

LOCAL MAIDSTONE DAD TO RUN HIS FIRST MARATHON IN MEMORY OF HIS SON HARRY

A personal tragedy will spur on Kent estate agent Michael Stewart next month when he runs the Virgin London Marathon to raise money for Sands, the stillbirth and neonatal death charity.

The 39 year old from Maidstone is in the midst of training for his first ever marathon and says he is determined to raise as much money as possible for the charity which supported him and his wife Anita following the death of their baby Harry three years ago.

“We were absolutely devastated when Harry died,” says Michael. “He was born prematurely at 22 weeks and our lives were changed in an instant. Sands supported us through the worst time of our lives, and I want everyone to know about the great work it does. This is my way of saying thank you to Sands, and to keeping Harry’s memory alive.”

Michael is in training up to four times a week and is regularly running up to 35 miles each week, in preparation for the big day on 17th April.

“My friends and family have been very supportive and generous so far, and I really hope I can reach my fundraising target of £2,000. It is so important that the work Sands does can continue – 17 babies are stillborn or die shortly after birth in the UK every single day, and I just want to do something to help ensure that parents continue to receive the same level of support that we did,” says Michael.

Michael will be cheered on by wife Anita and his two year old daughter Eliana.

-ENDS-

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Key Information about Sands:

Sands, the stillbirth and neonatal death charity, was established by bereaved parents in 1978 and obtained charity status in 1981. Sands core aims are to:

- Support anyone affected by the death of a baby;
- To work in partnership with health professionals to improve the quality of care and services offered to bereaved families; and
- To promote research and changes in practice that could help to reduce the loss of babies’ lives

Sands is a national organisation, with over 100 regional support groups across the UK.

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