



Luna's Fund Chair Report July 2019 - 2020

(Published February 2021)

From the day our charity began on 1st March 2018, our journey has been nothing short of incredible. We successfully gained registered charity status on 11th July 2019, and we have completed our accounting year in the middle of a global pandemic... the last thing any of us were expecting!

Here is an overview of our first year:

Launching our services: (July 2019)

- 1) Nursery Redecoration - Chosen to support parents financially and practically by redecorating their baby's nursery into a space they can utilise once more if they find this room is too painful for them. Parents have 12 months to choose this service from their baby's day of birth.

- 2) Relaxing Getaways - Offering parents respite through a relaxing getaway in a log cabin in Cornwall or a destination the trustees see fit dependant on the individuals criteria. We hope they can utilise this peaceful time to process the trauma of losing their baby whilst resting after the birth or baby's funeral. An immediate lifeline which we encourage parents to use within the first 6 months.

- 3) Food Hamper Deliveries - Offering a helping hand to parents who wish to avoid social environments in the early days of loss. We hope that our hampers can promote some nutritional goodness whilst reducing the lack of appetite to fuel parents as they experience the intense pressures of grief. We encourage this service to be used within the first 6 weeks.

Uptake of our services: (July 2019-July 2020)

- 1) Nursery Redecoration - 0
- 2) Relaxing Getaways - 3
- 3) Food Hamper Deliveries - 0

Although these figures may look small and relatively insignificant on paper, to know that we have brought comfort, peace and light into the broken lives of 3 families during this time, makes us feel extremely honored and proud of how far we have come.

The uptake of 3 families may not be many but we have had in excess of 10 referrals/enquiries from parents who are unable to receive our help due to their catchment area, criteria or not getting back to us.

From March 2020 - July 2020 we were also faced with the impact of lockdown due to the Covid-19 restrictions which greatly impacted our services.

We are proud to have been able to support 3 amazing families for their relaxing getaways.

New projects:

With our new found time during lockdown and the impact this was having on our original services, we were able to channel this time and thought into our new project.

We designed, trialed and launched this project in October 2020, offering much needed support to loss parents when they embark on their 'rainbow' pregnancy (a pregnancy which occurs after a loss).

1) Story Raine Project - Dedicated to our rainbow baby Story, we aim to use our experience of our rainbow pregnancy to support parents. Offering antenatal scans, additional to the NHS scans on offer and up to a maximum of 3, parents who have previously suffered a loss in the local area (through stillbirth post 24 weeks or neonatal death up to 28 days) can benefit from this through our partnership with Ultrasound Direct South West, Plymouth & Exeter. They are a private antenatal scanning facility who have generously benefitted the charity with a 10% discount on all scans.

Uptake on our project: (October 2020 - February 2021)

1) Story Raine Project - 2 families = 5 private scans

Pipeline projects:

We have many ideas from experience that we aim to utilise in order to shape the future of the incredibly complex world of 'life after loss.' In time, we plan to bring these projects to life:

- 'Daddies Grieve Too' - Monthly podcasts and a private Facebook page for all dads and male members of the family who have been affected by loss. The podcasts, videos and platform will be led by Luna's Dad, Ryan Conroy who has a passion for bettering the lives of others and life coaching. A dad's perspective is mostly overlooked and undervalued. We hope Ryan will be able to educate, unite and lead the dad's through loss.
- 'The Grey Area' - One for the grandparents, playing on the 'grey haired era' of the baby loss world. Focusing on the generation who suffer a double loss by losing a piece of their own child when they lose their grandchild. A support group for friendly chat, social events and encouragement for the grandparents to feel less helpless and more helpful.

Referrals:

- We rely heavily on cost effective ways to raise our platform and spread the word about our services so it will reach those who need us. Social media and through word of mouth accounts for the majority of our referrals.
- Often, we are contacted by parents who are out of our catchment area; London, Birmingham etc.. who have found us through a desperate internet search and through our 'contact us' page on our website.
- We believe that it is crucial to provide them with support even if we can't physically help them. Aimee will always signpost the parents to other baby loss charities, nationally and specifically to the individuals location. She will always offer time for the person to talk if they so wish and direct them to the 10 part blog on the website which we hope will help the individual feel less alone.
- We have implemented a referral procedure with Derriford Hospital to ensure every parent who fits our criteria upon losing their baby is given a 'Love Luna' candle in a descriptive box which encompasses our charity details and services.

- We chose to opt for this method as opposed to flyers and leaflets as, from experience, we didn't look at the leaflets in our information box when we returned home from our loss. The only things that caught our attention were tangible items which led us to the decision to include a candle.
- We hope families will gain comfort from the scent when they light it at home offering them warmth, peace and light and to feel less alone. We aim for Luna's Fund to bring them light in their darkest of days.

Advertising & Marketing:

Whilst there is still a 'taboo' around baby loss, it is important that we continue to try and break the silence. Even over the last 3 years we have personally seen a huge shift in the media, conversation and on social media. This is also thanks to the bravery and courage celebrities show upon losing their baby, inspiring bereaved parents to speak up whilst educating the public on the devastation it causes and how to handle the sensitivity of baby loss.

