

Summer 2026 Newsletter

Making sure every baby is remembered

Thanks to your incredible support, East Kent Baby Memorial Gardens charity continues to grow. Every volunteer, donor, family and supporter helps us provide beautiful places to remember our special babies across East Kent.

Since becoming an independent charity in 2020, we have continued to:

- ❤️ Support bereaved families across East Kent
- ❤️ Create and maintain beautiful baby memorial areas
- ❤️ Raise awareness of baby loss in our communities
- ❤️ Work alongside the NHS, local councils and other charities

Today, almost 600 babies are remembered through nametiles across our five memorial locations, offering families somewhere special to visit, reflect and remember—whenever, wherever, and however, their loss.

Thank you for being part of our journey. We hope you enjoy reading about everything we've achieved together over the past few months, and our plans for the future.

Ashford Baby Memorial Garden continues to flourish

The Ashford Baby Memorial Garden is unique, being right in the town centre, bright and welcoming, open to everyone, open every day and completely accessible. We created the Garden in 2013 after local volunteers raised an amazing £30,000.

We now have around 450 nametiles in the Ashford Garden remembering babies from the 1940's to the current year. The Garden continues to flourish and we are grateful to Aspire who we pay to maintain it for us, and to everyone who visits and helps remove litter etc. as well. It really is a beautiful place!



Helping more people understand Baby Loss

We continue to raise awareness of our charity, and baby loss more generally, through our attendance at events, giving presentations to between ten and 100+ people. We are very happy to come along to talk about our charity and/or baby loss more generally to groups or organisations of any size. It doesn't matter how many people, nor the age range of the group, as we can be very flexible with our presentation and can talk for anything from ten minutes to a couple of hours! We never charge for these sessions, nor do we ask for anything else, and we are available daytime, evenings, weekdays or weekends.

Thankyou to our amazing supporters

We couldn't do what we do without the generosity of our supporters including:

- **Frank and Gladys** who generously donated as part of their retirement celebrations, and **Rebecca's** friends who donated in celebration of her birthday.
- **Hilary**, for donating a fantastic selection of hundreds of prizes for our popular Spin the Wheel game.
- **Tesco Park Farm**, who raised **£450** through the sale of pre-loved books.
- Our friends in **Sainsbury's** and elsewhere who help us find lots of nice cheap tombola prizes!



Nametiles – five options now!

We are so proud of our lovely Ashford Baby Memorial Garden, created in 2013, but we are conscious that it is a fair way from parts of East Kent. It has always been our ambition to create a number of small, local, memorial sites in existing parks or gardens right across the whole of the area so that families can also have the option of having nametiles more local to them.



We are a very small charity with very limited resources (both financial and volunteer time!), and inevitably, this will take time, so we have set ourselves a sensible target of creating one area each year. We are pleased to report that we now have four additional areas, with a total of approaching 600 baby nametiles across our five sites.



Faversham

The Faversham baby memorial area was our first local area and is located within the garden of the West Faversham Community Centre in Bysing Road, opposite Sainsbury's. With nineteen tiles, we have plenty of space for more and are grateful to the Community Centre for hosting the boards and for installing the tiles for us. Our photo shows some of the families at the opening of the area.

Canterbury

The second area is within the lovely Westgate Park in Canterbury city centre, on the wall alongside the river. This area has been open for a couple of years and currently has tiles remembering over 60 special babies. Thanks to Canterbury City Council for its support and to our volunteers for keeping an eye on the area. In this particular area, we are limited to a maximum of 70 nametiles, so at some point will need to talk again to the Council about other options.



Sittingbourne

Our baby memorial area is in the lovely open King George V Park. We created this area in 2024 and now have nametiles there for over 40 special babies. We are grateful to Sarah and Paul who used some of their allocation as local councillors to install a bench for us and who continue to put up the tiles.

Margate

Our newest baby memorial area opened in 2026 and is in Dell Gardens, part of Northdown Park in Margate. Thanks to Thanet Council for its support. We have just a few nametiles there at present, but expect numbers to increase as more and more families learn about it. Thank you to Rebekah for kindly offering to keep an eye on the boards for us and for offering to install further nametiles. Really appreciated!

Ordering Nametiles

We offer the same nametiles in each of our areas at a one-off cost of £40, a price we have maintained since 2013. These tiles have one line for the baby's name and a second for a date.

On each line we are limited to 21 characters (including spaces) and families can choose '*Baby Surname*', or '*The Surname Babies*', instead of a full name, or may choose to have just a month or a year instead of a full date. Names don't have to be the baby's 'official' name and we have a number with a baby's nickname on them.



