

Oxfordshire Sands

July Newsletter 2015



*“I keep myself busy with the things I do.
But every time I pause,
I still think of you.”*

Group Meetings during 2015

“The chance to openly talk to people who have also lost a baby is a lifeline, because they really do understand what I’m going through. It gives me comfort and hope.”

Our group support meetings are led by Sands befrienders. You are welcome to join us from 7pm for refreshments and to have a look at the basket of support books that we have available to borrow.

With the meeting starting at 7.30pm, befrienders will share their stories and experiences and you will be invited to share your story if you wish, or you may just want to come and listen to others to begin with.

If you are not in a position to attend our meetings but feel you would like support from a befriender, we are always here to listen (Contact details on back page).

We offer email and telephone support for mothers, fathers, grandparents and anyone affected by baby loss and during the anxious time of a subsequent pregnancy.

- 2nd September
- 7th October
- 4th November
- 2nd December



All meetings are **7:00-9:30pm, at Bicester Children’s Centre,**
Queens Ave, Bicester, OX26 2NR. Tel: 07513 295505

All adults are welcome to come along to these informal support meetings

Donations



From Judy Mansfield at Cherish Ceremonies.

From Waynflete Masonic Lodge.

From Sarah Vigar, in memory of Felix.

From Diane Smale, in memory of Leah.

Many thanks ~

All fundraising and donations are hugely appreciated and are much needed to help us carry out the work we do.

Oxfordshire Sands' AGM

We held our AGM on Monday 1st June. For those of you who receive the newsletter via post, the minutes and reports are attached. (They have already been emailed out to our email mailing list.)

Sands Awareness Month

An amazing £481.79 was raised for Oxfordshire Sands on 6th June at our Sands Awareness Month event in Castle Quay shopping centre, Banbury. The tombola was a huge success throughout the day, as was the face painting. The lovely Liz from Liz's Fancy Faces was very popular and she generously donated all her proceeds to Sands. Many thanks to all those who kindly donated so many prizes and also to those who gave up their time to help on the stall. We obviously couldn't have done it without this invaluable support. It was a great atmosphere and event thanks to the generous members of the public.



Sands Window Display

Many thanks to Edd Frost and Daughters Ltd, who once again dedicated their window display to Oxfordshire Sands during June for our Awareness month. As part of the display, they provided a Memorial Trellis giving local families the opportunity to have the name of their baby displayed on individual flowers. It was wonderful to have so many names in the display and also for so many families to have visited the display in person.



Remembrance Books

Behind the scenes, we are very pleased to be working on our new user-friendly website. As part of this, we will have an online Remembrance Book. If you would like your baby's name to be included, please could you email the name and date you would like to appear.

As many of you know, we also have beautiful hand-made Remembrance Books, for which entries are completed by calligraphers. These special Sands books are kept on Level 7 at the JR hospital Women's Centre and the Horton chapel. If you would like a form to request a name dedication, please do get in touch. There is no charge for this service.



Diary dates for 2015

International Babyloss Awareness Day and Wave of Light –
October 15th

Oxfordshire Sands Annual Remembrance Service –
Sunday 22nd November

****WEEK EARLIER THAN USUAL***

Email Newsletter

Have you considered receiving our newsletter via email, so that more of the money donated to us can go towards the important work we do? If so, or if you do not wish to receive our newsletter any more, please do let us know.





Contact Details

Befrienders: Vicky, Karen, Corinne, Jenni, Anna,
Rosemary, Andrew
07513 295504
(Text or leave a message for a call back)

befriender@oxfordshiresands.org.uk

Donations donations@oxfordshiresands.org.uk

General Information info@oxfordshiresands.org.uk

Website: www.oxfordshiresands.org.uk



Oxfordshire Sands is run on a voluntary basis and depends on donations. It provides support to the parents and families who have lost a baby. Money raised by the Group is used to pay for the upkeep of the Ashfield suite at the John Radcliffe Hospital and the Forget-Me-Not room at the Horton Hospital, providing photographs of the babies and the cameras used, for remembrance cards and booklets, information leaflets provided, the 'Always Loved, Never Forgotten' memory boxes, hospital equipment, midwife training, maintenance of Sands memorials in Banbury, Botley, Headington and Wolvercote cemeteries and Hardwick Hill Crematorium, plus the Books of Remembrance and the annual Service of Remembrance and Sharing.

Charity registration number 299679

The Journey

You see this rucksack on my back?

It's with me on this walk but I did not choose to carry it.

At the beginning it was heavy.....so heavy that I simply sat down. The weight made me cry. But I had to walk – there was no other choice – there was a journey to go on.

So I staggered on. Once or twice I fell. When I came to fences I had to wait until another walker would come and help me climb over. When the hills were steep I would have to crawl on my hands and knees although sometimes another walker would offer me their hand. There were times when all I could do was sit with my load and watch others go by.

Not all walkers carry a rucksack like mine. Some have nothing and travel light. They are different from me, but then I am different from what I used to be. Some of these walkers, I am sure, may be given rucksacks to carry at some time during their journey.

I wonder how long my journey will be. I wonder what the path will be like. How many fences to cross, how many hills to climb, how many rivers to find stepping stones through. How many more times will I throw myself to the ground hoping to break the straps of my rucksack and release my load. But it is fixed there and I never find the answers to these questions – the next day just brings more walking and my rucksack is still there.

As time goes by my rucksack begins to feel a bit easier to carry. It is still there and weighs the same so what has changed? Have I grown stronger or just used to the load?

The long flat paths are no problems now. At times I can even run for a while. Even the small hills are no problem, although I might need a rest half-way to catch my breath. I find I can enjoy the view. Steep slopes are still a bit of a problem and then I go more slowly for my rucksack seems heavy again.

There are times when I do not even notice that I am carrying it, but I would not want to be without it. It is not the rucksack that has changed – but me.

Life is very different in this walk.