



# HOME START

Wokingham  
District



Design sponsored by



[www.fresh01.com](http://www.fresh01.com)

Annual Report 2019/2020



## Our Main Aims



### Early Intervention and Prevention

Our emphasis is on supporting families at an early stage to ensure the support we offer has the best possible impact on children. We support families, to give their children the opportunities they need to thrive and develop in the earliest years, identifying and addressing problems early, is one of the strongest themes of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) Children's Plan and we support this.

### Sustainability

We want to make sure Home-Start is here for parents and children now and in the future.

### Diversity and Inclusion

We want to ensure that all parents are aware of what we can offer and feel confident in our approach. We want to ensure we reach those who are socially disadvantaged or those who do not find it easy to ask for help or access services for themselves or their children. We want to learn what works best for them and how we can shape our service to meet their needs.

### Quality

We will ensure we have a continuous process of self-assessment and review, in every part of our work to ensure we continue to improve, develop and offer the highest quality service to families.



### What We Do

Home-Start offers a unique service, recruiting and training volunteers – who are usually parents themselves – to visit families at home who have at least one child under 5 to offer informal, friendly and confidential support.

To help give children the best possible start in life, Home-Start supports parents as they grow in confidence, strengthen their relationships with their children and widen their links with the local community.





## Our Team

**Our offices are usually staffed between the hours of 9.00am and 3.30pm Monday to Friday and there is an answer phone for out of office hours messages.**

We can be contacted on 0118 988 8025 or by email at [admin@home-startwd.org.uk](mailto:admin@home-startwd.org.uk) [www.home-startwd.org.uk](http://www.home-startwd.org.uk)

### Staff

**Manager** – Emma Roberts  
**Co-ordinator** – Lindsay Browne  
**Co-ordinator** – Mandy Özfiçici  
**Tools for Life Co-ordinator** – Teresa Crandon  
**Fundraiser** – Amy Fennell  
**Administrator** – Elaine Strange

### Honorary Officers – 2019-2020

**Chair** – Gareth Heard  
**Treasurer** – George McCormack  
**Company Secretary** – Emma Roberts

### Trustees

H Diffenthal  
P Cannam  
G Heard  
S Heard  
R McCormack  
G McCormack  
S South  
N Stubban

Trustees are elected and serve for 3 years. Re-election takes place at our Annual General Meeting.



Emma Roberts

I joined Home-Start Wokingham in July 2018 from a background in health, nutrition and humanitarian aid! Its been a steep but very interesting and enjoyable learning curve. Getting to know the team, volunteers and families has been a pleasure and knowing that together we can make a difference in the lives of families is very important. My role is to access the resources we need so our volunteers can provide the ongoing support, with guidance from the team.



Teresa Crandon

I joined Home-Start Wokingham in October 2018 as the Tools for Life Project Co-ordinator. I have developed the training and resources for the project to train our existing volunteers and also new volunteers on the Volunteer Preparation Course. I have also had the opportunity to volunteer with a family offering Tools for Life support and it has been very rewarding to see the family grow in confidence and be ready for school in September. I look forward to developing and supporting more family groups across the borough.



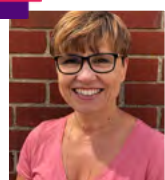
Lindsay Browne

Since joining the scheme over 7 years ago, I have had the opportunity to work with so many incredible families and volunteers. The needs of each family is very diverse and it is rewarding to see them flourish and in some cases turn their lives around. Watching the relationship between the family and the volunteer develop is so fulfilling. Everyday brings new opportunities and I certainly wouldn't want to change it.



Elaine Strange

I have been with Home-Start Wokingham District since August 2009. I currently work 24 hours per week providing administrative support to the office team and board of trustees. This work includes maintaining office records, banking and the monthly reconciliation of our accounts.



