

PRESS RELEASE & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

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Film created by people with learning disabilities receives red carpet treatment in Liverpool

A film animation created by a group of people with learning disabilities from Anfield is set to receive the red carpet treatment with a **gala screening** at **FACT's** (Foundation for Art and Creative Technology) big screen at **10am** on **Friday 17th July**. The event will be attended by special guests including Liverpool artists, The Singh Twins, along with members of the group who wrote, produced and performed in the animation.

A time travelling adventure, "From Oakfiends to Iron Men" sees Dr Who taking on his archenemies the Daleks with the help of Crosby Beach's 'Iron Men'. A collaboration between the national disability charity, United Response and the Workers' Educational Association (WEA), "From Oakfiends to Iron Men" received its public premiere at Clayton Square's Big Screen earlier this year.

Speaking ahead of the event, Veronica Astor, who heads up United Response's work at the Oakfield service in Anfield, said:

"We are really proud of this animation as it demonstrates what great skills people with learning disabilities possess - creative, artistic and technical. Everyone loved working on it and are all excited about the premiere and sharing the day with our special guests."

Stephen Edwards uses United Response's Oakfield service and took part in the making of the film. He said:

"I think it will be fabulous walking on the red carpet and being on the big screen so people will be amazed at all the fantastic hard work we've put into it"

"From Oakfiends to Iron Men" was created through 'Culture of Arts', a public arts programme run by the WEA to promote Liverpool's diverse communities. The project encouraged participation from groups who may have previously experienced exclusion from society or who may have found it difficult to participate in community arts projects.

Culture of Arts Project Manager Alex Whittle said:

"From Oakfiends to Iron Men is an outstanding piece of creative work and a great example of what can be achieved through partnership working. The Workers' Educational Association already has plans to work with United Response on more projects of this kind in the future, so we hope that this will be the first of many red carpet events!"

"From Oakfiends to Iron Men" was produced in partnership with Merseytravel and with the support of Liverpool Culture Company and Radio Merseyside.

Ends

For more information and to set up a photo opportunity please contact Sarah Bartlett on 020 8246 5237/ 07980 915749
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Notes to editors:

United Response

United Response is a top 100 charity operating in England and Wales, providing a range of support and services for more than 1,500 people with learning disabilities, mental health needs or physical disabilities. We employ over 2,000 people across the organisation and have won many awards for our pioneering work since being founded in 1973.

Our mission is to enable people with learning disabilities, mental health needs and physical disabilities to take control of their lives.

Our vision is a society where disabled people are equal participants and have access to the same rights and opportunities as everyone else.

The services we provide depend on each person we work with. We can provide 24-hour support for people with profound physical needs, or just a few hours for those who need less support to live their lives. We can job coach someone into meaningful paid employment. We can provide outreach support for someone with a mental health need or help people who find it difficult to communicate by making information more accessible. The key to our success is that we work with each person to do the things they want to do, supporting them to communicate what they want and tell us how we are doing.

To find out more please visit www.unitedresponse.org.uk.

Workers' Educational Association

The Workers' Educational Association (WEA) is the largest voluntary sector provider of adult education in Britain and provides learning opportunities for over 80,000 people each year. It operates in all nine English Regions and in Scotland and employs over three thousand part-time tutors.

The WEA creates and delivers courses in response to local need, often in partnership with community groups, local charities and other organisations. The WEA believes that education is life-long and should continue beyond school, college and university in order to help people develop their full human potential in society.

The North West region of the WEA covers the counties of Cheshire, Merseyside, Lancashire and Cumbria. The region attracts thousands of students each year to its courses. The courses take place in over 400 venues throughout the region. Where the region has branches many of the courses are organised with the assistance of their voluntary members and committees. In other areas our professional staff and a significant network of partnerships and co-operative working arrangements helps to build a substantial programme of regional courses.

Merseytravel

Merseytravel works to promote the interests of Merseyside's travelling public while providing value for money for its local tax payers. The public sector body co-ordinates public transport through partnership initiatives, with the aim of delivering a fully integrated and environmentally friendly public transport network accessible to everyone. Merseytravel is controlled by democratically elected councillors from the five Merseyside local authorities, who set the policies for officers to deliver. Merseytravel is committed to playing a major role in the continued regeneration of Merseyside - economically and socially. Merseytravel provides bus services linking communities with hospitals, schools and other vital social outlets at times when bus companies find it unprofitable.

Liverpool Culture Company

The Liverpool Culture Company is the organisation set up by Liverpool City Council to deliver the culture programme up to and beyond 2008. Liverpool won the 2008 race because people - our city's greatest asset - were at the heart of the bid and we want to ensure that everyone is given the opportunity to take part when Liverpool takes its curtain call before the eyes of the world in 2008. We are working closely with all our stakeholders - including cultural organisations, communities, creative industries, artists, schools and businesses - to help Liverpool shine on the world stage by delivering the best-ever European Capital of Culture 2008. As a result, we hope to leave a lasting and positive legacy for the people of Liverpool, including more jobs, a stronger economy and a better place to live.

BBC Radio Merseyside

The BBC Local Radio service for the English Metropolitan County of Merseyside and North Cheshire. It was the third BBC local radio station to launch on 22 November 1967. BBC Radio Merseyside broadcasts from its studios in Hanover St, Liverpool on 95.8 MHz (Allerton Park) , 1485 kHz(Wallasey)and DAB. On 15th July 2006, BBC Radio Merseyside moved from its former home in *Paradise Street*, Liverpool, to a new purpose-built studio building on the corner of *Hanover Street* and *College Lane* in Liverpool. This building has three ground-floor studios next to a public performance space. An Open Learning Centre is on the first floor and the main office is on the second floor.