

# **The John Betjeman Young People's Poetry Competition**

## **\*\* CALL FOR ENTRIES \*\***

The **John Betjeman Young People's Poetry Competition** sponsored by Shell is open to 11-14 year olds in the British Isles and Republic of Ireland.

The competition was inaugurated in 2006 to celebrate the centenary of one of the nation's best-loved poets. The prize of £1,000, (£500 to the winner and £500 to the English department of their school), is donated by John Murray (Publishers) Ltd.

The first prize winner, runner-up and highly commended will also each win three Eurostar standard class return tickets to either Paris or Brussels.

Entrants are invited to send one poem about any aspect of their local surroundings or any aspect thereof, whether it be a house, a street, a garden, a park, a city or a wider landscape. The spirit behind the competition is to encourage young people to understand and appreciate the importance of place.

The prize giving will take place in October 2009 at St. Pancras International Station.

Completed entry forms which are available on request need to be received by **31st August 2009**.

**For the full list of rules, entry form or for further information about the prize please visit [www.johnbetjeman.com](http://www.johnbetjeman.com) or email [justinagowers@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:justinagowers@yahoo.co.uk)**

Notes to Editors:

### **Sir John Betjeman and Shell**

Sir John Betjeman and his work are part of Shell's history. The Shell County Guides in the 1930's were Betjeman's brainchild and became one of their most memorable marketing campaigns. In addition, John Betjeman made 26 films for Shell in the 'Discovering Britain' series.

Seventy-six years later Shell is proud to continue their association with Sir John Betjeman and is therefore delighted to support "The John Betjeman Young People's Poetry Competition" .

Acclaimed author and journalist Candida Lycett Green will chair the panel of judges and is joined by novelist and Society Guardian columnist Clare Allan and performance poet Luke Wright.

About the judges:

Candida Lycett Green (Chair) is the author of sixteen books including *English Cottages*, *Goodbye London*, *The Perfect English House*, *Over the Hills and Far Away* and *The Dangerous Edge of Things*. Her television documentaries include “The Englishwoman and the Horse” and “The Front Garden”. She has also edited and introduced her father John Betjeman’s letters and prose in three volumes, to critical acclaim. She was a commissioner of English Heritage for nine years, is a member of the Performing Rights Society through her song-writing lyrics and has been a Contributing Editor to *Vogue* since 1987. She was part of the original team who started *Private Eye* and has written a regular column called *Unwrecked England* for *The Oldie* since 1992.

Clare Allan was the winner of the first Orange/Harpers short story prize. She lives in London. Her debut novel, *Poppy Shakespeare*, published by Bloomsbury in April 2006 was longlisted for the Orange Prize for Fiction and shortlisted for the BT Mind Book of the Year Award and the Guardian First Book award.

A 2007 4Talent Award winner, Luke Wright is the founder of Aisle16, the host of Glastonbury’s Cabaret stage and has three five star solo Edinburgh shows under his belt. Wright’s first book, *Who Writes This Crap?* was published by Hamish Hamilton/Penguin in November 2007. Wright also curates and hosts the Latitude Festival's Poetry Arena.



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*We wish all the entrants and good luck in reaching the finals!*

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**Name**.....

**Address**.....

**Age**.....

**Telephone**.....

**e-mail**.....

**School Name**.....

**School Address**.....

**I acknowledge that I have read and understood the rules of the John Betjeman Young People's Poetry Competition and guarantee that the enclosed entry is all my own work.**

**Signed**.....

**Date**.....

Please send **ONE POEM** only about any aspect of your local surroundings, with a title. Please note that for administrative reasons entries will not be acknowledged.

**Poems and completed entry forms to be sent to the John Betjeman Young People's Poetry Competition, 72 Vicars Hill, London, SE13 7JL by 31<sup>st</sup> August 2009**

### **RULES**

1. The competition is open to young people aged 11-14 inclusive, during the year 2009, living anywhere in the British Isles and the Republic of Ireland.
2. Entrants may submit one poem each, about their local surroundings or any aspect of them, whether a house, a street, a garden, a park, a city or a wider landscape. The spirit behind the competition is to encourage an understanding and appreciation of the importance of 'place'. We are not looking for pastiches of John Betjeman's own work
3. Each poem must be given a title.
4. Entries may be hand written (which must be legible) or typed.
5. Poems must not have been published, self-published, published on a website or broadcast (except in an individual school magazine).
6. All entries must be attached to the completed entry form.
7. The poems will be judged anonymously, therefore the name of the writer should not appear anywhere on the manuscript.
8. Entrants must ensure that they keep a copy of their poem as poems cannot be returned and for administrative reasons entries cannot be acknowledged.
9. Poems may be submitted by post only and must be received by 31<sup>st</sup> August 2009.
10. The judges' decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into.