

News Release:

23 March 2010

FORESTERS FRIENDLY SOCIETY LAUNCHES FORESTERS FRIENDS SOCIAL NETWORK

23 March 2010: It is reported widely that local community spirit has broken down or disappeared in the UK. According to independent research however, a quarter (25 per cent)¹ of adults would still be prepared to donate £5 every month to a common neighbourhood fund from which contributors could draw should they fall into financial hardship.

The belief that community spirit is alive and well is just one reason why Foresters Friendly Society today becomes the first UK friendly society to launch its own social networking website, www.forestersfriends.co.uk. The new online community is open to everyone and new joiners can register free of charge.

Community members will be able to participate in online forums. The forums will offer an opportunity to do everything from exchange opinions on current affairs topics to sharing tips for making community and charity fundraising events a success.

In addition, community members have the opportunity to create their own social or local area groups where they can meet like-minded others to discuss shared hobbies, interests or life stage events, such as student life or becoming a parent.

Members will also be able to access news and information about social activities and community and charity projects being undertaken by members of the Foresters Friendly Society in their local area.

.../more

¹ Source: YouGov research commissioned independently by Foresters Friendly Society

.../continues

Further, Foresters Friends features information about the range of straightforward savings and insurance products offered by the Foresters Friendly Society. These products help Society members save for a 'rainy day' and offer protection against any unfortunate future events such as sickness or death.

An accompanying range of 'How to' Guides are also included on the site, offering free advice on topics including saving for children's futures.

Neil Armitage, Marketing Director, Foresters Friendly Society, said: "For many years we've offered the social benefits of a participative local branch network in addition to our financial services products. This network provides many of our members with a vital social lifeline and a sense of community spirit and mutual support which helps them in their everyday lives.

"We're recreating that spirit and support in a virtual environment with the launch of Foresters Friends. This unique community will enable us to extend the offer of practical and emotional support for members in a modern way without deviating from our founding principles as a mutual society.

"In today's world, communities are no longer limited by geography and web technology is connecting like-minded people across the globe. Foresters Friends is therefore a key part of our desire to maintain the unique sense of togetherness our members have enjoyed since our foundation in 1834."

Members of Foresters Friends can also access lifestyle and money management articles published in the Society's member magazine, *The Forester*, as well as benefit from exclusive discounts and offers available www.mywebclub.co.uk

-Ends-

Notes to Editors

About Foresters Friendly Society

Foresters Friendly Society was founded in 1834 and offers a range of financial saving, investment, insurance and protection products, as well as educational grants and healthcare support for its members. All financial products come with the accompanying benefits of membership of the Society at no additional cost. There is no obligation to purchase a financial product in order to become a member. The Society currently includes over 70,000 members across 250 UK branches.

Foresters Friendly Society is the trading name of The Ancient Order of Foresters Friendly Society Limited, Foresters House, 29/33 Shirley Road, Southampton, SO15 3EW. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority. Incorporated Friendly Society No. 511F. FSA Registration No. 110029. Membership benefits are not regulated by the FSA.

For further information:

Weber Shandwick Financial

Stephen Finch, T: 0161 238 9401 or E: sfinch@webershandwick.com

Foresters Friendly Society

Neil Armitage, T: 023 80216 867 or E: NArmitage@forestersfriendlysociety.co.uk