

# HOME-START SOUTHERN OXFORDSHIRE

England & Wales · Charity number 1113941

## Details

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Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	<a href="#">05443274</a>
Registered	2006-04-27
Register	<a href="#">View on the Charity Commission register</a>

## Contact

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Address	Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire 197 Broadway Didcot OX11 8RU
Phone	01235511152
Email	<a href="mailto:admin@homestartso.org">admin@homestartso.org</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk">www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk</a>

## Activities

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**Objects:** The objects of the Charity are:(a) to safeguard, protect and preserve the good health, both mental and physical, of children and parents/carers of children;(b) to prevent cruelty to or maltreatment of children;(c) to relieve sickness, poverty and need amongst children and parents/carers of children;(d) to promote the education of the public in better standards of child care within the area of southern Oxfordshire and its environs.

**Activities:** Home-Start is a voluntary home-visiting scheme for families with pre-school children who may be under stress and experiencing difficulties. Volunteers offer regular support to the families in their own homes.

## Classification

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- **How:** Provides Human Resources, Provides Services
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, Disability
- **Who:** Children/young People, People With Disabilities

## Geography

- **Area of benefit:** SOUTHERN OXFORDSHIRE AND ITS ENVIRONS.
- Oxfordshire

## Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£254,211	£196,210	-	-
2024-03-31	£195,019	£169,018	-	-
2023-03-31	£137,596	£167,299	-	-
2022-03-31	£121,365	£138,793	-	-
2021-03-31	£143,463	£124,275	-	-

## Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
ABIGAIL HELEN ELIZABETH REYNOLDS		2023-03-15
Caroline Couldrick		2022-06-10
Christine Grandison		2024-03-13
GILL BODEY		2013-07-30
HELEN CHRISTABEL CONWAY		
Janet Rimmer		2024-12-11
Laura Greatrex		2025-06-11
Robert Fraser		2025-05-19

**HOME-START SOUTHERN OXFORDSHIRE**

England & Wales - Charity number 1113941

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# Accounts

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**HOME  
START**  
Southern  
Oxfordshire



**Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire**

**Annual Report & Financial  
Statements 2024-25**

**Supporting families in Oxfordshire since 1989**

**[www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk](http://www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk)**



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# ABOUT US

We work with families who are going through challenging times, and who have a child/children aged five years or under. We recruit and train volunteers to spend time with families, aiming to increase their confidence and independence by:

- Offering friendship, support, and practical assistance, with a flexible approach to take account of different needs
- Developing a trusting relationship with the family, to establish an understanding of their circumstances
- Reassuring parents that difficulties in bringing up children are not unusual, and encouraging enjoyment in family life
- Encouraging parents' strengths, emotional wellbeing and parenting skills, for the ultimate benefit of their children
- Encouraging families to widen their network of relationships and to effectively use the support and services within the local community.

In the year 2024 – 2025, we also supported families through a paid worker, and two groups, described later in this report.

We are an independent charity within the Home-Start federation, with our own board of trustees, and responsible for our own fundraising. We have a legal agreement with Home-Start UK, the charity that centrally supports local Home-Starts through influencing policy, supporting quality improvement, brokering national partnerships and working to enhance our impact for families.

# THE AREA WE COVER

Providing support across South Oxfordshire  
& the Vale of White Horse



## Families supported by location



Abingdon 23	Cholsey 2	Sutton Courtenay 4
Benson & Crowmarsh 6	Didcot 90	Thame 3
Berinsfield 2	Drayton 1	Wallingford 4
Blewbury & Harwell 39	Faringdon 9	Wantage & Grove 19
Chalgrove 3	Henley 2	Watchfield & Shrivenham 2
Chinnor 1	Steventon & The Hanneys 1	Watlington 2

**153  
referrals**

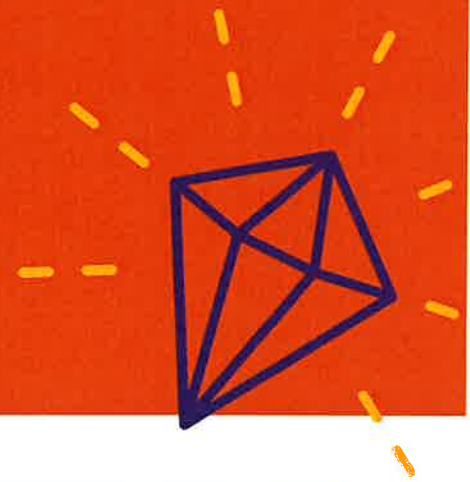
Referrals for our support continue to rise and have increased by **21%** over the last year.

Referral sources include: self referrals (29), Health Visitors (28), Social and Family Support Services (16), education professionals (15), other health services e.g. GP, midwifery & mental health (15), community organisations (4).



# OUR IMPACT

Because Childhood Can't Wait



**213**

families supported

**350**

children supported

**291**

children aged 0-5 years

**59**

children aged over 5 years

**13**

families supported by our Family Support Worker

**78**

families supported by our home-visiting volunteers

**122**

families supported at our groups

***“Home-Start is such a fantastic idea, and I would recommend any parent that is struggling to reach out.”***

***- Supported family***

**51** valued volunteers supporting families!

**80%**

of parents felt better able to cope with their child's mental health



**Our outcomes show that of the families we supported with a home-visiting volunteer over the last year...**

**88%**

of parents felt more involved in their children's learning and development

**81%**

of parents felt less isolated

**76%**

of families experienced improved wellbeing

**75%**

of families felt better able to cope with parenting in the earliest years

*“Having a Home-Start volunteer, to help with my twins, made a huge difference to how I coped postpartum. Without the 2 hours every week to catch up on tasks, the reassurance received, and the new friend I gained with our volunteer, my mental health would have suffered.”*

*- Supported family*



# CHAIR'S REPORT

## DOREEN MCNULTY

I am pleased to present this year's annual report. It gives an excellent representation of Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire's work.

We started the year with a new 3-year Strategic Plan in place. One of our early objectives was to adopt a new governing document, as our existing documents required minor updates to bring them into line with Home-Start UK. We hope to complete this during 2025.

We submitted our Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan to Home-Start UK as required, in April. Our Manager, Linda, developed this with a small group of trustees who continued to meet to further the work set out in the plan.

Once again, I am proud to mention that at our AGM in September 2024 we celebrated our 35-year anniversary of Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire. We had as guest speaker the then CEO of Home-Start UK Peter Grigg. Peter congratulated us on reaching this outstanding milestone achievement.



***"[My volunteer] has been an absolute staple to our week and has helped me in so many positive ways. I almost owe my life to her. I suffered with severe anxiety and agoraphobia to the point I did my shopping online. Now I go to groups, we go for walks, I do my shopping in the supermarket and I feel like such a better person mentally and physically."***  
***- Supported family***

In May 2024, we submitted our first self-assessment (on 'Protecting Families') to Home-Start UK, as part of the ongoing Quality Assurance process. We continued to work on other standards throughout the year, and there is more detail on these later in this Annual Report.

Towards the end of the year Colin, our long-standing Treasurer, let us know that he would be retiring in March. We started the long search for a replacement. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Colin for his outstanding contribution to the work of the charity. Colin has steered us through many challenges with his professionalism and integrity. We cannot thank him enough and wish him a very happy retirement!

Linda also advised us that she planned to retire in June 2025, so we began the recruitment process for her role too. My thanks go also to Linda, whose year was personally difficult with serious health issues. Even during this time Linda did her utmost to ensure everything in the organisation ran as smoothly as possible. I am pleased to say Linda has made an excellent recovery.

Thank you to the wonderful staff team and the amazing volunteers. The volunteers who work so closely with families, giving their time, care, life experiences and empathy. Volunteers should be really proud, that they can, and do, make a significant difference to the lives of the families they support!

My final thank you is to my colleagues on the Trustee Board, who bring a wealth of expertise, professionalism and compassion. I would like to thank Gill Bodey, Vice Chair, for her enormous contribution to the charity's smooth running. In December 2024, I am pleased to say we welcomed a new trustee, Jan Rimmer. Jan comes from a teaching background and brings lots of additional knowledge, including specialist dyslexia training. She has also been a Home-Start home-visiting volunteer.

# TREASURER'S REPORT

## COLIN CAMPBELL



The scheme had an overall surplus of £58,000.94 in the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

We are pleased to recognise the fantastic support from our largest donors:

- The Henry Smith Charity of £48,100.00;
- Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust of £38,086.00;
- BBC Children In Need of £30,000.00;
- The National Lottery Community Fund of £27,409.58

We have received funding from many town and parish councils, as well as grant-giving trusts, organisations and individuals. We thank them all. Expenditure was above budget, but this was partly due to additional staffing being recruited to provide the increased level of service available from new sources of funding.



Our reserves policy is to hold sufficient reserves to cover potential liabilities if the scheme was to close, plus anticipated funding requirements for the forthcoming year, plus a general reserve of no more than 12 months of annual income.

We had reserves at the financial year end totalling £193,662.03.

This is represented by two reserves:

- a designated reserve of £41,000 - to cover a Pension Trust liability and potential liabilities from redundancy payments and closing down costs.
- a free reserve of £152,662.03, which represents about 8.6 months of the budgeted expenditure for 2025/26.

Once again, we offer our sincere thanks to all the organisations, individuals and trusts that have supported us throughout the year, together with all our dedicated staff and volunteers.

In particular, our thanks must go to Faye, whose fundraising endeavours have been outstanding this year, enabling us to receive a record level of income in 2024/25 and funding in 2025/26 sufficient to meet the budget.

However, the uncertainties of funding from 2026/27 onwards and the increasing challenges, as we try to maintain the much higher level of service we are supplying, means it would be prudent to maintain this higher level of reserves.



# MANAGER'S REPORT

## LINDA CHEONG



This year has been a year of growth. We started this financial year in a brighter place financially from the previous year and we have been able to build and manifest some very exciting developments throughout the year. Faye, our Development Manager has been successful in several funding bids, including multi-year core funding from Children in Need, the National Lottery Community Fund, Step Change Fund and Home-Start UK's partnership with SGN.

We have also worked more closely with our sister Home-Starts in Oxford and Banbury, Bicester & Chipping Norton. We were successful in a collaborative bid to be part of the Oxford Health 0-19 tender and for the first time we have received funding from health services towards our home-visiting work.



Collaboratively, we were also successful in receiving funding from Active Oxfordshire to promote YouMove, which has given us the opportunity to play a pivotal role in their target of rolling out the YouMove card to families with under fives. The card gives access to free or low cost activities at leisure centres and local attractions.

Again, this year there was greater demand for our service and we received 153 referrals, up from 126 the previous year. Of the 153 referrals we received we had to decline 42, due to either no volunteer capacity, no staff capacity, lack of engagement from the family or the family declining support. More than 60 of the referrals we received were for families with increased needs, either in Child Protection Plan (CP), Child in Need (CIN) or Team Around the Family (TAF).

# 81%

**of parents reported improved confidence in managing their daily life**

*“I just want to say thank you. Having a volunteer has made such a huge difference. We go with her to Rhyme Time now and R has come out of his shell - he’s talking more and doesn’t scream around strangers. I’m getting out for a walk every day.”*  
**- Supported family**

In May, we said farewell to Lydia, who retired from being a Family Co-ordinator after 5 years of working with us. We like to encourage and allow growth and personal development within our team and Kelly, who was our Administrator and Group Worker, expressed a wish to become a Family Co-ordinator. We provided training, and with support from the rest of the team, Kelly has successfully taken up this role. This move within the team meant we needed to recruit a new Administrator and we were overjoyed when our previous Administrator Gill applied again!

Our volunteers are the backbone of all that we do and we certainly would not be able to offer the support we do without them. We recruited a Volunteer Development Co-ordinator, Janet, who had recently retired from a career within the NHS. The role, focusing on recruitment and stewardship of our volunteers, is already proving successful as we have trained 17 new volunteers this year, compared to 9 the previous year. We now have 51 volunteers. Unfortunately, 7 volunteers retired this year.

In March we sadly said good bye to Gill Jones, who had worked with us for a number of years as a Family Support Worker. We also said goodbye to Janet, who decided to embrace retirement.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our volunteers, from our Board of Trustees to our Home-Visiting and our Group Volunteers. Also, a huge thank you to the staff team who have worked hard and gone above and beyond to support the charity during a turbulent year with staff illness and changes.



## FAMILY STORY

We began support for Mum in November 2024. Mum had self-referred as she was really struggling with her mental health, isolation and looking after her two children. At the start of her support Mum said:

*“I have severe mental health problems. Depression and anxiety. My children are the only thing keeping me alive. My daughter has suspected autism, however we have been on the waiting list for an assessment for over 4 years. Her behaviour is very challenging on a daily basis. Financially, I am struggling. My UC does not cover my monthly outgoings anymore. Since moving areas and moving doctors I feel like all of my mental health history and support has just been forgotten about as I seem to be getting nowhere. I don't know anyone in this area now I've moved, so I don't leave the house unless I do the school runs. I'm extremely isolated and lonely.”*

We matched Mum with one of our trained home-visiting volunteers. Our volunteer's weekly visits have helped Mum improve her self-esteem and increase her confidence. After 7 months of support, Mum recently told us:

*“My volunteer, R, is absolutely amazing!! She has helped me leave the house, access medical services and food banks which I would never have done by myself! Before, I literally didn't leave the house. I even got my food shopping delivered. I didn't even go in my own garden! Now ...sometimes... I do go to the shop and for a walk with the children by myself. And we are always in the garden :) My mental health is still pretty awful but with the help of Home-Start I have actually contacted the medical centre to start getting it sorted. I'm very appreciative of the help they have all given me”*

**MAKE A MEANINGFUL  
IMPACT IN YOUR  
COMMUNITY**



**FIND OUT MORE  
ABOUT  
VOLUNTEERING  
FOR HOME-START**



# VOLUNTEER Q&A



## **Why did you choose to start volunteering?**

After facing my own challenges as a parent, I was incredibly fortunate to receive support from another dad. Family dynamics have evolved dramatically over the years, with men now playing a much more active role in childcare and running the household, sometimes even without a partner. My hope is to offer the same vital support I received, creating a positive impact for dads, children, and families across the board.

## **Describe your volunteering experience in three words?**

Purpose, helpfulness and accomplishment.

## **What is the most rewarding part of your volunteering role?**

It's truly rewarding to know you're making a tangible difference with every visit. Sometimes, it's as simple as lending an ear over a cuppa, helping with everyday tasks like folding laundry or doing the washing up, or just pushing a child on the swings at the local park. For some families, your visit might be the only adult company they've had in days. These small acts of presence and kindness can mean the world.

## **What would you say to someone who was thinking about becoming a Home-Start volunteer?**

We, as humans, inherently feel better when we help others. Sacrificing some of my time for Home-Start has brought immense personal benefit, while simultaneously supporting other families. In turn, if you choose to volunteer with Home-Start, it could make a profound difference for you, just as it has for me, and for even more families in our community.

# VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT

In September 2024 we were awarded funding from the Step Change Fund to recruit a Volunteer Development Co-ordinator. This new role was introduced to help us recruit, train and support our volunteers.

Janet attended events at libraries in Didcot, Wallingford and Wantage and schools in Grove and Didcot. Janet also attended events at the leisure centres in Abingdon and Thame, often teaming up or networking with partners such as Active Oxfordshire, SODC Active Communities Team and Reducing the Risk.

Our January Volunteer Preparation Course was one of our most well-attended courses. We also attracted sufficient interest from Janet's buzz-creating hard work to be able to hold another course after Easter. This role also gives us the capacity to hold more volunteer meet-ups, organise further training and ensure our volunteers are taken good care of.

Thank you to the Step Change Fund!

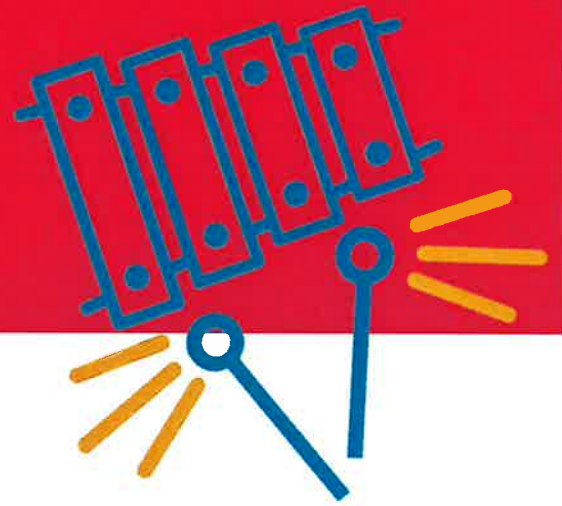
**“I really enjoyed the course and didn't want it to end! I'm going to miss seeing everybody each week.”**



**The heart of  
Home-Start**

# OUR GROUPS

We held two weekly groups this year which supported **122** families.



## Home-Start Parenting Group

This is a small group for referred families who would find attending larger groups difficult. It allows for support tailored to the needs of the individual. Support is provided on topics such as child development, behaviour, diet, weaning, the importance of play, budgeting and meal planning. The aim is to reduce isolation, improve parent-child relationships and increase self-esteem.

## CASE STUDY

A young mum who was living in supported accommodation with a baby boy was experiencing low self-esteem and anxiety. She felt unable to access public transport and was feeling anxious about attending any group. Although initially shy and withdrawn, she attended the group every week. She soon began speaking to the other attendees, took onboard advice and information and even referred the group to some of her housemates! Her confidence grew and she began helping others, referring them to the community larder and offering to meet them there, and even sharing tips for batch cooking! She also began travelling using the bus and the train! She and her son have now moved into their own place near to family!



*“The staff are really helpful and friendly. It's been a real lifeline as I was finding being home alone difficult and most other groups are too expensive”*



*“As the first of our friends to have children, groups like Home-Start have been vital for my mental health. Without it, I wouldn't know anyone going through the same things as me right now.”*  
*- Parent who attended group*



## Home-Start Baby & Me

First Babies group started the year at Ladygrove Community Centre and then relocated to the District Community Centre at Great Wester Park in Didcot; a new, modern playroom with lots of parking.




