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SOUTH YORKSHIRE WOMAN AN EXAMPLE TO ALL OF US SAYS EQUALITY COMMISSION CHAIR

A South Yorkshire woman has been praised by Trevor Phillips, Chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, for helping the UK create a fairer and more equal society in the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All (EYO)

Carol Robson is a trustee and regional representative for the Gender Trust and is herself a post-op trans woman. Having had her gender reassignment late in her life, after struggling with her identity from an early age and raising a family, she is keen that those who are unhappy with their gender have as much help and information as possible.

She runs seminars and workshops on gender identity disorder for students and professionals, and has advised organisations such as the NHS and the DfES. She also works with Age Concern as a trustee of her local branch and is a founder member of Rotherham Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Trans Network, with a particular interest in the older LGBT community.

Her interests include a research project on gender identity disorder in young people. Through her website she provides information, links and resources that aim to give some understanding of the issues for trans people.

Carol says:

“I stopped living a lie, started living as my true self in 2001, and had my realignment surgery in 2005.

“Between those years I attended Sheffield University, and it was there I started to teach on transsexuality, using a lot of material from my own experiences.

“I feel it’s important to educate the world that trans women and men can and do lead authentic and fulfilling lives, having previously suffered years of anguish.”

The European Year of Equal Opportunities for All marks a major debate on the benefits of diversity across Europe and aims to make Europeans more aware of their rights to enjoy equal treatment and a life free of discrimination. Feedback will be used to inform the future work of the new Equality and Human Rights Commission, whose Chair Trevor Phillips commented:

"Projects like this – and many others in Yorkshire and the Humber – are bringing communities together and tackling issues faced by some of the people encountering the greatest inequalities.

"But it’s also important to recognise that The European Year of Equal Opportunities for All gives each and every one of us all a chance to consider what we mean when we talk about equality. It is clear from the people and projects I’ve met during the year that equal opportunities affects all of us in one way or another in the different stages of our lives – whether we are parents, carers or workers, elderly people or children.”

Notes to Editors

1. The Equality and Human Rights Commission is a statutory body established under the Equality Act 2006, which took over the responsibilities of Commission for Racial Equality, Disability Rights Commission and Equal Opportunities Commission.
2. The Equality and Human Rights Commission is the independent advocate for equality and human rights in Britain. It aims to reduce inequality, eliminate discrimination, strengthen good relations between people, and promote and protect human rights.
3. The Equality and Human Rights Commission will enforce equality legislation on age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or transgender status, and encourage compliance with the Human Rights Act. It will also give advice and guidance to businesses, the voluntary and public.

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