

Annual Report

April 2023 – March 2024



**HOME
START**
Hampshire

Helping turn tough days
into better tomorrows.

Chairs Report

It has been a challenging year for Home-Start Hampshire. The economic climate has meant that income on previous years has reduced, which has led to the Board making some very difficult decisions to reduce our costs, which has resulted in a reduction in staff and therefore in the services that we have been able to provide.



We totally acknowledge that this has meant instability and uncertainty for our staff and Volunteers.

Sadly, we have had to say goodbye to some staff through redundancy and also through staff having left, particularly in the Havant, Gosport and Fareham and Meon Valley areas. I am pleased to report that we have now recruited in this area and have welcomed both an Area Manager and a Project Coordinator who will cover those areas. We now have a core group of very experienced staff who have continued to provide a service the children and families in all six of our areas.

We continue to place our reliance on our wonderful volunteers, of whom seven are Trustees. During the past year the Trustees have stepped up to become more involved in front line work carrying out some of the work previously done by the CEO and the senior leadership team. We have increased our Board Meetings from bi-monthly to monthly, to monitor our activity, financial situation and income.

During this difficult period our loyal volunteers have not only continued home-visiting and supporting groups but are also involved in fundraising, administration and triage of families waiting for support.

Post COVID, like many other charities it has become more difficult to recruit volunteers and we have run fewer preparation courses as a result. However, I am pleased to report that we have recently seen an increase in enquiries from those who are interested in becoming volunteers.

Without our volunteers we could not function, and we cannot thank them enough. Their commitment is a lifeline for families struggling to cope with life's challenges, especially during the current difficult time. We would also like to thank all our supporters throughout the year.

I have been Chair since our merger of six Home-Starts in 2018 and before that, six years as Chair of Home-Start Rushmoor and Hart. Having given notice of my intention in January 2024, I stepped down as Chair at our AGM on 24th July. I feel very privileged to have worked with Home-Start for these 12 years, having had previous involvement with the charity as a Local Authority Funder in my pre-retirement role of Service Manager for Children's Services in the North-East of Hampshire.

I haven't quite finished though, as I am delighted to remain on the Board as Safeguarding Trustee, a role I have held whilst Chair. I am pleased to say that we have elected two Co-chairs, Paul Rann and Fiona Keyzor, both current Trustees.

Introducing our Co-Chairs

We are delighted to have been voted in to the role of Co-chairs for the charity; Lynn has provided exceptional leadership over the years. We have been through a significant period of change in the last 2 years, culminating in us becoming a smaller charity to help ensure our sustainability.

The strategy and plans that we have in place for the future are ones that we have supported as part of the Trustee Board and from this we are committed to these which means it will be "business as usual" for our staff, volunteers and supporters.

Looking ahead our purpose remains the same, which is to support families wherever we can. The numbers we can support will be different in the coming year as we adjust to lower levels of funding and therefore staff to support our work but will still anticipate supporting over 300 families in this period.

Finally, it is great news that Lynn is remaining on the Trustee Board as our safeguarding trustee where her vast experience is so valuable to all of us.

Our Impact

In 2023-2024 Home-Start Hampshire supported 598 families, totaling 891 children.

Our work was supported and made possible by 132 volunteers who donated their time, energy and skills. Volunteers donated over 14,500 hours during this period.

Our support to families included home-visiting, group support, and seasonal family events, such as Christmas parties, summer days out and family social days.



Journey of Change

Support offered to families is as unique as they are.

We work with each family to develop a support plan that is tailored to their individual circumstances. Using the Family Star Plus from Outcomes Star, we work with families across up to ten outcome areas. In 2023-24, 89% of supported families made progress in three or more outcome areas and on average, families made positive progress in 5.3 outcome areas.

- how I feel
- home & money
- our family routine
- friends & community
- work
- *my children's emotions*
- *my children's health*
- *my children's learning*
- *my children's behaviour*
- *keeping my children safe*

The outcome areas that saw the most positive progress over the past twelve months were; how I feel, friends & community and my children's emotions.

Treasurers Report

2023-24 has been a very challenging year. The economic climate means that funding and fundraising has been difficult and income on previous years reduced by half. As a result we have restructured to reduce our cost base, ensuring we are sustainable in each of our six areas. In addition this protects our reserves and provides time for our funding strategy to be successful.

We continue to evaluate the income streams and strive to diversify our income in line with our funding strategy.



Income Statement	
Income	£287,170
Cost of Sales	£395,832
Gross Deficit	(£108,692)
Operating Expenses	£42,720
Net Deficit	(£151,411)

Balance Sheet Position	
Net Assets	£239,344
Current Year Earnings	(£151,411)
Restricted Earnings	£91,087
Unrestricted Funds	£299,668
Capital & Reserves	£239,344

As at March 2024, restricted reserves amounted to £49,226 for use in the financial year 2024-25 with a further £46,451 as designated reserves for business contingency. In addition, there is £4,000 unrestricted funds to be allocated to a specific contract in Rushmoor and Hart.