We re-launched the Group as 'Baby & Me' - no longer just for first-time parents. This meant we could welcome back parents who previously attended with their first child. This group continues to offer a safe place for babies to play and give parents and caregivers an opportunity to connect, improving isolation and wellbeing.

We welcomed Kath from Didcot Baby Monday who attended 6 sessions and gave advice around feeding, sleep and self-care. We also began holding twins sessions on the first Tuesday of each month. Our two group volunteers, Gill and Helen, continue to be a great support, warmly welcoming parents, carers and babies.

# FAMILY SUPPORT WORKER

During 2024-25 we continued to deliver 1-to-1 support via our Family Support Worker, Gill, in family homes across South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse. The support was flexible and varied to meet the individual needs of the family. On a few occasions we were able to work with children within their school setting.

Support was particularly centred around mental health, providing cognitive behavioural therapy, and family nurturing, using the Family Links Programme. Isolation, low confidence and low self-esteem were also areas of need. Practical help sourcing funds for items such as cookers, washing machines and other equipment was also given by our Family Support Worker, as well as signposting and making referrals to foodbanks and community larders. Working alongside many other agencies and professionals and attending multi-agency meetings, further ensured that the needs of the families were met.



**“Thank you for being a massive part of our lives for the past year, it has made a huge difference to us, and we would not be where we are today without you!”**

**– Supported family**

**“I just wanted to say thank you for everything you have done for us. It really has made a difference to our lives. I feel so much more in control of my life and I am able to manage my anxiety a lot better, thanks to your help, support and understanding.”**

**– Supported family**



# OUR HIGHLIGHTS



Anonymous Coffee Co. in Henley raised £180 through donating a percentage of the sales from its Christmas 'Good Will' coffee blend! Thank you!



St Peter's Didcot raised £505 at their quiz night for Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire! We gave a talk, entered our own 'Home-Starters for 10' team and even enjoyed some fish and chips! A lovely night - thank you!



Medlock Grove Didcot Light Up chose us as its charity to support during its Christmas light display! We attended the switching on of the lights on 1 December and they raised more than £700 for us! Amazing! Thank you!



Tesco in Henley donated new school uniforms and essential household supplies for us to distribute to families in need! Thank you!

Thank you to Tesco in Didcot and local charity, Play2Give, who each donated new toys at Christmas to help families struggling over the festive period.

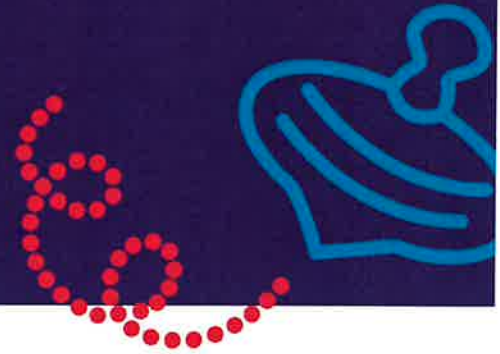


The inspirational girls at Didcot Girls' School took part in the school's First Give Project, with one team choosing us as its charity to support through a cake sale and teachers race! Thank you for your support!

We had a great day at the Abingdon Air & Country Show! Thank you to everyone who came by our stall, donated, picked up a leaflet or took one of our free children's books!



# A BIG THANK YOU!

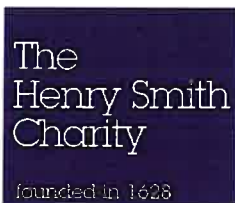


Thank you to all the grant-giving trusts and foundations; Town and Parish Councils including Didcot Town Council, Abingdon Town Council, Wantage Town Council and Henley-on-Thames Town Council; and individual donors who have generously helped fund Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire this year!

SUPPORTED BY



Listening Learning Leading



Thank you to all the families, volunteers past and present, and supporters who donate their expenses, make donations in lieu of birthdays, fundraise and/or make regular donations to the charity often boosted by Gift Aid.

We wouldn't be able to support and help struggling families without people like you!





If you would like to  
donate to or  
fundraise for  
Home-Start Southern  
Oxfordshire, we'd  
love your support!



[homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk/fundraise](http://homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk/fundraise)

BECAUSE  
CHILDHOOD

# TRUSTEES & STAFF

## APRIL 2024 - MARCH 2025



### TRUSTEES

**Doreen McNulty**, Chair  
**Colin Campbell**, Honorary Treasurer  
**Gill Bodey**, Vice Chair  
**Helen Conway**  
**Caroline Couldrick**  
**Abi Reynolds**  
**Christine Grandison**  
**Jan Rimmer** (from December 2024)



### STAFF

**Linda Cheong**, Manager  
**Anita Davidson**, Family Co-ordinator  
**Lydia Davison**, Family Co-ordinator  
**Gill Jones**, Family Support Worker  
**Faye Golding-King**, Development Manager  
**Kelly Summers**, Administrator (until June 2024), Family Co-ordinator (from June 2024) and Group Worker  
**Gill Rose**, Administrator (from June 2024)  
**Janet Porter**, Volunteer Development Co-ordinator (from September 2024)

**Independent Examiner:**  
**Sue Scane, CIPFA**



## HOME-START SAFEGUARDING

Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults, and expects all trustees, staff, volunteers and members to share this commitment. Our policies on safeguarding children and adults are available on our website.

## PUBLIC BENEFIT STATEMENT

The Trustees have a duty to report on the scheme's public benefit. They have taken into account the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in planning the year's activities. This report demonstrates how Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire fulfils its charitable objectives.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE

We are proud to be part of the Home-Start network. As well as giving us wider publicity and access to specialist support, our membership ensures we are assessed under the Home-Start Quality Assurance Standard.

This encompasses ten areas of work: Protecting Families; Governance & Leadership; Family Support; Operating a Home-Start; Money & Funding; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; Quality & Impact; Staff & Volunteers; Brand, Communication & Digital; Partnership & Influence.

We are currently submitting self-assessments of our practice in the above areas, for monitoring by Home-Start UK, and all four submitted so far have been approved.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is exposed, in particular those relating to finances and operations, and believe that arrangements are in place to mitigate those risks.

## Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

(A company limited by guarantee)

# Charity information and reference details

<b>Registered Charity Number</b>	1113941
<b>Registered Company Number</b>	05443274 (England and Wales)
<b>Trustees (Directors)</b>	The Trustees who served during the year are listed on page 24
<b>Staff</b>	The staff who served during the year are also listed on page 24
<b>Registered office</b>	197 Broadway, Didcot, Oxfordshire. OX11 8RU.
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk">www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk</a>
<b>Independent examiner</b>	Susan Scane CIPFA 151 Lydalls Road, Didcot, Oxfordshire. OX11 7EA
<b>Bankers</b>	CAF Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, West Malling, Kent. ME19 4JQ,



# Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

Registered Charity No: 1113941

Company Registration No: 05443274

<b>Governing document</b>	Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is a company limited by guarantee (No. 05443274) and a registered charity (No. 1113941) governed by its articles of association. Previously Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire operated as charity number 1006230. The existing charitable company was formed on 4 May 2005.
<b>Directors and trustees</b>	The Directors of a charitable company stand in place of the Trustees for the purposes of Charity Law, and throughout the above pages of the Annual Report and Financial Statements are collectively referred to as the Trustees. The Trustees who served during the year are listed on page 24.
<b>Charitable objects</b>	<p>The charitable objects of the Charity are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- to safeguard, protect and preserve the good health, both mental and physical, of children and parents/carers of children;</li><li>- to prevent cruelty to or maltreatment of children;</li><li>- to relieve sickness, poverty and need amongst children and parents/carers of children;</li><li>- to promote the education of the public in better standards of child care;</li></ul> <p>within the area of southern Oxfordshire and its environs.</p>
<b>Activities</b>	The Charity fulfils its objects by means of the activities listed on page 2
<b>Achievements and performance</b>	For a description of our achievements and performance during the year, and our impact, see pages 3 to 21
<b>Report of the Chair of the Trustees</b>	See pages 6 to 7
<b>Treasurer's report and reserves policy</b>	See pages 8 to 9
<b>Manager's report</b>	See pages 10 to 11
<b>Public benefit statement, quality assurance, safeguarding and risk management</b>	See page 25
<b>Plans for the future period</b>	<p>The charity seeks to assist increasing numbers of families through home-visits in the coming period, undertaken by its network of trained volunteers. In addition, we aim to help families access groups and resources in their local communities, either providing these ourselves or through close links with other like-minded organisations.</p> <p>We are aware that some current multi-year funding grants will come to an end from 2026/27 onwards, and we are making contingency plans to cover projected funding shortfalls.</p>



# Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

Registered Charity No: 1113941

Company Registration No: 05443274

## Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

Company and charity law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of the surplus or deficit of the Charity in that period.

In preparing these financial statements the Trustees have:

- Selected suitable accounting policies and applied them consistently;
- Made judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Stated whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- Prepared the financial statements on a going-concern basis.

The Trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the Charity has an appropriate system of controls, financial and otherwise. They are also responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the detection and prevention of fraud and other irregularities.

This report is prepared in accordance with the special provisions of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small charitable companies.

This report was approved by the Trustees on 1 October 2025 and signed on its behalf, by:



Robert Fraser

Treasurer and Company Secretary



# Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

Registered Charity No: 1113941

Company Registration No: 05443274

## Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire ('the Charity'), for the year ended 31 March 2025, which are set out on pages 31 and 32.

### Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

As the Charity's Trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act'). The Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Act and that an independent examination is needed. Having satisfied myself that the Charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Act
- follow all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act; and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### Independent examiner's statement

The Charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Susan Scane CIPFA  
Independent examiner

Date: 24.9.25

151 Lydalls Road,  
Didcot, OX11 7EA



# Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

Registered Charity No: 1113941

Registered Company No: 05443274 (England and Wales)

## INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR 12 MONTHS TO 31 MARCH 2025 - £.p

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2025 Total funds	2024 Total funds
<b>INCOME</b>				
Active Oxfordshire YouMove	10,584.58		10,584.58	
Albert Hunt Charity	6,000.00		6,000.00	
BBC Children In Need	30,000.00		30,000.00	4,157.00
Didcot Powerhouse Fund			0.0	5,518.00
Didcot Town Council	5,250.00		5,250.00	8,000.00
Henry Smith Foundation	48,100.00		48,100.00	47,200.00
J A Pye Charitable Settlement	5,000.00		5,000.00	5,000.00
National Lottery Community Fund	27,409.58		27,409.58	
OCF Better Mental Health Fund	3,520.33		3,520.33	
Oxford Health NHS (0-19)	38,086.00		38,086.00	
Oxfordshire Community Foundation	4,256.00		4,256.00	8,033.00
POD Charity Grant			0.0	22,994.74
SGN Fuelling Futures: Home-Start	4,302.00		4,302.00	
South Oxfordshire District Council	8,227.00		8,227.00	8,227.00
Step Change Fund		16,500.00	16,500.00	
The Beeching Trust	4,166.67		4,166.67	
The Tambour Foundation			0.0	25,000.00
Veterans Foundation		7,500.00	7,500.00	22,500.00
Small Council Grants (under £5k)	7,190.00		7,190.00	6,095.00
Other Donations & Fundraising	28,118.80		28,118.80	32,294.57
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>230,210.96</b>	<b>24,000.00</b>	<b>254,210.96</b>	<b>195,019.31</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
AGM	242.67	33.82	276.49	501.47
Computing	4,322.65	602.42	4,925.07	4,845.95
Home-Start UK Consultancy	4,016.10	559.70	4,575.80	3,306.76
Insurance	1,124.61	156.73	1,281.34	1,469.09
Rent / Service Charge	10,969.78	1,528.80	12,498.58	11,676.59
Room Hire	1,925.30	268.32	2,193.62	1,099.93
Staff Salaries	136,089.55	18,966.08	155,055.63	134,156.49
Staff Training	294.02	40.98	335.00	712.33
Staff Travel & Expenses	3,027.77	421.96	3,449.73	3,000.00
Stationery / Photocopier / Post / Telephone	3,331.47	464.29	3,795.76	3,419.11
Volunteers Travel & Expenses	1,749.76	243.86	1,993.62	1,896.33
Volunteers Training	375.73	52.36	428.09	340.00
Other Expenditure	4,740.62	660.67	5,401.29	2,593.97
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>172,210.02</b>	<b>24,000.00</b>	<b>196,210.02</b>	<b>169,018.02</b>
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>58,000.94</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>58,000.94</b>	<b>26,001.29</b>
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>				
Total funds brought forward	135,661.09	-	135,661.09	109,659.80
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<b>193,662.03</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>193,662.03</b>	<b>135,661.09</b>



# Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

## BALANCE SHEET

31 March 2025

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2025 Total funds	2024 Total funds
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>				
Debtors and Prepayments	847.57	-	847.57	412.10
Cash at Bank and In Hand	244,841.91	-	244,841.91	171,940.75
	<u>245,689.48</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>245,689.48</u>	<u>172,352.85</u>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>				
Creditors, Accruals & Payments in Advance	<u>52,027.45</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>52,027.45</u>	<u>36,691.76</u>
<b>NET ASSETS/(LIABILITIES)</b>	<u>193,662.03</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>193,662.03</u>	<u>135,661.09</u>
<b>FUNDS</b>				
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>				
- Designated reserve to cover budgeted deficits in forthcoming years			-	-
- Designated reserve to cover Pension Deficit / Redundancy / Closing Down			41,000.00	41,000.00
- Free Reserves			152,662.03	94,661.09
<b>Restricted funds</b>				
Restricted funds			<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>			<u>193,662.03</u>	<u>135,661.09</u>

For the financial year ending 31 March 2025 the Charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

- The members have not required the Charity to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476; and
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on 1 October 2025, and signed on their behalf by:



Robert Fraser  
Treasurer and Company Secretary



# Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

Registered Charity No: 1113941

Registered Company No: 05443274 (England and Wales)

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### 1. Accounting policies

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime under the Companies Act 2006 and on an accruals basis.

### 2. Company status

The company is a company limited by guarantee with no share capital. The liability of members in the event of winding up is limited to £1.

### 3. Related party transactions

There were no related-party transactions during the year requiring disclosure under the Companies Act 2006.

### 4. Creditors and accruals

Included within creditors are amounts relating to grant income received in advance for the following financial year and accrued service charge costs relating to the year ended 31 March 2025 but invoiced after the year end.

### 5. Exemptions

The company has taken advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing these accounts.

### 6. Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern nor any significant areas of uncertainty that affect the carrying value of assets held by the Charity.

### 7. Trustees remuneration and expenses

No trustees, nor any persons connected with them, have received any remuneration or expenses from the Charity during the year.

### 8. Staff costs

The aggregate payroll costs of staff employed during the year were £155,056 (2024: £134,156)

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2025	2024
Charitable activities	5	5
Fundraising & Communications	1	1
Support services	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>

All seven members of staff were part-time. The full-time equivalent number of staff was 5 (2024: 5)





**HOME  
START**

**Southern  
Oxfordshire**

Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

197 Broadway

Didcot

OX11 8RU

01235 511152

**f HomeStartSouthernOxfordshire**

**[www](http://www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk)  homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk**

Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is a company limited by guarantee,  
registered in England and Wales Number 05443274  
Registered Charity Number 1113941

**HOME-START SOUTHERN OXFORDSHIRE**

England & Wales - Charity number 1113941

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# Accounts

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# HOME START

Southern  
Oxfordshire



## Annual Report 2023/24

Supporting families in Oxfordshire since 1989

[www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk](http://www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk)

## About us

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We work with families who are going through challenging times, and who have a child/children aged five years or under.

We recruit and train volunteers to spend time with families, aiming to increase their confidence and independence by:



**Offering friendship, support, and practical assistance, with a flexible approach to take account of different needs**



**Developing a trusting relationship with the family, to establish an understanding of their circumstances**



**Reassuring parents that difficulties in bringing up children are not unusual, and encouraging enjoyment in family life**



**Encouraging parents' strengths, emotional wellbeing and parenting skills, for the ultimate benefit of their children**



**Encouraging families to widen their network of relationships and to effectively use the support and services within the local community.**

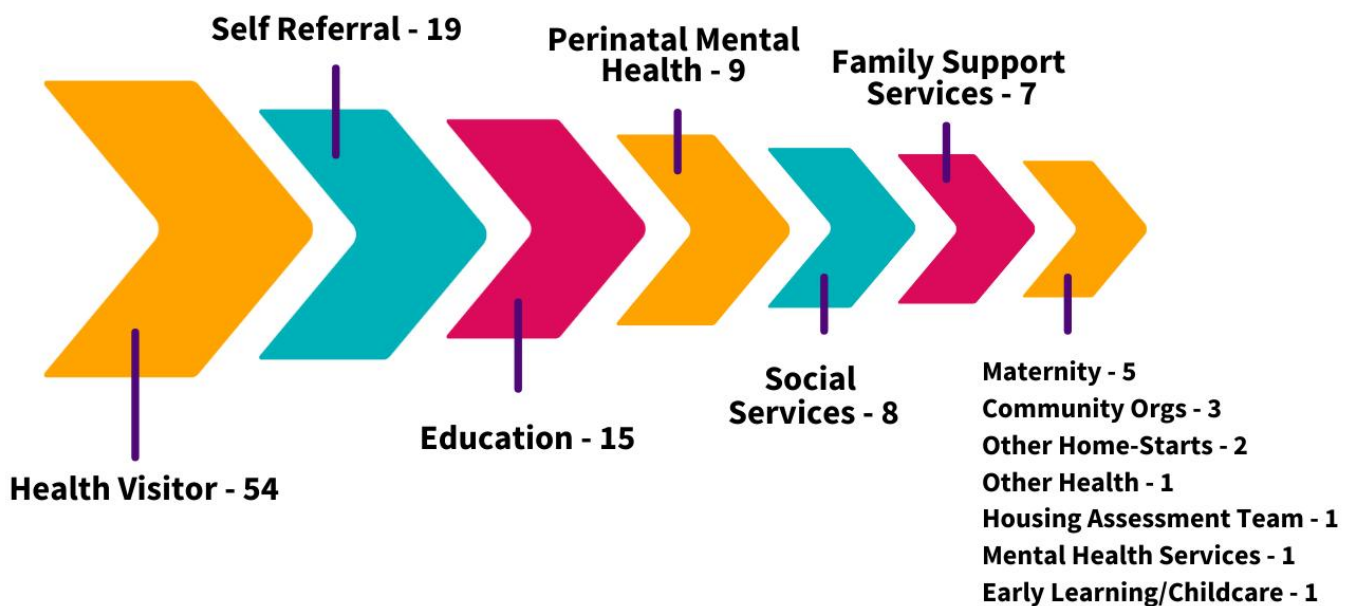
We also support families through a paid worker, and two groups, described later in this report.

