

Home-Start Babergh

Annual Report 2009/10

**Here for
families and
children**

**Home
Start**

**Support and friendship
for families**

Home-Start Babergh

*Patron Sheila Ravenscroft
(Mrs John Peel)*



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Registered Charity No. 1107915

The Government's Green Paper, 'Every Child Matters', says...

"There are many reasons why parents feel unable to ask for help. They might have moved house and feel isolated from friends and family; they could be suffering with illness or depression; or they may be struggling to cope with a child who has a disability or other special needs.

This is where outreach services such as Home-Start can make a real difference.

Home-start volunteers visit families in their own home to offer support, friendship and practical help.

Volunteers will only get involved if the family want them to, which means the parents remain in control, rather than having help forced on them. In fact, one in four of the families helped by Home-Start make the first contact themselves."

How Home-Start Babergh helps families in our community

Being a parent, wherever you live, or whatever your situation, is not easy. Many parents feel exhausted and overwhelmed by the stresses of family life with under-fives. It is even more difficult if family or friends are unable to offer support and a breathing space when most needed. Some parents lose confidence in their ability to cope and most can remember when they would have liked someone to turn to. Everyone needs a hand sometime.

Home-Start runs more services and has more volunteers supporting more families than any other family support charity in the UK.

Home-Start Babergh's home visiting service is provided by over 50 trained and supervised volunteer parents who give non-judgemental, confidential support in families' own homes – tailored to families' specific needs. Volunteers visit for a couple of hours each week, for as long as the family needs them or until their youngest child turns five. Volunteers help in simple practical ways and build parents' confidence so that they can make positive choices about how to run their own lives.

Home-Start works preventatively with families from all walks of life and with parents with different ranges of problems. There is evidence that the relationship between the parents and their children improves and that social and support networks are widened for all in the family.

Who Home-Start Can Help...

- Lonely or isolated parents
- Families with twins, multiple births or several pre-school children
- Families where there is ill-health or disability/special needs
- Lone parents
- Mums who may have postnatal depression
- Families who are new to the area
- Families from all backgrounds
- Any family, with at least one child under five

How Home-Start Can Help...

A Home-Start Volunteer will visit regularly (usually once a week for a couple of hours) in the family's own home, and offer:

- Friendly support
- Flexibility
- Understanding
- Reassurance
- A listening ear
- An extra pair of hands
- Confidentiality
- Choice

Who are the Volunteers?

Home-Start Volunteers

- Come from many different backgrounds
- Vary in age, but all are either parents or have parenting experience
- Are carefully selected for their friendliness and understanding, are appropriately approved and all attend a course of preparation before being linked with families
- Some volunteers visit more than one family and take their own individual skills and experience to the families they visit
- Make home visits because they have been invited and wish to offer their time and friendship

Our Volunteers are...

Patricia, Lynn, Melanie, Ruth, Lesley, Anne C, Liza, John, Yvonne, Georgie, Anne G, Sarah, Lorraine, Jane, Katherine, Margaret L, Jo, Muriel, Clare, Frances, Liz, Heather, Pam, Jill, Margaret R, Sally, Doreen, Jane S, Iris, Sylvia, Penny, Julia S, Sharon, Amicie, Maxine, Marie and Jane W

They have been joined this year by...

Sonya, Julia C, Tina, Susan, Terina, Veronica, Alison, Sandra, Marion, Pippa and Sue G

Those who have left us during the year who we would like to thank:

Benny, Penny B, Barbara R, Brenda, Yvette, Anthea, Mary, Joan, Alison, Anne M, Marguerite, Kath G, Lisa F, Helen and Alix

Long serving volunteers:

Lesley (14 years), Anne G (9 years), Sharon (9 years), Frances (7 years), Liza, John and Lynn (6 years), Margaret L, Melanie and Sylvia (5 years)

Our Staff

From left to right:

Sarah Mann – Company Secretary

Jane Farrow – Co-ordinator / Family Group Leader

Gillian Hall – Scheme Manager

Carol Long – Co-ordinator



Alix Brain
Family Group
Playworker

Jane Farrow
Family Group Leader/
Co-ordinator

A Note from our Patron

I'm delighted to be acting as patron as Home-Start Babergh celebrates its 20th anniversary.

