

# Annual Report 2015 – 2016

Home  
Start

Support and friendship  
for families

HOME-START  
HEREFORDSHIRE



## Building a happy future for families

Registered Charity No 1113432 • Company No 5659978

# A Home-Start Full Circle

## Cindy Ojwang

Hi my name is Cindy and I am a volunteer for Home-Start Herefordshire. I have been with the team for around 2 years now and I am really enjoying the experience.

Believe it or not I actually used to be a Home-Start user! Way back 11 years ago when my girls were babies, I was finding life really hard. I was 22 years old with 2 small babies, the eldest of which was severely disabled. I didn't drive, I had very little family support and I didn't know anyone else with a special needs child. I felt alone and lost. Most days I didn't even leave the house as it was such hard work trying to get 2 babies fed, dressed, in the double buggy and get anywhere on time! Added to that; was the fact that my eldest was super clingy and wouldn't go to anyone but me and her dad and would scream anytime I left the room.

My Home-Start volunteer was a wonderful woman called Nerys. I must admit, when she first arrived I felt like someone had been sent to watch me or judge me. After a week or two I realised that she really was there to help. To be that extra pair of hands that I needed or just to be the friendly ear to listen to me when I was feeling low. She helped me so much during the time that she was with me and I appreciated it so much that years later when I was back on my feet and feeling the

strongest that I had ever felt due to lots of support, I decided that I too wanted to be a Home-Start volunteer and give something back to the wonderful charity that had helped me so much.

Life is very different for me now! I now also have a little boy who keeps me on my toes and I am also doing it alone. This has presented its own challenges but thanks to all of the help I have received I'm managing really well. Also, I feel that the experiences I have been through have helped me to become the person that I am today.



*Cindy Ojwang with Ebony, Jamari and Imani*

A friend of mine was starting the preparation course and I asked if I could join too. The 10 week course was amazing and I loved it. Don't get me wrong some of the subjects were hard to deal with but so worth doing. I really learnt so much about not only the families I would be working with but also about myself. The most important lesson of course; being that we are all human.

Since then I have worked with two lovely families and I have found it to be so rewarding. I am so glad that such a wonderful charity exists.

## An all round volunteer

### Gail Ford

After a chat with Alison, I felt that I had no option but to train as a Home-Start volunteer in 2011. The training was beyond expectation in so many ways; meeting lovely people; making friends and of course, being thoroughly prepared for the time to be spent with our families. The care, compassion, expertise and dare I say, common sense, remain available at all times, often with a laugh for good measure.

I have gained so much from my time spent with the families I've been matched with (3 to date), and it feels like a "cwttch" to see the positive effects that our visits can make to a family. The families I have supported have had a variety of concerns to deal with, so there is never a chance of becoming bored or complacent with the care and help that I give.

I'm not sure that I appreciate Alison calling me a "crafty lady" but I do enjoy making things that can be sold to raise funds and, more importantly, awareness of Home-Start Herefordshire. Sometimes this has been in lovely surroundings: Teri's garden, the cathedral, Broadfield Court and often in pouring rain or even a thunderstorm at Witney. Still, we had a laugh.

My calendar is also marked for Thursday mornings when I help out at Ross Toy Library, a carer/baby/toddler group expertly run by Kay Gray



*Caroline Watson and Gail Ford at Broadfield Christmas Fair*

Group Coordinator along with Sue Jackson who is another volunteer helper "musketee" and is also a "crafty lady". We are sometimes joined by Social worker students who attend to gain experience.

There is a great buzz at the group with lots of activities: craft, painting, sand, toys and also time for carers to chat about life in general or, maybe, concerns, which can often be dispelled before they become a problem.

Teamwork and Support explains how Home-Start Herefordshire work and I am grateful to have been included in this supportive teamwork when working with: my families, the office, the Toy Library and fundraising.

There is always the support of a team available.

# Chair's Annual Report

## Vicki Murray Chair of Trustees

It is a real pleasure to be able to report yet again on a successful year for Home-Start Herefordshire. We have been able to continue our essential work with over 200 families so far this year. They have been befriended by dedicated home visiting volunteers and supported in a great number of ways to address the problems that they are facing at this time in their lives. Helping the parents helps the children and equally helping the children helps the parents.