We ask families to order through the 'Order a Nametile' tab on our website – this can be accessed by scanning the QR code to the right. We have always said that if money really is an issue, we may be able to help out, so please ask.



Cut-off dates for ordering are the 15th of February, May August and November each year and nametiles are usually put up on the boards by our volunteers within a couple of weeks. Families can, of course, choose to have nametiles in more than one area, although once the tiles are up, they are fixed permanently and cannot be moved to another area.



A Busy Summer of fundraising

We receive no funding and rely totally on fundraising and donations to meet the running costs of the charity, as well as our baby memorial areas. Each year we take part in around twenty community events, usually taking our Smiley Face Tombola or our Spin the Wheel game. This year we have already joined in events in Sittingbourne and Ashford and over the summer our wonderful volunteers will be taking part in fetes and fairs in Dover, Great Chart, Canterbury, Folkestone, Maidstone, Challock, Romney Marsh and Smarden, and will probably add a few more dates as the year progresses!

Always Loved, Never Forgotten

Don't forget, on our website we have also 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. See the 'Our Special Babies' section on our website.

Baby Loss Awareness Week

This special week in October helps highlight some of the issues around baby loss and we usually try to have some sort of awareness raising event during that week. One of the main events of the week is the Wave of Light, an international event that creates a wave around the globe, all aimed at supporting families and raising awareness of baby loss.

We are hoping there might be a number of small Wave of Light events across East Kent and we are more than happy to talk to anyone interested in running such an event in their area, to see how we can support them. If you know of any plans, or if anyone is interested in getting involved in a local event, do contact us – we are sure we can help!



Supporting the NHS and other charities.

We continue to support our colleagues in the NHS and in other baby loss charities where we can and in recent times have funded a full day's bereavement training for the NHS Trust, separate training for student midwives, encouraged the NHS trust to improve the late miscarriage cemetery at Canterbury Hospital, and purchased small items of equipment, including a very special pram for one of the hospitals. One of the real benefits of being an autonomous charity is that we have total flexibility over how we raise and spend our money.



We have no staff and depend entirely on our wonderful volunteers to run our charity and to deliver all of our events and activities. They are joined by a lovely team of occasional volunteers who support our fundraising events and other activities as and when they can. Thank you to each of them.

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. If you are interested, please get in touch.

Volunteers recognised at Buckingham Palace

We were delighted that some of our volunteers were invited to Buckingham Palace for a Royal Garden Party. This was a lovely way of recognising their contribution, while also making more people aware of our charity and what we offer. And we want to say a big thank you to all our volunteers, many of whom support us quietly in the background, but each one contributing towards our support for bereaved families.



Money, Money, Money!

We became an independent charity in 2020, run and organised entirely by local volunteers for all bereaved families, no matter what the circumstances, nor how recent or how long ago. This includes miscarriages, stillbirths, neonatal and toddler deaths.

With no staff, our costs are very modest and usually we have a turnover of around £12,000 a year, most of which is raised through our own fundraising activities, payments for nametiles and donations. We pay Aspire around £1,000 a year to maintain the Ashford Baby Memorial Garden and we pay Ashford Council almost £1,800 every year for the rental of our two garages. We have asked the Council to reduce the garage rentals to no avail.

We are not in a position to arrange big events and we certainly don't want to adopt the intensive fundraising campaigns of many charities, but we do welcome ad hoc donations or fundraisers to help us meet our costs. Every donation helps us maintain our memorial areas, support bereaved families and continue our awareness work. If you would like to make a donation, organise a fundraiser, or support us in another way, we would love to hear from you.

We still find people associate us with Sands, and 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!



A small charity.... but a big impact!

We were delighted to be one of thirty charities from across the country invited to the Houses of Parliament for an All Party Parliamentary Group event celebrating the impact of small charities. It was a great to talk to peers and MPs about our work and the impact we make with several politicians sharing their own baby loss stories. We will follow up by encouraging Kent MPs to join the Baby Loss group and meeting again with the Ashford MP, Sojan Joseph. We may be small, but we know how to network!

Our Web Site

We hope you have been able to visit our web site. We will continue to use this, as well as our Facebook page to keep everyone up to date. While we print this newsletter just occasionally, we also send out occasional short updates to anyone with an interest. If you would like to receive these, please contact us via our website, or by email.



Web Site and how you can contact us

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Thank you for supporting East Kent Baby Memorial Garden charity. Whether you have purchased a nametile, volunteered, donated, attended an event, or just read this newsletter, you have helped spread awareness, you have helped us spread awareness so that we can continue supporting bereaved families across East Kent.

Together, we make sure that every baby is never forgotten.