

Following the loss of your baby

A practical guide for parents
following a Stillbirth



A butterfly lights beside us, like a sunbeam...

And for a brief moment its glory and beauty belong to our world...

But then it flies on again, and although we wish it could have stayed,

We are so thankful to have seen it at all.

Anon



INTRODUCTION

The death of a baby is a very distressing and painful time. Even at this most difficult of times there are certain things that have to be dealt with; this booklet aims to provide some help and advice during the early days of your bereavement. We hope that it will help you at this sad time, particularly with some of the practical and official matters.

If you have any questions or want to discuss anything, please feel free to contact our bereavement team on 01438 288462 or 01438 288463. Our office hours are Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm. We do not work weekends or bank holidays but messages can be left on our secure voicemail facility and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

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STILLBIRTH

(a baby born after 24 weeks showing no signs of life)

Every parent's experience is individual, and every circumstance is different, but the death of a baby can bring a grief that is deeper and lasts much longer than most people realise.

You may feel shocked and numb, especially in the first few days after your baby's death. You may find it hard to take in what has happened, and also hard to understand and remember what people are saying.

Many bereaved parents have physical reactions to grief. You may have palpitations or chest pains; you may have a lump in your throat or butterflies in your stomach. You may not feel like eating anything and you may feel exhausted but find it difficult to sleep. You may be physically as well as emotionally drained.

All of these reactions are common and normal.

Please do not feel that any choices or decisions need to be hurried.

Make any decisions at your own pace, giving yourself time to deal with the vast array of emotions you will have.

At the back of this booklet there are contact details of some organisations that may be able to offer you advice and support.

POST MORTEM EXAMINATION

A post mortem examination can be very helpful in identifying why your baby has died. Although a post mortem does not always find a definite cause for stillbirth it may tell you what did not cause it.

Some parents are certain from the beginning that they want a post mortem, others may not be sure. It is your decision (except in a Coroner's case). Take time to think it over and if you have any questions or concerns your doctor or midwife will be able to talk it through with you. You can also call and speak to a member of the bereavement team on the numbers given at the back of this booklet.

Before you leave the hospital you will be given some 'Stillbirth and Neonatal Death' charity (SANDS) bereavement booklets which contain lots of helpful information.

One booklet in particular is the SANDS guide 'Deciding about a post mortem examination – information for parents'.

On the following pages we have given a brief summary of the post mortem process but recommend you also read the SANDS booklet as this may answer any further questions you have.

HOSPITAL POST MORTEM

The doctor or midwife will ask you if you wish to consider a post mortem. Unless it has been ordered by the Coroner, a post mortem cannot be done without your consent.

The doctor or bereavement midwife will go through the consent form with you and there will be opportunities for you to ask questions and make sure your preferences are noted.

Some questions you may wish to ask about the post mortem examination are:

When it might be carried out

Where it will take place

How long it will take

When the results will be given to you, and who you can discuss them with

When and from whom you can get a copy of the results

Once the consent has been taken, you will be given a 24 hour 'cooling off' period to change your mind should you wish to do so.

The post mortem will take place at a specialist hospital; usually within 1-2 weeks. Your baby will be transferred to the specialist hospital by our contract funeral directors and will be returned to Lister Hospital once all examinations are completed. As part of the post mortem process, small samples of tissue from the organs may be taken for more detailed examination under a microscope. With your agreement these tissue samples will be retained as part of your baby's medical record. This is so that they can be re-examined in the future to try and find out more if new tests or new information become available. If you do not agree to this, all tissue samples will be returned with your baby after examination.

The post mortem process can take between 1-3 weeks depending on the examinations required and what you would like to happen to the tissue samples after the examination.

We will contact you once your baby has returned from the specialist hospital and ask you if you have come to any decisions regarding your baby's funeral.

The results can take between 6 -10 weeks depending on the type of examination you requested and consented to.

Once the post mortem results are available (usually 6 – 10 weeks after the examination), your consultant's secretary will arrange a follow up counselling appointment during which the results will be discussed with you. Present at this meeting will be your consultant and the bereavement midwife.

If you choose not to have a post mortem, with your consent the placenta will be sent to the histology department for histological examination. This is part of the investigation process to try and identify a cause of death. The placenta is also screened for any infections that may have been present.

It is recommended that for any unexpected loss a sample of placenta is taken and sent to the Kennedy Galton Centre for Genetic Research for examination. This can be particularly useful in identifying genetic causes of fetal loss.

If you have any further questions about the post mortem examination, the doctor, midwife or one of our bereavement team will be happy to answer these for you.

CORONERS POST MORTEM

Occasionally the Coroner will order a post mortem to find out why a baby has died, although this is very rare for a baby who is stillborn.

If this is the case the post mortem is required by law and you will not be asked for your consent to the examination; you will however be asked for your consent to take small tissue samples, as with a hospital post mortem. The Coroner's officer

will contact you to explain the procedure and to make sure you understand why the post mortem has been requested. The Coroner's officer will contact you again once the post mortem is complete, to give you the results and they will issue the paperwork allowing you to register the stillbirth and hold the funeral.

The bereavement midwife and one of our bereavement team will guide and support you through this process.

REGISTERING YOUR BABY'S DEATH

A stillbirth should be registered within 42 days. To register the stillbirth you will need the Medical Certificate of Stillbirth issued by the doctor or midwife caring for you. When you attend your appointment at the registry office the registrar will keep the Medical Certificate and will give you a Certificate of Registration of Stillbirth. This simply confirms that the stillbirth has been registered – there is no charge. If you want a full Certificate of Stillbirth, which is a certified copy of the complete entry in the register with names and other details, there will be a small fee for this.

