



Empowering Families, Helping Children Thrive

**Your Impact Report
2024–2025**

Review of the Year

2024/2025 has been another challenging year, for Home-Start Hertfordshire and for the wider charity sector. The ongoing cost-of-living crisis has deepened financial hardship for many of the families we support and the demand for our services has continued to rise each month.

At the same time, competition for funding is ever growing, and many of our dedicated volunteers were unable to continue due to returning to work or family responsibilities, such as caring for grandchildren. These challenges have required us to adapt and think creatively to continue supporting local families.

I am immensely proud of the way our team – Staff, Trustees and Volunteers –

have risen to the occasion. They have embraced new roles, driven efficiencies and worked tirelessly to secure additional funding wherever possible. We have renewed our efforts to recruit volunteers and continued to develop our hybrid training programme, making it more accessible and effective than ever.



Our purpose

Home-Start Hertfordshire (HSH) is a small charity with a big vision; to ensure every parent in Hertfordshire has the support they need to give their child the best start in life.

We are a volunteer-led, quality driven, non-judgemental, family support service. We reach out to families who are experiencing a variety of different and complex challenges.

By getting in early, we support families before they break down, thus enabling their children to thrive.



Notably, our commitment to quality was recognised through the Home-Start UK Quality Assurance initiative, where we achieved an 'Excellent' rating – an important endorsement of the impact and standard of the services we provide.

Despite our best efforts, the volume of referrals meant we were unable to support every family in need. In some cases, we had to signpost families to alternative services due to a lack of available resources. This is never an easy decision and underlines the growing pressures faced by organisations like ours.

We began the year with solid progress against our Business Plan, but the ongoing scarcity of grant funding made it difficult to meet all our objectives. Towards the end of the year, both our CEO Suzy Moody

and our Patron Ken Follett stepped down due to personal reasons. We are deeply grateful for their dedication and support.

Looking ahead, we are committed to building new partnerships with like-minded organisations, broadening our reach and continuing to develop a sustainable model to support families across Hertfordshire.

Thank you to every member of our community who has played a part this year – whether by giving time, expertise, or financial support. Your efforts have made a meaningful difference in an exceptionally difficult time.

Julia Gregory

**Chair of the Board of Trustees
Home-Start Hertfordshire**



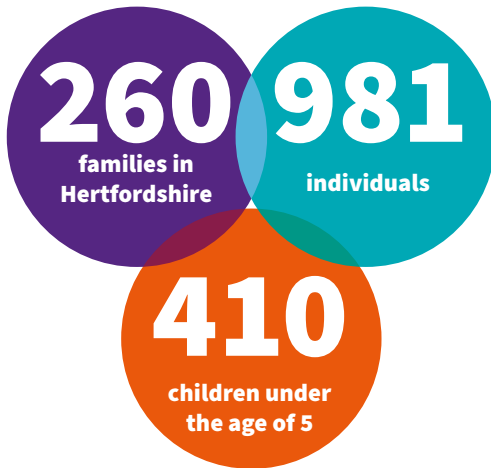
CASE STUDY

"Family Group was so beneficial to me feeling less isolated, both my children loved it and I made a lot of friends who really supported me through a tough year. The group leader and volunteers there were amazing. We are really going to miss the Home-Start group."

***Thank you for everything
you have done for me and
my children."***

Family support:

During 2024–25,
we offered support to:



- Families reaching out to us remains high with on average **5 requests** for support **every week**.
- Currently, we only have capacity to support around **4 in 10 families** who approach us, with **increased funding**

We're seeing a **rise in multiple and complex needs**, particularly in health and neurodiversity. To keep meeting these needs – and to **ensure no family faces these challenges alone** – we urgently need more funding.

- We only had capacity to support around **260 families**, making a direct difference to **981 individuals** – including **410 children under five**, **202 older children**, and **369 adults**.



Hertford Family Group were delighted to receive the award from the Hertford Mayor

Family group support

We were delighted to welcome different visitors to our family groups throughout the year, including former High Sherriff Annie Brewster and former Deputy Mayor of Hertford, Cllr Steven Watson.

In March 2024 our Hertford Family Group was awarded Hertford Mayor's Community Award. Family Group Leader, Kayleigh Short and HSH volunteer Ghislaine Peart were delighted to go to receive the award. **We are incredibly proud of the whole team.**



