

# SPRING

Supporting parents and relatives through baby loss



NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2020

## SPRING's "virtual" Wave of Light Event

Full story on page 4



# 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: 0300 019 8752 or email: [maternity.counsellors@uhd.nhs.uk](mailto:maternity.counsellors@uhd.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.

Currently, these are going to be held each month online. Further details can be found in What's On section.

### 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.

Third Saturday of every month (10.30-12pm) at Lounge One, 10 Adastral Square, Canford Heath BH17 8SA.

During the current Covid 19 Situation, these are being held virtually - see our social media platforms for more information.

## Contact SPRING

[SPRING admin and fundraising enquiries](#)

**Telephone: 0300 019 8084** (please note that if we are unavailable to take your call, you can leave a message on our answerphone).

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

**Email: [spring.support@uhd.nhs.uk](mailto:spring.support@uhd.nhs.uk)**

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn @SPRINGsupport



[Maternity and bereavement counselling services](#)

**Telephone: 0300 019 8752**

**Email: [maternity.counsellors@uhd.nhs.uk](mailto:maternity.counsellors@uhd.nhs.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 Lynch, SPRING Chairperson

## Welcome to this edition of the SPRING newsletter.

Firstly, I hope you and your families are all keeping safe and healthy in these uncertain times.

Here at SPRING we have tried our best to keep our services running to the best of our abilities. We know it is not the same as having face to face contact, but hopefully the virtual coffee mornings, the reintroduction of the support groups and the Wave of Light event have given you some comfort and reassurance that SPRING is still here for you all.

On 15th October we held a Digital Wave of Light, to mark the end of Baby Loss Awareness week. Here, readings were read by members of the Steering Group and also Jo, one of the Bereavement Midwives and a candle was lit to remember those babies lost too soon. We were touched to see all of your beautiful candles to remember your precious babies on our Facebook page, thank you for posting. This event is always incredibly special as bereaved parents, families and friends remember their own special babies. I've always felt that this event offers support, comfort and a feeling of solidarity, all of which are such important parts of what SPRING represents. You can read more about the Wave of Light later in the newsletter.

Sadly I need to tell you that our Christmas Service will also have to take place virtually. Details will be posted via SPRING's website and on our social media platforms. We would also ask that if you have any suggestions of further virtual events that you would like to see take place, please do let us know.

The virtual events do rely on the time and energy of our volunteers, most of whom are bereaved parents themselves therefore, we are always

extremely grateful for any help people can offer. With this in mind I would like to welcome Zoe Mitchell who has recently joined the Steering Group, hopefully you will all get to see her soon. If you would like to get involved, please do get in touch.

Thank you to those people who have shared their stories in the newsletter. I know it is hard to write about something so personal, but they really do help and comfort other bereaved parents. If you would like to share your story for a future edition of the newsletter or to go on our website, then please do get in touch.

I would also like to say a huge thank you to all those people who continue to fundraise for SPRING. We have included some examples in the newsletter, but I would like to mention a couple here. Firstly, a massive shout out and thank you to the Cycle for Spring team who will be cycling from Poole to Paris - 424 miles over 4 days. They have already raised an incredible £14k! The second mention is for Forum Jewellers in Broadstone who recently ran a raffle with over 50 amazing prizes, all generously donated by their suppliers. Due to everyone that kindly bought tickets they raised an incredible £2,560 for SPRING, so again a huge thank you to them. If you have been fundraising and would like to tell others about it, we would love to hear from you.

So this just leaves me to say that we really do miss seeing you all face to face and we really hope we can all get together really, really soon.

All the very best,

*Emma x*

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# Fundraising Update

by Zoë Wood, SPRING Fundraising Administrator



Well, 2020 is certainly proving to be a year that has been full of challenges due to the extraordinary situation that Covid-19 has presented!

So many of us have had to adapt to the new way of living, working, shopping, eating out and so much more over the past eight months. Nevertheless, throughout this pandemic, SPRING has continued to offer a majority of its much needed services, alongside supporting our invaluable fundraisers who have encountered postponements or cancellation of events.

Such changes have meant that many of our fundraisers have had to develop a more

creative approach to their fundraising events, some of which feature in this edition, and without this money raised from our wonderful supporters we would not be able to provide the services that we do - so thank you all so very very much!!

Finally, a huge thank you to all the people who have shared their real life stories. We know these accounts genuinely help others who have had similar experiences - so thank you. If you would like to share a story, or tell us about your fundraising efforts, then please do get in touch as we would love to hear from you.

Zoë can be contacted on 0300 019 8084 or by email: spring.support@uhd.nhs.uk

*Zoë x*



# Wave of Light Event

On Thursday 15 October, SPRING joined others around the world as part of the Global Wave of Light event that marks the end of Baby Loss Awareness Week, by remembering all our precious babies who have died too soon, with the lighting of candles at 7pm.

Normally, SPRING comes together with bereaved parents and their families at Poole Park to remember loved and longed for babies that were gone to soon with readings and gentle music, however, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and in accordance with Government guidelines, we were sadly unable to hold this event as we have done in previous years.

As a baby loss charity we knew it was so incredibly important that we were able to be part of this remembrance event, therefore we invited bereaved parents, families and friends to join us "virtually"

and watch some special messages read out by members of SPRING's Steering Group and the lighting of the candle on our Facebook page.

