



Press release

Date: 19 August 2016

New Drop-In Service for Male Victims of Domestic Abuse Opens in Taunton

Time: Every Monday¹ 11am to 2pm (no appointment necessary)

Venue: The ManKind Initiative, Flook House, Belvedere Road, Taunton, TA1 1BT

Taunton-based charity, The ManKind Initiative, has launched a Monday drop-in service for male victims of domestic abuse in the county. The service, open between 11am and 2pm gives male victims the chance to talk about the domestic abuse they are suffering from and find out how they can safely leave their relationship. There is no need for an appointment and they will be met with a welcoming environment with people from the charity who will listen to them, give them support and provide the information they need.

The one-year project is being funded by Taunton Women's Aid and has been created by the charity's Independent Domestic Violence Adviser, Lori Busch. Leaflets and posters will be distributed throughout Taunton and the surrounding towns with barbers, pubs, sports clubs and GP surgeries being asked to display the literature. Requests for literature can be made at admin@mankind.org.uk and there is a dedicated webpage: www.mankind.org.uk/somersetdropin

Recent figures show that over 1,500 men report to Avon & Somerset police every year² stating they are a victim of domestic abuse, however, the charity believes the figure is far higher given that many men do not tell anyone, let alone the police, that they are a victim.

Taunton Women's Aid Trustee, Anne Kearle, said: "Taunton Women's Aid has supported women and children affected by domestic abuse in the local area for over thirty years. In recent years the aims of the charity were extended to help men, and men with children, who suffer similar abuse, so we are really pleased to work with the ManKind Initiative to help change lives."

Mark Brooks, Chairman of the ManKind Initiative, said: “We are delighted that Taunton Women's Aid wanted to create this groundbreaking service and that they then wanted us to support them in doing so.

“We are confident that this service will make a difference to those men suffering from domestic abuse in Somerset and we urge any man who wants to escape, to please drop-in. We have a first class team ready to support them. For men unable to come in person, please do not hesitate in calling our helpline.”

The ManKind Initiative was the first charity in the United Kingdom to support male victims of domestic abuse and in addition, to the drop-in service, from its Taunton base it also runs a national helpline (01823 334244), trains professionals within the sector and runs a national conference.

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Notes to Editors

1. Except Bank Holidays
2. Freedom of Information Request made by the ManKind Initiative – the exact figure in 2013 was 1,525
3. Photo Caption: Anne Kearle (Trustee of Taunton Women's Aid) and Mark Brooks (Chairman of the ManKind Initiative) at Flook House, Taunton (the venue of the drop-in service)
4. Further information about Taunton Women's Aid can be found here:
<http://www.tauntonwomensaid.org.uk/>
5. Journalists requiring further information please contact Mark Brooks on 07834 452357
chairman@mankind.org.uk