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Press Release

When: Saturday 18th August 2018

Where: Birkenhead Park

**One Wirral Festival 2018 confirmed after Wirral Chamber and The Lauries step in with £5000 pledge!**

Ahead of the deadline a crowd-funding campaign to bring back ‘One Wirral Festival’ has been successful after the Wirral Chamber of Commerce and The Lauries both pledged £2500 to help event organisers secure the £10,202 needed. The inclusion festival is now confirmed to take place in Birkenhead Park on Saturday 18th August. The FREE event took place for the first time last summer and drew in over 2000 visitors despite poor weather. Planning is now under way to make the festival even bigger and better with the support of the event sponsors.

‘One Wirral’ is organised by local learning disability charities Wirral Mencap and Options for Supported Living and is a celebration of Wirral and all who live here, promoting the diversity in the local community and bringing everyone together for a fully inclusive fun-filled day in Birkenhead Park. As well as highlighting the talents and contributions of people with a disability, the organisers involve a wide range of groups and organisations to showcase talent and opportunities from across the community. Last year’s festival featured 70 community stalls, 10 free workshops, eight stage acts, sports area and much more. Activities were set across 7 zones which included a popular ‘Nostalgia Zone’ in the visitors centre created by local charity Age UK Wirral. To ensure everyone could enjoy the event the organisers arranged sign language interpreters, Changing Places facilities (specialist toilets for people with complex disabilities) and mobility scooters amongst other things.

Wirral Chamber of Commerce and The Lauries join a raft of pledgers, big and small, who have made One Wirral Festival 2018 a reality. Paula Basnett, CEO at Wirral Chamber of Commerce spoke on behalf of both the Chamber of Commerce and The Lauries, she said, “It is important that events such as the One Wirral Festival continues, offering great opportunities in promoting the achievements and important contributions people with and without disabilities can offer in making a better community. Both Wirral Chamber of Commerce and The Lauries are very much community minded about our businesses and our people, so we were delighted to add our support for the One Wirral Festival.”

Wirral Change, a charity that supports Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities in Wirral also pledged £500 to see the festival go ahead this year. Sharon Munroe, (Community Liaison Officer) said, ‘Wirral Change is supporting this fantastic festival because we love bringing the community together and we love celebrating cultural diversity. This year we will be hosting the Cultural Zone celebrating diversity from around the world: with tastes of Food and an exhibition on cultural traditions and different cultures.’

Wirral Mencap’s event lead, Sharon Nicholson said, ‘We’ve had individual pledges from members of the public, volunteers, staff, family and friends of Wirral Mencap and Options and from local 3rd sector organisations and Wirral businesses. It has been a real community effort to raise the funds. A huge thank you to everyone who gave One Wirral 2018 their support. See you on the 18th August!’

For more information find One Wirral 2018 on Facebook or contact Wirral Mencap on 0151 666 1829.

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**NOTES TO THE EDITOR:**

**About Wirral Mencap**

Birkenhead-based Wirral Mencap is a small, independent charity that has been supporting local people with a learning disability and their families for 50 years. Its mission is to provide equal opportunities for people with a learning disability which we do by providing beneficiaries with information and support, social opportunities, personal development activities, supported volunteering and more.

**About Options for Supported Living**

Options is a local organisation existing for one reason - to support, empower and enable people with disabilities to live their lives to the full. They believe all people should live a fulfilled and meaningful life in their local community. As a charity, they put people before profits. Options support children and adults with learning disabilities, autism and acquired brain injury across Merseyside and the surrounding areas. They turn no one away based on the complexity of their support needs and they hold that principle at their heart. They believe that every person is important, unique and has a contribution to make to the community in which they live. For Options, this is what being person-centred means.