

## **Lepra ambassador Victoria Hislop launches sequel to international bestseller, The Island**

**29/10/20**

Today, Victoria Hislop launches her new book, *One August Night*, the sequel to bestselling *The Island*.

Victoria has been an ambassador for Colchester based charity, Lepra, since 2013 and remains a committed supporter for the charity's mission.

Leprosy remains a serious global health concern across the world, with the disease carrying lasting prejudice and discrimination for those affected.

When asked about the most emotional or difficult issue of leprosy in her opinion, Ms Hislop said:

“I think it must be fear! Although as soon as someone is reassured that the disease is totally curable, I hope that fear goes away. But in some communities in the developing world, they are also afraid of being shunned and that must be terrible. When the message has not got through that this is a curable disease, the prejudice remains.”

The book, launching today, aims to give a very human face to the difficulties and tragedies faced by those affected by leprosy.

Victoria travelled to visit our projects several years ago and this experience helped her to better understand the vital work of Lepra and the importance of detection, diagnosis and overcoming the deep vein of prejudice that runs alongside a diagnosis of leprosy.

Geoff Prescott, Chief Executive of Lepra, commends Victoria Hislop's relationship with Lepra and thanks her for her continued support for such a misunderstood and neglected disease.

“We have been honoured to have Victoria Hislop as our ambassador. Her writing shines a new light on a historic disease and really demonstrates the everyday difficulties still faced by millions affected by leprosy. We are proud to have her on our team and we wish her every success with the launch.”

**ENDS**

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**Notes for Editors**

**About Lepra and leprosy**

Lepra is a UK-based international specialist charity that has been working to beat leprosy since 1924. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II became Patron of Lepra in 1952, shortly after the death of her father King George VI, who had been Lepra's Patron since the charity was founded in 1924.

Leprosy affects over 7 million of the most vulnerable people in the world, causing life-changing disabilities and attracting terrible prejudice and discrimination. **But there is a cure.**

Lepra works to beat leprosy in India, Bangladesh and Mozambique by finding, diagnosing and treating people affected by the disease. By raising awareness, pushing for early detection and supporting people living with disabilities caused by leprosy, Lepra works towards a day when this disease no longer destroys lives.

Last year, the charity reached 301,000 people through diagnosis, treatment and care. It reached a further 1.7 million people through health education and events to raise awareness of leprosy and other neglected diseases.

Find out more about Lepra on its website and social media channels:

Website: [www.lepra.org.uk](http://www.lepra.org.uk)

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/LepraUK>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LEPRAUK/>

You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/LEPRAHinA>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/LepraUK/>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/lepra/>