This year, we also invited everyone to join us in creating a digital Wave of Light by posting photos of their candles onto our Facebook feed. Thank you to everyone who took part in lighting a candle and sharing their photos and comments. We hope it provided comfort to all those remembering their beloved angel babies, and to know that you are not alone.

Whilst we missed bringing together bereaved parents, families and friends at Poole Park, as our remembrance events are such a significant part of what SPRING does, it was still a beautiful and moving occasion made all the more

so by peoples' memories and photos. So thank you so very much to everyone who helped make this event so very special.

*Incase you missed it, you can still watch our video on our Facebook and Twitter platforms at @Spring Support, or on our website at [springsupport.org.uk](http://springsupport.org.uk).*



# International Day of the Midwife 2020

International Day of the Midwife was celebrated on the 05 May, with the official opening of "The Nest" at St Mary's Maternity Unit.

This is the second of the Poole Hospital's staff safe places and was the perfect place to celebrate the International Day of the Midwife with one of our lovely bereavement midwives!





# Introducing our newest member to the bereavement midwife team!

Hi, my name is Michelle Bodle. I am new to the bereavement support midwives team.

"I have been a midwife for 9 years working mainly on delivery suite. I joined the bereavement team about six months ago and I am now working in a job that I absolutely love. I aim to provide a continuity of care for women and their families offering support and guidance at what can feel like a very confusing and upsetting time.

It is hard to put into words what it is like to be a bereavement midwife; it comes with much sadness as well as



so much pride. I feel proud of what we do as a team, and find it very humbling helping families through the pregnancy loss journey.

# Bereavement counsellor

My name is Sumiyo and I have been involved with SPRING as a bereavement counsellor since 2015.

Working with bereaved parents and their families has been the most rewarding and humbling experience for me, both personally as well as professionally. I admire their courage in seeking help and expressing themselves in the most authentic ways.

Going through life events that cannot be more traumatic, the level of resilience the SPRING counselling clients show is so inspiring - they continue their search in finding ways to live as well as they can.

In my counselling work I share anger and disappointment with them, cry with them, even laugh with them - but most of all, I feel a lot of things with them. In the process of doing so I often find myself learning from my counselling clients, what it is to be brave and let people in, during their most vulnerable times. I am in awe of their openness and how they share some of their rawest



emotions with me in SPRING bereavement counselling. I feel so privileged to be a part of such incredible work and I am so proud to be a part of the SPRING charity.

# Maternity and SPRING's counselling service

by Karen Stevens, Lead counsellor

As with many things over the last six months, SPRING's counselling service has also had to make changes and adapt its services offered due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fortunately, with the aid of modern technology counselling sessions have been able to continue, facilitated through video calls using a NHS service called "Attend Anywhere", or by telephone calls.

The pandemic has resulted in high levels of anxiety, isolation and an increase in counselling referrals, and as such, we are so grateful to have been able to continue our counselling work during these uncertain times. Whilst this has been a new way of working for both counsellors and clients to adapt to it is certainly one that is proving to be successful!

For the time being, the counselling service will remain working remotely in line with government guidance but we very much look forward to working face to face again when it is safe to do so. As always, we welcome any feedback from our service users.

The counselling service can be contacted by email at: **maternity.counsellors@uhd.nhd.uk** or by telephone on **0300 019 8752**



# Baby Lumi

In August 2018, after ten years trying to conceive and at the age of 38, my husband, Ross and I discovered I was pregnant with what seemed like a miracle baby.

We were over the moon as it had become somewhat of a pipe dream for us. Children were something gifted to other people, not us. The pregnancy seemed totally normal. I was understandably anxious but appointments and scans seemed fine. I was under consultant led care as a result of high BMI and age, plus risk of pre-eclampsia. I had very little in the way of symptoms, other than the usual first trimester tiredness and uterus cramps. I experienced no morning sickness at all and thought myself quite lucky to be avoiding it. After our 12 week scan I began to let myself relax and start to enjoy the pregnancy and allow myself to believe we were bringing a baby home.

On the 19 November 2018 we attended our routine 16 week midwife appointment. My husband wanted to go out for late breakfast after the appointment and I remember telling him to 'see how the appointment went first.' Not because I knew anything was wrong but because I was always anxious and took the pregnancy a day at a time. The appointment went well then the midwife asked me to lie down on the bed so she could have a listen to the baby. I remember hearing that crackling on the Doppler for what seemed like a lifetime, but other than that, radio silence. I was trying not to panic but I knew deep down in my heart something wasn't right. The midwife stayed so calm, explaining that sometimes babies are stubborn and hide. She said she would get us an emergency scan to have a proper look. At that point I just knew our baby had already passed. I remember turning to my husband wild eyed, shaking my head, panic rising inside me.

