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**Cassiobury Park ‘Walk for freedom’ celebrates Watford counselling service**

A Watford-based charity that offers counselling services to women who have experienced sexual violence is celebrating its relaunch this month.

Taking place to coincide with International Women’s Day, **Juno Hertfordshire**, formerly Watford Rape Crisis, is inviting people to take part in a ‘walk for freedom and recovery’ in Cassiobury Park on Saturday 12th March.

Counsellors and volunteers will meet at the top of the park at 2pm, (the Peace Hospice end) holding purple balloons so that they can’t be missed. They will then make the symbolic walk down to the Cassiobury Park Community Hub, next to the Daisy’s in the Park cafe, where there will be a chance to find out more about the service, have a coffee and cake, and even hear some original poetry - written especially for the occasion.

“Our walk is a small but powerful act that shows what we can achieve when we take the first step. With others by our side, we can gain the strength to walk towards freedom and recovery,” says Laura Smith, Juno’s counselling co-ordinator.

Explaining the decision behind the name change and relaunch, Laura adds: “Watford Rape Crisis made the decision to change its name to Juno Hertfordshire to reflect the sheer breadth of ways that sexual violence affects women’s lives. No matter when or how it happened, we offer empathy, compassion and support to any women who feels ready to talk”

Why Juno?

“Juno was the ancient Roman goddess who had a central role as the protector of women. We feel that we are aligned with Juno’s character as our aim is to support women to find safety and protection with us, and to go forward with the knowledge that the future offers hope for recovery and the chance to live life fully.

The event is open to all, and we will be at the Cassiobury Park Community Hub until 4pm. We would love to see you there and share our pride in the work that we do.”

Ends

**Notes to editors**

**Juno Hertfordshire**

Juno Hertfordshire is a counselling service based in Watford. It is a charity that offers specialist support and counselling to women aged 16 and over who have experienced sexual violence at any time in their lives, whenever and however it happened. It is a female-led organisation, serving all women living in Hertfordshire and neighbouring areas, irrespective of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic class, religion or disability.

Juno was previously called Watford Rape Crisis. It has been renamed as Juno, to reflect the breadth of its clients and their experiences. Juno was the ancient Roman Goddess who possessed the characteristics of energy and a force for life. She also had a central role as a protector of women.

Juno Hertfordshire offers face to face, online and telephone counselling. For more information, visit [www.junocounselling.co.uk](http://www.junocounselling.co.uk)

**International Women’s Day**

International Women’s Day takes place every year on March 8th. It is a global day that celebrates the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity and an opportunity to celebrate women’s achievements and fundraise for female-focused charities.

The 2022 campaign theme is #BreakTheBias. Whether deliberate or unconscious, bias makes it difficult for women to move ahead. Knowing that bias exists isn’t enough, action is needed to level the playing field.

To find out how to get involved, visit [www.internationalwomensday.com](http://www.internationalwomensday.com)