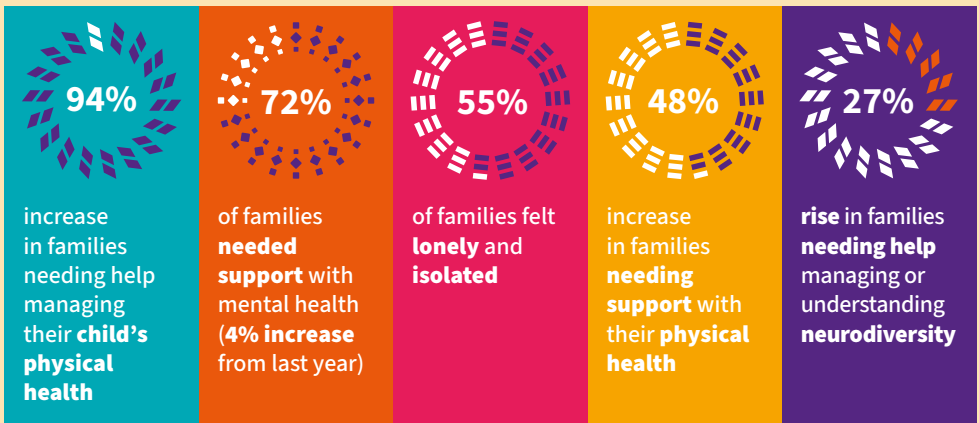
We were delighted to welcome the former High Sherriff to Welwyn Family Group

The changing needs of families



This year, we received
225 new referrals.

Our data shows that of those referrals:



Meanwhile, **confidence and self-esteem**, **budgeting**, and **parenting challenges** remain high, affecting over a third of the families we see.

These figures tell us that while our support is making a difference, the **complexity of families' needs is increasing** – especially in areas like physical health, neurodiversity, and financial pressure.



CASE STUDY

*"I was nervous about coming to group, but **the staff made me feel welcome**. Some of the staff/volunteers I really clicked with, as they were understanding my struggles.*

***The other parents are lovely** and I valued having a good chat"*

Volunteering...



Congratulations Sonya!

In March 2025 we were delighted our volunteer, Sonya Godbert was shortlisted at the Home-Start UK Volunteer of the Year awards, presented at the RAC, London. Sonya was unable to attend the Awards Ceremony, so Claire & Lisa from HSH went on her behalf. Whilst Sonya didn't win, she is a winner in our eyes!



(left to right): Claire Norris – Service Delivery Manager, TV Presenter Kirstie Allsop, Lisa Nyquist – Volunteer Manager East Herts A



Sonya Godbert – Home Visiting Volunteer finalist

HSH volunteers remain the life and soul of the charity, we are so grateful for each and every one of them. However, recruiting and retaining volunteers

Celebrating our volunteers...

In June 2024 we were delighted to host our Volunteer Celebration at the Holiday Inn Express London Colney. The Mayor of St Albans Cllr Jamie Day and his wife Liz, joined us to help celebrate our dedicated volunteers and the hours they give to help support families.



Welcoming new volunteers at our Prep Course at Holiday Inn London Colney

Sue Chappell, Volunteer Manager Stevenage:

“All our volunteers are such amazing people with hearts of gold, who give so much to our HSH families. Going that extra mile to ensure families receive the help and support they need.”



The Mayor of St Albans celebrates with HSH staff and volunteers

continues to be a challenge throughout the charity sector, and HSH is no exception. The world is changing, and so are the lives of those who once had time to volunteer. HSH have seen more grandparents stepping into caring roles and parents returning to work, which has led to a 45.7% turnover in volunteers (higher than the national average of 35%,

ref Volunteerhub.com) and just a 23.3% recruitment rate this year.

But this also opens up an opportunity: to reimagine volunteering for today's world. With the right investment, we can build flexible, inclusive volunteering models that fit modern life, and continue to harness the power of our community supporting families.

April 2024:



March 2025:



We need your support for this vital work...

✓ **Volunteer** ✓ **Sponsor** ✓ **Fundraise** ✓ **Donate**



Fundraising

to support families in Hertfordshire

St Albans Pancake Festival 2025

In glorious sunshine, we took to the streets of St Albans for the 2025 Pancake Festival. Record numbers of teams and spectators attended, witnessing Youth Talk being crowned winners of the walking race and KDW Financial Planning winners of the running.



Winners of the running race,
KDW Financial Planning

With thanks to our Headline Sponsor **SA Law**, all banner sponsors and our wonderful volunteers who helped on the day. Special thanks to the St Albans Town Crier and Mayor of St Albans for joining us to celebrate with the local community.



Winners of the walking race, Youth Talk



Guests enjoying Great Gatsby



Thanks to No-Nonsense Design for bringing the roaring 1920s to St Michael's Manor Hotel

Great Gatsby Gala Dinner

Our glitzy glamorous gala dinner was held at St Michael's Manor Hotel and transported guests back to the roaring 1920's, with thanks to **No-Nonsense Design**. The event raised a phenomenal £22,651 to support vulnerable families. With thanks to our sponsor & former Patron, Ken Follett.



Former Patron, Ken Follett and guests including Baroness Sharon Taylor of Stevenage, MP Kevin Bonavia and Leader of Stevenage Council Cllr Richard Henry.

Building Sustainable Futures

With your help we raised an incredible £42,729 through our Building Sustainable Futures Big Give 2024 Campaign. Thank you to all our supporters, funders and The Monday Charitable Trust for Championing our campaign and all those who contributed.

