

LOCAL VOLUNTEER ROLE



Background

East Kent Sands supports anyone affected by the death of a baby across the whole of East Kent. This includes Shepway, Dover, Canterbury, Swale, Ashford and Thanet areas as well as the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford and the QEQM hospital in Margate. We run support groups in Ashford and Margate, provide training for midwives, run the Ashford Baby Memorial Garden, organise events including the Wave of Light on 15 October, supply cuddle cots and memory boxes to the hospitals and, most importantly, raise awareness around stillbirths and neonatal deaths which average 15 a day nationally and one every five days just in our area. Alongside this we do a lot of events and fundraising including our Smiley Face Tombolas. We have a lot of marketing material and use this to get ourselves as well-known as possible.

The Volunteer Role.

East Kent Sands is made up entirely of volunteers. We try to attend as many events as possible (an average of over 30 events each year) either for fundraising or just for raising awareness and while we have a fantastic group of volunteers, most are working and have family and other commitments so cannot always attend events. We are looking for volunteers who can spare a little time for us by helping with local events and helping raise the profile of Sands nationally and locally in a particular local area, a town, or a district. We would agree with the individual what area and what tasks they would cover but this could include, for example:

- Distributing East Kent Sands leaflets and posters in the area and revisiting and replacing as necessary. This could be to GP surgeries, libraries, supermarkets, shopping centres, community centres, children's centres etc.
- Assisting Team Members attending awareness or other events.
- Helping to identify local opportunities for events or publicity.
- Representing East Kent Sands at occasional events such as cheque presentations.

The Person

Sands works in a very emotionally charged area and supports people who have faced a really traumatic experience. We need volunteers who, if they attend events, can talk about baby loss appropriately and without any religious or other undertones and who are comfortable talking to members of the public who may include bereaved families. This is less of a consideration if the role is confined to posters and leaflets etc. Other than that, the only other requirement is a willingness to support Sands and its work and no previous experience is necessary.

Support

We would agree the area and tasks we would like you to undertake for us and would give you an understanding of how we operate and some of the issues surrounding baby loss. We would support you in your activities and make sure you undertook only those that you felt comfortable with. We would provide you with a polo shirt and we would, of course, pay your mileage and any other direct expenses. We would keep you informed of any activities and would invite you to events including the annual Christmas thankyou meal for volunteers.

The Rewards

Most people find the role very rewarding and fulfilling — we certainly do and make sure we also have fun! Depending on your exact role, it could help give you experience and help develop your skills around marketing, publicity, public speaking, events, customer focus and community engagement, all useful addition to your CV.

Further information.

If you would like to know more about the role, or other ways you could support us, please contact Chris on 01233 643 976 or by email eastkentsands@gmail.com