



Support and friendship  
for families

# **Home Start Family Support Centre**

**Winson Green, Handsworth & Sandwell Areas**

## **Business Plan 2009 – 2012**

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## HOME START BUSINESS PLAN 2009 – 2012

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1. This Business Plan sets out the current position of Home Start Winson Green, Handsworth and Sandwell Areas and details the strategic aims of the Organisation for the next 3 years.**
- 2. The Scheme is now 12 years old and provides services to over 900 families per year, who are under stress and have at least one child less than 5 years of age. It has 18 funded posts and provides a range of services to its users including a Home Safety Service to assess and equip family homes for improved safety and security, "Time-Out" Family Group provision, training services and its core Home Visiting Service. The latter relies almost entirely upon volunteers who receive a comprehensive training and support package. This continues to equip many individuals to move on following a period of volunteer work into paid employment with Home Start or other organisations.**
- 3. In 2008 the Scheme moved into its own newly refurbished premises from where it continues to provide services to Winson Green and Handsworth. New funding from a Charitable Trust has also enabled Home Start to extend its provision to families living in Sandwell.**
- 4. Home Start continues to raise funding from a variety of sources and to identify new income streams; a large lettable space has been created within the Home Start premises to generate rental income and increased opportunities for partnership work.**
- 5. Despite the apparent strengths of Home Start's position the organisation is facing uncertainties over the period 2009 – 2012, not least of all due to the down turn in the current economic climate, increasing pressures upon local authorities and rapid pace of change within the children and family services sector.**
- 6. This Plan sets out planned activity for the future centred around six agreed objectives aimed at continuing current services and incremental development of new provision. These are:-**
  - a. To maintain current services to families in Winson Green and Handsworth**
  - b. To develop Home Start provision in Sandwell**
  - c. To maximise the use of its new premises**
  - d. To further develop the Home Start Volunteering Scheme**
  - e. To increase services for Disabled Children and Parents**
  - f. To improve organisational sustainability.**
- 7. Inevitably a continuing focus upon fundraising is required and a careful strategic steer particularly to ensure the continuing integration of Home Start services alongside Children's Centres and PCT provision.**

## **1. PURPOSE OF THIS BUSINESS PLAN**

This document is a three year Business Plan, covering an exciting but challenging period for the Organisation as it extends its services into a new area and becomes Home Start Winson Green, Handsworth and Sandwell Areas. The purpose of this Plan is:-

- To provide a clear strategic plan for the period 2009 - 2012
- To set objectives in support of the strategic aims so that activity can be prioritised accordingly
- To support future applications for funding.

## **2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF HOME START WINSON GREEN, HANDSWORTH AND SANDWELL AREAS**

Home Start Winson Green, Handsworth and Sandwell is now 12 years old having been set up in 1997. It operates as an independent registered charity (number 1068317) with its own Management Committee. It is currently in the process of registering with Companies House as a charitable company limited by guarantee. The Organisation promotes the welfare of families with at least one child under 5 years of age. Volunteers offer regular support, friendship and practical help to families under stress in their homes - helping to prevent family crisis and breakdown.

The objects of the organisation as specified within its Constitution are:-

- To safeguard, protect and preserve the good health, both mental and physical of children and parents of children
- To prevent cruelty to, or maltreatment of children
- To relieve sickness, poverty and need amongst children and parents of children
- To promote the education of the public in better standards of childcare within the Soho\* area of Birmingham and its environs.

\*Note: This is currently being extended to also incorporate Sandwell areas

The emphasis of the services provided includes a Home Visiting Service, complimented by Family Groups offering "Time Out" family group provision. The Home Safety Service has also become an important aspect of Home Start's work, including assessment of a family's home environment and provision of equipment to improve safety and security.

## **3. THE NATIONAL ORGANISATION**

There are 337 Home Start schemes affiliated to Home Start UK (registered Charity No: 326148). Founded in Leicester in 1973, the Home Start organisation is now recognised as the UK's leading family support agency, working nationally through locally based schemes with 34,700 families and 71,600 children in 2006/7 (source:- Home Start UK Annual Report 2006/7). It is committed to promoting the welfare of families with at least one child under 5 years of age.

