

For Immediate Release

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Julia Donaldson visits libraries across Scotland for 20th Anniversary of Scottish Friendly Children's Book Tour



Tour dates are included in this release. If you are interested in an interview with Julia Donaldson or would like a reporter or photographer to attend one of the events please contact:

keara.donnachie@scottishbooktrust.com or 0131 524 0184

2018 marks the 20th anniversary of the Scottish Friendly Children's Book Tour and, from 19 to 23 March, as part of the all-star anniversary celebrations, best-selling children's author Julia Donaldson will visit libraries in Dundee, Stirling, Glasgow, the Scottish Borders and Dumfries & Galloway.

The Children's Book Tour is sponsored by Scottish Friendly, one of the UK's leading financial mutuals, and organised by Scottish Book Trust, the national charity transforming lives through reading and writing. The tour visits both primary and secondary schools, and has enthralled more than 100,000 children since it began in 1998.

Hundreds of school children will take part in the special events with Julia, who has written more than 160 books and is a high profile supporter of libraries.

This will be the second time Julia has joined the Scottish Friendly Children's Book Tour, following her highly popular tour of libraries in 2012, which was attended by more than 1000 primary school pupils.

Julia Donaldson is a passionate advocate of libraries, and has spoken out on numerous occasions about the importance of librarians and the work they do. In 2016, Julia stated that: "Librarians can put the right books into the right hands. They can be up to date, read a lot themselves, and know the children really well."

Marc Lambert, CEO of Scottish Book Trust, recently supported efforts to stop the proposed 50% cut to the number of secondary school librarians in Moray, whose impact, he said, far exceeds the investment made in them.



Julia Donaldson will work with Primary 3 to Primary 4 pupils for this year's tour through an interactive event. Pupils will re-imagine and re-tell a picture book of their choice, designing props, musical accompaniment, songs and rhyme. Following this, Julia will perform her own musical plays and adaptations of her own picture books, making this a unique and memorable opportunity for all involved.

Julia's first book, *A Squash and a Squeeze*, was published in 1993, and since then she has become a favourite author of children around the world. Her book, *The Gruffalo*, has sold over 13 million copies and has been adapted for film and theatre. Her newest title, *The Ugly Five*, is about a wildebeest, warthog, vulture, hyena and marabou stork that swagger proudly across the savannah, rejoicing in their ugliness.

Two new paperback editions of Julia's stories, *The Everywhere Bear* and *What the Ladybird Heard on Holiday*, have also recently been released.

Julia works tirelessly to promote the importance of children's performance through drama to improve literacy and personal confidence and is a patron of Scottish Book Trust's Bookbug programme. She also works on the project [PictureBookPlays](#) to support teachers in developing performance in the classroom.

The events during this tour are closed to the public, but press are welcome to send photographers.

**For all press enquiries, please contact Press Officer Keara Donnachie:
keara.donnachie@scottishbooktrust.com or 0131 524 0184.**

Commenting on the tour, Julia said:

"I'm very much looking forward to joining the Scottish Friendly Children's Book Tour for its 20th anniversary celebrations. The library tour I did in 2012 was one of the highlights of my time as Children's Laureate, and it was wonderful to watch the invited pupils performing their adaptations of picture books. Those performances were the inspiration for a website I then created, [PictureBookPlays](#). Libraries and drama are still very close to my heart so I'm delighted that in the space of a week I'll be visiting lots of libraries and watching schoolchildren acting out yet more stories. It's particularly good to be able to do something to celebrate not just libraries but also librarians, whose jobs these days are sadly often under threat."

Calum Bennie, Communications Manager of Scottish Friendly, said:

"We're thrilled to have Julia Donaldson back with us on the Scottish Friendly Children's Book Tour in its 20th anniversary year. For many adults, the local library played a memorable part in their childhood and Julia's 2018 tour to key libraries in Scotland is sure to make an equally lasting impression on today's young generation."

Marc Lambert, CEO of Scottish Book Trust, added:



“It is an honour to have Julia Donaldson joining us for the 20th Anniversary of the Scottish Friendly Children’s Book Tour. Julia’s stories have delighted and inspired children and parents all across Scotland, and this is a rare opportunity for children to take part in creative workshops with such a successful storyteller. We are also very pleased that this tour will visit libraries; as a charity that works closely with them to encourage all aspects of reading and writing, we know the incredible work librarians do, and the positive impact they can have on a child’s reading journey.”

The 20th anniversary of the Scottish Friendly Children’s Book Tour will be a year-long celebration. Over 100 authors have taken part in the Children’s Book Tour since 1998, and 13 of those authors will join the anniversary celebrations.

Sarah McIntyre, illustrator and writer of children’s books, has designed exclusive comics for the 20th anniversary celebrations, which will be gifted to all primary and secondary pupils participating in the Scottish Friendly Children’s Book Tour throughout the year.

Notes to Editors

For media enquiries, interviews and images, please contact Keara Donnachie, PR Officer on keara.donnachie@scottishbooktrust.com or 0131 524 0184.

After every tour, Scottish Book Trust’s website features case studies and resources to show the impact of the tour on the pupils we visit: www.scottishbooktrust.com

Tour dates – NB these events are not open to the public

Monday 19 March – Dundee

AM: Steps Theatre at Central Library

Tuesday 20 March – Stirling

AM & PM: Raploch Community Campus Theatre

Wednesday 21 March – Glasgow

AM: The Mitchell Library & Theatre

PM: Darnley Primary School and Visual Impairment Unit

Thursday 22 March – Scottish Borders

AM: Galashiels Library



PM: Eyemouth Library

Friday 23 March – Dumfries & Galloway

AM: Lochthorn Library

PM: Kirkcudbright Library

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 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 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 @scotfriendly www.facebook.com/scottishfriendly

About Scottish Book Trust

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 classrooms 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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