The registrar will also give you a white form to permit burial or cremation. You should give this to the funeral director or, if the hospital is arranging the funeral, to the hospital.

If you have not yet chosen a name for your baby but wish to add one after registration, this will be possible but please bear in mind that the name you choose to add will be entered into section 17 of the Certificate of Stillbirth and not in to the 'Forename' section. You will need to make an appointment with the registry office to make any additions to the certificate and there may be a charge for this.

Please Note:

For unmarried couples, the mother needs to register the stillbirth herself. If the father's details are to be recorded on the certificate he must also be present at this time. Further information is available on the GOV.UK website www.gov.uk/register-stillbirth

Deaths are normally registered in the county in which they occur. However if for any reason you are unable to attend the area where the death occurred, please contact your local Register Office for advice regarding the registration.

Usually, after a stillbirth, the midwives in the maternity unit will make your registration appointment for you. If you have a preference for date, time or registration office please discuss this with them.

Should you wish to make your own appointment at a registration office in Hertfordshire please call 0300 1234 045. The bereavement midwife or a member of our bereavement team may be able to do this for you if you wish.

Financial support and taking time off work

Following a stillbirth (if your baby is stillborn after the start of your 24th week of pregnancy), you are normally entitled to:

- Statutory Maternity Pay - if you're employed
- Maternity Allowance - if you're not entitled to Statutory Maternity Pay
- Maternity Leave - if you're employed
- Statutory Paternity Pay - if you're employed
- Paternity Leave - if you're employed

You will be asked for evidence to get financial support. This can be the notification for the registration of a stillbirth from the attending doctor or midwife, or a Certificate of Stillbirth from the registrar.