We are linked with Home-Start UK, a national organisation which sets standards for the way we work, but we are an independent registered charity and responsible for our own fundraising.

## Our year at a glance



## Where our 126 referrals came from



# The Area We Cover



## Referrals received by district council ward



## Families supported by district council ward



## Our Impact

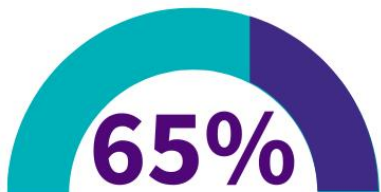
Our outcomes show that of the families we supported with a home-visiting volunteer over the last year:



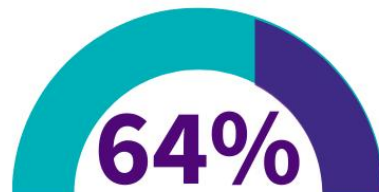
had improved outcomes for being involved in their children's learning and development



felt less isolated



felt better able to cope with parenting in the earliest years



had improved mental wellbeing

## In their words

"I received excellent support at a time when I felt very let down by mental health services. My volunteer, Debbie, has been incredibly helpful. With no family in the area, and not being able to drive, I felt very isolated. Her weekly visit helped me to do our weekly shop, allowed me to attend therapy and gave me someone to talk to. I couldn't have got to where I am now without this support in place"

"Thank you so much for all of the support Home-Start and Suzanne has given me! It has been greatly appreciated and a real lifeline for us as a family"



## Chair's Report

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I am extremely pleased to present our 35th Annual Report, as it gives us the opportunity to share with you an overview of the work of Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire.

This year we celebrate 35 years of supporting families, an achievement we are incredibly proud of. As a longstanding Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire trustee, I have experienced many highs and lows over the years. I am pleased to say that after a difficult start to the 2023-24 year, we are ending it in a much better place. The Treasurer's report will show this in more detail. We owe a huge thank you to Linda and a reduced staff team for the way they came together, to continue to seamlessly work for the benefit of our supported families. Thank you to Faye, returning from maternity leave, for almost immediately sourcing much needed funding to sustain our service, and thankfully continuing to work tirelessly for this aim.



We continue to work closely with the other two Oxfordshire Home-Starts: Oxford, and Banbury, Bicester and Chipping Norton. We share good practice and have had success coming together as a consortium, strengthening funding bids for countywide projects.

My thanks to my colleagues on the trustee board for their continued support and guidance. They give their time, expertise and commitment to benefit the work of Home-Start. A notable example is Rosemary Knagg, who this year retired from the board having faithfully served us since 1989, initially as an adviser, and later as a trustee. We were delighted to welcome Christine as a new trustee, bringing a wealth of Early Years and local authority experience, and at the same time starting as a home-visiting volunteer. My final thank you is to the amazing volunteers who bring a wealth of experience, compassion and caring to the families they support.

**They can and do make a difference, thank you!**

**Doreen McNulty**  
**Chair of Trustees**

# Treasurer's Report

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The scheme had an overall surplus of £26,001.29 in the year to 31st March 2024.

This went a great way towards recouping the previous year's deficit of £29,702.78.

We are pleased to recognise the fantastic support from our largest donors:

- The Henry Smith Charity of £47,200;
- the Tambour Foundation of £25,000;
- the Poor of Didcot Charity of £22,994.74;
- the Veterans' Foundation of £22,500.

We have received funding from many town and parish councils, as well as grant-giving trusts, organisations and individuals. We thank them all. Expenditure was within budget, as a result of tight controls, despite staff pay awards being above budgeted levels for a second year.

## Reserves Policy

Our reserves policy is to hold sufficient reserves to cover potential liabilities if the scheme was to close, plus anticipated funding requirements for the forthcoming year, plus a general reserve of no more than 12 months of annual income. We had reserves at the financial year end totalling £135,661.09.

This is represented by two reserves:

- a designated reserve of £41,000 - to cover a Pension Trust liability and potential liabilities from redundancy payments and closing down costs.
- a free reserve of £94,661.09, which represents about 6 months of the budgeted expenditure for 2024/25.

# Treasurer's Report

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Once again, we offer our sincere thanks to all the organisations, individuals and trusts that have supported us throughout the year, together with all our dedicated staff and volunteers.

In particular, our thanks must go to Faye, whose fundraising endeavours have been fundamental in enabling us to receive the income in 2023/24.

Ongoing funding will be an increasing challenge, as we try to maintain the demands on our services whilst supporting our families.



**Colin Campbell**  
Treasurer

## Manager's Report

The year April 2023 to March 2024 has been a year of consolidation. We started this period of time with some financial pressures and a lack of funding, which placed the scheme under stress. It has been a time to fasten our belts and work hard to maintain the service we offer to families.

We trained 9 new volunteers during this period and we would like to thank them for coming forward, completing the training and starting their journey of supporting families in their time of need.

Unfortunately, during this period, we also lost 11 volunteers who had to stop working with us. The main reasons for their retirements were supporting their own families with childcare, returning to work or increasing paid working hours and their own declining health. We would like to thank those volunteers for the time they were able to volunteer with us and for the difference they made to families they supported.

While we were struggling to obtain funding, especially multi year funding, the need for our service was ever-increasing. We received 126 referrals of which 54 had to be declined due to either the referral not fulfilling our criteria or to lack of capacity. 51 of the 126 referrals received were for families with increased needs, either in a Child Protection Plan (CP), Child in Need Plan (CIN) or Team Around the Family (TAF). This is an increase from 22/23 where we received 118 referrals, 47 had to be declined and 36 families were increased needs.



Collaborative working with the two other schemes in Oxfordshire, Home-Start Oxford and Home-Start Banbury, Bicester & Chipping Norton, has continued this year, especially around joint grant bids. We believe that being able to offer a unified service for all families in Oxfordshire gives us strength when applying for funding and also enables us to work closely and share practices and ideas.

## Manager's Report

---

In July, we said goodbye to our Group Worker, Jacquie, who had decided to change career and pursue her love of gardening. We decided to look within, at the strengths the existing team had to offer. Gill, our Family Support Worker, has experience and training in running groups from her previous role in Children's Centres. She was able to incorporate running our Home-Start Parenting Group with her current role.

We like to encourage and allow growth and personal development within our team and Kelly, our Administrator, had expressed a wish to work more closely with families. We were able to offer her advanced safeguarding, first aid and OXPIP training around attachment to enable her to feel confident in running our weekly First Babies Group, which she has taken to with great enthusiasm and enjoyment.

Thank you to Play2Give, Tesco Didcot and The Body Shop Didcot for donating gifts for the children and families at Christmas and Easter eggs too.

We held a Christmas thank you for our volunteers at Berro Lounge in Didcot. This was very well attended with 25 volunteers coming along for a hot drink and chat. Thank you to Berro Lounge for contributing to the occasion with some lovely cakes.



Our volunteers really are the backbone of Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire and without them, we really would not be able to operate. We would like to thank them all, from our board of Trustees to our Home-Visiting Volunteers and our Group Volunteers and everyone who has supported us throughout this year. A big thanks also to the staff team who have worked hard and pulled together to support the scheme throughout this difficult year.



We are pleased to report that as we approached the end of this financial year, our budget was looking much healthier and I am already looking forward to writing a much more exciting and positive report for next year's AGM... watch this space!

**Linda Cheong**  
Manager

## Volunteer Support

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Our trained home-visiting volunteer, B, is currently supporting a single mum of two. Mum has recently separated from her partner. This had been quite a toxic, stressful relationship and he had been suggesting he would be looking for custody of their newborn son. The baby was born prematurely after a difficult pregnancy, which left mum feeling very overwhelmed and her recovery has been tricky. Baby has had frequent visits to hospital, including a week-long stay, and struggles to gain and maintain weight.

With Mum's recent return to work, albeit from home initially, Mum's ability to cope has been further impaired by the stress of this coupled with sleep deprivation and trying to maintain a functioning family home for both her children and herself. Although there are other professionals involved in the support of the family, our volunteer, B, has greatly aided Mum in working towards getting her family to their new normal. B visits weekly and has played with the baby while Mum attends online meetings, takes a shower or carries out chores. Mum doesn't drive and is reliant on limited public transport. She has no family or friends in the area so can feel quite isolated. B has accompanied Mum and baby to GP appointments and has also driven her to interviews for alternative jobs.



B is helping to empower Mum and she is slowly but surely beginning to feel better about her future and how she will manage going forward. They have struck up a lovely, trusting friendship and Mum always remarks how very grateful she is for this.

**Our volunteers are the heart of Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire and we couldn't do what we do without them!**




# Home-Start Groups

We've worked with 70 families at our two parent and child support groups, First Babies Group and Home-Start Parenting Group, this year.

## First Babies Group

Our Tuesday mornings at Ladygrove Community Centre, Didcot, continued to support first-time parents. The group, which is funded by The Didcot Powerhouse Fund and Didcot Town Council, is a welcoming space where parents and babies can socialise and access support and advice from our experienced staff and volunteers.



-  **54% of parents reported feeling less isolated**
-  **71% of parents felt more prepared in meeting their child's social and development needs**
-  **100% of parents felt their child enjoyed the group**

The group continues to be supported by our two fantastic volunteers, Helen and Gill. Our Group Worker, Jacquie, left in July 2023 to pursue her love for gardening and since then the group has been run by Kelly, who joined Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire in 2021.

“The group has been a weekly haven where I've been able to chat with other parents, finding reassurance that we're all making this up as we go along; and that babies are rarely as 'text book' as I was led to expect. I've made great friends through the group who I now meet up with outside the weekly sessions. The Home-Start staff and volunteers who run the group are friendly and welcoming, always doing small things to make our visits easier, whether this is holding the baby while I put my bike away, giving me a second cup of tea or helping carry my tea to me as I have poor mobility. The volunteers also have a wonderful calming presence and help gently break the ice which prevents the clique atmosphere I've found in other groups.”



# Home-Start Groups

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## Home-Start Parenting Group

Our Home-Start Parenting Group is held in a private room at Didcot Library and has been mostly funded by the Pye Charitable Settlement this year.

This group is a small, friendly group with attendees referred to us from Health Visitors and Social Care. There has also been a number of self-referrals. As it is a small group, it gives ample opportunity to chat and provide any additional support needed.



Since July 2023, this group has been run by our Family Support Worker, Gill. Gill is highly skilled and has been able to bring lots of new support to the group. They have looked at strategies using the Family Links Nurturing Programme, covering areas such as consistency, self-esteem and personal power. The group has also learned about batch cooking, menu planning and meal preparation to make meals more affordable.

We provide a good range of age appropriate toys and crafts activities for the children. The activities and play resources provide good child stimulation and help the children and parents to socialise.



This year our Group Volunteer, Dina, left to pursue further opportunities and we wish her well. We welcomed Amanda as our new group volunteer. Amanda, as a parent previously supported by the group, has been able to bring lots of lived experience to the role and has been a great help.



# Family Support/Forces Liaison

In Spring 2023 our military family support was put under threat of closure after being unsuccessful in our bid for further funding from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund. Fortunately, The Veterans' Foundation and The Tambour Foundation came to our rescue and funded my role for a further year. This meant that my work, delivering one-to-one support to families in their own homes, could continue.



**THE TAMBOUR  
FOUNDATION**



I've been able to offer rapid response support, both long and short term, to predominantly military personnel and their families. This includes families living on or off the bases of Dalton Barracks (Abingdon), Vauxhall Barracks (Didcot), RAF Benson and the Defence Academy of the UK (Shrivenham). Support has mostly been around mental health, parenting, isolation and building self-esteem. The majority of my support has revolved around the use of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and the Family Links Nurturing Programme. I can work with any member of the family. A large percentage of my work is with the adults of the family, which is very understandable, as when a parent/carer is experiencing difficulties this has a direct effect on the whole family.

I've attended Family Days, Meet & Greets to welcome new families to base, community meetings and coffee mornings, building relationships with a network of agencies and professionals.

**“Gill was outstanding and supported me for the last year! I honestly could not have done it without her. She helped me and my little boy immensely and I cannot thank her enough! The support we received was amazing! Thank you Gill we will forever be grateful! I wouldn't have made it without you.”**

**Gill Jones  
Family Support Worker**

# Highlights

Thank you to the wonderful team at Digipress in Didcot who gave their services for free and produced 2 pop-up banner stands and 2 PVC banners for us to use at events. A special thank you to our amazing volunteer, Matt, who organised this for us!



We thank Play2Give for donating gifts for the families we were supporting at Christmas and Easter eggs at Easter time too! Thank you to our local Tesco Superstore and Body Shop for its gift donations too!



The Didcot Powerhouse Fund funded our First Babies Group for another year! The Didcot Powerhouse Fund tackles inequality and deprivation in Greater Didcot and the surrounding villages and we appreciate its continued support for our Group.



A huge thank you to all the businesses and organisations, such as SOHA, Oxfordshire 500, Magnox and Annington Ltd for their donations, as well as to all our supporters who made one-off and direct debit donations to us throughout the year!



## Funders

**Parish Councils:** Crowmarsh, Steventon, East Hagbourne, Kidmore End, Lewknor, Sutton Courtenay, Radley, Chilton, Tetsworth, Ewelme, Hinton Waldrist, Chalgrove, Cholsey.

**South Oxfordshire District Council:** Revenue Grant.

**Oxfordshire County Council:** Councillor Priority Fund.

**Town Councils:** Didcot, Henley-on-Thames, Abingdon-on-Thames.



### Charitable Trusts

The Veterans' Foundation, The Tambour Foundation, BBC Children in Need, The Henry Smith Charity, Stanton Ballard Charitable Trust, Didcot Powerhouse Fund, Faringdon United Charity, Localgiving Magic Little Grants, Wallingford Bridge Estates Charity, Doris Field Charitable Trust, The Albert Hunt Trust, Pye Charitable Settlement, PF Charitable Trust, Turners Court Youth Trust, The Alchemy Foundation, The Clarke Family Trust, The Wantage Coronation Fund, Henley-on-Thames Bridge Charity, Christopher Laing Foundation, Oxfordshire Community Foundation, Blakemore Foundation, Poor of Didcot Charity.

### Business Donors

Magnox Ltd, Annington Ltd, AmazonSmile.

### Groups and Individuals

SOHA, Oxfordshire 500, Wallingford and District Rotary Club, Aston Tirrold United Reformed Church, Abingdon Baptist Church, Didcot Baptist Church, Dorchester Abbey, Kickstart Fund, Players of the White Horse Community Lottery, Players of the SODC Charitable Lottery, Henley Table Tennis Club, Didcot Townswomen's Guild, Donations in memory of Sarah Morgan, Donations through easyfundraising.



**Thank you to all families, volunteers past and present and supporters who donate their expenses, make donations in lieu of birthday gifts, fundraise and/or make regular donations to the scheme, often boosted by Gift Aid.**

# **Trustees and Staff April 2023-March 2024**

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## **Trustees:**

Doreen McNulty	Chair
Colin Campbell	Honorary Treasurer
Gill Bodey	Vice Chair
Rosemary Knagg (until June 2023)	
Barbara Guast	
Helen Conway	
Tanya Skelton (until October 2023)	
Caroline Couldrick	
Abi Reynolds	
Christine Grandison (co-opted March 2024)	



## **Staff:**

Linda Cheong	Manager
Lydia Davison	Organiser
Anita Davidson	Organiser
Gill Jones	Family Support Worker
Jacquie Boshell	Group Worker (until July 2023)
Faye Golding-King	Development Manager
Kelly Summers	Administrator and Group Worker

## **Independent Examiner:**

Sue Scane, CIPFA

# **Home-Start Safeguarding**

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Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults, and expects all trustees, staff, volunteers and members to share this commitment. Our policies on safeguarding children and adults are available on our website.

## **Quality Assurance**

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We are proud to be part of the Home-Start network. As well as giving us wider publicity and access to specialist support, our membership ensures we are assessed under the Home-Start Quality Assurance Standard. This encompasses ten standard areas:

Family Support, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Operating a Home-Start, Quality & Impact, Protecting Families, Money & Funding, Staff & Volunteers, Governance & Leadership, Brand, Communication & Digital, and Partnership & Influence.

At our last Quality Assurance Review in 2018 we were categorised as ‘Demonstrating High Quality’, having met 100% of the performance indicators. Normally, we would by now have received a further review, but the pandemic has led to delays in Home-Start UK’s review programme. We are now starting to submit self-assessments of our practice in the standard areas, for monitoring by Home-Start UK.

## **Public Benefit Statement**

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The Trustees have a duty to report on the scheme’s public benefit. They have taken into account the Charity Commission’s guidance on public benefit in planning the year’s activities. This report demonstrates how Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire fulfils its charitable objectives.

