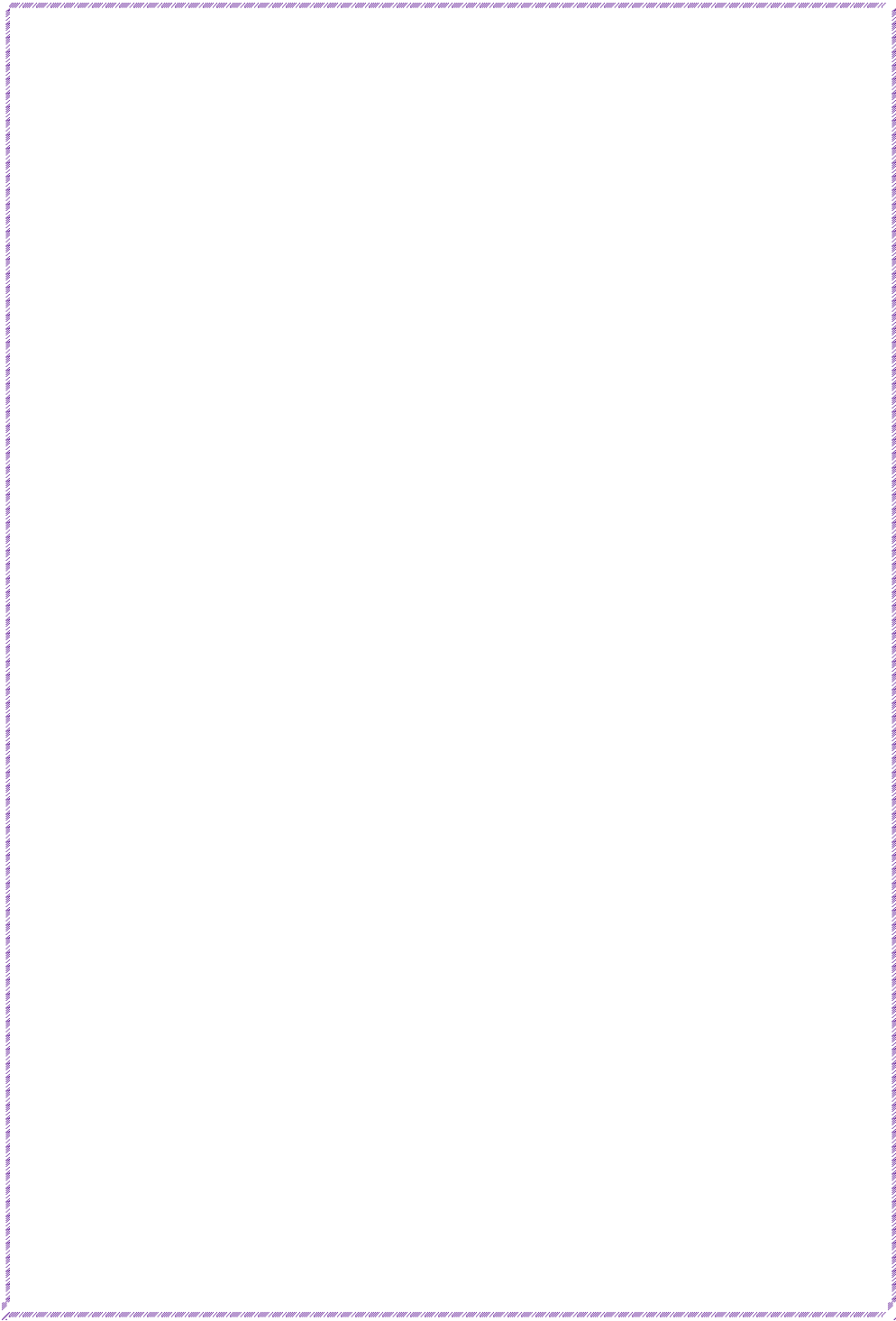




Home-Start Basingstoke & Deane (Formerly North West Hampshire)



ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024



A MESSAGE FROM JANETTE HEWITT CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

I'm pleased to report another successful year supporting 240 families across the borough. It has been a difficult year for many of our families with additional pressures from the cost-of-living crisis. Three out of four families referred to us cited mental health issues and our home visiting volunteers and group support continue to help families develop resilience, coping strategies and support networks for the future.