Stevenage Register Office

Opening Times

Mon: 9am – 5pm

Thur: 9am – 5pm

Tue: 9am – 5pm

Fri: 9am – 4pm

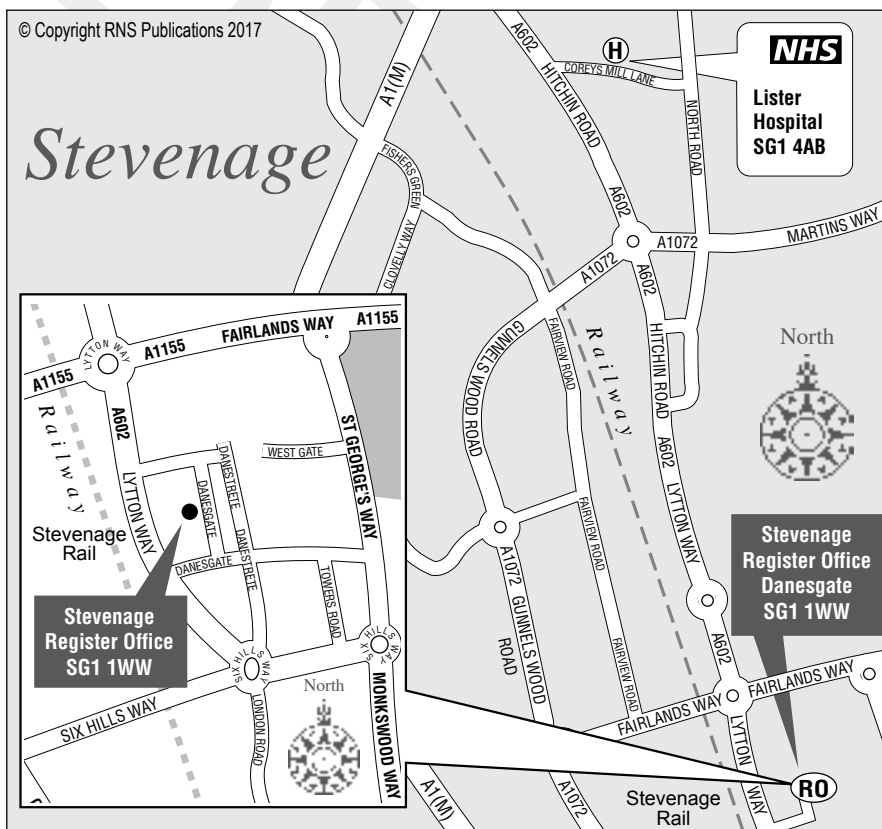
Wed: 9am – 5pm

Closed for lunch 12:30pm – 1:30pm

Address: Danesgate House, Danesgate,
Stevenage, SG1 1WW

Tel: 0300 123 4045

Location Map of Stevenage Register Office



Hertford Register Office

Opening Times

Mon: 9am – 5pm

Thur: 9am – 5pm

Tue: 9am – 5pm

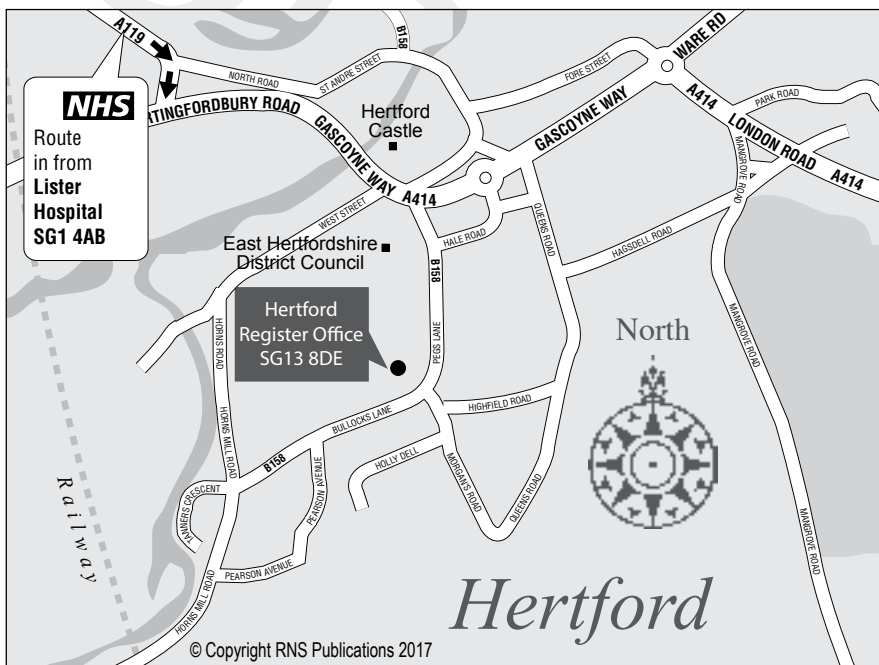
Fri: 9am – 4pm

Wed: 9am – 5pm

Address: County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8DE

Tel: 0300 123 4045

Location Map of Hertford Register Office



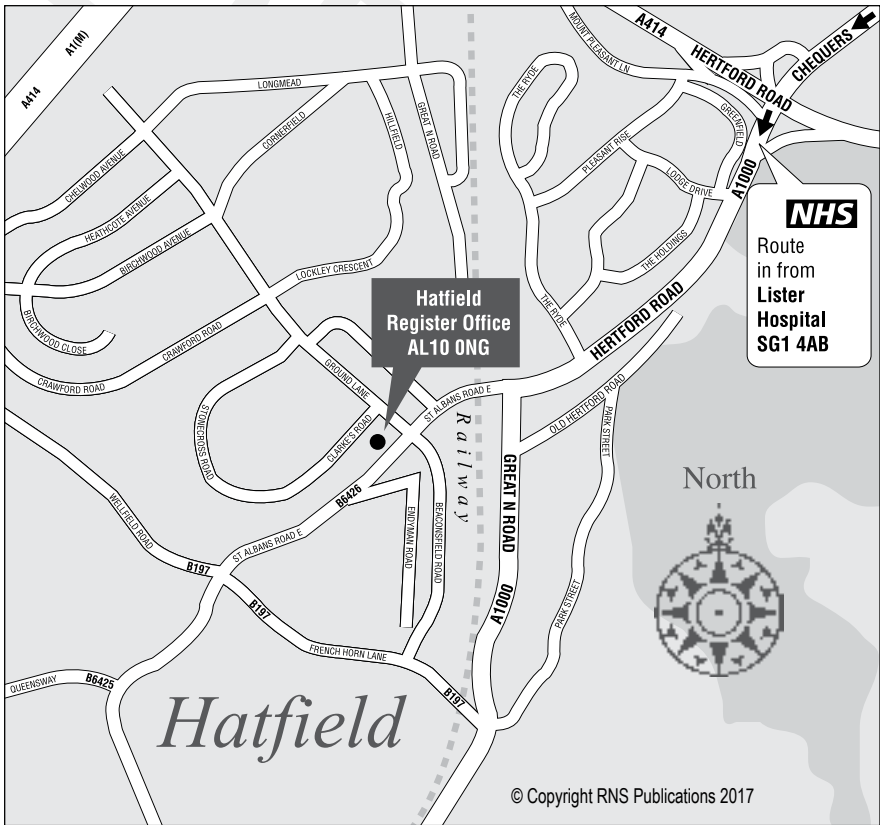
Hatfield Register Office

Opening Times

Mon: 9am – 5pm	Thur: 9am – 5pm
Tue: 9am – 5pm	Fri: 9am – 4pm
Wed: 9am – 5pm	

Address: 19b, St. Albans Road East, Hatfield, AL10 0NG
Tel: 0300 123 4045

