

## The WheelPower National Junior Games are back this June!



This month WheelPower, the national charity for wheelchair sport are delighted to be hosting the National Junior Games after a 3 year absence due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Games will take place at the Birthplace of the Paralympic Movement from June 28 to July 1 as over 100 physically disabled children (aged 11 – 18), their families, teachers and carers, from all over the UK come together to enjoy three days of sporting fun at Stoke Mandeville Stadium.

The Games have been taking place since the 1980s and over these years thousands of children and young disabled people have discovered their passion for sport, supporting them to live a healthier and more active lives as a result. This extraordinary event has also played a pivotal role in the development of many Paralympics GB stars, such as Alfie Hewett (tennis) Jess Stretton (archery), Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson and David Weir (athletics) who all took part in the Games on their way to sporting success.



The National Junior Games are a great place to discover sport in an inclusive and welcoming environment. During the week the participants will try a variety of sports, from wheelchair basketball to swimming, handcycling to table tennis, and lots more! In 2022 the ethos of the Games will be to ‘Achieve your Personal Best’ and through a series of fun challenges, and with the support of experienced and qualified coaches the children will develop their own skills and talents for sport.

Following the pandemic the return of events such as the National Junior Games are now of even greater importance. Latest research from Activity Alliance shows that disabled people have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic:

- 77% of disabled people want to be more active.
- Only 3 in 10 (28%) disabled people feel encouraged to return to being active, compared to 50% of non-disabled people.
- Disabled people are less likely to look forward to taking part in face-to-face activities (30% vs 44% of non-disabled people).

*Source: Activity Alliance Annual Disability and Activity Survey, 2021 – 2022*

### “I love the National Junior Games”

“The Games have allowed me to really break through my own personal boundaries and explore new sporting adventures that I’d never experience where I live. They have definitely changed my life.” **Daniel from Cumbria**

“The week isn’t just about competing, it enabled students to develop their confidence, social and inter-personal skills and learn new skills that they can use in their daily lives. It was incredible to see and long may the success continue.” **St John Fisher School, North Yorkshire.**



“We love seeing the joy and love for sport that shines through during the Games and we are delighted that following the pandemic they can now return. The introduction of a new format focussed on personal best will help physically disabled children to discover a sport and activities they love and build upon their confidence by taking part. It is going to be a fantastic week and everyone at WheelPower is really excited to be able to host this life changing event once again.” **Martin McElhatton, WheelPower Chief Executive.**

**ENDS**

**NOTES TO EDITORS:**

**Please feel free to use the images attached alongside this press release.**

**About WheelPower**

WheelPower have been providing opportunities in sport for people with physical impairments for over **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**, we 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.

While sport can develop confidence and improve your health, it’s also a great way to put a smile on the faces of those taking part. Each year, WheelPower supports over **62,099 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**.

**Website:** [www.wheelpower.org.uk](http://www.wheelpower.org.uk)

**Social media:** WheelPower can be found on all channels so please do tag us into your posts using the following: [@wheelchairsport](https://www.facebook.com/wheelchairsport) (Facebook) [@wheelpower](https://twitter.com/wheelpower) (twitter) [@wheelpower\\_official](https://www.instagram.com/wheelpower_official) (Instagram)

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