We were rushed through the waiting room to a scan room. The sonographer was silent while she took some measurements. I could see my baby lying still, no familiar white heartbeat ticking away. After what felt like a lifetime she simply said 'I think you know what I'm going to say...I'm so sorry.' It was in this moment that life crashed down around me. I remember letting out horrendous sobs but the tears were not

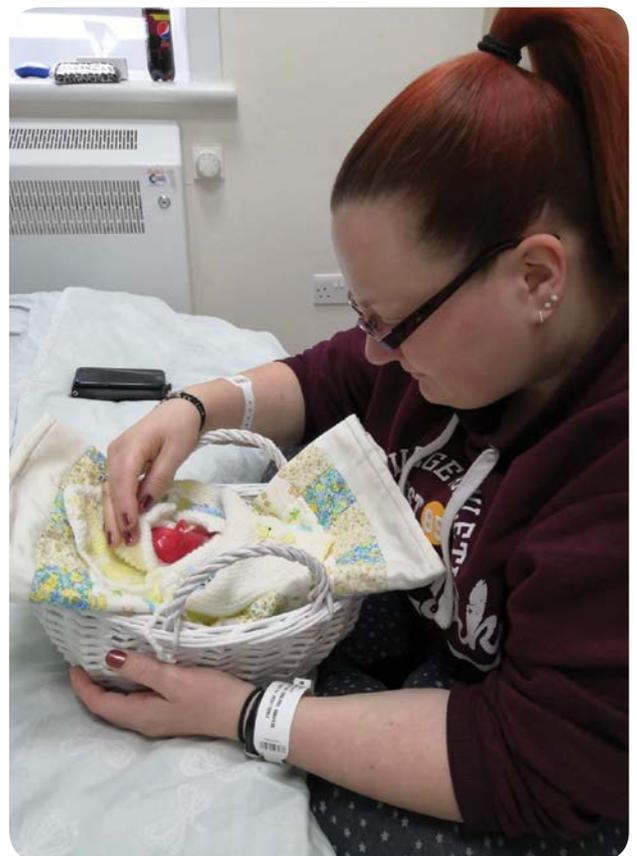
instant, they came later. The staff left the room so my husband and I could have a moment, I was reluctant to leave the room as I knew I didn't want to face what was to come. My husband remained calm and strong despite his obvious distress.

We were eventually led to a little side room and from then on it was a blur of professionals coming in and out of the room. Some I remember vividly, some I cannot recall at all. By this point the real tears and uncontrollable, heaving sobbing came as the reality of the situation sank in. The baby we longed for had died and I couldn't understand how life could be so cruel. The midwife who had performed the Doppler came into the room and just sat with me, telling me how sorry she was with her arms round me. Later I was introduced to the head of the bereavement midwifery team who explained what would happen next. She asked me if I knew what would happen and I mumbled something about an operation...then was informed that it would have to be an induction and vaginal delivery as at 16 weeks this is the safest option for the mother. I would have to sign consent forms then take a tablet which would effectively stop my pregnancy, then would be asked to go home and return two days later to be fully induced, labour and deliver our baby. The thought of being at home for two days with my dead baby inside me filled me with utter horror. My husband left the room for a while to gather himself and process what was going on. I left a voicemail with my mother who was attending a funeral and also somehow mustered the strength to call my boss to

inform him. I am a teacher in a special school and was fully expecting to go back to work that afternoon happy.

While my husband was out of the room the staff came back with the tablet I needed to take. It took me a long time, sitting there holding it, sobbing. They said I could take my time and just sat with me. Eventually I sobbed 'I'm so sorry baby' then swallowed the tablet, feeling like I was killing my baby despite knowing they were already gone. Sometime later we were sent home, leaving through the back door so we didn't have to go through the maternity waiting room and face all the expectant parents.

When we got home I ran upstairs and threw myself on the bed and let out a series of feral screams. I've never made a noise like it. My husband remained downstairs and had a cry of his own before joining me. I remember him calling his parents and heard the horror in my mother in law's voice. They said they would come straight over. My own mother finally got my message and called me back, having caught wind of the news through my in laws. She was broken but her and my step father also rushed round to the house to





be with us. I recall my mother lying next to me on the bed and sobbing with me.

Two days later we returned to the maternity hospital, entering the bereavement unit through a back door. I stood in the room with my back to the midwife, winter coat hood pulled up, crying, saying that I didn't want to be there. She was lovely. Her name was Ali and to this day I call her a true gem. I was induced via pessary and experienced a 10 hour, painful labour with back to back contractions. Our son was delivered at 11.33pm on 21 November 2018. My husband and I were alone in the room at the time and despite the tragedy it felt like a special and intimate moment. The night midwife came in and gave me an injection in my leg to help deliver the placenta. She left us to have some time just sitting with our boy. He was red, shiny, gunky looking but utterly perfect in our eyes. He looked like a serious soul and had his right hand resting on his hip and head upturned slightly in a warrior-esque pose.

A couple of hours later I had a shower, they removed the hospital bed and pulled down a double bed from the wall, complete with plush duvet, so that my husband and I could get some sleep together. The next day we had to make decisions over what would happen next. We opted for a full post mortem and a communal funeral as we didn't want our son to be alone. Our wonderful midwife Ali was so lovely with our son (who we named Lumi, which means 'Light Bringer'), chatting to him as if he were alive, with such dignity. She explained that he would be going off to Southampton for the post mortem with his 'buddies.' This solidified our decision to go for the communal funeral. Our boy would never be alone this way. We signed all the relevant paperwork then Lumi was brought to us again. We spent hours with him in the calm bubble of that room, parenting him even though he was gone. He was wrapped in a little hand knitted hooded robe, within another hand knitted blanket and laid in a little white Moses basket with two tiny blue teddies on each side of him. (One went to the funeral with him and we kept one). We took photos and talked to him. An hour before we left the reality that I would have to say a final goodbye sank in and I lost the plot again. I was completely inconsolable when I handed him back to the care of the on duty midwife as we were ready to leave. I'm not sure how my legs carried me out of the building and away from him forever.