Location Map of Hatfield Register Office



Bishop's Stortford Register Office

Opening Times

Mon: 9am – 4pm

Thur: 9am – 12:30pm

Tue: 9am – 4pm

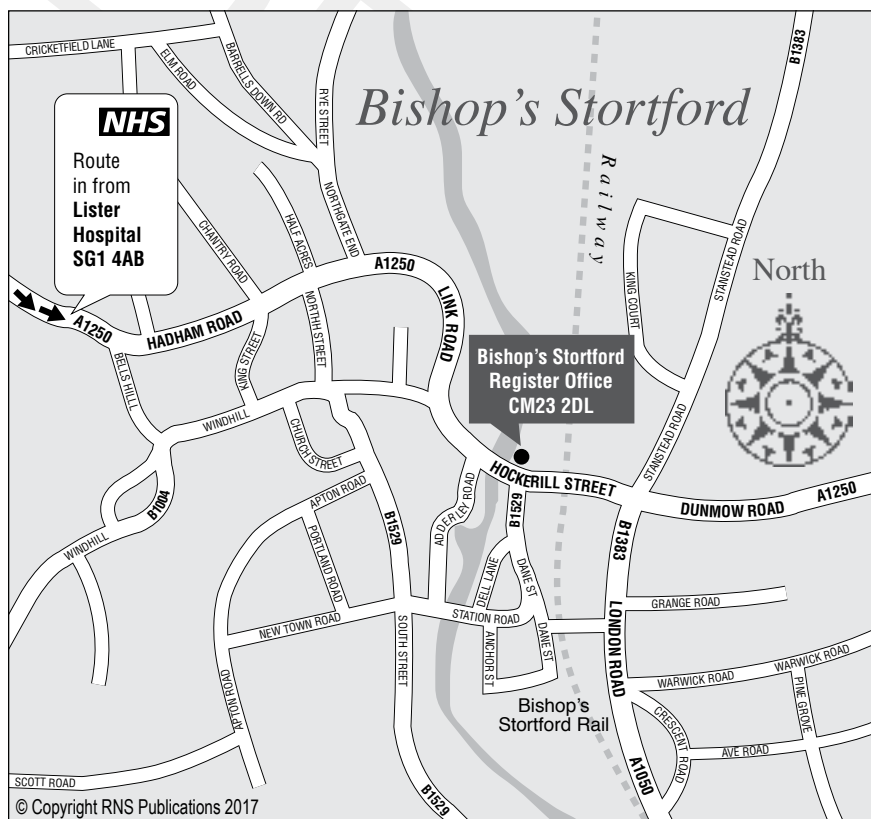
Fri: 9am – 4pm

Closed for lunch 12:30pm – 1:30pm

Address: Riverside House, 2 Hockerill Street,
Bishop's Stortford CM23 2DL

Tel: 0300 123 4045

Location Map of Bishop's Stortford Register Office



Watford Register Office

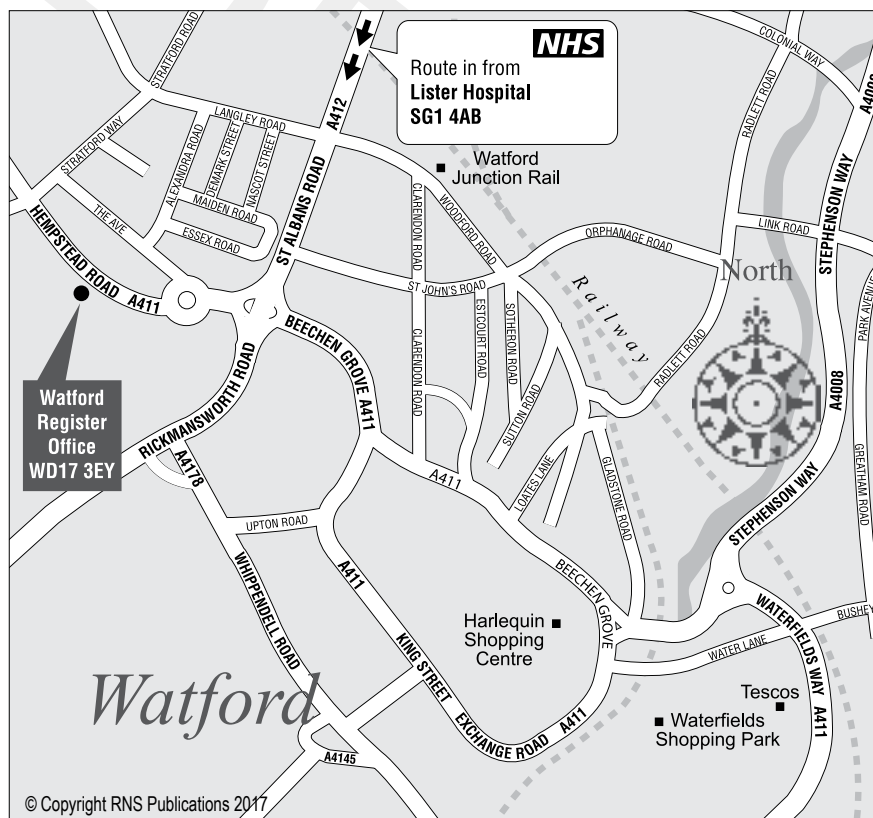
Opening Times

Mon: 9am – 5pm	Thur: 9am – 5pm
Tue: 9am – 5pm	Fri: 9am – 4pm
Wed: 9am – 5pm	Closed for lunch 12:30pm – 1:30pm

Address: 31 Hempstead Road, Watford WD17 3EY

Tel: 0300 123 4045

Location Map of Watford Register Office



Hemel Hempstead Register Office

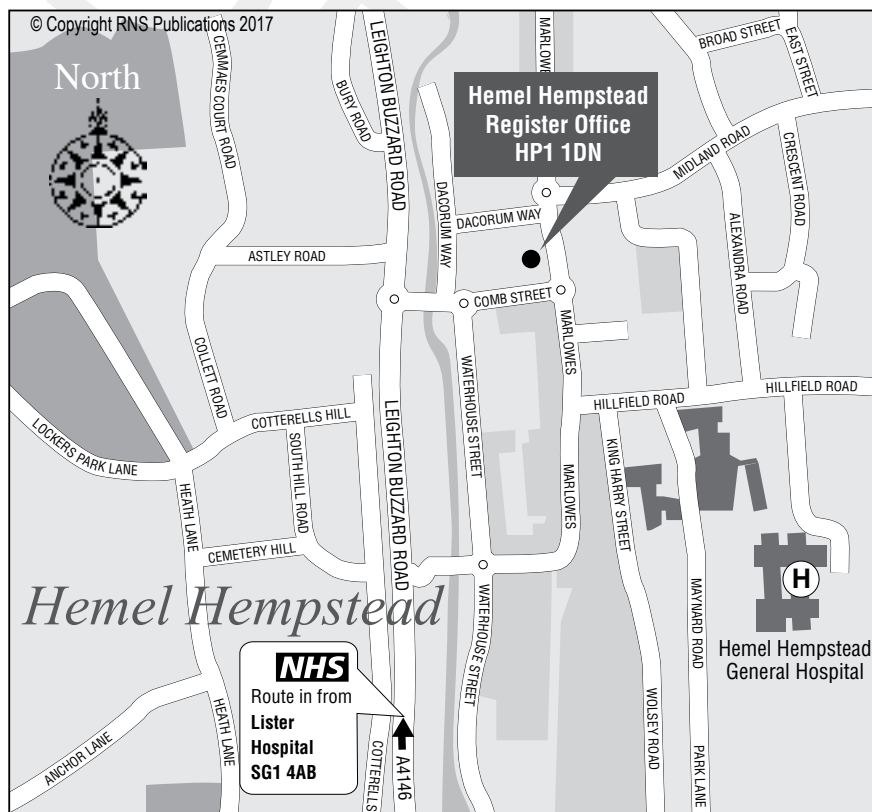
Opening Times

Mon: 9am – 5pm	Thur: 9am – 5pm
Tue: 9am – 5pm	Fri: 9am – 4pm
Wed: 9am – 5pm	Closed for lunch 1pm – 2pm

