

Books

A Chat with...

Julia Wolfendale, Author

Tell us Julia, how did you get into writing?

I love words. Words have meaning, words have power, they can transport us to places and times and give us new perspectives and knowledge, that excites me. I have always been a big reader, and once my imagination starts whirring I just have to get things down on paper.

What books/authors inspire you?

Philippa Gregory books always hit the spot for me, she conjures fabulous female characters and weaves in so much real history. Her books are a literary feast for me.

How did you come up with the concept for *The Trouble with Elephants* and *Five Ways to Focus*?

The first flash of inspiration was when I was 12 years old. I saw the bones of Maharajah the elephant in the Manchester Museum and was fascinated by the true story of his epic 10-day trek from Edinburgh to Belle Vue Zoo. I researched further and discovered the founder Mr Jennison of Stockport, had the idea for a zoo when people visited his strawberry garden and aviary in Adswold. He followed his dream to create something so marvellous from something so simple. With 10s of 1000s of visitors every year, Belle Vue Zoological Gardens became known as the 'showground of the world' boasting acres of parkland,

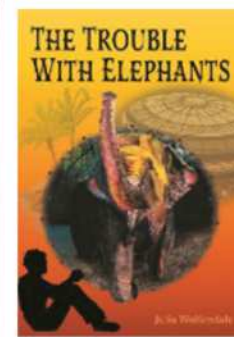
exotic animals and tropical plants, just a couple of miles away from the bustling Manchester and Stockport industrial centres.

For years, my manuscript that told my tale of Belle Vue's elephants, gathered dust in the garage. Yet I always had a niggling sense that it was a story that needed to be told. When lockdown hit, I was reminded how short life can be. I wanted to share this as a story of hope and inspiration. So, I finally fulfilled my dream and published the novel.

I like to write about positive, uplifting topics whilst dealing with the tough stuff too. 'Five ways to Focus' is my new self-help book about beating the overwhelm and dealing with distraction. Seeing how people are struggling these days with such busy lives and feeling unfulfilled, made me realise that this was a book that needed to be written. As an executive coach (that's my day job!) I know that when people focus on what matters they can make amazing things happen, so I wanted to share some insights and tips to help people get things on the up again.

And how have you found the process around publishing a book?

Well, I didn't imagine I would be a publisher, but On The Up Books is now a real thing! There is lots of help out there in the online community to help



Independent publishers get started. I personally like the process of creating the book from start to finish and the flexibility to craft the content, choose the cover and the layout. I like to work to my own deadlines and it has been great to build my own team by choosing my own local graphic artists and editors to work with me.

Finally, are you currently working on a new book or have any author events planned?

It will be a while until I can get onto writing another fiction book to follow *The Trouble with Elephants*, but *Five Ways to Focus* is part of a series of four

self-help and personal development books, and the next one will be out in around 12 months time, depending on how well I focus on making that happen! It is always a balance between promoting the books that are already published and working on the next one. It has been a busy year with book signings and visiting local independent book shops.

www.ontheupconsulting.com/on-the-up-books

Wilmslow Festival of Writing

by Steve Shale, The Guild for Lifelong Learning

Wilmslow Festival of Writing is back for another celebration of storytelling, creativity and the written word! This year's event will take place on Saturday 6 July from 10am to 9pm

It promises to be a fun-filled day you won't want to miss with author talks, writing workshops, performances, activities for kids and adults, book sales and more!

Whether you're a passionate writer, avid reader or just love a good story, the Festival of Writing has something for everyone. There's even a food and bar service available throughout the day!

Details are being finalised about our incredible lineup of events and guests and will be published on our website guildlifelonglearning.org

The Guild for Lifelong Learning, 1 Bourne Street, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5HD

And don't forget to follow our dedicated Festival social pages on Facebook or Instagram to get our latest updates.

See you on 6 July!

