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HOME START

Wokingham District



Annual Report 2023/2024

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
www.home-startwd.org.uk

Staff

Administrator – Elaine Strange
Co-ordinator – Leanne Hill
Fundraiser – Amy Fennell

Honorary Officers – March 2023/ April 2024

Chair –Chris Jack
Treasurer – Athena Guna

Trustees

P Cannam
H Diffenthal
G Heard
S Heard
C Jack
R McCormack
R Vaishampayan (to end 2021)
M Richards
N Stubban- resigned August 2023



Elaine Strange - Administrator
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.



Leanne Hill - Scheme Coordinator
I joined Home-Start Wokingham in November 2020, as a Scheme Co-ordinator having come from a background in the emergency services, children's safeguarding and a short time working in education. I have also previously been a Home-Start volunteer, which has given me a great insight into the diverse needs of the families we support.



Amy Fennell - Fundraiser
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.

Report from the Chair of the Board of Trustees

Following a difficult time for Home-Start Wokingham District (HSWD) over the previous 12-18 months it was great to start the year 2023-24 on a more solid financial footing than we have enjoyed for a couple of years and we looked forward to continuing in existence to support our client families in the area.

As we continued to cut our costs and maintain a viable operation, the Trustees took a number of key decisions to build on our new start. These included a major update to our Strategic Plan, recruitment of new Trustees and a renewed focus on fund-raising.

Our new 4-year Strategic Plan was launched in July 2023 with the objectives of continuing to consolidate and focus on our core activities of home visiting, recruiting and training volunteers and ensuring that we reviewed and delivered the most effective support to our families. The plan looks ahead to 2026 and charts out a carefully planned growth in staff numbers, subject to continued funding availability and matched to demand for our services from the local community.

Our operational team has continued to lead and provide oversight to the services delivered by our excellent team of volunteers, without whom we could not be successful. Our team has continued to recruit and train 11 new volunteers in the last year and the Board is very appreciative of the small team of Trustees and staff that oversees all aspects of our operation.

Aligned to the plan, we commenced a program to recruit a number of new Trustees and we were delighted to work with inTRUSTed, a local Trustee recruitment service that is operated within Involve, a small, local charity which supports the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in the Bracknell and Wokingham. Through some of our own contacts and through inTRUSTed, we found four excellent candidates that we were able to appoint to our Board early in 2024, bringing the total up to 12 again as per our articles of association.

One of our existing Trustees, Nina Stubban resigned from the Board with effect from the date of our AGM last September and we thank her for her input and support for HSWD over 3 years.

As part of our fund-raising, we were very pleased to be awarded funding once again from Wokingham Borough Council together with grants from St Pauls Church and Wokingham Lions. We have continued with applications to other grant-funding organisations, some of whom are very happy to talk with us about core-funding support, rather than funding for specific new projects. Our experience is that new projects require time and investment funding to get them up and running and these new initiatives then become part of our core activities in subsequent years and some grant funders cannot then support these normal operational costs. We continue to talk to two major funding organisations and are hopeful that we will be considered for some multi-year funding for core costs.

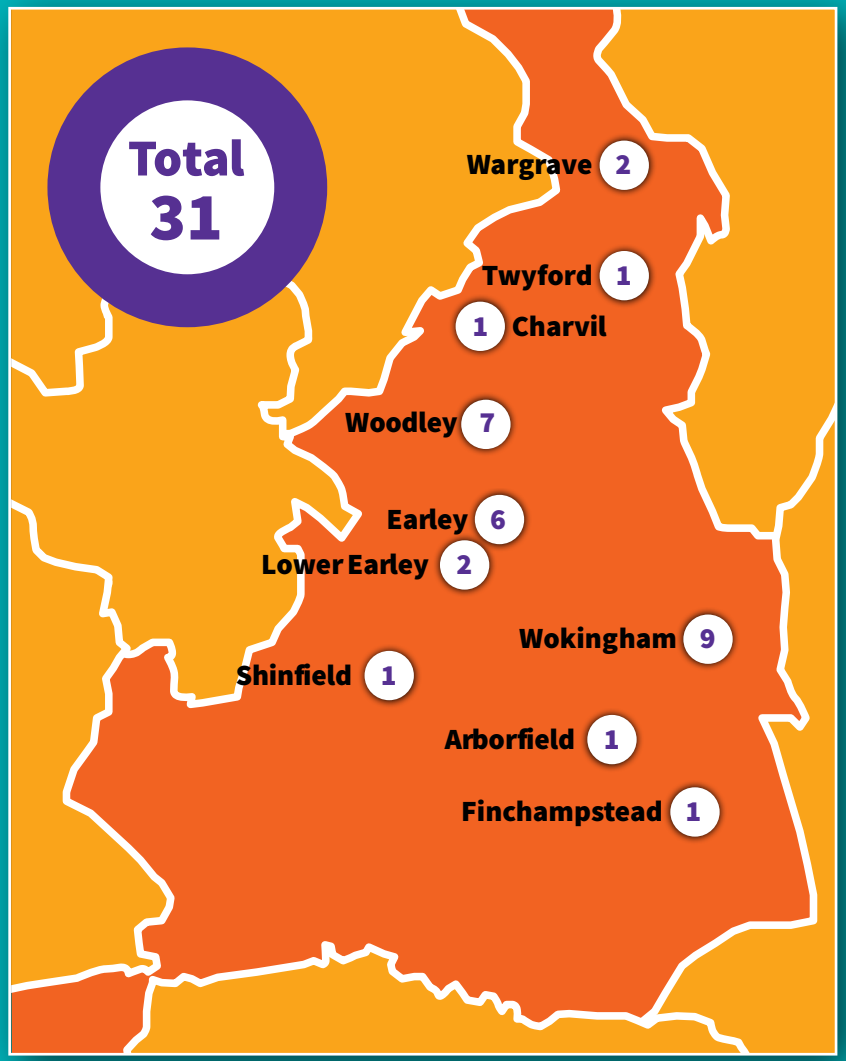
Our fundraising team has continued to organise a wide range of events such as coffee mornings, Ladies' Pamper evenings and a successful golf day organised jointly with local charity WADE. Many thanks to all of our sponsors, our fund-raising team and supporters who organised and ran these fund-raising events, and we look forward to continuing with this program.

