



Building Communities, Building Connections

Home-Start Cambridgeshire launches a timely new project

Creating a thriving community is challenging. Families can feel isolated because they:

- have left behind family and friends
- lack the confidence to join new networks
- do not know anyone who can help introduce them

Parents with young children are often stranded due to lack of:

- transport – private and public
- shops and essential services, especially in the early stages of a development

In Cambridgeshire, a large number of new settlements are being created to meet the need for more housing. To turn these developments into successful communities, many families with young children will need support to make local connections.



Home-Start Cambridgeshire provides targeted support to help families make connections and feel part of their new community. The need for this support is even greater when there are other issues within the family such as parental mental health concerns, disability, multiple births and post-natal illness.



“Chatting to other mums and the Home-Start team has made me more confident as a mum. I’ve made friends (I was isolated before Group) and I’ve felt happier. The guest speakers were fabulous and really informative.”

HSC Family

Our staff and volunteers understand these issues. They have extensive knowledge of local facilities and of other agencies and groups to which families can be referred, including for debt advice, parenting classes and healthy lifestyle activities. Families are referred to us by health visitors, midwives, social workers, GPs and other professionals; they can also self-refer. Staff meet with families to learn about their individual needs and then match a trained volunteer to support them through weekly visits. Our volunteers provide non-judgemental emotional and practical support to help develop confidence, independence and resilience, all of which are crucial factors in settling successfully into a new community.

Our work helps a new community to form as early as possible and improves the overall sense of belonging for residents, which is so important when establishing the reputation of a new development. It also helps to maximise the benefit of investment in physical infrastructure such as community facilities and local transport by ensuring that residents have the confidence to join local networks and use the services which are being offered.

“I cannot say thank you enough for all the help and support you provide. Because of you I didn’t feel alone. I was comforted knowing someone was coming to see me [even for just a chat more than practical help]. It gave me space to breathe again and a chance to reflect and recognise where I was at and the growth that was occurring. My family have been so blessed by your work and I hope I can help others the way you have helped us.”

HSC Family



With Home-Start Cambridgeshire’s support, our families report:

- 98% coping with children’s emotional health and wellbeing
- 88% feeling less isolated
- 85% improvement in parental mental health

Grosvenor and Barratt Homes have donated to Home-Start Cambridgeshire to support work with families in their new communities and to leave a legacy within a community where families are thriving and promoting the area as a great place to live. We are keen to roll out this project across the county.

How you can sponsor 'Building Communities, Building Connections'

" I'm a stay at home mother of 6 month old twins. I have no help and no confidence in my ability to be able to look after my children. I have recently moved to a new area and feel very isolated. I'm suffering from stress and fearful for my mental health.

I am in desperate need of help. I have post-natal depression and anxiety. I am completely exhausted and alone. I have no bond with my child. "

A mum seeking help

- * £8,500 would enable us to set up a parents and toddlers group in a new community for a year
- * £3,000 would recruit 10 volunteers, provide over 35hrs of initial training, on-going mandatory training and regular support and supervision
- * £26,300 would fund 1 coordinator for 1 year to support 40 families, 30 volunteers, develop their referrer networks and familiarise themselves with the new communities and their facilities
- * £3,900 will fund travel expenses for weekly home visits to 40 families for up to 6 months

When you support our project you are helping families to make connections, develop relationships and become part of a thriving community.

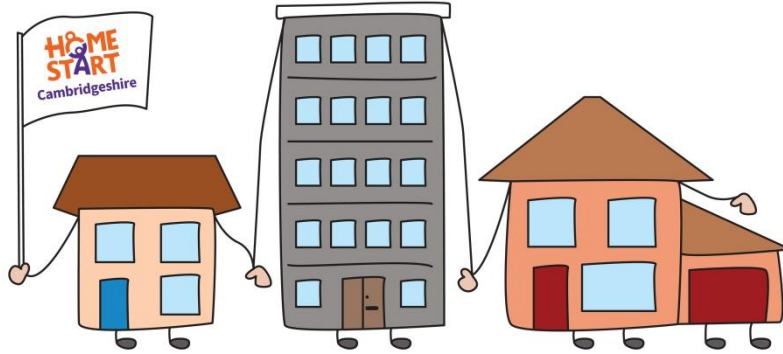
We rely on fundraising to provide all our services and need additional financial support to provide dedicated services in new communities.

To discuss how your company can participate in our 'Building Communities, Building Connections' project, please get in touch with Jo Studdert, our Chair of Trustees,

office@homestartcambridgeshire.co.uk Tel: 01480 700242

We look forward to your support.





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