

# NORFOLK INDUSTRIES FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

Part of *Independence Matters*



## VOLUNTARY WORK EXPERIENCE PLACEMENTS



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## Business History

Norfolk Industries is part of a Community Interest Company called Independence Matters. Employing people with various disabilities, as well as providing work placements to others with disabilities, we have worked hard to improve the reach of our service delivery across Norfolk and North Suffolk.



We attempt to assist individuals to reach their goals and aspirations to the best of their ability through meaningful work, which our logo attempts to portray.

THINK WORKABILITY,  
NOT DISABILITY

## The Team

As a Community Interest Company our most important asset is our staff. We have a small number of core staff, at least 50% of which have various disabilities.

Core staff are employed on good terms and conditions of service, with pay above minimum wage levels and generous sickness and pension schemes. The National Joint Council for Workshops terms of employment are also adhered to.

Customers purchasing from us can be assured that they are directly contributing towards the employment of people with significant barriers to work, who may find it difficult to sustain alternative employment, particularly in today's employment market.



## **Voluntary Placements Programme**

As well as providing employment for people with disabilities we also provide work placements to others who are hoping to get closer to employment. We are able to provide a supportive and well supervised environment working with individuals strengths and ignoring weaknesses.

Some work processes are manual only and do not involve machinery, others require straight forward training to enable the use of basic machinery.

We offer a flexible programme tailored to individuals in that hours can normally be arranged to suit, as well as the number of hours worked. However, things like bus timetables, stamina, confidence and what time of day people are at their best can all be taken into consideration when deciding hours.



People can be referred in a number of ways – via the Job Centre, Seetec, Meridian East, Shaw Trust, Norfolk County Council or just by contacting us and offering your time!

## **The Environment**

This is a factory environment and some processes can be a little dusty, but extraction is provided.

Some processes are noisier than others, due to machinery running and the forklift etc, but the factory is warm and dry, and a canteen is available for lunch and tea breaks.

Protective clothing can be provided; steel toe-capped shoes, warehouse coat, dust mask etc. or if you already have them you can bring your own.

## The Work – Manufacturing and Packing work

The work we offer is light weight, repetitive and requires little instruction, it is suitable for both men and women. This particularly suits people with learning difficulties and physical disabilities such as visual and/or hearing impairment, skeletal deformities etc. Other disabilities would also be assessed for their suitability to our environment.

Norfolk Industries manufactures a range of small animal pet bedding products aimed at rabbits, hamsters, guinea pigs, rats and mice. These products are made in large numbers and to the customer's specification. Quality is very important to us and is core to the success of the business.

We also offer a range of sub-contract packaging work which may involve packing electrical components or children's educational games. Again this is repetitive type work and is appropriate for people who do not suit a production line environment as this is stand alone work.



## Benefits of the Programme

It is our aim to provide a safe and relatively low stress working environment for people with barriers to work, who may struggle in other work places.

There are many benefits to the programme including –

- building confidence
- developing time keeping skills
- improving social skills through work
- understanding the work ethic
- engaging people in a productive manner
- learning to receive and interpret instructions
- gain general work experience such as packing, filling, boxing and palletising product for the customer.

Some elements of machinery maintenance can also be taught if this is something that the individual is interested in.

## Feedback

Here are some of the comments made by other people who have used this service –

*'I have settled quicker here than in all of the other jobs I have had. The people here are very nice, they support each other and work as a team. I have gained confidence in the weeks I've been here. I feel like a piece of jigsaw that finally fits.'*  
Penny Taylor - Volunteer

*'I would love to come back. I enjoyed my time at Norfolk Industries and would really like to work there in a paid job.'*  
Christine Clarke - Volunteer

*'It's brilliant! I enjoy the work.'*  
Chris Worbey - Volunteer