

Application deadline: Midday – Friday 15 January 2021

Voluntary Sector Provider Contribution Fund Scheme Application Form

Details of your Organisation

Name of organisation	Home-Start Essex
Address:	Unit 16D Reeds Farm Estate Roxwell Road Writtle Chelmsford Essex
Postcode:	CM1 3ST
Contact Person	Sam Bailey
Position in Organisation	Fundraising and Marketing Manager
Telephone Number:	01245 84 74 10
E-mail address:	sam.bailey@home-startessex.org.uk
Website address:	www.home-startessex.org.uk
Charity Registration No:	1170940

Declaration:

1. I am authorised to make the application on behalf of the above organisation.
2. I certify the information contained in this application is correct.
3. If the information in the application changes in any way I will inform Uttlesford District Council.



Signed:

Date: 14th January 2021

Name: Sam Bailey

Position: Fundraising and Marketing Manager

Details of Application

Description of work undertaken by the organisation

Home-Start Essex vision (HSE) is: "For every child and young person in Essex to grow up in a family that is strong and resilient and able to access support when and where it is needed".

We provide emotional, practical support and guidance to parents of young families, who are struggling with the demands of family life. Typically, they will be experiencing one, or more, of the following: social isolation, mental health issues, post-natal depression, domestic abuse, children with additional needs and financial difficulties.

Our work falls into the following categories:

- Individualised family support, providing tailor-made help and guidance in the home.
- Family groups - informal, welcoming environments for parents to meet and make friends, develop support networks and share experiences and for children to become nursery/school ready.
- Well-Being groups - parents struggling with self-esteem and mental health issues meet to share their own experiences to learn strategies and support each other.

How many paid employees does your organisation have?

36

How many volunteers does your organisation have?

84 actively working with families, 49 in the process of training. A further 76 volunteers are resting due to family commitments / COVID-19 restrictions. This means a total of 209 volunteers, 133 of which are deployable.

How many members does your organisation have (if applicable)

Not applicable

Who/what does your organisation support and in what way?

We aim to support families facing challenges which are adversely impacting on their ability to parent their children. Typically, whilst not an exhaustive list, the families supported will be affected by:

- Poor Mental Health
- Post-Natal Depression and Anxiety
- Financial Stress/Pressures
- Family Bereavement

- Low Self-Esteem
- Isolation
- Health or Learning Difficulties
- Children with Disabilities
- Significant Life Events
- Reliance on Benefits and Food Bank Vouchers
- Domestic Abuse
- Challenging Child Behaviour

The impact of poor wellbeing in parents has a significant adverse impact on child development. According to NSPCC, poor parental wellbeing increases the risk of children developing behavioural problems, mental health difficulties and taking on caring roles at a young age. Specifically, our experience has shown that:

- Low self-esteem (a commonly identified factor for the parents we support) is often fuelled by a combination of environmental, personal and practical difficulties.
- Mental Health (the number one identified cause of concern for the majority of the families we support) is an area of growing prominence.
- Parents receiving support from HSE, regularly cite economic hardship as being a principal concern, along with isolation caused by lack of mobility.
- Often isolation and mental health issues go hand in hand; perpetuating each other within a vicious cycle.
- for parents with young children, maintaining a healthy support network is difficult, often because child care, finances and confidence act as significant barriers.

Parents need access to early help in order to reduce risks of families falling into patterns of behaviour that can have an adverse impact of child development,. However, the following barriers to access exist: Long waiting lists for services; High thresholds / criteria; Limited finances; Child care costs; Unable to access service; and Stigma. As such, particularly with statutory mental health services being under growing pressure, the need for early help from the voluntary sector becomes a priority.

COVID-19 has disproportionately affected children in families who are socially or geographically isolated. Many families who are less well-off live in accommodation which does not have a garden or outdoor space – limiting children’s ability and access to play and isolation prevents attendance of free groups which support children in their socialisation and skills development. If social distancing continues, there is a risk particularly for younger (pre-school) children that they may become detached or be overly dependent on their parent – either extreme would be problematic in the long term.

This pandemic will have a long term impact on children, particularly those pre-school children (under the age of 4), where successive lockdowns will now account for a large percentage of their life. This will mean that many children will have missed out on time at nursery, clubs and groups which would have taught them developmental skills, social skills including sharing, turn-taking, listening, learning to play with peers and, being able to recognise their own name.

How much money is your organisation requesting?

2021/22

£10,500

Please give full details of the use that will be made of any financial aid given by Uttlesford District Council. (Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary).

We are seeking financial aid to continue the delivery of our unique Home Visiting service in Uttlesford.

We will deliver individually tailored support to meet the practical and emotional needs of c. 40 families per annum. The financial aid we are requesting would support a little over 25% of our work in Uttlesford, providing 12 months' worth of 1:1 home visiting support for 11 families each year.

Ordinarily the support we give would take the following form. Families are supported in their home for 2 hours a week, on a 1:1 basis, by a professionally trained volunteer. Our experienced coordinators will conduct an initial visit to families to assess their needs, and together with the family, will devise a Family Support Plan. Once an appropriate volunteer has been matched, the coordinator will oversee the process, completing reviews at 12 weekly intervals to ensure that the support being offered meets the family's needs. During support the volunteer and coordinator aim to build family's confidence enabling them to access external support and create networks to assist them once HSE support is withdrawn.

