



## NORFOLK SAYS NO

to domestic abuse  
and sexual violence

### PRESS RELEASE

23<sup>rd</sup> November 2009

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Police cars, fire engines and ambulances - decorated with white ribbons and balloons - will be at the centre of three unique photo shoots in Norwich, Kings Lynn and Great Yarmouth this week, to launch the **Norfolk Says No** campaign.

Shortly after **10am on Wednesday 25th November** the vehicles will be surrounded by crowds of people who work in the criminal justice system, local authorities, charities and voluntary groups, and everyone will be wearing white ribbons on their lapels.

The clear message is **Norfolk Says No** to domestic abuse and sexual violence and that everyone is committed to working together to help victims build a safe future for themselves and their families.

The three **Norfolk Says No** photo shoot locations are County Hall in Norwich, Kings Lynn Fire Station and Great Yarmouth Fire Station and members of the press are invited to attend at 10am.



Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November is International White Ribbon Day and the **Norfolk Says No** campaign is designed to reinforce, locally, the global campaign against domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse survivor, Rita Crombie, will be wearing her white ribbon and taking part in the photo shoot at County Hall, in Norwich on Wednesday morning.

Rita, who suffered horrific injuries at the hands of her former partner in 2007, says: "I'm lucky to be alive and it had to come to that before I realised I had to get out.

"The trouble is when you're in it you don't see it and you don't accept that what is happening is wrong. I believed that he was truly sorry each time he mentally or physically abused me.

"What a lot of victims don't realise is that they can get confidential help and stay safe. There are people and organisations across Norfolk who will support you right the way through. No-one has to live like that. There is a way out."

Rita's attacker is now serving an indeterminate jail sentence and Rita works alongside Leeway Women's Aid in Norfolk to offer confidential advice to abused women.

Rita will be available for interview at the photo shoot at County Hall. Photos of Rita's injuries are attached to this e mail and are cleared for use in broadcasts, publications and websites.

For more information and to arrange interviews contact -

**Jayne Evans**  
**Communications**  
**Norfolk Criminal Justice Board**  
**evansje@norfolk.pnn.police.uk**  
**07711 913179 / 01603 693132**

The **Norfolk Says No** campaign is an initiative which developed from the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Board; a new partnership in Norfolk which will focus on improving services and support available to victims and survivors and on strengthening the working links between criminal justice agencies, public sector bodies and voluntary and charity organisations. An open letter outlining this joint agency commitment is attached to this e mail.

Stickers for the back of lavatory doors will also be launched on Wednesday. They carry help line numbers and websites and will be distributed to pubs, clubs, public buildings etc throughout Norfolk. They have been produced and printed by Norfolk PACT (Partners Against Crime Task Force) and carry the **Norfolk Says No** message.

### **Facts and figures**

1. Nationally 2 people a week are killed by their partner – most after repeated escalating violence.
2. In 2008 the Home Office reported that there is one incident of domestic abuse reported to the police every minute.
3. Domestic violence accounts for 18% of all crime in England and Wales.
4. On average a victim can suffer 34 incidents of abuse before they contact the police.
5. Domestic crimes and incidents occur more during the warmer months and then again during the festive Christmas season.
6. In 2008 there were 9,172 incidents of domestic abuse reported to Norfolk Constabulary – 2,672 were crimes. Violence against the person accounts for a large number of these, with criminal damage as second.
7. 25% of homicides in Norfolk are domestic abuse related.

### **Links for your websites and more background information.**

Women's Aid

<http://www.womensaid.org.uk>

Leeway, Norfolk

<http://www.leewaysupport.org/>

Refuge

<http://www.refuge.org.uk/homepage.html>

Victim Support

<http://www.victimsupport.org.uk/>

White Ribbon Campaign

<http://www.whiteribboncampaign.co.uk/>

Domestic Violence - Home Office

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime-victims/reducing-crime/domestic-violence/>

