

Early Birth Association Newsletter

Registered Charity No: 286727,



Supporting TMBU and PRH SCBU

Our Running Heroes—Brighton Half

The Half Marathon took place on a serenely sunny February morning. Elaine, Mel and Andy, were volunteers on the day - some of the rest of us waved banners and shouted our encouragement from the start until the runners crossed the finishing line. Heidi & Duncan were of course themselves running. This is what Heidi has to say -

We had an amazing team of a whopping 56 people that ran the Brighton Half Marathon on our behalf this year. It was a wonderful day and so fantastic to see such a sea of yellow EBA vests along the route. So far, we have raised an incredible £15,906 from the day with money still coming in and cannot thank each and every one of our runners enough for their support and effort.



Some of the runners on the big day

A special mention to Andi Roberts whose daughter Tilly was cared for on the TMBU. Andi managed to persuade 40 of his friends to take part in the run, what a super star!

A huge thank you to our wonderful supporters too, cheering everyone on around the course, very much appreciated.

..... and onto the full 26 miles



A huge well done and THANK YOU to all of our amazing runners who took part in the Brighton Marathon on Sunday - Andi Roberts (again!), Ross Hamilton, Mike Melville-Reed, Hannah Bolland, Alis-tair Wilson, Helen Hauduc, Lee Madigan, Steve Beale, Lauren Millar, Jason Ruth, Rob Turunen and Jon Rangecroft.

You are all incredible and we know what a challenge it was for most of you so, amazing, amazing effort. The current amount raised from this event through Justgiving pages alone stands at £10,397.40

In awe of your determination and resilience xxxxx

IF YOU WANT TO TAKE PART NEXT YEAR, EMAIL HEIDI@EARLYBIRTH.CO.UK AND COME JOIN THE FUN !!

Spring 2015
Newsletter

Dates to Remember:

- AGM 20th May, 8pm, next to TMBU
- Push 4 Prems 2015 - 12th July
- Christmas Party (sorry!) 6th December

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Things we have bought

We think its vitally important that you know where the money raised goes so here are some examples of purchases so far this year.

The CFM (Cerebral Function Monitor) is now up and running – hurrah!! – this huge purchase was made in conjunction with Push For Prems – please see more details later in the newsletter.

The business plan has now been completed for the new open portable cot with phototherapy unit (to treat jaundice – extremely common in both premature and poorly babies).

Both VITAL pieces of equipment that we hope go some way to show you just how much your fundraising continues to make a difference.

The EBA has also agreed to fund the installation of the MetaVision system at PRH (electronic patient records) at a cost of approximately £23,000 – in layman's terms, so each baby can have a computer at the end of their cot like in TMBU.

Since last Autumn we have also purchased for the TMBU and PRH SCBU, for both the babies and their parents/carers the following more personal items:

(We also continue to make the blankets and keepsake/laundry bags for both units).

For the TMBU

- Christmas Stockings for the babies and families on the unit over Christmas
- Bedding including new pillows
- Budgie covers and memory/wash bags
- Bereavement candles

For PRH SCBU

- Budgie covers and memory/wash bags
- Craft kits for siblings.
- Diaries for parents

Here's why I joined the EBA and why these little items really do make such a big difference –

"Our son was unexpectedly transferred back to TMBU from SCBU in the early hours of one Saturday morning. My husband and I arrived in Brighton at 5am, exhausted after a sleepless night. We were able to see our son in Nursery One, before the staff showed us to one of the parents' bedrooms for a rest.

On the bed was a pack containing essential toiletries and other items – meaning we were able to shower and clean our teeth – which was wonderful as all we had with us were the clothes we had on. Those supplies, along with the cornflakes & a cuppa one of the nurses made us for breakfast, were supplied by the EBA.

At such an incredibly difficult time, those small things felt like being given an emotional cuddle. They were one of the many reasons I had decided to join the EBA even before our son came home."

Laura, EBA Committee member since 2014

Christmas Party 2014

Christmas is in the distance past now and it seems strange reporting on our 2014 Christmas Party! Everybody really seemed to enjoy themselves though, particularly liking the visit from Father Christmas. It is really nice to see so many families with their children, seeing how they are progressing. The Party and Raffle made a wonderful profit of over **£2400**. The committee worked hard throughout 2014 (starting in January) with organis-

ing this event for everybody – we are so pleased we had another successful year. We would like to say thank you to you all who donated raffle prizes and sold raffle tickets for our wonderful charity. A date for your diary – **6th December 2015** is the next Christmas Party (we promise to tell you the time this time...)

Thank you to our fundraisers!

