



NEWS RELEASE

18/06/07

For immediate release

Merseyside charity looks to the future for blind people

The Merseyside Team of national charity, Action for Blind People, celebrated the organisation's 150th birthday last Friday (15 June). The national visual impairment charity has been working to create opportunities for blind and partially sighted people since the Victorian era, and 60 local beneficiaries of the charity were at the Merseyside celebrations, along with a few local stars.

Actress Eithne Brown, star of theatre and television including Brookside, Lillies and Emmerdale, spoke about the history of Action for Blind People. BBC Radio Merseyside's local historian, Steve Binns, also attended whilst Andrew Colman, who appeared on TV's Pop Stars The Rivals, provided the musical entertainment. Both Steve Binns and Andrew Coleman are themselves visually impaired.

Actress Eithne Brown commented: "I'm delighted to be part of the celebrations today. Action for Blind People is a charity with a long and rich history – experience which has made it the expert charity it is today. I really enjoyed meeting with visually impaired people who had been supported by the Merseyside team, and I wish them all the best for the future."



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Janet Gilbertson, Service Manager for Action for Blind People Merseyside, commented: “Back in 1857 teaching blind people to read books and weave baskets were the main activities of Action for Blind People. Fast forward to 2007, and opportunities for visually impaired people have changed dramatically, along with the nature and scale of our charity’s work.

“Today, Action’s experts work with visually impaired clients on problems such as; finding or keeping a job, applying for benefits, housing issues, aids and adaptations, holiday breaks or playing sport. Occasionally a client may come to Action with an issue which is outside of the charity’s areas of expertise. Action has developed a network of partner organisations and works to ensure every client’s difficulties are resolved”.

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For further media information please contact Zoe Patel, press office on 020 7635 4898/ 07739 819954 or email: zoe.patel@actionforblindpeople.org.uk

Notes to editors:

- Action for Blind People Merseyside is based at 3rd Floor, 35 Bold Street, Liverpool L1 4DN, Tel: 0151 708 9008
- Action for Blind People is an expert national organisation, ensuring blind and 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

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- 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.

14 - 16 Verney Road London SE16 3DZ Tel 020 7635 4800 Fax 020 7635 4899

Website www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk

Patron HRH Princess Alexandra, the Hon. Lady Ogilvy, GCVO

Registered Charity no: 205913