



## **Scottish Book Trust celebrates success of 20-year collaboration with Scottish Friendly**

### **Thousands of pupils benefit from access to authors in 2018 anniversary tours**

Scottish Book Trust, the national charity transforming lives through reading and writing, has hailed a successful 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of Scottish Friendly Children's Book Tours.

Scottish Friendly is one of the UK's leading financial mutuals. Scottish Friendly Children's Book Tours visit both primary and secondary schools, and have enthralled more than 100,000 children with visits from over 100 individual authors since they began in 1998.

To mark 20 years of partnership in 2018, Scottish Book Trust and Scottish Friendly announced a bumper year of all-star events across every local authority in Scotland, in addition to tours of Northern Ireland and England.

In all, almost 10,000 pupils were given the chance to participate in events with leading children's authors who visited a total of 63 schools and libraries, over the course of the year.

Highlights included a summer Jamboree Celebration at Glasgow Royal Concert Hall in June. This fully funded event for 2,000 P4-7 pupils, included appearances from Tracy Beaker creator Jacqueline Wilson, former Children's Laureate Chris Riddell, and author of *How to Train Your Dragon*, Cressida Cowell.

In March, Julia Donaldson, author of *The Gruffalo* – which sold over 13 million copies and has been adapted for film and theatre – toured local libraries in Dundee, Stirling, Glasgow, the Scottish Borders and Dumfries and Galloway.

Six other national tours were conducted over the course of the year. John Fardell visited Northern Ireland, while Keith Gray returned to his roots in Lincolnshire. Chae Strathie visited Bradford and Nicola Davies toured Argyll and Bute, Highland, and the Western Isles. Andy Stanton visited Highland, Orkney, and Shetland and Phil Earle visited schools in Moray, Aberdeen, Angus and Perth. Including the Jamboree Celebration in Glasgow, Scottish Friendly Children's Book Tours covered all 32 Scottish Local Authorities over the course of the year.



**Marc Lambert, CEO of Scottish Book Trust, said:** “It’s important to take a moment to look back on what we’ve achieved through our work with Scottish Friendly over the past year and the past two decades. Bringing some of the finest children’s authors in the country to some of the most rural parts of the country and beyond has shown how transformative these tours can be. Scottish Book Trust is extremely grateful to Scottish Friendly for their long-term commitment to this project, and I sincerely hope that we are still working together to bring the best of children’s literature to schools twenty years from now.”

**Calum Bennie, Communications Manager at Scottish Friendly, said:** “It was clear 20 years ago that this children’s literacy project was a special one. However, none of us foresaw that its popularity would reach such heights and that the programme would grow so much over the past two decades. Scottish Friendly’s staff and customers are delighted that in our own small way, we have been able to engage children with a love of reading and writing.”

## Notes to Editors

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## About Scottish Friendly

Scottish Friendly, one of the UK’s largest mutual life offices, is a progressive and modern financial services group. It provides investors and their families with a wide range of affordable investments.

Scottish Friendly is very engaged in the community and works with Scottish Book Trust to provide fresh and exciting content on its website: [www.scottishfriendly.co.uk](http://www.scottishfriendly.co.uk) @scotfriendly [www.facebook.com/scottishfriendly](https://www.facebook.com/scottishfriendly)

Scottish Friendly has sponsored the programme for the past 20 years, touring some of the finest children’s authors and illustrators including former Children’s Laureate Chris Riddell, Malorie Blackman, Michael Rosen, Jacqueline Wilson, Melvin Burgess, Steve Cole, Michael Morpurgo and Sophie McKenzie.

**Scottish Book Trust** is a national charity changing lives through reading and writing. We inspire and support the people of Scotland to read and write for pleasure through programmes and outreach work that include:

- Gifting books to every child in Scotland to ensure families of all backgrounds can share the joy of books at home.
- Working with teachers to inspire children to develop a love of reading, creating innovative classroom activities, book awards and author events.
- Supporting Scotland’s diverse writing community with our training, awards and writing opportunities.
- Funding a range of author events for the public to enjoy and promoting Scottish writing to people worldwide.



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