



Support and friendship
for families

Home-Start
Cotswolds

Annual Report 2010-2011



Home-Start Cotswolds Annual Report from the Trustees

April 2010 - March 2011



Home-Start Cotswolds is a Registered Charity, and a Charitable Company limited by guarantee: it is governed by the Memorandum and Articles of Association, as advised by Home-Start UK.

Our Charity Registration number is 1110632 and we became a Charity on 28th July 2005; our Company Registration number is 5468592 and we were incorporated as a Company on 1st June 2005.

This is the sixth Annual Report of Home-Start Cotswolds.

Statement of Public Benefit

Home-Start Cotswolds is a local charity that exists entirely for the public benefit. We provide regular support, friendship and practical help for families in the Cotswold District Council area with at least one child under the age of 5 years. To do this, we recruit Volunteers who are parents, and provide them with 40 hours of training to prepare them for their role. A Volunteer is matched to a family, and visits them in the family home for 2 to 3 hours once a week.

Families can refer themselves to us, or are referred by others, including Health Visitors, GPs and Social Workers. We will provide services to families who meet our criteria as long as we have an appropriate Volunteer to help. Volunteers are supported through an ongoing system of regular supervision, training and back-up.

Where We Work

Home-Start Cotswolds' main office is:
33 Coxwell Street
Cirencester
GL7 2BQ
T: 01285 885391

Our Branch Office is:
Stow Youth Club
Stow-on-the-Wold
GL54 1DW
T: 01451 831781

"I don't feel so bad if I find things get tough, and she [my volunteer] gave me lots of confidence to go out and do things"

Supported parent

Website: www.home-start-cotswolds.org.uk

Our Registered Office address is:
203 Alexander Drive
Cirencester
GL7 1UH

We bank with Natwest Cirencester branch, Our Auditor is Mr Christopher Rowles
32 Market Place, 2, Keble Close
Cirencester The Maples
GL7 2NU Cirencester GL7 1UN

Trustees & Directors

A Board of Trustees was established in January 2005 to set up Home-Start Cotswolds, and official charity status was soon established. It is Home-Start policy that a trustee should only serve in any one post for a maximum of three years before being subject to an election. Trustees are unpaid volunteers from a variety of backgrounds including health, local government, law, education and other voluntary organisations. Trustees access training provided by Home-Start UK.

The Trustees, Specialist Advisors and the Home-Start Regional Consultant meet bi-monthly and together they form the Management Committee.

The Trustees are:

Clare Baker	Chair
Jackie Colburn	Vice-Chair
Anthony Jones	Treasurer & Company Secretary
Carolyn Ford	Minutes Secretary
Hilary Morris	
Paul Bickell	
Christine Hall	
Christopher Hall	
Kate Hicks Beach	
Phil Tubbs	

The Specialist Advisors are:

Frances Gilyead	Volunteer Representative
Mandy Fry	GP
Sarah Smithson	Health Visitor

"Seeing families, volunteers, staff and trustees come together for our Easter Egg Hunt and having a really wonderful time was very rewarding and uplifting! I feel very proud to be part of 'The Home-Start Family', and look forward to further gatherings!"

Trustee

This year we sadly said goodbye to two members of the Management Committee, Kim Hartshorne and Rosemary Lynn. As our original Chair of Trustees, Kim put in a tremendous amount of work to help establish Home-Start Cotswolds and provided a strong lead in the early years. We are extremely grateful to her and wish her well in her next venture. Rosemary Lynn was also particularly helpful in the early years and as the Cotswold District Council's Community Health & Housing Manager gave us a great deal of valuable support.

How We Are Funded

Home-Start Cotswolds is funded mainly by grants from charitable trusts, local fundraising and donations from private individuals. We are a not-for-profit organisation and our Directors, Trustees and Volunteers are all unpaid, although Volunteers and Trustees can be reimbursed for their travel expenses.

For the second year since Home-Start Cotswolds was formed, our accounts show a deficit in our income/expenditure balance. We are grateful for the funding we received from Gloucestershire County Council, over the last three years, enabling us to set up our "Enjoy and Achieve" parenting support programme. Although the funding came to an end in March 2011 we intend to continue the programme as it has proved so worthwhile.

