**UNDER STRICT EMBARGO UNTIL 00.01 4 MARCH 2022**

**Wildlife hits a winning streak as Invented by Animals & The Last Bear take top prizes at 2022 Blue Peter Book Awards**



**Friday 4th March –** Today, BookTrust, the UK’s largest children’s reading charity is excited to announce winners of the 2022 Blue Peter Book Awards as voted for by primary school aged-children from across the UK. Taking the top spot for **Best Book with Facts** is ***Invented by Animals*** by **Christiane Dorian and Gosia Herba** and honoured as the winner of **Best Story** is ***The Last Bear***by **Hannah Gold and Levi Pinfold.**

***The Last Bear***is a moving tale that children will fall in love with. Mixing the adventure of life in the Arctic Circle with danger, excitement, a touching exploration of April's relationship with her father and a thought-provoking exploration of the climate emergency, Hannah Gold's story is a reminder of the difference that one person can make.Even though it's set in the frozen climes of the Arctic Circle, it is full of warmth.

***The Last Bear* author, Hannah Gold, said:**

*“When I found out I had won, I burst into tears and couldn't speak. Like many children, I grew up on a diet of Blue Peter, following the show’s adventures and falling in love with all the pets. This feels particularly apt, because whilst The Last Bear touches upon serious themes, at its core, it is a story about the love between a child and an animal. Some of my earliest memories are visits to the library with my mum and then scampering back home to lose myself in the pages of a book. Books aren't just about escape. For children, stories play an increasingly important role in teaching empathy, kindness and tolerance. They help shape identity, a sense of belonging and often lend courage.”*

**Levi Pinfold, who illustrated the book, said:**

*“Who’d have thought reading too many comics as a kid would lead to a Blue Peter Book Award?! It's amazing to be a part of Hannah's wonderful book. To me, good stories are the ultimate enjoyment. It doesn’t matter what kind of person you are; you can guarantee someone has written a story which will grab you and not let go. It’s a thrill to celebrate something that can give so much pleasure. And to those of you who might be sitting on the fence about picking up a book: Take a chance, try something that looks good, it can change your life! It did mine.”*

***Invented by Animals***is a fun and informative non-fiction book that explores how animal anatomy, behaviour and skills have influenced the development of a range of human inventions. Packed full of interesting information, it not only highlights the remarkable capabilities of many creatures, but also shows how these qualities have been incorporated into the design of various objects and technologies.

**On the win, *Invented by Animals* author, Christiane Dorian said:**

**“***I am thrilled to win the Blue Peter Book Award amongst so many fantastic books. The fact that it is judged by children makes it even more special, as they are the best critics. I would say to children, read about what you enjoy. Whether it’s stepping into an imaginary world of wizards or learning all about amazing creatures or tropical jungles, books help us to understand the world around us and stimulate our curiosity and imagination. They can be funny, informative and inspiring. If you find books daunting, you don’t have to read it from beginning to end in one go. You can dip in and out, look at the pictures and go for the bits of text you find most interesting.”*

**Illustrator Gosia Herba, added: “***I love creating books for children, so it's my greatest joy to be appreciated by the readers. As a child, I spent most of my time reading or drawing, two things, each connected with books, which helped me discover my true passion: illustrating and making books for kids. We can do incredible things using nothing but our imagination and reading can be a great adventure. Don't be discouraged if you don't like a particular book. Look for another one that will interest and amaze you with the story. There are so many books in the world that everyone will find something interesting.”*

Managed by BookTrust, the UK’s largest children’s reading charity, the immensely popular Blue Peter Book Awards honour amazing authors, imaginative illustrators and the best books for primary school-aged children, published in the last 12 months. The winning titles were voted for by over 300 children from 12 schools across the UK.

**Diana Gerald, CEO, BookTrust commented:**

*“In an ever-changing and stressful world, more than ever we need brilliant and informative books that can grab the attention of every child, no matter what their interests, and inspire even the most reluctant of readers to pick up a book. At an age when children are starting to grow and develop their interests, the 2022 Blue Peter Book Award winners have offered children knowledge, escapism, new role models and nurtured their curiosity. But most of all they have inspired a new generation of children on their journey to becoming readers.*

*Congratulations to Christiane, Gosia, Hannah and Levi and all the shortlisted authors and illustrators for your fabulous books and a special thank you to all the young readers who have devoured these books and voted for their favourite. We hope everyone who’s participated in these brilliant awards will go on and share their favourites with their friends, families and teachers and inspire new readers on the way.”*

On Friday 4th March, winners will be announced during a special edition of Blue Peter on CBBC and BBC iPlayer from 5pm.

**Blue Peter Editor, Ellen Evans, says:**

*“Blue Peter is all about our audience, and in this 100th year of the BBC, over 300 kids read the shortlisted books to pick the Blue Peter Book Award winners. They chose two books about how incredible animals are and how they help us in different ways. Invented by Animals, winner of the Best Book with Facts, shows the ways that nature inspires scientists and engineers and how much we can discover from the natural world.*

*The Last Bear, winner of Best Story, has a message not to be afraid to try to make positive difference because each small thing can make an impact, whether that's to a person, an animal, or the planet. These two books show how aware the young generation are of our relationship to the natural world, how important it is to protect our planet and embrace our differences.’’*

Blue Peter is live every Friday at 5pm on CBBC and BBC iPlayer - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/shows/blue-peter>

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**Notes to Editors**

The Blue Peter Book Awards 2022 judging panel consisted of:

* Caroline Hill-Trevor, Head of Book Purchasing at BookTrust
* Catherine Millar, Founder of Reading for Pleasure consultancy
* Ellen Evans (non-voting chair), Editor of Blue Peter
* Emily Drabble, Head of Children's Books and Prizes at BookTrust
* Jasmine Richards, Founder of Storymix
* Maisie Craddock, Blue Peter’s Presenter Co-Ordinator
* Scott Evans, founder of The Reader Teacher blog, primary school teacher and children’s books consultant
* Simon Hudd, UKS2 Teacher and English Lead, Belleville Primary School
* Soraya Berry, Learning Resource Manager at secondary school

**About Blue Peter:**

Blue Peter, is the longest running kids TV show in the world featuring Adam, Mwaksy, Richie and Henry the dog. Blue Peter is packed full of challenges, celebrities, and things to do. Every week on CBBC and iPlayer, Blue Peter encourages kids to join in, earn their badge, enter a competition, be creative and adventurous.

For fun-filled content about books and authors head to the Blue Peter website

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bluepeter>

Ellen Evans is Editor of Blue Peter, the world’s longest running children’s series, with weekly live shows, an amazing online fan club and Blue Peter badges. A life-long fan of Blue Peter, she worked in bookshops for five years before joining the BBC where she has made factual and entertainment shows for BBC One, BBC Two and BBC Three, CBBC and CBeebies.

**About BookTrust:**

BookTrust is dedicated to getting children reading because we know that children who read are happier, healthier, more empathetic and more creative. Their early language development is supported and they also do better at school.

We are the UK’s largest children’s reading charity; each year we reach 3.9 million children across the UK with books, resources and support to help develop a love of reading, because we know that reading can transform lives.

We work with a variety of partners to get children excited about books, rhymes and stories, because if reading is fun, children will want to do it. Our books are delivered via health, library, schools and early years practitioners, and are supported with guidance, advice and resources to encourage the reading habit. Booktrust.org.uk