When I think of all the ups and downs my own family have negotiated their way through during the last twenty years it makes me proud to be part of an organisation that helps other families do the same with as much support as possible.

Here's to the next twenty years of families having the support and guidance of such an amazing and hard working group of people.

Sheila Ravenscroft



Our Directors

Lance Spraggons – Chairperson

With a background in training and development I spent over 30 years working for a large organisation leading change and supporting people through change. I was also the Chair of the British Institute for Learning and Development Quality Mark Forum.



Keith Nicholls – Vice Chair

I am a retired Primary School Headteacher and taught in Suffolk for over 20 years. I am married to Jenny and we have 3 children and 4 grandchildren. I was invited to join the Board of Directors in February 2007.



James Walter – Treasurer

I founded a Chartered Accountancy practice in Hadleigh in May 1973, which is now trading as Walter Wright. I retired as senior partner on 1st April 2007, however, I continue to work as a consultant, providing strategic tax and financial planning advice. I joined the Board of Directors in October 2007.



Lesley Burrows – Volunteers Representative

I am a married mother of four and am now retired. I have been with Home Start for the past 14 years as a volunteer and currently support a family. I became a Director in March 2007 and have responsibility for resources and volunteer support. I also help at two of the Family Groups in Great Cornard and Sudbury.



Debbie Collis

I joined the Board of Home-Start in September 2007. Being part of the 'Home-Start' team gives me immense pleasure knowing what lengths the service goes to in order to provide a safe, supportive environment for families and children and that my small contribution gives something back to the community where I live.



Dr Frances Moore MBE

I am one of two volunteer directors of Home-Start, having become a volunteer in 2002. I also welcome having a family to visit on a regular basis. I became a director in 2006 and have special responsibility for Public Relations/Publicity for the organisation.



John Hall

With a background in various aspects of the insurance industry, latterly in systems development and implementation, since retirement I provide IT support and teaching assistance at a local primary school where I am a governor. I was appointed a Home-Start Director in July 2008, with responsibility for IT.



David Parsons

I recently retired as Chief Executive of the Institute of Customer Service. I am a school governor and have lived in the Babergh area for many years. I was appointed to the Home-Start Babergh board in November 2009, where my experience will contribute to the strategic planning and also have responsibility for partnerships.



Mick Reeve

Following a 36 year career with BT I retired in June 2006 and am now consulting within the telecoms industry. Over my career I worked in design and development in many areas, including optical cable and transmission, switching and intelligent networks and Systems software. I am a Fellow of the UK's Royal Academy of Engineering. I am also a member of Inertia Reel, a local barn dance band, and I play the accordion for East Suffolk Morris Men.



Advisors to the Board

Kate Van Der Peer – Safeguarding/Child Protection

Jane Sharp – Safeguarding

Wayne Kerridge – ICT

Barry Woodward – Payroll

The Chairperson's Report

I look forward to this time of year as it gives me the opportunity to reflect on the past 12 months. Over that time we have taken a number of steps to strengthen the service that we provide to families in need of our support in the Babergh area. As demand for our support grows year on year, and to ensure that we can continue to meet demand, we regularly recruit new volunteers, and this year we have also appointed a part time Family Group Worker. This appointment is a new venture for us, designed to improve the service that we can offer to those families who attend our family groups.

Two new directors have joined the Board during the last year (David Parsons and Mick Reeve), and together they bring a wealth of business experience at a time when it has never been more important to operate on a sound business and financial level. Sadly Jane Sharp has resigned from the Board, because of pressure of work. She will be missed, but I am delighted to say that she will continue to be involved with Home Start as our safeguarding advisor.

We also made the decision during the year to move our offices to larger premises. We have taken the long term view that this move will ultimately benefit us financially as well as giving us the space to expand if the need should arise. It also means that we are able to be associated with a local company (JMS Developments).

The year has, as expected, been a difficult one because of the recession. However, through the hard work and dedication of our staff, volunteers, fellow directors and many others we have been able to raise the necessary funds and deliver services to the level that is expected of us.

Support to the families that need us is our sole purpose, and to this end we are delighted to be recognised by Suffolk County Council's children's services as one of their support agencies.

Finally, I would like to personally thank all those who are involved with Home Start Babergh for their support, innovation, dedication and professionalism and for their understanding as we move Home-Start Babergh forward. This sometimes means change to the way we operate, but change is often necessary.

