



NEWS RELEASE

05/06/07

For immediate release

Villa shoots into action for blind children from Birmingham

20 blind and partially sighted children from across Birmingham received their very own professional football coaching session at Villa Park last Saturday.

Coaches from Aston Villa FC's Football in the Community Programme shared their footie skills with 'Birmingham Actionnaires', a multi-sports club run by Action for Blind People.

Nigel Macrow, Special Needs Coach from Aston Villa FC's Football in the Community Programme, comments: "Villa's Football in the Community programme is all about getting the children to take part in a series of games, with the emphasis being on fun, participation and team-work. We had a great session with the Actionnaires kids; their determination and motivation to learn sports, such as football is truly commendable. It is so important to raise awareness of the sporting opportunities for visually impaired children and we at Aston Villa FC are glad to be a part of helping to achieve this"

John Ellery, Midlands Sports Development Officer at Action for Blind People, said: "It was fantastic to see the children really getting involved and enjoying the session. Before joining Actionnaires some of these children had never even run on their own before, so it is a great joy for me and their parents to watch them being able to play

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Website www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk

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football. Action for Blind People would like to thank Aston Villa FC for being a great inspiration to the children and giving them an experience I know they'll never forget."

Many visually impaired children benefit from attending Birmingham Actionnaires. Not only do the children get to participate in football sessions, but they also enjoy a whole range of sports, such as basketball, swimming and trampolining.

For more information about the Birmingham Actionnaires or volunteering for the group then please contact John Ellery, Sports Development Officer on 0800 915 4666 or email john.ellery@actionforblindpeople.org.uk

-Ends-

For further media information please contact Debbie Flatley, press office on 020 7635 4921/ 07739 819954 or email: debbie.flatley@actionforblindpeople.org.uk

Notes to editors:

- There are now 24 Actionnaires sports clubs run by Action for Blind People across the UK in Ashford, Birmingham, Blackburn, Carlisle, Coventry, Essex, Huddersfield, Hull, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool (2), Manchester, Middlesbrough, Nottingham, Peterborough, Portsmouth, South London, Southampton, Sunderland, West London, Swindon, Scarborough and Sheffield.
- Action for Blind People is an expert national organisation, ensuring blind and

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partially sighted people get practical support in all aspects of their lives.
Contact Action for Blind People's National Freephone Helpline on 0800 915 4666 or www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk

- Action for Blind People is breaking down barriers that prevent visually impaired people from achieving the same opportunities as sighted people.
- 2007 marks Action's 150 years of transforming the lives of blind and partially sighted people.
- If abbreviating "Action for Blind People", please use "Action" rather than AFBP or ABP.