Mandy Özfiçici

I joined Home-Start Wokingham District in March 2012 as a part-time Co-ordinator, having been a home visiting volunteer for a couple of years. I really enjoy the variety each day brings, from meeting with families to find out how we can help, to meeting with volunteers to see how their relationship has developed with the family they support. Seeing families gain confidence in their abilities is amazing.



Amy Fennell

I spent four years visiting families as a volunteer for Home-Start Wokingham which gave me real insight into the challenges facing young families and how much our support can help. I wanted to use my skills as a lawyer to do more so was thrilled to join the team, part-time, in 2019. As our Fundraiser my role is to help raise the money we need to fund our work. I also work to raise our profile within Wokingham Borough through social media and involvement in community events. I love the challenge of the role and knowing that, together, we are making a real difference to local families.





# Quotes from our families

Homestart is a life saver for parents who have noone else to turn to for a lot of emotional support while our children are little and sometimes very demanding. I highly praise homestart. Thankyou Lyndsey and everyone on the team x



Homestart have been amazing in their help to us as a family. Everyone is so supportive, friendly and helpful.

## The Home-Start Experience

Amazing made a hugely positive effect to my mental health. Can not thank you enough I have been with homestart long time now and they are like our family members now always there when we need help.

I'm happy that I am getting support from Homestart it really makes you feel that there is someone you can talk to.share your feelings.

It was a massive struggle before having HS, never went out. The kids got out more and my confidence grew. The Group was amazing

Home start Wokingham is an amazing service that helps young children get the best start in life. The impact of this service will undoubtedly have a positive ripple effect for years, reducing strain on other services.

It's given me respite when I needed it, and something to look forward to each week because my volunteer and I chat as well as her providing practical help. It's really given me a boost mentally knowing that I can rely on her to be there each week. I would have struggled a lot more without her.

Our family get support all the time volunteers are just like our family members

My twin girls learnt how to share and take turns in activities. Lynn had a calming affect on them and they enjoyed seeing her every week.

## How support has had impact on the family

Feeling much better and well supported

It enabled us to be out of the home to socialise and build

Im more confident in my parenting and my child has made impressive steps in his life for example smooth transition into school.

Able to get out more and do more with the children. Allowing time to catch up on household chores.



# Report from the Chair of the Board of Trustees



Since last year's AGM the world has changed irrevocably for a lot of people. Accepted everyday activities have been curtailed, to be replaced by a new set of rules and activities. It is under such a set of trying conditions, that the strengths and merits of an organization are tested to the full. The demands on the organization remain as great, but how those demands are met need to be adapted to take into account of the new circumstances under which it now operates.

Therefore, it gives me great pleasure to report how well and effectively the team at Home Start Wokingham District have adapted and responded to the change in their environment. The whole team of Elaine, Lindsay, Mandy, Teresa, and Amy led by Emma has responded quickly and willingly to work within the new guidelines of social distancing and limited access to our volunteers. Similarly, our volunteers have maintained close contact with our families without placing themselves or the families in any increased risk. The Board of Trustees would like to publicly thank you all for your dedication to the families we support, especially under these extraordinary times we find ourselves in.

Prior to the Covid-19 lockdown a number of our initiatives had been progressing positively. The Tools for Life group at Brambles is at capacity and plans are underway to form a second group within the borough in 2020. The TFL project is now integrated across all School Readiness projects within the Wokingham Borough. Anyone who visits the TFL groups cannot fail to be impressed by the activities and learning that is taking place.

Fundraising remains an important factor to allow HSWD to continue. Indeed fundraising was one of our priorities we set out at the beginning of the year. To this end I am pleased to welcome a new face to our organisation, Amy Fennell. Amy has been recruited as our Fundraising Officer and will develop our Fundraising Strategy to take us forward.

Mentioning fundraising, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Wokingham Borough Council, other local councils and organisations, as well as the National Lottery for their continued support. Also all those who helped us at fundraising events, whether it has been running a stall or dressing up as Father Christmas, it all counts. Continuing participation in local events such as the Wokingham Winter Carnival and Summer Fairs are vital for providing us an opportunity to meet the public and discuss how we provide assistance to families.