Lance Spraggons

From a New Trustee

When I was asked to join the Home-Start Babergh Board I said I would first like to undertake some research to find out more about the organisation and its work. I looked at all aspects of what went on and what struck me most was the very strong values which drives all those who work for Home-Start Babergh – permanent staff, volunteers and directors. All share a fundamental desire to help others and in so doing to contribute to the health and prosperity of the local community in which we all live. As I believe I share such values I therefore accepted the Board's invitation to join them in November 2009.

I spent over half my career in the energy industry mainly in people development and general management roles. Then in 1997 I began working for the Institute of Customer Service which was established to support public and private sector organisations in improving service standards. The Institute is a not-for-profit organisation and part of my role there was to build partnerships with UK and international organisations interested in re-focusing on the customer. I hope I may be able to bring some of that experience to Home-Start Babergh. I retired as the Institute's Chief Executive last year.

Since retiring I have continued as Chair of Governors of a large secondary school in Ipswich and, in addition to becoming a director of Home-Start Babergh, have taken on other voluntary work for example as a coastal warden for the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. However I am also doing some of those things I enjoy which I just never seemed to have time for when I was at work!

David Parsons



The Scheme Manager's Report

2009/10 has been an extremely challenging and rewarding year. As anticipated, the number of referrals we received throughout the year increased, and I'm delighted to confirm that we successfully supported ALL the families that needed our help. Thanks to the commitment and dedication of our volunteers, the majority of these families are now enjoying a much improved quality of family life, which is, of course, our ultimate aim.

I'm a firm believer in continually looking ahead, and it has become quite clear that the number of referrals is not likely to decrease, but quite the opposite. In order to continue to meet the needs of families in Babergh, we have expanded in a variety of ways during the past year.

Thanks to our funders, we were able to recruit and train an additional 11 volunteers, who have now supported at least 1 family each, many are now supporting their 2nd and 3rd families. We have also moved to larger premises and now benefit from having our own training/meeting room, and I would like to thank Councillors Grutchfield, Spence and Pembroke for their generous donations to help with our initial set up costs.

Referrals to our Family Support Groups have also increased, and for this reason, we have also recruited an experienced Play Worker, which has made an enormous difference to the level of support we can offer families attending.

I, Jane and Carol have also taken on our own specialist fields, including mental health, domestic abuse, and children's challenging behaviour and addictions—all issues affecting many of the families we support.

So once again, I am reporting on a year that has been packed with changes, all of which have been extremely positive. The challenge for us, as always, is obtaining funding in the present economic climate, to ensure we can continue supporting all the families that are referred to us.

Of course the success of our scheme is really down to the hard work and commitment of our volunteers. They offer a family at least 2 to 3 hours of their time each week, dedicating themselves to helping the family in so many different ways. Thank you to each and every one of you.

Gillian Hall

Scheme Manager

Co-ordinators report

Two years on.....

My role as co-ordinator continues to be varied and fulfilling, every day presents new challenges within the team and no two days are ever the same for each of us.

Visiting and assessing families for Home-Start Babergh support is the mainstay of my role. From my initial assessment carried out with the family it is evident that some families do not always know what they want, what they need or how we can help and support them. However, it soon becomes apparent that the support provided by our volunteers or through a family's attendance at Family Group, improvements can be seen in the quality of life for so many families referred to the scheme.

I base this thesis on the importance of the therapeutic alliance or relationship that a volunteer holds with her family which in turn is supported and overseen by Staff and Directors.

Once a family begins to engage and trust the volunteer, a process of hope and recovery begins. The family often become empowered, their self confidence begins to grow and the ability to take control of their lives again, manage tasks and activities, that once seemed unobtainable and unreachable, are soon in sight. All too often our volunteers fail to recognize the uniqueness and important part they play in the lives of so many families receiving support. Just a simple word of encouragement, a prompt or positive praise; *you look nice today, you're doing really well, I never thought of that, that's brilliant*, not only builds self esteem but promotes resilience and enables a family to recognize that maybe they are doing, OK.

So THANK YOU volunteers for all your time and commitment and understanding of your family's needs and thank you for your attendance at our Bi-monthly volunteer support meetings held throughout the year. These are aimed, as you know, at exchanging information amongst statutory and voluntary agencies in order to provide up to date developments in community services, which in turn you offer to your families.

