

SPRING

Supporting parents and relatives through baby loss



NEWSLETTER

Spring 2019

Remembering our babies in spring

Full story on page 6

How
SPRING
Celebrated
20th
Anniversary

See page 5.

What's inside:

- Wave of Light event
- SPRING Christmas Service
- Obituary for Kate Ward
- New garden for SPRING
- Real stories
- Fundraising news
- How to get involved with SPRING

About SPRING

SPRING is here to help parents and families through the worst possible time in their lives. We support parents and families through the loss of a baby – at any stage of pregnancy, at or just after birth – whatever the circumstances and however long ago.

Established in 1998, SPRING is a charitable trust fund of Poole Hospital Charity, which brings parents and medical professionals together to ensure bereaved parents and families are treated with sensitivity and genuine care. Our support is available to bereaved parents and families living in Poole, Bournemouth and surrounding areas.

We know we can't make everything better when a baby dies, but we aim to make sure things aren't worse for bereaved parents.

How we can help

The loss of a baby can feel overwhelming. We offer a range of services and support to help bereaved parents and families along this devastating journey. Not everyone will need or want to make use of everything we offer. But it is here if you need it, now or in the future.

Emotional and practical support, at the point of loss and beyond

Bereavement support

We work closely with the Maternity Bereavement Support Service and Early Pregnancy Unit at Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

Specialist bereavement support midwives and nurses offer information, advice and signposting to help parents and families make informed choices, and will continue to offer support at home, if required.

Professional counselling

Counselling is available for all bereaved parents and relatives following the loss of a baby. SPRING and Poole Hospital counselling services provide sessions with fully qualified counsellors who adhere to British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy guidelines (BACP).

Counselling provides a safe, non-judgemental environment. Referrals are via medical professionals or self-referral.

Contact Maternity Counselling Service on: 01202 448752 or email: maternity.counsellors@poole.nhs.uk

Monthly open support meetings

SPRING runs monthly open support meetings for informal peer support.

They are facilitated by fully qualified counsellors.

The meetings are friendly and relaxed and open to anyone who has experienced the death of a baby, either in pregnancy, at, or shortly after birth.

Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month 7.30pm – 9pm at St Mary's Longfleet Church Centre, Kingston Road, Poole BH15 2LP.

Rainbow pregnancies

We are also here to support parents and families through subsequent 'rainbow' pregnancies.

SPRING places

Bereavement suites

The SPRING Moon and Star bereavement suites at St Mary's Maternity Unit, Poole, provide space for parents and families to spend precious time with their baby before saying goodbye. Safe and private, these very special places mean parents and families receive specialised support as they go through the loss of their baby – away from the main maternity wards.

SPRING events

Remembrance events

Throughout the year, SPRING organises events to remember our precious babies.

February - *Snowdrop Walk*

October - *Wave of Light event (as part of Baby Loss Awareness Week)*

November - *Christmas Service*

Monthly coffee mornings

SPRING coffee mornings take place every month in a café, providing an informal and relaxed environment for bereaved parents and relatives to meet over a coffee and cake.

First Saturday of every month (10.30-12pm) at The Coffee House, 10 Adastral Square, Canford Heath BH17 8SA.

Other events

SPRING organises other social and fundraising events during the year – visit our website at www.springsupport.org.uk or find us on Facebook.

All bereaved parents and families are welcome to attend SPRING events. We look forward to meeting you.

Contact SPRING

24 hour answerphone: **01202 448084**

www.springsupport.org.uk

c/o St Mary's Maternity Unit, St Mary's Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 2JB

Poole Hospital Charity Registered No. 1058808.

Please note that any views or opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors, not those of SPRING. SPRING would encourage those seeking further advice and support to contact medical or counselling practitioners.



Chairperson's Chat

by Emma Johnston, SPRING Chairperson

Welcome to this edition of the SPRING newsletter.

Last year was so special, as 2018 marked 20 years since SPRING was established. Our 20th anniversary picnic was a wonderful event, well attended by friends old and new. Our other events – Wave of Light, the Christmas event, and most recently the Snowdrop Walk – have also been beautiful occasions, bringing together bereaved parents, families and friends. Our remembrance events are such a big part of what SPRING does so thank you to everyone who attends and all those who help to make them possible.

Volunteers are incredibly important to SPRING. Last year, after much dedication, some steering group members stood down - including bereaved parent Sarah Lister, and professionals Cindy Weller and Julie White. Happily, we are about to welcome new bereaved parents onto the SPRING steering group this month. But there are lots of other ways to get involved – from helping out at events to baking (or serving!) cakes. We also hope to set up a SPRING Forum in the near future so even more bereaved parents and

relatives can get involved. More information on page 15.

Some readers may remember Kate Ward, a bereaved grandmother who did so much in the early days to help create the SPRING we have today. We were very sad to hear that Kate sadly died earlier this year. We remember her fondly on page 6.

As a bereaved parent myself, I am so thankful that SPRING has been here to help me and my family. Working closely with Poole Maternity, SPRING has touched the lives of hundreds of families, some of whom share their stories in this newsletter. If you would like to share your story – or if you have ideas about SPRING – please do get in touch, we'd love to hear from you.

Best wishes – and hopefully see you at a SPRING event soon,

Emma x

Emma Johnston
SPRING Chairperson

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Fundraising Update

by Janine Golding, SPRING Fundraising Administrator



It's been a busy few months for our fundraisers. We've had plenty of runners, quiz nights, raffles, darts tournaments, bike rides, golf days and a sponsored hair cut before attending secondary school! Take a look at our Fundraising News pages to find out how our fundraisers got on. We have more challenge events taking place this year so good luck to all.