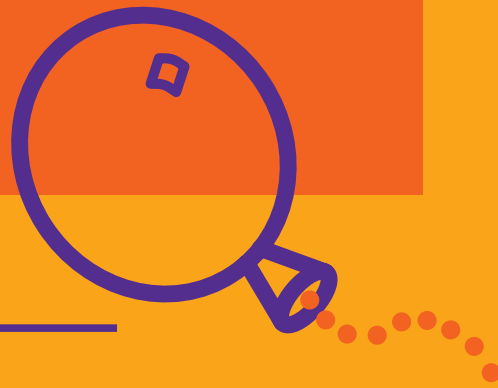
Another new face to join us is Nina Stubban. Nina joins as a Trustee having experience of the Home Start culture and we look forward to her contributions. Welcome and thank you for volunteering.

Finally, from the team at HSWD and the Trustees, we thank all of the general public who have supported us throughout the year. We look forward to meeting as many of you as possible in the coming months.

**Gareth Heard - Chair of Trustees**  
Home-Start Wokingham, Nov 2018-present



# Report from the Scheme manager



2019/2020 will inevitably be remembered for the events of the last 3 months of the year with the arrival of the Covid-19 virus and the need to adapt our ways of working to meet the challenges it raised. However, over the year the changes made in key areas enabled us to respond well when needed to during the unfolding pandemic. This is most clearly illustrated by 3 significant developments which have ensured that as we move into 2020/21, we remain active and continue to provide support to vulnerable families across the Borough.

As briefly mentioned at the end of last year our IT systems were failing and this precipitated a decision to upgrade our systems to Microsoft 365. We started using a cloud based system for all of our common files and we now have an intranet fit for the 21st century, that all can access from home or office which has enabled us to continue our work during “lockdown”. Alongside this we made the decision, funded by our lottery grant to move across to Charity Log for our case management as HSUK are phasing out the MESH system. Training for the move began in October and by January we were ready to start transferring data to the new system. We are still getting used to the way Charity Log functions and working out how to make it work best for us – but we are getting more confident and over time we will stop missing MESH! The final step of the transformation process will be to go paperless, but this is unlikely to happen until 2021/22, giving us time to get used to charity log before taking the final step.

In June last year, HSUK announced they were planning a review of the Preparation Course for volunteers. I was invited to join the working group necessitating a couple of trips to Leicester, which was invaluable in terms of meeting managers from other Home-Starts and hearing how they run their schemes and train their volunteers. The aim of the work was to update the training and make it more relevant and to develop new materials that are easier to deliver. The training materials are now PowerPoint based with new scenarios, and have been cut from 32 essential hours of training to 24 hours, which means a 6 week rather than an 8-week course. As a member of the working group we were able to receive the materials ahead of publication and were therefore using them for our course that began in February and was suspended in mid-March. Having these materials will enable us to complete the course remotely in the coming months. Generally, the updated course has been well received, and allows us flexibility to make sure our training is relevant for our situation here in Wokingham. In December 2019, Amy joined us as our Fundraiser. We have already seen an increase in our social media profile and we now have a new fundraising strategy.

This was developed ahead of the current emergency situation and therefore may need to be reviewed, but we now have a pathway to assist us in strengthening our fundraising going forwards. In the meantime, the raising of our social profile is key for families to know we exist and can support them. Over recent years we have seen an increase in self referrals, and we want to be able to continue to offer support directly to families that do not have contact with statutory services. Raising our profile will also help us to attract volunteers moving forwards. With a new website due to be launched mid-year, we aim to continue to make families, referrers, partner organisations and potential volunteers aware of our service.

