

WELCOME

Welcome to our latest newsletter with updates on what we have been doing and some of our plans for the months to come. The past couple of years has been challenging with the pandemic and other difficulties, but as a small charity, we have been able to ride these challenges and have continued to be both busy, and adventurous. We hope you find this update of interest, but do, please, ask if you have any questions.

Ashford Baby Memorial Garden

The Ashford Garden remains the only baby memorial garden right in a town centre and completely accessible. The Garden continues to flourish and we are grateful to everyone who visits and helps remove litter etc. Quite a lot has been happening recently - a new fence has been erected at the back of the Baby Garden, and a CCTV camera is also due to be installed to cover the whole of the Memorial Gardens. The storms destroyed our lovely clematis arch which has now been replaced, and finally, we have added a lovely wooden sign to the front of the Baby Garden. Aspire continues to maintain the Garden for us and will shortly be putting in some summer bedding plants.



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Canterbury Hospital Baby Cemetery



We were very concerned at the state of the Baby Cemetery at the back of Canterbury Hospital and put pressure on the NHS Trust to bring this up to an acceptable standard. The area has now been tidied up with a lovely new access path created, making it much nicer for the families of the 100 babies buried there up to around 2003. We also donated a lovely engraved bench. More information on our website. <https://www.eastkentbabymemorialgardens.org.uk/post/canterbury-hospital-baby-cemetery>

West Faversham Community Centre

We created the Ashford Baby Memorial Garden in 2013 but recognise Ashford is not always very easy to get to, particularly from some of the distant parts of the County. We always wanted to have some local areas around East Kent where families could also have nametiles locally for their babies, either as an alternative to the Ashford Baby Garden, or in addition to it. In partnership with the West Faversham Community Association, we now have the first such area, within the Community Centre's Garden and were delighted to be able to present an engraved bench, together with the board for the name tiles, to the Centre. We already have eleven baby names recorded at Faversham and are arranging a small handover in the afternoon of Sunday 3 July 2022. Please ask if you would like more information.



We are also talking to community organisations in Dover and Canterbury to see whether we might also be able to create memorial name boards there. Watch this space! And if you have any ideas or suggestions for potential suitable areas in other towns, please get in touch.

Nametiles

We now have over 360 nametiles in the Ashford Garden, and eleven at Faversham. These are available for a donation of £40 and the cut-off dates for the next orders will be 15 August. Further details are on our web site. <https://www.eastkentbabymemorialgardens.org.uk/ashford-baby-memorial-garden>

We also have been looking at some options for the original 171 nametiles in the ground in the Ashford Baby Memorial Garden (those surrounding the teardrop logo, and NOT those on the vertical boards). They have not weathered as well as we had hoped and are very difficult to keep clean, with some of the names becoming difficult to read. We have taken a decision to try to replace all of those name tiles in that area (not those on the vertical boards) with a grey colour granite name tile and this we hope to be doing later in the year. We will contact each of those families to let them know about our plans and we will do our very best to pass the existing nametiles on to any families who would like them. Please look out for further news.



Co-Op Community Fund

Are you a member of the Co-Op? If you are, every time you shop for groceries you can donate 1p for every £1 you spend to our charity, at no cost to you just by choosing us as your community cause. You can become a member for £1 and anyone in the country can support us this way. We have already raised around £400 through this scheme, so its a nice little earner! <https://www.coop.co.uk/membership/>

Calendar for 2022

We have a busy year ahead of us with over lots of Smiley Face Tombola fundraisers planned, including:

- 28 May Dragonboat Races, Ashford
- 2 Jun Eastry (Sandwich) Jubilee Fair
- 4 Jun Jubilee Music Event, Leas, Folkestone
- 5 Jun Jubilee Fair, Watercress Fields, Ashford
- 18 Jun Great Chart, Ashford Jubilee Fair
- 25 Jun Kennington Fair, Ashford
- 26 Jun Armed Forces Day, Ashford
- 13 Aug Folkestone Lions' Donkey Derby
- 20/21 Aug Tractorfest, Biddenden
- 29 Aug Singleton Barn Funday, Ashford
- 29 Aug Romney Day of Syn
- 10 Sep Ashford Town Centre
- 24 Sep Urban Fair Pencester Gardens, Dover
- 3 Dec Victoria Park Xmas Fair
- 10 Dec Halling Community Centre Xmas Fair



Do come and say hello! If you would like to help at any of these events, or know of other events we could attend, please get in touch. More details at <https://www.eastkentbabymemorialgardens.org.uk/fundraising-and-awareness>

We also have a number of awareness events including a recent Kent Scouts event, a Sittingbourne volunteering event in June, taking part in the National Citizen Service in Swale in July and August, and at Ashford College in September. Again, do let us know of any other opportunities to talk to groups or organisations about baby loss and how we offer support.



Teddy Bears Picnic.

