



2023-24 Annual Review



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HOME START

Clackmannanshire

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Chair's Update

By Patrick Leavey



Welcome to the latest Annual Review of Home-Start Clackmannanshire.

I am the Chair of the board of trustees of the charity. I live near Forestmill in Clackmannanshire, and I work for a public sector organisation called the Money and Pensions Service.

I have been a trustee since 2014. Back then we were a much smaller organisation: we supported fewer families with a much smaller team of staff. I have watched with great pride as Home-Start Clackmannanshire has grown and developed over the last 10 years.

This update covers the period of April 2023 to March 2024. Those 12 months were a period of consolidation as we transitioned to a new CEO and Chair, but also a period of continued growth in the number of families we supported.

I wanted to start by thanking Jax Kidd, our Assistant

Manager, for her steady hand on the tiller during the period between the departure of our previous CEO, Shelley Bowman, in April 2023 and the arrival of our new CEO, Louise Orr, in June 2023.

Thank you also to our volunteers and staff team who helped 151 Clackmannanshire families over the course of these 12 months. This is the largest number of families we have ever worked with since we were founded in 1988, 36 years ago. You will hear more about the individuals involved in this tremendous team effort in the pages which follow.

And finally, thank you to Doug Moodie, who stepped down as our Treasurer and as a trustee in September 2023. His service to Home-Start Clackmannanshire was invaluable, and we all miss his wisdom and his calm authority. We offer our best wishes to him and his family as they move to Ayrshire.

Treasurer's Update

by Patrick Leavey

The Treasurer plays a really important role in a small charity like ours. They look over our financial accounts so that trustees are confident we have the money to do what we want to do. The Treasurer also makes sure that our financial controls are being implemented correctly, so our trustees, funders and donors can be confident that our funds are spent wisely.



Doug Moodie had taken on these responsibilities when he joined the board of trustees in 2018. He stood down at our Annual General Meeting (AGM) in 2023, after 5 years of excellent service to Home-Start Clackmannanshire.

During Doug's time the charity grew from an organisation which supported 62 families and had an annual income of £107,000, to one which supported 132 families and had an income of £314,000. Periods of fast growth like that can often cause problems for charities, but Doug worked closely with our previous CEO, Shelley Bowman, to ensure that we successfully managed both this transition and the turbulence of the Covid-19 pandemic and its aftermath.

For the final six months of this Annual Review period, we had an interim Treasurer arrangement, filled by

previous trustee Stuart Landels, and me, whilst we recruited to strengthen our board with more trustees with relevant skillsets. We are thrilled to now have Colin Carmichael as our new Treasurer, who is already invaluable to our team, and is supporting our CEO Louise Orr to develop our financial systems further to adapt to the larger charity we now are.

Last year, we secured new income of £282,756. Our expenditure was £358,344, however, we carried forward funds from 22/23 for expenditure in 23/24. We have maintained a healthy level of reserves, totalling £125,000.

Thank you to all our donors, funders and supporters, we appreciated your continued support in such a challenging financial environment. We wouldn't be here without you.

Strategic Plan Update

By Patrick Leavey

Our Strategic Plan sets out the wider context in which Home-Start Clackmannanshire operates, our vision and mission, the services we deliver, the resources we have at our disposal, and the risks that we face and how we plan to mitigate them.

The most important element, however, is a set of four priorities:

1. Ensuring that we have increased awareness of our services both amongst the residents of the five most deprived areas of Clackmannanshire, and amongst potential volunteers.
2. Developing the support we provide when a family member has mental health issues, has been the victim of domestic abuse, or other issues identified by our CharityLog data.
3. Doing more to assist the school-age children of the families we support.
4. Continuing to widen our sources of unrestricted funds.

The current strategic plan runs from 2023 to 2026, so this Annual Review includes the first year of it.

The Wee County is a wonderful place with a fantastic community spirit. But many of the people living here face considerable challenges:

- End Child Poverty Coalition data shows that Clacks have the joint second highest rate of child poverty in Scotland alongside North Ayrshire, after Glasgow.
- While overall numbers are decreasing, 30% of all referrals from Clackmannanshire to the Children's Reporter continue to be related to "parental care/neglect."
- The number of offenders from Clackmannanshire who entered the Scottish prison system is the second highest amongst local authorities across Scotland.

So how are we doing in our first year of the current strategic plan?

1. Increased awareness: Staff and volunteers have been out and about promoting the work we do across Clackmannanshire. Our branded vehicle offers a driving advertisement of our services and how to contact us. We have placed adverts in the "Love Local" magazine, and the team have continued to engage with as many local partners, businesses, and agencies as possible. I would also particularly like to thank Sofie, who assists us to manage our website and social media activity, which presents our organisation and the work we do so effectively to the public and our stakeholders.

2. Developing the support we provide: Our services are very much shaped and developed in line with feedback from local families. We continue to gather a wealth of evaluation data to support this, and have recently been matched with a volunteer from Statisticians for Society to help us interrogate the data we hold in our CharityLog system to improve further. We have managed to increase the hours of our two Family Support Workers due to a direct need presented, particularly with families of older (5-12) children. We have also joined with Action for Children and Barnardos to form a lead agency group to shape a new Children's Services Collaborative locally, in partnership with Clackmannanshire Council.

3. School-age children: As mentioned above, we have experienced an increase of need within our school-aged children, particularly in regard to support to attend education. Our referral sources reflect this, with 33 of our 120 referrals coming from education. A large proportion of our Family Support Workers' efforts is within school age children.

4. Unrestricted funds: Sarah, Heather and our shop volunteers are doing a fantastic job growing revenue at our shop on the High Street in Alloa. You can find it between our neighbours, the D'nisi coffee shop and Greggs. I'm particularly pleased to report that we are now open on Saturdays and have put in place a gift aid scheme which will help us to boost our revenue. Many many thanks to our supporters who donated the clothing, household utensils, toys and books which generated £54,626 in 2023/24.

