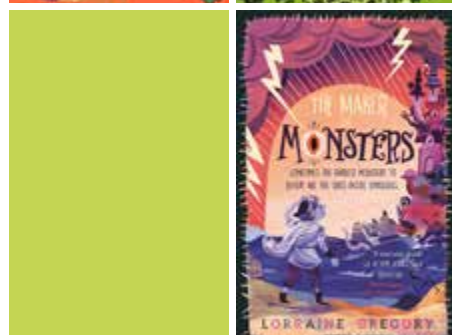
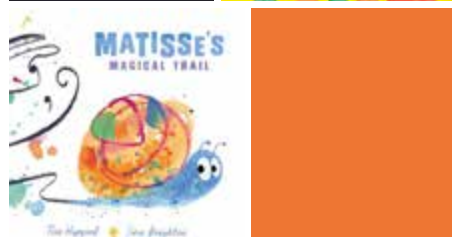


# The Federation of Children's Book Groups Newsletter



## CHILDREN'S BOOK AWARD Top 10 Announced



The children of the 12 FCBG testing groups have been busy reading and voting on books again this year. We've counted up the votes and the children have chosen another fantastic mix of books as their favourites.

As 2020 marks the 40th anniversary of the Children's Book Award we are celebrating by adding an extra category of books for this year. There was a strong showing for books for teen readers in the initial stage of voting and we are very excited to be engaging with these further through the shortlist.

You can access resources to support your work with children, and a pdf of the Pick of the Year leaflet, through the Children's Book Award pages of the Federation website (see below).

Any child in the UK can vote for their favourite in any of the categories – they just need to read every book in the category and rank them. If you are a member of an FCBG group you should vote through your group. If you are not a member you can still vote: go to <http://fcbg.org.uk/childrens-book-award/> for details. Online voting closes at 12.00 noon on Friday 11th September. Discounted sets of the Top 12 books can be purchased through Browns Books for Students at <https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/>

Follow the award on Twitter @CBACoordinator or like the CBA page on Facebook to keep up to date with news.

The winners will be announced on Saturday 10th October 2020.

**THESE DATES HAVE CHANGED DUE TO THE RESTRICTIONS ON GATHERINGS IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19. PLEASE KEEP AN EYE ON OUR WEBSITE FOR FURTHER UPDATES.**

### YOUNGER CHILDREN

**Jazz Dog** written and illustrated by Marie Voigt, published by Oxford University Press

**Matisse's Magical Trail** written by Tim Hopgood and illustrated by Sam Boughton, published by Oxford University Press

**The Runaway Pea** written by Kjartan Poskitt and illustrated by Alex Willmore, published by Simon & Schuster

### YOUNGER READERS

**Mutant Zombies Cursed my School Trip** written by Matt Brown and illustrated by Paco Sordo, published by Usborne

**Owen and the Soldier** written by Lisa Thompson, published by Barrington Stoke

**The Maker of Monsters** written by Lorraine Gregory, published by Oxford University Press

### CONFIDENT READERS

**A Pocketful of Stars** written by Aisha Bushby, published by Egmont

**D-Day Dog** written by Tom Palmer, published by Barrington Stoke

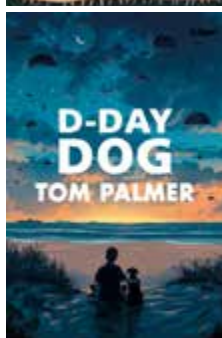
**Wildspark** written by Vashti Hardy, published by Scholastic

