



Exeter, East
& Mid Devon

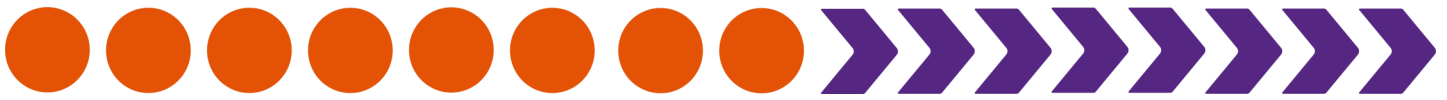
ANNUAL REPORT 2024



Because childhood can't wait...

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Registered Charity No: 1116385
Registered Company No: 5818942



A few words from the Chair...

As my second year as Chair comes to an end, I am delighted to introduce the annual report for 2023-4.

Home-Start Exeter, East, and Mid Devon has had another great year, building on and consolidating the stability established last year. Our core work supporting families through our amazing team of home visiting volunteers has continued to change peoples' lives. A total of 136 families were supported across Exeter, East Devon and Mid Devon by 45 volunteers.

Our thanks and gratitude go out to all those volunteers who give up their time and energy to make such a difference to families. We have held regular coffee mornings for volunteers, staff and trustees to meet each other and its always amazing to hear the stories of work with families being shared (anonymously of course).

Families are continuing to seek support around mental health issues, social isolation and, increasingly, special educational needs and we are considering how we can develop our service in that area.

Again, 92% of families who were surveyed reported an improvement in how they were feeling across several areas of need identified at the start of our work with them - and as ever their stories tell it best:

'My volunteer was just brilliant. Such a joy and relief to have her come and support our family. The charity provides much needed actual help for those who need it -thank you.'

'So useful to have a couple of hours where it felt like the pressure was off and to feel like I could offload any stresses from the week.'

The group work has continued too. We have two groups for mums - Mothers in Mind, focussed on perinatal mental health and a Family Well-Being Group open to all (including dads and grandparents). Our group for fathers, Dads Domain, running fortnightly on a Thursday evening in Exeter, is gradually growing too.

The staff team are well established and work really well as a team bringing complementary skills and experience.

Financially the scheme is in a better place than we were earlier in the year. A reminder that, in the main, our funding comes from grants and trusts including some small amounts from specific local authority funding. Our Funding and Development Manager continues to be 'worth her weight in gold' and our income in 2023-4 increased by £30,000 from the previous year. The financial climate, however, continues to be challenging with increased costs across the board and the need to secure funding stability for our core costs from large grant givers such as BBC Children in Need and The National Lottery Community Fund is ongoing.

We are really grateful for our local smaller grants too - local trusts, local supermarkets and local businesses have all made contributions. Local councillors have given us donations from their community funds too - thank you.

A vital part of our funding continues to come from our own fund-raising efforts. We have two trustees who are brilliant event organisers, and we held another great Quiz Night, repeating the success of last year. They have exciting plans for 2025 - watch this space!

We are working on raising our profile through social media (check out our Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn channels!), and recently joined in the opening of a new toy shop in Exeter, including a trolley dash!

Nationally, there is a push to develop Family Hubs in local areas to provide a more joined up approach to supporting families. We are working with colleagues from Devon County Council, Health and other local charities to ensure that we play our part and, on behalf of our families, promote the unique service we provide.

So, another busy and rewarding year! A huge personal thank you from me to the volunteer team, the staff team and the trustee team for your commitment and enthusiasm - we are definitely greater than the sum of our parts!

Maggie Carter
Chair of Trustees

Photo: Grand opening of The Entertainer, Exeter.
Maggie Carter, Lea Dempster, Rosie Collins—
Volunteer, Matilda—superstar Trolley Dasher!





Supporting families in 2023-24...

We were able to support 136 families - a 34% increase on the previous year.
There were 214 children in those families and of those children 176 were aged 5 or under.