These meetings have proved very interesting and successful so an enormous thank you to all our guest speakers who have taken the time to meet with us all and share best practice.

Throughout 2009 I have continued to keep up to date with developments relevant to my role. I have attended several seminars offered by Suffolk Mental Health Partnership Trust (SMHPT) as a trust member along with other training days offered by the scheme. Due to my avid interest in Mental Health Issues I am offering to share my knowledge as an Advisor to Home-Start Babergh for the year ahead, 2010.

I would like to thank all the Directors past and present, volunteers and staff, Gillian, Jane and Sarah for a most enjoyable and interesting year.

Carol Long

Co-ordinator/Registered Mental Health Nurse (RMN)



Family Group Report

Once again we have had another successful year. We have been able to appoint a Play Worker, Alix Brain to support at all three groups. This has been very valuable to the Family Groups and will enable us to provide a higher level of support.

Family Group has been developed in response to the local needs of families in the Babergh area. The three Family Groups group are held once a week. We also meet over the school holidays so the older brothers and sisters can come along too and join in all the fun. Hadleigh Group is held at The Salvation Army Hall, Duke Street. Sudbury Group is held at the Phoenix Children's Centre. It has been beneficial holding the Group at the Children's Centre as this enables our families to source and tap into any courses available at both Children's Centre. Great Cornard Group is held at St Andrews Church. All three groups are now able to offer tea, toast and crumpets which have proved to be a good social event for families and children. The groups are warm and friendly with a relaxed atmosphere. It is a place for friendships to be made and for the children to make new friends.

We provide a wide range of fun and educational toys, puzzles and books. We have a craft activity each week covering a wide range of topics, these can be seasonal, from a story book, nursery rhymes, or about our Home-Start outing to the Balham Rare Breeds Centre.

Various people have visited groups and given talks. To date we have Charlotte Pugh from the Sudbury Health Visiting Team who comes to Sudbury and Gt Cornard groups once a month, Lynne Searle who did cooking on a budget, the local Police who came and gave us a talk on safety, Sue Hunter the Dental Nurse and the Library with their story time.

Sudbury and Cornard, Family Groups have been supported financially, by the Phoenix and Cornfields Children's Centre. I would like to say thank you for all their support.

I would like to thank Lesley and Lynn for all their support and help at the groups and Alix for all her hard work.

Testimonials from families why they enjoy Family Group so much

- Socialising
- Enjoy the breakfast saves the cooking on Wednesday
- We enjoy the company
- Gives the children chance to make new friends
- I look forward to my Family Group day
- It's fun

Jane Morgan



From the Engine Room

It seems impossible that it is over two years since I joined Home-Start Babergh and it is a testament to the amount of work the whole team undertakes, to support as many families as possible, how quickly the time has flown by.

I had the opportunity to join some of our families on a day out to Baylham Rare Breeds Farm last August and it was a pleasure to see them enjoy themselves on a much needed day out, something an awful lot of us take for granted. I was also lucky enough to go along to the Christmas Party and watch the children have fun, and to see the look on their faces when they knew Father Christmas had arrived. It is at these times that it really doesn't matter that the paperless office hasn't yet arrived!!

I would like to thank Gillian, Jane, Carol and Alix who are a fantastic team to work with. They are a great bunch of dedicated, professional, compassionate and hard working people all doing their upmost for families needing the support of Home-Start Babergh.

Sarah Mann

Treasurer's Report for the Year End 31 March 2010

The financial results for the year show a modest deficit of £2,434, which is very similar to the previous year and an increase in the general fund from £22,378 to £24,644 due to the reduction of £4,700 in Restricted funds.

The income at £122,613 shows a significant increase from last year directly due to the increase in core funding from Suffolk County Council and Babergh, up from £48,637 to £76,037. Whilst this increased funding is needed and is most welcome, with the proposed government cutbacks it could be substantially reduced from April 2011, which is cause for concern. Grants have decreased from £34,592 to £15,722 despite increased efforts to obtain grant funding, reflecting the fragile economic climate.

Fund-raising activities continue to make a significant contribution, generating £6,739, due principally to the very successful dinner dance, which not only raised over £2,800 was again very well organised and much enjoyed by those who attended.

The expenses have increased, principally due to the cost of moving office and having to upgrade the computer system. Salaries increased due to increased levels of activity and the appointment of a Family Group Playworker.