Alongside these 3 key changes to our ways of working the team has continued to support families across the borough. Our Tools for Life Project run by Teresa, has gone from strength to strength with its Brambles Chat and Play group having a clear impact on the lives of children and parents. A second group, in partnership with the Children’s Centres and Early Years team was just beginning when the emergency situation took over, so this will be a priority in the coming year. Home-visiting support remains the core work of the charity, and what makes us different from other organisations across the Borough. This year we have continued to provide support to families through our amazing team of volunteers backed by our coordinators, Mandy and Lindsay and with Elaine keeping us all organised!

As we move into our 25th year we need to continue to innovate, to enable us to widen our funding base and ensure we remain relevant, providing a service that is available and responsive to the needs of families. Over the coming year we will continue to work hard to identify the needs of families and how best we can respond to them.

Finally, I want to say a huge ‘thank you’ to the team for all your hard work, the trustees for your ongoing support and all of our wonderful volunteers. Without you, there would be no Home-Start Wokingham.

**Emma Roberts**



# Family Events



## PARADISE PARK outing 30<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2019

32 Adults & 56 children attended



Two coaches left full of excited children and their families, from Wokingham and headed off for a day at Paradise Wildlife Park. The weather had been glorious for weeks leading up to the day and then on the day the heavens opened and it rained – a lot. That didn't dampen spirits, as well as the amazing animals and play parks, dodging rain showers and ice-creams were the order of the day.



## Circus Starr - The circus with a purpose

We saw all the fun of the circus descend on Woodley when the Circus Starr big top arrived in town. We were delighted to receive 160 tickets across two performances on 16th October 2019 for an evening of amazing juggling, stilt walking, roller blading and even face painting during the interval. An exciting, fun filled spectacle of live performances brought so many smiles and joy to the faces of families. Thank you Circus Starr for allowing our families to be part of your tour.



## Santa's Grotto - Wokingham Winter Carnival 24th November 2019

As always we had a great turn out at Santas Grotto last year. From the minute the doors opened in the library to when they were closed we had a steady stream of excited children and their parents. Santa listened to the children telling him what was on their Christmas list and gave them a small present to take away with them. We would like to thank all the volunteers and trustees that helped set up and run the Grotto and to Neil Hodgson. We managed to raise £420.



## May Fayre

We were delighted to be chosen as one of the charities benefitting from the May Fayre. We set up a Preloved Soft Toy Stall near the bandstand and had an extremely busy day. Children spending their pocket money and adults buying toys for their pets, we managed to raise £320.



## Winnersh Fete

As with the May Fayre we were one of the chosen charities for the Winnersh fete and so were given a great pitch for our stall of preloved toys. With Staff, volunteers and trustees manning the stall in rotation we had another busy afternoon, despite the weather being a little damp! and were able to raise £82.



