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THE STREET SHOWS ITS SUPPORT FOR BINGO FOR BREAKTHROUGH BREAST CANCER

Stars from the UK's favourite soap, Coronation Street have been shouting out their support for 'Bingo for Breakthrough', as The Bingo Association once again leads the industry in raising funds in support of Breakthrough Breast Cancer, the UK's leading breast cancer charity.

The girls from the Street's underwear factory, Underworld – Fizz, Janice, Kelly and Hayley – as well as Vera and Eileen are regular bingo players on the much loved series and as such the actresses who play them are proud to show their support for Bingo for Breakthrough 2005.

Liz Dawn, who plays one of the streets longest serving and best loved characters, Vera Duckworth said: 'A great big thank you to bingo players up and down the country for supporting Breast Cancer Awareness Month by playing Bingo for Breakthrough.'

Julie Hesmondhaigh (Hayley Cropper) said: 'It's fantastic to see all the support from players for Bingo for Breakthrough. Fingers crossed for everyone for a big win!' Vicky Entwistle, who plays feisty Janice Battersby added: 'I'm sure Janice and the others would play Bingo for Breakthrough, it's about women supporting women whilst having a really good night out, what could be better than that?'

Jennie McAlpine (Fizz), Tupele Dogru (Kelly) and Sue Cleaver (Eileen) have also pledged to support the campaign due to their on screen characters' love of bingo and said: 'We want to thank everyone who has played so far - Bingo for Breakthrough has raised a lot of money to help women with breast cancer and this year we're sure bingo players will raise even more!'

Running from 24 – 30 October 2005, as part of National Breast Cancer awareness month, 'Bingo for Breakthrough' once again will invite players in over 400 Bingo Clubs around the country to donate their usual game fees to Bingo For Breakthrough, for a chance to play for special prizes. In addition, throughout the week, clubs will also be organising additional fund-raising activities, including pink nights, selling special edition pink Bingo for Breakthrough dabbers and holding sponsored events.

Steve Baldwin, spokesperson for The Bingo Association said: 'We are delighted that these fantastic and well loved household names are supporting bingo players up and down the country – especially as their characters are bingo mad! We are confident that this year's Bingo for Breakthrough will be bigger and better than ever, bingo players are a generous lot and with our friends at Coronation Street's support, there will be no stopping them!'

You can show your support for Bingo for Breakthrough in 2005 by going along to your local club, simply log onto www.nationalbingo.co.uk or call 01582 860900 to find your nearest club.

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Editors Notes:

- Gaming laws stipulate that all Bingo players must be over 18 and join a club 24 hours before playing. To find a local club check on line at www.nationalbingo.co.uk or call The NBGA on 01582 860900.
- Breakthrough Breast Cancer is a charity committed to fighting breast cancer through research and awareness. We have established the UK's first dedicated breast cancer research centre, in partnership with the Institute of Cancer Research.
- Breakthrough Breast Cancer needs to raise at least £7 million every year to fund its programme of research and awareness.
- Breakthrough has a free phone information line to provide information on breast cancer, Breakthrough activities and our research to our supporters. The number is 08080 100 200 (free phone) and will be open from 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday and from 9am to noon on Saturdays. Alternatively, please visit the website on www.breakthrough.org.uk for more information.

BINGO QUICK FACTS

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- Bingo got its present name in 1930 when an American, Edwin Lowe, patented the name. The game was reputedly played by the Romans, and was recorded as a children's game under the name of 'lotto' in 1778.
- To register for email and text alerts on bingo news register online at www.nationalbingo.co.uk.
- Over three million people play bingo regularly in the UK (at least twice a week).
- Eight per cent of the UK population play bingo - 10% of all women and 5% of all men.
- Most common reasons for playing bingo are because it's fun, inexpensive, it offers companionship and the chance to socialise.
- Celebs love bingo! Catherine Zeta Jones can thank bingo for her career after her dad won enough to afford to send her to theatre school; Robbie Williams went to his local Bingo club in Stoke and played bingo with Daryl Hannah in his music video for Feel. Other celebrity fans include: Denise Van Outen, Scott Mills, not to mention her majesty the Queen who apparently chooses to call 'Palace' rather than 'house'!
- A number of celebrities also started their careers in bingo calling including Simon from boy band Blue, Eastender's Shane Richie, Russell Crowe and Kian from west Life.
- The average customer at a licensed bingo club spends around £25 on an evening at bingo. This includes bingo tickets, VAT and duty, food, drink and other gaming. This excludes any winnings.

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