

22.9.89 discharged from Guys

In 1990 we were expecting our second child (Emily). She had a foetal heart scan from which it was possible to tell that she did not have a serious heart abnormality. We wanted to leave London, partly because of the quality of the air and family circumstances.

2 Move to Exeter and referral to Bristol Royal Infirmary

In September we moved to Exeter, where Thomas attended St James nursery two days a week.

5.2.91 Thomas was admitted to RD&E Hospital Exeter in heart failure. Treated with medication

10.2.91 discharged from RD&E Exeter

11.7.91 first admission to Bristol, for Cardiac catheter

12.7.91 saw Dr Robin Martin, paediatric cardiologist

1.I .92 admitted to Children's hospital for catheter

At this time, Thomas was unable to walk to school (approx. 1/4 mile) he had to be pushed in a disabled child's buggy, and qualified for disability allowance and an orange badge. He did attend normal school with a lot of assistance

25.3.92. Our first appointment with Mr Wisheart at Bristol. Both my wife and myself were present. Mr Wisheart explained that Thomas required major surgery and said that he could have it in Bristol or be referred back to Guys - whichever we chose. He explained the danger of the operation he had in mind (the modified Fontan operation). He drew a diagram for us (which we still have), and noted 75-80 on it (i.e. 75-80% survival rate after 30 days). He explained more than once, and in different ways, that this was the prospect, taking care to be sure we understood what the percentages meant.

He explained that he did one of these Fontan operations a month, and had a bed available for the month in between (i.e. expecting the child to be in hospital around a month). He said that the long-term outcome was unknown, as the operation was a recent development. Mr Wisheart also discussed the option of no surgery (which he said would mean - probably - Thomas dying as a teenager) - and told us it was our decision. He asked us to go away and think about it, saying that we could see him