## **Membership**

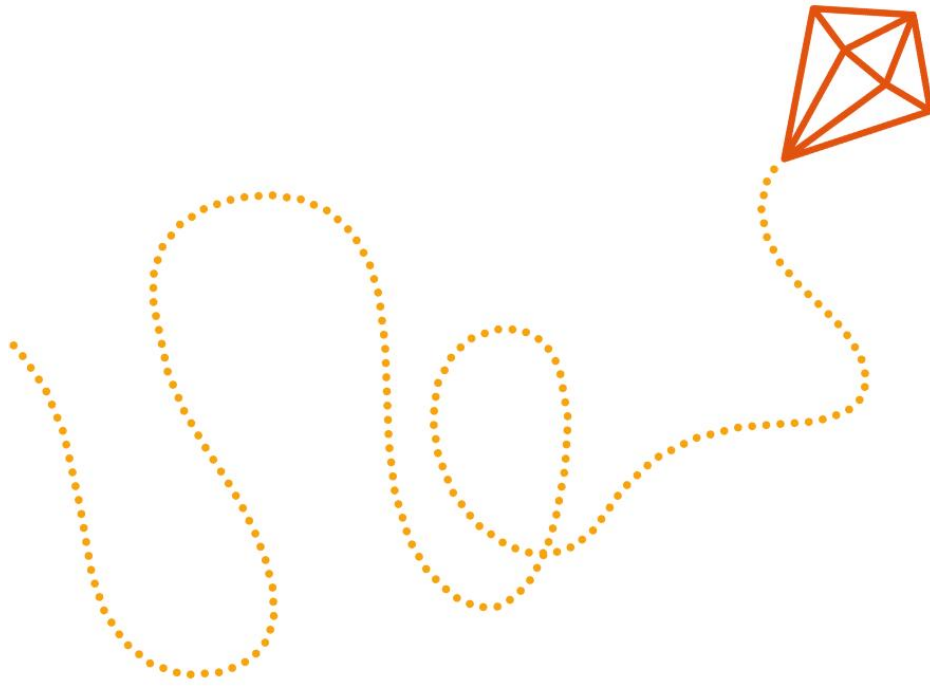
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Membership of Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is open to any person interested in furthering the objectives quoted above, and approved by the trustees. Members are entitled to vote at the AGM and other general meetings. Application forms are available on request.

## **Risk Management**

---

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is exposed, in particular those relating to finances and operations, and believe that arrangements are in place to mitigate those risks.



Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire  
197 Broadway  
Didcot  
OX11 8RU  
01235 511152  
admin@homestartso.org

 HomeStartSouthernOxfordshire  
 @HomeStart\_S\_Ox

[www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk](http://www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk)

---

Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is a company limited by guarantee,  
registered in England and Wales Number: 05443274  
Registered Charity Number: 1113941

# Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

Registered Charity No: 1113941  
Company Registration No: 05443274

## STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 12 MONTHS TO 31st March 2024

### INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR 12 MONTHS TO 31st March 2024 (E.P)

	<u>2023/2024</u>		<u>2022/2023</u>
	<u>Unrestricted Core</u>	<u>Restricted</u>	
<u>Income</u>			
Henry Smith	47,200.00		46,300.00
Tambour Foundation Trust	25,000.00		
POD Charity Grant	22,994.74		
Veterans Foundation		22,500.00	
South Oxfordshire District Council	8,227.00		10,077.00
Oxfordshire Community Foundation	8,033.00		
Didcot Town Council	8,000.00		2,000.00
Didcot Powerhouse Fund	5,518.00		
JA Pye Settlement Fund	5,000.00		
BBC Children In Need		4,157.00	10,395.83
MOD Covenant		1,881.00	24,408.00
Four Acre Trust			12,021.00
Other Council Grants	6,095.00		3,050.00
Other Donations & Fundraising	30,413.57		29,344.40
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>166,481.31</b>	<b>28,538.00</b>	<b>137,596.23</b>
<u>Expenditure</u>			
Staff Salaries	111,504.72	22,651.77	129,005.65
Stationery / Post / Telephone	2,841.81	577.30	3,767.94
Rent / Service Charge	9,705.05	1,971.54	8,150.00
Staff Training / Travel / Expenses	3,085.52	626.81	4,074.37
Volunteers Training / Travel / Expenses	1,858.73	377.60	3,034.51
Home-Start Consultancy	2,748.43	558.33	2,293.17
AGM	416.80	84.67	440.53
Other Expenditure	8,318.97	1,689.97	16,532.84
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>140,480.02</b>	<b>28,538.00</b>	<b>167,299.01</b>
<b>Excess of Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>26,001.29</b>		<b>-29,702.78</b>

## Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

Registered Charity No: 1113941  
Company Registration No: 05443274

### STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31st March 2024 (E.P)

<u>Accumulated Fund</u>	<u>2023/2024</u>	<u>2022/2023</u>		
	Unrestricted Core	Restricted	TOTAL	TOTAL
Brought Forward from previous year	26,001.29	26,001.29	26,001.29	5,273.57
Surplus / Deficit for the year	26,001.29	26,001.29	26,001.29	-29,702.78
Transfer to/from Reserves	-26,001.29	-26,001.29	-26,001.29	-24,429.21
Balance Carried Forward	<u>26,001.29</u>	<u>26,001.29</u>	<u>26,001.29</u>	<u>24,429.21</u>
<b><u>BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st March 2024</u></b>				
Current Assets				
Debtors and Prepayments		412.10		390.00
Cash at Bank and In Hand		171,940.75		134,332.88
		<u>172,352.85</u>		<u>134,722.88</u>
Less Current Liabilities				
Creditors, Accruals & Payments in Advance		36,691.76		25,063.08
Net Assets		<u>135,661.09</u>		<u>109,659.80</u>
Represented by:				
Restricted Accumulated Fund Carried Forward				0.00
Pension Deficit / Redundancy / Closing Down Reserves		41,000.00		41,000.00
Reserve to meet budgeted deficit in forthcoming year		0.00		61,843.23
Free Reserves		<u>94,661.09</u>		<u>6,816.57</u>
Total		<u>135,661.09</u>		<u>109,659.80</u>

#### **SUMMARY OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT**

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31st March 2024, which are set out above. In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements (a) to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act); and (b) to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act; have not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Susan Scane

# INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF HOME-START SOUTHERN OXFORDSHIRE

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31st March 2024, which are set out on pages 1 and 2.  
Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner  
**Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the Accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 43(2) of the Charities Act (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 43 (7)(b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

## **Basis of independent examiner's report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

## **Independent Examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

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Susan Scane  
151 Lydalls Road, Didcot, Oxfordshire, OX11 7EA  
CIPFA

12/7/24

# Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

Registered Charity No: 1113941  
Company Registration No: 05443274

## STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 12 MONTHS TO 31st March 2024

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Susan Scane  
151 Lydalls Road, Didcot, Oxfordshire, OX11 7EA  
CIPFA

12/7/24

**HOME-START SOUTHERN OXFORDSHIRE**

England & Wales - Charity number 1113941

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# Accounts

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**Southern  
Oxfordshire**



# **Annual Report 2022/23**

**Supporting families in Oxfordshire since 1989**

[www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk](http://www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk)

## About us

---

We work with families who are going through challenging times, and who have a child/children under the age of five.

We recruit and train volunteers to spend time with families, aiming to increase their confidence and independence by:



- Offering friendship, support, and practical assistance, with a flexible approach to take account of different needs
- Developing a trusting relationship with the family, to establish an understanding of their circumstances
- Reassuring parents that difficulties in bringing up children are not unusual, and encouraging enjoyment in family life
- Encouraging parents' strengths, emotional wellbeing and parenting skills, for the ultimate benefit of their children
- Encouraging families to widen their network of relationships and to effectively use the support and services within the local community.

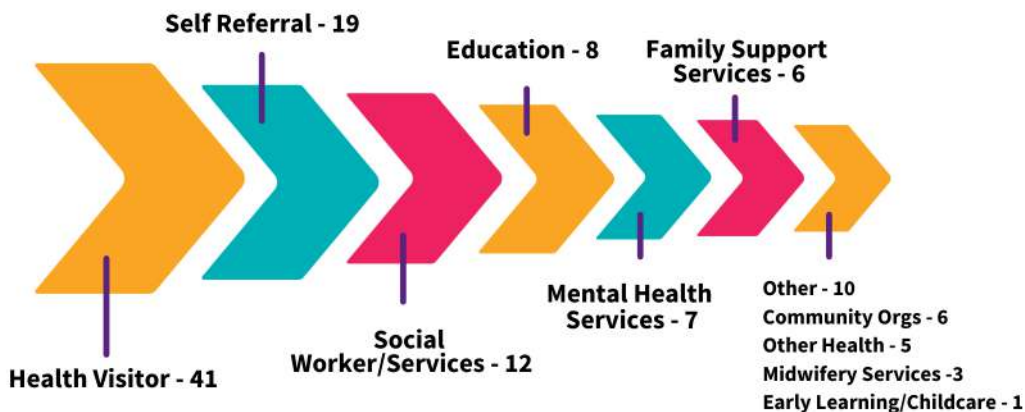
We also support families through a paid worker, and two groups, described later in this report. We are linked with Home-Start UK, a national organisation which sets standards for the way we work, but we are an independent registered charity and responsible for our own fundraising.



## Our year at a glance



## Where our 118 referrals came from





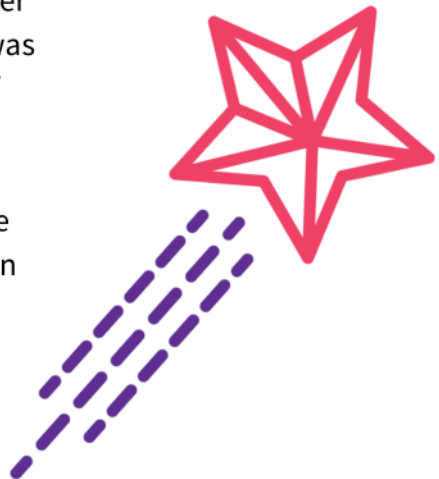
## Chair's Report

I would like to begin my report by thanking Cllr Pam Siggers, Mayor of Didcot 2022-2023, and a Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire Home-Visiting Volunteer for many years. Pam kindly chose us as one of her charities to support during her year of office.

In December, we signed the New Home-Start UK Agreement after a lengthy consultation process. My sincere thanks to trustees Gill Bodey and Rosemary Knagg for going through the document and accompanying new Home-Start Handbook in such detail, and to HSUK for recognising Gill and Rosemary's constructive feedback.

Thank you to Rob Hufton, our trustee who retired last year. Rob was a very supportive trustee and helped with implementing our IT systems. We wish Rob and his wife Jan a happy retirement. I am delighted to say that we welcomed two new trustees to our Trustee Board: Caroline Couldrick and Abigail Reynolds. Caroline has recently retired from a lengthy career in social work with children and families, and Abi is a Primary School Teacher.

Caroline was able to attend our Volunteer Preparation Course in September and was extremely impressed with the quality of the volunteers and the training they receive. Both Caroline and Abi bring excellent skills and life experience to the role of trustee and have already made an incredibly positive contribution to the work of HSSO.



## Chair's Report

I am pleased to say that the Oxfordshire County Council Library Service renewed our lease in March for two years, so it is due to expire in 2025.

As you will see from our Scheme Manager Linda's report, the need for the work of Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire continues to grow, with the staff team and volunteers more often being asked to support quite complex families. I am proud to say that they do this with commitment, caring and compassion. My sincere thanks to Linda, the staff team and volunteers, they really can and do make a difference to the lives of the families they support!

My thanks to my colleagues on the Trustee Board who bring a wealth of expertise and professionalism to the role of trustee. Additional thanks to Gill, Rosemary and Colin for their time and commitment to the work of Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire.



**Doreen McNulty**  
**Chair of Trustees**

# Treasurer's Report

---

The scheme had an overall deficit of £29,702.78 in the year to 31st March 2023.

A deficit had been budgeted, funded from reserves, in order to maintain staffing levels and the service we are able to provide to our families.

We are pleased to report the fantastic support from:

- The Henry Smith Charity of £46,300, as a contribution to supporting families in the Vale of White Horse District.
- the Armed Forces Covenant Trust Fund of £24,408, allowing us to support military families.
- The Four Acre Trust of £12,021.
- BBC Children In Need of £10,395.83, for our Parenting Group.
- South Oxfordshire District Council of £10,077, as a contribution to supporting families in the South Oxfordshire District.
- The Eileen Kirkland Will Trust of £10,000.



We have received funding from many town and parish councils, as well as grant giving trusts, organisations and individuals. We thank them all. Expenditure was well within budget, as a result of tight controls, even though we spent a large sum in updating our computer equipment. Year-on-year staff salaries increased, primarily as a result of a pay award that was well above the 2% budgeted level but necessary to help offset the high inflation levels.

## Reserves Policy

Our reserves policy is to hold sufficient reserves to cover potential liabilities if the scheme was to close, plus anticipated funding requirements for the forthcoming year, plus a general reserve of no more than 12 months of annual income. We had reserves at the financial year end totalling £109,659.80.

## Treasurer's Report

---

This is represented by three reserves:

- a designated reserve of £41,000 - to cover a Pension Trust liability of about £28,000 and potential liabilities from redundancy payments and closing down costs.
- a free reserve of £61,843.23 - to meet a budgeted deficit in 2023/24. This represents unfunded budgeted expenditure. The Directors/Trustees have agreed this to ensure the level of our services can be maintained in the coming year and are confident that sources of funding can be identified during the coming year to keep our reserves at a minimum level.
- a general, free reserve of £6,816.57.



The total of our free reserves represents 4 months of the budgeted expenditure for 2023/24.

Once again, we offer our sincere thanks to all the organisations, individuals and trusts that have supported us throughout the year, together with all our dedicated staff and volunteers.

We are fortunate to have reserves to cover budgeted shortfalls but ongoing funding will be an increasing challenge, as we try to maintain the demands on our services while supporting our families.

**Colin Campbell**  
Treasurer

**“Having support from Home-Start has been key to my recovery. Thank you very much indeed”**

**- Parent who received volunteer support**

## Manager's Report

---

We started this financial year with a bonanza Easter. We were fortunate to be selected, once again, by Tesco Didcot to be one of their chosen charities for their Easter egg collection. We had trays of delicious chocolate delights, with which, together with some art and craft and other goodies left over from donated Christmas gifts, we were able to make up Easter goodie bags for each child in every family we were working with.

This coincided with an offer from Home-Start UK, who had been contacted by Russell & Bromley with an offer of new shoes. Russell & Bromley stopped selling children's shoes and offered their remaining stock to Home-Start UK. We applied to be considered for an allocation of shoes and were amazed and somewhat overwhelmed to have 173 pairs of shoes in boxes delivered to the office.

With the help of Doreen & Gill (Chair and Vice Chair) who sorted the shoes and made an inventory, we were able to offer and deliver shoes to families in need. Once we had delivered all that were needed by the families we work with, shoes were distributed to various good causes. The few men's shoes which were included in the delivery were given to a homeless centre in Oxford and the remaining pairs were given to a Rotary club for distribution to refugees they were supporting.



## Manager's Report

---

In May, Cllr Pam Siggers became Mayor of Didcot. Pam was also a Home-Visiting Volunteer with us and we were very fortunate that she chose us as one of her charities for her mayoral year in office. Pam raised £1,000 for Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire in her year, for which we are extremely grateful.

During the school summer holidays we were fortunate enough to be included in the wonderful Didcot Grub Hub, in association with Didcot Powerhouse, to attend two play days at Didcot Railway Centre. Families who were experiencing a difficult time were invited along to the free attraction and were also provided with lunch. Both days were a huge success, with many children benefiting from the experience.

We were also grateful to launch the Kickstart Fund this year. A donation was received to enable children who are starting school to have a new pair of shoes. The fund also expands to provide sports shoes for children who would be unable to participate in sports clubs if they did not have the correct footwear. Our volunteers identify the need within the family they are working with and apply to the fund, and they are then able to take the family shoe shopping.



At Christmas time we were able to return to holding a Christmas party for the families we work with. This was held in Didcot Civic Hall and was great fun. We were lucky to have Bertie Slippers providing the entertainment and the children were delighted when Father Christmas arrived on a fire engine! Again, this year, due to the generosity of Play2Give, Tesco, BT and White Stuff, we were able to supply gifts to all the families we support.



## Manager's Report

---

Since the pandemic, our referrals have steadily increased and during this year we have received 172 referrals and worked with 116 families, while supporting another 78 families through our First Babies Group. We have noted that the referrals we are receiving are becoming more and more complex, with greater additional needs in children and increase in mental health difficulties for parents.

This means it is more important than ever to attract new volunteers and ensure they are well trained and feel comfortable and equipped to support the families they are matched with. We held 2 successful Preparation Courses and trained a total of 13 new volunteers.



We had the opportunity to offer additional training to our volunteers, including an Introduction to Autism hosted by Autism Family Support Oxfordshire, Understanding Hoarding which was a shared opportunity with Home-Start Oxford, and an Introduction to Children's Mental Health offered in person at our office by CAMHS. Also, First Stop Safety Training (Tiny Lives) hosted in association with Home-Start Banbury, Bicester & Chipping Norton. We also hosted a coffee morning in July for our volunteers and included an invite to our prospective ones, so they were able to come along and meet some of our more established volunteers and hear their experiences of supporting families.

We had a few changes in personnel over this year. Our Development Manager, Faye, had started her maternity leave in February 2022 and in April we welcomed Stacey Davies to the team to cover this role in Faye's absence.



Then in May we said a temporary goodbye to Lucia who also went on maternity leave. In August we welcomed Anita Davidson to the team as an Organiser to cover Lucia's post.

## Manager's Report

---

We also said a final goodbye to Janet McIlvennie, who had been with the scheme for more than 30 years and had officially retired last year, but had kindly carried on working as our Bookkeeper. She finally said goodbye to the scheme, but remains a very good friend of Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire.

In February 2023 Faye returned to work and faced the immediate challenge presented to us, as we learned the funding we received from the Army Covenant Fund Trust was ending and we had not been successful in applying for a continuation.



Our two groups, First Babies and our Parenting Support Group (known as Wednesday Group), ran successfully throughout the year and updates for these are shown separately within this Annual Report.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank: the team for their continued support and compassion for the families we work with. our wonderful volunteers who give up so much of their time and without whom we would not be able to do the work we do, our Board of Trustees who have supported and steered us onwards through another year of supporting families in the southern area of Oxfordshire.

**"Home-Start support has been amazing.  
I can't thank you enough. Just knowing  
someone was there who understood and  
knew what we were experiencing was a  
massive relief"**

**- A family of multiple birth, who had a  
Home-Visiting Volunteer**



**Linda Cheong  
Manager**

## Volunteer Support Highlights

---

**J** - Lovely match as a mother/grandmotherly figure to support Dad & youngest child. Dad struggles with his mental health and was very isolated. Dad's goals were to take youngest to playgroup regularly, have some 'me' time to get back into running and generally become less overwhelmed with household chores and the needs of the family. Dad, with support from J was able to work towards achieving his goal and was left feeling more empowered. J befriended in such a way that she still continues to stay in touch with the family as a friend.