Finally, my thanks once again to all of our sponsors, volunteers, staff and Trustees, without whose valuable time and efforts we would not be able to provide our support to the community.

Chris Jack - Chair of Trustees
Home-Start Wokingham District, October 2024

Where our supported families live

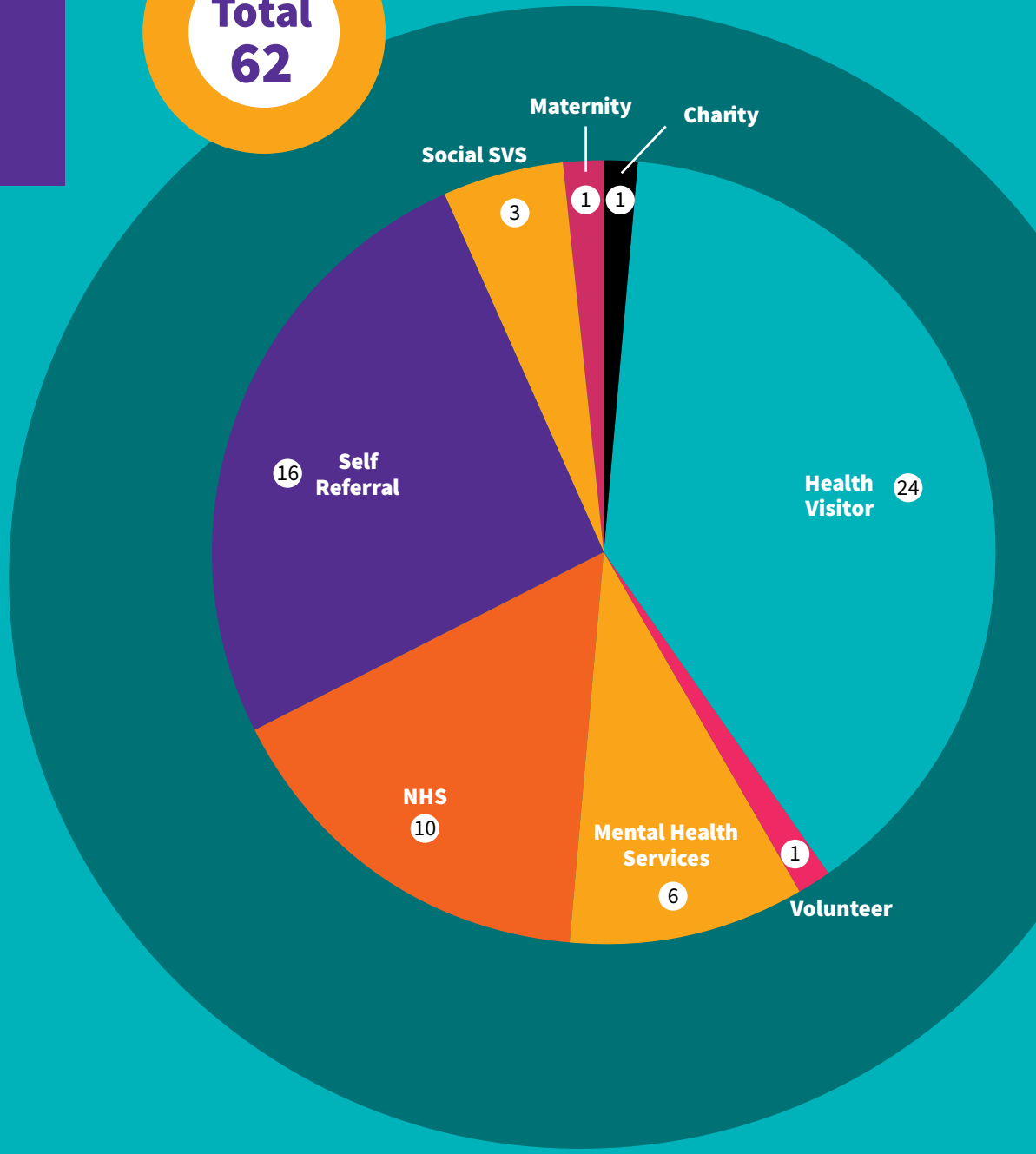
Map of Wokingham Borough.
Showing families supported by
Home-Start Wokingham District



