



GRITSTONE PUBLISHING

The UK's first author-owned publishing co-operative

Authors Speaker List

Welcome to a new guide to the various authors who are published under the banner of Gritstone Publishing, Britain's first publishing company which is an author-run co-operative. Established in 2016, Gritstone specialises in publishing non-fiction and fiction titles, which all have a sense of place as a central theme. Its members are all experienced outdoor writers, journalists and novelists who have decided that, by establishing Gritstone as a fully mutual co-operative, they will be able to exercise more control over the way that their work is published (see gritstonecoop.co.uk for more information).

As well as being widely recognised as leading outdoor writers, several of our Gritstone authors are also in demand as informative speakers, especially for groups with a real interest in the outdoors, travel, nature, landscape, local and regional history, and fiction that is strongly based in local or regional settings.

As a co-operative we leave it to each individual speaker to decide on his or her availability and agree an appropriate fee for their talk, travel cost, subsistence and expertise. You can read about the topics each author is prepared to cover in their individual listings below, and their terms of engagement for groups and organisations.

All enquiries and booking arrangements should be made directly with the individual writer.

As authors we always find it a privilege to meet our audiences, and when we do so, to offer signed copies of our work for sale as a rather special opportunity to celebrate a unique bond between reader and writer which we believe is something worth cherishing.

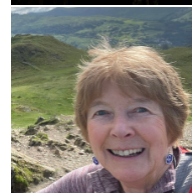


Our authors currently offering talks:

Andrew Bibby



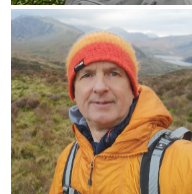
Christopher Goddard



Eileen Jones



Mike Padgett



Mike Raine



Laurence Rose



Colin Speakman

Andrew Bibby



Andrew's background is as a freelance national journalist, with his work having appeared in a wide range of publications including *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *The Mail on Sunday* and the *Financial Times*. He is now focusing on book-writing, focusing particularly on aspects of the countryside and the implications of climate change for the British landscape. He is also the author of a trilogy of crime novels, set in the high Lake District fells.

Andrew is a regular speaker at festivals, events and meetings, in locations as far apart as Dorset and the north of England. He has recently been a guest speaker at, among others, the Ilkley, Todmorden and Oundle literature festivals.

Current topics offered:

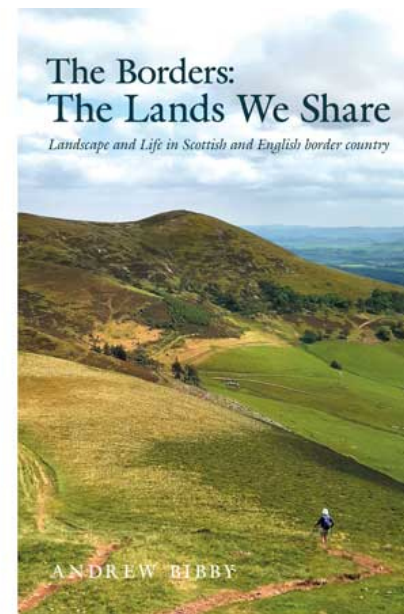
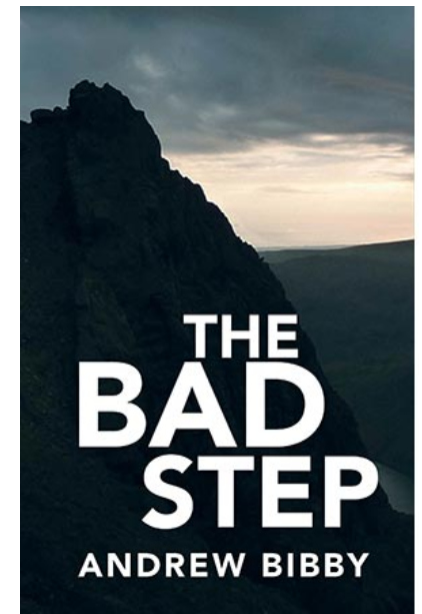
- **Land, landscape and climate change.** How human activity is shaping the way our countryside looks
- **How to enjoy your walk in the countryside even more!** An appreciation of how walkers can understand better how the lands that they're exploring are being used
- **Murder in the mountains!** How Andrew came to plan and plot his Lake District mystery novels

Speaker's fees are by arrangement. You are invited to contact him directly, preferably by email. He is based in the Calder valley, in West Yorkshire.

www.andrewbibby.com

andrewbibbygm@gmail.com

07989 965315



Christopher Goddard



Chris is a cartographer and guidebook writer, whose hand-drawn maps lend his books a unique and timeless air. Hailing from Sheffield and based in Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire, he has largely focused on the local landscapes he knows best.