**V** - Supported a young, first-time mum with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) and her 5-month-old baby. They were new to the area with no friends or family nearby. Partner was at work during the day. V took Mum and daughter out into the community on walks to help her become familiar with the area and accompanied her to baby groups. Confidence gradually built and Mum was soon able to go on her own to the group and made a couple of friends there. Unfortunately, the baby developed some health issues and V was able to support with attending hospital visits. The illness has significantly impacted on baby's development as weaning was delayed and she is yet to meet some expected milestones. V, has provided ongoing emotional and practical support to the family.



**L** - Supported a grandfather who is the main carer for three young grandchildren. He was finding it difficult to go out with all of the children. Our volunteer, L, visited weekly and supported in taking the children to the local play park and out on walks, enabling Grandad to feel less stressed and for the children to experience being outdoors and playing. L also went along with the family to an activity day we were able to signpost to run by The Grub Hub in Didcot.

## Volunteer Support Highlights

---

**J** - Supported a large family where the children were under a Social Care Child Protection Plan. The parents had historic issues and were experiencing difficulties with coping with the children, which resulted in many professionals visiting the house and working with the children and parents. Our role in the Child Protection Plan was to visit weekly and engage with the second youngest child, who was turning two. Unfortunately, even though the child was entitled to an early years childcare placement, in the area the family live there were no available spaces. Volunteer J took resources and engaged and played with the child each week. The child slowly learnt numbers, shapes and colours and how to sing, hop and jump. She learnt how to solve simple puzzles, share, stack and thread, plus many other new skills. J was able to model how you interact and play with your child. The child will start nursery in September and is more 'school ready' due to J's involvement with the family.



**A** - Supported a Mum who had recently separated from her husband due to domestic abuse. Mum had 4-month-old twins. Unfortunately, one of the twins had been diagnosed with a medical condition for which they needed regular visits to hospital. The family do not drive and had relocated to an area which they were not familiar and therefore had no network of friends or family. Mum felt rather isolated, especially as her first language is not English. Our volunteer, A, was able to take Mum and the children to their hospital appointments. Mum also struggled to get the children out to parks or for walks, so A also helped them get out so they could familiarise themselves with the area and enjoy being outside. She also took them to do large supermarket shops, which helped with budgeting.

## Home-Start Groups

We've worked with 94 families at our two parent and child support groups, First babies Group and Home-Start Parenting Group, this year.

### First Babies Group

Our Tuesday mornings at Ladygrove Community Centre continue to be a hive of activity. We usually have a regular group of at least 13 parents and 13 babies on any one day. We provide a nurturing, welcoming, social space where families may access support and advice from our experienced staff and other parents, reducing social isolation and supporting mental health.

At the end of 2022 our lovely group volunteer, Sandy, retired. She has supported many families during her time with us and we thank her for all her help over the years. Our other group volunteer, Helen, continues to be an asset supporting the group with her experience and advice and we welcome Gill, one of our Home-Visiting Volunteers, who now kindly supports the group too.



### Home-Start Parenting Group



Our Home-Start Parenting Group, formerly called Wednesday Group, continues to be held in a private room at Didcot Library.

This year we have supported eight regular parents and their children. This small group is for referred families who would find attending a larger group difficult. We provide support and advice on all aspects of child development and our aim is to reduce social isolation, improve family relationships and to improve self-esteem of both children and parents.

Subjects covered at group include infant mental health, the importance of play, reducing debts, reducing food waste and dental health. Our group Volunteer, Dina, has been supporting this rewarding and lively group.

# Family Support and Community Liaison

Unbelievably, I have now been in the role of Family Support/Community Liaison Worker for more than 6 years! Time has sped by! I have continued to offer rapid response support to military personnel, and their families, under the heading of 'Removing Barriers to Family Life'. This has been very successful with support offered on a one-to-one basis in the family home. Support is varied and includes mental health, parenting skills, isolation and building confidence and self-esteem. I deliver the Family Links Nurturing Programme and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. Although these are usually delivered to the adults of the families, support has a positive effect on everyone!



Support is flexible to help accommodate every situation. For instance, I have been working with a Dad who is unable to receive support in the daytime, so I have delivered the Family Links Nurturing Programme in the evening via Teams online. Two Mums returning to work have had telephone support in the evenings. Referrals are received from various agencies, as well as self-referrals. Support extends to families living on or off the bases of Dalton Barracks (Abingdon), Vauxhall Barracks (Didcot), RAF Benson and the Defence Academy in Shrivenham.

I continue to attend events such as Family Days, Meet and Greet Days, Wellbeing Days and Coffee Mornings. As this financial year comes to a close, the future of our highly successful and unique service we offer to Armed Forces families hangs in the balance due to lack of funding. We are hoping to work more closely with the Armed Forces bases we cover for them to support us in finding funding for our work to continue.



**Gill Jones**

**Family Support/Community Liaison Worker**

# Our Impact

---

**“You will never know what an impact you had on our lives! You saved our lives!!”**

Family who had a multiple birth (both had additional needs) and received Family Support Worker support.

**“It's so lovely that we had the option to go to the park once a week. We had the best time! I am so grateful for the help. Fridays were a blessing”**

Family who received volunteer support on a Friday.



**“Thank you so much for working with the family. Your service goes beyond bounds and is without a doubt an amazing facility we are lucky to have in Oxfordshire”**

A professional who referred a family.

**“Thank you for everything Home-Start has done for this family. She was very appreciative and is feeling more confident and less anxious now”**

A Health Visitor who referred a family.



**“My youngest child asks me almost every day if it is Tuesday today (the day our volunteer visits) as she so enjoys her visits. Even if the volunteer has been the day before (on Tuesday), she will ask in the morning!”**

Single Mum of two children who had volunteer support.

**“Thank you so much for all that you have done for my family. You have been a great support. I'm going to miss you”**

Family with a disabled child who had volunteer support.



# Fundraising Highlights



We were delighted to have been awarded a grant from The Didcot Powerhouse Fund to fund our First Babies Group. The Didcot Powerhouse Fund was founded by local people to tackle inequality in the Didcot Garden Town Area of Influence, which encompasses the wider area of Didcot and the surrounding villages. The 2022 fund theme was 'Supporting children, young people and families as we emerge from the pandemic'.

We received an incredible £2,883.28 from Co-op's Local Community Fund! We are especially grateful to all the Co-op members who chose Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire as their chosen charity!



Thank you once again to Play2Give's Sleigh2Give toy donation at Christmas! We also received gift donations from Tesco Superstore in Didcot and BT Openreach which enabled us to provide gifts to all the children in the families we support. This year we were also able to give parents, as well as our volunteers, a gift from the wonderful gift donations we received from White Stuff.



A huge thank you to all the local businesses and organisations, such as TK Maxx Foundation, Waitrose, Infineum Smile and Oxfordshire 500 who offered support and donations, as well as to all our supporters who made one-off and direct debit donations to us throughout the year!

White  
STUFF



## **Trustees and Staff April 2022-March 2023**

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### **Trustees:**

Doreen McNulty	Chair
Gill Bodey	Vice Chair
Colin Campbell	Hon. Treasurer
Rosemary Knagg	
Barbara Guast	
Helen Conway	
Rob Hufton (until September 2022)	
Tanya Skelton	
Caroline Couldrick (co-opted June 2022)	
Abi Reynolds (co-opted March 2023)	



### **Staff:**

Linda Cheong	Manager
Lydia Davison	Organiser
Lucia Prentice	Organiser
Anita Davidson	Organiser (from August 2022)
Gill Jones	Family Support/Community Liaison Worker
Jacquie Boshell	Group Worker
Faye Golding-King	Development Manager
Stacey Davies	Development Manager (Maternity Cover)
Kelly Summers	Office Administrator

### **Independent Examiner:**

Sue Scane, CIPFA

## **Home-Start Safeguarding**

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Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults, and expects all trustees, staff, volunteers and members to share this commitment. Our policies on safeguarding children and adults are available on request.

# Funders

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## Parish Councils

Crowmarsh, Little Milton, Stoke Row, Steventon, Wootton, East Hagbourne, Harwell.

## South Oxfordshire District Council

Revenue Grant.

## Town Councils

Didcot, Wantage.

## Charitable Trusts

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, BBC Children in Need, The Henry Smith Charity, Four Acre Trust, Stanton Ballard Charitable Trust, Eileen Kirkland Will Trust, Didcot Powerhouse Fund, Faringdon United Charities, Postcode Society Trust/Localgiving Magic Little Grants.

## Home-Start UK

HSUK Army Central Fund

## Business Donors

Waitrose Wantage, Co-op Local Community Fund, Infineum SMILE, TK Maxx and Homesense Foundation, M&Co Didcot.

## Groups and Individuals

Wallingford and District Rotary Club, Aston Tirrold United Reformed Church, Kickstart Fund, Players of the White Horse Community Lottery, Players of the SODC Charitable Lottery.

Thank you to all families and volunteers, past and present, who donate their expenses, make donations in lieu of birthday gifts, and/or make regular donations to the scheme, often boosted by Gift Aid.



## **Quality Assurance**

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We are proud to be quality assured through the Home-Start Quality Assurance System – a programme of self-assessment against nationwide quality standards. The process looks at the continuous improvement of all our practice areas relating to governance, management and service delivery. At our last Quality Assurance Review in February 2018 we were categorised as ‘Demonstrating High Quality’, having met 100% of the legal, safeguarding/child protection and other mandatory performance indicators.

## **Public Benefit Statement**

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The Trustees have a duty to report on the scheme’s public benefit. They have taken into account the Charity Commission’s guidance on public benefit in planning the year’s activities. This report demonstrates how Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire fulfils its charitable objectives which are:

'To safeguard, protect and preserve the good health, both mental and physical, of children and parents; to prevent cruelty to or maltreatment of children; to relieve sickness, poverty and need amongst children and parents; to promote the education of the public in better standards of childcare in southern Oxfordshire'.

## **Membership**

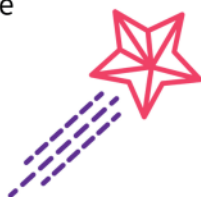
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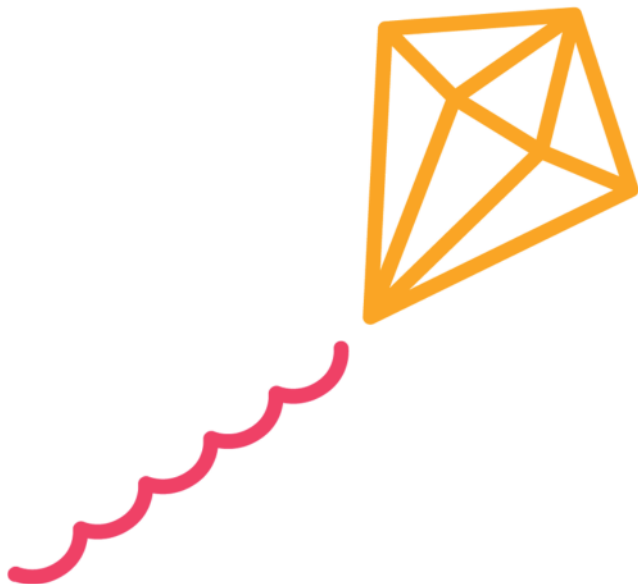
Membership of Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is open to any person interested in furthering the objectives quoted above, and approved by the trustees. Members are entitled to vote at the AGM and other general meetings. Application forms are available on request from the scheme.

## **Risk Management**



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The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the scheme is exposed, in particular those relating to finances and operations, and believe that arrangements are in place to mitigate those risks.





Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire  
197 Broadway  
Didcot  
OX11 8RU  
01235 511152  
admin@homestartso.org

 HomeStartSouthernOxfordshire  
 @HomeStart\_S\_Ox

[www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk](http://www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk)

---

Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is a company limited by guarantee,  
registered in England and Wales Number: 05443274  
Registered Charity Number: 1113941

## Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

Registered Charity No: 1113941  
Company Registration No: 05443274

### STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 12 MONTHS TO 31st March 2023

#### INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR 12 MONTHS TO 31st March 2023 (£.p)

	<u>2022/2023</u>		<u>2021/2022</u>
	Unrestricted Core	Restricted	TOTAL
<b>Income</b>			
Henry Smith	46,300.00		46,300.00
Big Lottery Fund			26,399.33
MOD Covenant		24,408.00	24,408.00
Four Acre Trust	12,021.00		12,021.00
BBC Children In Need		10,395.83	9,702.42
South Oxfordshire District Council	10,077.00		10,159.00
Eileen Kirkland Will Trust	10,000.00		10,000.00
OCF Berin Project			6,750.00
Other Council Grants	5,050.00		2,379.00
Donations & Fundraising	19,344.40		41,567.26
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>102,792.40</b>	<b>34,803.83</b>	<b>121,365.01</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Staff Salaries	95,170.14	33,835.51	113,088.06
Stationery / Post / Telephone	3,224.16	543.78	3,721.05
Rent / Service Charge	6,458.25	1,691.75	5,134.80
Staff Training / Travel / Expenses	2,907.06	1,167.31	3,837.29
Volunteers Training / Travel / Expenses	2,853.25	181.26	1,216.95
Home-Start Consultancy	1,666.70	626.47	2,020.18
AGM	440.53		302.00
Other Expenditure	14,501.50	2,031.34	9,473.02
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>127,221.61</b>	<b>40,077.40</b>	<b>138,793.35</b>
<b>Excess of Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>-24,429.21</b>	<b>-5,273.57</b>	<b>-17,428.34</b>

**Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire**

Registered Charity No: 1113941  
Company Registration No: 05443274

**STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31st March 2023 (£.p)**

<u>Accumulated Fund</u>	<u>2022/2023</u>		<u>2021/2022</u>
	Unrestricted Core	Restricted	TOTAL
Brought Forward from previous year		5,273.57	9,741.44
Surplus / Deficit for the year	-24,429.21	-5,273.57	-17,428.34
Transfer to/from Reserves	-24,429.21	-24,429.21	-7,686.90
Balance Carried Forward	24,429.21	24,429.21	-12,960.47
			5,273.57

**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st March 2023**

Current Assets		
Debtors and Prepayments	390.00	360.58
Cash at Bank and in Hand	134,332.88	154,279.00
Less <i>Current Liabilities</i>		154,639.58
Creditors, Accruals & Payments in Advance	25,063.08	15,277.00
Net Assets	109,659.80	139,362.58
Represented by:		
Restricted Accumulated Fund Carried Forward		5,273.57
Pension Deficit / Redundancy / Closing Down Reserves	41,000.00	41,000.00
Reserve to meet budgeted deficit in forthcoming year	61,843.23	51,586.82
Free Reserves	6,816.57	41,502.19
Total	109,659.80	139,362.58

**SUMMARY OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT**

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31st March 2023, which are set out above. In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements (a) to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act); and (b) to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act. have not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Susan Scane

 21/8/23

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF HOME-START SOUTHERN OXFORDSHIRE

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31st March 2023, which are set out on pages 1 and 2.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

**Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the Accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 43(2) of the Charities Act (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 43 (7)(b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of independent examiner's report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

**Independent Examiner's statement**

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 21/8/23

Susan Scane  
151 Lydalls Road, Didcot, Oxfordshire, OX11 7EA  
CIPFA

## Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

Registered Charity No: 1113941  
Company Registration No: 05443274

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- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Susan Scane

*Susan Scane* 21/8/23

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 21/8/23

Susan Scane  
151 Lydalls Road, Didcot, Oxfordshire, OX11 7EA  
CIPFA

**HOME-START SOUTHERN OXFORDSHIRE**

England & Wales - Charity number 1113941

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# Accounts

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**Southern  
Oxfordshire**



# Annual Report 2021/22

Supporting families in southern Oxfordshire since 1989

**Because Childhood Can't Wait**



[www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk](http://www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk)

# Standards and Methods of Practice

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Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire works with families who are experiencing difficulties or very stressful situations, and who have a child/children under five years of age.

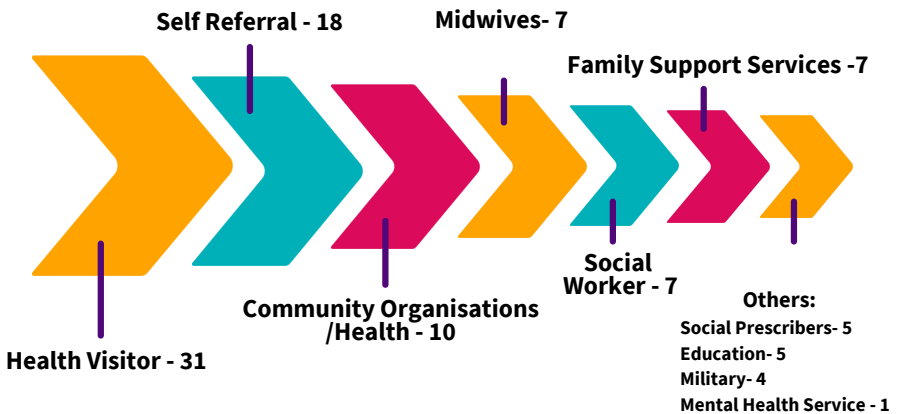
We are an independent registered charity, and work towards the increased confidence and independence of the family by:

- offering support, friendship and practical assistance
- visiting families in their own homes, where the dignity and identity of each individual can be respected and protected
- reassuring parents that difficulties in bringing up children are not unusual and encouraging enjoyment in family life
- developing a relationship with the family in which time can be shared and understanding can be developed; the approach is flexible to take account of different needs
- encouraging the parents' strengths and emotional wellbeing for the ultimate benefit of their own children
- encouraging families to widen their network of relationships and to use effectively the support and services available within the community

# Our year at a glance



# Where our referrals came from



# The Area We Cover



## Referrals received by district council ward



## Families supported by district council ward



# Chair's Report

---

I would like to begin my report by thanking Home-Start UK. Not only for the one off Covid grants, which helped to get staff set up with the equipment they needed to work from home, but also for their online help, support and guidance which was invaluable in the challenging times of Covid.

