

Speech, FLO awards, Mary Williams, 3 July 2019

- It is an enormous privilege to thank and award Family Liaison Officers today. You are the frontline of care, undertaking a vital, tough and challenging role.
- That role is highly deserving of recognition. And that is what we are here to do today.
- You and I know that no case is the same as the last case. Every family faces their own unique set of horrors and hardship.
- At Brake, we believe that the only acceptable number of deaths and serious injuries on the road is zero. Vision Zero is becoming a goal, not a dream. The answer is a safe system approach.
 - Safer vehicles.
 - Safer roads.
 - Separate space for people on foot and bicycles.
And, critically, from a policing perspective,
 - Forensic investigation of collisions, so all causes can be scrutinised and prevented.
 - Comprehensive, well-funded enforcement, to rid our roads of illegalities.
- 5 people are still being killed on UK roads every day.
- 5 families have lost a parent, a partner, a child, a grandparent, or a close friend.
- 5 families urgently need the support that family liaison officers and Brake's National Road Victim Service provide.
- The needs of people bereaved by road death are profound. Wide-ranging. Those affected suffer shock, trauma and grief as well as facing new and unfamiliar practical and procedural challenges, often over a very long period.

- Without immediate and continuous support, such traumatically bereaved people experience long-term emotional, health and practical problems.
- Brake is so proud of our long-standing partnership with family liaison officers and our hand in hand care.
- It is a requirement, within police guidance, for police to distribute Brake's bereavement packs and we are reliant on family liaison officers to achieve this. Last year, we worked with police to distribute nearly 4,000 packs across the UK.
- Our team of professional editors widely consult on, and continually improve the packs year on year, making sure they provide the clearest, and most up-to-date advice possible for families in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- The Brake packs are just the start of a family's support journey and comprise one part of Brake's National Road Victim Service. Our national helpline supports the work of family liaison officers, by providing down the line vital emotional support, practical help and advocacy on behalf of callers, helping them to meet a range of needs outside the remit of a FLO, from mental health care to housing to child care.
- One recent case, referred to us by the police, was assessed as high risk and extremely vulnerable, with multiple and complex needs around the caller's mental health. Throughout our support for this one caller we delivered:
 - over 180 communications with the caller
 - achieved advocacy results by working with 7 other agencies, including
 - accessing local culturally relevant counselling
 - liaising with their GP and Mental Health services
 - liaising with the coroner's office and providing practical information about inquest procedures
 - accessing funding for a graveyard headstone
 - and, throughout, extensively liaising with the family liaison officer. We shared the care load appropriately and in line with our expertise and responsibilities.

- Last year, the helpline supported 740 victims, nearly a quarter more than the year before, and also supported 172 professionals including police officers.
- Through our national conference in the autumn for Family Liaison Officers, our free training sessions for Family Liaison Officers, and through regular telephone contact with you, we demonstrate the importance of sharing professional knowledge and working together.
- Many of you in this room will know that PCC funding of Brake's National Road Victim Service is increasing. 24 PCCs now fund our work, which is vital because, across the board, the Ministry of Justice has been devolving funding to PCCs for victim care and we are expecting our centralised funding (which comprises around a third of our funding) to end. The National Road Victim Service, will, however, continue, with the support of PCCs and our much valued corporate and community giving.
- If you have the chance, please write to, and encourage, your PCC to continue, or start to, grant aid Brake. Your words of support are so important at this time.
- Which leaves me once again to say how delighted and honoured I am to be here to present these awards.

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