This year sees the end of our Mental Health project funded by the Lottery Community Fund, and the end of our 6-year partnership with Home-Start in Rushmoor and Hart. The project has worked with almost 250 families in the last 3 years and has been a great success.

Funding continues to be a challenge, and our reserves were reduced during the year as competition for grants increased. I would like to thank all the individuals and organisations noted in the accounts for their continued support. Without your help, we would not be able to improve the outcomes for families and children in Basingstoke and Deane. Next year looks to be another challenging year for income and we may need to review services if funds are not forthcoming.

We welcomed 3 trustees to the Board, Susan Bailey, Samantha Baker and Amanda Britton, who bring a variety of skills to the team.

Our working name changes to Home-Start Basingstoke and Deane from 1st April 2024 to better reflect the community we work with and the families we support.

Once again, I would like to thank our hard-working staff, volunteers and trustees for their commitment and dedication to Home-Start Basingstoke & Deane. We are indebted to them for the great achievements you will read about in this report.

Janette Hewitt – Chair



Above & left our Team of Fundraising heroes who ran the Basingstoke Half-Marathon last October raising over £2,000 between them.



Bottom left members of Forresters Financial who came into the office before Christmas to make up 60 Food Treat Bags gifted by Forresters for Home-Start Families.

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS REPORT

One thing we can never be accused of is staying static. Each year brings its own challenges, and we adapt our services to ensure we keep up with emerging trends and local need. The most significant changes in 2023/24 have been within our range of family groups.

In September we introduced a new outdoor toddler group, Little Wellies, with the focus on playing outdoors in nature whatever the weather, especially for those families without access to a garden at home. A small grant from Sovereign Housing allowed us to purchase a range of toddler rain suits and wellies that are lent to families who do not own their own, reducing the financial barriers to attending.



Above & right photos from our Little Wellies outdoor Group!

Reduced numbers of families attending both the Young Parents group and Mum's Club led to us merging the two and creating

Basingstoke Family group. BFG has become a thriving mix of Mums, Dads and Grandparents with their young children coming together to share the ups and downs of family life and developing ideas for creating learning opportunities through play.

Following feedback from families that they were struggling to get their babies weighed, as there are no longer universal Health Visitor weigh clinics within Basingstoke, we thought about how we could address this need.

A long-time friend of Home-Start and qualified health visitor offered her time to volunteer fortnightly to provide a well-baby weigh session and so 'Bumps to Newborn and Beyond' was formed. With a kind donation of money for medical standard weigh scales and calibration weights from another volunteer to ensure the equipment is appropriate and accurate, and with clarification from our insurers to ensure we are covered for this new service, we were able to launch in September.



Left – Baby Weighing Station set up for Bumps to Newborn & Beyond session.

Below – The pram park gets busy on well-baby weigh sessions!





Left – Play and Chat area for parents & children to enjoy at Bumps Newborn & Beyond weekly.

We invite a range of partner organisations to join us in the drop-in sessions and we have had visits from The Basingstoke Green Team, Healthy Hampshire Families, Overton Cloth Nappies, and SNG housing to name just a few. We were thrilled when Hampshire Breastfeeding Counsellors were able to get funding to join us weekly, helping to create a session with a warm and friendly buzz. Our vision is for the session to be a family information hub, a place to come to meet others and get guidance and signposting to resolve challenges and feel connected.



Left SNG Housing (SNG) hosted an event which included offering families' free nappies, skincare, baby wipes and home safety packs.

The one-to-one work Home-Start volunteers do within the family home and community continues to go from strength to strength. We have had a record number of new volunteers join our team and this means we have been able to provide more quality volunteer matches than ever before, with some families being matched with more than one volunteer to support them to reach different specific goals.

It feels that we can never quite convey to the volunteer just how much of a difference they make to the families they spend time

with, but we hope that they feel appreciated and part of the Home-Start team. One thing we are hearing from our volunteers is just how much Home-Start volunteering has impacted their own lives, either by increasing confidence, reducing isolation or providing training that helps ignite their own aspirations.

