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More than 1,400 couples say “I will” to set record number of vow renewals, with PM’s support

More than 1,400 couples joined together to reaffirm their wedding vows in over 70 venues across the UK on 8th February 2014. It is anticipated that *The BIG Promise* will set a new world record for the number of couples doing this simultaneously.

Vows were reaffirmed from Bournemouth to Sunderland and one hundred couples took part on the island of Orkney alone! *The BIG Promise* is the flagship event of Marriage Week 2014 which runs from 7th February to 14th February each year.

The national coordinator for *The BIG Promise*, *Dave Percival* said:

“The simplicity and dignity of each BIG Promise ceremony held sends a clear message. The vows are the essential part of being married – not the fancy wedding, amazing reception, or exotic honeymoon. Marriage matters to every one of these couples, and should matter to all of us in society as the bedrock of stable family life.”

The golden wedding anniversary of Tom and Doreen Shaw from Sheffield coincided with the record attempt and they celebrated their fifty years together by reaffirming their vows in front of their whole family.

Tom Shaw said:

“We were thrilled to remind each other of the promises we made to each other 50 years to the day that we first said them! This has been such a special day as we have celebrated our commitment to each other with our family and friends. It has been quite moving to look back on how we have been blessed and challenged throughout our life together. And after 50 years, it's not over yet. The best is still to come!”

Marriage Week has attracted the support of the Prime Minister David Cameron, who said:

“I welcome National Marriage Week and am pleased to give it my support. Marriage is a declaration of commitment, responsibility and stability that helps to bind families.”

“The values of marriage are give and take, support and sacrifice - values that we need more of in this country.”

The Bishop of Chester, Peter Forster, also lent his support to *The BIG Promise*:

"I am delighted to support this event and I am wishing all couples joy and happiness as they re-affirm their vows. Marriage is the building block of society and I welcome the efforts of The BIG Promise in upholding this"

<ENDS>

To arrange interviews or for photo downloads contact Ruth Bessant on tel: 020 7227 4731 or 07581 153693 or email: ruth.bessant@care.org.uk

Editors Notes:

1. The numbers are subject to Guinness World Record checks and approval. Official confirmation has not yet been received.
2. The most up to date number of couples is 1427.
3. For a selection of photos (credit Elijah Kibutu) please visit this link: <http://www.ekibutsp photography.com/p1046089679> Downloads available on request.
4. The current world record is 1089 couples set in Ohio USA in 2009
5. The BIG Promise is a project of Marriage Week UK for 2014. On 8th Feb at 5.15pm couples all over the UK simultaneously re-affirmed their marriage vows.
6. Marriage Week UK runs from 7-14 February 2014. Last year 1.5 million people attended a Marriage Week event worldwide.
7. Marriage Week UK is a part of the registered charity, The Future Way Trust, which is also spearheading the development of Marriage Week in other nations.
8. Marriage Week is supported by the following organizations: 2-in-2-1, CARE, Care for the Family, the Church of England, CWR, Futureway Trust, the Evangelical Alliance, Family Life, Family Time, Marriage Care, The Marriage Course, The Mothers' Union, New Wine and Time for Marriage. Founded in 1997, Marriage Week UK is part of Marriage Week International. There are currently expressions of Marriage Week in 15 countries.
9. Special thanks to Christian Today for the right to reproduce the quote from the Prime Minister.
10. The BIG Promise website is www.BIGPromise.org.uk
11. The Marriage Week UK website: <http://marriage-week.org.uk/>