Over the last year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been adapting the services that we deliver so that we are able to support parents remotely via telephone, video conferencing or when government guidance allows, socially distanced activities outdoors.

Our Home Visiting programme, recruit parent volunteers to be matched with families in a way that allows them to draw on their own experiences and their knowledge/skills to help other parents. This creates a trusting and helping relationship between the family and volunteer, allowing the family to be receptive to support and guidance that enables them to change existing practices/behaviours and enjoy their family life. Due to COVID we have had the opportunity to recruit telephone befriender volunteers, allowing us to broaden the volunteering opportunities we offer and the demographic of volunteers we draw support from.

Experienced and highly skilled Co-ordinators provide confidential support and supervision to all of our volunteers on an 8 weekly cycle to ensure compliance to our safeguarding policy as well as ensuring progress is being made with the family, and if necessary our work is refocused.

Referrals are accepted from a wide range of sources including health visitors, children's centres, social care and nurseries, with families also able to self-refer. At the initial visit the Co-ordinator gains an overview of the holistic needs of the family providing us with a unique insight into what other HSE services would benefit the family, e.g. well-being group or the school readiness programme. All of our services are led and delivered by suitably qualified and trained staff and volunteers. In order to support families to achieve their goals, we work collaboratively with a range of agencies and organisations, to address specific needs such as Housing, CAB, Job Centres, Food Banks, Libraries, Essex Child and Family Well-Being Service (ECFWS) and Adult Community Learning.

Name up to three things you aim to achieve in the funding period.

With your financial aid we would aim:

1. To continue to support families living in Uttlesford through our 1 to 1 support service. We endeavour to help families grow in confidence and develop their personal skills to build resilience and independence. The families' outcomes will be measured using our 13 outcomes of need.
2. We will use your support to enable us to recruit and train an additional 6 volunteers to support our work in the Uttlesford area. As each volunteer on average works with 2 families per year, this would give us the opportunity to work with 12 extra families per year.
3. Once we have completed our annual reviews with volunteers we will create and deliver an appropriate programme of additional training which will be tailored to volunteers identified needs – but may include training on mental health first aid, safeguarding or similar as appropriate.

What is the demand for the service and how is this being established? How will your project/service find out what the views of its users are and about the services they (will) receive?

Home-Start has had a presence in Uttlesford since our predecessor organisation was launched in 1984. Home-Start has been providing support to local families for the last 35 years.

Referrals into our service in Uttlesford come from a variety of sources including health visitors, GPs, statutory services, other voluntary sector agencies and families themselves. Of the 584 Essex families supported in the last year, 31 live in Uttlesford. We currently have a short waiting list of families waiting to be matched with a volunteer, so there is a need and request for our services from local families.

COVID has by necessity pushed us forward on the journey of having service users centrally feeding back on the work we do. We have been able to consult more widely with staff, volunteers and beneficiaries as we go through a period of significant change and adaption – ensuring the developments we are making are in line with the needs of the communities we serve.

We are in the process of establishing a Families Forum from families who have received our services, adopting a co-design and co-evaluation approach to our services, meeting quarterly. Establishing a steering committee with representation from families, volunteers, Essex County Council and Health Professionals is also a goal for us as we continue to go through the changes and adaptations we make as an organisation in the year ahead. It is important that we have family evaluation at every stage and know what is working for them. The focus is on ensuring that HSE has a constant focus on feedback, learning and improving.

Does the Council encourage or support your organisation in any way other than financially? Please give details.

Our offices are located within the Uttlesford District Council Office Building. We are grateful to be able to use this space rent free.

A link to the Council's Corporate Plan is below. Please explain how your organisation or the proposed project would contribute to the Council's corporate plans objectives?

<https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/corporate-plan>

The support that we are seeking to deliver fits directly within the council's corporate plan – specifically the focus on providing Thriving, Safe and Healthy Communities. Whilst Home-Start support is open to any family that requests it, families that we have supported tend to skew towards more vulnerable groups such as single parents or military families.

The support given by volunteers as part of our home visiting service is led by the family and specifically focused on the particular needs that they identify at the start of support. As such this support can be highly localised and targeted to the specific and individual needs of the particular family. Examples of this include:

- Volunteers give both practical and emotional support to parents, and are able to sign post to more specialised well-being and mental health support where appropriate. 80%* of parents that requested support coping with their own emotional and mental health showed an improvement at the end of support.
- Supporting parents to get out of the house and to access services in the local community, including gyms, doctors' surgeries and encouraged local family trips. At the end of Home-Start support, 64%* of parents expressing a problem with isolation reported an improvement.
- Volunteers support parents to put in place routines around mealtimes, help budgeting for family shopping and encourage parents to take their children to outdoor spaces to play – all contributing to healthier children. Supported families showed improvements of 100%* with needs around children's physical health and 100%* with needs around managing household budget.

*All stats represent data from families supported in Uttlesford during the time period Jan 2020 – Dec 2020.

