

Welcome...

Welcome to Clevedon LitFest 2025: Making Waves

This summer, Clevedon LitFest invites you to dive into Making Waves, a celebration of stories shaped by the sea.

Inspired by the rhythm of the tide, the whispers of sea breeze, and the rich traditions of the British seaside, our programme brings together salt-sprayed myths, maritime memoirs, and bold new voices making ripples across the literary world.

Join us for a vibrant weekend of talks, workshops, performances, exhibitions, and creative encounters. Whether you're dipping a toe in or diving deep, there's something for everyone as we celebrate the magic of words in our beautiful coastal town.

This festival simply would not be possible without the support of our funders, sponsors, venues, our creative friends, tireless team of freelancers and volunteers, and of course you, our audience and local community. Thank you for helping us make waves.

GRANTS, SPONSORS & FRIENDS



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



**Quartet
Community
Foundation**



TICKETS will be available at www.ticketsource.co.uk/clevedon-litfest
unless otherwise indicated

Icons by each event give details about venue facilities.
See inside back cover for full key.



Clevedon LitFest is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) no. 1206829

clevedonlitfest.org.uk enquiries@clevedonlitfest.org.uk

THURSDAY

Mrs Spy

M J Robotham

Thurs 5 June - 6.30pm-8.00pm. Books on the Hill Hill Road BS21 7NZ

£5



Join M J Robotham as she talks about her new novel **Mrs Spy**. Get ready for a pulse-pounding, laugh-out-loud ride through 1960s London as Maggie Flynn, unexpected MI5 operative and single mum, unravels the intelligence agency's most treacherous secrets.

Former journalist and midwife Mandy Robotham swapped birth for books when her first novel was published in 2018. Since then, she has been a USA Today bestseller and a five times Globe and Mail bestseller, with seven historical dramas selling over a million copies. Writing as M J Robotham, her book **The Scandalous Life of Ruby Devereaux** was published in 2024 by Aria/Head of Zeus.

Tickets: www.booksonthehill.co.uk/events/

Poisoning in Crime Fiction

Brian Price

Thurs 5 Jun 7.30pm - 8.30pm. Clevedon Library Old Church Road. BS21 6NN

£FREE



Brian Price is an author and crime science advisor with a background in chemistry and biology. He turned from science to crime in 2016 when he attended Crime Fest in Bristol, and started to use his knowledge to help crime writers get the scientific details right. This work became the book **Crime Writing: How to Write the Science**, a guide to the scientific aspects of crime for crime writers (and readers). He is also the author of the DC Mel Cotton thrillers, published by Hobeck Books.

Join us for a lively talk on the fact and fiction of poisoning in crime novels through the ages with author and crime science advisor, Brian Price.

Free tickets available from - <https://brian-price-clevedon.eventbrite.co.uk> - or can be booked with staff at Clevedon Library.

Screening: The Salt Path followed by In Conversation with Raynor Winn

Fri 6 June 7.00pm (doors)-10.30pm Curzon Cinema Old Church Road BS21 6NN £12   

This first screening of **The Salt Path** at the Curzon is a special one, when bestselling author Raynor Winn will join film producer (and Curzon patron) Elizabeth Karlsen for a post-screen Q&A. We are delighted to be including this as part of our Making Waves festival, in partnership with the Curzon.



The life-affirming story **The Salt Path** has been adapted into a major film starring Gillian Anderson and Jason Isaacs (directed by Marianne Elliott and written by Rebecca Lenkiewicz).

This is the profound true story of husband and wife, Raynor and Moth Winn's 630-mile trek along the beautiful but rugged South West Coast Path. After being forcibly removed from their home, they make the desperate decision to walk in the hope that, in nature, they will find solace and a sense of acceptance. With depleted resources, only a tent and some essentials between them, every step along the path is a testament to their growing strength and determination.