We have also continued our efforts to secure unrestricted income through fundraising, and applications to trusts and foundations.

But this is only the first year of the strategic plan, and I look forward to updating you on further progress in the next Annual Review.



Key messages and measuring our impact

151 families supported over 23-24. Made up of 615 individuals – 293 adults and 322 children. Of these children, 184 were aged 0-5, 109 were 6-12 and 29 were 13-18.

Over 23-24, we received 120 new referrals. Health visitors again remained our highest referrers (40), with education following (33) and then our social work team (22). There was a scattering across other sources, including self-referrals (6), and CAB (3).

Implemented new systems and processes in our shop to better track our environmental impact. From October 23 – March 24, we received 13043.46 KG of items, successfully diverting from landfill through onward sale, or donation to Nathans Wastesavers.

Our shop embarked upon strengthening our learning and development programme, with the support of Tackling Child Poverty funding, to better support volunteers keen to progress their employability journey.

We signed up to the refreshed Volunteer Charter in June 2023, to show our commitment to maintaining best practice in volunteering.

We signed up to the Equality Networks Rainbow Mark in June 2023, proudly displaying the mark in our office and shop premises to show our support and dedication to equality for the LGBTQ+ community.

77% of parents/carers who responded to our 23/24 end of year survey reported feeling more confident in themselves after receiving our support.

75% of parents/carers who responded to our 23/24 end of year survey said they felt less isolated, and that their network has improved after receiving support.

77% of parents/carers who responded to our 23/24 end of year survey reported feeling more able to deal with challenging situations and make positive changes in their lives.

75% of parents/carers who responded to our 23/24 end of year survey feel better able to manage their mental health/wellbeing.

77% of families who responded to our 23/24 end of year survey indicated that their children are more interested and excited to learn and try new activities.

77% of families who responded to our 23/24 end of year survey report their children have increased confidence.

100% of referrers who responded to our 23/24 end of year survey said they would recommend Home-Start to a colleague/family/friend.

100% of volunteers are very satisfied/satisfied with their overall experience as a volunteer with Home-Start Clackmannanshire (measured through evaluation survey).

100% of our volunteers feel valued and appreciated (measured through evaluation survey).

Our 23/24 shop customer survey reported 100% customer satisfaction with our goods and service.

Through our continued partnership with Save the Children, we were able to administer support to 32 families through the early years support grants, each for up to £340.

Save the Children also supported us with Play Packs during the Summer, and funding for Winter of Play, which allowed us to host our annual Christmas Party for families, enjoyed by 181 attendees.

Family Quotes

"Coming to Homestart group makes it likely for our baby to play with other children - I feel excited every week to come to the homestart group".

"M has been an amazing support for me with all aspects of my life and my kids I wouldn't be able to go to Groups without her - M gives me the confidence that I need and if M didn't help then I would not have any confidence - M is like my second mum".

"Homestart was there for me when I was going through a very difficult time. Through the support groups and my family volunteers and support worker I was able to build my self esteem and confidence in myself. They helped me to believe in myself and that I am capable of making the right decisions for me and my family. With their help I am now in a much better position with my mental health and my family as a whole has benefited from this".

"We received home start support because we had no idea what having a wee one added to our relationship and Home-Start gave us confidence, support and resources".

"I have been going threw a lot at min but home-start have came to appointments with me,helping me get to group classes,they give good advice and strategies,they txt or ring,home visits to check in on me they are all amazing. If I didn't have home-start I don't know were I would be today".

"Home start has really helped my family over the last couple of years, I have two kids on the asd pathway and I'm a single parent with an abusive ex I was a shell of the person I used to be before Homestart they've helped me build my confidence back up helped me with vouchers, been a shoulder to cry on an ear to listen gave me more support than I ever thought possible I will be forever grateful".

"My whole life has been turned around with me and my family having the confidence to tackle life with a positive attitude".

"I feel I have a space in this society. Thanks very much".

"Homestart massively helped me and my daughter after lockdown. My confidence as a mum and in other areas of my life have increased significantly and it was great comfort having that support when my partner was away working".

"During a difficult time with my youngest son's behaviour affecting our family day to day life I was lost and didn't know what to do. I needed help and support and contacted homestart to see if they could help. Staff got in touch and has been amazing throughout and helped me understand my emotions and how to deal with them".



CEO's Update

By Louise Orr

I was thrilled to join the team in June 2023 after having previously been involved as a volunteer on the board of trustees.



Louise Orr

Through that role, I saw Home-Start Clackmannanshire evolve and was excited to have a more direct role in shaping our services for many years to come. Home-Start has adapted and grown again this year, to continue to meet the needs of local families, but always staying true to our core ethos and practice.

I firstly want to acknowledge and thank our team (staff and volunteers) for welcoming me, and having an unwavering passion for Home-Start Clackmannanshire, and providing a professional yet friendly, person-centered support system for all our local families who need it.

We continue to see an increase in need for our services, indicating that our families locally are continuing to feel intense pressures and struggles in many forms - poor mental health, isolation and loneliness, ongoing impacts of Covid, cost of living crisis etc. Fortunately, due to the continued generosity and support of our local community, donors, funders and supporters, we have been there. Despite increased levels of referrals, and complexities in the nature of support, our team have never had to implement waiting lists, something we are incredibly proud of, to ensure that families receive support when they need it. Usually, we have contacted and visited a family within 2 weeks of referral. At incredibly busy times, we have sometimes had to increase this to 4 weeks.

To keep up with the growing need for our services, we have grown our team, and so the last year has also seen a number of internal changes and developments to ensure our systems and processes remain fit for purpose. We have implemented a new HR system, taken steps to becoming paperless to further our commitment to environmental sustainability, brought in systems to measure environmental impact of our shop accurately, implemented a new Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, and continued to further our partnership working locally. We also successfully received our Quality Assurance mark from Home-Start UK, who assess individual schemes every 3 years.