As the national organisation, Home Start UK provides training, information, guidance and support to the locally based schemes, in turn receiving a 2% top slice of the funding received by each of these groups (5% in a scheme's first year). With its Head Office in Leicester, Home Start UK is organised on a regional basis with several regional consultants employed to link directly to local schemes. A set of 16 quality standards have been agreed with which Home Start UK and all local schemes must comply.

All local schemes employ a Scheme Manager and indeed the larger schemes may have other paid posts but there continues to be a strong emphasis upon volunteer input, all of whom are themselves parents or have had parenting experience. Nationally at 31.03.08 there were 17,500 Home Start volunteers visiting families under stress, and a further 2,000+ volunteers working in service management at various local levels.

#### 4. SCHEME BACKGROUND

Home Start Winson Green, Handsworth and Sandwell areas is one of 10 Home Start schemes offering services to families in Birmingham. The others are run in Saltley, Bartley Green and Quinton, Cole Valley, Erdington, Selly Oak, Northfield, Castle Vale, Stockland Green and Sutton Coldfield.

##### **Scheme Milestones:-**

- In 1997, funding was received from Birmingham Social Services to operate a Home Start scheme to cover the Winson Green and Soho wards. This funding enabled the appointment of the current Scheme Manager, the rental of office space within Bolton Road School in Handsworth and provided for the recruitment of 25 volunteers.
- In October 1999, the Health Authority provided additional funding to enable the extension of the scheme boundaries to include Handsworth.
- In June 2000 the Scheme moved to Midland Area Housing Association accommodation at 138, Hamstead Road, Handsworth, shared with Handsworth Area Regeneration Trust (H.A.R.T.). Family group activities were run at Foundary School.
- In 2008, Home Start Winson Green / Handsworth took ownership of and moved into its current premises.



Moving to much improved premises within 4 miles of its previous location means that the Scheme is now based within the neighbouring authority of Sandwell. As well as its continuing responsibilities to provide services for Handsworth and Winson Green, the Scheme is well placed to extend into Sandwell areas.

## 5. THE CURRENT POSITION

### 5A. SERVICE PROVISION

During 07/08 support was provided to a total of 914 families with 632 ceasing to receive support during the year. Referrals were received from a variety of sources.

Sources of Referrals For All Families Supported This Year	Number of Families
Children's Centres	303*
Health Visitor	88
Other Health Referrals	19
Social Worker	14
Other Social Services / Social Work Referrals	109
Self	86
Other	295

\* Mostly referrals for Home Safety Project

The total number of children receiving support during the year was 1157, of whom 260 were disabled. 624 of these children were under 5s and 533 over 5 years. 416 children receiving support were on the Child Protection Register at the year end, whilst 280 children came off the Child Protection Register during the year. The Scheme received 379 new referrals during the year.



The ethnicity of the families supported during 07/08 (taking account of the ethnicity of the main carer) was as follows:

Ethnic Origin		Main Carer In Families		Volunteers & Staff	
		Number	%	Number	%
<b>Asian</b>	Indian	115	12	20	13
	Pakistani	272	30		
	Bangladeshi	85	9		
	Other Asian Background	20	2		
<b>Black</b>	Caribbean	122	13	68	45
	African	64	7		
	Other Black Background	19	2		
<b>Chinese or other ethnic group</b>		5	1		
Any other ethnic group		49	5		
<b>Mixed</b>	Any Mixed Background	34	4	20	13
<b>White</b>	British	65	7	42	28
	Irish	27	3	1	1
	Other White Background	2	1		
Nil Responses		35	4		
<b>Totals</b>		<b>914</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>100</b>

The Scheme had 58 volunteers linked to and visiting families in March 08. A further 45 volunteers had left the scheme during the year, plus 24 currently resting from active duty. In addition 14 volunteers had supported other activities run by Home Start, including help with the Family Group, social activities such as trips and parties and practical tasks. Overall these figures reflect the continuing Home Start national trend of significant increases in number of families at the same time as the numbers of volunteers are decreasing.