Tickets: <https://www.curzon.org.uk/film/the-salt-path-qa/>

In Conversation with Raynor Winn

Fri 6 June after screening of The Salt Path Curzon Cinema Old Church Road.BS216NN



Raynor Winn is the author of three Sunday Times bestselling memoirs: **The Salt Path**, **The Wild Silence**, and **Landlines**. Her books have sold over 2 million copies worldwide and have been translated into over 25 languages. Her debut **The Salt Path** won the Royal Society of Christopher Isherwood Prize and was shortlisted for the Costa Biography Award and the Wainwright Prize for Nature Writing. **The Wild Silence** was also shortlisted for the Wainwright Prize. In 2024, the Sunday Times listed **The Salt Path** as one of their top 100 books of the past 50 years.

Raynor is a regular long-distance walker and in 2024 walked the London Marathon to raise awareness and funds for Corticobasal Degeneration research. She writes about nature, homelessness, our relationship to the land and the health benefits of walking. Raynor lives in Cornwall with her husband Moth and is currently writing her fourth book.

Co-producer of the film, **Elizabeth Karlsen**, is an internationally renowned filmmaker, BAFTA winner for Outstanding Contribution to British Cinema, and co-founder of Number 9 Films. Her work has garnered a total of 52 BAFTA nominations and wins, along with 20 Academy Award® nominations and wins, and the Curzon is incredibly fortunate that Elizabeth is a Patron.

All three of Raynor Winn's books are available to purchase with tickets at the Curzon's online checkout for this show. Supplied by local, independent bookshop, and our Making Waves festival bookshop partners, Books on the Hill, who will bring pre-orders on the evening which you can get signed.

Saints, Heroes, Humans, and Magic

Amy Jeffs

Fri 6 June 6.00pm-7.00pm Theatre Shop Triangle BS21 6HX

£12   



There is fresh love for folklore, fairytale and myth, that can exclude saints' legends, perhaps seen as products of a medieval faith that could be tyrannical. But the people shaped it too, cramming into walled cities to show their devotion to relics and sharing stories on badges they wore on their hats and bags; stories that drew on and helped shape the folklore and fairytale we love. Celebrating the ambiguity of stories generated by the European cult of saints, from its birth in Late Antiquity, to its demise in the Protestant Reformation.

Writing and illustrating books inspired by medieval culture, Amy Jeffs has a PhD in Art History. Her most recent book, **Saints: Medieval Legends of Heroes, Humans and Magic** (2024), grew out of a fascination with the medieval pilgrim souvenirs found in the Thames.

As Pleased As Punch: Making Mischief Since 1662

7 & 8 June 11.00am-5.00pm The Hawthorns - Elton Road, BS21 7EH

£FREE



Step right up and discover the mischievous world of Mr Punch, the star of seaside stages for over 360 years. Fedora's Punch and Judy present a captivating exhibition, open to all ages, celebrating the cultural legacy, artistic influence, and enduring charm of the most iconic puppet in British history. Discover the fascinating, curious, sometimes controversial, story of Mr Punch, from his continental origins to his establishment as a seaside holiday favourite.

Everyone is welcome to this FREE exhibition (donations to the LitFest are welcome).

Whether you're here for the nostalgia, the laughs, or the cultural insights, this is not to be missed!

Making Waves festival bookshop - Books on the Hill

20 Hill Road Clevedon BS217NZ

Clevedon LitFest is delighted to be partnering with Books on the Hill, our local, independent bookshop, as our 'festival bookshop' once again.

Books by many of our wonderful speakers will be available to buy at our events, or direct from the bookshop on Hill Road.

<https://www.booksonthehill.co.uk/>



How to Bathe In the Sea: Naked Georgians to Art Deco Lidos

Allan Brodie

Sat 7 June 12.00pm-1.00pm. Walton Park Hotel Clevedon BS21 7BL

"Since we live in an Island, and have the Sea about us, we cannot want an excellent Cold Bath, which will both preserve our Healths, and cure many Diseases" (Sir John Floyer, 1700). This is the story of how people "enjoyed" the sea around England's coastline, from its naked Georgian origins, and at times the accompanying sexual frisson, to George III being accompanied into the sea by a band of musicians. From respectable bathing machines and gender segregation to the joys of the inter-war lidos. Warning; contains some nudity and occasional mentions of knitted swimming costumes!



