

VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 25' EDITION

LATEST AT HOME-START WKCHF

Hello!!

There has been so much going on, I don't know where to start! So far this year, we have embarked on some external and internal evaluations which has included interviews and surveys with volunteers, families, staff and trustees. These are important to let us know what is working and what areas need to be different or improved. In June last year we asked your views, and have made some improvements accordingly. It is time again for the Annual Volunteer Survey, and we will be sending this out soon-ish. I know we ask you for your time in supporting families and enhanced training, so the extra time those of you are giving in helping us to continually improve is enormously appreciated. Please also know that you never need to wait for a supervision session, survey or forum to share your views with us- you can call, text or email, or even write a letter! I hope you enjoy the medley of updates and information in this newsletter.

♥ Thienhuong and the HSWKCHF Team ♥

HIGHLIGHTS

WE DID IT! – INVESTING IN VOLUNTEERS

We're pleased to share that we've successfully renewed our Investing in Volunteers (IiV) award for another three years (April 2025 – April 2028)! The IiV award is the UK quality standard for good volunteer management. It helps organisations like ours reflect on how we support and value volunteers—celebrating what's working well, and highlighting ways we can do even better. As part of the renewal process, 21 brilliant volunteers took part in interviews earlier this year, giving honest, thoughtful feedback. We're so grateful to all of you who gave your time to help us. To say thank you, Karima treated those involved to a delicious lunch of her famous Moroccan shakshuka. We first received this award back in 2007, and thanks to the continued passion, commitment, and care you bring, we're proud to be recognised once again.



SUMMER PREP COURSE

Our Summer Preparation Course is now in full flow! Taking place in a brilliant, fully-equipped space at White City Place, the course wrapped up on 8th July. We're thrilled to welcome 6 new volunteers, full of energy, enthusiasm, and ready to be matched. It's been a good few weeks of learning, connecting, and preparing for the busy summer ahead.

URANG CYCLE 2025

A huge shoutout goes to the amazing team at Urang Property Management. In May, they cycled an incredible 90 miles from their London office all the way to Folkestone—all in support of Home-Start! We were cheering them on every step (and pedal) of the way.

Thanks to their determination and the generosity of their supporters, they raised just over £3000 to help us continue supporting local families! We're so grateful for their effort, energy, and commitment – thank you!!



HIGHLIGHTS



VOLUNTEER WEEK



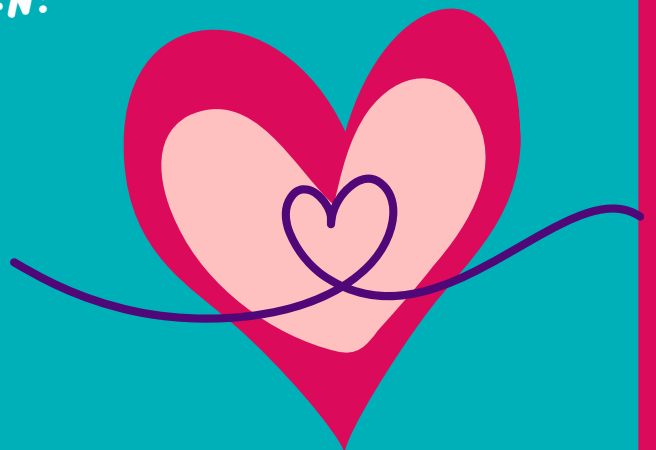
Valued
Oustanding
Ferless
Inbelievable
Nurturing
Trusting
Empathetic
Encouraging
Reliable / resilient

We had a fantastic afternoon on 5th June for our Volunteer Summer Party – rain and all! Held during Volunteer Week, it was a chance to come together, catch up with one another over a glass of Pimms, food and music, and celebrate the incredible work you do. We shared a lovely video message from our patron, Floella, and Mary treated us to a brilliant poem written by the team that perfectly captures the heart of all our Home-Start volunteers. If you couldn't make it this time, we'd love to see you at the next one.

