

# NEWS RELEASE

21/03/07

For immediate release

## **Sensory experience offered to companies in Cumbria**

Action for Blind People and Cumbria Deaf Association are offering people the chance to become better at both working with and communicating with, visually impaired, deaf and deafblind customers and colleagues. The free **Sensory Impairment Awareness Training** is available to companies and organisations across Cumbria and takes place on Thursday 19 April, 9.30am-4pm at Penrith Rugby Union FC.

### **Visual awareness training will cover:**

- Techniques for guiding blind and partially sighted people
- Information on the main types of eye conditions
- The use of large print and Braille in written communications
- Tips on how to make environments accessible
- What the Disability Discrimination Act means

### **Deaf awareness training will include:**

- An introduction to using British Sign Language (BSL)
- The use of lip-reading skills, facial expression and body language
- Information on mild, moderate, severe and profound levels of deafness
- Common reactions to hearing loss
- Deafblind awareness training

Anne Pritchard, Visual Awareness Trainer for Action for Blind People, commented: "A blind or partially sighted person may use a company's services, or they may be a member of staff. It's vital that companies and organisations across Cumbria understand their obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act and we can help them do that."

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John Brown, Chief Executive for Cumbria Deaf Association, added: “We are delighted to be working in partnership with Action for Blind People to develop an awareness of how sensory loss can impact on people’s lives. I hope that this initiative is as successful as the courses that were run last year in Barrow and Carlisle with Action for Blind People.”

The training has been funded by Care Sector Alliance Cumbria and will take place at Penrith Rugby Union FC, Winters Park, Penrith, CA11 8RG. Companies interested in booking their staff on the free training should contact Lorna Lang, Tel: 020 7635 4854 or email: [visual.awareness@actionforblindpeople.org.uk](mailto:visual.awareness@actionforblindpeople.org.uk)

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For further media information please contact Zoë Patel, Press Officer for Action for Blind People, Tel: 020 7635 4898, mobile: 07739819954 or email: [zoe.patel@actionforblindpeople.org.uk](mailto:zoe.patel@actionforblindpeople.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. 2007 marks Action’s 150 years of transforming the lives of blind and partially sighted people.

Cumbria Deaf Association is the local voluntary organisation meeting the needs of some of the 75,000 people in Cumbria who are profoundly Deaf, deaf/blind, deafened or hard of hearing. CDA is based in Carlisle with offices in Barrow, Whitehaven and Kendal. It has 36 staff many of them part time, and a network of

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Patron HRH Princess Alexandra, the Hon. Lady Ogilvy, GCVO

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some 20 volunteers. For more information see [www.cumbriadeaf.co.uk](http://www.cumbriadeaf.co.uk)