In the days following our lovely midwife

made a home visit, others made phone calls regularly. I was advised to get an HBA1C test as when I delivered Lumi my blood sugars were rather high. It turns out that I was living with undiagnosed and uncontrolled type 2 diabetes and this is the most likely reason for our loss as the post mortem and follow up genetics tests found no other cause. Lumi had so many physical problems: a heart defect, no kidneys, no thumb or radial bone in his left arm/hand, spinal dysplasia amongst a long list. I'll forever feel like I am to blame.

By January 2019 I plucked up the courage to start attending the monthly open support meetings and met many bereaved parents with whom I could talk openly about all my feelings surrounding the loss. I also accessed 1:1 counselling with a wonderful counsellor, Shonagh Gibb who was also present at those group meetings. She has since retired but I owe her so much. She supported me through a second miscarriage. We lost our second baby at 6 weeks on 08 August 2019. I had an appointment with her the day the bleeding started, I knew something wasn't right as my digital tests were not progressing and the lines on first response tests had started to get lighter the day before, She found me in the waiting room sobbing and whisked me off to her room. We named our second lost baby 'Comet,' as they blazed in and out of our orbit so quickly.

By this point I was determined to get pregnant again and miraculously fell pregnant on the first cycle after our second loss. I continued to have counselling sessions until January 2020, up until I had my 20 week scan with our rainbow baby. On 14 May 2020 I gave birth to our beautiful and healthy daughter, Eris Rose Teagle. She has brought so much happiness into our lives after a very long, dark two year period.



The pain of our losses will never go away, it now lives alongside our happiness.

*We cannot thank Spring enough for everything it did for us and continues to do for us. I hope to be associated with the charity for a long time to come, whether that be through helping others who are struggling with loss as the support group, fundraising or simply raising awareness on behalf of all the bereaved parents who find themselves as part of this extremely difficult community.*



## Have you got a story to share?

**Real stories of baby loss or rainbow babies can make a real difference to bereaved parents going through a similar experience.**

If you would like to share your story in our next edition, please get in touch by emailing [spring.support@uhd.nhs.uk](mailto:spring.support@uhd.nhs.uk) or message us through the **SPRING** Facebook page.



# Hannah's Story

My name is Hannah Murray and this is my story, I hope it helps anyone going through anything remotely similar.

I was 19+1 weeks pregnant. I had a private gender scan booked on Saturday morning, and my husband, two boys and step mum came along to find out what we were having.

I'd still been feeling slight movements and still had morning sickness the morning of the scan. When the sonographer told me there was no heartbeat our entire world fell apart. It was explained to me that the movements I was feeling were passive movements (baby was moving with my movements and that's what I'd felt). I'd had a feeling all along this was a girl.

*“ When the sonographer told me there was no heartbeat our entire world fell apart. ”*

My step-mum took our boys out of the room and the clinic made a call to Poole Hospital's SPRING Suite. When my husband and I arrived, I was scared, upset and heartbroken. From the minute we pulled up in the car, Steph (one of the bereavement midwives) came out to meet us, she was so lovely. The doctors also came to scan me again to confirm that there was no heartbeat. Steph explained what would happen next. I had to take a tablet to switch off my body's pregnancy hormones - the hardest thing I have ever done. The tablet took two days to work and I had

*“ On Monday 13 May 2019, I gave birth to the most perfect, tiny, precious sleeping angel, our girl. ”*

to go back to the SPRING Suite two days later.

On Monday 13 May 2019, I gave birth to the most perfect, tiny, precious sleeping angel, our girl. We called her Peaches. Our son loves the film Ice Age, and asked continuously throughout my pregnancy if we could call her Peaches (the name of the baby mammoth from the film) although I wasn't sure. However, after giving birth to our angel I knew it was the right name for her, chosen by her brother, after a fictional character that was in his eyes, magical. After I gave birth to Peaches it took me a long time to feel myself again, and even now, over a year on, I've realised I don't think I'll ever get over losing her.

I had to go to my GP as I was feeling very low and struggling to sleep. Everyone said time is a healer, that's not true as I don't think I will ever completely heal, but it does get easier with time. I am so much stronger than I was, and without the incredible care and support from the midwives at Poole Hospital and the SPRING Suite it would have been a while lot harder. Ali came to visit us at home. We had the photographer take photos of us and our angel, photos we will treasure for ever, the memory box that was given to us after I gave birth, the phone calls from the midwives at SPRING, it was

never going to be easy after losing Peaches but every little thing they did made it that bit easier and we are so very grateful. Myself, my husband and our boys think about our little girl every day, we talk about her a lot, as I write this now I still get upset, I miss what should have been and I don't think that will ever get any easier but I know she is with us always.

*“ After I gave birth to Peaches it took me a long time to feel myself again, and even now, over a year on, I've realised I don't think I'll ever get over losing her. ”*





## 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.



# Rainbow Baby Lucía

Lucía is a rainbow baby. She was born in the water on the 01 January 2020. Her name means light and she has definitely enlightened and brightened up our lives.