Having our roots in early intervention and with feedback from parents who said they wished they had the support of a volunteer in the earliest weeks of parenthood, this year we have met with the midwifery team to explain how Home-Start is relevant for pregnant Mum's.

We have now had the privilege of matching a few first-time Mum's with a volunteer before the baby was born. The positive impact these placements have had for the Mum and Dad who tell us having a volunteer pre-birth to ask the questions that they would not bother a professional with made them less anxious and feel more prepared about what was to come.

We know that meeting someone new, such as a volunteer, is difficult to do in the first few months of a baby's life which can be filled with sleepless nights and endless feeding. Matching the family with a volunteer pre-birth means they have already built a relationship and are much more able to accept weekly visits enabling us to provide positive encouragement right from the start of the parenting journey. This is something we hope to do more and more of moving forward, whilst continuing to work with families with under-fives.

After another successful year thanks must go to our board of trustees who provide governance, the staff team for remaining positive and professional and all of the volunteers, without whom we would not have a service.

Jools Anderson - Director of Operations

A SUPPORTED FAMILY'S STORY...

Life before Home-Start was awful, dark and everything felt so lonely. I was recovering from a difficult past.

I was so anxious about meeting my Home-Start Volunteer for the first time and just didn't want to get my hopes up that she could make a difference. I have been let down by other services and wasn't sure if I could trust again. I was introduced to Nicola, my volunteer, and it felt different knowing she was there because she wanted to spend time with us.

I don't know where to start with how Nicola helps me. She listens to me and comforts me if I need it. She is great with my children and spends time with them to give me five minutes of time just for me. Nicola helps me to get organised for the week ahead to keep me going.

Having a volunteer has made a massive positive change to how I feel about the week ahead knowing that she is going to come visit us. I have complete trust in her because she is always there on good and bad days - always consistent. Home-Start is the one service that I know I can rely on.

Nicola coming into our life has been a massive positive impact on myself and my children they simply adore her. When I am having a bad day she comes round listens, gives me a hug, and is just there for us. She just gets me, takes me how I am without judgement.

My volunteer has been my guardian angel.



When the time is right, I would love to be a volunteer so I can help others in the same way as Nicola helps us.

Many thanks to the Family for allowing us to share their Home-Start journey!

VOLUNTEER'S REPORT

Jill saw an advert on ITV's 'Million Minute' campaign and arranged to meet with a volunteer co-ordinator at our office to discuss the volunteer application and training process. The Jill we met on that day is a far cry from the Jill who volunteers twice a week in Home-Start groups with us now.

I can honestly say I have rarely seen anyone look so afraid as Jill did on that first visit. Jill told us that she didn't think she had anything to offer so we probably wouldn't want her to volunteer. She explained that she had tried volunteering elsewhere, but she struggled to find a place where she fitted in. We reassured Jill that we had a place for her, and she was welcome to join us on the next training course. At that point, we were unsure if Jill would be back, perhaps we were too overwhelming. We hoped that at least Jill would feel able to come to the training and meet new people, even if at the end of it she decided volunteering with us was not for her.

The two days of training to be a group volunteer was a baptism of fire for Jill who was thrown into a room of new people talking about personal values and strengths. But in true Home-Start style, everyone was welcoming and non-judgmental. Jill was quiet but coped well, although she was often self-deprecating, illustrating her lack of confidence in her own worth. Jill stated that she just wanted to make tea and coffee and hoped that she would be good enough to that.

Feeling that we might lose Jill if she had too long to think about it we asked her to try a few groups to see which one she felt was right for her. We watched Jill grow in confidence and with encouragement she was able to identify her own strengths, wants and limitations as she gave each one a go. Jill landed on finding her place in the weekly family group which often welcomes parents who are wary of joining new things. I feel that

Jill's own life experience gives her the empathy and understanding to put these parents at ease...whilst making them their cup of tea!

Wanting to spend more time with us Jill asked to be part of 'Little Wellies' our outdoor toddler group. Being part of a team, we have seen Jill grow into a volunteer who can build relationships with families who are struggling, put them at ease and make them feel welcome.