Children of all ages have been supported both in their early years and in primary and secondary schools. Home-Start's core work has traditionally been with children under 5 and we try to maintain a balance between our work with the very young and that with older children. Our scheme manager Mandie's report gives examples of the positive feedback we get from families on a regular basis. These responses give us reassurance that HSH is able to make a difference and sometimes prevent real tragedy. It certainly justifies the hard work and often difficult challenges that the organisation faces.

We could not of course do any of this work without the generosity of our funders. At present we receive help from a number of different sources: The Eveson Trust gave us much needed core funding, often extremely difficult to access, and we currently get funding for specific projects from Children in Need, the Southall Fund, Kington Church, the Army Central Fund, the Cadbury Trust, the Community Foundation, Bulmer's charitable trusts, New Grove Trust, West Mercia Police and others. Small grants are also made to individual families to help them with specific difficulties such as needing some item of furniture or needing help with travel. We cannot express our gratitude enough to them all. There is a tremendous well of charitable giving in this county and across the country which is too often

unrecorded but invaluable.

Herefordshire Council Children's Services have continued to commission us to deliver a befriending service for families. They are referred to us for the unique support that we can offer. We work closely with the Council and other partners across the county, including schools, police and health services in a

variety of formal and informal networks. The more partners and services work together the better and more coordinated the help for our families can be.

I would personally like to thank my fellow trustees who give so much of their time and the benefit of their many skills including safeguarding, health and safety, financial and legal probity, human resources and experienced leadership and planning. They are a reassuring support to me. Our excellent staff members are a delight to work with and make our governance role a pleasure. In May 2016 my husband and I had a great day out in Snowdonia, North Wales along with some of our intrepid staff and their partners, riding the triple zip wire down the mountain. We were generously sponsored by friends and families and raised over £1000 so it was a profitable and exciting change for me from my usual rather more staid responsibilities and a good start to our 2016-17 fundraising income.

We have too many volunteers, friends and supporters to mention them all individually by name but their efforts in family support, fundraising and other areas do not go unnoticed and we thank them all.



*Vicki and Paul Murray at Zip World North Wales*

## Toy Library

### Kay Gray Group Coordinator/Admin

The Toy Library runs on Thursday mornings (term-time) at the Children's Centre in Ross-on-Wye. We are grateful for the continued support from The New Grove Trust and from all of the staff and the resources that are available to us.

Since October 2015 we have been visited by 122 families, with not just mums, but dads, grandparents, foster carers and childminders. A wide diversity of nationalities have also been welcomed at the group. Many lasting friendships have been built between children and adults.

In a safe and secure environment we offer support, friendship, fun and activities. Each week we have a theme which incorporates craft and play activities. Many of which are very messy with paint, glue, play dough, 'gloop', painting and water play on offer. A healthy snack is also included in the planning with creations such as

'Humpty Dumpty' cheese scones and 'ladybird' crackers and always a variety of fruit. This has become a big part of our morning with lovely comments from parents and carers and even requests for our recipes. We do still enjoy a party though with the occasional treat!

During our sessions we always have a quiet area where carers can share experiences and babies can explore safely.

Our morning always ends with a popular singing

session with 'sleeping bunnies' being a firm favourite with our children.

This busy morning is all made possible with the kind help and support of Gail and Su, our lovely Home-Start volunteers. Thank you very much!!



*Kay Gray and Ruby Creed*





**Hereford Festival of Sport 2015**  
saw a team from HSH raise £2,520.22

*A big thank you to  
all who took part and to everyone  
that sponsored us in our efforts.  
In total our fundraising events  
raised £4,762*

*Wish you  
were here!*



**AGM 2015**



*2015/16 has been  
yet again a great  
year of different  
fundraising ideas  
and events.*



**Christmas Craft Fair at Broadfield Court**



# Manager's Report

## Mandie Preece Scheme Manager

What an incredibly busy year it's been here at Home-Start with us achieving and celebrating many great things in terms of our service delivery. We have continued to provide effective and often life changing support for some of the most vulnerable families living in the county of Herefordshire. During the year we have supported 208 families including 389 children (203 aged 0-5yrs and 186 aged 6-18yrs).

Through the delivery of our contract, commissioned by the local authority we have provided Targeted Volunteer Support for Vulnerable Families with children aged 0-19 years. 105 families, were referred for support, including parents and children struggling with; physical and mental health, financial problems, housing issues, substance misuse and living with the impact of domestic abuse were a few of the challenges that our befriending volunteers have helped families overcome.

