

Annual Report

1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020

Because Childhood Can't Wait

Home
Start

Support and friendship
for families

Home-Start
Telford & Wrekin



**BBO Herefordshire
BBO Shropshire**
where will your journey take you?



The project is funded by The National Lottery Community Fund and the European Social Fund.

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Mission Statement

Home-Start offers support, friendship and practical help to parents with young children in local communities throughout the UK and with British Forces in Germany and Cyprus.

Home-Start offers a unique service. We recruit and train volunteers who are usually parents themselves to visit families with at least one child under 5, at home, and offer them informal, friendly and confidential support.

Home-Start Telford & Wrekin is a charitable company limited by guarantee which is governed by Memorandum and Articles of Association. A Board of Trustees is responsible for the Governance and management of the charity and employ a team of staff to recruit and train a team of volunteers who deliver support to families. New Trustees are recruited to the Board after consideration of an application form, references and Trustee Declaration and are subject to relevant checks. Trustees receive their initial training through an induction process where they meet with the Chairperson and staff and are provided with a range of information regarding the Charity including a full set of Policies and Procedures. All Trustees are offered the opportunity to attend induction training with Home-Start UK as well as on-going opportunities for both in-house and Home-Start UK in-service training.

This report was approved by Trustees on 5th November 2020

Signed: 

Catherine Landau, Chair, on behalf of Trustees

Introduction

Home-Start Telford & Wrekin has been supporting local families for 31 years this year; we provide a core home-visiting service, self-esteem courses and parent and child groups. The core service of Home-Start is to provide weekly home visits to young families under pressure to give parents the support they need to give their children the best possible start in life. We work with carefully selected, vetted and trained volunteers who are matched with parents to provide friendship and emotional and practical support.

Chair's Report

For the year ended 31st March 2020

Home-Start Telford & Wrekin continues ...

This year Home-Start Telford & Wrekin has met fortunate, changing and challenging circumstances.

Fortunate, in terms of retaining and gaining funding from local partners in the community, and national sources for projects which enabled us to work with more families referred for support. Doubly fortunate in our extraordinary volunteers and staff, without whom the service would not have been able to continue, particularly towards the end of the year when lockdown brought further isolation to everyone. They have continued to be committed, loyal, and have resourcefully risen to the challenges of maintaining contact that came with the pandemic emerging in 2020, where physical, emotional and psychological isolation for many of our families has become more acute. My thanks go to them and Trustee colleagues – all of whom have continued to give their unfailing support to keep the Home-Start services running.

Since the start of Home-Start in Telford & Wrekin 31 years ago we have continued to support our local families, including during – and despite – the Coronavirus pandemic. Up until the emergence of lockdown and the last weeks of the reporting year, the core home-visiting service had continued, alongside self-esteem courses and parent and child groups for young families under pressure. We also adapted and increased our virtual contacts to maintain this support as much as possible within the government social distancing and safety guidelines.

The year saw changes in our Trustee team with two new Trustees joining the Board – including myself – each of whom bring skills, experience and willingness that will greatly help us as we move into the changing times ahead. We also continued to have volunteers join us who have provided support to families, both by direct contact, raising funds, helping run family groups and more.

Of course, Home-Start's existence and success continues to be challenged by being reliant on sufficient funding year on year, and going further into 2020 we are not complacent to the fact that there will be extraordinary pressures on all funding sources – for charities in particular – which are being stretched to limits not seen in our lifetime with the continuing pandemic. It also means that new ways of working will remain with us, but I am confident that between the Trustee Board, management advisors, and our passionate staff and volunteers we can prepare and respond in order to continue to ensure that families in the local area have access to a support system which is caring, flexible and proactive, and supporting volunteers to, in turn, support families.

I have been truly humbled by the continued commitment shown by our funders, volunteers, staff, and families, both past and present, without whom Home-Start family support in Telford & Wrekin would not have been possible, and would like to express my respect and sincere thanks to you all.

