****

**For immediate release: Wednesday 7 December 2022**

**Huddersfield Literature Festival wins prestigious Yorkshire Post award for Accessible and Inclusive Tourism**

Huddersfield Literature Festival has won the Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Award at the inaugural Yorkshire Post Tourism Awards 2022. The prestigious awards were held at Headingley Stadium in Leeds on Monday 5 December and comprised 17 categories recognising the achievements of touristic organisations across Yorkshire.

Hudd Lit Fest, as they have nicknamed themselves, was the only literature festival among the finalists and the only Kirklees-based organisation. It’s a huge achievement for the Festival which has been bringing high-quality literature events to the Pennine town since 2006.

The Festival was also a finalist in the 2022 Kirklees Diversity, Equality, and Innovation Awards earlier this year, proving that not only is the organisation fully committed to creating a diverse and inclusive festival, but that the work they are doing is being recognised as being at a high standard.

Festival Director Michelle Hodgson, who has been expertly leading the festival since 2013 said: “We are thrilled to bring this prestigious award home to Huddersfield. We were up against some tough competition and it was wonderful to have our long-standing commitment to accessibility and inclusivity recognised by such prestigious awards. Our next Festival will showcase a wide representation of voices and we will be working closely with Kirklees Local TV to increase our hybrid offer, as part of our ongoing commitment to accessibility.”

With the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, and other challenges the country faces this year, access to exceptional arts and culture events is crucial for wellbeing and emotional resilience. A study conducted by UCL stated that during the pandemic: “The arts were proactively adopted by many as part of supportive coping styles to help them manage the stress of the pandemic.” With a new set of challenges facing us this winter, the role of the arts is going to be just as critical.

Not only are Hudd Lit Fest committed to accessibility across their annual programme of events and inclusivity in their communications and festival structure, but they’re also tackling the financial access to events. By keeping as many events as possible free of charge or low-cost, they are ensuring that no one, even those struggling financially this season, should be without access to exceptional cultural offerings.

The Festival will return in spring 2023 with a diverse programme of venue-based, online and hybrid events. The theme of ‘Music’ will run through the Festival programme to tie in with the [Kirklees Year of Music 2023](https://www.musicinkirklees.co.uk/) initiative. Events will be available to view and book through the Festival website with further information at: <https://www.huddlitfest.org.uk/>

**Notes for Editors:**

**Media contact:**

Charlotte Furness, Marketing Manager: marketing@huddlitfest.org.uk; 07825 750755

Hi-res mages are available upon request.

**About** [**Huddersfield Literature Festival**](https://www.huddlitfest.org.uk/)

Often referred to as Hudd Lit Fest or HLF.

An award-winning 10-day Festival held annually in the spring. A blended Festival of 50+ digital, outdoor and venue-based events, HLF champions accessibility, diversity and under-represented groups. Showcasing emerging writers and artists alongside major names, the Festival offers a diverse programme of author talks, workshops, discussion topics, performance poetry, multi-arts performances, wellbeing projects and family friendly events.

Innovative special projects and commissions, often inspired by local community partnerships, are designed to promote community cohesion, improve wellbeing and proactively engage with under-represented artists, performers and audiences. With many free and low-cost events, including some with live subtitling, and Access Guides to key venues, HLF promotes accessibility with a view to offering more opportunities for a wider range of people to enjoy arts and culture.

Established in 2006, HLF is a major fixture on the town’s cultural calendar. The Festival has been selected as a finalist in the prestigious Welcome to Yorkshire White Rose Awards on three occasions (2016, 2017 & 2020), and in 2017 won the Examiner Community Award for Arts. The Festival was also a finalist in the Inclusive Third Sector Organisation category at the Kirklees Diversity, Equality and Innovation Awards 2022 and won the prestigious Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Award at the Yorkshire Post Tourism Awards 2022.