As the coming pages will highlight, it is the end of an era for us at Home-Start Clackmannanshire, with Irene Richmond, one of our Family Support Co-ordinator's retiring. Irene has been with us for 29 years, starting her journey as a volunteer, then carrying out administrative duties, before finding her perfect fit supporting our volunteer team, and our families.

A "thank you" cannot begin to express our gratitude for Irene's time with us. In addition to being an incredible colleague, an empath, and a natural carer, Irene is a friend, and often a walking accident waiting to happen, which has provided much amusement for the team over the years! We will miss her immensely but wish her all the best in her well-deserved retirement and future adventures.

Family Support Services

Family Support Co-ordinators and Assistant Manager Update

As always, we would like to begin by thanking our incredible volunteers. Without them, we would be unable to offer such an effective support service for families across Clackmannanshire.

Over the last year, our team has changed and grown. We said a temporary farewell to Paula, as she left us on maternity leave in December to welcome her beautiful new son Riley in the New Year, the first Home-Start Clacks (staff) baby in our history! Leyanne, our Family Support Worker, stepped into the Family Support Co-ordinator role, and has flourished in post, helping us strengthen our PIMH (Peri-Infant Mental Health) work, and supporting exciting future plans to develop this further in the coming year and so we are thrilled she has decided to remain in this post. Susan joined the team in January 2024 as a Family Support Worker bringing 3 decades of family support experience and settling well into the team. It has been another busy year for us, again seeing an increased need for our services. To help meet this need, we ran two volunteer preparation courses, onboarding seven new volunteers to support our group and home visiting work. The Preparation



Course spans eight weeks, covering topics such as child protection, domestic abuse, mental health issues (in parents/carers and children), and why play matters. We also cover the importance of listening to our parents/carers and children and boundaries in order to effectively prepare volunteers.



We are dedicated to providing continuous learning and development for our team (staff and volunteers), which over the past year have included: how to be a Safe Adult, Ask-Tell-Respond, Makaton, Responding to Trauma, Safe and Together, The Invisible Principles of Child Development, and Child Protection (mandatory on an annual basis for all). We have also continued supporting The Promise through our work, to ensure that all care experienced children in Scotland are supported to reach their full potential and be loved, respected and nurtured. Once matched, our volunteers receive monthly support from their named Co-ordinator (our staff are available at any time to chat with volunteers if there are any issues or concerns). We also strive to offer wider opportunities to recognise our volunteers, for them to socialise, and to ensure their voices are central with our families in shaping future developments. For example, this year, our volunteer Jeanette represented us at the King's Garden party, Charlie and Grace attended the Westminster Abbey Christmas Concert, we had our Volunteers' Week Celebration, a Christmas meal, and continued to run our Volunteer Forum quarterly.

As the saying goes, “it takes a village to raise a child” and so partnership working is vital for us. We work closely with our local Social Work team, Education, fellow third-sector organisations and are actively involved in forums such as GIRFEC, and Whole Family Support Screening Group. This year, we had the privilege of having another social work student complete their placement with us. Heather’s knowledge, practical support, and emotional support greatly benefited our families. She created a safe space where families felt comfortable sharing their challenges and planning support with her. Through the Home-Start network, we have also fostered strong relationships with fellow schemes, such as Glasgow North and North Lanarkshire Home-Start, who we engaged in sharing practices through site visits and collaboration to share our work and gain new ideas, strengthening our collective mission.

The Co-ordinators ensure families have 12-weekly review visits to monitor our progress in meeting the needs identified during the initial visit. This year has been an extremely challenging year for our families, with increased numbers of poor mental health, financial hardship, and domestic abuse. Our team have worked even more closely with external agencies and partners such as CAB, Energy Efficiency Team from Clackmannanshire Council, The Gate Food Bank, our Bairn Bank at our Home-Start Shop, Save the Children, and many more to signpost/support them to engage with wider supports needed. Often, the team supports families to attend appointments, such as mental health, hospital, dental, etc. (tackling issues of missed appointments/avoidance that has occurred in the past). We have also worked with Social Security Scotland and CAB on benefit checks and for Adult and Children disability payments, providing assistance when needed to complete forms.

We continue to run our two parent/carer Wellbeing groups each week, supported by Maureen and Leyanne, during term time. One group meets in Community House, Alloa and the other meets in the Dumyat Centre, Menstrie. These groups are well attended and are a safe and confidential space for parents/carers to talk openly, try new activities, and connect with their peers. The parents/carers very much shape the content and format of these groups and have chosen to come together to enjoy certain activities, such as a Mother’s Day lunch, group walks, and getting their skates on (literally!) for a Christmas roller disco.



This year, we have also placed a focus on “team time” – so much of everyone’s role is out in the community, we are very rarely in one place at the same time. So, we have committed to setting aside a few hours each quarter, to come together and connect. This has been as simple as taking a lunch break together to chat, to taking out our frustrations at Axe Throwing.

We are excited to move into 2024 – 2025 to continue developing our support services for local families and provide opportunities for volunteers. We have a new Family Support Co-ordinator joining the team, Paula returning from her maternity leave mid-September 2024, and will be saying a reluctant farewell to Irene as she retires.

Irene, Maureen, Leyanne and Jax

Family Support Services

Family Support Workers

The Family Support Team at Home-Start Clacks offers practical help and emotional support to families experiencing short- or long-term difficulties. Our work has a profound impact on the families we serve, empowering them to address challenges and make positive decisions moving forward. We aim to support the whole family in a non-judgmental way, and our involvement is entirely tailored towards their needs. Sometimes, this is a short, intensive, targeted piece of work lasting as little as six weeks. On the other hand, we have families who have been with us for a year or more, and who will continue to be supported until they are ready to move on to the next stage, most likely group support or a volunteer.

When meeting a new family we consider both the emotional and practical support. Practical support may include referrals for food parcels and fuel vouchers and budgeting advice. We support families in accessing information from Citizens' Advice and Social Security Scotland to ensure they receive all the benefits they are entitled to. We can access funding from organisations such as Save the Children for required household items and refer to our charity shop

for toys, books and clothes, baby equipment, and safety equipment such as stairgates.

