



Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council

Community grant application form - part A

Please ensure you complete all of this form and Part B and send the following information to enquiries@abingdon.gov.uk:

- forms A and B, completed in full
- your organisation's last set of accounts
- the most recent bank statement for your organisation, which should match the payment information on form B

1. About your organisation

Name of the organisation requesting the grant

Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire

Please state briefly what the purpose of your organisation is

Charity providing Early Years family support across the South & Vale.

2. Your grant request

Please describe the project for which the grant is needed.

Research has shown that the earliest years make the biggest impact on a child's development. Without a stable, loving a nurturing environment, a very young child will not develop the vital foundations they need. Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is a local charity that supports vulnerable families, who have at least one child under the age of five (though they may have older children too), across most of South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse area. Our charity is well established and has supported families continuously for 35 years.

We want to be able to continue supporting vulnerable families in Abingdon through our confidential, non-judgmental, and free home-visiting volunteer support. Over the last year, we have supported 20 families in Abingdon – 16 with a trained home-visiting volunteer and 4 (military families) with our Family Support Worker.

Our trained home-visiting volunteers are matched with families who need help and visit them in their own homes every week for 2-3 hours to support them in the ways they need. Families may be struggling with issues such as postnatal depression, isolation, mental health issues and low self-esteem. They may be struggling to cope with the challenges of parenting and lacking confidence to access support in the community or engage with other services. They may be coping with multiple births or have children who are unwell or have additional needs, be a first-time or young parent, or be a parent without a support network around them. We also signpost families to other services in the community and we collaborate with other local organisations to ensure that families get the support they need.

Our aim is to help our home-visiting service become more sustainable and have enough volunteers in all areas that we cover to be able to support many more referrals. We have just been awarded a Step Change Fund grant of £50,000 over two years to recruit a Volunteer Development Co-ordinator. We hope this will increase our staff capacity, increase our volunteer recruitment and improve volunteer training and stewardship, helping us grow and improve our service. One of the areas we will be working to recruit more volunteers in is Abingdon, as we receive many referrals from the town (via health visitors mostly and some self-referrals) and we want to be able to support them all and not have to turn any away due to capacity/lack of volunteers. Our Family Support Worker will support the more complex families.

What is the total cost of the project	£50,000 (estimate for Vale of White Horse area)
How much grant are you seeking	£2,000
What percentage of the total cost of your project are you seeking via this grant	4%
How do you plan to raise the rest of the money for your project	We fundraise all year round. We have some larger grants from BBC Children in Need and The Henry Smith Charity, but we also receive grants from various trusts/foundations, Oxfordshire Community Foundation, Town and Parish Councils and SO District Council. We will have a stall at Abingdon Air Show in May. This year will be the first year we have been awarded a grant from The Oxford Health NHS Trust Foundation as part of its 0-19 commission.
Please show roughly how the costs of the project are broken down	-Staff salaries – Organiser/Coordinator & % for admin and supervision -Staff training -Volunteer expenses (volunteers are not paid and only receive £100 travel expenses a year) -Volunteer training (and DBS Checks) -Overheads (rent, post, telephone) The cost to support one family for one year is around £1,700.
What fund-raising have you undertaken for this project or others in the past 2 years	As above, mostly multi-year grants and smaller one-year grants. We're always looking for new trusts to apply to or community grants such as Tesco Stronger Starts etc.

3. Local benefit

How many people take part in your organisation's activities? Give local branch numbers if you are a national organisation.	As members	13
	As recipients	700

Please fill in the table below relating to numbers of members and/or recipients falling into each category. Estimates are acceptable provided an “e” is put after the figure.

Age profile	0-16	16-65	over 65
- Members		9	4
- Recipients	317	363e	20e

Gender profile	Male	Female
- Members	1	12
- Recipients	250e	450e

Local connection	Town resident	Attend education in town	Neither resident nor attending education in town
- Members	1	0	12
- Recipients	70e	20e	

4. Vision and objectives

Please explain how your project will meet the town councils vision and objectives, which are set out below. **You do not need to respond to each point** but it is important that your project addresses the town council’s vision and at least one objective.

4a. Vision

To develop an inclusive community so that Abingdon is the place where everyone wants to live and where the wellbeing of residents is prioritised. In developing this community, the town will be one which is environmentally sustainable, vibrant, resilient and safe.

