# Parents of baby girl born with life-threatening condition thank charity with Big Chocolate Tea fundraiser

**Friday 5 May, 2017**

The parents of a little girl who survived a life-threatening condition have raised £300 for The Sick Children's Trust by taking part in its Big Chocolate Tea campaign.

Danielle Bestford, 26 and Corey Nelson, 22 from Wingate, were told to prepare for the worst when their unborn baby was diagnosed with a diaphragmatic hernia, a condition which meant that their baby's lungs would be underdeveloped and she would struggle to survive.

Just hours after their daughter Evie was born at Newcastle's Royal Victoria Infirmary (RVI), she was rushed to Leicester Royal Infirmary's Children's Hospital for lifesaving treatment. At just three days old, Evie underwent major surgery to repair her hernia and at two weeks old was transferred back to the RVI, where she remained for another six weeks. During this time, Danielle and Corey were supported with free 'Home from Home' accommodation at Crawford House, run by The Sick Children's Trust. Crawford House, which is located within the hospital grounds, is just a few minutes' walk from the children's wards and gave the couple a place where they could rest and recuperate.

The couple held a Big Chocolate Tea event last month to thank the charity for its support and raised £300. They also raised over £111 for Heart Link Children's Charity which funds specialist equipment at Leicester's Glenfield Hospital. **Danielle says:**

"Crawford House gave us somewhere we could go which was homely, clean and close to our daughter who was so poorly. We were just a few minutes' walk from our baby at any time which meant we didn't have the additional worries of travelling every day from our home in Durham to the hospital or worries about paying for a hotel in Newcastle. By keeping us together just minutes from Evie's side, Crawford House gave us a lot of security as we knew that if anything bad were to happen, we were minutes rather than miles away. The ward could call us directly on the phone in our room and we could be there in an instant.

"Evie is now doing really well and has been home with us for a few weeks now. And every day we see her getting stronger and stronger – she makes us so proud. We decided we wanted to hold a Big Chocolate Tea event to give back to The Sick Children's Trust – the amazing charity that was there for us in our darkest time. The Sick Children's Trust is there for people who need a 'Home from Home' and emotional support when they're at their most vulnerable. To have a seriously ill child is a very stressful time for parents, and to know that you can be nearby is a huge help.

"We'd like to thank everyone who came along to our Big Chocolate Tea event – we received lots of generous donations of cakes and pies, and everyone had a wonderful time. We're pleased to know that the money raised will help a number of families who need support from The Sick Children's Trust."

Last year, Big Chocolate Tea raised £60,000 which gave 2,000 families free 'Home from Home' accommodation while their child underwent treatment in hospital, keeping them together just minutes from their seriously ill child's bedside. The Sick Children's Trust hopes this year's campaign will be an even greater success. **Crawford House Assistant Manager, Linsey Brough, says:**

"It's lovely to hear that Evie is getting on well since she left the RVI, and we're delighted to hear how successful Danielle and Corey's fundraiser was – we'd like to say a special thank you to them and to everyone who went along to support their Big Chocolate Tea.

"The Sick Children's Trust runs ten 'Homes from Home' across the country supporting families with seriously ill children in hospital. Although the accommodation is provided free to families, it costs us £30 to support a family for one night. So we're asking everyone, like Danielle and Corey, to join us in our most chocola-tea fundraising campaign and raise at least £30 to support a family with 'Home from Home' accommodation minutes from their sick child's hospital bedside."

Supporters can choose to take part in Big Chocolate Tea at any point during the year and will receive a free fundraising pack full of goodies to hold the perfect event. For more information and to request your pack, please visit: http://www.sickchildrenstrust.org/bigchoctea.

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