



**Press Release:** Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2019:

## ***The Bingo Association donates Variety Sunshine Coach to Beaufort School in Birmingham***

A Variety Sunshine Coach has been presented by The Bingo Association Chief Executive, Miles Baron, to pupils at Beaufort School in Birmingham. This Sunshine Coach is the 29<sup>th</sup> donated by The Bingo Association in the past four years. Also, in attendance at the presentation were Dave Robson, Operations Director at BJ's Bingo, Dave Cooksley - General Manager and Debbie Allan - Assistant Manager from the local BJ's bingo club in Kitts Green and Andrew Tattershall the General Manager of BJ's Bingo in Leigh.

Beaufort School is a community day special school for 84 primary aged children with severe and complex learning difficulties. The school is committed to ensuring the best possible education for their pupils and maintain strong community links.

The Sunshine Coach will provide enriching opportunities for the pupils to transfer their learning from the classroom to a real-life context. Extracurricular visits throughout the school year support children's thematic learning in school and can include historical buildings and places sports activities, sensory experiences outdoor pursuits, theme parks, the city centre and gardens.

Variety's Sunshine Coaches have helped improve the lives of thousands of disabled or disadvantaged children across the UK. The coaches enable schools to take children on education and recreational days out allowing children to explore places they would otherwise never have visited.

### **Steve Robinson, Head of School, Beaufort School said:**

"Beaufort school were delighted to be approached by BJ's Bingo via The Bingo Association to fund a brand-new minibus. This bus will be used to provide our children with real, immersive opportunities to learn, which support their work back in school. We can't wait to train new drivers and use the bus for trips as part of our 'Out and about' topic in the spring term!"

### **Charlotte Walker, Regional Fundraising Manager at Variety said:**

"We are delighted to donate one of our Sunshine Coaches today to Beaufort School, and would like to thank The Bingo Association for their huge generosity in making this possible.



Every new Sunshine Coach on the road is a step towards our goal of improving the lives of disadvantaged and disabled children across the UK. These coaches enable children and young people to get the most out of school life by granting access to recreational facilities outside of the school environment that they would otherwise not have the opportunity for.

The support of The Bingo Association's members and customers has directly funded the donation of 29 Sunshine Coaches in the past four years, making a real and tangible difference to thousands of disadvantaged and disabled children around the UK."

**Miles Baron, Chief Executive of The Bingo Association said:**

"I would like to thank BJ's Bingo who are present today, for the incredible support and generosity of their customers and staff. Customers from bingo clubs across GB such as BJ's Bingo have made this very worthy donation of a Sunshine Coach possible.

"We have now raised £1.6 million for Variety in the past five years – a truly incredible amount – and it is brilliant to see that this has such a fantastic, direct impact on improving the lives of thousands of sick and disadvantaged children around the UK."

**- ENDS -**

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For more information on the Bingo Association, please visit [www.bingo-association.co.uk](http://www.bingo-association.co.uk)

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For more information or to donate to Variety, please visit [www.variety.org.uk](http://www.variety.org.uk)



## Notes to editors

### **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.

There are 51 proprietors in membership. Membership profile ranges from the large operators, including Buzz (124 clubs) and Mecca (82 clubs), to smaller operators such as Majestic Bingo (16) Castle Bingo (13) and many single site operators.

The bingo sector directly employs over 13,000 people in the UK. Over 3 million customers made over 40m visits to bingo clubs last year.

W: [www.bingoassociation.co.uk](http://www.bingoassociation.co.uk).

### **About Variety, the Children's Charity**

Variety believes that neither disability nor disadvantage should prevent a child from realising their full potential. This year, Variety will celebrate its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the UK, having been founded in October 1949. In this time, the charity has supported almost one million disabled and disadvantaged children.

With a focus on helping children make the most of their childhood, Variety provides support in the following five ways:

- Through the provision of bespoke **Sunshine Coaches**, making it possible for children to get out and about so that they can learn practical life skills and enjoy trips out to places they otherwise couldn't get to
- Through the provision of **customised wheelchairs**, helping to increase independence and improve medical outcomes
- Through the provision of **specialist disability equipment** to individuals and organisations in ways that will make the biggest difference
- Through the **delivery of the Variety Great Days Out programme**, creating memorable experiences through educational initiatives and exciting outings
- Through the design of specialist **projects to transform the facilities of schools and children's hospitals**



Variety 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 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](http://www.variety.org.uk)

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