In part the reduction in volunteers is due to the increasing complexity in the nature of the work which has made it difficult to sustain volunteers. Also family support services have changed and potential, new and experienced volunteers are moving into training opportunities or paid work with Children's Centres. Whereas 11 years ago no other family support provision existed in the Winson Green or Handsworth areas, there are now 6 Children's Centres developed from Sure Start's presence within the area - Soho, Limetree, Cherry Tree, Birchfield, Summerfield and Rookery Rd with approximately 2000 staff.

## 5B. MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING STRUCTURE

The Scheme has a Management Committee currently comprising 9 members. The Constitution permits up to 13 members.

There are presently 17 members of staff

### Currently Funded Posts

Post Title	Roles	Funding Source	Funding Period*
Scheme Manager	Full support to staff, volunteers, families and trustees	BCC Main Programme	3 years to 31 03 11
Senior Co-ordinator	Recruit, train, support staff, volunteers and families, deputise for Scheme Mgr.	Heart of Birmingham Primary Care Trust	
Volunteer Co-ordinator	Recruit, train, support staff, volunteers and families, for Sandwell	Charitable Trust	
Senior Administrator	Admin support to Co-ordinators & Fundraiser	Main Prog / PCT	
Volunteer & Family Liaison	Support staff, volunteers and families	Various Charitable Trusts	
Finance Officer	Finance & Salary Admin		
Fundraiser / Development	Fundraising & PR, Events		
Minibus Driver	Transport assistance and safety advice to families	Children's Centre	
Home Safety Officer x 2	Safety advice to families		
Family Support Worker (x 2)	Provide service within family homes (Birmingham only)	BCC Main Programme	3 years to 31 03 09
Family Group Co-ordinator	Oversee running of family group	Charitable Trust	
Family Group Assistant x 2	Assist Family Group Co-ordinator		

Minibus Escort	Assist minibus driver		
Trustee Administrator	Provide admin to Trustees	Charitable Trust	
Office Cleaner	Maintain clean environment	BCC Main Prog	3 years to 31 03 09

*\* One year funding unless otherwise stated.*

## **5C. FINANCIAL POSITION**

Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008 show total income of £282,701 of which £201,182 is restricted including a sum of £133,698 given through various donations and funders specifically for the Scheme's move to new premises. Revenue funders were Birmingham City Council, the Heart Of Birmingham Teaching Primary Care Trust (HOB PCT), the Eveson Trust and Sure Start, although a reduction in funding by the latter from £77,484 in 2006/7 to £29,164 is notable.

During the same period, total expenditure appears as £323,978 resulting in a £41,277 deficit. This compares with a £13,102 deficit on the income and expenditure account in the previous year. The stated deficit of £41,277, offset against the brought forward sum of £41,660 from 2006/07, meant that Home Start carried forward a balance of only £383 into the year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008. The deficit reflected the significant reduction in funding from the Children's Centres along with reduced unrestricted donations due to the specific focus of the Scheme's fundraising upon refurbishment of the new premises.

Home Start holds a Contingency Reserve Account with £15,000 and owns the building in which it is based. The Organisation also owns a 2 year old 16 seater mini bus.

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## 6. SERVICE OBJECTIVES 2009 – 2012

The following service objectives have been set out following a review of the organisation's current position, local needs, changes within the children's services sector and the need to ensure the future sustainability of Home Start.

### 6A. MAINTAIN CURRENT SERVICES TO HANDSWORTH AND WINSON GREEN

Current funding received by Home Start from Birmingham City Council's Children Young People and Families Directorate (CYP&F) together with the HOB tPCT is for delivery of visiting services by volunteers and staff to families living in the Handsworth and Winson Green area. This funding is subject to an SLA until 2011 with CYPF and funding, previously provided by HOB tPCT year on year, is due for renewal from April 2009.