On behalf of the Management Committee I would like to thank Barry Woodward for his continued support and assistance, especially with regard to salaries, tax and pensions; and also Burac Accountancy for acting as our Independent Examiners.

The Management Committee in turn would like to thank all those who have assisted them during the past year in helping raise the income and by providing essential voluntary assistance and whose support is vital if we are to continue to assist families within the Babergh District. A full list of organisations is shown at the back of this annual report.

The financial results we have achieved for the year ended 31 March 2010 were again the result of the dedication, hard work, resourcefulness and enterprise of our core team and I would particularly like to thank Gillian Hall as Scheme Manager, Jane Morgan, Carol Long and Sarah Mann for the exceptional work they have put in over the last year which continues to be well above and beyond the call of duty.

Income and Expenditure Account

		31.03.10	31.03.09
Income		£	£
SCC Core Funds		64,787.00	44,887.00
Hadleigh Family Group		1,000.00	0.00
Sudbury Family Group		2,000.00	0.00
Gt Cornard Family Group		2,000.00	0.00
Babergh District Council		11,250.00	3,750.00
Fund Raising Activities		6,739.35	6,808.08
Charities Aid		209.80	1,820.40
Donations		3,912.19	5,985.30
Children in Need		10,268.75	9,485.75
Sundry Income		0.00	0.00
Family Group		80.68	245.29
Grants		15,722.48	34,592.92
Donations from Corporate Appeals		3,500.00	0.00
Other		0.00	0.00
100 Club		838.00	823.45
Deposit Interest		305.06	2,171.22
TOTAL INCOME FOR THE YEAR		122,613.31	110,569.41
Expenditure		£	£
Office Salaries & PAYE	SCC	85,889.91	80,474.76
Pensions	Hadle	4,382.36	1,588.80
Recruitment and Training	Sudb	500.00	1,111.95
Staff Mileage and expenses	Gt Co	2,864.57	3,250.48
Volunteer Expenses	Babe	2,988.70	4,640.40
Office Rent	Fund	6,280.28	5,526.48
Family Group Premises Rent	Chari	420.00	777.00
Family Group Expenses	Dona	971.61	1,733.84
Insurance	Child	548.38	532.74
TIG Fee	Sund	2,144.93	2,092.23
Fund Raising	Famil	1,686.50	2,118.95
Postage & Stationery	Grant	741.10	1,168.89
Telephone	Dona	1,243.45	1,035.74
Petty Cash Expenses	Other	0.00	30.00
Hadleigh Family Group Expenses		364.25	1,086.17
Sudbury Family Group Expenses	100 C	407.19	997.22
Gt Cornard Family Group Expenses	Depo	415.04	741.11
Volunteer 'Prep' Group	TOTAL	3,118.98	1,145.03
Expenditure			
Office Salaries & PAYE			

Accountancy Fees	395.00	433.00
Office Expenses	6,414.43	1,821.46
Bank Charges	126.78	0.00
100 Club	368.70	350.45
Other	2,776.02	425.00
TOTAL OVERHEAD EXPENSES	125,048.18	113,081.70
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	(2,434.87)	(2,512.29)

BALANCE SHEET

	31.03.10	31.03.09
CURRENT ASSETS	£	£
Tax refund due on donations	0.00	0.00
Bank Current Account	5,899.67	9,350.93
Fundraising Account	0.00	0.00
Family Group Account	0.00	0.00
COIF Deposit Account	32,518.70	31,218.64
Rent deposit	410.00	410.00
Petty Cash	0.00	0.00
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	38,828.37	40,979.57
CREDITORS		
Amounts falling due within one year	4,184.64	3,900.97
TOTAL CREDITORS	4,184.64	3,900.97
NET CURRENT ASSETS	34,643.73	37,078.60
CAPITAL AND RESERVES		
Contingency Fund	7,500.00	7,500.00
Restricted Fund	2,500.00	7,200.00
General Fund	24,643.73	22,378.60
	34,643.73	37,078.60

This information is extracted from the audited Financial Statements of Home-Start Babergh, which were approved by Burac Accountants. These summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow for the full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity. A copy of the full financial statement is available on request.

