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Didcot Town Council
Britwell Road,
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30 October 2024

Dear Councillors,

Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire report to Didcot Town Council



Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is pleased to report back to Didcot Town Council about the support we have offered to beneficiaries since we were granted £5,250.

We continue to support families who have at least one child aged five years or under. Our trained home-visiting volunteers have been making weekly visits to help the families in the ways they need. The reasons for support have varied from helping to improve a mum's mental wellbeing, to supporting a single mum with a newborn who was struggling to cope and lacked a local support network, to helping a mum who had low mood and low confidence to get out a toddler group with her child. The peer support for these families has been invaluable.



We're currently **supporting 67 families in Didcot** – 61 supported at our two weekly parent and child support groups, 5 with our trained home-visiting volunteers and 1 with our Family Support Worker. Referrals mainly came via Health Visitors and self-referrals. Overall, referrals are still increasing – we received 20 referrals in the last month.

Our weekly drop-in Baby & Me Group continues to grow since moving it to the District Community Centre on Great Western Park. We often have between 8 and 15 regulars attending and most weeks there are new parents attending too. Our monthly twins session is proving successful too and we collaborate with Didcot Baby Monday, who attend our group once a month to provide sessions on issues such as baby weaning and self-care.



We have 7 trained volunteers in Didcot but we are always looking for more and we do need more in order to support the amount of referrals we receive. Excitingly, we have just recruited a Volunteer Development Co-ordinator after receiving a Step Change Fund grant through the Oxfordshire Community Foundation. We hope that having a role dedicated to volunteer recruitment, training and development will mean we will be able to increase the number of volunteers we have and that this will in turn help us support more families.

We continue to try build up partnerships with other local organisations, strengthening our relationship with SOHA and attending a meeting at SOFEA to discuss maternity care equality in

Didcot. We have also attended health team locality meetings to hear about the current needs of the community to help us shape our work. We are also partnering with local energy provider SGN in order to provide energy saving tip and advice, promote the Priority Services Register and distribute free carbon monoxide alarms to the families we work with. We have also partnered with Active Oxfordshire to promote YouMove to our families - now any Home-Start supported family can have access to all the free and low-cost activities on offer.

We are incredibly grateful to Didcot Town Council for its continued support of Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire and for the funding it provides us each year to help us to continue this vital support for Didcot residents with young children.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "FGKing". The letters are cursive and slightly slanted to the right.

Faye Golding-King
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