This year was the 20th Anniversary of SPRING and this was marked with a SPRING Picnic on a very hot and sunny day on the 15th July at Upton Country Park. More details and photos can be found on page 5.

We had a change of location for the Wave of Light event on the 15th October 2018. Due to the closure of the Poole Park Memorial, SPRING created our own memorial, selecting a beautiful tree overlooking Poole Park Lake and placing our lanterns around this. It was a beautiful and moving event.

We are so grateful to everyone who supports us and want to thank you for all your hard work and commitment in raising money and, just as important, raising awareness about SPRING – thank you.

If you're planning to do fundraising for SPRING – or if you want to get more involved with SPRING – please get in touch. I'm here to help.

Best wishes,

Janine x

Call Janine on 01202 448084 or email friends@springsupport.org.uk

Wave of Light Event

SPRING'S annual Wave of Light event took place on Monday 15 October in Poole Park. Bereaved parents, families and friends came together to remember their special babies and mark the end of Baby Loss Awareness Week.

This is always a beautiful and moving event, with families writing messages on blue, pink or cream stars to their precious babies and attaching them to lanterns with lit candles inside. They then gathered around to hear music playing and listen to poems. With the temporary closure of the War Memorial, the lanterns were then placed around a beautiful tree overlooking the water, creating a wave of light.

Baby Loss Awareness Week takes place every year from 9-15 October. Throughout the week bereaved parents, families and friends remember their special babies, with the knowledge that many other families are doing the same elsewhere in the world. The week also raises much needed awareness of baby loss.



Join us at this year's Wave of Light event on Tuesday 15 October - more details soon.

Remembering our babies at Christmas

SPRING's annual Christmas event was held on Saturday 1 December at St Mary's Church on Longfleet Road, where bereaved parents, families and friends gathered to remember their special babies.

A Christmas tree was the centrepiece, with handwritten messages of love attached to its branches, and everyone was invited to light a candle.

Music played a big part in the service this year, with professional singer Lizzie Holmes dazzling everyone with her beautiful rendition of Ava Maria and Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas. Mark Pitman, saxophonist, performed beautiful versions of Songbird and Everything Must Change and the New Bourne Community Choir sang

moving versions of A Thousand Years and Somewhere Out There. At the end of the service Jill and Declan Turner invited the children to sing and play instruments along to Christmas carols, which created a fun element to an emotional and moving service.

As always, at the end of the service, there was tea, coffee and lots of cake available which had been donated by SPRING volunteers. Judy's Jams also joined us, selling homemade jams and chutneys in aid of SPRING.



We would like to thank everyone who came, and a big thank you to all our performers, speakers and volunteers who helped make this such a special event.

The SPRING Picnic

Families - new and old - joined us for the 20th anniversary SPRING picnic at Upton Country Park on Saturday 15 July 2018.



Picnic blankets were dotted around the lawns, with bereaved parents, relatives and friends coming together to mark 20 years of SPRING. There were lots of activities to keep people entertained - including a bouncy castle, face-painters and outdoor

games. We also had the fabulous Black Sheep band who played during the afternoon, encouraging people to take part in barn dancing. But perhaps the most popular attraction was the ice cream 'bike', especially as it was such a hot, sunny day!

Heather and current SPRING Chairperson, Emma Johnston, cut a special SPRING 20th anniversary cake, which was shared with families at the event.

Thank you to everyone who came along and all the volunteers who helped to make the event possible. It really was a very special way to mark the milestone anniversary and give thanks for SPRING.

We made time during the afternoon to remember what it was all about - with a special place to write messages for the babies not with us. And it was lovely to be joined by Heather Matthews, the midwife, who was instrumental in founding SPRING and the support and services we have today.



Introducing our SPRING bear

To mark our 20th year, SPRING introduced a new (very cute!) fundraising and awareness-raising item – our very own SPRING teddy bear.

The bear's first outing was SPRING's 20th Anniversary Picnic and we invited everyone who attended to suggest a name for the bear. Anyone who couldn't attend on the day made suggestions on our Facebook page. After the event, a name was pulled from the hat, so let us introduce you to 'Snowdrop'. Snowdrop is available from the SPRING Office at a suggested donation of £5. If you would like a Snowdrop bear, please contact the office on 01202 448084 or email friends@springsupport.org.uk



Obituary for Kate Ward by Richard Mullins

On 25 January 2019, one hundred and fifty friends and family, gathered together to say 'goodbye' to Kate. She was diagnosed with terminal cancer in October 2017 and continued to be positive and pragmatic up until her death.

Of course many of you reading this would have known Kate, but for those who don't, Kate was a pivotal figure in getting SPRING off the ground.

Sally and I lost our daughter Jessica in April 2000. Sally had severe pre-eclampsia and Jessica was born 13 weeks premature, surviving for just seven days. Kate was a pillar of strength to us over this devastating period and between them they discovered that there was a counselling service provided at Poole Hospital.

As Kate learnt more about SPRING and its objectives, the more she wanted to get involved and this was the start of a longstanding partnership between Kate and Heather Matthews, the founder of SPRING.

Kate was involved with SPRING for a period of ten years, the latter years as Chairman, and over this period, so much was achieved:

Bereavement Suite. Through significant fundraising, a room was completed to enable

parents who had lost a child to have the privacy they deserve. This was painted and furnished by the Ward family

Counselling rooms and offices. With so much demand for the counselling service it was soon felt that designated rooms were necessary and ongoing fundraising continues to ensure that the counselling staff can be paid.

