



# East Anglian Book Awards

In partnership with

**Eastern Daily Press**

JARROLD

**N** National Centre  
for Writing

Supported by the University of East Anglia Faculty of Arts & Humanities

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## **Children's writer from Suffolk wins Book of the Year at the East Anglian Book Awards 2020**

We are delighted to reveal that *The House of One Hundred Clocks* (Usborne) by Suffolk-based children's writer A.M. Howell has been crowned Book of the Year at the East Anglian Book Awards 2020.

The announcement was made at a special online event hosted by awards partners Jarrold, the Eastern Daily Press and the National Centre for Writing with support from UEA Faculty of Arts & Humanities on Thursday evening ([watch the event here](#)). Howell will receive £1,000, generously funded by the PACCAR Foundation.

Ann-Marie (A.M.) Howell said:

'I'm absolutely thrilled to have won the Book of the Year Award! I'm still reeling at my book being selected from such an incredibly brilliant list of category winners. As well as living in the beautiful east of England, the history and landscape of this region provides huge inspiration for my children's novels, making this award even more special. A huge thank you to all the award organisers and judges.'

Set in Cambridge in the early twentieth century, *The House of One Hundred Clocks* follows a young girl and her parrot as they attempt to unravel the mysteries within the house of one hundred clocks. The judges called it 'a powerful and evocative story of grief and loss, richly rooted in place, and one that combines vivid writing with a warm and relevant message for the times. An important and magical book, *The House of One Hundred Clocks* will be treasured by children and adults alike.'

Ann-Marie Howell has signed with publisher Usborne for a further two middle-grade historical mysteries inspired by the stories and places of East Anglia. *The Mystery of the Night Watchers*, set in Bury St. Edmunds against the evocative backdrop of the Edwardian era and Halley's comet, will publish in July 2021, with Howell's as-yet-untitled fourth book to follow in 2022.

Peggy Hughes, one of the judges and Programme Director at the National Centre for Writing based in Norwich, said:

'In this extraordinary and complicated year, it has been hugely heartening to have such a strong showing from the writers and publishers of East Anglia. We thank all entrants for their brilliant work in writing, publishing, and championing such terrific and important books, and for their willingness to adapt with us in ensuring that the East Anglian Book Awards could happen despite the present moment. Huge congratulations to all the winners for these beautiful books that tell the story and share the flavour of our region in myriad wonderful ways.'

Emma Lee, Archant feature writer and one of the judges, said:

'It was my first time judging the awards, and it was an absolute privilege to take part. As for many people, books have been a balm during this most difficult of years and it was a joy to read the finalists. The standard was incredibly high – and choosing an overall winner was no easy task for us - but what a delightful challenge to have had.'

Holly Ainley, book buyer at Jarrold, said:

'I was honoured to deliver the exciting news to Ann-Marie that she has been crowned this year's Book of the Year winner. Forging ahead with an event, albeit online, to mark the awards and give the authors a platform, felt particularly special and important this year, allowing us to join together and share in the joy and excitement of all the books on the shortlist. It has been the perfect opportunity to celebrate the fact that in a year of change and restrictions, East Anglia's literary livelihood is still rich and flourishing.'

The Exceptional Contribution Award 2020 for outstanding work within writing and publishing in the region was presented to joint winners Norfolk Library and Information Service and Suffolk Libraries.

Sarah Hassan, Assistant Head of Service at Norfolk Library Information Service said:

‘Norfolk County Council Library and Information Service is enormously proud to accept this award. Libraries are about reading, learning and literacy and this is great recognition for the part we are playing during the pandemic and beyond. Libraries support people and communities – never more than now. Whether you are taking up our online events by visiting [What’s On in Norfolk Libraries](#) or reading or listening to books and magazines online, all the staff are looking forward hugely to welcoming you back into libraries after the lockdown. Thank you!’

The ‘Book by the Cover’ Award, sponsored by East Anglian Writers for the best-designed cover of the shortlisted titles, went to artist [Richard Wells](#) for the cover of *Ghostland: In Search of a Haunted Country* by Edward Parnell.

To qualify for the East Anglian Book Awards, works must be set largely in East Anglia or be written by an author living in the region – which is defined as Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and area of Fenland District Council.

Since the East Anglian Book Awards began in 2008, they have showcased the work of over 150 authors, 200 titles and more almost 100 publishers.

Discover more about the East Anglian Book Awards at <https://nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/east-anglian-book-awards/>

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**Notes to Editors:**

1. Press enquiries contact Steph McKenna, Communications Manager  
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2. The **National Centre for Writing** (NCW) is a place of discovery, exchange, ideas and learning for writers, literary translators and readers. Based in the restored and extended 15th century Dragon Hall in the heart of England’s first UNESCO City of Literature, it explores how writing can inspire and change the world we live in. Its year-round programme of events, festivals and courses reaches over 14,000 people a year with an additional 110,000 engaged online. Through its learning and participation programme it supports 20,000 young people a year and has a commitment to working with those in the most disadvantaged

areas. NCW's patrons include Margaret Atwood, JM Coetzee, Kei Miller and Elif Shafak.

[www.nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk](http://www.nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk)

3. The East Anglian Book Awards are organised by the Eastern Daily Press, Jarrold and the National Centre for Writing, with support from UEA's Faculty of Arts & Humanities.
4. The East Anglian Book Awards 2020 category winners were announced on Saturday 31 October. They are:
  - Biography & Memoir: *How to be Autistic* by Charlotte Amelia Poe (Myriad Editions)
  - Fiction: *The Choice* by Claire Wade (Orion)
  - General Non-Fiction: *New York to California* by Jeremy Page (Propolis)
  - History & Tradition: *Imperial Mud: The Fight for the Fens* by James Boyce (Icon Books)
  - The Mal Peet Children's Award: *The House of One Hundred Clocks* by A.M. Howell (Usborne)
  - Poetry: *So Many Rooms* by Laura Scott (Carcenet)