

20th January 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

‘Not So Strictly Come Dancing’ event is huge success

Children’s Charity SAFE@LAST is celebrating after one of its fundraising events, held last Friday 15th January at the Sheffield City Hall was a big success.

The ‘Not So Strictly Come Dancing’ event was the second of its kind the charity has benefited from and saw ten couples undergo weeks of training to perform two dances in front of over 400 people and four judges.

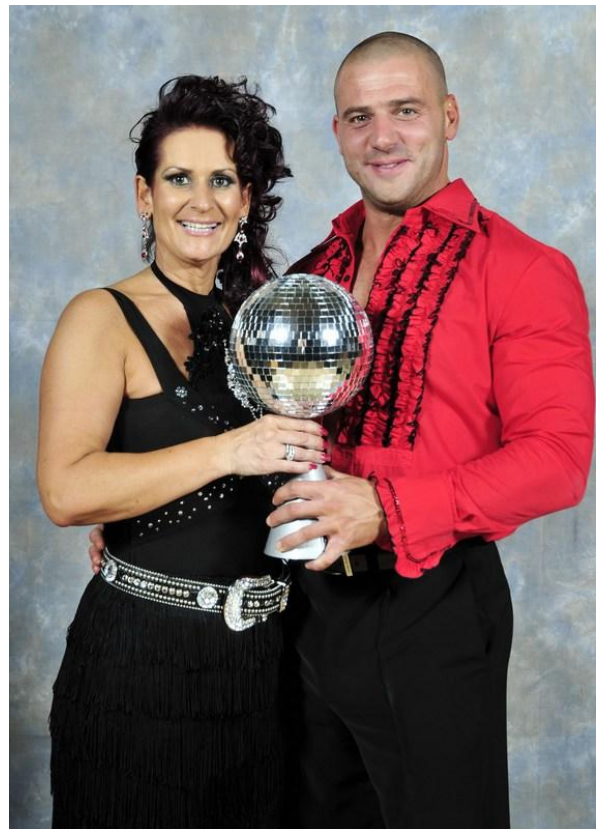
Judging the dancers were South Yorkshire Police Chief Constable and SAFE@LAST Patron Med Hughes, International ballroom judge and father of Darren Bennett from BBC1’s Strictly Come Dancing Tony Bennett, FA referee Howard Webb and SAFE@LAST volunteer and lover of all things Strictly Sue Norton!

All couples performed both a Jive and a Quickstep. They received comments and scores from the judges and the public voted by putting money in the bucket of their favourite couple. The top three dancers then performed again before the judges had the unviable task of sending one couple home. The finalists then danced for the last time before the public voted for their winner.

Jill Faulkner and Phil Reed were the lucky couple to walk away with the shiny glitter ball trophy after impressing both the judges and the public with their impressive dance skills.

Speaking about the event Hilary Massarella, SAFE@LAST Founder Trustee said; “A huge thank you to every one of the BRILLIANT dancers whose commitment to training, to each other, and to raising funds through sponsorship has been phenomenal. All of this amazing effort has resulted in one of the most successful events that we have ever done and this has come at a perfect time. SAFE@LAST is currently half way through the financial year and, largely because of external factors, fundraising budgets had fallen short on almost every event in this first half, ‘Not so Strictly Come Dancing’ should get us right back on track and so we are all extremely grateful.”

Chief Constable of South Yorkshire Police and Patron of SAFE@LAST Meredydd Hughes was a judge on the night and said “I freely admit that I know little about the technicalities of



Winners Jill Faulkner and Phil Reed with their trophy

dancing but I can recognise hard work, enthusiasm and commitment when I see it. Not only the dancers but the organisers and trainers had put so much into the evening that every one of the 500 guests had a fabulous time. Events like this are vital to help the young people SAFE@LAST supports so keep an eye out for the next event.”

Winner Jill Faulkner said; “Taking part in ‘Not So Strictly Come Dancing’ for me was an easy decision, not just for the obvious reason of helping a fantastic cause, SAFE@LAST, but it was an opportunity of a lifetime for me to learn to dance. From day one and after being introduced to my partner Phil and the others I was hooked. The final evening was amazing; I will hold this experience (and the glitter ball) in my memories forever. I just want to keeeeeeep dancing!” her partner PC Phil Reed added "I've never done any dancing before, but I've now been completely bitten by the bug. I absolutely love it and I'm definitely going to keep dancing. We had a brilliant night and with the amount that was raised, there were really winners all round."

SAFE@LAST is a charity which provides vital services to young people who are 16 and under and at risk through running away. SAFE@LAST provides a Helpline service, a Missing Young People’s Service encompassing ongoing one to one support, Preventative Workshops and, most remarkable of all the only Refuge outside of London for children and young people under the age of 16. Young people present SAFE@LAST with many complex issues including neglect, physical abuse, self harming, forced marriage, conflict and violence at home, sexual exploitation, mental health problems and many more. Although the charity receives some grant funding it is heavily reliant on raising funds through events such as ‘Not So Strictly Come Dancing’ in order to continue to provide essential services when children and young people need them the most.

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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.
- For more information about SAFE@LAST, the services it offers and how you can help visit www.safeatlast.org.uk. Young people wishing to contact SAFE@LAST can call on their 24hour confidential helpline on 0800 335 SAFE.