At its core, the work that we seek to do with families is about providing early intervention to facilitate parents giving their children the very best start in life. If it is required the earlier additional support can be put in place for a child, the better, as this significantly reduces the likelihood of more intensive interventions being made further down the line (in the form of social services etc.), and seeks to avoid families struggling with generation to generation challenges including social deprivation and poor parenting experience.

Our ultimate aim is to empower families, and communities more broadly, to be stronger and have the self-confidence to be self-sufficient, resilient and supportive to their parenting peers.

Are there any other organisations providing the same service as your organisation in Uttlesford? If yes, please give details.

ECFWS have a legal responsibility to provide a range of child and family services throughout Essex that are free at the point of delivery.

We work in partnership with ECFWS to deliver focused support to families through our school readiness programme, Big Hope Big Futures (BHBF), building resilience in families through our home-visiting volunteer service and reducing isolation through our group work. The work we do is complimentary to ECFWS, not a duplication.

This work would also be more specialised and targeted support than the core support that we provide in home visiting, as an initial support point for families to access.

Do you work in isolation to these organisations or collaboratively in any way? Please provide details.

We work in partnership with ECFWS, as detailed above.

We also work collaboratively with local organisation, "We Are Thrive," in the provision of our Uttlesford well-

being project. They present no competition to HSE as they are a well-being service that act as a third party and match the public to well-being services.

Your project costs

Please give an estimate breakdown of your running costs

Revenue Costs	2021/22
Salaries, NI and Pension costs	£7280 [this would be a contribution to the salary of Family Co-ordinators that support Uttlesford families]
Rent	£0
General running expenses (phone, Post, room hire, insurance etc.)	£1140
Producing information, education and Promotional materials	£0
Training	£1040
Travel expenses a) Staff	£520
b) Volunteers	£520
Recruitment costs	£0
Other costs	£0
Additional cost relating to Covid-19	
Total revenue costs	£10500
Capital costs	£0
Total capital costs	£0
Total Organisational costs	£10500

Income - current year only

From grants £428,531

From other sources £303,033

Total income	£731,564
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Is your organisation financed or supported by other organisations, if yes, give full details, if no, why not?

In this financial year grants provided 58% of our funding. Funders include National Lottery Community Fund, Children in Need and The Henry Smith Charity as well as Essex Community Foundation. Commission income including from the Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service, Essex County Council and A Better Start Southend provides a further 37% of our income.

What fund raising activities has your organisation undertaken in the last 3 years and how much money have you raised? Please do not include grants from Uttlesford District Council or other funding bodies.

Total Fundraising for the financial year 2018 – 2019 Including but not limited to sponsored walk at Barleylands Farm, events in the community including quizzes and curry nights, donations from community groups including Rotary Clubs and Round Tables, designer clothes sale and sponsored 5k run.	£32,444
Fundraising for the financial year 2019 – 2020. Including but not limited to charity quiz nights, Summer family fun day, donations from parish councils, churches, Rotary Clubs and Round Tables, collection buckets at Chelmsford Beer and Cider Festival, support from Maldon Orchestra and collections and sponsorship from various volunteer events.	£34,044
Fundraising for the financial year 2020 – 2021. Including but not limited to virtual quiz nights and virtual bingo nights, donations from parish councils, churches, Rotary Clubs and Round Tables, sponsored events and donations from businesses and individuals in the run up to Christmas.	£29,422 [to date]
Total:	£95,910

What percentage of your users are Uttlesford Residents?

6% of our beneficiaries over the last year were Uttlesford residents. For context, we deliver our services in 11 districts across Essex. (1st Jan 2020 – 31st Dec 2021)

How many people benefit from your service(s) each year?

We supported 584 families (1415 people) across Essex last year, 31 families (81 people) were located in Uttlesford District.

What effect would a reduction in the amount you have applied for have on your forward plan/service? Please provide quantifiable information?

In calculating the budget for this application, we have calculated that the funding we are requesting equates to 25% of the cost of our service delivery in Uttlesford. Should there be a reduction in funding to our organisation, this would unfortunately be reflected in our ability to deliver services in Uttlesford.

Based on our calculations, it costs £950 to fully support a family [the majority of this is staff time] and any reduction of grant means that we would not be able to continue at our current rate of delivery.

If you are currently in receipt of a grant from Uttlesford District Council, what effect would a reduction in funding have on your organisation? Please provide quantifiable information?

We are presently in receipt of a grant of £10500 from Uttlesford District Council. This primarily contributes to the funding of our core work in Uttlesford, the recruitment, training and deployment of volunteers to work directly 1 on 1 with families in need, in the home.

As stated above, the current grant provided by Uttlesford District Council makes a significant contribution to the overall service delivery we are able to provide Uttlesford.

Check List

- **Most recent Audited financial accounts**
- **List of extra spending due to Covid-19**
- **Medium/Long term business plan**
- **Copy of the organisation constitution**

I confirm that:

- to the best of my knowledge the information given above is accurate;
- I am authorised to make this application on behalf of the organisation named overleaf;
- Neither I nor the organisation is seeking to obtain any personal or financial benefit from the project/initiative.