Very well done to Linda, for completing a virtual/online Home-Start Prep Course for volunteers. Another of the ways we adapted to keep our service going in times of not being able to meet face to face. We had excellent and very positive feedback from attendees.

Thank you to Jo Robb, Chair of South Oxfordshire District Council. Jo chose Home-Start SO, as one of her charities to support in her year of office. Jo arranged a lovely Story Telling event at Cornerstone Arts Theatre in Didcot. It was well attended and gave us the opportunity to attract some new volunteers.

We changed our IT provider to Blue Spires IT Support, who are based in Witney. I am pleased to say this is going well and staff have seen a marked improvement in support.

Janet McIlvennie, our wonderful member of staff for over 30 years, officially retired as Finance Assistant on 30 April 2021. Janet did however agree to stay on as our bookkeeper until we could suitably fill the role. In July we said farewell to Gill Rose our administrator. Gill took up a new post within the NHS supporting the Health Visitors based in Abingdon. We wish Gill every success in her new role. As Gill joined the NHS, we were delighted to welcome from the NHS our new Administrator Kelly Summers. Kelly's previous position was as Team Administrator, supporting the Drug and Alcohol Recovery Team at HMP Huntercombe. Kelly brings a wealth of transferable skills and has already proved to be a valued addition to the staff team.



## Chair's Report

In my long involvement with the scheme, I have never had to consider maternity leave, for any of the staff team. That changed dramatically when first Faye told us she was expecting a baby in March. Lucia then told us in December that she was expecting a baby in June. We are delighted for them both and I am pleased to say that Mum's and babies are doing well.

Our six-year lease with Oxfordshire County Council was up for renewal at the end of March 2022, and the council offered us a one-year lease extension. Brian Davies, the Interim Senior Property Officer assured us that there are no immediate plans for the re-development of the building. We took the opportunity to make him aware of our inclusion in previous plans and discussions with OCC, to futureproof the building. We had no option other than to accept and sign the one-year lease that was offered to us.

Our collaborative work within the Home-Start Oxfordshire consortium continues to progress. The Oxfordshire Family Wellbeing Project our first joint lottery bid came to an end in January 2022. A further joint bid is being worked on.

On behalf of the trustees. I would like to thank Linda, the staff team and volunteers for their unwavering commitment to the work they do, in support of families in our community. When they need it most, they can and do make a difference.

Thank you to my colleagues on the Trustee Board. For their continued commitment to Home-Start SO. Their time, life skills, professionalism, and much more make a huge contribution to the effective running of the scheme! A special thank you, to Gill Bodey, our vice chair, whose attention to detail is second to none. Thank you, and goodbye to Lorraine Meadows for her time with us. Lorraine was our safeguarding trustee. Lorraine has moved out of the area, and we wish her every happiness in her new home.



# Treasurer's Report

---

The scheme had an overall deficit of £17,428.34 in 2021/22.

A deficit had been budgeted, funded from reserves, as income from regular funders reduced significantly during the year. In particular, the funding from the Big Lottery Fund ended part way through the year and the grants from the South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire Community Foundation (OCF) Berin Project both reduced.



We are pleased to report the fantastic support from:

- The Big Lottery Fund of £26,399.33, allowing us to support families in the Vale of White Horse District.
- The MOD Covenant of £24,408, allowing us to support military families;
- South Oxfordshire District Council of £10,159, as a contribution to supporting families in the South Oxfordshire District.
- BBC Children In Need of £9,702.42, for our Family Group.
- Oxfordshire Community Foundation Berin Project of £6,750 – supporting families in Berinsfield.

We have received funding from many town and parish councils, as well as grant giving trusts, organisations and individuals. We thank them all.

A special thanks to Faye, who continued to excel in fund-raising during the year.

Expenditure was well within budget, as a result of tight controls and the limited home-visiting, following Covid restrictions.

Year on-year Staff Salaries increased, as we were able to fill vacancies, and Service Charges were reduced, as an over-charging correction was made.

# Treasurer's Report



## Reserves Policy

Our reserves policy is to hold sufficient reserves to cover potential liabilities if the scheme was to close, plus anticipated funding requirements for the forthcoming year, plus a general reserve of no more than 12 months of annual income.

We had reserves at the financial year end totalling £139,362.58. This is represented by three reserves:

- A designated reserve of £41,000 - to cover a Pension Trust liability of about £28,000 and potential liabilities from redundancy payments and closing down costs.
- A reserve of £51,586.82 - to meet a budgeted deficit in 2022/23, as the Directors/ Trustees have agreed this to ensure the level of our services can be maintained in the coming year.
- A reserve of £5,273.57 from underspends in Restricted Funds during 2021/22.
- A general, free reserve of £41,502.19. These free reserves represent 4 months of the budgeted expenditure for 2022/23.

Once again, we offer our sincere thanks to all the organisations, individuals and trusts that have supported us throughout the year.

We cannot thank the staff enough for their tolerance and understanding in another year in which there has been great change along with our volunteers, for their flexibility during Covid restrictions.

We are fortunate to have reserves to cover budgeted shortfalls but ongoing funding will be an increasing challenge, as we try to maintain the demands on our services whilst supporting our families.



**Colin Campbell**  
Treasurer

# Senior Organiser's Report

---

We started April 21 with a first for Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire. As we were still under lockdown restrictions, we held our first virtual volunteer preparation course. It was a very different way for us to work, we delivered a resource pack to each participant, and they were given a login to the online course using Podia. It was a great success and we welcomed a new cohort of volunteers to the scheme, who were willing, ready and able to work with families once restrictions started to ease.

***“Podia prep course has been really well thought out, specifically the social inequality session was a real eye opener.”*** Quote from a volunteer who completed the online course.

We also introduced online via Zoom development sessions for volunteers. We hosted a session on Oral Health and another covering different types of Domestic Abuse.

In April, we also visited every family open to support to deliver an Easter Activity pack. These were very well received.

***“We had a nice Easter, the bag was brilliant! Thank you so much! It kept us busy for a few days and such good activities in it! We loved it!!”*** Feedback from a family.

Also in April, we started Buggy Walks around the Ladygrove Estate in Didcot. Restrictions were starting to lift, but we were unable to meet indoors in groups. These walks proved very popular and first time parents were really happy to be able to get out and about and meet other families.

***“I honestly feel like my maternity leave has been stolen from me by the pandemic but this walk felt like what a first time mummy should be doing. Thank you”*** Quote from a mum who attended the Buggy Walks.

We also said good-bye in April to Janet who after over 30 years with the scheme began her well-deserved retirement.

We reopened our First Babies Group in June and numbers have steadily increased.



# Senior Organiser's Report

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Our volunteers started to return and give outdoor support to families. In June, we slowly began to return to home visiting.

In July, we were sorry to say good-bye to Gill Rose, our Administrator, who left us for pastures new, supporting the Health Visiting Team in Abingdon.

We were very pleased to welcome in August, Kelly as our new Administrator. She has settled in to the Team quickly and we all appreciate her calmness and organisational skills.

We also re introduced our Home-Start Parenting Group. This is invite only, for families who may struggle with attending groups, due to anxiety or other issues. This now runs on a Weds and started by meeting the families in the park and then gradually getting back to meeting indoors by September.

Over August and September, we gradually returned to working in the office.

In October, we embarked on another Volunteer Preparation Course, but this time in the office, but still using elements of the online learning. This again worked well and we welcomed a much-valued new cohort of Home Visiting Volunteers.

***“I loved the volunteer course and was very impressed at the content and the way it was designed and delivered. Such a good idea to get people chatting, reflecting, thinking and sharing. The knowledge and experience that the team shared was invaluable. I look forward to getting started.”*** Quote from a new volunteer.



# Senior Organiser's Report

---



We were very pleased to hear our grant application had been successful with the Henry Smith Foundation, who have funded us to continue to offer support to families within the Vale of White Horse for the next 3 years.

We really appreciated Councillor, Jo Robb (Leader of SODC), for choosing us as one of her charities for her year in office. She hosted a Puppet Storytelling event at Cornerstone Arts Centre in Didcot in November .

At Christmas we were able to deliver over 70 gift bags to the children, we were working with. We would like to thank BT, Tesco and Play2Give for their continued support and generosity.

We said good-bye to Faye (our Development Manager) in February as she left us to go on maternity leave. We were pleased to hear of the safe arrival of her son.

In March, we hosted in the office a First Aid course for volunteers. As you can see, we have had another busy year at Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire. I would like to thank the Team for all their efforts in supporting the families we work with. Our wonderful volunteers, who give up so much of their time and our Trustees who have supported and steered us through these difficult times.

**Linda Cheong**  
**Senior Organiser**



# Family Case Study

---



Rose lives with her partner Matt and their three children, Michael 3, David 2, and Susie 1.

Rose was receiving support from IPPS Service (Infant perinatal parent support) regarding her poor mental health. This support came to an end once Susie turned one.

Rose found it difficult managing three young children, especially with Michael's challenging behaviour as he is waiting for a paediatric assessment for a suspected diagnosis of autism or ADHD. Rose was also struggling to keep on top of household chores. She was experiencing low self-esteem and lack of confidence.

Both boys have delayed speech. The pandemic has exacerbated this by Michael not being able to attend nursery or interact with other children. Susie, having been born in lockdown is understandably shy and reticent of people having been isolated and unable to attend any toddler groups.

Holly, our Home-Start volunteer was able to provide Rose with a lot of emotional support as well as practical ideas to help manage the children's behaviour. Holly encouraged Rose to put into practice what she learned from attending a Family links parenting course. Holly's visits to Rose also enabled Rose to spend some one-to-one time with each of her three children which had a positive impact on their relationships.

Holly's support has been invaluable to Rose and her family. The support she received has had a positive impact on her parenting, her own mental health and self-esteem. Rose now has a part time job and attends a gym once a week. Both Michael and David now attend nursery. School arranged for Michael to have speech and language therapy to help with his speech. Rose takes Susie to a local toddler group which has helped Susie come out of her shell.

***"Home-Start helped Rose to get back on track and the support has been such a benefit to the whole family"***

**Lydia Davison  
Scheme Organiser**

# Volunteer Q&A

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Jane McKeown ● Volunteer since 2015 ●



## **What made you want to volunteer for Home-Start?**

I had heard fabulous things about HomeStart, I myself had both of my children in a foreign country with no family support which I found very isolating and challenging so I was hoping to be of some help to others experiencing these issues and just give a couple of hours of my time every week to hopefully lessen someone else's load.

## **What is your proudest achievement as a volunteer?**

Seeing how the family I supported, the Mother in particular, grew in confidence, in themselves individually and as a family unit.

Mum now smiles and even laughs readily, she makes eye contact, and has direction and goals for her future. I'm so very proud of them all and also of myself for being a small part of their journey.

## **What is the most difficult thing you have dealt with as a volunteer?**

In the first month of working with my family I had carefully planned a visit involving a trip to a local play group which unfortunately did not go as well as I had hoped. At the time I completely over thought it and beat myself up over things not working out perfectly, but that disappointment of feeling like you are not doing enough and not being as helpful as you had hoped was tough. I now understand that just being a regular fixture, a reliable friendly face who shows up and doesn't expect anything in return is more than enough.

## **What do you see as the biggest challenges facing families nowadays?**

The lack of infrastructure including; affordable and accessible transport links, GPs, Dentists, Pre-schools, Schools and affordable supermarkets in growing areas is a huge concern.

Also the ever increasing cost of basic living, power and the weekly shop is proving to be a huge challenge, it breaks my heart to hear the stress so many families are under.

## **What have you learnt from being a volunteer?**

That being a regular, reliable visitor with no hidden agenda, a listening ear and a smile to greet them with is enough. You won't be able to move mountains but your time and that you care is enough.

## **What is the best part of your role?**

Knowing you are making a positive difference to someone's life.



# Home-Start Groups



## First Babies Group

First Babies group returned to the local community centre when Covid restrictions eased in September. Prior to this we held weekly buggy walks in the local area.

We have continued to welcome an ever increasing attendance of first time parents and bumps, with a regular group of 14 parents and three sets of twins.

We provide a social community where parents can come and meet up, improving isolation in new families and reducing post-natal depression.

Our Volunteers Sandy and Helen assist on a fortnightly basis and are valuable assets to our group, warmly welcoming new parents and their babies. Our Group Facilitator and Volunteers have a great deal of experience in Perinatal, Early Year, Physical and Mental Health Education.

## Parenting Group

This group is held on Wednesday mornings in the office at the Didcot Library. It is a small group for referred families who would find large groups difficult to attend due to their personal circumstances.

Thanks to our funding from BBC Children in Need, we are able to buy additional resources to encourage physical and creative activities.



The emphasis is on giving pre -school children, the best start with their literacy and language skills, supporting them to be school ready and confident to join their local community.



We assist with parenting skills and advice. We offer art activities and encourage play to increase learning opportunities. We include singing and rhyme time, participation is popular with our attendees. It's usually a very busy session!

# Family Support and Community Liaison



Our three-year Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, 'Removing Barriers to Family Life' is, unbelievably, in its third year! Prior to this the Trust funded us for 3 years under the heading 'Families in Stress'.

I Over 5 years ago I became Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire's first Family Support Worker. The aim was to be able to offer rapid response, to military personnel, and their families, within a few days of referral. Which has certainly been successful! Referrals are received from various agencies as well as some self-referrals. Support extends to families, living on or off the bases of Dalton Barracks (Abingdon), Vauxhall Barracks (Didcot), RAF Benson, and the Defence Academy of the UK (Shrivenham).

I work one-to-one, delivering support to families in their own homes. The areas of support are varied and include mental health, parenting, isolation and building self-esteem, amongst others. Currently, the majority of my support revolves around the use of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and the Family Links Nurturing Programme. As long as there is a child, under the age of 5, I can work with any member of the family. A large percentage of my work is with the adults of the family, which is very understandable, as when a parent/carer is experiencing difficulties this has a direct effect on the whole family.

The Community Liaison part of my role enables me to meet lots of other professionals and to promote other support Home-Start can offer, including groups and home-visiting volunteers. I attend events such as, Family Days, Meet and Greet (a fresher's type of event meeting new families moving to military bases), Military Community Meetings and coffee mornings. In the years I have worked for Home-Start I have built relationships with a network of agencies and professionals and keep in regular contact with these.

We have made it through the Covid-19 challenge and I have, for quite some time now, resumed my face to face work!! But there have been some positives, showing us that no matter what, support can still be delivered!!



**Gill Jones**  
**Family Support/Community Liaison Worker**

# Highlights



We're now using Localgiving as our online donation and fundraising platform. Any donation, whatever the size, will help us support families with young children across South Oxfordshire & the Vale of White Horse!

[www.localgiving.org/charity/home-start-southern-oxfordshire](http://www.localgiving.org/charity/home-start-southern-oxfordshire)



We were awarded £500 from Localgiving's Magic Little Grants Awards to provide training to staff in order to reach a wider number of families with mental health support. This Award was made possible by a grant from Localgiving and Postcode Society Trust, a grant-giving charity funded by players of People's Postcode Lottery



Each year we're lucky to benefit from local charity Play2Give's Sleigh2Give toy donation drive, where age appropriate new toys and gifts are provided for each of the children we support.

This year we also received gift donations from Tesco Superstore in Didcot, BT Openreach, Didcot's Co-op Funeralcare and from local schoolboy Daniel Lloyd who runs Markers for Mindfulness!



Waitrose Abingdon invited our local Home-Start families to a Santa Experience where the children got to meet Santa Claus in his sleigh and were treated in the in-store café.

We had three supporters take part in runs for us in October 2021! Mo Hussain ran the Virtual London Marathon on 3 October 2021 and Liam Day and Brogan Hunter took part in the Oxford Half Marathon on 17 October! They all did so well and we can't thank them enough for putting in all the training, rising to the challenge and fundraising for us along the way!

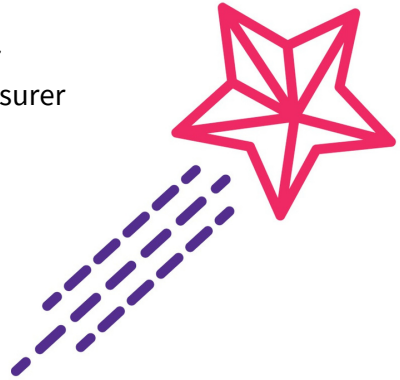


# Trustees and Staff 2021/22

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## Trustees:

Doreen McNulty	Chair
Gill Bodey	Vice Chair
Colin Campbell	Hon. Treasurer
Rosemary Knagg	
Barbara Guast	
Helen Conway	
Lorraine Meadows (until Oct 2021)	
Rob Hufton	
Tanya Skelton (co-opted March 2021)	



## Staff:

Linda Cheong	Senior Organiser
Lydia Davison	Scheme Organiser
Lucia Prentice	Scheme Organiser
Gill Jones	Family Support/Community Liaison Worker
Jacque Boshell	Group Worker
Faye Golding-King	Development Manager
Janet McIlvennie	Finance Administrator (until April 2021)
Gill Rose	Office Administrator (until July 2021)
Kelly Summers	Office Administrator from August 2022

## Independent Examiner:

Sue Scane, CIPFA

# Home-Start Safeguarding

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Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults, and expects all trustees, staff, volunteers and members to share this commitment. Our policies on safeguarding children and adults are available on request.

# Funders

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## Parish Councils

Sutton Courtenay, Sonning Common, Berinsfield, Watchfield, Radley, Moulsoford, Little Milton, Wootton, Dorchester-On-Thames, Crowmarsh, Chilton, Longworth, Steventon, Kidmore.

## South Oxfordshire District Council

Revenue Grant, Additional Restrictions Grant  
Remobilisation Grant

## Charitable Trusts

The Henry Smith charity, The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, BBC Children in Need, The Spalding Trust, Helianthus Trust, Souldern Trust, The Cumber Family Trust, PF Charitable Trust, Pears Foundation, AF Blakemore, Magic Little Grants.

## Business Donors

Waitrose Wantage, TK Maxx and Homesense foundation, OCVA and Community First Oxfordshire, Co-op community Fund Oxfordshire, M&Co Didcot, Orano LTD.

