

Annual Report

2021-2022



**Parents supporting parents
in Garioch and Formartine**



1a George Square, Inverurie, AB51 3XX

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 01467 624801

Email: info@homestartgarioch.org.uk Website: www.homestartgarioch.org.uk

Registered Charity No: SC022057 Scottish Registered Company No: 280871

Structure and Organisation

Board of Trustees:

Chair: Joe Greener

Treasurer: Robert Anderson

Secretary: Pam Morton

Trustees: Jackie Loder, Angela Gowdy, Lorraine Lee, Sandra McCorry,
Maeve McDowall and Tracey Skene and Gail Winchester

Staff:

Scheme Manager: Mhairi Philip

Co-ordinators: Lynn Davidson, Wendy Paterson & Shona Reynolds

Administrator: Valerie Tennant

Acknowledgements

Our main funders for 2020/2021



We have received donations of time, money, and other resources throughout the year. Our warm thanks go to: Angela Gowdy, Elizabeth Robertson, Evelyn Hendry, Carol Wright, Gariochs Fish Bar, Gary Cox, The Kilted Frog and Lochter

Background Information

Home-Start Garioch has been supporting families in Garioch and Formartine since 1995 through their most challenging times. We recognise that the earliest years make the biggest impact. We want to ensure those years count so that no child's future is limited by working with families to build on their strengths and give them the support they tell us they need. A unique service, recruiting and training volunteers, usually parents themselves, to support families, visiting them weekly in their own homes. Parents supporting parents through friendship offering practical and emotional support for parents with young children who are experiencing stress and difficult times.

Garioch and Formartine covers an area of 559 square miles. This represents 23%, almost a quarter of the geographical area of Aberdeenshire. The area has a population of 99015, (2021) a growth of 10% in the past 10 years. The increasing population, and need, has seen Home-Start Garioch grow over the past 27 years from a lone co-ordinator to a team of a Scheme Manager and 3 co-ordinators supporting more than 100 families per year with the support of around 75 volunteers.

Nearly 50 years' ago our Founder Margaret Harrison set up the first Home-Start built on the belief that supporting a family was best done in their home where it can be shaped to the needs of the family.

Since then, Home-Starts across Scotland and the UK work every day with families to build parents' confidence and get them to a more secure place because we know that the very best place for a child to grow up is with their family.

'Where children are safe in their families and feel loved they must stay – and families must be given support together to nurture that love and overcome the difficulties which get in the way.' - The Promise – A vision for Scotland, a change to make sure that all Scotland's children grow up to be "loved, safe and respected" #KeepThePromise

Chair's Report



The activities of Home-Start Garioch have become normalised after COVID and it has been possible to deliver face to face board meetings and subgroups have also returned to normal.

Fundraising has continued with many activities resulting in a considerable income £17,123 and kept Home-Start Garioch's profile in the community.

Home-Start Garioch has continued to take the lead role in Aberdeenshire Home-Start Consortium. Across Aberdeenshire the five schemes offer a wide range of activities tailored to the needs of the families involved.

With many funding awards coming to an end this year and early next, Home-Start Garioch could have a large funding shortfall going forward. Plans are however in place to make several funding applications and expectations are that some will be successful. Reserves are healthy and Home-Start Garioch will be able to continue operating should initial applications fail.



Managers' Report



We gradually began to see a return to normal. Referrals increased as the statutory services started to see families and were able to identify needs. Fundraising activities were established and very well attended as the community joined in raising awareness and raising money.

What we saw from the referrals coming in was the continuing impact on family's mental health and how that affected family life and relationships. More families looking for emotional support, support to access benefits, food, many of these families never being in that position before and not sure where to start.

Parents have been deprived of opportunities to share experiences, get out of the house and connect with other adults. They have felt angry and lost. Frustrated by the closure of toddler groups. Many parents have suffered birth trauma and isolation because of COVID. While we have endeavoured to support as normal, many organisations/services haven't reopened, and some won't.

Thank you to all the staff, Valerie, Lynn, Shona and Wendy who support those volunteers that are working so closely with the families and to the volunteers that are in there, providing that support. It is you which makes the difference, you which enables change to take place for the families and without you there would be no Home-Start.

Looking ahead, we look forward to moving on from the challenges of the previous 18 months. We will continue to support local families using our preventative, early intervention approach to make sure that all parents have the support that they need to give their children the best start in life.

We will be there for parents when they need us the most – because childhood can't wait.

Financial Report

Home Start Garioch is currently in a reasonable financial position, due to good fundraising within the community, and good support from donors. Aberdeenshire Council exercised the option to extend their contract with Home Start for a further two years, although this was at the same level as prior years with no increase for inflation.

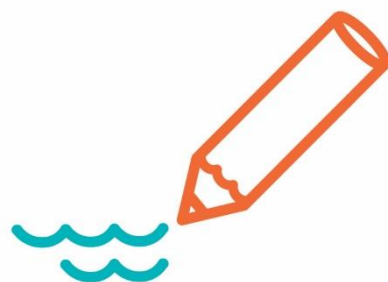
In the last financial year, the charity raised £162k in income, and had expenditure of £149k.

After adjusting for the actuarial non-cash gain of £10k on a historic pension scheme, the charity had net income of £22k. This is unusual as the charity normally breaks even or has a small loss. As several large funding comes to an end, this will take the immediate pressure off.

The charity's accounts were reviewed by an independent examiner and no issues were identified.

The gradual easing of covid restrictions has allowed increased fundraising within the community and made it easier for volunteers to support families.

Overall, the charity is in a healthy position financially and well placed to continue to provide services to families in need of help.

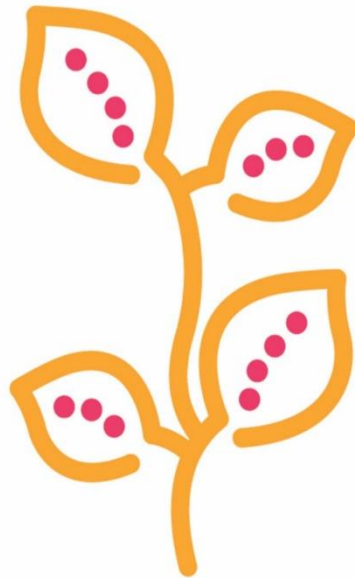


Our work in Numbers

6720 hours of support from home visiting volunteers.

102 Families supported

62 new referrals



211 children under 5 nurtured

Of the families that came to the end of their support in March 2022

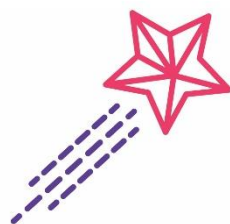


94% stated that they felt less isolated



92% reported improved self esteem

98% reported more confidence in being involved in their children's learning



97% reported improved children's emotional health and wellbeing

So How has Home-Start Garioch Helped?

“I’m so pleased you called; I feel absolutely elated. It has made such a difference to talk to an adult and know that there are people out there who care”

“My volunteer was there with us when we were on a tough road. I can really see the difference between then and now”

“You are like a guardian; you connect me to so many sources”

“My volunteer is amazing, a blessing, probably the best thing that’s happened to me on this journey. I don’t feel embarrassed, we really get along. I feel much more reassured and confident now”

“Home-Start has brought a change to my life and where I am today, I would not be without you. Giving me one to one support that has helped me on my hardest and saddest days. I feel so much better and more confident”

