



NEWS RELEASE

15/09/06

For immediate release

New sports club for blind kids in Leicester

Visually impaired children from Leicestershire are getting their very own sports club run by national charity, Action for Blind People. The club launches on Saturday 23 September, 1-4pm at Evington Pool, with a session in football and athletics.

The weekly sports club, known as the Leicester Actionnaires, is supported by local blind society VISTA and run in partnership with Leicester City Council. The Leicester Actionnaires will offer a variety of sports to blind and partially sighted children aged eight to 16. Hilton in the Community Foundation has generously donated £50,000 to the charity and part of this will fund sporting activities at this new club.

Martin Corry, Leicester Tigers and England Rugby Captain, sent the new sports club the following message of support: "I'd like to wish everyone taking part in the new Actionnaires club in Leicester lots of luck. I'm sure that the scheme will not only prove to be very beneficial, but also really enjoyable. It's a great chance to get involved in sport, at whatever level you feel comfortable, but more importantly, it's a real opportunity to make life-long friends."

John Ellery, Action for Blind People's Sports Development Officer, comments: "Leicester Actionnaires offers blind and partially sighted children the chance to try different sports in a fun, safe and encouraging environment. We hope kids from all



NEWS RELEASE

over Leicestershire will join the club, whether they're budding Olympians or have never tried sport before. We're very grateful to Hilton for their generous support. Without funding for equipment such as footballs with bells inside, or the hiring of specialist coaches, the club simply couldn't run!"

Simon Sheehan, Director of the Hilton in the Community Foundation, added: "This innovative project really enables blind and partially sighted children to feel included in nearly all sporting activities. It is a pleasure for the Foundation to be supporting young people to fulfil their potential in this way."

The Leicester Actionnaires will meet every Saturday at Evington Pool, Downing Drive, Leicester, LE5 6LP from 1pm -4pm, where membership is free. For more information about the Leicester Actionnaires, please contact John Ellery, Sports Development Officer on 07739819953 or email john.ellery@actionforblindpeople.org.uk

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For further media information please contact Zoë Patel, press officer on 020 7635 4898 or email: zoe.patel@actionforblindpeople.org.uk or call the out-of-hours media phone on 07739819954.

Notes to editors:

- Journalists and photographers are welcome to attend the launch on Saturday 23 September at Evington Pool, between 1pm - 3pm.



NEWS RELEASE

- There are currently 16 Actionnaires clubs across the UK in Huddersfield, Portsmouth, Essex, Sunderland, Blackburn, Coventry, Manchester, Liverpool (2), South London, Hull, Birmingham, Southampton, Peterborough, Nottingham and Leicester.
- Action for Blind People supports over 20,000 blind and partially sighted people in the UK every year. Action for Blind People's National Freephone Helpline is 0800 915 4666.
- Action works to inspire change and create opportunities to enable blind and partially sighted people to have equal voice and equal choice and to live a full and valuable life.
- Action provides visually impaired people with opportunities through employment, housing, leisure and information and support.
- Hilton in the Community Foundation was registered in millennium year as the charitable trust for Hilton International. Hilton in the Community Foundation is committed to supporting those most in need to have a brighter future. For further information visit www.hilton-foundation.org.uk
- If abbreviating "Action for Blind People", please use "Action" rather than AFBP or ABP.