After two painful miscarriages my husband and I worked very hard to heal. It was a rocky journey with plenty of tears with complicated painful moments.

We managed to navigate these thanks to the love and support received from our family, friends and colleagues. After the first miscarriage I tried to cope with the pain by grasping on to the hope of falling pregnant again fairly quickly. Unfortunately, as the months passed

and this didn't materialise I felt deeply sad and hopeless. When I found out I was pregnant again I felt immense joy and happiness, however having had a previous traumatic experience I felt quite anxious as well.

Not long later, my worst fears became true and we went through a second miscarriage. By this point I felt extremely upset and helpless. After a few days of rest and reflection I then decided to

have a more proactive approach to coping with this second loss. I researched every possible thing I could do to feel

better and start a new healing path.

Being back at work with my colleagues really helped at this point and I felt very lucky I was able to receive some counselling sessions at Poole Maternity Hospital provided by the amazing charity SPRING.

I would like to say a special thank you to my husband Robbie and my best friend/sister Leire for their continual support through that time. Also, during this time I felt very lucky to have found an excellent acupuncturist who helped me immensely, thank you Joy. After a couple of months of counselling, yoga practice and acupuncture I fell pregnant for the third time. 9 months later Lucía arrived in our lives and changed them forever. She is a strong and independent little lady, cuddly and very intelligent. We love her

to bits but we will never forget her two siblings who are upon us, on the sky, looking after us. We will always keep them in our hearts.





# More than just a piece of cake!

On 13 July, Lauren Walston held a charity cake sale at her work (Baden Powell School and St Peter's Church of England Junior School) with the hope of raising lots of money for SPRING.

Lauren and her colleagues raised an incredible amount of £835.51 which is just wonderful!! Thank you so so much to everyone involved, and especially to Lauren for organising this event for our special charity!!



## Thank you Fundraisers!

*We are so incredibly grateful to our supporters who raise money and awareness for SPRING – thank you all!!*

Some people do amazing things – running, baking, cycling and more, so here is a roundup of what you have been up to over the last few months!!

# “After the Storm” nursery mobiles

One of our lovely supporters has been selling nursery mobiles with 50% of sales being donated to SPRING. Thank you so much to Jane for all her support!! Please read her story and why she has been donating part of her proceeds to SPRING.

“After having my son without any issues in 2016, we could never have imagined that having another child would be so difficult.

Our story of recurrent loss began in January 2017 when I found out I was expecting baby number two. Excitement levels were high as we celebrated my son's first birthday, happily unaware that just one week later, a scan at 8 weeks would confirm that our baby had no heartbeat. We were heartbroken but picked ourselves up to try again in the hopes that we had just been unlucky.

By April, I was expecting again, but this time that pregnancy ended at 6 weeks. We could not believe we were in this position for a second time and I was starting to struggle not only with the losses but the prospect of more loss. That was about the time I got in contact with SPRING and started to attend counselling sessions at Poole Hospital.

By June, we had seen a healthy seven week heartbeat and I relaxed a little knowing the odds may be a little better after a heartbeat

confirmed. Unfortunately, that pregnancy ended at 11 weeks, just one week shy of the “safety” of the 12 week milestone. This third loss was devastating.

October came around with another 6 week loss, then another at 5 weeks in July the following year.

In total, we lost five pregnancies within a two year period and I can quite honestly say that I'm not sure how I would have gotten through it all (and kept trying for my rainbow) without the support of SPRING. I'm so grateful to have had not only the opportunity to talk it all through with a wonderful trained professional, but also for the way in which SPRING advocated for me through each loss and my subsequent (very anxious) pregnancy with rainbow Amelia. Once Amelia was born, I began to make felt nursery mobiles to try and raise funds for baby loss charities including SPRING, to whom I'm so grateful for all they have done for us.”





# Football card fundraiser event



In June, Daniel and Sam Manuel wanted to raise funds for SPRING by holding a football card fundraising event in memory of their daughter Mila, and sharing her and their story.

The initial aim was to hold one round, but with such overwhelming support, Daniel held two, raising a fantastic £1350!!! Daniel said he was blown away by everybody's support for the event – as were we!! Thank you so so much to everyone involved – and especially to those who donated some of their winnings to SPRING!

A huge shout out and thank you to Daniel from everyone here at SPRING for organising and running this event – it truly was a wonderful way to raise so much money during these socially restrictive times!

# Masking it up in 2020!!

During these strange and “new normal” times, one of our supporters, Louise Connor, raised £100 for SPRING by making and selling some very fabulous face masks – with £1 of each sale being donated to SPRING.



Thank you so very very much Louise – here at SPRING we absolutely loved your bang on trend choice of designs!

# “If you go down to the woods today..!”

A magical fairy door trail was created by one of our supporters through Mudeford Wood, Christchurch, in memory of all the angel babies no longer with us.



It truly brought so much joy to the local community, and in particular the little people, who enjoyed exploring the magic of nature.

Thank you to those who made donations to our charity... and a huge thank you to Jade for creating such a beautiful trail, along with raising awareness of our charity! We absolutely loved your walk with the hidden fairy homes amongst the trees!

# “Bee Happy” ... “Bee Hopeful”

Throughout May, Bee Happy Aromas was selling “Bee Hopeful” butterfly and angel wings wax melts, with 80% of all sales going to SPRING.

