

## PHOTOCALL INVITATION / NEWS RELEASE

*You are invited to send a reporter/photographer to attend any of the events (schedule below). However, please let us know in advance so that we can make suitable arrangements with the school.*

15 March 2007

### **Carnegie medal winner to visit Dundee schools - Words on Wheels book tour kicks off on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> March**

Melvin Burgess, the award winning children's author, is visiting Dundee secondary schools next week to encourage pupils to develop a love of reading.

The tour kicks off at Morgan Academy on 19 March, then two sessions at Baldrigon Academy on the 20<sup>th</sup>, before heading to Stirling on the 21<sup>st</sup> and West Dunbartonshire on 22nd.

Burgess, known for his controversial and hard hitting themes, will be reading from two of latest books, ***Sara's Face***, a taut psychological thriller; and ***Bloodsong***, the sequel to the bestseller ***Bloodtide***, a futuristic sci-fi story of love, destruction and revenge, based on a Norse legend.

A previous novel, *Junk*, was a winner of the Carnegie Medal – the most prestigious children's literary award in Britain - and Burgess has also won a Guardian's Children's Fiction Award. Internationally, his novel ***Doing It*** was voted Best Young Adult Book of the Year by the LA Times.

The tour has been organised by Scottish Book Trust, Scotland's national agency for readers and writers, as part of the Scottish Friendly 'Words on Wheels' touring programme, which aims to provide access to book related activities and promote a love of reading literacy across Scotland, particularly in rural and remote areas.

Jasmine Fassl of the Scottish Book Trust said: "This is a rare opportunity for Dundee pupils to meet Melvin Burgess, one of the few writers who is not afraid to tackle the big issues head on and whose uncompromising writing style has brought him to an audience of fans all over the world.

"We hope that Melvin's visit will inspire pupils to develop a love of literature and perhaps even follow his example by taking up a career in writing."

An unconfident student, Burgess became interested in writing when he was twelve when an English teacher praised one of his stories. "It was about the first time I'd ever done anything that got an A. I was so pleased I never stopped writing after that."

Calum Bennie, marketing manager at Scottish Friendly, added: "This programme is a great way to encourage interest in reading and writing. We are proud of our role in bringing the Words on Wheels tour to Dundee."

There is also an opportunity for teachers and librarians to benefit from the tour – with sessions planned for Dundee and Stirling. For more information call Moira Foster on 01382 438 110 (Dundee) and Clare Hoare on 01786 274 014 (Stirling).

## **NOTE TO EDITORS**

### **Tour Schedule**

#### **Monday 19 March : 1155 -1245 hrs**

Morgan Academy  
Forfar Road  
Dundee

#### **Tuesday 20 March : 1150 – 1250 hrs & 1400-1500 hrs**

Baldragon Academy  
Burn St  
Dundee

- Melvin Burgess' work has been widely adapted for stage and TV, and he has built up a reputation for controversial, hard-hitting books dealing with themes ranging from sex and drugs to adaptations of Norse mythology.
- The Scottish Friendly 'Words on Wheels' Touring Programme, organised by Scottish Book Trust, has been running since 1998. It tours top authors throughout Scotland's urban, rural and remote communities.
- Scottish Book Trust provides free, independent, quality advice and information for readers and writers and aims to support literacy initiatives and provide access to book related opportunities for all in Scotland. Its projects, activities and events programmes include Live Literature Scotland, Words on Wheels Touring Programme and BRAW - Books, Reading and Writing. It is funded by a range of businesses and organisations including Scottish Arts Council, Scottish Friendly Assurance, Arts & Business, Scottish Executive, Standard Life and The Royal Mail. Visit [www.scottishbooktrust.com](http://www.scottishbooktrust.com) for further details.
- Scottish Friendly is one of the UK's leading friendly societies, providing Child Trust Fund accounts, tax-free savings plans, ISAs, investment plans and term assurance to savers throughout the UK. For more information please visit [www.scottishfriendly.co.uk](http://www.scottishfriendly.co.uk)

### **Media Enquiries**

Clare Meikle / Laura McGinness  
3x1 Public Relations Tel 0141 221 0707 or 07837 399 215