Snowdrop Garden and Forget-me-not Garden. A place for parents to remember their babies at Poole Cemetery. This was maintained by a group of volunteers who gave up endless hours to tend the grounds, headed by Kate and husband Clive. Fences, a Lych gate and seating were created and the land drained and turfed. It was a project that was very close to her heart and from which close friendships were bonded.

Snowdrop Walk, Kingston Lacy. A chance for everyone to remember their lost child in a peaceful surrounding.



Memory album days. Crafting workshops were held to allow parents to put together a lasting memory of their loss. It was an important way to cope with their grief.

SPRING Christmas Service. Originally held in the small chapel at Poole Cemetery, its popularity meant a new home was needed and this continues to be held at St Mary's Church on Longfleet Road.

Kate was instrumental in so many fundraising events to allow so much of the above work, and it is through the dreams of Heather and the know-how of Kate that SPRING continues to thrive today.

Rest in Peace Kate 

A new SPRING garden



After much hard work, a new garden has been created for families staying in the bereavement suites at Poole Maternity Hospital. Much more about this beautiful space in the next newsletter.

SPRING Snowdrop Walk

The sun shone for us at SPRING's annual Snowdrop Walk on Saturday 23 February at Upton Country Park.

Many bereaved families, friends and relatives came together to remember their precious babies with a walk among the snowdrops in the winter borders and the creation of a special remembrance message tree.

Despite high winds bringing down a large tree in the area a few weeks before to the event, most of the snowdrops planted the year before had survived and were in full bloom.

It was a beautiful event, starting in Upton House to write our messages followed by poems read outside and then a walk down to the winter borders to tie the remembrance ribbon around a tree. SPRING volunteers Emma Johnston and Emma Lynch also planted a ceremonial snowdrop.

After the walk, there was tea, coffee and cake served in Upton House creating another opportunity for bereaved families to come together.

Thank you to everyone who came along and made this such a memorable event.





Join us for coffee

Have you ever been to a SPRING coffee morning? Hosted by a bereaved parent, the monthly meet-up is relaxed and informal, and a chance to meet other bereaved families over coffee and cake. Children, family members and friends are also welcome to join us.

Hayley, who regularly attends coffee mornings, says:

"The SPRING coffee mornings are really special to us. They are a chance to meet other parents who have been through the pain of a loss; a place where you don't have to answer the difficult questions you can get from people who don't know about your angel or angels; a place where those who have been blessed with rainbows can go as well as those hoping for their rainbow; a place where you can feel at ease to talk about your angel if you want and a place where I have met some wonderful people who have become good friends."



SPRING coffee mornings take place on the first Saturday of each month at The Coffee House, 10 Adastral Square, Canford Heath, Poole BH17 8SA (10:30am). Please do come along and join us!

For more information about the coffee mornings, or any other SPRING events, please email friends@springsupport.org.uk

Open Support Meetings

Monthly open support meetings are held at:

St. Mary's Longfleet (SML) Church Centre
Kingston Road, Poole
BH15 2LP.

Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month, 7.30 - 9pm

The Early Pregnancy Clinic

The Early Pregnancy Clinic is run from the Harbourside Gynaecology Centre, B5 Poole Hospital, seven days a week (8.30am - 12 noon) with dedicated scanning.

The Early Pregnancy Clinic is a member of the Association of Early Pregnancy Units, which has a national membership, and aims to improve the standard of care given in early pregnancy loss. The clinic is for women referred by a GP or midwife who have bleeding and abdominal pain between 6 and 14 weeks' gestation.

The intention of the clinic is to fast-track care of women threatening to miscarry, give reassurance with a viable

pregnancy, provide quality care and provide support to those miscarrying, and provide early detection and management of an ectopic pregnancy. There is a doctor, registered nurse and counsellor in attendance at this clinic.

You can reach Shonagh Gibb, Early Pregnancy Nurse Counsellor at Poole Hospital in the Early Pregnancy Unit on 01202 448432.

Sonny's Story

By Catherine Smith

In October 2016 we were celebrating our 1st wedding anniversary. It was a really happy day but I remember it vividly as the day we booked to first go to an IVF clinic.

After a long time of trying without success I just felt we should be checked out. It turned out that I had an extremely low egg count for my age and we were advised to get on with IVF as soon as possible. We were told we had about a 15% chance of success. We were devastated but a chance was a chance and we didn't delay.

You can imagine our delight when we managed to make two good embryos, and to our utter amazement I fell pregnant after one was implanted. We were so happy, I just felt like the luckiest girl in the world.

We had an early scan, which you get with IVF, and we were told that there was a heartbeat but the embryo looked a little small and there was a chance we would miscarry, we just had to wait and see what happened. I prayed and prayed that my little baby would make it and sure enough my little fighter did. Two weeks later the baby had caught up in size and the heartbeat was strong. There was my baby on the screen, I was going to be a mummy and I was just delighted.

We eventually got to 12 weeks and at this scan the sonographer went a little quiet. He said there was a bit of fluid around the baby's neck that shouldn't have been there, and that the tummy and head were measuring a little too large. We were told not to worry and to await our screening blood test to see what they showed.

