



**Trafford,
Salford & Wigan**



Annual Report 2022 - 2023

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All images used in this report are of families supported by Home-Start Trafford, Salford & Wigan. Picture above is of brothers Iskander and Sam, their mum Ahlam said, *"Home-Start have saved our family. They have given us a future."*

Who we are and what we do

How did it all start?

Home-Start was established, 50 Years ago, in Leicester in 1973 by Margaret Harrison, MBE. In 1981 it became nationwide and Home-Start International followed in 1998.

Home-Start Trafford was formed in 1999 as a voluntary organisation which now operates as a charitable company strategically managed by a Board of Trustees, all of whom are members of the local community. Home-Start Trafford extended its geographical area of reach into Salford in January 2012 and then into Wigan in January 2019.

We have a relatively small staff team and an army of dedicated, skilled volunteers all of whom have some parenting/family life experience, who visit families in the families' own home for 2 to 3 hours per week. Volunteers are given appropriate training and are checked by the Disclosure & Barring Scheme prior to being matched with families.

What our volunteers do.....

Offer friendship, provide an extra pair of hands, provide support to attend appointments, someone to share the families' difficulties', provide support with managing: the household, the budget and the children's behaviour; provide a tailor-made combination of practical & emotional support. Volunteers build on parent's skills and help boost self-esteem and confidence whilst enabling them to cope with the pressures of family life. Our aim is to help reduce stress and prevent crisis and breakdown.

Requesting support from Home-Start is a simple process, which involves filling out a short form, or completing an EHA in Trafford. Requests can come from professionals working with families or direct from families themselves.



Maureen pictured above with her children Jadriel and Jason said, *"Home-Start helped us feel that we are not alone, and the feeling of loneliness left"*

Chair's Report

This report covers the year to the end of March 2023.

I reported last year that the year to March 2022, had been one of the most challenging in our now 23-year history. My comments on the aftermath of the Covid pandemic have certainly remained with us in the last year, to which has been added the full impact of the cost-of-living crisis which has had a direct impact on the day-to-day lives of many of the families that we support.

Our core objective remains, giving children the best start in life, and we believe that this is best delivered by our home visiting model i.e., providing face-to-face practical, non-judgmental support, guidance and friendship. Our ever resourceful and highly professional staff team and wonderfully committed volunteers have continued to provide this assistance and support in what has become increasingly difficult circumstances.

Last year, I reported that the complexity of issues facing our families had risen to a level that we had not previously experienced. Sadly, this trend has continued and if anything, the pressures on our families have increased.

Last year we supported 285 families, slightly down from 294 families last year, but an increase from 234 families in the year ending March 2021. Our army of 172 volunteers, available throughout the year, supported 184 families.

We continue to receive regular and detailed feedback which we receive and record and from this, we note that Home-Start makes a particularly positive difference to each of our families in what continue to be extremely trying and stressful times. This type of feedback directly from both our families and referrers gives the whole team a huge sense of pride and achievement.

Over the last year, we have made further progress in several areas:

- Continued expansion of our professional counselling services to families where mental health issues are of particular concern. The demand here has grown significantly and we are looking to provide further support in this area.
- Our volunteer trustee team has been further strengthened with the addition of significant experience in the areas of education and corporate partner and fundraising engagement.
- We have further progressed our transition to a digital back-office which helps us to maximise the professional team's time in supporting our volunteers and families.
- We are pursuing the possible accreditation of our highly respected volunteer preparation training course with a view to this being an additional stepping stone towards career opportunities for our volunteers.

Our focus remains on our basic ethos of providing home visiting support to parents to help them provide each child with the best possible start in life.

Our sincere thanks are due to our highly professional and resourceful staff, inspirational home visiting volunteers and supporting board of trustees.

Finally, we continue to value the support we receive from our corporate partners, Continental Textiles, W Howard, Greystone Financial Services, the Brian Kennedy Trust and the Eric Wright Charitable Foundation.

Thank you all!
Neil Peden
Chair

Managing Director's Report

Writing a Managing Directors report each year is a great opportunity to pause and reflect, be proud of our scheme's achievements alongside continuing to learn and develop from the challenges we face. We have experienced both this year in abundance.

