

# Alexander Devine's *Big Spring Knit*



## Knitting and Crochet Guide





# Who we are

Alexander Devine Children's Hospice Service is a local charity that provides specialist care and vital support to children with life-limiting and life-threatening conditions, and their families, across Berkshire, South Bucks and into surrounding counties.



**Alexander  
Devine**

John and Fiona Devine set up the charity in memory of their extraordinary little boy who in early 2006 sadly passed away at the age of eight from a rare brain tumour. Their personal experience, and subsequent extensive research, led them to realise there was a vital need for a local children's hospice service in Berkshire.

## VISION & AIMS

We deliver palliative care to children and families through a holistic approach that meets the individual needs of each child and their family.

Our vision is to provide a children's hospice service within Berkshire, South Bucks and into surrounding counties that will give children and families a choice of care and support from a skilled and dedicated team.

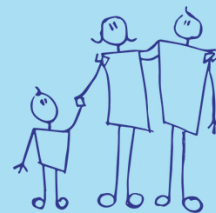


## OUR MISSION

**Reaching out  
to every child  
and family  
that needs  
us, offering  
support and  
care from  
people who  
understand**



200+



**children and families  
currently supported by  
Alexander Devine**



1,370+

**children in Berkshire alone  
with life-limiting  
conditions and research  
shows that this number is  
likely to increase by a  
further 11% by 2030**

”

*Alexander Devine  
stepped in and  
made such an  
unforgettable  
impact on our  
lives*



# About the Big Spring Knit

We are so excited that Spring is almost here, which means the launch of our third annual Big Spring Knit campaign!

Each year, incredible knitters and crafters from across our local area make knitted chicks and friends, each with a chocolate egg inside.

This year, our well known chicks and bunnies are being joined by a new sheep friend!



## So how does it work?

1

Amazing knitters and crafters get their needles together to knit or crochet as many chicks and friends as possible. These adorable knits are the heart of our campaign!



2

We appeal to local businesses, community groups and schools to donate Crème Eggs to our campaign or host a Crème Egg collection point, gathering as many Crème Eggs as possible to pop in each chick and friend.



3

When it's time to let the chicks and friends fly the nest, we provide boxes for groups or volunteers to sell across Berkshire, as well as selling the chicks and friends on our website or at local events.



## Each stuffed Knit is sold for £3!

And 100% of the money raised from these adorable knitted friends goes directly to our charity, making a huge difference to the children and families we support!







# Knit or crochet for us



Put your needles or hooks together and knit as many chicks and friends as you can manage!

We have knitting or crochet patterns you can follow. All patterns are available on our website and attached to this pack.

Some things to consider when knitting:



Each knit needs to be able to fit a Crème Egg or similar inside.



Knits can be as colourful as you please: the quirkier, the better!



You can accessorise your knits if you wish with scarves, hats, jewellery (suitable for children), etc.



Please ensure any eyes, beaks etc are stitched or secured by glue gun.

You can post your finished knits to:

**Fundraising Office, Alexander Devine Children's Hospice Service, Snowball Hill, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 3LU**

**Please make sure we receive your finished knits by 16th February 2026.**

As an alternative, we are always overwhelmed by the kindness of our supporters who go the extra mile by filling their own knits and selling them to friends, family, colleagues, or at events and places in their neighbourhood, etc.

Get in touch with our fundraising team to let us know if you plan to do this by emailing [fundraising@alexanderdevine.org](mailto:fundraising@alexanderdevine.org)



# Other ways to get involved

We are so grateful for any time and support you can spare for our Big Spring Knit, but if you would like to continue supporting our campaign once the knits are made, there are plenty of ways to do so!

## Egg Taxi Drivers

We need 'Egg Taxi' volunteers to pick up eggs in their area, kindly donated by companies, schools and other organisations, and then dropping them off at our children's hospice in Maidenhead.



## Knit Filling and Boxing

Filling and boxing thousands of chicks and friends isn't an easy task! We need volunteers to fill and prep knits in the run up to Easter. We can arrange 'filling sessions' at our hospice, or at a group near you to get our knits in top-notch condition!



## Knit Hospital

Unfortunately, some knits we receive need a few repairs from their travels. Our knit hospital needs volunteers to stitch our knits back to good health either at our children's hospice in Maidenhead or at home - sewing skills will be needed!



