



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 14 years old and provides services to over 400 (see Wendy) families per year, who are under stress and have at least one child under 5 years of age. It has 8 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 2011 the Scheme relocated and downsized Home Start's base due to the challenges of the economic downturn. Where it continues to provide services to Winson Green, Handsworth & Sandwell Areas.**
- 4. Home Start continues to raise funds from a variety of sources and we are involved in identifying new income streams; for partnership work with Children's Centres.**
- 5. Despite the current financial challenges, and the downturn in statutory funding we will continue to research and source alternative funding streams for sustainability within the Children's and Family 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 sustain Home Start provision in Sandwell**
 - c. To further develop the Home Start Volunteering Scheme**
 - d. To increase services for Disabled Children and Parents and Teenage Mums**
 - e. 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 a challenging period for the Organisation as it continues to sustain its services. 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 14 years old having been established in 1997. It operates as an independent registered charity (number 1134635) with its own Management Committee. 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 vulnerable 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 awareness to the public for better standards of parenting within the Winson Green, Handsworth and Sandwell Areas and its environs.

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

In total Home Start has 321 schemes which includes 284 in the UK with the remainder 37 being spread between Germany, Cyprus and Northern Ireland 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.

4. SCHEME BACKGROUND

Home Start Winson Green, Handsworth and Sandwell areas is one of 9 Home Start schemes offering services to families in Birmingham. The others schemes are; Bartley Green and Quinton, Castle Vale, Cole Valley, Erdington, Kingstanding, Northfield, Saltley 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 Foundry Road School.
- In 2008, Home Start Winson Green / Handsworth took over new premises as a new charity base.



This is our current base – 2 Windmill Cottages.

5. THE CURRENT POSITION

5A. SERVICE PROVISION

During 09/10 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 1076. 664 of these children were under 5s and 334 over 5 years. 50 children receiving support were on the Child Protection Register at the year end, whilst 9 children came off the Child Protection Register during the year. The Scheme received 351 new referrals during the year.



The ethnicity of the families supported during 09/10 (taking account of the ethnicity of the main carer) was as follows:

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

The Scheme had 56 volunteers linked to and visiting families in 09/10. A further 29 volunteers had left the scheme during the year. In addition volunteers have supported other activities run by Home Start, including help with the Family Group, social activities such as educational 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, which is reflected within the current economic downturn.

The reduction in volunteers is due to the increasing complexity within 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 1850 staff.

5B. MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING STRUCTURE

The Scheme has a Management Committee currently comprising 5 members (3 male/2 female).

There are presently 8 members of staff

Currently Funded Posts

Post Title	Roles
Scheme Manager	Full support to staff, volunteers, families and trustees
Volunteer Co-ordinator	Recruit, train, support staff, volunteers
Administrator x 2 (Job share)	Administrative Support
Finance Officer	Finance & Salary Admin
Fundraiser / Development	Fundraising & PR, Events
Family Group Co-ordinator	Oversee running of family group
Family Group Assistant	Assist Family Group Co-ordinator

5C. FINANCIAL POSITION

31st March 2010 shows a total income of £300,709 of which £144,063 is restricted revenue. Funders are Birmingham City Council, the Heart of Birmingham Primary Care Trust, Henry Smith and Eveson Trust.

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 PCT 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 HOB PCT.

- Home Start must 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 2012 to replace its main programme funding expiring March 31st 2012.
- 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 Every Child Matters 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 PCT

- Increased profile of Home Start among local Councillors and Members of Parliament.

6B. HOME START PROVISION WQS ESTABLISHED IN SANDWELL DURING 2008

Based at newly refurbished premises located in Sandwell, as well as a 3 year grant (2008-2011) from Henry Smith Charity to develop services in parts of Sandwell means that Home Start will deliver 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 (Great Barr and Hamstead) and B70 (West Bromwich) areas. 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 Training and Development Centre Popes Lane, Oldbury B69 4PJ	0121 569 4914
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Information about Sandwell’s Early Years and Childcare development can be obtained via the Sandwell MBC website 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 .

6C. 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 25% 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 NEET 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.

6D. INCREASE SERVICES FOR DISABLED CHILDREN AND PARENTS

Home Start 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 in 2009/2010 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.

6E. IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY

There is 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 Winson Green, Handsworth & Sandwell Areas has an excellent track record for securing funds needed to sustain its services. Home Start Winson Green & Handsworth has the advantage of having a paid Fundraising & Development Officer in post to increase income generation for funding potential 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.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children In Need • Comic Relief • Birmingham City Council Children, Young People and Families Directorate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big Lottery Reaching Communities • Neighbourhood Community Chest • Charitable Trusts • Opportunities for Volunteering • Children’s Centres • Primary Care Trusts
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8. MANAGING THE BUSINESS PLAN (SUMMARY)

This Business Plan will help to guide prioritising and decision making during the next 3 years. This is a living document and will be reviewed every 3-6 months 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.