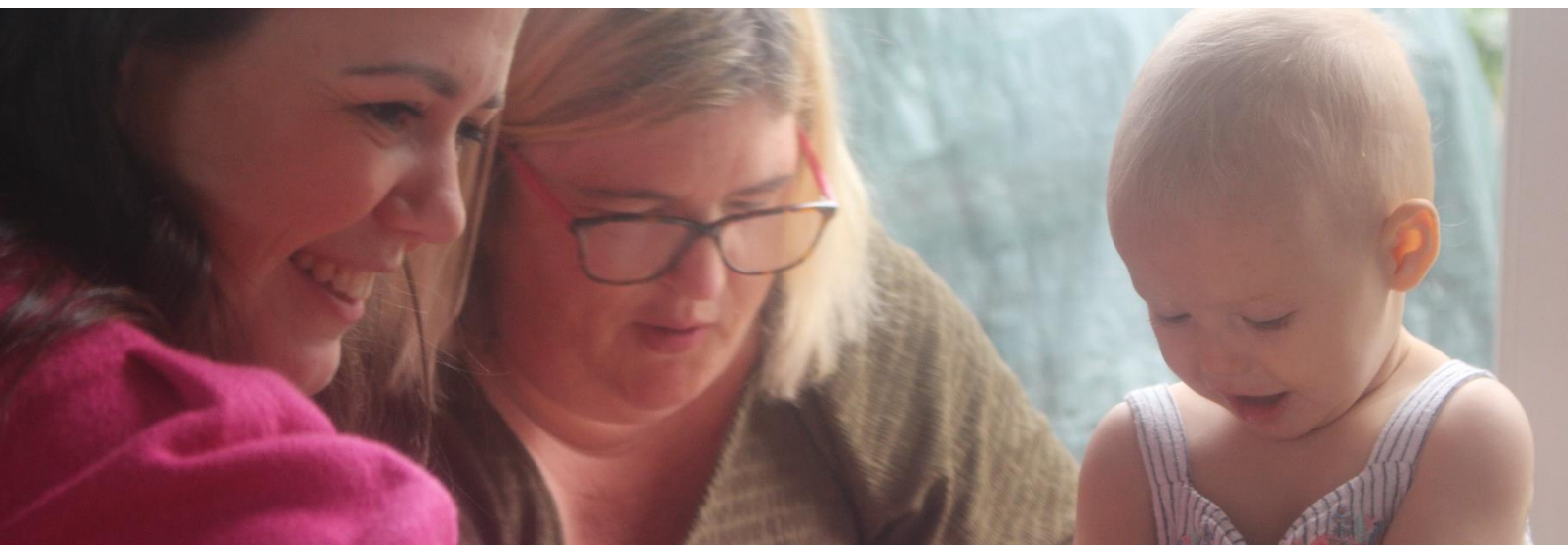
I can see after 15 years in this role that life is getting harder for many of our families. **Complexities of family's needs are increasing; parental mental health** needs in particular are at an all-time high. There will be no surprise to hear that as we **recover from the pandemic** and cope with a **cost-of-living crisis**, in 12 months we have seen a 23% increase in the number of families we support, who are struggling with **poverty and debt**. **Demand continues to increase and outweighs our capacity**; in the last year we have seen a 25% increase in the number of families asking for our help. Alongside this, **recruiting volunteers is getting more difficult** and needs more resource, available support from other agencies we work alongside is decreasing with growing waiting lists, yet **competition for investment** and **balancing our finances** is getting tougher.

Unfortunately, we can't solve all these problems, many are beyond our control, but what we can do, and what we did last year, was **help over 500 local children, from 285 families, have a better start in life**. Which is a huge achievement.

As a small charity, we have faced challenges together, and have done what we can to address them this year, from sustaining funding for our in-house psychotherapist to provide much needed **counselling for families** and investing in our staff by providing **clinical supervision**; become more **culturally competent** and **support more diverse families** through our Starting Well project; continue to **grow our enhanced Parent Infant Mental Health** offer including **Dad Matters** in Salford; we made **359 deliveries of items** to families, such as donated chrome books from BT, Christmas presents from The Toy Appeal, foodbanks parcels, preloved clothes from The Little Green Sock, and donated Aldi vouchers; provided direct support for 90 families who maybe a bit closer to crisis through our **Family Support Workers**; **increased our annual income by 7%** from the previous year to £570, 675, £36k of which raised through **fundraising and corporate support**; and we recruited and trained an additional **35 new home-visiting volunteers**.

All made possible by the wonderful people who are part of Home-Start Trafford, Salford and Wigan, dedicated and hardworking staff and specialist consultants; kind and caring home-visiting volunteers; skilled and committed Trustees; generous supporters; and brave, resilient families. Thank you all for being part of a charity that I am very proud and privileged to lead.