## Knit Deliveries

As well as picking up eggs, we need volunteers to deliver boxes of ready-to-go knits from our hospice to venues all across Berkshire. If you have a venue near you that you think would be a perfect place for our knits, please let us know!









# Chocolate egg collecting

Many of our amazing knitters often ask if they need to include Crème Eggs or equivalent in their parcel of chicks and friends. The answer is no - we are so grateful for your amazing knitting talents and would never expect you to provide the eggs too! However, if you do wish to include eggs with your knits, it is always hugely appreciated.

We appeal to supermarkets, businesses, schools and other organisations to donate or collect eggs for us. If you know of any venues that would be ideal for a Crème Egg collection point, such as your local library, coffee shops or community centres, please let us know!

We accept various types of chocolate eggs, including:

-  Cadbury's Creme Egg
-  Cadbury's Oreo Egg
-  Cadbury's Caramel Egg
-  Hershey's Cookies 'N' Cream Egg



**Each 50p\* Crème Egg is worth a £3 donation to our charity!**



5  
Crème  
Eggs

could help provide a memory box for a bereaved family, full of things to treasure forever.



35  
Crème  
Eggs

could pay for a Splash session in our hydrotherapy pool, time for a family to come together and have fun.



143  
Crème  
Eggs

would fund a day at the hospice for a child with a life-limiting or life-threatening condition, giving them the opportunities for fun and play as well as specialist care.



# Lets get cracking!



We can't wait for you to be part of The Big Spring Knit and are so grateful for your incredible support. With all your talents and the potential of how many knits you can knit, crochet or craft, just think of the difference we can make together!

Make sure to let us know of your plans and how you wish to support our Big Spring Knit. You can contact us at:



[chicks@alexanderdevine.org](mailto:chicks@alexanderdevine.org)



01628 822777



## Join our online community

We would love for you to be part of our new and exciting Knitting and Crafter's Facebook Group! This group is filled with like-minded people all knitting and crafting for a cause and is the perfect place to share patterns, show us your creations and connect with like-minded people.

To join our group, login to Facebook and search for:



**Alexander Devine's Knitting and Crafter's Group**







# Easter Chick Knitting Pattern



## You will need:

Any colour double knit wool  
Pair of needles UK Size 11 (3mm)  
Cotton wool ball/toy stuffing  
Black felt/thread for eyes  
Orange felt  
Coloured ribbon

1. Cast on 20 sts.
2. Knit 1 row.
3. Inc in 1st st, k8, inc into next 2sts, knit to end (23sts).
4. Inc in 1st st, k9, inc into next 2 sts, knit to end (26sts).
5. Inc in 1st st, k11, inc into next 2 sts, knit to end (29sts).
6. Inc 1 st at the beginning of every row until 42 sts are on the needle.
7. Cast off 11 sts at the beginning of next 2 rows (20sts).
8. Increase 1 st at the beginning of the next 4 rows (24 sts).
9. Knit 4 rows.
10. K2, then k2tog to last 2 sts, k2 (14sts).
11. Knit 4 rows.
12. K2, then k2tog to last 2sts, k2 (9sts).
13. Draw wool through rem 9 sts and pull tight.
14. With that piece of wool, sew round the edge of work to beg st leaving the cast on edge open so that the egg can be inserted.
15. Stuff the head with a cotton wool ball, sew around the neck and gather in.
16. Sew 2 eyes with fine black wool and stick or sew a small diamond shaped piece of orange felt for the beak.
17. Tie a thin piece of ribbon around the neck in a bow.
18. Insert egg and check it doesn't drop out when held by head. Add extra stitches to tighten if required.

Send your finished chicks to the below address marking your parcel 'Big Spring Knit'.  
Alexander Devine Children's Hospice Service,  
Snowball Hill, Maidenhead, SL6 3LU.

For more information email [fundraising@alexanderdevine.org](mailto:fundraising@alexanderdevine.org)  
or call 01628 822777



Please complete this tear off slip and enclose in your parcel.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

No. of chicks enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

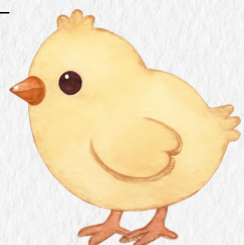
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you first hear about the Spring Appeal? \_\_\_\_\_

We would love to stay in touch with you to let you know how your donation helps support the children and their families that we care for.

