinking Cities / Museum of Walking: Promotes walking, art and creativity and brings the three together. The Museum of Walking conceived the Urban Tree Festival in 2018 and has produced the Festivals since.