## Groups and Individuals

Wallingford and Didcot Rotary Club, Faringdon United Charities.

Liam Day and Brogan Hunter - Oxford half marathon.

Families and Volunteers, past and present, who donate their expenses, make donations in lieu of birthday gifts, and/or make regular donations to the scheme, often boosted by Gift Aid.

A huge thank you to each of our funders throughout the year. Your generosity has enabled vital services to continue to support vulnerable families through their toughest times.

## **Quality Assurance**

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We are proud to be quality assured through the Home-Start Quality Assurance System – a programme of self-assessment against nationwide quality standards. The process looks at the continuous improvement of all our practice areas relating to governance, management and service delivery. At our last Quality Assurance Review in February 2018 we were categorised as ‘Demonstrating High Quality’, having met 100% of the legal, safeguarding/child protection and other mandatory performance indicators.

## **Public Benefit Statement**

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The Trustees have a duty to report on the scheme’s public benefit. They have taken into account the Charity Commission’s guidance on public benefit in planning the year’s activities. This report demonstrates how Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire fulfils its charitable objectives which are:

'To safeguard, protect and preserve the good health, both mental and physical, of children and parents; to prevent cruelty to or maltreatment of children; to relieve sickness, poverty and need amongst children and parents; to promote the education of the public in better standards of childcare in southern Oxfordshire'.

## **Membership**

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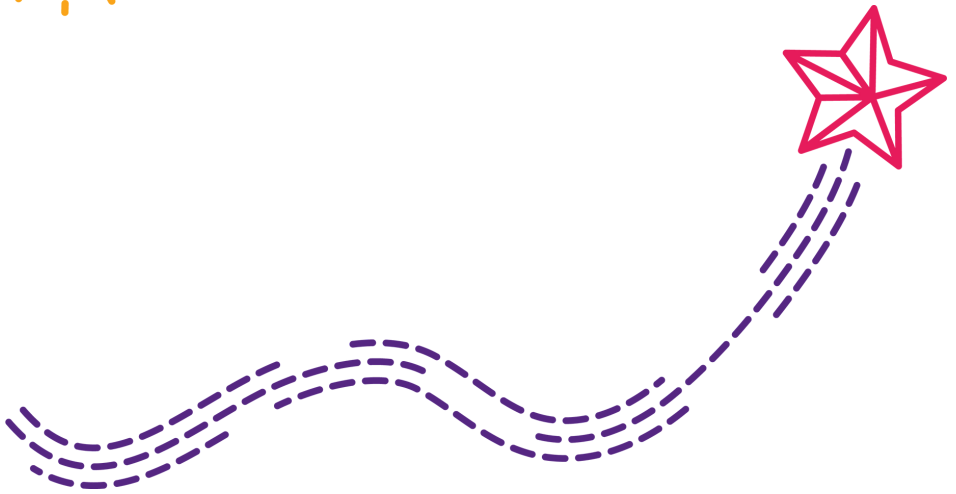
Membership of Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is open to any person interested in furthering the objectives quoted above, and approved by the trustees. Members are entitled to vote at the AGM and other general meetings. Application forms are available on request from the scheme.

## **Risk Management**



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The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the scheme is exposed, in particular those relating to finances and operations, and believe that arrangements are in place to mitigate those risks.





Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire  
197 Broadway  
Didcot  
OX11 8RU  
01235 511152  
admin@homestartso.org

 HomeStartSouthernOxfordshire  
 @HomeStart\_S\_Ox

[www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk](http://www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk)

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Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is a company limited by guarantee,  
registered in England and Wales Number: 05443274  
Registered Charity Number: 1113941

# Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

Company Registration No: 05443274

## STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 12 MONTHS TO 31st March 2022

### INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR 12 MONTHS TO 31st March 2022 (£.p)

	<u>2021/2022</u>		<u>2020/2021</u>
	Unrestricted Core	Restricted	TOTAL
<b><u>Income</u></b>			
Big Lottery Fund		26,399.33	44,600.92
MOD Covenant		24,408.00	24,408.00
OCF Berin Project		6,750.00	13,500.00
BBC Children In Need		9,702.42	8,093.50
South Oxfordshire District Council	10,159.00		10,159.00
Other Council Grants	2,379.00		2,379.00
Donations & Fundraising	41,567.26		41,567.26
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>54,105.26</b>	<b>67,259.75</b>	<b>121,365.01</b>
			<b>143,462.73</b>
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>			
Staff Salaries	55,496.96	57,591.10	113,088.06
Stationery / Post / Telephone	2,767.05	954.00	3,721.05
Rent / Service Charge	83.60	5,051.20	5,134.80
Staff Training / Travel / Expenses	2,581.29	1,256.00	3,837.29
Volunteers Training / Travel / Expenses	1,066.95	150.00	1,216.95
Home-Start Consultancy	820.18	1,200.00	2,020.18
AGM	302.00		302.00
Other Expenditure	3,947.70	5,525.32	9,473.02
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>67,065.73</b>	<b>71,727.62</b>	<b>138,793.35</b>
			<b>124,274.84</b>
<b><u>Excess of Income over Expenditure</u></b>	<b><u>-12,960.47</u></b>	<b><u>-4,467.87</u></b>	<b><u>-17,428.34</u></b>
			<b><u>19,187.89</u></b>

## Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

Company Registration No: 05443274

### STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31st March 2022 (£.p)

<u>Accumulated Fund</u>	<u>2021/2022</u>		TOTAL	TOTAL
	Unrestricted Core	Restricted	TOTAL	
Brought Forward from previous year	-12,960.47	9,741.44	9,741.44	2,178.42
Surplus / Deficit for the year	-12,960.47	-4,467.87	-17,428.34	19,187.89
Transfer to/from Reserves	-12,960.47	5,273.57	-7,686.90	21,366.31
Balance Carried Forward	<u>5,273.57</u>	<u>5,273.57</u>	<u>5,273.57</u>	<u>11,624.87</u>
<b><u>BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st March 2022</u></b>				
Current Assets				
Debtors and Prepayments		360.58		2,243.63
Cash at Bank and In Hand		<u>154,279.00</u>		<u>199,026.29</u>
Less Current Liabilities			154,639.58	<u>201,269.92</u>
Creditors, Accruals & Payments in Advance		<u>15,277.00</u>		<u>44,479.00</u>
Net Assets			<u>139,362.58</u>	<u>156,790.92</u>
Represented by:				
Restricted Accumulated Fund Carried Forward		5,273.57		9,741.44
Pension Deficit / Redundancy / Closing Down Reserves		41,000.00		41,000.00
Reserve to meet budgeted deficit in forthcoming year		51,586.82		37,626.00
Free Reserves		<u>41,502.19</u>		<u>68,423.48</u>
Total			<u>139,362.58</u>	<u>156,790.92</u>

#### **SUMMARY OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT**

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31st March 2022, which are set out above. In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements (a) to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act); and (b) to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act. have not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Susan Scane

# INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF HOME-START SOUTHERN OXFORDSHIRE

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31st March 2022, which are set out on pages 1 and 2.  
Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner  
**Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the Accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 43(2) of the Charities Act (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 43 (7)(b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

## **Basis of independent examiner's report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

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Susan Scane  
151 Lydalls Road, Didcot, Oxfordshire, OX11 7EA  
CIPFA  
4/11/22

# Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

Company Registration No: 05443274

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			<b><u>19,187.89</u></b>

## Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

Company Registration No: 05443274

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Total			<u>139,362.58</u>	<u>156,790.92</u>

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Susan Scane

# INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF HOME-START SOUTHERN OXFORDSHIRE

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4/11/22

Susan Scane  
151 Lydalls Road, Didcot, Oxfordshire, OX11 7EA  
CIPFA

**HOME-START SOUTHERN OXFORDSHIRE**

England & Wales - Charity number 1113941

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# Accounts

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**Southern  
Oxfordshire**



# **Annual Report 2020/21**

**Our year during the COVID-19 pandemic**

[www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk](http://www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk)

# Standards and Methods of Practice

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Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire works with families who are experiencing difficulties or very stressful situations, and who have a child/children under five years of age.

We are an independent registered charity, and work towards the increased confidence and independence of the family by:

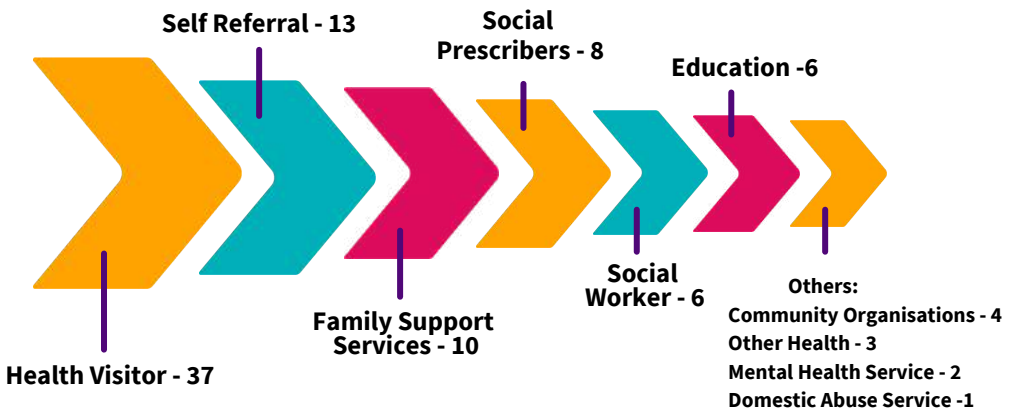
- offering support, friendship and practical assistance
- visiting families in their own homes, where the dignity and identity of each individual can be respected and protected
- reassuring parents that difficulties in bringing up children are not unusual and encouraging enjoyment in family life
- developing a relationship with the family in which time can be shared and understanding can be developed; the approach is flexible to take account of different needs
- encouraging the parents' strengths and emotional wellbeing for the ultimate benefit of their own children
- encouraging families to widen their network of relationships and to use effectively the support and services available within the community



# Our year at a glance



# Where our referrals came from

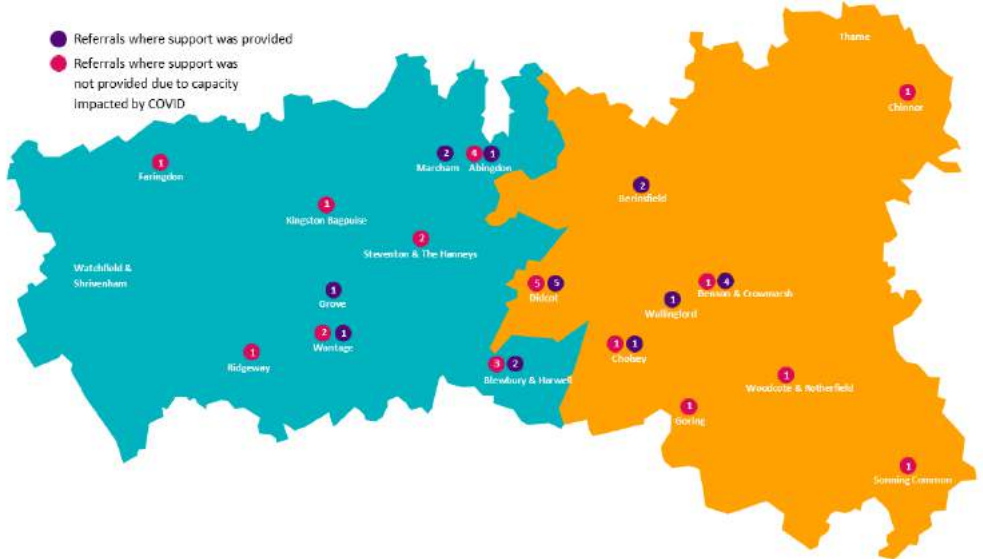


# The Area We Cover



## Referrals received by district council ward

- Referrals where support was provided
- Referrals where support was not provided due to capacity impacted by COVID



## Families supported by district council ward



# Chair's Report

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Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire reaches its 32nd year of supporting struggling and vulnerable families in our area. No one could have imagined the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic would have not just on our local community but the whole world order!

The trustees and I are extremely proud to say that despite the difficulties of the last year, Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire managed to maintain our service of support to families. We were fortunate to obtain funding to provide all the team with laptops and smartphones to enable them to work from home. The staff team were incredibly resourceful in rising to the challenges of adapting their ways of working.



During the year we had some staff changes.

In May, Rhiannon McCobb our excellent Scheme Manager of 8 years left us to pursue new challenges. We were very fortunate to have kept her for so long and we wish her every success for the future. Organiser Amy Rutherford left us in July to take up a role working with older children at the Aureus School in Didcot. I am pleased to say that we were able to recruit Lucia Prentice for the Organiser role, as we had previously had to withdraw the offer of a Group Worker/Family Support role we had made to Lucia in February.

I am delighted to say in November we appointed a new Senior Organiser, Linda Cheong. Linda has had a long involvement with Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire, she was one of our supported families over 20 years ago, when she was a young mum of twins with a toddler under 3.



Linda's previous role as part of The Early Help Team for Oxfordshire County Council means she has lots of transferable skills to bring to the role. Linda also served as a trustee of the Scheme for over 12 years.

# Chair's Report



In February, we were very fortunate to be able to re-recruit our previous Group Worker, Jacquie Boshell. Jacquie left us to go travelling with her husband, and when we were ready to restart our groups again Jacquie was back in the country and applied for her previous role. She was by far the best candidate we interviewed.

At last year's AGM our guest speaker was Tanya, whose family had been supported by a Home-Start volunteer. Tanya shared her experience of suffering from postnatal depression alongside fibromyalgia. Tanya spoke about the support she received both physically and emotionally, and the positive impact this had on her family. Tanya was incredibly grateful for the invaluable skills she gained and wanted to share how much Home-Start support makes a difference to the whole family. It was a very moving tribute to the skills of the volunteer, and to the work of Home-Start, and not least of all to Tanya herself! I am delighted to say that Tanya has joined our Board of Trustees.

## **"All our staff and volunteers have been outstanding!"**

The trustees would like to thank the staff team and all our amazing volunteers for their commitment and resourcefulness in meeting the challenges of adapting the delivery of support to vulnerable families during these difficult times of COVID.

Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues on the Trustee Board for their support, guidance and enthusiasm for the work of Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire. Their contribution is invaluable to the successful running of the Scheme!



**Doreen McNulty**  
**Chair of Trustees**

# Treasurer's Report

---

The scheme had an overall surplus of £19,187.89. This resulted from a combination of additional funding being provided for COVID-19 recovery and lower than anticipated expenditure resulting from a combination of staff vacancies and reduced costs during lockdowns and restricted home-visits.

We are pleased to report the fantastic support from:

- The National Lottery Community Fund of £44,600.92, allowing us to support families in the Vale of White Horse District
- The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust of £24,408, allowing us to support military families
- South Oxfordshire District Council of £16,183, as a contribution to supporting families in the South Oxfordshire District
- Oxfordshire Community Foundation Growing Minds Project – supporting families in Berinsfield
- BBC Children in Need of £8,093.50, for our Home-Start Parenting Group



We have received funding from many town and parish councils, as well as grant giving trusts, organisations and individuals. We thank them all. A special thanks to Faye, who has done exceptionally well in fundraising this year.

Expenditure was well within budget, as a result of tight controls and the lockdowns. We did incur additional expenditure to provide staff with the ability to work from home, and for family support while visits were not possible, during the lockdown periods. We thank all of our staff for their flexibility during these difficult times.

The accounts show an unusually high charge from Oxfordshire County Council for premises service charges, which we are querying.

# Treasurer's Report

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## Reserves Policy

Our reserves policy is to hold sufficient reserves to cover potential liabilities if the scheme were to close, plus anticipated funding requirements for the forthcoming year, as well as a general reserve of no more than 12 months of annual income.

We had reserves at the financial year end totalling £156,790.92. This is represented by three reserves:

- A designated reserve of £41,000 - to cover a Pension Trust liability of about £28,000 and potential liabilities from redundancy payments and closing down costs
- A reserve of £37,626 to meet a budgeted deficit in 2021/22, as the Directors/Trustees have agreed this to ensure the level of our services can be maintained in the coming year
- A reserve of £9,741.44 from underspends in Restricted Funds during 2020/21
- A general, free reserve of £68,423.48. These free reserves represent 5.5 months of the budgeted expenditure for 2021/22

Once again, we offer our sincere thanks to all the organisations, individuals and trusts that have supported us throughout the year. We cannot thank the staff enough for their tolerance and understanding in another year in which there has been great change. We also thank our volunteers for their flexibility during lockdowns.



We are fortunate to have reserves to cover potential shortfalls but ongoing funding will always be a challenge.

**Colin Campbell**  
Treasurer

# Senior Organiser's Report

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Well, what a year this report covers! It starts a week after the country entered the first COVID-19 lockdown. All home visiting and groups were suspended, and staff began working from home. Virtual support was put in place, with families being supported remotely by staff and volunteers.



We remained open to referrals, but had to decline some where remote support was inappropriate, either because the family wanted practical support, or had needs too complex to address without face-to-face contact. We cancelled the Volunteer Preparation Course that was about to start when the pandemic took hold, and several volunteers decided to take a 'rest' for their own health or personal reasons, so Organisers took on the support of some families themselves. All this affected the number of families we could support, but we anticipated that figures would eventually return to 'normal'.

We were able to support families experiencing a wide range of difficulties, including isolation, domestic abuse, mental health difficulties, and housing problems – all exacerbated by pandemic restrictions. Staff and volunteers delivered shopping, clothes and toys to families, and helped with accessing food banks, community larders and food parcels.

Staff were creative in producing weekly activity guides for families, and setting up Zoom 'Time for Tots' sessions, publicised on our social media and to Health Visitors, and described later in this report.



Zoom sessions were also introduced for volunteers to increase their confidence in giving remote support.

# Senior Organiser's Report

We assembled Easter activity packs and delivered them to families, which gave the opportunity for socially distanced doorstep chats. The packs were really appreciated, and were followed by further packs in the summer holidays, and stockings at Christmas filled with gifts from local companies and the community.



