



# Highclere Castle Book Readers and Writing Awards 2026



This summer we are offering both *Book Readers* prizes and *Writing* prizes.

For the *Book Readers' Awards*,- the book review can be a newly published novel, a non-fiction title or a renowned classic fitting into one of five categories. Entrants should write 750 -1,000 words on their chosen book to review.

### **The five categories include;**

**Travel:-** aimed at the adventurer, anything from a travelogue or a classic guidebook.

**Biography:-** this could be a book about a favourite hero, icon, author or historical figure. A great category for readers to share their immersion and understanding of a favourite person.

**History:-** this category includes social history, ancient or modern, military history or personal diaries.

**Novel:-** whether it's a classic or purely a favourite piece of narrative, the options are endless.

**Children's book:-** The choice is vast whether it's a classic or a contemporary children's story.

The winner of each category will win £500 with the five runners up taking home £100. Last year's inaugural awards saw 2200 entries from an international base.

Please email your review to: [competitions@highclerecastle.co.uk](mailto:competitions@highclerecastle.co.uk)





## *The Highclere Castle Writing Prize 2026*

To mark the inaugural year of the Writing Prize, budding writers are challenged to inhabit the mind and spirit of a famed author of the past. Whether inspired by the quiet intensity of a governess, the wit of a social observer, or the brooding sensibilities of a romantic poet, entrants must compose a diary entry as though they themselves were that writer, capturing not only their voice, but their time.



Each submission, must be in cursive writing, scanned, emailed or posted. No more than 750 words should unfold as a private reflection: intimate, immediate, and true to the era in which the chosen writer lived. Consider the concerns of the day, the constraints of society, and the inner life that shaped their work. What would they confide to the page, when no one else was listening?

We are not looking for imitation alone, but imagination, writing that breathes with authenticity while revealing something new.

Entries will be judged on originality, voice, historical sensitivity, and emotional depth. The winner will be announced at the Highclere Castle Book Festival in October.

Take up your pen. Assume another life. And write as though history itself were watching.

Entries to both competitions close on Monday 7th September and winners will be notified as soon as possible thereafter. Presentations and prizes will be awarded on Sunday 4th October at the Highclere Castle Literary Festival.

Please scan and email to: [competitions@highclerecastle.co.uk](mailto:competitions@highclerecastle.co.uk) or post your entry to Lady Carnarvon's Office, Highclere Castle, Newbury RG20 9RN

Terms and conditions for entrants can be found at:  
[www.highclerecastle/bookreadersawards](http://www.highclerecastle/bookreadersawards)

