



# NEWS RELEASE

16/08/07

For immediate release

## **Blind people in East Lancashire benefit from charity visit**

Over 90% of older visually impaired people live on less than half the national average income - a widely accepted definition of poverty<sup>1</sup> - yet many are not claiming the benefits to which they are entitled. In September, five days of Benefits Surgeries, run by **Action for Blind People** and **Age Concern**, will help local visually impaired people identify the money they are missing out on. The Benefits Surgeries will take place on board Action for Blind People's Sight Loss Information Service when it stops off at Barnoldswick, Earby, Nelson, Accrington, Burnley and Clitheroe.

There are a whole range of benefits such as Incapacity Benefit, Disability Living Allowance or Pensions Credit, that many visually impaired people are entitled to. From Monday 3 September to Friday 7 September, visually impaired people from the local area are invited to attend the Benefits Surgeries where they will receive the most up-to-date advice. People found not to be receiving the correct benefits, will be offered further appointments to complete the necessary forms and make their claim.

Kevin Nuttall, Welfare Rights Coordinator for Action for Blind People, commented: "Making a benefit claim usually involves filling in a detailed form – something that can be difficult if you are blind or partially sighted. Receiving the correct benefits isn't just about money, it's about lifting people out of poverty. Claiming the right



# NEWS RELEASE

benefits whether it's Pension Credit, Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit, can make a dramatic difference to someone's quality of life."

The Benefits Surgeries will take place on board Action's mobile Sight Loss Information Service. Staffed by a friendly and knowledgeable team, the mobile carries the latest technology and gadgets to improve daily life. From vibrating bank note detectors to talking microwaves and tin lids, staff on the unit offer impartial, practical advice and support. Robert Harris from Action for Blind People's Sight Loss Information Service said, "Everybody is welcome to come along to visit us on the mobile. Whether you are visually impaired or know somebody who may be having problems with their sight, please pay us a visit and pick up information or ask us questions. Visitors can try out a wide range of daily living aids or the latest computer and magnification technology."

Representatives from Age Concern Lancashire and Age Concern Hyndburn will be present at the events, providing information and answering questions about Age Concern's services. Martin Bradley, Day Care Manager at Age Concern Lancashire said, "As a major provider of services for older people across East Lancashire, we are keen to support the work of Action for Blind People and at the same time raise awareness of the services we provide to help older people."

## **ITINERARY:**

**Monday 3 September, 10am - 4pm**

Town Square  
Barnoldswick



# NEWS RELEASE

**Tuesday 4 September, 10am – 12noon**

Earby Youth & Community Centre  
New Road  
Earby

**2pm - 4pm**

Morrisons Supermarket  
Pendle Street  
Nelson

**Wednesday 5 September, 10am - 4pm**

Outside the Market Hall  
Blackburn Road  
Accrington

**Thursday 6 September, 10am - 4pm**

Outside Marks & Spencer  
St James Street  
Burnley

**Friday 7 September, 10am - 4pm**

Booths Supermarket  
Station Road  
Clitheroe

For more information people can contact Kevin Nuttall, Welfare Rights Officer, on tel: 01772 320 550 or email: [Kevin.nuttall@actionforblindpeople.org.uk](mailto:Kevin.nuttall@actionforblindpeople.org.uk)

**-Ends-**

For further media information please contact Zoë Patel, press office on 020 7635 4898/ 07739 819954 or email: [zoe.patel@actionforblindpeople.org.uk](mailto:zoe.patel@actionforblindpeople.org.uk)

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- Action deals with over 2,500 benefit enquiries every year. During 2005/6 Action's Welfare Rights Team ensured that over £1,350,000 worth of benefits went to people that really needed them.
- For more information on the mobile online, visit [www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk/support-advice/mobile-information-service](http://www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk/support-advice/mobile-information-service). Photos of the mobile service are available on request.
- Action for Blind People supports over 24,000 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.
- 2007 marks Action's 150 years of transforming the lives of blind and partially sighted people.
- If abbreviating "Action for Blind People", please use "Action" rather than AFBP or ABP.

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<sup>1</sup> RNIB, 'Changing the way we think about Blindness', 2002