His forensic maps of the moors and woods of West and South Yorkshire are accompanied by detailed notes on local folklore, wildlife and etymology, as well as suggested walking routes. His most recent work has been a series of guidebooks that cover all 2,700 miles of the new England Coast Path, with a separate detailed hand-drawn tome on the Yorkshire coast.

Area of availability: Across the north of England

Standard fees: Variable by location, £50-£150

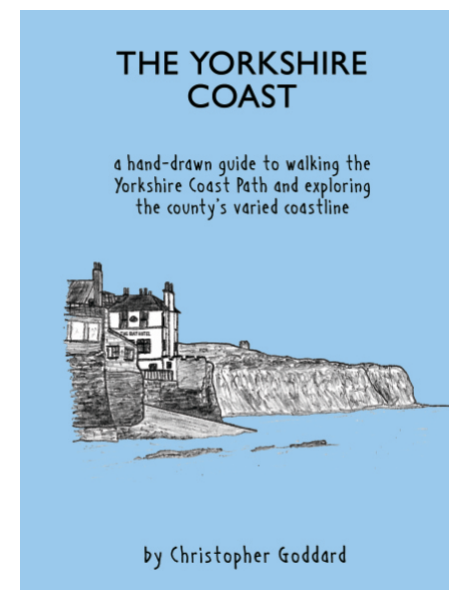
Current topics offered:

- **The England Coast Path** (and specifically the Yorkshire Coast) – having walked all 2,700 miles of the route and written the first complete series of guidebooks to it, he has a real perspective on this significant new national trail.
- **West Yorkshire Woodlands** – having already covered the Aire and Calder valleys in great detail, he is currently working on the final part of the trilogy, which will cover the Colne, Holme and Lower Calder valleys. He has a particular interest in woodland history and the way our woodlands (and attitudes to them) have changed over time.
- **West Yorkshire & South Yorkshire Moors** – covering the open access moorland of the Peak District and South Pennines, his books have explored the apparently empty spaces and revealed quite how much there is to be found here.
- **Map-making Workshops** – as a specific add-on, Chris can also incorporate a mapping workshop into his appearance, enabling participants to discover their own creative map-maker within.

Contact details:

cmgoddard@gmail.com

christophergoddard.net



Eileen Jones



Eileen is a journalist and author who was based in the Lake District for many years where she set up Cumbria PR, helping promote some of the region's top tourism and heritage businesses.

Now living in York, Eileen has worked for the *Yorkshire Post* and the *Hull Mail*, edited *Northside* Magazine, and was features editor of the Amsterdam-based *Holland Herald*. She was also course leader for degrees in journalism and public relations at the University of Huddersfield.

Eileen's the author of two books about parkrun, the Saturday-morning global phenomenon which has more than 12 million people registered in 23 countries. She was a runner-up in the Lakeland Book of the Year awards for *Loughrigg: Tales of a Small Mountain*, and more recently published *Rydal Mount: The Story of Wordsworth's Home*, having worked with the poet's descendants for several years. A long time before joining Gritstone, she was the author of a biography of the Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock (Robert Hale, 1994).

Eileen has been a guest speaker at the Kendal Mountain Festival, where she famously challenged the legendary fell-runner Joss Naylor to do his first parkrun – which he did, at the age of 85. She has given talks at a number of venues in Cumbria, including the Armitage Museum and Library, and has been a guest on several podcasts, including *Reasons to be cheerful*, the online show hosted by the now Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband. She also took part in an online conference hosted by the World Resources Institute, discussing the value of parkrun as a public health initiative.