Helping Herts Campaign

We were delighted to take part in the Helping Herts Campaign again in 2024, raising a phenomenal **£15,730** through events including The Great Big Walk for Herts and a Skydive.



A group of walkers conquered the 13-mile Kimpton Loop.

Two local supporters, including local Stevenage MP Kevin Bonavia, took to the skies to fall at great heights for HSH. We are so grateful to Helping Herts for their match funding.



MP Kevin Bonavia showed his support skydiving for HSH.

St Albans Fireworks

HSH were joint beneficiary charity at the 2024 display, raising an incredible **£10,000** to support vulnerable families. Big thanks to St Albans Cathedral who organised the event and to our community volunteers who helped on the night.

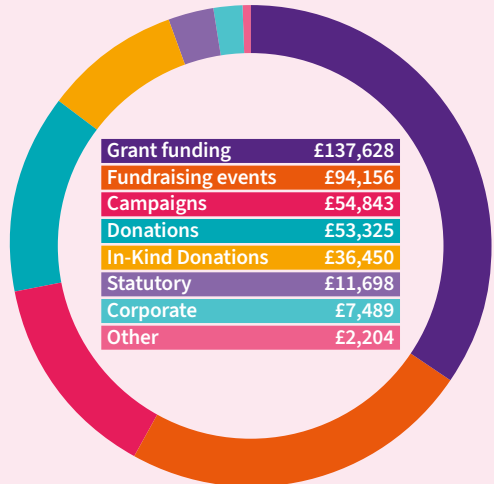


Taylor Walton's team redecorated the HSH office!

Corporate Support

A huge thank you to corporate partners Lovell Partnerships Limited for hosting a golf day in aid of HSH, raising **£33,000** and to Taylor Walton who undertook an office refurb for HSH, volunteering three days of their time to clean, paint and refresh a used space into a smart, vibrant office for the HSH team.

Income 2024-25: £397,793



To donate, visit **home-startherts-org-uk** or scan the QR code:



**FREE
TRAINING
COURSE**

Could you be a Volunteer Family Mentor?

Would you like to make a difference?

Do you have the experience of parenting or caring for children and have 2-3 hours a week to spare?

Home-Start Hertfordshire is recruiting volunteers to support families in their own homes.



Volunteering can provide you with skills like:

- Problem solving
- Communication
- Decision making
- Planning
- Teamwork

... and so much more!



Give back and make an impact!

**HOME
START**
Hertfordshire

Contact us today to start your exciting journey!

Call on: **01438 367788**

Email us: **admin@home-startherts.org.uk**

www.home-startherts.org.uk

What 3 words describe Home-Start to you:
“Life-changing, Comforting, Kindness”



Quality Assurance – achieving excellence



During 2024/25, HSH began its journey with Home-Start UK's Quality Assurance Programme.

This rigorous two-year self-assessment process benchmarks local Home-Starts against national quality standards. It enables us to reflect deeply on our governance, management and service delivery, promoting a culture of continuous improvement and organisational learning. Through this process, we strengthen our commitment to excellence, accountability, and the delivery of effective, compassionate support to families across Hertfordshire.

At the time of reporting, HSH has achieved excellent results. Our submissions have been recognised as thorough, of a high standard and demonstrating robust outcomes across key practice areas. These results affirm our unwavering dedication to providing a trusted, high-standard service that makes a lasting difference for families throughout the county.

CASE STUDY

Q: What feels different?

“Everything. I feel more normal. It’s hard to describe.

I felt I was living as a ghost, too anxious to go out alone or speak to people. It’s built my confidence back up.

I feel back to my old self but also a new version of myself.

A stronger version and more accepting of the path I’ve had to take, as horrible as it was. You unlocked the key and played a big part in pulling me out of a deep hole.

Just having someone to say ‘It’s fine, we can take these small steps together.’”



Our thanks to everyone who has supported us:



Corporate Supporters

Etsu Global
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John Lewis Partnership & Waitrose
KJ Smith Solicitors
Musterhubs Bushells
Riverside Business Service
SA Law
St Albans Businesses Community
St Albans District Chamber of Commerce
Steve Charles Electricals
The Bespoke Flooring Company
Viatrix
Women in Business Networking

Our Ambassadors Group

All those who donate their valuable time and expertise

BLS Computer Services
Business Buzz
Dvana
Heart Radio
Holiday Inn Express St Albans
No-Nonsense Design
The Hub on Verulum

Our Volunteers & Trustees

Individual and regular donors
for their generous support

Community Groups

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Helping Herts campaign
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Soroptimists International
St Albans Cathedral

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& Councillors
North Hertfordshire District Council
St Albans City and District Council
Stevenage Borough Council
Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

Trusts & Grant Funders

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Hitchin Youth Trust
Monday Charitable Trust
Robert Clutterbuck Charitable Trust
Stevenage Community Trust
Tesco Groundworks
The Follett Trust

Supporters of our events

Individual fundraisers
and their sponsors
HSH Staff Team



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