A word from Jill:

"Volunteering is about giving something of yourself, and Home-Start has given me the opportunity where I feel I am making a difference by being me. I am surprised at who I really am, it's been hidden away and volunteering at Home-Start has taught me to value myself. I want to thank the team for being so welcoming and giving me the positive feedback to appreciate what I have to offer."

Jill Hamilton- HSB&D Volunteer



A FINANCIAL MESSAGE FROM PATRICIA FOX, TREASURER

The year 2023/24 was another challenging year, financially, for Home-Start.

Whilst the income was decreased by £27k, expenditure was only decreased by £6k, resulting in a large deficit of £23k. This follows deficits in the previous five years, and we are continuing to eat into our reserves. That said, we are still within the reserve levels recommended by the Charity Commission, but not an ideal situation.

It means we are continuously, carefully monitoring our income and expenditure throughout the year, continually applying for grants and being prudent with our expenditure.

Our fundraising events are going from strength to strength, which help to boost the funds as well as providing a way to raise the profile of the charity.

With the cost-of-living crisis, there is more competition for the funds available from charitable funders, increasing the uncertainty about how we will finance our services.

We receive no funding from either Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council or Hampshire Council therefore we need to continually find further sources of funding. Many funders do not provide funds for core costs, so we need to find ways of getting money for projects that support our core costs.

There is a continuing demand for the services of Home-Start.

So, now, more than ever before, we need to ensure we have sustainable funding to provide this much needed service to the families of Basingstoke & Deane.

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2023-24

The table below gives an overview of the key figures as of 31st March 2024. They are extracted from our full accounts, which have been independently examined and approved by our Trustees and are available from the address on the back page.

Summary of Accounts

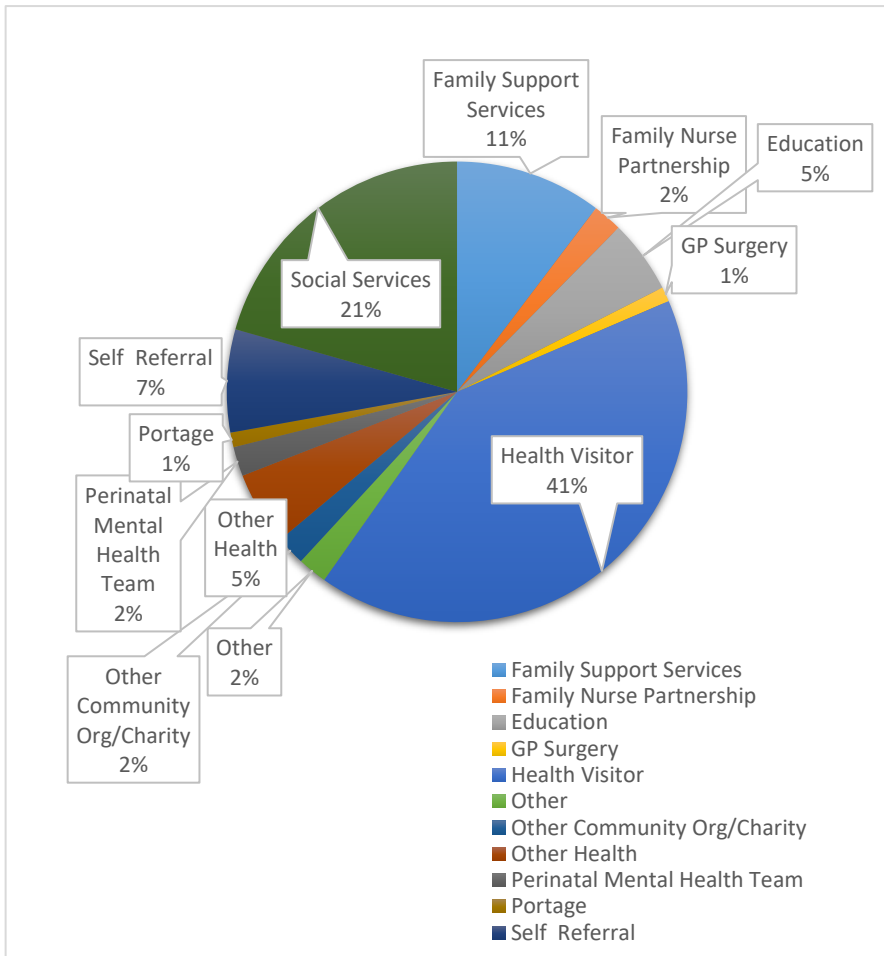
	2023/24	2022/23
Opening balance 1 st April	£108,774	£110,352
Total Income	£142,009	£168,723
Total Expenditure	£164,665	£170,301
Closing balance 31 st March	£86,118	£108,774
Increase/(Decrease) in funds	-£22,656	-£1,578