Reserves Policy for Home-Start Babergh

A formal policy on reserves was agreed for Home-Start Babergh at the meeting of the Board on the 18th May 2010

It states:

The Board have set a reserves policy which requires that:

Reserves are maintained at a level which ensures that Home-Start Babergh's staff costs, including any statutory redundancy payments, and office rent for one month could continue during a period of unforeseen difficulty.

A proportion of reserves are held in the COIF account.

The calculation of the required level of reserves is an integral part of the scheme's planning, budget and forecast cycle.

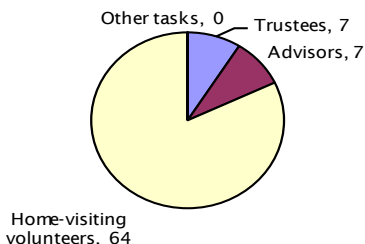
It takes into account:

Risks associated with each stream of income and core activity expenditure being different from that budgeted;

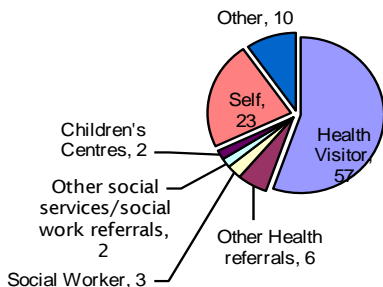
Planned activity level and commitments are only approved where sufficient funds are available in our account to cover the associated costs.

The level of reserve for the financial year 2010/11 is £7,500

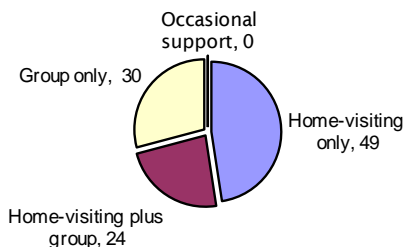
Breakdown of volunteers within scheme



Breakdown of sources of referrals



Type of Support



“Did You Know?”

In 2009/10 – 255 children were supported by Home-Start Babergh

In 2009/10 - 103 families were supported by Home-Start Babergh

In 2009/10 – 54 families attended a Home-Start Babergh Family Group

Our Training Commitment

The life blood of Home Start Babergh is our people and we put great emphasis on the development of our staff, volunteers and directors.

All our staff have personal development plans which identify areas where they need additional training to enhance or refresh their skills in dealing with children.

All new volunteers receive 40 hours of training including comprehensive training in the sensitive area of safeguarding children, before they support their first family. In addition, a series of training sessions are held throughout the year on a whole range of topics to further enhance the knowledge of our volunteers. These include visiting speakers on law and policy affecting children; information on extended schools; awareness and guidance on how to identify children and young people who may be at risk of abuse; post natal depression; childhood obesity and all aspects of childcare placements.

Our directors also have the opportunity for training in all areas of their work to support and again enhance their roles as directors.

In the coming year we will be seriously looking at accrediting some of the training that we have to offer. We take our training extremely seriously and all those involved with Home Start have our commitment to provide them with access to all the necessary training that they need.

Lance Spraggon



Fund Raising

Whilst several fund raising events occurred during the year in which individuals raised much needed funds, the fund raising committee were involved in three main events. The first of which was the Toddlethon. This year, the format changed, and we “toddled” in partnership with a few local schools, splitting the proceeds 50/50. The end result was £840 for our funds. Our next venture was a Barn Dance. This went well despite our initial panic that we would not be able to sell enough tickets. The evening was a great success and our thanks go to Foskers of Ipswich (wholesale fruit and vegetable merchants) who donated all the salad items for the ploughman’s that was served on the evening, together with Pam, Marie and me donating the puddings. We raised £400. Our latest event was the Annual Dinner/Dance – our third. Once again Brett Vale Golf Club provided the venue. 74 people enjoyed a brilliant evening of food, dance, games and fund raising activities, culminating in an amazing £2,965.50 profit. A big thank you to all who donated prizes for the raffle and gift tree and to everyone who bought/sold raffle tickets, helped on the night and attended.

Fund raising is on-going and seemingly never-ending. We are already in the process of organising the next Toddlethon and Barn Dance. A date for the diary is 25th September when the next Barn Dance is being held at Copleston High School in Ipswich, with Inertia Reel providing the music. Keep an eye open for when tickets go on sale so you don’t miss out on a fun evening. But mark the date in your diary now.

