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TO
COMPANY
DATE: 14 June 2004
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Stephen Fry Acts for Carers

During Carers Week, 14 to 20 June 2004, Stephen Fry will join CROSSROADS, the national charity Caring for Carers, as its Patron and launch the ITV Appeal on City Survival Guide aimed at helping Britain's 6 million Carers. CROSSROADS is asking Carers to reach out for practical support from CROSSROADS and other organisations, so that they can take a break from *their* caring responsibilities.

Many Carers are unsure where to receive help and advice and do not realise that they are entitled to support. Over a third of Carers report that no-one else helps them care¹ and 33% have not had a break in the last two years.

Stephen Fry says: "Imagine having a relative or friend whom you care for at home, helping them get on with the necessities of daily living, every day. Without being paid a penny. How do you get time to yourself and take the break that you surely deserve? Please act and ask for support."

CROSSROADS services include providing fully trained Carer Support Workers, who go into the home and take over the caring responsibilities, allowing the Carer time to be themselves. In its 30th year, CROSSROADS is already supporting more than 35,000 Carers in Britain but with one in eight of the population¹ invisibly caring in their homes across the country, there are many more to be reached.

Stephen Fry says: “It is easy to think that caring responsibilities are just life. How it is. Necessary and down to you. But if you are unpaid then you are a *Carer* and there is support out there for you.”

Anne Roberts, Chief Executive of CROSSROADS says: “CROSSROADS is thrilled to welcome Stephen Fry as Patron. His is a voice recognisable to so many and we hope that Carers will hear and act on his appeal this week, to find the support they deserve.”

Three in five people will become a Carer at some point in their lives². The number of people caring in Britain is rising, with those providing support for 20 or more hours every week having increased from 1.5 million in 1990 to 1.9 million in 2000. ¹ If all the Carers in the UK gave up caring the government would have to find £57 billion to provide the same level of care.

Ends

Further information from Katherine Nichols, Gateshead Crossroads, 0191 478 2423 or Nick Clarke, CROSSROADS 0845 450 6555 / 07803 581 389

Notes to editors:

Facts and Figures

- 1 adult in 8 is a Carer¹
- Men are almost as likely to be a Carer as women¹
- 33% of Carers say they have not had a break in the last two years
- Nearly a quarter of all Carers have been looking after someone for at least 10 years¹
- Over a third of Carers report that no-one else helps them care¹
- Three in five people will become a Carer at some point in their lives²

¹ General Household Survey 1995, published 1998

² Carers UK