### OLDER READERS

**Becoming Dinah** written by Kit de Waal, published by Orion

**On the Come Up** written by Angie Thomas, published by Walker

**Two Can Keep a Secret** written by Karen M McManus, published by Penguin Random House

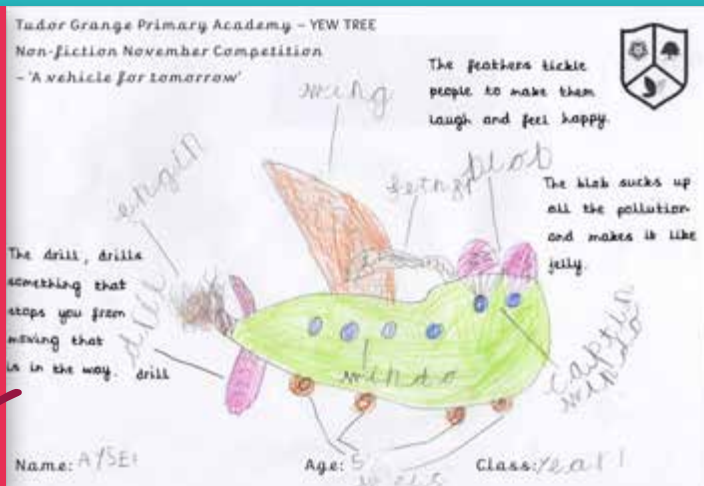




# NATIONAL NON-FICTION NOVEMBER 2019:

## TRANSPORT AND TRAVEL AROUND THE WORLD

Aysel, KS1 category  
and Overall Winner



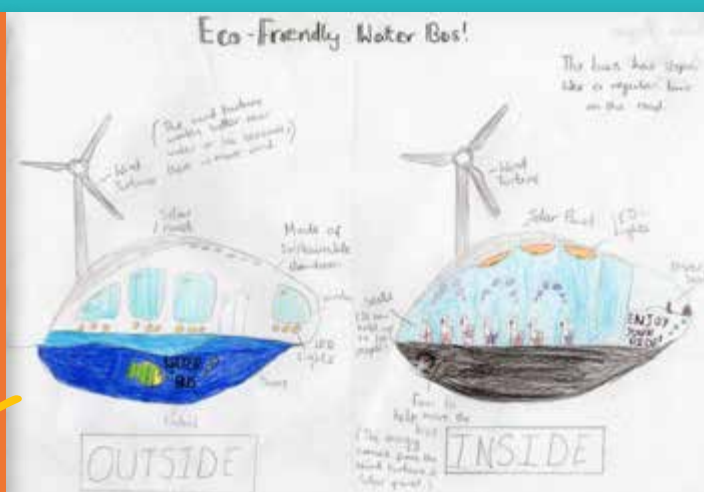
This year's competition involved designing a vehicle for tomorrow. We received 282 entries from 19 different organisations. NNFN Coordinator Marc Thomas invited members of the Aldbourne Children's Book Group committee (including two former FCBG Chairs) to judge the competition, and the prizes were awarded as follows:

**Tudor Grange Primary (Solihull)**  
Aysel, KS1 category and Overall Winner

**Hugh Gaitskell Primary (Leeds)**  
Aisha, KS2 category

**Croxley Danes School (Rickmansworth)**  
Georgia and Ciaran, KS3 category

Aisha, KS2 category



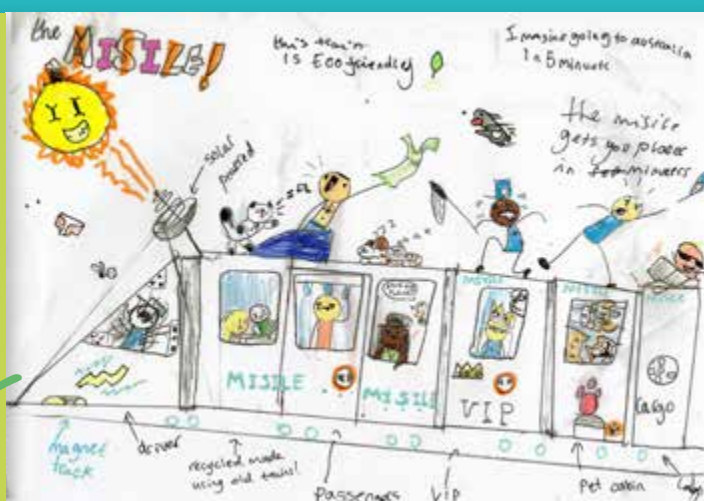
Congratulations to Aysel (Year 1), Aisha (Year 6) and Georgia and Ciaran (Year 7). The judges decided to make an exception to the 'no joint entries rule' this year, having heard from the school about the support the two children with special educational needs had given each other in order to complete the entry.