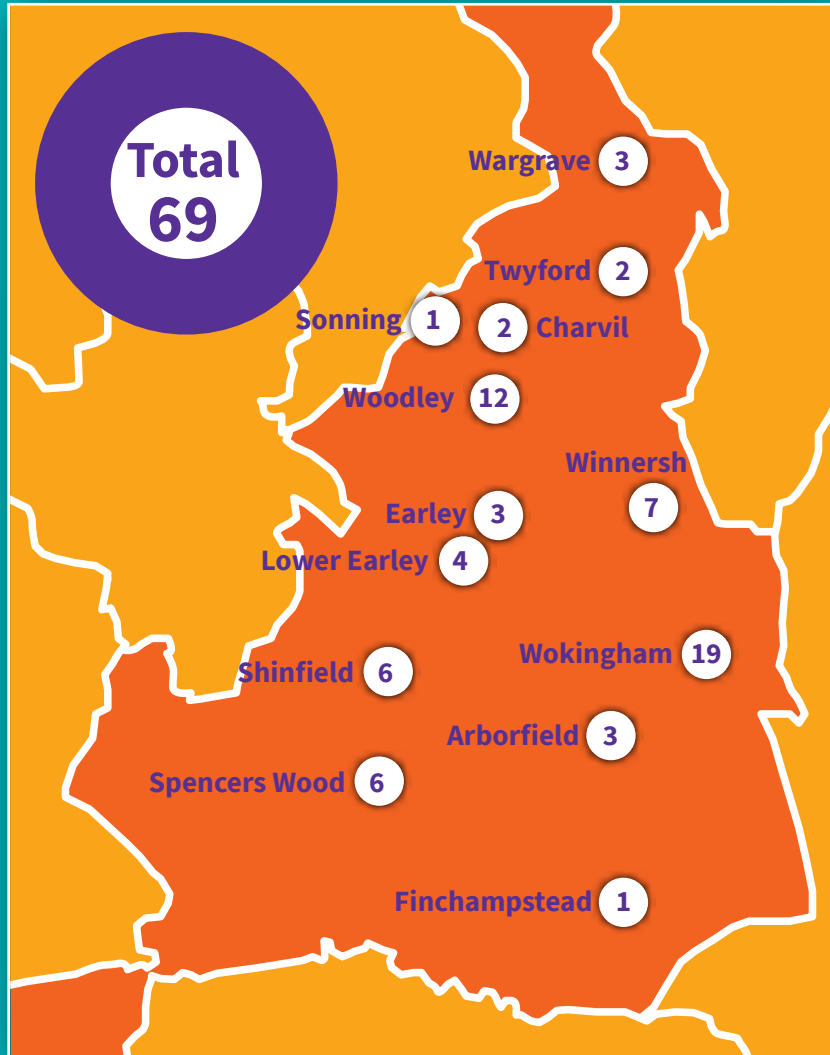


# Where our supported families live

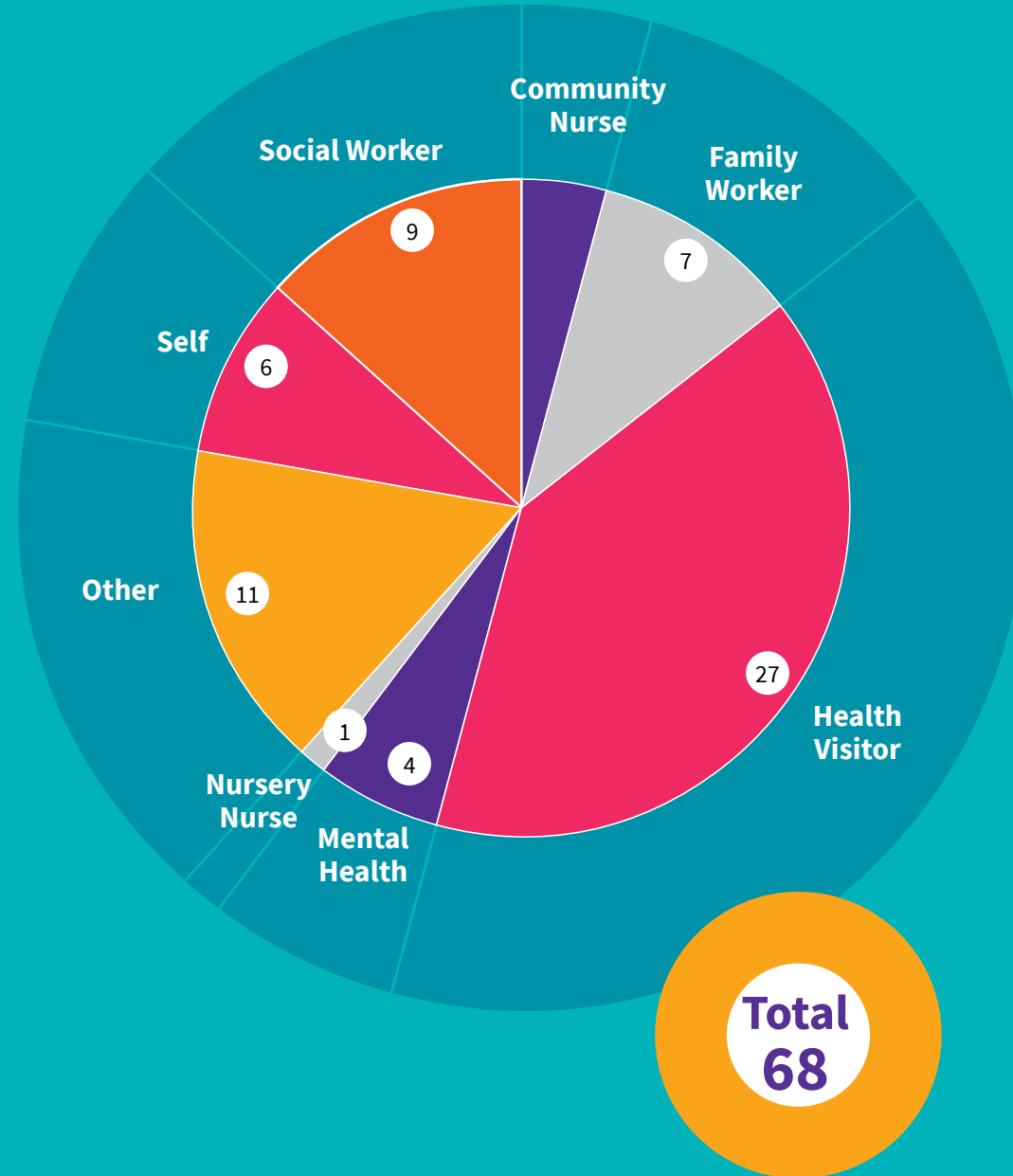


Map of Wokingham Borough.  
Showing families supported by  
Home-Start Wokingham District

(source MESH Q21a (1.4.19 – 31.3.20))



# Source of referral





# Annual Financial Report 2019/2020

Our sincere thanks go to all those who have supported us during the year.

The summary of Home-Start Wokingham District (HSWD) accounts for the year ending 31 March 2020 are set out below and they represent the day to day operations of the scheme. They have been independently examined by Mr Tim Kingcott ACMA ATT.

## Financial Status

HSWD received its funding during the year from a variety of sources but in the main from The Big Lottery Fund and from other national/local organisations and trusts. We received the second year's funding (4 year project) of £39,789 from The Big Lottery relating to Tools for Life, £24,000 from Wokingham Borough Council, and £5,000 from Wokingham United Charities.

In addition we had deferred income of £7,500 from Garfield Weston, £2,000 from Comic Relief, £2,000 from Kiriath Trust and £1,200 from the Woodward Trust. The Scheme also received a large number of smaller donations that each made a valuable contribution towards our income total of £103,421. Our expenditure was £129,606 resulting in a net deficit of £25,422. Our net assets excluding pension liability total £59,422.

From a financial point of view this was more challenging than the previous year. In the short term the organization is able to withstand a financial deficit in its funds because of careful monitoring of expenditure in the past. Ideally the trustees would like a breakeven situation year by year. Whilst our short term funding maybe secure the trustees will continue to monitor its resources on a regular basis and make difficult decisions if necessary to ensure the long term viability of the scheme.

## The Contingency Fund (Reserves)

The Charity holds £34,000 in reserve within the general fund and is designed to help finance any situation that the scheme may find itself in at

short notice. Closure would result in employment redundancy compensation being payable as well as employer debt on withdrawal from the pension scheme. The Charity aims to maintain the reserves in line with guidance from the Charity Commission on an ongoing basis. We review our reserves' fund on an annual basis.

