**RoSPA CASE STUDY – PHOTOS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST**

**Christina, 37, lives in Stubbington in Fareham and was just 17 when she was involved in a near-fatal traffic collision. She says:**

‘It was almost exactly twenty years ago, when I was just 17, that my life changed forever. Two of my friends and I were all in a car together – one of my friends who was 18 at the time was driving, and I was sitting in the back, behind the driver's seat.

‘I don’t remember anything at all about the collision, but I know that we were on the A32 near Fareham. My friend who was driving pulled out of a junction onto the road, right in front of a coach of school children, and was tragically killed. My parents were told it was unlikely that I would survive, and I spent 13 weeks in a coma. Doctors said even if I lived that I would still never walk or talk again, my future looked very bleak.

‘But I defied all expectations and pulled through. After 13 weeks in a coma, I then spent a further 18 months in hospital and then in rehab. I’ve worked so hard, and I have learned to walk and talk again - since the accident I’ve even run a 5k race for life. I lived with my parents for a long time after the accident, and I now live independently in my own bungalow.

‘I do lots of volunteer work and am currently working at Portsmouth University with a group of other disabled volunteers, where we help social care students to learn about disability awareness. In the past I’ve also been involved with Drive Safe Stay Alive, where I’ve worked with the emergency services and talked about my accident and road safety to groups of young people and army cadets. I want to do as much as possible to make people aware of the importance of safe driving, particularly among young people.

‘I can’t remember anything about my life from before the accident and still experience severe memory loss. But I’m leading a very full and happy life, and I’m doing everything I can to tell my story so that hopefully others don’t have to experience what I went through.’

ENDS