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27/11/06

For immediate release

National Lottery grants sports wish for blind kids in Middlesbrough

Blind and partially sighted children in Middlesbrough will receive a boost to their sporting dreams next month. Action for Blind People, a national charity running sports clubs for visually impaired children will open a Middlesbrough club thanks to a £5,000 grant from the National Lottery's 'Awards for All'.

The sports clubs, called Actionnaires, offer multi-sports in a safe and structured environment for visually impaired children aged eight to 16 who might be excluded from sports in their mainstream schools. In the UK currently, 30% of visually impaired children are not receiving the national curriculum standard of two hours' PE a week.

Lesley Inganni, Sports Development Officer for the North East, said, "This is a great contribution to Middlesbrough Actionnaires. We hope kids from all over the region will join the club, whether they're budding Paralympians or have never tried sport before. We're very grateful to our funders, without whose generous support with equipment such as footballs with bells inside, or hiring specialist coaches, the club simply couldn't run!"

The Actionnaires clubs have already gained success in other regions. Warren, 15, a member of Leicester Actionnaires, said, "It is not just football and swimming; you can do other sports as well. I'm really looking forward to playing cricket and taking part in archery. I have difficulty taking part in sport at school, but this club is a very good and a good way to make friends."

James Turner, Big Lottery Fund Head of the North East region, said on behalf of the Awards for All funders, "We are delighted that the grant to the Actionnaires sports club will provide vital access to sports for visually impaired children in



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Middlesbrough. The Awards for All scheme is all about supporting projects like this which bring many benefits to communities right across the North East region."

Middlesbrough Actionnaires opens on Saturday 2nd December at Rainbow Leisure Centre, Parkway Centre, Dalby Way, Coulby Newham. The club will run from 9am-11am for indoor sports in the sports hall and then from 11am-12pm for swimming.

If you know a child who might benefit from joining Actionnaires, go to www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk to locate your nearest club. Alternatively, please call Action's freephone information line on 0800 915 4666 or Lesley Inganni for details of clubs in the North East on 07703 099354.

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For further information please contact Victoria Moffett, press office on 020 7635 4921 / 07739 819954 or email: victoria.moffett@actionforblindpeople.org.uk

Notes to editors:

- 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 and the website is www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk .
- 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.



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- Action provides visually impaired people with opportunities through employment, housing, leisure and information and support.
- If abbreviating “Action for Blind People”, please use "Action" rather than AFBP or ABP.
- Awards for All England is a joint Lottery grants programme supported by Arts Council England, Big Lottery Fund*, Heritage Lottery Fund and Sport England.
- *Big Lottery Fund is the joint operating name of the New Opportunities Fund and the National Lottery Charities Board (which made grants under the name of the Community Fund).