



MEDIA RELEASE: 6th April 2009

Rugby legends fundraising success

Disadvantaged children and seriously ill young adults are set to benefit following the success of a rugby fundraiser at the Hilton London Metropole.

Legends from the rugby world attended the charity dinner held in aid of the Willow Foundation and Hilton in the Community Foundation last November which raised a fantastic **£96,625** in total.

Rugby heroes past and present including Matt Dawson, Jonathan Davies, Keith Wood and Kenny Logan attended the event, generously sponsored by Aspen Insurance. Auction prizes including original artwork by England manager Martin Johnson helped to add to the total raised.

The rugby legends dinner has helped the Willow Foundation to fund special days for 16 to 40 year olds living with serious illness, and to achieve their goal of providing 1,315 days last year alone. These empowering special days offer people living with life threatening illness much needed time out from hospital appointments and treatment and gives them a chance to feel normal, to enjoy time with family and friends and create precious memories.

Bob Wilson, the former Arsenal and Scotland goalkeeper and founder of the Willow Foundation, was at the hotel to accept a cheque for £15,813. This represented half the money raised on the night at the hotel. The other half will be donated by Hilton in the Community Foundation as grants to a host of charities supporting disadvantaged young people nationwide.

Bob Wilson said:

“The dinner was a real treat for true rugby fans with so many legends in the room, and a great night for all. Most of all it was a wonderful way to help so many seriously ill 16 to 40 year olds when they need it most.”

With a dedicated charity committee and a team of eager volunteers Hilton London Metropole consistently excels at Hilton in the Community Foundation fundraising. This effort was recently recognised as the hotel won the award for the top Hilton fundraising hotel across the UK and Ireland for the second year running. In 2008 the hotel raised a massive £57,871 for the Foundation, representing an impressive 296.78% of its fundraising target.

Hilton London Metropole General Manager Avner On said:

“The Rugby Legends Ball was a fantastic occasion and it has been a real pleasure to work in partnership with the Willow Foundation. Events like these are a great example of our Hilton in the Community Foundation work and I’m very proud of all our team members’ successful fundraising and community involvement. We know that every pound raised for Willow and Hilton in the Community Foundation will make a real difference to children’s lives.”

-ENDS-

For further information please contact:

John Townsend
PR Officer
Hilton in the Community Foundation
Email: john.townsend@hilton.com
Tel: 020 7605 7733

For more information about the Willow Foundation visit www.willowfoundation.org.uk or telephone 01707 259777. To find out more about the Hilton in the Community Foundation visit www.hilton-foundation.org.uk or phone 0207 605 7733

Notes to Editors:

About Hilton in the Community Foundation

Hilton in the Community Foundation was founded in 2000 as Hilton Hotels’ charity dedicated to supporting young people in need. Focused on disabled children, children in hospitals and hospices and homelessness, grants supporting disadvantaged young people are made in the UK and Ireland, while in the event of international disaster; grants are made to relief organisations at the Trustees’ discretion.

In 2008 the Foundation awarded £1.18 million to 298 charitable organisations benefiting over 200,000 young people.

The Foundation's core costs are funded by Hilton Hotels, so every net pound raised goes directly to good causes. Donations are funded almost entirely through the generous efforts and contributions of Hilton team members, family and friends and with the support of Hilton guests and company suppliers.

To find out more please take a look at our website: www.hilton-foundation.org.uk