# Press Release | 12 July 2024

**Baby loss Butterfly Garden takes shape at QEH**

Work is now under way on a special courtyard garden dedicated to hospital patients who have suffered a baby loss, providing those who are grieving with a place of remembrance and reflection.

The landscaped garden will be filled with an array of metal hand-forged purple butterflies each baring a special message. A pathway will weave through specially selected symbolic purple borders with private spaces and benches as well as a centrepiece sculpture and poetry installation.

The Butterfly Garden is funded through donations and fundraising to the QEHKL Charity. It was developed through a collaboration between the hospital’s maternity team and bereavement specialists alongside the hospital’s Maternity & Neonatal Voices Partnership (MNVP) which represents those who have experienced the loss of their baby either during pregnancy or shortly after birth.

The new memorial garden is part of the Butterfly Suite at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital which opened in 2022 and provides a comforting, supportive bereavement space for parents to be able to say goodbye to their little ones in a quiet and private setting.

It is hoped the garden will be ready in time for Baby Loss Awareness Week in October.

Some of those involved in the garden development gathered on site earlier this week to symbolically launch the project and pose for a photo.

Among them was hospital CEO Alice Webster who said: “It is great to see the garden taking shape and hear about the collaboration involved in this project, from our patients, the QEH team, artists and designers to make a truly special place. It is a great addition to our Butterfly Suite and I am sure the garden will be a very special place. I’d like to thank everyone involved and those who gave so generously to our charity Butterfly appeal.”

Emily Lunny is the Lead for the QEH Maternity & Neonatal Voices Partnership (MNVP) which collects feedback from women to make service improvements. She commented: “It is really exciting to see this coming together and I know a lot of the local parents who have experienced baby loss are really excited about this addition to QEH. It will be a massive benefit for them to have somewhere to go to really reflect on their experience.”

Louise Tomney, The QEH Deputy Divisional General Manager for Women and Children, has spearheaded the project, and commented: “It is really good to have incorporated service users’ voices. The women have been able to choose so many different things from the species of butterfly, which is local and specially made for the garden, to other aspects of the design. We’ve been able to get them involved in every step of the way in deciding what happens.”

Artist blacksmith Nigel Barnett has been commissioned to create 250 butterflies based on the Norfolk Butterfly in three shades of purple, a symbol of loss.

Nigel hand crafts decorative and functional metalwork at his forge in Fransham and was the creator of a spectacular display of metal butterflies at Sandringham in 2022 which raised money for Tapping House, the Norfolk Hospice.

He is also creating a central focal point that works with the design mapped out by landscapers Gavin Jones, alongside a special metal structure that will be engraved with a poem selected by MNVP and Team QEH.

Nigel said: “I am really pleased to be involved in and support this wonderful garden project at The QEH. Working with the hospital teams, I hope the butterflies and other pieces of artwork will bring some comfort to families who have lost babies, and I am looking forward to firing up the forge, getting stuck in to bring this display to life.”

**Ends.**

**Notes to editors;**

For media enquires only, please contact Communications Team, [media.enquiries@qehkl.nhs.uk](mailto:media.enquiries@qehkl.nhs.uk) or 01553 613216.

For all other enquiries, please contact QEH Switchboard on 01553 613613.