

Date: 14 September 2011

Ref: LDG 003

Subject **TAKE US TO THE RIVER!**



Media Release

Longridge and The Rivertime Boat Trust launch the River Access Campaign ***Making the river more accessible to people in wheelchairs and those with limited mobility***

To mark the launch of the River Access Campaign today (14 September 2011) Longridge and the Riverside Boat Trust welcomed children from The Avenue School in Tilehurst, Reading to a fun day at the centre. They were also joined by Mark Lawrie, CEO Berks Sport, Mayor of Marlow, Cllr Jocelyn Towns and Vice Chairman of Wycombe District Council, Cllr Wendy Mallen.

The River Access Campaign aims to raise funds to go towards building access routes to the river for people with limited mobility. Partners Longridge Activity Centre and The Rivertime Boat Trust are asking local residents and businesses to donate funds or materials to help them open up the access to the river through a series of pathways that can be used by wheel chairs. The target for the campaign is £60,000.

Commenting on the launch Amanda Foister, Director of Longridge said:

“Longridge is all about inspiring young people and giving them confidence through sport. Unfortunately, we do not currently have easy access to the river for those in wheel chairs or who have limited mobility and so some kids are missing out and that’s not good enough.

“Our friends at Rivertime Boat Trust have asked us to see if we can do something about this and we are asking local people and businesses to donate to help make this possible. We want put pathways from the car park right down to the river and we are also asking any local construction and engineering firms for their advice on how we can do this given our limited budget. If any local companies can provide the material and labour to help us achieve this, we also want to hear from them.”

Longridge plans to run weekly sessions for children with disabilities and they are doing with the support of the Rivertime Boat Trust who currently run boat trips on the Thames for disabled people on specially designed boats.

Simon Davis of The Rivertime Boat Trust said:

“We’ve been working for years to make the river accessible to people with disabilities, mainly through our boat trips. Our partnership with Longridge takes this one step further and if we can raise the funds needed to get the new pathways built, we can really get young disabled people messing about on the river – please dig deep to make this happen.”

People can donate to the River Access Campaign via the Longridge website at www.longridge.org.uk, or by calling the lovely people at Longridge on 01628 483 252.

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Notes to Editors:

The Rivertime Boat Trust has built and operates a specially designed boat for disabled, disadvantaged and deprived children on the River Thames between Windsor and Oxford. Since its foundation the Trust has taken out some 6,000 passengers with a vast range of visibilities. For further information visit www.rivertimeboattrust.org.uk

Longridge is set in a unique riverside location near Marlow, Buckinghamshire. Longridge provides a range of exciting water sports and land-based activities for young people of all abilities.

- As well as 12 acres of beautiful water meadows we have our own island for the ultimate swallows and amazons experience.
- Every year 80,000 young people visit our world-class facilities.
- We boast a proud 50 year history and an excellent safety record.
- Longridge helps young people from all walks of life and abilities to develop water skills as well as leadership, self-discipline, confidence and respect.
- **www.longridge.org.uk/about-longridge**

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