Whilst Home Start has "good fit" with Birmingham's Brighter Futures Strategy, the Local Area Agreement and both Perry Barr's and Ladywood's LAA Delivery Plan, the longer term continuation of funding from Local Authority and PCT sources is perceived as under a potential threat due to:-

- The ongoing establishment of integrated children and family services delivered by Children's Centres. Whilst the Children's Centres currently purchase a very successful Home Safety service from Home Start, there remains a reliance also upon Main Programme funding for the Home Start Home Visiting service delivered by volunteers
- Development in 2008 of "The Home Support" service by HOB tPCT. This service has very similar objectives to Home Start provision currently commissioned by the Children's Centres.

Home Start must respond to this changing environment in a range of ways:

- Strengthen working relationships with the local Children's Centres. Dialogue and negotiation at this stage remains crucial so that Home Start services can fully evolve and integrate with new frameworks for local services. Formal discussion with CYPF commissioners, including also Children's Centre Managers must be seen as Home Start's preparation for a bidding process in 2010 to replace its main programme funding expiring March 31<sup>st</sup> 2011.
- Build improved links with PCT commissioners

The key to both of the above is in two points clearly made in Sheila McGrath's report "Home Start Schemes in City of Birmingham" (02/08):-

*"It will be important in this developing picture that duplication of services is avoided as far as possible and that there is a clear remit for all providers." (Page 9)*

and

*"A clear understanding of how Home Start sits within an integrated Children's service and the role of the Children's Centres vis a vis Home Start needs to be developed. Currently Home Start offers a unique service which needs to be capitalised on rather than duplicated" (Page 49 Recommendations)*

- Improve Marketing:

Home Start’s organisational commitment is to help parents to build better lives for their children, in this way ensuring the achievement of the ECM agenda. The Organisation also has unique selling points which must be effectively marketed to Commissioning bodies. These points include:

- Non judgemental and non stigmatised service
  - Able to overcome barriers to engagement
  - Trusted by those not trusting of statutory services
  - Volunteer ethos highly valued by service users and allows for careful “matching” of volunteers to families.
  - Flexible services, very responsive to family needs
- Refine assessment, service planning, outcomes monitoring as well as feedback to referrers to improve interface with CYPF, Children’s Centres and HOB tPCT
  - Increased profile of Home Start among local Councillors and Members of Parliament.

**6B. DEVELOP HOME START PROVISION IN SANDWELL**

Ownership of newly refurbished premises located in Sandwell, as well as a 3 year grant from Henry Smith Charity to develop services in parts of Sandwell means that Home Start is well positioned to extend its services beyond Winson Green and Handsworth. Several steps have already been taken; changing the Organisation’s Constitution to include Sandwell within its catchment area and employing a Volunteer Co-ordinator to recruit and train volunteers for the new area.

Home Start’s initial focus will be upon developing services in Sandwell’s B33, B34 (Great Barr and Hamstead) and B70 (West Bromwich) areas. It will be essential as within Birmingham, to ensure effective lines of communication with Sandwell’s Local Authority and PCT commissioners and Children’s Centre Managers. Currently there are three Children’s Centres located within the Scheme’s geographical remit in Sandwell – Great Barr and Hamstead Children’s Centre in Ferndale School, Great Barr and West Bromwich Children’s Centre at Beeches Road and Hillside Children’s Centre, Connor Road, West Bromwich.

Home Start can access the Family Information Service which exists in Sandwell, to promote its services, including entry into the Family Services Directory:-

Family Information Service	0121 569 4914
Training and Development Centre	
Popes Lane, Oldbury B69 4PJ	

Information about Sandwell’s Early Years and Childcare development can be obtained via the Sandwell MBC website [www.sandwell.gov.uk](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk) Education and Learning> Early Years and Childcare. There is also a quarterly newsletter available via the website which provides updates on developments, and contacts within the Borough. The website also refers to a Business Development Team which provides advice and funding for the development of Out of School Clubs and other facilities.

