



Support and friendship
for families

Home-Start
Cotswolds

Annual
Report
2008-2009



Home-Start Cotswolds Annual Report from the Trustees

(Covering period April 2008 – March 2009)



Who Are We?

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 fourth Annual Report of Home-Start Cotswolds.



What Do We Do?

Home-Start Cotswolds is a local charity that exists to 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 themselves, and prepare them for this family support role with 40 hours of training. The volunteer is then 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, as well as being referred by Health Visitors, GPs, Social Workers and other professionals. We will provide services to families who meet our criteria as long as we have an appropriate volunteer to help. Volunteers are supported via an ongoing system of training and back-up.

Who are the 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 in health, local government, the law, education and other voluntary organisations. Trustees access training provided by Home-Start UK.

The Trustees are:

Clare Baker	Chair
Kim Hartshorne	Vice Chair
Antony Jones	Treasurer & Company Secretary
Carolyn Ford	Minutes Secretary
Hilary Morris	Volunteer Representative
Jackie Colburn	
Christine Hall	
Christopher Hall	
Alison Denham-Davis	
Paul Bickel	

The trustees meet bi-monthly with specialist advisors: they form the Management Committee.

The advisors are:-

Mandy Fry	GP
Eileen Ind	Family Support Worker
Rosemary Lynn	Community, Health & Housing Manager.
Sarah Smithson	Health Visitor
Sarah Cooper	Family Representative

Patron

We are really delighted that Felicity Montagu has agreed to become patron for Home-Start Cotswolds. Felicity, who lives locally, is an actor with two children, a daughter of 19 years and a son of 13 years: she shares our concerns for families going through difficult times. We look forward to working with Felicity on future profile-raising projects and are delighted that she is already helping us to make a short DVD to promote our work locally.



Where Do We Work?

Home-Start Cotswolds is based at:
33 Coxwell Street
Cirencester
GL7 2BT
T: 01285 885391.

These premises are provided free of charge by Cirencester Baptist Church – we are very grateful to them for their continued support of our work.

We also have a thriving satellite office in Stow-on-the-Wold, in order to reach families in the North Cotswolds: their office address is:

Stow Youth Club
Fosseway
Stow-on-the-Wold
GL54 1DW
T: 01451 831781

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

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

We bank with Natwest Cirencester branch, Market Place, Cirencester.

Our Auditor is Mr Christopher Rowles
2, Keble Close
The Maples
Cirencester.

How Is Home-Start Cotswolds Funded?

Home-Start Cotswolds is funded by a combination of grants from the public sector and charitable trusts, local fundraising and donations from private individuals. We are a not-for-profit organisation and our Directors, Trustees and Volunteers are unpaid, although expenses are reimbursed.

Our three-year National Lottery funding came to an end in March 2009; we achieved and met all the criteria set out in the original application. We have therefore been looking for other sources of funding and have been very fortunate to have been awarded a generous grant over three years from April 2009, from the Wates Foundation towards core costs, which will enable our work in the community to continue and grow. Full details of this funding will appear in next year's Annual Report and Accounts. Our other main source of income is a regular, generous donation from a private trust.

We also benefited from grants from:
Gloucestershire County Council to run an Enjoy and Achieve programme
Stow-on-the-Wold Town Council
Bibury and Winson PCC
Poulton PCC
Waitrose Community Matters Scheme

Several volunteers kindly donate back the expenses that they are able to claim, and last year nearly £900 was raised in this way.

The Trustees would like to 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 2008-2009 is attached to this Annual Report. It is the policy of Home-Start Cotswolds to seek to maintain a reserves balance of at least 75% of the annual running costs: this is especially important during the current uncertain financial climate.

How Do We Work?

We make most of our decisions at our Management Committee Meetings which are attended by trustees, paid 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.

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

The staff were:

*"Brilliant,
everyone I came
across during my
time with Home
Start were
positive, caring and
extremely
supportive."*

-Supported Family

We have six members of paid part-time staff who between them run our two offices. In Cirencester, two Senior Co-ordinators, Sarah Mais and Katharine Campbell, operate a full-time job share between them; our Administrator, Kate Rhodes, was joined by Posy Smith in February 2009. Our Co-ordinator in Stow-on-the-Wold is Lesley Thorn: her Administrator, Brenda Dyson, was sorry to have to leave in the autumn. Brenda and Lesley had worked well together and done a fantastic job of getting the office established in Stow-on-the-Wold. Brenda's replacement Nikki Hollingsworth continued her good work and Lesley has enjoyed working with her. The Trustees would like to honour and recognise the staff for all their hard work and enthusiasm this year with its different demands and challenges.