This will be on Sunday 10 July 2022 from 12 to 4pm and everyone is welcome. It is a lovely and very relaxed way to meet with other families and to see the Gardens at their best. Just bring your own picnic and a blanket to sit on – no booking necessary and all family members and friends are welcome. We will have a children's entertainer and face-painting and some other activities for the children. More details nearer the time, on our website and on our Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/EKBMGG>



Tombolas

Our Smiley Face tombolas are our main way of raising money and in the past year we ran 14 tombolas raising almost £4,000. We got through around 2,300 prizes and expect to need at least a similar number this year. If you are able to donate any prizes for the tombola, or know where we can buy any reasonably cheaply, (perhaps a local shop is having a sale?) do, please, get in touch. Thank you!



Ashford Community Draw

Ashford Council has launched its own lottery raising money for local good causes, including the Ashford Baby Memorial Garden. Players will be able to win up to £25,000 and there will be smaller prizes for matching certain numbers. The draw will take place at 8pm on Saturdays. For each £1 ticket, we will receive 50p with the rest going towards prizes, VAT and running costs as well as some going into a wider 'community chest' to support other local initiatives. If you would like to support us this way, just go to <https://www.ashfordcommunitylottery.co.uk/> Thanks.

Wave of Light 2022

The 2021 event was held indoors for the first time but did not go as well as we had hoped with serious problems with the church's audio-visual equipment and only half the people who booked places coming along. It does seem that as a result of the pandemic, people are more reluctant to attend large scale events, and big events can be quite challenging for our very small team of volunteers.



For this year we are going to try a different approach. Rather than one big event, we hope it may be possible to hold a number of smaller events around the county, perhaps in between six and ten locations all on the evening of Saturday 15 October, the 'official' Wave of Light day and time. We would need to find a couple of local volunteers in each area willing to get involved, and we would support them by helping to find suitable venues, preparing a 'standard' programme which could be used, along with a set of readings, as well as providing a number of lanterns etc. and helping publicise the events. **If you might be interested in getting involved in a local event, or if you have any suggestions for venues, please contact us for a chat, without any commitment!**

Visit by the Archbishop of Canterbury

We were delighted to welcome Justin Welby when he accepted our invitation to visit the Ashford Baby Garden at Easter. Justin, along with several of his colleagues saw the Garden in full bloom and met some of our lovely volunteers, including Emma, Ann, Rebecca, Chris and Chris. He was very impressed with the Garden and chatted about baby loss, something he really understood. We talked to him about the importance of all his East Kent clergy being aware of the Baby Garden, something he will address.



Always Loved, Never Forgotten

Don't forget, on our website we have listed the names of each of our special babies and we are now able to add a limited amount of wording from families, in addition to the name and date we have already. Details on the website. <https://www.eastkentbabymemorialgardens.org.uk/our-special-babies>

Queen's Jubilee

As well as three tombolas over the Jubilee Celebrations weekend, we were invited to be involved in an exciting project by Ashford College and Ashford International station. We were asked to design a 'stained-glass window' to celebrate the Queens Platinum Jubilee, to be displayed along the walkway leading to the platforms at Ashford International Station. This is our window. Do have a look next time you are in the station!



Thank you!

Our lovely charity gets so much support from some wonderful people and organisations and we'd like to record our thanks to some of our recent supporters, including Rebecca, Lewis and friends who raised £734 for us through a series of walks and hikes, the Tolmoor Shoot who collected £232 for us, Folkestone Lions who donated £300, Hannah who raised over £200 with a cake sale, 'D' who donated £100, Vicky who raised £65 through a birthday appeal, and Ashford Lions who donated another £50 on top of the money we raised with them and Santa. Thank you to each of them.

Our Independent Charity

Just a reminder that since 2020 we have been a separate charity and are no longer part of Sands. We are completely independent, although we support and publicise Sands as well as other baby loss charities. The Ashford Baby Memorial Gardens, and all our activities, are now run and organised entirely by local volunteers for all babies who have been taken from us, no matter what the circumstances, nor their age. This included miscarriages, stillbirths, neonatal deaths and toddlers. It is important that if you want money to come to us, you specify the East Kent Baby Memorial Gardens Charity (or the Ashford Baby Memorial Gardens charity). Our charity registration number is 1180090. Thanks!

Come and join us!

We are a small charity with no staff and rely entirely on a small team of volunteers. While the maintenance of the Ashford Garden is covered by our contract with Aspire, we really would love to have a few more people involved in helping us plan events, arrange fundraising and so on. It would be particularly good to have a few people who have had more recent losses, so that we can make sure what we do is relevant to everyone. If you would like to find out a little more, please contact Emma or Chris for an informal chat.

Our Web Site

We hope you have been able to visit our web site www.EastKentBabyMemorialGardens.org.uk We will continue to use this, as well as our Facebook page www.facebook.com/EKBMGG and our [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts to keep everyone up to date.

How you can contact us

Post	c/o 13 Goldings Court, Ashford, Kent TN24 9JR (changing in June 2022)
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REMEMBERING OUR SPECIAL BABIES