Mental health in adults and children continues to be an important area where support is required. This can take the form of emotional support (often just listening) and help to attend mental health and CAMHS appointments. Post-natal depression and other mental health conditions can result in parents feeling isolated, so we support them to attend our parent wellbeing groups run by our Family Support Coordinators, and our baby/toddler groups and summer Play in the Park sessions led by our Group Workers, as well as simply getting out and about and attending activities in the local area. Mental health problems can lead to chaotic living conditions, and we can work shoulder to shoulder with families supporting clearing out and cleaning, and generally improving our families' domestic situations.

A large part of our role involves working with families on early childhood development, making sense of challenging behaviour and additional support needs, setting boundaries, improving communication, and





establishing routines within the home, all aimed at improving parent-child relationships. School attendance and punctuality continue to be an area of difficulty for many families after Covid, with many children finding it hard to separate from their parents or carers. We work through this with families, offering strategies and practical support to make the process easier. We support parents and carers in attending Team Around the Child and Staged Intervention meetings at school and nursery, which our families can find daunting. We help with paediatric appointments, eye tests, dental appointments, and anything likely to affect a child's early development.

Our work involves liaising with and working alongside agencies such as Citizens' Advice, schools and nurseries, and the Health Visiting and Social Work teams. We have found many benefits from this sort of information-sharing and collaboration. We attend core-group meetings for children who are on the Child Protection register, as well as supporting adults and children who have been impacted by domestic abuse. We communicate with Safe guardians and have an input into Children's Hearings. We work with parents, carers and children where there is a kinship care arrangement, and we support families where a parent is in prison. Megan attended HMP Glenochil for the Family Centre's Open Day, where there were some interesting ideas about how we could work together.

January 2024 brought changes to the Family Support team as Leyanne took on the challenge of covering Paula's maternity leave, and Susan joined the family support team. Susan comes to Home-Start with a wealth of experience, having worked with families locally for 30 years. She was able to hit the ground

running, getting out and about to groups and getting to know Home-Start families, and has quickly become a fully integrated member of the team. This dedication to our work is what drives us to continue making a difference in the lives of the families we serve.

Family support workers have provided direct support to a total of 41 families in the year 2023/24. We are committed to continuous learning and improvement, always looking to build on our existing skills and knowledge to provide the best possible support to Home-Start families. Our training has included Ask, Tell, Respond (suicide prevention), Making Sense of Sensory Needs (neurodivergence), and Coercive Control and Domestic Abuse. Leyanne has undertaken Home-Start's Parent-Infant Mental Health Support (PIMHS) training, and we hope that the other team members will soon participate in this training as evidence shows that this type of early intervention can greatly improve outcomes for children and families. We have visited the Home-Start scheme for Glasgow North and continue to liaise with them, sharing ideas and good practice.

Last but not least, there are the most joyful parts of the job – distributing Christmas gifts to families, our Christmas party in the Town Hall, our trip to the Safari Park, and other seasonal events like our Autumn forestry event. We have the best time with our families and share many, many laughs. It never ceases to be a privilege to be part of the fantastic Home-Start team and to work alongside our amazing families, colleagues and volunteers.

We look forward to all that lies ahead in 2024/25.
Megan, Leyanne and Susan (Family Support Workers)



29 years of Home-Start... Reflection upon retirement

When I started with Home-Start, we had three members of staff (me on 10 hours per week carrying out admin support). I was brought in on a 1-year contract, and we didn't even have a computer – all reports, letters, policies etc. were typed out on an electric typewriter. We had a tomb (large manual) from Home-Start UK, which outlined everything we needed to maintain. The finances were completed on a handwritten ledger - how old school! The three of us supported 28 volunteers and regularly had new prep courses with 15 potential volunteers on each.

I have seen many changes over the years, most have been positive to support our development, including 6 office moves, new computer systems, internet, and our growing team. I have been encouraged to complete regular courses to keep my knowledge fresh and up to date, depending on role within organization. Even as part of my induction, I completed the Volunteer Preparation Course and also volunteered as a home visiting volunteer. I greatly enjoyed the interaction with various families, and supporting them to tackle their issues, taking the step into the Co-ordinator role in 2009.

Through the various roles I have held during my 29 years' service, I have just loved working with our families; helping them face challenges and seeing them grow as a family. I met one of the children from a previously supported family recently. She remembered me, and approached as she now has a wee one of her own and is getting some support as she felt that Home-Start had been so positive in her life as a child. I feel that Home-Start can make positive changes with families as it's probably the only thing



that they have control of when issues are spiraling. Unlike statutory services they can say no to our support, engagement with us is voluntary which helps parents/carers feel they have some power and control in their lives.

The role has changed and grown so much over the years. I helped support and run two family groups, worked on a homeless project working with extremely vulnerable families, a toy library service within 4 nurseries, then my current role of Co-ordinator assessing and supporting families. The team has grown and developed over the years from a small organization of 3 to where we are today. I hope it continues to grow and support families from all walks of life that just need that wee bit of help and someone telling them that they are doing a good job with their kids and acknowledging how hard a job that raising a family is. I wish everyone well for Home Starts future and look forward to hearing how things develop.

Irene Richmond



Family Support Services



**29 years of
Home-Start...
Reflections from
families and
volunteers Irene
has supported:**



Current families:

"Irene has made a massive difference to my son she will be missed not only by my son but me. A very good woman sad to lose to retirement".

"Irene's support has been great, so helpful. She is a great and nice woman. I hope she has a happy retirement she will be missed".

Previous family:

"I don't think Irene knows how much she's done for me, or for others. She just gives her all and stays so cheery".