A very special thank you to Lonely Planet for their support this year, which included the banner design for the relevant Federation website pages and the fantastic prizes for the winners of the competition.

Thank you also to Cicada Books, Quarto and Raintree for their generous Twitter-based giveaways; and to all the other publishers involved who contributed to the blog programme, including Award Publishing, Bloomsbury, b small, Dorling Kindersley, Laurence King, Quarto and Walker Books.

Finally, many thanks to Marc Thomas for all his hard work during 2019. We are very sorry that he has decided to step down from the role of National Non-fiction November coordinator for personal reasons. We are delighted, however, that Chris Routh has agreed to take over for 2020 and that plans are already well underway for this year's theme 'The Planet We Share'.

Georgia and Ciaran,  
KS3 category







# National Share a Story Month – May 2020

## The Planet we Share

The theme for National Share a Story Month 2020 is very wide – “The Planet we Share” – and can include anyone or anything we share this planet with. Enclosed in the pack for groups are some exciting and useful ideas on how book groups, schools, libraries and families can take part.

Anyone interested in joining in is encouraged to hold story sharing sessions, events encompassing art, craft, and cultural activity.

There are ideas for competitions – and lots of lovely book related prizes generously donated by many publishers. There is also the added excitement of a writing competition to win a school visit from an author – check out all the details on the website. All competitions will close at noon on Tuesday 30th June 2020. The winners of all the competitions will be celebrated on

our website and in our newsletters – but do also send news of your planned activities, too. There will be interesting blogs from authors, illustrators and other bookish people on the website during May – check them out! We are delighted we will be kicking off the blogs with one from the Children's Laureate Cressida Cowell.

Do take part – and enjoy sharing stories.

We'd love you to get in touch and let us know what your group is doing for NSSM – we'd like to advertise your events, or include a report after the event, in the Newsletter or on the website.

TRICIA ADAMS

## Group News

### SOLIHULL CHILDREN'S BOOK GROUP

Phyl Gaunt

On 7th and 8th November 2019, Solihull Children's Book Group had a much anticipated visit from the author Andy Stanton. Four schools welcomed him starting with Yardley Primary. Andy's presentation included details of his latest book 'Paninis of Pompeii', as well as reminding them of the ever popular 'Mr. Gum' series. A packed hall of children was entertained with funny stories, funny facts and very funny slides. Andy carried on to Peterbrook Primary where again the audience responded with hilarity.

Next day Andy entertained Dickens Heath and Yew Tree Primary where Year Six boys were crying with laughter. Solihull children will remember this visit for a long time; it certainly encouraged many reluctant readers to pick up a book, evidence of which was the long stream of children leaving their schools with a signed copy and a big smile on their faces. Andy spent a lot of time chatting and interacting with his readers which was much appreciated by everyone.



### IPSWICH CHILDREN'S BOOK GROUP

After two school visits in the city the children's author Onjali Rauf ('Boy at the Back of the Class' and 'The Star Outside our Window') held a question and answer session for the Ipswich group at an event which they hosted with the local Waterstones in their store. There were cakes, drinks and the chance to listen to her answer insightful questions into her writing process and her thoughts on being published. If you would like to read more about this event you will find it on the Federation website [www.fcbg.org.uk](http://www.fcbg.org.uk) as a guest post.