Unrestricted reserves at the end of the financial year 2023-24 were £139,668 and remain in line with our financial management policy and procedure.

Our Families

"When I spoke to you in utter despair, you said to me 'let me think about how I can help you'. I cannot describe how much impact that had on me at the time...that feeling that people care. And you always followed through with your word."

"Thank you all for being so welcoming and lovely. I was feeling a bit nervous to attend but I'm glad I did and got to meet more of your lovely volunteers."

"We really enjoy coming to the group, it gives a routine... at times I don't know what I would do without the support from the group, especially when I am having a bad week."

"The Wellbeing Group is a relaxed, friendly environment for mums who aren't having the easiest of journeys to come together with their children and take a pause out of their routines. There are volunteers to watch the children, whether newborn or toddlers. This allows mums to discuss a topic such as mindfulness, dealing with anxiety or feelings of appreciation and then get stuck into a fun arts and crafts activity. The group is a safe space for open discussion, allowing friendships to grow and people to feel listened to. I'm grateful to have been recommended, it's given me a lot of confidence both socially and as a mum".



2023-2024 Summary

Home-Start Hampshire has continued to provide the core service of volunteer led emotional and practical support to families with children aged 0-11 years across Hampshire via 1-1 support in the home. This has been enhanced by projects, some of which have been county wide where others have been location specific.

Projects include our ongoing work with the Royal Navy Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC) in Gosport, work with the Armed Forces Covenant in Rushmoor and Hart and a project in the New Forest focused on mental health for children and young people.

We have welcomed new volunteers across all areas and continued to work with our existing volunteers to expand the opportunities available to them to meet their goals as a volunteer. This has included providing mental health and first aid training and exploring opportunities outside of our traditional volunteer roles; we now have a volunteer supporting us with group registrations, input of other volunteers' expenses and so much more.



We have also been hosting regular in-person volunteer meetings, which has seen firm friendships form within our volunteer groups and given us the opportunity to celebrate our volunteers even more.

Hampshire County Council Connect 4 Communities, Household Support Fund

Over the past 12-months we have been in receipt of a Household Support Grant from Hampshire County Council Connect 4 Communicates. The grant has enabled us to work with our families, via our volunteers to identify need to and provide immediate relief to families experiencing financial hardship, whilst working with the families to explore longer term options. We have done this through grocery vouchers, support with utility payments and the provision of other essentials such as clothing and white goods.

Groups

Groups continue to be a significant part of our work; we currently operate five family groups across the county, all of which are led by an experienced member of staff supported by trained volunteers. The groups offer families a safe space to meet others in the local area, with children able to play with their peers and parents able to meet new people and receive focused support on specific topics.

Our group in Rushmoor, which to date has been funded as part of our National Lottery Mental Health project in partnership with Home-Start Northwest Hampshire offers families a 12-week programme to support their wellbeing and has received positive feedback from families, volunteers and our referral partners.

Seasonal Events



We have held seasonal events for families across the county, including Christmas Parties, a trip to the Farm to see Father Christmas in the New Forest and a series of summer outings in partnership with other community organisations in the Weywater area.

These events offer families and volunteers the opportunity to come together in an informal setting and enjoy being a family.

We have also, with support from partners such as Waitrose and John Lewis, been able to provide families with gifts, including presents for children and hampers of food. As always, these activities have been supported by our network of trained volunteers.

Over the Summer we held our annual event at Bucklers Hard in the New Forest in partnership with The Villagers Open Air Shakespeare Group and we look forward to working together in 2024 and beyond.



Our Referral Partners

"The support offered is invaluable, working together we are able to offer complete wrap around support so often needed by families"

"The wellbeing group is a lifeline to us as a team. To know we are referring parents to a trusted source of mental health and peer support, allows us to feel we are doing the best to support families and children within our community. As many as one in five women develop a mental illness the first year after birth, and if not given the space to talk, reflect and open up then this impacts on their children. As health visitors we bring awareness to this, but groups like these put in the action and time into helping these families be more stable again."

"It is an invaluable service and would be devastating to families if it ceased to exist."

"Your help is crucial."

"It's great to be able to work effectively with your staff and volunteers to provide whole support for families."

"Brilliant in so many ways. The volunteers are well matched to the families. It helps families transition from Family Support to having no support in a gentler and gradual way rather than support suddenly coming to an end. For socially isolated families who are struggling to maintain the gains made after FSS support, Home-Start is crucial."