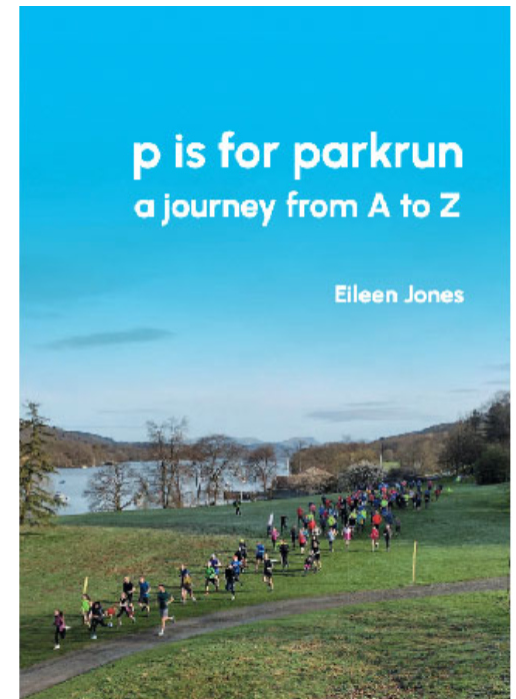
She also edits a theatre-review blog called *StageyLady* which has contributors around the country and covers off-West-End London shows, but mostly theatre in the north.

Current topics offered: Lectures or less formal talks can be arranged on subjects including:

- Running: from the fells to Fell Foot parkrun.
- Wordsworth and tourism in the Lake District.
- Why small is beautiful in the mountains.

Standard fees: Fees by arrangement.

Contact details: Please contact Eileen by email at cumbriapr@gmail.com.



Mike Padgett



Mike started writing seriously after retiring from his job as Employee Development Manager at British Gas. He has written 3 books. His travel memoir *As Far As We Can* is an Amazon best seller. His first novel *Scrap* was shortlisted for the Impress Prize for New Writers. His latest novel *Kicking Off* was published in July 2025.

Mike has given talks to a variety of audiences at a number of locations including libraries, international travel and camper show events, pubs, village halls and charities.

Mike lives in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

Area of availability: Mainly in and around Yorkshire but has travelled as far as Stratford (on his motorbike) to give a talk.

Standard fees: £75 plus travel costs

Current topics offered:

- **As Far As We Can:** a travel memoir about 3 working class young men from Barnsley who set off to the other side of the world in a second hand camper van in 1973.

Mike gives an illustrated talk about his 12 month adventure and discusses the process of writing a travel memoir.

- **Scrap:** a novel about a former mining family 10 years after their pit closed.

In this talk Mike discusses the impact the pit closure had on his own mining family and how their fight to adapt shaped his novel. He also discusses how his upbringing on a council estate in Barnsley led to him becoming an author.

- **Kicking Off:** a novel about a football match between a team of young women care workers and a former pub side back together after 30 years.

Mike talks about caring and not caring in the community, and the effect of discrimination and the fear of change as two very different teams prepare to face each other.

Contact details:

md@blackbirdcottage.karoo.co.uk



Mike Raine



Mike Raine is a mountaineer, writer and outdoor educator based in Eryri (Snowdonia). After careers as a greengrocer and teacher, he spent 15 years at Plas y Brenin, the National Outdoor Centre, working at middle and senior management level and training and assessing the next generation of mountaineering instructors.

Mike now runs his own business delivering continuing professional development and advanced training for Mountain Leaders and Mountaineering Instructors. He is the author of *Nature of Snowdonia* (Pesda Press, 2020) and *The Mountain Leader: A Practical Manual* (Pesda Press, 2023).

A lifelong walker, climber and mountaineer, Mike has recently turned his attention to long-distance bikepacking, travelling extensively across the UK by bike. These adventures form the basis of two new books: *Just One More Hill: A Bikepacker's Tales from the Trails*

(Gritstone Publishing, 2026) and *End to End: Lizard Point to Cape Wrath – An Off-Road Bikepacking Adventure* (2026).

Through his talks, writing and podcast *Outdoor Lives*, Mike shares stories from the hills, the trails and the people who shape a life outdoors.

Area of availability: North Wales, North West and West Yorkshire.

Standard fees: By negotiation, but usually between £50-£150 depending on nature and size of group plus out of pocket expenses – travel costs and any meals required. This will normally include an opportunity for book sales and signing before and after the talk.

