

**National Charity, WheelPower set to host annual
National Junior Games event at Stoke Mandeville Stadium
1st – 4th October 2018.**

The National Junior Games is just one of WheelPower's many wheelchair-friendly and inclusive sporting events designed to increase the importance of how sport can play a vital positive role in the wellbeing and mental health of young disabled people across the country.

Latest national research suggests that non-disabled people are twice (46.6%) as likely to play sport than disabled people (24.4%).

The flagship event, aimed at disabled children aged 12-18 years old, provides a superb opportunity to take time out of the classroom and discover sport in a safe, welcoming and friendly environment. This year some 140 participants from across the country are expected to attend.

The Games will combine have-a-go sessions with coaching from some of the country's leading sports professionals, and competitions in a range of different age groups and sports.

The initiative is all in line with WheelPower's strategy, 'Pushing Forward' which aims to transform lives through sport and enable more disabled people to lead healthy and active lives. It also coincides with the Charity's 70th anniversary celebrations of the birth of the Paralympic Movement and wheelchair sport at Stoke Mandeville.

Oliver Buncombe, Sports Development Officer comments, "The National Junior Games are a fantastic way in which disabled children and young adults can experience and engage with sport and physical activity. The Games also provide a platform for the sharing of ideas and experiences between participants, teachers, parents, carers and guardians. WheelPower is thoroughly excited to run the Games this year and look forward to welcoming participants both new and old".

Martin McElhatton, Chief Executive of WheelPower says, "Participants will be following in the paths of Paralympic stars such as Ade Adepitan, David Weir, and Baroness Tanni-Grey Thompson, who all took part in WheelPower's National Junior Games on their road to success. Although for WheelPower it is about giving the young people the chance to achieve their personal best, find a sport they love and inspire them to continue playing sport and being active throughout their lives."

The sports and activities include; archery, athletics, wheelchair basketball, boccia, bowls, cue sports, wheelchair fencing, golf, handcycling, polybat, powerlifting, wheelchair rugby, swimming, table games, table tennis, tennis and zone hockey.

Transforming lives through sport

WheelPower, Stoke Mandeville Stadium, Guttman Road, Stoke Mandeville, Buckinghamshire, HP21 9PP
Tel: 01296 395995 Email: info@wheelpower.org.uk www.wheelpower.org.uk

Parents, guardians, personal assistants, and teachers will be involved in supporting participants during activities to ensure that they get the best experience possible throughout the event. All sports coaches are qualified, have DBS checks and have lots of experience of delivering activity to disabled people.

Previous participants have commented on how the National Junior Games experience has noticeably improved their lives:

Fyona Gamble – Ashfield, Nottinghamshire - 17 years old

“I was eleven when I first came to Stoke Mandeville (National Junior Games) and I participated in the “Have A Go” sessions. I want it to lead to the Paralympics definitely, we’ve only got a year to the next Games, but I reckon 2020 I’m definitely in for. I enjoy archery. I have everything to give for the National Junior Games, honestly it’s amazing”.

As part of the event, the Buckinghamshire High Sheriff, Ruth Farewell, will be attending a reception to highlight the importance of this annual event in WheelPower’s sporting calendar. The whole programme culminates in the much loved disco which adds a social element to the Games in a celebration of everyone’s efforts to take part in sport and be more physically active.

-ENDS-

FOR MORE INFORMATION, TO ARRANGE AN INTERVIEW, OR TO ATTEND THIS EVENT:

Contact:

Carolyn Fray

Marketing, Communications & Engagement Officer

WheelPower

Email: carolyn.fray@wheelpower.org.uk

T: 01296 395995

W: www.wheelpower.org.uk

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NOTES TO EDITOR:

Sports Programme attached.

Venue address:

STOKE MANDEVILLE STADIUM

Guttman Road

Stoke Mandeville

Aylesbury

Buckinghamshire

HP21 9PP

DATE(S): 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th October 2018

TIMINGS: Morning: 9am – 12 noon, PM sessions: Afternoon: 1pm-5pm,

Evening: 7pm-9pm (1st, 2nd, 3rd only)

Further Case Studies:

- Chloe Osbourne – Table Tennis

“Before I got here the first time it was nerve wracking, I didn’t know what to expect and then when I was here I loved every single moment of it, absolutely every minute. I met fantastic people, couldn’t ask for any better. Before I knew about the Junior Games I didn’t realise that there was such a range of sport out there for the disabled and when I came here it opened my eyes up so much!!

Since coming here I’ve had training with Table Tennis.

I am quite competitive and for me this is where it all started, my biggest dream is to play in the Paralympics, but I don’t know which one yet!

- Daniel Hopkins – 10 years old from Barrow in Furness, Cumbria.

Daniel heard about the Junior Games from a [Boccia](#) teacher who was visiting his school.

“I’ve been playing sports with other people and being in competitions. I’ve enjoyed all of it really. I’ve found it really amazing! I’m hoping to try the shooting, the rowing and the hockey.”

Daniel’s Dad, Jonathan comments: “He’s told everyone at school about it and the school have been really good. The PE teacher has told me to take lots of photo’s so they can go on the sports wall when we get back”.

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Patrons: Ade Adepitan MBE, David Barnett, Annabelle Christie, Baroness Grey-Thompson DBE, Paddy Hopkirk MBE, Roger Jelfcoate CBE DL, The Countess of Westmorland

President: The Hon. Mrs Mark Vestey

Vice Presidents: Ann Cutcliffe OBE, Dennis Guttman FRCP, Sally Haynes MBE, Glyn Hibbert, Mark Jarrad, Rod Jones, Eva Loeffler OBE, Baroness Masham, David Skinner

Chairman: Rob Wilson Chief Executive: Martin McElhatton

Charity registration number: 265498 The British Wheelchair Sports Foundation Limited (WheelPower) registered office: as above Company registration number: 01059490

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About WheelPower:

WheelPower have been providing opportunities in sport for people with physical impairments for nearly 70 years.

Based in Stoke Mandeville, the home of the Paralympic movement, WheelPower is at the heart of wheelchair sport.

From first-timers to Paralympic medallists, WheelPower support and promote participation at all levels. We have seen how playing sport can enrich lives, offering tremendous physical and psychological benefits, whatever your age or ability.

Each year, WheelPower supports over 100,000 disabled people to participate in sport and activity across the country.

Join us in this mission as a participant, supporter or volunteer and together we can help transform lives through sport.

About the 'Pushing Forward' Strategy:

Pushing Forward is WheelPower's Strategic Plan for the period between 2017 and 2021, in line with the Government Sport England Strategy ('Towards an Active Nation'). It aims to move the organisation forward, building on its heritage, traditions and people to provide opportunities which will enable more disabled people to lead healthy and active lives.

Pushing Forward will deliver our Mission to 'Transform Lives Through Sport' and is based on our core values as an open, inspiring, forward looking and innovative organisation.

Pushing Forward will:

- Increase participation in sport and physical activity
- Provide iconic and inclusive facilities at Stoke Mandeville Stadium
- Ensure WheelPower is a credible and robust organisation
- Inspire people through our work, our heritage and the power of the Paralympic Games

Pushing Forward will create opportunities to encourage inactive wheelchair users as well as those already taking part and is an exciting new chapter for WheelPower.

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