

# n e w s r e l e a s e

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November 23, 2009

## DOVE RELEASE LAUNCHES DOMESTIC VIOLENCE WEEK

Fifty white doves, symbolising hope and peace were released in Verulamium Park, St Albans on 16 November.

The event, which was supported by the High Sheriff of Hertfordshire Janie Wentworth-Stanley, Lord Lieutenant Lady Verulam and mayors from around the county, was organised by Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire Constabulary to launch Domestic Violence Awareness Week in Hertfordshire.

Domestic Violence Awareness Week, which starts on 23 November, is supported by various organisations throughout Hertfordshire and aims to encourage the public to learn more about domestic violence, so that it isn't viewed as a taboo subject but is seen as a crime.

“Domestic violence has a huge impact on families and children,” said Det Supt Jon Chapman opening the event. “We know that 22% of young offenders come from domestic violence households and that children from these households are 12 times more likely to be excluded from school. It is also obvious that those who witness domestic violence are more likely to see this as the norm and mirror this behaviour in their later life. It is important that these children know they are not alone and that support is available.”

“Domestic violence is not just physical abuse but emotional abuse, financial abuse, sexual abuse, or a combination of these,” explained County Councillor Keith Emsall, Executive Member for Community Safety & Culture. “It's important that anyone who is living or has lived with domestic violence knows where to find support. In 90 per cent of domestic violence cases, children and young people witness or hear what is happening, and the Hertfordshire helpline can offer them support too.”

Chair of Hertfordshire Police Authority, Stuart Nagler, said “One of our greatest priorities is to protect vulnerable people and we have invested an extra three quarters of a million pounds over the past two years to do just that. Judging success is not easy as violence in the home far too often goes unreported. It is important to encourage victims and provide them with the support they and their families need to stop them suffering.”

The week culminates with a conference to raise awareness of the sensitive issues surrounding forced marriage, honour-based violence and female genital mutilation (FGM) on 30 November at the Hertfordshire Development Centre, Stevenage.



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[www.herts.police.uk](http://www.herts.police.uk)

To speak in confidence to a trained adviser ring the free Hertfordshire Domestic Violence/Abuse Line on **08 088 088 088** (Monday to Friday 10am - 8pm). This number will **not** show up on your telephone bill.

The National Centre for Domestic Violence provide a free 24:7 legal advice service for victims with access to a solicitor who can obtain injunctions and other civil legal remedies within hours rather than days. The telephone number for this service is 08709 220704

**-Ends-**

For further information, please contact Vanessa Lynch, Press & PR Officer, in Corporate Communication on 01707 354557.

The number for all non-emergency calls  
**0845 33 00 222**  
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