Allan Brodie is a founding member of the Seaside Heritage Network, and author of many books on the seaside including **England's Seaside Resorts** (2007), **The Seafront** (2018) and **England's Seaside Heritage from the Air** (2021), and books on Margate (2007), Weymouth (2008), Blackpool (2014) and Weston-super-Mare (2019).

£6

In Conversation: Coastal Crime Writer

Matt Brolly

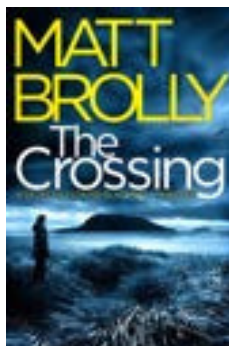
Sat 7 June 1.00pm-2.00pm. Theatre Shop Triangle BS21 6HX



Join bestselling author Matt Brolly as he talks to Cath 'Kitty' Murphy about his DI Blackwell crime series set in Weston-super-Mare and surrounding areas.

Matt Brolly is the Amazon number one bestselling author of the DI Blackwell novels, as well as the DCI Lambert crime novels, the acclaimed near-

future crime novel **Zero** and the US thrillers **The Controller**, **The Railroad**, and **The Running Girls**. His books have sold over one million copies in 16 countries.



£12

Call Me Ishmaelle - Whales and Battles

Xiaolu Guo

Sat 7 June 2.00pm-2.45pm. The Riff Corner Old Church Road BS21 7LU



Xiaolu Guo will be discussing her latest two books, **My Battle of Hastings**, and a retelling of Melville's Moby Dick, **Call me Ishmaelle**. She will talk about Melville's legacy, polytheism, transoceanic voyages, Taoism, cross-dressing and how to read the I-Ching.

Author of 11 published books, with novels including **A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers** (shortlisted for the Women's Prize), **Village of Stone** (shortlisted for the International Dublin Literary Award), and **A Lover's Discourse** (shortlisted for the Goldsmiths Prize). Her memoir **Once Upon A Time In The East** won the National Book Critics Circle Award 2017.

www.guoxiaolu.com

£6

The Seaside: England's Love Affair

Madeleine Bunting

Sat 7 June 3.00pm-4.00pm Waverly Room Walton Park Hotel BS21 7BL



For two hundred years, England's coastal edges were places of innovation and invention, shaping the future. Fifty years ago, that abruptly changed and haunted by their flamboyant pasts, many resorts have struggled with decline. Despite the markers of poverty and ill health, they attract intense affection. Nowhere reveals England more clearly to itself.

A writer of five books of non-fiction and two fiction, Madeleine Bunting has won and been listed for a number of prizes. A former Guardian columnist and associate editor, she is now a visiting professor at the London School of Economics and lives in Stroud, Gloucestershire.

£6

The Magic Thrills of Her

Marisa Carnesky

Sat 7 June 6.00pm-7.00pm. Theatre Shop Triangle BS21 6HX

£15



An all-new performance lecture revealing the hidden symbolism of magic illusions in relation to women performers and showcasing archival materials of extraordinary performers from the early 20th Century. Marisa reflects on how stage illusions and variety acts can take on new interpretations through a contemporary feminist lens, drawing reference to women's bodily experiences of change, and discusses the new publication **Obsessions Of a Showwoman**, edited by Eirini Kartsaki (Intellect 2024), which will be available to buy.

The evening will feature the performance of a live vintage magic illusion with a special guest assistant!

Marisa Carnesky is an Olivier Award-winning artist best known for her critically acclaimed immersive theatre ride **Carnesky's Ghost Train** which ran for over a decade and promenade street show **Carnesky's Showwomen Sideshow Spectacular**.

Following a premiere at the V&A in London, Marisa brings her new work to Clevedon. Exploring themes of contemporary ritual, women in entertainment history, feminism and cultural identity.