Source: CHARITY LOG (supported families 1.4.21- 31.3.22)

Source of referral

Source: CHARITY LOG (new referrals from 1.4.22- 31.3.23)



Annual Financial Report 2023/2024

The financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 are presented and these have been independently examined by Mt Tim Kingcott ACMA ATT.

Financial Status
During the year, Home-Start Wokingham District (HSWD) received unrestricted funding from a number of sources to support its re-establishment within the community following the financial struggles experienced in the last financial year.

The organization has successfully withstood its hardship by focusing on providing its core service effectively and efficiently whilst instilling financial agility in its operations.

The surplus funding from this year has enabled the entity to increase it's capacity to support more families in the forthcoming year through recruitment and increasing the breath of circumstances which HSWD can support. Irrespective of the surplus, 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.

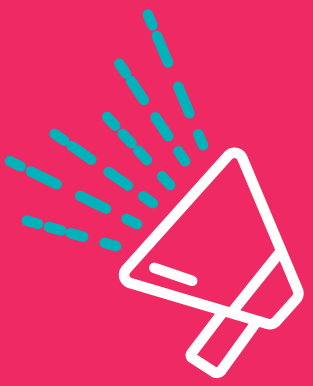
The Contingency Fund (Reserves)
The Trustees have taken the decision to increase it's contingency fund from £15,004 to £31,987 within the general fund reserve and is designed to help finance any situation that the scheme may find itself in at short notice. Closure would result in employment redundancy 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
Whilst we are fortunate to secure the short-terms future of HSWD, the trustees very grateful for all contributions which secure the future of the Scheme. We believe we continue to 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 needs within our community and the demand for our services is increasing and we are unable to cope within our existing resources. HSWD will continue to grow led by the needs of the community and the financial support received.

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

Alistair Parry
Berkshire Community Fund
Berkshire Masonics Charity
Catenian Association
Charlie Mather -Vintage Clothes Sale
Claire Francis
Drapers Charitable Fund
Earley Town Council
First Days
Free Cakes for Kids
Fresh01 - the Creative Agency
Garfield Weston
Hennerton Golf Club
Home-Start UK
Local Giving
Loddon Lodge of Instruction
Morrisons, Wokingham
Reddam House School
Seven Red Roses Pub
Shanly Foundation
St James Place Charitable Foundation
St Pauls Church, Wokingham
Swallowfield Horticultural Society
Tesco Wokingham
The Cowshed
The Foodbank
The Growth House
The Wokingham Lions
The Wokingham Walk
WADE Wokingham
Waitrose, Twyford
Winnersh Parish Council
Woodley Town Council
Wokingham Borough Council
Wokingham Half Marathon
Wokingham Town Council
Wokingham United Charities
Wokingham Winter Carnival
Wokingham Without PC

With thanks to the many volunteers, trustees and staff who made individual donations to our scheme and all who have supported our various fundraising activities.



A huge thank you to our wonderful Volunteers.

VOLUNTEERS 2023-24

Amreeta
Brenda
Camille
Carleen
Carolina
Caroline
Caroline
Cathy
Chris
Chris
Christina
Claire
Claudine
Dhanisha
Esther
Frankie
Hayley
Helena
Heloise
Jacqui
Jennie
Jenny
Jill
Julia
Julie
Karen
Kath
Katy
Kayleigh
Kelly
Kirsty
Lisa
Liz
Lorena
Loretta
Louisa
Lucinda
Lynn
Mandy
Mariam
Marie
Marie
Marjorie
Mary
Megan
Mitzi
Nicky
Prabha
Rebecca
Rebecca
Rosie
Rosie
Rosie
Sally
Sally
Sally
Sarah
Shelly
Silvana
Sonia
Sophie
Sue
Sue
Sue
Tara

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