We are always looking for new people to join the committee and new ways to make money. So whether you would like to join the committee, or have any fund raising ideas, we would love to hear from you. If you contact the office in the first place, they will let an existing committee member know, who will contact you.

Penny Spraggon



Testimonials from our Volunteers

"Being a Home-Start Volunteer has been and still is a most rewarding experience. I have been a volunteer for nearly four years and have supported two families long term and have just started to support a third family. All have had very different needs, but all have needed support at a difficult time. One feeling that comes to mind as a volunteer is satisfaction, that I can make a difference to someone just by being there for only a few hours each week. What can seem like very little help to me can make the world of difference to someone who is struggling. Just to be able to rely on a volunteer being there each week can be such a comfort to a client who may feel isolated. A listening ear and a helping hand, but most of all to be a friend is so very important and to know that I can give these things gives me great satisfaction. We take a lot for granted in our lives and it's not until you see what little support some people have that you realise why Home Start is a much needed and much appreciated organisation, one that I am proud to be a part of."



"I had no knowledge of Home-Start until I was flicking through the Community News and came across the advertisement for volunteers. I was instantly impressed with the invaluable service they offer mums and was keen to find out more.

I had recently lost my mum, who was my absolute rock during my children's younger years. On reflection I realise how very fortunate I had been to have that unconditional support and I wanted to help others who needed a little extra help for that reason.

Home-Start was the perfect way to fulfil that desire! The staff are very dedicated, special people and I felt honoured to become part of the organisation. The course was informative in a very relaxed informal environment, and helped to build my confidence.

I have been visiting my first family for two and a half months now, and I can honestly say it is one of the most enjoyable, rewarding things I have ever done.

It is such a lovely feeling to be accepted into someone's home, trusted, and to feel I make a difference. My family and I have a very good balance. I feel we are friends, have great communication between us and the ability to work as a super team through the emotional and practical demands of parenting.

This is underpinned by the network of support by Home-Start, which is excellent.

Reading the Community News has added a very fulfilling dimension to my life. Thank you Home-Start"



"I personally volunteer for Home-Start because I feel that I can use my life's experiences, my experiences gained as a parent and my experiences gained professionally after many years in child care.

I feel these experiences enable me to relate to a wide variety of people and situations.

We all know that being a parent isn't easy; we all go through stressful and difficult periods in life, when that extra bit of support can make so much difference; someone just to listen, someone to really care, someone we can relate to, who understands. If I can be that 'someone' I feel humbled, rewarded and fulfilled and that is what I have found in being a volunteer for Home-Start Babergh".



"I have worked for Home-Start for four years during this time I have had the privilege to help look after four families as a Home-Start volunteer. It has been challenging and at times harrowing. I have very much appreciated the constant and wonderful support from Home-Start with some of the tougher situations I have had to deal with. It is difficult to know if my help has made any real difference helping some very needy families cope with their difficulties. But I do hope so. What is very rewarding is the children's pleasure and excitement my arrival brings even if it is just because I come laden with books, jigsaws, plastercine and cupcakes! When your family starts to introduce you to their family and friends and say, "This is my friend Clare", then it feels pretty special and worthwhile."



Testimonials from the professionals

"It is a delight to have Home Start Babergh as members of Young Suffolk. On attending last year's AGM It was great to hear and see the success stories that were shared from those who have benefited from the service provided. Hearing and seeing the difference this type of support has made to both individuals and families just reiterates how worthwhile this work is, and how the staff at Home Start Babergh have contributed to making a real impact on local families in need of support".

Baz Wilkinson, Southern Area Co-ordinator, Young Suffolk



“As the Cluster Development Co-ordinator for Sudbury and Great Cornard, I lead on the development of multi agency responses to families with needs that require support, possibly from several services at the same time. I have contact with a large number of agencies supporting children and families and I never hear anything but high praise for the work that Home-start does. They provide invaluable help in all sorts of different ways to families who are struggling to cope. They are always friendly and helpful to work with and keen to cooperate where necessary with other services that may need to be involved. I realise that we are extremely lucky to have the service in this area”. **Sally O’Leary, Cluster Development Co-ordinator, Sudbury and Great Cornard.**



"I have been working with Home-Start Babergh for 5 years, during this time we have been working together to enhance the support of families across the Sudbury cluster". This has included Home-Start Babergh attending well-being events and conferences to support families locally. I have also been involved with the volunteers and I have a run training session on how funding can support families in the area.

