

# Charity helps grieving family to remember girls

WHEN a new baby is born a parent's biggest wish is that the child will be healthy and strong.

However, every year, many families are faced with the devastating news that their child will be born with a potentially terminal illness.

For Julie and Paul Alliston, from Eastbourne, this situation sadly became a reality when their baby girl Angel was diagnosed with two life-threatening conditions, chronic lung disease and gastric reflux disease.

Although the doctors knew how to treat these conditions, baby Angel still had a number of problems which could not be diagnosed and this meant the prognosis was extremely grim.

"Although knew she had chronic lung disease and gastric reflux disease, no one knew exactly what was making her so ill," said Angel's mother, Julie.

Although Angel was very ill, through a number of operations she began to show signs of an improvement.

"She had a year of her life where, although she was still in discomfort and on constant oxygen, she was doing well.

"She actually started to take notice of



**Angel Alliston**

things and rolled over for the first time. She was a completely different girl," said Julie. However, Angel's improvement did not last long and sadly, only six weeks after showing signs that her health was improving, she contracted a blood infection and, aged only 17 months, she lost her fight for life.

Julie said, "Angel's older sister had died three years previously. You don't ever

expect one of your children to die, but for both Angel and her sister to die within a few years of each other was absolutely devastating for us."

To pay a lasting tribute to both their daughters, the family desperately wanted to purchase a memorial headstone but at a cost of more than £2,000, finding the funds was proving difficult.

But through their local children's hospice, the family heard about React, a national children's charity that helps with a wide range of requests, including the purchase of memorial headstones. Julie approached the charity and React was delighted to help the family buy a headstone in memory of the girls.

Julie said, "When we received the news we couldn't believe it. We thought how lucky we were that React would help. We have now purchased the headstone so my girls can finally have their names written and everyone can see how proud we were of them and still are. Every child deserves to be remembered. Thank you so much, it means the world."