Summer of Soul with DJ Ngaio + Motown Poetry Awards at the Curzon

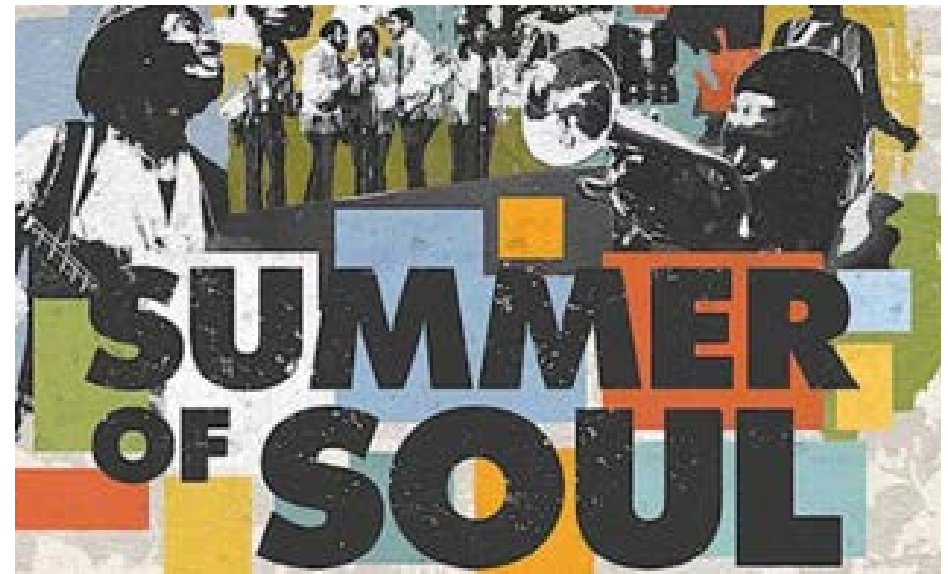
Sat 7 June 7.00pm - 10.00pm. Curzon Cinema Old Church Road BS21 6NN

£10



Celebrate Clevedon LitFest's Motown themed poetry competition and see one of the greatest music festival docs of all time. This is a powerful and transformative film that shines a light on the importance of history to our spiritual well-being and stands as a testament to the healing power of music during times of unrest, both past and present.

The feature includes concert performances by Stevie Wonder, Nina Simone, Sly & the Family Stone, Gladys Knight & the Pips, Mahalia Jackson, B.B. King, The 5th Dimension and more.



During the evening the winner of the £1,000 prize for our Poetry Competition will be announced by guest judge, Grammy-nominated Adam White, an acknowledged expert on all things Tamla Motown. We are honoured to have him join us. He is the author of **Motown: The Voice of Young America**, along with Barney Ales, right-hand man of Berry Gordy, the founder of Motown Records.

Dj Ngaio will be on the decks to set the night off, so plan to get there nice and early!

Clevedon Bandstand Elton Road BS21 7EH

Rimski's Mobile Performance
SUNDAY 8 JUNE 11AM, 12.45PM & 3PM

£FREE

Rimski & Handkerchief



Rimski & Handkerchief are a curious spectacle indeed, as they meander among the crowds with their marvellous musical machines: the Piano bicycle and the Double Bassicle.

Singing timeless songs of momentous, melancholic and magical magnitude, while performing an extraordinary dance on wheels.

Expect extreme eccentricity and silliness interspersed with moments of moving beauty. This is a double act of bizarre proportions, that will have you questioning everything - from the fourth law of thermodynamics to the conundrum of how Rimski manages to steer that thing!

Sea Shanties SUNDAY 8 JUNE 2PM & 4PM

Barnacle Buoys



A non-profit group of a cappella singers, Barnacle Buoys exist to enjoy their craft, entertain their audiences and raise money for their chosen charities (principal charities are Children's Hospice South West and the RNLI).

Riding the Waves

Suzannah V. Evans

SUNDAY 8 JUNE 5PM-5.30PM

Join poet Suzannah for "Riding the Waves" - a performance of poetry celebrating all things water. From submerged amphoras to the environment of a working boatyard in Bristol and out into the sea, these poems will take you on a tour through different waterways.



