



The Bingo Association donates *Sunshine Coach* to Llanishen Fach Primary School in Cardiff

Celtic Manor, Newport, 25th May 2017: A Sunshine Coach, provided by Variety, the Children's Charity, has been presented by The Bingo Association Chief Executive, Miles Baron, alongside Lisa Morgan chief operating Officer, and Jeff Harris CEO from Castle Bingo, to **Llanishen Fach Primary School** at Celtic Manor today. The Bingo Association were holding their Annual Golf Day at Celtic Manor, where over 70 bingo colleagues gather and also raise money for Variety.

Llanishen Fach Primary School is a mainstream school with a Special Needs Resource Base for up to 20 pupils aged 5-11 years old, who primarily need to develop their speech and language skills. The school is fully committed to integrating the children with special needs with mainstream classes. The new specially adapted minibus, with wheelchair access will be instrumental in enriching their learning experience. It will allow them to travel and attend activities with their peers. The opportunities afforded to the children will develop their social skills, independence and build their confidence for future challenges.

This Sunshine Coach is the 6th donated by The Bingo Association in the past two years thanks to the fundraising by the bingo industry and players nationwide, who smashed their target of £500,000 in support of Variety, the Children's Charity. Throughout 2015 and 2016, the funds raised by The Bingo Association's fun for Variety have also supported a number of grants for specialist, sensory and medical equipment, including a sensory room at a special needs school, powered and sports wheelchairs, provided a number of memorable days and outings for disabled and disadvantaged children across the UK.

Colleen Ettridge, Head of Fundraising at Variety, the Children's Charity said:

"We have been overwhelmed by the generosity of the Bingo Association, its members and customers over the last two years. Since 1962, Variety has donated over 5,400 Sunshine Coaches to schools across the UK so we can give disabled and disadvantaged children and young people the ability to get the most out of life. I know that this Sunshine coach will make a massive difference to the young lives at Llanishen Fach Primary School."

Miles Baron, Chief Executive of the Bingo Association said:

"More than 400 bingo clubs across the UK made this very worthy donation of a Sunshine Coach possible and so I must thank the staff and bingo players for their support. We're very excited to continue our fundraising throughout 2017/2018 and hope to reach our target of £1 million to help more children get the most out of their childhood and reach their unique potential." **Lisa Morgan, CEO of Castle Bingo added:** "Castle Bingo are proud to be associated with Variety, the Children's Charity, our members are always supportive of their local community, we are delighted to have played a part in raising the money to donate the Sunshine Coach to Llanishen Fach School"

Sarah Coombes, Head teacher at Llanishen Fach Primary School said: "We are very grateful to Variety and the Bingo Association for their donation of a specialised Sunshine Coach. This donation will make a fantastic impact upon the children, providing them with the opportunity to join in on a variety of activities, enriching their lives enormously".

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Notes to editors:

About Variety, the Children's Charity

Variety, the Children's Charity, believes that neither disability nor disadvantage should prevent a child from realising their full potential. Since setting up its UK division in 1949, the charity has raised over £200 million and supported over 800,000 children affected by ill health, disadvantage and disability.

With a focus on helping children make the most of their childhood, Variety the Children's Charity, provides support through four core programmes:

Mobility - providing specialist equipment including customised electric wheelchairs and bespoke Sunshine Coaches for schools ensuring children develop a greater sense of freedom and adventure

Health - equipping children's hospitals with the latest medical technology and life changing aids

Education - equipping Youth Clubs and young people's organisations – facilitating new skills and developing greater self-worth

Variety Great Days Out - providing new experiences through educational programmes and exciting outings

Variety, the Children's Charity, launched in the United States in 1928 and is the oldest international children's charity. It has divisions across 13 countries (United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Jersey, Republic of Ireland, France, Israel, Japan, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Australia, Barbados and Eastern Caribbean) helping children at the local community level.

Since its beginning, Variety has designated as "Chief Barker" the person elected by the Trustees of the Charity to act as Chairman of the Board. It is in honorary position. "Chief Barker" reflects the charity's Showbusiness roots; these included circus, from which the term emanates.

Since 2009, Variety has partnered with SportsAid to support young sporting talent from different Paralympic disciplines, by providing essential items such as sport kits and equipment, to support with travel costs and accommodation. Of the 55 disabled athletes Variety has supported, 17 were chosen as part of Team GB for the 2012 London Paralympics and included Gold Medal winners and MBE honourees Ollie Hynd and Johnnie Peacock.

Variety is a registered charity in England and Wales (209259) and Scotland (SC038505)

For more information or to donate to Variety, please visit www.variety.org.uk

Follow Variety, the Children's Charity on twitter @VarietyGB or www.facebook.com/VarietyGB

About The Bingo Association

The Bingo Association is the trade association of the licensed bingo industry in Great Britain, representing the proprietors licensed under The Gambling Act 2005. www.bingo-association.co.uk

There are 51 proprietors in membership. Membership profile ranges from the large operators, including Gala (138 clubs) and Mecca (97 clubs), to smaller operators like Carlton Leisure (14 clubs) and many single unit businesses.

The bingo sector directly employs over 13,000 people in the UK. Over 3 million customers made over 48m visits to bingo clubs last year.