Current topics offered:

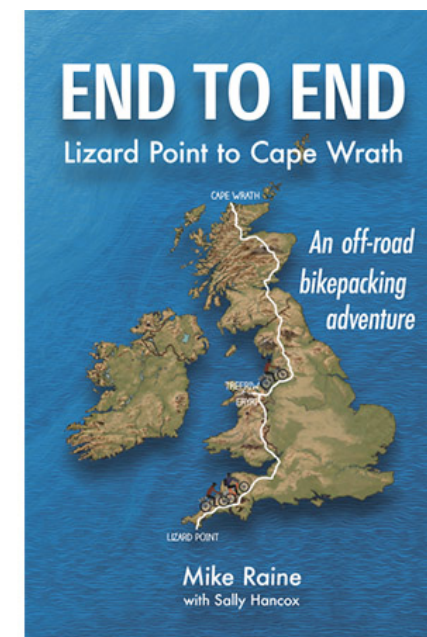
- **Being a Mountain Leader** – writing the handbook and ‘the bible’
- **Just One More Hill** – Bikepacking stories from the UK, featuring the Highland 550 and the Welsh 550 also including some ‘how to’ tips
- **End to End: Lizard Point to Cape Wrath** – An Off-Road Bikepacking Adventure

Mike is happy giving formal public talks or attending more casual book signing events.

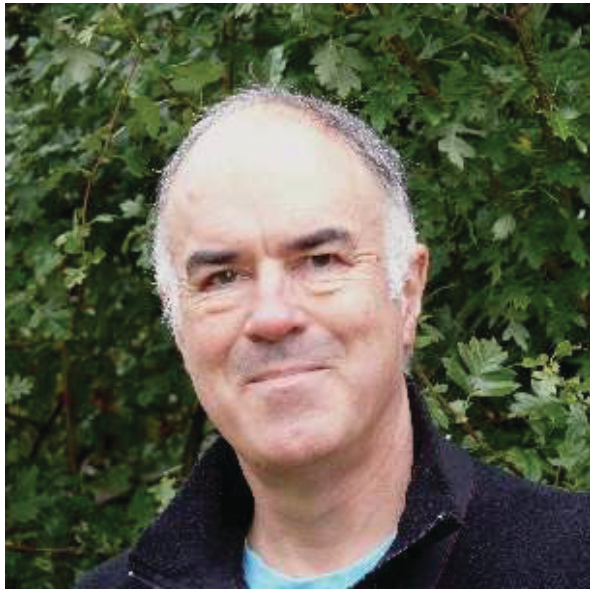
Contact details:

miker.raine@gmail.com

www.mikeraine.co.uk



Laurence Rose



Laurence Rose is a Yorkshire-based writer, researcher and conservationist. He worked for the RSPB between 1983 and 2022 in roles as varied as volunteer development, international partnerships, international law and policy, regional and country leadership, area reserves management and strategic project management. To discuss your organisation's requirements, contact laurence@laurerose.co.uk

- **Windhover** – a year among kestrels Laurence's next book is due in 2026. He wanted to devote a year, 2023, to really getting to know one species well, from among the relatively common birds in his home area. He chose the kestrel – or rather, the kestrel chose him.

- **A Tale of Three Raptors** (new for 2026) – In three very different ways, the red kite, the kestrel and the peregrine have provided some of the best stories of spectacular nature in its own right, and of

conservation challenge. Laurence takes a personal view of two of them, while also celebrating the 2026 centenary of JA Baker, author of the ground-breaking *The Peregrine*.

- **Notes from the Field** – Laurence Rose's writing always starts with close, careful observation of nature wherever it is found, and whatever its context. His prose has been described in reviews as lyrical, mindful, inspiring and eye-opening. This talk focuses on the wildlife, describing specific encounters that became the starting point for passages in books and essays. Versions of this talk can be adapted for different groups depending on whether a wildlife focus or a literature focus is required.

- **Framing Nature** – conservation and culture. Based on the book of the same title. Through the stories of nine species – four birds, three mammals and two insects – Laurence Rose explores the roots of our relationship with nature, revealing much about us. Includes scientific detective stories, cultural revelations, stories of loss, recovery and hope.

- **The Long Spring** – tracking the arrival of spring through Europe. Based on the book of the same title. Between February and May 2016 Laurence Rose followed the progress of spring, starting at the northern tip of Africa and ending his journeys on the north coast of



Arctic Norway. This talk is a homage to the diversity and beauty of his home continent, with a focus on wildlife. A new version marking the publication of the revised edition in March 2026. An alternative is *Connections: the nature of Europe* which takes in a few countries not included in the book.