Unfortunately these came back as high risk for a chromosomal condition and the likelihood was that our baby had Down

syndrome. We were told that a needle test would be best to check this. I knew this came with a risk of miscarriage and I just couldn't risk my precious baby, especially, as to us, Down syndrome would not have meant a medical abortion. Instead we knew there was a private blood test that was 99% accurate in diagnosing Down syndrome and we wanted to be prepared for what was ahead.

To our amazement the test came back negative to the 3 chromosomal conditions it checks and we were told that our baby was healthy and to enjoy the rest of our pregnancy. We were just over the moon, my little fighter was healthy and I was just so in love already. We also found out that he was a boy and we named him Sonny.

I remember going on holiday whilst pregnant with Sonny when I was about 20 weeks and I just felt on top of the world. I would sit looking out to sea rubbing my bump thinking how did I get this lucky?

When we got back to the UK I went for my 20 week scan, I was excited to see him again. I could feel him moving around by now but I hadn't been pregnant before so I didn't know what was normal. He didn't move that much, however, when I played him music that was when I got the most movement. I just thought it was early days still and that the movement would pick up.

I remember the sonographer going quiet again and saying he wanted a doctor to take a second look. My blood went cold, we had already determined a heartbeat at the scan so what could be wrong now?

The doctor scanned me for 45 minutes in silence and tears rolled down my cheeks, I knew something was very wrong.

I remember the doctor sitting me up on the bed and taking off his glasses to look at me. He looked sad and I felt sorry for him, I wanted to almost comfort him.

He told me that the baby had multiple problems with his brain, heart, spine, stomach



and kidneys. He was very worried that a more serious chromosomal disease had been missed and that the global picture did not look good. I was referred immediately to Southampton for a second opinion which was just as bad and they predicted that my precious boy had Edwards Disease, a condition that wasn't really compatible with life. They immediately did a needle test to diagnose and we awaited the results. We were utterly devastated and I was completely overcome with terror about what would happen.

Unbelievably, the test came back negative for the most common serious chromosomal diseases and we had to await further more detailed tests that were sent off to a genetics team to assess for rarer conditions.

I remember the doctor very gently approaching the subject with me of a medical termination. I was almost insulted that they even said the words. To talk with a mother about ending her baby's life is possibly the worst conversation you can ever have. I felt like my beautiful boy was slipping away from me. I wanted to wait for all results to be back before we talked anymore about it and I asked if we could have a genetics opinion as well when the results were in. I would be the last person that would give up on our son. He had fought so hard to be here already.

A few weeks went by and my stomach got bigger and my heart broke daily thinking about the future. We were eventually asked to come back and were met by two consultants and a geneticist. I knew straight away this wasn't good and where the conversation was going.

Sonny was diagnosed with two rare chromosomal diseases. The first called cri-de-chat syndrome which came with multiple organ problems. The second, an



even rarer problem with chromosome number one which would mean multiple mental disabilities. The geneticist said that Sonny would probably not make it to full term and if he did he would most probably die very soon after. If he did manage to live a while then he would need full organ support until he eventually died as there was no cure for his condition. She was very surprised that I had managed to carry him this long. I remember thinking back to the very first scan when they said I might miscarry as he looked too small. I remember I willed him to live and grow and promised that I would look after him and love him so much. I now felt guilty for willing him on when maybe he was meant to leave me back then.

The three doctors agreed that they felt a medical abortion was the kindest thing to do but they would support my decision either way.

I was 27 weeks pregnant by this point and there were some legal complications, but in Sonny's 'catastrophic' condition this is something they would recommend. I was asked to think about it and come back with my answer.

“ Holding him in the dim light was the most spiritual moment of my life. ”

Before my current job I was an intensive care nurse, and through my experience I came to believe that there were worse things than death, and to suffer with no hope of getting better was one of them. I didn't want my beautiful boy to suffer for one second and I knew what multi organ intervention meant. He had no hope of ever running or laughing and maybe even ever knowing that I was hugging him and telling him I loved him. I felt that bringing Sonny into a world that would not have been kind to him was for me and not for him. I loved him more than that and I chose to let him go.

The day before Sonny died I walked with him around a country park and talked to him to explain why I couldn't keep him and why I was letting him go. It was a perfect summer's day and there was an orchestra practising in

the park for a summer night concert. We listened to the beautiful music together and I held my pregnant stomach trying to let him feel every bit of love I had for him.

Sonny was then stillborn on the 17th July 2017. He looked so perfect when they put him in my arms. Holding him in the dim light was the most spiritual moment of my life, the love I felt for him overwhelmed me. I knew he was dead but he was the most amazing thing I had ever seen. I got to spend a day with Sonny caring for him and creating some lasting memories. Leaving hospital without him will always haunt me and my arms physically ached for him over the following days.

I never knew how scary grief could be and I was utterly terrified most of the time. After all, the worst thing in the world had happened, and so why couldn't other bad things happen. I truly felt in those early days that I didn't really care if I died because at least I would be with Sonny.

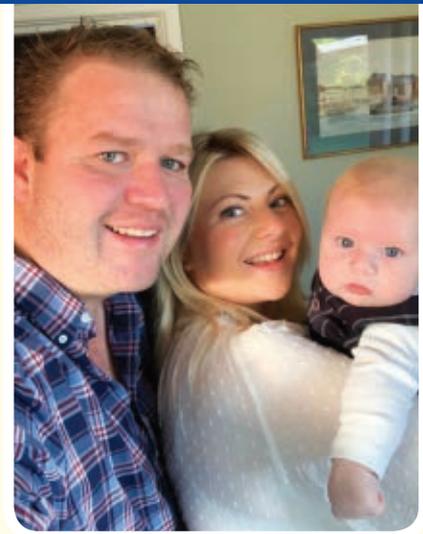
We managed to work through our grief a little with the amazing support and counselling that SPRING offered. The evening meetings honestly saved me, and talking to other people that had gone through the same thing helped me beyond belief.