Address: The Forum, Marlowes,
Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP1 1DN

Tel: 0300 123 4045

Location Map of Hemel Hempstead Register Office



St Albans Register Office

Opening Times

Mon: 9am – 5pm

Thur: 9am – 5pm

Tue: 9am – 5pm

Fri: 9am – 4pm

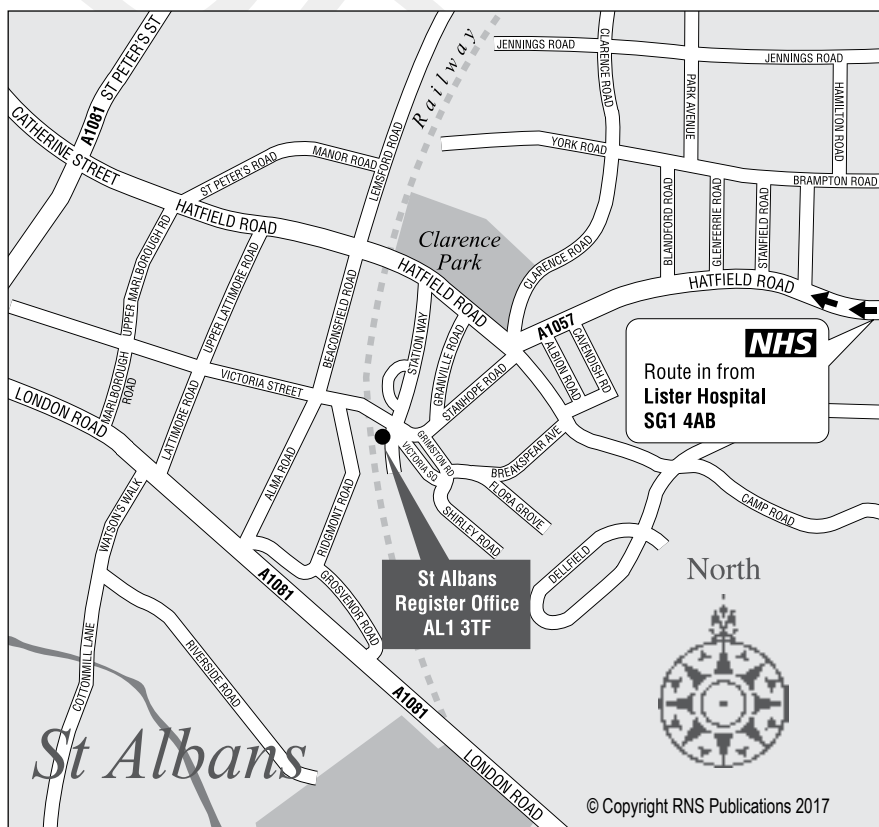
Wed: 9am – 5pm

Closed for lunch 12:30pm – 1:30pm

Address: The Gatehouse, 1, Victoria Square,
St Albans AL1 3TF

Tel: 0300 123 4045

Location Map of St Albans Register Office



Broxbourne Register Office

Opening Times

Mon: 9am – 3pm

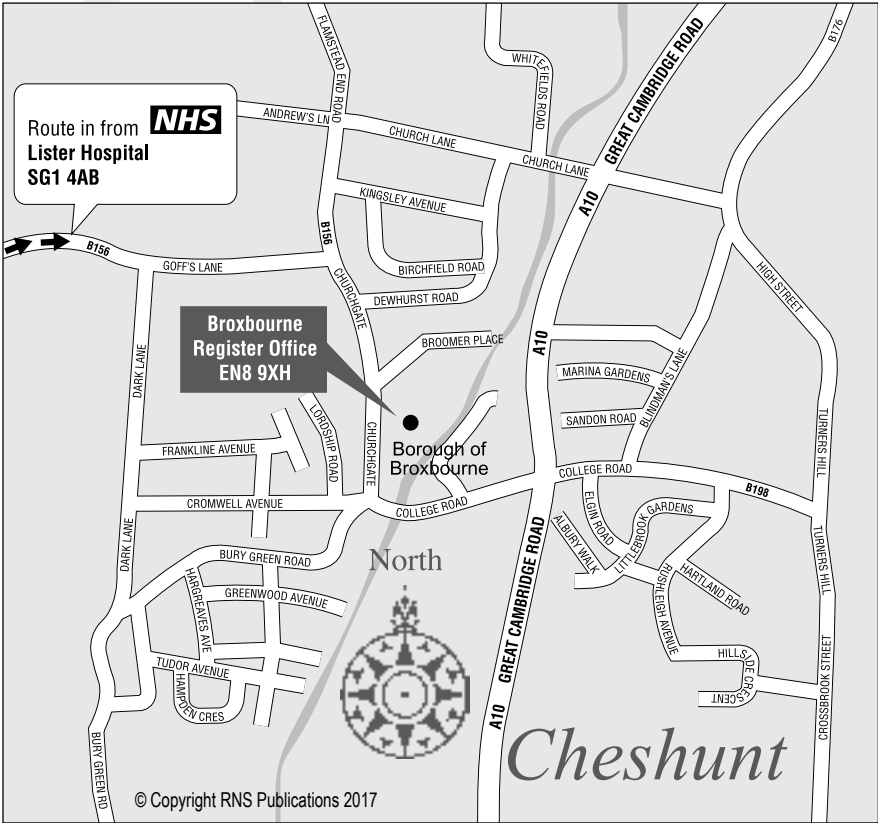
Wed: 9am – 3pm

Tue: 9am – 3pm

Fri: 9am – 4pm

Address: Bishop’s College, Churchgate, Cheshunt, EN8 9XH
Tel: 0300 123 4045

Location Map of Broxbourne Register Office



PHOTOGRAPHY

Before you go home you will be asked if you would like your baby photographed. If you agree you will be asked to sign a consent form.