Catherine Landau
Chair

Family Facts 2019/20

- **Total families supported: 131**
- Families who received home-visiting support: 30
- Chatterbox, Playing Together and 'Me Time' Groups support: 87
- Something More self esteem course: 9
- Teenage Something More course: 5

Further facts about families who received home-visiting support:

- Number of children under 5 supported: 45
- Number of children over 5 supported: 17
- Average length of home-visiting support: 6 months
- Families where mental health issues were identified: 12

Referral source of families receiving home-visiting support:

- Health Visitors: 8
- Self referrals: 8
- Children's Centres: 3
- Teenage Parenting: 3
- Family Nurse Partnership: 3
- Carers' Centre: 2
- Brookside Big Local project: 1
- Midwife: 1
- Housing: 1

Manager's Report

For the year ended 31st March 2020

2019/20 was another busy and successful year with the continuation of our HLC Children's Centre work, completion of the first year of a new Children In Need project working with teenage parents, an extension of our BBO volunteer development programme and the start of a new Lottery programme. We also agreed two new contracts with the NHS—one for work on perinatal smoking cessation to improve numbers of mothers who are smoke free at delivery, the other to manage volunteers offering peer support to breastfeeding mums. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19, we were unable to start these projects in March as originally planned.

PR firm, Zen Communications Ltd kindly sponsored us for a year—greatly increasing our profile, improving our networking and spearheading a successful online fundraising campaign to meet a shortfall in our budget.

The HLC Children's Centre work has continued to go well with excellent attendances and volunteers are very much included in running our groups.

The Children In Need project supported teenage parents through home-visiting and a 'Something More' course. It became clear that a weekly 'Something More' style group, less fast paced than the full course, would be very beneficial to teenage parents and would be more appropriate than home-visiting and the full course. We therefore contacted Children In Need and asked if we could change the format of the project to a weekly group and a reduced number of home-visiting places; this was agreed and the group had been meeting for a month before lockdown. The teenage parents have kept in touch with each other through their own WhatsApp accounts.

Another casualty of Covid-19 was a new 'Something More' course which was nearly half way through; we set up a WhatsApp group and have kept in touch with participants through this—we will start the course again from the beginning when it becomes appropriate to start face-to-face groups once more. Our HLC groups also closed when lockdown was introduced.

Isolation is always a big focus of our work and we attended an isolation conference run by the Council, agreeing to become isolation champions; this work has become increasingly important as lockdown impacts on vulnerable families and we hope to gain funding for more work in the field.

The pandemic is likely to have a long-lasting impact on vulnerable families and on charitable finances so we anticipate a challenging time in 2020/21!

Finally, thank you to all those who make our work possible—our families, funders, staff, trustees and volunteers, you're brilliant!

Caia Bryant-Griffiths

Public Benefit Report

For the year ended 31st March 2020

The following is a report illustrating how our work this year has related to our constitutional objectives:

The objects for which Home-Start is established are:

- a) To safeguard, protect and preserve the good health, both mental and physical of children and parents of children.

In order to meet this object all volunteers and staff are vetted and comprehensively trained (including statutory sector safeguarding training). Volunteers are carefully matched, supported and supervised. Families are supported with a range of issues and our work is aimed at promoting wellbeing – both mental and physical. Our National Lottery funded Parents Matter project supports families with issues of isolation, mental and physical health problems and domestic abuse. Home support visits are supplemented by ‘Me Time’ groups where mothers’ experiencing low mood/mental health issues can meet and talk. The format for these groups includes exercises to improve mental health and self esteem and talks by relevant professionals. Our Children in Need funded Teenage Project provides home-visiting support to teenage parents and their babies in their own homes as well as helping them to get out and access appointments and community facilities. It also involves a weekly, term time support group. The Allen Lane Foundation funding enables us to deliver Something More Self Esteem Courses for vulnerable women.

- b) To prevent cruelty to or maltreatment of children.

As above plus we maintain effective working relationships with other professionals in the sector. We attend safeguarding and family support meetings, plus the manager sits on the Safeguarding Children Board.

- c) To relieve sickness, poverty and need amongst children and parents of children.