I missed Sonny every day. I would sit at his grave and read him stories for what seemed like hours. I just felt so strongly connected to him still.

After a few months I felt the desperate need to try and be pregnant again. This came with huge feeling of guilt over Sonny, but I really wanted to try again.

We had one more IVF attempt that cruelly failed. So we were left with one last embryo, which had been created at same time as Sonny, and which had been frozen.

We went for it and had it implanted as our last chance. It worked, I was pregnant again and I just couldn't believe it! However Instead of utter excitement and joy, we were petrified! To potentially love and loose again seemed like a trauma that we couldn't bare. I'd like to say that I enjoyed my pregnancy but I didn't. It was scary and a chaotic time of grief mixed with happiness. We had multiple scans and tests and were very closely monitored.



I am so happy to say though that we delivered a healthy baby boy at full term. Teddy was born on the 3rd July 2018, almost exactly one year after we lost Sonny.

Teddy is the light of our life and although he doesn't completely stop our grief for Sonny he helps us to move forward. We loved Sonny with all of our hearts and so we grieve him with all of our hearts too. But we have learnt that this is ok. Grief and love seem so closely linked.

Teddy is now 5 months old and I thank God for him every day. I will always continue to say that I am a mother of two though, and when people ask is Teddy my first child, I proudly say no, he has an older brother called Sonny!

Love for a child has no limits and like I always tell Sonny and will tell Teddy throughout his life, wherever you go and however far away from me you are, you will always feel my love!



George's Story

By Ryan Roberts

We were filled with happiness and joy after finding out we would be expecting our first baby. Nervous and excited, we were given a due date of 14th June 2018.



After a fairly straightforward pregnancy we found out we were expecting a baby boy. We were both so excited to meet him. Towards the end of the pregnancy he was being a little bugger and not moving around as much so we were put onto daily monitoring and were booked in for a C-section on 7th June and everything seemed fine.

On Sunday 20th May, we went to St Mary's Maternity Unit after not feeling him kick after breakfast. The journey to the ANDA unit in the morning was no different. We had no worries and we even joked as we were walking

“We could really sense something wasn't right but just didn't want it to be true.”

up that hopefully this would be the last time. We weren't to know that when we walked through those doors that morning it would turn our world upside down. We both remember it clear as day. Sapphire was hooked up to the monitoring machine and the nurse came in to see us. It was the nurse's first day and she couldn't find a heartbeat. We looked at each other as she went to get her supervisor, maybe it was because she was new? Maybe she didn't know how to work the equipment properly. The supervisor came in and had a good feel around Sapphire's tummy to locate the heartbeat to no avail. This is when we

started to sense something wasn't right, so a doctor was called to do a scan. It was 10am. The doctor was silent, we could really sense something wasn't right but just didn't want it to be true. I can remember how he slowly shut the monitor down and looked over to us and said "I'm really sorry." We just burst into tears and didn't know what to think! It came as a complete shock and we just couldn't believe the words that came out of the doctor's mouth. We were then taken to a private suite away from the maternity ward and introduced to one of the dedicated bereavement midwives.

On 23rd May 2018 Sapphire gave birth to George Graham Paul Roberts weighing in at 5lbs 1oz, he was such a beautiful boy! We were given time and space to spend with George over the next few days and all of our family were given the opportunity to see and hold

George and make the most special memories with him.

Seven months on, we are still mourning our loss but have found comfort in raising money for this amazing charity that has helped us through some of our darkest days! We set up a Just Giving page which raised an amazing £1,200 through generous donations from friends and family. We also held a charity darts tournament with a huge raffle running alongside it. We were kindly donated over 150 prizes to raffle off which helped us raise an amazing £1,529.66 bringing the total raised with the Just Giving page to £2,729.66

We would like to thank everyone at SPRING for their support and helping us raise so much money, to the bereavement nurses that have helped us through the toughest time in our lives, and finally to all our family and friends!



SPRING would like to say a big thank Ryan Roberts, Sapphire Freeman, Liam Roberts, their Auntie Lisa and everyone at the Poole Labour Club who helped raised such an amazing amount for SPRING at the Charity Darts Tournament in August.



SPRING would like to welcome all new Rainbow Babies.

Why Rainbow Babies?

The idea is that the new baby is like a rainbow after a storm. The beauty of the rainbow does not negate the ravages of the storm. When a rainbow appears, it does not mean the storm never happened – or that the family is not still dealing with its aftermath. What it means is that something beautiful and full of light has appeared in the midst of the darkness and clouds. Storm clouds may still hover but the rainbow provides a counter balance of colour, energy and hope.

I found being a mum was the best thing in the world. As his father wasn't in his life, it was just us and the amazing feeling I got when I had to get up throughout the night, I just loved it, and felt completely blessed. Shortly after having him I met someone who is perfect in every way. Henry took to him instantly and naturally a father and son bond was formed. They are two peas in a pod. Finally I felt complete.

Little did we know another piece of the puzzle was waiting. We found out that I was pregnant, our miracle number two. We both decided to find out the sex of the baby and were over the moon to find out that we were having a little girl. We toyed backwards and forwards with names, finally settling on Willow.

