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NORTH WEST COMMUNITIES GET ACTIVE WITH £2 MILLION LOTTERY BOOST

Three North West communities will be among the first in England to benefit from the opportunity to get more active, thanks to a cash boost of just over £2 million announced today, by Lottery good cause distributors New Opportunities Fund and Sport England. The two organisations are working in partnership on the new £108 million **Active England** funding initiative, which will drive forward community participation in sport and physical activity.

The **Active England** programme will provide new or improved sporting facilities and activity projects in local communities across England. A further £22.5million from the New Opportunities Fund will be available to develop similar initiatives in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

In **Bolton** , in Greater Manchester , local people will have the chance to get active with a range of new sport and physical activities on offer thanks to a grant of **£993,002** which will contribute to the development of a community sports club in **Lever Hulme Park**.

People in **Knowsley** will have wider access to the range of activities on offer at **Tower Hill** Community Centre. Knowsley Borough Council will use a grant of **£470,000** to develop spaces for physical activity and sport as part of a major redevelopment including health, culture and education providers in developing a multi-use community facility.

The **Dingle in Liverpool** , which is part of the **Sport Action Zone**. will receive **£595,514** to create a new multi-sport facility at an existing site in Liverpool. The planned facility will give local people of all ages and abilities the opportunity to get involved in an increased range of sport and physical activities.



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As well as building multi-activity environments in more disadvantaged areas, **Active England** will encourage innovative community projects all over the country. These could include finding new ways of attracting older people, supporting family activities with childcare and making better use of rural and urban spaces. The two lottery distribution bodies also envisage **Active England** helping to mark the country's commitment to increasing grassroots participation in sport and physical activity alongside the UK's 2012 London Olympic bid.

Just 30 minutes of moderate exercise five times a week for adults and one hour a day for children can make a significant impact on health. Exercise can help to prevent some cancers, heart disease, depression and obesity.

Sports Minister Richard Caborn said: "Lottery money is a driving force behind sport at all levels and this new Active England programme will widen access to physical activity and sport in some of our most deprived communities. The flexible and accessible facilities this funding will provide have an important role to play in increasing participation - giving people the chance to get fit and stay fit, whatever their circumstances."

Baroness Pitkeathley, Chair of the New Opportunities Fund said: "These new facilities will be at the heart of our local communities giving local people the chance to get fit and stay fit will long term benefits for their health and well being. This funding will create high quality, flexible facilities suitable for a wide range of sports and physical activities so there will really be something on offer for everyone. National Lottery players can take pride in the fact that they are contributing to the creation of more active communities."

Patrick Carter, Chair of Sport England said: "We want to help combat obesity by encouraging the nation to get more active through sports participation. We have purposefully encouraged creative ideas for these new facilities to make them more



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appealing for people to try sport for the first time. It's only by doing this that we will succeed in introducing newcomers to the benefits of exercise.”

The **Active England** programme takes the total funding for community sport and physical activity from New Opportunities Fund to more than £900 million. Existing programmes currently support playing fields, out of school hours sport-related activities, PE and sport facilities for schools and communities.

Sport England provides the strategic lead for sport in this country and has invested over £1.8 billion from its lottery fund in sporting projects from grassroots to elite level. Its aim is to make England a more active and successful sporting nation. Sport England recently set up a network of nine new regional sports boards who provide local expertise and invest money into community projects in their area.

Notes to Editors

- The New Opportunities Fund distributes National Lottery money to health, education and environment projects across the UK. We intend to support sustainable projects that will improve the quality of life of people throughout the UK, address the needs of those who are most disadvantaged in society, encourage community participation, complement relevant local and national strategies and programmes. Funding for programmes is divided between England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales on the basis of population weighted to reflect levels of deprivation.
- Sport England provides the strategic lead for sport in this country and distributes lottery money to sporting projects. Sport England is part of a cross-Government team to develop a national Delivery Plan for physical activity and sport. Key partners include Department of Health and Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Its core target is to increase participation in sport and physical activity, particularly among women, school leavers, economically disadvantaged groups and older people. The Delivery Plan will provide the foundation for a long-term national physical activity and sport strategy for England.
- The Government strategy for delivering its sport and physical activity objectives, *Game Plan, December 2002* sets a target of 70% in England being reasonably active by 2020.

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Full details of the New Opportunities Fund programmes and grant awards are available on website: www.nof.org.uk

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