

NEWS RELEASE

20/09/2006

For immediate release

MPs take Action for Blind People in Lancashire

David Borrow, MP for South Ribble, will learn about the services available to help blind and partially-sighted people in the workplace when he visits the Lancashire branch of national charity Action for Blind People in Preston on Friday 29th September.

Jack Straw, MP for Blackburn, has also extended his support to Action for Blind People Lancashire, stating, "It is only through government and employers working together with organisations such as Action for Blind People that we shall start to tackle the unacceptable level of unemployment amongst visually impaired people."*

Support from the two MPs precedes the charity's Employer Business Breakfast which takes place on October 20th at Ewood Park, Blackburn. Here, local employers can learn not only about the extensive support they can gain from Action when working with a visually impaired employee, but also the potential wealth of talent offered by visually impaired people.

Jack Ritson, Deputy Manager for Action for Blind People Lancashire, said, "We challenge local employers to ask themselves whether they are opening their eyes to the potential of visually impaired people in the workplace, who, research shows, are just as productive as their sighted colleagues." **

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To book a place at the Employer Business Breakfast or for any other services, contact Action for Blind People Lancashire on 01772 320550 or at Howick House, Howick Park Avenue, Penwortham, Preston, PR1 0LS.

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For further information, please contact Victoria Moffett, PR Officer on 020 7635 4921 or victoria.moffett@actionforblindpeople.org.uk. For out of office hours enquiries, please call 07739 819954.

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.
- 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.
- 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.
- There are eight Action Teams across England: North East; Lancashire; Merseyside; Carlisle and Dumfries; Manchester; Wessex; South West and Southern Counties.

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- * Research carried out by Action for Blind People found 3 out of 4 visually impaired people who want to work are unemployed.
- ** Research carried out by Action for Blind People found that 75% of employers agree that a visually impaired employee is just as productive as sighted colleagues.