



***“In an English village, you turn over a stone and have no idea what will crawl out”***

The commemorate the 50th anniversary of the death of the Queen of Crime, Agatha Christie, and the centenary anniversary of both her infamous disappearance, having abandoned her car at Newlands Corner, and the publication of one of the greatest mystery novels ever written, *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*, The 2026 Elmbridge Literary Competition is asking Elmbridge writers to get their little grey cells working and come up with poems and short stories that celebrate the most popular genre in literature today.

**This year, The Elmbridge Literary Competition is returning to its roots. It is only open to residents, schools and groups based in Elmbridge.**

The Competition is being run in conjunction with The Elmbridge LitFest taking place in June.

Entry for adults is £10  
Entry for under 18s free.

**The closing date for entries is Monday 27 April 2026.**

The Elmbridge Literary Competition is run in partnership by The R C Sherriff Trust and Elmbridge U3A. Full details, terms and conditions are available at [www.rcsherrifftrust.org.uk](http://www.rcsherrifftrust.org.uk) or emailing [arts@rcsherrifftrust.org.uk](mailto:arts@rcsherrifftrust.org.uk)

## **Terms and Conditions of Entry**

Please read these carefully as some of the terms and conditions regarding lay out and submission have changed.

Entries that DO NOT comply to the conditions set out below will not be accepted.

**PLEASE NOTE: THE 2026 ELMBRIDGE LITERARY COMPETITION IS ONLY OPEN TO RESIDENTS OF THE BOROUGH OF ELMBRIDGE, SURREY OR PUPILS WHO ATTEND SCHOOLS WITHIN THE BOROUGH. ENTRIES MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH AN ADDRESS THAT IS WITHIN THE BOROUGH OF ELMBRIDGE, SURREY.**

- **Please do not send your entry via an internet link as it will not be accepted.**
- **Entry to the Elmbridge Literary Competition for adults is £10**
- **Entries for under 18s free.**
- **Entry Fee: Adult Entries, once submitted, the £10 entry fee should be paid via PayPal on the R C Sherriff Trust Website.**
- **Please ensure you use your name as reference.**
- **If you are requesting Judges Feedback or Critique this MUST be highlighted on your entry. Refunds will not be offered if the Feedback/Critique requested has not been highlighted on your entry.**
- **If paying by cheque, please make the cheque payable to The R C Sherriff Trust.**

### **Age Categories:**

- **Ages 5 – 7; Little rhymes and stories.**
- **Ages 8 - 11 (Junior); Poems and short stories.**
- **Ages 11 (Secondary) - 13; Poems and short stories.**
- **Ages 14 - 18; Poems and short stories.**
- **Ages Adult; Poems and short stories.**

### **Submission Format:**

- **All entries must be typed, using Arial font and double-spaced. Entries that do not adhere to these conditions will not be considered.**
- **Short stories** must be in English, previously unpublished and a maximum length of 1000 words (8-13 years) or 1500 words (14+). **Entries that do not adhere to these conditions will not be considered.**
- **Poems** must be in English, previously unpublished and a maximum length of 30 lines typed, using Arial font and double-spaced. **Entries that do not adhere to these conditions will not be considered.**
- **Little Rhymes and Stories for the 5-7 years group** should be no longer than 20 lines (Rhymes) or 500 words (Stories) and can be hand-written (but must be legible). Where possible we suggest a typed copy is attached. **The Judges will not consider any entries which they cannot read.**

- All entries **MUST** be accompanied by the following information on the opening page:
  1. **Declaration that the poem/short submitted is your own work.**  
Submissions will be checked for plagiarism or AI generated work.
  2. **age category being entered,**
  3. **the title of the story/poem,**
  4. **word/line count,**
  5. **author's name, age (if under 18),**
  6. **a postal address confirming Elmbridge residency.**
  7. **an email address.**

**This should be the first page of all entries and NOT on a separate sheet or embedded in an email. Your story/poem should start on page 2.**

**Entries are judged anonymously so please do not have your name embedded on the pages containing the short story/poem.**

- A maximum of one story and one poem per person can be entered.
- Where possible please email your entry.
- Entries must be submitted as a Word Document or a PDF. **Please do not send scanned PDFs.**
- Email entries to [elmbridgelitcomp@outlook.com](mailto:elmbridgelitcomp@outlook.com)
- **PLEASE DO NOT SEND YOUR ENTRY VIA AN INTERNET LINK AS IT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**
- For posted or hand-delivered submissions, please provide **Six** copies.
- Entries cannot be returned.
- The Judging Panel's decision is final, and no correspondence will be entered into.
- The closing date for entries is **Monday 27 April 2026 at 5pm. Entries received after this time and date will not be accepted.**
- Postal/hand-delivered entries to the **RC Sherriff Trust, Office 111, 1st Floor, Ashley Park House, 42-50 Hersham Rd, Walton-on-Thames KT12 1RZ**
- Please mark your envelope and email title '**MYSTERY**'.

## Prizes:

- All Winning, Highly Commended & Commended Entries will receive a Digital Certificate
- All prizes for Children's entries are in the form of book tokens. Entry to the Competition is free.
- 5-7 Year Olds:                    1<sup>st</sup> £40                    2<sup>nd</sup> £30                    3<sup>rd</sup> £20
- 8-11 Year Olds:                    1<sup>st</sup> £40                    2<sup>nd</sup> £30                    3<sup>rd</sup> £20
- 11-13 Year Olds:                    1<sup>st</sup> £40                    2<sup>nd</sup> £30                    3<sup>rd</sup> £20
- 14-18 Year Olds:                    1<sup>st</sup> £40                    2<sup>nd</sup> £30                    3<sup>rd</sup> £20
- All successful Adult entries will receive cash prizes.
- 19+ (Short Story):    1<sup>st</sup> £150                    2<sup>nd</sup> £100                    3<sup>rd</sup> £50
- 19+ (Poem):                    1<sup>st</sup> £150                    2<sup>nd</sup> £100                    3<sup>rd</sup> £50
- Entry to the Competition for the Adult category is £10. Payment can be made via the R C Sherriff Trust website:

[www.rcsherrifftrust.org.uk/elmbridge-literary-competition](http://www.rcsherrifftrust.org.uk/elmbridge-literary-competition)

**(please ensure that the name by which you make the online payment is on your submission front page *if* it differs from the name by which you have entered your short story or poem)**

- By cheque made payable to 'The R C Sherriff Trust' and sent to: **RC Sherriff Trust, Office 111, 1st Floor, Ashley Park House, 42-50 Hersham Rd, Walton-on-Thames KT12 1RZ** (please ensure your name, the title of your short story/poem and age category in written on the reverse.)
- **An Event celebrating the winners of the Competition will take place at Riverhouse Barn Arts Centre on Saturday 6 June as 2:30 as part of the Elmbridge LitFest 2026.**
- The winning, highly commended and commended entries will have their entries be showcased online on the RC Sherriff websites.

There is a **£15** charge if you would like to receive written feedback from the judges, **£25** if you would like a full written critique of your piece by one of the professional authors. (Payment must be made in advance via PayPal on the R C Sherriff website. Cheques must be made payable to The RC Sherriff Trust.) **If you are requesting Judges Feedback or Critique this MUST be highlighted on your entry. Refunds will not be offered if the Feedback/Critique requested has not been highlighted on your entry.**