- We have invested in leaflets, flyers, candle boxes for the hospital, pop up banners, all weather banners and back pack flags for events.
- We always invest in logo t-shirts for any event a person undertakes, as the gain of awareness heavily outweighs the cost of the t-shirts. The cost of the t-shirts is usually recuperated by the individual themselves or through the fundraising amount they have raised.
- We have also invested in our website to ensure we have a professional and accessible space for the families who are searching for our help.
- On the website, a 10 part blog documenting Luna's life and our lives after loss written by Aimee, is used to raise awareness and as a signpost for angel mother to angel mother support. This blog has exceeded 100,000 views and has been read by people all over the globe.
- Our website is our hub for downloadable fundraising material, information about the charity and our services, it includes a 'meet the team' section for supporters and potential donors to get to know us, a transparent policies and designated accounts section which is linked to the official Charity Commission website, a 'contact us' section for enquiries and it is the home of our charity shop.
- We receive coverage in the local newspapers to advertise our services, to increase awareness of them, to inform the public of any expansion to our charity and for promotion of large events.
- We are currently waiting for publishing of the Story Raine Project in the newspapers for increased awareness of this service so we can reach anxious loss parents who need to use our additional scans for reassurance.

Events & Fundraising:

We are extremely fortunate to be surrounded by fundraising activists with the passion and drive to raise awareness and funds for our charity. Having started with £0, we are blown away to be closing on £58,649 having spent £12,480 to get off the ground 16 months ago (March 2018-July 2020).

This figure is purely down to the sheer hardwork, determination and love we have channelled into this charity in order to establish our name and reputation into the community.

Our efforts have created an abundance of sustainable funds which will support families who need us for years to come.

Fundraising Events: (July 2018 - February 2021)

- Marathons
- Half Marathons
- 10K & 5K Runs
- Auction Night
- Launch Party
- Skydive
- Bake Sales
- Football Matches
- Quiz Nights
- Psychic Evening
- Bonfire Evening
- 2.6 Challenge
- Craft Sale
- Burpee Challenge
- Mudstock Run
- Raffles

There has most definitely been a selection of fundraising activities to choose from, suitable for all abilities and interests!

At the moment, like the rest of the world, Coronavirus has impacted the world of fundraising so we have had to put our plans on hold for the time being and get creative where we can.

Virtual events such as the 2.6 challenge and the burpee challenge were completed via Facebook and they were both a great success. Birthday fundraisers on Facebook, direct debits and online donations are currently our income stream.

Charity Shop - 'Love Luna' (October 2020)

The purpose of the shop was to create a brand for our charity. To grow it in a way that will raise awareness, help local businesses and provide the charity another income stream at the same time.

All merchandise apart from the pin badges, have been sourced, created or purchased through local suppliers or small businesses to ensure we give back to our local community or support small. The items we sell are all in keeping with our theme of 'what Luna loves' and they are affordable for all budgets as the stock ranges from £3.50 - £20.00. The customers enjoy the satisfaction of purchasing an item they will benefit from whilst knowing all of their money will benefit us.

This has been an investment for us as we have had to purchase all of the stock, packaging, delivery boxes, labels, scales, and envelopes. We have successfully sold over half of the stock to date with the impact of Covid-19 slowing down sales. This is the start of building Luna's Legacy.

Merchandise:

- Pin Badges
- Face Masks
- Candles
- Reed Diffusers
- Wax Melts
- Bracelets/Anklets
- Bears
- Children's Headbands
- Nursery Prints

Charity Goals:

The dream has always been for us to own 'Luna's Lodge.' A comfortable, peaceful and safe space for families to grieve in peace and return in future with their

rainbows.

The location of the lodge will be determined closer to the time of purchase but we aim for the lodge to be set in an idyllic location embraced by either the countryside, a lake or the sea. The ideas we have for the furnishings, decoration and details inside are what will set Luna's Lodge apart from any standard getaway. It will connect families to their babies in indescribable ways and it will be a little piece of heaven from their babies on Earth.

Thanks to all of the hard work and efforts over the last 18 months, it is safe to say that Luna's Lodge will be purchased sooner rather than later.

In the near future we aim to:

- Expand our services to support families in Exeter and Cornwall through Exeter Hospital & Trulisk Hospital in Truro
- Launch the 'Daddies Grieve Too' Project
- Register with the Fundraising Regulator
- Gain NCVO Membership
- Grow the charity shop and offer a 'rainbow' baby clothing and accessories line

Thank you:

To summarise, I don't think it's possible to articulate my thanks to those whom I am surrounded by, but I will try.

I would sincerely like to thank each and every individual who has supported us, donated to us, believed in us and stood by us. Your shares on social media, involvement in events, donations of £2 or £20, wearing your branded face masks to the shops, telling friends about the charity, however you are involved, thank you. You are changing the world with us one step at a time and we couldn't be any more grateful.

To the trustees who commit to us from only the goodness of their hearts, freeing up their valuable and precious family time to improve and better the lives of the bereaved, thank you. Your ideas, plans, energy, and focus is what has enabled us to achieve what we have in such a small amount of time. Thank you so much.

To my husband and co-founder Ryan for always supporting me and my ideas, for throwing himself into all kinds of events and for believing that **nothing** is impossible. The love we share for our daughter is what will make our dreams for

the charity a reality.

And of course, to the main little lady herself, to Luna. Thank you for changing the world, for bettering the lives of others and for improving us all as human beings. Opening our eyes to what is important and opening our hearts more than ever. You are an inspiration to us all and our reason why. Thank you for everything.