Your baby can be photographed in his or her own clothes or we can provide hats, clothing and blankets if wished.

You may wish to have photographs taken of you and your baby together or with siblings. The department of clinical photography are happy to do this for you.

Once the photos are ready one of the bereavement team will call you to let you know that they are ready to collect.

You will be provided with two copies of a 6 x 4 colour image in a white card mount. Photographs can be printed in black and white if you wish. The photography department can also size photographs to fit any personal frames or locket and the images can also be put on to a disc if required.

Should you wish to have additional copies of your photographs, these can be provided at minimal cost. Either inform one of our bereavement team or contact the department of clinical photography directly on 01438 284019.

If you are not sure if you want photographs, they can be taken and kept in your hospital notes in case you wish to see them in the future. Photographs can be made available to you up to 25 years after they were taken.

*"I decided that it would be better
to have a photo I might never look at
than to want a photo that I do not have"*

Dad.

KEEPSAKES

Keeping mementos of your baby can help the grieving process. We can provide these for you at your request. Some of the keepsakes we can provide are:

- Hand and foot prints
- Hand and foot impressions
- Photographs
- Lock of hair (if appropriate)
- Name bands
- Umbilical cord clip (if available)
- Cot card



Please inform either the bereavement midwife or one of the bereavement team if you would like some of these keepsakes and we will arrange for them to be taken.

You will also be offered a memory box on the maternity unit. If you do not wish to take your keepsakes immediately they can be kept in your notes until you feel ready to have them.



SEEING YOUR BABY

Saying goodbye to your baby is a painful process but many parents find it helpful to see and hold their baby. If you want to see your baby and spend some time with him or her, this is possible straight after the birth or at a later date.

If you choose to see your baby at a later date you can contact either the bereavement midwife or the maternity unit to arrange this. You can choose to see your baby in the bereavement room in the maternity unit if it is available or in the viewing facility in the bereavement department.



If other members of the family, including brothers and sisters, wish to see the baby they are welcome to do so with your consent.

You may wish to dress your baby in clothes you have brought in for them or you may want a member of staff to do this for you. We are happy to help you with this.

If there are any religious or cultural practices that you want to carry out for your baby please tell us and we will help you to ensure that everything is done as you wish. There are hospital chaplains available to help and support you with this. The hospital chaplains are also able to conduct a blessing or naming ceremony for your baby if desired.

It can be possible to see your baby after a post mortem but you may need to take some advice regarding their appearance. Some smaller babies can deteriorate quite quickly and it may be advisable to see them before examination rather than afterwards. One of the bereavement team or the bereavement midwife will always be happy to advise you if you feel that you need some guidance.

TAKING YOUR BABY HOME

Some parents decide to take their baby home before the funeral. There is no legal reason why you should not do this unless the Coroner has ordered a post mortem.

How long can I keep my baby at home?

This depends on your baby's condition and the temperature of the room in which he or she will be kept. A maximum of three days is advisable, unless there is a post mortem examination due.

If you have agreed to a hospital post mortem you can still take your baby home but you will be asked to bring him or her back to the hospital after about 24 hours. This is because the sooner the post mortem is done, the more chance there is of finding out why your baby died.

If you want to take your baby home please let the midwife or bereavement midwife know.

If you decide to take your baby home you will be asked to sign a form confirming that you are taking responsibility for your baby whilst at home and that you will either bring him or her back to the hospital for the funeral or arrange the funeral yourself.

We have a portable cooling system available for parents to borrow from the bereavement office.

You will be given advice on how to keep your baby cool and told about changes that may occur in your baby's appearance, such as darkening of the lips. You will be advised that your baby's skin may be fragile and in this case, when holding your baby, it may be best to place him or her on a pillow and hold the pillow.

You may want to consider these changes when deciding how long to have your baby at home.

FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

As your baby died after 24 completed weeks of pregnancy, he or she must, by law, be formally buried or cremated.

The funeral can be religious or non religious, traditional, or a ceremony of your own design. Take your time to think about how you would like to say goodbye to your baby and what would be right for you.

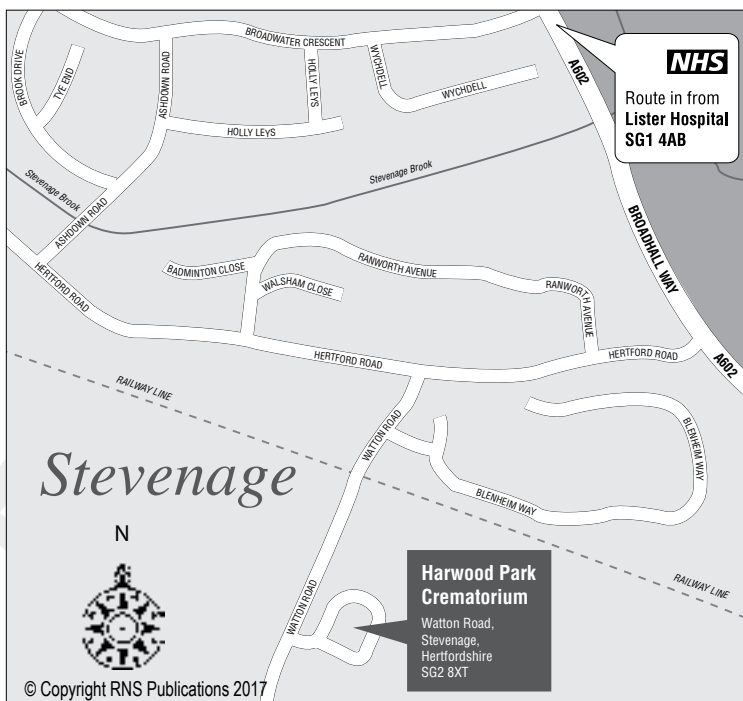
Initially, after a stillbirth, some parents may feel that they are not up to making funeral arrangements and would prefer for the hospital to do this for them.