## OXFORD CHILDREN'S BOOK GROUP

Jackie Holderness

### Biennial Bookfest October 12th 2019

The stellar line up of speakers deserved a larger audience but they were all very gracious and happy to contribute to what turned into a very special event. The day started with Kathy Lemaire (former SLA Chair) skilfully interviewing author Linda Newbery. Linda's latest book (published by David Fickling) is 'The Key to Flambards,' which is based upon the novels of K M Peyton. Linda shared her affection for the Flambard novels and explained how she had become friends with their author. Kathy Peyton was delighted with Linda's sequel, the heroine of which has to overcome serious challenges. However, she has inherited her Grandmother Christina's fierce determination and the book evolves very powerfully within a contemporary setting. Next, they were all treated to a lively and highly informative talk by BBC presenter and OUP author, Janina Ramirez, whose books, 'Riddle of the Runes' and 'Way of the Waves' feature a strong heroine, Alva, many other engaging characters, and a tame wolf called Fen. Everyone was captivated by Janina's passion for and knowledge of Norse lore and language and learned a great deal about the people who used to go 'a-Viking' in times past. Irish author, Patricia Murphy, then shared her gripping work of historical fiction, Leo's War. The story's context is WW2 Rome and it features the true-life hero of the Vatican Father Hugh Flaherty, who helped to save hundreds of allied soldiers, refugees and Jews, throughout the Nazi occupation of the city.

After that the audience was able to learn more about recent developments at The Story Museum. The Museum will re-open in the Spring of 2020, after a thrillingly imaginative refurbishment. Bill Laar closed the day with a moving overview of what it means to be heroic, to demonstrate heroic behaviours and values, all of which had been embodied by the characters in the books featured during the morning. Thanks are due to all those who came to the event, to the wonderfully generous and inspirational speakers and to the hard-working committee. Only a small profit was made, but most of that will fund the group's aims to give away yet more books to schools and family centres.

## PLYMOUTH CHILDREN'S BOOK GROUP

Hilarie Medler

### An Evening with "Mr Scruff"

In early November, Plymouth Children's Book Group members had the great privilege of being invited along by Simon James to spend an evening with him at his studio.

There was a lovely atmosphere of warmth and humour as Simon shared his thoughts, inspiration and art work from his new book "Mr Scruff". We

were all enthralled and captured as he read aloud "Mr Scruff" with the storytelling skills of a master before discussing some of the emotions evoked by such a lovely story. We even had some of our own alternative rhyming pairs for dog names and owners!



The highlight of the evening was perhaps watching Simon as he painted one of the illustrations from "Mr Scruff". It was fascinating to learn about the different effects that can be achieved with tone and shade and the attention to detail in the drawing. When you are such a perfectionist, there is no wonder that writing/illustrating a new book takes as long as it does. As always, Simon has created a wonderful new book which can be shared and appreciated on so many different levels by both young and old alike!

Thank you must go to Simon for taking the time to share his expertise with us in such a warm and friendly atmosphere. It was a great way to welcome new members into the wonderful world of children's books.

## BIRMINGHAM CHILDREN'S BOOK GROUP

Debbie Wiggett

### 50th Anniversary

In October, Birmingham Children's Book Group celebrated their FIFTIETH birthday with a meal held at a Birmingham restaurant. They were delighted that past members of the committee together with

friends from the Solihull group, along with Judith Elkin and Diane Gaunt from the Federation, were able to join the existing committee members to celebrate this special occasion.

Over the years, the book group has organised many various book related activities including events at Butlin's, hosting the Children's Book Award, initiating the design of the Federation's bear symbol, local events including an annual book quiz for local schools, and, numerous author visits. Birmingham was privileged to be one of the first groups to be involved in the Jean Russell Storyteller project. Most recently the group has established a regular monthly Book Swap and participated in the Bookfest.



Joining in the evening celebrations were authors Steve Skidmore and Robert Crowther, who both have had a long association with the group. Robert Crowther reminisced how he had first visited Birmingham at the beginning of his career. During the day, Steve and Robert visited two schools. Robert spent an enjoyable day with Year 2 and Year 5 classes making pop-ups. Steve Skidmore entertained children in Key Stage 2 reading extracts from his book and encouraging the children and members of staff to act out one of the stories. He also had lunch with a group of children, who took the opportunity to ask him questions about his books.

No birthday celebration would be complete without a cake. Steve and Robert were invited to cut the cake, designed and baked by the husband of one of their committee members.



In the fifty years what has remained constant is the aim to 'bring children and books together'. Wouldn't it be terrific if this continues for another fifty years?