Previous family who then volunteered:

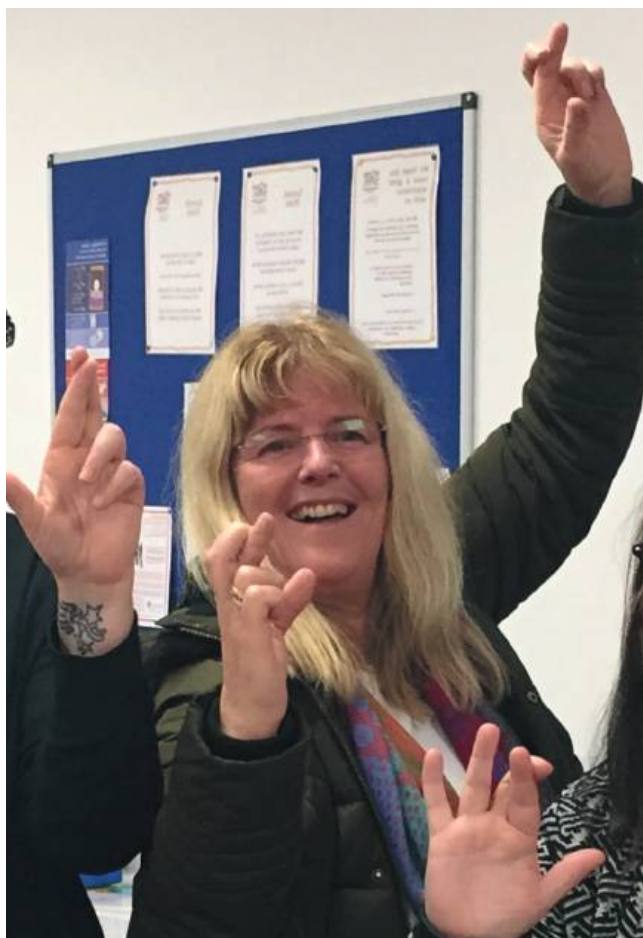
"Irene made us all including the kids feel like a big part of the Home-Start team – everything she did was for the families, she was just the best person to look after us all".

Volunteers:

"Thank you for being not just a family support coordinator, but moreover a mentor. Your leadership and wisdom have been a true source of inspiration. I thank you for all the wisdom you've shared and the support you've given. Wishing you a retirement as amazing as the impact you've made over the 29 years at Home-Start".

"Irene was an absolute pleasure to work with. The knowledge and skills she was able to impart to help me with my families has been invaluable. Personally, it has been the utmost pleasure working with Irene and, I hope, a person who will continue to be in my life. I wish her all the very best in this next stage in life".

"Irene is caring, helpful, and has a bubbly personality, good at involving people, getting things done, good sense of humour, and last but not least, forgets to send links on email, then sends them eventually (but we can get over that) :-D We hope she has a long and enjoyable retirement".



Group Support Services

Early Years Groups

Over the past year, we have continued to develop our three community-based groups in The Blue House Tullibody, Ben Cleuch in Tillicoultry and Hawkhill in Alloa, whilst making plans to expand our provision to make it as accessible as possible for people to access support in their community.

None of this would be possible without our dedicated Group volunteers. Throughout the year, we had six volunteers providing invaluable support to the running of the sessions. Our wider team can also often be found at group – providing support to a family to engage for the first time, or just finding an excuse to play on the park!

We have also been expanding our knowledge and skills over the year, including staff and volunteers undertaking “Make and Taste” training with the NHS in January 2024, and our group workers undertaking “Making Groupwork Work” training. Through partnership with CERT (Clackmannanshire Economic Regeneration Trust), we were also able to offer a variety of training to our families attending groups, from Paediatric First Aid, to Play Learn and Grow (numeracy focus).



Connection is a key theme of our groups; families are able to connect with each other, our team, but also, wider services. We arrange to have visitors to group who can provide specific training (such as CERT mentioned above), information, or expertise. Over the year, these have included: Energy Advice Trust, Childsmile, Play Talk Read, local authors, and Save the Children. As part of all our supports, we inform families about the Hawkhill Community Shop, and cover the cost (£5) of their first year’s membership.



Ben Cleuch Group

Our Ben Cleuch Group remains at capacity, the group naturally evolving as wee ones “graduate” and move on to nursery, and new families join us. Again, we are lucky to have indoor and outdoor space for families to enjoy, and we have observed some real friendships forming over the past year which has been lovely to see.

We had 30 sessions (weekly during term time) with a total of 287 attendances, averaging 10 per session.

Blue House Group

Our Tullibody group at Action for Children's Blue House is in their well-equipped children's room. This is adjoining the "teen" room, which has been incredibly useful when having training, as we have been able to take over the full space. The addition of an outdoor space from the room is again a welcome addition and offers opportunity for outdoor play. Whilst the format of our sessions is similar across the groups, offering the same support, families can shape activities, make snack suggestions etc. to inform our future delivery and structure. Our monthly evaluations (carried out across all groups) encourage this.

Again, this group has seen children learning and playing together alongside their parents/carers, preparing them for starting nursery through improving motor skills, sharing, communication, building peer relationships, and above all, having fun in a safe environment.

We had 34 weekly sessions during term time. A total of 168 attendees were recorded, which is an average of 5 per session. This group by its nature will always be smaller due to the size of the space. It is not possible to have more than 6 or 7 families in the space.



Hawkhill Group

Our Hawkhill Group is still going from strength to strength. We have been able to provide time together for families both indoors and outdoors including healthy snack, activities and Bookbug sessions.

We have regularly welcomed and supported new families while continuing to support our existing ones. Activities are designed to include literacy, numeracy and social skills but most importantly to provide fun and learning for all the family. Children can enjoy learning and playing in a safe environment and parents have an opportunity to meet others thus reducing social isolation.

We delivered 34 sessions (weekly during term time) over the year, which saw a total of 623 attendances, an average of 18 per week. We heard from families that anxiety, lack of transport, or cost of transport were barriers to attending, and so we sought to ease/remove these through measures such as providing a "buddy" system for new families, covering travel costs, or picking up families.

Group Support Services

Holiday Programmes/ Family Events

Easter and Summer Activity Programme

Over the Easter and Summer school holidays, we ran a series of Play in the Park Sessions.