Please tick this box if you would like to sign up to our newsletter ☐

[www.alexanderdevine.org/big-spring-knit](http://www.alexanderdevine.org/big-spring-knit)







# Easter Chick Crochet Pattern

## You will need:

3.5 hook (or 2.5 if you crochet loosely)  
Darning needle  
Sewing needle  
Double knit wool (any colour)  
Black felt for eyes  
Orange felt for beak  
Black thread  
Scissors  
Toy stuffing



## Head (6 rows in total)

**Row 1:** Magic ring. Into this, ch2, then 11 htr; ss to join into a circle.

**Row 2:** ch2, into first htr of row 1, do 1htr, and keep alternating 2htr, 1htr until row is completed (18 stitches in total) ss to join.

**Row 3:** ch2, 17htr, ss to join.

**Row 4:** as row 3.

**Row 5:** ch2, do 2htr together to decrease, then 1htr, then 2htr together to decrease, then 1htr, then 2htr together, then 1htr, and so on until ring meets, ss to join (18 in total, down to 12). Fill head with stuffing now.

**Row 6:** ch2. This is the first part of htr2 together to continue decreasing, of which you do 6 in total to complete head, ss to join. Leaving a long tail (to sew head and body), cut wool.

## Body

**Row 1:** Cast on, leaving long tail for sewing up. CH27 (last two form first stitch of row 2).

**Row 2:** Htr into base of first stitch, then 1htr into each ch, until the last ch into that do 2htr.

**Row 3:** ch2, into base of ch2, do 1htr. Then 1htr into each stitch of row until last stitch of row. Into that, do 2 htr.

**Row 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9:** as before, so increasing by 2htr each row. At end of row 9, fasten off, weave in end.

Holding horizontally, fold vertically down the centre. Sew up body, leaving room to get the egg in and out (but held firmly - you should be able to hold the chick by its head without the egg dropping out), and gather where the head will go so it's rounded. Sew head to body weaving in ends. Sew on beak and eyes.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

No. of chicks enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

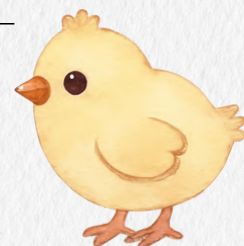
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# Easter Bunny Knitting Pattern

## You will need:

Double knitting wool    Pair of UK size 11 needles (3mm)  
Black thread for eyes, nose and mouth    Length of wool for tail  
Cotton wool ball or toy filling    Coloured ribbon

1. Cast on 21 sts.
2. Knit 1 row.
3. Inc in 1st st k1, repeat to the last st, inc in last st (32 sts).
4. Inc in 1st st, k14, inc in next 2 sts, k14, inc in last st (36sts).
5. Knit 10 rows.
6. K2tog at beg of next 4 rows (32sts).
7. Cast off 6sts at beg of next 2 rows (20sts).
8. Inc in 1st st at beg of next 4 rows (24sts).
9. Knit 4 rows.
10. K2, k2tog to last 2 sts, k2 (14sts).
11. Knit 4 rows.
12. K2, k2tog to last 2 sts, k2 (9sts).
13. Draw wool through remaining sts and pull tight.
14. With that piece of wool, sew round the edge of work leaving the cast on edge open for the egg to be inserted. Be sure to stitch the first cast on stitch to the last stitch to complete the circle at the bottom.
15. Check that the Creme Egg fits snugly inside the bunny. It shouldn't fall out when you pick up the bunny by the head.
16. Stuff the head with toy filling, sew around neck and gather in tight, fasten off.

1. Cast on 8 sts (leave a long length of wool to sew the ear to the head)
2. Knit 12 rows
3. K3, K2tog, K3 (7sts)
4. K3, K2tog, K2 (6sts)
5. K2, K2tog, K2 (5sts)
6. K2, K3tog, K1 (4sts)
7. K1, K2tog, K1 (3sts)
8. K1, K2tog (2sts)
9. K2 tog
10. Fasten off, cut wool and sew in end of yarn.
11. Fold ears in half lengthways and using the length of wool attached, sew both ears on towards the back of the head starting about 3-4 rows from the tops and meetings down centre back of head.  
*TIP - Before cutting yarn from sewing on 2nd ear, sew a few stitches through both ears lengthways and pull tight. This helps to shape the bunny's head and hold ears together.*
12. Embroider nose, mouth and eyes. Slightly pulling thread between the eyes helps draw in and shape the head. Add a tail (lazy daisy flower with a French knot centre works well)
13. Tie a ribbon around the neck.

