



NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

Manchester charity looks to the future for blind people

The Greater Manchester Team of national charity, Action for Blind People, celebrated the organisation's 150th birthday last Friday (15 June). The national visual impairment charity has been working to create opportunities for blind and partially sighted people since the Victorian era, and 40 local beneficiaries of the charity were at the Manchester celebrations.

Claire O'Kane, a local visually impaired client of Action for Blind People Greater Manchester, was recently assisted by the team in her search for a job. Claire commented:

"I first heard of Action for Blind People through Social Services. Someone from Action Manchester came to see me at home, where I preferred to meet. We put a personal development plan together, to help me find the kind of job I wanted.

"I'm now working for a local blind society, which I'm finding really satisfying. I'm out and about in the local community meeting lots of people and feel I'm making a difference to other people's lives. Action was very supportive and now instead of saying 'I can't do that', I now say 'I can'! I'm delighted to be part of the anniversary celebrations."



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Jenny Lloyd, Service Manager for Action for Blind People Manchester, added:

“Back in 1857 teaching blind people to read books and weave baskets were the main activities of Action for Blind People. Fast forward to 2007, and opportunities for visually impaired people have changed dramatically, along with the nature and scale of our charity’s work.

“Today, Action’s experts work with visually impaired clients on problems such as; finding or keeping a job, applying for benefits, housing issues, aids and adaptations, holiday breaks or playing sport. Occasionally a client may come to Action with an issue which is outside of the charity’s areas of expertise. Action has developed a network of partner organisations and works to ensure every client’s difficulties are resolved”.

Action for Blind People Greater Manchester’s celebrations included greeting their guests in 1850’s costume, a presentation of the charity’s history, a buffet and anniversary cake, and a prize draw where the top prize was at night at the charity’s Windermere Manor Hotel in the Lake District.

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For further media information please contact Zoe Patel, press office on 020 7635 4898/ 07739 819954 or email: zoe.patel@actionforblindpeople.org.uk



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Notes to editors:

- Action for Blind People Greater Manchester is based at 5th Floor Orbit House, Albert Street, Eccles, M30 OBL, Tel: 0161 787 9252.
- Action for Blind People is an expert national organisation, ensuring blind and partially sighted people get practical support in all aspects of their lives. Contact Action for Blind People's National Freephone Helpline on 0800 915 4666 or www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk
- Action for Blind People is breaking down barriers that prevent visually impaired people from achieving the same opportunities as sighted people.
- 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.