We continue to approach charitable trusts and other bodies for funding. In terms of continued income sources we were delighted to be awarded a generous grant over three years from April 2009, from the Wates Foundation. This grant helps us to meet our core costs, enabling our work in the community to continue and grow, by recruiting and training more volunteers. Our other main source of income is a regular, generous donation from a local private trust.

We have also benefitted from grants and donations from a variety of organisations and we are grateful to them for their support:

Mrs K D Winstone Charitable Trust (a restricted fund); The Notgrove Trust; Soroptomists International, Cirencester; D M Focus Limited; South Cerney PCC; Bibury and Winson PCC; North Cotswolds Rotary; Community Awareness; Duke of Gloucester Barracks; Oddington PCC; Norah and Leslie Prince Trust and Heber Percy Charitable Settlement.

Donations have also come from individuals and local groups including the Mother's Union; Bagendon Church; Ashcroft Women's Fellowship and Duke of Gloucester Barracks Sergeants' Mess. We also held a collection at Tesco's in Stow-on-the-Wold. Many of our Volunteers and Trustees were able to generously donate back their expenses, bringing in a magnificent £3,422.

Various local events and initiatives have helped to raise funds and awareness of Home-Start Cotswolds over the year. The second well-supported Bibury Christmas Concert; a Ceilidh in Rendcomb, where the band was led by one of our trustees; a Bring and Buy sale organised by one of our members and the sale of Christmas cards designed by a local young artist.



During the year we registered for Gift Aid, and were able to claim £405 from HMRC on behalf of those donors who are taxpayers. This coming year we will be making a further claim in respect of Gift Aided donations, from the previous financial year, totalling £1,834

The Trustees extend their thanks and gratitude to all those who have made a financial contribution to Home-Start Cotswolds.

A copy of the audited Annual Accounts for 2010-2011 is attached to this Annual Report. It is the policy of Home-Start Cotswolds to seek to maintain a reserve of at least 75% of the annual running costs - this is especially important in the current uncertain financial climate.



How We Work

The staff are responsible for running the day-to-day operation of the Scheme, while the Trustees are responsible for governance, and financial and strategic planning.

We make most of our decisions at our Management Committee Meetings which are attended by Trustees, staff and specialist advisers. Discussion takes place freely between all parties at the meeting; major decisions are made by Trustee vote on the basis of the information discussed.

We employ six members of staff, all part-time, who between them run our two offices. In Cirencester, two Senior Co-ordinators, Janice Gibson and Katharine Campbell, operate a full-time job share between them. They are ably supported by our administrators Kate Rhodes and Sally Mason. In Stow-on-the-Wold our Co-ordinator is Lesley Thorn who is supported by her administrator Juliet Ralph. The Trustees value the staff team enormously and are very grateful to them for all their hard work and commitment.

Although the Cirencester and Stow offices operate independently recruiting, training and supervising their own volunteers, they work closely together and meet monthly to co-ordinate their activities.

As an independent charity we work under the umbrella of Home-Start UK, which has been in existence for over 35 years. We adhere to their codes of practice and value the support we get from their Regional Consultant, Julie Campbell, who also sits on the Management Committee.

Summary of 2010 - 2011

Volunteers

During the financial year 2010-2011 we had 61 trained volunteers, who were able to support 64 families, including 179 children, of whom 119 were under the age of 5 years.

Some of our volunteers inevitably move on to other things and it is particularly encouraging when we see a number of them leaving to start jobs, feeling better equipped because of the training and experience that Home-Start has given them. Inevitably when parents have taken long periods of time out of the workplace to devote their energy and time to bringing up children, getting back into work can be quite challenging and we are pleased to have been able to help equip them for this.

In order to keep our number of volunteers at the optimum level, two volunteer preparation courses were run, one in Stow-on-the-Wold, and one in Cirencester. Our volunteers come from every walk of life and bring a wide range of experience to Home-Start. The length of time they are with a family varies from a few months, to over a year, depending on the family's need and progress.

Volunteers are supported through regular one to one supervision with a Co-ordinator, as well as receiving on-going training at regular support group meetings. During the year these meetings have covered topics such as the importance of attachment; depression in parents or carers and how it affects children in their care; helping the sad and anxious child and emergency first aid for infants. Volunteers were also invited to a social event at the Boathouse Restaurant and a great evening was had by all. Both Stow and Cirencester held celebratory Christmas lunches for the Trustees and volunteers.