East and North Herts NHS Trust can arrange a hospital funded funeral for your baby, in conjunction with our hospital chaplains and contracted funeral director. This is an individual burial or cremation service. The hospital chaplains will work with you to offer a service that is personal to you and your baby.

These are examples of what is provided for a hospital funded funeral:

Cremation

- A white wooden coffin with a brass nameplate and handles.
- A car to transport the baby from the funeral director's premises to Harwood Park Crematorium in Stevenage.
- The service will usually be held on a weekday morning between 9am and 10am.
- You may choose music and/or some words or poetry for the service. The hospital chaplain will contact you beforehand to discuss this with you.
- This is an individual service that you may attend with family and friends.
- You do not have to attend the service if you do not feel up to doing so.



Burial

- A white wooden coffin with a brass nameplate and handles
- A car to transport the baby from the funeral director's premises to the cemetery.
- The service will usually be held on a weekday morning between 9am and 10am.
- You may choose the readings and/or some poetry or words for the service. The hospital chaplain will contact you beforehand to discuss this with you.
- This is an individual graveside service that you may attend with family and friends.
- You do not have to attend the service if you do not feel up to doing so.

If you choose a hospital funded cremation this will usually take place at Harwood Park Crematorium in Stevenage. A hospital funded burial can be arranged for your local open cemetery, please see the list given below;

- Stevenage Weston Road Cemetery
- Hitchin Hitchin Cemetery, St John's Road
- Letchworth Wilbury Hill Cemetery
- Knebworth Knebworth Cemetery, Gun Road Gardens
- Royston Melbourn Road Cemetery
- Baldock Baldock Cemetery, Norton Road
- Ware Ware Cemetery, Westmill Road
- Hertford Hertford Cemetery, North Road
- Welwyn GC Hatfield Hyde Cemetery, Hollybush Lane, WGC
- Hatfield Welwyn Hatfield Lawn Cemetery, Southway, Hatfield
- St Albans London Road Cemetery

If you live outside any of the areas given above, please contact the Bereavement office on 01438 288462 or 01438 288463 and we will be able to find your nearest local open cemetery.

Please note that although some of these cemeteries have chapels, a hospital funded burial does not include use of these. Should you wish to have use of the chapel as part of your hospital funded burial service you will need to contact the relevant cemetery office directly to discuss this. There is likely to be a fee for the use of the chapel, unfortunately East & North Herts NHS Trust cannot cover this cost.

(The phone numbers and addresses of all above listed open cemeteries are given at the back of this booklet).

If you choose to have your baby buried outside of the area within which you live, you will be subject to a 'non parishioner fee'. This fee is payable by anyone who lives outside of the parish where the funeral is taking place, whether the funeral is for a baby or an adult. The fee is set by the individual cemetery

and is payable by yourselves directly to them. Unfortunately East and North Herts NHS Trust cannot cover this cost.

If you are making your own private burial arrangements and the burial is taking place in the area within which you live, you will not be subject to this charge.

If you choose a burial for your baby or an interment of his or her ashes and wish to place a headstone or memorial on the grave, you will have to purchase the 'Grant of Exclusive Right' to a grave (grave space). There will be a fee payable to the cemetery for this. You will need to contact your local open cemetery (phone numbers are given at the back of this booklet) to find out what the fee for purchasing the 'Grant of Exclusive Right' will be. This is applicable for both hospital and privately arranged burials.

A hospital chaplain will usually officiate at a funeral arranged by the hospital but if you have your own chaplain or religious minister who you would like to carry out the service for you, arrangements can be made for this to happen. Alternatively, you can have a humanist celebrant, or even a friend or family member to carry out a service for you.

If you have any mementos you would like to put in your baby's coffin please let one of the bereavement team or the bereavement midwife know and we can arrange for this to be done.

Some parents prefer to arrange and pay for their baby's funeral personally. Most funeral directors will either carry out a baby's funeral for free or at a reduced cost.

We are able to give you the names and contact details of funeral directors in your area if you wish to make your own arrangements.

If you are on a low income you may be able to get a Funeral Expenses payment from the Social Fund to help towards the costs. See the contact numbers at the back of this booklet for where to get advice.

Ashes

If you choose to have your baby cremated you will be asked what you would like to happen to the ashes. There are 3 options that are available to parents:

- To release the ashes to you. The ashes will usually be available 24 hours after the funeral and will be given to you in a small white wooden casket. If you have named your baby there will be a nameplate with your baby's name on it. If you have not named your baby it will have your surname on i.e. 'Baby Smith'
- To scatter the ashes in the Princess Diana Children's Garden at Harwood Park. You may choose if you would like to be present or not when this is done.
- To retain the ashes at Harwood Park pending your instructions. If you choose this option, the staff at Harwood Park will contact you one month after the service if final instructions have not been received during that time.

If you have any questions regarding this please do not hesitate to speak to the bereavement midwife or one of our bereavement team.

Memorial Service

Each year the hospital chaplaincy team organise a memorial service for all babies who have died. A candle is lit for each baby and there is time for quiet reflection and remembrance.