It is important for the Scheme to link into the Extended Schools provision within Sandwell, particularly to engage with developments in parenting support and to seek involvement in partnership work. The Extended Schools and Inclusive Learning Unit is located at the Primrose Centre in Holly Lane, Smethwick B66 1QN. Tel no: 0121 565 8700. Also by reference to [www.extendedschools.sandwell.gov.uk](http://www.extendedschools.sandwell.gov.uk) .

## 6C. MAXIMISE USE OF NEW PREMISES

Home Start's new premises has a ground floor room with dedicated toilet and changing facilities which could be made available for service development, rental or sessional lettings. Potential exists to enlarge the available lettable space through a minor internal alteration to the premises. There is also a small outdoor play area within the garden, with limited parking space.



A range of uses for generating income from this space, all of which are in keeping with Home Start's objectives have been suggested:-

- a. Marketing of the available space as a training, meeting and conference facility and/or a contact centre. This is the chosen priority for using space as it will provide benefits and is also the least onerous way of generating income.
- b. Providing opportunities for future partnership with other organisations or development of new Home Start service
  - A "Time out" Family Group
  - Venue for Parent classes
  - Toy Library
  - Playgroup facility
  - A small after school and / or before school club
  - A Mediation and Befriending Service
  - A Children's or Family Counselling Service
  - Drop In Advice Sessions



Various issues need to be considered in taking any of these options forward:

Room booking system  
Marketing  
Policies and Procedures e.g.: Insurance  
Security  
Managing additional wear and tear on building

Charging system  
Caretaking  
Managing disruption to existing staff and volunteers within the premises  
Noise

## **6D. FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF HOME START VOLUNTEERING SCHEME**

There is an opportunity to improve the profile and further enhance the organisational framework for supporting volunteers.

Improving the profile will help to increase awareness of

- The opportunities for volunteering offered by Home Start
- The individual benefits including increased self esteem and raised confidence levels
- The transition that many make from Home Start service user to Home Start volunteer
- The pathway to further training and employment which often leads on from volunteering with Home Start
- The positive impact that Home Start volunteers have on the lives of children and their families

Around 2% of Home Start's annual income is spent on volunteer recruitment, training and support. With additional resources the framework for volunteering could be further improved by

- More regular supervision and appraisal sessions
- More regular meetings with volunteer group
- Additional training provision to aid professional and personal development

The extra income required to make these improvements could be sought through appropriate funding opportunities - both the Perry Barr and Ladywood Constituency Plans include tackling worklessness targets which provide good fit for the further development of volunteering, amongst the current priorities for the area. Other local and national sources also exist. Home Start might also consider requiring volunteers completing the 8 week Home Start preparation course to make a commitment to provide a specified minimum number of voluntary support hours for families, before certificated evidence of course completion is issued. This will have a two fold effect of assuring quality of "graduating volunteers", and reducing loss of volunteers to other agencies immediately following completion of their basic training.

It is also worth finding out whether volunteers have any association with local clubs, blue chip companies, and churches or links to professional friends or corporate funders particularly those which have an employee giving scheme. This might provide new avenues for generating income.

## **6E. INCREASE SERVICES FOR DISABLED CHILDREN AND PARENTS**

Home Start is keen to develop additional specialist services to meet the needs of families with children with a disability. In 2007-08 22% (i.e: 260) of children from families supported by Home Start had a disability.

There is potential to develop a recreation club in the Home Start premises for up to 5 children with disabilities. Home Start is well placed in view of the accessibility of its current accommodation, outdoor play space and adapted mini-bus. Also Home Start is seeking to develop a partnership with KIDS West Midlands to further strengthen its ability to deliver specialist services for disabled children. There may also be an opportunity to link with West Birmingham Crossroads, based in Handsworth to investigate potential for partnership.

Home Start are likely to meet criteria for services which Birmingham City Council will commission in 2009-10 for Short Break facilities for disabled children. Two of the six specified funding objectives are:-

- To increase school holidays, weekend and evening activities. A budget for parent led projects will be established
- To increase short breaks within Children's Centres and early years settings. Priorities for investment will include working with providers to ensure there is publicity and promotion of services to parents of disabled children and commissioning community groups to provide activities during weekends, after school and holiday periods.