The pregnancy itself was a great one, of course I was understandably very nervous yet excited at the same time.

My Rainbow Story

By Jennie Dacombe

Back in 2014 I fell pregnant with my first baby. I was excited and nervous as I never pictured myself as a mum before. The pregnancy was a good one until I reached 34 weeks when I found out that my baby had fallen asleep in my tummy. At that moment I instantly felt as it was my fault and maybe I had done something wrong, it was completely soul destroying.

A year later I had found out that I was pregnant again. This pregnancy really wasn't planned as I wasn't sure how I felt about having another baby after the experience I had with the first pregnancy.

I had a lot of support throughout this pregnancy from my mum and sister as they were such a great support throughout the loss of my first baby Sonny. Carrying this baby was brilliant with every kick, nudge and even backache was all worth it.

They decided to induce me at 35 weeks and 5 days as there were a few issues but the staff were absolutely incredible. I called my little boy Henry.

Henry was so tiny when he was first born, weighing just under 6lbs. He spent 3 days in the neonatal intensive care unit. Seeing him laying so small with tubes and wires surrounding him was very hard to see. After building up strength in his lungs, he

was able to join me on the postnatal ward. Leaving the hospital was the best day of my life. Finally I could be with my baby, I could take him home.

“I found being a mum was the best thing in the world.”

Something was very different, I had someone beside me throughout the whole pregnancy encouraging me and supporting me. My partner knew my past and understood that it would be a bumpy road but I felt content.

Of course with every pregnancy you have a few ups and downs and trips to the hospital with twinges etc. But overall it was a brilliant pregnancy. Finally Willow was born at 37 weeks and weighing in at only 5 ½ pounds she was just perfect.

I feel happy, content and have faith that in every storm there is a rainbow. Keep searching for yours and you will find it.



Harrison's hair today, gone tomorrow!

Harrison was very reluctant to have his hair cut before he started secondary school in September.

Unfortunately, Gemma Coles (Harrison's mum) felt there was no place for the excessive fringe in secondary education and suggested raising money for SPRING through sponsorship on Just Giving. Harrison raised an amazing £216! Well done, and we all agree that you look very smart!



Dorset Plane Pull

William Blackwell took part in the Dorset Plane Pull in August in memory of his son James, who was born sleeping.

This is the 5th year that William has taken part in this event. Unfortunately he was pipped to the post by another team who were 0.59 seconds quicker. We would like to thank William and his team who raised over £300 for SPRING. Better luck in 2019!

Halloween fun



Jennie and Clyde Braley decided to hold their annual Halloween party on behalf of SPRING and raised an impressive £151.71.

They spent hours transforming their home into a spooktacular lair for their party – complete with giant spider adorning the ceiling and brain jelly – which was attended by friends and family. Thank you to everyone who attended and donated.

London to Brighton Bike Ride

Andrew Dawson and his two sons took part in the London to Brighton Bike Ride in aid of SPRING.

Andrew said: "Myself and my two sons, Jonathan and Elliot, were delighted with the kind sponsorship support for our Bike Ride from London to Brighton, for which we raised in excess of £2,000 for SPRING."

Andrew, from Roberts Letting and Estate Agents, also organised a charity golf day in conjunction with Emma Farrell from Barclays in October. The weather was kind at Dudsbury Golf Club as 8 teams arrived for the day, which included golf, followed by a dinner and raffle. All those attending helped to raise over £2,000 including Barclays match funding the money raised on the day. Thank you to everyone for raising the money and awareness for SPRING.



Christmas Quiz Night

Ella Armstrong was invited to attend a Christmas Quiz Night in aid of SPRING. Ella says:

"On 19th December 2018, I was honoured to attend a fun Christmas quiz night representing an amazing charity, that's very close to my heart, SPRING. I went not knowing anyone, except my friend Maria. She asked me if I wanted to come along as she knew how SPRING helped me, my husband and my family when we very sadly lost our beautiful baby girl, Chloe in November 2015 at nearly 30 weeks pregnant. Since then we do what we can to support SPRING and give thanks back. We also find it important to get baby loss awareness out there and inform people about how SPRING can help and support parents and families after a loss.

"The quiz night was taking place at Vodka Revolution in Bournemouth. This event was

organised by the Junior Lawyers Division to raise money for SPRING. The people who attended were local lawyers and employees of local firms in the Bournemouth and Poole area. There were roughly 65 people who purchased a ticket at £5 and I was proudly selling keyrings and badges, as well as showing people the SPRING newsletters and leaflets. I was even brave enough to say a few words at the end in front of everyone to thank them. Whilst getting the awareness out, I even mentioned a little bit about our angel baby Chloe. I went away that night feeling very proud of myself, and it was a fun night and a laugh, even if our group did come last at the quiz! I look forward to helping with any other events for SPRING in the future."

Thank you Ella for collecting £47.10 on the night and raising awareness of SPRING and the services we offer.

The Ashley Lodge 6525



The Ashley Lodge No 6525 is a Masonic Lodge that meets ten times a year in Poole.

Each year the Lodge selects from amongst its numbers a member to act as Master for the ensuing year. Part of the Master's duty is to nominate a charitable cause for his time in that role. In 2018 the Master chose SPRING as the main recipient of the charitable giving from the Lodge. At each of the ten meetings, money was donated by those present under the gift aid scheme. Also, each year the Lodge holds a Ladies' Gala Evening, which this year was held at Dudsbury Spa Hotel in Ferndown where a further collection was held. Charitable giving is at the core of Freemasonry both in Poole and across the county.

