



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National charity welcomes zero drink-drive limit calls

2 December 2011, national – Swanswell’s welcoming calls from one of the country’s top Police Officers to introduce a zero drink-drive limit but says driver education is a good place to start.

The national charity, which helps people overcome drug, alcohol and other problem behaviour, is reacting to Deputy Chief Constable Suzette Davenport’s suggestion to ban motorists from drinking any alcohol if they are going to get behind the wheel.

Speaking as the Association of Chief Police Officers launched its Christmas campaign, she said the change would drastically reduce the number of drink- related deaths and serious injuries on our roads¹.

Debbie Bannigan, Swanswell’s Chief Executive, said: *‘Even small amounts of alcohol can affect someone behind the wheel - working out whether you’re under the current drink-drive limit’s difficult at the best of times, because alcohol affects people in different ways.*

‘Alcohol’s a depressant so it slows down the bodies functions, resulting in slower reaction times when driving. It can also lead to people making riskier decisions, increasing the risk of an accident.

‘We know that in 2008 for example, 8,620 road accidents happened when a driver was over the legal limit and that 2,020 were killed or seriously injured as a result².

‘Many of those who take part in our drink-impaired drivers programme tell us that they didn’t realise how alcohol could affect their driving and the potential danger they were putting themselves and others in.

‘So the best way to help keep safe on the road is not to drink at all if you’re getting behind the wheel.

‘We welcome the Deputy Chief Constable’s suggestion and we hope the government will seriously consider this.’

Below are some useful tips to help you ensure you don’t drink-drive³:

- Have a designated driver if you’re planning a night out – someone who won’t drink alcohol on that night so they can drive friends back safely
- Use public transport and make sure you have a couple of taxi numbers to hand
- If you are driving, drink soft drinks or zero-alcohol beers

To find out more about Swanswell and the services it provides, please visit

www.swanswell.org.

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Notes for editors

For more information or supporting photographs, contact Stuart Goodwin:

Swanswell
Suite 5, Hilton House
Corporation Street
Rugby
Warwickshire
CV21 2DN

Tel: 01788 559 422

Email: stuart.goodwin@swanswell.org

About Swanswell

Swanswell is a national charity that helps people overcome drug, alcohol and other problem behaviour. We believe that everyone deserves the chance to change and to be happy. We help them to remove the things that stand in their way, whether physical, emotional or practical. So, as their lives improve, they can feel well, do well, and stay well. Swanswell has a reputation for innovation and is a leading developer of new services which help people to change their behaviour for the better.

Swanswell has a number of offices across the country including Coventry and Warwickshire, Birmingham, Barnsley, Sandwell, Leicestershire and Rutland. Visit Swanswell at: www.swanswell.org.

Join the conversation, follow Swanswell on twitter at www.twitter.com/Swanswell.

References

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2. Department for Transport 2008, *Road Casualties Great Britain: 2008 – Annual Report*. [Online]. Available at: <http://www2.dft.gov.uk/pgr/statistics/datatablespublications/accidents/casualtiesgbar/rrcgb2008.html> [accessed 2/12/11].
3. DrinkAware 2011, *drink-driving and the legal alcohol limit*. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.drinkaware.co.uk/facts/drink-driving> [accessed 2/12/2011].