I have also supported day trips through the activities for all funding which has enabled families from across Babergh to access a free day out. This will be supported again this year. **Ann-Marie Childs – Extended Schools, Sudbury**



"Babergh District Council is happy to have been able to support Home- Start again this year. We have always had a good working relationship with Home Start and are impressed with the quality of service and the professionalism of both staff and volunteers. The few hours a week given by each of the many volunteers makes a significant difference to the lives of the families supported by Home Start as it helps build parental confidence and enduring friendships between the families and volunteers." **Chris Foti, Head of Community Development, Babergh District Council**



“Home-start Babergh are a key voluntary agency in the South Suffolk area.

As a health visiting team we have worked very successfully in partnership with Home-start for many years in order to deliver high quality effective interventions to highly vulnerable families in the area. The rurality of this area means that statutory agencies at times, provide little outreach support. Home-start has been pivotal in filling a much needed gap in service provision delivered in a way which is very acceptable and much needed.

Home-start ensures that all volunteers are prepared to an exceptionally high standard. This means that volunteers have very effective relationships with the families that they support. It is so beneficial to see the positive effect that this input has on families. Befriending, helping with tasks, support with debt management and paying bills, playing with children and showing parents how to play effectively with their children – these are just some examples of the ways in which volunteers provide support.

The Home-Start staff undertake very effective assessment work following all referrals. This further supports the appropriate placement of volunteers. Boundaries are always clear due to the excellent preparation work. Families value their volunteer and as a health visitor it is clear that following contact with Home-Start families become more confident and able to reach out to the local community and develop local networks.

We look forward to another year of positive engagement with Home-Start to the benefit of local families in need.”

Hadleigh Health Visiting Team



Testimonials from our Mums / Families

“Making an invaluable friend who is a firm favourite with all the family and someone who has already been through it all with their own children”.



“Home-Start is a fabulous scheme and I personally have benefited greatly from it!”



“It was the only tangible thing I had to rely on”.



“I appreciated the full support, both from my own volunteer and the Home-Start Babergh Co-ordinators and feel fortunate that this help is available for those who need it in Suffolk.”



“I benefited from Home-Start Babergh as I had someone to chat to, who wasn’t directly involved with the family.”



“My son looked forward to our weekly visits from our volunteer who was more like a family member. We learnt to respect her wishes and liked doing the activities she provided.”



“My volunteer listened and was great with the children, an all round lovely lady.”



“Home-Start gave me the support I needed at a time when I was finding things hard.”



“My children have benefited immeasurably from Home-Start Babergh. They have made a very special friend who loves to spend focussed time just with them and is always fun.”



Donations / Grants

We would like to thank all who have donated to Home-Start Babergh during the past year:

Hadleigh Thrift Shop, J Mievile, Mr Daultry, Keith Nicholls, C Long, Hadleigh Rotary Club, Katherine Alexander, Heather Partridge, J Stacey, L Spraggon, Mrs Wright, G Hall, Mrs C Langley, Mr & Mrs Phillips, S Mann, Ink Express, Usborne Publishing, M Girling, Mrs Beadle, Mr Tricker, Peter Wenham, G Hines, The Moncrieff Charitable Trust, Hadleigh Town Council, Simon Gibson Charitable Trust, Henry Smith Charity, Britannia Building Society, Anne Tranmere Charitable Trust, Lord Belstead Charitable Trust, Wakeham Trust, Co-op Community Fund, Four Acre Trust, Sudbury Municipal Charities, Norwich & Peterborough Building Society, Army Central Fund, Councillor Spence, Councillor Grutchfield, Councillor Wood, Suffolk County Council, Babergh District Council, Heart FM, ASDA, Polstead Parish Council, Nayland & Wissington Parish Council, Hitcham Parish Council, East Bergholt Parish Council, Chelmondiston Parish Council, Gt Waldingfield Parish Council, Gt Cornard Parish Council, Monks Eleigh Parish Council, Bures St Mary Parish Council, Acton Parish Council, Pinewood Parish Council, Polstead Parish Council

Many people have also kindly donated their time to us in a variety of ways including Wayne Kerridge (WPK Systems). There are too many other people to name, but you know who you are and we would like to offer a sincere thank you.



**Home
Start**

Support and friendship
for families