Send your finished bunnies to the below address marking your parcel 'Big Spring Knit'.  
Alexander Devine Children's Hospice Service,  
Snowball Hill, Maidenhead, SL6 3LU.

For more information email  
[fundraising@alexanderdevine.org](mailto:fundraising@alexanderdevine.org)  
or call 01628 822777

Please complete this tear off slip and enclose in your parcel.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

No. of bunnies enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Easter Bunny Crochet Pattern



## You will need:

2.5 or 3.5 hook (smaller if you crochet loosely)  
Darning needle  
Sewing needle  
Double knit wool (two colours)  
Black wool for nose and eyes  
Scissors  
Toy stuffing  
Tiny pompom and white thread

## Head (6 rows in total)

**Row 1:** Magic ring. Into this, ch2, then 11 htr; ss to join into a circle. Pull magic ring tight and weave/sew in before you go any further.

**Row 2:** ch2, into first htr of row 1, do 2htr; into 2nd htr of row 1, do 1htr, and keep alternating 2htr, 1htr until row is completed (18 stitches in total), ss to join.

**Row 3:** ch2, 17htr, ss to join.

**Row 4:** as row 3.

**Row 5:** ch2, do 2htr together to decrease, then 1htr, then 2htr together, then 1htr, and so on until ring meets, ss to join (18 in total, down to 12). Fill head with stuffing now.

**Row 6:** ch2. This is the first part of the 1st htr together to continue decreasing, of which you do 6 in total to complete head, ss to join. Leaving a long tail (to sew head and body), cut wool.

## Body

**Row 1:** Cast on, leaving long tail for sewing up. CH25 (last two form first stitch of row 2).

**Row 2:** Htr into base of first stitch, then 1htr into each ch, until the last ch: into that do 2htr.

**Row 3:** ch2, into base of ch2, do 1htr. Then 1htr into each stitch of row until last stitch of row. Into that, do 2 htr.

**Row 4, 5, 6, 7, 8:** as before, so increasing by 2htr each row. At end of row 8, fasten off, weave in end.

Holding horizontally, fold vertically down the centre. Sew up body, leaving room to get the egg in and out (but held firmly - you should be able to hold the bunny by its head without the egg dropping out), and gather where the head will go so it's rounded. Sew head to body weaving in ends. Sew on a pompom for a tail.





### Ears (Make 2)

**Row 1:** ss (leaving a tail 30cm max to sew with). ch8 (ch 7&8 form first stitch of row 2).

**Row 2:** htr into each of the stitches of row 1 (you should have 7 stitches).

**Row 3:** ch2. htr into base of chain2; htr into each stitch (8 in total).

**Row 4:** ch2, htr 2 together, htr the three middle stitches, htr2 together.

**Row 5:** ch2, htr 2 together, htr, htr 2 together.

**Row 6:** ch2, htr together all the stitches into a cluster, and then fasten off and weave in.

When you have made both, fold each one in half vertically and using the tail of the wool, sew the edges together to form a long, pointed ear shape. Then sew the ears to each other. Don't cut the wool, you can use it to attach the ears to the head.

### Bow Tie (essentially a tiny 5 stitch by 7 row scarf)

**Row 1:** ss, ch6 (last two chain stitches form first stitch of row 2).

**Row 2:** htr into each of chains (5 stitches in total).

**Row 3:** ch2, htr, htr, htr, htr.

**Row 4:** as row 3.

**Row 5, 6, 7:** The same. Finish off, weave in. Make a bow tie either by wrapping wool round the middle or sewing it into a ruched/gathered shape. Leave a tail; you'll need this to sew the bow tie on.

Send your finished bunnies to the below address  
marking your parcel 'Big Spring Knit'.

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# Easter Sheep Knitting Pattern



## Abbreviations:

YO = yarn over needle = bring yarn to the front of the work  
PSSO = Pass slipped stitch over.

## You will need:

Cream or white DK wool and another colour for the face  
Small amount of black wool for eyes and mouth  
Small amount of toy filling  
Size 3 ¼ knitting needles

## To make bobble:

**Step 1** - YO, knit into next stitch but do not transfer from left needle, YO, knit into same stitch, YO, knit into same stitch again and transfer stitch to right needle. (These 6 stitches will form the bobble.) Turn.