Hire a deckchair at the Bandstand from 11am until 5pm (donations). Relax and enjoy the fun in comfort!

Punch and Judy - Live Shows at the Bandstand

Fedora Group

Sun 8 June

Clevedon Bandstand Elton Road BS21 7EH

£FREE

Shows at 12.00pm, 1.30pm and 4.40pm



Enjoy a live Punch and Judy performance at The Bandstand. Appearing will be one of the UK's best-known Punch professors, Glyn Edwards, bringing the slapstick tradition to life right here in Clevedon.

Come along and enjoy the fun of a live show, as well as visiting the exhibition at The Hawthorns (11am- 5pm). Children of all ages welcome!

The Typewriter Bloke - Poems on Demand (donation)

Andrew Nicholls

11.00am-1.30pm and 2.30pm-5.00pm

Make a donation to Clevedon LitFest, chose a subject and in no more than 10 minutes the Typewriter Bloke will create a one-off poem, using a typewriter, just for you. Instant, tangible poetry in the palm of your hand!

Typewriter Bloke, Andrew Nicholls, was the resident poet on the See Monster, Weston-super-Mare, in 2022, where he wrote typewritten poetry on demand He is also a spoken word poet.



Punch and Judy: A Cultural History

Punch Professor Glyn Edwards

Sun 8 June 3.00pm-3.45pm

The Riff Corner Old Church Road BS21 6LU

£6



Professor Glyn Edwards will give a short talk on the cultural history of Punch and Judy and its influence on literature. A founder of the Punch and Judy College of Professors, Glyn is an author, film maker and lecturer, who has been promoting the image of Mr Punch for more than fifty years.

The Tide: Storytime and crafts

Clare Helen Welsh

Sun 8 June 12.00pm-1.00pm. Theatre Shop Clevedon BS21 6HX

£6   



Join Clare Helen Welsh for a heartwarming story time based on **The Tide**, a beautifully gentle picture book about memory and love. After the story reading, children can make their own memory shells and craft a wind clay keepsake to take home. There will be a special opportunity to come and see a collage that will be shared with a local artist. A thoughtful and...

POSTPONED
new date later this year!

Lindsay, won the Children's Picture Book Award and the Newbery Award (picture book category) in 2019. With her fulfilling her dream of creating books for children, she loves nothing better than helping children do the same.

Motown: The Poetry of Young America

Adam White

Sun 8 June 1.00pm-1.45pm. The Riff Corner Old Church Road BS21 6LU

£6   

No slouch himself when it comes to the written word, Bob Dylan was famously said to have called Smokey Robinson "America's greatest living poet". Motown has many music fans, but we sometimes overlook the quality of the poetry that helped shape the music. Based on a lifetime study of the Sound of Young America, Adam White will be talking about Smokey Robinson, Janie Bradford and the other great lyricists of the label, as well as taking your questions.

Adam was born in Bristol and, having freelanced for music magazines in the UK, moved to the US in 1978, where he went on to become editor-in-chief at Billboard Magazine.

www.adampwhite.com



England-on-Sea: from Austen to Mods & Rockers

Travis Elborough

Sun 8 June 2.00pm-2.45pm. The Riff Corner Old Church Road BS21 6LU

£6   



A pop cultural tour of the English seaside via Jane Austen, Agatha Christie, Harold Pinter, Brighton Rock, and Mods and Rockers. In many ways, our national character has been defined by our relationship with the seaside and we can see how our ideas about health, wealth and happiness evolved. Our aspirations and snobbery, our attitudes to sex, our keen sense of fair play, and our ability to laugh at ourselves have all been played out against a backdrop of stormy skies, pebbly beaches and sticks of rock. The seaside is the place we go to get better, to let our hair down, to downsize, to retire, to take drugs and to hide.

One of "one of Britain's finest pop culture historians" (The Guardian), award-winning Travis is a freelance writer, author, broadcaster and cultural commentator. His books include **The Long-Player Goodbye**, and **Atlas of Vanishing Places**, winner of Edward Stanford Travel Book Award in 2020.

