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Media Release

200 school children involved in Royal opening of Peterborough Garden Park

ALMOST 200 children from eight schools will be in touch with Royalty when Her Royal Highness The Countess of Wessex officially opens Peterborough Garden Park on July 8, 2010.

The pupils aged between four and 13-years-old will play a key part in the Garden Park's celebrations. Each child will have their hand on the ribbon as the Royal visitor marks the official opening by helping to cut the ribbon outside the doorway to each retail unit.

Mary Foreman, head teacher at Dogsthorpe Junior School, said: "On behalf of both Dogsthorpe Junior and Infant schools it is a fantastic opportunity for our children to have ownership of something taking place on our doorstep. We love to be involved in things that are happening in our areas no matter what.

"For my school, it's going to be part of our aspirations day so the children that I'm bringing will spend the day thinking about the roles of people involved in Royal visits, like press officers, the military, police, etc. It's like a project we incorporate into their learning.

"Many of our children are disadvantaged and we want them to have great aspirations. We try to give them a diverse range of experiences so they can think about what they want to be. This Royal visit is not within their normal experience at all."

The eight schools involved are: Parnwell Primary, Eye Primary, Marshfields, Dogsthorpe Infant, Dogsthorpe Junior, Welland Primary, Newark Hill Primary, and Fulbridge.

Peterborough Garden Park Chairman Gordon Edington added: “We are delighted that so many local children are able to join us in welcoming The Countess to Peterborough Garden Park. I would urge as many people as possible to come and share in our event, so that we can demonstrate what a vibrant city Peterborough is. We would like to make this a truly memorable day, not just for the Park, but also for the people of Peterborough.”

Events at Peterborough Garden Park are open to the public with entertainment starting from 11am.

The Countess will mark the official opening of the Garden Park by unveiling the ‘Children’s Tile Project’, a circular piece of artwork crafted by potter Richard Miller.

This will be the first time the tiles will be on display, which showcase the names of 320 children from the eight schools. Each child has a unique tile that all join to form a circle around a Valencian olive tree, believed to be almost 75 years old. The olive tree is a fitting accompaniment to the tile project as it is the symbol of peace and, according to Sophocles, is “the tree that feeds the children”.

Peterborough Garden Park opened its gates to the public in February this year. Since then, thousands of visitors have flocked to experience the exclusive Van Hage garden centre and the Park’s other high quality lifestyle retailers, including Andronicas World of Coffee, Cotswold Outdoor, Cotton Traders, Hawkins Bazaar, Hobbycraft, Le Creuset, Maidenhead Aquatics, Past Times, PBC Books and Pets Corner.

For more information on Peterborough Garden Park, log onto www.peterboroughgardenpark.co.uk

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Notes to Editors

Peterborough Garden Park is an impressive new development located just off the Eye roundabout in Peterborough. It combines the UK’s premier garden centre with an exciting mix of lifestyle retailers, offering a superior retail and leisure experience all year round. Set against a backdrop of generous landscaping, Peterborough Garden Park has something for everyone, providing a day out for the whole family.

The Park combines the attributes of a traditional garden centre in Van Hage's dramatic 'Crystal Palace' premises with a mix of lifestyle retailers, including Andronicas World of Coffee, Cotswold Outdoor, Cotton Traders, Hawkins Bazaar, Hobbycraft, Le Creuset, Maidenhead Aquatics, Past Times, PBC Books and Pets Corner.

Despite problems of road access during the first weekend, and works being undertaken to improve the Eye roundabout, traffic is flowing well and access is easy.

Media contacts

Peterborough Garden Park Chairman Gordon Edington is happy to do interviews and photographs.

For media requests please contact Rebecca Stephens or Kelly Allnutt at Athene Communications on 01733 207334, email rebecca@athene-communications.co.uk, or call 078 796 33 796.

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