Birmingham City Council has ring fenced revenue of £5,806,000 and £2,311,700 capital for the period April 2009 to 31/03/11. Similar resources have also been announced in the base budgets of the Birmingham PCT's for the same purpose. Short break developments must occur in Sandwell also.

Home Start must ensure that it is fully informed of the Short Breaks Strategy and commissioning framework. The availability of a budget for parent led projects may also offer exciting potential to develop Home Start's role with the parents of disabled children. The published contact points within Birmingham Council are  
Jane Shepherd: - [janeshepherd@dial.pipex.com](mailto:janeshepherd@dial.pipex.com)  
Narinder Saggu: - [narinder.saggu@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:narinder.saggu@birmingham.gov.uk)

In Sandwell, services for disabled children and young people are co-ordinated through the Integrated Support Service for Children and Young People with disabilities which includes the Early Years Integrated Support Service. This is located at Crystal House, 1-7 Crystal Drive, Smethwick B66 1QG.

In partnership with other Birmingham based Home Starts, the organisation is seeking to develop a "Triple P" (Positive Parenting Programme) mentoring scheme to work with parents to strengthen parenting skills. This utilises Home Start's ability to reach families who might not otherwise access mainstream provision. Also funding has recently been received from Birmingham's Child and Adolescent Mental Health services to run workshops within a group setting to assist parents in finding techniques to manage their child's behavioural problems.

## 6F. IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY

To help assure Home Start's future, continuing focus upon re-positioning the Organisation alongside the Children's Centres and HOB tPCT's new "Home Support" initiative which matches Home Start's model is needed. The new environment for family support should also offer opportunities if these can be harnessed. Funding should be identified to support the Scheme Manager in implementing the new service objectives for both Birmingham and Sandwell as outlined in this Business Plan. The funding could be utilised for consultancy hours e.g.: 6 hours per week over a 3 month period or for additional staffing hours to provide the required assistance.

There is also scope to improve the marketing of the Scheme. Home Start particularly under sells itself in terms of the beneficial impacts for families and volunteers, including confidence building and creation of a route to employment.

There should be an increased emphasis upon partnership working including more joint project initiatives and improved referral mechanisms. A number of potential partners have been proposed including other Home Starts, Children's Centres, Health Visitors, Women's Aid, Shelter, Advice Centres, Ashram Bharosa, Asian Resource Centre and the Crisis Centre.

## 7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Home Start has an excellent track record of raising funds needed to maintain and develop its services. Home Start has the advantage of having a paid Fundraiser in post to increase opportunities to raise funds from central and local government funding initiatives, grant making trusts, voluntary contributions, corporate appeals and sponsored events.

There are financial implications for each of the Service Objectives outlined within the Business Plan but they represent incremental increases in services and funding rather than major shifts costing significant sums of money. Potential funding opportunities exist for the proposed initiatives and these are listed in the box below. Some initiatives may need to be financed through generated income, including through the marketing and letting of the spare space within the new premises.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children In Need</li><li>• Comic Relief</li><li>• Fair Share (Areas of Sandwell)</li><li>• Birmingham City Council Children, Young People and Families Directorate</li><li>• Birmingham Children's Fund</li><li>• Parenting Grant</li><li>• Community Safety Funding</li><li>• European Social Fund</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Big Lottery Reaching Communities</li><li>• Future Builders, Small Organisation Tender Fund</li><li>• Short Breaks Funding</li><li>• Working Neighbourhoods Funding</li><li>• Charitable Trusts</li><li>• Opportunities for Volunteering</li><li>• Sure Start</li><li>• Primary Care Trusts</li></ul>
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## **8. MANAGING THE BUSINESS PLAN**

This Business Plan will help to guide prioritising and decision making during the next 3 years. It must be reviewed, at least annually by the Management Committee to reflect changes and achievements. The content of the Plan represents the views of staff and Management Committee members and the developments are a response to the needs of Home Start's user groups – as such the Plan can be used as evidence to potential funders of a strategic approach to service development.

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