Our Funders

Home-Start Hampshire is reliant on funding to operate; we are fortunate to have support from a range of different grants and trusts, including national organisations and parish and town councils. We work with local businesses and other organisations that believe in what we do and support us with financial donations.

We are also supported by regular donors and our Community Teams; volunteers who work tirelessly to raise awareness and fundraise in the communities in which we operate.

- Alton Community Choir
- Alton Lions
- Alton Round Table
- Alton Town Council
- Alton Townswomen's Guild
- Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust
- Aviva
- Babcock
- Barker Mills Foundation
- Barnaby's
- Beaulieu Beaufont Foundation
- Bishops Waltham Parish Council
- Bishops Waltham Society
- Botley Parish Council
- Calleva Foundation
- Citizens Advice Winchester District
- Co-op Local Community Fund
- Corhampton & Meonstoke PC
- Curdridge Parish Council
- Denmead Parish Council
- Droxford Parish Council
- Durley Parish Council
- East Hants Lottery
- Edward Gostling Foundation
- Fareham Lottery
- Farnborough Rotary
- Gosport Community Lottery
- Groundwork UK
- Hampshire County Council
- Hancaw Fabrications Ltd
- Hart Lottery
- Havant Borough Council
- Headley Down Community Church
- Hermes Lodge
- HIWCF
- Home-Start UK
- Hook & Odiham Lions Club
- Inner Wheel Club of Hamble Valley
- John Lewis
- Larcomes Financial
- Martlett Trust
- Medstead Fete Committee
- Mogan & Mogan
- Much Loved
- Neighbourly Community Fund
- New Forest Mummers
- Odiham Cottage Hospital
- Priors Lodge
- Reta Lila Howard Foundation
- Richard Bond Lodge

Our Funders Contd...

- RNRMC
- Rotary Club of Rushmoor
- Rushmoor Borough Council
- Rushmoor Lottery
- Russell Family Charitable Trust
- Shedfield Parish Council
- Sovereign Network Group
- St Columbia Church
- St Peter's Bishops Waltham Parochial Church Council
- Stubbington WI Stitch and Knit Group
- Swanmore Parish Council
- Swanmore Women's Interest Group
- The Alice Ellen Cooper Dean Charitable Foundation
- The Ardwick Trust
- The Hedley Foundation
- The IMP Trust
- The Meon Valley Lions Club
- The Richard Kirkman Trust (Mogan&Mogan)
- The Swaythling Housing Society t/a Abri
- University of Chichester
- University of Winchester
- West Meon parish City Council
- Whitehill Town Council
- Whiteley Town Council
- Wickham & Knowle Parish Council
- Winchester City Council



Our Volunteers



"I am so glad that I decided to take the plunge and start volunteering. Whilst we are there to improve the lives of our families, I can honestly say that I get so much from it too."

"Thank you for the opportunity of helping the local community."

"Very valuable experience and rewarding to help others."

"Home-Start support is a life saver for some families."

"I have enjoyed the many varied families I have worked with. I have also enjoyed getting to know other volunteers and members of staff at Home-Start Hampshire."

"It has been challenging working remotely with families - and that makes it so good when you meet face to face. I have thoroughly enjoyed my work and the levels of support given."



To find out more about the volunteering with Home-Start Hampshire, please watch our Volunteer Video, produced by students from The 6th Form College Farnborough:

<https://home-starthampshire.org.uk/our-new-volunteer-recruitment-video>

Head of Services Report

Over the past twelve months we have remained committed to providing support to families across Hampshire and are delighted to have supported 598 families and 891 children during this period, made possible by our dedicated volunteers, skilled staff team, referral partners and wider network of supporters.



Like so many other charities, the impact of the cost of living crisis continues to be felt by us and our beneficiaries and the funding and fundraising climate is more challenging than ever. We have needed to make some difficult decisions this year and as a result said goodbye to members of our staff team, which is never easy. By making the tough decisions we have been able to continue operating across all six areas, albeit at a reduced level, and improved our long-term position.

It's not been an easy year; however, when I reflect on the past twelve months my overwhelming feeling is one of pride. I am proud to be part of the team at Home-Start Hampshire and incredibly proud of the work we do to support families. Reading the feedback from our families brings to life the journey of change they experience with us, and the feedback from our volunteers highlights the positive impact volunteering can have on volunteers themselves. To know that our referral partners value our contribution and see us as filling a gap in provision for families reinforces our place in the sector and inspires us to continue working to ensure we are able to serve our communities for many years to come.

I am optimistic for the future; our revised structure and strong team put us good position for success and together, we look forward to continuing to work to improve the lives of children and their parents.

Home-Start Hampshire
www.home-starthampshire.org.uk

Registered Charity: 144661

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