

# Andrew Lane

A detective author and good friend of the Newham bookshop



Photograph by Laura Hynd

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Andrew Lane grew up in Newham. His mother liked painting and his father was very good at reasoning and maths. As a child, there were three libraries close to Andrew's house, and he would try to borrow the maximum number of books possible from each library to bring them back home.

Andrew's school teachers helped him become a writer. One, called Sylvia, knew how to captivate him during storytelling and another teacher, Iris, challenged him by asking questions such as 'Why are the characters doing these things?'

When the Newham bookshop opened Andrew had two bookshops he could go to close to his home. He remembered that the Newham Bookshop sold 'odd' books which he couldn't find elsewhere. It was a friendly place, and it felt like home.

When Andrew visits schools, he tells children who want to write that it is not very well paid. To be a writer you need to have creativity, but you also need to be able to plan the plot. Andrew compares writing a story plot to a bus route, you need to know where you are going in order to start your journey. He also encourages young people to read a lot of 'bad books', and think about how they can improve them.

Andrew has recently developed an interest in the history of buildings and spaces. He is worried about losing connections with the past as new buildings and infrastructure are replacing old ones in Newham.