# Couple ask for charity donations instead of wedding presents

**Friday 3 November, 2017**

A couple celebrating their wedding asked their guests to make a donation to Sands (Stillbirth and neonatal death charity) instead of buying them presents.

The funds raised from Phil and Karen Spencer's wedding on 24th June were in memory of their daughter Ella, who was stillborn at 23 weeks on 29 December 2013.

The charity is close to the couple's hearts after they were supported by Sands when Ella sadly died.

Phil and Karen who are 42 and 40 years old respectively, are from Great Sutton and have a daughter, Chloe, age eight. They have been a couple for 13 years and were engaged for eight years.

Karen Spencer said: "We were devastated by the death of our precious baby Ella in 2013. After getting through what was a really difficult time for Phil and I, we wanted to celebrate the fact that we are strong as a couple by getting married.

"We have established careers and a home so when it came to identifying wedding gifts it was difficult to know what to suggest, so we decided to give something back to Sands who had really supported us. It was also a way of having Ella in our thoughts on our wedding day."

Over £2,000 was raised and the funds have been donated to The Countess of Chester Hospital who will purchase a CuddleCot which is a Moses basket with a refrigerated bottom that allows bereaved parents to spend extra precious time with their baby.

The Chester Sands support group meets on the last Wednesday of each month from 8pm - 9.30pm at All Saints Church Centre, Vicarage Road, Hoole, Chester CH2 3HZ with befrienders welcoming newcomers to the group from 7.30pm**.** The group is run by Sands befrienders who are also bereaved parents. For further information email: chester.sands@aol.co.uk or call 0808 164 3332.

**Ends**

**Notes to editors**

Picture - Phil and Karen Spencer on their wedding day with daughter Chloe.

For further information, please contact Lee Armitt, Press and PR Officer on 020 3897 3449/07587 925411 or media@sands.org.uk

**About Sands**

Sands is the leading stillbirth and neonatal death charity in the UK. They work nationally to reduce baby deaths through promoting better maternity care and funding research. They have a programme of training and a wide range of resources designed to support professionals to improve the bereavement care they provide following the death of a baby, and they provide a comprehensive bereavement support service both nationally through their helpline and locally through around 100 regional support groups based across the UK.

Further information can be found at www.sands.org.uk

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