

April 2013

Lindfield mum all set to compete in 2013 Virgin London Marathon and raise funds for Sands – the stillbirth and neonatal death charity – in memory of daughter, Isabella

Sunday 21st April will see Lucy Fitzmaurice of Lindfield, near Haywards Heath, pounding the streets of the Capital, running as one of Sands (the stillbirth and neo-natal death charity) nominated runners in this year's Virgin London Marathon.

Lucy will be running her first marathon to raise awareness of stillbirth and in memory of her daughter, Isabella, who died when she was 2 ½ days old in 2005.

Lucy, aged 40, explains: 'I am not a runner, in fact I usually have an aversion to any kind of exercise, but I was determined to challenge myself to do something really special in memory of Isabella.

'Our lives were changed forever when Isabella died and until then we had no idea that 17 babies die everyday in the UK - 11 are stillborn and 6 die shortly after birth. Running the marathon is a very big thing for me but I was determined to do something to help raise the profile of the great work Sands does in supporting bereaved parents.

'When Isabella died just knowing that people from Sands were there to offer support made such a huge difference. Their work is so diverse and ranges from funding research to better understand why so many babies are still dying everyday across the country, to running a network of support networks across the country and providing memory boxes to ensure no parents leave hospital without precious memories of their baby.'

Come Marathon day, Lucy will be cheered on by sons Will, aged 6 and Rory, aged 4, but as she says: 'Not one single day has passed when I have not thought about our darling girl. She is and always will be part of our family and I know she will be spurring me on to the finishing line.'

Lucy has already surpassed her initial fundraising target of £1,500 and her current total stands at nearly £2,500. She says: 'Everyone seems to be taking on bigger and bigger challenges for charities, but for me the marathon was as big as it gets and my determination to complete the 26 miles has, I know, struck a chord with family and friends. Everyone's generosity and support has been amazing and I'm delighted people feel able to help me raise funds for a cause so personal and close to my heart.'

To sponsor Lucy please visit: www.justgiving.com/Lucy-FitzMaurice

To find out more, please visit: www.uk-sands.org

ENDS

For further information, please contact Sands press officers:

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or

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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

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