The Mermaid, the Otter and the Big Poo

Lindsey Cole

Sun 8 June 3.00pm - 4.00pm. Theatre Shop Triangle BS21 6HX

£6   



A fun, interactive kids show about sewage pollution, by author and adventure mermaid Lindsey Cole. Otter has gone missing, and Mermaid needs your help to find her best friend. Expect songs, games, audience participation and poo-busting fun! You'll leave the show as River Warriors, equipped with knowledge about otters and how to help save your local river.

Lindsey is an environmental adventurer and children's author. She swam the length of the Thames as a mermaid to campaign against the plastic pandemic and her adventures along the way led to her realising that being a mermaid is a great tool to talk to kids about environmental issues. More recently, she towed her big poo sculpture from Wales to Clevedon across the Bristol Channel and down the Bristol Avon.

Smutty Letters: Message In A Bottle (workshop for 18+)**Rosy Pendlebaby**

Sun 8 June 6.00pm - 7.30pm. Theatre Shop Triangle BS21 6HX

£15   

A playful creative-writing workshop exploring the lost art of the love letter, and the role the sea has played in our communications throughout history. An antidote to the fast and flaccid romance of the digital age, and an eco-erotic deep-dive into our innate love affair with the sea... through a selection of inspirational salacious readings and guided writing exercises, the humble 'message in a bottle' draws us into the mysterious waters of our desires, becoming a medium for greater intimacy in our relationships with both the human and the natural world. Open to all romantics, regardless of age, gender, sexuality, relationship status. All materials provided.

Rosy Pendlebaby (she/they) is a queer performer, facilitator, and activist, who explores the intersections of creativity, pleasure, and change-making. She is director of rebellious arts lab, Revolting Arts Club, and co-founder of body positive life drawing project, Body Love Sketch Club. Recent collaborators include Fusion Festival, Soho House, Cheltenham Literature, Torture Garden Festival, Pinky Promise, Shambala, and Edinburgh Fringe.

POSTPONED
Watch our for a new date!

NEWS OF A VIRTUAL POETS' WALK**Launch event for the Poets' Walk digital installation and book****2 June 2025****3.30pm Demonstration Walk**

Meet at Salhouse fields steps by Marine Lake Bring smartphone/earphones.



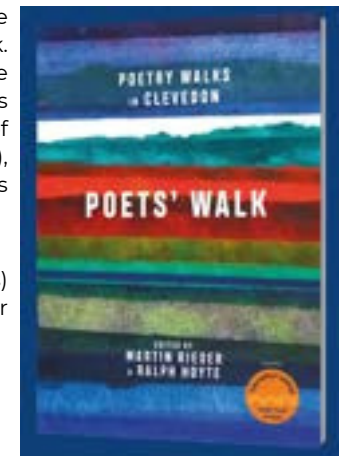
Contemporary poets respond to themes inspired by Alfred Lord Tennyson and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, both associated with Clevedon's Poet's Walk. 32 curated poems for Clevedon Litfest have been used to build a permanent located-audio walk, accessed through smartphones.

The walk is triggered by GPS locations on a route around the route of the existing Poets' Walk.

6.00pm Book Launch and readings The Riff Corner Old Church Road BS21 6LU

After the walk come along to The Riff Corner, and have a refreshing drink and enjoy the launch of this book. **Poets' Walk** is a vibrant collection of poetry from some of the region's best-loved poets. We invited local poets to respond to themes explored in the poems of Tennyson (In Memoriam) and Coleridge (Aeolian Harp), most associated with the town. The resulting poems are collected here.

Join the launch of the **Poets' Walk** book (Bristol Books) and you just might bump into the editors, Martin Reiser and Ralph Hoyte.