## HARROGATE CHILDREN'S BOOK GROUP

### Tom Palmer Workshops

To start HCBG's 40th Anniversary celebrations off with a bang, we were delighted to sponsor a visit by Tom Palmer to Willow Tree School, Harrogate. Tom kept the children enthralled with a question and answer session in assembly and workshops for Years 5 & 6 on his latest book, D-Day Dog. Fed Ted was proud to give out signed books as raffle prizes to 3 lucky winners!



### Chris Mould and Eoin Colfer visit Waterstones and Imagined Things Bookshop

Nicola has had a busy weekend meeting author, Eoin Colfer and illustrator, Chris Mould. In fact she enjoyed a double dose of Chris Mould, firstly in Waterstones and then in independent bookshop, Imagined Things, where Fed Ted joined in. Chris was kind enough to sign two copies of The Iron Man for us to use in a competition.



### Big Birthday Bash!

We had so much fun at our Big Birthday Bash! We celebrated the anniversaries of five classic children's books – 'The Tiger Who Came To Tea' by Judith Kerr, 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt' by Michael Rosen, 'The Gruffalo' by Julia Donaldson, 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' by Eric Carle and 'Giraffes Can't Dance' by Giles Andreae. The children then had the chance to create their own Gruffalo or Caterpillar. And what birthday party would be complete with a slice of birthday cake? Thank you to everyone who came along to celebrate with us!



**TO BE INCLUDED IN THE  
NEXT ISSUE**

**PLEASE SEND YOUR GROUP  
NEWS AND ATTACH SEPARATE  
HIGH RESOLUTION PHOTOS TO  
HILARIE MEDLER, THE GROUP  
LIAISON OFFICER**

**[groupliaison@fcbg.org.uk](mailto:groupliaison@fcbg.org.uk)**



# SALISBURY PLAIN CBG LAUNCH

## WE CELEBRATE THE BEGINNING OF A NEW BOOK GROUP

On Saturday 21st September The Salisbury Plain Children's Book Group held its official launch event at Netheravon All Saints Primary School. There was a superb line up of illustrators and authors for a jam packed day of entertainment. The day attracted families from a wide area of the Plain with children from at least seven local schools in attendance.

The day kicked off with local picture book author and illustrator, Kristina Stephenson who held her audience, young and old, captivated for the entire morning. She treated the group to a fantastic show based on her book 'Why are there so many books about bears?' With props, puppets and dressing up, Kristina knows exactly how to bring her story to life. There was lots of audience participation with children playing the main characters of the story, including 'William Shakespeare' and 'Albert Swinestein'. Children were rewarded with cakes, balloons and special certificates from the author. The afternoon session was aimed at the older children starting with Martin Brown, illustrator of the popular Horrible Histories series – this was a hugely exciting booking for our very first event. Martin gave the children lots of advice and tips on drawing and learning how to try different things out. It was really inspiring seeing how he worked and hearing how he became an illustrator. He also treated everyone to some insight of his own incredible 'Lesser Spotted Animals' series. Animals such as The Black Footed Ferret and The Pika were brought to life by Martin as he drew and talked about the inspiration behind the books. Rounding off the event was debut novelist, Charlotte Lo, who spoke to the group about her novel 'We won an Island'. She gave everyone an insight into what it is like to be a writer of children's fiction, what gives her inspiration and her road to publication. There were lots of fantastic questions asked by children and adults alike!



feedback from members and attendees, as well as the authors.

**'It was a great day and I thoroughly enjoyed being part of it. I think you and your team are amazing and should be applauded by the whole publishing industry. It is grass roots enterprises like yours that will have a lasting impact on children's reading habits. You should be very proud of yourselves'.**

**KRISTINA STEPHENSON**

## NON FICTION NOVEMBER

In November they held their second, slightly lower key event – free for all of their lovely members. They held a transport themed junk modelling afternoon and even had a guest appearance from a vintage Landrover and some super motorbikes as inspiration for the children.



**A message for people out there who are thinking about setting up an FCBG group**

We have had so much fun in Salisbury setting up the group and have lots of fabulous things in the pipeline for 2020, including some exciting events for our member schools. If anyone is reading this and considering setting up a group – I would really advise just going for it!