During Summer 2023, we ran 2 sessions per week, with one becoming an indoor play in Hawkhill, and another unfortunately having to be cancelled due to the not so lovely Scottish weather! At our West End Park visits we were joined by Reachout with Arts in Mind, who provided interesting clay activities for the children to enjoy. At one of our Alva and Civic Centre Park visits, Nicola from the Japanese Garden joined us and led families through making fish kites and origami cranes. We also had CERT join us at a couple of our Play in the Parks to engage families in numeracy games.

A total of 363 attendances were recorded which is an average of 36 per session.

We also hosted a Family Wellbeing Day at Hawkhill on the 5 August for our families. We had healthy snack making sessions, information from CERT, CTSI (Clackmannanshire Third Sector Interface), Kooth, crafts with The Japanese Garden and fun family games, glitter tattoos and free books.

Local Community Champions at Morrisons, Tesco and Asda supported us to provide snacks and drinks for all attendees. Summer of Play funding from Clackmannanshire Council, and support and Play Packs from our partners Save the Children made our Summer fun possible.





Kidz-World

We have continued to collaborate with Kidz-World, to offer a free monthly (term-time) play session for our supported families. These sessions allow parents/carers and children to enjoy the soft play area and spend time with other families having fun. The children receive a lunch box, and refreshments are provided for the parents/carers too. These sessions are popular, not only to allow children to access our local soft play, but also due to the social opportunity it brings for families. A total of 8 Kidz-World sessions have been held with 153 attendees which is an average of 19 per session.

October Holiday Programme

We had two activities during the October holidays – our family trip to Blair Drummond Safari Park, and an activities day with Forestry and Land Scotland in the Cochrane Hall and surrounding park in Alva.

We experienced all seasons in a day during our trip to Blair Drummond; but that didn't stop over 100 people loading into coaches. Thankfully, the rain stopped by the time we arrived, and everyone had a great day out enjoying the animals and playing on the park. Before we knew it, the coaches were loaded back up with tired children (and adults!) and we were homeward bound.

Our Forestry Day was fantastic, initially planned for 30-40 people, we had 92 book! Alva Development Trust were incredible hosts, taking the additional attendees in their stride to cater for. Families enjoyed putting up hammocks, making beasties from clay and natural objects, clambering on rope bridges and much more.



Christmas Party

We held our Christmas Party in the Town Hall with 177 attendees. We all had a great time dancing, making crafts, enjoying our magician, and eating lots of food. We also had a visit from a special guest - Santa took some time out of his very busy schedule to visit our children and give them each a gift.



Home-Start Charity Shop

Update by Shop Managers
Sarah & Heather



We have had another busy but exciting year in our shop, continuing to develop to serve our community, and raise vital funds for our core work with local families.

Towards the start of the year, we said “goodbye” to our Manager Emma, who left to return to her Care work roots. Excitingly, we received a small pot of funding from Tackling Child Poverty funds at Clackmannanshire Council to develop our volunteer learning and development programme, specifically for parents in Clackmannanshire looking to further their employability journey. As part of this programme, our volunteer Heather progressed to being our Retail Supervisor! We also had other participants receive

training such as moving and handling, first aid, and gain valuable transferable skills to support their employability journeys.

Sarah and Heather (our two shop staff) have been a wonderful team this year, supporting our incredible team of 18 shop volunteers, who contributed an outstanding 2096 hours over the year. This is absolutely amazing, as we wouldn’t be able to open without their support. Thank you all for all your hard work over the last year! It has been great to have some social opportunities over the year too, from our volunteer forums to our Volunteer’s Week celebrations and of course, Christmas meal and quiz.



We have introduced the weighing of donations within the shop, which has allowed us to see what our environmental impact is. We are proud to announce that between October 23 – March 24, we received 13043.46 KG of items, successfully diverting from landfill through onward sale, or donation to Nathans Wastesavers. We look forward to continuing these efforts to do as much as possible to improve our environmental impact.

Our van continues to be a great asset to us. Without the van we wouldn't be able to offer collections of donations, or delivery to our customers and families. Having the van has also allowed us to increase the number of donation pods we have situated round the county. The donation pods are great as they allows our customer to donate items to us in their local communities, making it more convenient for them, and more environmentally friendly, as we are able to collect multiple donations with one trip. We currently have 5 donation pods situated in: Alloa Business Centre, Tuillibody Health Centre, Alva Health Centre, Dumyat Centre in Menstire and Ugyrn in Tillicoultry.

Over the next year, we plan to grow this number further, to have coverage across each locality in Clackmannanshire. If you are interested in hosting a pod for us then please get in touch with Sarah our Shop manager.

We are excited for the year ahead, having extended our shop lease for another 2 years. A huge thank you to our landlord Mr Howie, our board of trustees, and the wider Home-Start Staff team for their continued amazing support. But especially, we would like to thank our amazing customers and the wider community who donate to us, and continue to support us.



**Thanks to our
amazing Charity
Shop Volunteers**

Fundraising

Generating income is becoming more and more important for us to remain a sustainable and healthy charity, especially to boost our unrestricted income. In addition to the outstanding sum generated by our Charity shop, we are also developing our community fundraising, and wider fundraising options, such as corporate partnerships. In 2023 – 2024, we carried out various activities to support our fundraising, some highlights were:

The Kiltwalk

We had 4 teams walking for us in 2023, raising hundreds, this included our volunteer Aileen, Assistant Manager Jax with her family, our Group Worker Carlyne with her friend Gavin, and Alva Nursery's Louise H, Louise D, and Julie.



Campaigns

Each year at Christmas, we run a campaign looking for items to bring the magic of Christmas to our families. This year, in partnership with Love in a Box, and through the overwhelming generosity of the community, we were again able to do this. A huge thank you to everyone involved.

We also ran our first online fundraising campaign through The Big Give in March 2024, in partnership with Reachout with Arts in Mind. This raised £3,223.75 (including Gift Aid) to bring creative activities to our families over the current year (2024 – 2025).



