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Media Release

New website for Peterborough Based Charity

Peterborough based national charity ASBAH (Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus) has launched a new webshop offering easy access to over 150 leading stores with the added benefit that up to 10% of each purchase made through the site goes straight to the charity.

The webshop, which can be accessed at www.asbah.org, contains links to the on-line stores of traditional retailers such as John Lewis, PC World, Boots, Tesco and Woolworths, as well as on-line specialists Amazon and travel companies such as Hilton hotels and Keycamp Holidays. Shopping and payment methods are just the same as if you had accessed these stores direct.

As well as the webshop, ASBAH's new website provides a wealth of information about the charity and its services, including case studies of those living with spina bifida and hydrocephalus.

ASBAH's Director of Fundraising, Colin Roberts said, "ASBAH's new website presents a modern, professional image for the charity – but it is now also at the heart of our fundraising strategy. I hope the people of Peterborough will support us – as a local national charity - by using our webshop, where just one extra click will lead to a donation to ASBAH".

ASBAH staff recently visited Peterborough's Queensgate Shopping Centre to raise awareness of ASBAH and the work it does both in the city and nationally. The team set-up an information point within the shopping centre and enticed shoppers with a tombola. They offered information on a range of topics that shoppers might have found useful, including folic acid, an issue which all women of child bearing age need to be aware of.

Gill Winfield, ASBAH's Marketing & Communications Manager, lives in Peterborough and went along for the day: "We had a steady stream of visitors to our stand and there were several who knew someone with the disabilities or had a family member affected but didn't know about ASBAH and how we can help. We were also delighted by the generosity of shoppers, as we collected over £562."

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Notes to editors:

The Peterborough-based national charity provides spina bifida and hydrocephalus information and advice to individuals, families and carers. The charity's head office, located on Park Road, Peterborough, also houses the eastern regional ASBAH office and the national helpline.

Spina Bifida occurs very early in pregnancy when the spine and brain are being formed. It is a fault in the development of the spinal cord and surrounding bones (vertebrae) and leaves a gap or split in the spine. The spinal cord has not formed properly, and may also be damaged. Spina bifida often results in paralysis below the fault resulting in severe disability.

Each year up to 1200 pregnancies in the UK are affected by Neural Tube Defects (spina bifida).

A major secondary complication of spina bifida is **hydrocephalus** –excess fluid pressure in the brain, which can cause brain damage if not treated promptly.

Hydrocephalus can also occur on its own: in babies born prematurely, or as a result of meningitis, cysts in the brain, strokes or other brain injuries. There can be learning difficulties associated with hydrocephalus such as problems with concentration, reasoning and short-term memory.

ASBAH is actively campaigning to introduce the compulsory addition of folic acid into UK flour products to prevent up to 1,000 terminations of spina bifida affected pregnancies each year.

Registered charity number 249338

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