

## **Statements/ tributes from Becky's family and friends**

### **Tribute from Becky's Mum - Tanya Watts**

"Rebecca Marie Watts, Becky. As a mother it is impossible to believe that I am having to write a tribute for my daughter. It is a shocking truth that I can't imagine I will ever accept. I still remember the day I gave birth to Becky as one of the happiest days of my life. Becky would be 21 now, and sometimes I allow myself the luxury of imagining the type of young woman she would be today.

Becky was as beautiful on the inside as she was on the outside. Becky was a peacemaker, a kind and caring friend and a loving daughter. Becky was immensely loyal to those she cared about; she cared more about others than she cared about herself. Becky always wanted her family to be happy and united and she worked hard to bring us all together.

Her happiest times were when we were together as a family watching films and playing games. Becky loved animals and she particularly loved our dog, Jack, she would love to dress him up and for us to go on family walks. She was artistic; she would love to draw us pictures and would always make me beautiful Mother's Day cards, Christmas cards and Birthday cards which I treasure. She loved to dance and dress up to make us happy and smile.

Even as a baby, Becky lit up the cameras and she lit up all our lives. I called her 'our little sunbeam' and she would light up the days with her beautiful smile and her warm heart. She faced her challenges with courage and grace, carrying a heavy weight on her little shoulders. I will miss her forever and always be so proud to call her my daughter."

### **Statement from Tanya Watts**

"As Becky's Mum, it has been a really distressing and upsetting process to be involved in this DHR. I have worked hard to try to understand the support that Becky may or not have had, with the long-term aim of hoping to make another young person's life safer. On reading this DHR it is clear to me that there were missed opportunities to support Becky from individuals and agencies. Becky wasn't able to have a voice and I hope that learning can be implemented to ensure another young victim can speak out in a way that my daughter couldn't.

One of the key messages I hope the agencies can take forward is the importance of allowing young people the space and time to speak to those working with them alone. It is not enough to ask questions in front of family members as that may be unsafe for victims and increase their risk of harm. Sadly, as this DHR clearly highlights, Becky was at risk from people in her family so she would not have been able to talk openly to professionals with other family members present.

Young people need time to build trusting relationships with the professionals in their life and that means that we need to support the professionals to want to have longevity in their roles. All professionals must embrace opportunities to be professionally curious about the young people in their care and to try to understand

some of their behaviours perhaps as a cry for help or in the context of struggling in their home life.

Becky was a brave and resilient young woman who had faced challenging times, including her struggle with anorexia which in hindsight was indicative of the struggles she was facing at home. It has been particularly distressing to read about how even after conquering anorexia there were times when Becky appeared to be hungry and without food.

I was horrified to read in the report that Becky had confided in a close friend that she had been sexually abused by her step brother at a young age. I had not known about this before and if I had known I would have done everything I could to support and protect her. I feel strongly that the physical abuse then developed into mental abuse.

It feels clear to me that individuals and professionals involved in Becky's short life could have been more honest and transparent with each other, working together to support someone who was exhibiting worrying behaviour and vulnerabilities. The lack of joined up communication between agencies and families is poignant too. It is so important that professionals know who is in the young person's life and household to know if they are a risk to their happiness and wellbeing. It feels that more could have been done to complete risk assessments with Becky, however sadly these opportunities were not acted on and Becky's risks from the perpetrators were not identified.

Sadly, I remain of the view that I wouldn't be writing this tribute to my sweet and special daughter if Becky had been given better support and those around her were more vigilant in upholding their duty of care.

I am particularly grateful to the close friends of Becky's who have contributed to this review. Thank you so much for your support."

### **Tribute from Becky's Dad**

"Becky. Losing a child is a parent's worst nightmare; the way in which we lost Becky makes it even harder to bear. We are unable to put into words the level of loss and life will never be the same again. The bond between us was unbreakable and beyond anything I could have ever imagined. I knew I was truly blessed and suddenly life had a totally different meaning.

She grew to be beautiful both inside and out a determined and strong-minded girl and we are gutted that she was denied the opportunity to live a full life and to become a mum. She was caring, loyal and wise beyond her years; her laugh and smile would melt the hardest of hearts. She had a quirky sense of humour and was fun to be with. We never imagined our lives without her and it will take forever for us to adjust to losing her. Becky was the heart and soul of our family and the light at the end of our tunnel without her there is only darkness left and an impatient desire to be reunited with her. The world has lost a very special soul.

Things like this make you realise how fragile and precious life is."

## **Becky's friends' statements**

“Becky was my best friend, I knew her from when I was 5 and then we reconnected when we were 13. We did most things together, we were both struggling with different issues and we both helped each other recover and come out of our shells. She was a very funny, witty person, and I remember our time together being full of laughter, watching movies, having roast dinners at her mums and going clothes shopping together as well as being there for each other through thick and thin.

The last time I saw Becky I wasn't actually meant to be in Bristol but as my trip got cancelled I got to see my best friend for what I didn't know then, would be for the last time. We had a roast dinner together at my Nan's, and I walked her home as she was anxious about walking anywhere alone. I hugged her and said “Bye mate.” and then I walked home.

Seeing her lying there lifeless in a mortuary when just a couple weeks earlier we were planning our 18th Birthday's and watching Netflix, was very hard to accept and was the worst experience of my life. I would give anything to have my beautiful, funny and caring best friend back, but unfortunately I can't and it's left a massive hole in mine and everyone who cared about her lives. I hope the review can make a difference in others' lives and do something good in her memory as I know that's what she would want.” **Courtney Bicker**

“Becky was the most kind and loving person I had ever met. I will always have the most amazing memories of all the times we spent together. We were always laughing and smiling. Becky never failed to make the bad days so much better.

Becky will always be the best friend I have ever had and always was my rock to lean on. I still wear her necklace every day and can honestly say it has not left my side since the day I got it.

People have been calling Becky Bristol's Angel and I can honestly say there is no one else more deserving of that name.” **Adam Dancey**

Becky was a ray of sunshine who brought the best out of us all. Becky was never without a beaming smile and her energy was contagious. Becky was a loving, caring, beautiful young girl, who put everyone else before herself.

The first time I met Becky with Adam, i knew they were going to be the best of friends. They became inseparable more a brother and sister.

Thank you Becky for choosing us to be part of your life, you were like a daughter to me, with which I will deeply always treasure and fond memories of you will stay with me forever.” **Shelley Dancey**