We would be nowhere without our endlessly generous fundraisers, who give so much of their time and effort to keep us ticking over. More than ticking over! THANK YOU. Here's the latest round-up of EBA inspired superstars;

Patrick Sweeney. As ever.

Michelle Miles (committee member) successfully applied for the EBA to receive some funds from her son's nursery - £2000!!!!

Asda, Hollingbury - We were entered into their Chosen By You Given By Us scheme and we won!!! Thank you to John, Sophie and Evie for collecting the £200.00 funds on our behalf. The EBA are also doing a bucket collection on 23rd May - do come along and show your support!

Southern Foam - after speaking to Lee they very kindly - & quickly - agreed to donate a new memory

foam double mattress for the parents' room.

Harper Collins - for their book donations, brightening up both units.

Everyone who has donated through our **Justgiving** page.



Push For Prems

This year's Push For Prems is on Sunday 12th July (the day before my son's second birthday - my how differently we spent that day 2 years ago ...)

Catherine Demir, Wendy Campling, Chantal Marcello and the late Sam Beaven organise this fantastic annual event. It's such a positive thing to participate in, in the shadow of the place that cared for our children. They always manage to raise a fantastic amount of money for the Trevor Mann Baby Unit. Push for Prems also raises funds for Neonatal Transport and Ronald Macdonald House opposite RSCH, as well as both units.

PLEASE COME ALONG AND JOIN IN THE FUN THIS YEAR.

Catherine Demir had a son (Ciwan) on the TMBU a few years back and has been inspirational with her fundraising ever since. Here is a piece, in her own words, about the annual Push For Prems -

This year is the 6th Push For Prems. A small group of Prem Parents started to organise this sponsored walk/pram push back in 2009 after

their little ones spent time in the Trevor Mann Baby Unit and every year we have gone from strength to strength. We want to thank everyone for helping us raise so much in the past years, we are so grateful. Last year we raised the terrific amount of £16,692.46! The EBA have made up the difference of £10,292.54 so that we would purchase a vital piece of equipment for the Trevor Mann Baby Unit. The equipment is called The Cerebral Function Monitor. If it is suspected that the new born could have had some sort of brain trauma during birth, the monitor will be used to establish if this is the case so the baby can get immediate treatment. Using the monitor cuts down the 'diagnosis' time, leading to the baby being treated quicker.

We will be meeting outside The Royal Sussex County Hospital on Sunday 12th July at 11am and taking part in a Push for Prem walk with our babies and children to Hove Lagoon where we will meet for a picnic (please bring your own drinks and food). Some of us will be walking in memory of a little one that didn't make it home from hospital. After the picnic at Hove Lagoon we will be letting off balloons

in memory of these children. If you have sadly lost a little one you are welcome to bring a balloon on the day to release as well.

Everyone is welcome to join us - you don't have to have a prem baby. The more people who take part in this sponsored walk the more money we will raise. We ask for a small fee of £2 for all adults and £1 for children who are taking part. This will go towards our final amount raised. Last year many of the dads dressed up as nurses which really helped in raising so much money so we will be asking if dads can take part in doing the same this year!

The day is a fantastic way of celebrating how far our little miracles have come and to remember those that were lost and to meet lots of amazing parents and friends along the way. Please find us on Facebook - Push for Prems TMBU Fundraiser and our Just Giving Page is www.justgiving.com/PushForPrems2015.

(Details are also on the Early Birth Association Facebook page).

To Borneo and Back....

Helen Wright joined the EBA in 2011 after her twin girls, born 8 weeks early, were successfully treated on the TMBU for 6 weeks. She is now EBA secretary. Helen bid an emotional farewell to her family on 8th November and set off for the wilds of the Borneo rainforest (trip costs paid for personally) to raise money. We think she's AMAZING. Here is her update.....

When I was single I did adventure holidays. I went dog sledding in the Arctic, I cycled from Saigon to Angkor Watt, I walked across Costa Rica from the Atlantic to Pacific, I trekked through the Himalayas, across Namibian desserts and over Icelandic glaciers. And then I met John, fell in love and became a mum; I had three beautiful children but with the girls being born prematurely and all the stress that that entails, I did no more adventuring. Then last year, my girls turned three and whilst my husband was on a snowboarding trip with the boys I decided it was time to head off again.

I spent last summer doing fundraising events with friends. Holding barbecues at home and charging friends for dinner parties every other weekend. In November, I packed my boots, boarded a plane and headed for 10 days in deepest, darkest Borneo with 11 strangers.

