

# NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

## East Anglia factory guides blind people into work

Blind people in **East Anglia** are being offered guidance on getting into employment from national visual impairment charity, **Action for Blind People**. The charity's new project, based at Norfolk Industries in Norwich, is now up and running thanks to the Big Lottery Fund which has funded two new full-time Employment Coordinators.

With 75% of blind and partially sighted people of working age currently unemployed, the project aims to support unemployed people into jobs and assist those already employed to retain their jobs. Working with local employers, the Employment Coordinators will offer visual awareness training to local companies, raise awareness of the issues affecting visually impaired people in the workplace, and arrange work experience placements for their visually impaired clients.

The new team will be based at Norfolk Industries, a supported employment factory owned by Norfolk County Council and managed by Action for Blind People. Derek Rix, General Manager of Norfolk Industries comments:

“Many employers believe that blind and partially sighted people cannot contribute effectively in the workplace. This is simply not true; with the right support, visually impaired people can contribute just as effectively as sighted people. Our new team



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will strive to ensure that people in East Anglia with sight problems who want to work, have the opportunity to succeed in a wide variety of work areas.”

Action for Blind People’s two new Employment Coordinators bring with them a wealth of experience. Carolyn Fletcher worked for five years as a Recruitment Services Manager for Executive Recruitment Services plc. Since relocating to East Anglia she has worked for ITE Marine Training, where she recruited young people for a marine apprenticeship scheme to address the skills shortage within the Norfolk boat building sector. Carolyn has also worked as a Work Placement Officer for Great Yarmouth College.

Anita Moxley comes to Action from Pelcombe Training Ltd, where she supported unemployed people on New Deal and Gateway to Work programmes. For the previous 13 years she worked for West Hertfordshire College as a Training Coordinator, with a three year secondment to South and West Hertfordshire Probation Service as an ETE (Education, Training and Employment) Advisor. Prior to this, Anita worked in similar recruitment and training roles for a training provider and a recruitment company. Anita is also Chairman of her local community centre.

Companies or visually impaired people interested in working with the new team can contact them at Norfolk Industries, 95 Oak Street, Norwich, NR3 3BP Tel: 01603 626625 or email: [eastanglia@afbp.org](mailto:eastanglia@afbp.org). The team also has out of hours mobile numbers: Anita 078 3425 7992 and Carolyn 078 3425 7991.

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For further media information please contact Zoë Patel, PR Officer on 020 7635 4898 or email [zoe\\_m@afbp.org.uk](mailto:zoe_m@afbp.org.uk)

## 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.
- The Big Lottery Fund distributes half of all National Lottery good cause funding across the UK. The fund aims to enable others to make real improvements to the lives of disadvantaged people and the well-being of communities, through fair and open funding of people, projects and programmes.