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PRESS RELEASE

4th October 2017



Baby Loss Awareness Week launches in Oxfordshire

To raise public and political awareness of baby death in county the Oxfordshire Group of the (Stillbirth and neonatal death charity) will be raising awareness of the devastating impact the death of a baby has on parents and families as part of Baby Loss Awareness Week.

The annual and national awareness week, which takes place from 9- 15 October, is an opportunity for bereaved parents to acknowledge and remember their precious babies, for people to talk openly and to raise awareness of pregnancy, baby and infant loss.

Oxfordshire Sands with St Mary's Church have organised a memorial service at 6:30pm on Sunday 15th October, International Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day, at St Mary's Church in Banbury and is inviting local people who have been affected by the death of a baby to join them to remember their babies. The service will coincide with the 7pm global Wave of Light- where families across the world unite by lighting a candle at 7pm local time and leave it burning for at least one hour, creating a global 'Wave of Light' in memory of all the babies who lit up our lives for such a short time.

National Sands are keen to turn the country pink and blue for Baby Loss Awareness Week, to raise awareness. They have asked local groups to light up a local landmark.

Karen Hancox from Oxfordshire Sands Group, said: "I am very excited to be liaising with Banbury Town Council to arrange for the Banbury Cross to be lit up pink and blue 14th-15th October. This is a fantastic opportunity to raise awareness and a new venture for the town and county. It will be an amazing achievement to be part of the National Sands campaign to light up the country pink and blue."

Vicky Smith, from Oxfordshire Sands Group, said: “Many members of our group are bereaved parents so we know how devastating it is when a baby dies. We hope that Baby Loss Awareness Week will spark conversations about baby death and provide opportunities for people to talk about and remember their precious sons and daughters.”

Dr Clea Harmer, Chief Executive of Sands (Stillbirth and neonatal death charity), said: “The death of a baby is a tragedy that can happen to anyone, at any time. It is devastating, not only for parents, but also their families and their friends and can have a long-term impact on their mental health and wellbeing.

“Baby Loss Awareness Week is a unique opportunity to help families remember their babies, whether it be in public or private, and feel less isolated and alone by giving them the opportunity to join with others. We are committed to working to reduce the number of a babies that die every day in the UK.”

Anyone affected by the death of a baby in Oxfordshire is welcome to join their support group that meets regularly, or just drop in for a cup of tea and a chat at one of their future meetings.

Please call 07513 295504 or email info@oxfordshiresands.org.uk for further information. Follow us on facebook @oxfordshiresands and twitter @OxfordSands

Pregnancy and baby loss affects thousands of families each year across the UK. The death of a baby is a tragedy that can happen to anyone, at any time. It can be devastating, not only for parents, but also their families and their friends and can have long-term lasting effects.

For further information about Baby Loss Awareness Week visit:

www.babyloss-awareness.org

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Notes to editors

For further information, please contact Lee Armit, Press and PR Officer on 020 3897 3449/07587 925411 or media@sands.org.uk

About Sands

Sands is the leading stillbirth and neonatal death charity in the UK. They work nationally to reduce baby deaths through promoting better maternity care and funding research. They have a programme of training and a wide range of resources designed to support professionals to improve the bereavement care they provide following the death of a baby, and they provide a comprehensive bereavement support service both nationally through their helpline and locally through around 100 regional support groups based across the UK.

Further information can be found at www.sands.org.uk

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