Summary of 2008 - 2009

Quality Assurance System

It is impossible to begin a summary of the year without focussing on the Quality Assurance Process (QA) that we underwent in 2008. Home-Start UK introduced this process in 2006, as a means of external validation for local Home-Start schemes' own self-assessment. Two of Home-Start UK's regional consultants were appointed to conduct the review. This consisted of a desk-top review in October 2008 followed by two days of interviews and meetings in November. The assessors met with trustees and advisors, staff, volunteers, families and referrers. Through a process of joint meetings and individual interviews the assessors were able to establish how we were doing as a scheme and presented us with a comprehensive report in March 2009.

"Home-Start helped me feel less isolated, offered emotional and practical support for me and my three children. Made me feel part of the community - helped me find things that were available to me."
-Supported family

The trustees were delighted by the positive feedback the scheme received through the QA process. The report stated "how highly the work of Home-Start Cotswolds is regarded by local families, volunteers and partners". An action plan was drawn up for the scheme to work on, over the following six months, to ensure that every point of the sixteen standards is fully met; these have now been addressed. The plan also gave helpful suggestions to improve our practice. We are looking forward to our final review with our Regional Consultant in September.

Volunteers

"I thoroughly enjoyed the Preparation Course - it was well run with lots of opportunities to talk through issues as a group"
-Volunteer

During the financial year 2008-2009 we had 53 trained volunteers, who were able to support 57 families, including 138 children, of whom 88 were under the age of 5 years. At the end of March 2009 there were another 10 volunteers undertaking Volunteer Preparation. Three courses were run in Stow-on-the-Wold, and one course in Cirencester to keep our number of volunteers at the optimum level.

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 included: speakers from Breastfeeding Encouragement and Support Team and Childrens Information Service; taster courses run by Cirencester College; training on the Enjoy & Achieve Project; a volunteer social and Christmas lunch.

The Trustees would like to 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.

Families

As well as providing individual volunteer support in families' homes, we have organised several events for families to attend. Family fun days 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. Coffee and Cake mornings were held in the spring, where we had craft activities for the children, organised by Cirencester College. This provided an excellent taster for the Crafty Play Course, that the College ran for us later in the year, benefiting several of our families.

"Knowing that once a week, I would have someone supporting me without question, judgement or expectation of reciprocation was invaluable. I didn't need to beg or negotiate for help, as with other family members - she [The Volunteer] just arrived and everything felt easier."
-Supported Family

Stow-on-the-Wold

Our satellite office in Stow-on-the-Wold has grown from strength to strength over the year, thanks to the hard work of the team there. Running three volunteer training courses has been demanding and finding recruits was initially difficult. Staff and trustees have worked closely together to network and raise our profile in the North Cotswolds, with positive results. There has been no shortage of family referrals. The provision of our home visiting service in this rurally isolated area has been warmly welcomed by health visiting and education services locally.

Enjoy and Achieve Project

Summer 2008 was an extremely busy time for our Senior Co-ordinators as they worked closely with Stroud and Dursley Home-Start to submit a joint bid for funding from Gloucestershire Children and Young People's Partnership. We applied for funding to set up the 'Enjoy and Achieve Project' that we knew would be of significant benefit to some of our families. After a great deal of hard work, we were delighted that our bid was successful and have since been able to train volunteers to deliver this extra support. The project is delivered by volunteers taking books and educational toys into the home on their weekly visits, working through a Home-Start Activity Booklet together and helping parents to access some of the many different learning opportunities in the community. This is proving an excellent tool, especially for those parents who had struggled themselves at school and don't know where to start in helping their own children.



Summer Family
Picnic, August 2008

Away Day

Our annual Management Committee and Staff Away Day was held in June 2008: as always it was a productive time for team building. We worked on and finalised our Strategic Plan. A guest speaker led the Trustees in a useful discussion about our different roles, having asked us all previously to complete a personality, strengths and styles questionnaire.