Celebration of the Book

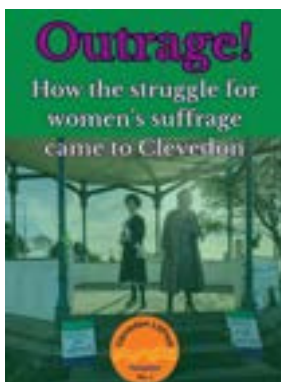
Sat 11 October one-day event (times to be confirmed)



It's a pleasure to invite you to join our celebration of books and book arts. Once again there will be a marketplace for local authors and creatives and we look forward to expanding the conversation about books beyond their content to include their physical and artistic aspects. As last year, we welcome local, grassroots participation and a community focus.

A date for your diary - watch out for further news of this event on our website and in our newsletters.

Outrage: How the struggle for women's suffrage came to Clevedon



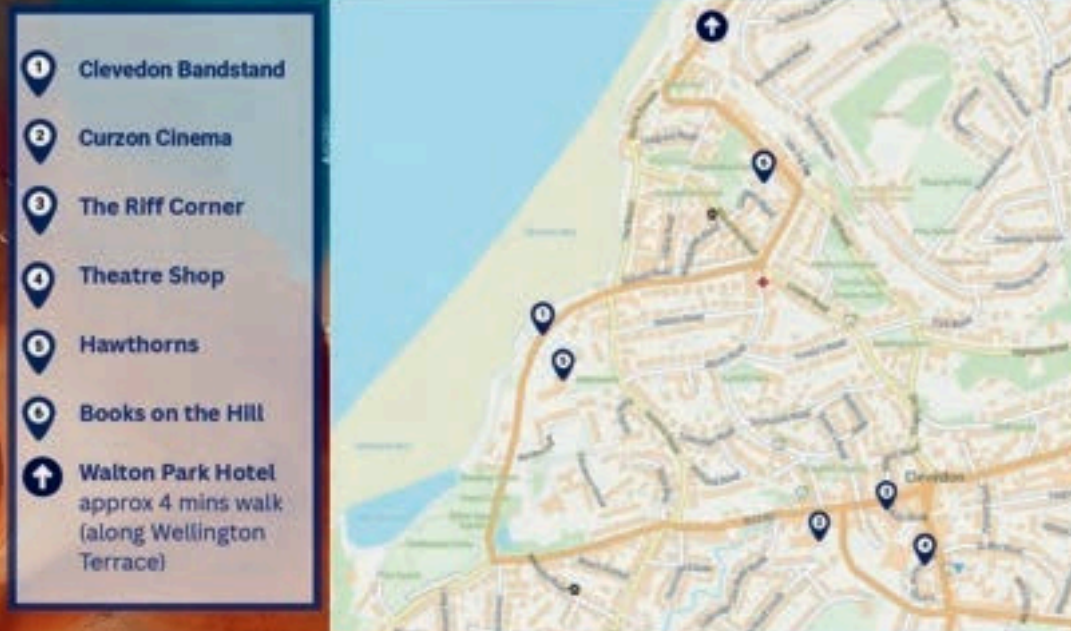
In March 1914 Clevedon's historic St Andrew's Church was the subject of an arson attack - which appeared to be a protest by suffragettes campaigning for women's voting rights.

Following on from our successful, and hugely enjoyable, collaboration with Show of Strength Theatre, which culminated in two promenade performances of **Outrage! Or the Ghost of Mabel Hunt** last October, the background research to the story has been used to produce our first pamphlet.

This is now on sale (£3) at our events, or you can email us about purchasing - enquiries@clevedonlitfest.org.uk

How you can help...

Please consider making a regular donation to build up our reserves, which will help us to secure grant funding. If 100 people contributed as little as £3 a month - less than the price of a cup of coffee - this would raise £3,600 of additional funding each year. The Arts Council and other local grant makers support us where they can, but like to see evidence of contributions from the local community to bolster our funds. Once again, email enquiries@clevedonlitfest.org.uk for details.



THE ICONIC ART OF DORIS HATT

Prints are available to buy from Clevedon Community Bookshop or can be ordered by email (enquiries@clevedonlitfest.org.uk). Proceeds support Clevedon LitFest.



Clevedon LitFest is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) no. 1206829

clevedonlitfest.org.uk enquiries@clevedonlitfest.org.uk

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