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18 July 2013

Dear Councillor

I am writing to let you know that we are planning an awareness week in the Horsham area from 29th September to 5th October. This is in response to the recent suicides at Swan Walk and also in recognition of the fact that there are some misconceptions about who our service supports. We want to spread the message that we are a confidential listening service available to anyone at any time. We are particularly keen to get that message across to men of 30 - 55, the group most likely to commit suicide, and to encourage them to contact us before problems become so overwhelming that worry turns to despair, and perhaps to suicidal feelings.

We are contacting pubs and sports clubs, employers and small businesses, shops and cafes, churches and schools to help us. The week will begin with a concert at the Horsham bandstand, organised for us by Horsham Folk Club, and Samaritans will have information stands all week in Swan Walk and on both market days in the Carfax. Our aim is that Samaritans will be visible across the district. Our Branch is staffed only by volunteers so this is a huge undertaking for us. We are enormously grateful for the help we have received from Horsham District Council and for the grant from the North Horsham Community Initiative Fund, both of which have made it all possible.

It is first and foremost an awareness raising exercise but we will be sending out '40 Fund' collection boxes along with the promotional material. To mark our 40th year in Horsham we would like each organisation to collect £40 during the course of the week. This will contribute to the promotional costs and also to the costs of delivering our service in Horsham. Most importantly, we hope that raising funds for us will help to establish the role of Samaritans in people's minds.

I thought it important to let you know what we are planning. Your support would mean a great deal to all of us at Horsham and Crawley Samaritans

Yours sincerely

Sue Jago
Director, Samaritans of Horsham & Crawley