Profile and Fund Raising Events

Our Co-ordinators are constantly active, networking and building links with referral agencies and other groups in the community who work with families. Good links have been established with the new Cotswold Children's Centre and we hope to work closely with them in the future.

A Waitrose collection day, coffee mornings and even a riotous 50-a-side football match, were among the events organised by staff and trustees throughout the year, which helped raise awareness of Home-Start Cotswolds and additional funding.



Home-Start Cotswolds
team for the Football
Frolic II event, May 2008

Looking Ahead

The Trustees are committed to promoting the welfare of families with young children, in the Cotswolds; their focus in 2009 – 2010 will be to continue to keep the scheme on a strong financial footing.

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 aim to strengthen our working relationship with the developing Children's Centre and maintain the strong links we have with our referrers. We plan to build on the statutory relationship we recently began with Gloucestershire County Council on the Enjoy and Achieve Project.



Our successful recruitment of volunteers in the North Cotswolds means that we will be able to extend our service in September 2009 to support more families. We are delighted that our Co-ordinator in Stow has agreed to increase her hours to meet the demand.

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.

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 (Chairman)
On behalf of the Trustees
August 2009



Home-Start Cotswolds Limited



Registered Office: 203 Alexander Drive, Cirencester, Glos. GL7 1UH

Annual Accounts – Year ending 31 March 2009

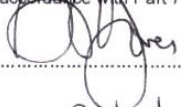

Income	2007-2008	2008-2009
• Big Lottery Grant (restricted fund)	£27,482.00	£45,347.00
• Parish Councils and P.C.C.s	£1,375.00	£750.00
• John Armitage Trust	£36,000.00	£36,000.00
• Glos County Council (Enjoy and achieve programme)	-	£1,900.00
• Unpresented cheque from 2007-08	-	£31.80
• Other Charitable Trusts	£16,000.00	-
• Fundraising	-	£2,393.50
• Other Donations and fees	£1,795.39	£676.65
• Volunteers expenses returned as gifts	(included in above)	£862.62
• Interest earned on Reserve account	£940.11	£905.11
	£83,592.50	£88,866.68
Expenditure (code numbers)		
• Staff costs including N.I. & pensions (01;03)	£42,440.65	£51,869.38
• Staff travel/expenses (04)	£1,484.69	£1,567.21
• Volunteers travel/expenses and support (05;21)	£4,672.88	£5,663.63
• All training costs (10;18;22)	£2,036.80	£2,287.22
• Home-Start fee (11)	£1,410.59	£1,504.65
• Office furniture/equipment (14)	£2,686.63	£765.67
• Office supplies / petty cash (16)	£1,631.53	£2,408.13
• Insurance (09)	£570.61	£518.77
• Utilities and premises costs (incl. rent/rates) (07;08;)	£1,683.10	£3,884.98
• Others (Advertising; publicity; fees; etc) (13;17;19;20;23)	£1,299.66	£1,155.83
	£59,917.14	£71,625.47
Net Surplus	£23,675.36	£17,241.21

<u>Balance sheet</u>	31 March 2008	31 March 2009
Opening balance at 1 st April 2008 (1 st April 2007)	(£55,491.71)	£79,167.07
Add surplus 2008-2009 (2007-2008)	(£23,675.36)	£17,241.21
Total to carry forward	(£79,167.07)	£96,408.28

<u>Reconciliation:</u>		
Bank Statements - reserve account balance	(£65,940.11)	£76,845.22
- current account balance	(£15,509.72)	£20,089.66
Less unpresented cheques (000399, 000402)	(£2,282.76)	£526.60
Balance to be carried forward	(£79,167.07)	£96,408.28

(Details of all transactions can be viewed by arrangement with the Treasurer.)

For the year ended 31 March 2009, the company was exempt under section 249A(1) of the Companies Act 1985. No members have required an audit of the accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 249B(2). The directors acknowledge their responsibility for: i) Ensuring the company keeps accounting records which comply with section 221; and ii) Preparing accounts which give a true view of the company for the financial year in accordance with section 226, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act relating to accounts. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with Part 7 of the Companies Act 1985 relating to small companies.

Signed  Signed 

A R Jones Date 28/05/09 C J Rowles Date 28/05/09

(Treasurer & Company Secretary) (Independent Examiner)