



PLACE TO REFLECT: From left, Cheryl Kilby, Eszti Pontone and Maggie Simkiss, of Hull Sands, at the new memorial at the Endsleigh Centre, west Hull. Picture: Simon Renilson

A sanctuary for grieving parents

HULL: New memorial for those who have lost a baby

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A NEW memorial will provide a sanctuary for grieving parents.

Hull Sands (Stillbirth And Neonatal Death Society) is inviting people who have lost a baby or suffered a stillbirth to use the new memorial they have built at the Endsleigh Centre, off Beverley Road.

The stone plinth has an image of a baby in a blanket on it and a daisy, with a short verse written on the side.

It reads: "Those we hold in our arms for a short while, we hold in our hearts forever."

The memorial was created so parents have somewhere in the centre of the city

InShort

Hull Sands (Stillbirth And Neonatal Death Society) has created a new memorial at the Endsleigh Centre.

The tranquil area will provide a place for people to remember lost babies.

where they can reflect on their loss and take time to remember their child.

The group's chairman, Maggie Simkiss, 57, said: "Some people don't have gravestones to attend, so this will give them somewhere to go and remember their child.

"It is a very quiet and tranquil place in the grounds.

"We felt we wanted to do something as a group and were extremely lucky in that we had donations given to us in the

past couple of years, which meant we could afford to buy the memorial."

The memorial cost about £2,000, but the group would also like to buy some stone seats to place near it, which will cost between £500 and £600 each.

Sands have thanked artist Alan Clough and Chris Kemp from Odlings for working on the memorial.

Sandra Pearson, the group's secretary and Maggie's sister, said: "Unfortunately we cannot allow people to lay flowers, as that would mean we need someone to regularly maintain them and clear the old ones.

"But we would invite anyone who would like to, to place a pebble with their baby's name on it."

Maggie set up the group 21 years ago, after losing her son Kieran.

He was born on January 1, 1992, but died just nine days later.

Maggie said: "After he died I was obviously floored and didn't know what to do.

"It was a social worker at Hedon Road Maternity Hospital who encouraged me to set up a Sands group in Hull.

"We held our first meeting in April 1993 and we've been running every since."

An official memorial opening will be held on Sunday, February 9, at 2pm. Everyone is welcome to attend.

11 stillbirths and six neonatal deaths every day in UK

IN THE UK, 17 babies die each day. Of these, 11 are stillbirths and six are neonatal deaths.

The number covers any loss from 24 weeks of pregnancy to within 28 days of birth.

The Hull and East Yorkshire branches

of Sands provide help and support for bereaved parents and families who have suffered the death of a baby, even if their baby's age falls outside the parameters of the statistics.

The support is provided free of

charge and is open to all bereaved parents, their families and friends, no matter how long ago it was since the loss occurred.

Hull Sands meets on the first Wednesday of the month at the Captain's Room at

Victoria Dock Village Hall at 7.30pm.

The East Yorkshire group meets on the first Monday of the month at 6.30pm at Driffild Children's Centre.

Visit www.hull-sands.org.uk for details.



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