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Media Release

Domestic abuse website launches in Hampshire

Domestic abuse can come in many forms, from physical acts such as kicking or punching, to controlling finances and withholding money, or humiliation, enforced isolation and verbal bullying. Whichever forms it takes, this abuse is a crime and should not be tolerated, and this is the message of a new website being launched today.

The Hampshire Domestic Abuse Forum (HDAF) has teamed up with 'five by five' Southampton based Engagement and Attraction specialists, to create a website that provides a variety of different information on domestic abuse, whether you are a victim or offender, or a friend or family member who knows someone in an abusive relationship.

There is factual information, advice and support, as well as personal stories from people who have escaped abusive relationships, providing an insight into the harrowing reality of living with domestic abuse and violence, and how victims can break free and rebuild their lives.

The HDAF believes that 'tackling domestic abuse is not the responsibility of any single organisation or agency, and success can only be achieved by a true partnership approach'. This is exactly what is achieved with the website – one place where people can access all relevant information and get help with moving forward, whichever stage they may be at.

Jude Ruddock-Atcherley, who is the Strategic Domestic Abuse Manager for Hampshire County Council, said: "It is estimated that 56,000 women and girls have been a victim of domestic abuse in the last year in Hampshire. We have developed this website to try and help the public and professionals have easy access to information, help and support.

"Some people are fully aware of the abuse that they are living with on a daily basis and this site will help them to find out the information and agencies which can help them. Other people may not realise that the way they are being treated is in fact abusive and that they have a right to live free from abuse – this site also aims to help them find the information they need and the people who can help them.

“There is also lots of information aimed at the family and friends of people experiencing abuse, people who are concerned about their own behaviour, children and young people, people experiencing so called ‘honour’ based violence, and also professionals working with and supporting people everyday.”

There are two sites being launched under the Hampshire Domestic Abuse Forum branding; the first is for the public, giving access to all information on the many aspects and forms of domestic abuse, including the related subject of Honour Based Violence, and how to get help or provide support.

The second site is password protected, and designed for all professionals who either work with, or may come into contact with, people experiencing domestic abuse. There is a wealth of information which can help the users better understand the issues around domestic abuse, and gives access to resources both locally and across the county.

Detective Inspector Nigel Scott said: “This project represents the commitment of all agencies in the Hampshire Domestic Abuse Forum to provide support for those who are affected by domestic abuse, whether as victims, offenders, relatives or professionals. Talking openly about this issue is a key factor in raising awareness and creating confidence in tackling abusive behaviour, because this is an issue which has a devastating effect on people’s lives.”

Councillor Roy Perry, Deputy Leader of Hampshire County Council, and chairman of Hampshire’s Domestic Abuse Partnership Board, said: “Domestic abuse is unacceptable and we are committed to combating all forms of domestic abuse, however it arises in Hampshire. It is a pervasive problem that occurs regardless of background or age and combating it requires co-operation from all sectors. This website is an excellent example of agencies working together to provide information to the public so that they can seek help. The safety and welfare of Hampshire’s residents is our number one priority and tackling domestic abuse across the county is fundamental in this.”

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Notes to editors: The web address for the public site is www.hampshiredomesticabuse.org.uk

Detective Inspector Scott and Jude Ruddock-Atcherley are available for interview between **12noon and 4pm today, Tuesday, June 1.**

To arrange an interview with DI Nigel Scott, please call Liz Harding, Corporate Communications Officer for Hampshire Constabulary, on 07768 553450.

To arrange an interview with Jude Ruddock-Atcherley, please call Louise Payne, Hampshire County Council Media Communications Officer - Adults and Children's Services, on 01962 847363.