# Hannah’s Birth Story:

40 weeks +2 days, 25/8/2020 the day our lives changed forever.

Gary and I had completed a hypnobirthing course with Leanne and after being given all our options had chosen Melton birthing unit as our chosen hospital as we were classed as a low risk pregnancy it was a case of waiting for baby S to make his appearance.

At 40weeks and 2 days 230am I woke Gary to say I felt a bit sick, I went to the toilet and got back into bed using my practice telling myself what Leanne had taught me 'if you can go back sleep it isn't labour' so I did just that got back into bed and went to sleep thinking nothing more of it. 630am I woke up with feeling like I constantly needed to wee, I got up made a brew and went to go about my normal day. By 9am the feeling of constantly needing to go toilet was full on so I text Leanne to explain my symptoms and phoned Melton as I wasn't sure what 'labour' was. We all agreed I could hold conversation wasn't in too much pain and other than the need to wee constantly no other 'labour' signs.

I had a routine midwife appointment at 1015 as I was now over 40weeks so I phoned Gary from work to take me (the need to wee had taken over my ability to concentrate so I got him home to drive me).

When I got to the appointment, I found it uncomfortable to sit so did a strange jig in the waiting area whilst I waited to be seen. At the appointment we discussed the usual bits and my choice was still firmly melton and it was just a case of when he was going to come, I explained I'd felt sick and the constant need to wee and that I'd phoned melton but we'd all agreed for me to attend this appointment as they thought it could be early labour signs which can last days maybe weeks by this point 1030am I was having to take a few deeper than normal breathes so the midwife asked if I wanted an examination. I agreed to this but if there were no signs or very early ones she was to send me home so I could crack on and not get flustered at not knowing when he'd be here as all pregnancy we'd agreed he'd come when he's ready and therefore my 'due date' became a little irrelevant.

During the examination the midwife looked at me and said well you shouldn't be here I'd advise you call Melton and tell them I'm sending you over, you're 4cm dilated and in active labour. I was not expecting to be told this, so left the drs got in the car where gary was stressing as I'd been gone 50 minutes for a ten minute appointment and I told him what she'd said. From the course we'd taken we discussed in the car how I was feeling and agreed going to Melton at that point wasn't what we wanted to do and as I felt ok, we'd head back home. We got back Gary ran me a bath made me some toast telling me I had to eat to build my energy up ready. We sat in the bathroom having random conversation, i was on the phone to my mum laughing and joking that she had me on loud speaker at work (i was discussing things people did not want to hear) I started to get what felt like light period pains and had a slight show. We had Leanne on hand who advised to start timing the pains I was having. Gary kept re-running the bath water timing the pains and writing it all down. We phoned Melton at 1pm where again we all agreed I'd be ok to be home for a while longer yet as 'i could hold normal conversation'.

At 2pm Gary said to me he thought it was time I got out the bath and we got sorted to head over to Melton as it's a 40 minute drive for us.(i didn't know he was massaging Leanne who he had on speed dial that day) it wasn't until I got out the bath and attempted to walk down the stairs did I think OK this is a little more intense now, Gary got me some paracetamols we got in the car and played the tracks we'd used in practice in the car. We arrived at Melton for

roughly 245pm and shown to our room. We had two midwifes one student midwife who took the lead from the other lovely midwife we had for our care. They asked if they could do an examination as they felt I could still talk etc pretty well and wanted to see where I was. I consented to this, whilst telling her to not tell me where I was but to tell Gary and if i was being a 'pussy pants' they were to tell Gary to take me back home.  The midwife simply said 'you aren't going home without a baby' (i found out afterwards she told me i was a conservative 7cm dilated more likely 8cm when we arrived) she took the birth plan from Gary and instantly started filling the pool for us as we'd set our heart on a water birth.

Once the pool was ran I got in and felt comfortable and in control. Gary played the tracks through the speaker and encouraged me with my breathing techniques and also kept supplying me with drinks and nibbles to keep my energy up. We had to be monitored every 15 minutes, but every time baby S was comfortable and showing no signs of stress. The midwives other than to do these checks stayed out the way as per our birth plan requests.  They told me to keep feel for 'pop' as that would be my waters breaking. - the pop never came till it was time to push.

It got to 530-6pm and the increase in pain was now more apparent. I'm not ashamed to admit I had a momentary lapse in my ability and lost total concentration on my breathing, the pain took over me and I started to freak out. After having a stern word with myself, along with Gary and the midwife telling me to get myself together remember my practice and re focus we were back on track. Gary kept telling me i could do it and telling me positive affirmations.

We'd been told you'll just know when you need to push and I never understood that until it happened. But you do just know. I kept telling the midwife I felt like I needed a big poo and the pressure was a feeling I've never felt before, I was still waiting for this pop to happen to for my waters so didn't think it was time to push. I trusted my body and the midwives said if you feel you need a poo try push listen to what your body is telling you. So with that I started to push, at this point the pop happened I'm not sure if I'd have felt different if I was out of water but the pop didn't make a huge difference to how i felt.

I changed my breathing like we'd learnt in preparation for welcoming our baby into the world. We were extremely fortunate that we were the only people in Melton that evening so at the point of pushing we had 1 to 4 care and the midwives I'd had with me all day could focus on me and Arlo fully. People talk about the 'burn' feeling when you push (it's VERY real). So with small gentle pushes I remember the midwifes saying that's baby’s head out do you want to feel. This was one of the most amazing experiences of our lives and knowing we were so close to getting to hold him gave me the final push. At 720pm we welcomed Arlo into our world. Born in the water not a sound made straight onto my chest for me and Gary to see what we'd waited all that time for. There was no rush we stayed in the water for 30 minutes before moving onto the bed. We had decided on delayed cord clamping and a natural birth of the placenta. Arlo’s cord wasn't cut till I'd delivered the placenta at this point Gary cut this so he could be weighed, before being given to Gary for skin to skin time with his Daddy all 9lb 2oz of him. Our birth experience is nothing short of amazing, and something we are both extremely proud of. Using everything we learnt from our course we got the birth we had in mind and we're so proud!!