

21st July 2009

### **SAFE@LAST volunteers attend Queens Garden Party**

Volunteers from Children's Charity SAFE@LAST attended a garden party at Buckingham Palace last week as part of the celebrations after the local charity was awarded this years Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

The prestigious National Honour, which is equivalent to the MBE, sets the national benchmark for excellence in volunteering, and the activities of those awarded have been judged of the highest standard.

SAFE@LAST has received the Award for its work with vulnerable young people from South Yorkshire, North Nottinghamshire and North East Debyshire who are at risk through running away either from what they are running from or where they are running to. SAFE@LAST provides services for the 1 in 9 children in South Yorkshire who run away from home or care. SAFE@LAST provides preventative work, a 24 hour helpline (0800 335 SAFE), a MISPER (Missing Persons) Scheme and an emergency refuge for young people who are 16 and under.

Four volunteers from the charity who had previously won SAFE@LAST's Volunteer of the Year award enjoyed a day out in London visiting Buckingham Palace to celebrate the achievement. Volunteers who attended were Sue Norton who supports the charity by working on the helpline as well as supporting fundraising events, Danielle Fitzpatrick who volunteers on the helpline and delivers preventative work in schools, Pam Forbes who volunteers in the SAFE@LAST office on a frequent basis providing admin support and Dane Howard who also works on the helpline.

Sue Norton said of the day "I thoroughly enjoyed the totally elegant experience of visiting the palace. The whole event had a wonderful atmosphere and it was magical to be inside Buckingham Palace. We didn't have the opportunity to speak to the queen but she walked close by us and looked beautiful. We were all proud to have been asked to represent SAFE@LAST and all the volunteers at the charity that this award recognises."

**- Ends -**

## **For further information**

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## **Note to editors**

- SAFE@LAST is a registered charity working with young people who have run away from, or have been thrown out of, the place where they usually live.
- Young People that need help can contact SAFE@LAST on their 24hour helpline by calling 0800 335 SAFE.
- People wishing to support SAFE@LAST can make a donation by texting SAM to 84424 and £3 will be taken from their credit, or added to their bill and donated to the charity. Donations can also be made via the website [www.safeatlast.org.uk](http://www.safeatlast.org.uk)
- For more information about SAFE@LAST, the services it offers and how you can help visit [www.safeatlast.org.uk](http://www.safeatlast.org.uk). Young people wishing to contact SAFE@LAST can call on their 24hour confidential helpline on 0800 335 SAFE.

## **About the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service**

For details of all this year's Queen's Award for Voluntary Service winners and information on how to nominate a group that really makes a difference, visit [www.queensawardvoluntary.gov.uk](http://www.queensawardvoluntary.gov.uk), where a nomination form can be downloaded.

In 2002, in celebration of Her Majesty's Golden Jubilee, the Queen's Golden Jubilee Award for Voluntary Service by Groups in the Community was established. Its purpose is to recognise groups of individuals who are giving their time freely for the benefit of others. It is the highest honour that can be bestowed upon groups of this kind and is equivalent in status to the MBE. As such, the Queen's Award not only serves to provide recognition of volunteer groups, but also demonstrates the high respect in which volunteering is held.

The Award is overseen by the Office of the Third Sector (OTS). As part of the Cabinet Office, the OTS leads work across government to support the environment for a thriving third sector (voluntary and community groups, social enterprises, charities, cooperatives and mutuals), enabling it to campaign for change, deliver public services, promote social enterprise and strengthen communities.

Groups must be nominated for the Award – self nomination is not permitted. A group (two or more people) can be nominated if it is based in the UK, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. The group has to have been volunteering for the benefit of people in the UK or overseas for at least three years and more than half its members must be volunteers who have the right of residence in the UK. Groups solely concerned with fundraising for charitable purposes are not eligible. Further details on entrance criteria and the nomination process are available from [www.queensawardvoluntary.gov.uk](http://www.queensawardvoluntary.gov.uk).