In June, when restrictions eased, staff returned to the office, on a rota basis and with risk assessments and COVID precautions in place. In September some volunteers began outdoor meetings with their families, but it was back to remote support for lockdown 2 in November.

I joined the team as Senior Organiser in January 2021, but had been a trustee prior to this so was aware of the different ways of working that staff had developed. We urgently needed more volunteers, so put our energies into planning an online Preparation Course to run after March 2021. This was a whole new experience and steep learning curve! The year ended as some of the restrictions of lockdown 3 were easing.

Thank you to all staff, volunteers, trustees, supporters, funders and Home-Start UK who helped us make a difference to families' lives through such a different and difficult year!

**Linda Cheong**  
Senior Organiser

Thank you

Alison M  
Amanda W  
Anne T

Barbara G	Elaine R	Janet R	Mary-Jane C	Sandy S
Beth D	Emma J	Jean D	Nikki P	Sarah C
Carol P	Francia K	Jill F	Pam S	Saras R
Caroline C	Gill B	Judy L	Paulene T	Sue P-J
Carrie P	Gill G	Layla J	Rachel L	Sue R
Claire D	Helen G	Lucy C-D	Rose R	Suzanne W
Clare J	Jane D	Maria W	Roseanne C	
Debbie B	Jane S	Mary B	Sam B	



## Family Case Study

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When support from Home-Start began, Maryam knew no one in the area. English is her second language which proved to be quite perplexing. Maryam had moved to refuge accommodation to ensure the safety of herself and unborn baby after leaving her husband due to domestic abuse. Maryam divorced her husband and he flew back to his homeland.

Maryam's rights to reside in the UK were linked to her husband, however when he returned to his homeland, Maryam was required to request rights in her own right. Maryam was supported by Asylum Welcome to apply for pre-settled status which was granted. However this did not automatically entitle Maryam to apply for benefits.



Before Maryam became entitled to Universal Credit, Home-Start were able to secure grants and apply to her housing association for financial support. Weekly requests for food parcels were provided for her. We were able to source milk, nappies, clothes and toys for baby Youssef. Eventually, after many applications for Universal Credit, it was granted.

Maryam and Youssef have greatly appreciated the support of June, one of our volunteers. Maryam felt very isolated particularly during the pandemic. She greatly valued the weekly phone calls. When restrictions were lifted Maryam was able to meet face to face with June outdoors and looked forward to June's weekly visits. She has since had the confidence to find a nursery for her son which has allowed her to work two days a week.

**"To see Maryam settle so well into her new life as a single mother in an unfamiliar town, in unprecedented times, is quite remarkable. She's revealed how resilient she is. She feels far less isolated and her self-esteem has greatly improved since having the support and guidance from June."**

**Lydia Davison**  
**Scheme Organiser**

*\*all family names have been changed*

# Volunteer Q&A

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Amanda Wood 🟡 Volunteer since 2015 🟡 Supported 7 families

## What made you want to volunteer for Home-Start?

I always loved being home with my children and I wanted to be able to give other mums the confidence to enjoy spending time with theirs. I wanted to be a positive support to other parents.



## What is your proudest achievement as a volunteer?

The first family I worked with was very complex and had lots of social needs. The mum attended a panel meeting to find out if she could come off her child protection plan, so I went with her and looked after the children. When mum came out of the meeting and had been told the positive news she became a different person, that was a proud moment for me.

## What is the most difficult thing you have dealt with as a volunteer?

Lockdown has been very challenging. Providing support over the phone was difficult as it allows people to hang up at any point and you can't get the full picture of what's going on. It's also challenging dealing with the conflict between social services and a family.

## What do you see as the biggest challenges facing families nowadays?

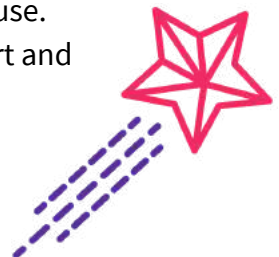
Post lockdown, the backlog of services, families having to wait longer than usual to be seen by mental health services and longer to get diagnoses for children with additional needs.

## What have you learnt from being a volunteer?

You can't change everything! Little things are enough. Just be yourself.

## What impact have you seen on families during the pandemic?

Increase in anxiety, especially around leaving the house. Difficulties getting food. Difficulties accessing support and children being at home due to school closures.



## What is the best part of your role?

Making a difference.

# Home-Start Groups

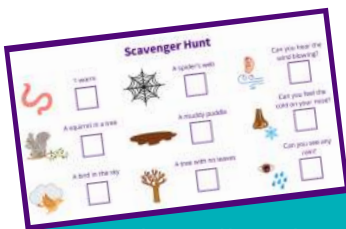


Our First Babies and Monday Groups closed during the pandemic. I kept in contact via phone calls and texts with parents who usually attended our Monday Group, a small weekly group funded by BBC Children in Need for referred families who would find large groups difficult to attend.

In November 2020 we decided to launch an online group for our Monday Group to help increase support. This Zoom group was called *Time for Tots* and was run weekly by myself and Gill Jones, our Family Support Worker. Unfortunately, due to the nature of Monday Group, some of the mums did not have the confidence to join virtually so we had very little uptake. We very quickly opened the group to all parents of children under 5 years old living in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse to try and attract more families, which it did.

Gill and I wanted to give the families an opportunity to talk about their parenting experience and discuss any concerns they may have, as well as help them meet other mums in the local area.

We then sang songs and read a story for the children which always had a lovely positive response.



**Lucia Prentice**  
**Scheme Organiser**

Early in lockdown, we published weekly activity guides, full of ideas on ways parents could keep their children busy and learning. The guides were emailed to families and made available on our website. We also produced one-off Easter and Autumn activity guides and a Creatures and Minibeasts activity guide during half-term.

# Family Support and Community Liaison

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We are now in the second year of our three-year funding from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, for our 'Removing Barriers to Family Life' project.



I continue to work with families, offering intensive and individually tailored support, on a one-to-one basis. This includes military families, living both on and off bases, in Dalton Barracks (Abingdon), Vauxhall Barracks (Didcot), RAF Benson and the Defence Academy (Shrivenham). My support covers many areas including, mental health, parenting, domestic abuse, isolation and building self-esteem.

In 2020 my support extended to families in the Berinsfield area. This is part of the Growing Minds Project, funded by Oxfordshire Community Foundation. Its main aims include: improving the home learning environment for families in disadvantaged communities, to engage families with community support (starting from registration of the birth of their child), and to increase school readiness. To date my support is very similar to that of the military families.



The past year and a half have seen many challenges. Initially, offering virtual support had very mixed reactions! Gradually families accepted the situation and virtual support became busy and very successful, with people adapting very well!

Virtual contact also enabled me to continue the Community Liaison side of my role, albeit less often. I have been able to attend meetings held by Family Links, developing close links with them and I continually use their family nurturing programme in my support of families. I look forward to things getting back to normal.

**Gill Jones**

Family Support/Community Liaison Worker

# Highlights

The Give A Little Love campaign is an amazing partnership between Home-Start and the John Lewis Partnership, which hopes to help 100,000 families in need and inspire an outpouring of kindness. We've been supported with funding, gifts for families and gift cards for volunteers from Waitrose stores in Abingdon, Wantage and Wallingford and John Lewis in Oxford. The Give A Little Love campaign was even the star of the famous Waitrose and John Lewis Christmas 2020 advert!

The logo for the 'Give A Little Love' campaign. It features the words 'GIVE A LITTLE LOVE' in a bold, black, hand-drawn font. A small green heart is positioned above the letter 'A' in 'GIVE'.

To help us celebrate World Book Day, Rob Jones, an Author and Illustrator from Abingdon, performed a lovely reading of his new children's book, *Where's Brian's Bottom?*. Rob also kindly gifted copies of his other book, *Bernard*, which we added to one of our doorstep deliveries to the children we support.



Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic meant that we were unable to run stalls at local events and local businesses were unable to run fundraising events in-store. We would like to thank all our funders, from Parish and Town Councils to Trusts and major grant funders who continued to support us throughout this time.

A yellow speech bubble with the words 'THANK YOU' written inside in a white, hand-drawn font.

# Highlights

We were fortunate to be chosen as one of the beneficiaries of the popular year-long Co-op Local Community Fund campaign. Every time a Co-op member bought selected Co-op brand products and services, a donation was made to us. We ended up receiving an incredible donation of more than £2,500! Thank you to Co-op and all their members for supporting us!



A huge thank you to Play2Give who once again supported us through its Sleigh2Give Christmas toy drive.

They provided a huge amount of toys and gifts for the children we support! White Stuff also supported us by donating warm hats, scarves and gloves to add to our children's Christmas sacks! We managed to spread lots of Christmas cheer!



We organised doorstep deliveries of children's Easter activity bags. Funded by Home-Start UK's *Caring for Families during COVID* fund, the bags were filled with Spring-themed activities such as bunny mask kits, cress planting kits and chocolate Easter nest baking kits! Thank you to Waitrose in Abingdon and Didcot Tesco Superstore for donating all the Easter eggs!

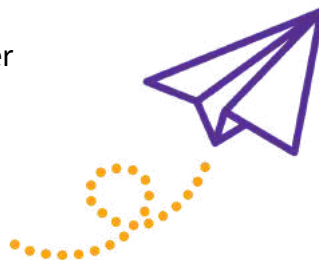


## Trustees and Staff 2020/21

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### Trustees:

Doreen McNulty	Chair
Gill Bodey	Vice Chair
Colin Campbell	Hon. Treasurer
Rosemary Knagg	
Barbara Guast	
Helen Conway	
Lorraine Meadows	
Linda Cheong (until Dec 2020)	
Rob Hufton	
Tanya Skelton (co-opted March 2021)	



### Staff:

Rhiannon McCobb	Senior Organiser until May 2020
Linda Cheong	Senior Organiser from January 2021
Lydia Davison	Scheme Organiser
Amy Rutherford	Scheme Organiser until July 2020
Lucia Prentice	Scheme Organiser from August 2020
Gill Jones	Family Support/Community Liaison Worker
Jacque Boshell	Group Worker from March 2021
Faye Golding-King	Development Manager
Janet McIlvennie	Finance Administrator
Gill Rose	Office Administrator

### Independent Examiner:

Sue Scane, CIPFA

## Home-Start Safeguarding

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Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults, and expects all trustees, staff, volunteers and members to share this commitment. Our policies on safeguarding children and adults are available on request.

# Funders

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## Parish Councils

Crowmarsh, Little Milton, Stoke Row, Watchfield, Lewknor, Kidmore End, Blewbury, Steventon, Sonning Common, Long Wittenham, Upton, Nuffield, Great Milton, Horspath.

## South Oxfordshire District Council

Revenue Grant, Additional Restrictions COVID-19 Grant.

## Town Councils

Wallingford, Abingdon, Didcot, Wantage.

## Charitable Trusts

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, BBC Children in Need, The National Lottery Community Fund, OCF Growing Minds, Albert Hunt Trust, PYE Charitable Trust, PF Charitable Trust, Stanton Ballard Charitable Trust, Lord Faringdon Charitable Trust, Faringdon United Charities, Doris Field Charitable Trust.

## Home-Start UK

Connecting families at Christmas grant, Caring for families during COVID fund.

## Business Donors

Tesco Bags of Help, Newbury Building Society, Waitrose Community Matters Schemes in Abingdon & Wantage, Co-op Local Community Fund, Rugby Group Benevolent Fund; Infineum SMILE programme.

## Groups and Individuals

Skylark Golfing, Aston Tirrold United Reformed Church, Wallingford Bridge Estate Charity, Abingdon Rotary Club, Wallingford and District Rotary Club.

Families and Volunteers, past and present, who donate their expenses, make donations in lieu of birthday gifts, and/or make regular donations to the scheme, often boosted by Gift Aid.



## **Quality Assurance**

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We are proud to be quality assured through the Home-Start Quality Assurance System – a programme of self-assessment against nationwide quality standards. The process looks at the continuous improvement of all our practice areas relating to governance, management and service delivery. At our last Quality Assurance Review in February 2018 we were categorised as ‘Demonstrating High Quality’, having met 100% of the legal, safeguarding/child protection and other mandatory performance indicators.

## **Public Benefit Statement**

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The Trustees have a duty to report on the scheme’s public benefit. They have taken into account the Charity Commission’s guidance on public benefit in planning the year’s activities. This report demonstrates how Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire fulfils its charitable objectives which are:

'To safeguard, protect and preserve the good health, both mental and physical, of children and parents; to prevent cruelty to or maltreatment of children; to relieve sickness, poverty and need amongst children and parents; to promote the education of the public in better standards of childcare in southern Oxfordshire'.

## **Membership**

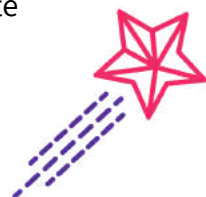
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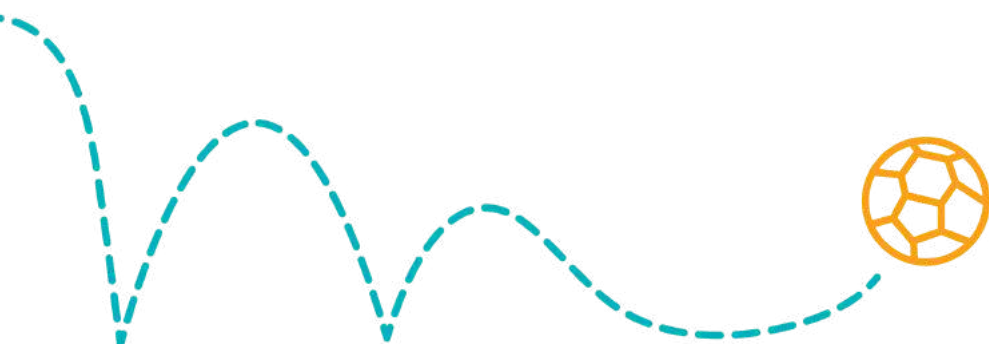
Membership of Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is open to any person interested in furthering the objectives quoted above, and approved by the trustees. Members are entitled to vote at the AGM and other general meetings. Application forms are available on request from the scheme.

## **Risk Management**



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The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the scheme is exposed, in particular those relating to finances and operations, and believe that arrangements are in place to mitigate those risks.





Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire  
197 Broadway  
Didcot  
OX11 8RU  
01235 511152  
admin@homestartso.org

 HomeStartSouthernOxfordshire  
 @HomeStart\_S\_Ox

[www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk](http://www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk)

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Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is a company limited by guarantee,  
registered in England and Wales Number: 05443274  
Registered Charity Number: 1113941

## Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

Registered Charity No: 1113941  
Company Registration No: 05443274

### STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 12 MONTHS TO 31st March 2021

#### INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR 12 MONTHS TO 31st March 2021 (£.p)

<u>Income</u>	<u>2020/2021</u>	<u>2019/2020</u>
Unrestricted Core	Restricted	TOTAL
Big Lottery Fund	44,600.92	44,600.92
MOD Covenant	24,408.00	24,408.00
OCF Berin Project	13,500.00	13,500.00
BBC Children In Need	8,093.50	8,093.50
South Oxfordshire District Council	16,183.00	16,183.00
Donations & Fundraising	28,252.31	28,252.31
Council Grants	8,425.00	8,425.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>52,860.31</b>	<b>90,602.42</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>90,602.42</b>	<b>143,462.73</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>52,860.31</b>	<b>129,301.55</b>
<u>Expenditure</u>		
Staff Salaries	18,993.04	67,267.40
Stationery / Post / Telephone	2,609.55	1,155.00
Rent / Service Charge	7,040.09	6,339.00
Staff Training / Travel / Expenses	1,176.39	1,366.00
Volunteers Training / Travel / Expenses	493.33	150.00
Home-Start Consultancy	1,496.45	1,500.00
AGM	350.00	2,996.45
Other Expenditure	9,076.59	5,262.00
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>41,235.44</b>	<b>83,039.40</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>41,235.44</b>	<b>124,274.84</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>11,624.87</b>	<b>19,187.89</b>
<b>Excess of Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>11,624.87</b>	<b>7,563.02</b>
<b>Excess of Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>11,624.87</b>	<b>-13,972.10</b>

## Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

Registered Charity No: 1113941

Company Registration No: 05443274

### STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31st March 2021 (E.P)

<u>Accumulated Fund</u>	<u>2020/2021</u>	<u>2019/2020</u>
Unrestricted Core	Restricted	TOTAL
Brought Forward from previous year	2,178.42	2,178.42
Surplus / Deficit for the year	7,563.02	19,187.89
Transfer to/from Reserves	9,741.44	21,366.31
Balance Carried Forward	11,624.87	11,624.87
	9,741.44	9,741.44
	2,178.42	2,178.42

### BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st March 2020

Current Assets			
Debtors and Prepayments	2,243.63		1,436.83
Cash at Bank and In Hand	199,026.29		148,716.15
Less Current Liabilities			150,152.98
Creditors, Accruals & Payments in Advance	44,479.00		11,660.72
Net Assets		156,790.92	138,492.26
Represented by:			
Restricted Accumulated Fund Carried Forward	9,741.44		2,178.42
Pension Deficit / Redundancy / Closing Down Reserves	41,000.00		41,000.00
Reserve to meet budgeted deficit in forthcoming year	37,626.00		28,090.00
Free Reserves	68,423.48		67,223.84
Total		156,790.92	138,492.26

### SUMMARY OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31st March 2021, which are set out above. In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements (a) to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act); and (b) to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act.

have not been met; or  
(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.  
Susan Scane

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF HOME-START SOUTHERN OXFO

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31st March 2021, which are set out on pages 1 and 2.  
Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner  
**Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the Accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 43(2) of the Charities Act (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 43 (7)(b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### **Basis of independent examiner's report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures used do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the

### **Independent Examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements  
(a) to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act); and  
(b) to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act.  
have not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Susan Scane  
26/11/2021  
151 Lydalls Road, Didcot, Oxfordshire, OX11 7EA  
CIPFA

# INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF HOME-START SOUTHERN OXFO

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Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

## Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the Accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 43(2) of the Charities Act (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 43 (7)(b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

## Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures used do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the

## Independent Examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
  - (a) to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act); and
  - (b) to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act.have not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



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26/11/2022