Bingo's, Tombola's, and Raffles

Throughout the year, we had various tombola's and raffles at events we hosted. We were also overjoyed to find out that Theo, from one of our supported families pitched an idea with his friends at Coalsnaughton Primary School to the LENS project, to run community bingo at school. They were successful, and chose to donate the proceeds to us at Home-Start!



Libertas FM

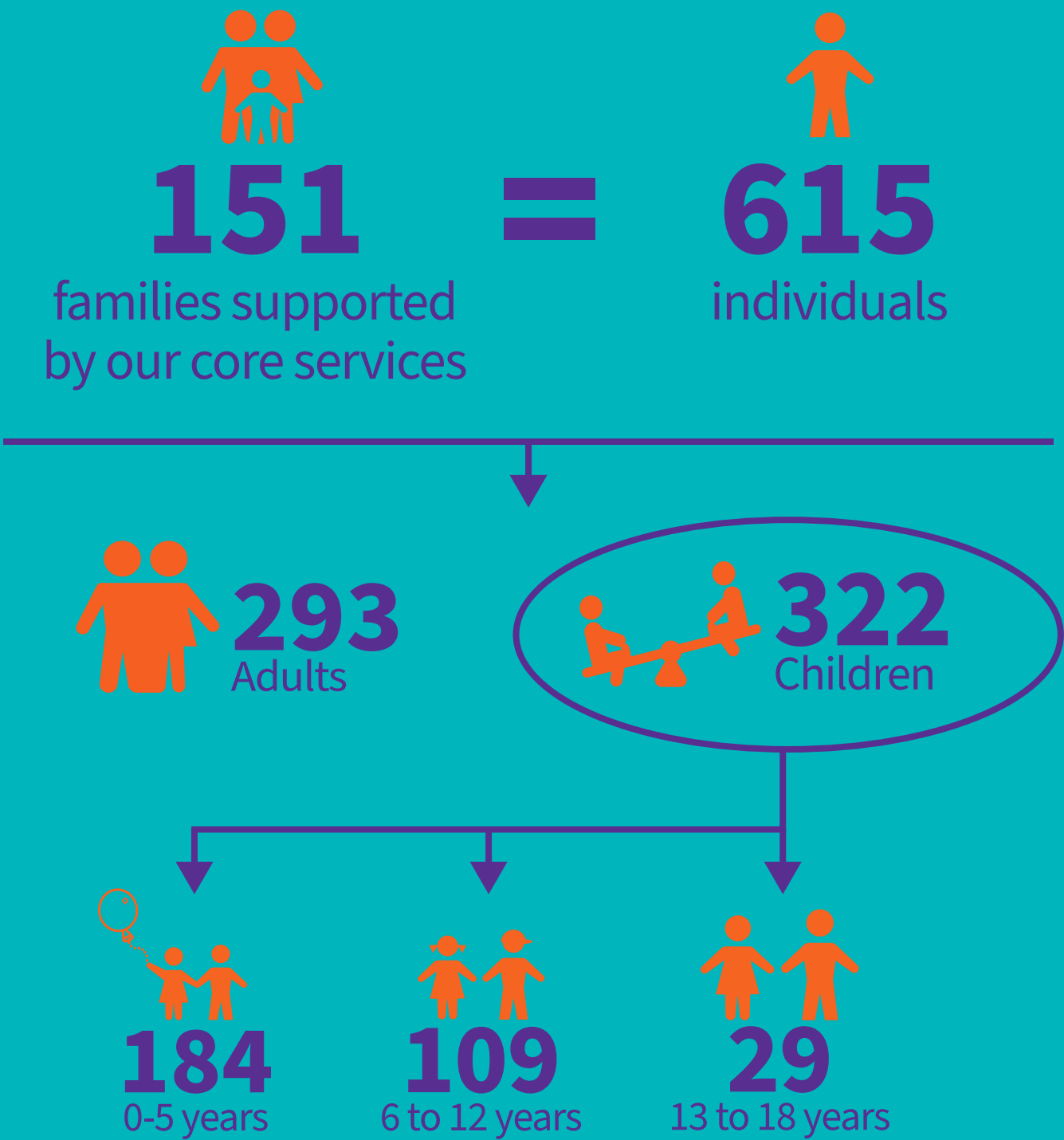
Libertas Financial Management are a wonderful local business who believe in unbiased, independent financial advice. They provide a range of services, from retirement planning to investment planning. Libertas FM was founded, and run by Andre, Calum and Jamie, locals with a drive to support their

community. We were lucky enough to be chosen as the recipient of funds raised from their 2023 Charity Golf Day. They raised an incredible £3073.60 for us, which supported our trip to family trip to Blair Drummond Safari Park in October 2023.



Statistical Info

April 2023 - March 2024



Child Protection:

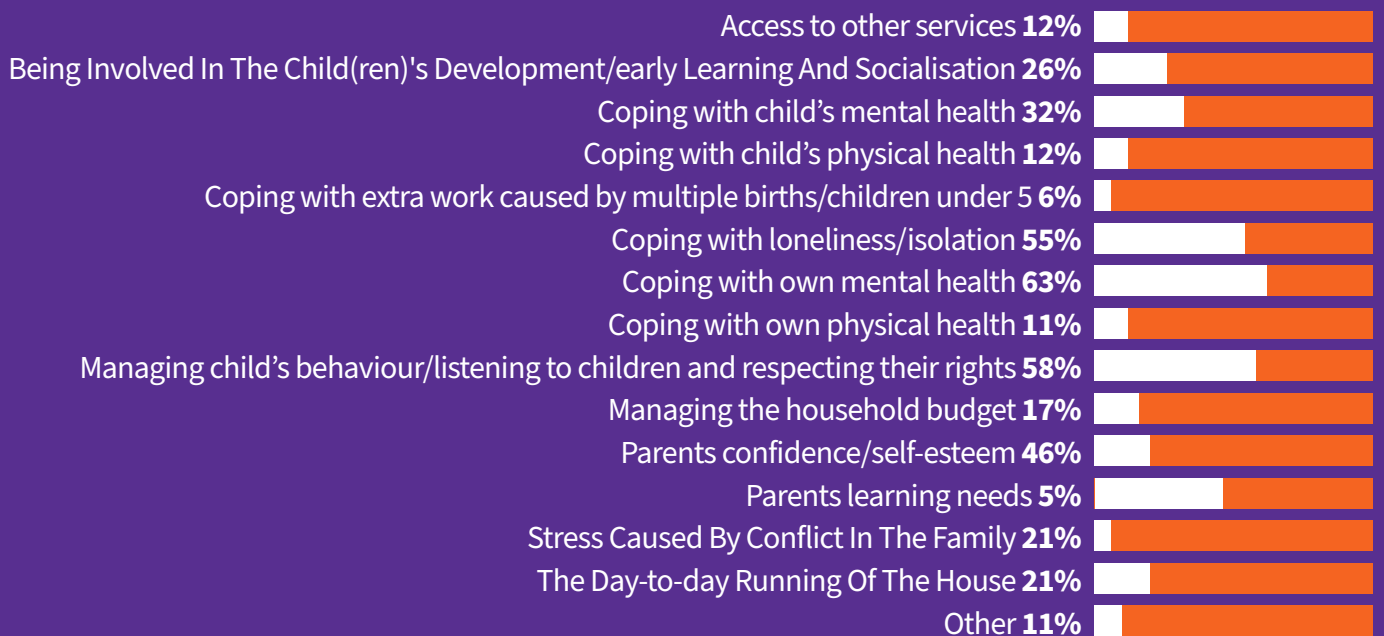


**3 families (8 children)
worked with on the
Child Protection register**



**4 families (5 children)
with care experience**

Reason for Referral:



Geographical areas where families reside:

Alloa **71**
Alva **10**
Clackmannan **12**
Coalsnaughton **3**
Devon Village **1**
Dollar **1**
Fishcross **1**
Menstrie **7**
Sauchie **13**
Tillicoultry **12**
Tullibody **19**

Referral Sources:

We had 120 new referrals (of which 108 engaged) over the year from:

Health Visitor **40**
Social Worker **22**
Education **33**
Self-Referral **6**
Community Mental Health Nurse **4**
Community Nursery Nurse **3**
Other **3**
CAB **6**
Inclusion Worker **2**
Clackmannanshire Works **1**
Housing **1**
CTSI **1**
Home-Start Stirling **1**

Circumstances at referral:

Unsuitable housing **97**
Family Member in Prison **3**
Required support with debt & finances **25**
Issues with speech and languages **23**
Lone Parent **68**
Substance Misuse **10**
Domestic Abuse **29**
Disabilities **40**
Teenage Pregnancy **3**
Mental health **98**
Refugee/Asylum seeker **4**

Trustees



Patrick Leavey (Chairperson)



Colin Carmichael (Treasurer)



Lynn Leitch



Joan Gibson



Melissa Albentosa



Sarah Shimmen



Jill Baty



Steven Day



Jim Nicol

Staff



Louise Orr



Jacqueline Kidd



Linda Kerr



Leyanne McLean



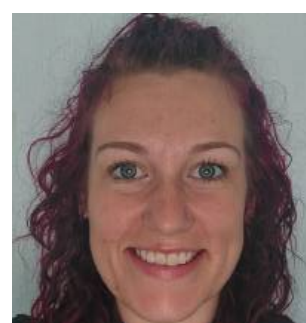
Maureen Holden



Irene Richmond



Paula Paton



Joni Boyd



Megan Thomson



Susan Bannatyne



Carole Evans



Carolyn Nicol



Sarah Gray



Heather Jarvie



Shelley Bowman



Sofie Meier



Clackmannanshire

Supporters/Donors 2023-24

A. Gray

Tesco Alloa – Community Champion

Asda Alloa – Community Champion

Morrisons Alloa – Community Champion

Dollywood Foundation

Royal Oak, Alloa

Hawkhill Community Centre

Kidzworld, Alloa

Emblation, Alloa

Trillium, Alloa

Forefront Stage School

Sauchie & Coalsnaughton Parish Church

Menstrie Mains Residents Association

St Mungos RC Prayer Group

Lithium Systems

RSVP Knitting Group

uGym, Tillicoultry

The Works, Tillicoultry

Libertas Financial Managment

Digital Teddy Solutions

Clacks Community Lottery

**Clackmannanshire Third
Sector Interface**

Clackmannan Primary School

J. & J. Dick

Stirling & District Car Club

Busy Bee Bingo (Coalsnaughton PS)

Alloa Round Table

Flying Start Nursery



Thanks to our funders



**Clackmannanshire
Council**



THE
RS MACDONALD
CHARITABLE TRUST



The
ROBERTSON
Trust

The
Henry Smith
Charity

**May McIntosh
Charitable Trust**



Save the Children



**NHS
CHARITIES
TOGETHER**



TESCO



LOTTERY FUNDED



ARTEMIS
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

the**schuh****trust**



**COMMUNITY
FUND**



**Foundation
Scotland**



CORRA
FOUNDATION



Clackmannanshire

**Chief Executive Officer:**

Louise Orr

Assistant Manager:

Jacqueline Kidd

Office Manager:

Linda Kerr

Family Support Co-ordinators:

Leyanne McLean

Maureen Holden

Irene Richmond

Paula Paton

Joni Boyd

Family Support Workers:

Megan Thomson

Susan Bannatyne

Family Support Group Workers:

Carolyn Nicol

Carole Evans

Shop Learning and Development Manager :

Sarah Gray

Retail Supervisor:

Heather Jarvie

Consultant Support provided by:

Shelley Bowman

Sofie Meier

Our incredible team of family support, group and shop volunteers.

Office Contact Details

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F: @homestart.clackmannanshire

X: [@hsclacks](https://www.facebook.com/hsclacks)

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