These positive outcomes were evidenced through feedback from parents themselves.

"I valued all the help and support the volunteer offered, spending time with us helping with strategies to use with difficult behaviour. She made our outlook a lot brighter and helped reduce conflict in the home" (mum struggling with child's challenging behaviour)

"HS support has made a noticeable positive impact. C1 attendance has improved, she is accessing more activities and mum says she feels more confident, she feels listened to and valued which has improved her self esteem" (referrer/ primary school)

Improving the lives of children and young people is a priority of the organisation and much of this has been possible thanks to BBC Children In Need who have funded our direct work with children 5-14yrs over the past 3 years. We have seen so many successes through our direct/mentoring support. Volunteers have helped to rebuild fragile parent/child relationships, improve children's attainment and attendance at school, help reduce the incidence of self harming, reduce isolation, address the impact of domestic abuse and improve self esteem and self worth. We felt it extremely important that this service continue, so we were delighted when in the autumn this year we secured repeat funding from BBC Children In Need to fund the continuation of this valuable work.

"Before the volunteer came I felt ...

"I couldn't tell anyone how I felt, she has made me understand how to express my feelings in the right way and I now feel much happier" (child 14yrs)

"I felt alone, depressed and had enough, now I feel there is hope and room for improvement. I was at rock bottom and it felt helpless, now I feel confident things will and have been changing for the better." (Child 13yrs struggling with mental health)

Over the past 2 years we have received an increasing number of referrals for families who have been victims of domestic abuse. These families are greatly disadvantaged as they have often fled abusive relationships leaving both parents and children traumatised by past experiences, they often have very few belongings and live with the uncertainty of not

knowing where or how they are going to live or manage. Seeing a great need for additional resources in this area we applied to West Mercia Police and Crime Commission for a grant to fund this work. We were delighted when in May 2015 we were successful in our application securing a grant of £18,988 to launch our "New Beginnings Service", helping victims of Domestic Abuse (men, women and children). This new service has been a resounding success with over 50 families helped and receiving intensive befriending volunteer support.



Mandie Preece

(Dad) "Our volunteer has helped us rebuild our lives and to live as a family and work better as a family, she's helped to smooth things out. Being able for us all to share our thoughts and feelings has made a huge difference to our lives." (Mum) "Our volunteer has great empathy and encourages me to have confidence in my ideas and suggests other. She has greatly improved our feelings of taking decisions and not being overwhelmed."

Over the years we have found our service to take on a more preventative role, increasingly providing help for families with more complex needs and although we are extremely successful in supporting families to achieve positive outcomes we as an organisation felt it important to continue to provide Early Intervention support for our younger families, helping in the early years to avoid an escalation of need. Supporting this work, in January this year we launched our "Big Hopes, Big Future" service (BHBF), which supports and helps parents of young children to be Nursery and School ready. 15 volunteers have undertaken specialist BHBF training to deliver this new service in the family's own home and we are starting to see the first few families referred for this service.

We pride ourselves in providing our volunteer team with a high quality comprehensive training programme which meets their own personal development requirements as well as ensuring it reflects the needs of the families we support. This year we have delivered various training sessions including new opportunities like BHBF. In addition to this 10 volunteers have taken part in our new Money for Life training which has provided them with vital tools needed to help families who are struggling with money management and debt related issues. We have also received excellent sessions from external trainers including St Michaels Hospice (supporting families with life limiting conditions), MIND and CLD (helping adults and children with mental health problems), specialist Health Visitor (understanding Infant Mental Health) and Women's Aid (supporting families struggling with issues around domestic abuse). We are extremely grateful to Herefordshire Community Foundation for providing funding to enable us to run the training.

"Very useful information and training which has helped me have a greater understanding of what my family is experiencing" (volunteer)

Finally I would like to pass on my sincere and grateful thanks to our incredible staff and volunteer team for all their hard work and dedication to the organisation. It is a great honour to work with such a fabulous Team, as none of this would be possible without them.

# Celebrating 10 years

## Sally Jones Organiser / Administrator

I am celebrating 10 years being at Home-Start this year. The time has flown and not one minute has been boring. There have been difficult times, but the team here are so special, we look after each other. They also encourage you to strive for the things that you want to achieve. They have helped me grow as a person and given me the confidence to become a Home-Start Organiser and I would like to thank them for their support.