- **Perspectives of India** – This talk takes us to central India, Assam, Gujarat and Mumbai. Laurence Rose claims to be an expert in “how little I know about India” which is hardly surprising, given the vast scale and diversity of this amazing country. Birds and big cats feature strongly, alongside the people for whom daily life revolves around nature; or **Leopard Moon Rising – distant views of India** – Based on the book of the same title. A version of *Perspectives of India* but with more of a cultural focus, exploring the relationship between people and nature and how this influences conservation issues.

- **Wild Spain** – Laurence Rose has visited Spain around 80 times, for work and pleasure. This talk is a tour of some of the special places of this endlessly fascinating country, and its special wildlife, some of which is found nowhere else.



Iberian fox
©Laurence Rose

- **Bringing them Back** – stories from the brink Laurence Rose retired from the RSPB in early 2022 and immediately started a new ‘job’ as a volunteer, writing up the stories of some of the RSPB’s very long-term work to recover threatened species. White-tailed eagle, curlew, bunting, bittern, red kite, common crane and corncrake are among the subjects to be explored. 2026 version incorporates a previous talk *Birds on the Brink - the Red, Amber and Green Lists of Birds of Conservation Concern* explained, and their implications for the future.

- **Rethinking Nature** – Our relationship with nature has been repeatedly re-evaluated over the last 250 years. In this flexible, bespoke talk, Laurence Rose looks at the contributions made by figures such as Gilbert White, Charles Darwin, Rachel Carson and E.O. Wilson, before tackling contemporary issues. These include finding nature-based solutions to the wider climate and environment crisis, and nature-positive ways of progress. This is a challenge to society, including the environment sector itself, to take bolder steps.

- **Birds and Music** – An occasional composer and regular collaborator with musicians and fellow composers, Laurence Rose has created this talk for music clubs and societies, or joint meetings. It explores the contribution birds and nature have made to inspiring classical and contemporary music. The title and content can be adapted according to the interests of the audience, including university/conservatoire students. Particularly suitable for venues with a good sound system.

Conference keynote speeches, presentations, panels, festivals, workshops and academic lectures.

Please contact Laurence Rose to discuss your requirements:

laurence@laurerose.co.uk

laurerose.co.uk

[@windhovering.bsky.social](https://www.bsky.social/windhovering)



Colin Speakman



Colin is an award winning and well-known writer of walking and outdoor books, with a strong focus on Yorkshire and the Yorkshire countryside. This includes his pioneering account of the Dales Way, but also of biographies of famous Yorkshire geologists and scientists, local history, topography (especially the Yorkshire Dales), a history of walking in England and an 'alternative' history of Yorkshire. His latest work includes a new edition of his popular re-imaginings of traditional Dales' folk stories and legends *The Nut Brown Maid*. He is also a well-respected poet of Northern landscape and history with his recently published *Collected Poems* spanning over 60 years.

Area of availability: Generally within a 30-mile radius of Leeds and Bradford and preferably close to a railway station as Colin does not drive and may require lifts to and from a convenient railhead.

Standard fees: By negotiation, but usually between £50-£100 depending on nature and size of group plus out of pocket expenses – travel costs and any meals required. This will normally include an opportunity for book sales and signing before and after the talk.

Current topics offered:

- **Yorkshire Ancient National Future Province** – a light-hearted look at the over thousand-year history of Yorkshire, from ancient Anglo-Viking kingdom to modern region, making a powerful case for English devolution
- **Adam Sedgwick Geologist and Dalesman**
- **John Phillips, Yorkshire's Traveller Through Time**
- **Arthur Raistrick Dalesman and Polymath**
- **The Dales Way** – the Peoples' Path; the evolution of one of Britain's most popular walking trails.
- **The Nut Brown Maid and Other Dales stories** – Why folk tales matters including readings of one or more of these both familiar but also unfamiliar stories.
- **Poetry: The Lost Chronicles of York** – An illustrated presentation based on his 2022 Collection plus later verse.
- **Rhythms of the Northern Landscape** – A full evening presentation of Colin's poems intermixed with songs from well-known northern folk singer-songwriter Kath Reade.
- **So Let it Be: Collected Poems 1960-2025** – well reviewed at recent launch.

Contact details:

colinspeakman799@gmail.com