78 families received one to one home visiting volunteer support.
52 families received group support.
4 families received a combination of both.
2 families received online one to one volunteer support.

92% of families surveyed saw an improvement in their outcome scores at the end of their support with us.

Volunteers gave over 5000 hours of their time to our charity, worth their weight in gold!



**HOME
START**
Exeter, East
& Mid Devon

Feedback from families ...

Home-Start was fantastic, H came in and helped me each week. Its hard to put a finger on what it was exactly but her encouragement in my mothering really helped me. It was the highlight of my week. Whenever she came I felt really good afterwards like I could do everything. She was brilliant with both my little ones, she answered my parenting questions and definitely made me a better mum. In a period of my life where things were really dark she was a weekly ray of sunshine in our house. Helped me to get back on my feet, get my confidence back to go out, to manage both the kids and the house, to be a mum. I owe Home-Start so much.

I call my volunteer a "life saver"! Having an adult to talk with every week that is kind, understanding and respectful of who I am without any judgement or criticism, what a difference it made. Knowing she was coming to visit me, helped me to feel better and to get through each week. She also helped me to fill in important and long forms and questionnaires when I was struggling so much to prioritise and concentrate. She helped me to get out and about (for walks, coffee, supermarket, doctor appointments, shops, ...) and she helped me with my daughter too.

She was honestly such a positive and helpful person to have visit, and our whole family warmed to her immediately. She helped out in some really dark moments when my twins went to hospital etc, but on normal days it was so valuable knowing I could get a few things done each week. Thanks a million from a very grateful family who has a phenomenal experience with our volunteer.

My volunteer gave not only me, but my little one more confidence to go out - especially to baby and toddler groups. It was amazing, almost felt like a mother figure to me.

D has been so incredibly supportive to me and I cannot thank him enough. Through rubbish mental health and not being the best at always responding/arranging meet ups, he's always understood, always listened, and always managed to make the clouds seem less heavier. D became more than a volunteer, he was adored by my children. D will never understand the amount of support he's given me, and he doesn't realise how wonderful he is.



A year with our charity...

We have had a busy year since our last Annual Report, take a look!

November—we were invited to decorate a Christmas Tree at Princesshay, Exeter. We will be there again this year so do take a look.

December— we were delighted to send our Senior Coordinator, Nicola, to represent us at the carol concert at Westminster Abbey, hosted by the Princess of Wales and The Royal Foundation as a moment to thank all those who work to support babies, young children and families in communities across the UK. We hosted a Christmas party for families with their volunteers, funded by Princesshay, and Santa even paid a visit. Every supported family received gifts thanks to Waitrose Sidmouth, John Lewis and BT.

January—our trustees held a fundraising quiz night and raised a fantastic £2242! We are so grateful to everyone who supports our events and donates.

February—our dads' group is now established and dads are coming along to share their experiences and the highs and lows of parenting in a safe space.

March—Exeter Community Initiatives invited us to a Volunteer Fayre in Exeter Cathedral; we love talking to new people and sharing the work we do and the surroundings were stunning.

April—our first board meeting of the financial year took place and we began collecting and analysing our annual data for the previous year. These important back office functions tick along in the background and provide the information we need to report back on progress to our major funders and keep our trustees informed.

May—in collaboration with the Citizens Advice Bureau, we held a training session for our volunteers on the subject of Maximising Income so that they can provide extra help for the families who we identify as struggling financially.

June— we said goodbye to our lovely volunteer Sandra who had been with the charity for 9 years and supported 11 families during that time. As well as the one to one family support, Sandra was always happy to talk to new volunteers and share her experiences at our training days—we will miss her.

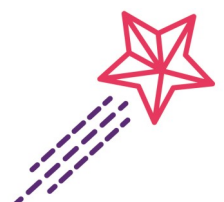
July—more additional training offered to our volunteers, this time from BT in Exeter, on the subject of online safety. With younger and younger children having access to online platforms, and adults at risk of scams, it was a very useful session. BT has a strong relationship with Home-Start and locally we are well supported by them.