I started as an admin assistant and after getting to know the charity and the special work that it does, I wanted to become a volunteer and help families. I completed the preparation course and volunteered for a couple of years which was amazingly rewarding.

The next stage was to help the organisers with delivering the preparation course. So I completed the Preparing To Teach in the Life Long Learning Sector training and before long and with encouragement from the organisers, I was delivering a few parts of the new volunteer training course. With further support from staff, and the residential Induction course, I am now able to do organiser work: visiting, matching and supporting families and their volunteers.

What interested me most about working as an organiser was the chance to help support families coping with domestic abuse situations. I had recently done a 3 day course on this subject delivered by Women's Aid, as well as other training over the years on the subject

At the same time, Home-Start Herefordshire was given a grant from the police enabling us to work with abused families. Mandie then gave me the chance to get involved. Having experienced domestic abuse myself I was ready for the challenge.

These families can be affected by so many issues – emotional, self esteem, housing and debt issues. The children can be severely affected – we see it coming out in the form of challenging behaviour and not being able to deal with their emotions. Children can end up with severe mental health issues and attachment disorders. I



Sally Jones

have found this project to be very rewarding, seeing Mums improve in confidence and being empowered to deal with issues.

Through our Monitoring and Evaluation process, it has been recognised that three quarters of our referrals are, or have been in the past, affected by domestic abuse.

We are also now supporting male victims of domestic abuse. I started working with a couple of families and have since built up to giving support and guidance to 8 families at one time. I continue to maintain the administration role on a shared basis with colleague Kay Gray.

I would like to thank some charities that have helped these families this year:-

The Community Foundation and Bulmers who have supported families with fuel funding.

The Family Holiday Association paid for two of my families to go on holiday. For one family they got to see the sea for the first time. This family also went to the circus for the first time and said it was 'amazing'.

The Rathbone Charity has funded many different things to support the young people in these families – horse-riding, gym membership, dog training sessions, funding for children to attend school clubs or activities and funding for transport to take a family on holiday.

The Hereford Lions also supported with transport for a family to go on holiday.

The Hereford Food Bank for providing food parcels for families in an emergency.

It has been amazing to be able to provide these families with experiences that they otherwise would not have.

This year we have supported  
389 children in families,  
including 203 under 5's

## Kington Family Group

### Tam Thomas Family Group Coordinator

Goodness me, again I am wondering where has the last 12 months have gone as I do my report for our Kington family group. Once again some of our children will be moving on to school and it seems they have grown up with us, but what fun we have had along the way. Lots of crafts, loads of messy play (thank you Kim), singing, dancing – I go to sleep some nights with Hop Little Bunny going round and round in my head having heard it at least 10 times at group that morning – stories, cooking, flower arranging etc, etc. My volunteers Amber, Caroline and Mel make the group so welcoming for all the families it is always a comfortable place to be. Mums can chat about anxieties and successes in a lovely relaxed atmosphere.



Coffee morning in Kington

We are thriving and we have a lot of support from various groups within the local community, including Kington United Charities whose funding and help enables us to continue. We had a fun night at the local Bingo where all proceeds were donated to the group. We also have great support from the Health Visiting Team who will drop in for coffee and a chat to support our families.

We ended this term with a trip to the local fruit farm where we picked cherries and strawberries, met the farm animals and enjoyed a lovely picnic with strawberries and ice cream to finish our day. Lovely memories!!



# A Big Welcome to our New Volunteers

We have had another very busy year of volunteer recruitment and we are delighted that we have managed to recruit and train 29 new home-visiting volunteers who are now ready to support families all over the county.

**We hope you find your journey with us as rewarding as we do,**

Thank You to those volunteers who have left us, we have really valued your contribution and are truly grateful for the difference you have made to the lives of the families you have supported.



## Student Placements

### Andy Portman, Student

My placement with Home-Start Herefordshire has been an invaluable learning curve for me as a social work student. Due to continued austerity measures implemented by the government the local authorities are forced with making difficult decisions regarding which services they will keep and which will be lost. I have witnessed the impact of these decisions as the thresholds for social care involvement are now much higher and as a result the council and other agencies look to Home-Start Herefordshire to take on more cases.