Through our unique volunteer home-visiting support, we provide social/peer support to the families that need it most. Regular visits help build a parent’s self-esteem, facilitates a positive home environment, and having someone to talk to confidently helps the parent’s mental wellbeing. This boost helps them become more resilient and gain the courage to use local resources.

We encourage families to widen their network of relationships and to access community support. Our volunteers can accompany them to medical appointments and local baby and toddler groups in the town. Integrating families within the local community helps reduce isolation and loneliness, improving the wellbeing of many families in the town.

Our Abingdon home-visiting volunteers will also benefit from this project. Many of our home-visiting volunteers tell us how volunteering has helped reduce their own isolation and improved their own wellbeing. They also gain personal development and experience working with families, which can support them with future jobs in the area – creating a vibrant town.

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4b. Objectives

1. **To respond effectively and speedily to the climate emergency**

Grass roots service minimises climate impact. Our charity recognises the serious and accelerating changes to the world caused by climate change and are working hard to reduce our carbon footprints. We train local volunteers who are matched with local families, enhancing community wellbeing, but keeping travel to a minimum. Staff can work flexibly from home, which minimises travel time and virtual meetings save on travel altogether. In our office, staff separate refuse waste from recycling, are encouraged to print documents only when necessary and to print double-sided to save on paper. We are increasingly paperless. We favour digital communications. We reuse and offer play resources for our volunteers to utilise with the families they support and promote ‘everyday’ play resources over bought items. The majority of the activities that our volunteers do with the families they support have a very low environmental impact, such as walking to the local park, library or local play group.

2. **To develop a resilient, sustainable town which will provide a home for residents now and in the future**

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3. **To manage the Council’s assets efficiently and effectively to meet for the needs of the community now and in the future**

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4. **To work with community partners to support those who are vulnerable and in need and to create opportunities to increase social inclusivity**

The earliest years make the biggest impact on a child’s development. Without a stable, loving and nurturing environment, a very young child will not develop the vital foundations they need. Through our support we aim to help parents (and their children) who are going through difficult times become more resilient to their situations and better able to cope.

We support vulnerable families in the town. Our support helps boost confidence and encourages families to interact within their local community. We signpost them to local services in the area to get the further support they need. We work closely with local health visitors, midwives, social workers and schools in the town where many of our referrals come from.

Our home-visiting volunteers will work with families to help support them in making children school ready, which has a positive effect on the child’s learning and development as well

as creating a simple transition for the child and the school setting.

Our aim is to help families by intervening early before the problem they are facing escalates into something more serious and there is a need of statutory services. Our work in the area helps relieve the strain from local services such as health visitors and early help team.

5. Other/previous grant awards

Please provide details of any grant awards you have received from the town council, other councils or large organisations that you have received in the past three years

Didcot Town Council - £2,000 and £7,000 (2022/2023)
Wantage Town Council - £2,000 and £2,000 (2022/2023)
Abingdon Town Council - £2,000 (2023)
Henley Town Council - £1,000 (2023)
SODC - £3,000 (during COVID)
SODC - £28K (Revenue Grant 2021-23)
Parish Councils – various small donations each year
The Henry Smith Charity - £141,501.27 (2022-2025)
Children in Need - £30K (2020-2023)
The Veterans' Foundation - £30K (2023-24)
The Tambour Foundation - £25K (2023-24)

Please list any grant applications to other councils or bodies which are currently pending

Didcot Town Council pending - £7,000
Henley Town Council – To be done in July
Wantage Town Council – To be done in July

6. About your organisation

Please explain what structure your organisation has, i.e. is it a charity, a society, or another type of model

Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is a registered charity.
Charity No. 1113941.

What is the balance of your main account according to the most recent bank statement?

183,912.11

Additional financial information

Does your organisation have any other finances held in other accounts?

N/A

If so, please provide full details of all your additional finances, including recent figures.

If these funds are earmarked for any specific projects, please provide further information about this.

7. Reporting back on your grant

Organisations receiving a grant from the town council are required to provide a written report on their event or project within twelve months of the award date. The report should detail how the funds were spent and how residents of Abingdon are benefitting. The report may be included in any town council publicity, including the website or the Town Crier magazine.

Declaration

I declare that the information given in this grant application, both parts A and B, is complete and accurate and that no relevant information has been omitted.

I agree that the organisation receiving the grant will report back to the town council within 12 months of the award of this grant on how it has been used.

Signature

FGKing

Name

Faye Golding-King

Position with organisation

Development Manager

Date

15 May 2024