FACTS & FIGURES

Referrals: April 2023 - March 2024

Total number of 1-1 home-visiting referrals for the year **105**
Total number of all families supported during the year **240**

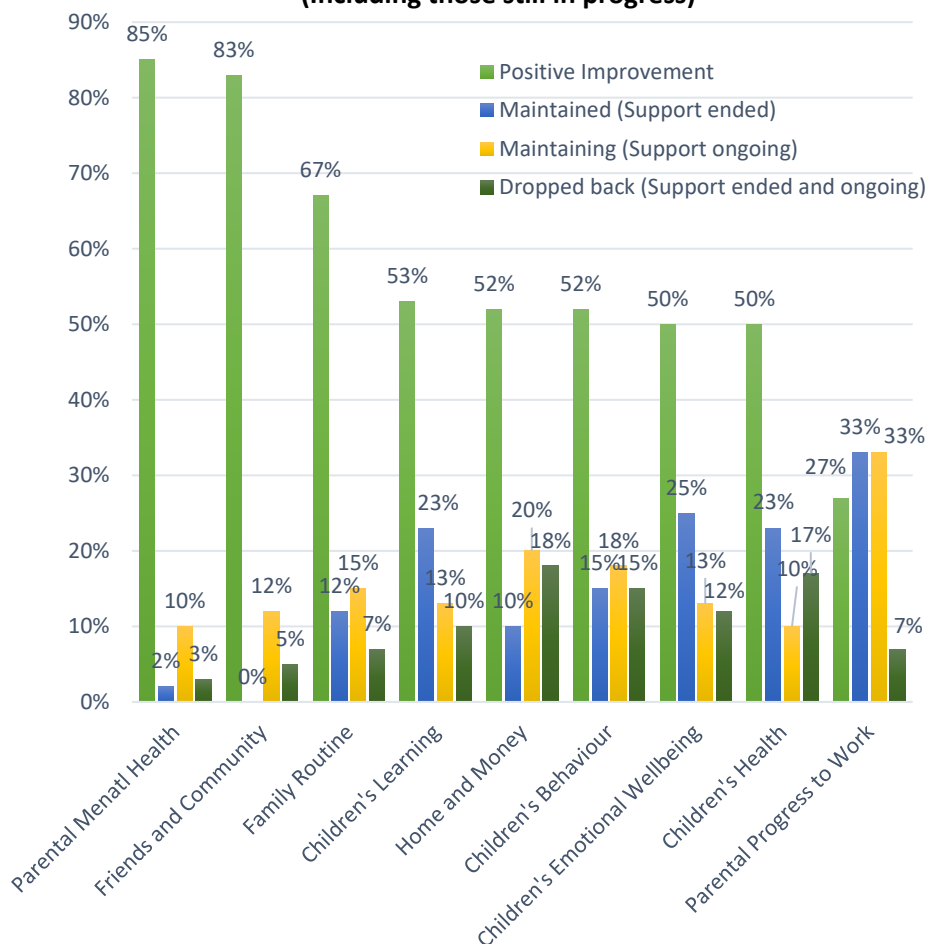
SOURCE OF 1-1 HOME-VISITING REFERRALS: -



Outcomes

We use Outcomes Star which is a framework that provides visual representation of changes within family life. We can demonstrate impact and progress, and we use it to help us create action plans with the family to help them achieve their goals.

Outcomes for families who were matched with a 1:1 volunteer 23/24. (Including those still in progress)



Between April 2023 and March 2024:

100% of families made positive progress in at least **one** outcome area, this means every family who was matched with a volunteer found their family life was improved.