Kathryn Eckersley

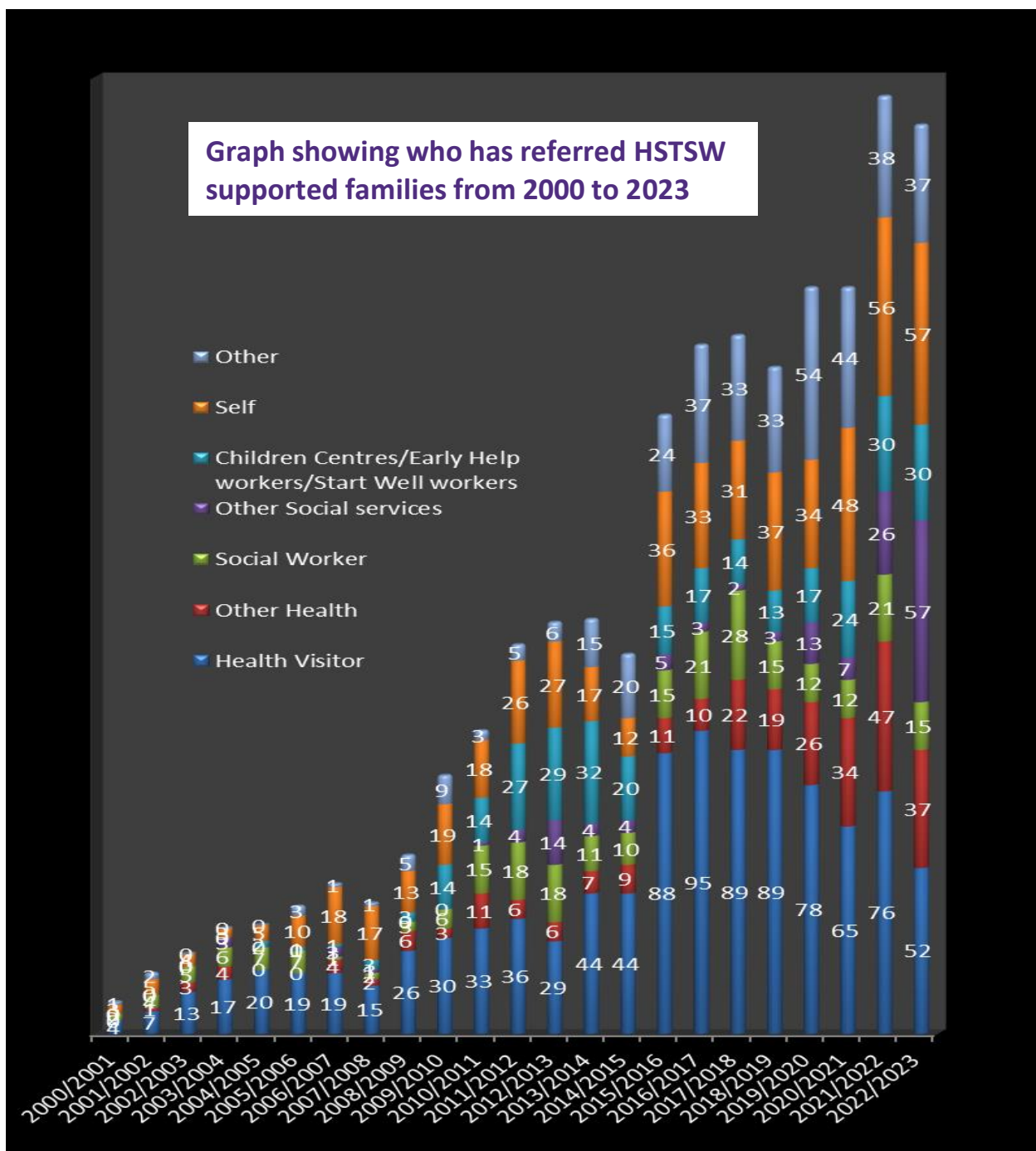


Becky, mum of 3 young children pictured above, when asked where does she think she would be without support from Home-Start said, *"In a very difficult mental state, without having those couple of hours to look forward to each week, to give me the small break or opportunity to tidy and clean, especially at the beginning would have really affected me mentally"*

Referrers

Many thanks to all our referrers who take the time to suggest Home-Start support for families they come into contact with. Up until this year Health Visitors have consistently been HSTSW's top referring agency, as the chart below illustrates. This year they have reduced again to 18%, which is a significant decrease when compared to 4 years ago when they accounted for 43%, and around 50% in all the other previous years.

'Other Social Services' (just under 20%) which includes Trafford Team Together, Intensive Family Support Workers, Strengthening Families Practitioners, has seen the most growth again this year, alongside families who refer themselves (also 20%), 'Other' includes referrals direct from schools and the VCSE sector; and over a quarter of referrals in the 'Other Health' category are from midwives.



514 children have been supported this year from **285 families**. 170 Trafford families, 64 Salford families, 41 Wigan families and 10 Manchester families, as part of our Starting Well project run in partnership with Home-Start Manchester.