SPRING would like to say a big thank you to everyone who donated, raising an impressive £2,950.

Frettons Charity of the Year

Frettons Solicitors in Christchurch chose SPRING as its charity of the year for 2018.

Various events and fundraising has been taking place during the year, including 20p coins in Smartie tubes, dress down days and they have raised an amazing £1,274.01. Thank you to all the employees at Frettons for all their hard work in fundraising and for raising awareness for SPRING.



Luscombe Valley Steam

Richard and Connie Knott of Luscombe Valley Railway at Sandbanks had a trial run on 28th July 2018 after four years of rebuilding.

The event was a success and the temporary train control in place ran well. No charge was made to enter the site or ride the trains but a voluntary collection was made in aid of SPRING, raising the fantastic sum of £500.

Richard and Connie also had a December opening in aid of SPRING and raised a magnificent sum of £1,112.74 through donations at the gate, sales of tea and coffee, and sales of railway merchandise. SPRING would like to say a big thank you to Richard and Connie and all the other volunteers at the railway for making this such a wonderful day.



Poole Charity Darts League

Two teams from the Poole Charity Darts League raised money for SPRING this year: Poole Ex Cons and Newtown Conservative Club darts team.

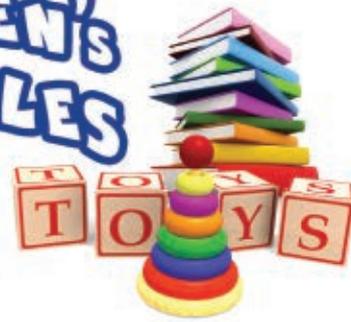


Richard Hutley, Colin Carter, Emma (SPRING Chairperson), Peter Ellis, Elaine Foster, Dan Corbin

Money is raised with donations from players each week and this gets totalled at the end of the season. Between them they have raised £475. Thank you all so much from SPRING.



BABY & CHILDREN'S NEARLY NEW SALES 2017



2pm - 3:30pm

Admission: £1 per adult
(FREE tea, coffee & squash)

**16th March, 11th May, 1st June,
14th September, 16th November**

All taking place at Broadstone Methodist Church
Lower Blandford Road, Broadstone, BH18 8DP

Please contact Helen
to donate or register to sell:
helenhunt@yahoo.co.uk
or 01202 463446.

Please contact Janet
to donate or register to sell:
cliffandjanetsibley@hotmail.co.uk
or 01202 699420.



Find us on Facebook:
"Charity Nearly New Sale"

All proceeds from this sale go to SPRING.

SPRING's Wave of Light Event

Tuesday 15 October,
6:30-7:30pm,
Venue tbc

Bereaved parents, families and friends are invited to join us at our Global Wave of Light Event as we mark the end of Baby Loss Awareness Week.

All around the world, parents, families and friends light a candle at 7pm to remember the babies who lit up our lives.

For more information, contact SPRING on 01202 448084 or email friends@springsupport.org.uk

SPRING Christmas Service

Saturday 30 November
3pm at St Mary's Church, Longfleet Road, Poole BH15 2JD

You are invited to join us for an uplifting service to remember our special babies at Christmas time. We will be writing personal messages and lighting candles in memory of our special babies followed by tea, coffee cake.

Key Dates

APRIL

Wed 3rd Open Support Meeting (7.30-9pm), St Mary's Longfleet Church Centre, Kingston Road, Poole BH15 2LP.

Sat 6th Coffee Morning (10.30am – 12noon), The Coffee House, 10 Adastral Square, Canford Heath, Poole BH17 8SA.

MAY

Wed 1st. Open Support Meeting (7.30-9pm), St Mary's Longfleet Church Centre, Kingston Road, Poole BH15 2LP.

Sat 4th. Coffee Morning (10.30am – 12noon), The Coffee House, 10 Adastral Square, Canford Heath, Poole BH17 8SA.

JUNE

Sat 1st. Coffee Morning (10.30am – 12noon), The Coffee House, 10 Adastral Square, Canford Heath, Poole BH17 8SA.

Wed 5th. Open Support Meeting (7.30-9pm), St Mary's Longfleet Church Centre, Kingston Road, Poole BH15 2LP.



TBC. SPRING Annual Social – Date, venue and details tbc.

JULY

Wed 3rd. Open Support Meeting (7.30-9pm), St Mary's Longfleet Church Centre, Kingston Road, Poole BH15 2LP.

Sat 6th. Coffee Morning (10.30am – 12noon), The Coffee House, 10 Adastral Square, Canford Heath, Poole BH17 8SA.

AUGUST

Sat 3rd. Coffee Morning (10.30am – 12noon), The Coffee House, 10 Adastral Square, Canford Heath, Poole BH17 8SA.

Wed 7th. Open Support Meeting (7.30-9pm), St Mary's Longfleet Church Centre, Kingston Road, Poole BH15 2LP.

SEPTEMBER

Wed 4th. Open Support Meeting (7.30-9pm), St Mary's Longfleet Church Centre, Kingston Road, Poole BH15 2LP.

Sat 7th. Coffee Morning (10.30am – 12noon), The Coffee House, 10 Adastral Square, Canford Heath, Poole BH17 8SA.

OCTOBER

Wed 2nd. Open Support Meeting (7.30-9pm), St Mary's Longfleet Church Centre, Kingston Road, Poole BH15 2LP.

Sat 5th. Coffee Morning (10.30am – 12noon), The Coffee House, 10 Adastral Square, Canford Heath, Poole BH17 8SA.