97% of families made progress in at least **two** outcome areas.

95% of families made progress in at least **three** outcome areas.

Maintaining a good start point can be important to recognise, especially if there are multiple challenges that the family are facing. Inevitably there are times when circumstances change and life becomes more difficult, but identifying this early means we can find solutions with the family.

Type of Support

The statistics below show the number of families who received support through a Home Visiting Volunteer, attended Group sessions or were supported with Family Learning.

108 Supported by a 1:1 Volunteer

**41 Supported by Groups & a
1:1 Volunteer**

191 Supported by Groups & Family Learning

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS.....

We could not provide our service to families in the Borough without the dedication of our wonderful volunteers.

Our thanks go to:-

Jan Allen, Toni Allen, Jane Amos, Ann Anderson, Carol Ash, Naila Aslam, Jo Attride, Sue Bailey, Sam Baker, Sue Batten, Vanessa Bearne, Emily Bray, Kathryn Brittain, Amanda Britton, Lin Bromley-Oberne, Steve Bushell, Lydia Butler, Kirsty Cary, Gillian Comfort, Paula Cooper, Jessie Davies-Jones, Lauren English, Sophie Evans, Natalie Fletcher, Mark Flower, Patricia Fox, Elaine Gibbons, Lynda Hall, Jill Hamilton, Julie Hartnell, Janette Hewitt, Mark Holley, Nicola James, Sue Kentish, Jen Laidlaw, Ros Letherby, Janet Lyons, Claire Macdonald, Mandy Madge, Loo Mason, Noreen Mason, Kirilee Mazurkiewicz, Angela McCart, Jane Michael, Katie Minney, Lindsey Nicholls, Jeffrey Northam, Susan Parish, Laura Parker, Sarah Parry, Caroline Remnant, Sarah Robertson, Tricia Rocke, Annie Saunders, Julia Slowey, Joy Smith, Elizabeth Taylor, Tracey Taylor, Dilys Temple, Shirley Vacher, Pam Verdon, Claire Warman, Jo Weineck, Erika Wilson & Heather Wilson.



We said Goodbye this year to:-

Staff: Em Cater

Volunteers: Rose Allen, Peter Cook, Sophie Davy, Thea Halstead, Rosie Meekings, Sylvia Roberts, Claire Fernandez, Pauline Irving & Margaret Rogers.

FUNDERS & SUPPORTERS

We would like to thank all our funders and supporters, without which we would not be able to provide our service:-

Alex Timpson Trust
Awards for All
Berry Bros & Rudd Ltd.,
Big Lottery
Children In Need
Donations via CAF
Donations via Just Giving
Dummer Church
Forresters Financial
Gabardine Bar
Greenham Common Trust
Greywell Estate
Hampshire & Isle of Wight Community Foundation
Hedley FDN BCA
Loddon Lodge
Manydown Trust
Masonic Lodge
Odiham Rotary
Several Private Donations
SNG formerly Sovereign Housing
Sunlife
Tadley U3A
The Park Family Trust
The Co-op
Waitrose
Winchfield Village Hall Committee

Our thanks go to our Patron of Home-Start Basingstoke & Deane, who is very supportive of the work we do and is always keen to engage in all aspects of the organisation:-

James, Earl of Malmesbury

This year we have started a new business sponsorship opportunity and I am pleased to present the following sponsors for 2024/25:-



Together Let's Change (TLC)

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HAS SUPPORTED US THROUGHOUT THE PAST YEAR



Home-Start Basingstoke & Deane,
Rucstall Community Centre,
Holbein Close, Basingstoke,
Hampshire, RG21 3QN
Tel: 01256 325793

Email: info@hsbd.org.uk

Website: www.homestart-basingstokedeane.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/homestartnw

Instagram: www.instagram.com/homestart_nwh

Home-Start Basingstoke & Deane (formerly Home-Start North West Hampshire)

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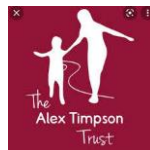
Registered in England and Wales

No. 5604443. Registered charity no. 1112233

Patron: The Earl of Malmesbury D.L.



**The Park
Family Trust**



Manydown Trust



**The Hedley
Foundation**

