

Enjoy the poetry of the North courtesy of Northern and Manchester Literature Festival, discover the historic landmarks around Hebden Bridge and immerse yourself in the rich literary heritage of the Calder Valley.

1. Sign up to a writing course at the [Arvon Foundation at Lumb Bank](#) which was originally founded in 1968 by poets, John Fairfax and John Moat. This charitable organisation attracted the attention of Ted Hughes who offered his house at Lumb Bank for its use. Many famous writers including Hilary Mantel, Paul Abbott and Andrew Miller have passed through this home of creative writing.

2. Take a wander through [St Thomas' Churchyard in Heptonstall](#) where you will find the graves of the famous poets, Sylvia Plath and Asa Benveniste – you'll recognise Sylvia Plath's grave by the many pens left by visitors and Asa Benveniste's, who settled in Hebden Bridge in the 1980s, by the inscription on his grave which reads, 'Foolish enough to have been a poet'. Listen to Sylvia Plath read her poem *November Graveyard* inspired by the cemetery she is buried in [here](#).

3. Stop for a drink at [Stubbing Wharf in Hebden Bridge](#). Ted Hughes wrote his poem of the same name about this traditional pub after visiting in the late 1950s with his then-wife Sylvia Plath.

4. Make a stop at Mytholmroyd, the birthplace of Ted Hughes. Here, you can visit his first home at [1 Aspinall Street](#) which is now a museum and writers' retreat. Look into the skies around Mytholmroyd and you will see why one of Hughes best-known collections is *The Life and Songs of the Crow*.

5. Take a walk around the village of [Cragg Vale](#) and learn the story of the Cragg Vale coiners, a 1760s gang lead by 'King' David Hartley who cleverly snipped precious gold from the edges of coins, re-milled them to hide the theft and used the snipped gold to make new coins. Phyllis Bentley's children's book *Gold Pieces*, Peter M Kershaw's graphic novel *The Last Coiner* and Benjamin Myers' novel *The Gallows Pole* all took inspiration from the story. Look out for their books in The Book Case store in Hebden Bridge.



For more information, please visit northernrailway.co.uk or manchestr-literaturefestival.co.uk

6. Take a trip to [Sowerby Bridge](#) where TV writer Sally Wainwright grew up. You'll probably know Sally's work if you're a fan of *The Archers* and *Coronation Street*, she also created *Scott and Bailey*, *Happy Valley* and *Last Tango in Halifax*. Parts of *Last Tango and Happy Valley* were filmed in Sowerby Bridge. Look out for the Moorings, Sowerby Bridge Wharf and the police station.

7. Did you know, the first modern lesbian, Anne Lister's (1791-1840) diaries entitled *I Know My Own Heart* are currently in production for a new Sally Wainwright drama series? Visit [Shibden Hall](#), near Halifax, where the diarist and mountaineer lived an unusually independent life for a woman of her time.

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