Don't be shy in asking for favours from publishers, authors, illustrators or other members of the book community – most are delighted to be asked and will say no if they cannot help this time. Thanks to the generosity of the wider book community we have managed to have two fantastic raffles at our events, provided a joining pack to our family members and school members, given our three member schools a lovely book gift for Non Fiction November and had enough proofs to set up our 'Book Review Squad' of our young members who have been reading and reviewing books for our blog.

And don't forget, Hilarie Medler (Group Liaison Officer- address on the back page of this newsletter) is always available to support you in the planning stages and once you have set up a group.

**SALISBURY PLAIN CHILDREN'S BOOK GROUP**

# REFLECTIONS ON BEING FCBG CHAIR

## GOODBYE CAROUSEL AND THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

Members of the Federation were deeply saddened by the news that **Carousel – the Guide to Children's Books** was to cease publication after 24 years and we felt that we wanted to pay tribute to the contribution it has made over these years.

Carousel was conceived in 1995 following Anne Wood's decision to cease publication of Books for Your Children. Its development was based on the belief of its founders, David and Jenny Blanch, that every child has the right to be presented with books that are both appropriate and stimulating. Over the years, its reputation grew as a magazine that provided a source of information and independent reviews for people who have an enthusiasm for and work in the world of children's books, and especially parents and carers.

In 2016, changing circumstances for David and Jenny meant they had to step down and it looked as if Carousel would close, but David and Elaine Chant, members of the editorial team at the time, agreed to take over its running, supported by Debbie Wiggett on the finance side and Martin and Sinead Kromer who had been doing a stalwart job as reviews editors. One of the highlights for David and Elaine during their time running Carousel was seeing that first edition under their leadership and on which they had worked so hard, finally come to print. Over the past five years, the quality of the magazine went from strength to strength – an increase in pages, high quality production and design, informative reviews from a wonderful team of volunteer reviewers, and a myriad of excellent articles and author features either self-penned or as a result of interviews undertaken by the current editorial team. On a personal level it was a privilege to be invited to join the editorial board and subsequently to jointly take on the role of Reviews Editor with Debbie Wiggett and Tricia Adams, when Martin and Sinead decided it was time to step down.

There has always been a special relationship between Carousel and FCBG, something that David and Elaine have always been keen to foster. Carousel supported FCBG's 50th birthday celebrations with centre page spreads in each magazine that year, focusing on different aspects of FCBG and sponsored the successful 'Three Laureates' event in Birmingham with Julia Donaldson, Jacqueline Wilson and Chris Riddell. FCBG has supported Carousel by taking regular adverts and encouraging its members to offer the magazine as part of their membership.

In the summer of 2019, following changing circumstances, Elaine and David announced to the editorial team that they would be standing down after the autumn/winter issue. Despite everyone's concerted efforts, in seeking new partners to take on the day to day running of the magazine and role of editor in chief, no-one could be found and Elaine and David had to make the sad and difficult decision to cease publication.

Elaine and David have said they would like to take this opportunity to thank FCBG members and Executive Committee for the numerous kind messages they have received since this decision was taken and for all the partnership working and support FCBG has given Carousel over many years. I think we in the Federation, would like to say how sorry we are to lose this amazing resource, a HUGE thank you to Elaine and David for all their immense hard work in ensuring that we continued to have it for the past five years and for it having been such an informative and inspirational resource for us all. We are all hoping that at some point in the future, a new publication embodying its spirit and ethos will, like the Phoenix, rise from the ashes.

ANNIE EVERALL



Taking over as Chair of FCBG during the organisation's 50th anniversary year was a real privilege and I thoroughly enjoyed helping to organise and deliver our three celebratory events at national level. Towards the end of 2018, I was granted a few weeks off from my day job to focus on Federation work which enabled me to visit some of the Children's Book Groups and join in with their events - most memorably in Lewes, Lincolnshire, Somerset and West Wales. I also spent a fantastic three days spreading the word about FCBG in schools and libraries on Merseyside and am delighted that we now have a new Children's Book Group up and running in that area.