We signpost and accompany families to access specialist financial advice plus we help them think about ways to maximise their income. We access grants for items such as fridges and cookers, plus have accessed holidays and summer days out for some families. Families are supported with medical issues and appointments and a healthy lifestyle is encouraged. Our Building Better Opportunities project provides the opportunity for volunteers to gain skills to enhance their employability.

- d) To promote the education of the public in better standards of child care within the area of Telford & Wrekin and its environs.

Our volunteer preparation courses and the support for families address this object. Our Children in Need funded project, Big Hopes, Big Future, addressed families needs associated with children’s school readiness including household routines and developmental milestones. Groups and courses held at Hadley Learning Community offer support, information and training to enhance parents’ skills.

The charity’s trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

Co-ordinator's Report

For the year ended 31st March 2020

Following recent events, it's hard to cast my mind back to life before lockdown however I do recall beginning the year concerned about a funding shortfall.

Fortunately due to a healthy financial position brought forward from the previous year, we managed to weather the storm and thanks to some very successful funding bids, fundraising projects and events as well as PR support from Zen, things soon improved. This meant as well as continuing our core work supporting families on a 1-1 home visiting basis, we were able to go ahead with some new projects.

For me that meant having the opportunity to realise a long held ambition to hold a Something More Course specifically for teenage mums. Becoming a mother for the first time is an exciting but challenging time for any of us but to do that at such a young age, when perhaps practicalities such as not living in your own home, being in a stable relationship or in a secure career can make it doubly difficult. Many felt very isolated as their peers' lives continued down one path and their own lives had taken a very different course. It was so rewarding to see these women become more confident, with improved communication skills and higher self-esteem and the biggest bonus was that they had become such close friends. After a short break, we were able to continue meeting regularly with a Me Time group again aimed at teenage parents. We still regularly discussed topics covered in the Something More course but Me Time is a slower paced group with the content decided by the group themselves meaning we could plan sessions to include craft activities or pampering sessions, career support or guest speakers from other agencies. I would like to thank our volunteers Lauren, Elysia and Linda for their support with these groups.

We had also just begun another Me Time Group in South Telford but unfortunately it was put on hold after only a few weeks due to lockdown. Hopefully, we will be able to continue with this before too long. I would like to thank volunteer Carol who came along to one session to teach us how to knit! One mum had never tried before and was thrilled to produce her first square. I am a prolific producer of squares but Carol promises to teach me about the wonders of following a pattern so I hope we can resume soon!

Having mentioned specific volunteers for their support with groups, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all our volunteers. Visiting your families each week offering emotional and practical support, sharing the highs and lows, offering advice and guidance at a pace that parents need is still as crucial as ever and we massively appreciate all your hard work and dedication. A huge thank you to you all.

Vikki Thomas

A Taste of Home-Start Support

Family 1466—a single mum with 3 young children and no family or friends nearby, having moved to Telford from another part of the country. Our Family Support Worker, Donna, placed a home-visiting volunteer with the family who provided important emotional support and together they have helped access food and essential household items, outdoor toys, children’s clothes, a trip to Wonderland and packed lunches for school holiday times.

Mum has continually thanked Home-Start for all the extra support we’ve provided.



Chatterbox and Playing Together Groups - weekly term time groups for parents with pre-school children held at Hadley Learning Community, with craft activities, song time, story time and healthy snacks.

Families have talked about how they see their children grow in confidence and become ‘nursery-ready’. Parents have been surprised when their children have enjoyed new tastes at snack time including eating fruit which they didn’t eat before. Parents have commented on how the groups help alleviate feelings of isolation and that they enjoy the opportunity to have quality time with their children.

The groups have helped volunteers develop too: 2 mums have completed the Home-Start Volunteer Preparation Course, one has begun a work placement within the groups to gain experience as well as completing a Level 2 training course and the other will begin a placement as soon as it’s possible.



Objectives for 2020/2021

Develop a new strategic and business plan.

Access secure long term funding for core service and future development.

Develop digital systems and move towards a paperless system

Recruit and train enough new volunteers each year to meet service needs.

Develop new areas of work to meet local needs

Strengthen the Board of Trustees



Who were our supporters?