Tue 15th. Wave of Light (6.30-7.30pm).

NOVEMBER

Sat 2nd. Coffee Morning (10.30am – 12noon), The Coffee House, 10 Adastral Square, Canford Heath, Poole BH17 8SA.

Wed 6th. Open Support Meeting (7.30-9pm), St Mary's Longfleet Church Centre, Kingston Road, Poole BH15 2LP.



Sat 30th. SPRING's Christmas Event – remembering our babies (3.00pm), St Mary's Church, Longfleet Road, Poole BH15 2JD.

DECEMBER

Wed 4th. Open Support Meeting (7.30-9pm), St Mary's Longfleet Church Centre, Kingston Road, Poole BH15 2LP.

Sat 7th. Coffee Morning (10.30am – 12noon), The Coffee House, 10 Adastral Square, Canford Heath, Poole BH17 8SA.

Get involved with SPRING

For many months, there has been lots going on behind the scenes to improve the way SPRING is run, how volunteers and professionals are involved, and how SPRING operates as a charitable fund of Poole Hospital Charity.

A big part of this process involved creating a new Terms of Reference document, which bereaved parents and professionals helped to develop at workshops facilitated by the Poole CVS (Council of Voluntary Service).

Now the new Terms of Reference have been approved and adopted, we want to create even more ways for bereaved parents and relatives to get involved with SPRING.

The SPRING Steering Group - made up of 6-12 bereaved parents and relatives, and professionals involved with supporting families through baby loss - aims to be a voice for bereaved parents. The group meets every other month to oversee the work of SPRING, make 'spend' recommendations and, in some cases, help to deliver SPRING activities. Members who are bereaved parents are especially active attending meetings, hosting coffee mornings and helping with events. The Steering Group is about to welcome new members - including three bereaved parents - but we are always keen to hear from others who might like to join the group, so please get in touch if this is of interest.

We know some people want to get involved with sharing their views, but as and when they choose, so we are very excited about setting up the SPRING Forum. It will be an opportunity for bereaved parents to share their views and experiences (good and bad) in less formal ways, and with less commitment. We hope by hearing from more bereaved parents and relatives, SPRING can improve what it does and offer even better ways to support families through baby loss. Please look out for details in future editions of the newsletter and on Facebook.

There are lots of others ways to get involved with SPRING. Volunteers to help at our events, as well as bakers and people to drive equipment to events. If you want to get more involved with our community, please get in touch - we'd love to hear from you.

Interested? Email friends@springsupport.org.uk to find out about volunteer opportunities with SPRING.

Bereaved parent, Emma Lynch, shares her experience about being a volunteer with SPRING.



“ I joined the SPRING Steering Group in early 2016. It was something I had been thinking about for a while as SPRING had helped and my family so much after the loss of our son Finn. I knew that I had a pretty unique story to tell as well as transferable skills from my working life that could be utilised by SPRING for its fundraising and events.

“I was incredibly nervous about applying – would it be too soon after our loss? Would I be able to cope with the stories I may hear? I can honestly say though it has helped with my own personal grieving, coming to terms with what happened and our loss.

“Being part of SPRING and the Steering Group is a commitment, but it is a commitment I am happy to give. Giving time to help at events and to attend meetings seems such a small thing compared to the amazing work SPRING does for families and relatives through their loss.

“The other Steering Group members I now consider friends, even though I didn't know any of them when I joined the group. Not only do we support SPRING, we support each other.

“I am incredibly proud to be part of SPRING and the work that it does. I can't imagine not being part of it now – it's a real family affair too, as my husband and daughters also come along to the events to help out, something they really enjoy as well.”

Get involved

There are lots of ways to get involved in supporting **SPRING**.

Here are just a few ideas.

DONATE
Via Just Giving or donate direct to **SPRING** at St. Mary's Maternity Hospital, Poole.

BAKE CAKES
Join our list of happy bakers!

RAFFLE/TOMBOLA PRIZES
Collect from family, friends or work colleagues.

EVENTS
Organise or come along and attend an event.

If you'd like to get involved, please get in touch!

JustGiving™

We are always in need of your help so we can carry on helping families during their difficult times.

We are members of the Just Giving Website. It's an excellent idea. Essentially it means that visitors to our website can donate money and/or gifts to **SPRING** online. Any items we receive are automatically transferred to the **SPRING** account and **SPRING** gets the full benefit immediately. Also, Gift Aid can be added automatically so that **SPRING** benefits even more.

You can find out more about donating by visiting:
<http://www.justgiving.com/springsupport/donate>

You can set up your own fundraising page for **SPRING** by logging on to:
<http://www.justgiving.com/springsupport/raisemoney>



The Baby Mailing Preference Service helps reduce the number of baby-related mailings you receive.

In the sad circumstances of the death of a baby, mailings to parents about baby products from well meaning companies can cause unintended hurt.

By registering with Baby MPS you can reduce the number of unwanted mailings you receive.

Contact MPS:

Tel: 020 7291 3310

Email: babymps@dma.org.uk

www.mpsonline.org.uk



Follow us on Facebook

...and keep up to date with latest news, announcements and other members

Search for us at **SPRING Support**

For more information or support – or to make a donation – contact **SPRING**:

Call 01202 448084 (24 hour answerphone) **Email: friends@springsupport.org.uk**

c/o St Mary's Maternity Unit, St Mary's Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 2JB

SPRING is part of Poole Hospital Charity. Registered Charity No 1058808