



Press Release

For immediate release

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'All together now' for Football and Peace Day

YOUNG people from England and Germany are at the heart of a unique Football and Peace Day being held this month to mark the Centenary of the First World War.

Organised by the National Children's Football Alliance (NCFA), the event will be held at Gallagher Stadium, home of Maidstone United FC, on Friday, April 25, from 9.30am to 3pm.

Sports Minister Helen Grant will be attending and other guests include NCFA patron and renowned bestselling Irish author Don Mullan, Dr Emma Hanna of the University of Greenwich and founder member Ivan Kakembo of the Uganda Youth Soccer Academy.

Pupils from five schools in Kent – Borden Grammar School, Sittingbourne; Herne Bay High School; Oasis Academy, Isle of Sheppey; Swadelands School, Lenham and High Weald Academy, Cranbrook – will be joined by students from Humboldt-Gymnasium Bad Pymont in Germany in friendly games of football, rugby and cricket and boxing sessions. All four sports have strong associations with the 1914-1918 conflict.

Thanks to a £32,500 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) towards the NCFA's Football and Peace Children's Programme, the Kent youngsters have been researching the impact of the war on local communities and looking at the role of sport in war and peace. Their work will be exhibited at the event. Other highlights include an assault course facilitated by the British Army FA.

NCFA chairman James Lamont said: "More than 100 children will be involved in the sporting activities on the day, which will evoke the spirit of the iconic Christmas Truce football match in 1914 and The Farm song *All Together Now*."

"We're looking forward to welcoming the Sports Minister to share in this special event which we hope will be rolled out across the country in the centenary year."



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Stuart McLeod, head of the Heritage Lottery Fund South East, said: “Using the iconic 1914 Christmas Day Truce to explore the relationship between sport and the First World War, young people have been learning about how important recreation was to soldiers during the war.

“Taking part in sport provided men in the trenches with momentary relief from fighting and enabled them to be at peace, if only for a short time. It will be great to see children from both the UK and Germany recreating some of the most popular wartime sports, making new friends and learning about how this global conflict shaped the world they live in today.

“The Heritage Lottery Fund has already awarded £47m to projects – like Football and Peace – that are helping people across the UK commemorate the Centenary.”

Helen Grant MP added: “Sport is a brilliant way to bring people from all backgrounds together. As we count down to the start of our First World War commemorations, this unique Football and Peace event at Maidstone United FC, with the help of Heritage Lottery Funding, is giving the opportunity for young people to learn about the role sport played during war and peace time and is also a chance to forge long lasting friendships.”

Notes to editors

For more details or to arrange interviews/photographs on the day, contact Ernie Brennan on 07813 082584 or email erniebrennan@thecfa.co.uk or Paul Cooper on 07875 283093/email paulcooper@thecfa.co.uk

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The NCFCA was established in 2008 to enhance children’s development. Its core aim is to promote and advance children’s right to engage in football play appropriate to their age and needs with best practice spread through practical application and football for fun workshops.

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) aims to make a lasting difference for heritage, people and communities across the UK and help build a resilient heritage economy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, HLF invests in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported over 36,000 projects with more than £6 billion across the UK. www.hlf.org.uk



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