These gorgeous wax melts proved to be hugely popular and an incredible £600 was raised for our charity!! Thank you to everyone who bought some, and a huge thank you to Bee Happy Aromas for creating these beautiful wax melts and donating the proceeds to SPRING!!





# "Tigers Really Aren't That Scary!"

**Tigers Really Aren't That Scary** is the debut children's books from one of our wonderful supporters, **Steve Dixon (aka Steph Daisy)**, with 25% of all sales profits going to SPRING.

Here, he explains how it all began and why he chose for a portion of the books' sales to be donated to our charity.

"Tigers' all started in lockdown - and quite unexpectedly. I wasn't coping with lockdown well. With lots on my mind I started putting all my thoughts onto paper - well, onto screen - and I wrote. And wrote. And wrote. Poem after poem just poured out (and still continues to do so).



I found it great therapy. It's amazing how letting things out can be so therapeutic. It doesn't cure you, but it does help. To start with it was just writing, and clearing some of the fog from my head. But when friends and family started to read them and liked them, I decided I would see if I could get the book published. And so my other book 'Poems from a Depressed Mind' was born.

I spent a lot of time researching how to get published and realised that the chances of getting a traditional publishing contract were one in a million so with this in mind, I set about starting a Kickstarter Campaign - and within 3 weeks I had raised the £1000 I thought I would need to start my illustrious writing career!

In the meantime, because the poems were of all shapes, sizes, themes, and genres - found I had a good collection of poems for children gathering together. And so, I thought, why not try and see if you can raise money and get these published too. I am always a glutton for punishment when it comes to ideas like this!

I found an illustrator on the freelance website, Upwork, and literally paid them any spare money I had to help bring my children's book, 'Tigers Really Aren't That Scary!' to life.

The research continued, and after being recommended it by a friend of my partner, I purchased a copy of the Children's Writers' & Artists' Yearbook - 2021 Edition (I mean who can't wait for 2020 to be over!) and emailed every agent and publisher and resource I could.

After rejection after rejection, it did yield some 'interest' from a few publishers but at a cost of between £1000 and £1800 (from one!) to get just my children's book published, it was obvious another route had to be the best option - if indeed there was another path I could go down. So I decided why not start my own business using the Kickstarter money - and get both the books published for the price of one, as well as maybe being able to help others who were looking to get their works published. And so [pretypug.co.uk](http://pretypug.co.uk) was started as well!

Only time will tell how foolish an idea this will be - starting a business



in the worst pandemic we have seen in generations. But, it just felt right and too many times in the past have I let ideas and dreams be brushed under the carpet.

## Why I chose SPRING...

It's for Peanut - my grandbaby in the sky, sadly taken too early (at 20 weeks) a couple of years ago, from my eldest daughter (I have 4!). It was difficult to know what to say or do at the time, or even if it should be talked about at all. I registered a Star for Baby Peanut, who will never be forgotten and every time I look in the night sky, I know he is out there.

And then the day I thought wouldn't happen, Poppy my first beautiful Grand-daughter was born, 4 June 2020 to the same daughter. She is so gorgeous and I have had many snuggles with her



since lockdown eased.

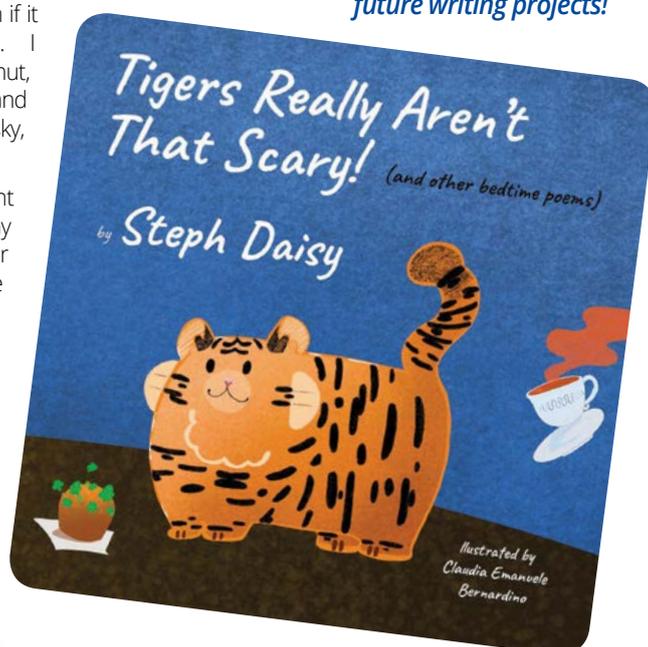
## About Tigers Really Aren't That Scary

Tigers Really Aren't That Scary is the first in a series of Bedtime Poems featuring Tabatha Tiger & Friends. Tabatha Tiger lives in Lionville. Tabatha, also known as Tabby says about her and her friends - "We all love playing together, in our gardens and indoors on rainy days. But our favourite thing to do is writing stories and poems. We all read them at our sleepovers just before bed - which we think is the best time to read them when you are all snuggled up and warm." All brilliantly, colourfully and quirkily illustrated by Claudia Emanuele Bernardino, this book should appeal to young children, and hopefully adults alike.

Young readers are already enjoying it, and more books are planned if Tigers Aren't That Scary is a success!"