VOLUNTEER VOICES

"ANOTHER GREAT PARTY BUT WHERE WERE ALL THE GUESTS? IT WAS A VERY WET DAY, OF COURSE, AND A THURSDAY AFTERNOON MAY NOT HAVE SUITED EVERYONE - WE ALL HAVE SUCH BUSY LIVES! AS USUAL, THE STAFF WERE THERE TO WELCOME US WITH SMILES AND LAUGHTER - ALWAYS THE SAME GENUINE INTEREST IN AND PRAISE FOR VOLUNTEERS; WHICH IS WHY I WRITE THIS. THEY TELL US CONSTANTLY HOW MUCH THEY VALUE US SO THE LEAST WE CAN DO IS TO TURN UP FOR THE PARTIES IN OUR HONOUR. COME ON EVERYONE, SHOW YOUR SUPPORT!"

A MESSAGE FROM OUR WONDERFUL
VOLUNTEER, HELEN!



HIGHLIGHTS

EASTER EGG HUNT

We had a fantastic time at our Easter Egg Hunt on 9th April in Holland Park! With huge thanks to the team at the Bank of Kuwait for helping us organise the day, families gathered for a lively egg hunt, picnic, and plenty of laughs. The egg and spoon races got competitive, the sack races brought out some surprise talent, and the chocolate prizes went down a treat. It was a brilliant day! We really appreciate those of you who came along to support and made it such a great day!



"HOLDING IT TOGETHER" REPORT

Home-Start London recently published a powerful new report based on a survey of 300 parents – including families right here in our tri-borough. The findings? Parenting is tougher than ever: 86% said money worries make parenting harder. But here's the good news: 91% said Home-Start improved their mental health, 88% felt less alone, and 84% felt more confident supporting their children. That's the difference your time, energy, and kindness make. Want to read more? The full report is here: [Holding-it-together-May-2025.pdf](#)
You're amazing. Keep doing what you do! 💖



DONATIONS FOR FAMILIES

If you've been to our offices recently, you might have noticed that we are bursting at the seams with donations ready to be shared with our Home-Start families! This includes an amazing selection of toys, books, art supplies and warm clothing items for children between 1-12 years old! Please get in touch with your coordinator to discuss donations for your Home-Start family.



SUMMER SCHEME

With the summer holidays just around the corner and this gorgeous sunshine, we're excited to kick off our Summer Scheme - packed with brilliant trips and activities for families to enjoy. There's plenty for them to look forward to! These outings make a big difference for the families we support, and we'd love your help to make them run smoothly.

We need your help for our Holland Park Picnic, Kew Gardens and Hyde Park picnic, so if you're able to volunteer for a day (or more), please get in touch!

Contact your coordinator to let them know your preferences.

Please note, spaces **will be allocated on a first come, first served basis and your space is not finalized until you receive official confirmation** from the team a few days before the trip.

Holland Park Picnic 📍

**24th July
11am-2pm**

Meet staff by the adventure playground, 55 Abbotsbury Rd, London W14 8EL

Margate Beach 🌊

29th July

Meet staff at the Home-Start Office (St Pauls Church Centre, 3 Rossmore Rd, London NW1 6NJ) at **8:45am, for a 9am departure.** We will leave the beach at 3:30pm and return to the office at 6pm. *We will be providing sandwiches and refreshments.*

Lee Valley Farm 🐷

5th August

Meet staff at the Home-Start Office (St Pauls Church Centre, 3 Rossmore Rd, London NW1 6NJ) at **8:45am, for a 9am departure.** We will leave the farm at 3:30pm and return to the office at 6pm.

Kew Gardens 🌿

**13th August
10am-2pm**

Meet staff at Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Richmond TW9 3AB
We will be providing sandwiches and refreshments.

Arundel Castle 🏰

20th August

Meet staff at the Home-Start Office (St Pauls Church Centre, 3 Rossmore Rd, London NW1 6NJ) at **8:45am, for a 9am departure.** We will leave the castle at 3:30pm and return to the office at 6pm. *We will be providing sandwiches and refreshments.*

Hyde Park Picnic ☀️

**27th August
11am-2pm**

Meet staff at by the playground, S Carriage Dr, London W2 2UH

SPOTLIGHT



CAROLINE LOR

**VOLUNTEER
BEFRIENDER**

How long have you been part of the Home-Start WKCHF family? I have been with Home-Start since September 2024. I have a background in professional services and have volunteered for several charities, large and small. Never in my working life have I been so impressed and inspired by the training provided by Thienhuong and every single member of her passionate team. The support I receive from my coordinator, Sophie, is truly excellent which means I never feel out of my depth. My volunteering journey has been wonderful in so many ways.

