



*-Embargoed until 00.01am, Thursday 6 December 2012-*

## **Mental health charity SANE launches world's largest dedicated social networking platform for mental health**

Alastair Campbell today welcomes the announcement by mental health charity SANE of its acquisition of the popular Black Dog Tribe website ([www.blackdogtribe.com](http://www.blackdogtribe.com)), at an event at the London headquarters of Citi to mark International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

Black Dog Tribe was inspired by comedian and actress Ruby Wax and internet entrepreneur Dr Nina Storms. Together with SANE's online community, it will establish the world's largest dedicated social networking platform for mental health. The 'marriage' of the two sites has the potential to reach and help many thousands more people affected by mental health problems both nationally and internationally.

Mr Campbell said: "The creation of this new online community is a great development for mental health. As well as helping many more people connect with each other, it should help them find the support and advice they need to tackle concerns at home or in the workplace.

"There is a long way to go before we have parity of treatment of services and understanding between physical and mental health, but the movement is in the right direction and as an ambassador for SANE and Time to Change, I welcome the move by major employers to support the Black Dog Campaign."

[http://www.sane.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/black\\_dog/bd\\_partners/](http://www.sane.org.uk/what_we_do/black_dog/bd_partners/)

Announcing the development, Marjorie Wallace, SANE's Chief Executive, said: "The possibility of extending the reach of our online community through Black Dog Tribe is exciting. Looking to the future, with all the sophisticated technology already invested, we will enable people with mental health problems to connect with each other, access video-counselling, keep up to date with global mental health news and combine peer group support with speedy access to professional help through SANE's helpline and other services."

*"Marjorie and I toast the betrothal of SANE's Black Dog Campaign and our Black Dog Tribe. We hope that they will have a family of thousands, whom we will welcome to our new home."* **Ruby Wax**

*"We are delighted that we have been able to give our site to a charity like SANE. They have been pioneers in providing a telephone helpline and are experienced in giving trustworthy, knowledgeable and caring contact for people in need of advice, support and direction. They offer a truly welcoming environment and share our vision in being independent, objective and pragmatic."* **Dr Nina Storms**

**For more information, please contact the SANE media department on 020-7422 5556.**

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **About Black Dog Tribe (BDT)**

BDT was founded in 2011 as a social networking platform for those affected by depression and other mental health conditions, in which like minded people can find their own ‘tribe’ and share experiences in a supportive online community. The site consists of forums, blogs, daily news and mental health information.

From the beginning, BDT collaborated with SANE in the development of web content and professional support.

Support and follow Black Dog Tribe:

Twitter (@FollowBDT) <http://twitter.com/followBDT>

Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/BlackDogTribe>

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### **About SANE’s Black Dog Campaign**

SANE’s Black Dog Campaign ([http://www.sane.org.uk/what we do/black dog/](http://www.sane.org.uk/what_we_do/black_dog/)) marks the charity’s 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and aims to raise awareness of depression and other mental health conditions. Black Dog sculptures are being placed across London and other UK cities to raise awareness, reduce stigma and misunderstanding of mental health problems and encourage people to seek help.

Several leading companies, including Deloitte, Clifford Chance and Legal & General, have purchased Black Dog sculptures and adopted the vision and aims of the campaign. They are also working in partnership with SANE to involve staff and families in speaking out and helping break the stigma of mental illness.

### **About SANE**

**SANE is a UK-wide charity set up to improve the quality of life for people affected by mental illness. It has three objectives:**

1. to raise awareness and combat stigma about mental illness, educating and campaigning to improve mental health services
2. to provide care and emotional support for people with mental health problems, their families and carers as well as information for other organisations and the public
3. to initiate research into the causes and treatments of serious mental illness such as schizophrenia and depression and the psychological and social impact of mental illness

## **SANE Services:**

There are three main ways to access our services for emotional support and information:

- SANEline – 0845 767 8000 (6pm – 11pm)
- SANEmail – [http://www.sane.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/support/email/](http://www.sane.org.uk/what_we_do/support/email/)
- SANE Support Forum (peer support) - [http://www.sane.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/support/supportforum/](http://www.sane.org.uk/what_we_do/support/supportforum/)

To support SANE and join the Community, visit the **SANE** website at [www.sane.org.uk](http://www.sane.org.uk).

Also, support and follow SANE via social media:

**Twitter** <http://twitter.com/CharitySANE> (@CharitySANE)

**Facebook** <http://www.facebook.com/charitySANE>

**YouTube** <http://www.youtube.com/user/charitySANE>