

# NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

## **Blind Essex man spends cold and lonely winter due to local authority's failures**

David Weaver, a deafblind Essex man faced spending Christmas alone and without central heating this year due to what a Judge described as Essex County Council's failure to lawfully assess his needs.

David, who lives in West Mersea, has been deaf since birth, has learning disabilities and has also lost his sight in recent years. Supported by national charity Action for Blind People, David recently took the Council to court for refusing to fund the equivalent of two hours' care a day.

Nikki Scambler, Housing Co-ordinator for Action for Blind People said: "Over the past few years David has become increasingly lonely and isolated due to his deafness and sight loss. He is afraid to leave the house, and yet in his home his disabilities have led to him suffering from food poisoning and even an accidental fire".

Despite ECC having been found to have acted unlawfully, to date the local authority have still failed to put proper support in place for David.

However, thanks to support from national charity Action for Blind People, things are looking up. David has been awarded a holiday bursary and will be staying in one of Action's hotels over Christmas. From working with partners Action has also found a home for David in supported housing in Plymouth where he will receive specialist support, and most importantly, companionship. He will be moving to this new home in the New Year.

"Without Action for Blind People I would have been lost" said David. "Essex County Council haven't bothered with me for years."

**-Ends-**

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## Notes to editors:

- Action for Blind People supports over 20,000 blind and partially sighted people in the UK every year. Contact Action for Blind People's National Freephone Helpline on 0800 915 4666 or [www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk](http://www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk) .
- 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.