

First Minister Commends Local Fairtrade in Football Campaign

The RT Hon First Minister of Wales, Carwyn Jones, recently commended children from Tavernspite County Primary School who were awarded 'Highly Commended' status from the Fairtrade Foundation for their work with Stokieshazer's Fair Trade in Football Campaign.

The campaign founded by Fair Trade Wales Voluntary School's Speaker Sharron Hardwick, Kilgetty, highlights the meagre wages and poor conditions endured by many football-stitchers in developing countries.

Mr Jones attended a Fairtrade tea party with Sharron Hardwick, pupils and teachers from Tavernspite school at the Fair Trade Wales stall during the National Eisteddfod of Wales, and praised their efforts to raise awareness of the issue.

First Minister Carwyn Jones said: "I am very proud that Wales continues to lead the way in supporting Fair Trade. The number of Fair Trade schools, towns and local authorities keeps growing, more businesses are embracing Fair Trade products and awareness has increased across the country. I would like to offer my congratulations to Tavernspite County Primary School on their success in the Fairtrade Foundation Awards. It is encouraging to see the dedication and hard work of young people in Wales in supporting and promoting Fair Trade. Their commitment is playing an important part in helping thousands of developing country farmers and producers to trade their way out of poverty".

The Margaret Demidecka Fairtrade Awards are given by the Fairtrade Foundation to primary and secondary schools for activities held during the annual Fairtrade Fortnight.

Tavernspite pupils learnt that many workers receive just 22p per ball compared with the vast sums received by many professional football players, and often have to endure poor and hazardous working conditions. In addition to workshops and assemblies, the school held its own Fairtrade football and tag rugby tournaments, raising awareness in the local community, and wrote to the Football Association, national clubs and sports shops to persuade them to use and sell Fairtrade footballs.

Year two teacher and schools fair trade co-ordinator Julie Houghton, said: "Tavernspite became a Fairtrade School in 2010 and the children are very aware of Fair Trade issues.

They were shocked to learn about the unfairness and conditions endured by many of the people who make the footballs used in playgrounds and on football pitches everyday, and wanted to do all they could to help. They were thrilled to find their work was so appreciated by the Fairtrade Foundation and the First Minister of Wales. They are now eagerly awaiting replies to their letters."

Sharron Hardwick hopes all footballs will eventually be Fairtrade and has been in talks with the Welsh FA and Stoke City Football Club, saying: "Meeting The First Minister has been so encouraging, he was genuinely interested and supportive of the campaign. The dedication of all at Tavernspite School is inspiring. They are a school with a heart for fairness, leading the way for other schools to follow."

Tenby Juniors, Saundersfoot CP, Hubberston VC, Roch CP and Castle Schools are also supporting the campaign, receiving Fairtrade footballs from Sharron. Saundersfoot, Roch and Castle pupils have written letters requesting Fair Trade in football too.

Campaign supporters hope for a positive response, and are ready to step up their game to make a difference together.

To find out more visit: www.fairtradewales.com www.fairtrade.org www.thefaircorp.com

Fair Trade in Football Campaign: www.facebook.com/groups/306309052733859/

Ends

For more information contact Elen Jones on 07912 496044 / 07880 680113

Notes to editor

- Fair trade is about creating opportunities for farmers and producers in the developing world to receive a fair price for the goods they produce, and ensure standards of welfare for workers.
- The Fairtrade (one word) mark is awarded by the Fairtrade Foundation to products that meet international

Fairtrade standards.

- Fair Trade Wales exists to grow the Fair Trade movement in Wales and for the last three years has been funded by the Welsh Government.
- Wales made history when it became the first ever Fair Trade Nation in June 2008, recognizing the national commitment to supporting fair trade principles.