25% of all sales profits will go to SPRING, and you can buy this on Amazon, or via the Pretty Pug Publishing website direct: <https://www.pretypug.co.uk/product-page/tigers-really-aren-t-that-scary>. You can also follow Steph Daisy on Twitter: @stephdaisypoet or find further details at [www.pretypug.co.uk](http://www.pretypug.co.uk) or email: [pugtastic@pretypug.co.uk](mailto:pugtastic@pretypug.co.uk)

**Thank you to Steph Daisy for donating 25% of sales profits to SPRING, we are so very grateful and wish you all the very best in your future writing projects!**





# The 'pressure' was on to bake cakes!

One of our supporters, Charlotte, held a cake sale last year to raise money for a new Blood Pressure machine for the Bereavement Suite at St Mary's Maternity Unit. Here she writes why she was keen to raise funds for this piece of equipment.

"Xander was a dear little package...small but perfect in our eyes and although he was too unwell to make it, he is very much in our hearts and thoughts.

I don't know what we'd have done without SPRING as the team has ensured we have no regrets; we had a wonderful delivery, a beautiful send-off for Xander and ultimately, we can remember our son in the way we want. We cannot thank them enough. Raising money for the charity was just an obvious step in the recovery process, certainly for me.

The cake sale was an absolute hit (as they always are!) and due to the generous donations of cakes, ran over two days. SPRING allowed me to borrow their banner and my work colleagues used their time to help, which all added to its success. A number of people not only bought cakes but also shared their own stories which I felt honoured to hear. It made me realise how our story is mirrored by so many other people. Running the stall has been a great therapy for me, mainly because I was able

to hold it on what would have been Xander's due date.

During Xander's delivery, it was apparent that Jo, our midwife, had to borrow the observation kit from the labour ward. At the time I thought little of it but during periods of reflection I realised how in need they were of their own piece of equipment, in fact I was shocked this wasn't already the case. Alongside contributions from our family and friends and the proceeds from the cake sale, we managed to raise £1026.44. Following discussions with the charity's



## Get Involved

*There are lots of ways to get involved in supporting SPRING, from volunteering, to fundraising, to challenge events.*

Some people are worried that they won't raise much, but because we are entirely self-funded, every penny donated to us from each step walked or run, of each cake baked and sold, means that we can continue to offer our support to parents and families following the loss of a baby.

Donations can be made via our Just Giving page <https://www.justgiving.com/springsupport/donate> or to SPRING c/o St. Mary's Maternity Unit, St. Mary's Road, Poole, Dorset, BH15 2JB. Cheques should be made payable to Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust. Thank you.

Not all donations are financial, giving a bit of your time can also be rewarding and can make a big difference by supporting those who have experienced baby loss. This can be through supporting our remembrance events or by joining SPRING's steering group.

*If you would like to get involved, or simply want to let us know what you are up to, please do get in touch! Email [spring.support@uhd.nhs.uk](mailto:spring.support@uhd.nhs.uk) or call 0300 019 8084.*

Steering Group, the piece of equipment was procured pretty quickly which we were so pleased to hear.

This time has been absolutely awful but I'm so glad we have been able to go some way to ease the process for the midwives and other parents now and in the future, due in part to Xander's legacy.

In writing this piece, I would like to indulge in thanking my wonderful husband, Peter and my fantastic Mum, Marian but equally, without my daughter, Heidi as a distraction all I would have wanted to do was curl up and cry."

SPRING and the bereavement midwife team would love to say a huge huge thank you to Charlotte, her colleagues, and those who brought some of the wonderful cakes, in raising such a generous amount which meant we were able to purchase the observational suite! Your generosity is truly wonderful and we are, as always, grateful to our local community for the continuing support that is provided to us!

Thank you, it means so very much xx



# Cycle for SPRING

Two of SPRING's supporters, Chris and Micky, along with eight friends, have set up a challenge to cycle from Poole to Paris and back over four days to raise funds and awareness for SPRING.

They set up this challenge as both men and their partners sadly experienced the loss of their baby girls in 2019. During this time and afterwards they received support from the Bereavement Midwife Team and SPRING to help them and their families through such an utterly devastating time. As such, Chris and Micky are keen to raise the awareness of baby loss, and highlight the support SPRING provides to bereaved parents and their families.

Whilst the challenge was initially set for September 2020, due to Covid-19 travel restrictions this event has had to be postponed until SPRING 2021. Both men and their team however continue to raise awareness of baby loss and funds for SPRING so to read more or to donate, please visit their page at [justgiving.com/team/CYCLEFORSPRING](https://justgiving.com/team/CYCLEFORSPRING).

In the meantime, we would like to thank every single member of the team along with those who have already supported and donated to Cycle for SPRING's Just

Giving page!! It truly means so very much to all of us here at SPRING. We wish Chris, Micky and the team all the very best with their training!! Happy cycling!!