What's one moment or memory that has really stayed with you? There are many other memorable moments, but my family has a nine month old baby girl who has not had much exposure to others and it is only in the last few visits that she hasn't cried when I walked in!

What's kept you coming back all these years? Top of the list - I really feel like I am making a difference. The joy of building a rapport with a family in need and to know they look forward to your visit each week is incredibly rewarding.

If you could describe your volunteer experience in three words, what would they be? Heartbreaking, life affirming , enriching

What's your dream holiday destination? My dream holiday destination is always going to be Australia where I grew up but I am lucky enough to be writing this from Vietnam where I am accompanying my daughter who is volunteering in a children's kindergarten! My photo is of me hiking in the northern regions among beautiful diverse minority communities.

SPOTLIGHT



MARY HILTON

FAMILY SUPPORT
COORDINATOR &
PRACTICE EDUCATOR

How long have you been with Home-Start WKCHF? I started working for Home-Start Westminster in Jan 2020, two months before we went into lockdown. That was lucky right!! That was such a weird time. However, I've been associated with the service since 2015 when I started coming in fortnightly to meet with social work students.

What's one project or achievement you're especially proud of? The Social Work Students Programme. I'm so proud to see how this is developing and to be part of a team that is involved in part of the journey of future social work students.

What's something people might not know about your job? Part of my supervision of social work students is that I teach them. I introduce them to new social work concepts that they may have never come across before or that they may just have heard the phrase for.

Do you have a favorite quote or motto you live by? "Treat others how you yourself want to be treated"

What's your favorite thing about working with volunteers? I love the diversity, the differences they all come with, the vast amount of skills they bring to the service. I love hearing their stories of their own lives.

What message would you like to share with our volunteers? As a Christian, I love the Bible and the messages it gives for everyday and every situation. So the message I will leave comes from there. It's from the Book of Galatians Chpt 6 and verse 9 and it says this: "Let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not become weary".



SPOTLIGHT

ANIKA HARIA TRUSTEE (TREASURER)



When did you join the Board of Trustees and what inspired you to join the board? I joined the Home-Start WKCHF Board of Trustees in March 2025. Alongside this, I have been a Volunteer Board Member for the youth charity Young Enterprise since 2018. I wanted to continue applying my professional skills and knowledge to make a difference to the lives of young people and communities.

What is your role on the Board and what does it involve? My role as Finance Trustee involves overseeing the finance function, contributing towards developing the charity's strategy and ensuring its financial viability.

Can you share a bit about your professional background? After graduating from UCL in 2015, I joined PwC where I qualified as an ACA Chartered Accountant. Since then I have worked within the media and technology sectors and am now a Financial Controller.

What are you most excited about for the future of Home-Start WKCHF? Two key strategic focus areas for Home-Start WKCHF are diversifying its funding sources and improving volunteer recruitment and retention. These are important for long-term sustainable growth and to enable Home-Start WKCHF to reach more families who are in need of support. I am excited to be part of the journey of building on these.

What book, podcast, or movie/TV show has recently inspired you? One of my all time favourite books is The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini. It's a timeless and inspiring story.

THANK YOU

“I AM COMPLETELY BLOWN AWAY BY ALL THE STAFF; I’VE NEVER MET A GROUP OF MORE PASSIONATE, CARING AND KNOWLEDGEABLE WOMEN” AND “THEIR PASSION IS INFECTIOUS, I’M PROUD TO BE PART OF HOME-START BECAUSE OF THEM, THEY REALLY GO ABOVE AND BEYOND TO MAKE SURE YOU FEEL SUPPORTED AND COMFORTABLE IN YOUR ROLE, THEY REALLY ARE EXPERTS IN THEIR FIELD”

VOLUNTEER FEEDBACK



“HE IS AMAZING AND THERAPY IS MAKING A BIG DIFFERENCE. HE HELPS ME SEE THINGS IN MYSELF THAT I’VE BEEN AVOIDING FOR 40 YEAR”
PARENT RECEIVING THERAPY

FAMILY FEEDBACK

“THE HARD WORK AND DEDICATION THESE INDIVIDUALS PUT INTO FAMILIES THAT NEED EXTRA SUPPORT IS TRULY REMARKABLE. I HAVE FELT SO CARED FOR AND LOVED BY MY HOME START FAMILY”

FAMILY FEEDBACK