This is usually held around September time in Letchworth Garden City and all bereaved parents are welcome to attend. You can find out more by contacting the chaplains on 01438 285519, or you can email them at **chaplaincy.enh-tr@nhs.net**

There is also a book of remembrance in the Chapel that you can have your baby's name entered in to if you wish. You should be given a form in the maternity unit to complete if you would like your baby's details entered into the book of remembrance. If you do not receive one you can contact one of the bereavement team and we will be happy to get one for you.



WHERE TO FIND FURTHER SUPPORT

SANDS (Stillbirth and Neonatal Death charity)

- Helpline **0207 436 5881**
- Email **helpline@uk-sands.org**
- **www.uk-sands.org**

Child Bereavement UK

- Support line **0800 028 8840**
- Email **support@childbereavementuk.org**
- **www.childbereavementuk.org**

Child Death Helpline

- Helpline **0800 282 986 / 0808 800 6019**
- Email **contact@childdeathhelpline.org**
- **www.childdeathhelpline.org.uk**

Tommy's

- Helpline **0800 014 7800**
- Email **info@tommys.org**
- **www.tommys.org**

TAMBA Bereavement Support Group (part of the Twins and Multiple Births Association. Support for families who have lost one or more children from a multiple birth)

- Helpline **0800 138 0509**
- Email - **use the form on their website**
- **www.tamba.org.uk/bereavement/support**

Cruse Bereavement Care

- Helpline **0808 808 1677**
- Email **helpline@cruse.org.uk**
- **www.cruse.org.uk**

The Samaritans

- Helpline **116 123**
- Email **jo@samaritans.org**
- **www.samaritans.org**

Winston's Wish (the charity for bereaved children)

- Helpline **0845 203 0405**
- Email **info@winstonswish.org.uk**
- **www.winstonswish.org.uk**

Child Funeral Charity

Provides help with funeral costs. Takes referrals from professionals who have knowledge of the bereaved family and their circumstances.

- Tel **01480 276088**
- Email **enquiries@childfuneralcharity.org.uk**
- **www.childfuneralcharity.org.uk**

Petals

Counselling for trauma or loss during pregnancy and birth.

- Helpline **0300 688 0068**
- Email **counselling@petalscharity.org**
- **www.petalscharity.org**

Bereavement Advice Centre

Practical information and advice on what needs to be done when someone has died. Will find answers to less common questions such as taking ashes abroad.

- Helpline **0800 634 9494**
- Email **info@bereavementadvice.org**
- **www.bereavementadvice.org**

The Money Advice Service

- Helpline **0300 500 5000**
- **www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk**
- **www.gov.uk**

Baby Mailing Preference Service (MPS)

Free site where you can register online to stop or reduce baby-related mailings of samples, advertisements etc.

- Tel **0207 291 3310**
- Email **bmpps@dma.org.uk**
- **www.mpsonline.org.uk/bmpps**
- Address: **DMA House, 70 Margaret Street, London, W1W 8SS**

Funeral Payment from the Social Fund

- Available if you are claiming benefits due to low income.
- You can claim at any time up to three months after the funeral.

England, Scotland and Wales

Online: **www.gov.uk/funeral-payments**

(download and fill in form SF200 and take it to your local Jobcentre Plus)

Tel: **0345 606 0265** (Mon to Fri, 8am to 6pm)

Harwood Park Crematorium
Watton Road
Stevenage, Hertfordshire
SG2 8XT
01438 815555
www.crematorium.co.uk

Weston Road Cemetery
Weston Road
Stevenage, Hertfordshire
SG1 3RP
01438 367109

Welwyn and Hatfield
Lawn Cemetery
Southway
Hatfield, Hertfordshire
AL10 8HS
01707 357000

Hitchin Cemetery
St John's Road
Hitchin, Hertfordshire
SG4 9JP
01462 474000

Letchworth Cemetery
Wilbury Hills
Stotfold Road
Letchworth Garden City
Hertfordshire
SG6 4EG
01462 474000

Knebworth Cemetery
Gun Road Gardens
Knebworth, Hertfordshire
SG3 6ED
01462 474000

Royston Cemetery
Cemetery East
Melbourn Road
Royston, Hertfordshire
SG8 6BP
01462 474000

Baldock Cemetery
Norton Road
Baldock, Hertfordshire
SG7 5AW
01462 474000

Ware Cemetery
Westmill Road
Ware, Hertfordshire
SG12 0EW
01920 460316

Hertford Cemetery
North Road
Hertford, Hertfordshire
SG14 2HZ
01992 552885

Welwyn Garden City
Cemetery
Hatfield Hyde
Hollybush Lane
Welwyn Garden City
Hertfordshire
AL7 4JU
01707 357000

Bereavement office,
Lister Hospital
Level 3
Lou Thomas
01438 288462
Jackie Head
01438 288463
Mon-Fri 8am to 4pm

Consultant Led Unit
Ground floor
Diamond Jubilee
Maternity Unit
01438 285630

Chaplaincy Team,
Lister Hospital
Level 3
01438 285519
Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm
Can be contacted out of
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Department of Clinical
Photography and Illustration,
Lister Hospital
Level 3
01438 284019
Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm
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The world may never notice if a snowdrop doesn't bloom,

Or even pause to wonder if the petals fall too soon.

But every life that ever forms, or ever comes to be,

Touches the world in some small way for all eternity.

The little one we longed for was swiftly here and gone.

But the love that was then planted is a light that still shines on.

And though our arms are empty, our hearts know what to do.

Every beating of our hearts says that we love you.

Notes

Blank handwriting practice lines with a large, light gray watermark reading "DRAFT" diagonally across the page.

DRAFT