It's been a very busy two years with many challenges and rewards. Along the way we've said our farewells to several experienced and highly valued National Executive Committee members, but we've also welcomed new members to the team, who are already contributing new talents and ideas. Although two book groups have closed, several have celebrated significant birthdays, and four new groups have opened. As I pass the baton on to Diane Gaunt, we are marking the 40th anniversary of The Children's Book Award and working on the development of a new website.

Although change is inevitable, even desirable, and sometimes necessary, I think that we are all united in our sadness about the closure of *Carousel* this year. The magazine has been a key element of what we offer to our groups and members for so many years; and how we respond to the closure will be high on the agenda of the National Executive Committee's next meeting. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has served on the committee during my term of office - attending four meetings a year requires commitment, but only represents a fraction of the work done by committee members. I applaud the Children's Book Groups who continue to do sterling work bringing children and books together through a variety of events and activities tailored for their local communities. Never forget that everything achieved by the Federation at both local and national level is done entirely by volunteers.

It has been a great pleasure to meet and work with many organisations, publishers, authors, illustrators and individuals involved in the world of children's books, whom I whole-heartedly thank for their ongoing support. However, I remain in total awe of all the time and effort our Children's Book Groups and members devote to fulfilling the Federation's mission to encourage children and young people to read for pleasure. Here's to the next 50 years!

CHRIS ROUTH, FEBRUARY 2020



# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

## APRIL

20 CLIPPA shortlist announced  
23 World Book Night  
Little Rebels Book Award shortlist announced

## MAY

9-17 National Share-A-Story Month  
11 Stratford Literary Festival  
23 CLIPPA shadowing Scheme launch  
Elmer Day

## JUNE

1-7 Pyjamarama  
13 Children's Book Award ceremony  
11 Empathy Day  
17 Carnegie/Greenaway winners announced

## JULY

Little Rebels Book Award winner announced  
'Summer' CLIPPA winner announced  
1 Branford Boase Award winner announced  
3-5 UKLA International Conference  
UKLA Book Awards winners announced

**GIVEN THE CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES, PLEASE ENSURE YOU CHECK RELEVANT WEBSITES FOR UP TO DATE INFORMATION ON THE AVAILABILITY OF ACTIVITIES.**

**Deadline for the next issue:  
Thursday 7th May 2020**

**Next Issue:** 40th Anniversary of the Children's Book Award  
NSSM  
And more...

Please send all your group news, high resolution photos and top tips to [groupliaison@fcbg.org.uk](mailto:groupliaison@fcbg.org.uk)

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don't forget our  
**website: [www.fcbg.org.uk](http://www.fcbg.org.uk)**  
where you can subscribe to our blog!



## Executive Committee

The next Executive meetings will be on Saturdays

**2nd May, 11th July and 17th October 2020**

All meetings are held in London. Please contact [chair@fcbg.org.uk](mailto:chair@fcbg.org.uk) for further information at least two weeks in advance of the meeting if you would like to attend as an observer.

## CAN YOU PLAY A NATIONAL ROLE IN THE FEDERATION?

We are very keen to talk to anyone who is interested in the possibility of joining the Executive Committee this year. We are currently looking to fill the roles of **Social Media Manager**, **UpdaTED editor** and **National Non-Fiction Coordinator** for 2021 onwards. We would also love to hear from anyone with back office website management skills. Please contact **Diane Gaunt** if you are interested in supporting us in this way.

## CONTACT LIST

**Please note that we have changed our email addresses as follows. We hope this makes it easier for people to contact us, and that it will help continuity when roles change. Please use these addresses from now on.**

### Chair

**Diane Gaunt**  
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Dudley CBG

### Vice Chair

**Tricia Adams**  
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Northants CBG

### Treasurer

**Jane Etheridge**  
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Oxtden CBG

### National Secretary

**(to be ratified at AGM)**  
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### Minutes Secretary,

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### Group Liaison Officer

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### Conference Programme Organiser

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### Blog / website

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### National Non-Fiction November

**Non-executive Member**  
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Reading CBG