It had been on my to-do list since forever and the rainforest is every bit as beautiful as I'd hoped. The walking was tough; steep, narrow, uneven paths not really wide enough for my boots at points. There were genu-

inely sections where I was shaking with fear of falling, repeatedly slipping on loose ground and catching hold of branches (which turned out to not be attached to anything!) but I am proud to say I did the whole thing without crying. We saw baboons, lizards, snakes, bugs, a few more bugs and way too many leaches - sadly the leaches always spotted me before I spotted them and I won the "most leached" title amongst the group. We slept in a variety of wooden shacks, washed in rivers, drank rain water collected in bamboo canes (a natural water filter/store if you're ever lost and thirsty!) and swam in waterfalls. The villages we passed through were a world away from anything I'd ever seen; no electricity, no running water, no roads but plenty of smiling children and a significant number of chickens!

"my children are my challenge, they are my adventure. ... now and forever."

At the last minute, with the encouragement of my husband John, I decided to join the extension group and flew to the national



On approach to one of the villages

park to see the wild orang-utans - WOW. We slept on the floor of a narrow boat and were so close to the orang-utans we genuinely could have touched them, in fact, I had to move to let one pass me at one point.

It was a once in a lifetime trip. It was amazing. It was a challenge. It was an adventure. But it turns out it wasn't the return to adventuring I'd expected as two weeks without my family taught me that my children haven't stopped me adventuring or taking challenges, they are my challenge, they are my adventure. Through the fundraising events and generous sponsorship I raised £1376 for EBA - a tiny drop to try and repay the TMBU for the gift of my girls, for the new challenges and adventures they give me every day, now and forever.

Cake Sale at PRH

There was another cake sale at PRH on 30th March. Lee managed to persuade Truffles bakery to donate some delicious cakes, which sold like hot cakes (please don't excuse the pun!) We also ran an Easter Egg raffle alongside, with eggs kindly donated by both Sainsburys and Morrisons. It was a great success, just like the previous sale and it was nice for everyone who was there to meet Lee's wife Lisa & their gorgeous girls. Leftover cakes went to the very well deserving staff and the Easter eggs to siblings of babies on the unit. Happy days.

Altogether we raised over £250.

We continue to supply both TMBU & SCBU with biscuits, tea, coffee, hot chocolate, soup & sweets on a regular basis.

The staff at both units are always partial to a slice of something yummy if any of you are avid bakers

The EBA continue to run the parent coffee mornings at TMBU. Some of the committee members are in the process of completing the trust's volunteer training programme, so we can hopefully also start up a similar thing at PRH.



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Record Breakers!!!

One of our supporters is now the OFFICIAL Speedball World Record Holder (see the Guinness Book of World Records website).

Heather Gullick set about her challenge in January and said afterwards,

I punched my speedball for 30 hours and 15 minutes the weekend before last!! It all went well and probably "easier" (not easy!) than I had been expecting, I guess I talked myself into it ...

She managed to raise lots of money for the EBA through sponsorship and a tin collection on the day.

THANK YOU Heather, awe-inspiring.

AGM 2015

We are heading towards our AGM, how time flies when you are having fun ... We keep it as informal as possible but do need to go through the previous year's events and accounts. After this we open the floor to chat and ideas for the coming year with a few nibbles and soft drinks available.

To satisfy the Charities Commission **we need bums on seats**, so please feel free to pop along — we would love to

meet you and put a face to the name.

Any offers of help through the year are also always appreciated!!!

Its on the 20th May - Seminar Room, 14th Floor, Trevor Mann Baby Unit, RSCH - 8pm.

Welcome to Lee Burlton

Lee has recently joined the EBA and is already proving to be a force to be reckoned with due to his fund-raising abilities and local knowledge.

Good luck Lee in the London to Brighton Bike Ride on June 22nd!! We were delighted to also meet Lee's wife Lisa and their children at the PRH cake

sale recently.

Website

The website - www.earlybirth.co.uk. - is running well and being updated regularly, thanks to Heidi & Duncan. If you would like to add or suggest anything please email Heidi (heidi@earlybirth.co.uk). We love hearing from you!

Officers of the Committee

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|------------------|--------------------------|
| Chairperson | Elaine Rowe (Trustee) |
| Vice-Chairperson | Heidi Crawford |
| Treasurer | Wayne Lawrence (Trustee) |
| Secretary | Helen Wright |

Committee Members

Melanie Edgar
Margaret Hatley (Trustee)
Michelle Miles
Andy Salvage
Laura Scott

TMBU Representatives

Dr Ryan Watkins & Julie Nalletamby

PRH SCBU Representatives

Sue Robinson & Sue Nightingale