184 families across Trafford, Salford, Wigan and Manchester have received Coordinator/Volunteer core Home-Start support, 90 families have received one to one support from our Family Support Workers, and 11 Salford families have received one to one support from our Salford Dad Matters Coordinator.

Since we started supporting families in 1999 up until the end of this financial year, 31st March 2023, we have supported 6052 children from 2869 families. To give this some context, it is the equivalent to the number of children from just over 21 UK averaged sized primary schools!

We supported 27 families this year where mum was pregnant at time of referral

Complexities of families are increasing, one way of demonstrating this is through the number of ROCAs (record of concern and actions) we complete, which are part of our internal process to record and manage safeguarding worries and concerns. During 19/20 12% of families had ROCAs; 20/21 22%, 21/22 26%, 22/23 34%.

Parental mental health needs have grown too, this alongside social isolation has always been one of the most common needs of HSTSW supported families, however it is increasing, in 19/20 79% of HSTSW families had a parental mental need rising in 21/22 88% and continuing to rise to 92% in 22/23.

The average length of a block of support with a Volunteer/Coordinator is just under 6 months, and 4 months with a Family Support Worker, however we have seen an increase in the number of families needing more than 1 block of support, 49 last year, rising to 68 this year.

Impact

The table below shows the number of families whose support ended during the last 2 years and how many reported an improvement in their self-assessment coping scores:

Family Outcomes - Increase in coping scores	21/22		22/23	
Parenting Skills	141	82.0%	149	91.4%
Parents Wellbeing	157	91.3%	151	92.6%
Childrens Wellbeing	132	76.7%	138	84.7%
Family Management	158	91.9%	148	90.8%

This year we received 157 written responses to our feedback questionnaires from families and referrers: 96% of respondents felt our support had made a positive difference to the family; 100% were satisfied with our service and said they would recommend us to another family. In the words of a Health Visitor:

“HSTSW have made a huge difference to this family. I feel like they have empowered this mother and she is more confident in her parenting skills and ability. This mother has complex mental health difficulties and HSTSW have supported her with this in a supportive and non-judgmental manner. This support has certainly made a huge difference on the children and their long-term futures”

Volunteers

During 22/23 we are really proud to report that we have recruited and trained 35 new home-visiting volunteers adding to our 172 strong army who have been available throughout the year.



As you will see from the graph below, our volunteer army is smaller than it has been in recent years, as it is becoming more challenging to find volunteers who have the time available to visit families weekly.



Our volunteers often benefit from the experience of volunteering with Home-Start as well as the families they support. This year 87% reported improved confidence, 77% reported increased life opportunities such as access to training, and 74% reported improved employment prospects.

Treasurers Report

Excerpt from Financial Statements:

	Year to 31.03.2023	Year to 31.03.22
	£	£
Total income	570,675	530,996
Total expenditure	(592,466)	(564,812)
Net loss for the year	<u>(21,791)</u>	<u>(33,816)</u>
Reserves carried forward	131,636	153,427
Restricted funds	20,775	21,276
Unrestricted funds	<u>110,861</u>	<u>132,151</u>
	<u>131,636</u>	<u>153,427</u>

Income increased by 7% in 2022/23 to £570,675, which was the result of continued efforts to apply for grants and contracts to help cope with the increased demand on our scheme.

Funding continues to be our main priority.

84% of our expenditure is spent on staffing and associated travel and expenses, an 11% increase on the previous year. Our staff team and our army of volunteers continue to do an amazing job. All non-essential support costs are kept to a minimum.

Losses incurred in the last 2 financial years have had a negative impact on reserves, reducing the unrestricted funds. The Trustees believe that the losses have been unavoidable as it has been necessary to increase staff salaries in order to seek to mitigate the effects of the cost-of-living crisis which has affected all staff members.

Unrestricted funds are donations that the scheme may use for any purpose so long as it meets the aims and objectives of the charity, as outlined in our governing document.

Restricted funds are where the restriction is defined by the investor on how that money should be spent, for example as a grant to pay for a project such as a School Readiness, or Parent Infant Mental Health Support health contract.

Home-Start Trafford, Salford and Wigan place great importance on the continuity of its service to all service users. In the event that grant funding should cease, it is vital that funds are available to allow either an orderly close down of the service or to allow alternative funding to be found.

Sharon Feldmann
Acting Treasurer

Thank you

We would like to sincerely thank all of our Funders and Corporate Supporters



Salford City Council



Department of Health & Social Care



To contact us
call **0161 865 4222**,
or email us admin@hsts.org.uk
or visit our website www.hsts.org.uk