



NAME:	John Hartley 
Profile: <i>(Tell us about yourself; how long have you been writing? What inspires you to write? how long have you been a member of Watford Writers? What are your favourite reads?)</i>	I joined Watford Writers in early 2025, but have been writing for decades, be it poetry, songs, music journalism, academic writing or fiction. I can be inspired to write by pretty much anything in the world around me, often the more trivial and 'ordinary' things that we take for granted. My own reading tastes are probably guided by this similarly.
Main writing interests <i>(Novelist, Poet, Playwright, Biographer, Historian, Academic, Researcher, other etc?)</i>	Music journalism: I have written for a number of long-established music websites including Neo-Tokyo, Dukla Prague Away Kit, Everything Indie Over 40 and Toppermost (the latter of which is the only one still going). Poetry: probably where my creativity first started. It later evolved into songwriting, and now the two live side-by-side in my head. Academic: special education. Biography: I am the author of the official biography of UK indie band BOB, and have written two musical memoirs of my own. Fiction: with the Young/New Adult market in mind, I have written a trilogy of coming-of-age novels under the umbrella of the first title 'The Broken Bottle', which detail Wilf's adventures from teen to adult in the North of England via Ireland.
Do you have a special place in which to write?	The Shed. Nominally known as 'the writing shed' to distinguish it from the coal shed and the potting shed, but other things happen there as well.
Do you have a preferred time of day for writing?	My writing time is dictated by the other things in life that are going on, just as any hobby is.
Have you been published or have self-published? <i>(Please list your publications)</i>	I have had two books published by the now-defunct micropress i40Publishing, which focussed on music writing. 'The Broken Bottle' was touted round some of the Lit Agencies, but it's very much like the music business and touting round demos; often it's not what you know but who you know ... So I've chosen to ignore that route and self-publishing, in the true DIY spirit of the indie music I grew up on in the 1980s. Should Mr and Mrs Schuster, or a Random Penguin come knocking on my door, i

	will invite them in for a cup of tea and see what they have to say, but I've not got any biscuits in specially. 'Capturing the Wry' (musical memoir) published by i40Publishing 2018 'The View From Orlando Bridge' (football memoir) self-published via Lulu.com 2019 'From Banwell to Berlin and Beyond: the book of BOB' (biography) published by i40 Publishing 2023 'The Broken Bottle' (YA Novel) self-published via Draft2Digital 2023 'Seasonal Adjustments' (poetry anthology) self-published via Draft2Digital 2023 'Out of Tune' (lyric anthology) self-published via Draft2Digital 2024 'How Green Are Your Eyes' (YA Novel) self-published via Draft2Digital 2024 'This Is Not The End' (YA Novel) self-published via Draft2Digital 2025
Do you have any special techniques for writing? Specialist equipment or writing aids?	A pen, a notebook, and a Chromebook are serving me well at the moment. The Notes App on my phone comes in handy too.
Have you been involved with any other writing activities? <i>(e.g. workshops, organising writing events, attending external workshops, retreats?)</i>	No. A short-and-sweet answer there.
What writing project are you currently working on (or intend to start)?	At the time of writing I'm close to self-publishing a novel entitled 'The Old Couple', an imagining of the relationship between two of my maternal ancestors from the mid-1800s, but set in present day North Shields.
Do you have other interests? and/or member of other groups/societies?	Music, as both performer and audience. The Irony Board, Echolalia, Broken Down Lorry and now solo as Johny Nocash for the former; jangly guitar-based indiepop from the mid 1980s and beyond for the latter. Photography, generally just phone-based though. Wood carving. Pottering about in the garden.
Do you have a website; Facebook, Twitter; Instagram? or write a blog?	I stopped using Twitter when Musk took over and spoiled it, and have never had a Facebook page. However, I can be found on BlueSky (like Twitter but without corporations and multinationals) @johnynocash.bsky.social and post photos on Instagram @johnynocash I also occasionally write bits of bobs on a blog which can be found at https://johnhartleywriter.blogspot.com/
What message would you like to give to other writers / would-be writers?	Ignore the imposter syndrome, and bear in mind that if the average book published by one of the Big Five publishing houses sells 3000 copies in its lifetime, and 'The Hobbit' has sold 140.6 million copies, there must be loads of published books that have sold between 0 and 10.

	Write for yourself; it's quality, not quantity. source: https://jerichowriters.com/average-book-sales-figures/
Do you have favourite author or book?	Magnus Mills: 'The Scheme For Full Employment' RC Sherriff: 'A Fortnight In September' Bill Drummond: '45' Charles M. Schulz Robert Westall: 'The Kingdom By The Sea' Roger McGough and Michael Rosen: 'You Tell Me' Leonard Koren: 'How To Rake Leaves'