**Cycle For Spring**

- ✦ Poole to Paris
- ✦ 424 miles (approx)
- ✦ 4 days

Sponsors: KDW, ABAKON, W+S, swd, The Cosmetic Clinic, PARVALUX, BluechipFinancial, CYCLE FOR SPRING, SPRING

## Liam Daniels ran the Virtual London Marathon – “his race, his way”

On Sunday 04 October, Liam Daniels joined thousands of other runners across the UK to run the Virtual London Marathon's 26.2 miles! Liam ran “his race, his way” around the streets and beaches of Poole and Bournemouth on what was a pretty wet and windy miserable morning, raising a brilliant amount of **£1075 for SPRING!**

Liam says he wanted to raise money for SPRING as our charity has helped some of his close friends and family through the tragedy of baby loss and wanted to raise awareness of what we do. He has also signed up to do the London Marathon in October 2021 with the aim of raising further money for SPRING! Liam, we cannot thank you enough for your commitment and support to our charity, it is so very much appreciated and we look forward to hearing your training updates over the next year!





# Charity partnership with Forum Jewellers

“Forum Jewellers were delighted that our Facebook followers voted for Spring Support to be our Charity of the Year 2020 from six other local charities.

*Our customers and supporters are very generous but, unfortunately, because of the unusual and unexpected events this year, our normal fundraising programme had to be postponed. However, we decided we wanted to continue fundraising throughout 2021 to make up for lost time and are planning to hold a spectacular Virtual Charity Raffle in October with our top prize being a diamond necklace worth £1,000 plus many more prizes thanks to the amazing generosity of our suppliers!!*”

This event held on the 15 October raised a staggering £2,560 for SPRING!!

Every single penny raised is hugely appreciated by all of us here and will go towards the continued



provision of our much needed counselling support service to bereaved parents and their families so thank you from the bottom of our hearts to everyone who has donated and to Forum's suppliers for their overwhelming gifts!

We truly are so pleased that we will be moving forward into 2021 with this partnership with Forum Jewellers and look forward to collaborating with them in future events.



# Community matters...

During the summer, SPRING was delighted to be nominated by a local Waitrose customer in Parkstone, to take part in Waitrose's Community Matters Scheme.

Thank you so so much for the nomination, and a huge thank you to Waitrose and the wonderful shoppers who put their green tokens into our box! We are very grateful and really appreciate your support!!

Pictured is our SPRING Administrator, Zoe, collecting the cheque for £333 from the lovely Community Matters Representative, Michelle.



[www.springsupport.org.uk](http://www.springsupport.org.uk)



# Charity pub draw

Back in June, The Pilot Pub, Canford Heath, held a charity meat raffle with the aim to donate proceeds to SPRING.

A wonderful £230 was raised from this meat draw and we would like to thank The Pilot and everyone involved and who supported this event! It is so so appreciated!



# Collecting for SPRING



A huge thanks to Mark James Goldsmiths and their customers who have been busy filling up one of our money collection tins in their shop.

A brilliant amount of £900 was counted out... thank you to everyone who donated and to Mark James Goldsmiths in Charminster for raising support and awareness for SPRING!

# SPRING'S open support meetings

Unfortunately, over the last six months, SPRING has been unable to hold its monthly group support meetings in the usual way at St Mary's Longfleet Church Centre due to Government regulations.

However, we are pleased to say that from October, we are once again able to offer bereaved parents and their families the opportunity to attend our monthly group support meetings virtually, via the online hub "Microsoft TEAMS".

Our first meeting was held on Wednesday 07 October. It was lovely to be able to resume this much valued group support session and to touch base with all those that attended.

These meetings will continue to be held on the **1st Wednesday of every month, 7pm-8.30pm**, and facilitated by one of our specialist bereavement counsellors, with a maximum of 10 registrations available for each session (with up to 2 people per registration) to ensure that everyone taking part receives a high level of support from the counsellor facilitating the session.

To register your interest, please email [maternity.counsellors@uhd.nhs.uk](mailto:maternity.counsellors@uhd.nhs.uk) who will add you to the TEAMS meeting and forward you an email with a link to the session.

TEAMS is free and secure to use, and you can easily join as a guest. Once you have received the email with the TEAMS Meeting invite, you can click the **"Join Microsoft Teams Meeting"** link and open TEAMS where you will be admitted into the meeting by the counsellor on the date and time advertised.

TEAMS can be used on laptops, mobiles phones and on tablets.

If you have any further enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact us here at SPRING at [spring.support@uhd.nhs.uk](mailto:spring.support@uhd.nhs.uk)



# SPRING's Christmas service

Sadly, our Christmas Service that is due to be held at St Mary's Longfleet Church, Poole, on Saturday 28 November will not be going ahead as planned due to Government Guidelines and the current Covid-19 restrictions.

However, we are hoping to send out a gentle Christmas message to all those affected by baby loss via our social media platforms nearer the time.

# Snowdrop Walk

Unfortunately, we are currently unable to confirm whether our annual Snowdrop Walk event will be taking place at Upton House and Country House in February due to the on-going Covid-19 restrictions that are in place.



So please do keep an eye out on our social media platforms for further updates regarding this.

# Coffee Mornings

Our SPRING coffee mornings are a chance to meet other parents or relatives who have experience pregnancy of babyloss.

These get togethers are normally held at Lounge One in Canford Heath, however, during these Covid-19 times, we are currently holding these "virtually" in accordance with Government Guidelines. Please see our social media pages for further and up to date information.



Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn

Search for us at **SPRING Support**

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

Call **0300 019 8084** Email: [spring.support@uhd.nhs.uk](mailto:spring.support@uhd.nhs.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



**SPRING**  
Supporting parents and relatives through baby loss

[www.springsupport.org.uk](http://www.springsupport.org.uk)