

PRESS RELEASE

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER PRAISES RURAL WOMEN'S CELEBRATION OF CULTURE, HERITAGE AND DIVERSITY

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Northumbria's Police and Crime Commissioner Vera Baird QC has applauded the tremendous efforts of a newly formed partnership of rural women's organisations and community groups. Tomorrow, they will be hosting a unique celebration of women's culture, heritage and diversity at Alington House Community Centre in Durham City. The event forms part of National Heritage Open Days which are taking place this weekend.

Ms Baird, who has recently been elected as the first women chair of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners said, "Heritage Open Days are about learning from our past and taking forward our message to ensure we deliver change. The agenda for the women's heritage events, delivers just that – innovation, diversity and creativity. The displays and workshops come from women's projects across our region, it showcases the very best of what women are doing and our drive and desire to make tomorrow even better than today."

There will be displays, workshops and information from women's projects across Durham and Northumberland, featuring: Werca's Folk , a hugely popular choir of women's voices; displays and workshops from Alington House Womens Groups; HERitage Northumberland; Diverse Women's Network, Emily Inspires!; Canny Craic Theatre Company; the BAM! Sistahood! Project; and Women of Wit, Wisdom and Wonder.

North East Rural Women's Partnership formed in response to high levels social isolation among rural women and their difficulties in accessing services, resources, information and support. Dr Sue Robson from Women's Resource Centre, a national charity which supports women's organisations said, "it has been no mean feat to work together across such a large geographical expanse as Northumberland and Durham but such is the enthusiasm and commitment to improve the conditions of the lives of women in rural areas, a creative, energetic and dynamic partnership has formed." Vera Baird made a point of saying that, "it is important that decision makers appreciate the difficult and complex issues faced by women in rural communities, we must ensure that funding and services continue to be available to women and girls in rural communities as they are in urban communities. She added, "National Heritage Open Days, highlight the dazzling diversity of Europe's heritage, but also its intercultural links, it is important that the decision to leave Europe does not affect this important work."

The event takes place from 10am-3pm at Alington House Community Association, 4 North Bailey, Durham, DH1 3ET. This particular event is for women only. For more information contact Debra or Elaine on 0191 386 4088/ info.alingtonhouse@gmail.com or just come along on the day!

Ends

Editors Notes

- 1) Heritage Open Days were established in 1994 as England's contribution to the European Heritage Days. They are held annually in September in 50 signatory states to the European Cultural Convention. The festival not only highlights the dazzling diversity of Europe's heritage, but also its intercultural links. <https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/>
- 2) Information and how to find Alington House can be found here - <http://www.alingtonhouse.org.uk/>
- 3) Publicity for the event can be found on [Durham County Council's website](#) and [Heritage](#)

[Open Days website:](#)

4) North East Rural Women's Network is a collaborative development between the Women's Resource Centre and [North East Women's Network](#). The project is part [Women's Commissioning Support Unit](#) pilot project in the North East, funded by [Esmée Fairbairn Foundation](#).

5) The [Women's Resource Centre](#) is a charity which supports women's organisations to be more effective and sustainable. It provide training, information, resources and one-to-one support on a range of organisational development issues. We also lobby decision makers on behalf of the women's not-for-profit sector for improved representation and funding.

If you need any further information, contact Dr. Sue Robson, sue@wrc.org.uk or 07813109215