For the year ended 31st March 2020

Home-Start UK

for legal guidance, quality resources,
training, policies, Quality Assurance etc

130 families
(home-visited,
Something More
Courses and
family groups)

Volunteers

Sandra, Marg B, Carol,
Marg C, Carrieann, Katie,
Richard, Pat, Lauren,
Elysia, Belinda, Caroline,
Dave, Hayley, Claire,
Bernice, Courtney, Liz,
Vanesa, Pat, Wendy,
Leeanne, Kibra, Virginia,
Julie J, Jenna, Angela, Mo,
Donna, Julie R, Tina,
Linda, Nic and Tanya.

Management Committee

Cathy Landau, Trustee, Chairperson
Colin Branagh, Trustee, Chairperson (resigned
16/07/2020)
David Thomas, Trustee, Hon. Treasurer
Mel Ward, Trustee
Linda Sabini, Trustee
Katie Shoosmith, Trustee
Su Saxelby, Trustee (resigned 06/07/2020)
Gayle Desouza, Health Representative
Cllr Jacquie Seymour, Telford & Wrekin Council

Staff Team

Caia Bryant-Griffiths, Manager
Vikki Thomas, Co-ordinator
Donna Sayer, Family Support Worker
Heidi Carter, Administrator & Project Co-ordinator
Naomi Calabrese, Charity Administrator

Professional Services

Independent Examiner—Hilary Payne

Bankers—CAF Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ
Unity Trust Bank plc, Nine Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2HB

Insurers—Zurich Insurance plc, The Zurich Centre, 3000 Parkway, Whiteley, Fareham,
Hampshire, PO15 7JZ

Accountant—Stephanie James

Financial support

For the year ended 31st March 2020

Sincere thanks to all the organisations and individuals who supported Home-Start Telford & Wrekin over the past financial year, including our fundraisers **Vikki Thomas, Lucie R and Claire H.**

Aga Rangemaster
The Asda Foundation
Baron Davenport's Charity
Helen Bowes
Charity Car
Children in Need
Co-op Local Community Fund
Councillors' Pride Fund 2019 (Cllr Paul Watling)
European Social Fund
Roy Evans
The Lady Forester Trust
John Fowler
Highfield Luncheon Club
The Albert Hunt Trust
Ironbridge & Severn Gorge Lions Club
The Allen Lane Foundation
Edgar E Lawley Foundation
Lawley Village Community Chest
Madeley Town Council
The Millichope Foundation
The National Lottery
Newport & District Running Club
Nuffield Gym, Telford (member donations in memory of Denzil Martin)
Shana Roberts / Brookside Big Local
Rotary Club of Wellington
St Christopher's Community Café
Tortoise Day Nursery
The Mrs Wingfield Charitable Trust
Dr Gavin Wood
Zen Communications

Gifts in Kind:

Admaston Methodist Church—children's toys
Asda—Easter eggs
Buckatree Hall Hotel—meeting room provision
Christmas Smile—Christmas gifts for children
Circus Starr—circus tickets
Hadley Women's Fellowship—children's knitted items
Ironbridge & Severn Gorge Lions—15 x Christmas food hampers
Lichfield Diocese Mother's Union- family holidays
Morrisons—children's toys
Project Linus—patchwork quilts
Rotary Club of Wellington—summer day trip tickets for families
Severn Valley Railway
David Thomas, MD Warranty Support Services Ltd—IT support
Zen Communications Ltd -PR support

Contact us

Home-Start Telford & Wrekin

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E-mail: homestarttelfordandwrekin1@gmail.com

Website: www.homestarttelfordandwrekin.co.uk

Facebook: Home-Start Telford and Wrekin

Twitter: [homestarttw](https://twitter.com/homestarttw)

Other useful contact details:

Chief Executive, Home-Start UK

The Crescent, King Street, Leicester, LE1 6RX

T: 0116 464 5490

E: info@home-start.org.uk

Charity Commission

T: 0300 066 9197

W: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>

Companies House

T: 0303 123 4500

W: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/companies-house>

Home-Start Telford & Wrekin

Registered Charity Number: 1148269

Company Limited by Guarantee Number: 7004506