The Trustees express their gratitude to all the volunteers who give up their time and energy each week to support families. The volunteers do so much which is perhaps unseen; we really appreciate all they do and know that for many families they are a lifeline.

"Part of my job involves training and courses and I can honestly say this course has been excellent."
Volunteer

"My volunteer helped me to get a place back into college and helped me with household budgeting"
Supported parent

Families

As well as providing individual volunteer support in families' homes, we have organised several events for families to attend. Family picnics were held during the summer, in both Stow and Cirencester. Despite the poor weather many families came along with picnics and had fun playing games and getting to know each other. Stow held a very successful Easter Egg Hunt.

Two Coffee and Cake mornings were held at both Stow and Cirencester and these events continue to be popular for families to meet each other, with craft activities for the children and there is never a shortage of cake!

A four week 'Crafty Play' course was organised in June in partnership with Cirencester College which was enjoyed by several families who had never done anything like that before.

"Everyone I came across during my time with Home-Start was positive, caring and extremely supportive."
Supported parent



Cirencester Crafty Play 2010



Stow Coffee and Cake with Crafty Play 2010

Profile and Fund Raising Events

Our Co-ordinators are very active, networking and building links with referral agencies and other groups in the community who work with families. We work closely with the local health visiting team, the Cotswold Children's Centre, the Children and Families team and a number of other local agencies.

We took part in the Churn Family Fun Day in May. This has become a thriving event in Cirencester each year and is an excellent showcase for all local voluntary groups working in the community. We also had a stall at the Cotswold Festival in Stow-on-the-Wold, helping to raise our profile in the North Cotswolds.

We have had two major fundraising events this year. A Ceilidh in Redcomb village hall in October was a sell out and at one point there was barely room to dance. Everyone enjoyed the band and delicious supper and the evening was very valuable for raising awareness as well as funds. The Bibury Christmas Concert was a huge success for the second year running and much enjoyed by everyone who attended. The church was packed for the celebration of Christmas in words and music. Wine and canapés were followed by a captivating concert, given freely by talented actors and musicians, in support of our work.

Lesley and Juliet from the Stow office spent two days in October 2010 fundraising outside the Tesco store, with the help of our Trustees and Volunteers.

A new initiative this year was to produce and sell our own Christmas Cards. A local teenager, Anna Glover, designed the cards for us free of charge, producing two very professional looking watercolours. The Letterpress in Cirencester printed them at very reasonable cost enabling us to make a good profit to help our fundraising.



Christmas Card Stall November 2010



Ceilidh at Rendcomb October 2010



Concert at Bibury December 2010

Away Day

The Staff Away Day was held in September 2010 at Ingleside House.



Looking Ahead

The Trustees are committed to promoting the welfare of families with young children in the Cotswolds; their focus in 2011 – 2012 will be to continue to keep the scheme on a strong financial footing. In the coming year we will be working together with the staff to review our strategic plan which was last done three years ago.

It is also time for us to be reassessed by Home-Start UK. They have a rigorous Quality Assurance process, which each scheme participates in every three years. We look forward to welcoming two of Home-Start UK's Regional Organisers to Home-Start Cotswolds in the autumn for a full desk top review followed by two days of interviews with staff, Trustees, referrers, Volunteers, families and funders.

The Trustees will continue to support our staff to deliver the high level of service for which Home-Start Cotswolds has become known, and will continue to seek to raise our profile in the local community. This will enable us to recruit more high quality volunteers in order to maintain our level of support for families. We plan to run volunteer training courses in Cirencester and Stow-on-the-Wold in the autumn in order to maintain our numbers of volunteers.

Our continued investment in training and supporting volunteers throughout the Cotswolds will allow families who need our services, to benefit from tailored one to one support in their homes, so their children will have a better start in life. In these days of financial cut backs we are aware that pressures on young families are ever greater and there are fewer support services available. Investing in young lives will pay dividends in the future, not just for them personally, but for society as a whole.



Thanks

The Trustees appreciate all the help we have received in many forms during this year, and wish to thank all the volunteers, staff, advisors and funding partners for their support, which enables us to make a positive difference for many local families.

Clare Baker (Chair)
On behalf of the Trustees
June 2011