The team are an inspiration and they work tirelessly to provide support to families in need across the whole county. The support offered is first class and that's thanks to the excellent leadership, supervision and training that are provided by the scheme manager, and the organisers, who ensure the continued professional development of all staff and volunteers. Most of the direct work with families is undertaken by a team of dedicated volunteers who give 2-3 hours a week of their time for FREE to help those most in need in their communities. The volunteers all share a common goal of wanting to help people.

I would like to take this opportunity to give heartfelt thanks to all the team at Home-Start Hereford for making my placement such an enlightening and enjoyable experience.

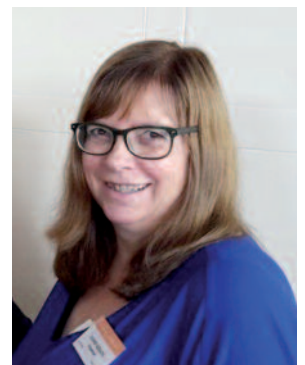


*Andy Portman with friend Mike on the mic*

**"I cannot talk highly enough of my professional and personal admiration for you all at the office and will take a lot of experience and happy memories away with me. I hope to be able to give something back to the organisation in the future as the hope and light it brings to families you touch is priceless."** Andy Portman

### Diane Gibson Organiser

- Home-Start Herefordshire is a recognised First Placement of 70 days for students on either Bachelor or Masters Degrees in Social Work at Worcester and Gloucester universities. This means that there is a student social worker on placement throughout the year.
- Diane is the Workplace Supervisor and works in close co-operation with Lindsey McArthur Practice Educator to ensure the students have as wide an experience as possible which benefits both them and the service Home-Start Herefordshire provides to families.
- The students benefit from both informal and formal supervision from Diane and a huge amount of support from the rest of the team.



# Treasurer's Report

## Rob Ellam, Treasurer

Income increased by 16% during the year mainly from the new Domestic Abuse contract. Expenditure also increased, by 10% again reflecting higher staff costs resulting from the Domestic Abuse contract.

The net result is a surplus of £4,443 on unrestricted activities which is slightly lower than the surplus of £7,969 for the previous year. The unrestricted surplus for the year has been added to reserves to leave total reserves at 31 March 2016 of £50,596.

Our current unrestricted reserves only provide minimum cover for emergencies such as shortfalls in funding or unexpected expenditure. The Trustees continue to believe that reserves equivalent to 6 months expenditure, i.e. in excess of £80,000, are the optimum required to ensure continuity of operations and will continue to work towards this goal. However, although the current reserves only provide for 4 months of expenditure cover, the Trustees believe this is sufficient to meet the minimum required to continue operations.

Amounts were received from Eveson Charitable Trust, Herefordshire Council, BBC Children in Need, New Grove Trust, Cadbury, The Army Fund, EF Bulmer Benevolent Fund, Southall Trust, West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner, Pontrilas Development, Kington United Charity and HFT Forklifts. We are grateful for their support.

In addition money was received in the form of donations from individuals and the proceeds from fund raising events. We are grateful to the donors for their generosity and to all those involved in fund raising events for their hard work and commitment.

**We have raised £4762 with our fundraising events during the last 12 months**



The Eveson Charitable Trust

S. R. & P. H. Southall Charitable Trust



THE HEREFORDSHIRE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



Rathbourne Moral Aid Charity



EF Bulmer Benevolent Fund



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## Financial Summary

	Year ending 31 March 2016	Year ending 31 March 2015
<b>Incoming resources</b>		
Donations	4,032	6,488
Fund raising income	4,762	4,041
Grants	164,828	139,600
Other income	2,478	1,187
	<b>176,100</b>	<b>151,316</b>
<b>Resources expended</b>		
Staff and volunteer costs	141,741	128,985
Fund raising costs	176	31
Office costs	14,477	12,171
Scheme expenses	4,521	5,914
Governance costs	1,716	1,215
Other costs	255	
	<b>162,886</b>	<b>148,316</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		
Unrestricted funds	4,443	7,969
Restricted funds	8,771	(4,969)
<b>Funds at 31 March</b>		
Unrestricted	50,596	46,153
Restricted	10,970	2,199

**During 2015/16  
we have supported  
208 families including  
43 lone parents**

## Home-Start Hereford's board of trustees



Peter Watts, Julian Mawdesley Vice Chair,  
Christine Wright, Rob Ellam Treasurer, Teri Turner  
front row Vicki Murray Chair,  
Judy Hooley Volunteer Rep, Helen Tank