**Step 2** - Slip 1 purlwise. Knit next 5 stitches. Turn

**Step 3** - Repeat step 2

**Step 4** - K2 tog x 3. Turn

**Step 5** - Slip 1 purlwise. K2 tog.PSSO

## BODY and HEAD

Cast on 23 stitches

**Rows 1** K11, bobble in next stitch, K11. This bobble will form the tail.

**Rows 2 – 26** Knit

**Rows 27 – 28** Cast off 4 stitches at the start of each row. (15 stitches)

**Row 29 – 32** Knit

**Row 33** K5, bobble in next stitch, K3, bobble in next stitch, K5. These bobbles will form the ears.

Change to another colour yarn for a different coloured face if desired.

**Rows 34 – 36** Knit

**Row 37** K2tog, Knit to last 2 stitches, K2tog (13 stitches)

**Row 38** Knit

**Row 39** K2tog, (K2, K2tog) x 2 (10 stitches)

**Row 40** K2tog, Knit to last 2 stitches, K2tog (8 stitches)

**Row 41** Repeat row 40. (6 stitches)

Cut yarn and gather tightly through remaining stitches.

**TO MAKE UP:** Stitch the underside of head, down the front of the body and a short way along the bottom. Stitch the back of the lamb and a short way along the bottom. Leave a gap in the bottom of the lamb for the egg to be inserted (making sure that it will be held securely).

Embroider two black stitches for the eyes and add a nose and a smiley mouth. (Suggested way is to insert the yarn through the inside of the head. The ends can then be tied and tucked into the head space.) Gather the neck slightly and use a couple of stitches to secure the head into the position shown in the photo. Finally add ribbon for decoration if required.

Send your finished sheep to the below address marking your parcel 'Big Spring Knit'.

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# Easter Sheep Crochet Pattern

## You will need:

- Abbreviations (UK crochet terms):  
HTR = Half treble  
DC = Double crochet
- Cream or white DK wool and another colour for the face  
Small amount of black wool for eyes and mouth  
Small amount of toy filling  
Size 3.5mm crochet hook

### To make bobble:

Yarn over and pull through the next stitch as usual (3 on hook)  
Yarn over and pull through last 2 loops on hook (2 remaining on hook)  
Yarn over and pull through the same hole (4 on hook)  
Yarn over and pull through last 2 loops on hook (3 remaining on hook)  
Yarn over and pull through the same hole (5 on hook)  
Yarn over and pull through last 2 loops on hook (4 remaining on hook)  
Yarn over and pull through the same hole (6 on hook)  
Yarn over and pull through last 2 loops on hook (5 remaining on hook)  
Yarn over and pull through the 5 loops on the hook

### BODY and HEAD

Chain 20. (This should measure approx. 11 cm)  
**Row 1** Starting in the 2<sup>nd</sup> chain from the hook, DC 9, bobble in the next stitch, DC 9. (This bobble forms the tail.) (19 sts) Chain 2. Turn  
**Row 2** HTR in each stitch across the row. Chain 2. Turn.  
**Rows 3-9** Repeat row 2 (x 7).  
**Row 10** Repeat row 2 but only chain 1 at the end. Turn.  
Work should now measure approx. 6 ½ cm.

**Row 11** DC 16. Chain 1. Turn  
**Row 12** DC 13. Chain 1. Turn.  
**Rows 13 -14** Repeat row 12 (x2)  
**Row 15** DC 4, bobble in next stitch, DC 3, bobble in next stitch, DC 4. Chain 1. Turn. (These bobbles form the ears.)  
Change to another colour yarn for a different coloured face if required.  
**Row 16** DC 13. Chain 1. Turn.  
**Row 17** Decrease, DC to last two stitches, Decrease (11 stitches)  
**Row 18** Repeat row 17. (9 stitches)  
**Row 19** Repeat row 17. (7 stitches)  
Cut yarn, gather last row tightly to form nose.

**TO MAKE UP:** Stitch the underside of head, down the front of the body and a short way along the bottom. Stitch the back of the lamb and a short way along the bottom. Leave a gap in the bottom of the lamb for the egg to be inserted (making sure that it will be held securely). Embroider two black stitches for the eyes and add a nose and a smiley mouth. (Suggested way is to insert the yarn through the inside of the head. The ends can then be tied and tucked into the head space.) Gather the neck slightly and use a couple of stitches to secure the head into the position shown in the photo. Finally add ribbon for decoration if required.

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No. of sheep enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

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