## The Future

Fortunately the Scheme's short term future is secure for the next year or two. In addition to the organisations listed above we have deferred income from Wokingham United Charities. At the end of February, Amy our staff fundraiser secured £10,000 funding at their Strictly Charity event. Recently the newly elected Mayor chose Home-Start as one of his charities for the coming year. These are major endorsements of the work of HSWD. The trustees very much appreciate all these contributions which secure the short term future of the Scheme. We believe we offer tremendous value for money to local families who rely on our professional help so much and that we make a major contribution to our local community. Unfortunately the demand for our services is increasing and we are unable to cope within our existing resources.

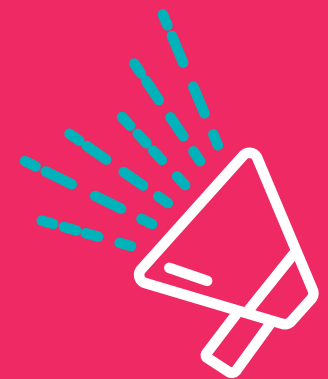
Due to Covid-19 we believe our services will be more in demand and the issues becoming more complex. We are committed to continuing our vital work in the community for as long as possible.

*Additional copies of the full accounts are available from our offices at a cost of £3.00.*

**Berkshire Community Fund**  
**Berkshire Masonic Charity**  
**Big Lottery**  
**Brook Trust**  
**Catenian Charity**  
**Circus Starr**  
**College of Estate Management**  
**Ecclesiastical Movement for Good**  
**Charvil Parish Council**  
**EP Godson Charity**  
**Earley Town Council**  
**Englefield Charity**  
**Finchampstead Parish Council**  
**First Days Charity**  
**Free Cakes for Kids**  
**Fresh01 - The Creative Agency**  
**Garfield Weston**  
**Kiriath Trust**  
**Loddon Lodge of Instruction**

**MCKS**  
**Morrisons**  
**Reading Family Aid**  
**The Cow Shed**  
**The Giving Tree**  
**Twyford Parish Council**  
**Twyford & District Round Table**  
**Waitrose, Wokingham**  
**Wargrave Parish Council**  
**Winnersh Parish Council**  
**Wokingham Borough Council**  
**Wokingham Foodbank**  
**Wokingham Lions**  
**Wokingham Town Council**  
**Wokingham Winter Carnival**  
**Woodward Trust**  
**Wokingham United Charities**  
**Wokingham Half Marathon**  
**Wokingham Library**

**And one huge thank you to the many volunteers, trustees and staff who made individual donations to our scheme.**



A huge thankyou to  
our wonderful Volunteers.

## VOLUNTEERS 2019-20

Amy	Jane	Lynn
Ania	Jayne	Marsha
Angie	Jen	Megan
Anne	Jennie	Melanie
Anthony	Jenny	Mitzi
Carleen	Jill	Patricia
Caroline	Joanne	Rebecca
Caroline	Judith	Rebecca
Catherine	Julia	Rosemary
Catherine	Julie	Rosie
Cathy	Joanna	Sally
Celia	Karen	Sarah
Christine	Kelly	Shelly
Claire	Kerry	Sue M
Claire	Kim	Sue S
Claudine	Linda	Sue T
Debra	Linda	Susan
Dhanisha	Liz	Suzanne
Esther	Liz	Teresa
Frances	Lorena	Tricia
Gill	Loretta	Tricia
Heloise	Louisa	Tori
Jaminni	Lorraine	Vicky
Jaqui	Lucinda	



Home-Start Wokingham relies on funding and donations which are essential to our work with existing families and our vision for the helping more families in the future.

## Would you like to help?

Please tick one of the following boxes:

- I would like to make a donation to Home-Start Wokingham District

Amount

(Cheques payable to Home-Start Wokingham District)

- Please contact me regarding corporate fundraising

Name: .....

Address: .....

Email: ..... Tel No: .....

Home-Start Wokingham is a registered charity.  
Charity Number 1109629

Please send this page back to:

Home-Start Wokingham District,  
Shinfield Grange,  
Cutbush Lane East,  
Shinfield  
Reading  
RG2 9AF