August— our Family Wellbeing Group in Cranbrook stays open during the school summer holiday and is always busy. Open to parents and grandparents too, the group has proved really popular in the town and also welcomed refugee families who were housed locally in hotels before being moved.



September—we held our regular coffee mornings for volunteers and trustees; a time to celebrate and a great chance for the volunteers to get together and meet one another if they had not already. Volunteers tell us they really value these mornings and they are always well attended.

October— 6 new volunteers signed up to our training course and they'll be up and running and ready to support families before Christmas. We aim to run at least 3 courses a year to keep our bank of volunteers topped up. Sadly we have found that the cost of living crisis means that some volunteers have had to return to work and no longer have the time to volunteer.





HOME-START EXETER, EAST AND MID DEVON
(A company limited by guarantee)

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE
ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	2024	2024	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
INCOME FROM:				
Donations and legacies	22,384	-	22,384	19,213
Charitable activities		157,082	157,082	108,365
Investments	582	-	582	259
TOTAL INCOME	22,966	157,082	180,048	127,837
EXPENDITURE ON:				
Charitable activities	26,695	136,447	163,142	154,493
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	26,695	136,447	163,142	154,493
NET (EXPENDITURE) / INCOME	(3,729)	20,635	16,906	(26,656)
Transfers between funds	(1,249)	1,249	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	(4,978)	21,884	16,906	(26,656)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:				
Total funds brought forward	40,127	18,275	58,402	85,058
Net movement in funds	(4,978)	21,884	16,906	(26,656)
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	35,149	40,159	75,308	58,402

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



During the year, the charity received total income of £180,048 and had total costs of £163,142, giving a surplus of £16,906.

Despite the tough economic climate, the charity has maintained an appropriate level of reserves to allow the charity's activities to continue. At the 31st March 2024, current reserves held were £75,308 of which £40,159 are restricted funds and £35,149 are unrestricted.

(Accountants: Griffin Chartered Accountants, 165 High Street, Honiton ,EX14 1LQ)



Thank you to ...

Our wonderful funders, donors and supporters



Action for Children
Albert Hunt Trust
Ashcombe Village Club
Bloss Family Foundation
Bridge Motorcycles
BT Consumer Team, Exeter
City Life Church
Cranbrook Town Council
David Gibbons Foundation
Devon Communities Together
Devon County Council
G Effuso Wine Merchants
Exeter Lottery supporters
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Foot Anstey
Friends of Home-Start Exeter, East and Mid Devon
Garfield Weston
Hendy Foundation

Home-Start UK
HSEEMD annual quiz supporters
John Lewis Partnership
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Neighbourly/Sainsburys
J S Paterson
Pears
Postcode Local Trust
Princesshay, Exeter
Rediscover Church
Santa for Hire
Teignmouth WI
Tesco
The Claire Milne Trust
The Henry Smith Charity
The National Lottery Community Fund
The Norman Family Charitable Trust

Our fantastic team of volunteers...

Chris, Sarah, Helen, Juliet, Julie, Wendy, Ali, Helen, Sue, Eileen, Sandra, Jill, Trish, Nicola, Toni, Rosie, Rebecca, Natalie, Mitzi, David, Fiona, Laura, Tess, Lyn, Sally, Eve, Shay, Jen, Fiona, Elaine, Lisa, Carla, Martha, Lisa, Wendy, Amy, Jennifer, Jen, Sue, Jane, Wendy, Jenna, Aukje and Lizzie

Our dedicated board of trustees...

Maggie, Wendy, Jackie, Wendy, Claire, Peter and Debbie

And our amazing team of staff...

Nic, Julia, Lea, Jo, Hannah and Vicki

**For parents when
they need us most**

