

Dorset writer Margery Hookings publishes new novel, *Plashy Fen*



Margery Hookings

A NEW NOVEL by former local newspaper editor Margery Hookings will be launched at Washingpool Farm Shop, Bridport, on Saturday 10 October 2026 from 11am-12 noon.

Published under the pen name Maddie Grigg, *Plashy Fen* is set in an imagined Dorset village by the sea and explores community, friendship, belonging and the stories that connect people in a small place.

Margery was editor of the Bridport & Lyme Regis News from 1999 to 2004 and is a former feature writer for The Marshwood Vale Magazine, Dorset Magazine and other publications.

For the past 11 years, she has written the Maddie's World column about country life for The People's Friend, the world's longest-running weekly magazine for women.

Margery said: '*Plashy Fen* is an entirely fictional place, but I've been writing about the real people of West Dorset for nearly 45 years.'

Told through a chorus of voices, the novel's interwoven stories reveal a place shaped by friendship, longing and the tension between those who arrive and those who feel they can never quite leave.

It also features a decades-old murder no locals can

ever forget. But beneath the mystery, *Plashy Fen* is a warm, humorous and gently cosy portrait of village life.

The novel, published by Larbok Creative, is already available on Kindle, with the paperback published on 29 September.

Reviewer Katherine Mezzacappa said: '*Plashy Fen* is written by an author who has great affection and understanding for the community she describes. Her story is bucolic, but also clear-eyed and her characters multi-layered and never stereotypical.'

Margery said: 'This rural landscape and those who make their living from it are important to me. It's the world I know.'

'I'm a tenant farmer's daughter who was born and brought up just over the county border in Somerset.'

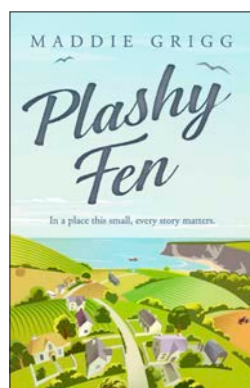
'I'm interested in the backstories of people who might, on the surface, seem 'ordinary'. I've always felt a bit of a champion for the rural underdog.'

Last year, as part of a local heritage project she led for the Windrose Rural Media Trust charity, she wrote a book recording the memories of people born and bred in Broadwindsor. It culminated in an archive film show in the village hall, with profits from book sales split between Windrose, the community shop and community pub.

She said: 'Everyone has a story to tell and my imagined characters in *Plashy Fen* are no exception.'

'One of the fictional settings in the novel is a farm shop, where key characters meet and things happen. Having Washingpool as the venue for the launch couldn't be more appropriate.'

'Washingpool began in 1971, long before farm shops and local food became a 'thing'. It's one of those local, unpretentious family businesses worth treasuring. I was chuffed to bits when the farm shop offered to host the launch.'



Plashy Fen
by Maddie Grigg

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£3.99, paperback £12.99

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Available to order from local bookshops, through Amazon or at the launch.